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18 January 1961

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# CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN



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Approved for Release: 2020/08/11 C03174711

18 JANUARY 1961

ASIA-AFRICA

Laos--Kong Le - Pathet Lao forces continue to exert strong pressure in Xieng Khouang Province. ①

Congo--Foreign aid to Gizenga dissidents apparently to be coordinated in Cairo. ②



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# CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN

18 January 1961

## DAILY BRIEF

### ASIA-AFRICA

*Sirah*

Laos: Kong Le - Pathet Lao forces in Xieng Khouang Province are apparently exerting strong pressure on Tha Thom, the government's most important remaining position in the province. Meanwhile, government forces holding the junction between the Vientiane - Luang Prabang road and Route 7, which leads eastward toward the Plaine des Jarres, have reportedly come under enemy artillery fire.

[ ] one of the four T-6 aircraft which have been flying missions against the Kong Le - Pathet Lao forces was shot down or crashed on 17 January. [ ]

The airlift into Laos continued through 16 January, with flights scheduled for 17 January. Five Soviet LI-2s arrived in Hanoi on 16 January. Five others probably arrived on 17 January. The remaining eight LI-2s are en route to North Vietnam.

[ ] (Page 1) (Map)

[ ] ten light aircraft, a shipload of rations, and "more than twenty trucks"--allegedly provided by the UAR--will arrive "shortly" at Port Sudan. [ ]

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logistical problems may delay a projected advance of dissident forces southward through Katanga to Elisabethville. [ ]

[ ] a consolidation at Manono to defend against "the

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eventual attack" by Tshombé's forces, [redacted] "For the moment do not enter Elisabethville." The dissidents appear prepared to go on the defensive along the border of Orientale and Equateur provinces as well. [redacted]

[redacted] preparations "for the defensive against the troops of Mobutu who are making preparations to attack." [redacted] According to one report, an anti-Lumumba politician, Jean Bolikango--who recently solicited Portuguese support for an independent Equateur state--is rallying Bangala tribesmen to resist any dissident invasion of, Bangala areas within the province. [redacted]

### CONCLUSIONS OF SPECIAL USIB SUBCOMMITTEE ON BERLIN SITUATION

The USIB has taken note of the following conclusions reached by its special committee on the Berlin situation for the period 20 December 1960 through 16 January 1961.

1. We are currently in an interim period during which the USSR is intent on reaching an assessment of the new US administration and the possibilities of negotiating with the West on major issues. Therefore, at least for the next few months --through April and possibly until midsummer--the USSR is unlikely to increase tensions over Berlin. However, should the Soviet leaders at any time during this period estimate that the West is uninterested in high-level negotiations with the USSR; they may increase the threat of unilateral action in an effort to expedite talks.

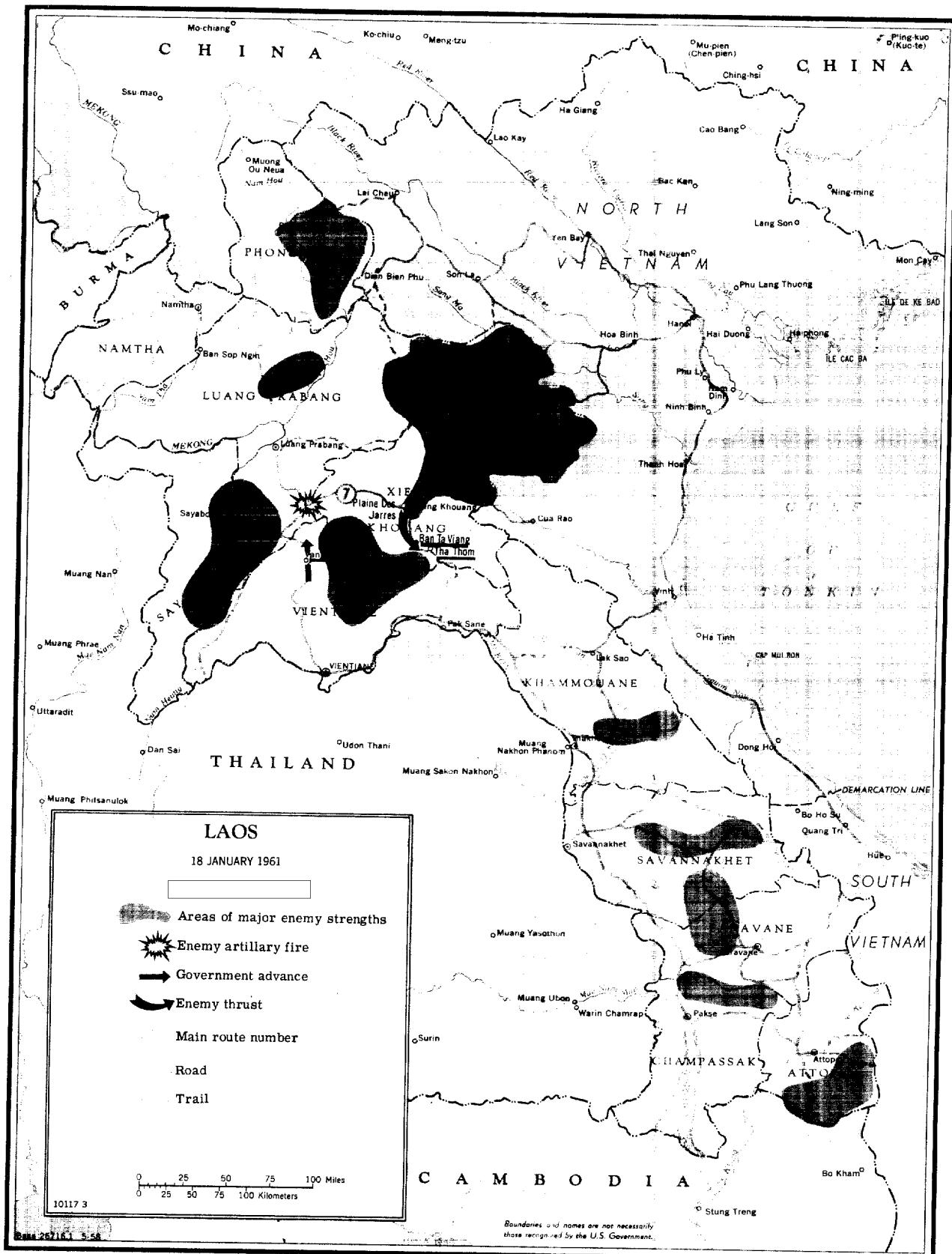
2. While long-range Soviet policy on the broad problems of East-West relations was the overriding factor in reaching a solution of the recent trade impasse between Bonn and Moscow and Bonn and Pankow, the vulnerability of the East German economy contributed significantly and gave Bonn important leverage in negotiating on the IZT issue. [redacted]

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DAILY BRIEF

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### The Situation in Laos

[The Kong Le - Pathet Lao forces appear to be exerting strong pressure on Tha Thom, the most important post in Xieng Khouang Province still retained by the government. Tha Thom and Ban Ta Viang, which was recently occupied by the enemy, figured prominently in General Phoumi's plans as assembly areas from which to mount offensive action against the Plaine des Jarres area to the northwest. Meo tribesmen have reportedly been ordered to harass the Kong Le - Pathet Lao forces advancing on Tha Thom from Ban Ta Viang, but it is doubtful they will prove much of an impediment to the seemingly well-organized enemy force.]

[Meanwhile, the government force holding the junction between the Vientiane - Luang Prabang road and Route 7, which leads eastward toward Xieng Khouang, has reportedly come under enemy 105-mm. howitzer fire. The fire may have come from artillery pieces withdrawn from Vang Vieng prior to its fall to the government on 16 January, or from enemy elements which may have moved westward from the Plaine des Jarres to deny the government access to Route 7. The government column which took Vang Vieng will presumably move northward to link up with the force holding the road junction, but it must first move through what has traditionally been an area of Pathet Lao strength.]

[The airlift into Laos continues, with flights terminating in the Plaines des Jarres area and at Sam Neua. Eleven IL-14 sorties were scheduled for 17 January. Since 13 December 1960, when airdrops of military supplies to the Kong Le - Pathet Lao forces began, the Soviet IL-14s have flown at least 214 sorties into Laos.]

[Five of the 18 Soviet LI-2s landed at Hanoi on 16 January, and five others probably arrived at Hanoi on 17 January. The remaining eight LI-2s are en route from Irkutsk and Peiping to North Vietnam.]

the LI-2s

are being delivered by Soviet crews.]

[In a discussion with Ambassador Thompson following the presentation on 16 January of an official Soviet protest over the use of American T-6 aircraft in Laos, Soviet First Deputy Foreign Minister Kuznetsov emphasized the mild tone of the statement and again assured the US ambassador that the Soviet Union did not desire to expand the conflict in Laos. The Soviet official voiced skepticism that Laotian pilots could be flying the T-6s and implied that the question of volunteers, which Pravda on 16 January alleged the US was recruiting, would make the situation in Laos even more difficult. Kuznetsov said that while the Soviet Union was not opposed to the International Control Commission, it preferred an international conference.]

[On 5 January a pro-Communist editor in Hong Kong reportedly told a left-wing group meeting there that Peiping's policy toward Laos was to give moral and material support but to avoid direct involvement. The editor stated that this position had been outlined by a party official during a reception in late December for united front delegates in Canton. Another Communist editor in Hong Kong commented on 2 January that Peiping would not intervene in Laos unless US troops did so first.]

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