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GENERAL

1. Soviet attitude toward Foreign Ministers' meeting:

By way of pointing out that major Western concessions on preparing a Foreign Ministers' agenda could only result in Soviet advantage, US Embassy Moscow presents

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possible alternative Soviet attitudes toward holding a Foreign Ministers' meeting. The Embassy believes that the USSR still puts considerable store by CFM meetings, at least for disruptive tactics. It is also possible that in the face of a firmly united Western opinion, the USSR would desire a Ministers' meeting to compromise on the substance of some of the issues at stake, and thus attempt to diminish the impetus of the Western defense drive. If this is the case, the Embassy feels that Gromyko will, if necessary, accept a neutral agenda. The Embassy points out that if Gromyko will not yield, as Britain and France fear, it would be evident that the USSR feels no real compulsion at this time to contribute materially to any serious efforts to alleviate European tensions and at most is interested in a Ministers' meeting solely as a forum for propaganda.

2. US delegation's reactions to new Soviet CFM agenda proposals:

Ambassador Jessup, in commenting on the new Soviet proposals of 28 March for a Foreign Ministers' agenda, expresses a belief that Moscow ordered this concession

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to be made at least partly in order to arrive at agreement within a reasonable time. The chiefs of the French and UK delegations clearly consider the new Soviet proposals to be a basis for reaching rapid agreement with the USSR on an agenda, and Jessup anticipated a "serious problem" in the tripartite meeting scheduled for 29 March. Jessup regards the latest Soviet proposals as "the first formal and serious break in the Russian position on anything of major importance," and reports that it was not possible to prevent the Western press from presenting the Soviet move as a concession.

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Comment: The new Soviet proposals can be expected to strengthen public and official determination, in both France and the UK, to press for a Foreign Ministers' conference. The Soviet concessions indicate that the USSR may compromise further if necessary for the sake of achieving a Foreign Ministers' meeting.

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4. US Embassy Moscow estimates Soviet reaction to Japanese treaty draft:



US Embassy Moscow expects a sharp Soviet reaction to the Japanese peace treaty draft. The USSR's tactics would be designed (a) to prevent the conclusion of the treaty on a multilateral basis, (b) to dissuade other countries,

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particularly in Asia, from signing the treaty, and (c) to disrupt the operation of the treaty. In addition, the USSR would attempt to portray Japan as a US colony and a base for US aggression in Asia and also to capitalize on Asian countries' fear of renewed Japanese imperialism. China may be expected to advance the most violent opposition to the treaty.

The Embassy anticipates that Soviet opposition to the draft treaty is capable of limiting achievement of US objectives in Asia, even though a number of states sign the treaty. The USSR would consider that it had gained an advantage if, by its opposition, several independent Asian states did not sign the treaty, and if Communist denunciation of the treaty crystallized Asian distrust of US motives and fear of Japan.

Comment: The USSR has already utilized almost all political and propaganda means at its disposal for opposing a "separate" Japanese peace treaty. However, if the USSR refuses to sign the draft treaty, it will thereby gain a useful lever for exerting pressure on the Japanese Government in the course of bilateral dealings and later treaty negotiations -- since technically a state of war between the USSR and Japan would still exist. If Communist China does not sign the draft, it will possess comparable advantages. It is conceivable that India, in particular, might not be willing to sign a treaty which was unacceptable to both the USSR and Communist China.

FAR EAST

5. Lull in Indochina broken by "heavy" Viet Minh attack in Tonkin:



The US Military Attache in Hanoi states 3.3(h)(2) that Viet Minh forces have begun a heavy attack at Mao Khe, 30 kilometers north-northwest of Haiphong. The attack, which

began during the night and was resumed at daylight, had been in progress for eleven hours at the time of the Attache's report. The Viet Minh push is directed against one of the weakest and most vital areas of the French-defended delta perimeter.



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[redacted] The Mao Khe area, hard to defend because of its position at the foothills of Viet Minh-held mountains, lies close to the road and railroad which connect Hanoi with its supply port of Haiphong. Reports indicate that the weather in Tonkin continues extremely unfavorable for both air operations and ground observation.

EASTERN EUROPE

6. Yugoslavs opposed to any attempt to unseat Hoxha now:

[redacted] In a 29 March article in the Yugoslav news paper Borba, Vladimir Dedijer, secretary of the Yugoslav Parliamentary Committee on Foreign Affairs, expressed the fear that current internal strife in Albania may furnish the USSR with an excuse for armed intervention in the Balkans. According to Dedijer, a purge of individual leaders in Albania has been followed by collective purges of party organizations, which have resulted in an intensification of terror throughout the country. This situation is being exploited by certain elements in Greece and by Albanian emigre groups in Italy, who are parachuting armed men and dropping propaganda leaflets into Albania. Dedijer pointed out that Soviet propaganda has been accusing Yugoslavia of preparing aggressive action against Albania. He added that the actions of the emigres could provide the USSR with a pretext to intervene in "defense of a small socialist country," and might be used as an excuse to launch an attack on Yugoslavia.

Comment: The Tito government has consistently opposed any external intervention in Albania on the grounds that the USSR might use such action as a pretext for armed aggression against Yugoslavia. Another factor bearing on the Yugoslav attitude may be an estimate of its inability to take advantage of unsettled conditions to establish a pro-Tito regime in Albania.

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SCANDINAVIA

7. Soviet official in Norway interested in Norwegian molybdenum deposits:

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Comment: Norway succeeded in eliminating molybdenum (which is on the US 1-A list) from its 1950 trade agreement with the USSR by persuading the Russians that Norway's sole molybdenum mine (at Knaben) had ceased operations for technical reasons. The present Soviet interest may stem from the fact that, late in 1949, a Norwegian business man informed the Soviets that additional molybdenum deposits existed and could be exploited. Although the Knaben mine is now back in operation, the USSR is not known to have raised the question of molybdenum again with Norway.

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