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3.5(c)

2 January 1956

3.3(h)(2)

Copy No. 103

CURRENT INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN

DOCUMENT NO. 41NO CHANGE IN CLASS.

D) DECLASSIFIED

CLASS. CHANGED TO: TS S C

NEXT REVIEW DATE: 2010

AUTH: HR 70-2

DATE: 17 JAN 1980 REVIEWER:

OFFICE OF CURRENT INTELLIGENCE
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

~~TOP SECRET~~

Approved for Release: 2019/10/23 C03020475



Approved for Release: 2019/10/23 C03020475

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1. PEIPING PROPAGANDA TAKES HARDER LINE ON IMPRISONED AMERICANS

[Redacted]

Peiping propaganda has adopted a new and aggressive tone in commenting on the 10 September agreement with the United States for the repatriation of nationals. The new tone suggests that the Chinese Communists remain determined to hold most of the imprisoned Americans, although individual Americans may be released from time to time in accordance with previous practice. The British chargé at Peiping believes that the Communists are determined to exploit the prisoners' ransom value in the current negotiations with the United States at Geneva.

Radio Peiping on 31 December tried to document charges that the US was violating the agreement. Previously the Chinese had maintained a defensive position explaining that imprisoned Americans would be released "one by one after a judicial review of their cases."

The 31 December broadcast carried letters from five families of Chinese in the US. The letters named those allegedly detained and in some cases requested the assistance of the Peiping regime in effecting their expeditious release. The broadcast added that the US was obstructing the return of "thousands of Chinese students."

[Redacted]

2. USSR MAY SPONSOR MOVE TO EXPEL ISRAEL FROM THE UN

According to a member of the United Nations Secretariat, the Soviet Union plans to introduce into the Security Council a Syrian resolution calling for the expulsion of Israel from the United Nations.

Comment

The Soviet delegation may make a pro forma move to oust Israel. Soviet-Israeli relations have become increasingly strained since last spring when the Soviet Union began to exhibit its partiality for the Arabs more openly. Relations have deteriorated further as a result of Party Secretary Khrushchev's statement to the Supreme Soviet on 29 December that Israel, "ever since it came into being has been threatening its neighbors and pursuing a policy hostile to them." Foreign Minister Sharett is reported to have called Soviet ambassador Abramov to the Israeli Foreign Office on 30 December to protest Khrushchev's statement.

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3. NEHRU SEEKS TO CONVINCE UNITED STATES OF INDIA'S GOODWILL

Prime Minister Nehru has instructed Indian UN representative Krishnaswamy to give a series of lectures in the United States during January emphasizing that the Bulganin-Khrushchev visit has not altered India's non-alignment policy. Krishnaswamy told the American consul general in Madras he is also to state that the Indian government does not wish to embarrass the United States on the question of Portuguese-Indian relations, and that India does not believe in unilateral nuclear disarmament by the United States.

The Indian representative also commented that Nehru knows he will probably have to approach Washington for aid in completing India's Second Five Year Plan. He stated Nehru feels the US is already aware of India's problems, and that he hopes it will take the initiative. Nehru wants to avoid American congressional debate on aid to India during an election year.

Comment

Nehru and the Indian government have already given tangible evidence of new willingness to be moderate in their relations with the United States.

4. JAPAN PLANS ACTIVE ROLE IN ASIAN ATOMIC ENERGY DEVELOPMENT

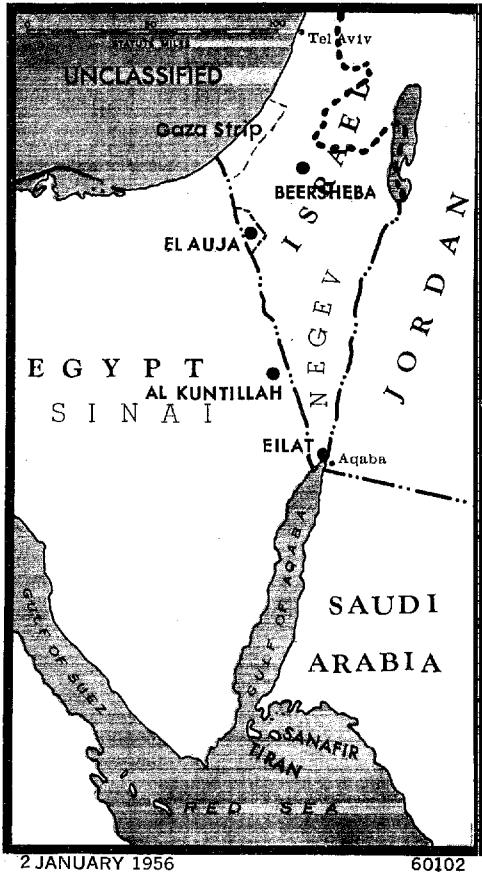
A representative of Japan's Atomic Energy Commission has stated that Japan desires to convene a conference of Asian nations to convince them of the need for a rapid development of atomic power with American assistance. He saw Japan's role as supplying equipment and technical assistance and hoped that this would help it to recapture its position of leadership in Asia.

Comment

The emphasis on Asian co-operation may stem from the recent American decision to locate the Asian Atomic Research Center in the Philippines, which Japanese leaders fear will impair Japan's prestige as Asia's leader in the scientific field. They have indicated that Japan plans to bring its capabilities in this field to bear on the development of industrial uses of atomic energy during the next five years, while the other Asian nations are still undergoing training at Manila.

The marked change in Japan's previously hypersensitive attitude towards nuclear matters is indicated by the ease with which the basic atomic energy bills and the US-Japan bilateral agreement were passed with Socialist support during the recent Diet session. (Concurred in by OSI)

THE ARAB-ISRAELI SITUATION
 (Information as of 1700, 2 January)



No significant military activity has been reported. Israeli army spokesmen on 1 January reported minor clashes with Egyptian troops in the Gaza strip and in the El Auja demilitarized zone. Israel also announced that two public works officials were killed and another one injured when an Arab "suicide" squad ambushed a road repair vehicle on the Beersheba-Eilat highway on 31 December. According to information reaching the American army attaché in Tel Aviv, the trail of the squad led to the Jordan frontier.

further details on an anticipated Israeli attack on the islands of Tiran and Sanafir in the Gulf of

Aqaba

Syrian intelligence reported to Egypt that the Israelis would attack these islands sometime between the middle and the end of January and would begin the operation by attempting to send an Israeli ship probably from Eritrea to the Israeli port of Eilat. Israel, [redacted] has four torpedo boats at Eilat and is expected to increase the number to six. The American military attaché previously reported that the Israelis had hauled three motor torpedo boats overland to Eilat. [redacted]

There have been repeated indications that Israel is determined to use force, if necessary, to obtain free transit in the Gulf of Aqaba. While some previous

[redacted] analyses in the Israeli press of the Israeli-Egyptian situation suggest that January may be a decisive month in the Middle East, firm evidence on Israeli intentions to engage in major military activity is still lacking.

In anticipation of an Israeli attack, Egyptian forces in Sinai presumably will not only be kept on the alert but probably will be reinforced.

[redacted] a national guard company was to be moved from Cairo to El Kuntillah, about 35 miles northwest of Eilat, on the frontier, and that 4,000 hand grenades were to be sent immediately to the Aqaba sector. On 29 December the Aqaba port asked that its previous request for "arms and ammunition" be treated as "most urgent" and that they be forwarded on the "7 January ship."

[redacted] The American air attaché in Cairo reported considerable air activity over the city on 28 December, probably as part of the reception for Marshal Tito's current visit to Egypt. Vampires, Meteors as well as FAGOTS (MIG-15) took part in the air display. This was the first time that the new Soviet bloc equipment had been openly observed in Egypt, according to the American army attaché.

The American consul general in Jerusalem reported on 29 December that UN truce officials believe the UN peace proposals for the El Auja demilitarized zone no longer serve a useful purpose in view of the deterioration of the Arab-Israeli situation since 11 December when the Israeli attack on Lake Tiberias occurred. General Burns reportedly feels there is little hope for success in obtaining Egyptian or Israeli agreement to these proposals. UN officials, in reviewing the situation, feel that recent Israeli press reports may constitute propaganda justification for some new Israeli "activist" venture.