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25 December 1953

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DIA and DOS review(s) completed.

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SUMMARY

FAR EAST

1. Neutral report on Korean prisoners may intensify Indian demand for UN discussions (page 3).

SOUTHEAST ASIA

2. Viet Minh task force probes central Laos (page 3)

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FAR EAST

1. Neutral report on Korean prisoners may intensify Indian demand for UN discussions:

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The American embassy in London reported on 23 December that the Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission's report on Korean prisoners might "renew" Indian pressure for

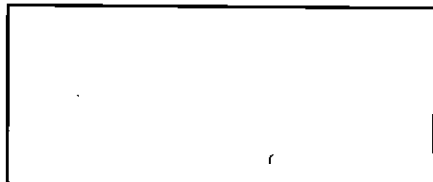
fresh General Assembly instructions before the period of neutral custodianship ends on 23 January.

Comment: Prime Minister Nehru's suggestion on 23 December that early General Assembly discussions be held on the Korean prisoner issue appears to confirm the embassy's observation. India probably recognizes, however, that the UN can do little to solve the problem, and it is likely that the NNRC will have to decide the issue itself.

SOUTHEAST ASIA

2. Viet Minh task force probes central Laos:

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Elements of the Viet Minh 325th Division have captured a small French post in central Laos, and have attacked another, the

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The French believe these attacks are designed to draw their reserves from the delta. They are not overly concerned in view of the large front, difficult terrain, and the limited number of Viet Minh troops involved.

Comment: A penetration of central Laos by the Viet Minh has been anticipated. The forces involved are small and could constitute only a secondary effort against that country. Any major attack would be launched against northern Laos from Tonkin, where the bulk of the enemy forces are located.

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