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16 October 1959

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CENTRAL

INTELLIGENCE

BULLETIN



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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN

16 October 1959

DAILY BRIEF

I. THE COMMUNIST BLOC

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II. ASIA-AFRICA

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Laos: [The Japanese and Italian chief delegates on the UN subcommittee, in separate talks with Premier Phoui prior to their recent departure from Vientiane, expressed their personal opinions that Laos should make the best of a bad situation and seek some sort of accommodation with its Communist neighbors. They suggested presenting to the UN Security Council a mediation formula designed to achieve this result. Phoui, upset by their views, which he reported to the US ambassador, plans to fly to New York near the end of the month in order to argue the Laotian case personally.] 25X1

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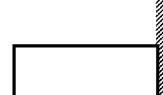
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UAR: [The visit of UAR Vice President Field Marshal Amir to Syria emphasizes Nasir's continuing concern over the organization and reliability of the UAR First (Syrian) Army. Since formation of the UAR in February 1958, Cairo has tried hard to remove or neutralize Syrian Army elements of questionable loyalty to the concept of union or those involved in any political action. A reshuffle of First Army personnel, perhaps of major proportions, appears to be under way, and Amir's presence may be essential to assure that the changes will be effected without dangerous repercussions.] 25X1

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Ceylon: [The position of the new government has been seriously jeopardized by the arrest on 14 October of a Buddhist priest--a high official of the government party--in connection with the assassination of former Prime Minister Bandaranaike. The close association of the priest with several cabinet ministers will intensify suspicion that top government officials were involved in a conspiracy. Those politicians implicated may be forced to resign from the government and others may defect from the ruling party, thus depriving Prime Minister Dahanayake of his bare majority in Parliament.]

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Belgian Congo: The two most recent outbreaks of violence among Africans in the Belgian Congo have reportedly resulted in at least 25 deaths. Although not directed primarily against Europeans, the outbreaks continue a trend toward violence which has been manifest in numerous incidents since the Leopoldville riots last January.

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South Korea: Government and opposition leaders on 13 October agreed to end South Korea's long-standing legislative impasse. Opposition willingness to proceed with the election of National Assembly officers probably stemmed from a recognition that their obstructionist tactics were generating adverse public reaction, as well as from a desire to regain their major forum for criticizing the administration. Although the agreement may temporarily restore normal legislative activity, further disruptions are likely until after the 1960 presidential elections.

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III. SIGNIFICANT INTELLIGENCE REPORTS AND ESTIMATES

(Available during the preceding week)

Outlook for Peru. NIE 97-59. 13 Oct 59. [redacted]

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I. THE COMMUNIST BLOC

II. ASIA-AFRICA

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UN Subcommittee Delegates' Views on Laos

[Laotian Premier Phoui has told the US ambassador that in separate conversations prior to their departure from Vientiane, the Italian and Japanese chief delegates on the UN fact-finding subcommittee expressed their personal opinion that Laos should make the best of a bad situation and seek closer relations with Communist China and North Vietnam. The Japanese delegate stated his belief that the Chinese Communists and the North Vietnamese genuinely fear that the Phoui government is allowing Laos to be turned into a base of aggression. He suggested that the only remedy would be to establish relations with the Communists and let them see for themselves.]

[Both subcommittee representatives, according to Phoui, agreed that the Laotian Government has furnished considerable evidence of North Vietnamese participation in recent military operations in Laos and expected the subcommittee's report to reflect this belief. They doubted, however, that the UN could provide a lasting solution to the Laotian crisis, since neither Communist China nor North Vietnam is a member.]

[The representatives also requested Phoui's endorsement of their suggestion that a formula for mediation between Laos and its Communist neighbors be presented to the Security Council. The American Embassy in Vientiane believes the "surprising blow" of the views expressed by delegates triggered the premier's decision to fly to New York to argue Laos' case in the UN personally. Formal recommendations would appear to overstep the bounds of the subcommittee's limited mandate, and such proposals are therefore unlikely to appear in the final report prepared in New York. However, their views are likely to have an adverse effect on the atmosphere in which Laos' case is considered at the UN, in addition to demoralizing the Phoui government.]

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Ceylonese Officials Implicated in Bandaranaike's Assassination

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[New Prime Minister Dahanayake's government will be seriously weakened and possibly deprived of its slim parliamentary majority as a result of a government party official's arrest on 14 October in connection with the inquiry into former Prime Minister Bandaranaike's assassination. The official, a prominent Buddhist priest and member of the ruling Sri Lanka Freedom party's executive committee, allegedly knew in early September of plans to assassinate Bandaranaike.]

[The latest issue of a publication which was the Sri Lanka Freedom party organ under Bandaranaike implies in a front-page story that Prime Minister Dahanayake and at least six other prominent figures were implicated in the assassination. Public suspicion of top government involvement will be intensified by the close association of the arrested priest with several cabinet ministers and by the simultaneous arrest of the brother of one of these ministers. The growing suspicions may force the implicated cabinet members to resign from the government. On the day prior to the arrest, three government members reportedly asked Prime Minister Dahanayake to request the resignation of Minister of Local Government Vimala Wijewardene because of her well-known association with the priest. The three members also requested an emergency meeting of the government parliamentary group and suggested dissolution of parliament and new elections if necessary. Dahanayake apparently is considering having the cabinet decide whether the implicated ministers should take leave pending the outcome of investigations.]

[Should the issue become the subject of heated public debate or should Dahanayake attempt to protect the suspected members, some of his parliamentary support may defect to avoid being identified with the controversy. Senior cabinet member C. P. de Silva reportedly arranged to meet on 14 October with Dudley Senanayake, leader of the moderately conservative United National party. De Silva's move suggests that his irritation over not being named Bandaranaike's successor, together with the deepening cabinet rift, may provoke him to seek alignment with conservative opposition elements.]

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New Violence in Belgian Congo

Two apparently unrelated outbreaks of violence among Africans in the Belgian Congo have reportedly taken at least 25 lives since 13 October. Although not directed primarily against Europeans, the outbreaks continue a trend toward violence which has been manifested in numerous minor incidents since the Leopoldville riots of last January.

Tribal jealousies and rivalries appear to have been responsible for the latest incidents at the river port of Matadi and one at Luluabourg in the central Congo. Three lesser clashes in late September and a short-lived strike by an estimated 24,000 transport workers apparently were triggered by the discharge of African employees at a Belgian air base; the arrest of four Africans not possessing proper identification; and alleged grievances among students at an American missionary school.

While the unrest could lend itself to exploitation by nationalist groups, there is no evidence at present of involvement by either of the Congo's two most influential nationalist organizations. Nationalist leaders may be awaiting developments in Belgium, where Congo Minister Auguste de Schrijver is expected to make a statement in the next few days clarifying the government's program for the Congo and outlining plans to bolster its economy.

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South Korean Political Leaders End Legislative Impasse

South Korean opposition leaders on 14 October ended the boycott of National Assembly sessions which had blocked legislative business for 43 days by withholding the two-thirds quorum required for election of officers. The opposition probably realized that the obstructionist tactics were not only beginning to generate adverse public reaction but were denying the opposition its best forum for criticism of the administration.

Normal legislative functions have been suspended, except for short intervals, since last December, when the majority Liberal party forcibly ousted from the assembly chamber opposition members who were staging disorders to prevent passage of restrictive legislation strongly opposed by the Democratic party.

Although the entente may restore normal legislative activity temporarily, recurrent impasses are likely at least until after the 1960 presidential elections. The government has indicated it will take whatever measures are necessary to assure the re-election of President Rhee.

The long-standing suspension of normal parliamentary processes has threatened to discredit democracy in the eyes of the public and has delayed the passage of important legislation. However, the day-to-day operations of the government, which is dominated by President Rhee and the administration, have not been seriously hampered.

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