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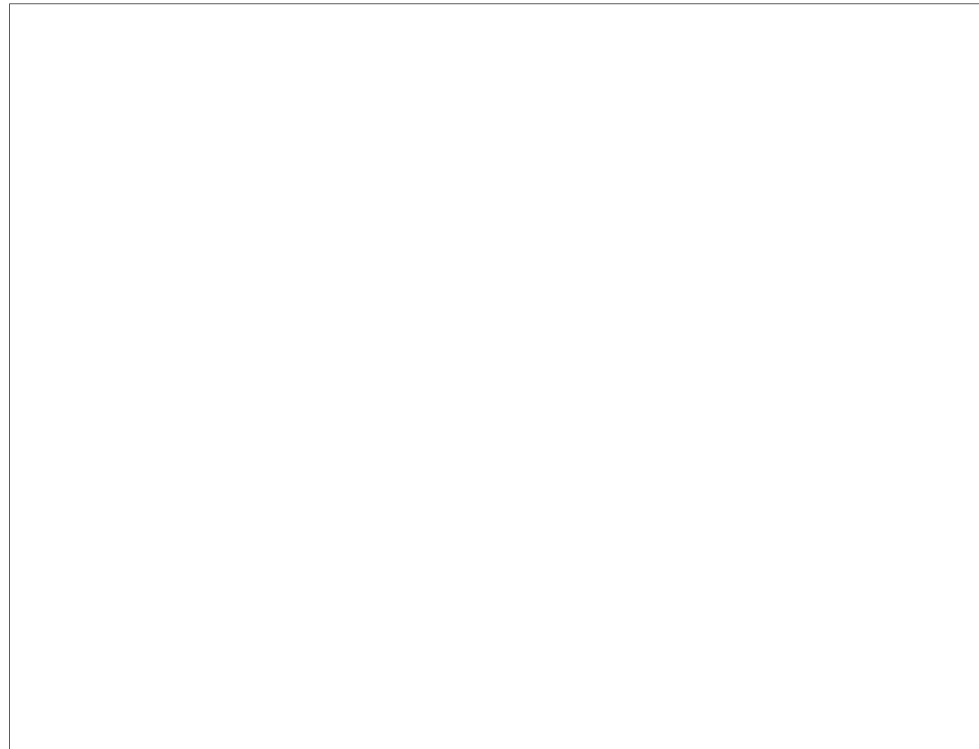


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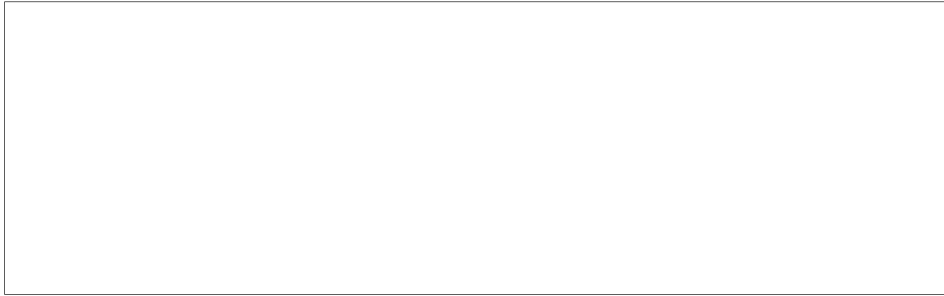
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1. FRENCH MAY INVITE SOVIET LEADERS TO VISIT PARIS

[REDACTED] The French embassy in London is alerting certain British newspaper correspondents that the French government is thinking seriously of

[REDACTED] inviting Soviet leaders Khrushchev and Bulganin to Paris following their visit to Britain. Premier Mollet is said to favor such a move, since he would probably find it difficult to visit Moscow himself, particularly during the North African crisis.

Comment

The visit of the Soviet leaders to Britain is tentatively scheduled for the latter half of April.

Foreign Minister Pineau denied to an American representative on 7 February that any consideration had been given to inviting the Soviet leaders to Paris. Pineau feels, however, that a Soviet invitation for him and Mollet to visit Moscow is imminent. Both he and Premier Mollet have stressed to the American embassy that French opinion, particularly in their own Socialist Party, does not permit them to neglect any gesture that would dramatize France's desire for peace.

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2. YUGOSLAV AMBASSADOR COMMENTS ON HIS VISIT TO KHRUSHCHEV

[REDACTED] Yugoslav ambassador Vidic in Moscow has informed Ambassador Bohlen that he told Khrushchev on 12 February that Yugoslavia would not send a delegation to the 20th Party Congress, but he would himself attend as an observer. Vidic told Bohlen his government is primarily interested in seeing if the party congress reaffirms the concept that "each country should seek socialism by its own path."

Khrushchev, in reply to a query by Vidic, said that the chief purpose of recent Soviet statements about Moscow's intention to maintain and support the Cominform was "to maintain the right of Communist Parties to have co-operative interparty relationships." He added that the Cominform as a body and mechanism for such consultation was of secondary importance and had not met since 1949.

Comment

Yugoslavia's designation of its ambassador rather than a group of party leaders to attend the Soviet party congress underlines its reluctance to re-establish party ties at this time. Yugoslav officials have been skeptical of the sincerity of the USSR's agreement last June in Belgrade that each state has the right to find its own path toward socialism.

Yugoslavia has repeatedly called for the dissolution of the Cominform, while indicating a willingness to "exchange experiences" with individual Communist Parties--just as it would with "other socialist" groups--provided a satisfactory basis could be established.

Khrushchev's reference to the secondary importance of the Cominform was apparently designed to mollify the Yugoslavs. Khrushchev and Bulganin last December publicly disavowed speculation that the USSR might dissolve the Cominform and strongly defended it as a "generally accepted form of international contact."

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3. PEIPING'S WARM RECEPTION OF THAI AND CAMBODIAN VISITORS

Comment on:



The Chinese Communists are sparing no efforts to convince Thailand's Economist Party leader Thep Chotinuchit and Cambodia's Prince Sihanouk, who are now visiting Communist China, of Peiping's desire for close relations. Mao Tse-tung granted one of his rare interviews to the leader of the unofficial Thai mission on 10 February, and Premier Chou En-lai led a high-level Chinese official delegation on 14 February to greet Prince Sihanouk on his arrival in Peiping.

Thep is Thailand's leading advocate of neutralism and the Chinese Communists obviously hope that after his return to Thailand he and other members of parliament will exploit any opportunities created by the visit to increase pressure on government leaders for establishment of official Sino-Thai relations. Thep's trip has already received wide and favorable publicity in Bangkok.

Prince Sihanouk, following his recent visit to the Philippines, pointedly reaffirmed his neutralist views. Peiping will probably use this opportunity to influence him to follow the lead of other neutralist leaders and sign a joint communiqué subscribing to the "five principles of peaceful coexistence." Similar efforts will be made to influence Mohammad Ali and Sir John Kotelawala, prime ministers of Pakistan and Ceylon, during their forthcoming visits to China. 

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4. REVOLT IN EL SALVADOR REPORTED PLANNED FOR 15 FEBRUARY

[REDACTED] Lt. Colonel Rafael Carranza Amaya, Salvadoran presidential candidate of the opposition Authentic Constitutional Party, plans a revolt on 15 February,

[REDACTED]

Comment

Carranza Amaya, who played a leading role in the 1948 revolution, has a strong personal following within the army, and might have sufficient military backing to effect a coup. He has been described as "a throwback to the old-style Central American dictator."


Political tension in El Salvador is high, and the danger of a military coup or of violence increases as the 4 March elections approach. The army, which has often taken a decisive role in the presidential succession, is divided among supporters of the several presidential candidates, three of whom are prominent officers.

Registration of opposition voters has apparently been small, and [REDACTED] the opposition candidates have been accumulating funds for a revolt. Moves toward a coup may have been encouraged by the government's announcement that one of the opposition candidates was ineligible.

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5. USSR REJECTS JAPANESE DEMANDS FOR SOUTHERN KURILS

 Soviet negotiator Malik rejected demands for the return of the southern Kurils at the 10 February session of the Japanese-Soviet talks in London. He said that the unconditional return of Shikotan and the Habomais was the absolute limit of Soviet territorial concessions and that any further Japanese insistence on territories would be regarded as a deliberate delaying tactic.

In reply to Japanese delegate Matsumoto's insistence that the return of the southern Kurils is a national aspiration of the Japanese, Malik said their retention is the national aspiration of 200,000,000 Soviet citizens, and casually asked whether Japan was seeking a rupture of negotiations.

Comment Malik has left London to attend the Soviet 20th Party Congress, and talks with the Japanese are not expected to be resumed for at least a week or ten days.

Moscow had earlier insisted that Shikotan and the Habomais would be returned only on the condition that they be demilitarized.

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6. LIBYA SEEKS SUBSTANTIAL INCREASE IN AMERICAN AID

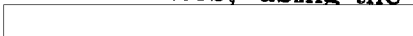
Comment on:



On 11 February King Idriss told Ambassador Tappin he believed Libya must under no circumstances become further involved with the USSR. However, Idriss echoed Prime Minister Ben Halim's view that the "solution" to the problem of internal pressure to accept a Soviet offer lay in continued "sympathetic consideration" of Libya's needs by the West.



the USSR had offered Libya an unconditional credit worth \$80,000,000. Libyan officials on 7 February presented Tappin with a new list of development projects totaling \$118,000,000, which would increase American aid to Libya by \$76,000,000 over the next five years.

These figures apparently indicate at least the order of magnitude of the aid which the Libyans hope to extract from the United States, using the Soviet offer to exert pressure. 

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7. CZECHS TO EXPAND TRADE WITH COLOMBIA

[REDACTED] the Czechs have decided to send a mission to Bogota at the end of February "to study markets and possibilities of importing other products and to establish contacts and the basis for an initial purchase of 4,000 to 10,000 tons of coffee in a year by means of an agreement to accept Czech imports in compensation." The consul added that the mission will be composed of eight or ten representatives of the Ministry of Commerce and of import-export enterprises.

Comment Czechoslovakia has been interested for some time in expanding its Colombian market, while the always uncertain international outlook for coffee, by far Colombia's principal export, has been driving Colombia to seek new markets. Following Czech demarches last fall, Colombia agreed to exchange consuls and its consul arrived in Prague in January.

Colombian-Czech trade for the first eight months of 1955 amounted to only about \$1,400,000 and trade with the rest of the Soviet bloc was negligible.
(Concurred in by ORR)

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8. REBEL HOA HAO LEADER REPORTED READY TO SURRENDER

[REDACTED] At a meeting with President Diem on 12 February, one of the Hoa Hao rebel leaders, Tran Van Soai, asked the terms under which the forces un-

[REDACTED] der his control could surrender and join the government side, [REDACTED]

Soai is said to have returned to his troops after the meeting to arrange for the end to their rebellion. Surrender negotiations reportedly began early this month and [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] believes the rallying of Soai's troops is a virtual certainty. [REDACTED]

Comment

Soai is estimated to have 1,800 troops loosely under his control in western South Vietnam, and the surrender of this group would be an important psychological victory for the government. The Viet Minh has infiltrated these troops and some 2,000 others under Ba Cut, a more fanatical Hoa Hao leader. The 600 Viet Minh advisers with the Hoa Hao rebels may be able to prevent any large-scale surrender.

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THE ARAB-ISRAELI SITUATION
(Information as of 1700, 14 February)

The Syrian representative to the United Nations asked on 13 February that the United States support a call for an urgent meeting of the Security Council to consider the Banat Yacov situation. He contended his government has evidence that Israel intends to resume work on the canal in the Israeli-Syrian demilitarized zone. This Syrian move follows Egyptian prime minister Nasr's reported advice that Syria exhaust all diplomatic alternatives before taking military action over Banat Yacov. The Security Council is chaired this month by the USSR, which almost certainly would support the Syrian point of view.

The Syrian ambassador in Washington, advising his government to take a strong stand on the Banat Yacov issue in order to generate Western pressure against Israel, noted on 8 February that the Soviet ambassador had told him "Russia is ready to assist the Arabs in undertaking construction projects on the waters of the Jordan basin."

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