

23 June 1959

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN



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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN

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23 June 1959

DAILY BRIEF

I. THE COMMUNIST BLOC

*Communist China: The rich, rice-producing Pearl River delta in Kwangtung Province is threatened by what Peiping calls a "once-in-a-century" flood. Canton, the largest city in South China, is in danger of inundation. The flood follows bad weather which hampered the wheat harvest in Central and North China. These setbacks and the failure of some of Peiping's "leap forward" agricultural programs are compelling the regime to back off from its extravagantly optimistic forecasts for this year's crops.

II. ASIA-AFRICA

UAR-USSR: (The Soviet construction plans for the Aswan High Dam have been rejected by Egypt's international High Dam Consulting Board, according to an American member of the board. A major portion of the Soviet plans was dismissed by the board as "untried and unsafe." Cairo now must decide whether to follow the consultants' recommendations or accept the Soviet plans. In a recent press announcement the USSR, apparently anticipating a rejection, claimed Moscow was prepared to implement the project in accordance with any plan the UAR experts approve. The USSR claims its plan would be the most economical and the least time consuming.)

India: The Communist administration of India's Kerala State continues under pressure from united opposition groups seeking its downfall. Demonstrations are occurring almost daily, although the opposition attack appears to have lost some of its momentum. High leaders of the Congress party, including Prime Minister Nehru, are visiting the state to investigate the situation. The Congress party high command apparently is

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not strongly backing the local opposition campaign. Nehru's pacification efforts could result in further weakening the campaign and making it more difficult to force the Communists out of office. The national leaders of the Praja Socialist party--the Congress' major ally in Kerala--are concerned over this possibility and are meeting on 25 June to consider a course of action.

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III. THE WEST

OK Britain: (The Labor party and trade-union leadership meets on 23 June to consider how to deal with the growing pressure within the Labor movement, including pressure from traditionally right-wing trade unions, to advocate unilateral renunciation of nuclear weapons by Britain. Although party leaders, including Bevan, are not expected to make any major change in their policy of opposition to unilateral nuclear disarmament, a tactical shift that would not tie the hands of a possible future Labor government may become necessary to preserve party unity before the coming general elections. Such a tactical Labor shift would increase the already considerable pressure on the Macmillan government to achieve an agreement to suspend nuclear tests.)

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Caribbean: The Haitian Government has placed the armed forces on a full nationwide alert. This move was prompted by an explosion and fire at army headquarters in Port-au-Prince on 21 June and by rumors of imminent landings on the north coast. The landings might be made either by Dominican revolutionaries attempting to invade the Dominican Republic through Haiti or by Haitian exiles attempting to take advantage of the situation.

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LATE ITEM

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*Belgian Congo: Nationalist-inspired disorders may occur in Leopoldville within the next few days if the Belgians do not satisfy African demands for the early establishment of a regional "Republic of Central Kongo,"

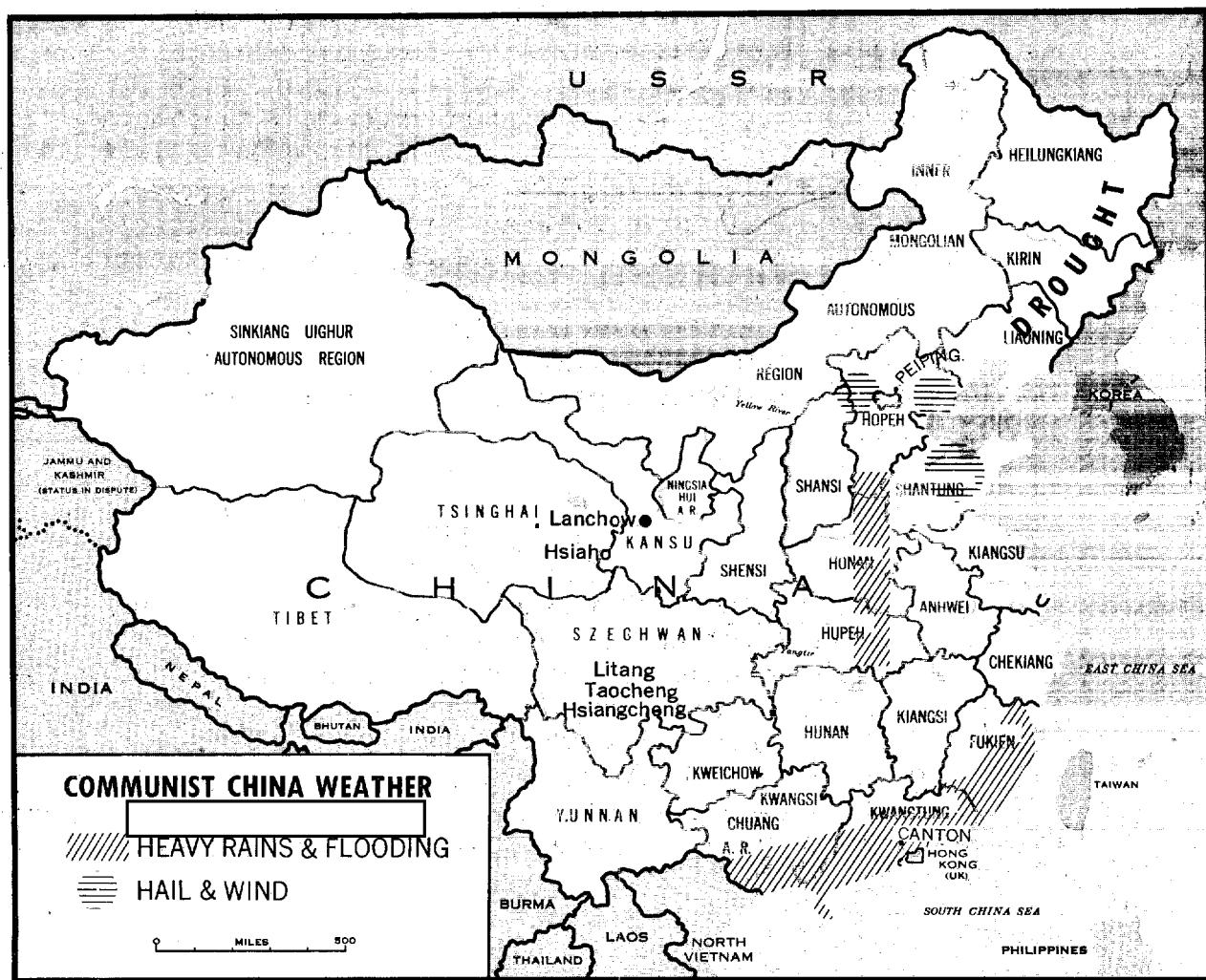
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25X1 The Africans are led by Joseph Kasavubu, who played an important role in the riots last January.

25X1 (the native city is tense and that "whole-sale violence" against the 20,000-odd whites may result.)

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I. THE COMMUNIST BLOC

Bad Weather in China

The rich, rice-producing Pearl River delta in Kwangtung Province is threatened by what Peiping says is a "once-in-a-century" flood which may also engulf Canton, South China's largest city. Excessive rains have already caused floods and loss of property and crops in the province and in neighboring Kwangsi and Fukien. Flooding in low-lying tidal areas--such as the Pearl River delta--will be aggravated by the abnormally high tides accompanying the summer solstice. Millions of peasants have been mobilized to raise and reinforce dikes. Military and civilian aircraft, naval and merchant vessels have been pressed into service to carry relief supplies and rescue those marooned by high waters.

Earlier in the month Peiping was complaining of damage caused by hail, rain, and windstorms in important winter wheat regions of Central and North China and by persisting drought in Manchuria.

It is still too early to assess the damage done by bad weather to crops and food supplies. The leadership has good reason to overplay the extent of this year's natural calamities as a hedge against failure to reach overly ambitious farm targets. Even before the present run of unfavorable weather started, it was apparent that some of the regime's farm policies were not yielding anticipated results.

At least two important agricultural provinces have acknowledged that production goals set early in the year would not be reached. Although Peiping has not yet retracted on its target of producing 525,000,000 tons of food grains this year, it has admitted that early grain crops will be no larger than last year's.

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II. ASIA-AFRICA

The Situation in Kerala

The campaign led by anti-Communist political and religious groups to bring about the fall of the Communist government of India's Kerala State appears to be approaching a point of crisis. Demonstrations are occurring almost daily, with some 3,000 persons arrested to date, and two deaths were reported over the past week end. Prime Minister Nehru apparently is not strongly supporting the Congress party units in Kerala, however, and his doubts concerning the constitutionality of the agitation may cause the campaign to lose much momentum. This could result in the Communists' continuing to stand firm, as they have to date. It could also discredit the Congress and Praja Socialist parties, which have led the political agitation, and make it difficult for them to initiate another "all-out" effort against the Communists in the future.

The state elements of the Congress party and the younger national party leaders are still firmly convinced of the need to oust the Communists by all possible means while feeling is running high. Nehru, however, arrived in Kerala for a three-day visit the day before a new round of agitation was to have begun. His publicized plans to talk to members of the Communist administration, as well as rumors that he may ask the Congress party to call off its agitation in favor of a round-table discussion, may delay further agitation while people wait to see what his visit produces. National leaders of the Praja Socialist party--the Congress' major ally in Kerala--apparently fear that the Congress may let them down; they plan to meet in Coimbatore, Mysore State, on 25 June to discuss the situation. PSP leader Thanu Pillai said on 18 June that if the Congress party withdrew from the direct-action movement, it would only help to perpetuate Communist "misrule" in Kerala.

If further violence does not occur, and if the anti-Communist campaign loses additional momentum, Nehru would find it difficult to institute President's Rule--direct rule from New Delhi--in Kerala on grounds of a breakdown of law and order. [redacted]

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Dalai Lama's Statement Disturbs Indian Officials

(Several references in the Dalai Lama's statement on Tibet at his press conference on 20 June were considerably more outspoken than Indian officials had recommended and may create friction between him and New Delhi concerning the duration of his stay and his future activities in India.)

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(Should the Dalai Lama and members of his government continue to press an anti-Peiping line or reiterate the Lama's statement that he considers himself head of a "government-in-exile," the Indian Government might become sufficiently embarrassed in its relations with China to request the Dalai Lama to leave the country. The Dalai Lama's statement that he does not intend to stay indefinitely in India or "embarrass the Indian Government" suggests that he already has this possibility in mind.)

(Peiping may feel compelled to attack the Dalai Lama's statement, although it would have preferred to remain silent about him and his activities.)

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III. THE WEST

British Labor Party Reconsidering Nuclear Policy

(To avoid a Labor party split before the general elections expected this fall, party and trade-union leaders will meet on 23 June to seek ways of dealing with the growing pressure within the Labor movement to advocate a unilateral renunciation of nuclear weapons by Britain)

(The meeting is being held a month earlier than originally scheduled, primarily to meet the threat posed by a resolution passed on 4 June by the powerful right-wing National Union of General and Municipal Workers, the third largest British trade union. This resolution calls for "the next Labor government" to stop the manufacture of nuclear weapons in Britain and prohibit their use on British territory. The Labor leadership apparently hopes to stave off a similar resolution from the Transport and General Workers Union--Britain's largest)

(The present party policy, formulated in March 1958, merely calls on the government to press for an international agreement on the suspension of thermonuclear tests and to adopt a unilateral British test ban for one year. While Gaitskell, Bevan, and other party leaders continue to oppose any unilateral British nuclear disarmament, they are searching for measures which, while not limiting a future Labor government's freedom of action, will offer a contrast to the Macmillan government's policy. Bevan, for instance, favors a proposal that Britain should offer to give up its nuclear weapons to help form a non-nuclear "club" of all nations except the US and the USSR.

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(Even a slight shift in Labor party policy would bring additional pressure on the Macmillan government to achieve a test-suspension agreement. The government has continually shown its sensitivity to public opinion on the issue by seeking compromises for Soviet-Western differences on the subject.)

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Haitian Armed Forces Alerted Against Possible Invasion

The Duvalier government has placed the armed forces on a full nationwide alert. This move was prompted by rumors of imminent landings on Haiti's north coast, and by a large explosion and fire at army headquarters near the presidential palace in Port-au-Prince. Landings might be attempted either by supporters of exiled opposition leader Louis Dejoie or by groups hoping to overthrow Dominican dictator Trujillo by means of an invasion through Haiti. This is the first time the government has alerted all military personnel since the abortive seven-man invasion attempt last 29 July.

Opposition groups in Haiti, principally supporters of Dejoie and exiled former Provisional President Daniel Fignolé, have recently stepped up terrorist activity against the weak and unpopular regime. President Duvalier's heart attack on 24 May, which has removed him at least temporarily from the political scene, has further encouraged opposition groups and intensified the long-standing hostility between the regular armed forces and Duvalier's repressive civilian militia.

Haiti's internal difficulties are further complicated by revolutionary activity throughout the Caribbean area. Revolutionary elements hoping to unseat Trujillo have long regarded Haiti as a convenient point from which to launch an invasion of the Dominican Republic. The Dominican Government has warned that it would send troops to repel any invasion of Haiti.

Public disorders caused by an invasion of either anti-Duvalier or anti-Trujillo groups or by an increase in internal opposition to the Haitian Government could provoke a popular uprising serious enough to topple the Duvalier regime. Haiti has specifically requested the United States to establish air and sea patrols and may also ask the Organization of American States for aid in preventing an invasion. [redacted]

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LATE ITEM

Nationalist Disorders May Occur Soon In Belgian Congo

(Nationalist-inspired disorders, possibly degenerating to wholesale violence against the 20,000-odd whites, may break out in Leopoldville within the next few days, [redacted]

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[redacted] the native city is tense and awaiting a statement from Minister of the Congo van Hemelrijck, who is due back in Leopoldville on 24 June following a tour of the colony.)

(The Africans are led by Joseph Kasavubu, who played an important role in the violent riots last January following his return from the All-African Peoples Conference at Accra. They are demanding that a regional "Republic of Central Kongo"--to include only the southwestern part of the Congo from Leopoldville to the ocean--be established by 1 January 1960. Kasavubu's plan calls for the election of a president in mid-December 1959, with the election campaign to begin next month. Brussels, however, is believed very unlikely to accept any such program.)

(Kasavubu's activities suggest that Brussels has failed in its efforts to win his cooperation to a program of orderly but rapid political evolution for the Congo, and that the Belgians are now likely to encounter increasing difficulties in implementing their reform program. Kasavubu has indicated complete lack of confidence in all Belgian officials except Van Hemelrijck, and he believes that the forthcoming council elections will be rigged. His scheme for a separate tribal republic is incompatible with Brussels' plans for a highly centralized Congo state.)

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