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8 September 1957

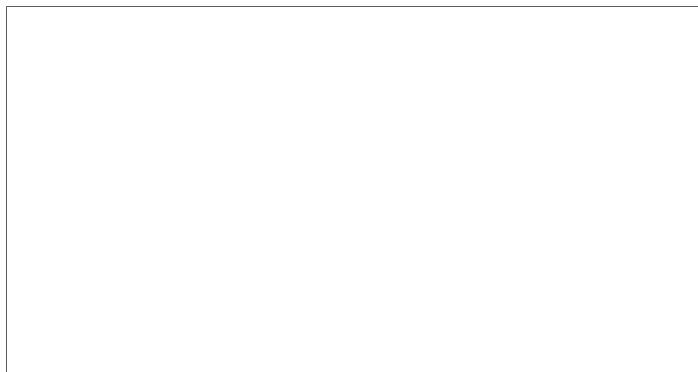
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1. SYRIA REQUESTS VISIT BY SOVIET FLEET TO COUNTER WESTERN MOVES

[Redacted] Syria ordered its military attaché in Moscow [Redacted] to request that the "Russian fleet" immediately pay a "friendly visit" to the Syrian port of Latakia "because it would be appreciated by the Syrian people and because it would strengthen Syria's position." [Redacted]

[Redacted]

Comment

The Soviet Union may accept the Syrian invitation as an opportunity for making a gesture of support for Syria. A Soviet Baltic Fleet cruiser and a destroyer are now in the Mediterranean for a scheduled goodwill visit to Yugoslavia. These units could be sent on to Latakia. The size of the visiting group would be of little importance either to the Syrians or the Soviet Union, since the significance of such a visit would lie in the gesture itself.

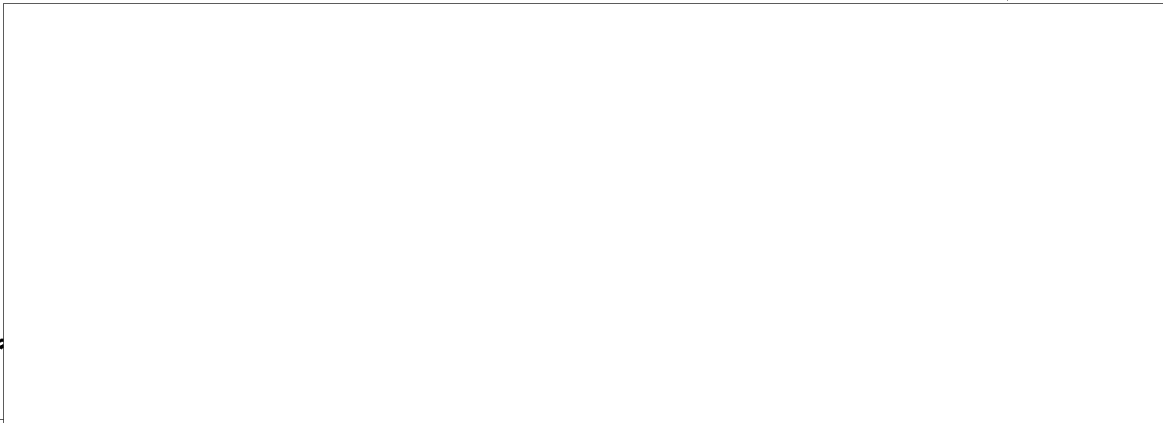
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2. KING SAUD'S VIEWS REGARDING SYRIA

Reference:



[redacted] Saud has not yet established a firm policy toward Syria, but that Saudi policy will avoid any "physical" action against fellow Arabs for the benefit of non-Arabs. [redacted] the Saudis will attempt to avoid a diplomatic break with Syria unless they are seriously provoked. [redacted]

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3. NEW SOVIET NUCLEAR EXPLOSION

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

Comment

This is the 37th Soviet nuclear test detected [Redacted] and the ninth known to have occurred this year. [Redacted]

[Redacted]

The latest nuclear explosion may be part of the operations associated with Soviet air and naval maneuvers which, according to public announcement, will be held in this area from 10 September to 15 October. [Redacted]

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4. PEIPING EXECUTES STUDENT RIOT LEADERS

Comment on:



Peiping announced on 6 September that three leaders of a student riot which occurred in central China last June had been executed. This is the sternest measure yet taken by Peiping to end free criticism and to counter student and intellectual ferment which developed from Mao Tse-tung's "hundred flowers" policy. Apparently timed to coincide with the beginning of a new school year, the announcement is intended to sober students, who have been told that they must spend considerably more time on ideological education this year.

Despite Communist protestations that "blossoming and contending" will continue, it seems unlikely now that Peiping would chance re-establishing a meaningful "liberalization" program or that the people would venture to take such a program at face value.

Several "rightist" non-Communist cabinet officials have been linked with the student riot in Communist accounts, and could become later victims. Under attack since last June, they have so far managed to survive severe criticism without even losing their jobs. 

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5. TUNISIA REQUESTS US ARMS AID



Tunisian Foreign Secretary Sadok Mokadem on 4 September requested urgent assistance from the United States in procuring small arms and ammunition for internal defense purposes. He said that the incident of 1 September, in which a unit of the French army pursuing Algerian rebels crossed into Tunisia and clashed with a unit of the Tunisian army, has highlighted the "imperative necessity" for the government to obtain arms.

Comment

This is the third time since May that Tunisia has requested American assistance in procuring materiel to equip its small army. France, which armed one battalion and promised materiel for another, has withheld supplies on the grounds that they might be turned over to the Algerian rebels.

President Bourghiba has been particularly indignant over his conviction that France has persuaded other governments not to sell arms to Tunisia. He announced on 8 August that the Tunisian government will find arms "at any price," although it is "loath to follow the dangerous example of some Middle Eastern states which bought Communist arms." At that time he initiated a nationwide drive to raise funds to purchase arms.

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6. ADENAUER'S CAMPAIGN MANAGER FEARS PARTY HIT PEAK TOO SOON



Franz Meyers, campaign manager of Chancellor Adenauer's Christian Democratic Union (CDU), told American representatives on 4 September that he is afraid the CDU hit its campaign peak

too soon. He had favored a last-minute effort to get out the vote and win the uncommitted voters with an argument that security and stability were at stake. Adenauer has been stressing this theme hard for weeks, however, and Meyers feels the CDU has no new ammunition left to counter surprise tactics by the opposition.

Meyers nevertheless believes the present coalition will win a Bundestag majority and also that the CDU has some chance to win a majority by itself. In North Rhine-Westphalia, the Duesseldorf consulate general predicts a 45-46 percent return for the CDU and a 37-38 percent return for the Social Democratic party.

Comment

If the CDU declines appreciably from the 48.9 percent it won in North Rhine-Westphalia in 1953, it is not likely to gain a majority by itself. The country's most populous state, North Rhine-Westphalia will elect about 30 percent of the Bundestag deputies.

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7. HUNGARY ARRESTS HIGH CATHOLIC CHURCHMEN



The American legation in Budapest has been reliably informed of the recent arrest of four Catholic bishops, including the acting head of the church in Hungary--

Archbishop Grosz of Kalocsa--and an unknown number of priests. The legation believes the churchmen were arrested to silence their strong opposition to the government's demand that the Bench of Bishops, the top Catholic ecclesiastical body in the country, sign a public declaration supporting the regime's protest against UN General Assembly consideration of the Hungarian situation.

A "protest" against the UN action was issued in the name of the Bench of Bishops on 29 August. Grosz reportedly was unaware of the action and objected strongly to it after its release.

Comment

These and other coercive measures against the church probably have the immediate objective of silencing the opposition which might have become more vocal during the UN hearings. There has been evidence that representatives of the Lutheran and Calvinist churches were preparing to join the Catholics in condemning the terrorist tactics of the regime.

Archbishop Grosz was amnestied on 11 May 1956, after being sentenced to life imprisonment in a June 1951 show trial for conspiracy against the state. His long imprisonment has added to his stature as a symbol of anti-Communist opposition to the regime. The other bishops reportedly taken into custody all have long been opponents of the regime.

Attacks on the church could also be part of an effort to force the surrender of Cardinal Mindszenty, still in asylum in the American legation. The Cardinal has recently been subjected to a campaign of vilification as a "fascist" and stooge of Western imperialists, and charged with a share of responsibility for the national uprising.

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