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CURRENT INTELLIGENCE WEEKLY SUMMARY



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NORTH AFRICA

Bizerte

President Bourguiba apparently will seek another meeting of the UN Security Council to charge that France has failed to comply with the council's 22 July resolution urging an immediate cease-fire at Bizerte and the withdrawal of forces to positions held before hostilities began on 19 July. Before the tenuous truce was effected on Sunday, French forces had secured all access routes to their base complex. A formal cease-fire has yet to be arranged because the French base commander and the Tunisian provincial governor, who have been charged with securing an agreement, have not agreed on a site for the meeting. France is reported to have suggested a "neutral spot" outside Bizerte for the meeting.

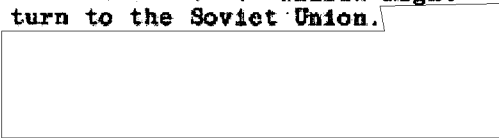
Bourguiba may have intended to forestall a similar move by the USSR when he stated on 25 July that he wanted another meeting of the Security Council. An American UN official had a hint on 24 July from Georgy Arkadyev, highest ranking Soviet national in the Secretariat, that the USSR might call for another council meeting. This official estimates that if the French do not comply promptly with the council resolution, there will be a further meeting on 28 July "and a special General Assembly session next week."

Hammar skjold, who arrived in Tunis on 24 July at Bourguiba's invitation, is reported hopeful that he can persuade both the Tunisians and the French to conform to the resolution, in which case "it would not be too difficult for the parties to reach a negotiating posture." Negotiations, however, would be complicated both by

fears of reprisals by the sizable French colony in Bizerte and by Tunisian action in detaining and expelling French citizens and seizing French properties throughout Tunisia.

Bourguiba on 25 July renewed his demands that France evacuate the base and reiterated his appeal for foreign volunteers, citing a need for guerrilla fighters, technicians, and arms to augment his crippled army. The return of the 3,100 Tunisian troops from the Congo will boost morale, but Bourguiba feels a need for something more than pledges of solidarity and is seeking at least a token international force.

There is still no evidence that Tunisia is soliciting Sino-Soviet bloc assistance, despite the fact that Tunisian officials --including Ambassador Habib Bourguiba, Jr., in Washington-- have hinted that Tunisia might turn to the Soviet Union.



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The Bizerte crisis and Bourguiba's feeling that the West betrayed him at this juncture are expected to be reflected in a modification of his policy of pro-Western nonalignment, and anti-Western tendencies which Bourguiba has heretofore held in check are likely to emerge. Although he has sought to remain aloof from Middle Eastern entanglements and has quarreled bitterly with Nasir, he is now committed to resume full membership in the Arab League and to re-establish diplomatic relations with the UAR. Renewal of these ties, however, is not likely to eliminate wholly the suspicion with which Arab leaders generally regard Bourguiba and his aspirations

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to become a leading Arab and African statesman.

Algerian Support

Leaders of the provisional Algerian government (PAG) have made strong public statements condemning the "French aggression" against Tunisia, pledged Algerian solidarity with their Tunisian brothers, and implemented their 21 July offer of men and equipment to assist Bourguiba.



These PAG moves are, however, designed more to display solidarity and to establish a future bargaining position against Bourguiba's Saharan claims than to indicate a real intent to become embroiled in Bourguiba's struggle with the French.



PAG leaders disclaim prior knowledge of Bourguiba's intentions in forcing the Bizerte issue and privately are opposed to his actions and apparently not too displeased with the "thrashing" given him by the French.

Repercussions in France

Foreign Minister Couve de Murville on 24 July called the situation at Bizerte "very

serious." He noted some French officials feel that the "contrived" origin of the affair was not adequately reflected in the UN debate and that the image of a small country as the victim of aggression was allowed to blur Tunisian responsibility. Moreover, the airlift repatriation of Tunisian troops from the Congo in UN-chartered American planes appears to Paris as an example of France's friends' helping another country in an operation against France.

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In addition to the dangers of renewed hostilities and to the rising international criticism of France's position, the Bizerte affair threatens to undermine De Gaulle's Algerian policy and France's close relations with its former colonies in tropical Africa. The US Embassy in Paris believes that domestic opinion is bound to question the futility of negotiating with the Algerians and to wonder about the value of a regime whose policy leads it into this sort of contradiction. Bourguiba's action has in effect forced De Gaulle to depart, at least temporarily, from his decolonization policy, which has been seriously criticized by army and civilian rightist opposition elements.

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Meanwhile, there are further indications of the extent of military and rightist opposition to De Gaulle. Interior Minister Roger Frey told Ambassador Gavin on 19 July that he regarded the army as "the most serious problem" confronting France. This statement was made prior to the

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