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SECURITY INFORMATION

8 December 1953

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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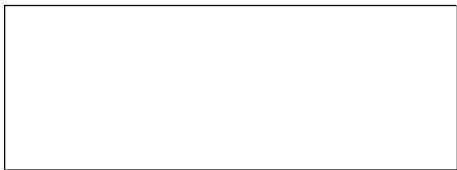
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SOVIET UNION

2. Bohlen sees genuine Soviet interest in reducing tension:



Ambassador Bohlen believes that the Western note of 16 November proved to the Kremlin that it had failed to divide the West on the question of Chinese Communist participation

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in a conference and that as long as the Soviet Union continued to insist on this condition it could have no important contact with the leading Western powers. He states that most foreign observers in Moscow consider that the present regime genuinely desires to avoid complications and adventures in its foreign relations while it is carrying out new programs in agriculture, consumers' goods and trade, both in the USSR and the Satellites.

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The ambassador points out that the 26 November note suggests, for the first time since the war, that the Eastern European nations and their relationship to European security are suitable subjects for discussion. He thinks the references to European security in the note and in subsequent propaganda foreshadow Soviet proposals at the four-power conference for a European regional security plan designed to limit German rearmament with the ultimate aim of squeezing the United States out of Europe.

FAR EAST

3. North Korea receiving railway equipment from USSR:



According to a broadcast in Korean from Pyongyang, 546 carloads of rails, concrete and other railway and construction equipment had been received from the Soviet Union by

20 November under the billion-ruble aid program. Much of this material is being used to reconstruct trunk rail lines in North Korea.

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Comment: This is the first indication from Pyongyang that substantial amounts of railway equipment are arriving from the USSR under the Soviet-North Korean agreement signed in September. Along with the reconstruction of metallurgical and hydroelectric plants, railroads are probably being given a priority because they are vital to the rehabilitation and further development of North Korea.

4. Stalemate in negotiations with Korea threatens moderate Japanese stand:



The continued delay in resumption of negotiations with South Korea in the dispute over fisheries and property claims threatens to discredit the Japanese Foreign Ministry's

policy of conciliation toward the Rhee government, according to Ambassador Allison. He notes that if the prospects for an early settlement continue to recede, the advocates of forceful retaliation against Korea will assume control of Japanese policy.

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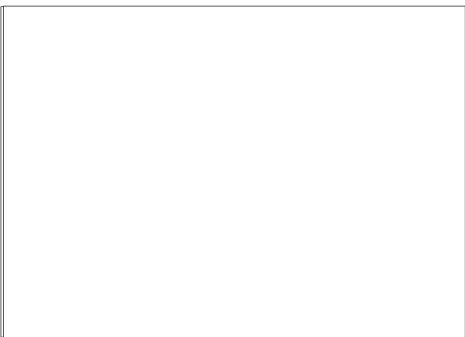
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Allison comments that the Japanese public and the fishing interests believe that the good offices of the United States will provide for an early resumption of negotiations. He notes, however, that Foreign Ministry officials are becoming increasingly alarmed by the lack of progress.

Comment: Prime Minister Yoshida on 2 November postponed taking cabinet-approved retaliatory measures against South Korea for its seizures of Japanese fishing vessels in view of America's willingness to lend its good offices and provide observers at future talks. Rhee has indicated, however, that he feels no compulsion to modify his attitude.

SOUTHEAST ASIA

5. Chinese Nationalists announce end of evacuation from Burma:



A Chinese Nationalist spokesman has informed the three-power committee in charge of the evacuation of Chinese troops from Burma that the withdrawal will end on 8 December. The American embassy in Bangkok points out that by then 1,800 troops and 225 dependents will have been evacuated instead of the 2,000 troops with arms and "several hundred" dependents originally promised by Taipei.

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The Burmese cease-fire agreement terminates on 15 December.



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Comment: Scarcely any arms have been brought out by the evacuees. An estimated 10,000 Chinese troops remain in Burma. The remaining forces apparently now call themselves the "Anti-Communist United Forces of Free Peoples in Southeast Asia," welcoming recruits from all nationalities in the area.

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NEAR EAST - AFRICA

6. Iran objects to accepting British diplomats who previously served there:



Foreign Minister Entezam told Ambassador Henderson on 5 December that it was his and Prime Minister Zahedi's earnest hope that the British embassy in Tehran will be staffed by personnel "entirely new to Iran."

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Entezam emphasized that this should apply to the entire British mission, including the ambassador. He remarked that such extremists as Kashani, Makki and Baghai could create even greater difficulties for the government if the British returned personnel who had formerly served in Iran.

Comment: Prime Minister Zahedi has consistently voiced fear of public reaction to early resumption of diplomatic relations with Britain. Should opposition become strong, particularly on the point of "tainted" personnel, the Zahedi government might be inclined to reconsider its conciliatory attitude toward Britain.

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