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22 March 1961

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN



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CONTENTS

25X1

3. Korea: Pyongyang offers rice to South Korea in gesture contrasting shortages in South with economic progress in North. (*Page ii*)
4. Africa: All-African People's Conference to begin in Cairo tomorrow. (*Page ii*)
5. Rumania: Government reorganization concentrates power in hands of Gheorghiu-Dej. (*Page ii*)

25X1

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Next 1 Page(s) In Document Exempt

25X1

North Korea - South Korea: Capitalizing on recent exaggerated South Korean press reports of widespread food shortages, North Korea has offered Seoul about 75,000 tons of milled rice. This gesture is timed for maximum impact among the rural population in the South, where grain stocks are at their annual low point. North Korea, which claimed a record harvest last year, has repeatedly sought to contrast its economic progress with that of the South. Seoul has consistently rejected North Korean offers of relief in the past as obvious propaganda gambits.

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(Backup, Page 4)

Africa: The Third All-African People's Conference (AAPC)-- scheduled to meet in Cairo on 23 March--is likely to be held in a more extremist atmosphere than those in Accra in 1958 and Tunis in 1960. Although delegations to the AAPC are nongovernmental, the conference receives extensive publicity in Africa, the Near East, and South Asia. This year the situations in the Congo, Angola, South Africa, and the Rhodesian Federation will be the major objects of attack. The Cairo press states that Nasir will make a major address on the opening day of the conference.

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(Backup, Page 6)

Rumania: In a move paralleling earlier changes in East Germany and Czechoslovakia, Rumanian party leader Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej has added to his power by assuming the position

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22 Mar 61

DAILY BRIEF

ii

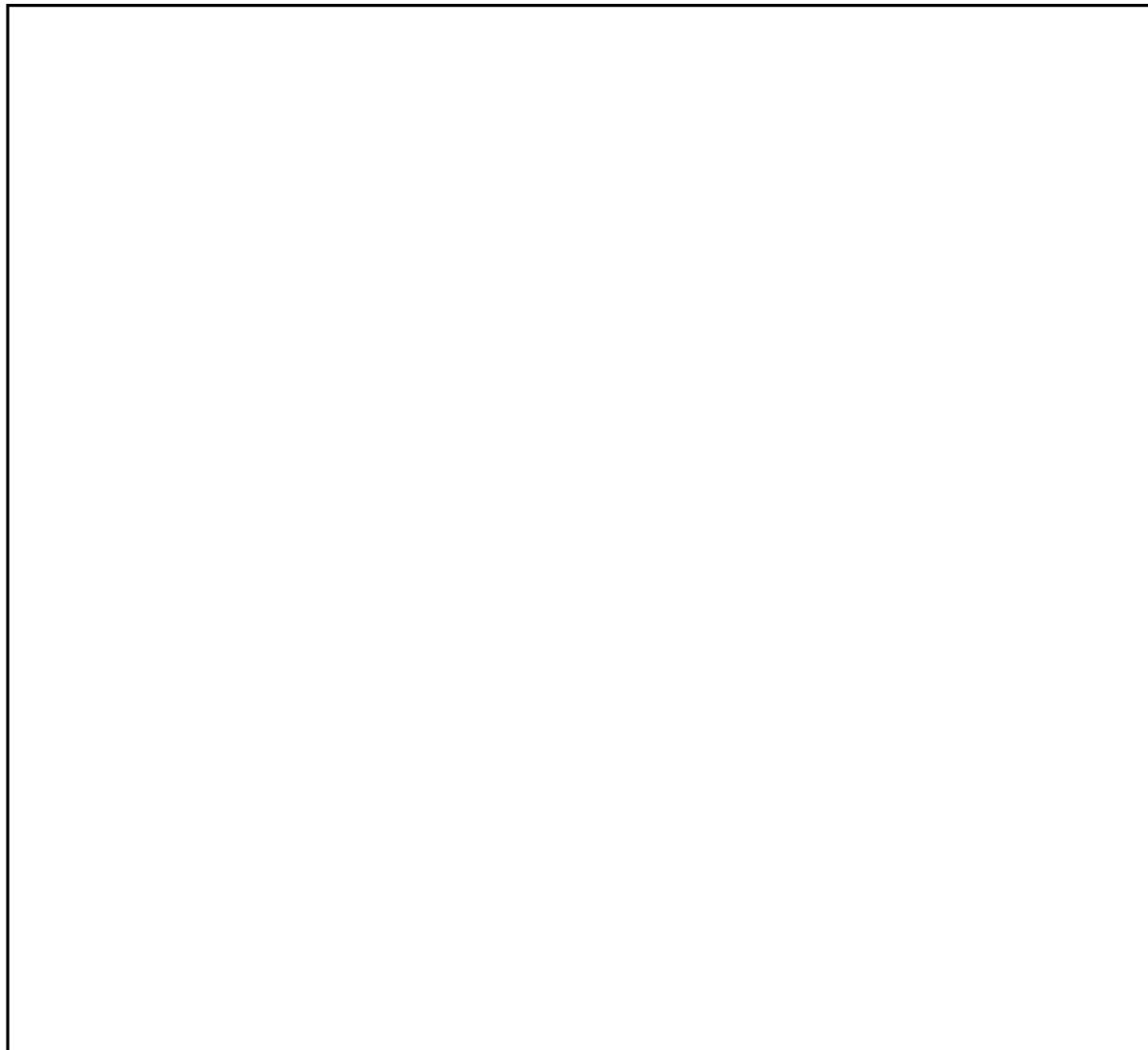
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of chief of state in addition to his present post as party first secretary. His appointment as chairman of the newly formed 17-man Council of State formally empowers him to intervene directly in all government operations. The personnel changes associated with the reorganization appear designed to concentrate power in the hands of Dej and those most closely associated with him.

(Backup, Page 7)

25X1

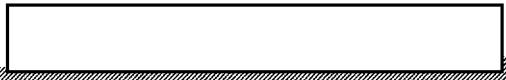
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22 Mar 61

DAILY BRIEF

iii



25X1

Next 3 Page(s) In Document Exempt

North Korea Offers Rice to South Korea

Pyongyang's offer of rice to South Korea is the latest in a series of aid proposals all designed to stir popular agitation for increased North-South contacts and foster dissatisfaction with the Chang Myon government.

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Last August, North Korean Premier Kim Il-song proposed a confederation of North and South in which each would keep its own sovereignty while working out economic and cultural cooperation. Kim's speech was followed by an unprecedented propaganda campaign detailing proposed remedies for southern economic problems. Among these specific proposals have been offers to rebuild the city of Seoul completely, to construct housing for 100,000 South Korean families, to build bridges and factories, and to set up numerous joint North-South committees to consider scientific and cultural matters.

Annual spring food shortages in South Korea have developed earlier than usual this year because of typhoon damage to crops last year. The American Embassy in Seoul, however, reports after a survey of two of the most affected southern provinces that grain deficiencies are not as serious as Seoul press accounts suggest. Local officials have indicated they have some resources and are taking measures to cope with the problem. They believe that receipt of anticipated additional supplies of food will prevent the shortages from becoming critical and provoking serious unrest. One official noted that the uncertainty generated by inflammatory press reports from Seoul was more likely to cause discontent than the immediate problems to which the people are accustomed.

The shortages are more a problem of distribution than of supply. A gradual release of rice stocks held by speculators and the arrival of barley financed by US aid have contributed to

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a slight decline of grain prices in Seoul. In addition the National Construction Service program now under way is expected to help avert a rural crisis by providing employment on public projects.

Pyongyang's offer, however, is almost certain to stimulate further the small but vocal minority of South Korean intellectuals and students who are propagating the idea that unification based on a vague formula of Korean neutralization offers the only solution to the nation's chronic economic difficulties. The Chang Myon government is aware of the danger of growing public sentiment for some direct contacts with North Korea and has indicated some willingness to be more flexible in an effort to convince the public it is doing all that is possible to satisfy desires for unification.

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Third All-African People's Conference

The first AAPC was held in December 1958 at the initiative of Ghana's Nkrumah and provided an opportunity for a general expression of African desires for independence. Attendance totaled about 300, representing approximately 60 nationalist groups from most of Africa's independent nations and dependent territories. The second meeting at Tunis in January 1960 was highlighted by harsh criticism of the US and the European colonial powers and by an implied approval of violence as a means to win independence. Attendance at the second conference was less than 150 delegates, representing political parties and trade unions in 30 states and territories.

At the forthcoming meeting, the independence of still dependent territories will again be the paramount issue, despite the achievement of that goal by many African states since the last conference. The number of delegates and the organizations represented is expected to show a further decline. Delegates from the Casablanca powers (UAR, Ghana, Guinea, Mali, Morocco), however, will probably seek to maintain their pose as spokesmen for Africa by leading denunciations of the West, apartheid, and UN ineffectiveness in the Congo. Observers from Sino-Soviet bloc countries can be expected to attend and lobby vigorously, especially with delegates from territories still under European control.

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Rumanian Regime Reorganization

Chivu Stoica has been replaced as premier by Ion Gheorghe Maurer, who has also been named vice chairman of the Council of State. Stoica remains one of four party secretaries and will presumably administer the party's political apparatus under Dej. Gheorghe Apostol, appointed first deputy premier, will be the principal executive officer for government affairs. Gheorghiu-Dej, Stoica, Apostol, and Maurer have been close associates since the 1930s, and their political power seems unassailable at the present time. The remaining two vice chairmen of the new Council of State are former Foreign Minister Avram Bunaciu and Stefan Voitec, formerly a deputy premier, who has also been selected president of the National Assembly and will serve as Gheorghiu-Dej's liaison to that body.

The government reorganization represents more than a consolidation of political power. It appears to be a part of Rumania's first step in the transition from a "people's democracy" to a "socialist republic," an achievement which has been claimed publicly among European satellites only by Czechoslovakia. On 5 March, Gheorghiu-Dej announced that Rumania required a new constitution which would reflect "profound changes," since the present constitution was drafted 12 years ago. On 21 March the recently elected Grand National Assembly, after approving the government reorganization, established a committee to draft this new constitution.

In recent years, Rumania has enjoyed political stability and has maintained the highest economic growth rate of the bloc. Progress in industrialization and in the socialization of the land--83.7 percent of arable land is now in the socialist sector--has been continuous in spite of the continuing low standard of living and problems of low productivity and poor quality of goods. The regime has adopted an ambitious economic plan for 1961.

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