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NEAR EAST/AFRICA BRANCH

INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY

For Week Ending  
15 September 1948

Vol. III No. 36

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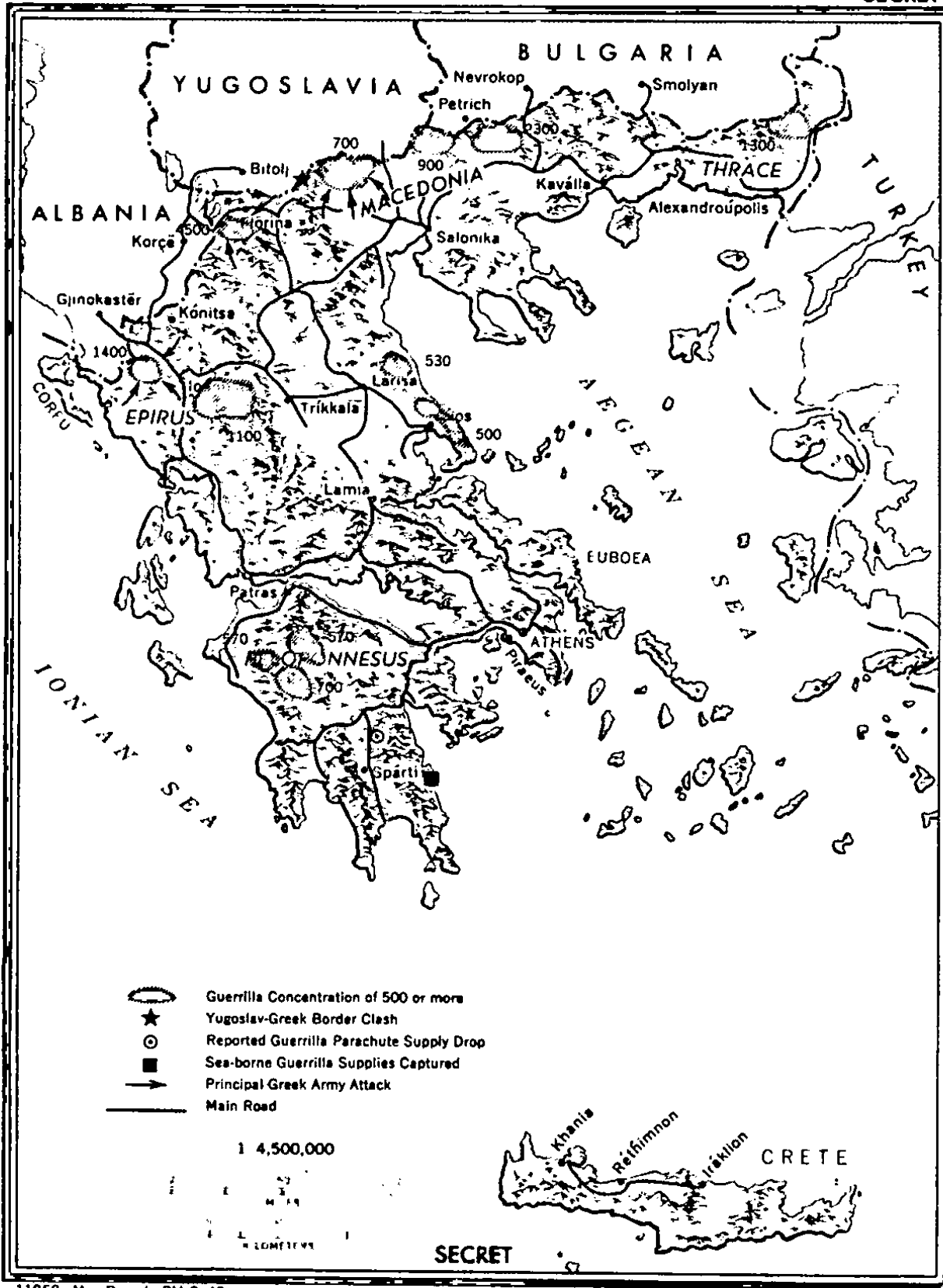
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GREECE: SITUATION MAP-11 SEPTEMBER 1948

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## NEAR EAST/AFRICA BRANCH

## INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY

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## GREECE

Sharp guerrilla fighting continues throughout Greece. Despite some army successes, the guerrillas have been able to maintain their numerical strength by the use of reserves from Bulgaria as well as by enforced recruitment inside Greece. The main effort of the army is currently directed against the last rebel stronghold on the Albanian border and against 4,500 guerrillas who escaped from the Grammos battle and re-established themselves a short distance to the north. These rebel units are offering strong resistance to the army in an attempt to keep the supply lines from Albania open. The eastward movement of many units, however, suggests that Markos is not confident that these pockets can be defended and is therefore attempting to establish an alternative supply line from Bulgaria down the east coast of Greece. The general pattern of guerrilla deployment indicates that the guerrillas are trying to stave off defeat until winter weather makes further army operations impractical. It is believed that they will succeed in this effort.

The selection of the Greek delegation to the UN General Assembly has given dissenting elements within the Liberal Party a new opportunity to challenge party unity and the continuation of the Liberal-Populist coalition government. Again led by deputy party leader Venizelos, 35 Liberal deputies recently passed a resolution--obviously aimed at Populist Foreign Minister Tsaldaris--calling on Liberal Prime Minister Sophoulis to head the UN delegation, on the ground that the selection of any other leader for the delegation would be harmful to the national interest. This resolution evoked a protest from Tsaldaris over the difficulties of cooperation but had no further adverse effect. On the next day the usual Sophoulis-Tsaldaris joint statement about the necessity for continued collaboration was issued, and although Sophoulis later told a Liberal Party meeting that he did not object in principle to going to Paris it is unlikely that he will actually accompany the delegation. While a Liberal Party split has thus been postponed, a genuine solution of intra-party tension has not been reached, and a threat to the coalition government still exists.

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## TURKEY

The creation of a "free" zone in the Turkish Mediterranean port of Iskenderun, which is now being contemplated, will ease the trade difficulties of the north Syrian hinterland by making available to this area its natural and traditional outlet to the sea. In view, however, of the strong nationalist and xenophobic temper of the Syrian people, the proposed Turkish gesture of economic amity is not likely to reconcile the country to Turkish sovereignty over the former Syrian province of Hatay, in which Iskenderun is located. Although the Hatay question is apparently a dead issue, it will be neither forgiven nor forgotten by the Syrians for many years to come. In the meantime, in spite of a "free" zone in Iskenderun and special transit privileges at Beirut, Syria will want a deep-water port of its own and will continue to attempt to build up Latakia as a rival to Lebanese, as well as Turkish, ports, on which it would otherwise be almost completely dependent for its foreign trade.

## PALESTINE

No decisive developments in Palestine can be expected until the General Assembly takes (or fails to take) action on the issue at the forthcoming meeting in Paris. In spite of periodic artillery duels in Jerusalem, both Arabs and Jews appear to be marking time in the hope that international opinion will decisively support their respective causes. The Arabs are generally more conciliatory than they were six months ago, but the Jews have increased their demands to such an extent that the area of disagreement between the belligerents is as wide as ever. Unless a solution can be imposed by the UN, it seems likely that the truce will completely collapse. The Provisional Government of Israel is feeling the economic strain of maintaining on a war basis an army of more than 100,000 troops and will almost certainly resume hostilities if the UN is unable to effect a settlement. Although Arab leaders appear to have little enthusiasm for continuing the war, they will attempt to prevent their armies from being pushed out of Palestine by the Jews; and in any event, they will probably support guerrilla action for some time to come. For these reasons they are making preparations to combine their military commands, to obtain arms and ammunition from abroad, and to build up an independent Palestinian guerrilla army.

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## IRAN

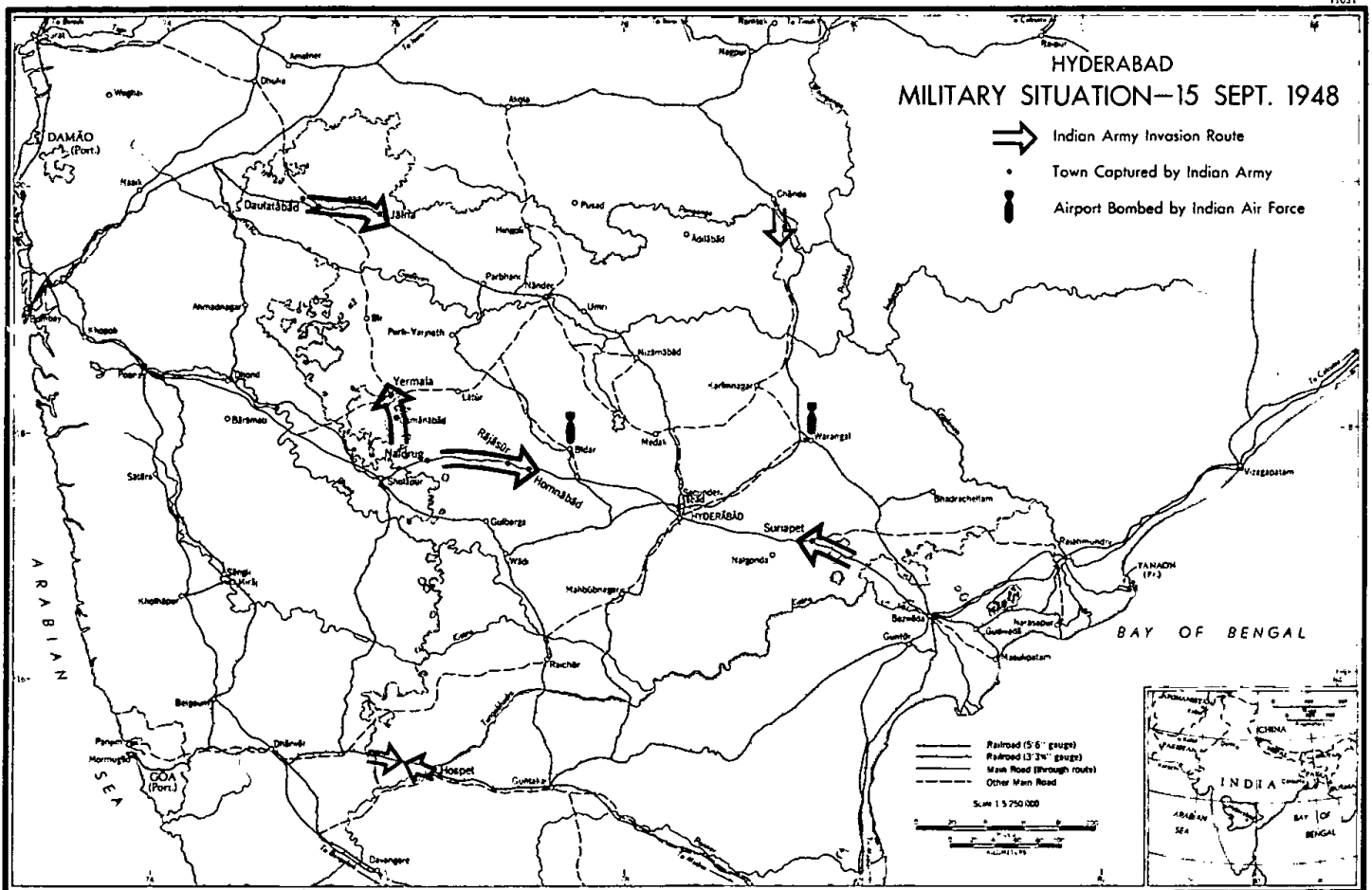
The USSR is apparently preparing to capitalize on the popular discontent in Iran which has been mounting over the government's failure to initiate internal reforms. While the recent announcement (over a clandestine radio presumably located in Soviet territory) of the formation of an "Azerbaijan Free Government" may be but another phase of the long-maintained Soviet war of nerves, it may also presage a serious attempt to re-establish an autonomous regime in Azerbaijan, where dissatisfaction with the Iranian Government is particularly strong. Although the Iranian Government may be expected to deal effectively with any local subversive movement which is not given foreign military support, the continuation of resistance to over-all Soviet pressure will depend largely on Iran's confidence in obtaining effective US support. Recent criticism of the US arms credit program in military and court circles, on the ground that key items of materiel have not been forthcoming, indicates that Iranian leaders have some misgiving about the extent of US interest in protecting Iran.

Three hundred and sixty Iranian tribal chieftains were scheduled to assemble in Tehran on 13 September for a conference with army leaders. The ostensible purpose of the meeting was to display the strength of the army and to convince the chiefs that the army is available for their protection. Army Chief of Staff Razmara says, however, that the actual reason for assembling the chieftains was to insure the coordination of tribal operations in the event that Iran is attacked by the USSR. The calling of this unprecedented conclave appears to be another step in the conciliatory policy recently adopted by the army toward the tribes. While the conference may lead to greater internal stability and to greater efficiency in dealing with Soviet subversive activities, it will have little effect on Iran's military capabilities vis-a-vis the USSR.

## INDIA-PAKISTAN

The death of Mohammed Ali Jinnah is not expected to have any immediate effect on the conduct of Pakistan's affairs, despite his special qualities of leadership. During Jinnah's long illness the details of policy were worked out for his approval by Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan and Foreign Minister Zafrullah Khan, and since these men who held Jinnah's confidence will remain in power, the loss of Jinnah will probably be felt only indirectly. Neither Liaquat Ali nor Zafrullah Khan has shown Jinnah's ability to exercise long-run leadership. The absence of Jinnah's astuteness and of his calculated use of authority may make

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it more difficult to restrain the element of public opinion and of Pakistan officialdom which seeks bolder action against India.

The newly appointed acting Governor General of Pakistan, Khwaja Nazimuddin, will not exercise any decisive influence in the immediate future, although his vigorous efforts on behalf of social legislation, education, and agricultural development indicate that he may eventually play an important role in Pakistan affairs. While Nazimuddin may have been a compromise candidate and while his "acting" status introduces some uncertainty, it is likely that his selection was a shrewd move to tie East Pakistan more closely with the larger western part of the dominion. Nazimuddin is a member of an old East Bengal Moslem family and has a long and distinguished political career which in recent years has included leadership of the East Bengal Moslem League and service in the US and at the UN.

India's campaign in Hyderabad appears to be well planned and executed, and it may result in Indian control of Hyderabad City and other important points in the state within a few days. India has committed to the operation an estimated 20-25,000 troops, divided into six forces which jumped off simultaneously. The most important column, estimated to be the bulk of the Indian 1st Armored Division, is advancing eastward toward Hyderabad City from Sholapur, along the main road from Bombay. This force has reportedly advanced to within 125 miles of a smaller tank-infantry column advancing on Hyderabad City from the east. Another major force, advancing from the northwest, has moved well past Auranabad, the second largest city in Hyderabad, while other detachments have moved into the southwest and northeast corners of the state. The absence thus far of any notable resistance on the part of Hyderabad's 25,000-man mercenary army suggests that the Nizam may contemplate a close-in defense of his capital and of the nearby garrison city of Secunderabad or may attempt to cut behind the advancing Indian columns. Such tactics are not likely to have any lasting success; although the Hyderabad Army is fairly well trained and equipped, it probably lacks materiel with which to resist armor effectively and its movements are handicapped by Indian control of the main roads. The violently anti-Indian Razakar irregulars, who may number as many as 50-100,000, will probably take months to subdue but are incapable of preventing Indian seizure of Hyderabad's major cities and installations.

The invasion of Hyderabad is not expected to precipitate open war between Pakistan and India. Although the incident has provoked strong feelings in both dominions, and a flareup of Hindu-Moslem rioting throughout the subcontinent remains a grave possibility, communal disorders will probably be held to a minimum. The government of each

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dominion is aware of the dangers inherent in communal action, and each has strengthened its security forces during the past year. Moreover, the Government of Pakistan, despite the urgings of some zealots, is not likely to risk giving direct aid to the Nizam, particularly in view of the speed with which the Indian forces are accomplishing their mission. Hyderabad's appeal to the UN, if acted on by the Security Council, can result in little more than a rebuke to India and a plebiscite, which will insure Hyderabad's accession to India and thus confirm the latter's victory. Once Indian control of Hyderabad is consolidated, however, India may well intensify its activities in Kashmir. Pakistan, nursing resentment over the action in Hyderabad, will feel compelled to do likewise, with the result that the undeclared war between the two dominions may slowly expand into a major conflict.

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