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FAR EAST

**1. Communist food deliveries to Tibet reported lagging:**

An American consular official who recently visited the Indian-Tibetan border area reports that the road into Tibet is in very poor condition.

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Communists in Tibet obtained no more than 350 tons of rice through India between late July and early September.

The Tibetans are reported to be restive under Communist control. The Dalai Lama's power and influence among the people is said to be increasing continuously.

Comment: To alleviate a serious food shortage in Tibet, the Chinese Communists reportedly promised to ship 1,500 to 3,000 tons of rice via India. With only 350 tons transported by early September, the Communists may find it difficult to attain this objective before heavy snows block the mountain passes.

Tibetan restlessness under the Communists was expressed in riots in the Lhasa area last spring. The Dalai Lama is believed no longer to have significant power in Tibet.

SOUTHEAST ASIA

**2. Cool Southeast Asian reception for proposed defense declaration predicted:**

Emphasizing the importance of Southeast Asian reaction to the French-proposed defense declaration for that area, Ambassador Stanton in Bangkok fears that the

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declaration would do more harm than good. He believes that the Southeast Asian nations would regard it as a vague recapitulation of existing Western policy, undeserving of their support unless immediately and fully backed up by firm military commitments.

## SOUTH ASIA

### 3. Afghanistan rejects Soviet protest on oil-drilling operation:

The Afghan Government has rejected the Soviet demarche protesting preparations by a French firm to drill for oil in northern Afghanistan, claiming that the oil-drilling project is a purely internal matter.

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The Afghan Foreign Minister has stressed to the American Embassy the seriousness of the Soviet protest, the possibility of unrest if the government fails to improve economic conditions in northern Afghanistan, the friendship of Afghanistan for the United States and its desire for American assistance. The Foreign Minister said that settlement of the frontier dispute with Pakistan was now essential, though he failed to indicate whether Afghanistan was prepared to offer any concessions.

Comment: There is no evidence that the USSR plans drastic action at the moment. On the other hand, it is presumably prepared to increase pressure on the Afghan Government if this and UN-conducted economic projects in north Afghanistan are not abandoned.

Afghan ability to withstand Soviet pressure depends upon the solution of such complicated problems as settling the dispute with Pakistan, which cannot be easily or quickly done.

### 4. Britain proposes joint Anglo-American approach to Kabul on Soviet note:

The British Foreign Office suggests tentatively that in view of the Soviet demarche to Afghanistan, the United States and Britain should jointly assure the Afghans of continued moral support, urge specific steps for the settlement of the frontier dispute with Pakistan, and hold out the hope of increased economic assistance.

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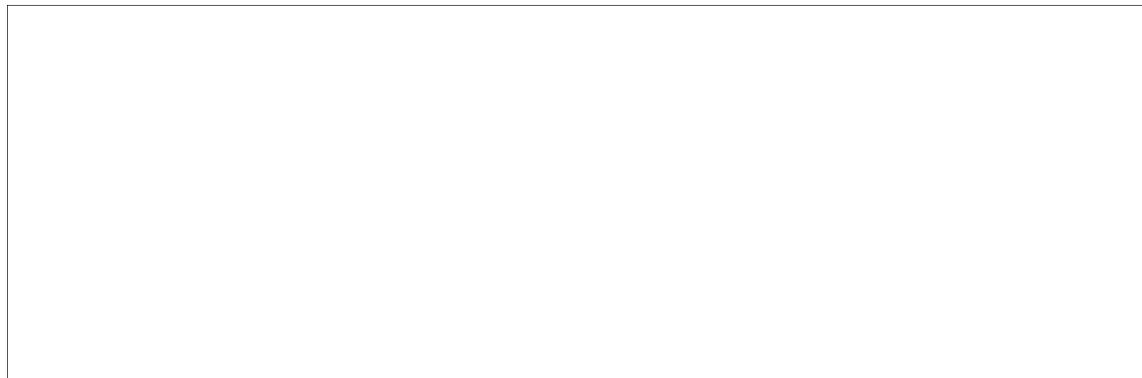
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**Comment:** The proposal suggests that Britain at present rules out the possibility of Soviet aggression against Afghanistan and believes there is a genuine opportunity to make progress toward a settlement between Pakistan and Afghanistan.

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7. Egyptian military forced removal of secretary general of Arab League:



Abdul Rahman Azzam has informed Ambassador Caffery that his resignation as secretary general of the Arab League was demanded by the military group in Egypt.

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Caffery believes that Azzam's unpopularity with Iraq and Lebanon may have caused his resignation.

Comment: Azzam, who is friendly toward the West and an eloquent promoter of the pan-Arab movement, has been a controversial figure identified with former Egyptian regimes.

The prestige of the League and of Azzam has declined steadily since the war with Israel. Azzam's removal may indicate Egypt's intention of reorganizing the League into an effective regional organization.

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