

THE PRESIDENT'S INTELLIGENCE CHECKLIST

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21 MAR. 1962
~~TOP SECRET~~

1. Argentina

a. Frondizi gained at least a breathing spell by yesterday's tentative agreement with armed forces leaders calling for a military-civilian coalition cabinet, strong measures against Communists and Peronistas and ouster of supporters of Frigerio, his controversial adviser. Disagreements over specific points of the agreement and its actual implementation could rekindle the crisis. There is still considerable sentiment within the armed forces for a military government and Ambassador McClintock reports Frondizi has suffered a serious loss of public confidence.

b. The threat of violence continues as Peronistas await orders from Peron in Spain and clarification of the government's intent on allowing them to take office on 1 May. Frondizi has asked us urgently to try to get Franco to persuade Peron not to incite his followers in Argentina to resort to violent action. (See Documents of Interest)

**2. Syrian-Israeli
tensions remain high**

There were two Syrian-Israeli firing incidents on Lake Tiberias yesterday. Both sides are determined to maintain their claimed prerogatives in the area and appear preparing for further action. Ambassador Knight suspects the Syrian government believes the "battle of the water" has already begun and is gambling to forestall the Israeli Jordan River diversion by escalating tension to a point where the UN, led by the US, would step in and force Israel to abandon the project to avoid war.

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**3. Laos impasse
continues**

b. Sarit, has expressed his alarm at Phoumi's stand and emphasized his willingness to do everything he could to bring Phoumi to a Bangkok meeting with Harriman and a compromise settlement. He has sent General Wallop to Savannaket in a last ditch effort to bring Phoumi around. Sarit sees Phoumi as now tied up in a matter of "face" and cautions that he will require "skillful" handling.

(cont'd)

c. King Savang, in his favorite role of detached observer, told Ambassador Brown on Monday that he can see no solution for the "great and tragic drama" in Laos. Brown sums up the session: we can expect no help from the King; his sympathies are already with Phoumi.

4. Berlin

a. Eight Soviet transport flights--two outbound and two inbound in both the central and northern Berlin corridors--were scheduled this morning between 0420 and 0709 Washington time at altitudes from 2,500 to 7,500 feet. A total of six Western flights in the northern and seven in the southern corridor were also scheduled during the period. As of 0830 no incidents or harrassment of Western flights have been reported and all flights proceeded on schedule.

b. Yesterday our autobahn convoy experienced a two-and-half hour delay at the East German border. The Soviet officer ascribed the delay to our failure to give advance notice of the convoy's arrival and requested that such notice be given in the future. This is the first such Soviet request.

c. Recent crossing point activity suggests the East Germans may be preparing to impose on West German visitors to East Berlin the same custom controls now exercised over foreign nationals entering the Communist sector.

5. Guatemala

Surface calm has been restored in the capital and the strike is subsiding. The students have called off their street fighting tactics but announce they will continue anti-government agitation. Behind-the-scenes jockeying among the military continues and Ambassador Bell describes the situation as still uncertain and delicate.

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NOTES

A. A test vehicle was launched from the Soviet Tyuratam missile rangehead yesterday but apparently failed in flight shortly after firing. It was intended to impact on the Kamchatka Peninsula.

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B. Saigon officials are still reassuring us that Madame Nhu's speech did not reflect government views. Diem, somewhat embarrassed by it all, has told Ambassador Nolting her remarks were "politically stupid."

C. Both Qasim and the Kurdish rebels seem to be cranking up for a renewal of hostilities. Qasim is also increasing diplomatic pressures on those countries still recognizing Kuwait.

D. Precarious internal security, political infighting among the tribal factions and African static in the UN are combining to give the Belgians a rough go in setting up their Ruanda-Urundi trust territory for independence this summer.

E. In the wake of the Algerian cease-fire, Egypt may resume diplomatic relations with France and Nasir [redacted] merely expel the French spy trial defendants to avoid further embarrassing De Gaulle. [redacted]

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F. The Egyptians are sending a delegation to Moscow to procure from the USSR more raw materials and semi-processed items now obtained from the West. We suspect the move stems from pressure on Nasir to alleviate Egypt's serious foreign exchange difficulties and his probable disappointment at advice from Western experts to cut his overambitious development program if he wants to qualify for stabilization aid. [redacted]

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DOCUMENTS OF INTEREST

I.

[Redacted]

II.

[Redacted]

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III.

THE DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE