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24 August 1959

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN



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DAILY BRIEF

I. THE COMMUNIST BLOC

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[redacted] Laos: A statement broadcast from Hanoi on 21 August, but attributed to a spokesman of the Laotian Communist front, calls for the government to realign its pro-Western foreign policy and [redacted]

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[redacted]
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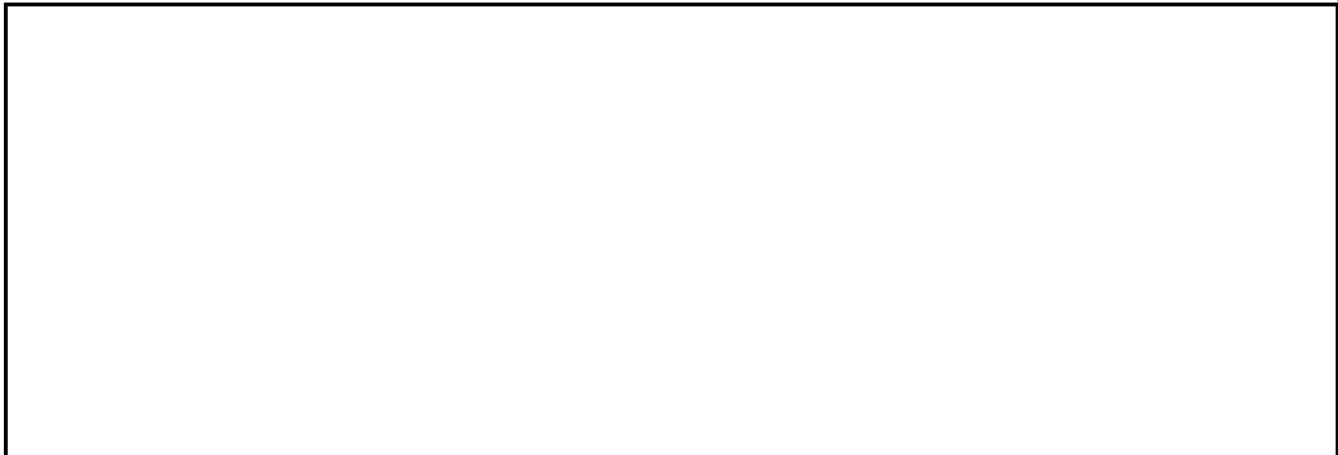
to set up a coalition government with Communist participation. North Vietnamese propaganda attempting to show that Saigon is intimately linked with the Laotian crisis suggests that Hanoi is concerned over the possibility that South Vietnam has secretly agreed to send military aid to Laos.

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DAILY BRIEF

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III. THE WEST

NO
France-Algeria: [During UN Secretary General Hammar-skjold's recent visit to France, De Gaulle gave no indication that he plans any major change in France's Algerian policy. He also ruled out negotiations for a political settlement with Premier Abbas of the Provisional Algerian Government, explaining that Abbas is without a mandate to represent the Algerians and is too weak to control or lead them. Premier Debré, who took a considerably tougher line during the 31 July talks with Hammar-skjold, stated that if the UN interfered with France on the Algerian question, France might have to walk out of the General Assembly.]

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UK-Maldives: [The present impasse between Britain and the government of the Maldives--over terms governing British use of a key RAF base being completed on Gan Island in southern-most Addu Atoll--could aggravate Britain's relations with India and Ceylon and provide an issue for international Communist propaganda. Britain is prepared to repulse any effort by the government of the Maldives to suppress dissidents who control Addu Atoll and provide workers for the base.]

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DAILY BRIEF

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I. THE COMMUNIST BLOC

Situation in Laos

A Hanoi broadcast of 21 August, attributed to a spokesman of Laos' Communist front Neo Lao Hak Zat (NLHZ) party, called for the creation of a coalition government with Communist participation, the realignment of Laos' pro-Western foreign policy, and a return to the privileged position secured through the negotiations between the Communists and the royal government which culminated in the unification settlement of November 1957. By taking this extreme position, the NLHZ is creating a climate in which its proscription as a political party is almost inevitable. Its line also suggests that the NLHZ is preparing to abandon legal political activity in favor of guerrilla warfare.

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[Reports point to intensified Communist partisan operations in northern Laos, especially in Sam Neua Province and areas of eastern Luang Prabang Province adjacent to Sam Neua.] The press states that infiltration in Vientiane Province has forced the government to abandon several posts. The scale of operations appears to be smaller than is suggested by the reports, however.

North Vietnam has markedly increased its accusations that South Vietnam is actively involved in the Laotian crisis, suggesting concern over the possibility that Saigon has secretly agreed to give military aid to Laos. Specifically Hanoi accuses Saigon of training anti-Communist terrorists for the Laotian Government and sending advisers to help the army, and claims that a decision now has been reached to dispatch troops from South Vietnam. At the very least Hanoi probably is worried that Saigon will utilize the present crisis to increase its influence in Laos.

In another development, [] has reported rumors circulating in Hanoi that Premier and Foreign Minister Pham Van Dong left North Vietnam for Communist China around 17 August to meet President Ho Chi Minh, who has been in China since early August, and to confer with Peiping's leaders about the Laotian situation. Such action would indicate the Communists' pressing need for close policy coordination at this time.

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III. THE WEST

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Paris Shows No Signs of Changing Algerian Program

[President de Gaulle told UN Secretary General Hammarskjold on 31 July that he has no definite plan for a "final solution," of the Algerian question. He said he was willing to accept whatever solution "evolved" as long as it was based on a "democratic" decision. He ruled out any negotiations on political matters with Provisional Algerian Republic Premier Abbas, explaining that Abbas has no mandate to represent the Algerians and is too weak to rule them if given an opportunity. De Gaulle said he had made his policy clear and saw no reason to restate it.]

[The French cabinet is scheduled to review the Algerian question 26 August, the day before De Gaulle leaves for a three-day visit to the area.]

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[Premier Debré, on the other hand, took a much tougher line in his conversation with Hammarskjold. He stated that if the UN General Assembly interfered with France on Algeria, France might have to "cease its cooperation" with the General Assembly. Hammarskjold understood that the threatened walk-out would not extend to the Security Council or the UN as a whole.]

[Recently there have been indications that Paris intends to prepare a strong case for the UN debate. Such an approach would undoubtedly lead to renewed insistence that France's allies give their full support.]

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Complete Impasse Reached in British-Maldivian Relations

[Relations between Britain and the Maldives, a British-protected sultanate 400 miles southwest of Ceylon, have reached an impasse over the terms governing Britain's use of the air base under construction on Gan Island. This base, a key RAF staging post and an important link between the Middle East-African area and Singapore-Australia, is located in Addu Atoll, one of the three southern atolls which were taken over by a secessionist movement in March.]

[Two of the three atolls were recaptured in early August, and the British now have informed the Maldivian Government that they are prepared to resist by force any effort to recapture Addu Atoll from the rebels, who provide labor on the air base. A 50-man RAF detachment from Aden is replacing a 100-man army contingent flown in from Singapore in early August when local British officials feared trouble. The Maldivian Government, which earlier charged Britain with instigating the revolt, has rebuffed British offers of mediation, and the prime minister has refused to negotiate further about the base.]

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