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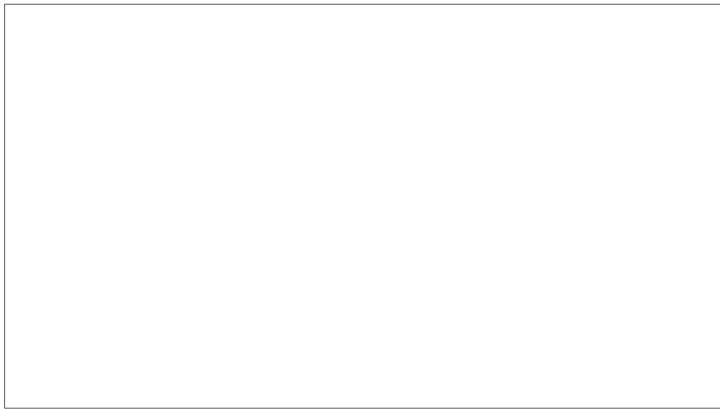
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1. SARIT OVERTHROWS PHIBUN GOVERNMENT IN THAILAND
 (Information as of 0030 hours EDT, 17 Sept 57)

Comment on:

Latest reports from Bangkok indicate that Thai army troops commanded by Marshal Sarit are firmly in control of the city following their bloodless coup against the Phibun government on the night of 16 September.

Premier Phibun has fled and his whereabouts is unknown. Sarit has declared martial law throughout the country to guard against the possibility of a counter coup by the followers of Phibun and Police Director Phao who reportedly has given himself up.

The coup was precipitated by Phibun's adamant rejection of repeated demands by Sarit for the removal of Phao and his supporters from all official positions. Sarit apparently decided to take direct action when Phibun, on the morning of the 16th, sought to stall off an ultimatum calling for the cabinet's resignation and replacement by one formed "in accordance with the people's wishes."

The only clue to Sarit's future intentions is his establishment, prior to the coup, of a committee of 13 army officers and himself, as chairman, for the purpose of maintaining "peace and security." This group will almost certainly form the nucleus of a new ruling clique. Under this setup, Sarit would be in line to assume the premiership, although he may prefer to rule behind a front man.

Sarit's assumption of control of the Thai government promises to be followed by an extensive "house cleaning," particularly in the police force. Thailand's foreign policy, however, is unlikely to be drastically altered in the immediate future.

There will undoubtedly be strong pressures for the adoption of a more "independent" policy involving the loosening of ties with the West. Available information suggests, however, that Sarit has acknowledged the importance of American economic and military aid, although he may seek a greater degree of Thai supervision of its administration. He has also publicly endorsed Thailand's membership in SEATO. Another factor militating against his moving toward an accommodation with the Communists is that much of his present popularity is based on his being identified as the champion of the monarchy and of "traditional Thai values."

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2. TITO-GOMULKA COMMUNIQUE

Comment on:

In a joint party and government communique signed on 16 September, Tito and Gomulka agreed on the correctness of their independent roads to socialism and reaffirmed that relations between

Communist states and parties should be based on the principle of equality and noninterference. The communique did not once refer to the Soviet Union. It did not take issue with the USSR, however, on any international problem.

The two men again stressed their desire for bilateral relations between Communist parties, but noted that multilateral relations "can also be very useful." The declaration embodies Tito's theory that progressive forces, even in capitalist states, are moving toward socialism and states that the very fate of socialism and peace depends on strengthening relations, cooperation, and unity among these forces.

With respect to international issues, Tito reiterated his previous stand on German unification and endorsed the Oder-Neisse as the final Polish-German frontier. Both countries invited other nations to adhere to this view. In addition, they called for the admission of Communist China to the UN and an immediate ban on nuclear tests as a first step toward disarmament.

Both powers pledged themselves to develop the broadest possible economic and cultural relations with all countries regardless of the political system. In order to promote cultural and economic cooperation, the two governments agreed to establish a Yugoslav-Polish economic commission and cultural information centers in their two capitals.

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3. KHRUSHCHEV'S POLITICAL POSITION REPORTEDLY SHAKY

Comment on:

[redacted] Khrushchev may be facing stiff political opposition within the party presidium and that he has suffered a decline in public esteem as a result of the June purges.

[redacted] he would like to get rid of Bulganin, Voroshilov, and Suslov but has been unable to secure the necessary majority in the presidium.

[redacted] Khrushchev is not popular in party circles where it is doubted that he will be able to keep power for long.

"Khrushchev isn't feared nor loved. In the party apparatus he is still regarded with some contempt."

[redacted] the working people of that city reacted unfavorably to the purge of Malenkov and Molotov. The news announcement caused feelings of anger and open talk of demonstrations.

[redacted] Khrushchev is not popular in Leningrad, became even less so after the purges, and was booed in the streets during his visit to Leningrad for its 250th anniversary celebration.

[redacted] the people in Brest were

speaking openly in criticism of Khrushchev and in favor of Malenkov.

[redacted] in August that the mood of many Soviet citizens appeared to be one of general depression, lack of faith about the future, cynicism toward the party line, and distrust of present party leaders--a far cry from the bold optimism which Khrushchev seeks to inculcate. (NOFORN)

**4. USSR WARNS ISRAEL TO AVOID "PROVOCATIVE MOVES"
AGAINST SYRIA**

Comment on:

Comment

The Abramov warning, which was apparently delivered orally to Foreign Minister Meir just before she left for New York, supplements the USSR's warnings to Turkey in Gromyko's statement of 10 September and Bulganin's note to Prime Minister Menderes on 10 September. Soviet broadcasts on 13 September repeated the Soviet line that the actions by Israeli "ruling circles" backed by the West were creating a "danger to the very existence of Israel as a state!"

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5. IRAQIS REPORT KING SAUD READY TO SUPPORT SYRIAN REVOLT

[redacted] King Saud told Lebanese officials [redacted]

[redacted] that he was prepared to finance from his private treasury any revolt or action which would lead to changing the situation in Syria [redacted]

[redacted] he preferred that military intervention be avoided, but that Iraqi and Jordanian military support would be needed if the revolt failed. The King apparently opposed Turkish intervention.

Comment

King Saud has indicated on other occasions that he believes the trend of developments in Syria should be reversed by internal means, not by open foreign intervention. It is unlikely, however, that the Saudis have or could acquire political assets in Syria which would have a significant effect on the situation.

[redacted]

[redacted]

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6. SYRIAN ARMY CHIEF PLANS PALESTINIAN COMMANDO CORPS

ious Arab countries,

Syrian Chief of Staff Major General Bizri has stated that he intends to organize into a special commando corps 20,000 Palestinian refugees now in var-

The ex-Grand Mufti of Jerusalem, Hajj Amin al-Hussayni, is said to be cooperating in the plan.

Comment

The Syrian army now totals 50,000 men.

A group organized by Bizri and loyal to him rather than to the Syrian state would represent the most violent anti-Western element, and could make leftist Bizri the strongest man in Syria. Such a group would most likely be used as an instrument to control Syria and to subvert other Arab governments.

7. JAPANESE PROTEST ON 1958 US NUCLEAR TESTS SERIES

Comment on:

The Japanese government's decision to protest the United States' plans for nuclear tests in the Pacific in 1958, announced on 15 September, is a swift move to align itself with Japanese public opinion

on this issue. The popular reaction also may make it difficult for the Kishi government to comply with the United States' desire not to present to the UN General Assembly a resolution calling for the suspension of all nuclear tests. The resolution, already drafted, does not provide for immediate supervision of the test ban or for the halting of weapons production, both considered vital by the West.

Japan has submitted similar protests to the USSR in recent months in order to maintain its stand against further nuclear tests.

8. POLITICAL DISSENSION IN FRANCE INCREASES OVER ALGERIAN STATUTE

[REDACTED]

The Bourges-Maunoury government's hopes for wide National Assembly backing on its proposed basic statute for Algeria appear to have vanished [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] The left continues to press for a more liberal version of the proposed plan, and unexpectedly strong opposition to a federative solution is developing on the right.

Defense Minister Morice, a dissident Radical, has so far refused to join the rest of the cabinet in endorsing the government's program, and there is speculation that he may resign. The embassy fears the right may seek to water down the draft when it comes up for debate, or even to oppose it.

The government is expected to stress the urgency of the Algerian issue in order to limit discussion of the economic grievances which led Bourges-Maunoury to call a special assembly session for 17 September. The embassy expects the difficulty of finding a new premier and the imminent UN debate on Algeria to prevent a crisis now. Nevertheless, it believes that the heavy opposition to the government's economic program and back-bench restiveness will put Bourges-Maunoury in serious trouble again in a month.

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9. THE WEST GERMAN ELECTION

Comment on:

[Redacted]

Following its sweeping victory in the 15 September West German Bundestag elections the Christian Democratic Union, with 21 seats more than a majority, will probably invite its present coalition partner, the German party, into the new government, adding 17 seats to its majority. Chairman Maier

of the Free Democrats has indicated that he is opposed to joining the government even if invited, but a party caucus is necessary for any final decision. The new Bundestag is scheduled to meet on 10 October in Berlin.

The election furthered the development of a two-party system in West Germany--82 percent of the ballots being cast for the two major parties in contrast to 74 percent in 1953. Only two other parties gained Bundestag representation. The CDU became the first party in modern German history to win an absolute majority--50.18 percent--of the vote. The SPD gained 31.8 percent of the popular vote as contrasted with 28.8 four years ago and, with over a third of the Bundestag seats, now has the power to block constitutional amendments. [Redacted]

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