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13 November 1958


3.3(h)(2)
3.5(c)



Copy No. C 60

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN



DOCUMENT NO. 17
NO CHANGE IN CLASS. X
DECLASSIFIED
CLASS. CHANGED TO: TS S
NEXT REVIEW DATE: 2018
AUTH: HR 70-2
DATE: 4/4/80 REVIEWER: 



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13 NOVEMBER 1958

I. THE COMMUNIST BLOC

Gromyko says Berlin change will not be long delayed; Bonn official states change "must" affect Bonn's relations with USSR. ①

Yugoslavia threatens to break relations with East Germany. ②

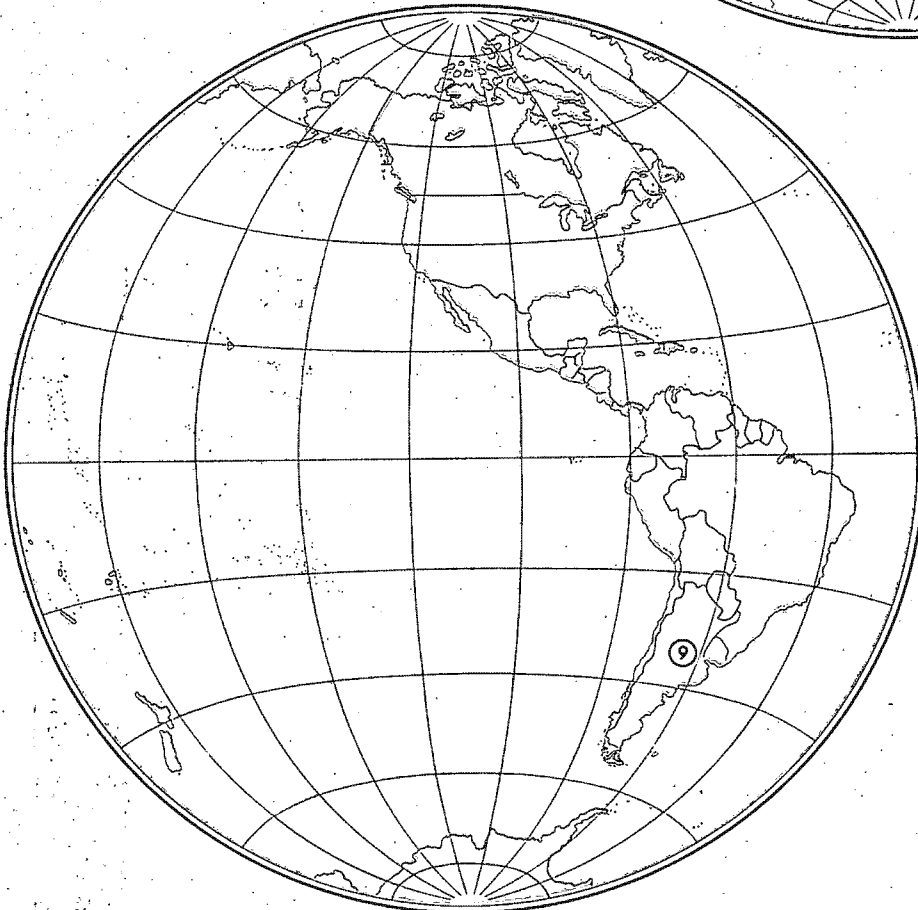
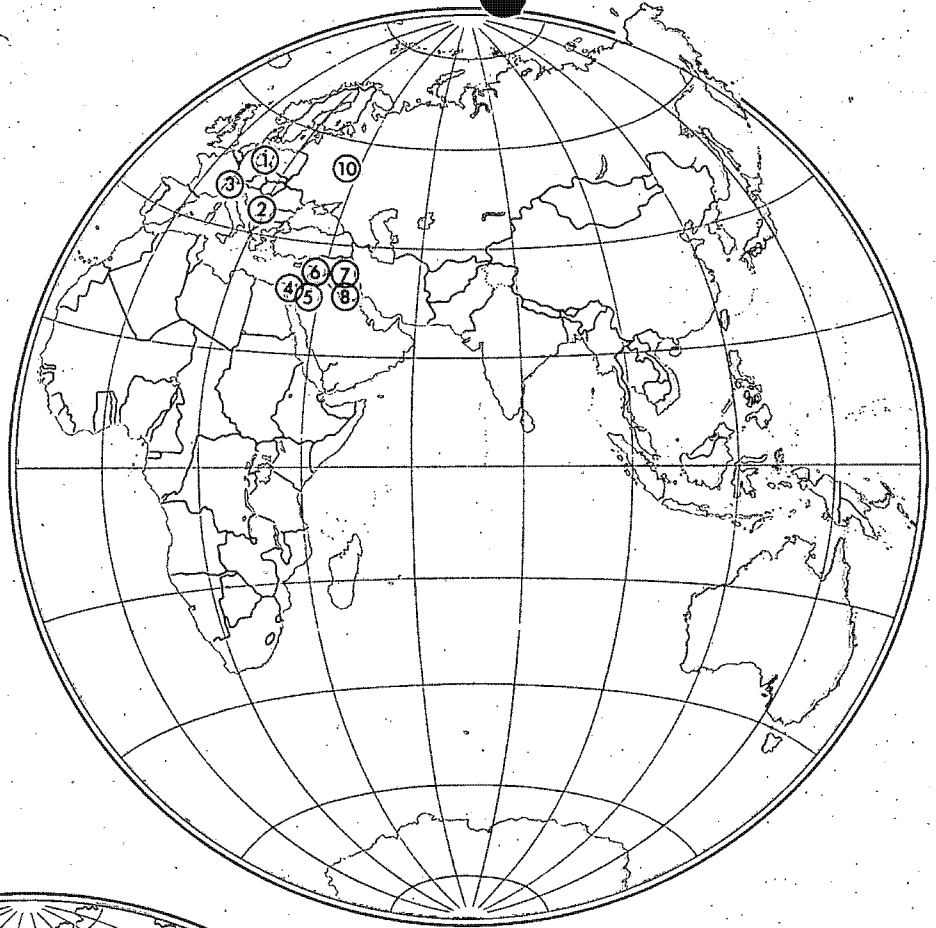
Comment on Soviet tactics at Geneva. ③

II. ASIA-AFRICA

UN officials fear new trouble between Israel and Jordan over Mount Scopus area. ④

Hammaraskjold suggests Jordan not press charges against UAR on plane incident. ⑤

Syrian students strike against UAR education policy. ⑥



⑦ Soviet arms to arrive in Iraq 15-16 November. [redacted]

⑧ Iraq - Pro-UAR party plans more vigorous tactics.

III. THE WEST

⑨ Argentina - Petroleum workers continue defiant; pressing for nationwide strike.

LATE ITEM

⑩ Soviet central committee now meeting.

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN

13 November 1958

DAILY BRIEF

I. THE COMMUNIST BLOC

USSR-Berlin: Gromyko has told the Swiss ambassador to Moscow that while action to implement changes in the four-power administration of Berlin would not be taken immediately, it would not be long delayed. Following a special cabinet meeting, Bonn's press chief said that Soviet-German relations "must" be affected if Moscow proceeds with its plan to transfer its responsibilities in Berlin to the East German Government, and pointed to diplomatic and economic relations as "ties which might suffer."

OK

[redacted] (Page 1)

Watch Committee conclusion--Berlin: Recent Soviet and East German declarations regarding the status of Berlin probably represent the beginning of a concerted effort to make Western access to the city conditional on de facto recognition of the East German regime.

no

Yugoslavia - East Germany: Yugoslavia has threatened to break diplomatic relations with East Germany. Belgrade on 11 November protested remarks made by Premier Grotewohl on the occasion of the 41st Soviet anniversary celebrations. Until recently, the East German regime has appeared hesitant to take a strong line in the bloc campaign against Yugoslavia because of the importance it has attached to maintaining diplomatic relations with Yugoslavia--the only nonbloc country recognizing it.

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*USSR-Geneva talks: The deadlock on an agenda for the talks on nuclear tests continues, despite some adjustments by both sides on procedural points. While the Soviet delegate has refused to discuss a control system until agreement has been reached on a permanent cessation of tests, he has given no indication of a desire to break off the negotiations. At the opening sessions of the talks on prevention of surprise attack, the Soviet delegation took a firm line insisting that unless this subject is "organically linked" with broader disarmament issues--such as a ban on nuclear weapons, liquidation of foreign military bases, and reduction of conventional armaments and forces--any discussion of controls is useless and inspection could only be regarded as an intelligence-collecting device. [redacted] (Page 2)

NO

Watch Committee conclusion--Taiwan Strait situation: The Chinese Communists are likely to continue military action against the offshore islands to the degree they deem necessary to demonstrate their capability to retain the military initiative, and to support their political objectives in the strait area. The Chinese Communists retain the capabilities to launch major attacks with little or no warning against the offshore islands and, by air, against Taiwan and the Penghus (Pescadores). While the Chinese Communists may expand the scope of their military activities against the offshore islands, available evidence does not indicate that they will do so to the extent of deliberately risking hostilities with the US. [redacted]

II. ASIA-AFRICA

OK

Arab-Israeli tension: Tel Aviv is following up the Syrian border incident of last week with pressure on local UN officials for a further extension of Israeli control over the demilitarized zone in the Lake Hula area. UN officials, moreover, fear new trouble may soon occur with Jordan over the disputed Mount Scopus area of Jerusalem. [redacted]
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DAILY BRIEF

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Watch Committee conclusion--Middle East: The situation remains unstable throughout the Middle East and incidents and coups could occur at any time. A deliberate initiation of open hostilities in the area is unlikely in the immediate future. The attempted Syrian interception of King Husayn's aircraft on 10 November has had the short-term effect of considerably strengthening the personal position of the King and, to that extent, has improved Jordanian stability. It has also caused a sharp deterioration of Jordanian-UAR relations, and Husayn's regime remains basically vulnerable.

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Jordan-UAR: UN Secretary General Hammarskjold has counseled the Jordanian Government against pressing charges against the UAR on the plane incident on 10 November involving the King. He has also advised Nasir that the UAR should apologize even though it may technically be in the right. Additional information on the circumstances of the King's flight indicates that a request for blanket clearances of several flights over Syria was never answered by the UAR.

[Redacted]

UAR student strike: Syrian University students in Damascus have been out since 8 November on a strike in protest against new regulations integrating the Syrian and Egyptian higher educational systems. This is the first demonstration of organized opposition to government policy since the creation of the UAR.

OK

Iraq-USSR: The first consignment of Soviet arms is expected to arrive at Basra about 15-16 November. A Soviet military delegation, numbering from three to five men, has arrived in Baghdad.

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Iraq: The pro-UAR Baath party now believes that its tactic of avoiding criticism of the government and clashes with Communist elements has been unwise. It intends to

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call attention to the Qasim regime's failure to fulfill promises made at the time of the revolution and to meet the Communists "head-on." Unless the Baath shows unexpected strength, the new tactic would seem merely to provide Qasim with an excuse to be more rigorous in arresting Baathist leaders. [redacted] (Page 8)

III. THE WEST

no
 *Argentina: Despite the arrest of several hundred Peronists and Communists under the state of siege declared on 11 November, defiant petroleum workers are continuing efforts to call an immediate nationwide strike. Other workers are threatening sympathy strikes. Meanwhile Frondizi, with armed forces' backing, apparently quashed an abortive plot involving Vice President Gomez who may be forced to resign. [redacted]

*USSR: The central committee of the Soviet Communist party was meeting in Moscow on 12 November. [redacted]

no
 [redacted] Discussion of the new Seven-Year Plan, soon to be issued in draft, is apparently the main business of the central committee, since its session is to be followed by a separate meeting of economic experts. The likelihood of a plenum is strengthened by the fact that the Soviet ambassadors to Iran, Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, and Great Britain, all of whom have central committee standing, had left their posts for Moscow as of 10 November. [redacted]

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DAILY BRIEF

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I. THE COMMUNIST BLOC

Further Comments on Status of Berlin

The Soviet Union probably will follow up Khrushchev's statement on Berlin with some form of agreement providing for at least the de jure transfer of its functions in Berlin to the German Democratic Republic (GDR). An East German Foreign Ministry official reportedly stated some action would be taken in December or January following a meeting of Soviet and East German representatives to work out the details. Foreign Minister Gromyko told the Swiss ambassador in Moscow that while the action would not be taken immediately, it would not be long delayed.

West German press chief von Eckardt, in a prepared statement on 12 November, hinted that Bonn might consider severing relations with Moscow if the USSR should abrogate the four-power agreement on Berlin.

The USSR probably will not permit East Germany to go so far as to provoke Western military action, but there is likely to be a new series of harassments by the Communists of allied lines of communication to the Western sectors of Berlin. British officials in Berlin point to the danger of a "self-imposed" blockade if the Western powers refuse to accept East German control over access to Berlin.

In a press conference on 12 November, East German Premier Otto Grotewohl made strong anti-Bonn statements stressing violations of the Potsdam Agreement by both the Western powers and the Federal Republic. He also discussed the possibility of negotiating troop withdrawals from both parts of Germany on a quid-pro-quo basis.

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Geneva Talks on Test Cessation Still Deadlocked Over Agenda

The deadlock over the agenda for the Geneva talks on nuclear tests has extended through the second week of the conference without any apparent movement in Moscow's basic position that the first order of business must be an immediate permanent and unconditional test-cessation agreement. The discussion of a second Soviet agenda proposal--modified to appear as a concession to the West by providing for discussion of a control system before signature of an agreement--clearly indicates that Moscow wants only a general directive for the establishment of a control organization. The details of such an organization would be relegated to a subsequent separate agreement. There is no indication, however, that the Soviet Union desires to break off the negotiations.

Meanwhile, Soviet First Deputy Foreign Minister V. V. Kuznetsov, who is the chief Soviet delegate at the talks in Geneva on prevention of surprise attack, has stated that this subject must be "organically linked" with broader disarmament issues such as a ban on nuclear weapons, liquidation of foreign military bases, and reduction of conventional armaments and forces. He insisted that an inspection system not linked with definite disarmament measures would promote rather than hinder the prospects of a surprise attack since the system would provide the would-be aggressor with intelligence data of value in launching such attack.

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II. ASIA-AFRICA

Arab-Israeli Tension

King Husayn's decision to remain in Jordan following the incident involving his aircraft over Syria apparently has temporarily relieved Israeli apprehension over the future of Jordan. During the past week, the Israeli Army had alerted its mobilization cadre, a precautionary measure which would enable it to move and mobilize with a minimum of delay in the event of trouble. Reserve transport units with civilian vehicles are reported to have been alerted since 7 November.

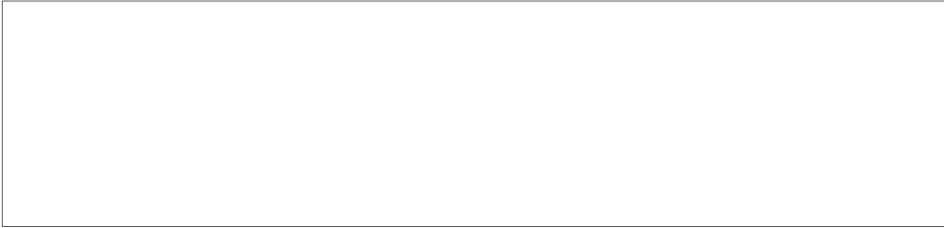
Localized Israeli-Jordanian trouble, however, may occur again in Jerusalem to exacerbate the broader tension. The chief of staff of the UN Truce Supervision Organization fears a new crisis may develop involving the Israeli enclave on Mt. Scopus. The Israelis insist on including new-type rifles and ammunition--to be exchanged for older weapons currently in use on Scopus--in the manifest of supplies for the next convoy to the enclave. The Jordanians are expected to reject the request. Israeli patrols, moreover, have continued to enter a disputed area of the Mt. Scopus demilitarized zone where a conflict with Jordanian forces earlier this year resulted in the death of a Canadian UN official.

The Israeli Foreign Ministry is following up the incident of 6 November on Israel's Syrian border by protesting to UN officials regarding the UAR "attack." The Israelis also have requested a survey of the area in the demilitarized zone where an Israeli tractor was fired on. Israeli accounts of the incident do not conform with the facts as available to the UN teams, and UN observers reportedly were prevented from fulfilling their function. Some UN officers were detained at Israeli check points, the view from one of the UN observation posts was obscured by Israeli smoke bombs, and observer radio communications were jammed by the Israelis. Israel apparently will oppose any investigation by the Mixed Armistice

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Commission on the ground that the commission's competence does not extend to the demilitarized zone. Israel's alleged conduct during the incident and its position regarding the commission is a continuation of persistent Israeli efforts to exercise sovereignty over the demilitarized zone in contravention of the General Armistice Agreement.



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Developments in Jordan

UN Secretary General Hammarskjold has advised the Jordanian Government against attempting to press charges in the UN against the UAR over the incident involving the royal aircraft on 10 November. According to UN Ambassador Spinelli in Amman, the Jordanian Government had failed to obtain clearance for overflight of the King's aircraft; a request for blanket clearance of three overflights, one of them to be the King's, was never answered. Despite the absence of an official clearance from UAR authorities, the completion of a test flight without incident led the Jordanians to assume that all three flights were approved.

Hammarskjold reportedly advised Nasir to apologize even though the UAR might technically be in the right. Nasir is most unlikely to do so, however, whatever the circumstances, particularly in view of the propaganda play being given the incident by Amman.

King Husayn has confirmed that some Jordanian Army units were preparing for an attack on Syria by the time he returned to Amman, and that it became necessary for him to make a personal appeal to Bedouin troops to return to their camps. While residents of Amman and the Bedouin, with official encouragement, rejoiced over the survival of the King, the reaction in West Jordan has been largely one of indifference. The American chargé in Amman points out that the aircraft incident demonstrated the extent to which King Husayn alone provides the cohesion necessary to hold Jordan together. The chargé believes that without the King's physical presence the army might have fragmented along Bedouin-Palestinian lines, accompanied by popular demands for overthrow of the pro-Western Rifai government.

Tension resulting from the aircraft incident probably caused the exchange of fire between a Jordanian outpost and a Syrian gendarmerie patrol on 11 November, in which the Syrians accused the Jordanians of stealing 69 cows and wounding a gendarmerie sergeant. The American military attaché in Amman reported on 11 November that although

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the Jordanian Army had increased the strength of its border patrols, there were no indications of preparations to attack Syria. The Rifai government, apparently reluctant to concede its share of responsibility for the aircraft incident, has continued to exploit the upsurge of anti-UAR feeling. It is possible that Rifai's enemies will attempt to discredit his government by charging that inadequate arrangements for the flight endangered the life of the King.

The first two of twelve British-made Hawker Hunter jet fighters being supplied to Jordan under the American military aid program arrived in Amman via Egypt without incident on 11 November.

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Anti-UAR Syrian Student Strike

Syrian University law and medical students went on strike on 8 November in protest against the unification of Syrian and Egyptian higher educational systems. After their protests had been rebuffed by the university president, a delegation of students and faculty protested to Minister of Interior Sarraj and the minister of education. The strikers have threatened a university-wide strike unless student demands for rescinding the directives are met. Two faculty members are said to have resigned from the university in sympathy with the strikers.

Antigovernment politicians have often used the students as tools to serve their political objectives. In the past, several Syrian governments have been pulled down by student strikes and demonstrations. While the strike may have been sparked by what the students believe to be genuine grievances, anti-UAR elements, possibly the Communists or Baathists, may have seized upon it as a means to embarrass the regime.

There is no indication that this protest will serve as a catalyst for widespread unrest, but it is the first demonstration of organized opposition since the formation of the UAR in February 1958.

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~~SECRET~~Iraqi Political Situation

The pro-UAR Iraqi Baath party now believes that a continuation of its tactic of avoiding clashes with the Communists would result in Communist control of the "street" mob and the government. The party has therefore decided to meet the Communists "head-on" and to provoke clashes whenever possible in the hope that this will stimulate the government into moving against the Communists. At the same time, the Baath will undertake a campaign to undermine Prime Minister Qasim by encouraging criticism of the government's failure to live up to its earlier promises.

Fighting between anti-Communist Iraqi nationalists and Communists, possibly Baathist-inspired, occurred in Baghdad on 10 November near the home of relatives of arrested former Deputy Premier Arif. Troops had to be used to disperse the crowd. [redacted]

[redacted] "the Communists and nationalists are planning identical demonstrations" for either 13 or 14 November and that Iraqi officials fear "large-scale incidents."

Senior military officers and General Rubai, head of the Council of State, [redacted] again urged Prime Minister Qasim to establish a military Revolutionary Command Council, release Arif, remain neutral between right- and left-wing civilian groups, and depend on the army instead of the Communists for support. [redacted]

[redacted] senior military officers had urged Qasim to issue a decree suppressing all political activities. [redacted]

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