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1 June 1960



Copy No. C 68

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CENTRAL

INTELLIGENCE

BULLETIN



DOCUMENT NO. 27
NO CHANGE IN CLASS.
IF DECLASSIFIED
CLASS. CHANGED TO: TS S C
NEXT REVIEW DATE: 2010
AUTH: MR TCR
DATE: 15 JUL 1960 REVIEWER:

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State Dept. review completed

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Approved For Release 2002/09/04 : CIA-RDP79T00975A005100270001-5

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DAILY BRIEF

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I. THE COMMUNIST BLOC

Communist China: Former Defense Minister Peng Te-huai, whose dismissal last September had aroused speculation as to internal policy differences within the politburo, made his first public appearance in nearly a year on 30 May. Chinese Communist press reports on the occasion--when he paid last respects at the bier of another party official--listed Peng as a politburo member and in the same position--fourteenth--he was listed in a year ago. It now appears that Peng is being permitted to continue in some position of high rank, although probably with little actual authority.

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II. ASIA-AFRICA

Laos: Premier-designate Tiao Somsanith is expected to form another coalition government, but one which in reality will be dominated by the militantly anti-Communist Committee for Defense of National Interests (CDNI). Somsanith's chances of investiture by the National Assembly are reasonably good, and his investiture will be virtually certain if former Premier Phoui's Rally of the Lao People (RLP) is given adequate minority representation in the cabinet. Whatever the composition of the cabinet, CDNI leader General Phoumi will probably be the real power in the new government.

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Morocco: Moroccan Foreign Minister Driss M'Hamed has inquired informally whether the evacuation of American troops from Morocco, now scheduled to be completed by the end of 1963, could be accelerated. He said that the new Moroccan cabinet had agreed it would be desirable for all foreign troops to be withdrawn by the time the King grants a constitution, which he has indicated he will do by the end of 1962.

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Belgian Congo: Preliminary returns on elections for a Congo legislature indicate that Patrice Lumumba's leftist National Congo Movement will control about 45 of the 137 seats, and that no other party will control more than 20. Although the opposition to Lumumba remains disorganized, his rivals are making soundings on the possibility of a coalition which would exclude Lumumba from the government when the Congo becomes independent on 30 June. Some Congolese politicians fear, however, that if Lumumba is excluded in this way he might set up a rival government and precipitate civil war.

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South Africa: Intellectual elements in South Africa's politically dominant Afrikaner community are intensifying their efforts to find an alternative to apartheid. These efforts, spearheaded by leaders of the Dutch Reformed Church in Cape Province and by faculty members at Stellenbosch University, have already met opposition from the government, which is dominated by conservative Afrikaners from the Transvaal. The ensuing ferment may deepen the traditional Transvaal - Cape Province split in the ruling Nationalist party.

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Former Defense Minister of Communist China Reappears

Communist China's former Defense Minister Peng Te-huai made his first public appearance in nearly a year on 30 May, when he paid last respects at the bier of party elder Lin Po-chu. Peng had made no public appearance since last June, and there had been no public reference to him since his dismissal from the post of defense minister last September. His removal and long absence had aroused speculation that there had been disagreement within the politburo on matters of economic or military policy.

[Redacted]

Peng's future may be indicated by the examples of alternate politburo members Chang Wen-tien and Kang Sheng. Both of these men suffered demotion from high positions and obvious curtailment of their influence in the party. Both were given relatively minor posts, and Chang, who was dismissed as vice foreign minister at the same time that Peng was ousted, reappeared last month in the party position he had held prior to his removal.

[Redacted]

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Formation of New Laotian Government May Be Imminent

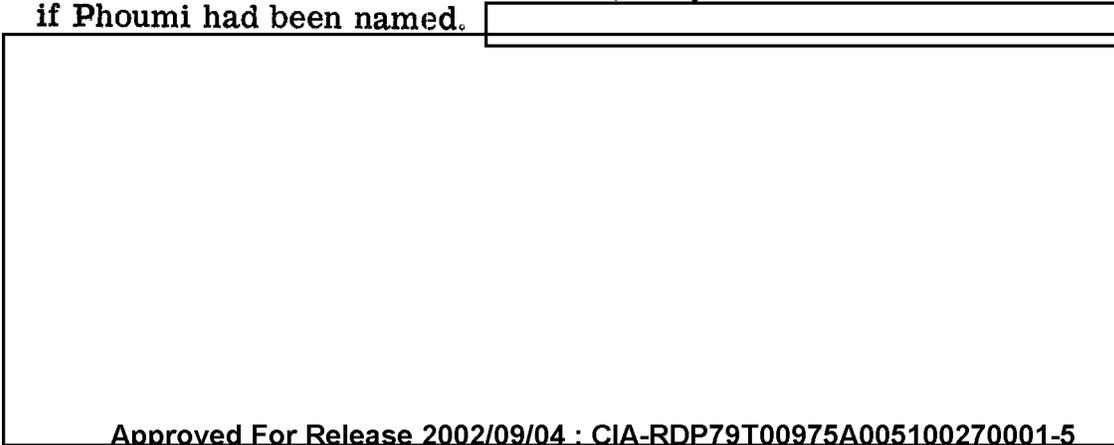
Laotian King Savang has designated Tiao Somsanith, interior minister in the outgoing caretaker government, to form a new cabinet. Although the government he forms is expected to be another coalition embracing the Committee for Defense of National Interests (CDNI), former Premier Phoui's Rally of the Lao People (RLP), and various independents, real power will reside in the militantly anti-Communist CDNI. [The King probably would have preferred to name CDNI leader Gen. Phoumi but may have settled for Somsanith out of deference to Western concern that Phoumi's designation might spark a strong and immediate Communist reaction.] As the prospective defense minister, Phoumi nevertheless is likely to be the dominant voice in the new government.

The 47-year-old Somsanith is a widely respected former national police chief who until recently was a member of the RLP. During the preparations for the April National Assembly elections, he developed a close working relationship with Phoumi. After the elections, he joined the CDNI's newly created Social Democratic party (SDP) and was elected one of its vice presidents and the party's assembly floor leader. He is reputed to be an able administrator, but his mild disposition will probably be no match for the stronger personality of Phoumi.

Somsanith's chances of winning investiture from the 59-member National Assembly depend on the degree of representation the RLP is given in the cabinet. The SDP claims to have an assembly majority, but if the RLP, with over 20 deputies, were to vote as a bloc against Somsanith, he might have difficulty gaining confirmation. A simple majority is required for investiture, but that majority must not include the votes of deputies who are members of the cabinet to be confirmed.

Should Somsanith be able to form a government, the Communists will be under no illusions as to where the real power resides. Their immediate reaction, however, may be more restrained than if Phoumi had been named.

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Morocco May Press for Accelerated Troop Withdrawals

Foreign Minister Driss M'Hammedi inquired informally on 28 May whether the evacuation of American troops from Morocco, scheduled to be completed by the end of 1963, could be accelerated. He said that the new cabinet, invested on 26 May, had agreed at its first meeting that it would be desirable for all foreign troops to have left the country by the time a constitution is promulgated. The King, who proclaimed last February that 1960 was the "year of evacuation," has promised that Morocco would have a constitution and a national legislature by the end of 1962.

The new Moroccan Government, nominally headed by the King but in fact administered by Crown Prince Moulay Hassan in his capacity as deputy premier, will be under considerable pressure from both the rightists and leftists to secure French and Spanish commitments to evacuate troops and to speed up all military withdrawals.

France has resisted making such a commitment and apparently also has persuaded Spain not to comply with the Moroccan demand. The left-wing Moroccan opposition is likely to play up the speculation of certain French newspapers that Paris urged the palace to dismiss leftist premier Abdallah Ibrahim in return for a French promise of accommodation on the subject of military bases.

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Ferment Among Afrikaner Intellectuals Increases in South Africa

Intellectual elements in South Africa's politically dominant Afrikaner community, their belief in apartheid shaken by recent events, are intensifying their efforts to find an alternative.

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[redacted] the Dutch Reformed Church (DRC) in Cape Province plans to initiate discussions with other DRC groups and with other Protestant churches in an attempt to formulate an agreed "Christian approach" to the racial situation. Professors at Stellenbosch University, long a center of liberal Afrikaner thinking, reportedly are actively promoting contacts with spokesmen for the English-speaking population and for the Union's natives.

These efforts by Cape Province Afrikaners have already met strong opposition from the government, which is dominated by conservative Afrikaners from the Transvaal. By appealing to the tradition of unity in the face of criticism, the conservatives apparently succeeded in forcing the withdrawal of two influential Afrikaner businessmen from a Stellenbosch-sponsored organization designed to bridge the gap between the Afrikaans- and English-speaking parts of the white population. The government reportedly has also inspired rumors of an English-Afrikaner business war in order to discourage cooperation between the two groups.

Afrikaner critics of the Verwoerd government's policies are becoming increasingly vocal, however. The Cape Province DRC's decision to enter the political field may lead to dissent elsewhere in the church hierarchy, which until now has stood solidly behind Verwoerd. The intellectual ferment may also deepen the traditional Transvaal - Cape Province division in South Africa's ruling Nationalist party. [redacted]

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