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24 December 1960



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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN

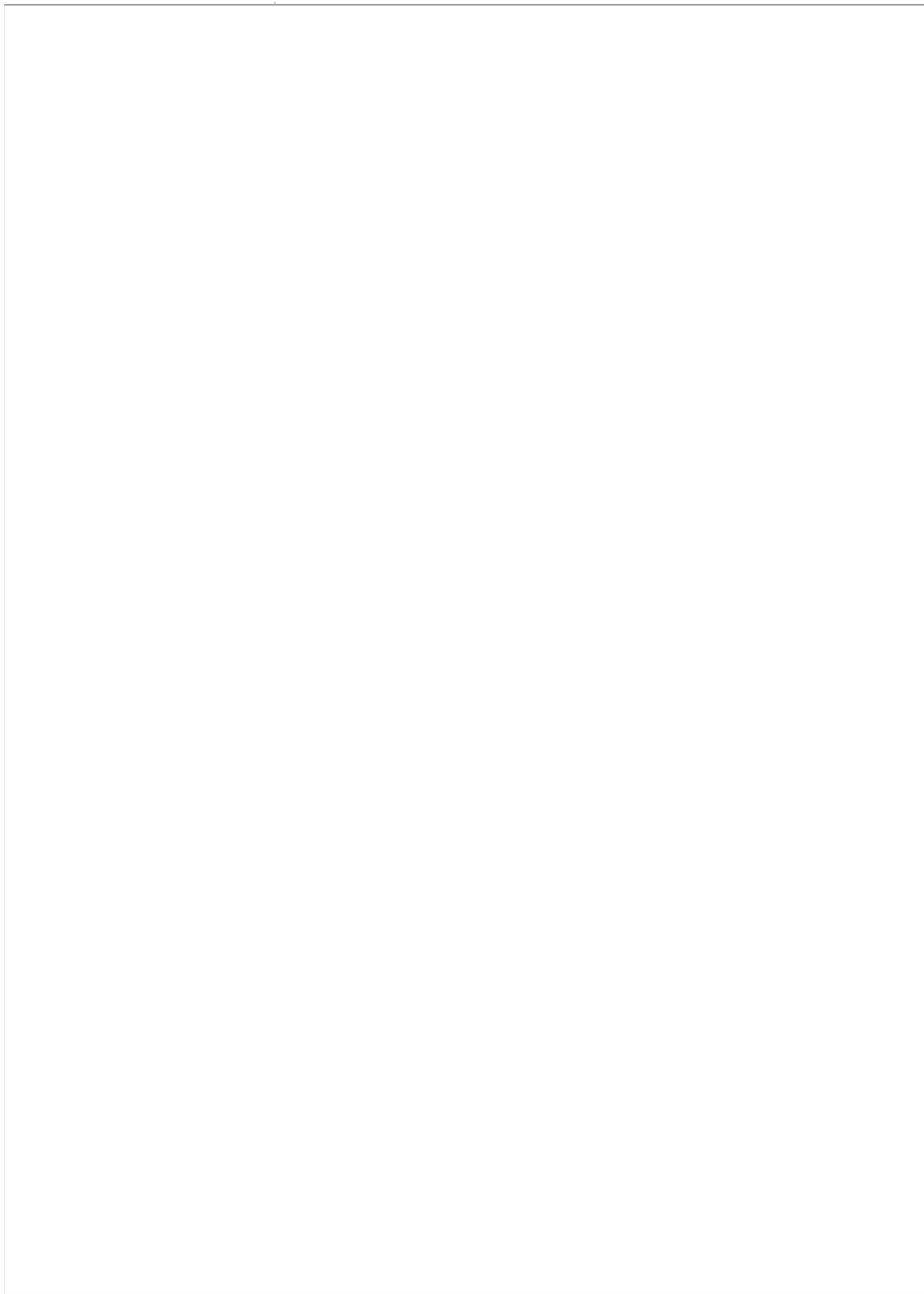


DOCUMENT NO. 47
NO CHANGE IN CLASS.
 DECLASSIFIED
CLASS. CHANGED TO: TS S 8
NEXT REVIEW DATE: 2018
AUTH: HR 70-2
10 JUN 1980
DATE: _____ REVIEWER:



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24 DECEMBER 1960

I. THE COMMUNIST BLOC

Gromyko reiterates Soviet interest in improving relations with the US. ①

East German officials apparently expect to reach early agreement on interzonal trade. ②

II. ASIA-AFRICA

Ghana signs protocol with USSR on economic development projects. ③

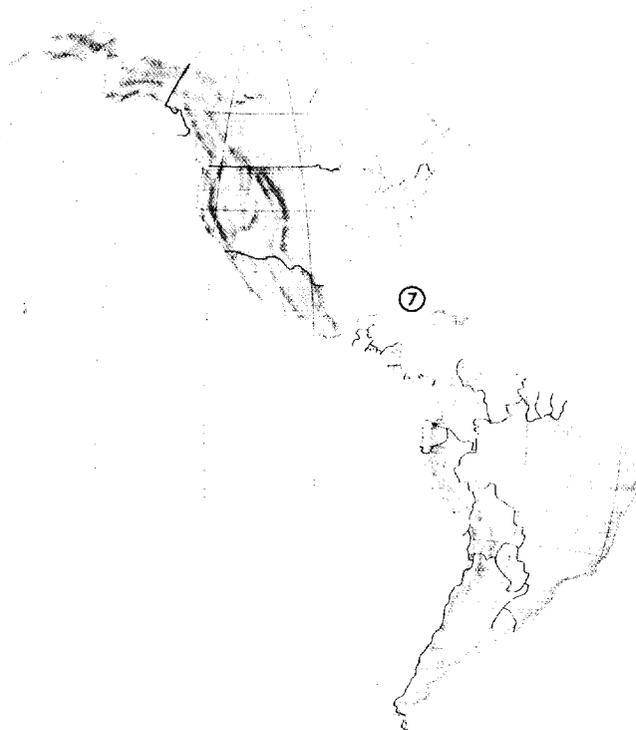
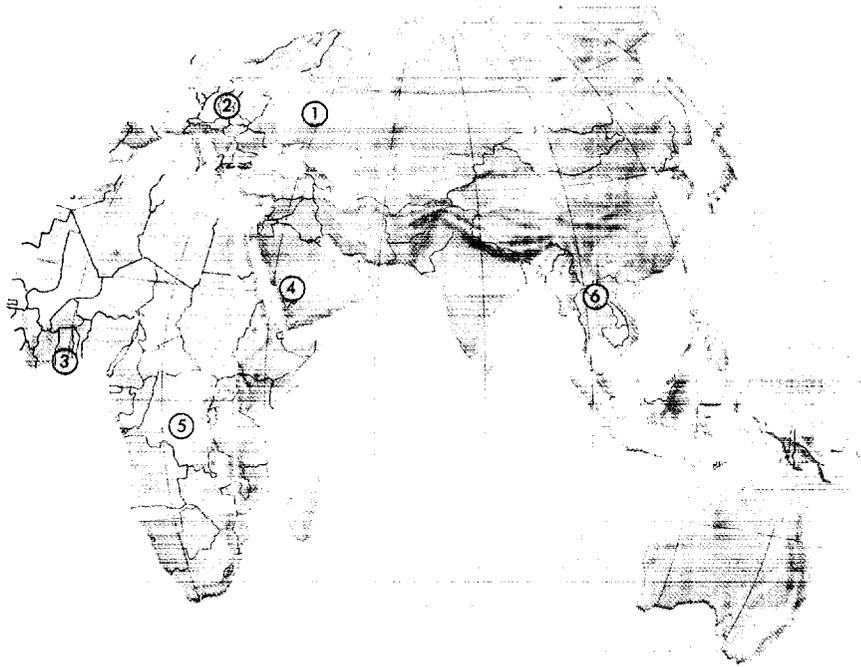
Dissident Saudi military officers seek UAR support in planned coup. ④

Congo--UAR battalion commander in the Congo urges Cairo to infiltrate guerrilla bands and supply arms and advisers to Gizenga. ⑤

Laos--USSR calls for reconvening ICC. ⑥

III. THE WEST

Cuba--Bloc resuming large-scale arms shipments to Cuba. ⑦



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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN

24 December 1960

DAILY BRIEF

I. THE COMMUNIST BLOC

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*USSR: Foreign Minister Gromyko's report to the Supreme Soviet on 23 December--the first authoritative foreign policy statement since the Moscow conference of Communist leaders--provides further evidence that the USSR intends to combine a bid for high-level negotiations with the West with a vigorous prosecution of its truculent "anti-colonial" line. Gromyko's remarks on the Congo, Laos, Algeria, and Cuba were framed in the militant anti-Western tone of the Moscow declaration, although he avoided any general attacks on US "imperialism." After quoting Khrushchev's telegram to President-elect Kennedy, Gromyko declared, "I am empowered to state. . . that as far as the Soviet Government is concerned, on its part there is a complete readiness to contribute to an improvement in Soviet-US relations." He also repeated Khrushchev's proposal that the heads of government attend a special UN session on disarmament.

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[East - West German Interzonal Trade Negotiations:]

[] the East Germans are counting on the reinstatement of the interzonal trade agreement before it lapses on 31 December.

[] "We shall continue to work until trade can function without a hitch." The East Germans, however, have been stubbornly resisting West German demands for a precise, written commitment not to enforce Pankow's decree of 8 September requiring West Germans to secure permits to enter East Berlin. The East Germans have now postponed further talks with the West Germans until 28 December, presumably in order to decide whether they can make some face-saving announcement on this point. In the first high-level Soviet comment on the

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negotiations, Foreign Minister Gromyko warned that failure to reach agreement would be "fraught with unexpected and quite dangerous consequences." [redacted]

II. ASIA-AFRICA

Ghana-USSR: Ghana and the USSR reportedly have signed a protocol specifying a wide variety of economic development projects to be undertaken by the USSR under the \$40,000,000 credit it extended to Ghana last August. One project envisaged-- a hydroelectric dam for depressed northern Ghana-- could upset present plans of a Western consortium to construct the much larger and more important Volta River hydroelectric-aluminum project which Nkrumah is determined to see started very soon. The USSR reportedly is also examining a Ghanaian request for military aid, including the construction of naval and air bases. Ghana signed preliminary trade and technical assistance agreements with Czechoslovakia in November and is reported to have signed similar accords with Hungary earlier this month. [redacted]

[redacted] (Page 1)

Saudi Arabia: A group of dissident Saudi military officers has requested support from the UAR for their plans to undertake a coup and set up an independent state of Hijaz and Asir in the western part of the country, [redacted]

[redacted] The plotters said they hope to take advantage of "the confused thinking" resulting from King Saud's resumption of control of the government and expressed concern over possible Israeli, Jordanian, and US intervention. They asked for assurances that the UAR would supply them with antiaircraft weapons and prevent, by military action if necessary, intervention by any foreign state. The dissident officers' group does not appear at this stage to control enough forces or have a tight enough organization for a successful coup. The UAR will probably not commit itself to any extensive support for immediate action by the group, but may offer clandestine assistance for a move several months hence. [redacted]

(Page 3) (Map)

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Congo: The commander of the UAR battalion in the Congo, following his representative's conference with dissident leader Antoine Gizenga in Stanleyville, has urged that Cairo infiltrate armed bands in the Congo in addition to providing arms and military advisers for the dissidents, [redacted]

[redacted] Gizenga as claiming that he could extend his control to Kivu and Kasai provinces if provided with sufficient technical, financial, and military assistance. Cairo, which reacted coolly to a suggestion in November by its ambassador in Leopoldville that the Congo be turned into "another Algeria," may still wish to limit its involvement in the Congo. *no*

[redacted] Soviet-type aircraft have made a few flights to Stanleyville since mid-December, possibly carrying aid to the dissidents. [redacted]

[redacted] (Page 5)

Laos: The Soviet Union, acting in its official capacity as co-chairman with Great Britain of the 1954 Geneva Conference, has requested the revival of the International Control Commission in Laos and has asked Britain's cooperation in calling a meeting of all governments which participated in the 1954 conference. In its note to the British on 22 December, Moscow also urged that the ICC confer with Souvanna Phouma on practical measures concerning the renewal of the commission's activities in Laos. *no* While the British would be reluctant to accept the Soviet proposal without a favorable reaction from other governments involved, they support the neutralist concepts of Souvanna. [redacted]

The Soviet proposal comes in the wake of a concerted effort in bloc propaganda during the past week to stimulate international alarm over events in Laos and build pressure for reconvening a new Geneva conference. [redacted] The USSR meanwhile has augmented its airlift capacity with eight AN-12 transports--each capable of carrying 15 to 20 tons--which arrived in Peiping on 23 December. [redacted]

[redacted] (General Phoumi's troops are moving slowly northward from Vientiane in pursuit of Kong Le's force; no major contact has yet been made.) [redacted] (Page 7)

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III. THE WEST

USSR-Cuba: After a two-month pause in military deliveries, the bloc apparently is resuming large-scale arms shipments to Cuba. The Soviet freighter Kislodovsk currently is unloading a 4,400-ton cargo in Havana under the stringent security conditions usually applied to military shipments. Another Soviet ship is believed also to be unloading arms in Cuba. At least three other Soviet ships are currently loading or are en route from the Black Sea with possible arms cargoes for Cuba.

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Ghana Expanding Ties With Soviet Bloc

Ghana and the USSR reportedly have signed within the last few days a protocol specifying development projects to be carried out by the USSR under the \$40,000,000 credit it extended to Ghana last August. The American Embassy in Accra has been authoritatively informed that the package agreed on includes assistance and equipment for a hydroelectric dam at Bui in depressed northern Ghana, as well as for an ancillary power transmission line. This scheme could upset present plans for the construction of [redacted]

[redacted] Volta River hydroelectric-aluminum project. Officials of the World Bank-- which has tentatively agreed to advance \$40,000,000 for the Volta project--are concerned that Ghana may not be able to make economic use of so much electric power and have indicated that another review of the Volta plan will be required if the Bui dam is undertaken now. Nkrumah, however, is determined to see the Volta project begun in the very near future and would probably react to any further delay by turning immediately to the USSR.

Other projects outlined in the reported protocol are a comprehensive geological survey, a fishing industry complex, the establishment of three large state farms, and assistance with housing projects planned for Accra and the new port city being built at nearby Tema. Separate negotiations are said to be under way concerning the installation in Ghana of a small nuclear test reactor. Implementation target dates vary, extending in at least one case into 1966.

In addition, the USSR reportedly is examining a request by Nkrumah for aid in establishing naval and air bases and a military aviation school which presumably would supplant the air training program now conducted by Israeli instructors. [redacted]

[redacted] the USSR had itself offered to train and provide jet aircraft for Ghana's embryo air force. [redacted]

[redacted] Khrushchev had expressed willingness to provide [redacted]

assistance for a Ghanaian naval base and school. ([redacted])
[redacted] One of the Soviet negotiators at the talks recently held in Accra apparently was General Sidorovich, a key official in the Soviet organization responsible for negotiating and implementing arms deals.

Ghana's increasing involvement with the bloc, which is being spurred by influential left-wing elements in the Nkrumah regime, coincides with indications that the President is becoming increasingly antagonistic toward the West, especially the US, as a result of frustrations encountered in his pan-African policy. He has publicly accused the US of abetting Belgian attempts to "regain control" of the Congo and is permitting Ghana's controlled press to pursue a violently anti-US line. [redacted]

[redacted]

~~TOP SECRET~~ [REDACTED]

Dissident Saudi Arabian Officers Seek UAR Aid
For Planned Coup

Representatives of the Saudi "free officers" group contacted the UAR chargé in Jidda on 22 December, [REDACTED] to seek support for plans to undertake a coup and set up an independent state of Hijaz and Asir comprising the two western provinces of Saudi Arabia. The plotters hope to take advantage of the political confusion resulting from King Saud's abrupt resumption of control of the Saudi Government. They have asked for assurances that the UAR would supply them with anti-aircraft weapons, would recognize their new "Islamic Republic" as soon as they proclaimed it, would "safeguard the revolution" against possible attacks by Israel or Jordan, would prevent "intervention by the Americans, particularly the American air force at Dhahran," and would be prepared to take military action in the case of intervention by any "foreign party."

The "free officers" group is said to be composed of regular army and air force officers who have Hijazi tribal connections and have always resented domination of the government by the House of Saud and other leaders from the central province of Nejd. Most of the dissident officers are stationed in the Taif-Jidda area of Hijaz Province. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

The dissident officers do not, however, seem to control enough forces or have a tight enough organization for a successful coup. The White Army--which is at least as strong as the regular army--the Royal Guard Regiment, and some units of the regular army itself would almost certainly remain loyal to the King.

The UAR chargé's immediate reaction to the "free officers" overture was cautious and noncommittal. The UAR is unlikely

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to undertake any extensive support for immediate action by the group, although Saud's reassertion of authority has probably given Nasir increased incentive to work for the overthrow of the monarchy. For the present, Cairo will probably limit its actions to an offer of clandestine assistance to expand the strength of the plotting group for a move several months hence. [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

~~TOP SECRET~~ [redacted]

~~TOP SECRET~~ [REDACTED]The Situation in the Congo

[REDACTED] the commander of the UAR battalion in the Congo, Colonel Shazeli, portrayed the Gizenga regime in Stanleyville as insecure but capable of expanding its control into the Congo interior if provided with extensive outside support. [REDACTED] followed a four-hour conference on 18 December with Gizenga and certain of his advisers in which Gizenga took the view that "it would be easy" to gain control of Kivu and Kasai provinces if he were given enough technical, financial, and military assistance.

[REDACTED] of 6,000 troops in Orientale Province--comprising six Congo Army battalions and two battalions of militia--90 percent are loyal to the Gizenga regime. Nine thousand recruits are being mobilized, but these have no weapons. In the economic field, [REDACTED] Gizenga requires \$2,000,000 per month financial aid until such time as the dissident forces may capture some diamond mines.

[REDACTED] Cairo send urgently "flat-trajectory arms" including 7.92-mm. rifles, and [REDACTED] respond to Gizenga's request for military and technical experts. Without specifying whether he contemplated the use of UAR or dissident troops, [REDACTED] observed that "our policy should be to infiltrate armed bands and not to form battalions. . . . If (guerrilla) companies were used circumspectly, it would be possible to cause difficulties for the greatest of armies."

Cairo is favorably disposed toward aiding the dissidents and may have already airlifted some supplies to Stanleyville. Various reports have alluded to a few landings in Stanleyville by Soviet-type aircraft, possibly bearing UAR aid. Cairo may nonetheless wish to limit the extent of its military involvement in the Congo. It reacted coolly in late November to the suggestion by its ambassador in Leopoldville that the Congo might be turned into "another Algeria."

Meanwhile, Guinea, Ghana, Mali, and the UAR have accepted an invitation from King Mohamed V of Morocco to meet

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in Rabat on 3 January to discuss common problems, including Algeria and the Congo. In addition to providing a sounding board for anti-Western pronouncements, the meeting may promote discussion of the proposed "joint African command" for the Congo--a plan originally advanced by President Nkrumah, in which African contingents withdrawn from the UN Congo force would support the dissidents independently of the UN. President Nasir has indicated his approval of the plan, and has urged that African nations rid their armies of "imperialist," i. e., Western, officers. [redacted]

[redacted]

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Situation in Laos

In its efforts to prevent the Boun Oum regime in Vientiane from establishing an effective government and to provide the catalyst for a possible political settlement of the Laotian crisis favorable to Communist interests, the Soviet Union has officially requested the cooperation of Great Britain, as one of the co-chairmen with the USSR of the 1954 Geneva Conference, in re-activating the International Control Commission (ICC) in Laos and convening representatives of all governments which participated in the 1954 conference. The Soviet note to the British on 22 December follows recent government statements by Hanoi and Peiping calling for a new conference of the Geneva participants.

[In view of London's opposition to Indian and Soviet efforts to reconvene the ICC in 1959 over Laotian objections, a favorable response to the current Soviet request appears unlikely unless the request is supported by other governments involved or unless SEATO involvement--which the British are most anxious to avoid--appears imminent. Foreign Secretary Home stated on 19 December that Britain would approach the USSR if the Laotians supported the Indian request for reconvening the ICC. Boun Oum has already said that recalling the ICC would serve no useful purpose in Laos. However, London has long considered a neutralist Laos under Souvanna--even if it involved an accommodation with Pathet Lao elements--the best means of avoiding overt Communist intervention.]

The Soviet proposal referred to a request by Nehru, who had earlier suggested reactivation of the ICC as a means of settling the crisis. During the past week there has been a concerted bloc propaganda effort to heighten international tension over events in Laos and exert pressure for a new international conference to end the civil war. Both Cambodia's Prince Sihanouk and the Burmese Government have already expressed themselves in favor of some sort of international discussion of the problem.

In the note, Moscow also urged that the ICC confer with Souvanna Phouma on practical measures concerning the renewal of

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its activity in Laos. The bloc continues to insist that Souvanna represents the only legitimate government and hopes that reactivation of the ICC would preserve present Communist assets in Laos and lead ultimately to a coalition government including the Communists--an aim previously endorsed by Souvanna. The ICC--composed of Indian, Polish, and Canadian representatives--was deactivated in 1958. During its existence, the commission's activities served to frustrate government attempts to suppress the Pathet Lao. Previous bloc attempts to revive the ICC have always been thwarted by the Laotian Government's objections.

The note, which repeated earlier charges of US military support for General Phoumi's forces, suggested that the US Government should take part in the efforts of the two chairmen of the Geneva Conference to normalize the situation in Laos. Moscow will probably continue to build its case against the US and may try to bring the issue before the United Nations in the event its call for renewed ICC activity in Laos or a new Geneva conference fails.

In the midst of their diplomatic maneuvers, the Communists continue to expand their airlift capability for supporting military activity in Laos. Six Soviet AN-12s scheduled for Communist China from Irkutsk arrived in Peiping on 23 December. They were to go on to Canton, but this flight subsequently was canceled. In addition, two of the three AN-12s which first flew to Canton from the USSR on 17-18 December have returned to Peiping, bringing the total number of AN-12s at Peiping to eight. One of these heavy transports has been scheduled on to Hanoi. If this flight is made, it will be the first by a military transport across the Sino - North Vietnamese border.

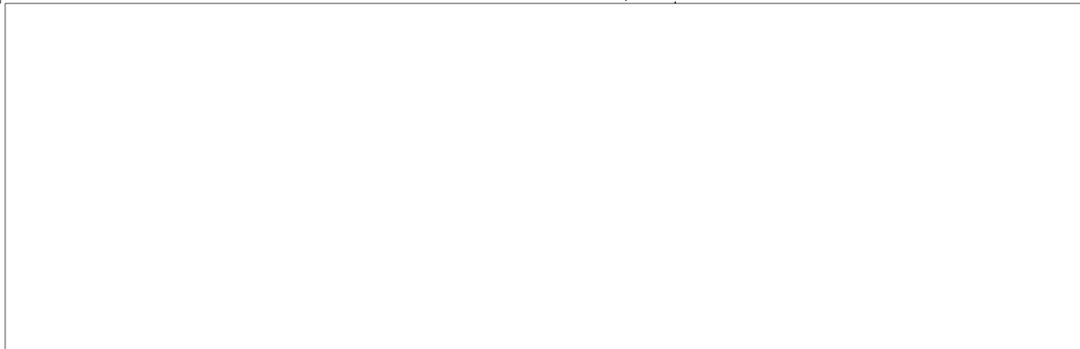
Soviet and North Vietnamese transports continue to be scheduled for lift operations into Laos through 23 December. There are indications that ten North Vietnamese light aircraft--five Aero-45s and five Zlin-226 trainers--may also be added to the operations into Laos. These light aircraft would most likely be used for transporting key personnel and reconnaissance missions.

Government forces continue to advance slowly northward from Vientiane in pursuit of Captain Kong Le's force. One

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[redacted] element encountered some enemy resistance at a point about 15 miles from Vientiane, but no major contact has as yet been reported. [redacted]



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