



CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

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16 DECEMBER 1964

~~TOP SECRET~~

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DAILY BRIEF
16 DECEMBER 1964

1. South Vietnam

Buddhist leader Tri Quang told US Embassy officers yesterday that, while he hoped for a "legal solution," "extra-legal" mass action against Premier Huong's government now appeared necessary. Quang was not totally intransigent, however. Perhaps influenced by the Buddhists' failure so far to develop popular support, he suggested an apparent willingness to negotiate behind the scenes with Chief of State Suu or the High National Council and hinted that the US might mediate. Quang added that he would wait a day or two before giving the signal for more anti-government activities.

2. Congo

In view of the growing Belgian concern over giving continued backing to Tshombé, we have included at annex a cable setting forth the views of Auguste Gérard, head of Belgium's Société Générale. The Société is a sizable shareholder in the Congo's Katanga mines.

3. USSR

An Egyptian military group is in the USSR inspecting a wide variety of late model and up-dated equipment not previously offered to non-bloc countries. The new Soviet leaders are also filling earlier contracts with Indonesia and Syria, indicating their intention to continue long-range military aid programs undertaken by Khrushchev. [redacted]

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4. Pakistan

Opposition parties think they have the votes to oust Ayub from the presidency in next month's election. His opponents' joint candidate, Miss Fatima Jinnah, has picked up surprising strength, but Ayub's control of Pakistan's administration will probably give him the edge.

5. Guatemala

[redacted] guerrilla activity there is directed by a Communist headquarters in Mexico. [redacted]

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6. Cyprus

The Soviet ship which docked in Cyprus yesterday unloaded 100 military trucks. The Greek Cypriots will probably exploit the delivery as demonstrating Soviet backing for Makarios.

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ANNEX

US Embassy Reports Conversation with Head of
Belgium's Société Générale
(State from Brussels 1201, 15 December)

EMBOFF HAD LONG CONVERSATION EVE DEC 14 WITH AUGUSTE GERARD SOCIETE GENERALE WHO HAD JUST RETURNED FROM CONGO. GERARD'S ANALYSIS OF CONGO SITUATION HAD BEEN EAGERLY AWAITED BY SOCIETE GENERALE AND CAN BE EXPECTED TO INFLUENCE PRIVATE SECTOR'S ATTITUDES TOWARD CONGO. FOR THIS REASON EMB IS REPORTING HIS COMMENTS AT SOME LENGTH.

GERARD TAKES SOMBER VIEW OF CONGO SITUATION. HE EMPHASIZED THAT HE HAD FULLY RECOVERED FROM FATIGUE OF HIS TRIP AND THAT HE HAD ARRIVED AT HIS ANALYSIS ONLY AFTER CAREFUL REFLECTION. EMBOFF NOTED THAT GERARD WAS EMOTIONALLY AFFECTED BY ATROCIOUS KILLING OF SOME OF HIS PEOPLE BY CONGOLESE REBELS.

IN GERARD'S VIEW ALL INTERESTED PARTIES IN CONGO HAVE SERIOUSLY UNDERESTIMATED APPEAL OF REBELLION. OLD CONGO HANDS HAVE BEEN AMAZED AT ABILITY AND WILLINGNESS OF REBEL SOLDIERS TO FIGHT FOR CAUSE WHICH IS APPARENTLY EFFECTIVE MIXTURE OF TRADITIONAL TRIBAL PLUS ECONOMIC DISCONTENT AND THE KIND OF POLITICAL PURITANISM WHICH PROTESTS AGAINST CORRUPTION. NOTING THAT ALL OF SIMBAS WERE NOT SAVAGES FRESH FROM BUSH, GERARD POINTED OUT THAT SOME REBEL MILITARY LEADERS HAD RECEIVED TRAINING IN BELGIUM. THESE SAME OFFICERS FOUGHT BETTER AS REBELS THAN THEY EVER HAD AS ANC.

ON POLITICAL ASPECTS GERARD CLEARLY INDICATED THAT HIS NEGATIVE VIEW OF TSHOMBE IS UNCHANGED (EMBTTEL 76) BUT SUGGESTED THAT WE WOULD HAVE TO LIVE WITH HIM SINCE THERE SEEMED TO BE NO AVAILABLE ALTERNATIVE. ON REBEL SIDE THERE SEEMS TO BE NO ACCEPTABLE PERSONALITY WITH WHOM POLITICAL SETTLEMENT CAN BE REACHED. IN TERMS OF INTERNATIONAL POLITICS GERARD IS CONVINCED THAT COLD WAR CONFRONTATION ALREADY EXISTS IN CONGO AND THAT COMMUNISTS ARE IN POSITION TO EXPLOIT MAJOR

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STRATEGIC BREAK-THROUGH WHICH COULD GRAVELY UNDERMINE WESTERN POSITION AND EVENTUALLY CREATE DANGERS FOR EUROPE. FOR THIS REASON, GERARD BELIEVES CONGO SHOULD BE DEALT WITH AS "NATO PROBLEM" AND THAT NATO COUNTRIES SHOULD RALLY TO TAKE STEPS TO RESTORE WESTERN POSITION IN CENTRAL AFRICA.

PROBLEMS FACING US HAS TWO INTERRELATED ASPECTS (A) MILITARY AND (B) POLITICAL. REGARDING MILITARY SITUATION GERARD BELIEVES MERCENARIES TO ENCADRE ANC ARE ESSENTIAL FOR AT LEAST ONE YEAR UNTIL NEW ANC BATTALIONS CAN BE TRAINED. BELGIUM ALONE CANNOT PROVIDE SUFFICIENT VOLUNTEERS AND IT WOULD BE PREFERABLE TO ELIMINATE SOUTH AFRICANS AND RHODESIANS INSOFAR AS POSSIBLE. THIS LEAVES EUROPE AS ONLY SOURCE OF MERCENARIES AND GERARD BELIEVES SUFFICIENT NUMBER OF QUALIFIED MEN COULD BE OBTAINED ONLY IF NATO COUNTRIES COOPERATE.

TSHOMBE AND KASAVUBU MUST MAKE MAXIMUM EFFORT ACHIEVE DOMESTIC RECONCILIATION WITH VALID POLITICAL ELEMENTS. CONCURRENTLY MAJOR CAMPAIGN WITH OTHER AFRICAN STATES MUST BE UNDERTAKEN TO OBTAIN THEIR AGREEMENT TO STOP MEDDLING IN CONGOLESE AFFAIRS. NATO COUNTRIES SHOULD JOIN IN EXERCISING MAXIMUM POLITICAL INFLUENCE ON AFRICAN COUNTRIES IN THIS SENSE AND OBVIOUSLY GDRC WILL HAVE TO COOPERATE IN ESTABLISHING BETTER RELATIONS WITH ITS NEIGHBORS.

IT IS ASSUMED THAT SOCIETE GENERALE AND PROBABLY OTHER BELGIUM INTERESTS WILL URGE ABOVE VIEWS ON GOB. IT FURTHER SEEMS LIKELY THAT PRIVATE SECTOR WILL BE PREPARED COOPERATE WITH GOB IN CARRYING OUT TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM INCLUDING POSSIBLE ASSISTANCE IN MAINTENANCE OF ORDER ALTHOUGH LATTER POINT WAS NOT SPECIFICALLY MADE BY GERARD.