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SECURITY INFORMATION

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Office of Current Intelligence

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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FAR EAST

1. Bridge built on possible invasion route to Indochina:

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Aerial photographs
 reveal that a bridge capable of supporting railway equipment has been rebuilt this past summer over the Namti River, which forms the boundary between China and Indochina, near its confluence with the Red River.

- Comment: This bridge forms an important link in the railroad from Hanoi to Kunming, one of the three major routes connecting China and Indochina (see map on following page). Much of this railroad has been inoperative during the past ten years. These photographs tend to confirm other evidence that reconstruction of the railroad is underway.

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flatcars pulled by motor vehicles fitted with flanged wheels are now operating over a fifty-mile section of this railroad in Viet Minh territory northwest of Hanoi.

2. Split in ruling clique presages early coup in Thailand:

"High Thai officials" in ostensible support of the King may be expected to attempt a coup d'etat "at any time" against the present military regime. The informant, who is close to the

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states that mounting tension between Police General Phao and Assistant Army Commander Sarit is forcing early action and the "heaviest fighting to date" will probably occur.

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The King is in danger of assassination at the hands of the ruling clique because of his firm opposition to its demands for constitutional changes.

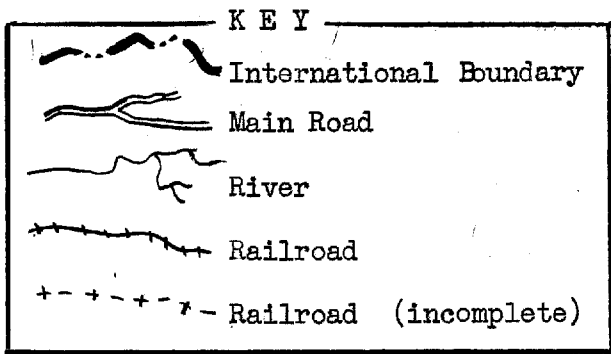
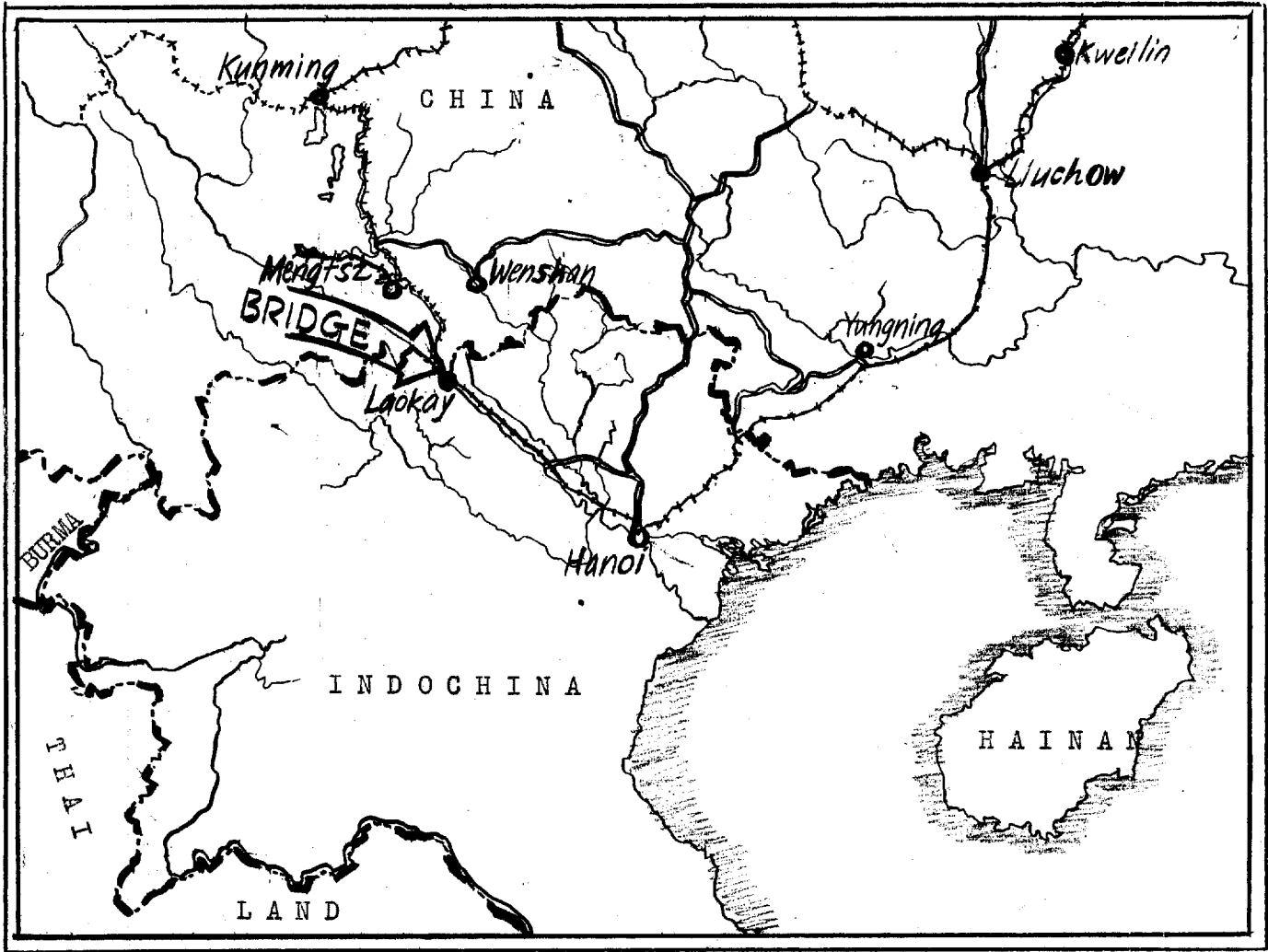
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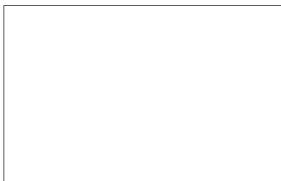
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NEAR EAST - AFRICA

3. Comment on Iranian criticism of Point IV aid:

The Tehran radio announced on 29 December that a disagreement had arisen between the United States and Iran over conditions imposed by the US on the allocation of aid to Iran. The United States, according to this broadcast, had demanded that its representatives should be allowed to control the expenditure of Point IV funds.

Mossadeq has already indicated his unwillingness to give assurances required by the Mutual Security Act from those countries receiving combined military and economic aid. The criticism of Point IV expressed by the above broadcast suggests that Mossadeq may also refuse to sign any agreement presented to him for economic aid alone.

4. Egyptian King urges Prime Minister to settle Anglo-Egyptian dispute:

King Farouk has given the Egyptian Prime Minister until 15 January to formulate a reasonable program for settling the Anglo-

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Egyptian dispute, If a break develops between the two over this issue, the Prime Minister is determined not to resign but to force the King to dismiss him. 3.3(h)(2)

Comment: The King has indicated on several recent occasions that he favors the appointment of a new government more amenable to effecting a settlement with the British. The considerable resentment aroused by his appointment of two pro-Westerners to the royal Cabinet last week, however, makes it unlikely that the King will dismiss the Prime Minister in the immediate future.

WESTERN EUROPE

5. Italian Premier discusses European Army problems with General Eisenhower:



Premier de Gasperi told General Eisenhower on 28 December that he believes it will be possible to get agreement on the fundamental principles of the European Defense Community 3.3(h)(2)

by the time of the Lisbon meeting of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, now scheduled for February. He seemed, however, to doubt that a unanimously acceptable draft treaty will be ready by then. He urged that the United States persuade Benelux to go along and hoped that the United States could get Britain to take similar action.

Comment: De Gasperi's tone of pessimism was reflected in a press release following the recent meeting on the European Defense Community. Although the conferees agreed in principle on the EDC, they did not adopt the plan for supranational management at this time and were unable to agree on the form of its budget. A second conference will be held in Paris late in January.

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