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27 August 1953



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GENERAL

1. Soviet press comment may foreshadow new disarmament proposal in UN:

Ambassador Bohlen reports that the Soviet press on 25 August carried a long article quoting foreign reaction to the Soviet hydrogen bomb explosion.

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Most of the quotations were chosen to show that Soviet possession of the H-bomb will give "new impetus to the struggle for outlawing atomic weapons." One mentioned "repeated Soviet demands in the United Nations for limitation of armaments and outlawing of atomic weapons."

Comment: The new emphasis given to the disarmament question in the Soviet press at this time may foreshadow increased propaganda emphasis on disarmament as a prelude to the introduction of a new Soviet proposal in the forthcoming UN eighth General Assembly. The proposal would probably be similar to that of November 1951, following Stalin's October announcement that the USSR had carried out an atom bomb test. It called for a "world conference" of all states.

2. Soviet Union seen committed to support of East Germany at cost of unity:

Ambassador Bohlen believes that the Soviet 3.3(h)(2)
East German talks and Malenkov's speech prove beyond reasonable doubt that the USSR has decided to throw its full support behind

the East German regime for the immediate future, regardless of the effect on other aspects of its foreign policy. He believes the decision resulted from the 17 June riots and later unrest, which would have weakened the Soviet position in serious negotiations on German unity.

Bohlen believes that Malenkov's speech marks a return to a policy of general threat and intimidation on the German problem. He notes that it contained no appeal to the West German Socialists and seemed to anticipate an Adenauer victory, which could be used as justification for later Soviet actions in East Germany and Berlin.

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SOVIET UNION

3. Continued absence of Zhukov and Vasilevsky from official Soviet functions noted:



The American embassy in Moscow comments 3.3(h)(2) that press reports have failed to mention either Marshal Zhukov or Vasilevsky in connection with several recent functions attended by the other members of the Soviet hierarchy. Both apparently were absent from the Supreme Soviet session, the air show, and recent Moscow receptions in honor of the East German delegation.

Comment: The continued absence of these two first deputy ministers of defense may possibly reflect further political maneuvering among the top leadership. While Vasilevsky was listed above Zhukov in the March announcement of their appointments, the order was reversed when their names appeared among the signers of an obituary of a lesser military figure on 22 July. This was the last date either was publicly mentioned. Vasilevsky also failed to attend the 16 July meeting of important party members in the Ministry of Defense which approved Beria's arrest.

SOUTHEAST ASIA

4. Strategic corner of Tonkin delta heavily infiltrated by Viet Minh:



The military and political situation is 3.3(h)(2) "very bad" in the strategic area forming the western apex of the Tonkin delta,

Viet Minh infiltration is so heavy that the bulk of this nominally French-controlled area is in enemy hands.

Most of the population supports the Viet Minh and little is being done by the French or the Vietnamese government to counter Viet Minh propaganda.

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Comment: The Viet Minh's most determined frontal assault against the Tonkin delta took place at this point in January 1951. Several recent reports state that the enemy will drive for Hanoi through this region in the fall.

5. Politicians blamed for terminating Philippine military action against Huks:

The American embassy in Manila reports that the Philippine army has confirmed the termination of anti-Huk operations northwest of Manila, placing responsibility for their cessation on the "politicians." The army is convinced that Huk leader Luis Taruc could have been captured had the operations been permitted to continue. 3.3(h)(2)

The American embassy believes that the deliberate failure to capture Taruc strengthens the probability that a Liberal Party deal with the Huks is being concluded.

Comment: This development is the strongest indication so far received that Liberal Party leaders, in anticipation of the forthcoming elections, are offering liberalized terms of surrender to the Huks. It supports the embassy's recent warning that such terms constitute a serious threat to Philippine security.

SOUTH ASIA

6. Nehru unlikely to withdraw Indian candidacy for political conference on Korea:

On 25 August Indian prime minister Nehru delivered a violent diatribe to American ambassador Allen, stating with extreme emotion that South Korea was not one of the major parties concerned with the political conference on Korea. 3.3(h)(2)

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He said that Rhee was a "wicked, corrupt, and unprincipled old man" who had no right to dictate to the world, that it would be ruinous to permit him to do so, and that Rhee's setting a 90-day time limit on the Korean conference was "insupportable arrogance."

Comment: This outburst suggests that if India is elected to a seat at the political conference, it will not voluntarily withdraw therefrom. India is likely to regard the judgment of a majority of UN members as outweighing that of South Korea on the advisability of India's attendance.

NEAR EAST - AFRICA

7. Important Iranian tribe neutral toward Prime Minister Zahedi:

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The Qashqai are willing to accept Prime Minister Zahedi's offer of friendship, which was made through the local provincial governor general. They fear, however, that the shah may influence the army against them.

Comment: The neutrality of the Qashqai will simplify Zahedi's task of maintaining public order throughout Iran and may influence the Bakhtiari tribes to adopt a similar neutral policy. The Qashqai tribes have traditionally resented control from Tehran and have always resisted attempts by the army to interfere with their semiautonomy.

8. Latest Anglo-Egyptian meeting reveals sharp conflict:

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A sharp conflict between the British and Egyptians over the question of the duration of any Anglo-Egyptian agreement on the

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Suez base emerged at the informal meeting of representatives of the two countries on 24 August, according to the American embassy in Cairo.

The British are proposing a ten-year agreement, with 4,000 technicians remaining at the base for five years and the number tapering off thereafter. Britain insists that all duration periods must start after withdrawal of British troops has been completed. Eighteen months to two years is considered the minimum for evacuation.

The Egyptian counterproposal was a five-year agreement, with technicians to remain three years only. The Egyptian negotiators maintain that the duration period must start from the date of the signing of the agreement.

Comment: Anglo-Egyptian negotiations on the Suez base were suspended on 6 May. Informal meetings between the delegates have been taking place in Cairo since 28 July in an effort to establish sufficient agreement for the resumption of formal talks.

WESTERN EUROPE

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