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Approved For Release 2000/08/29 : CIA-RDP79R00890A001300010026-4

NSC BRIEFING

20 October 1960

FRANCE - DE GAULLE

- I. De Gaulle still stands high with French public, but is under increasingly heavy attack from hitherto silent opponents and some of his former political backers.
  - A. Die-hard rightists in Assembly aligning with democratic left against De Gaulle's proposed nuclear striking force and his opposition to NATO and integrated European Community.
  - B. Heavy-handed attitude of De Gaulle government toward parliament and labor's demands for fairer share in an improved economy are additional irritants.
- II. Algeria increasingly focuses tensions.
  - A. Failure FLN talks, increasing terrorism, mutual reprisals, rebel moves to internationalize problem arousing French public opinion.
  - B. Leftists, many clergy and other groups critical of army methods and of use of conscripts in this type of war.
    1. Student groups have called massive 27 October demonstrations; wide labor support indicated.
  - C. Right continues appeals for maintenance of French Algeria.
- III. Rightists also stepping up plotting against Fifth Republic and seeking to unite De Gaulle's military and political opponents.
  - A. Soustelle on 19 October for first time publicly advanced himself as alternative to De Gaulle.
    1. He recently set forth broad political-economic program in opposition to De Gaulle, including French Algeria and integration of NATO forces.

DOCUMENT NO. 22  
NO CHANGE IN CLASS. (1)  
CLASS. AUTHORITY  
CLASS. EXTENSION TO: 18 6 C  
NEXT REVIEW DATE: 1-31-70  
DATE: 1-31-70 REVIEWER: 372044

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- IV. However, De Gaulle could still rally most of French public to accept a move leading to negotiations or even Algerian independence so long as it was French initiative, if he dared do this. If so, he might have right-left revolution on his hands.
- V. Hence, De Gaulle is still standing pat on his policy of self-determination and shows no signs of making any move before UN debate in November.
- VI. In addition to public popularity, De Gaulle holds some trump cards.
- A. He can't be ousted legally.
  - B. Threat of dissolution enough to block non-confidence vote in assembly.
  - C. Most rightist opponents have no alternate candidate of stature.
    - 1. Opponents primarily involved in stepped up "psychological warfare" campaign in hope he'll abandon policy of self-determination.
- VII. Nevertheless, possibility increasing that a rightist fanatic may strike him down.

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