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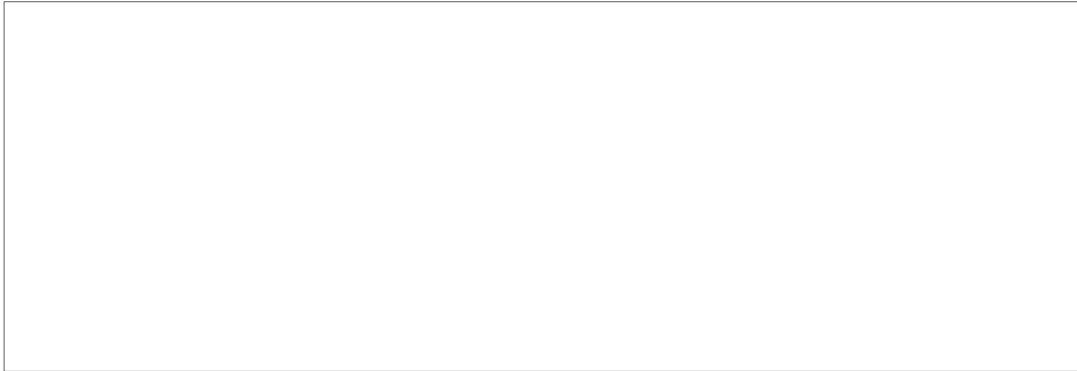
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10 September 1955

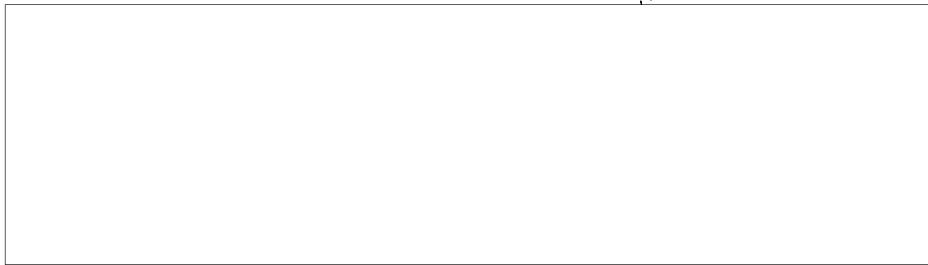
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1. IMPORTANT CHANGES IN SOVIET MILITARY FORCES
IN GERMANY MAY BE IMPENDING



The completion of Soviet antiaircraft artillery firing exercises, originally scheduled to last until 18 September, has been advanced to 16 September,

Comment

These security measures and the apparent advance in the training schedule may presage some reorganization or redisposition in the Group of Soviet Forces, Germany. Some reorganization might be undertaken in conjunction with the demobilization of an unusually large number of conscripts. The USSR promised in August to reduce its active military personnel strength by 640,000, and this reduction might well involve a cut in the 435,000 Soviet ground and air personnel in Germany.

The USSR might go so far as to reduce the number of combat divisions now stationed in East Germany. Coming after the recent announcements of Soviet and Satellite troop cuts, such a dramatic move would be calculated to give added impetus to the Soviet campaign for relaxation of tensions. The USSR would hope that such a concrete "demonstration" that the threat of military aggression against the NATO area has evaporated would bring powerful pressure to bear on the Western governments to reduce NATO troop strength in Europe and slow down or abandon the rearmament of West Germany. An announcement of troop cuts in East Germany would have a particularly dramatic effect if made during Adenauer's negotiations in Moscow.

2. FRANCE MAY ACCEPT VIET MINH REPRESENTATION TO PARIS

The French government intends to decide this month the question of Viet Minh representation in Paris, according to Jacques Roux, chief of Far East Affairs in the Foreign Ministry. Roux stressed to American officials on 8 September, however, that it was not yet certain that France was prepared to accede to the Viet Minh desire to send an official economic and cultural mission. He pointed out, however, that if France was unable to make a favorable response, it would mean the end "in effect" to the Sainteny mission in Hanoi.

The American embassy in Paris believes that France does not want to terminate the Sainteny mission, and, in the hope that the Viet Minh will take a moderate line on the elections consultations issue, is reluctant to do anything that will offend the North Vietnam government.

Comment

Should France accept a Viet Minh mission, South Vietnam would probably become stronger in its opposition to consultations with North Vietnam on elections. The Diem government has long maintained that, among other things, unqualified American, British, and French backing is a prerequisite to acceptance of consultations.

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3. ALBANIA MOVES TO IMPROVE ITS RELATIONS WITH ITALY

The Albanian minister in Rome informed the Italian Foreign Ministry on 8 September that his government has decided to release 13 Italian POW's and begin talks with Rome on the "whole problem of normalization of relations." According to Secretary General Rossi-Longhi of the Italian Foreign Ministry, Italy intends to hold such talks.

Rossi-Longhi told the American embassy that he believed this approach resulted from Tirana's fear of the consequences of an agreement Yugoslavia and the USSR might have reached on Albania.

The Italian minister to Albania told the American embassy in Rome his government is considering making an official public statement of Italian interest in the neutrality, independence, and territorial integrity of Albania.

Comment

These conciliatory Albanian moves toward Italy are in keeping with the recent efforts by Tirana to play a part in the Soviet bloc's policy of conciliation.

There is no evidence that a Yugoslav-Soviet deal exists regarding Albania. Italian policy has consistently sought to keep a door open for the eventual renewal of Italian influence in Albania and to discredit Yugoslavia by accusing Tito of plotting a partition of Albania or seeking hegemony over it.

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