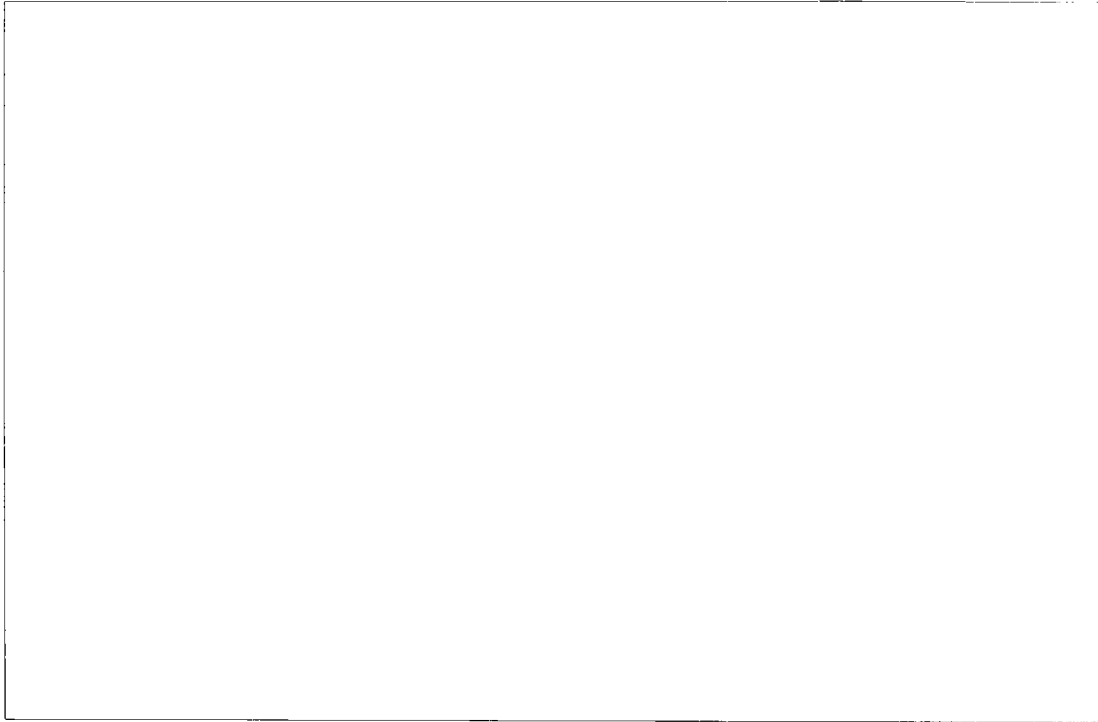



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SECURITY INFORMATION

29 Mar 53  
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2. Molotov offers to intervene on behalf of French internees in Korea:

 In a 26 March interview with French Ambassador Joxe, Molotov offered to intervene with the North Koreans to secure the release of French internees.

The offer came in response to the Ambassador's question on the relationship of Malenkov's statements of peaceful intentions to a Korean settlement.

Joxe regards his interview as one of several Soviet conciliatory gestures which have cost the Soviet Government nothing and have the advantage of relaxing Western vigilance. He does not think that the USSR will forfeit its bargaining power through any substantial concessions.

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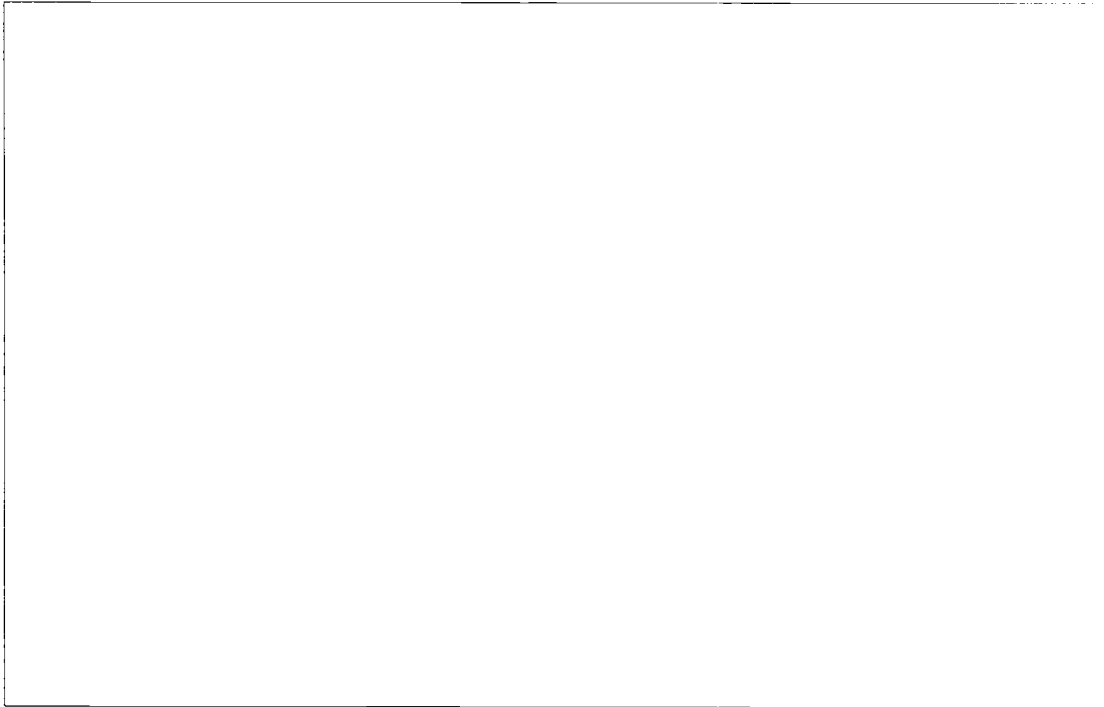
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APPROVED FOR RELEASE DATE:  
24-Mar-2010

The American Embassy recommends that the United States make a similar approach regarding American internees in North Korea.

Comment: Molotov has already offered to intervene for the release of British internees.

Soviet reaction to any American proposal of this nature would help to show whether recent Soviet conciliatory tactics have been primarily aimed at dividing the West or represent a modification in policy by the new regime.



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FAR EAST

4. Comment on the Communist offer to exchange prisoners in Korea:

The Communists' apparent agreement to exchange sick and wounded prisoners in Korea probably represents an attempt to regain the propaganda initiative, not only on an issue of wide humanitarian appeal, but on the whole East-West controversy of which Korea is the focus. The move is consonant with the recently intensified effort to portray the Soviet side as the "camp of peace."

The Communists' statement emphasizes their desire for an agreement in accordance with Article 109 of the Geneva Convention, which specifically provides that no sick or injured prisoner of war "may be repatriated against his will during hostilities." Thus, while the Communists could negate the offer by attaching unacceptable stipulations, they could, in the interest of their broad propaganda objectives, agree on a partial exchange of sick and wounded prisoners without compromising their stand on "total repatriation." They could continue to interpret Article 118 as calling for repatriation of all prisoners following the cessation of hostilities.

Recent propaganda has given no indication that the Communists would be willing to accept a truce on anything but their own terms.

5. Communists in Korea strengthen defenses at Wonsan:

National Security  
Agency - 921  
25 Mar 53  
CANOE

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An intercepted Chinese message reveals that an enemy conference was held on 23 March to implement by 10 April detailed plans for the defense of the Wonsan area. The plans, which involved both Chinese Communist and North Korean forces included the construction of camouflaged positions, reconnaissance of terrain, firing for adjustment, and artillery and infantry coordination.

Comment: This is the first message which has detailed the extent of the enemy's preparations against a possible UN landing on the east coast of Korea. Elements of two Chinese armies were moved to this area during February and March to reinforce the North Korean forces normally stationed there.

6. Joint Communist air force conference being held in Manchuria:

Air Force  
Roundup  
27 Mar 53  
CANOE

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field reports. The conference is apparently sponsored by Joint Air Force Headquarters at Mukden.

A "joint conference," attended by high-ranking officers of four Chinese Communist Air Divisions, and possibly by North Korean and Soviet officials, is being held at Antung on the Sino-Korean border, according to advance

Comment: Although such a conference may be evidence of a decision to employ air units in offensive operations in Korea, there are few indications that an air offensive is being planned in the immediate future. Such reports as have been received suggest that the enemy will continue in a defensive role.

7.

