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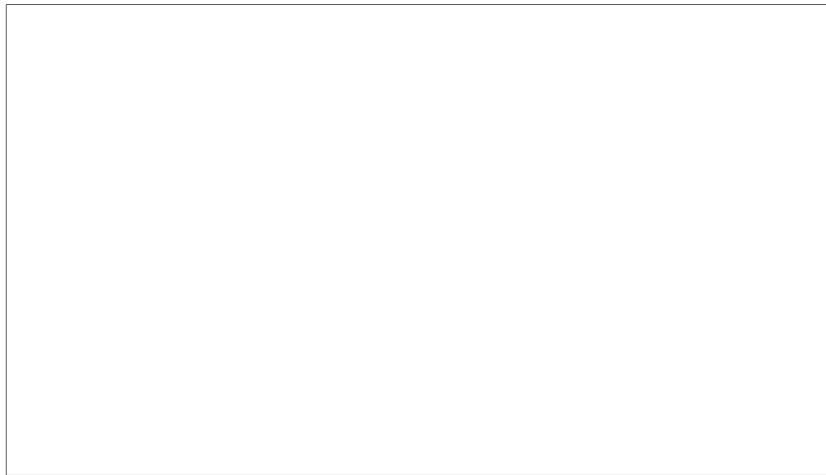
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1. DEVELOPMENTS IN JORDAN

Comment on:

Relative quiet prevailed in Jordan on 25 April following the new Hashim cabinet's imposition of martial law and curfew, and the dissolution of all political parties. The cabinet will probably be dominated by the pro-Western leader Samir Rifai, who is deputy premier and foreign minister. Although five of the seven new cabinet members are from West Jordan, the center of Palestinian extremism, all the ministers have relatively conservative pro-Western records. The one newcomer to cabinet status is a representative of the Bedouin tribes, which are providing the king with his armed support.

Meanwhile, the Syrians and refugee Jordanian nationalists continue to press Egypt for a decision on joint action to forestall consolidation of King Hussain's position.

a mission representing the Syrian general staff and refugee Jordanian leftist military and political leaders was to go to Cairo [redacted] to discuss with Nasr and Commander in Chief Amer joint action to be undertaken "before events deteriorate in Jordan." The Syrians were reported to be particularly apprehensive over action to be taken if Hussain requested intervention by the Iraqi army, and to have decided to engage the Iraqi army if it entered Jordan. According to Beirut radio, Syrian president Quwatli flew to Cairo for a four-hour "crucial" conference with Nasr on 25 April.

On 24 April, King Hussain is reported to have notified Cairo and Damascus that unless Syrian troops were withdrawn from Jordan within 48 hours, Iraqi troops would

be brought in. [redacted]

the Jordanian command had asked that Saudi forces in West Jordan prepare to move two battalions into the towns of Nablus and Ramallah to assist Jordanian units in maintaining order. [redacted]

Saudi and Iraqi officers had conferred on the Jordanian-Iraqi border.

A limited precautionary mobilization of reserves appeared to be continuing in Israel as of 25 April. The American embassy in Tel Aviv tentatively assesses this to be a result of both mounting tension in Jordan and the need for troops to participate in Israel's Independence Day celebrations on 5-6 May. [redacted]

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~**2. BRITISH SEE BID FOR MIDDLE EAST TALKS IN
BULGANIN LETTER**

The British Foreign Office, in a preliminary appraisal of Premier Bulganin's letter to Prime Minister Macmillan, feels that it contains a veiled bid to participate in talks on the Middle East with the United States, Britain and France. While a definitive British attitude has not yet been formed, the Foreign Office seems to think that the USSR cannot be excluded indefinitely from talks concerning developments in the Middle East.

Comment

There have been no recent indications that London believes the situation in the Middle East could be eased by seeking an accommodation with the USSR. Macmillan may nevertheless again be considering a trip to Moscow.

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3. BRITISH SEEN FAVORABLE TO NATO COMMON STOCKPILE OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS

[Redacted]
[Redacted] Britain might support the French suggestion for a NATO "common stockpile" of nuclear weapons under SACEUR control if the plan did not interfere with the favored British position in obtaining US nuclear components, in the view of the American embassy in London. Senior British officials, in their anxiety to deter additional countries from producing their own nuclear weapons, had earlier suggested that the United States might prevent this by supplying such weapons.

Comment Any method of dissuading European nations from producing nuclear weapons would be attractive to London. London's concern is so great that it would probably consider contributing to such a stockpile, or even supplying nuclear weapons directly to France or Germany.

4. IRAQI OFFICERS ARRESTED FOR ANTI-
REGIME ACTIVITIES

A group of younger Iraqi army officers, including a colonel, were arrested on 16 April for antigovernment activities, according to a well-informed diplomatic source. It is not known whether the arrests were carried out to stop an actual conspiracy, or as a warning to disaffected officers.

Comment There have been a number of reports of discontent among the younger Iraqi officer element because of what they consider to be Premier Nuri Said's anti-Nasr, pro-Western policy. It is not believed, however, that the Iraqi army is seriously disaffected.

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5. LAOTIAN PRIME MINISTER REPORTEDLY PLANS TO RESIGN

Comment on: [redacted]

[redacted] Prime Minister Souvanna Phouma will resign in May and a political crisis will result, in the opinion of a high-ranking Laotian officer. The officer predicted that Deputy Premier Katay and Independent Party leader Phoui would each prevent the other from obtaining majority support, and that the king would refuse to offer Prince Pet sarath the premiership. Other reports have also stated that Souvanna has threatened to submit his resignation if he has still not achieved a settlement of the Pathet Lao problem by the time the National Assembly convenes on 11 May. Souvanna's resignation would pose the threat of a prolonged cabinet crisis at a time when the Pathet Lao has stepped up military pressure in the two northern provinces.

Souvanna may be persuaded not to resign, however, by the continued feeling that he is in a unique position, because of his kinship with Pathet Lao chief Souphannou vong, to achieve the peaceful reunification of Laos. It is also known [redacted] that the Pathet Lao has been anxious to keep Souvanna in power, fearing that a more pro-Western premier might succeed him. It may therefore seek to encourage the premier to believe that a satisfactory settlement is still possible. [redacted]

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6. WEST GERMAN PROBLEMS WITH STATUS-OF-FORCES AGREEMENTS

Commenting on Bonn's suggestion to suspend the status-of-forces negotiations, Ambassador Bruce remarks that although West German officials are undoubtedly seeking a negotiating advantage, they also genuinely fear an agreement unacceptable to the Bundestag. Bruce points out that on two of the most difficult unresolved items in the negotiations--relating to freedom of the Western forces in Germany to maneuver, and to Allied retention of real estate requisitioned from the Germans--the Allied proposals not only exceed rights granted by the Bonn Conventions and those under status-of-forces agreements in other NATO countries, but also run counter to German laws.

There is intense public interest in both these subjects, he observes, since German citizens want their houses and property back and do not want to be disturbed by maneuvers. He thinks German unwillingness to come to grips with these hard problems is chiefly responsible for the proposal to end the negotiations.

Comment

The West German government would undoubtedly consider itself in a perilous position, in view of the coming election, if it announced highly unpopular status-of-forces agreements on maneuvers and property requisitioning at this time.

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**7. OVERSEAS CHINESE ISSUE IN SOUTH VIETNAM MAY BE
REACHING CRITICAL STAGE**

Comment on: [Redacted]

Tension between Taipei and Saigon continues to increase as a result of enforcement of South Vietnam's decree imposing mandatory citizenship on locally born Chinese. Taipei's insistence that the Chinese be given the freedom to choose their citizenship, repeated in a diplomatic note of protest dated 23 April, is unacceptable to the Ngo Dinh Diem government.

Pressure on the Overseas Chinese to comply with the Vietnamese government's decree is likely to increase, despite the economic dislocation which is bound to result. Shops and businesses owned by noncitizen Chinese engaged in eleven important businesses proscribed to foreigners, in which the Chinese predominate, are already being closed down in the provinces and there are signs that enforcement is about to be tightened in Saigon. There are not enough Vietnamese with the necessary capital and experience to take over these businesses.

Saigon's uncompromising attitude and Taipei's ineffective protection have made the harassed Overseas Chinese vulnerable to Communist exploitation. There is also a danger of the outbreak of violence between the Vietnamese and local Chinese. [Redacted]

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ANNEXWatch Report 350, 25 April 1957
of the
Intelligence Advisory Committee

No: 350

Conclusions on Indications of Hostilities

On the basis of findings by its Watch Committee, the Intelligence Advisory Committee concludes that:

- A. No Sino-Soviet bloc country intends to initiate hostilities against the continental US or its possessions in the immediate future.
- B. No Sino-Soviet bloc country intends to initiate hostilities against US forces abroad, US allies or areas peripheral to the Orbit in the immediate future.
- C. A deliberate initiation of hostilities by either Israel or the Arab states is improbable in the immediate future. Unsettled issues and tensions, particularly the internal situation in Jordan, continue to constitute possibilities for violence. Should there be intensified disorders or civil war in Jordan, military intervention by neighboring Arab states probably would occur, and Israeli intervention would be a possibility.

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