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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN



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10 FEBRUARY 1959

I. THE COMMUNIST BLOC

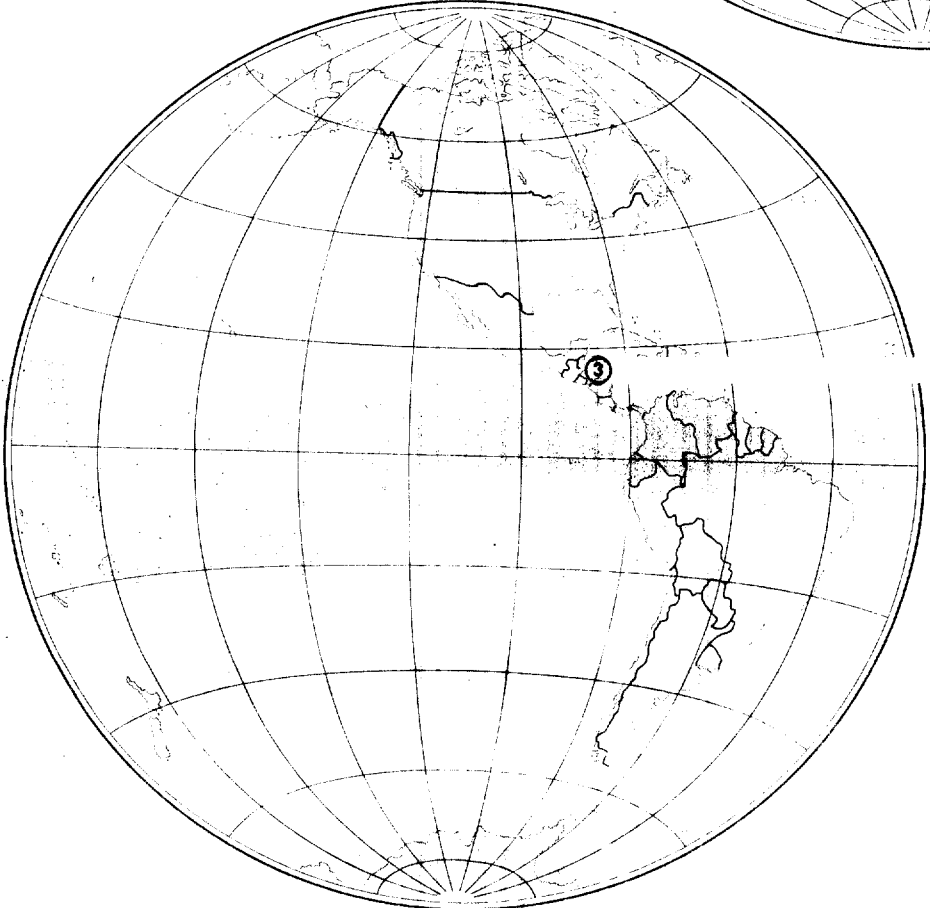
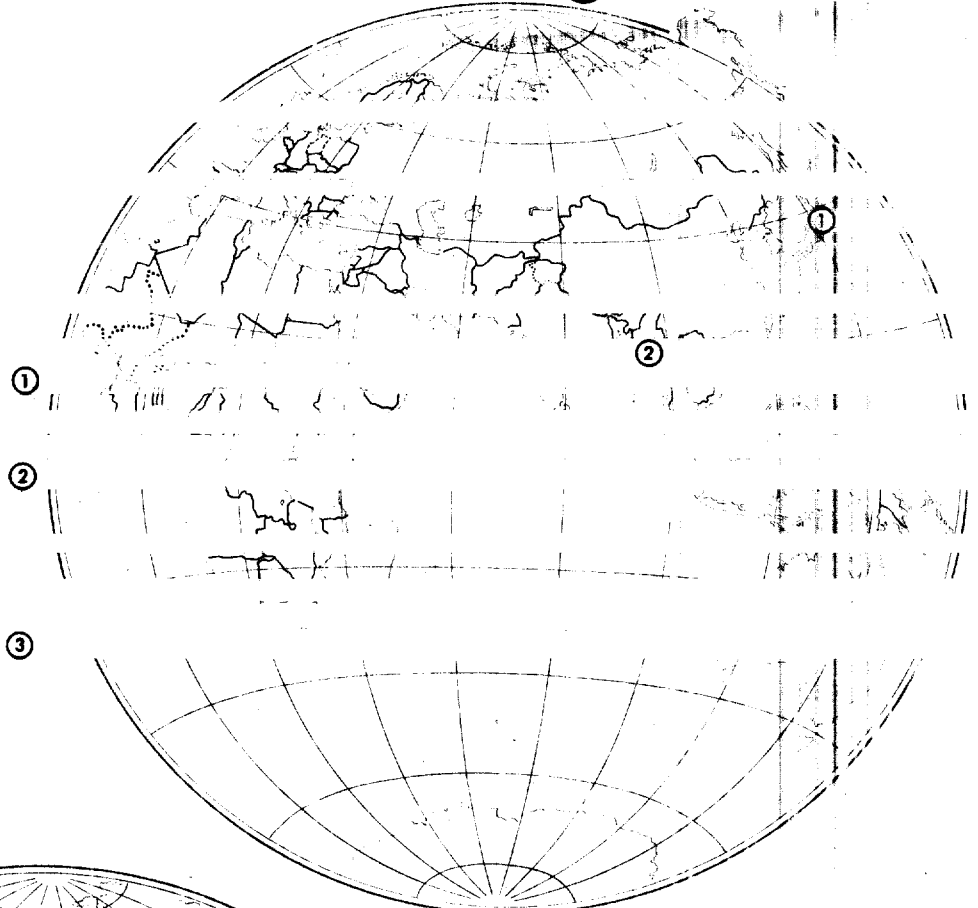
II. ASIA-AFRICA

Tokyo moves toward trade talks with Peiping.

Burma - General Ne Win to ask for six-month extension as prime minister.

III. THE WEST

Honduran military official doubts Villeda regime can survive present crisis; civil war possibly near.



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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN

10 February 1959

DAILY BRIEF

SIRAB

I. THE COMMUNIST BLOC

II. ASIA-AFRICA

OK

Japan - Communist China: Foreign Minister Fujiyama announced on 8 February that instructions had been issued to select a Japanese representative and a site for ambassadorial talks with Peiping over the resumption of trade. Prime Minister Kishi has apparently been forced to make this offer because of internal political pressures. Peiping has thus far avoided comment. [redacted] (Page 1)

OK

Burma: General Ne Win is expected to ask the Chamber of Deputies, during its session which convened on 9 February, to extend his term as prime minister for at least six months. This request is likely to be opposed by former Prime Minister U Nu. Ne Win probably controls a majority of the Chamber of Deputies, but an extension of his regime may, over a period of time, lead to popular discontent and broadening political opposition. [redacted] (Page 2)

III. THE WEST

NO

*Honduras: [Armed forces chief Lopez expressed strong doubts to the American ambassador on 9 February that the government of President Villeda can survive the present crisis unless rebel leader Velasquez is immediately expelled from neighboring Nicaragua and his clandestine rebel radio forced to cease broadcasting. Tension has risen to the point where the country appears on the verge of civil war.] [redacted] (Page 3)

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I. THE COMMUNIST BLOC

No Back-up Material

II. ASIA-AFRICA**Japan Contemplating Ambassadorial Talks With Communist China**

An announcement by Japanese Foreign Minister Fujiyama on 8 February that his ministry has been directed to select a representative and a site for ambassadorial talks with Communist China is an overture on the part of the Kishi government, under growing internal political pressure, to determine Peiping's willingness to resume trade relations.

Fujiyama said the ambassadorial talks, if they take place, would include the question of missing Japanese nationals in China, as well as possible postal, fishing, meteorological, and sea-rescue agreements. It is uncertain, however, whether Tokyo is thinking in terms of a government-to-government trade agreement.

Prime Minister Kishi, no longer in firm control of the government, has been forced to abandon his "wait-and-see" policy toward Peiping. Failure to respond to the growing domestic pressures for resumption of mainland trade could jeopardize his party's chances in the upper-house elections in June and endanger his own retention of office. Kishi has emphasized, however, that ambassadorial talks with Peiping may not solve the trade impasse and that diplomatic recognition of Communist China still is not contemplated.

Peiping has thus far avoided comment.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Prime Minister Ne Win Expected to Ask for Extension
Of Tenure

General Ne Win is expected to ask the Burmese Chamber of Deputies, which convened on 9 February, to extend his term as prime minister for at least six months. As a nonmember of Parliament, Ne Win is limited by the Constitution to a tenure of six months, and his term expires in April. He probably will argue that he needs more time to achieve his objective of restoring peace and security to permit the holding of elections free from violence and coercion.

Ne Win now appears to command a majority in Parliament, and his request probably will be granted. Former Deputy Premier Ba Swe has already assured the government of his party's support, as have smaller independent groups, and the vigorous reforms carried out during his tenure have added to Ne Win's national prestige.

The prime minister also will present Parliament with a solution for the long-standing problem of the Shan States. The hereditary Shan princes have agreed to surrender their feudal privileges and their constitutional right of secession.

Nevertheless, there is a strong probability that former Prime Minister U Nu, whose influence has declined under the present government, will oppose the extension as being unconstitutional. All political quarters, including those currently supporting Ne Win, look forward to ultimately resuming control of the government and will become increasingly dissatisfied as the army consolidates its rule while they are excluded from positions of national leadership.

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III. THE WEST

Honduras Appears on Verge of Civil War

{The situation in Honduras has become critical. Early on 9 February the Honduran Army sent troops to the departmental capital of Santa Barbara to suppress opposition elements which had apparently seized the city. Clashes between opposition groups and loyal civilians, as well as between the latter and isolated military outposts, have been reported in several parts of the country since early last week. Members of the administration Liberal party are threatening to take further independent action against the opposition unless President Villeda shows himself in command of the situation. Further deterioration of governmental control could result in widespread bloodshed and even civil war.}

{The weak opposition parties, with the help of a clandestine rebel radio in neighboring Nicaragua, have so exacerbated long-standing frictions between members of President Villeda's majority Liberal party and the armed forces that, in the resulting confusion, even armed forces chief Lopez admitted that he found it difficult to ascertain where his true loyalties lay. He is publicly committed to defend the government, however, and early on 9 February he expressed strong doubts to the American ambassador that the government can survive unless rebel leader Velasquez is immediately expelled from Nicaragua and his radio forced to cease broadcasting. Lopez' control over his subordinates is in some doubt, and Managua has reported that since 4 February a considerable number of Honduran Army deserters have been crossing into Nicaragua.}

{On 9 February the clandestine rebel radio announced that the long-promised revolution had begun; this was probably a bluff designed to stimulate the military to defect and the various uncoordinated opposition groups to take violent action against the government. Despite the impression created by the broadcasts that the rebel movement is a coordinated force of overwhelming strength, the rebels probably number only a few hundred and are not known to have left their sanctuary in Nicaragua.}

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