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TXA5 MIDDLE EAST
BY HOWARD HANDLEMAN

CHIEF WASHINGTON DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT OF INTERNATIONAL NEWS SERVICE
WASHINGTON- NOV. 9---(INS)---SOME U. S. OFFICIALS SERIOUSLY CONSIDERED
TODAY THE POSSIBILITY THAT AMERICA MAY HAVE TO TAKE DIRECT ACTION TO
AVERT WAR AND DISASTER IN THE MIDDLE EAST.

THESE OFFICIALS BELIEVE THAT WESTERN HONOR AND INFLUENCE ARE BEING
GRAVELY CHALLENGED.

THEY SAID THAT IF BY AGGRESSIONS EITHER ISRAEL OR THE ARAB STATES
LOSE TERRITORY TO THE OTHER- THE REPUTATION AND INFLUENCE OF BRITAIN-
FRANCE AND THE U. S. WILL BE SORELY HURT ALL OVER THE WORLD.

IT WAS AGAINST THIS BACKGROUND THAT ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE
GEORGE V. ALLEN SAID PUBLICLY SUNDAY THAT "IF ISRAEL IS ATTACKED- WE
WILL DO EVERYTHING TO PROTECT IT- AND WE WOULD DO THE SAME FOR THE ARAB
STATES."

NO OFFICIALS HAVE YET SPELLED OUT WHAT DIRECT ACTION MIGHT
BE TAKEN IF THE WORST COMES TO THE WORST.

OFFICIALLY THERE HAVE BEEN REPEATED STATEMENTS OF HOPE THAT EGYPT
AND ISRAEL WILL ACCEPT THE NEW UNITED NATIONS TRUCE PLAN.

BUT PRIVATELY SOME OFFICIALS BELIEVE THE U. S. MIGHT BE FORCED TO
TAKE SOME DRAMATIC ACTION TO "SANITIZE" THE SITUATION THROUGH PHYSICAL
INTERVENTION IN ONE FORM OR ANOTHER. THIS IS STILL IN THE TALKING
STAGE.

THE ENTRANCE OF THE COMMUNISTS INTO THE MIDDLE EAST PICTURE THROUGH
THE SALE TO EGYPT OF 75 TO 100 MILLION DOLLARS WORTH OF ARMS
SHARPENED THE CHALLENGE TO THE WEST.

BROKEN DOWN INTO SIMPLE TERMS THE SITUATION IS THIS:

1. IN 1950 IT WAS FELT THERE WAS DANGER THAT ISRAEL MIGHT ATTACK THE
ARAB STATES. AS A WARNING TO ISRAEL AND ASSURANCE TO THE ARABS- THE
THREE WESTERN POWERS DECLARED IT WAS THEIR POLICY TO PREVENT EITHER
SIDE FROM CAPTURING TERRITORY FROM THE OTHER.

2. SINCE THEN- THE THREE WESTERN POWERS HAVE PUT CURBS ON THEIR OWN
ARMS SHIPMENTS TO THE MIDDLE EAST TO TRY TO MAKE IT IMPOSSIBLE FOR
EITHER SIDE TO GET ENOUGH POWER TO CONQUER THE OTHER.

3. THE SALE OF COMMUNIST ARMS TO EGYPT- INCLUDING JET FIGHTER PLANES
AND SUBMARINES- HAS THREATENED TO WRECK WESTERN EFFORTS TO MAINTAIN AN
ARMS BALANCE.

4. THE WEST HAS DECLARED IT WILL NOT ENTER AN ARMS RACE IN THE
MIDDLE EAST. IT IS DOUBTFUL WHETHER THE WEST HAS ENOUGH SURPLUS WAR
PLANES AND GUNS TO MATCH THE COMMUNISTS IN A PLANE-FOR-PLANE AND GUN-
FOR-GUN ARMS RACE.

THE COMMUNISTS ARE DEALING IN SURPLUS- AND HAVE PLENTY TO DEAL WITH.
DIRECTOR ALLEN DULLES OF THE CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY ESTIMATED
RUSSIA HAS BETWEEN FOUR AND SIX THOUSAND MIG-15 JET FIGHTERS- MANY OF
WHICH HE SAID- COULD BE WRITTEN OFF AS "SURPLUS" FOR DEALS LIKE THE
ONE WITH EGYPT.

AS A RESULT OF THESE FACTORS- OFFICIALS MADE IT CLEAR THAT ISRAEL
MUST DEPEND MORE ON WESTERN PROMISES OF PROTECTION THAN ON DIRECT ARMS
SHIPMENTS FOR DEFENSE AGAINST EGYPT.

SOME ARMS UNDOUBTEDLY WILL GO TO ISRAEL TO HELP REDUCE THE LEAD
EGYPT SEEMS TO BE OBTAINING WITH THE DEAL WITH RED CZECHOSLOVAKIA.

BUT OFFICIALS ADMIT THAT IN ORDER TO MAINTAIN HONOR AND INFLUENCE
IN THE WORLD THE WESTERN POWERS MUST THEMSELVES MAKE CERTAIN THAT
ISRAEL IS NOT ENGULFED.

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