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INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS GROUP
OFFICE OF REPORTS AND ESTIMATES
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

WORKING PAPER

8 MAY 1949

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INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS GROUP

WEEKLY SUMMARY NO. 18

For week ending 3 May 1949

Volume II

The International Week

The Jessup-Malik negotiations over lifting the Berlin blockade still occupy the center of the East-West stage. Meanwhile, ten Western European Foreign Ministers are meeting in London this week to approve final plans for the Council of Europe. At Lake Success the UN General Assembly approved, 46-6 (Soviet bloc), creation of a special committee to study plans for a UN armed guard. The Assembly also passed a resolution approving resort to the peace treaty procedure in the Mindszenty case, meanwhile retaining the matter on the agenda. Additional machinery for international conciliation was also approved by the GA.

PROBABLE DEVELOPMENTS IN A NEW CFM MEETING

A Should the Berlin blockade be lifted, it would reflect the USSR's desire to: (1) regain its lost initiative in the East-West struggle; (2) slow down the growing consolidation of the West through some relaxation of East-West tension; and (3) seek a new agreement on Germany as a whole which would forestall the orientation of Western Germany toward the West and expand Soviet opportunities for political exploitation in this area. The Kremlin's decision would reflect a recognition of the numerous unfavorable developments which have occurred since the abrupt end of the London Council of Foreign Ministers meeting: (1) the Marshall Plan, which includes West Germany, is no longer a plan but an effectively functioning program; (2) Western Union is a fact and ratification of the Atlantic Pact a virtual certainty; (3) the Soviet-predicted US depression has not materialized; (4) the postwar Communist tide has receded in France and Italy; (5) the three Western Powers have reached agreement on uniting Western Germany and establishment of a West German state is near; and (6) the airlift has sustained Berlin through the winter while the Western counter-blockade is weakening the Soviet zone economy. Under these circumstances the Kremlin may appreciate that its own repudiation of four-power control in Germany led the Western Powers to accept partition and to proceed with the creation of a Western-oriented republic. Moreover, the USSR's "hard" policy toward Germany has shown meager results. At the same time, Soviet cold war tactics, particularly the Berlin blockade, have led to a far greater counter-reaction than anticipated from the West.

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The Kremlin may therefore judge the moment opportune for an attempt both to reduce the sharp pressure of Western counteraction to Soviet expansionism and, if possible, to delay the further integration of Western Germany with the West. Any lifting of the blockade will tie in with the current Soviet "peace" offensive, which will probably be brought to a crescendo timed to coincide with the date of the CFM.

At any CFM meeting the USSR, appealing to an increasingly articulate German nationalism, will press for an immediate peace treaty, formation of a centralized "democratic" German government and probably withdrawal of occupation troops, proposals already foreshadowed in the Warsaw communique. Some of the Soviet themes heard in London will undoubtedly be repeated, such as freedom for "democratic" trade unions and political parties to operate in all zones and a Soviet voice in the Ruhr. Whether the USSR approaches a new CFM meeting with a genuine purpose to reach some agreement or merely with a plan to feign such a purpose, it may also present some new proposals designed either to entice or to embarrass the Western Powers. As in the past, the USSR might resurrect some Western proposal long since outdated, which it had previously rejected. Thus the Kremlin might associate a proposal for the withdrawal of troops from Germany and an immediate peace treaty with a willingness to enter into a watered-down four-power guaranty against a renewal of German aggression as proposed by Secretary of State Byrnes in 1946.

Just as the USSR will approach a new CFM meeting without abandoning its basic long term aim of dominating Germany, it must expect the Western Powers to remain firm in their insistence on: (1) a federalized state along the lines of the projected West German republic, assuring free elections and enjoyment of civil rights; (2) maintenance of existing West German currency reforms; and (3) freedom of the International Ruhr Authority from any Soviet veto. Therefore the USSR may be willing to settle temporarily for some ostensibly "neutral" solution which will at least delay the final consolidation of a Western-oriented republic and, by giving the USSR some voice in all Germany, enable it to pursue its long term aims. It might hope by reasonable concessions to draw the West into some such "compromise." While it is unlikely that the USSR would agree to inclusion of the Soviet zone in the projected West German state, if only because of the Western victory this would symbolize, the Kremlin may be willing to make some reasonable terms which would accomplish roughly the same objective. In accepting such a course the West would run a double risk as to what political course the Germans would follow and as to whether the USSR would really carry out any undertaking not to interfere in German political activity. Moreover, regardless of any temporary detente on Germany, the fundamental differences between the USSR and the Western Powers are so deep-seated as to offer little hope

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that the CFM can bridge them permanently. If Germany is to be unified, the ultimate choice lies between a Communist and a non-Communist Germany, alternatives so mutually exclusive as to rule out any enduring compromise.

A second alternative is failure to agree in the CFM and a consequent formalization of the East-West partition of Germany. In this case, the USSR would eventually set up an all-German "peoples" government in its zone and let the West run the risk of giving offense to German nationalism. Moreover, the West would ultimately be faced with a completely communized Eastern Germany.

Despite CFM failure to reach any agreement, the USSR is unlikely to reimpose the Berlin blockade. To be sure, there are cogent reasons for its reimposition. It would renew the strain of the airlift and the long term attrition on the inhabitants of western Berlin while reducing to a minimum the political value of the West's present foothold in the midst of the Soviet zone. The USSR could cite the permanent split in Germany as invalidating the whole basis of a quadripartite control in Berlin. Nevertheless, by reimposing the blockade the USSR would: (1) aggravate East-West tension anew; (2) further stimulate Western rearmament; (3) again cut off the Eastern zone from Western imports; and (4) sacrifice the propaganda advantage of having generously lifted the blockade in search of peace. If it did not reimpose the blockade, the USSR could at least leave the CFM with the boast that it had made every effort to reach an understanding with the West. Thus, if it is assumed that the USSR seeks some relaxation of East-West tension, it would at least have achieved this objective of a temporary defrosting of the cold war.

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Soviet revival of the Trieste issue. The reported Soviet intention to request the Security Council to consider, for the third time this year, the question of a governor for the Free Territory of Trieste indicates that the Kremlin may be setting the stage for a showdown on this area. After a prolonged deadlock, the USSR in February suddenly announced that a British nominee was acceptable. The US, UK and France, however, were no longer interested in a governor and have since adhered to their April 1948 proposal to return the Territory to Italy. The Soviet shift was doubtless induced by a desire to hasten withdrawal of US-UK occupation forces. The possibility of using the Trieste question as a further bargaining point at any approaching CFM meeting may have been an additional Soviet reason for raising the problem at this particular time. While renewed SC consideration will probably achieve no immediate result, it will pave the way for either Soviet acceptance of the tripartite plan or a Soviet proposal to divide the territory on a zonal basis between Italy and Yugoslavia.

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Rumored Latin American-Arab deal on colonies. An Arab-Latin American "deal" trading Arab support for a resolution on the Italian colonies for LA opposition to the admission of Israel this session is reportedly in the making. The proposed colonies resolution apparently recommends that: (1) the US, UK, France, Egypt and Italy study the disposition of Libya as a whole and report to the regular GA in September; (2) these five states, plus Ethiopia, make a similar report on Eritrea; (3) the five states consult with the Trusteeship Council and/or the Interim Committee in connection with the proposed study; and (4) the GA reserve action on Italian Somaliland but request Italy to submit trusteeship plans for the colony. Such a comparatively innocuous resolution might be acceptable to a GA majority as it does not predetermine the disposition of any colony and permits postponement of the entire issue to the September GA. There is, however, no indication that the Latin American and Arab blocs have yet reached agreement. Moreover, the UK reportedly opposes any Italian participation in a commission studying Cyrenaica, one of the key features of the Latin American plan.

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Zinchenko appointment stirs UN. Secretary General Lie's precipitate appointment of Konstantin Zinchenko as Assistant Secretary General in charge of Security Council affairs following the resignation of Arkady Sobolev probably stems from Lie's desire to retain a senior Soviet official on the UN Secretariat at almost any cost in order to counteract Soviet accusations of discrimination against the USSR. Zinchenko was practically imposed upon Lie. Although the Syg reportedly suggested Dr. A. A. Arutiunian (of the Soviet UN delegation) and Nikolai Roschin (Ambassador to China) as replacements, he was brusquely told they were unavailable. Soviet representative Gromyko hinted that UN delegate Jacob Malik might be a candidate, but Lie vetoed this suggestion (he apparently has disliked Malik since the latter suggested changes in Lie's annual report to the General Assembly, a draft of which was sent to Sobolev in Moscow via the Soviet delegation pouch).

Lie's arbitrary action has created considerable bad feeling among various UN delegations and senior UN Staff officials. The Chinese, Canadian and French delegates are considering strong protests against the appointment since it was made without prior consultation. Secretariat officials are irate over Lie's filling the position so promptly, thus virtually conceding to the USSR that the Asyg for SC affairs must be a Soviet national. Lie has also been criticized for not refusing to act until a written resignation was received from Sobolev himself, although it is admitted he could have done little to protect Sobolev had the latter resigned under duress. In defense of his actions, Lie states that Gromyko insisted Sobolev's resignation and the new appointment "move together."

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Reports that Sobolev is already working in the Soviet Foreign Office again indicate the failure of the Kremlin to differentiate between USSR and UN employment, as first evidenced in the Gubitchev incident. Should Sobolev return to New York with the Soviet UN delegation, as Gromyko indicated, he would probably continue to direct the undercover activities of Communists and fellow travelers on the Secretariat.

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AFL-CIO agreement speeds progress towards new labor international. Informal agreement of the AFL and CIO jointly to support plans for the formation of a new, anti-Communist world labor federation will probably hasten early achievement of that long-awaited goal. The AFL-CIO action will reinforce the determination of non-Communist national labor groups still in the World Federation of Trade Unions to withdraw from that organization prior to the Milan WFTU meeting on 27 June. The AFL-CIO agreement, which must be approved by the executive boards of both US labor organizations, is also likely to dispel the fears of the smaller Western European national labor groups about the wisdom of joining an international in which only one of the US organizations might be represented. While these smaller countries will probably accept the British Trades Union Congress proposal for a June conference in Geneva, they can, however, be expected to press for: (1) small nation sponsorship of any general conference called to draft a charter for the new federation; (2) guarantees against its "domination" by the big powers; and (3) location of the new international seat in a small nation.

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Resistance to Japanese ITU membership. Opposition to exclusive US control of Japan's external relations is evident from the attitude of other nations toward Japanese participation in the forthcoming Paris conference of the International Telecommunications Union. The US maintains that through formal adherence to the Atlantic City Telecommunications Convention, Japan has become a member of the ITU with full rights to participate in its conferences. France, however, has not issued Japan an invitation, objecting that the Far Eastern Commission, not SCAP, has the power to authorize Japan's adherence and that prior to FEC decision on this point, Japan could not have legally adhered to the Convention nor become an ITU member. Chinese, Dutch and Indian support of the French legal interpretation indicates unwillingness of some FEC members to yield ground to SCAP in the control of Japan's foreign relations rather than any opposition to Japanese membership in the ITU. France, however, may also fear opening the way to ITU membership for Germany.

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Setbacks to US views on FOI. US ideas of freedom of information will probably suffer a setback this week should the GA Social Committee approve a draft Freedom of Information Convention containing two features which the US has stated it will not accept. First, a Mexican proposal would add to the Convention a code of ethics which the US considers unenforceable. This code reflects ideas the USSR and its Satellites had vainly tried to work into the Convention many times. Under it, correspondents must "report facts without discrimination, promote respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, further international understanding and contribute to the maintenance of international peace and security." By adding this language to Article IX instead of inserting it in the Preamble, a moral obligation was converted into a legal one. As a result, a government, with UN sanction, could expel a foreign correspondent whenever it felt that any of his dispatches impeded "international understanding." The US will strive to have the GA overrule this decision, failing which it will refuse to ratify the Convention.

Secondly, under the provisions of the existing International Telecommunications Convention, a government may stop outgoing messages which it considers dangerous to national security or a violation of its own law. Thus failure specifically to except the FOI Convention from the legal operation of the ITU Convention would countenance "back-door" censorship which the US contends should be outlawed. The powerful alignment of Asiatic, Latin American and Soviet blocs which supports this "back-door" censorship makes the outlook for General Assembly reversal of the Committee action very dim. These reactions bring home the inescapable conclusion that the liberal Anglo-American concept of freedom of information is a minority view in this world -- still an inspired exception rather than the rule. Only powerful US pressure could induce some countries to accord even lip service to these liberal aspirations.

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