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30 May 1956

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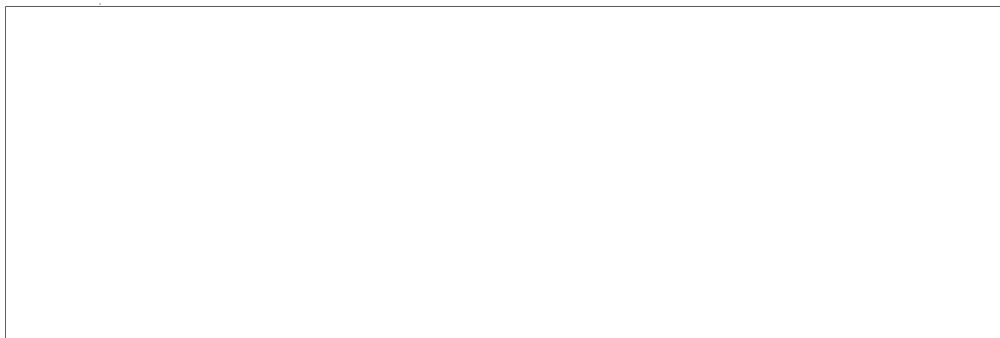
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CONTENTS

1. BERIA SUPPORTERS EXECUTED ([redacted]) (page 3).

2. FINNS PROPOSE RECTIFICATION OF BORDER TO USSR
[redacted] (page 4).

3. WEST GERMAN SOCIALIST LEADER [redacted] APPROACH-
ING USSR ON REUNIFICATION [redacted] (page 6).

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THE ARAB-ISRAELI SITUATION
[redacted] (page 7)

30 May 56

Current Intelligence Bulletin

Page 2

~~TOP SECRET~~ [redacted]

1. BERIA SUPPORTERS EXECUTED

Comment on:



The execution of M. D. Bagirov and three former secret police subordinates, following a public trial in Baku from 12 to 26 April, is another step in the long-drawn-out process of liquidating former protégés of L. P. Beria. In July 1953, shortly after Beria's ouster, Bagirov was criticized for serious infringement of the principle of collective leadership and removed from all his positions.

The indictment against Bagirov and his accomplices, drawn up almost three years after their removal from office, charges them with treason, the use of improper methods of police investigation, and setting the state security organs against the government and party. These accusations serve, as did those in the earlier trials of Beria's protégés, to emphasize the regime's public position that "illegality and arbitrary action" by the secret police will no longer be tolerated.



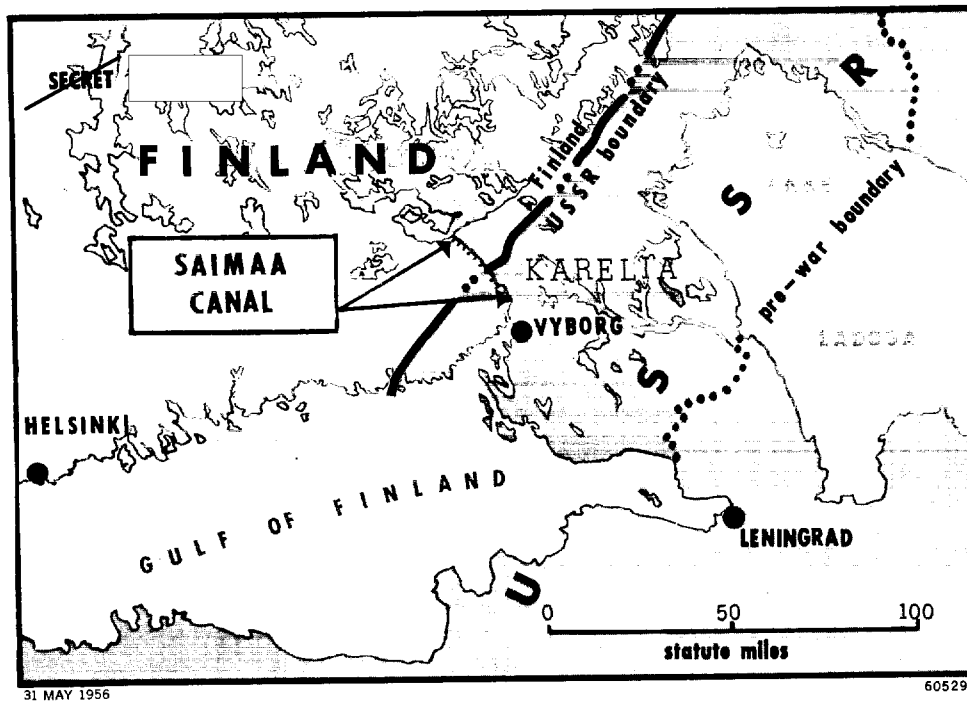
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2. FINNS PROPOSE RECTIFICATION OF BORDER TO USSR

Comment

The present economic value of the Saimaa Canal, which connects the Finnish inland lake system with the Gulf of Finland and the Baltic Sea, is



30 May 56

Current Intelligence Bulletin

Page 4

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

questionable, according to the Finnish committee of experts which recently studied the canal. However, the return of any part of Karelia, and the city of Vyborg in particular, which they lost to the USSR in 1944, has a strong emotional appeal to the Finns. President Kekkonen reportedly hopes to regain as much of Karelia as possible during his tenure.

While it would require only a minor border adjustment to meet Finnish desires, the USSR will not make any territorial change lightly--which might inspire similar demands by other countries--but would time such a concession for the maximum political effect throughout Scandinavia.

30 May 56

Current Intelligence Bulletin

Page 5

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

3. WEST GERMAN SOCIALIST LEADER REPORTED APPROACHING USSR ON REUNIFICATION

[redacted] the leader of the left-wing faction of the Social Democratic Party (SPD), Herbert Wehner, has been attempting in recent weeks to establish contact with the Kremlin in order to discuss the conditions under which the Soviet government would agree to the reunification of Germany. [redacted] Wehner, during a visit to Stockholm in early May, asked Swedish foreign minister Uden to intercede with Uden's acquaintances in high Soviet circles. Later in the month, while in Yugoslavia, Wehner [redacted] tried to persuade Tito to raise the German reunification question during his coming trip to Moscow.

[redacted] Wehner's activities have the full knowledge, if not approval, of SPD chairman Ollenhauer and other SPD leaders. [redacted]

Comment

While there have been reports in the German press of informal talks between SPD functionaries and Soviet officials on German reunification, this is the first assertion that the party may approve such activities.

The SPD has publicly condemned the Bonn government for failing to explore reunification possibilities with Moscow, and may now for political reasons want to demonstrate its greater interest and activity in this respect.

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THE ARAB-ISRAELI SITUATION
(Information as of 1700, 30 May)

Syrian president Quwatli, accompanied by a Syrian military delegation under Chief of Staff Shuqayr, has arrived in Jordan to conduct military talks. The Syrian

[redacted]

[redacted] According to public announcements, this agreement involved co-ordination of war plans against Israel and exchange of information. It appears, however, that Egypt did make a conditional offer to Jordan of military equipment and financial aid. It is possible, therefore, that the current Syrian-Jordanian talks involve another offer of Soviet bloc arms to Jordan if the Jordanians will agree to further curtail British influence. According to the Cyprus radio on 26 May, Egypt's Premier Nasr will visit Jordan in the next few days to join the Jordanian and Syrian leaders in military and political discussions. [redacted]

[redacted] The American army attaché in Damascus reports that Syria's total order of MIG-15 jet fighters may have been raised from 20 or 25 aircraft to 60.

[redacted]

30 May 56

Current Intelligence Bulletin

Page 7

~~TOP SECRET~~ [redacted]