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1. USSR PLANNING DISARMAMENT MEETING IN MOSCOW

The Soviet Union is planning to hold a "small unofficial meeting" to discuss disarmament in Moscow beginning on 29 March and has invited representatives of a variety of political parties and viewpoints from several European and Asian countries.

An invitation

stated that acceptances had been received from individuals in France, Britain, India, Japan, Italy, Belgium and other countries.

The invitation promised that no communiqué would be issued to the press without unanimous consent of the participants.

Comment The individuals reported to have accepted range from fellow travelers to conservatives.

Moscow is apparently trying to make the meeting more widely representative and more respectable by inviting anti-Communists as well as some responsible party leaders. It is doubtful that Dehler or Social Democratic Party leader Ollenhauer, who may have been invited, will go unless other responsible anti-Communist leaders are invited and accept.

The Soviet representatives at the conference will probably seek to win endorsement of Khrushchev's three-point interim disarmament plan, which includes the cessation of atomic tests.

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2. JAPANESE PRIME MINISTER WILLING TO TALK WITH CHOU

Prime Minister Hatoyama told an upper house committee on 15 March that he is willing to meet Chinese Communist premier Chou En-lai to discuss the establishment of closer relations between Tokyo and Peiping, which "everyone desires." Hatoyama emphasized that the "difficulty" is Japan's treaty with Nationalist China, a problem which he said could be removed by Chinese Communist "recognition" of Taipei.

A Foreign Ministry official has informed the American embassy in Tokyo that Peiping probably would respond quickly to Hatoyama's remarks, possibly by making some "major proposition" just prior to Secretary of State Dulles' visit to Tokyo.

Comment

A spokesman for the Peiping regime renewed on 16 March the Chinese Communist offer to discuss the normalization of relations, although he did not mention Hatoyama's remarks. Chou En-lai may soon follow up this offer, and, in order to engage the Japanese prime minister in such talks, Chou may refrain temporarily from denouncing Hatoyama's proposal for two Chinas.

Virtually all Japanese believe that if Japan is to achieve economic independence and assume its rightful role as a power in the Far East, normal diplomatic relations with Communist China are necessary. Tokyo's desire for relations with Peiping is strengthened by its belief that the Chinese Nationalist regime will not last more than two more years and certainly will not survive Chiang Kai-shek's death.

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3. FRENCH SETTLERS IN ALGERIA THREATEN TO LYNCH MOSLEMS UNDER DEATH SENTENCE

An action group of French settlers in Algeria has sent a barrage of letters and telegrams to French president Coty threatening to lynch the 120 Moslem terrorists now under death sentence in Algeria if the executions are not carried out by 21 March,

The French minister in Algiers is unwilling to go through with the executions, but doubts that his police would defend the prisons against the settlers.

French settlers in Algiers fear that the Algerian National Liberation Front plans to attack isolated farms on 21 March. They claim that as many as 6,000 settlers may be killed, and predict large-scale retaliation by the French against urban Moslems.

Comment The Liberation Front has distributed leaflets warning that for every "patriot" executed the Front would execute two persons in retaliation.

The recent attacks in and near the city of Algiers and the intensified military campaign now under way increase the probability of major clashes between the settlers and Algerian Moslems.

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4. POSITION OF HUNGARIAN PARTY LEADER RAKOSI APPEARS THREATENED

[Redacted]

Reported dissension within the Hungarian party's central committee over the status of ex-premier Imre Nagy indicates that Party Secretary Rakosi is still having difficulty in asserting his leadership.

Nagy has petitioned the central committee to withdraw the charges against him which led to his conviction for "rightist deviation" a year ago. The request prompted "heated discussion" within the committee at its meeting on 12 and 13 March.

Reportedly Istvan Kovacs, Nagy's chief supporter in the central committee, argued that Rakosi's proposal to ignore Nagy's request was impossible in view of statements at the Soviet congress. Kovacs, a politburo member who accompanied Rakosi to the Soviet 20th Party Congress, insisted that Rakosi had no right to decide the matter alone. Rakosi apparently attempted to defend himself on the ground that the Soviet congress had endorsed his policies as leader of the Hungarian party.

The defensive statements contained in Rakosi's report on the congress tend to support reports of division within the central committee and to indicate that the recent Soviet party congress has strengthened the opposition of nationalist elements within the party. Since he ousted Nagy, Rakosi has had difficulty in controlling nationalist elements within the party despite Moscow's support of his leadership. Even a gradual rehabilitation of Nagy would seriously threaten Rakosi's leadership of the party.

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5. PREMIER MOLLET CONCERNED OVER ANTI-AMERICAN SENTIMENT IN FRANCE

[Redacted]

In a conversation on 10 March, Premier Mollet told American UN delegate Lodge that he was disturbed by the anti-American sentiment the Algerian situation has stimulated in France, not merely among the Communists but also among certain elements of the French right which sought to find a scapegoat "abroad" for their troubles in Algeria.

Mollet protested that although he had no cause for complaint over the official attitude of the United States government, he did complain that many American businessmen and working-level officials had caused friction by giving unsolicited advice. Another factor in French-American misunderstanding was the "blanket stand" taken by the American press against what it calls "colonialism." He said the most hard-hitting passages in its editorials are picked up and reprinted by the French press.

Comment Other reports suggest that anti-American sentiment in France is considerably more widespread than Mollet indicated. It stems in part from the French belief that American influence in Vietnam has supplanted France without regard to French interests there, and that a similar pattern is in the making in North Africa.

According to a 17 March press report, the French Secretary of State for Operations in Algeria criticized the United States' "long silence" and said he expects an "unequivocal" declaration of its solidarity with France on the Algerian crisis.

THE ARAB-ISRAELI SITUATION
(Information as of 1700, 18 March)

Egypt charged on 17 and 18 March that Israeli patrols killed two Arabs in the Moghazi refugee camp southwest of Gaza. Israel has charged that Egyptian "infiltrators" have repeatedly crossed into Israeli territory from the Gaza strip, and that Egyptian patrols made a series of attacks on the Israeli settlement of Kissufim, near the Gaza strip. Israel also charged that Jordanians scattered fire into the Israeli sector of Jerusalem near the Jaffa Gate. (Press)

Syrian military authorities notified Cairo [redacted] that the Israelis have been carrying out air reconnaissance "day and night" over the Syrian front. [redacted]

[redacted]
[redacted] Britain has agreed to supply Syria with two Meteor Mark 9 jet fighter planes modified to take Hispano-Suiza 804 guns and provided with the standard photographic equipment. [redacted]

[redacted] Yemen has requested some type of arms or military equipment from Egypt. [redacted]