

409731

~~SECRET~~

NEAR/EAST AFRICA BRANCH
OFFICE OF REPORTS AND ESTIMATES
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

WORKING PAPER

NOTICE: This document is a working paper, NOT an official CIA issuance, and has not necessarily been coordinated with other ORE producing components. It represents current thinking by one group of specialists in CIA, and is designed for use by others engaged on similar or overlapping studies. The opinions expressed herein may be revised before final and official publication. It is intended solely for the information of the addressee and not for further dissemination.

Document No. 0005
NO CHANGE in Class. ☐
☒ DECLASSIFIED
Class. CHANGED TO: TS S C
DDA Memo, 4 Apr 77
Auth: DDA REG. 77/1763
Date: 6 MAR 1978 By: OH

Copy for Library

~~SECRET~~

P45

~~SECRET~~

NEAR EAST/AFRICA BRANCH

INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY

Vol. IV No. 13

For Week Ending
6 April 1949

GREECE

Guerrilla manpower potential: It is gradually becoming clear that the Tito-Cominform quarrel, through its divisive effect on the guerrillas and the groups collaborating with them, has major implications regarding the manpower potential of the guerrilla movement. The most serious aspect of the problem at present is the friction existing within the ranks of KKE (Communist Party of Greece) and NOF (Slavo-Macedonian Liberation Front). Greek Communist leader Zachariades, who has admitted that the "Greek Democratic movement" is affected perhaps more than any other group by the "situation in Yugoslavia," probably had this condition in mind in his statement, before the long-awaited NOF Congress which assembled 25 March, stressing the need for unity between Slavo-Macedonians and Greeks. Special appeals have also been addressed by the guerrilla high command to other minorities in north Greece, such as the Moslem groups inhabiting certain border areas of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace, the Turks, and the Pomaks. Significantly, an appeal has been directed even to Albanians, whose existence as a minority in Greece has been virtually fictional since their expulsion at the end of World War II following acts of mass treason during the war. The appeal to the Albanians is consistent with other indications that, while the guerrilla command is now more firmly committed than before to a pro-Cominform course, Greek Communist leaders are making strenuous efforts to prevent the polarization toward Tito of significant numbers of their collaborators in critical areas.

Military situation: Major anti-guerrilla operations in the Peloponnesus, which yielded more than 4,000 guerrilla casualties in three months, were officially terminated on the Greek Independence Day, 25 March, while the aggressive pursuit tactics of the Greek Army have produced 1,000 new casualties in the mountains of central Greece. Despite growing indications of guerrilla manpower and supply difficulties, however, the army's operations have produced only local results to date, as is brought out by the bold movements the guerrillas have just been able to make in the Vitsi and Grammos areas near the Albanian frontier. While 1,000 women reserves were being brought in from Albania to Vitsi, some 2,500 guerrillas were

~~SECRET~~



CIA Reproduction

~~SECRET~~

2.

suddenly moved to Grammos, raising guerrilla strength there to 4,000. Renewed guerrilla efforts are likely in this general area, to counteract operations of the Greek National Forces in the mountains of central Greece.

PALESTINE

The military situation: The military situation in Palestine appears to have been stabilized, at least for the immediate future, now that Israel and Transjordan have reached an armistice agreement. The Syrian bridgehead at Mishmar hay Yarden is still in dispute, but the new Syrian regime is apparently prepared to negotiate with Israel.

The territorial provisions of the Israeli-Transjordan armistice give Transjordan control over the Jenin-Nablus-Tulkarm triangle in central Samaria. In return, Transjordan has assured the Israelis uninterrupted use of the main Haifa-Tel Aviv communication lines (hitherto partially under Iraqi control) by conceding the Afule-Hadera road and the road and railway between Tulkarm and Qalqilya. The Israelis have agreed to leave the Arab villages involved in these changes under Arab control and to make financial compensation to Transjordan for Israeli communication gains. Israel agreed to withdraw from several Arab villages in the Hebron areas, most of which had been occupied during the armistice negotiations by Israeli forces.

Remaining provisions of the armistice are concerned chiefly with Jerusalem and its approaches. The Arabs may now use the main road from Jerusalem to Bethlehem, and the Jews the main Tel Aviv-Jerusalem highway skirting the Arab-held Latrun salient. The Jews are also assured access to religious places in the Old City as well as the Jewish holdings on Mount Scopus and the Mount of Olives. The provision that all questions relating to the Jerusalem area are to be determined by a "special committee" of Israeli and Transjordan representatives may lead to a division of the area into spheres of control in disregard of the UN recommendation for the internationalization of Jerusalem.

The refugee problem: The Arab refugees, who by latest count number more than 800,000, present an apparently insoluble problem involving repatriation, resettlement, and rehabilitation. The Arab governments in a conference

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

3.

called by the PCC (Palestine Conciliation Commission) in Beirut have insisted that repatriation be offered every refugee before the matter of resettlement is considered. Both the UN (in its resolution of 11 December 1948) and the US (in official statements) have asserted the right of the refugees to return to their homes or to receive compensation for confiscated property. Now the PCC is considering proposing to Israel the immediate return of refugees from territory outside the areas allotted to Israel under the UN partition plan but currently under Israel's control. Such a movement would substantially reduce the number of refugees, and economic planners might then be able to make satisfactory resettlement arrangements for those remaining. The Israelis, however, would probably oppose such a plan as constituting a threat to their security. They would consider their claim to peripheral territory weakened by the presence in this territory of a predominantly Arab population, and they would envisage each returning Arab as taking the place of a potential Jewish immigrant.

SYRIA

The Syrian revolt: On 30 March, the Syrian Army under General Zaim seized power in Syria by a coup d'etat and placed leading members of the government, including President Quwatli, under arrest. Since then Zaim's main preoccupation has been to consolidate his position; in this task he has attained a considerable measure of success. New governmental machinery, however, is still in process of organization, apparently by a system of trial and error. It was first announced that a new cabinet had been formed. This cabinet was almost immediately disbanded and replaced by an "administrative" council of technicians, followed by the dissolution of Parliament on 1 April. A committee to draft a new constitution and electoral law has also been established.

Zaim himself has outlined broadly the policy which his regime will follow, although it is difficult at this time to appraise his sincerity. He has affirmed his intention of cooperating with the West, approved in principle the Tapline Agreement, and stated that he is prepared to open armistice negotiations with Israel. (There is still some question whether Israel is prepared to accept Zaim's regime as the legal government of Syria with authority to negotiate.) Zaim has also outlined a program of internal reforms, but its implementation will presumably be delayed until he considers his position secure.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

4.

Zaim's greatest problem at the moment is President Quwatli's refusal to resign. Were Quwatli out of the picture, the way would be clear for Zaim either to arrange to assume the presidency himself or to install someone whom he trusted. He is eager to invest his regime with an aura of constitutionality and hence may be prepared to bring about the unofficial "liquidation" of Quwatli to remove an embarrassing stumbling block.

IRAN

New border incident: A new border incident has taken place in Iranian Azerbaijan, in which a Soviet regiment reinforced by tanks and armored cars reportedly engaged in an overnight battle with Iranian frontier forces. This engagement, which began on 31 March, was preceded by a new round of alarmist reports of increased Soviet activity along the Azerbaijan frontier. According to these reports, the strength of border posts has been increased to up to four times the normal level, maneuvers have been held within sight of Iranian border posts, four Soviet generals have arrived in Baku, and oil and railroad equipment shipments in the Caucasus region have been trebled. Receipt of these reports aroused no particular concern on the part of the Iranian Army, however, and together with the border incident, the latest in a long series, they probably represent continuation of the war of nerves against Iran rather than preparations for an immediate invasion.

INDIA-PAKISTAN

Kashmir problems: Negotiations for a Kashmir truce agreement, as distinct from the present cease-fire, are becoming protracted because of the extreme positions which both India and Pakistan have adopted, presumably for bargaining purposes. As a result, the UN Commission for India and Pakistan, which has thus far considered attainment of a truce to be a matter for direct agreement between the two governments, may soon have to take the initiative by furnishing each government with precise interpretation of its obligations regarding a truce. Meanwhile, the repatriation of refugees remains one of the first basic problems to be solved. The return to Kashmir of all refugees who desire to do so must precede a plebiscite if the voting is to reflect the sentiment of the Kashmir population and is called for by the UN Commission's proposals of 11 December 1948. Several months will probably be required to solve the refugee problem, with its great complexities, after which the major problems of preparing satisfactory electoral rolls and of assuring

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

5.

proper conditions for a fair plebiscite will remain. Since these preparatory moves will not be completed before winter, when a plebiscite is considered impossible, April or May of 1950 appears to be reasonable as a target date for the plebiscite.

NOTED IN BRIEF

Turkey's strong desire to be more definitely included in Western plans against possible Soviet aggression was indirectly emphasized by a remark of Foreign Minister Sadak on his departure from Ankara for the UN General Assembly meetings. Asked by a newspaperman what Turkey's position would be in the event of a war, Sadak confined himself to the unrevealing observation that Turkey would vigorously defend itself if attacked.

* * *

Governmental control over Turkey's Moslem "clergy" is not to be relaxed, despite the new tolerance displayed by the government toward religious instruction. Funds providing for such instruction are to be allocated out of the national purse, and one requirement for would-be imams is that they must have performed their military training first.

* * *

Expressions of friendly invitation to US private capital by Turkish Government officials are becoming more frequent. There is not yet any firm indication, however, that such investment may be made without unreasonable danger of governmental red tape, restriction, and even unfair competition. It is probable that most US investors will require much more than emicable gestures before they loosen up on their much-prized dollars.

* * *

De-facto recognition of Israel has now been extended by Turkey, the first Moslem-populated state to do so. Other Moslem states may well soon follow Turkey's example.

* * *

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

6.

The current shaky relations existing between the Arab states have been highlighted not only by the recent colorless meeting of the Arab League Council in Cairo but also by the bitter attacks appearing in Egyptian opposition newspapers on both Iraq and Transjordan.

* * *

The political party developed from the terrorist Stern Gang, LHY, has abandoned its ultra-right stand. Its members are now required to join Histadruth, the secular socialist labor organization. This move may further weaken the already small party by causing a split between its left and right wing factions.

* * *

The assassination in Asmara of Abdullah Dir Kebire, prominent in the Eritrean Moslem League, indicates the divergence of opinion in Eritrea regarding that country's future. Kebire was planning to leave for Lake Success within the week as a member of the Moslem delegation to the UN to protest the proposed cession of the southern part of Eritrea to Ethiopia. It is likely that the unknown assassin was a member of the Union with Ethiopia Party, which is made up of Coptic Christians and represents approximately forty-five percent of the country's population. The large majority of this party's adherents live in southern Eritrea, where Asmara is situated.

* * *

Iran is considering replacing its present ambassador in Moscow with someone more "acceptable" to the Soviets. The man proposed for the post is Nadr Arasteh, now Minister of Roads and Communications, a career diplomat specializing in Turkish and Russian affairs, who allegedly played along with the Tudeh Party while Governor General of Mazandaran in 1946 and is generally regarded as pro-Soviet. The proposed appointment may be intended as either a prelude to negotiation of modifications in the 1921 Treaty, which has been suggested by the Shah, or as a friendly gesture designed to persuade the Soviets to reduce their present heavy pressure campaign against Iran. In either case it would indicate no switch in Iran's fundamental policy of energetic resistance to Soviet encroachment.

* * *

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

7.

Relations between Afghanistan and Pakistan are approaching what may be a diplomatic break. The Afghan Charge in Karachi and all but one of the ten remaining Afghan Embassy staff members are to depart for Kabul in the near future, while Afghanistan has already held one jirga (tribal conference), at which the tribesmen were assured of Afghanistan's preparedness to "shed its last drop of blood to defend the liberty of its Afghan brothers," and is planning a second jirga later this week at which the issue of peace or war is supposedly to be decided. The Pakistan Government, however, is reportedly confident of the loyalty of the majority of the tribal elements and hence inclined to discount the seriousness of the situation.

*

*

*

The US has decided to support Nepal's application for UN membership, although it does not wish to invite a Soviet veto by taking the lead in the matter. Nepal, which understands the US position, has sent its London Military Attache to the US to facilitate efforts to get it into the UN.

~~SECRET~~