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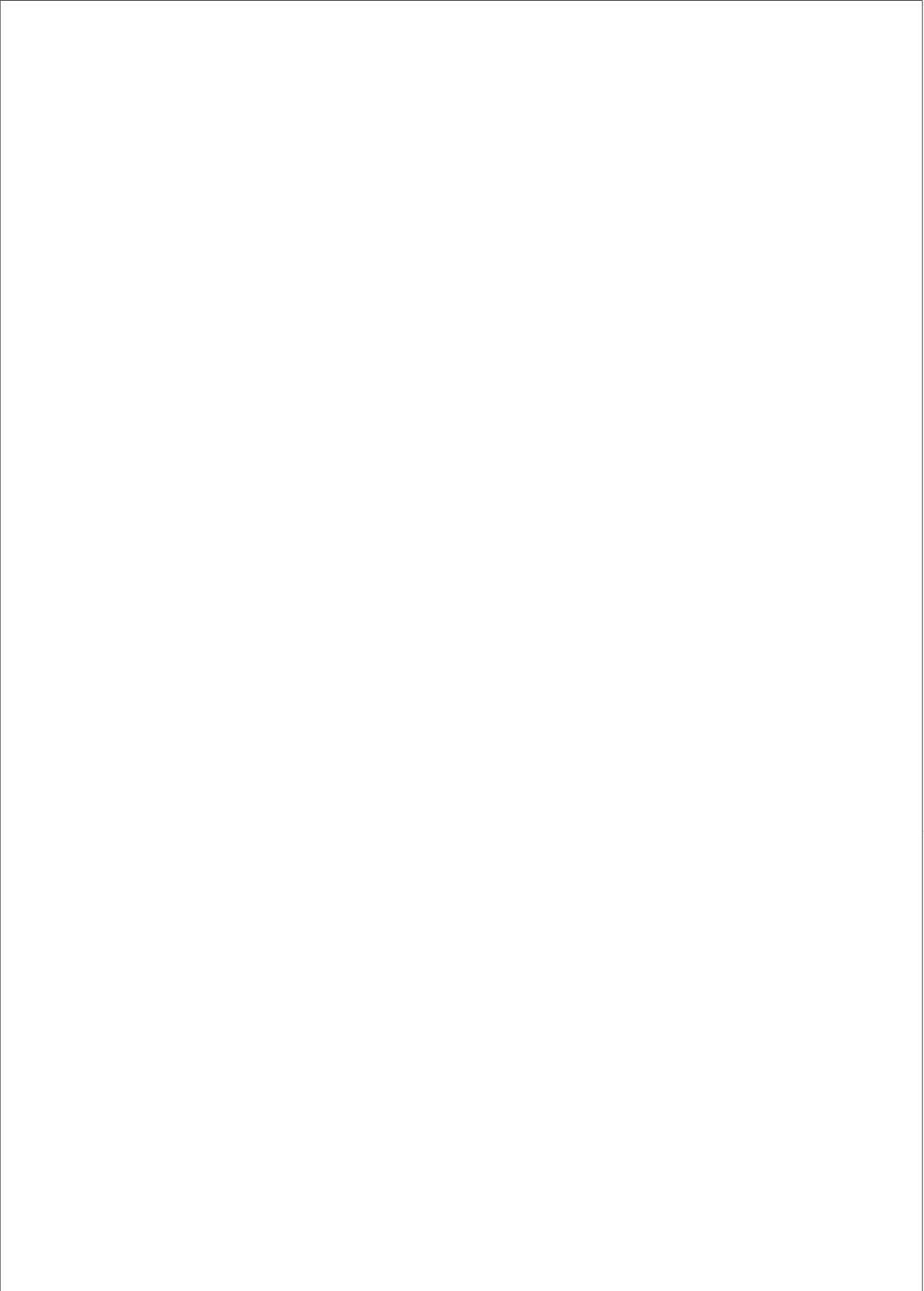
18 May 1961

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN



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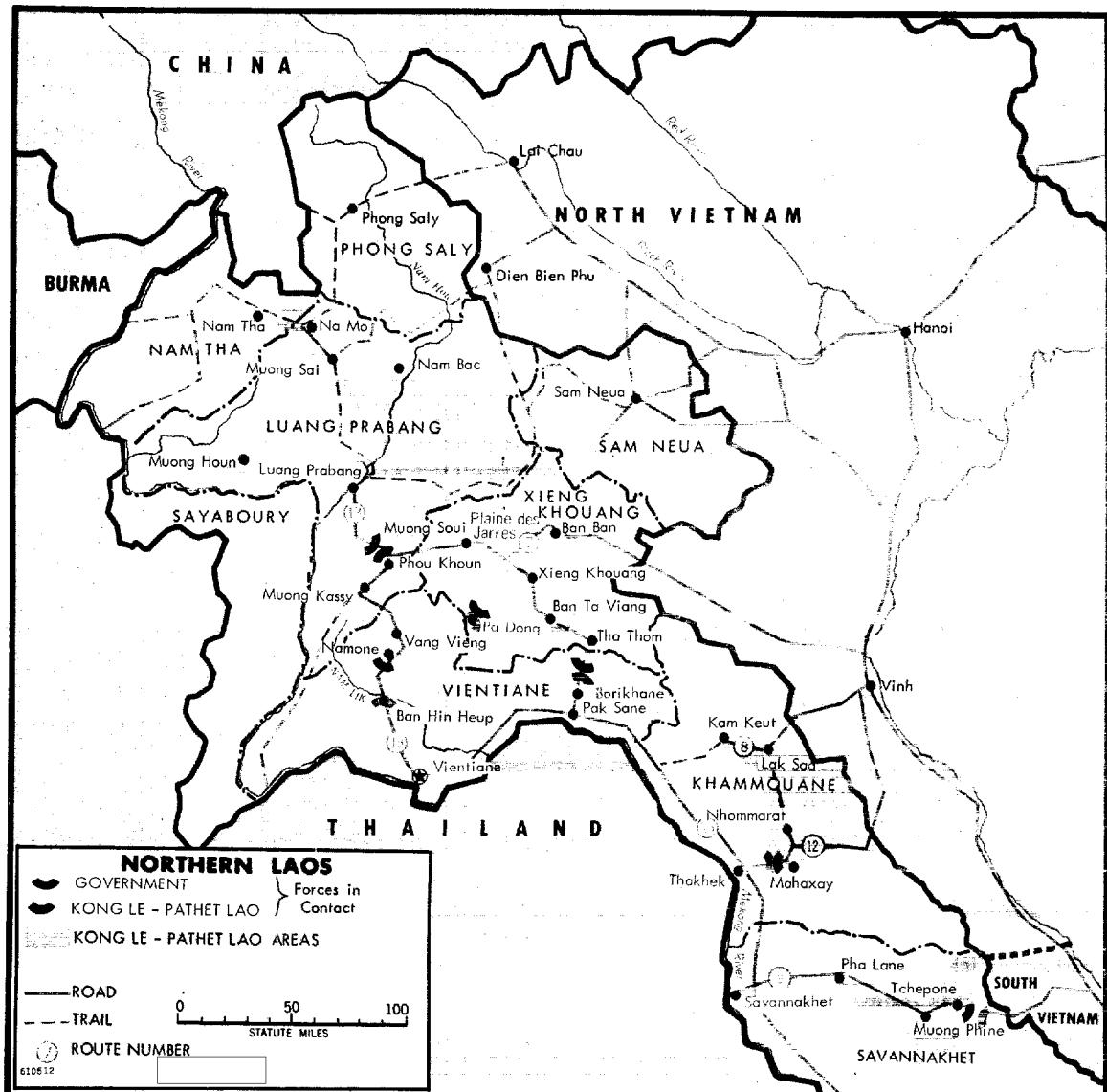
18 May 1961

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN

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DAILY BRIEF

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Laos: [Tripartite talks at the Namone truce site on 17 May resulted in agreement to discuss at the next meeting, on ~~delete~~ Friday, the possibility of forming a coalition government and ~~Ps 3, 4, 5~~ establishing a tripartite military group to help the ICC regulate the cease-fire. It was also agreed that Phoumi, Souvanna, and Souphanouvong should meet as soon as possible, but no ~~delete~~ definite time or place was set.]

[The military situation remains generally quiet, although ~~Ps 3, 6, 7, 8, 9~~ scattered enemy artillery fire and guerrilla activity continue.]

Soviet airlift operations into Laos were scheduled through 18 May. [] (Backup, Page 1) (Map)

[The Watch Committee at its meeting on 17 May reached the following conclusion concerning Laos:

Communist forces will continue to observe the "cease-fire" at major points of contact but will continue military efforts to reduce progovernment Meo bases in the Xieng Khouang area and to improve their military position in other areas. So long as developments in the Ban Namone talks and at the Geneva Conference remain favorable to the Communists, they will not resume major military operations. We continue to see no evidence of Chinese Communist military movements indicative of preparations for an active military role in Laos, although such movements could have been made without detection. Communist political maneuvers in both Laos and Geneva will attempt to degrade the status of the Royal Laotian Government and to achieve for the Neo Lao Hak Sat the dominant influence in any future coalition government, whether or not headed by Souvanna.]

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South Korea: In a broadcast on 18 May, Prime Minister Chang Myon announced the resignation of his cabinet and stated that the martial law proclaimed by Lt. Gen. Chang To-yong as chairman of the Military Revolutionary Committee (MRC) was legal. The Prime Minister's action will provide a cloak of legality for the coup and open the way for transitional measures within a constitutional framework.

OK

delete
P 4, 6, 7

Lieutenant General Yi Han-lim, commander of the front-line First Army who had previously ordered his troops to remain neutral, has now publicly declared his support of the coup. [Yi had indicated earlier that he feared the time had passed for the successful commitment of the First Army to counter the coup.] This action is certain to bolster the position of the Military Revolutionary Committee (MRC) by removing the main potential source of effective military opposition. [A South Korean field-grade officer with good connections at army headquarters has stated that the lack of resistance to the coup in Seoul and the public indifference or sympathy shown in other areas have already increased the confidence of the revolutionary group.]

[Army Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Chang To-yong] he had accepted the post as chairman of the MRC only after the MRC had agreed to three conditions. These were that no mass punishments or violence against individuals was to be carried out; the best men available were to be placed in a new cabinet; and the troops who participated in the coup were to be removed from Seoul "at the earliest opportunity." Chang noted that the committee agreed to the last condition with the understanding that removal of the troops would not begin until the position of the United States toward the coup was clear. Chang's actions are designed to maintain his position both with the insurgents and the American side. Major General Pak Chong-hui remains the driving force in the revolutionary group.]

[] the police have been ordered to enforce martial law and acknowledge the authority of the military officers in charge. []

North Korea is describing the coup leaders as "flagrantly reactionary" but expressing the hope that events may yet develop to the Communists' advantage. While hailing the move

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to overthrow Chang Myon, Pyongyang radio on 17 May depicted South Korean troops as "deceived and misled" and urged them to take "internal problems firmly in their hands." The broadcast warned against "US interference."

[The Watch Committee at its meeting on 17 May reached the following conclusion concerning South Korea:]

[A military coup has placed control of the Republic of Korea (ROK) Government in a military junta. The leaders of the coup appear to have progressed considerably toward consolidating their control of the country, with most military units declaring adherence and with no active opposition noted so far. A further period of confusion and instability is in prospect. The ROK Army along the Demilitarized Zone is performing its normal missions, and there are no indications that the North Korean Government intends to take aggressive action at this time.]

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Iran: [The Shah and a party of 19 left for an official visit to Norway on 17 May, and he is expected to be out of the country for about a week. Before leaving, the Shah appointed a regency council to rule in his absence consisting of Prime Minister Amini and Minister of Court Ala, and two members of the royal family, Prince Gholam Reza and Prince Abdol Reza.]

[Princess Ashraf, the Shah's twin sister, is reported to have left Iran on 14 May. Some of the royal family, particularly the two princes on the regency council, will presumably remain in Tehran at least until the Shah returns from Norway. Some of the Shah's unpopularity results from the intrigues and financial manipulations of the royal family, and their elimination from the scene would help further the image of a reformed government which Amini is attempting to create.]

[The Watch Committee at its meeting on 17 May reached the following conclusion concerning Iran:]

[The implementation of reforms by the Amini government will at least temporarily result in a period of increased political instability. The opportunity for reaction to these reforms may be enhanced during the absence of the Shah.]

Note: [While the Director of the Bureau of Intelligence and Research, Department of State, and the Director for Intelligence, The Joint Staff, agree that there is a continuing danger of a military coup in Iran, they do not believe that this danger is as great as it was several weeks ago or that it is materially accentuated by the absence of the Shah on a brief trip to Europe.]

Iraq-Oil: [Prime Minister Qasim apparently views recent conciliatory moves by the Iraq Petroleum Company (IPC) to resume negotiations as indicating company weakness. He may now attempt to enforce his government's demands for more revenue and part ownership of the company. Qasim responded to IPC Board Chairman Lord Monckton's personal letter of 30 April by publicly castigating "the avaricious, monopolist-imperialist companies which suck the blood and wealth of the] *No*

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[redacted] peoples" and which fear losing "the wealth upon which they have preyed for a number of years." The IPC appealed to the British Foreign Office for assistance on 9 May. [redacted]

[redacted] Iraq would probably impose additional taxes on the company unless offered a change in the existing 50/50 profit-sharing arrangement which would give the government more "immediate cash." (CONFIDENTIAL NO-[redacted])

Jordan: There is continuing ferment in Jordan as a result of King Husayn's engagement to an Englishwoman, but talk of wholesale cabinet resignations and of widespread disaffection within the army has abated. The King's supporters have discontinued their efforts to get him to change his mind in view of his determination to carry out his plans. A newly organized Royal Armored Force commanded by the King's uncle, Sharif Nasir, probably will be able to control any disturbances that might develop at the time of the wedding, on or about 25 May. Anti-regime political elements like the Baath party now apparently favor the marriage because of the ultimate advantage it could afford them. [redacted] *No*

Syria: [redacted] a well-organized group within the Sudanese Army is planning a coup against Abboud's military regime. [redacted] (Conf) the army group is connected with the group of civilian politicians who have in recent months been agitating for a return to civilian government. The government's security organizations have been keeping most leaders of the civilian opposition under surveillance and are almost certainly aware of this new military plotting. While the government appears capable of dealing with any immediate internal threat, there continues to be an increase in the number of Sudanese opposing the Abboud government. [redacted] (Backup, [redacted]) *No*

Page 41 [redacted]

USSR: The Soviet interplanetary probe launched on 12 February is expected to reach the vicinity of Venus on or about OK

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19 May. If this space ship passes within about 60,000 miles of Venus, as Moscow claims it will, it will be a major technical achievement. The USSR admitted several months ago, however, that no communications had been received from the probe during the regular transmission period on 27 February, and Moscow's silence on the subject thereafter suggests that no further communications have been received. The USSR may therefore have no way to confirm the probe's trajectory. The contribution of this space operation to scientific knowledge of Venus and its environment will be nil unless communications can be re-established. Soviet descriptions and photographs indicate that the probe is equipped with directional long-range communications equipment. Despite the failure to communicate at relatively close range, the USSR may be able to reactivate this equipment as the vehicle reaches the vicinity of Venus.

WATCH COMMITTEE CONCLUSIONS

- A. No change from last week.
- B. No change from last week.
- C. LAOS: Carried on Page i of the Daily Brief.
- D. SOUTH KOREA: Carried on Page ii of the Daily Brief.
- E. IRAN: Carried on Page iv of the Daily Brief.

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~~SECRET~~Laos

Communist broadcasts describe the opening of the Geneva Conference as a complete success for the Communists and US agreement to equal representation for the three Laotian groups a "retreat." Peiping stated on 17 May that the US faces "utter isolation" because of "outrageous obstruction and disruptive maneuvers." Moscow reports that it was extremely difficult for the US to accept the compromise solution on Laotian representation.

[The Soviet Union also is attempting to turn to its own advantage whatever differences exist between itself and Communist China on how best to handle the Laotian situation. Bloc sources in Geneva and Saigon recently have used nearly identical terms in describing the US and Communist China as the two extremes in the Laotian situation, while the Soviet position is pictured as one of reasonableness.]

Moscow's vote would be that of arranging a compromise between the two extremes. Hinting that the USSR could contain the Chinese, [the] the two delegations would present a "united front" at the conference and that there would be no "open break" between them.]

[Indian ICC Chairman Samar Sen observed to Ambassador Brown on 14 May that the ICC under its present terms of reference was powerless to investigate complaints and agreed that a more detailed cease-fire agreement pinpointing troop positions and specifying conditions of the truce was required. Sen expressed the hope that the RLG would be dissuaded from filing complaints with the ICC since they would merely generate countercomplaints and poison the atmosphere still further. He said the ICC already had more complaints from the other side than from the RLG. Sen stressed the urgency of an agreement among internal political factions on a coalition government, reiterating the standard Indian view that both Souvanna and the Pathet Lao enjoy considerable popular support and must be represented in any truly neutral government.]

[Krishna Menon, on the eve of his departure for Geneva, reportedly visualized an eventual settlement which would give the Neo Lao Hak Sat and Pathet Lao forces a clear victory.]

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[He felt that in any elections following a merger of the Pathet Lao with the Laotian Army, the NLHS would sweep the polls because of the Pathet Lao's close contact with the people. Nehru, in a recent talk with Indian President Prasad, expressed pessimism about the chances of solving the Laotian problem at the Geneva Conference. Nehru apparently is still thinking of going to Geneva himself if the talks drag on inconclusively, but sees little profit in doing so before he has an opportunity to meet with President Kennedy and Khrushchev.]

Kong Le, now described as a brigadier general, issued a statement over the Pathet Lao radio on 17 May charging the "Phoumi - Boun Oum clique, on the orders of the US imperialists," of trying to sabotage the Geneva Conference and the tripartite talks at Namone by conducting mopping-up operations, in collaboration with South Vietnamese forces, along Route 9 in Savannakhet Province. Kong Le demanded the immediate withdrawal of South Vietnamese forces and warned that if attacks were made on "liberated" portions of Savannakhet Province the "US imperialists and their lackeys would be held responsible for resuming the war in Laos."

Airlift operations for 16 May involved a total of 18 sorties--17 by Soviet transports and one by a North Vietnamese transport. Of these, six Soviet IL-14s and two Soviet LI-2s were reflected in flights to Xieng Khouang. The eight Soviet and/or DRV IL-14s scheduled to fly from Hanoi to Vinh and Dong Hoi on 16 May were neither reflected nor canceled. Apparently part or all of these aircraft flew to Xieng Khouang instead. Five IL-14s are scheduled from Hanoi to Vinh and Dong Hoi on 17 May, probably a rescheduling.

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A new Chinese Communist radio net in the Kunming Military Region [redacted] It is composed of at least eight outstations located in the China-Burma, China-Laos border areas and appears to be of a tactical nature. A similar net appeared in conjunction with Chinese Communist operations against the Kuomintang irregulars in Burma late last year. The appearance of this net could indicate a resumption of operations against irregulars still in the area. However, it may also be associated with Chinese Communist patrols along the border. There have been recent reports that the Chinese Communists have between 3,000 and 7,000 troops in the Laos border area opposite Nam Tha Province and are patrolling the frontier in company-size units. No significant number of Chinese Communist troops is believed to be in Laos.

[redacted]
[redacted] the possible movement of recruits from North Vietnam--probably Dien Bien Phu--to Xieng Khouang. The nationality of these recruits was not revealed, but they could be Pathet Lao who received training at Dien Bien Phu. Dien Bien Phu has long been considered a training establishment for Pathet Lao troops. It is not likely that the North Vietnamese would send new recruits into Laos, where experienced personnel are needed in most of their operations.
[redacted]

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~~SECRET~~Further Plotting Against Abboud Regime

[Although antigovernment plotting in the army has been chronic since Abboud came to power in 1958, the focus of opposition in recent months has been a group of civilian politicians. This group is basically a coalition of the leaders of the conservative Umma and the more liberal National Unionist parties, but it includes elements of the mildly pro-UAR People's Democratic party and of the Sudanese Communist party as well. The group lacks real cohesion; its chief raison d'etre is the desire of the politicians to return to power.]

[The leader and spokesman of the coalition group, Siddiq al-Mahdi, who is also the Imam of the powerful Moslem Ansar Brotherhood, has demanded in a series of notes to the government that the military rulers set up a timetable for a return to civilian government. There has been no indication that the government intends to meet the demand. The opposition is probably uncertain of its own strength and, lacking any concrete issue with which to arouse public support, has been reluctant to force a showdown with the government.]

[There is evidence that the opposition is gaining support from important elements of the civilian population. At a recently concluded conference of civilian provincial governors, all of the governors expressed dissatisfaction with the new system of local government, and five of the nine threatened to resign. [at least some of them have thrown in their lot with the opposition group and would probably support it in any move it might make against the government.]

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The Director, Office of Civil and Defense Mobilization

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