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20 May 1961

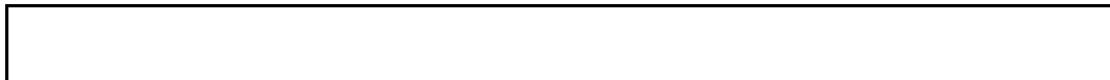
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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN



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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN

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 4. USSR: Press comment on extension of death penalty apparently intended to forestall public fear of revival of police terror. (*Page iii*)
 5. USSR: M. V. Keldysh replaces A. N. Nesmeyanov as president of Academy of Sciences. (*Page iii*)
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7. France-Algeria: Reported plot to assassinate De Gaulle. (*Page iv*)

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USSR: Frol Kozlov, probably the leading contender as Khrushchev's eventual successor, has been "convalescing from heart trouble" since 22 April, according to a Soviet Foreign Ministry official. Kozlov's chances of succeeding Khrushchev may now be reduced and below-the-surface maneuvering for the succession may be intensified. Any serious impairment of Kozlov's activities would also necessitate the redistribution of his key administrative responsibilities in party organizational and personnel work

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USSR: Initial Soviet press comment on the decree which sets the death penalty for large-scale embezzlement, counterfeiting, and forgery is apparently intended to forestall public fears that Stalinist police terror may be revived. While calling for strict enforcement of the new decree, Moscow at the same time insists that "liberalization trends" have not been reversed. The Kremlin is apparently also concerned that this move will furnish propaganda fuel for the West.

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USSR: For comment on election of M. V. Keldysh, who is believed to have played an important role in research on the Soviet guided missile program, as president of the Academy of Sciences, USSR, see Page 6.

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***France-Algeria:**

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tain army units in France plan to storm the Elysee Palace, De Gaulle's official residence, and "remove him" shortly after the 20 May opening of negotiations with the Algerian rebels. Premier Debré is said to have been alerted to this report,

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Collapse of the late April military revolt in Algeria has left military and civilian extremists still bitterly opposed to De Gaulle's Algerian policy. In view of the failure of past plots to seize control of the government or otherwise persuade De Gaulle to modify his policy, fanatic rightists probably feel assassination is the only remaining way to block Algerian independence.)

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DAILY BRIEF

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Soviet Comment on New Embezzlement Law

On 14 May, the official government organ Izvestia pointedly denied that promulgation of the new death decree had come as a shock and asserted that the measure enjoys the approval of the entire Soviet people. Ostensibly written in answer to Western press criticism, the commentary has strong overtones of Kremlin concern that the law will revive old memories of indiscriminate police terror. Izvestia reassured the "capitalist world" that there has been no abandonment of the post-Stalin trend of liberalization of the Soviet penal code and denied that crime is on the increase or that the punitive arm of the state has been strengthened.

Apparently anticipating Western propaganda exploitation of the law, Moscow twice broadcast the Izvestia article to Europe on the day it was published.

The Kremlin nevertheless seems bent on enforcing the law, and the secret police (KGB) have evidently assumed responsibility for investigating the crimes which it covers. On 18 May, the KGB announced the arrest of a gang of "large-scale speculators" in currency; declaring that "the hour of revenge" had come, Izvestia hinted that the ringleader might be sent to the firing squad in accordance with the law.

M. V. Keldysh, New President of Academy of Sciences, USSR

Moscow radio announced on 19 May the election of M. V. Keldysh as president of the Academy of Sciences, USSR. He was elected by the academy's General Assembly of Academicians and Corresponding Members. The outgoing president, A. N. Nesmeyanov, who had served since 1951 and is 62 years old, was relieved at his own request and received a unanimous expression of gratitude by the General Assembly for his service.

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The Director for Intelligence, The Joint Staff

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