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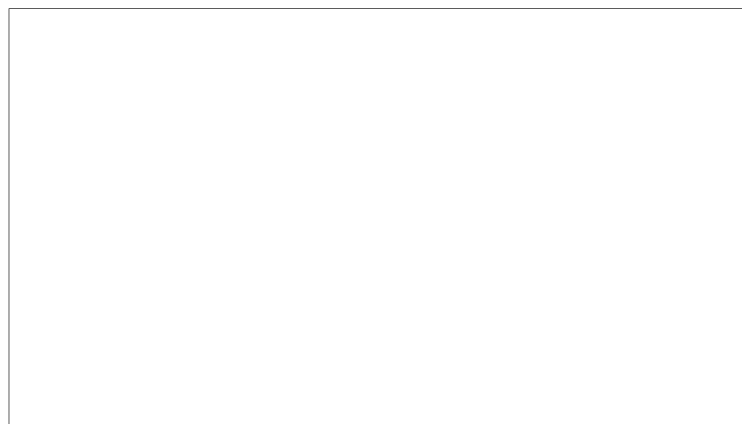
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1. FRANCE NOW PROPOSES TO OFFER ARMS TO TUNISIA IN RETURN FOR "BROAD" AGREEMENT

 French Foreign Minister Pineau told the American embassy in Paris on 26 September that France will propose a "broad understanding" to Tunisia under which Paris would supply the arms Bourguiba desires in return for Tunisian assurances concerning "current matters at issue between the two governments." Pineau did not go into details but did make clear that the French would expect to retain troops at several points in Tunisia.

Pineau said he expected this step to evoke criticism in the National Assembly, but of a less severe nature than if one of France's allies were to offer arms.

Comment

A violent split in the French cabinet resulted from reports that Pineau had accepted the idea of arms shipments by third parties such as Italy, Belgium, or the United States. Paris has since withdrawn the approval it gave Rome on 17 September to supply the Tunisians. Pineau's latest move may be an urgent effort to maintain as much French control as possible over the Tunisian defense establishment.

Bourguiba is unlikely to agree to the desired commitments, particularly on the key issues of Tunisian support for Algerian independence and the continued presence of French military units in Tunisia. He probably looks on recent developments as a break in France's hold over Tunisia. Bourguiba's popularity would be endangered if he were to accept French conditions in order to obtain arms, when Egypt has already offered to provide them.

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2. REPORTS OF FURTHER SOVIET ACTIVITY IN SYRIA

Comment on:

[REDACTED]

Recent reports indicate that Soviet activities within Syria are accelerating in both the military and propaganda fields.

[REDACTED]

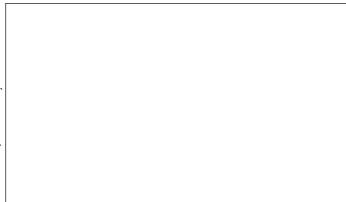
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] the Soviet technical specialists being sent to instruct at Syrian army schools will include two specialists for the weapons scheduled to reach Latakia on 3 October. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] the recent shipment of 50,000 submachine guns and 2,000 light machine guns are for equipping the Syrian army, rather than the popular resistance forces. The resistance groups may be equipped with the older arms of the Syrian army.

Another report states that a representative of the Soviet press and propaganda office recently arrived in Damascus to arrange for the printing of Communist propaganda in Arabic for distribution throughout the Arab world. Under present circumstances Damascus may be a better focal point for Communist propaganda than Cairo, where Nasir has recently stepped up anti-Communist activities. [REDACTED]

3. EGYPTIANS REVEAL CONCERN OVER SOVIET-SYRIAN RELATIONS



Egypt is making an effort to restrain Syria from overcommitments in its dealings with the USSR, according to the Egyptian embassy counselor in Damascus. He told the American embassy on 24 September that his government had requested both Syria and the USSR not to undertake programs which Syria could not afford, and he criticized some Syrians, especially Defense Minister Azm, for announcing a "grandiose program beyond their capacity to implement."

The counselor added that the Syrian government still must find funds for buying the home-grown agricultural products to be used in paying the USSR, even though the terms for payment for the Soviet arms had been softened. He stated that Egyptian credit and materials were available for aiding Syria, and that Syria and the USSR had been reminded of the recent Egyptian-Syrian agreement on economic union.

Comment

These statements are the strongest indication yet received of Egyptian concern over Syrian-Soviet relations. They suggest that Egypt's overt approval of these relations will not keep Cairo from working against any agreements tending to involve Syria too deeply with the USSR. Such an attitude on the part of Egypt is in line with the position which President Nasir has taken when discussing the Syrian situation.

4. EGYPTIAN MILITARY PREPAREDNESS

Reference:

[redacted] [redacted] the Egyptian army has been on a 50-percent alert since 9 September, primarily against the possibility of air attack. [redacted] Egypt is preparing to give military assistance to Syria, but the only measure taken thus far is to train Egyptian "volunteers" near Alexandria. No mobilization is in effect, no army reserves have been recalled, and there are no unusual air activities.

[redacted]

5. OUSTER OF ARGENTINE PRESIDENT
REPORTED IMMINENT

Comment on:

Important civilian and military backers of the provisional government are believed extremely apprehensive over Aramburu's promise of free elections in February, fearing control would go to demagogic nationalists angling for Peronista and Communist support. It seems unlikely, however, that any palace coup will be attempted as early as this week end unless there are indications that Aramburu is unable to control the Peronista-backed general strike that began on 27 September.

The strike is apparently part of a Peronista campaign to regain control of Argentine labor, but its effectiveness cannot yet be assessed. On 24 September, Aramburu termed the strike plan irresponsible and unpatriotic and announced that the government would not even discuss the demands put forward by the strike leaders.

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6. ECUADOR ORDERS DEPARTURE OF CZECH LEGATION

The Ecuadoran Foreign Ministry announced on 27 September that Czech legation personnel had been notified to leave the country within 48 hours or be expelled. The ultimatum was given to the Czechs at 1700 hours on 26 September.

Comment

The Czech legation, consisting of a chargé and a third secretary, is the only bloc mission in Ecuador. On several occasions in recent months, Ecuadoran President Ponce and other high officials have stated that the Czechs would be expelled. On 23 September, Ponce indirectly advised the American embassy that he would oust the legation for involvement in the recent general strike, which reportedly was promoted largely by Communist labor agitators and especially by Pedro Saad, senator for labor and secretary general of the Ecuadoran Communist party (PCE). The action may presage stronger government action against the PCE and Communist influence in the labor movement.

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7. USSR MAKES FIRST OVERTURE TO SOMALIA

Three ranking Soviet embassy officials in Ethiopia are scheduled to make the first formal Soviet visit to the Italian trust territory of Somalia on 2 October. The composition of the delegation suggests they may offer aid and propose the establishment of a Soviet consular mission. The USSR has already indicated its interest

in Somalia by arranging for Egypt to disseminate and broadcast Soviet anti-Western propaganda.

The British Foreign Office recently indicated its concern that Somali fear of Ethiopian expansionist ambitions might lead the trust territory to seek arms from any source following its independence in 1960.

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