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## 1. SOVIET PROPOSAL FOR FOREIGN MINISTERS' MEETING

In agreeing to the Western proposal to convene the UN Disarmament Subcommittee in London on 11 March, Soviet UN delegate Kuznetsov proposed on 7 February that the meeting be held at the foreign minister level. This is mainly an attempt to create the impression that the USSR is continuing its efforts to reach a disarmament agreement and to place the onus for rejecting this initiative on the Western powers. Since the General Assembly already had voted unanimously to hold another meeting of the subcommittee in London, Moscow probably expects that its new proposal for a higher level meeting will be rejected.

The suggestion was also made that the meeting be expanded to include military, economic and financial experts, apparently to demonstrate Moscow's readiness to negotiate on technical details of inspection and control, including reductions in force and military expenditures.

The Soviet position in the subcommittee talks will probably be based primarily on the Soviet omnibus disarmament proposals of 17 November 1956, which included a statement of Soviet readiness to discuss the use of aerial inspection in a zone of about 500 miles on either side of the line dividing East and West in Europe.

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**3. ISRAEL SAID TO BE DETERMINED TO HOLD OUT  
AGAINST ANY UN SANCTIONS**

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[Redacted]

An official closely associated with the Israeli prime minister told an American embassy official on 6 February that the government is working overtime in an attempt to cut Israel's proposed 1957-58 budget by 150,000,000 pounds (about \$84,000,000) in anticipation of the application of economic sanctions by the UN with American support. The Israeli official asserted such sanctions are already in effect de facto, and said he believes Israel could hold out against them for three to six months. He observed that there would be nothing ignominious if a small country like Israel had to buckle under to pressure from all the rest of the world, but he anticipated that before this happened the justice of Israel's "modest demands" would be recognized. Even if this did not occur, Israel could never forgive itself for not trying to prevent a return to the status quo ante, and the experience of belt-tightening might not be a bad thing, as it would have the effect of forcing "stark economic reality" on the Israeli people.

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**Comment**

These remarks, while designed to convince the United States that there is no object in pressing Israel for concessions at this time, nevertheless appear to be an accurate reflection of Israeli policy. The current Israeli press campaign and the mass demonstrations of support for the government's intransigent stand, planned by all Israeli parties except the Communists for this week end, will make it more difficult for the government to retreat even should it decide at the last moment to do so.

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4. UNREST REPORTED IN NORTHERN SYRIA

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[Redacted]

Press reports of an uprising in Aleppo are partially confirmed by American officials in Syria. The practically harmless bombing of government buildings and the homes of leftist and Communist leaders suggest that the "revolt" may have been planned by leftist army elements in order to justify the continuance of martial law and to further the elimination of opposition elements. Aleppo, a conservative stronghold, has been a center of resistance to the leftist trend in Syria, and Damascus has recently strengthened its garrison there. There

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[Redacted]

have been reports of the distribution of anti-government and anti-Communist pamphlets and the purported formation of a secret rightist political movement aimed at the government.

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According to the American embassy in Damascus, Syria has now become practically a police state. Conservative and pro-Western political leaders are intimidated and the Syrian army intelligence is staging "treason" trials complete with Soviet-type confessions. High civil servants are being dismissed and transferred in large numbers, especially those deemed "unreliable" by leftist elements. The combination of army and leftist-Communist elements appears to be moving Syria toward a one-party "democratic republic."

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7. MOSCOW BLAMES ISRAEL FOR SOVIET "ANNULMENT"  
OF OIL CONTRACTS

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A Soviet note of 6 February blaming Israel for Moscow's "annulment" of oil contracts presages a renewed Soviet propaganda and diplomatic attack on Israel. The note, which was in reply

to an Israeli protest on 28 December against Soviet suspension of shipments of "crude oil and pipes" in early November, said Israel's "aggressive actions against Egypt" made it impossible for the USSR to honor these contracts.

Although propaganda attacks on Israel were reduced recently, Moscow's anti-Israeli line is apparently to be renewed. A Soviet broadcast warned Israeli leaders on 5 February that in doing the bidding of the United States, "which now is leading the colonialists," they were "performing their shameful tricks on the brink of the abyss." On 1 February, Syria began a weekly broadcast in Russian to Russian-born immigrants in Israel encouraging hostility toward "Zionist rulers."

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