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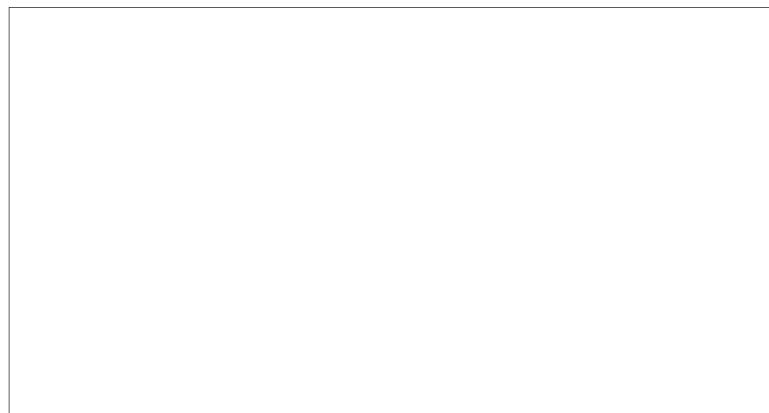
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1. THE SITUATION IN JORDAN

Comment on:

Prime Minister Nabulsi and his cabinet have not yet submitted their resignations to King Hussain, despite their decision on 31 March to do so in an effort to force a showdown.

The cabinet apparently continues to hope that it can through intimidation prevent the king from carrying out a series of political moves to arrest Jordan's leftist drift.

The cabinet also objects,

[redacted] to Hussain's opposition to its efforts to reorganize the government and the electoral machinery, and to "his constant contacts with America without reference to the government."

Nabulsi and his cabinet appear to believe that without representatives of the parties in the present cabinet, Hussain could not form a government with sufficient popular support to maintain order. They are reportedly prepared to support their stand with the threat of calling out leftist mobs. Nabulsi is reported to have appealed personally to Jordan's Communist Party "to stand by and be ready to fight the king."

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2. RHEE TO SHAKE UP SOUTH KOREAN HIGH COMMAND

Comment on:

President Rhee has informed American officials of his intention to remove his senior military leaders to make room for promotions which will improve morale.

✓ and efficiency in the armed forces. Rhee has decided to appoint General Chong Il-kwon, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, as ambassador to Turkey, and will also try to find a civilian position for General Yi Hyong-kun, army chief of staff. He reportedly is considering offering a diplomatic post to General Paek Son-yop, commander of the First Army.

Yi succeeded Chong as chief of staff last June. The widespread command changes instituted by Yi since then, some of which were politically motivated, have been a factor in the reported decline in morale of the army. Rhee may hope that the removal of these top leaders will diminish the factional bickering among their supporters. He may also want to send General Chong abroad because of Chong's involvement in the assassination of the CIC chief in 1956.

General Yi has been the most vigorous supporter of Rhee's demands for a "march north." There is no indication as to his successor. Air force general Kim Chong-yol, who has been co-operative with American officials, has been mentioned as the possible next chairman of the joint chiefs.

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3. EGYPT FEARS FRENCH FLEET MOVE TO EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN

The Egyptian ambassador in Athens told Ambassador Allen on 1 April that Cairo had reports of French naval vessels moving from their base at Toulon toward the eastern Mediterranean. Allen reported that the Egyptian had queried him in detail as to any NATO plans for maneuvers in that area, and commented that the Egyptian apparently feared France might try to use such maneuvers as a cover for moving naval units toward Egypt.

Comment

A French seagoing squadron--a force of 20 vessels, including an aircraft carrier and accompanied by a commando unit--left Toulon on 25 March for exercises off the Algerian coast. This force is scheduled to return to Toulon on 6 April.

The next NATO naval maneuver involving French units in the Mediterranean is a training exercise in early May.

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4. NEW IRANIAN PRIME MINISTER

Comment on:

The appointment of Manuchehr Eqbal, capable and pro-Western minister of court and chancellor of Tehran University, as prime minister of Iran offers some hope for a constructive program of economic and social reforms only if the Shah is willing to withdraw from personal participation in the government.

Although the Shah apparently has been preparing Eqbal for the new post for nearly two years, the monarch has a long-standing fear of strong prime ministers and a reputation for attempting to limit the authority of anyone who appears to be winning popular support.

The resignation of the Ala government, which has become progressively more unpopular because of its corruption and ineffectiveness, has long been expected.