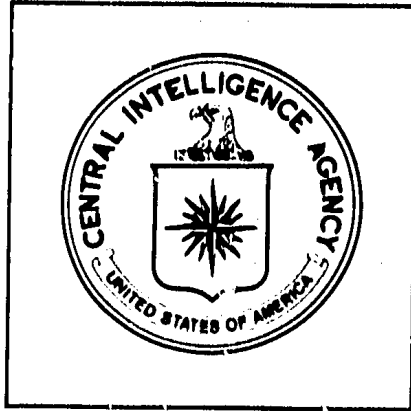


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STAFF NOTES:

Military Developments

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FINLAND: The Lapland Gap

For the second time this year Finland's defense policy has become a subject of public controversy with one of its neighbors. High-ranking Norwegian officers apparently were quite frank during a recent interview with Finnish journalists in expressing their concern with the existence of a "near military vacuum" in northern Finland which might be exploited by the Soviet Union to facilitate the wartime movement of forces from the Leningrad Military District into Norway. The Norwegians have been concerned that Finland, under pressure from both the USSR and domestic leftists, might not resist such a use of its territory by Soviet units outflanking the Norwegian forces in the Finnmark area of northern Norway.

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A similar situation arose earlier this year when the commander of the Swedish armed forces publicly warned that the increased integration of the Soviet and Finnish railroad networks would facilitate the movement of Soviet forces into northern Sweden. The implication that such integration posed a threat to Swedish military defense caused a great deal of acrimonious comment in Sweden, Finland, and the Soviet Union.

Both incidents are illustrative of the concern felt by both of Finland's non-communist neighbors about what the Finns would actually do in a wartime situation in which the Soviets refrained from an attack on the country's vital southern area but insisted on use of northern Finland for the passage of forces westward.

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SRI LANKA: To Receive Osa Patrol Boat From USSR

Sri Lanka will receive an Osa class patrol boat as a gift from the Soviet Union, according to a defense attache report. The Soviets also have agreed to provide advisers and replacement parts for the boat. The patrol boat is scheduled to arrive in Sri Lanka in mid-December,

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and will be the first Soviet-built ship in the inventory. The Sri Lanka Navy probably will use the boat in operations against smuggling and illegal immigration between India and Ceylon.

According to the report, the Osa will carry less than its normal complement of weapons. The missile tubes will be removed, but the gun mounts for the two 30mm AA machine guns will be retained.

Soviet technicians and instructors--the first ever to serve in the country--are scheduled to arrive in Sri Lanka shortly after the patrol boat has been delivered. They will be on a one month temporary assignment, probably to complete the training cycle of the seven Sri Lanka naval officers sent to the Soviet Union in early March for training.

The Sri Lanka navy has some 33 aging ships in its inventory, used mostly for coastal patrol and internal security. Most of the patrol activity is conducted with 45-foot Singaporean built Thornycroft patrol boats and the five Shanghai fast attack gun boats, a gift from China. The navy's effectiveness is limited, restricted severely by the shallowness of coastal water, uncharted and shifting sandbars in the waters surrounding the island, and by the lack of adequate training and competent leadership.

Colombo's decision to acquire the Osa probably is the first step in its plans to upgrade the navy's capability to conduct surveillance of Sri Lanka's coasts and inland waterways. Sri Lankan Navy Chief of Staff Perera said that the navy is looking to the USSR to give them a small destroyer escort to replace the aging Canadian-built river escort, the Gahabahu. According to Perera, the ship would not be a Petya but something smaller.

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