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SUMMARY

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3. De Lattre fears teamwork of Chinese and Vietnamese Communists:

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General de Lattre has stated his conviction that the entry into northwest Tonkin of a Chinese Communist battalion was the result of a request from, or perhaps a bargain with, Ho Chi Minh to support Viet Minh pressure on the French post at Laichau and thus divert French troops from the delta or, failing that objective, to assist the Viet Minh in establishing themselves in the Laichau region. In de Lattre's opinion, his quick airlift to Laichau forced both the Viet Minh and Chinese forces back and he expressed the belief that the latter have now retired across the border. De Lattre sees no indication of an early invasion in force from China, but he is concerned over the fact that Ho was able to obtain the support of Chinese Communist troops.

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4. De Lattre outlines Tonkin delta operations:

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General de Lattre states that 10,000 Franco-Vietnamese troops have just successfully completed extensive clearing operations in the guerrilla-infested lowlands southwest of Haiphong within the French defense perimeter. This "viper's nest" was the base for launching attacks within the perimeter coinciding with attacks from outside.

Comment: De Lattre's use of a full mobile division in this operation, following shortly upon an easing of enemy pressure to the north, illustrates his determination to move to the offensive whenever and wherever possible. It is unlikely that Ho Chi Minh's forces, which have established numerous "fortified villages" within the French perimeter, have been completely cleared out.

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NEAR EAST

5. Government plans to curb Soviet activity in Pakistan:

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On 22 March, Mohammad Ikramullah, Secretary of the Pakistani Ministry of Foreign Affairs, informed the US Ambassador in Karachi that his government was investigating all aspects of

Soviet activity in Pakistan, especially propaganda. Upon completion of the investigation, Ikramullah expects to have the permission of the cabinet to tell the Soviet Ambassador that Pakistan will permit only such Soviet activity in Pakistan as is allowed Pakistanis in the USSR. The government then plans to close bookstalls and propaganda distributing agencies employed by the Soviets and to cancel all their mailing lists.

Comment: The Government of Pakistan, which has been slow to recognize the dangers of Communism in an Islamic country, now appears to be fully aware of them. It may be that Communist implication in the recent military plot to overthrow the government has sharpened the government's interest in the subject. It is believed, however, that any anti-Soviet moves made by the Pakistanis in the near future will be more cautious and less sweeping than Ikramullah suggests.

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