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22 September 1960

CURRENT INTELLIGENCE WEEKLY SUMMARY



CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
OFFICE OF CURRENT INTELLIGENCE

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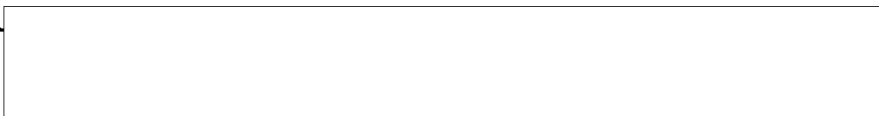
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has temporarily abated as a result of a cease-fire called by the Pathet Lao high command on 18 September. The cease-fire applies only to areas loyal to Souvanna; the inclusion of Sam Neua in this category may have stemmed from a letter purportedly written by the Sam Neua commander affirming loyalty to Souvanna. The letter was broadcast over Vientiane radio, but its authenticity is suspect. The Sam Neua garrison has in any event reaffirmed its loyalty to Phoumi since that time. When it becomes clear to the insurgents that the region is in fact loyal to Phoumi, they may well resume their slow advance on Sam Neua town, with its vital airfield.

The Laotian Army garrison in Sam Neua has been reinforced by a company of paratroopers dropped by Phoumi and resupplied by Vientiane. The commander ordered the abandonment of several of his outlying posts and is reportedly regrouping his forces in a defense perimeter around the town of Sam Neua. While this may be a more rational defense plan, it enables the Pathet Lao to operate at will in the rest of the province.

Pathet Lao propaganda now is coming out more unqualifiedly in support of the Souvanna regime. Souvanna has admitted that a high-ranking Pathet Lao leader is in Vientiane in

a liaison capacity to prepare the way for the peace talks which were a major aim of the Kong Le coup and an important plan in Souvanna's program for solving Laos' problems.

As the Asian Communist regime most directly concerned with events in Laos, Hanoi has charged that the United States is "instigating a civil war" which could be transformed into an "international conflagration." The same 19 September broadcast stated the Laotian situation is "a direct threat to the security" of North Vietnam and that "the Vietnamese people cannot remain indifferent." Hanoi insists, however, that there are no North Vietnamese personnel in Laos. Both Moscow and Peiping also have sought to create an air of foreboding about the Laotian situation without, however, threatening direct bloc intervention.

On 21 September, Moscow issued a statement charging "crude interference" by the United States and SEATO in Laotian affairs and remarking that the "Soviet Union is attentively watching the courageous struggle waged by the peoples of Laos." All three Communist nations seem to confine the "struggle" to the Laotian people and are bitterly denouncing what they term "US instigation of intervention" by South Vietnam and Thailand.

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REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

Colonel Mobutu is strengthening his position in the Leopoldville area. He has set up a technical commission, headed by Foreign Minister Bomboko and

staffed by Congolese university graduates and students, to administer the Congo temporarily. Although he has publicly announced that the commission will serve

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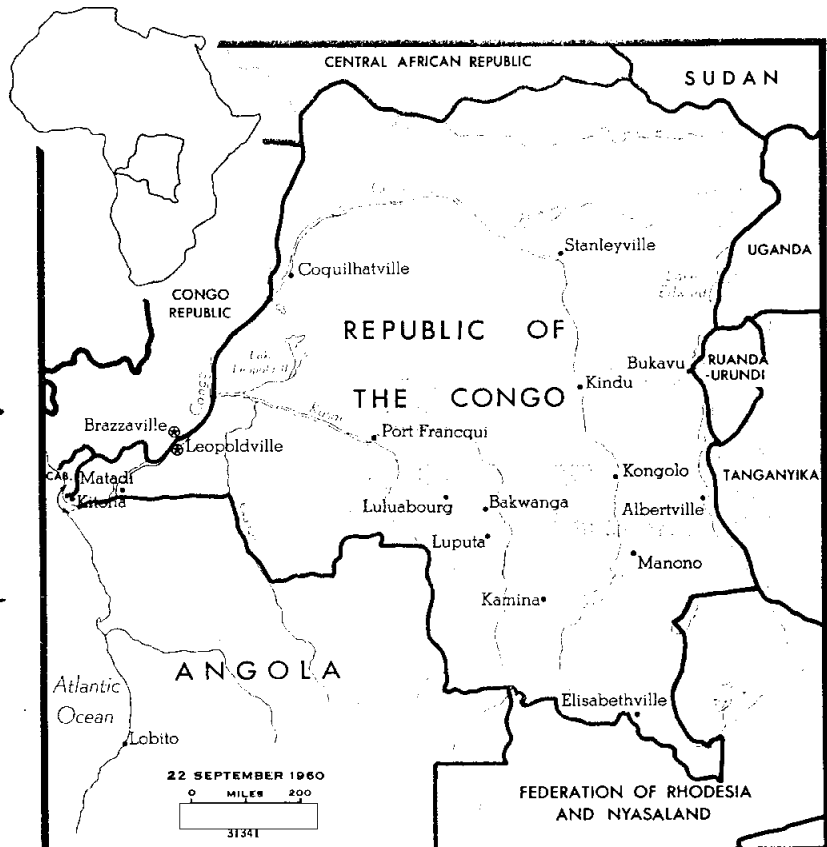
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during a three-month political truce while the various political factions seek an understanding, Mobutu has privately stated that a Kasavubu-Ileo government will take over at the end of October. During the interim, the commission will take orders from President Kasavubu.

Mobutu controls the troops in the Leopoldville area, but their loyalty is largely dependent on tribal allegiances. The three assassination attempts against the colonel--at least one of them put Mobutu in grave personal danger--show the weakness of his security system and the real threat posed by extremist action.

Premier Lumumba apparently has been unable to marshal significant support among the troops and populace of the Leopoldville area, and his influence is diminishing. He remains a very real threat to any successor government, however, particularly as long as he retains the backing of several influential African states--Ghana, Guinea, and the UAR.

The Guinean Embassy played a major role in protecting Lumumba from arrest by Mobutu's troops, as did the Ghanaian troops which ringed his office



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cial residence. As a result, Mobutu has protested to the UN Command and demanded the withdrawal of Ghanaian and Guinean troops from the Congo. The UN has agreed to replace Ghana's troops in the capital with Sudanese.

Lumumba has so far been frustrated in his effort to reach the UN General Assembly session in New York. The possibility of success of such an effort cannot be disregarded despite Mobutu's police control and intention to arrest Lumumba if he tries to leave the country.

Developments in Katanga Province suggest that the secession

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problem will become of major importance for Colonel Mobutu and play into the hands of Lumumba. Katanga's strong espousal of its separate identity and strong-arm action against dissident tribesmen will arouse the indignation of many Congolese--including moderate supporters of Kasavubu--and strengthen the conviction of leaders in Ghana, Guinea, and other African states that Lumumba is needed to prevent a breakup of the Congo.

On 19 September Katanga President Tshombé stated privately that his province would not join any political association with the other Congolese provinces despite a recent agreement signed between representatives of Katanga and the Ileo "government" of the Congo. Desiring to avoid the political instability he foresees for Leopoldville for a least five years, Katanga's President wants nothing more than a loose economic association with the Congo. He expects that equally close economic ties between Katanga and other central African areas will reduce the significance of the political question in the future.

The danger of war between Congolese and Katangan forces is considerably diminished at present as a result of the UN-sponsored cease-fire under which both sides have withdrawn their troops from the border area. However, tribal warfare in several areas of central and northern Katanga against the Tshombé regime has caused a good many casualties. Furthermore, the excesses of Tshombé's forces during their clean-up operations have caused an official protest by the UN Command and threaten to involve it in serious controversy with the Katanga government. In Kasai Province the

situation continues to smolder as tribal warfare against the troops of the central government in behalf of secessionist forces occurs in scattered localities.

Bloc Moves

At the UN General Assembly special session on the Congo which ended on 20 September, the USSR abandoned its efforts to obtain endorsement of its draft resolution which, in effect, would have censured Hammarskjold's actions in the Congo and secured UN approval for unilateral aid to the Congolese Government. The bloc opposed, but abstained, on the Afro-Asian resolution--passed overwhelmingly by the assembly--supporting Hammarskjold and opposing any military assistance to the Congo outside UN channels.

Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister Zorin, in a statement to the assembly, attributed the Congo crisis to a "criminal coalition of colonialists led by the US" which utilized the UN Command and secretary general for its own purposes. He charged that the UN Command in the Congo was preventing the "lawful" government from exercising its functions and that Hammarskjold had abused Security Council resolutions.

In the face of UN developments adverse to Lumumba, who from the initial phases of the Congo crisis had received Moscow's diplomatic and propaganda support as well as direct material aid, Soviet policy-makers apparently decided to acquiesce without risking a further loss of Soviet prestige, particularly with Khrushchev now at the UN. On orders from Mobutu, the USSR and Czechoslovakia closed their embassies in Leopoldville on 17 September.

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The Soviet Government's statement on 18 September, noting the "temporary" recall of the Soviet Embassy staff from the Congo, explained that as a result of the "intrigues of the colonialists and their agents as well as the undisguised interference of the UN Command in the Congo's internal affairs," the legal Congolese Government and parliament had been removed, making it impossible for the Soviet Embassy to function normally. The statement reaffirmed the USSR's "invariable friendship" toward the Congo Republic and its continued support and help to the Congolese people, but made no specific reference to Lumumba--indicating a more cautious Soviet approach to Congolese internal developments. Prague issued a similar statement at the same time.

The hasty departure of Soviet aircraft makes it unlikely that all bloc technicians have been evacuated. An observer in Khartoum saw one Soviet and seven Czech diplomats and 124 bloc technicians--about half of the number reported in the Congo--aboard the planes.

Coinciding with the General Assembly's approval of the reso-

lution sponsored by 16 African and Asian countries, Soviet propaganda voiced its first criticism of the Afro-Asian position in the Congo situation. Moscow radio on 19 September said that African and Asian representatives "did not have enough courage to condemn totally" the policy pursued in Africa by the US, and Hammarskjold's activities in the Congo. Terming the resolution "incorrect" in having given authority to the secretary general to dispose of UN military aid in the Congo at his own discretion, the Soviet broadcast asserted that only the "socialist states" have consistently upheld the interests of the Congolese people and resolutely demanded the immediate end of the NATO powers' intervention in the Congo Republic.

Congo events have received brief coverage in the Soviet press since Mobutu's coup. In addition, the "indefinite postponement" of a Moscow public lecture on the Congo scheduled for 21 September suggests that the Kremlin is having difficulty in explaining recent Congolese developments to the Soviet people.

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