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20 October 1959

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CENTRAL

INTELLIGENCE

BULLETIN



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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN

20 October 1959

DAILY BRIEF

I. THE COMMUNIST BLOC

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Algeria: The vice premier of the Algerian rebel government has indicated to Tunisian officials that attempts to negotiate a cease-fire in Algeria may be imminent. According to these officials, Krim stated that the rebel National Revolutionary Council this week will ratify acceptance of De Gaulle's proposals as a basis for negotiations, and that a three-man team would be given full power to negotiate with the French. The rebels have attacked several points of De Gaulle's program, including France's claim to the Sahara, and any negotiations are likely to be protracted.

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India: Dissension among Indian Communist leaders--heightened by the Sino-Indian border issue--continues to plague the party as preparations are being made for the important meetings of the Indian Communist leadership beginning on 7 November. The party's dilemma

[Is receiving increasing publicity as leaders of the "nationalist" and "internationalist" factions vie for position and the moderates in the middle try to retain control. Moderate party secretary Ajoy Ghosh returned from Moscow and Peiping on 18 October two weeks earlier than expected in order to deal with the growing rift.]

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III. THE WEST

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Cuba: Current changes in Fidel Castro's government indicate that the extremists are expanding their control at the expense of moderate officials. Raul Castro heads a powerful new ministry of the armed forces; one of his closest associates, characterized by the American Embassy as an extreme leftist, has been assigned to head the key labor ministry.

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Algerian Rebels Preparing for Talks With French

A meeting of the Algerian rebel National Revolutionary Council will be held shortly to ratify acceptance of President de Gaulle's proposals as a basis for negotiations, according to remarks attributed to rebel Vice Premier Elkacem Krim. Following such ratification, the council will reportedly appoint a three-man committee with full powers to negotiate a cease-fire with the French.

Krim's remarks, as reported by a senior Tunisian official, suggest that negotiations will begin soon. Previously, there were indications that rebel intransigents intended to use the council meeting as a forum to attack French good faith and to question the practicality of any Algerian referendum. The optimistic tone of Krim's remarks, however, suggests that he expects any such opposition to be overcome. The rebels have attacked several points of De Gaulle's program--including France's claim to the Sahara--and any negotiations are likely to be protracted.

According to Krim--who is probably the most influential rebel leader--the Algerians have declined a Tunisian offer to help establish contact with Paris, but will work through Moroccan Crown Prince Moulay Hassan.

Although Paris would probably receive the rebel committee, it is likely to maintain its insistence that discussions at this time be strictly limited to arrangements for a cease-fire. Last week's overwhelming assembly vote of 441 to 23 in support of De Gaulle's Algerian program may make it easier for French spokesmen to persuade rebel negotiators that France intends to stand by its offer of eventual Algerian self-determination. [Redacted]

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III. THE WEST

Cuban Cabinet Changes

Raul Castro, considered the leader of extremist forces in the Cuban revolutionary government, has consolidated his growing influence by securing a powerful cabinet post which controls all army, air, navy, and police forces. His appointment on 16 October as head of the new Ministry of Revolutionary Armed Forces makes even stronger his position as Fidel Castro's presumptive heir and correspondingly weakens the moderate officials whose influence has tempered some of the revolution's more drastic aspects.

At the same time, former Minister of Defense Augustin Martinez Sanchez, an extreme leftist and long-time confidant of Raul, was named minister of labor to replace Manuel Fernandez. Fernandez cooperated with Cuban Confederation of Labor (CTC) leaders in resisting Communist efforts to gain control of the unions in recent elections. Martinez may facilitate expected Communist attempts to dominate the CTC national conference in November, when top officers will be elected.

Raul Castro has been commander of all Cuban armed forces since Fidel resigned the post to become prime minister in February. He has converted the military into a political instrument, dismissing almost all army and air force members who had served before the revolution. Since this included most of the trained technical and mechanical personnel, the result has been a complete lack of military efficiency, discipline, and training and a series of disastrous air force accidents. Raul will completely reorganize the forces, probably reducing them and continuing his practice of consolidating as many units as possible under his direct control.

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