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3 March 1960



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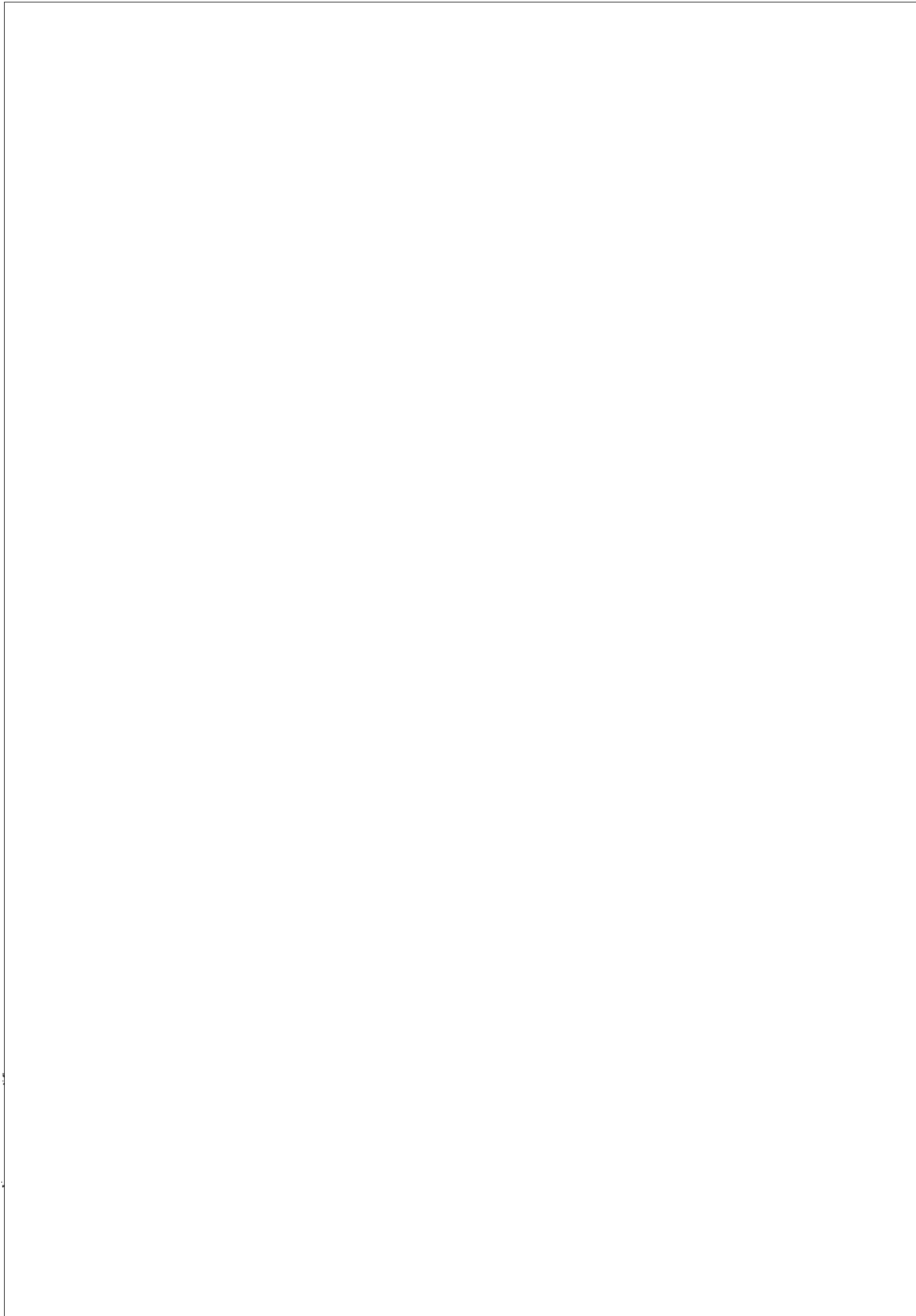
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN



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3 MARCH 1960

I. THE COMMUNIST BLOC

Moscow denounces US intention to resume high-altitude flights to Berlin.

①

Chinese Communists virtually ignore Khrushchev's Asian trip.

②

II. ASIA-AFRICA

Iraq--Qasim appears to be trying to undercut Communist control of Peace Partisans.

③

Jordan and Israel likely to request American assistance to overcome effects of drought.

④

Iranian ambassador in Moscow sees no hope for improved Iranian-Soviet relations.

⑤

Repercussions of Pakistani propaganda attacks on Afghanistan affect US.

⑥

Laos--Preparations for elections may be complicated by Thai and South Vietnamese interference.

⑦



III. THE WEST

⑧ Swedish foreign minister makes thinly veiled attack on US position on nuclear testing.



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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN

3 March 1960

DAILY BRIEF

SIRAB
I. THE COMMUNIST BLOC

Berlin Air Corridors: Moscow's immediate denunciation of reports that the United States will resume flights to Berlin above 10,000 feet suggests that the USSR hopes to exploit differences among the three Western powers by warning that unilateral action would have an adverse effect on the May summit meeting. A Soviet spokesman in East Berlin has declared that, in the absence of an agreement with both the USSR and East Germany, such flights would be regarded as a "unilateral violation of East German air sovereignty" and existing four-power agreements. The statement was probably intended to induce the Western powers to postpone such flights and agree to technical discussions on flight procedures with East German participation. (Page 1)

OK

Communist China - USSR: The Chinese Communist press and radio in contrast to other bloc media have virtually ignored Khrushchev's trip through India, Burma, and Indonesia. This sparse coverage supports other suggestions of a continuing coolness between Peiping and Moscow and may reflect irritation at Khrushchev's failure to support Peiping in its disputes with India and Indonesia. Communist China could feel that the trip, coming at a time when it had begun to make gestures toward easing strains with these Asian countries, gives Khrushchev a large measure of the credit Peiping had hoped to gain solely for itself.

NO

II. ASIA-AFRICA

Iraq: Baghdad radio on 1 March carried a statement by Aziz Sharif, secretary general of the Peace Partisan movement, announcing that a mass meeting of the Partisans in Baghdad during late March would again, like last year's, be under Qasim's

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patronage and would be addressed by the Iraqi premier. Qasim's strategy seems to be to treat the Peace Partisans as a nationwide nonpolitical movement in an attempt to undercut Communist control of the Partisans, who have functioned as the principal Communist front in Iraq. Last week Qasim rejected the application of the orthodox Communists for legal recognition as a political party. [redacted]
(Page 2)

NO
Watch Committee Conclusion - Middle East: [In the Middle East present evidence does not indicate that either the UAR or Israel is deliberately planning to initiate hostilities in the near future. The disposition and readiness of UAR forces and precautionary military measures by Israel continue the risk that any local incidents could reach more serious proportions.] [redacted]

OK
Jordan-Israel: The food-grain crop in Jordan is in danger of being totally destroyed by drought, and the government as well as the public is becoming panicky over an already short supply of drinking water. Similar but less critical conditions exist in Israel, where drought is likely to result in large crop and livestock losses. Jordan and Israel are likely to request emergency American assistance.

*Jordanian Premier Hazza al-Majali issued a defense order on 2 March requisitioning all water resources within Amman and authorizing the Municipal Council to take all measures necessary to secure Amman's water resources. The premier also said that the cabinet has decided to waive all taxes on livestock for this year. [redacted] (Page 3)

NO
Iran-USSR: Iranian Ambassador Ansari in Moscow, on 29 February, in response to a [redacted] message from Foreign Minister Aram, has reviewed the status of Iranian-Soviet relations and has concluded that there is no use in his having further discussions with the Soviet Government. He says the USSR maintains its position that normal friendly relations will not be established until Tehran gives written assurances that military

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bases, including rocket sites, will not be established in Iran, after which the Soviet Union would be ready to fulfill Iranian political and economic requests to the greatest extent possible. The ambassador, who probably was sent to Moscow originally because of his pro-Soviet sympathies, adds that he has made the situation entirely clear to Tehran and suggests that Aram may wish to replace him with someone more acceptable to Moscow. [redacted] (Page 4)

No

Afghanistan: Foreign Minister Naim, in a press interview a few days prior to Khrushchev's arrival, said that President Eisenhower's visit to Kabul had not resulted in any greater understanding on the part of the West. He also accused the United States of tying its military aid to membership in military pacts, a condition unacceptable to Afghanistan. The Foreign Minister expressed appreciation for American economic aid. However, he reiterated Kabul's determination on the Pushtoonistan issue and his intention to discuss economic aid with Khrushchev. Naim seemed to reflect the opinion that the US should be able to exercise some control over Pakistani propaganda. [redacted] (Page 5)

No

Laos - Thailand - South Vietnam: [Thai and South Vietnamese intent to interfere in preparations for the Laotian election this April may complicate the difficult task of developing a unified slate of candidates to compete with the Communists. Thai Premier Sarit is reported to be extending covert financial assistance to the reformist CDNI-military clique, while the Diem government tends to support the old guard conservative faction of former Premier Phoui. Alleged Thai and South Vietnamese interference in the power struggle in Laos last fall aggravated the bitterness between the old guard and the reformists.] [redacted] (Page 6)

III. THE WEST

No

Sweden: The US Embassy has described Foreign Minister Uden's speech of 29 February as a thinly veiled attack on the Western position in the Geneva talks on nuclear testing. Uden

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expressed the belief that the USSR is ready to accept an agreement "which from the point of view of control is still imperfect, but which is nonetheless relatively satisfactory." He concluded that such an agreement would "be better than none at all or an agreement which leaves the field wide open for underground tests of quite considerable effect." Uden's remarks, although focusing on the need for an international agreement, may stem in part from domestic political considerations. The governing Social Democratic party is deeply divided on the issue of acquiring a nuclear weapons capability, which Uden opposes, and an international agreement would enable the party to avoid a decision.

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I. THE COMMUNIST BLOC

USSR Denounces Reported US Plan to Conduct High-Altitude Flights Into Berlin

Moscow's prompt and strong reaction to press reports that the US will resume flights in the Berlin air corridors above 10,000 feet suggests that the Soviet leaders view this as an opportunity to test Western unity in the pre-summit period and, if possible, to inject the East Germans into any technical discussion on flight procedures. At the time of the last such flight, in April 1959, the British attitude was that the flights unnecessarily endangered the prospects for the Geneva foreign ministers' talks. Moscow's propaganda and official statements now imply that resumption could have an adverse effect on summit negotiations.

In discussions preceding the Western decision to resume such flights, the British argued against making an open commitment to early action because of the sensitivity of the British public to any seemingly provocative action before the summit. In the initial editorial response, the pro-Conservative Daily Mail on 1 March protested against the "provocative" character of flights at this time and wondered what difference waiting a few weeks would make.

The warning by a Soviet spokesman in East Berlin that flights above 10,000 feet in the absence of an agreement with both the USSR and East Germany would be regarded as a "unilateral violation of East German air sovereignty" and existing four-power agreements probably is aimed at inducing the Western powers to postpone such flights and agree to technical discussions on flight procedures with East German participation. Moscow will probably attempt to increase pressure for negotiations, as it did in 1959, by hinting that possible "incidents" might result. On the flights in the spring of 1959, American C-130s were harassed by Soviet aircraft.

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II. ASIA-AFRICA

The Iraqi Situation

Prime Minister Qasim has agreed to continue his role of patron of the Iraqi Peace Partisans, possibly in an effort to transform this important Communist-front group into a non-political nationwide movement. Following his ambiguous statement of 23 February when he declared, among other things, "Henceforth, there will be no society of Peace Partisans," Qasim was visited by Peace Partisan leader Aziz Sharif. On 1 March, Baghdad Radio broadcast a statement by Sharif to the effect that, again this year, a mass meeting of Partisans will be held in late March under Qasim's patronage and addressed by him.

This new endorsement of the Partisans may be a stratagem of Qasim to forestall criticism from the orthodox Communist group by throwing them a sop, while at the same time working to dilute the Partisans' leadership with his own supporters. While he has licensed certain political parties and associations, Qasim has refused to license the Peace Partisans, claiming that "all Iraqis" are for peace. Thus, the Peace Partisans will not have legal status as a party or as a society and accordingly exist at Qasim's sufferance. However, Qasim probably envisages the Peace Partisans as a great mass organization which can be manipulated much like Nasir's National Union in the UAR.

The Communist bloc press and radio, while refraining from any direct criticism of Qasim, have implied dissatisfaction with his handling of the licensing of Iraqi political parties. Moscow has given considerable publicity to newspaper attacks by the orthodox Communist group on the Sayigh splinter group which Qasim licensed as the "Communist Party of Iraq." A quasi-clandestine bloc station has gone even closer to implying criticism of Qasim with a broadcast of 27 February to Turkey charging "reactionary elements" in the Iraqi Ministry of Interior--headed by Qasim's close associate Brigadier Yahya--with responsibility for refusing to license the orthodox Communist group.

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Drought Threatens Jordanian and Israeli Crops

Jordan is threatened with the loss of its entire grain crop, unless rain falls within the next week. There has been no rain since 3 February and the cumulative rainfall this season is the lowest on record. After three years of drought, many springs are drying up, cisterns and reservoirs are far below normal, and a severe shortage of potable water is imminent.

The Jordanian Government and public are becoming panicky. Jordanian officials estimate that even if there is rain this week, this year's shortfall will be 153,000 tons of wheat, 50,000 tons of barley, 8,000 tons of sorghum, and 11,000 tons of vetch.

Crop conditions in Israel are similar, but less critical. The Israeli Ministry of Finance estimates now that at least 60,000 tons of feed grains and 30,000 tons of wheat will be needed to supplement domestic production. If the drought continues through March, these estimates will have to be revised upward.

Complicating the drought in the Levant area is the annual locust threat. Although it is too early in the season to estimate potential locust damage, large swarms have been observed in Saudi Arabia, Jordan, and Lebanon. The Desert Locust Information Center in London states that infestation may spread to Israel, Iraq, Kuwait, and possibly Syria and Turkey. The locust threat extends as far as Libya, particularly in the Fezzan where all crops were destroyed. Lesser damage has occurred in the coastal regions of Tripolitania and Cyrenaica.

Jordan is likely to request emergency aid soon, and requests from Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, and Libya may also be forthcoming. Israeli Minister of Agriculture Dayan, who will be in the US this week for an Israeli bond drive, intends to discuss possible drought relief with Secretary of Agriculture Benson.

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Iranian Ambassador Sees No Hope for Improved Iranian-Soviet Relations

Iranian Ambassador Masud-Ansari in Moscow, [redacted]

[redacted] reviewed his unsuccessful efforts to improve Iranian-Soviet relations and concluded that there was no use in discussing the subject further with Soviet officials. He said the Soviet Union maintains that "normal friendly" relations could be re-established only if Tehran would give a written assurance that no military bases or missile sites will be established in Iran. Masud Ansari concluded by saying that perhaps he should be replaced by someone more acceptable to the Soviet Union.

The USSR's propaganda assaults on the Shah and Iran's policies are continuing, despite Deputy Foreign Minister Pavlov's statement to Ansari on 9 February that Khrushchev had ordered Radio Moscow to stop its "offensive statements." Soviet officials suggested in late February through a neutral diplomat that if the Iranian Government would take the initiative in proposing an exchange of high-level visits, the "improved atmosphere" could enable Moscow to stop its radio propaganda. Khrushchev had accused Iran of interpreting earlier Soviet concessions as a sign of weakness.

The Shah, for his part, has expressed a willingness to give Moscow written assurances not to permit foreign long-range or intermediate-range missile bases. However, he does hope to get defensive ground-to-air missiles and would not agree to a blanket ban on all missiles. Tehran is apparently convinced that an immediate improvement in relations is unlikely. It has resumed its Russian-language broadcasts from Tehran for the first time in 18 months and has reactivated the National Defense Organization to organize anti-Soviet demonstrations throughout the country.

Masud-Ansari was sent to Moscow in late 1958, apparently in the hope that he would be able to improve Iranian-Soviet relations because of his well-known pro-Russian sympathies--he spent his childhood in Russia and his first wife was Russian. He has been described as a cautious, uncourageous man who is incapable of objective judgment when the USSR is concerned. [redacted]

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Afghan-US Relations Are Affected by Pakistani Propaganda Attacks

The Afghan Government is adopting a cooler attitude toward the United States as a result of the increasingly unfriendly propaganda now being aimed at Afghanistan by Pakistan. In response to Kabul's Pushtoonistan propaganda campaign, Karachi has stepped up its radiobroadcasts to the same level of virulence often found in the Afghan output.

These attacks produced a strong reaction in Kabul, as shown by Foreign Minister Naim's recent statements in a press interview. Naim said his January meeting with President Ayub merely convinced him that Pakistan intends to maintain a hard line toward Kabul. He noted that Pakistani propaganda and "subversive activities" have recently increased, and he complained that President Eisenhower's visit to Kabul last December has not resulted in any greater understanding by the West of Afghan problems.

Naim reiterated Kabul's long-standing complaint that US military aid to Pakistan has upset the regional balance of power. He pointed out that the United States has given no military assistance to Afghanistan, and he added that "political conditions" attached to US military aid would make it unacceptable in any event. The Afghan foreign minister probably hopes such criticism will persuade the United States to put strong pressure on Pakistan to adopt a less hostile policy.

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Thai and South Vietnamese Intrigue in Laos

[The apparent plans of Thailand and South Vietnam to give financial support to non-Communist candidates in the 24 April parliamentary elections in Laos may complicate the Laotian Government's difficult task of developing a unified slate. Such support might also contribute to a new flare-up of bitterness between the reformist Committee for Defense of National Interests (CDNI) and former Premier Phoui's Rally of the Lao People (RLP), which are now jockeying for preferred treatment in the selection of a government-approved slate. Allegations of Thai interference on the side of the CDNI and South Vietnamese support of the RLP aggravated the bitter dispute between the two groups which led to the fall of Phoui's government last December.]

[Thai Premier Marshal Sarit is reported to be giving covert financial support and tactical advice to the CDNI through his nephew General Phoumi, the Laotian defense minister and perhaps the most influential of the CDNI's leaders. Sarit hopes that Laos will eventually establish a military dictatorship, like the one in Thailand, and he probably feels that by helping CDNI-supported candidates he can retain and perhaps increase his influence over Phoumi and other military members of the CDNI.]

[Meanwhile, the RLP is reliably reported to have approached the South Vietnamese Embassy in Vientiane for financial support for 59 candidates. Many of these candidates will presumably be dropped from the government-approved slate, but Phoui may hope to run them as "independents" if funds for their campaign are forthcoming. This would run counter to the government's scheme for avoiding vote-splitting among anti-Communist candidates and would probably invite CDNI recriminations.]

[The South Vietnamese Embassy is reported reluctant to give all its support to one party, but may well be told to do so by Saigon. President Diem has tended in the past to place more confidence in the RLP than in the CDNI, whose leaders he considers inexperienced and somewhat brash.]

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