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SUBJECT : Possible Utilization of New Soviet Transport in Expansion of Bloc Airlines

A recent civil air line agreement between Aeroflot and Air France established Prague as the exchange point on Moscow to Paris flights and gives CSA (Czechoslovakian Air Lines) a share in the 6 weekly flights between Paris and Prague. 3/ A second civil air agreement is being promoted by KLM for an Amsterdam-Dusseldorf-Prague service to the Middle East. 4/ CSA will undoubtedly request reciprocity if this agreement is consummated. 5/

COMMENT: If CSA is to attempt to expand its airline network to include Paris, Amsterdam, and other points it will need an improved transport to compete effectively with non-bloc airlines. The current first line transport of the Bloc airlines, the Soviet IL-12, has proven very unsatisfactory. It is underpowered, has developed stability problems, and has been subject to wing failures. The lack of power and resulting modifications caused a drastic reduction in the cargo capacity of the aircraft and lowered the passenger capacity from 32 to 18 persons, greatly reducing its commercial effectiveness. 6/

CSA attempted to cancel further IL-12 orders from the USSR in 1950 and revert to its U.S.-built transports; however, the USSR frustrated this move by refusing spare parts for the U.S. aircraft. CSA acquisition of spare parts and new aircraft from the West was almost eliminated by the export control phase of the joint US-UK Satellite aviation policy adopted in 1949. 6/

The IL-14 could put CSA on a par with non-bloc airlines since it is believed to be an improvement over the IL-12 and probably overcomes its faults. the aircraft probably began series production at Factory #84 in Tashkent early in 1954. 7/ Significantly, it is not believed to be in commercial use within the USSR as yet.

The "model" sent to

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Prague in May could well be intended for pilot and mechanic familiarization in preparation for its commercial utilization.

CSA could use this aircraft as the instrument for regaining part of its former network. The airline has experienced a progressive reduction in its external operations since March 1948, partially as a result of US-UK Satellite aviation policy. In addition, the lack of a suitable transport forced the suspension of the very important Prague-Lydda route to the Middle East in May 1949, since Greece had withdrawn landing and transit rights and CSA did not have an aircraft suitable for the resulting overflight to Lydda. 8/ In 1951 denial to CSA of overflights of the U. S. Zone Germany, as pressure in connection with the Oatis case, and the cancellation of the London-Prague air services by the UK further reduced the network. Finally, the deliberate Dutch, Belgian and French delays in servicing requests for air rights by CSA left the airline with a flight to the Scandinavian countries as its only route reaching outside the Bloc. 9/

The recent air agreement with Air France and the prospective agreement with KLM portend a reversal of CSA's fortunes. Yet, it is obvious that to make the maximum use of these opportunities for expansion a better aircraft than the IL-12 will be required; it is believed that the IL-14 may fill this requirement.

Documentation

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British Air Ministry Aircraft Recognition Journal, Vol. 4, No. 6, February 1950, Unclassified

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Documentation (continued)

NIS 18, Section 37, 1 July 1952, ~~Secret~~

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