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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

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Attached is a copy of report [redacted]

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[redacted] Comment: Throughout the attached report, read Mingrelian for Migrelian, and Beriya for Beria.

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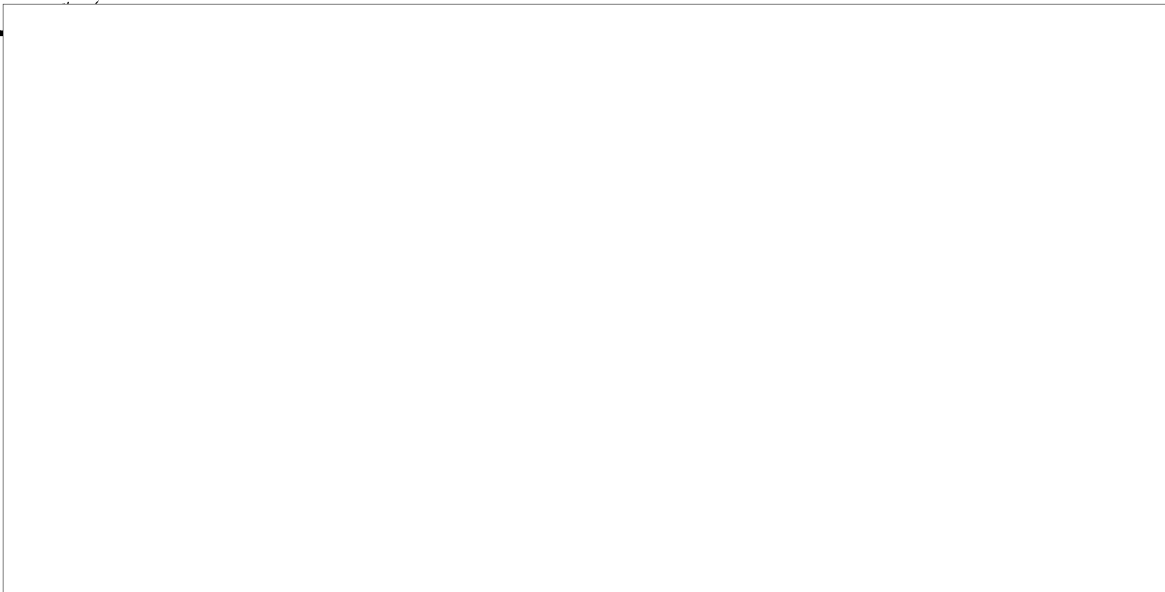
SUPPLEMENT TO REPORT NO.

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THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION

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1. [] the struggle between MALENKOV and BERIA has been going on for many years, becoming especially tense by the end of 1951. This struggle was quite apparent as reflected in local Georgian politics, which, because of STALIN's and BERIA's Georgian origin, have had tremendous influence on and significance for All-Union affairs.

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2. [] not believe that at any time STALIN had the intention of appointing BERIA his successor. There had always been considerable resentment among Russians about STALIN's Georgian origin. STALIN himself was well aware of this fact, and he certainly would not cherish the idea of creating a permanent Georgian dynasty in the USSR. On the other hand, it would be sound to assume that BERIA, as a very ambitious man, had been obsessed by such an idea for years. His position of MGB head was an excellent spring-board for a USSR dictator. In this connection, it is of interest to follow the strengthening of the MGB position and the expansion of the MGB at the expense of the MVD in the period from 1948. Prior to this

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time, the USSR Militia, the State Department for the Fight against Misappropriations and Speculations, the Passport Offices, and many other state agencies were under MVD jurisdiction. From 1948 on, all these functions, including the USSR Border Guard Service, were gradually transferred to the MGB. After this re-organization, the only responsibility left to the MVD was the operation of prisons and forced labor camps, which certainly did not give this ministry very much power and influence in the government.

3. The strengthening of BERIA's position, of course, could not be achieved without STALIN's consent, but it is hard to say whether, during the post-World War II period, STALIN was whole-heartedly supporting BERIA's rise to power. One may fairly safely assume that BERIA had at least succeeded in persuading STALIN of the necessity of the reorganizations mentioned above and of strengthening the MGB position. STALIN's support, however, continued only for a limited time, and during the last few years, and in 1951 especially, there was a noticeable cooling of STALIN-BERIA relations. In order to understand this properly, we must go back to Georgian local politics, especially during the period preceding STALIN's death.
4. It should be kept in mind that L.P. BERIA is a Migrelian in origin. This Georgian national group, although it numbers only 150,000 people, has its own language, and its members in general are very intelligent, clever, sly, and predisposed to politics and political intrigues. Most Migrelians are clannish and help each other to higher positions whenever they can. After serving as President of the Georgian Cheka (later renamed NKVD) BERIA became the Secretary of the Communist Party of Georgia, in which position he remained until 1938 when, it is rumored, he was earmarked to be arrested in the course of YEZHOV's purge. He went to Moscow to see STALIN and, instead of being arrested by YEZHOV, he himself became the USSR's NKVD boss. BERIA had never forgotten his clan and, after this time, he started promoting Migrelians not only to local government and Party positions in Georgia, but to positions throughout the USSR, especially to positions with the NKVD in Moscow. During World War II, BERIA was appointed Deputy President of the USSR Council of Ministers and Member of the National Defense Council. In this capacity he was entrusted with the organization of defense of the Caucasus, and he used his extraordinary powers to strengthen the Migrelian positions in Georgia and in the national MGB.
5. The first check to the practically sovereign power of BERIA in Georgia came in 1947 when his personal friend and henchman, A.N. RAPAVA, the MGB Minister of the Georgian SSR, was dismissed for misappropriation of several million rubles during the USSR currency devaluation reform. With BERIA's assistance, RAPAVA escaped arrest and eventually was given a less important position in the Georgian Government, namely the position of Minister of Justice. The MGB Ministry of the Georgian SSR was given to N.M. RUKHADZE, who allegedly came from the Army and was not a BERIA man. Although a blow, this was not enough to shake BERIA's position in the USSR Government, as he was supported by large numbers of adherents he had planted in Georgia and in the MGB agencies throughout the country.
6. Nonetheless, this case marked the start of a campaign against BERIA's sovereignty in Georgia. Rumors of many arbitrary actions of Georgian officials and the creation of a "national bourgeois movement" in this Republic became more and more persistent. It is believed by many people in the USSR that STALIN's trip to Georgia in 1951 was motivated in part by these rumors. During this trip, STALIN personally discovered many irregularities, cases of most shameless favoritism, numerous misappropriations, etc., going on

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in the Georgian SSR. Following this trip, a large purge took place in Georgia in November 1951. It was rumored to have been directed by MALENKOV, who allegedly acted as a special emissary of STALIN to Tbilisi and organized the court proceedings against several of the highest Georgian officials, all of whom were staunch BERIA adherents. The following individuals were accused and stripped of power in this trial:

- a. The Second Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Georgian SSR, M.I. BARAMIYA;
- b. The Minister of Justice of the Georgian SSR, A.N. RAPAVALA;
- c. The Secretary of the Georgian SSR Komsomol Organization, I.S. ZODELAVA
- d. The State Attorney (Prokuror) of the Georgian SSR, V.Y. SHONIYA, and many others.

They were charged with various crimes, each according to his official position, but what was most significant, in addition to these individual crimes, all of them were accused of promotion of a "national bourgeois movement" in the Georgian SSR. The entire case against the defendants was prepared by the Georgian MGB Minister, N.M. RUKHADZE. It was also significant that the first secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Georgian SSR, K.N. CHARKVIANI, who was not a Migrelian but a Svan (another Georgian clan), escaped the purge and retained his position.

7. The events of November 1951 in Georgia not only shook BERIA's position in Georgia and the MGB dictatorial power throughout the USSR, but they may be considered the first open clash between MALENKOV and BERIA for future supremacy. This fight, once started, continued.
8. In April 1952 BERIA, quite unexpectedly, arrived at Tbilisi. It was rumored that the main purpose of his trip was to reinstate his friends who had been purged in November 1951. Nobody knows what went on behind the scenes, but it was apparent that BERIA failed in this effort. It would be logical to assume that the reinstatement of highest Party functionaries who had been deprived of their positions by a court verdict could not be done without STALIN's approval and that BERIA did not succeed in getting this approval. It was generally felt in Georgia that, after STALIN's trip to this Republic in 1951, BERIA's star in STALIN's orbit began to wane. Although he did not succeed in accomplishing his purpose in Tbilisi, BERIA did succeed in forcing the dismissal of the first secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Georgian SSR, CHARKVIANI, for letting down his associates. Officially, CHARKVIANI was fired for poor leadership, as proved by the November 1951 purge. But this was the only success of BERIA's trip to Tbilisi, for he was not permitted to give CHARKVIANI's position to any of his men, and the position of first secretary was given to A.I. MGELADZE, who was a very pronounced STALIN man, hated by Migrelians.
9. At the time of STALIN's death on 9 March 1953, BERIA's position, although shaken to a certain extent by the events described above, was still enormously strong. In this initial period MALENKOV was certainly not strong enough to eliminate BERIA right away. Having become a member of the USSR triumvirate, one of the first of BERIA's steps was to initiate a complete reinstatement of his Georgian friends convicted in the November 1951 trial. The victim now was RUKHADZE, who was arrested for staging the trial and bringing out false accusations against the highest Georgian officials. And so ZODELAVA became Deputy Minister President of the Georgian SSR, BARAMIYA member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the

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Georgian SSR, RAPAVA Minister of State Control, of the Georgian SSR, and many others of BERIA's purged friends were appointed to similar high positions. The only man of whom nothing was heard in the reinstatement process was the former Georgian State Attorney V.Y. SHONIYA, who, it is rumored, was liquidated in the meantime. A certain V.M. BAKRADZE, a close friend of BERIA, was appointed President of the Georgian Council of Ministers. (This was the second time that BAKRADZE was appointed to this position. He held it first up to 1948, when he was dismissed for misappropriations.) An excellent politician, BAKRADZE, when making his speech reinstating the Party functionaries arrested in the November 1951 purge, stated among other things that: "...all these people are our Georgian flesh and blood and staunch adherents of our glorious son L.P. BERIA..." Other moves of BERIA in order to strengthen his position in the Georgian SSR after STALIN's death were dismissal of V.Ya. EGNATASHVILI, since 1928 Secretary of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Georgian SSR, and dismissal of Z.N. KETSKHOVELI, President of the Council of Ministers of the Georgian SSR, both personal friends of STALIN. EGNATASHVILI was replaced by BAKRADZE and KETSKHOVELI by Mrs. G.D. DZHAVAKHISHVILI, both close friends of BERIA.

10. Considering these things that BERIA did in the Georgian SSR in order to strengthen his position after STALIN's death, it would be logical to assume that he took similar steps throughout the USSR, placing his men in key MGB positions and strengthening the position of the MGB, endangering in this way the position of MALENKOV.
11. The role played in the purge of BERIA by the Minister of National Defense, BULGANIN, who was appointed after STALIN's death, requires careful study. BULGANIN is certainly not a popular man in the USSR and not a military leader. The Army does not accept him, and he cannot count on Army support if he should get the idea of starting a military Putsch. As a matter of fact, in my opinion, he would never get such an idea, since he is practically unknown in Soviet political life. It is my guess that, in planning the final blow against BERIA, MALENKOV succeeded in getting BULGANIN's, i.e. Army, support against BERIA, or rather, against the MGB, which was always disliked and even despised by the Soviet military.
12. It is most significant that among other crimes BERIA was charged with was the "activation of bourgeois nationalist movements in various USSR republics" - i.e. the same crime of which the Georgian political leaders were accused by RUKHADZE in November 1951. [redacted] believe that such a movement was actually in progress and had caused MALENKOV's counteraction as far back as November 1951.
13. If [redacted] the support of MALENKOV by the military in BERIA's elimination is correct, the next question would be, what is MALENKOV's present position as far as the Army is concerned? Having been helped by the military, MALENKOV could hardly get away from some dependence on the Army in the future. So long as BULGANIN remains the nominal military chief, the Army will probably not represent any serious threat to MALENKOV's power. But how long will BULGANIN hold his position? What is ZHUKOV's present attitude towards MALENKOV? ZHUKOV is certainly the most popular person today in the USSR. But we should not forget that this man was humiliated and practically sent into exile by STALIN and that it was MALENKOV who reinstated him and raised him to the second highest position in the Soviet Armed Forces.

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Is there any friendship and/or agreement between MALENKOV and ZHUKOV? If there is, we can expect the fall of BULGANIN and the rise of ZHUKOV rather soon. Even without any such intention on the part of MALENKOV, it is not at all improbable that the Army, feeling its strength over the MGB and even over the USSR Government, could force ZHUKOV's rise to power.

50X1 14. [] not believe that MOLOTOV represents any danger to MALENKOV. Strange as it seems, he has the reputation of being a quiet man, not ambitious, and rather easy to get along with. He is a very popular person with the USSR people, being known as a typical Russian who was never connected with any such unpopular government action as the establishment of kolkhozy, work norms, forced labor camps, etc.

15. As far as the USSR people are concerned, BERIA's successor KRUGLOV is quite unknown. He is just another official of the USSR government with no popularity at all with the people.

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16. [] the hysterics about the "activization or bourgeois nationalist movement in various USSR republics" were staged by MALENKOV in order to give him a pretext for the Russification of many of the national republics of the USSR, which is a necessary prerequisite for strengthening his position and consolidation of power.

50X1 17. [] not expect any basic change of Soviet international policy as the result of STALIN's death, at least not so far as strategy is concerned. The removal of BERIA, who was the instigator of all kinds of underground activities abroad, would probably result in a change of tactics, which might bring about the discontinuation of the policy of behind the scene activity and the replacement of it with more legal and more normal relations between the USSR and the West.

50X1 18. [] not believe that MALENKOV will lead the USSR toward war. On the contrary, in order to consolidate his position, he will need peace for a long time to come. But even then, providing he succeeds in consolidating his power, he would not start a war which could never be popular in the USSR. He would rather adhere to the continuation of the cold war, adjusting its intensity to the internal conditions of the USSR through the various forthcoming periods.

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