

26 December 1960

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN

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26 DECEMBER 1960

I. THE COMMUNIST BLOC

Taiwan Strait--Almost no Communist shelling in past month.

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II. ASIA-AFRICA

Laos--Peiping endorses USSR's "just stand" on ICC and Geneva conference; bloc air support continues.

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Congo--Hammarskjold implies he will try to take UN out of Congo if Mobutu uses force in Orientale Province.

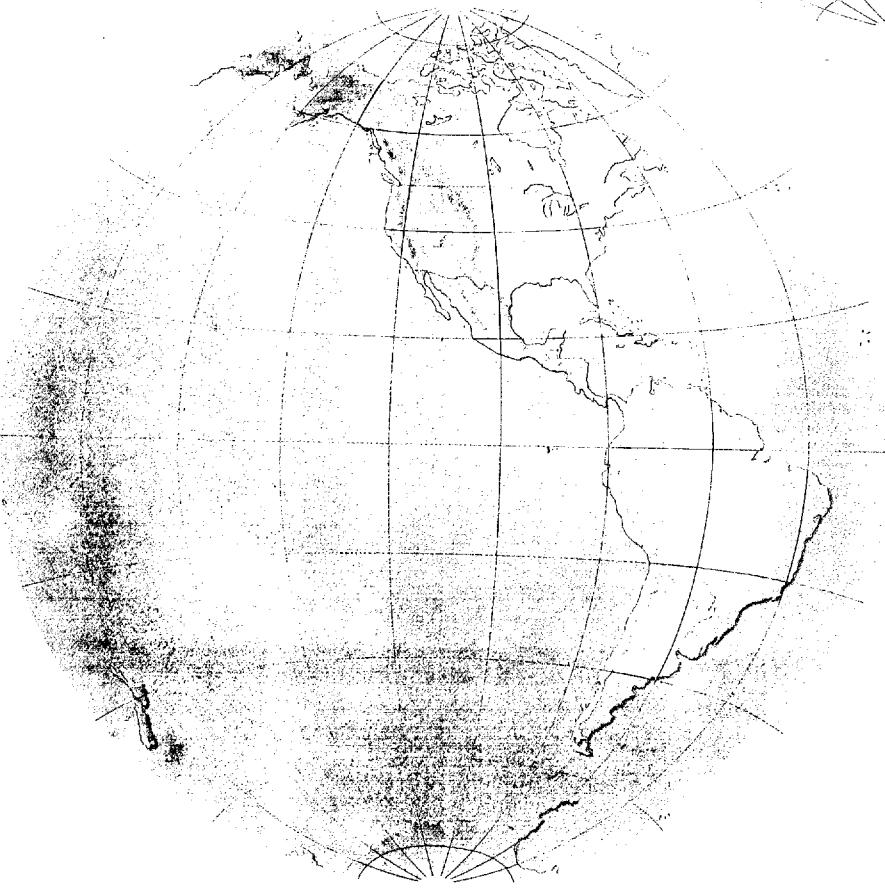
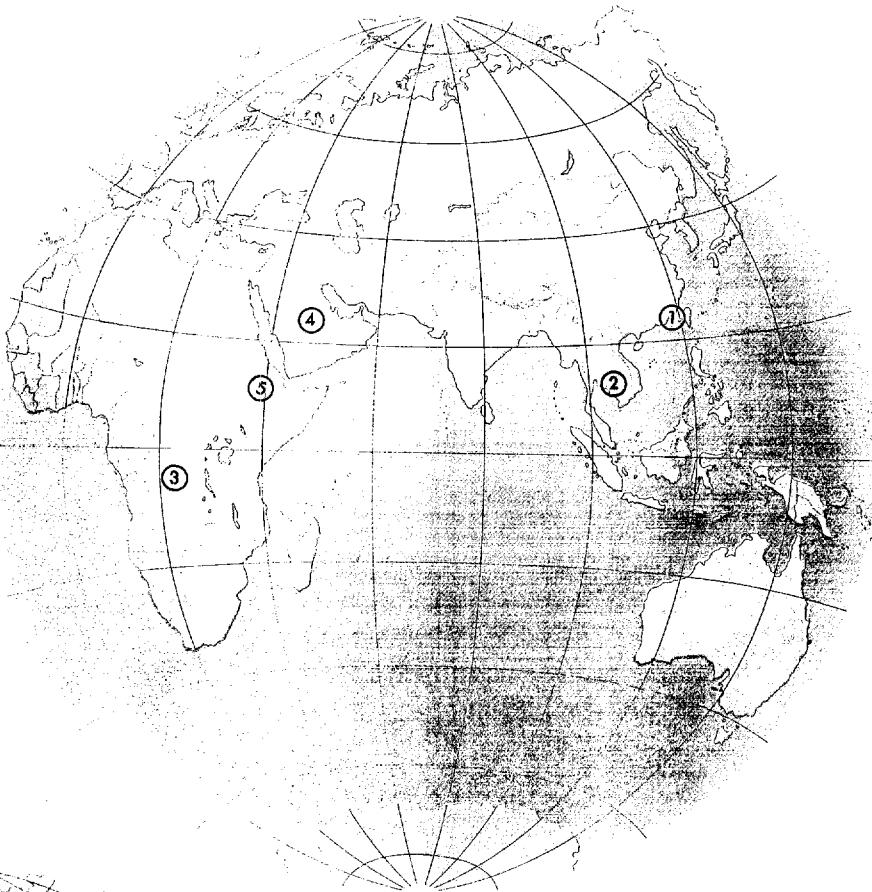
③

King Saud promises some reforms; popular reaction to his take-over generally favorable.

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Ethiopia--Security precautions continue high; Emperor's decision to reconstitute Bodyguard likely to antagonize army.

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DAILY BRIEF

I. THE COMMUNIST BLOC

*Communist China - Taiwan: Communist shelling of the offshore islands has almost ceased for the past month. Only one firing of 33 propaganda rounds has occurred since 27 November--the lowest ebb since the odd-day firing pattern was established in October 1958. In addition, the "liberate Taiwan" theme has been a negligible ingredient in mainland propaganda since mid-1960. On the few occasions when the Taiwan issue is mentioned, however, Peiping continues to underscore its determination to use force if necessary while expressing hope for a peaceful solution.

In contrast to the Communist behavior, Chinese Nationalist batteries have increased the number of high-explosive shells fired against the mainland since mid-November. Tai-pei apparently believes it is politically advantageous to keep a state of tension in the strait. [redacted]

II. ASIA-AFRICA

*Laos: Peiping, in a People's Daily editorial on 25 December, endorsed the "just stand" taken by the Soviet Government in formally requesting British support for reactivating the International Control Commission in Laos and reconvening the Geneva conference. The Chinese Communists would expect to participate in such a conference. The editorial implied, however, that Communist China would disapprove of any Soviet effort to bring the Laotian situation before the United Nations. Three columns of Laotian Government troops continue their security patrols north of Vientiane against the Pathet Lao and

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~~TOP SECRET~~

Captain Le's force. The present objective is said to be to pinpoint enemy forces in preparation for more concerted operations aimed at their liquidation. (SECRET NOFORN)

Six of the Soviet AN-12s that arrived in Peiping from the USSR on 23 December continued on to Canton on 24 December. Their cargo will probably be transshipped to Hanoi aboard Soviet IL-14s operating out of the North Vietnamese capital. Soviet and North Vietnamese aircraft were scheduled for flights into Laos at least through 24 December.

***Congo:** Hammarskjold has sent a letter to Kasavubu implying that he will ask the Security Council to take the UN out of the Congo if Mobutu uses force in an attempt to take Orientale Province--still nominally controlled by Antoine Gizenga's "government." Hammarskjold told US officials, however, that he does not expect civil war in the Stanleyville area, since he believes neither Gizenga nor Mobutu is strong enough to force a fight. Hammarskjold plans to be in the Congo on 3 and 4 January. Khrushchev, after a delay of ten days, responded to Gizenga's appeal for support by reiterating Soviet promises of support and sympathy but avoiding any specific commitment of assistance. Sudan continues to refuse transit to UAR planes bound for Stanleyville, but President Abboud admits that flights over remote areas of the country could probably be made without Sudanese knowledge.

***Saudi Arabia:** In his first policy statements since reassuming active charge of the government on 21 December, King Saud on 24 and 25 December promised to take steps to eliminate economic "stagnancy" and decentralize the government, to have a constitution drawn up, and to make other moves suggestive of greater democratization. These statements, and the relatively liberal character of his cabinet appointments, indicate that Saud hopes at least to create the impression of sponsoring a reformist government. The first popular reactions to the King's take-over

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appear to be favorable, although educated Saudis reportedly have adopted a wait-and-see attitude. (SECRET NOFORN)

A group of dissident Saudi military officers continue to express dissatisfaction with King Saud's resumption of control of the government.

Representatives of the officers' group told the charge that their movement was inspired by the UAR's success with its revolution and that they felt the time was favorable for action because of the "intense disputes among the members of the royal household." The UAR charge, noting that his views were unofficial, pointed out to the officers the "economic and international" difficulties they would face if they undertook a coup and advised them to be patient and remain vigilant.

*Ethiopia: Although the leaders of the attempted coup against Emperor Haile Selassie are now reported to have been killed or captured, considerable sympathy for the coup effort persists, and the Imperial Government's position may still be precarious. Because of the elaborate precautions considered necessary for the Emperor's safety, the royal family has not attended the funerals of the government ministers killed by the rebels. The Emperor reportedly decided on 21 December to reconstitute the Royal Bodyguard, and some junior officers and men have already been released from custody. This action could seriously antagonize the army, which crushed the revolt. Officials of the government claim to have captured documents which they say clearly indicate Soviet and Czech involvement in the coup attempt, but the officials have not produced the evidence they claim to have.

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