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NEAR EAST/AFRICA BRANCH  
OFFICE OF REPORTS AND ESTIMATES  
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

WORKING PAPER

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## NEAR EAST/AFRICA BRANCH

## INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY

For Week Ending  
9 February 1949

Vol. IV No.5

## GREECE

Markos' dismissal: The dismissal of General Markos by the Politbureau of the Greek Communist Party (KKE) should have the principal effect of assisting the internationalist, or pro-Cominform wing of the party under Zachariades in completing its domination over the guerrilla cause. Markos has been virtually the only important leader of the nationalist clique in KKE since the spring of 1947, when his most prominent fellow-nationalists, Siantos and Zevgos, died mysteriously; particularly in his role of military spokesman for the guerrillas, Markos may have resisted the growing pressure to steer clear of commitments to Tito which the Cominform has apparently exerted on KKE. Markos' relief from command will probably have little immediate effect on guerrilla tactics or capabilities in the field. Markos has reportedly never had much more than a symbolic role as a military leader and, in any event, there are indications that he has been in virtual retirement since last summer's Grammos campaign. Moreover, Yugoslavian support for the guerrillas, particularly by Tito's South Macedonian irregulars, has already lessened. The fact that Markos was dropped on grounds of illness, rather than for failure or deviationism, suggests that Zachariades hopes to effect a reduction in anti-Cominform influence among the guerrillas quietly, without antagonizing Tito into ceasing all cooperation with the Greek rebels. The possibility remains, however, that the Markos dismissal, while immediately effecting a closing of ranks within KKE, may in the end react against it by giving Tito cause for cutting off support of the guerrillas and sealing the Yugoslav border against them.

## TURKEY

The mantle of Atatürk: 'The clock stopped when Atatürk died' is a remark which has frequently been heard in Turkey during the past decade. The general conviction it represents--that President İnönü lacks the ability to carry on the dynamic program of regeneration

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and reform begun by his predecessor--is less than just to İnönü, who has exercised skillful direction over foreign affairs, has promoted a more democratic government, and, after all, is president rather than premier. Nevertheless, economic development has lagged during his tenure of office, and cabinet after cabinet has failed to redeem its stout promises to do something about the cost of living, the costliness and inefficiency of government, the high price of government-manufactured goods, the diminution of Turkey's export trade, the hunger and poverty in the eastern provinces, and an assortment of other economic ills. Recently, public discontent has been growing over continued governmental failure to deal with economic difficulties; the people appear to be getting rather tired of hearing it all blamed upon the war (hot or cold). Many Turks--in the coffeeshops, in editorials, in the Assembly--are voicing their skepticism of endlessly repeated government promises which are never fulfilled; during a recent National Assembly debate, one government party deputy went so far as to step up to the rostrum, deliver a violent tirade against government inaction, announce his resignation from both the party and the Assembly, and then stride out of the Chamber with the cheers of the opposition ringing in his ears. Now even those who believe that the clock did not entirely stop when the great Atatürk died are becoming convinced that, however responsible his successor in the presidency may be, the old timepiece certainly seems to have slowed down.

#### PALESTINE

Israeli aspirations in Jerusalem: While the Jews have always wanted the Jewish sections of Jerusalem as part of their state, Israeli tactics in working toward this goal have undergone a change.

In the early period of the new state when Jerusalem was isolated by Arab forces from the rest of Israel, the majority of Jerusalem's Jews reportedly favored the UN proposal to internationalize Jerusalem. Only the independent Irgun and Stern Gang fighters insisted that the city must become the capital, and hence an integral part, of Israel. As Israel's strength increased, however, following the first UN truce, the incorporation of Jerusalem within Israel became increasingly popular among Jews generally. During this period a Jewish Military Governorship was established and improvements were made in the communications between Jerusalem and Tel Aviv, including the building

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of the 'Burma Road' to bypass Arab-held Latrun. Subsequently the Jews were reported to have begun the construction of new settlements in the connecting corridor, and Jewish DP's from Europe have been housed in areas (like Ramle and Lydda) previously inhabited by Arabs. With the improved military situation many Israelis looked forward to a Jewish attack on the Old City, which would have brought all Jerusalem under Israeli control. This offensive was prevented primarily by the costliness in time and effort that clearing the Old City would impose on the embryonic Jewish State, and the fact that the UN has consistently favored internationalizing the entire Jerusalem area.

Now the Israelis are strengthening their claims in Jerusalem by the simple expedient of building up their vested interests in the area. Recently the PGI announced that the Israeli civil administration would replace the Military Governorship of Jerusalem. Moreover, government offices are gradually being transferred from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, and the forthcoming Constituent Assembly will be held there. These tactics seem designed to prepare the ground for the eventual annexation of Jewish-held Jerusalem and thus to present the UN with a fait accompli.

Arab-Jewish deadlock continues: The Egyptian and Israeli representatives at Rhodes, unable to agree on any general armistice principles, appear to be concentrating on technical details, presumably in the hope that agreement on details will add up to a comprehensive armistice. It is unlikely that this inverted procedure will lead to a satisfactory solution. Moreover, the other Arab states have reached no decision on how to deal with Israel in the present uncertain situation. Transjordan appears eager to negotiate but is waiting to see how the Egyptians make out at Rhodes. Lebanon is reluctant to institute negotiations so long as Israeli forces remain in southern Lebanon. Syria seems unwilling to negotiate under any conditions. Iraq has asked Transjordan to represent it in whatever negotiations take place, but it probably will not feel bound by commitments made on its behalf. Saudi Arabia and Yemen are silent on the question, and Israel declares that it has no differences with either of them. Meanwhile, Israel's extension of its civil administration to Jewish Jerusalem and its announced intention of holding the Constituent Assembly there are regarded as preliminary to incorporation of certain sections of the city into the Jewish state, notwithstanding the UN's resolution that Jerusalem be internationalized. Thus the old picture of Israeli determination and Arab vacillation has not changed.

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## ISRAEL

The Israeli political situation: The Israeli Constituent Assembly, delegates to which were chosen numerically in the 25 January election with each delegate representing 3,500 votes, will open 14 February in Jerusalem. MAPAI, the winning party in the election, will control 49 of the 120 seats in the Assembly. MAPAM, the second party, has 19 seats, the United Religious Bloc 16, and Menachem Beigin's extremely nationalist Freedom Party 14. If it so desires, MAPAI can bypass these three major parties and still obtain the additional 11 votes necessary for a majority in the Assembly from the center parties, which have 12 seats, and the Sephardic Jews, who have 5.

The first task of the Assembly will be to elect a president; Dr. Weizmann, now President of the PGI Council of State, will almost certainly be chosen. The President will then call upon MAPAI's Ben-Gurion, as leader of the most powerful political party, to form a government. As the chief task of the government and the Assembly will be to draw up a constitution for Israel, MAPAI will probably attempt to form as broad a coalition as possible. Except for the Communists, it may invite all the parties, possibly including even Beigin's Freedom Party, to join for the framing of the constitution. The center parties will almost certainly be asked into the coalition because of the enormous political and financial power they command among Zionists abroad, and they will undoubtedly accept. MAPAM, the leftist labor party which is closest to MAPAI in views and second to it in strength, will probably also be included in the coalition. Although relatively weak in the country as a whole, its influence in the coalition and the Constituent Assembly may be much greater because of its strong position in Histadruth, the powerful labor organization to which more than 40% of the population belongs. In the last Histadruth elections in 1946 MAPAM obtained 43% of the vote to MAPAI's 53%. Should this ratio be maintained in the 13 February Histadruth elections, MAPAM will be in a strong bargaining position vis-a-vis MAPAI and can be expected to demand greater influence in the coalition government and the Constituent Assembly than its 15% vote in the general election would warrant. By including the third strongest party, the United Religious Bloc, in the government, MAPAI could obtain a strong majority without MAPAM and still have a relatively free hand in economic and foreign affairs in exchange for certain religious concessions within Israel.

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## IRAN

Aftermath of the shooting: The attempt to assassinate the Shah has provided his supporters with an opportunity to clamp down on troublesome elements, both leftist and rightist, which have been ill-disposed toward the court and the government. The army, with the approval of the Cabinet and under martial law, has not only outlawed the pro-Soviet Tudeh Party, to which officials claim the assassin belonged, but has also arrested the politically ambitious religious leader, Mullah Kashani, and some of his henchmen. (While Kashani had often used rabble-rousing tactics against the government, he has not been implicated in the attack, and even the Tudeh Party had still to be clearly linked, as an organization, with the shooting, although it staged two large student demonstrations just beforehand.) Altogether some 500 persons have been reportedly arrested and 60 newspapers suppressed, and it may be expected that the army will further tighten up security controls through Iran. The attempted assassination will also affect the Shah's relations with the Majlis. He has probably gained in popularity and it is almost certain he will now renew his attempts to effect constitutional reforms granting him greater powers.

## NOTED IN BRIEF

The Turkish Government approves the sentiments expressed in Patriarch Athenagoras' recent appeal for Christian-Moslem unity against Communism but is doubtful about their propriety. Turkish officialdom feels that the new patriarch should check the tendency he has displayed to make pronouncements on political affairs and should confine his public efforts to curtail Soviet influence to his proper sphere, the Greek Orthodox Church.

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The governments of Syria and Iraq are incensed by the recently enacted Israeli property law, which vests in an official administrator the property of 'absentees.' They view this act as tantamount to confiscation of the property of the Arabs who fled from Israel and threaten to retaliate by confiscating property of Jews who are Syrian and Iraqi nationals. This retaliatory plan, allegedly designed to help the Arab refugees, would affect a comparatively few wealthy Jews of Baghdad and Damascus but would do little toward maintaining the hundreds of thousands of Arabs who fled Jewish rule following the outbreak of hostilities.

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The British Foreign Office is planning to set up a new section to handle Libyan affairs. The British Military Administration has been under fire for some time from the Tripolitarians for its 'care and maintenance' policy, which is keeping the country at an economic standstill. This British move may presage an effort by the UK to discard this highly unpopular policy for one of economic assistance. If such were the case, the US-UK proposals for postponement of the disposition of Tripolitania for another year might not be as unpalatable to the Tripolitarians as heretofore.

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Mrs. Golda Myerson, for many years a leader in the Zionist movement and a member of the MAPAI Party, is reported to be disillusioned with her position as Minister to the USSR and prepared to take over a cabinet post in the new Israeli Government.

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The Iranian Majlis accorded Prime Minister Saed an 89-0 vote of confidence, with 4 deputies abstaining the day after the attempt on the Shah's life. The vote, which followed an interpellation on the government's oil policy, indicates that Saed has not only retained Majlis confidence, but also that the Majlis has met the assassination attempt with equanimity.

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The British-owned Imperial Bank of Iran faces a precarious future, as a result of a recent cabinet decree prohibiting the Bank from dealing in foreign exchange after 19 February. The Bank had expected less favorable operating conditions following the expiration of its concession on 30 January but was unprepared for a measure virtually tantamount to forcing it out of business, and the British Embassy is seriously concerned over the reduction in British influence and prestige in Iran which would follow the closing of the Bank. While the cabinet's action, which was precipitate, may be moderated later, it reflects the strength of the nationalist feeling in Iran.

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Evacuation of tribesmen from Kashmir to their tribal areas continues without incident and no violation of the truce agreement has been reported from either Pakistan or India. Over half of the tribesmen already have been removed, and if sufficient transportation had been available the evacuation would have been more rapid. General Delvoie, UNCIP Military Attache and ten US observers have left New Delhi for the Pakistan Army Headquarters at Rawalpindi, preparatory to forming teams and moving them to the field on the Pakistan side. The remaining six US observers, to serve on the Indian side, will be joined later by Canadian, Norwegian, and Belgian observers. The preliminary truce arrangements agreed on by the two Commanders-in-Chief on 15 January have still to be approved by the two governments, with the major point of difference being India's refusal to permit local forces to be trained by Pakistan for police duty in Kashmir areas already evacuated by the Pakistan Army.

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The Indian Constituent Assembly convened 1 February. The main business of the session is to consider and approve railway and general budgets.

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