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17 April 1956



Copy No. 103

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CURRENT INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN

DOCUMENT NO. 20
NO CHANGE IN CLASS.
IS DECLASSIFIED
CLASS. CHANGED TO: TS
NEXT REVIEW DATE: 2009
AUTH: HR 70-2
DATE: 12-26-75 REVIEWER:

25X1

OFFICE OF CURRENT INTELLIGENCE CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

ARMY, DOS and DIA review(s) completed.

25X1



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25X1

Approved For Release 2004/07/08 : CIA-RDP79T00975A002500200001-1

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CONTENTS

- 25X1A
1. **SOVIET POSITION ON ARAB-ISRAELI PROBLEM**

[REDACTED]

- 25X1A
2. **TURKISH ECONOMIC STABILIZATION PROGRAM
THREATENED**

[REDACTED]

3. **SHARP INCREASE IN EAST GERMAN REFUGEES**

25X1A

[REDACTED]

25X1A
THE ARAB-ISRAELI SITUATION

[REDACTED]

1. SOVIET POSITION ON ARAB-ISRAELI PROBLEM

25X1A

[Redacted]

25X1A

Moscow apparently regards the Arab-Israeli dispute as a useful lever to achieve Western recognition of its interest as a great power in Near Eastern affairs. Moscow considers that efforts to deal with the immediate threat of war should be kept within the jurisdiction of the Security Council, where the USSR can most effectively

promote Soviet-Arab policies. Moscow has repeatedly indicated, however, that it would like to participate in a conference on general Near Eastern problems.

Moscow does not appear to be urging the Arabs at present to attack Israel.

25X1

25X1

[Redacted]

During the period of superior Israeli strength, the USSR probably will direct its tactics toward avoiding an early Arab-Israeli war. If, however, the USSR does not attain the position it desires in the area after the Arabs achieve military superiority, Moscow may then be willing to see a local war break out.

25X1

[Redacted]

25X1A 2. TURKISH ECONOMIC STABILIZATION
PROGRAM THREATENED

 The American chargé in Ankara reports that Turkey's economic stabilization program appears to be at "dead center" and that in the absence of renewed cabinet leadership, the entire program may be abandoned. The stabilization program is losing two of its strongest proponents in the resignation of Minister of Economy Ulas and the imminent resignation of Assistant Secretary General of the Treasury Kurdash.

The chargé believes that the recent Soviet aid offers to Turkey will become significant only as the idea grows that the "US is letting her ally down" and as the economic situation worsens.

Comment

Prime Minister Menderes may regard the Soviet aid offers as strengthening his position in regard to American stabilization demands, and he may be willing to approve acceptance of some aid in order to ease the domestic economic situation.

The resignation of Ulas and the anticipated resignation of Kurdash, both of whom favor devaluation, indicate that Menderes will continue to oppose this step when he meets with the representative of the International Monetary Fund next week or soon thereafter.

3. SHARP INCREASE IN EAST GERMAN REFUGEES

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25X1A

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

During the week of 30 March to 5 April, a total of 5,472 East German refugees registered in West Berlin, an increase of almost 80 percent over the previous week. These refugees included 702 persons in the military age bracket of 17-24 years. American officials in Heidelberg attribute this sharp increase to a relaxation of border controls for the Easter holiday.

Comment

The above total is the highest number of East German refugees to register in West Berlin in a single week since June 1953. This sharp increase follows several months during which the rate of exodus decreased, though it remained considerably higher than during the comparable period of 1955.

Over the past six months an average of over 3,000 refugees have registered in West Berlin each week. Approximately the same number have crossed directly into West Germany. [Redacted]

25X1

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[Redacted]

25X1A

THE ARAB-ISRAELI SITUATION
(Information as of 1700, 16 April)

Israeli prime minister Ben-Gurion angrily rejected UN secretary general Hammarskjold's note of 13 April which expressed conviction that Egypt sought to avoid war with Israel and that the question of war or peace rested in Israel's hands. Ben-Gurion also expressed disappointment with Hammarskjold's statement that he was not competent to deal with the question of freedom of passage for Israeli vessels in the Suez Canal and the Gulf of Aqaba.

25X1

25X1

[Redacted]

This disillusionment was probably responsible for accelerated Israeli mobilization of personnel and vehicles over the week end. The American army attaché in Tel Aviv estimates that this latest call-up includes between 10,000 and 15,000 men. Subsequent reports indicate that the mobilization now includes some second-line units in which only half of the personnel is equipped with uniforms. Members of a home guard brigade mobilized during the night of 13-14 April in the Tel Aviv area, although armed, were not in uniform.

25X1A

25X1A

[Redacted]

On 15 April an Israeli Foreign Ministry official told Ambassador Lawson that Ben-Gurion had been under "tremendous pressure from all quarters to retaliate" for Egyptian-sponsored terrorist activities. The prime minister was reported to be still incensed at the "highly arbitrary placement of responsibility upon Israel" in Hammarskjold's note, but had decided to wait until the secretary general's arrival in Israel on Tuesday before engaging in further exchanges.

25X1A

25X1A

In Egypt, recent rail movements of armor, including 20 T-34 tanks and 75 Bren gun carriers, and supplies

25X1A

25X1A

from the Cairo area have been reported. The destination of these shipments is reported to be the Canal zone or the Sinai area, but this cannot be confirmed. Increased civilian defense activity including mobilization of vehicles and establishment of emergency sources of water was reported in Cairo over the week end.

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