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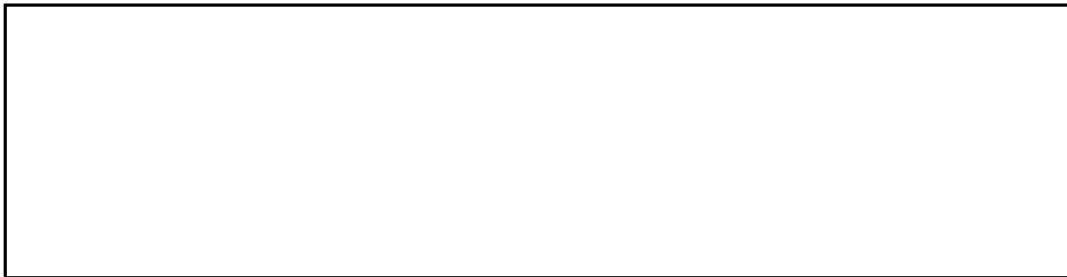
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2. BRITAIN MIGHT MATCH ANY UNILATERAL SOVIET DEMOBILIZATION MOVE

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Britain might match any unilateral Soviet demobilization with reductions of its own, Foreign Office permanent under secretary Kirkpatrick has told the American embassy in London. The British believe, he said, that Khrushchev's remarks in Britain indicate a Soviet intention to reduce substantially the Soviet conventional forces without a disarmament agreement. Consequently, the Western position of "no disarmament without German reunification" no longer exerts appreciable leverage on Moscow. Kirkpatrick said that Britain is therefore considering informing the Germans that its policy no longer precludes British disarmament before German reunification is achieved.

Kirkpatrick insisted that any such British reduction would be based strictly on a reassessment of British defense needs in light of any Soviet disarmament, rather than on a feeling of any obligation, "moral or otherwise," to reciprocate.

Comment

By communicating such possible intentions to the Germans at this time, the British probably would hope to prod them into agreeing to pay \$140,000,000 in support of British forces for another year, lest those forces be reduced, after the present agreement expires on 5 May.

Britain's present military manpower plans call for a cut from 800,000 to 700,000 by 1958.

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5. COMMUNISTS INCREASE STRENGTH IN BURMESE ELECTION

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[Redacted]

Unofficial returns on 164 out of 238 parliamentary seats contested in last Friday's elections indicate that although Premier Nu's Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League (AFPFL) will retain a substantial majority in the new lower house, the Communist-led National United Front has made significant gains.

So far, the Front has won 33 seats, thus increasing its representation by at least 20. Final returns are expected to give the Front about 30 percent of the total vote. This improved showing probably stemmed from the popularity of its appeal for an end to the "civil war," and from its ability to attract the large protest vote against the regime.

The Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League, which has always felt more insecure than its strong parliamentary position would seem to warrant, will probably move to placate the extreme left-wing sentiment reflected in electoral returns. Pressure may develop within the League in favor of softening the terms for the re-emergence of the insurgent Burma Communist Party as a legal political entity and for another effort to achieve "leftist unity" such as was attempted in 1948 just after the Communists went underground.

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6. LAOTIAN PREMIER STATES CONDITIONS FOR TALKS WITH PATHET LAO

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[Redacted]

Premier Souvanna Phouma, in his reply to the 26 April request of Pathet Lao leader Prince Souphanouvong for direct negotiations, made acceptance of the government's authority over the two northern provinces a prerequisite for any meeting with the Pathets. Souvanna told the American chargé he had also ruled out any visit to Hanoi or Peiping until the Pathet Lao problem was settled--"without external intervention."

In his statements to the chargé the premier was cautiously optimistic about the outcome of talks with Souphanouvong. He said he had the impression the Pathet Lao were on the defensive and that he would be able to exploit the differences between those Pathets who were oriented toward the Viet Minh and those who were "nationalists." The chargé, however, points out the premier is basically naive and may well "give something away without meaning to."

Comment

The premier's statements indicate that he is strongly attracted to the idea of negotiating with his half brother.

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**8. PRIME MINISTER OF NEPAL TO VISIT
COMMUNIST CHINA**

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Nepalese prime minister Tanka Prasad Charya has accepted an invitation to visit Communist China. No date for the visit has been set.

Comment

Closer relations have been developing between Nepal and Communist China since the two countries established diplomatic relations last summer. An offer of economic and technical assistance which the Chinese Communists made to Nepal last February will probably be discussed during the visit.

Although Prasad's acceptance is likely to cause some concern in India, which has an important security interest in Nepal, New Delhi is unlikely to attempt to block the visit.

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

UN secretary general Hammarskjold has delayed his departure from the Middle East, apparently in a further effort to get the Arab states and Israel to come to some sort of agreement on the dispute over the Israeli plan to divert the Jordan River waters at Banat Yacov. Syria, Jordan, and Lebanon have stated that if they agree to a cease-fire, Israel must agree not to resume digging at Banat Yacov.

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reports that heavy military traffic, including military and requisitioned civilian vehicles, artillery and half-tracks, was heading south on 30 April.

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nine of Egypt's MIG jets have crashed at Almaza airfield near Cairo and three or four more in the desert. The crashes were due to poor maintenance and pilot errors.

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**BIWEEKLY SUMMARY
19 April-2 May 1956**

THE TAIWAN STRAIT

**Report of the IAC Current Intelligence Group
for the Taiwan Strait Problem**

There were no significant developments in the area during the period.

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