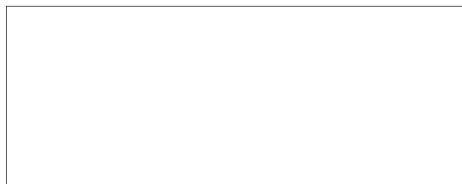


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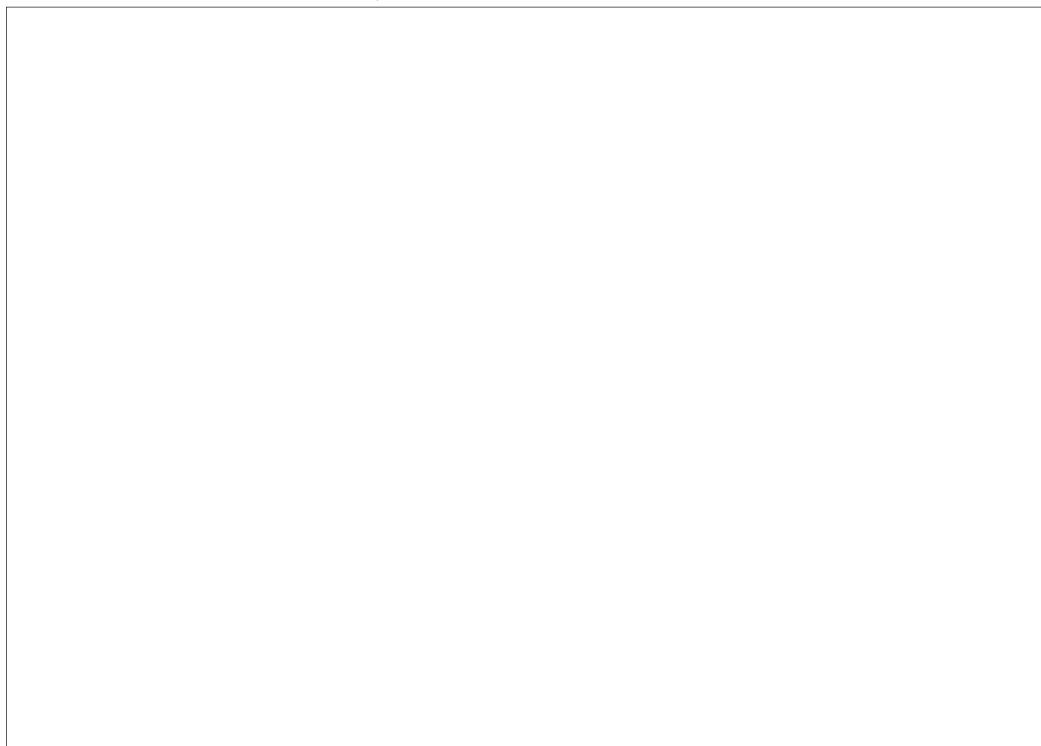


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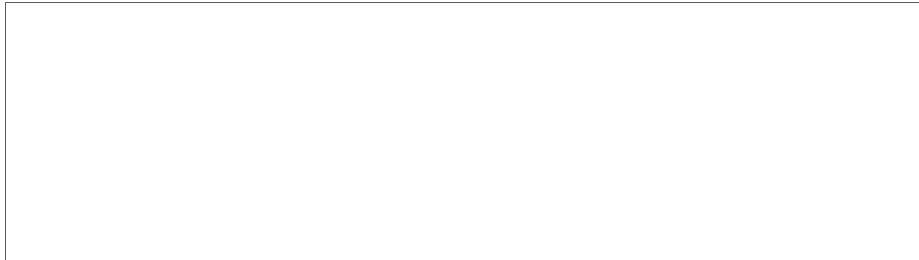
**CURRENT
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BULLETIN**

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**OFFICE OF CURRENT INTELLIGENCE
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY**



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1. JORDAN AND SYRIA REPORTEDLY SIGN MILITARY ALLIANCE

Comment on:

Jordan and Syria are reported to have concluded a "united frontier agreement." The agreement would have the effect of making an Israeli attack on either party an attack on both.

A meeting between the Syrian army chief of staff and the new commander of Jordan's Arab Legion was reported to have been followed on 24 March by a meeting of Syrian prime minister Ghazzi and Jordanian foreign minister Khalidi.

Pro-Egyptian elements in the new Jordanian army command apparently are moving quickly to swing Jordan into the Egyptian-Syrian-Saudi Arabian camp.

Any closer ties between Syria and Jordan will almost certainly lead London further to reconsider British relations with Jordan. Under the Anglo-Jordanian treaty Britain is obligated to come to Jordan's defense if the country is attacked.

These events will convince Israel that it has been encircled by the "long arm" of Egyptian prime minister Nasr. [redacted]

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2. USSR REPORTED SEEKING FRENCH SUPPORT FOR CONFERENCE ON NEAR EAST

[REDACTED] [REDACTED] the Soviet Union might consider stopping sending arms to the Near East if a conference of all the great powers reached general agreement on this issue. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Premier Bulganin was noncommittal with Auriol regarding Moscow's views on French policies in North Africa. [REDACTED]

Comment

In mid-March, Foreign Minister Pineau proposed a meeting of Britain, France, and the United States which would call upon the USSR to halt the arms race in the Middle East. Premier Mollet stated on 24 March that an embargo on arms to the area must be imposed "very soon."

The USSR has hinted several times since last summer that it would be willing to participate in a great-power conference on Middle Eastern problems, but that the initiative must come from the West. Although Moscow has referred to the UN Security Council as better qualified to deal with the problem than the tripartite powers, it would probably prefer a special conference--including Egypt and possibly India--to deal with the area's problems.

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3. USSR REPORTED WILLING TO SUPPLY ARMS TO NORTH AFRICAN NATIONALISTS

[redacted] The leader of the Tunisian nationalists in Libya, Abdul Aziz Chouchane, said in early March that the USSR has agreed to supply free, via Egypt, any arms needed by nationalists in French North Africa, [redacted]

[redacted] Chouchane recently returned to his headquarters in Tripoli after a visit to Egypt where he said the Cairo office maintained by the nationalists made the approach to the Russians.

[redacted]

Comment

Chouchane is chief agent in Libya for exiled Tunisian extremist leader

Salah ben Youssef.

It is highly unlikely that Moscow would want to jeopardize its relations with France, at this time, by becoming involved in a direct deal with the nationalists in French North Africa. The USSR might be instrumental, however, in making arms available to nationalists by dealing with a third party--such as Egypt or Libya.

Soviet bloc arms may, in fact, have already reached nationalist guerrilla fighters in French North Africa via Libya. [redacted]

[redacted] definitely one and possibly four shipments of Czech machine guns and ammunition arrived in Libya during the first two months of 1956.

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4. AMBASSADOR RIDDLEBERGER COMMENTS ON YUGOSLAV-SOVIET RELATIONS



Ambassador Riddleberger believes that the Sixth Plenum of the Yugoslav Communist Party, held in mid-March, concluded in secret session, that the changes in the Soviet Communist Party were real and that the time had come to move toward the establishment of party relations.

In the ambassador's opinion, the Yugoslavs have no clear idea how rapidly party relations may develop, but they probably will not abandon the cautious policy they have adopted in approaching this problem. The evolution of Soviet policy will have to go a long way, he believes, before Belgrade would permit ideological reconciliation with the USSR to jeopardize its ties with the West.

Comment

Yugoslav leaders have made it clear that they now consider the way open to establishing party relations with all Communist parties. In mid-March, a delegation of the Yugoslav party's central committee attended the funeral of Polish party leader Bierut. On its return, the delegation stopped off in Prague for conversations with members of the politburo of the Czech party.

The Yugoslavs apparently believe that the West can be persuaded that interparty relationships with the other Communist parties do not mean that Belgrade has returned to the Soviet fold. Yugoslavia still considers its interests best served by maintaining a position between East and West.

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5. BRITISH ENVOY IN PEIPING FORESEES NO BREAK IN SINO-SOVIET ALLIANCE

[REDACTED] The USSR cannot afford to allow a Chinese Communist defeat as long as the Sino-Soviet alliance exists, according to a study prepared by the British embassy in Peiping. The Soviet Union is therefore expected to restrain Communist China in the international field as long as Chinese industrial and military weakness continues.

The embassy does not foresee the Chinese Communists taking the initiative to break away from the alliance until China is industrially more self-sufficient--perhaps in 10 or 15 years. The relaxation of embargo measures and admission of Peiping to the UN therefore would not materially encourage Communist China to break with the USSR, in the opinion of the British embassy.

Comment

There have been various reports but no conclusive evidence that the Soviet Union is attempting to restrain the Chinese Communists. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Such issues as embargoes and UN representation have not been the primary factors in cementing the Sino-Soviet alliance. Mao Tse-tung espoused the policy of "lean to one side" (toward the Soviet Union) in 1949 and concluded the Sino-Soviet alliance in February 1950, before the issues of embargoes and UN representation became acute.

[REDACTED]

6. SOVIET AID TO BURMA

Comment

Mikoyan, a first deputy Soviet premier, led a 40-man delegation to Pakistan's republic day celebrations on 23 March. He plans trade talks with the Pakistanis and will also visit India and North Vietnam. His visit to Burma, as well as Kaganovich's and Saburov's, was requested by U Nu and is connected with planning for technical and capital assistance.

The Burmese, who were reported staggered when they learned of the USSR's grandiose plans for a technological institute, have announced that the institute will have facilities to train 1,000 students at the college level and 100 post-graduate students. The Russians are also reported planning to build apartments for the faculty.

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THE ARAB-ISRAELI SITUATION
(Information as of 1700, 24 March)

[redacted]
[redacted]
[redacted] an Egyptian intent to attack Israel soon. Among other indications, [redacted] construction of storage depots in Sinai; recent Egyptian divisional maneuvers based on cutting off the Negev, capturing Beersheba and linking up with Jordan's Arab Legion; and training of units in Sinai in attacking mock villages constructed to resemble Israeli border settlements. [redacted] it could be assumed Egypt would be ready to attack by May or June, and this consideration had recently forced Israel to undertake all-out defense measures. Although life in Israel was still normal, progressive dislocation toward maximum war economy would soon develop. [redacted]

Israeli reaction to the American call for a UN Security Council meeting has been critical. An Israeli Foreign Ministry official saw the move as primarily a device to further postpone granting arms to Israel, and several newspapers dwelt on the opportunity the meeting might provide to enhance the Soviet Union's role in the [redacted] Near East. [redacted]

The Egyptian press has played up speculative reports regarding the United States' intentions in calling the meeting. The American embassy in Cairo believes the Egyptian regime is still studying the line it will adopt on the question. The embassy feels, however, that Cairo will claim that Egypt has accepted all recent proposals by UN officials concerning border tension.
[redacted]

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