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10 August 1956

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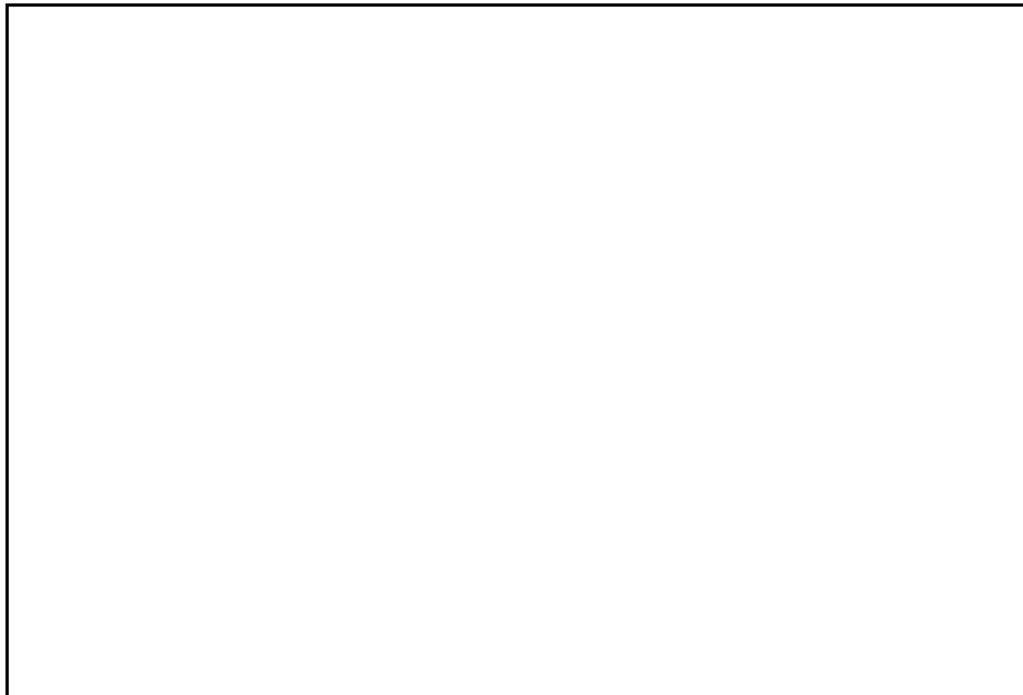
CURRENT INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN

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DOCUMENT NO. _____
NO CHANGE IN CLASS.
 DECLASSIFIED
CLASS. CHANGED TO: TS S C
NEXT REVIEW DATE: 2009
AUTH: HR 70-2
DATE: 20 Dec 79 REVIEWER: _____

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OFFICE OF CURRENT INTELLIGENCE
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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State Dept. review completed

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THE ARAB-ISRAELI SITUATION

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1. USSR ACCEPTS WESTERN INVITATION TO LONDON CONFERENCE

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The Soviet note accepting the invitation to the London conference makes numerous reservations to the conference as proposed. The USSR urges postponement of the conference until late August, if only to allow time to invite the new participants the Soviet Union proposes. The note strongly supports Egypt's position, terms as "inadmissible" threats by Britain and France, and is in harmony with Prime Minister Nehru's statement on 8 August. It invites Asian and neutral powers to oppose the British proposal and support Nasr.

Moscow probably will attempt to hamstring the conference at the outset by challenging its competence to deal with the problem. The note states that the conference as presently constituted "cannot in any way" be regarded as authorized to take "any decisions whatever" affecting the Suez Canal. It suggests instead that the USSR considers it "most expedient" to discuss such problems within the framework of the United Nations.

In its proposal, Moscow names 22 additional states to be invited to the conference, including the seven Satellites, Communist China and ten Moslem countries.

Moscow may introduce the question of the status of other waterways at the conference. The note asks why the Western declaration at London singled out the Suez Canal from the "sea straits and canals of no smaller importance."

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**3. PINEAU PROPOSES THAT ATOMIC ARMS BE
MADE AVAILABLE TO NATO**

[Redacted]

French foreign minister Pineau feels that the best way to meet both German and French worries over possible British and US troop reductions in

[Redacted] Europe would be to make quantities of tactical atomic weapons available to NATO. Pineau reportedly feels that this action would confirm that NATO is still the bulwark of Western defense and that there is no intention of letting its armament become obsolete. A ranking Foreign Ministry spokesman on 6 August quoted Pineau as having made these statements in his conference last week with British foreign secretary Lloyd.

Comment Pineau's suggestion may indicate a major evolution in the official French position on the desirability of permitting West German armed forces to have access to atomic weapons. Such a change is possible in the light of French concern for the maintenance of the NATO shield in Western Europe. Most of France's NATO divisions have been diverted to North Africa, and there is a possibility of British withdrawals in connection with the Suez crisis.

Paris, however, can be expected to oppose the release of West Germany from restrictions on its right to manufacture atomic, biological, and chemical weapons.

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5. RUMORED SHOOTING OF ECUADORAN ARMY CHIEF MAY PROVOKE CRISIS IN ARMED FORCES

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Rumors that a popular Ecuadoran army commander, Colonel Humberto Garces-- reportedly arrested for implication in the Portoviejo uprising of 6-8 August--has been killed may lead to unrest in the armed forces and possibly an attempt to thwart the official declaration of president-elect Ponce's victory on 10 August or prevent his inauguration.

President Velasco appears determined to supervise Ponce's peaceful accession to power. Prompt government action in suppressing the Portoviejo revolt has tended to augment Velasco's prestige. Serious armed forces defection, or congressional rejection of the election results on 10 August, might lead Velasco to try to perpetuate himself in office.

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THE ARAB-ISRAELI SITUATION
(Information as of 1700, 9 August)

The American embassy in Lebanon reports that the wave of popular support for Nasr now sweeping the Arab states indicates a far more belligerent and uncompromising attitude than previously. Even Christian elements in Lebanon, who may privately have reservations about Nasr, have joined the chorus for Egypt. The embassy warns against underestimating the popular acclaim and support for Egypt in the area and the resulting emotional reaction which increases Arab intransigence on the problem of accommodation with Israel.

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