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1. GROMYKO AGAIN CALLS FOR NUCLEAR TEST BAN

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Foreign Minister Gromyko, in a speech to the Supreme Soviet summarizing the now familiar Soviet arguments for banning nuclear weapons tests, has re-emphasized the separability of the test ban issue from other aspects of the current London disarmament talks. Gromyko said that it was premature to draw conclusions regarding the results of the current negotiations. However, his flat state-

ment that the Soviet government expects the US and UK to achieve a rapprochement with the USSR on a nuclear test ban emphasizes that the USSR considers agreement on this issue a prerequisite for negotiating other agenda items. His failure to repeat the familiar Soviet demand for a "pledge" by the great powers not to use nuclear weapons suggests that this point may be negotiable.

Gromyko presented Soviet rebuttals to Western arguments for test registration, the interrelationship of test bans and nuclear disarmament, and the fallibility of test detection systems. Gromyko stated that "there has not been a single case when atomic or hydrogen bomb explosions were not detected with the aid of scientific and technical devices!"

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Gromyko's speech, one of the strongest official Soviet statements on this issue, coincides with the completion of the latest series of Soviet nuclear tests, while new US and UK testing programs are still pending. Throughout the

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current London disarmament conferences, it has been evident that the Soviet position on nuclear test bans has been aimed most immediately at obstructing the UK weapons development program. The USSR also views a ban on nuclear testing as a barrier to the development by "fourth countries" of a native nuclear weapons capability.

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3. ISRAELI-SYRIAN BORDER TENSION DISCOUNTED

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[Redacted]

The American embassy in Tel Aviv feels that local frictions are the cause of recent Israeli and Syrian activities along the armistice line. These include: increased Israeli engineering activity on the east bank of Lake Hula; increased Israeli fishing activity in the north-east shallows of Lake Tiberias; the Syrian resumption of its former position overlooking Lake Tiberias; and Israeli patrol activity due to spring training exercises and as a response to the presence of Syrian units.

Israel's official reaction appears similar to that noted in the past under comparable situations. Although some Israeli officials have suggested Soviet and Egyptian instigation of the Syrian activities, Ambassador Lawson comments that the present Israeli attitude is in line with Foreign Minister Meir's earlier statement that Israel would not be provoked into violent reaction over trivial incidents, but would not overlook any serious threat to its security..

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4. MOLLET GOVERNMENT SEEN LIKELY TO WEATHER FORTHCOMING DEBATE

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The American embassy in Paris expects Premier Mollet to win National Assembly support for increased taxes, despite general opposition in the assembly to his economic and fiscal policies. A confidence vote is expected about 24 May. The lack of a practical alternative to Mollet still restrains his opponents and thus favors the government's chance of survival. A majority of the deputies approve his Algerian and European integration policies, and would probably be reluctant to precipitate a crisis immediately prior to President Coty's departure for the United States.

Comment

Mollet won his last confidence vote on 29 March largely because his rightist opponents were unwilling to cause a crisis at that time. There has been considerable speculation that the right has been waiting for an economic issue to launch an attack on the government, with the intention of replacing Mollet by an interim, short-lived cabinet which would in turn give way to a government headed by a conservative premier.

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**5. COLOMBIAN MILITARY JUNTA ANNOUNCES
ITS PROGRAM**

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The five-man military junta, headed by the former war minister, which exiled and replaced president Rojas on 10 May, announced a fourteen-point program late the same day after conferring with the opposition. It calls for the junta to rule until the end of the current presidential term in August 1958; popular elections in 1958; a cabinet with the participation of the traditional Liberal and Conservative parties; and restoration of freedom of the press.

Key opposition leaders, including the joint presidential candidate of the two major parties, urged the people to support the program and the junta. In addition, the cardinal primate apparently gave Catholic Church endorsement to the interim regime and appealed to the nation for restraint.

Civilian participation in the junta may be essential to the restoration and maintenance of order. Some popular demand for immediate return to civilian government was voiced in Bogota and particularly in Cali.

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6. BRITAIN TO BUILD LARGE FACTORY IN USSR

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The USSR has placed a contract with a consortium of five British firms for construction of a tire plant in the Ukraine, according to the American embassy in London. Details are still unknown, although reports in the British press described the proposed plant as "larger than any tire factory outside the United States!"

Comment This is the most substantial result to date of the trade offers made by Bulganin and Khrushchev during their visit to the UK in April 1956. Its implementation would mark the first time in more than 20 years that the USSR has permitted construction under foreign supervision within its borders. Such a departure from past policies suggest the beginning of a new stage in the USSR's program to profit from specific Western technical capabilities.

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7. JAPANESE GOVERNMENT AND LABOR IN TEST OF STRENGTH OVER ILLEGAL STRIKES

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[Redacted]

More than 1,000,000 public enterprise workers in Japan participated in a series of walkouts and shop rallies on 11 and 12 May. The nationwide walkouts are in retaliation for government action in firing, suspending or otherwise punishing some 1,000 government union leaders responsible for illegal activities during the recent spring labor offensive for higher wages. The basic issue at stake is the ability of the Kishi government to restrict labor activities to legal limits. Japanese law denies public corporation employees the right to strike.

The disruptions were led by the National Railway Workers Union and supported by postal, telecommunications and other public workers unions, which are under the strong influence of Sohyo, Japan's 3,000,000-strong leftist labor federation. The Socialist Party has endorsed the labor action and reportedly plans to introduce a no-confidence motion against the government during Diet deliberations this week.

Business, the press, and the general public welcomed the government's punitive measures. Continued support from these quarters may result in even bolder government action, including new legislation to curb Sohyo's power.

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