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5 March 1959



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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN



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5 MARCH 1959

I. THE COMMUNIST BLOC

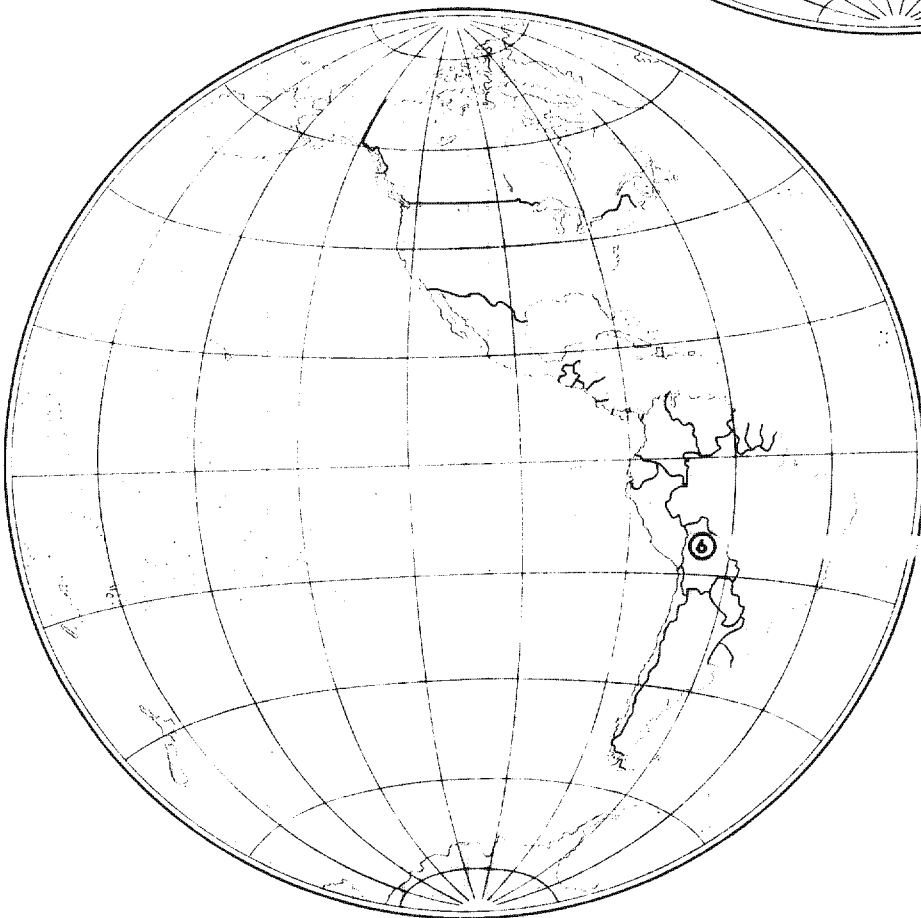
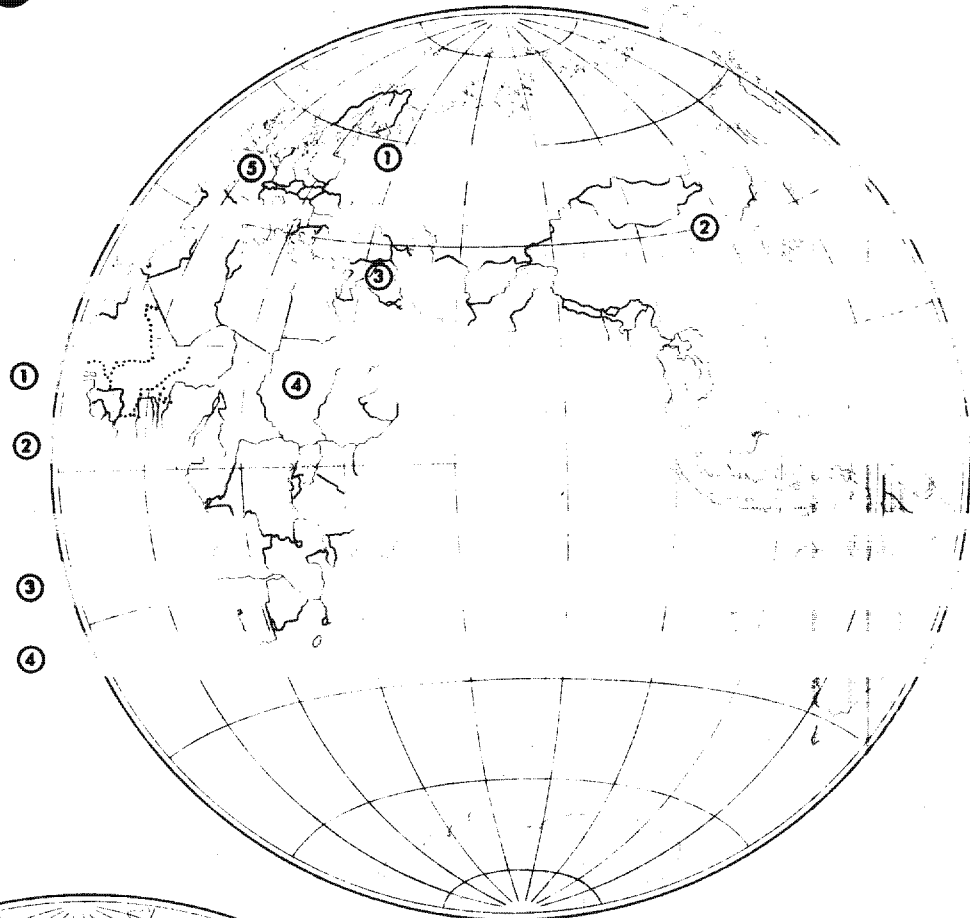
Macmillan and Lloyd take credit for inducing Moscow to agree to foreign ministers' conference.

Peiping protests against Indian anti-commune articles.

II. ASIA-AFRICA

Iraq - Pro-Communist may be appointed interior minister.

Sudanese military council resigns; Abboud to name new members.



III. THE WEST

- ⑤ De Gaulle's decision to withdraw French fleet from NATO attributed to disillusion with progress in tripartite coordination.
- ⑥ Bolivia - Government succeeds in bringing at least temporary halt to anti-American riots in La Paz; tension continues in provinces.

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DAILY BRIEF

SIRAB

I. THE COMMUNIST BLOC

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USSR-UK: Foreign Secretary Lloyd has told Ambassador Thompson that he and Macmillan have become convinced that Khrushchev is running the show and there is little point in talking to anyone else. Even Mikoyan was careful to take his cues from Khrushchev. The British take credit for inducing the Soviet leaders to "agree" to a foreign ministers' meeting under certain conditions. Lloyd implied that although the Soviet agenda proposals were unsatisfactory the West might consider accepting them. The British were impressed by the "extraordinary sensitivity" of the Soviet leaders which they found combined with "a lack of understanding of the sensibilities of others."

OK

Communist China - India: Peiping has formally protested to New Delhi concerning press articles critical of communes written by an Indian demographer after his visit to Communist China last December. The Chinese remain sensitive to widespread international criticism of the communes, but the protest does not appear to presage any worsening of the already cool relations between Peiping and New Delhi. Prime Minister Nehru, who was concerned over the articles' effect on Sino-Indian relations, recently told Chinese Communist Vice Foreign Minister Chang Han-fu that he does not take recent border incidents too seriously, but suggested that a joint commission should try to "finalize" the border after the spring thaw.]

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II. ASIA-AFRICA

Iraq: Colonel Mahdawi, the pro-Communist head of the military court conducting the Baghdad "treason" trials, is to be appointed minister of interior, [redacted]

[redacted] Mahdawi's appointment would be the strongest indication to date that Qasim is increasingly subject to Communist influence.

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The Communists plan a large-scale demonstration on 6 March in Mosul, the main center of pro-UAR sentiment. They almost certainly intend to provoke clashes which could justify a crackdown on pro-UAR elements in this area. [redacted]

[redacted] (Page 2)

*Sudan: On the morning of 4 March, the two commanders who perpetrated the 2 March coup attempt returned to the Khar-toum area with their troops, surrounded army headquarters and the ministry of defense, and occupied strategic positions in Omdurman and Khartoum North. The members of the Supreme Military Council, the highest governmental body, have resigned and given Premier Abboud a vote of confidence to form a new council. [redacted]

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Abboud has called a meeting of the army commanders apparently for 5 March rather than for 7 March as earlier scheduled.

[redacted] command posts were being established at Omdurman garrison and the Khartoum North military school. [redacted]

Watch Committee conclusion--Middle East: Situations susceptible of direct exploitation by Sino-Soviet hostile action which would jeopardize US interests exist in the Middle East, particularly in Iran and Iraq. The situations in the area remain precarious, but a deliberate initiation of large-scale hostilities is unlikely in the immediate future.

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Iran: Current tensions between Iran and the USSR can be expected to continue and, with the signing of the Iranian-US bilateral, to increase to a point short of direct military action.

Jordan: The scheduled absence from Jordan of King Hussein beginning on 8 March and Prime Minister Rifai beginning on 17 March

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provides opportunity for political competition among members of the government remaining in Amman and for coups by opposition elements.

Sudan: The resignation of the Supreme Council in the Sudan underscores the instability of the government and its exploitability by outside elements. [redacted]

III. THE WEST

France-NATO: [High French officials attribute De Gaulle's decision to withdraw the Mediterranean Fleet from NATO to his dissatisfaction with the response to France's proposals for Western tripartite global policy coordination. Paris holds that genuine coordination would involve US backing for France's North African policy and a voice for France in any US or British decision to use nuclear weapons. Although the French now indicate they would reconsider withdrawal of the fleet if their proposals for tripartite coordination are treated more favorably, De Gaulle will still probably insist on changes within NATO to give France a status he considers comparable to that of the United States and Britain.] [redacted] (Page 4)

NO

*Bolivia: The 4 March demonstrations in La Paz passed without further anti-American rioting, but tension continues high in some provincial cities. Some public reaction against violence seems to have set in, and President Siles' speech of 3 March promising a plan for supporting the nation by its own resources may be serving to restore his moderate leadership. [redacted]

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DAILY BRIEF

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I. THE COMMUNIST BLOC

Peiping Protests to New Delhi Over Press Articles Critical of Communes

[Communist China has formally protested to New Delhi against criticism of communes last January in the conservative Indian newspaper The Statesman. The articles, written by Dr. Chandrasekhar, director of the Indian Institute for Population Studies at Madras, following his recent trip to China, assert that China's economic progress is made only at great human cost. Chandrasekhar reported that in China "human beings are reduced to the level of inmates in a zoo." He has since continued to make anti-Chinese statements despite a warning by the Madras government that his remarks were becoming an embarrassment to New Delhi.]

[Although the Indian Government rejected Peiping's protest on grounds that Chandrasekhar's trip was not officially sponsored, Prime Minister Nehru privately expressed concern over possible effects on India's relations with Communist China.]

[Despite this protest, Communist China's intention is probably to follow the Soviet line of seeking improved relations with India. Vice Foreign Minister Chang Han-fu's stopover in New Delhi in late February provided the Chinese with an opportunity to sound out India's attitude toward the bloc and its view of recent incidents on the Sino-Indian border. Nehru told Chang that he does not take the incidents too seriously but suggested that a joint commission should try to define the border after the spring thaw. Nehru apparently was referring to ill-defined border pockets between India and Tibet, which have been the scene of troop incursions from both sides since 1955. He has previously indicated, however, that India is not prepared to "negotiate" the over-all issue of frontier demarcation and that, in the disputed area, the frontier shown on existing Chinese Communist maps has no validity.]

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II. ASIA-AFRICA

The Iraqi Situation

[Colonel Fadhil Mahdawi, pro-Communist president of the Iraqi military court which has been carrying out the "treason" trials against figures in the former royal regime, is to be appointed minister of interior, according to an Iraqi with high-level contacts. The court may be dissolved shortly and another influential post must be found for Mahdawi, who is Qasim's brother-in-law and one of his closest advisers. Mahdawi once boasted in court, "I am the son of a butcher and a butcher of men." Present Minister of Interior Brig. Ahmad Muhammad Yahya, although opposed to the leftward drift of the country, lacks the stamina to oppose the pro-Communist inroads into the government. He will probably be appointed to an ambassadorial post. Mahdawi's appointment would be a strong indication that Qasim is increasingly responsive to Communist guidance.]

A vacancy still remains in the Council of State, following the resignation of Muhammad Mahdi Kubba. Qasim has reportedly approached several individuals, including Kurdish leader Mulla Mustafa Barzani, to take Kubba's place. Barzani is said to have refused. Chief of State Lt. Gen. Rubai is secretly cooperating with the anti-Communists who resigned from the cabinet in early February, and is encouraging the formation of an anti-Communist "National Front."

The Communists are preparing to hold a large demonstration on 6 March in Mosul, a center of anti-Qasim sentiment, in the hope of provoking anti-Communist elements. A special train is being sent from Baghdad to carry demonstrators. The Communists probably hope that riots would force the regime to crack down on anti-Qasim elements. Other recent pro-Communist activity has been the step-up in training of Popular Resistance Forces in the use of arms.

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[redacted] the issuance of ammunition and training hand grenades to PRF units. [redacted]

[redacted] Reports of coups to assassinate Qasim persist and have become common talk in Baghdad and Basra. It is possible that these have been inspired by the Communists in order to provide an excuse for additional suppression of anti-Communist elements. However, the situation is ripe for an attempted coup. [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

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III. THE WEST

France Ties Withdrawal of Fleet From NATO to De Gaulle's Tripartite Policy Proposals [redacted]

[French Ambassador Alphand has informed the State Department that he believed Paris would "indefinitely" postpone notifying NATO of intent to withdraw the Mediterranean Fleet if its proposals for tripartite Western global policy coordination were received more favorably. He and other high French officials have described De Gaulle as "profoundly shocked" by the US abstention on the Algerian resolution in the UN last December, and have stressed this as the root of the French decision.]

[The French representative to NATO held out no hope that De Gaulle would change his decision on the fleet. He said the whole question went back to the lack of progress in the tripartite discussions in Washington on coordination of policy. He said the greatest difficulty lay in "who held the keys" to the use of nuclear weapons.] [redacted]

[redacted]

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