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23 November 1960

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN



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23 NOVEMBER 1960

I. THE COMMUNIST BLOC

II. ASIA-AFRICA

Situation in Laos. ①

The Congo--Lumumba adherents reportedly losing ground in Stanleyville. ②

Gabon--President Mba survives plot against his pro-West regime. ③

III. THE WEST

Cuban foreign exchange reserves reportedly exhausted, with no normal replenishment in sight before January. ④

Switzerland reportedly planning to counter Chinese Communist harassment of Swiss nationals by imposing restrictions on Chinese activities in Switzerland. ⑤



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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN

23 November 1960

DAILY BRIEF

I. THE COMMUNIST BLOC

II. ASIA-AFRICA

Laos: Souvanna Phouma is pressing for talks in Luang Prabang with General Phoumi and Pathet Lao leader Prince Souphannouvong looking to the formation of a coalition government. The prospects are remote that Phoumi would agree to such negotiations. [The widely reported movement of Vientiane troops toward Luang Prabang may be in part designed by Souvanna to pressure Phoumi into such talks.] Soviet Ambassador Abramov, accredited to both Laos and Cambodia but resident in Phnom Penh, arrived in Vientiane on 22 November on a hurriedly arranged trip, possibly to offer Souvanna specific assistance as a follow-up to the general aid offer accepted by the premier on 28 October.

(Page 1)

Republic of the Congo: Opposition by Congolese Army units in Orientale Province to the pro-Lumumba regime in Stanleyville has forced Lumumba's chief lieutenant, Antoine Gizenga, to seek UN protection, [redacted]

[redacted] however, that Rikhye was receiving conflicting reports from Stanleyville "every four hours." The emergence of anti-Lumumba opposition in Orientale Province, along with Mobutu's violent expulsion from Leopoldville of the pro-Lumumba Ghanaian representative, would appear to be a major setback for Lumumba and his supporters, who were considering shifting their base from Leopoldville to Stanleyville. [redacted]

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Gabon: President Mba of the newly independent French Community state of Gabon has broken up an attempt to overturn his pro-West regime. Some leaders of the plot, including top officials in the National Assembly, are reported in hiding; others have been arrested. Several important figures who have been lukewarm toward Mba, such as the foreign minister, now have come out in his support. The President's position appears secure for the time being, but the prospects for long-term political stability in Gabon are not favorable.

[redacted] (Page 5)

III. THE WEST

Cuba: The Cuban Government's foreign exchange reserves are almost exhausted, and finance officials were forced on 18 November to cancel orders for urgently needed materials--such as sugar bags--according to [redacted] the American Embassy. Fidel Castro himself was not immediately informed of the situation for fear of his reaction. The National Bank's account with one of the two principal Canadian banks in Cuba is overdrawn, and there can be no normal significant replenishment of the Cuban reserves until the new sugar crop is exported, beginning in January. Cuba is still dependent on Western sources for some materials not available through present Sino-Soviet barter deals. Continued inability to purchase such goods, particularly food and consumer goods and materials for the critically important petroleum industry, would pose grave problems for the regime. Cuban banking officials reportedly doubt that relief will be forthcoming from the Soviet Union.

[redacted]

Switzerland - Communist China: Switzerland is reported to be increasingly concerned by Peiping's harassments of its nationals and threats to their property in China, and to be planning to encourage all private Swiss

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[nationals resident in China to liquidate their remaining holdings there and to return. Bern also contemplates taking other actions short of a diplomatic break, such as closing or reducing in size the Chinese Communist trade mission in Switzerland, and limiting travel through Switzerland by Chinese trade and cultural delegations en route to Africa and Latin America. These restrictions would inconvenience the Chinese but, since Peiping apparently places considerable value on maintaining outwardly friendly relations with Bern, it may make some conciliatory gesture.] [redacted] (Page 6)

IV. WATCH COMMITTEE CONCLUSIONS

- A. [No Sino-Soviet bloc country intends to initiate hostilities against the United States or its possessions in the immediate future.]
- B. [No Sino-Soviet bloc country intends deliberately to initiate direct military action against US forces abroad, US allies, or areas peripheral to the bloc in the immediate future.] *no*
- C. [There are indications that the situation in Laos has entered a critical phase, and general military conflict between the Phoumi and the Pathet Lao - supported Souvanna Phouma forces may ensue at any time. The Pathet Lao under such circumstances can be expected to oppose vigorously, with the help of the Communist bloc, any attempt to unseat Souvanna Phouma.]
- D. [Other developments affording increased opportunities for exploitation by the Communist bloc:]
1. [Algeria. Morocco's acceptance of Soviet military aid will make it easier for the bloc to supply Algerian rebel forces.] [redacted]

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V. CONCLUSIONS OF SPECIAL USIB COMMITTEE ON BERLIN SITUATION

The USIB has taken note of the following conclusions reached by its special committee on the Berlin situation, for the period 25 October 1960 through 22 November 1960.

1. There has been no significant change in the Berlin situation since the subcommittee's previous report of 25 October. During the early half of November, references to Berlin have been played down in Soviet news media--probably in part reflecting the current preoccupation of the Communist world with the meeting of bloc leaders in Moscow and a wait-and-see attitude regarding the impending change in the US administration. *no*

2. While the East Germans appeared primarily concerned with assessing and consolidating their earlier moves against West Berlin, the GDR did take some further minor steps in its campaign to assert control over goods moving in and out of West Berlin.

3. With the 1 January cut-off date for interzonal trade agreements between East and West Germany only a month and a half away, both the East and the West appear to be uncertain as to what actions and counteractions will be taken. However, it appears now that the West Germans may request that negotiations be started on the Interzonal Trade Agreement in the near future.

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~~SECRET~~The Situation in Laos

Souvanna Phouma sent a letter to King Savang on 22 November to enlist the King's support for his proposed meeting with General Phoumi and Pathet Lao leader Prince Souphannouvong looking to the formation of a coalition government. (Souvanna claimed [redacted] [redacted] during his recent trip to Sam Neua, he had secured Souphannouvong's agreement to participation in a coalition cabinet with representatives of the Phoumi group, excluding Phoumi himself.) It is doubtful the King will offer Souvanna much encouragement in his latest venture, and in any event there seems little chance that Phoumi would agree at this stage to talks on coalition with the Pathet Lao.

[redacted] the contemplated attack on Luang Prabang by a joint Pathet Lao - government force will be deferred pending receipt of Phoumi's reaction to the proposal for negotiations. It had been previously reported that the Vientiane elements slated to participate in the attack, including some of Captain Kong Le's paratroopers, departed by truck from Vientiane on 20 November. They were allegedly to rendezvous with Pathet Lao elements at Muong Kassy, about 55 miles south of Luang Prabang on the road from Vientiane. A later report indicates the Vientiane force may have stopped only a short distance from Vientiane. [redacted]

[redacted] initiation of a previously planned offensive, the nature of which is not spelled out [redacted] "Mobile Group 1" may be Captain Siho's commando battalion of about 800 men which reportedly joined other Phoumi elements recently in the Pak Ca Dinh area, about 20 miles east of Pak Sane. The emphasis [redacted] on infiltration tactics suggests the operation does not envisage a frontal assault on Vientiane forces disposed between Pak Sane and Pak Ca Dinh, but rather an attempt to bypass them. General Boun Leut, Phoumi's top military leader, recently divulged plans aimed at cutting off the Vientiane forces in the Pak Sane - Pak Ca Dinh area. [redacted]

Soviet Ambassador Abramov, who is accredited to both Laos and Cambodia but resides in Phnom Penh,

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[redacted] arrived in Vientiane on 22 November, possibly armed with an offer of specific assistance as a follow-up to the general aid offer accepted by Souvanna "in principle" on 28 October. [redacted] Abramov postponed a trip to Moscow, in connection with the forthcoming arrival of Cambodian Chief of State Sihanouk, in order to make his hurried visit to Vientiane. [redacted] Soviet propaganda reflects Moscow's increasing concern over Souvanna's position and has repeatedly charged the US with attempting to strangle Laos economically. A few hours before Abramov's arrival, Souvanna told the press that he would discuss with Abramov economic and "perhaps" military aid, pointing out that it could be flown in from Hanoi, in Communist North Vietnam. [redacted]

[redacted]

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~~TOP SECRET~~ [REDACTED]The Situation in the Congo

Tension continues high in Leopoldville after the 21 November clash between UN troops and Congolese Army units attempting to expel the pro-Lumumba Ghanaian representative, Nathaniel Welbeck. Sporadic firing continued through much of the night, even after the UN announced at 2000 hours that it had agreed to expel Welbeck. Although casualties are not believed to have exceeded 14, Congolese troops were reportedly "screaming for revenge" following word that one of their dead was a popular commander, Lt. Col. Kokolo. [REDACTED]

Forces favoring Lumumba were dealt a second setback with the emergence of army opposition to their strong-arm regime in Orientale Province. Since the arrival there in mid-October of Antoine Gizenga, Lumumba's principal lieutenant, pro-Lumumba elements had been developing the province as a politico-military springboard for the "reconquest" of the Congo. Although army units there were known to be irritated by Gizenga's wholesale arrests, Lumumba's supporters in Leopoldville considered Gizenga sufficiently in control to warrant plans to set up in Stanleyville a Congolese government to rival that of Mobutu's.

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] the situation in Stanleyville was unclear and that UN representative Rikhye was receiving conflicting reports "every four hours." [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Gizenga had been forced to take refuge in a UN building in Stanleyville. [REDACTED]

In the UN yesterday, the General Assembly voted to seat the Congolese delegation headed by Kasavubu, after first defeating another attempt led by Ghana and supported by the Soviet bloc to postpone consideration of the seating of the Kasavubu group. Guinea had announced beforehand that it would not

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serve on the UN Conciliation Commission if the Kasavubu delegation were recognized, and after the vote Mali announced that it also was withdrawing from that commission. Prospects are that there will be further defections from the commission--which has again delayed its departure--before it leaves for the Congo. [redacted]

[redacted]

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Coup Foiled in Gabon

President Leon Mba of the French Community state of Gabon, which attained independence last August, has blocked a plot to destroy his political power. The President has proclaimed a state of alert for six months, and acted against several top government officials who were accused of trying to poison him. As a result, the president of the National Assembly, Paul Gondjout, and several others are in hiding. Foreign Minister Gustave Anguilé and the leader of the parliamentary opposition, Jean Aubamé, now have come out in support of Mba.

Mba's victory should ensure Gabon's continued pro-Western policies. If his regime had been upset and an alliance between Gondjout and Anguilé formed, Gabon would have been vulnerable to Soviet bloc infiltration. Gondjout has disagreed with Mba over the relative powers of the legislature and executive and apparently has been scheming to upset Mba for several months. He had succeeded in temporarily dividing the governing party and leaving Mba in a minority position. Anguilé, who together with Gondjout has represented ambitious elements among the most highly developed segments of local society, has in the past reportedly been influenced by Gabonese students in Paris who were members of Communist organizations.

Although the President's position appears secure for the time being, long-term political stability in Gabon is endangered by tribal rivalries and political immaturity. Gabon, which is heavily dependent on French economic and political assistance, has maintained closer ties with Paris than any Equatorial African republic, and there is virtually no antiwhite feeling at this time. This republic, alone of the economically underdeveloped four states of the former French Equatorial Africa, has rich resources -- particularly wood products, oil, and mineral deposits already of interest to American industry. At Lambarené in the interior of Gabon, Dr. Albert Schweitzer conducts his world-renowned medical work.

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[REDACTED]

Swiss Relations With Communist China Worsen

[Switzerland, which has long tried to maintain correct relations with all nations of the Sino-Soviet bloc, is becoming increasingly concerned by Peiping's harassments of Swiss nationals and threats to their property in China, and is planning to retaliate with actions short of breaking diplomatic relations. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Bern's long-range strategy will be to withdraw all private Swiss nationals resident in China, try to sell at any price the few remaining Swiss-owned industrial installations there, and reduce its diplomatic representation--possibly by closing the Swiss Consulate in Shanghai.]

[While the Swiss are not greatly concerned about their assets in China, valued at several million dollars, they are disturbed by the Chinese practice of taxing Swiss nationals in China on their total income instead of on that part earned in China. Some Swiss residing in China have been presented with bills for over a million Swiss francs in back taxes. The Chinese refuse existing Swiss assets in China as payment for these bills, and instead demand foreign exchange from abroad. The Foreign Ministry official said that in effect the Swiss are held as hostages.]

[Bern contemplates that after the Swiss nationals have left China it will close or reduce in size the Chinese Communist trade mission in Switzerland and limit travel through Switzerland by Chinese trade and cultural delegations en route to Africa and Latin America by reducing the number of Swiss visas issued in Peiping. These restrictions would inconvenience the Chinese, who maintain a large trade mission in Bern. Although the use of Switzerland as an intermediary for trade with the West in strategic goods has fallen off in recent years, Bern and London are the focal points for Chinese economic activity throughout Western Europe.]

[Although Peiping treats Swiss nationals in China no better than other Westerners, it seems to attach considerable value to friendly relations with Bern, and may make

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[some conciliatory gesture to prevent their deterioration. In an unusual appearance at Swiss National Day celebrations in Peiping last summer, Premier Chou En-lai spoke in high terms of his country's relations with Switzerland, holding them up as a model of peaceful coexistence.]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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Special Assistant for National Security Affairs

Scientific Adviser to the President

Director of the Budget

Director, Office of Civil and Defense Mobilization

Director, National Aeronautics and Space Administration

Special Assistant for Security Operations Coordination

Chairman, Board of Consultants on Foreign Intelligence Activities

Special Assistant for Foreign Economic Policy

Executive Secretary, National Security Council

The Treasury Department

The Secretary of the Treasury

The Department of State

The Secretary of State

The Under Secretary of State

The Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs

The Deputy Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs

The Deputy Under Secretary of State for Administration

The Counselor

Director, International Cooperation Administration

The Director of Intelligence and Research

The Department of Defense

The Secretary of Defense

The Deputy Secretary of Defense

Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs

The Secretary of the Army

The Secretary of the Navy

The Secretary of the Air Force

The Chairman, The Joint Chiefs of Staff

The Director, The Joint Staff

Chief of Staff, United States Army

Chief of Naval Operations, United States Navy

Chief of Staff, United States Air Force

Commandant, United States Marine Corps

Assistant to Secretary of Defense for Special Operations

Director for Intelligence, The Joint Staff

Assistant Chief of Staff for Intelligence, Department of Army

Director of Naval Intelligence, Department of Navy

Assistant Chief of Staff, Intelligence, Department of the Air Force

Supreme Allied Commander, Europe

Commander in Chief, Pacific

The Department of Commerce

The Secretary of Commerce

Federal Bureau of Investigation

The Director

Atomic Energy Commission

The Chairman

National Security Agency

The Director

National Indications Center

The Director

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