

TOP SECRET

16 March 1954

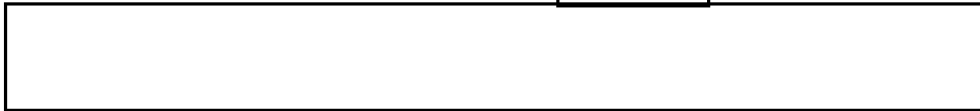


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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY



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3. Bohlen sees Sino-Soviet differences over Geneva arrangements:

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Ambassador Bohlen believes that the USSR's delay in agreeing to prepare for the Geneva conference may be attributed to difficulties with Communist China. He believes that the

Chinese response to the Berlin agreement on Geneva was not overly enthusiastic. He suggests that the Kremlin may have had to justify to Peiping Molotov's failure to obtain acceptance of great-power status for China. It is possible, Bohlen reasons, that the Chinese, having swallowed the original Berlin decision, now object to having their inferior status emphasized by the proposal that the four powers as a group should be responsible for preliminary Geneva arrangements.

Comment: The Soviet Union was also notably slow in making arrangements for the Berlin conference.

Peiping propaganda clearly shows gratification over Communist China's scheduled appearance at Geneva, which it consistently presents as a major step toward gaining general international acceptance. It is unlikely that the Chinese anticipated any role in making official preparations for the conference.

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6. French commander describes assault on Dien Bien Phu:

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General Navarre told the governor of Tonkin that the Viet Minh attack on Dien Bien Phu which began on 14 March was of "unprecedented fury." He said that one Viet Minh division lost 40 percent of its effectives.

Navarre said he "hoped" the French forces at Dien Bien Phu would be able to hold. He added that if they were able to resist such onslaughts as the first, "the Viet Minh battle force will have been broken."

Comment: The American army attaché on 14 March reported that the Viet Minh's initial series of attacks had succeeded in overrunning one of the more lightly defended French positions, wiping out the defending force of one Foreign Legion battalion. Two other strong points had repulsed the attacks and had inflicted heavy enemy casualties.

Since then, the French have flown in one paratroop battalion, which roughly replaces their losses. Though heavily outnumbered, the French retain the advantage of greater firepower.

7. Burma refuses to change present cease-fire plan:

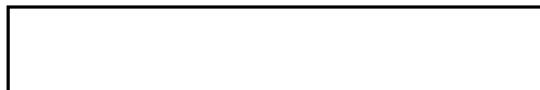
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Acting Foreign Minister Kyaw Nyein told Ambassador Sebald in Rangoon on 14 March that his government "found it impossible" to accede to the American request for a revision of the present cease-fire plan for the evacuation of Chinese Nationalist forces. Sebald believes Rangoon's decision on the matter is final.

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Comment: As of 15 March the cease-fire area was to be restricted to a small assembly area near the Thai border. To date, 4,700 Chinese have been withdrawn, and plans had been under discussion to bring out an additional 2,500 troops. Burma's attitude appears virtually to end all hopes that this latter group will come out.

Rangoon's decision appears to reflect its confidence that the Burmese armed forces can bring under control the estimated 7,000 Chinese troops remaining in Burma. Burmese forces could achieve this objective, however, only at the cost of lessened military pressure on domestic Communists and other insurgent forces.

SOUTH ASIA

8. Pakistan to take Kashmir dispute to Security Council soon:

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Foreign Minister Zafrullah Khan has told American diplomats in Karachi that Pakistan will soon make a new approach on the Kashmir question to the UN Security Council. He said that he has received an official letter from Prime Minister Nehru saying there is no reason for another meeting with the Pakistani prime minister.

Zafrullah added that Nehru's attitude leaves Pakistan with no recourse except the United Nations, and that there was no object now in Pakistan's delaying its action until after 30 April, the deadline for agreement on a Kashmir plebiscite administrator.

Comment: Pakistan has regarded recourse to the Security Council as inevitable since the UN Kashmir Committee talks broke down last December. Zafrullah may still hope that a threat to take the dispute to the UN will influence Nehru to agree to further talks, but the Indian position is not likely to change.

Nehru has said that American military aid to Pakistan changes the complexion of the Kashmir problem. India probably will attempt to inject this subject into a Security Council discussion on Kashmir.

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EASTERN EUROPE

9. Czechs may be producing improved MIG fighter:

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At least a portion of Czechoslovakia's MIG-15 production facilities was switched to an improved model in mid-1953, [redacted]

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[redacted] The Vodochody plant near Prague has been assembling this type since August 1953.

Comment: Czech production of an improved MIG model would substantially increase Satellite fighter capabilities.

Such a model would logically correspond to the MIG-15-bis, which went into production in the USSR in 1950 and has an engine which develops a thrust 1,000 pounds greater than that in the MIG-15.

The time of the reported model change follows closely the known shift of MIG final assembly from the Letnany to the new Vodochody plant. Czech MIG production, estimated at about 25 per month in the summer of 1953, had apparently doubled by January 1954.

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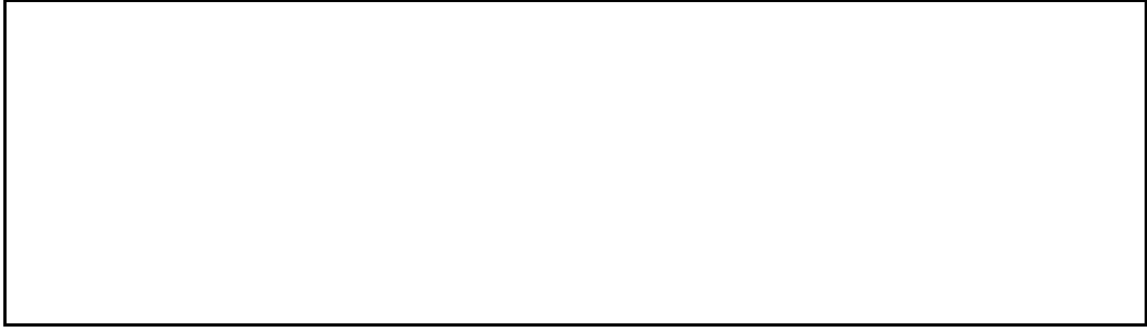
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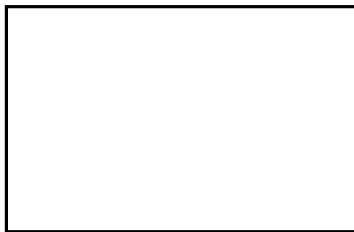
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11. Communist sympathizer reported in line for top Italian military post:

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The American army attaché in Rome reports a growing belief in Italian military circles that General Alessandro Trabucchi may soon replace General Marras as chief of staff for defense. Marras is past retirement age.

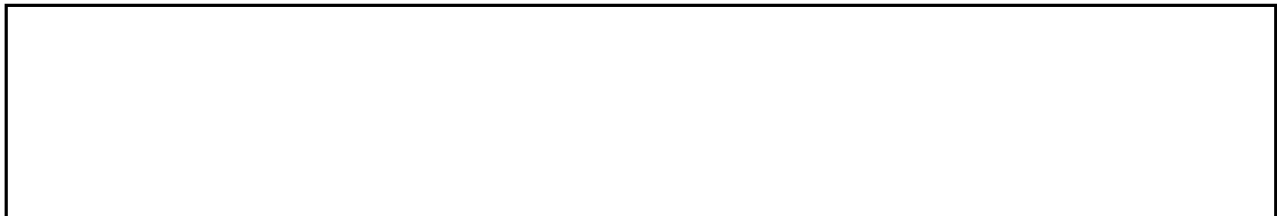
According to the attaché, Trabucchi has made statements indicating hostility to the United States and Britain,  and has appeared ignorant of modern concepts of military science. General Pieche, retired chief of the Carabinieri, recently referred to Trabucchi as "a man of Communist tendencies if indeed not an outright Communist."

Comment: Previous reports on Trabucchi have also indicated that he has pro-Communist sentiments. He will not reach retirement age for approximately three years.

LATIN AMERICA

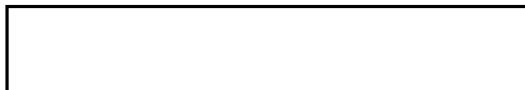
12. Guatemala may lead anticolonial attack at Caracas:

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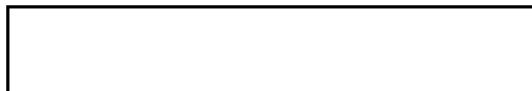


Comment: The item on colonialism in the Caracas agenda was cosponsored by Guatemala and Argentina. On 12 March the latter presented a resolution calling for the elimination of colonies in the hemisphere and for the repudiation of force in the continuance of colonial occupation.

The popular anticolonial issue may serve to align Guatemala--isolated in the vote on the anti-Communist resolution--with the majority of the Latin American countries. The United States has maintained that no specific cases should be discussed under the colonialism item.

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