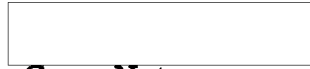


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26 February 1956




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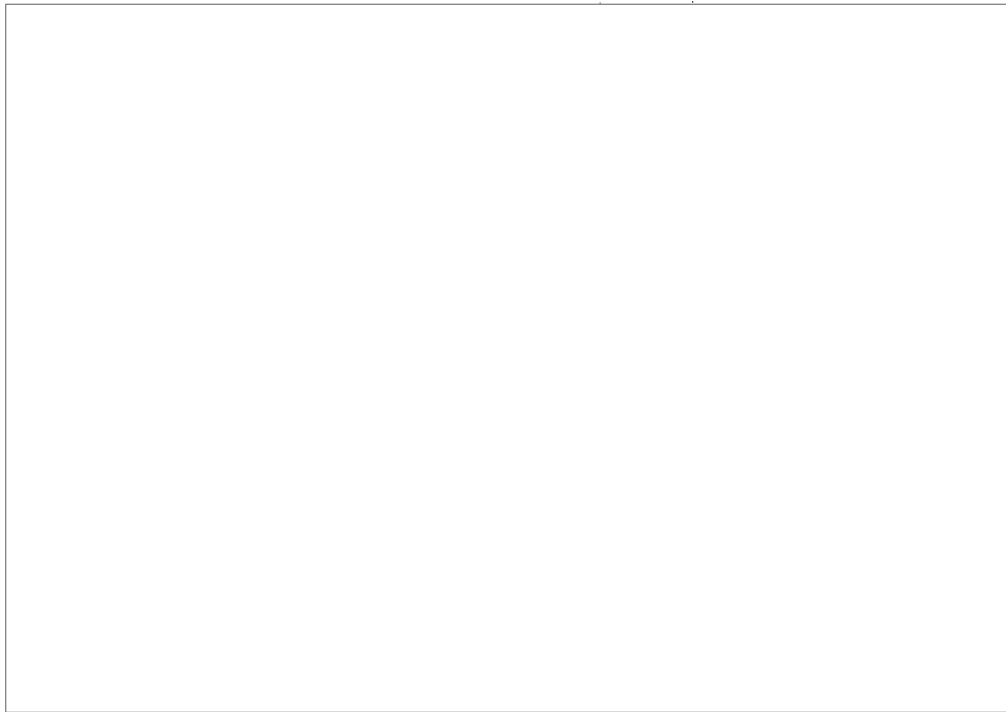
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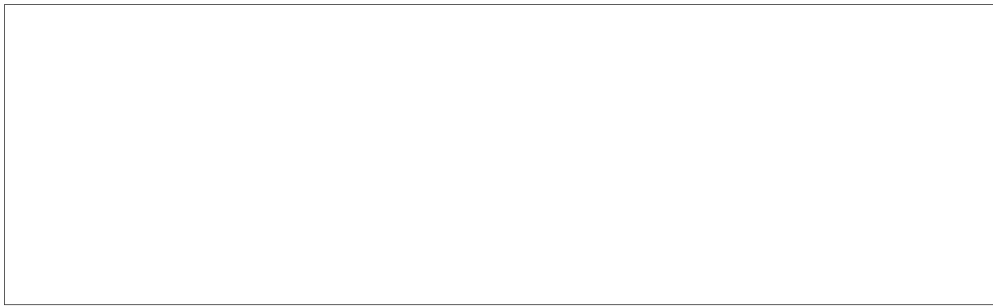
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1. THE NEW SOVIET CENTRAL COMMITTEE


Comment on:



The election on 24 February of the new central committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union by the 20th Party Congress confirms, as has the rest of the proceedings of the congress, the political relationships which have crystallized in the Soviet Union over the past year.

Khrushchev's predominant position within the "collective dictatorship" was established beyond doubt by the election of a large number of his friends and protégés to the new 255-man central committee (133 full members and 122 candidates). A liberal sprinkling of probable supporters of the other top leaders (Mikoyan, Bulganin, and Kaganovich) attests, however, to the continuation of collective rule.

The stability of the post-Stalin regime in the USSR, despite Beria's execution, Malenkov's demotion, and Molotov's humiliation, is clearly revealed in the percentage of persons (60 percent) re-elected to the central committee. The percentage re-elected is larger than at any time since the 17th Party Congress in 1934, the last congress before the great purges.

All major groups in the country, including military leaders, are represented on the new central committee in about the same proportion as in 1952, affirming that none of these groups has significantly increased its relative political influence over the last three-and-a-half years. 

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**2. KING SAUD REFUSES EGYPTIAN OFFER OF SOVIET
BLOC ARMS**



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3. PEIPING RECALLING AMBASSADORS FROM SEVERAL ASIAN POSTS



The Chinese Communist ambassador to Burma, accompanied by his wife, left Rangoon on 23 February in a chartered plane bound for southwest China.

Also aboard were Peiping's ambassadors to India and Pakistan.



Comment

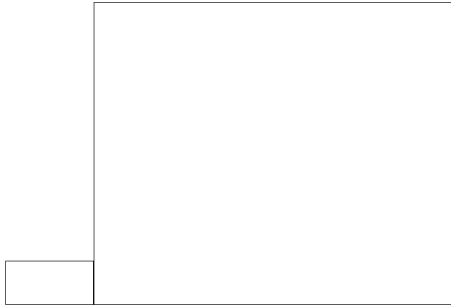
All three of these Chinese ambassadors have been in their posts for several years and may be overdue for reassignment. Another factor is suggested, however, by the simultaneous recall of Peiping's ambassador in Afghanistan, who has not been long in his post.

It seems likely that the Chinese Communists are reorganizing their diplomatic effort in the area in order to co-ordinate it more effectively with recent Soviet moves. Some of Peiping's envoys will probably be replaced by men of greater prestige and ability.

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4. EXPELLED FREE DEMOCRATS MAY FORM NATIONALIST OPPOSITION IN WEST GERMANY



American officials in Bonn expect that the Free Democratic Party (FDP) elements expelled from the Bonn coalition will adopt an all-out nationalist line of opposition to Adenauer, advocating a reunification program with overtones of neutralism. These officials believe that the opportunistic, nationalist

Westphalian wing of the party will now consolidate its hold over the anti-Adenauer wing of the FDP under party Chairman Thomas Dehler and that Dehler will have to go along with such a program in the 1957 election campaign.

According to the leader of the pro-Adenauer Free Democratic faction, the chancellor has promised to retain the four FDP ministers in his cabinet and has assured preferred treatment for those FDP Bundestag members who remain loyal to the coalition.

Well-informed Bundestag members in both the pro- and anti-Adenauer factions of the FDP claim that the North-Rhine Westphalia Free Democratic organization has hitherto been supported with generous financial contributions from a number of leading industrialists. These industrialists may continue to support the Westphalian FDP, even in opposition to Adenauer, in an attempt to insure themselves domestically in the event that the Christian Democrats are ousted from the government in favor of a Free Democratic-Socialist coalition, and internationally in the event Soviet world power and influence should exceed that of the United States. 


Comment

A large share of the power of the Westphalian wing of the Free Democratic party derives from the fact that this is the group through which most of the federal party's financial support is channeled. An FDP leader loyal to Adenauer has expressed the belief, however, that some substantial financial contributors would shift their support to the newly formed pro-Adenauer Bundestag faction of the FDP.

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5. FRENCH EFFORTS TO MAINTAIN INFLUENCE IN NORTH VIETNAM

 Jean Sainteny, French delegate general to North Vietnam, will return to Hanoi although "not in the immediate future," according to a spokesman for French foreign minister Pineau. He said that French acceptance of Viet Minh representation in Paris was still under consideration.

Comment When Sainteny returned to Paris in mid-1955, he indicated he saw no purpose in returning to Hanoi unless a Viet Minh mission was officially accepted in France.


A member of the French Foreign Ministry told an American official on 20 February that France feels it important to try to re-establish French influence in North Vietnam. The American embassy in Saigon believes that the reported arrival in Hanoi of new French economic and cultural attachés, and the reported new French-Viet Minh contract permitting operation of the Pasteur Institute in North Vietnam through 1956, indicate French interest in continuing this "coexistence experiment."

Any renewed French effort to develop official relations with Hanoi will inflame anti-French sentiment among South Vietnamese and cause them to intensify efforts to eliminate all vestiges of Paris' influence in the south. 

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6. INDONESIAN VICE PRESIDENT SAYS HE WILL RESIGN

 Indonesia's Vice President Hatta told Ambassador Cumming on 24 February that he has definitely decided to resign. He said he intended to work for the betterment of the Indonesian people and to combat Communism through the medium of the co-operative movement which is rapidly spreading among the villages of Indonesia.

The ambassador comments that Hatta's long range plan may be to develop the co-operative movement into an anti-Communist political party which would attract both Moslems and nationalists.

Comment


The rift between the moderate Hatta and President Sukarno has been apparent for several months. Hatta's resignation, which is likely to be announced shortly after the seating of the new parliament early next month, will remove what is perhaps the only important restraining influence on Sukarno, who is inclined to favor a nationalist government supported by the Communists.

Although Hatta is presently overshadowed by Sukarno and is handicapped by his Sumatran origin in view of Javanese dominance of Indonesian politics, he is widely respected and has the confidence of the army.

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7. COMMUNISTS LAUNCH STRIKES IN ITALY AS PREFACE TO ELECTION CAMPAIGN

 The Communist-controlled Italian General Confederation of Labor (CGIL), apparently as part of the Communist-Nenni Socialist preparation for nationwide communal elections this spring, has undertaken a campaign of strikes throughout Italy designed to exploit demonstrations and popular unrest attributable to the suffering and unemployment caused by bad weather.

The local demonstrations, primarily in rural areas, had already required police intervention in a number of localities. Recently, agricultural and industrial workers, in obviously concerted strike action, have moved in on the spontaneous disorders in order to "demonstrate the solidarity of the workers and to prove the inefficiency of the government's measures to improve the standard of living."

The embassy believes, however, that the Communists and their Nenni Socialist allies will try to prevent the agitation from getting out of hand or from seriously embarrassing the Segni government.

Comment

In view of the forthcoming local elections, it would be to the Communists' advantage to make a show of strength at this time, and, in particular, to champion local complaints against the Christian Democratic-dominated government. Should the extreme left make strong gains in these elections, the government might find it necessary to call new general elections later in the year.

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THE ARAB-ISRAELI SITUATION
(Information as of 1700, 26 February)

Israel on 26 February claimed that Syria had again fired on Israeli fishing boats on Lake Tiberias. An Israeli spokesman also said that Egyptian outposts in the Gaza strip had fired on Israeli patrols seven times in the last two days. No casualties were reported. (Press)

Syria notified Egypt on 24 February that Israel had made a number of reconnaissances opposite the Syrian front during the past few days. The Syrians said Israeli naval vessels and fishing boats "on numerous occasions" had approached the Syrian side of Lake Tiberias to within 100 yards. The Syrians believed that the object was to reconnoiter the "new positions," adding that Israeli aircraft are still carrying out reconnaissances over the Syrian sectors. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] told the American military attaché in Damascus on 25 February they believe it quite probable that there is a certain amount of provocation involved in the Israeli fishing boats coming so close to the eastern shore of Lake Tiberias. The attaché commented that the recent Syrian firing on Israeli fishing boats--four times in the last six days--though small incidents, indicate a pattern which if followed might eventually result in Israeli retaliation. [REDACTED]

Syria on 20 and 22 February restated its position on Banat Yacov to UN Truce Supervisor General Burns, asserting that Burns could not on his own authority agree to resumption of work in the demilitarized zone at Banat Yacov. The American embassy says that Syria appears to be afraid Burns will succumb to pressure to reverse the 1953 decision ordering suspension of work. [REDACTED]

The American military attaché in Damascus reports that all Syrian officers known by him are sure Egypt will be with them immediately in an all-out

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effort in the event of hostilities and that much of their confidence or overconfidence stems from this. [redacted]

[redacted]

The Israeli foreign ministry has informed the American embassy in Tel Aviv that Egypt on 22 February released a Greek flag vessel, the Komtsa which had been detained since 8 February. The vessel, loaded with building materials, was enroute from Haifa to the Israeli port of Eilat in the Gulf of Aqaba. Israel had imposed censorship on reports of the detention. The embassy comments that the censorship indicates Israel wants at the moment to avoid an international political debate over the Egyptian blockade measures at the Suez canal and at Aqaba. [redacted]

[redacted] informed Aqaba forces that the Greek ship was bound for Eilat and "you may delay her a while before allowing her to proceed." Despite Egypt's harassing tactics its apparent willingness to permit shipping to Eilat at this time suggests that it too is interested in avoiding a major test with Israel.

[redacted] 3532

Egypt continues to build up its strength and maintain an alert in the Gulf of Aqaba. The Egyptian works department in Sharm al-Shaikh was ordered on 23 February to complete construction for the 4th Coastal Battery on an urgent basis. [redacted]

[redacted] who has been in Cairo for the past 3 months says that the MIG-15's in Egypt are old models with an "early" engine. [redacted]

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The Israeli ambassador to the USSR, Yosef Avidar, who returned to Israel in early February and who was expected to be away from Moscow for six weeks, may not return to the USSR, according to the Israeli chargé in Moscow. The American military attaché notes that Avidar is one of Israel's able generals. Avidar arrived in Moscow in April 1955. [redacted]

[redacted]

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