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13 March 1961

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN



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13 March 1961

DAILY BRIEF

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USSR: [In his conversation with Ambassador Thompson on 9 March, Khrushchev raised the Berlin and German question and stated his desire not to worsen but to improve US-Soviet relations. He refrained from proposing resumption of negotiations or setting a deadline for action, but did reiterate his warning that the USSR would sign a separate peace treaty with East Germany if the wartime allies did not agree to a treaty with both German states.]

[On the disarmament issue, Khrushchev again tied Soviet agreement to general disarmament with the proposal to reorganize the UN secretariat, and used the Congo situation to stress repeatedly the need for revision of the UN.]

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*Laos: Vientiane representatives and Souvanna Phouma are expected to meet this week to discuss details of the general program announced by General Phoumi and Souvanna in their talks at Phnom Penh. Souvanna's departure from Phnom Penh on a world tour is still scheduled for 15 March.

Moscow characterized the Phnom Penh discussions as a diplomatic defeat for the Phoumi forces and emphasized that Souvanna stood firm on the need to convene an international conference to settle the Laotian problem. Both Peiping and Hanoi have indicated that they are interested in the vaguely worded communiqué only as a departure point for propagandizing the deteriorating position of the Boun Oum regime.

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[Kong Le - Pathet Lao forces in both the Phou Khoun and Muong Kassy sectors apparently are consolidating their positions. Their patrols continue to maintain contact with government forces.]

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[] Congo: [The expected arrival of the first contingent of India's troops on 16 March will confront the UN with its next big hurdle in the Congo, according to Ambassador Timberlake. He feels that there is widespread belief among the Congolese that India's troops are coming to enforce "Dayal's plan for a UN tutelage of the Congo."] 72e

[Khrushchev, in his recent talk with Ambassador Thompson, showed little interest in the possibilities of a Congo settlement and used the occasion to reiterate Soviet charges of the ineffectiveness of the UN policies in the Congo.] 25X1
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DAILY BRIEF

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Khrushchev Spells Out Soviet Position on Germany,
Disarmament, and the UN

{At the end of his conversation with Ambassador Thompson, Khrushchev spelled out the Soviet position on Germany and Berlin along the lines of the recent memorandum to Bonn. He stressed the necessity of a peace settlement with both Germanys in order to confirm postwar developments and provide a legal foundation for the postwar borders. He denied that the bloc had any desire to expand to the West and offered to make a statement to this effect if the US was prepared to begin peace treaty negotiations.}

{In connection with his threat to sign a separate treaty with East Germany, Khrushchev was careful to evade any response to the ambassador's question on how a separate treaty would affect the Allied position in West Berlin. Khrushchev reaffirmed that a peace treaty would include a clause providing creation of a free city for West Berlin, but urged that the US and USSR join in working out a new status for West Berlin.}

{Khrushchev showed some flexibility in his discussion of the Berlin problem in asserting that the USSR would provide any guarantees necessary to preserve the internal situation in West Berlin and to assure the United States that its prestige would not suffer. As examples of guarantees, he mentioned a joint police force, presumably composed of the four powers, and he repeated a previous Soviet proposal to permit stationing of symbolic forces of the four powers in West Berlin. He made it clear that East Berlin was excluded from a settlement on the grounds that it was the capital of East Germany, but he committed Ulbricht to sign any guarantees for West Berlin.}

{The Soviet leader concluded his remarks by repeating that if the US and USSR could sign a treaty on Germany, it would mark great progress in their relations and establish an atmosphere of trust. He added that a treaty could be implemented by installments and provide for a gradual withdrawal of Soviet and American troops from Germany, which would aid in negotiations and disarmament.}

{The most notable aspect of Khrushchev's statements was his failure to stress the urgency of early negotiations on Berlin, as}

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He has in his recent conversations with Western diplomats and the Soviet memorandum to Bonn. This suggests that the USSR will continue to hold the Berlin question in reserve until the Soviet leaders assess more fully the US position on major East-West questions. Khrushchev's remarks on Adenauer's role and references to the memorandum to Bonn also suggest that he may be awaiting a reply as a pretext for presenting a more exact demand on negotiations. A French Foreign Ministry official was recently told by his Soviet counterpart that Moscow was considering a foreign ministers' conference on Berlin and Germany.)

(On the disarmament question Khrushchev implied that the Western powers were attempting to defer negotiations. His insistence that Soviet acceptance of general disarmament was linked to UN revision was the same position he took last fall at the UN General Assembly. At that time, however, he explained that the reorganization scheme was not a prerequisite for negotiations.)

(In his statements to Ambassador Thompson on the Congo, Khrushchev labeled UN policy as "colonialist" and stressed that the USSR would oppose it "with all its means." He emphasized that a reorganization of the UN was necessary to prevent another situation such as that in the Congo, and argued that the US should have an interest in reorganization, since it might be in a minority position some time in the future. Khrushchev's revival of the link between UN revision and disarmament, which has been played down in recent Soviet statements, probably foreshadows a more intensive effort to use the appeal of disarmament to gain support for at least Hammarskjold's resignation or progress toward a greater Soviet role in the UN executive organs.)

(Khrushchev showed considerable satisfaction when informed by Thompson that the US hoped shortly to lift its ban on Soviet crabmeat imports, although he expressed some disappointment at the recent canceling of a license for precision grinding machines. Khrushchev reiterated the Soviet position that trade relations must be normalized and again emphasized that the USSR)

[trades with other Western powers. In addition, he pointed out that the USSR does not compete with the US in trade and could be a very good customer for American exports. Khrushchev avoided mentioning Moscow's previous request for credits to finance Soviet purchases.]

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The Situation in Laos

General Phoumi has told Ambassador Brown that during his recent visit to Phnom Penh, he was able to clear up the misconceptions of the Cambodian foreign minister over King Savang's proposal for a neutral nations commission--composed of Cambodia, Burma, and Malaya--and that Souvanna himself now would attempt to persuade Sihanouk to reconsider his rejection of the commission's chairmanship.

Although Phoumi and his aides returned to Vientiane apparently convinced of Souvanna's acquiescence to an investigative commission prior to a full-scale international conference, there is already some indication that Souvanna may have been temporizing. Souvanna is reported to have stated publicly on 11 March that the three-nation commission should meet "about the same time" as the 14-power conference proposed by Sihanouk, in order to enable the conference to give directives to the commission.

Phoumi also reports that he and Souvanna, in their discussion of the question of a coalition government including the Pathet Lao, agreed that Communists should hold no posts. Phoumi, however, apparently did not rule out the possibility that "non-Communist" members of the Neo Lao Hak Sat (NLHS), the Pathet Lao's political arm, might be included. A long-standing argument of Souvanna, which has found favor among many Laotian officials, is that Prince Souphannouvong--head of the NLHS--and many other party members are nationalists rather than Communists.

Moscow's initial reaction to the discussions between Phoumi and Souvanna Phouma indicates that the USSR will claim that the general compromised his own position as a result of his visit to Phnom Penh and that Souvanna will accept no solution in Laos which does not make the convening of an international conference the first order of business.

A Pathet Lao statement, rebroadcast by both Peiping and Hanoi, vigorously attacked Phoumi's mission to Phnom Penh as an effort to "use the name of Premier Souvanna Phouma" to split

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the Laotian people. The Pathet Lao radio claimed it was only because of military reverses that Phoumi "attempted to compel Prince Phouma to negotiate with and make concessions to the traitors' clique." The statement clearly indicated that the Communists do not recognize the Phnom Penh communiqué as in any way restricting their freedom of action.

Reflecting some uneasiness over the possibility that Souvanna may have made some deal with Phoumi, the Pathet Lao radio stressed the unflinching support of the Pathet Lao forces for Souvanna. It pointed out that Souvanna's speeches and statements made in Xieng Khouang during his visit there prove that he would refuse "to knuckle under in any circumstances before the traitors' clique in Vientiane." The statement reiterated the bloc contention that an international conference must be held, to be followed by an international commission to work in Laos in accordance with the specific powers granted to it by the conference.

[The recent successes of the Kong Le - Pathet Lao forces appear to have been due less to aggressive action on their part than to withdrawal by the Vientiane forces in the face of such a threat. Vientiane troops north of Phou Khoun junction are reported in a state of low morale and unlikely to put up much resistance to any further Pathet Lao advance. All supplies that had been stockpiled by these troops at the junction were left intact when they withdrew and now are in enemy hands.] [REDACTED]

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Situation in the Congo

{Hammaraskjold recently sent a conciliatory letter to Kasavubu, who is attending the Tananarive conference of Congolese leaders, in an attempt to lessen the likelihood of a conflict between Indian and Congolese troops. He tried to reassure Kasavubu that the arrival of these troops was not part of a planned military build-up to be used against the Congolese Army, explaining that the Security Council had not authorized such action in connection with the proposed reorganization of the army.}

[In a discussion with an American official, Hammaraskjold indicated a belief that "some kind of political game was going on in Leopoldville" between two rival acting prime ministers in the absence of Ileo, who accompanied Kasavubu to Tananarive. He noted that acting Prime Minister Delvaux modified his earlier hostile attitude toward the UN and became willing to negotiate after Massa suddenly "took over" that office. Hammaraskjold remarked that "there are too many untutored people with guns who become involved in political moves" in the Congo.}

Tshombé's apparent success in dominating the proceedings at Tananarive has been complemented by another success in Katanga. Before leaving for the conference, Tshombé--apparently fearing that his deputy Kibwe and French Colonel Trinquier were plotting to oust him--ordered Trinquier to leave the country by 10 March. The American Consul in Elisabethville reported that Trinquier, under pressure from Katangan authorities and possibly the UN, departed for Brussels on 11 March.

When informed that Brussels intended to remove some 30 Belgian military technicians from Katanga, Tshombé indicated he would oppose this action by all means possible and that he might close the Belgian Consulate General in Elisabethville.

{In his conversation with Ambassador Thompson, Khrushchev said it was clear that the US and the Soviet Union were in complete disagreement on the Congo. Khrushchev failed to respond to Ambassador Thompson's remark that there was nothing in the}

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{Congo situation basic to US or Soviet interests. The ambassador noted that the Soviet premier refrained from mentioning any new approach to a solution of the Congo problem and referred to the internal Congo situation only in terms of the past.}

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{Khrushchev used the Congo question to launch a vigorous attack on UN policies; he told the ambassador that the US and the Soviet Union had different positions on this question and prospects were not bright. He reiterated the standard charges that the UN and Hammarskjold were responsible for Lumumba's death.}

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