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## GENERAL

1. Soviet air safety proposals recommended as basis for further negotiations:

Despite the disadvantages of the Soviet air safety proposals, Western Allied air representatives meeting at Bonn have recommended accepting them as a basis for further quadripartite negotiations. The single air corridor is considered unsatisfactory because of the technical difficulties involved. Counterproposals for a wider single corridor, abolition of the approximately 13,000-foot flight ceiling, and agreement on the rules governing Soviet interception of planes straying from the corridor were suggested.

The British Foreign Office feels that the Western powers might yield on the prohibition of flights by combat aircraft if the talks were endangered by Western insistence on this issue.

The French Foreign Office, however, believes that giving up the right to arm planes might be "extremely unwise." The French offered no objection to the single-corridor idea provided no technical difficulties were involved, but rejected the Soviet "right" to grant the West the use of the corridor.

Comment: While the Western powers are generally agreed on the advantages and disadvantages of the Soviet proposals, they want to avoid a situation in which they could be blamed for breaking off the discussions.

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**SOUTH ASIA****3. Comment on apparent improvement in Indo-Pakistani relations:**

Recent indications of improved Indo-Pakistani relations provide no real cause for optimism. Indian moves are possibly designed to impress the West with India's conciliatory attitude and its nonaggressive intentions toward Pakistan. They may have been timed to coincide with Secretary Dulles' forthcoming trip to the subcontinent, the UN Security Council's current deliberations on Kashmir, and Pakistan's efforts to join MEDO, the last of which India is trying to hinder. In past years, similar Indian moves have raised false hopes in the West.

Indian officials have taken special pains to point out the unusually friendly atmosphere in which the mid-March Indo-Pakistani trade agreement was negotiated and have stated that tension between the two countries appears to be lessening. The suggested meeting between Prime Ministers Nehru and Nazimuddin, however, gives no indication of being more fruitful than previous talks, since ill feeling between India and Pakistan is still deep seated.

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## WESTERN EUROPE

4. Return of Thorez expected to heighten French Communist peace offensive:

[redacted] The American Embassy in Paris believes that the return of Thorez on 10 April was in line with the current Soviet peace offensive and calculated to smooth the French Communist Party's internal difficulties. The Embassy expects Thorez to intensify the party's pacifist tone and place greater emphasis on mass action to support economic and political demands, particularly in the field of civil liberties.

Thorez has been identified with two conciliatory eras in party history. His reappearance will be heralded as presaging a "softer" approach designed to undermine the government's anti-Communist program and to lead the party back from its present isolation.

The Embassy notes that his precarious health poses a problem for the French Government, which is reluctant to make a martyr of him and yet anxious to avoid giving any impression of weakness in its current anti-Communist campaign.

Comment: Thorez's return provides Moscow with a chance to give first-hand directives to a major foreign Communist party.

The reluctance of French deputies to lift the parliamentary immunity of five top Communist leaders may well be increased as a result of Thorez's return.

## LATIN AMERICA

5. Disturbances in Venezuelan oil fields reportedly scheduled for mid-April:

[redacted] An uprising and acts of sabotage in the oil fields of eastern Venezuela are tentatively scheduled to occur about 19 April, [redacted] 3.3(h)(2) [redacted] 3.3(h)(2)

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[redacted] The conspirators are a faction of the outlawed Democratic Action Party. They reportedly favor close collaboration with the Communist Party, which is said to have found major gaps in the oil field security system.

Comment: Disturbances on or about 19 April are not unlikely since Provisional President Perez is to be "re-elected" then by an appointed House of Deputies. However, a localized uprising involving only a "faction" of the Democratic Action Party and certain Communists could easily be controlled by the national security forces and the oil companies.

6. Comment on Argentine cabinet crisis:

The emergency meeting of Peron's entire cabinet and five Supreme Court justices has added to the political tension sparked by his 8 April speech denouncing black marketeering and opposition "rumor mongers" who charge corruption in government.

The Peronista Party's expulsion of Colonel Domingo Mercante and seven other prominent members on 9 April on charges of spreading false rumors, as well as the absence of high military officials at the funeral of Juan Duarte, Peron's brother-in-law, suggests that Peron is under strong pressure from the "moderate" wing of the party to make administrative reforms.

Unemployment, price rises, and food shortages have recently caused greater popular dissatisfaction. According to the American Military Attaché in Buenos Aires, however, there has been no indication that Peron has lost his control over the army, police, or labor confederation.

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