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EVALUATION OF JOHNSON AND HIS

29 Nov 63

[22-part message complete]

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I. KENNEDY's murder and its causes.

A. Since the announcement of the assassination, there have been rumors in diplomatic circles, and in some of the newspapers and radio broadcasts and various other quarters about the facts and motives of the event and the position of the Dallas authorities toward it, etc.

Some are of the opinion that the crime was arranged by some radical right-wingers who had been aroused by KENNEDY's policy which advocated racial equality, by his position toward some of the big industrial forces, particularly steel, and by his strategy which [Part 2] called for a truce with the Soviets and for finding spheres of co-operation with them. Others believe that the crime was set up by the radical Communists who oppose the policy of peaceful coexistence. One faction of that [group] said that the crime was an individual act committed by a fanatic or a deranged person.

B. The killing of OSWALD, who was accused of KENNEDY's murder, and the circumstances under which it was committed and the new suspicions it raised in and outside of America [I wd G] President JOHNSON (B val to instruct) the [Part 3] FBI and the Department of Justice to make a comprehensive investigation of the matter and not to be content with the investigations which were being made by the state in which the crime was committed. It was

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☐ also reported today that the Senate Judiciary Committee would in turn request an investigation of the matter and also discussion of legislation to make the murder of a President a federal crime which would not fall under the legal jurisdiction of any state.

C. It is hoped that the coming investigations will reveal the following: [Part 4]

Was OSWALD the killer and what were his motives? If OSWALD was not the killer, who committed the crime? Was it a conspiracy or an individual act? Was it an American or an international conspiracy?

The prevailing view among circles known for conservatism is that it is essential to make a meticulous and public investigation to forestall rumors and in order to dispel unjustified suspicions, elevate the power of the law and protect American honor in the eyes of the world and history.

II. The new President and his policy: [Part 5]

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The leaders of Congress from both parties and the top officials in the government and the press and radio worked energetically to prevent division and confusion((A)) life to normal, after it had almost come to a standstill, by supporting the new President and advocating unity and working for the future. In order to restore confidence and clarify matters, the President hastened to announce his domestic and foreign policy in a speech which he delivered to Congress in joint session, with the chiefs of the diplomatic missions and representatives of the international and American press also present. [Part 6]

He announced that his foreign and domestic policy would be a continuation and implementation of the policy of his predecessor:

A. From the international standpoint, he stated that he supported the policy of seeking peace and exploring spheres of co-operation, even with antagonists, offering aid to emerging nations, bolstering the Western alliance and fulfilling America's obligations from South Viet Nam to Berlin. He summarized his foreign

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[] policy by saying that America would be ready for peace or war.

B. From the domestic standpoint, he also adhered to KENNEDY's program and urged [Part 7] Congress to hasten to enact the racial equality bill, the tax reduction bill, the education law, etc.

This speech is the first official document which, at least on the surface, reveals that the new President will adhere to KENNEDY's foreign and domestic policy. The view which is current in some Western diplomatic circles is that the new President is an expert in the methods and the directing of American partisan policy and that he was extraordinary in his handling of the various currents in Congress; however, [Part 8] he has not been sufficiently experienced in foreign affairs and he leans more toward the conservatives than the liberals. Some of these circles have also stated some apprehensions about him and have said that he is from the recalcitrant, conservative South and that his connection with the oilmen in Texas is well known and that his long service in the Armed Forces Committee in the Senate has made him closely connected with the top men of the armed forces, and these persons do not like KENNEDY's policy which advocated trying to reach an understanding with the Russians. Then, his friendship with the American Ambassador in Bonn, [Part 9] Mr. MCGHEE, who leans toward ADENAUER's views on Moscow, might make him more inclined toward a policy of toughness, not truce, with regard to the Communist camp.

Some Britons think it possible that KHRUSHCHEV will have no confidence in him and that DE GAULLE may seize the opportunity to activate his plans in Europe. They, therefore, advocate that Britain take the initiative in playing a more prominent role in the Western camp in the directing of international policy.

Nevertheless, the prevailing view here at present--if nothing happens to force him to change--is that he will not change KENNEDY's foreign policy [] [Part 10] nor in method and [] to give assurance. He, therefore, will retain most of KENNEDY's advisers, the most important being his number-one adviser in international affairs, BUNDY. Since the new President has a propensity for domestic political affairs, they expect him to rely more on the

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[] Secretary of State. It is well known that JOHNSON especially appreciates RUSK.

Political circles here also believe that [Part 11] he will continue the domestic policy of his predecessor, at least until the presidential elections. It is, therefore, (B val supposed) that he (B val will retain) most of his Cabinet and will enter the election campaign on the basis of KENNEDY's program. Also, they think it most likely that JOHNSON will be the candidate of the Democratic Party in the coming presidential elections at the end of next year. They think that the chances of GOLDWATER, the right-wing Republican, have lessened and that the Republicans might nominate ROCKEFELLER or NIXON and that the latter's chances have increased. [Part 12]

It is risky to make any predictions now about the results of the coming presidential campaign. Nevertheless, it appears that it will be between JOHNSON and a middle-of-the-road Republican not a radical right-winger, because the prevailing sentiment of public opinion is a demand to repair the breach and close the wound and to raise [to higher priority] the policy of reconciliation and interest in domestic affairs.

Some of Peking's supporters in North Viet Nam, Laos and North Korea are reiterating that KENNEDY's murder reveals a victory of reactionary trends. It is to be noted that at present there is an increase in the activity of the Viet Cong forces in South Viet Nam. [Part 13] Also, the press of North Korea and the Pathet Lao in Laos have intensified their attack on Washington. They explain the position of Peking and its supporters [] that on the one hand, their view may be represented in [the statement] that the policy of the new President will be less flexible than that of his predecessor but, on the other hand, perhaps the attack is a means of testing the rigidity of the new American administration.

Some circles in Britain believe that JOHNSON is an astute politician who is skillful in figuring and evaluating and a conservative who is practiced in conducting a policy of conciliation. [Part 14]

KHRUSHCHEV, on the surface, appears sympathetic but he hides

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[] heart that is unyielding.

III. The Embassy's observations:

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A. KENNEDY's death has created a new situation in America and on the international scene, the landmarks of which are at present unclear. Therefore, it appears to us that the position which prevails in Western and Eastern diplomatic circles and in the neutral group is one based on watchfulness and acting with extreme care and caution and attempting to begin a careful operation to disclose, on the one hand, the real leanings [Part 15] of the new administration and its method of operation and the forces which can influence it, while working on the other hand to establish friendly, constructive relations with it as far as possible.

B. This has been clear in the contacts of MIKOYAN in Washington and his statements about his government's desire to continue the policy of reaching an understanding and in the reports of some Russian diplomats that KHRUSHCHEV and JOHNSON must meet, etc. The same attitude is to be noted with the British, the French, the Yugoslavs, etc. [Part 16]

C. Matters will remain unclear as long as the circumstances, motives and forces behind KENNEDY's death remain undefined. Then, any basic surprise in this regard might have a long-range effect on domestic and external conditions. The present [situation] is that KENNEDY and his top aides sensed the toughness, and (B val despair) of the forces which opposed their liberal, realistic policy and, therefore, had not concealed that from us, something which we had explained fully to the Ministry.

C. [sic] Despite the obvious difference in the personalities of KENNEDY and JOHNSON-the former was a blend [Part 17] of idealism, and realism, rare intelligence, broad knowledge, deep understanding of the developments of history and the secrets of human psychology at its highest and lowest, loyalty to the welfare of the world and his country and of courage and fidelity to the rule of reason and the bond of friendship; also, he [1 wd G] drawing around him domestic and foreign policies while JOHNSON has more of an inclination and adherence than KENNEDY

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☐ to the economic system based on free enterprise and, therefore, is more inclined to the right wing [Part 18] and closer to the conservative policy and the past generation and further from the left wing which is more intellectual and possesses long-range imagination and which KENNEDY had led--despite this, it is [1 wd G] at present to make any predictions about the final course which the new President will follow. The prevailing view here is that there will be no basic change in KENNEDY's policy until the presidential elections are held the end of next year. Nevertheless, it depends on the development of events. [Part 19].

D. Signs that KENNEDY's policy will be continued appear in the speech of the new President before Congress, the statements of top officials here in the State Department, the writings of top writers and the retention, so far, of the members of KENNEDY's cabinet and his top advisers and confidants in the White House, the State Department and other departments.

E. Then, the many complications domestically and externally would make any minor change, particularly toward Moscow, easy practically but dangerous realistically. [Part 20]

Since it is likely that the new President will be less (B val able) to resist pressure than his predecessor and since, because of his long service in domestic politics, he may by nature be more prone to keep considerations of domestic politics in mind and to proceed in conformity with their (B val requirements) and to endeavor to satisfy them and because his philosophy and his methods are different from those of his predecessor. It would therefore be to our interest until the presidential elections are held to follow a policy which would not expose him to pressure or embarrassment so as not to enable our enemies to draw him [Part 21] over to their side. This is the essence of the matter at present. It would appear that our opponents will try at the first opportunity to complicate matters between us and the new administration by exploiting: the situation in Yemen; or the Algerian-Moroccan dispute and our position toward it; or the Arab-Israeli dispute if they find a chance to raise it; etc.

In the light of the above paragraph, it would appear to us

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at present that JOHNSON may continue the policy of his predecessor toward us. He may be encouraged to do that by the [Part 22] positive results achieved by the policy of his predecessor in this regard and by the supporters of this policy both in and outside the government, the most important being Secretary of State RUSK and FULBRIGHT, Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, a confidant of JOHNSON and one of the first ones who supported him as a candidate for president in the 1960 elections.

((A)) Obvious omission.

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