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20 November 1958

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CENTRAL

INTELLIGENCE

BULLETIN



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20 NOVEMBER 1958

I. THE COMMUNIST BLOC

USSR takes strong line on Berlin; Ambassador Thompson lists Khrushchev's probable objectives.

(1)

Chinese communes apparently sensitive issue between Moscow and Peiping.

(2)

II. ASIA-AFRICA

Sudan - Khalil expects to remain out of office for extended period.

(3)

Iranian chief of staff expresses disillusionment with Baghdad Pact and US-Iranian agreement.

(4)

Iraqi regime takes precautions against UAR plotting.

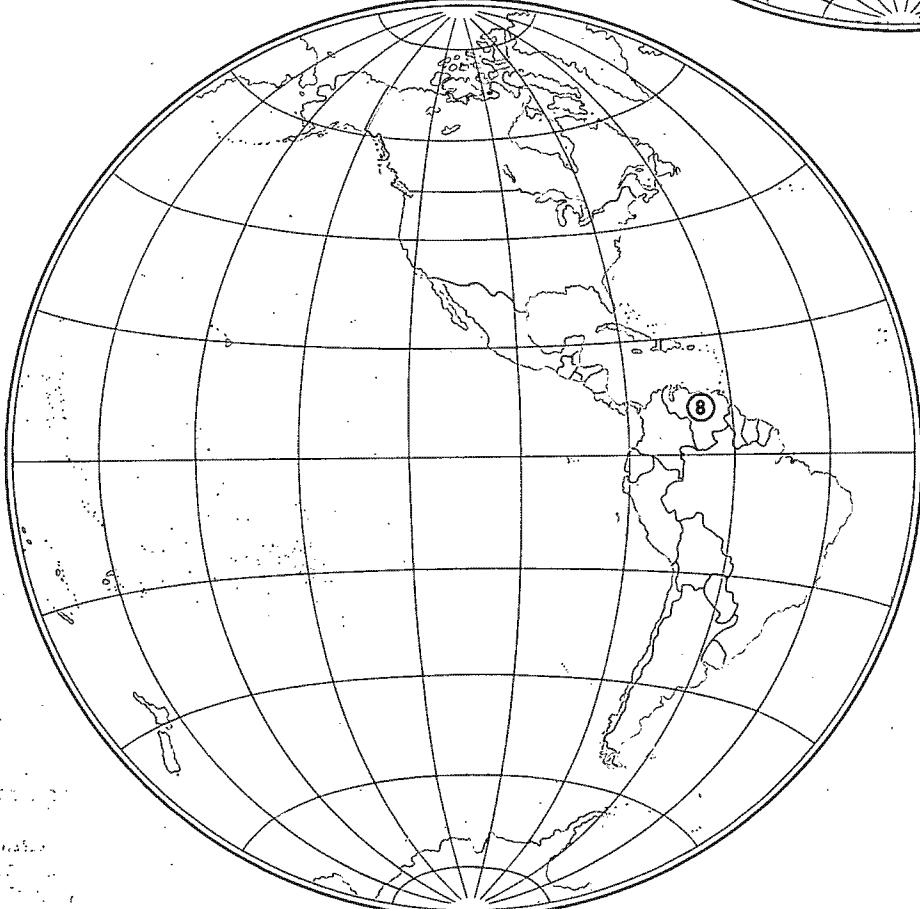
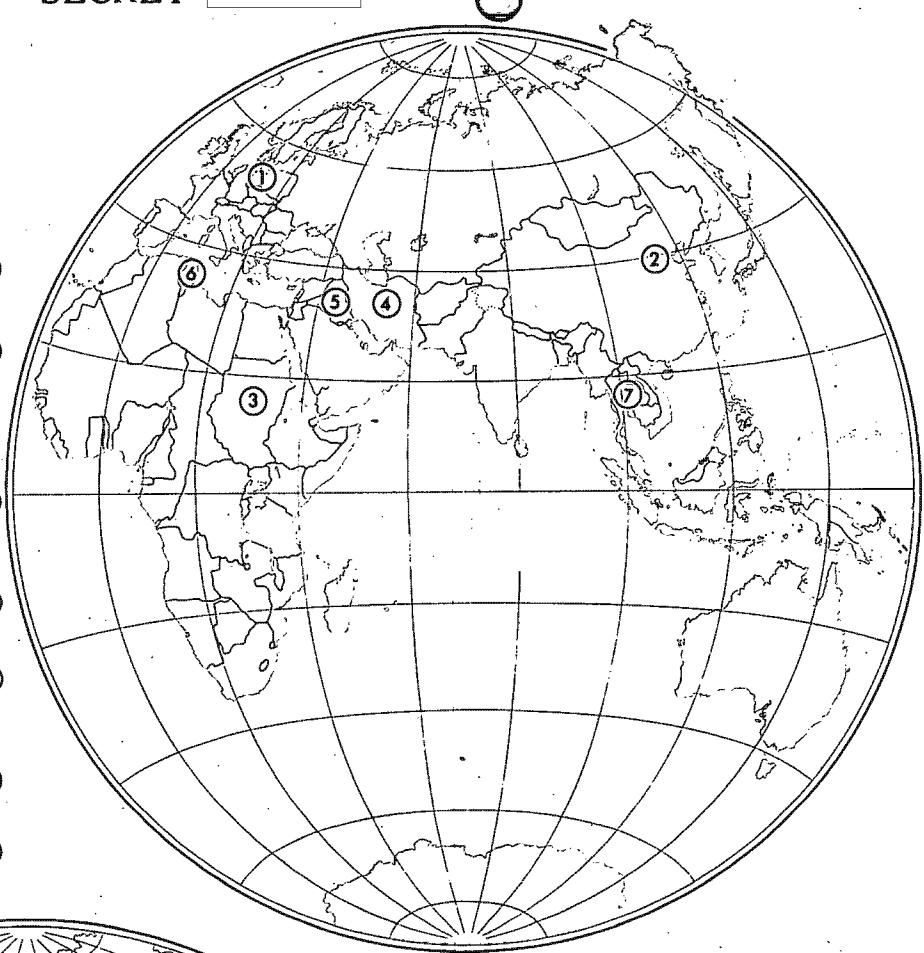
(5)

Relations between President Bourguiba and Algerian rebel units in Tunisia likely to deteriorate further.

(6)

Thailand - Marshal Sarit's behavior increasingly capricious.

(7)

**III. THE WEST**

(8) Venezuela - Larrazabal's acceptance of Communist support will stimulate further military plotting.

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN

20 November 1958

SIRAB

DAILY BRIEF

I. THE COMMUNIST BLOC

*Berlin: Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko told West German Ambassador Kroll in Moscow [redacted] that the USSR would cede its rights in Berlin to East Germany without further negotiation with the Western powers, and that this was "the final decision" of the USSR. Ambassador Thompson believes Khrushchev's objectives are to strengthen East Germany by removal or reduction of the threat to the regime from the West German enclave, to bar West German acquisition of atomic weapons, and to force high-level negotiations aimed at consolidation of the status quo in Europe. [redacted]

(Page 1)

Watch Committee conclusions--Berlin, Taiwan: No Sino-Soviet bloc country intends deliberately to initiate direct military action against US forces abroad, US allies, or areas peripheral to the orbit in the immediate future, except as noted below:

1. Recent Soviet and East German statements and actions regarding Berlin continue the present Communist campaign for East German recognition, which will probably entail Soviet transfer of access controls to the East Germans, and may involve intensified harassment of Allied traffic to Berlin. Although the USSR is not likely to carry this harassment to the point of risking war, serious incidents may occur.
2. While the Taiwan Strait crisis has abated at the present, the Chinese Communists are likely to continue military action against the offshore islands to the degree deemed necessary to demonstrate their initiative in this situation.

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USSR - Communist China: Recent speeches and articles by Soviet and Chinese Communist officials show great sensitivity on the question of the Chinese communes, particularly the implications for bloc ideological leadership in Peiping's claims about them. Following the recent return of the Soviet ambassador to Peiping, the Chinese began to defer to Soviet leadership by omitting from their external propaganda earlier suggestions that because of the commune movement the achievement of Communism in China is imminent.

II. ASIA-AFRICA

AB

Sudan: Former Prime Minister Khalil has indicated that he believes the army will stay in control at least six months or a year, and that he does not plan to return to public life until civil government is re-established.

(Page 5)

AB

Iran: General Hedayat, chief of the Iranian General Staff and chief Iranian delegate to the recent meeting of the Baghdad Pact Military Committee, has voiced strong criticism and disillusionment with both the Baghdad Pact and the bilateral Iranian-American agreement currently being negotiated. Hedayat said he planned to expand the Iranian Army and redeploy some units in a manner directly contrary to the recommendations of the Baghdad Pact Committee.

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PW

Iraq-UAR: The UAR military attaché in Baghdad has informed Cairo of a warning [redacted] orders have been issued to search any parcels sent to Iraq on UAR military planes. This is further evidence that Qasim is aware of the UAR's subversive activities and is taking precautions while continuing to cooperate with the UAR in military training and planning.

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Tunisia - Algerian rebels: Relations between Tunisian President Bourguiba and Algerian rebel elements in Tunis are likely to deteriorate further as a result of a Tunisian raid on a rebel transmission and monitoring center in western Tunisia on 15 November.

Bourguiba told the British chargé in Tunis that UAR agents were infiltrating Tunisia from Libya with the aim of contacting Algerian rebel elements opposed to his regime. (Page 7)

Watch Committee conclusion--Middle East: The situation remains unstable throughout the Middle East, and incidents and coups could occur at any time. A deliberate initiation of open hostilities in the area is unlikely in the immediate future.

Thailand: Marshal Sarit's detention of Air Marshal Dawee, who is widely popular in military circles, on probably false charges of involvement in an alleged plot is an indication of Sarit's increasingly capricious behavior. This action, and reported plans of Sarit to arrest other leaders, may accelerate plotting against him in the ruling military group.

III. THE WEST

Venezuela: Admiral Wolfgang Larrazabal, former Venezuelan junta president and favored presidential candidate, authorized the Communist party to register him as its candidate for the 7 December elections. Larrazabal's action, designed to win the estimated 150,000-200,000 Communist votes in what is expected to be a close three-way election, will stimulate further military plotting.

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I. THE COMMUNIST BLOC

Berlin Situation

Gromyko told West German Ambassador Kroll in Moscow [redacted] that the USSR would cede its rights in Berlin to East Germany without further negotiation with the Western powers, and that this was "the final decision" of the USSR.

Ambassador Thompson in Moscow believes Soviet objectives are to strengthen the East German regime, bar West German acquisition of atomic weapons, and force high-level negotiations looking to the consolidation of the status quo in Europe. The first objective can be achieved, in Thompson's opinion, only by the elimination of Berlin as a Western enclave in East Germany and the achievement of some degree of Western recognition for East Germany. He thinks that while the USSR may move cautiously in the Berlin situation Khrushchev is a "man in a hurry" who considers that time is against him on this issue.

In an article on 18 November, Pravda demanded a radical solution of the Berlin problem, asserted the West had forfeited every moral or legal right to further occupation of Berlin, reiterated Khrushchev's declaration that the USSR will hand over its functions in Berlin to "sovereign" East Germany, and affirmed that Western statesmen were deeply mistaken if they thought their consent was required for such action.

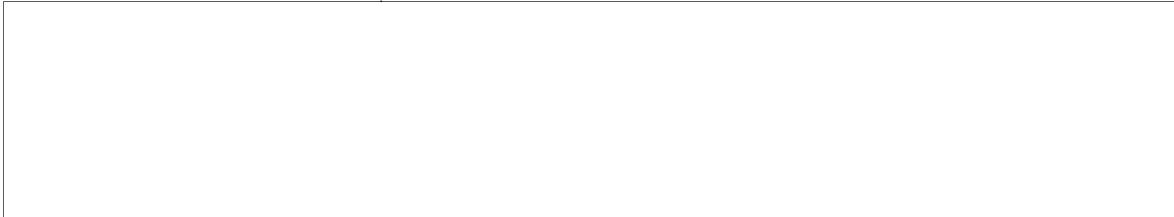
As a possible indication that the USSR may already be moving to transfer its authority to East Germany, US train commanders reported [redacted] that East German transportation police stood by at the Marienborn checkpoint while Soviet officials checked Allied rail documents. A Soviet officer commented that the US train commander would probably be seeing them in the future.

An East German international law expert claimed [redacted] that the West is using the air corridors illegally

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for nonmilitary traffic and asserted that the West would have to negotiate with East Germany to enter the city by ground or air.



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Moscow Disturbed by Chinese Commune Question

Moscow's ideological leadership in the bloc has been implicitly challenged by Peiping's claims that the new "people's communes" are a shortcut to the achievement of Communism. The Soviet leaders have ignored these claims and countered with doctrinal statements of their own.

Soviet Ambassador Yudin, in his first public speech following his recent return to Peiping after a prolonged stay in the Soviet Union, corrected Peiping's claim of rapid "progress toward Communism" by stressing that the Chinese were still "building Socialism." He said that the Soviet Union, with its production beginning to rival the most advanced capitalist countries, is just reaching the point where Socialism begins to change to Communism, implying that the Chinese Communists could not hope to enter the Communist stage of development until their production had reached the present Soviet level.

This was a pointed reminder of the classic Marxist doctrine that material abundance is an absolute prerequisite for distribution "according to needs"--a basic principle of the ultimate Communist society. Peiping has claimed that it has met all of the preconditions for achieving Communism but two, neither of which includes the development of large-scale industry. Moscow is undoubtedly apprehensive that such a claim might tend to undercut its leadership in the Communist world.

The Chinese, apparently in deference to Soviet leadership, have altered their stand since Yudin's speech. In statements likely to receive international publicity they have generally emphasized that the CPR is still in the stage of socialist construction and have dropped the claim that the commune movement has brought China to the verge of achieving Communism. Mao's telegram to the Soviet leaders on the occasion of the USSR's 7 November celebration referred to the Soviet advance toward Communism but omitted any mention of Chinese achievements. Major statements by other Chinese leaders take a similar line.

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Chinese statements less likely to be picked up abroad, however, continue to imply a rapid transition to Communism.

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II. ASIA-AFRICA

Sudanese Situation

Prime Minister General Abboud and his new regime are supported by all military units and provincial directorates.

[redacted] There are no overt signs of organized opposition. The influential Abd al-Rahman al-Mahdi, however, reportedly is dissatisfied. He allegedly turned down an offer from Abboud to become president of a five-man, civilian supreme council. The 73-year-old Mahdi's refusal was based on his personal ambition to become president of the Sudan, and was apparently followed by Abboud's announcement of the present, all-military, 13-member Supreme Council of the Armed Forces and a military-dominated cabinet with himself as prime minister. The Mahdi now reportedly feels that, from the standpoint of his and former Prime Minister Khalil's Umma party, the coup has been a failure. Most other Umma leaders, although recognizing the coup has not taken on a pro-Umma aspect, are said to feel the new government is composed of "loyal Sudanese who will protect the nation's independence."

[redacted], Khalil [redacted] had been behind the coup and outlined what he believed would be its future course. His statements as reported are considerably at variance with subsequent events. He had also stated that he intended to take no part in the new government, but might be "recalled" after six months when a civil government was re-established. The impression is that, despite his contention of participation in the planning, events may have passed him by.

On 19 November, Great Britain became the first Western government to recognize the new regime. Jordan and the UAR have also extended recognition, although official UAR distrust of Abboud apparently continues. The Cairo press, however, is portraying the coup as a reaction to American "economic intervention" in the Sudan.

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Iranian Military Leaders Dissatisfied With Defense Planning
For Iran

Lieutenant General Abdollah Hedayat, chief of the Iranian General Staff, has strongly criticized the position taken at the recent Ankara meeting of the Baghdad Pact Military Committee that Iran should add no further divisions to its army. Hedayat has charged that Iranian forces are being used only to secure NATO's right flank rather than for the best defense of Iran, and offered as evidence the decision that the bulk of Iranian forces should be concentrated in northwestern Iran, which would leave Iran's northeastern border with the USSR lightly defended.

Hedayat's disappointment over his failure to gain approval of four additional divisions--which would give the army the equivalent of 14 US divisions--has led him to claim that his faith in the pact has been shaken and to charge that Iran will obtain no advantages from the defense agreement currently being negotiated with the US to supplement the pact.

Following the Ankara meeting, Hedayat ordered immediate planning for his projected increase in the Iranian Army and declared his intention to move two "heavy" divisions to northeastern Iran "in defiance" of American recommendations.

Iran will probably continue to press for a sizable and unrealistic increase in its military establishment. The Shah has often expressed his desire for a large air force and more modern equipment including antiaircraft missiles. Under present conditions, however, Iran is not likely to take any action that would endanger its military alignment with the West.

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~~TOP SECRET~~Bourguiba Continues Fearful of Hostile Algerian Elements

Tunisian President Bourguiba's continuing concern over the presence in or near Tunisia of hostile Algerian rebel elements almost certainly occasioned the 15 November raid by Tunisian authorities on a rebel transmission and monitoring center located just inside Tunisia on the Algerian frontier

[redacted] the center--an important link between rebel stations in Tunis and Cairo and those maintained by guerrilla units operating in eastern Algeria--was forcibly entered by Tunisian police and national guard personnel.

[redacted] all persons on the premises at the time were arrested and that all documents were taken, with only some subsequently returned.

The center requested the intervention of the rebels' provisional government in the matter. FLN leaders, who have recently appeared especially anxious to demonstrate their concern for the interests of the lower echelons, are likely to comply. In any event, the incident will increase the hostility of anti-Bourguiba elements among Algerian troops based in Tunisia. These troops are better equipped and probably more numerous than the Tunisian security forces, which total some 6,000 men.

Bourguiba indicated to the British chargé on 17 November that the situation developing on the Tunisian-Libyan border was even more dangerous. He said agents from Násir's United Arab Republic were crossing into Tunisia from Libya to contact Algerian rebel elements opposed to his regime.

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III. THE WEST

Former Venezuelan Junta President Accepts Communist Presidential Nomination

Former Venezuelan junta president Admiral Larrazabal has probably improved his position as the favored presidential candidate in the 7 December elections by authorizing the Venezuelan Communist party (PCV) to register him as its candidate. The PCV may poll as many as 200,000 votes--possibly a deciding number--in what is expected to be a close three-way race. The other contenders are Romulo Betancourt, chief of the largest party, Democratic Action (AD), toward which the military has long been hostile, and Rafael Caldera, chief of the Christian democratic COPEI, probably the second strongest party.

Larrazabal, who has also been nominated by the Democratic Republican Union and an independent organization, is expected to win a substantial portion of the large independent vote. His formal acceptance of Communist support will enhance the prestige of the PCV, which has considerable influence in press, labor, and student circles. This may also increase Communist chances for winning national and local legislative elections and for penetrating government at the lower and middle echelons in the event of a Larrazabal victory. As in the past, Larrazabal has declared he is not a Communist and is a stanch Catholic--a statement designed to mollify the Catholic hierarchy which recently threatened excommunication of those Catholics voting for Communists.

Larrazabal's action may also stimulate further military plotting, rumors of which have circulated with increasing frequency as the election date approaches, and could enhance the chances of Caldera, weakest of the candidates, whom the dissident military now may indirectly support.

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