

Paris Rumors on C. I. A.

Despite Firm U. S. Denials, Speculation Persists Agency Aided Algiers Revolt

By THOMAS F. BRADY

PARIS, May 1—Now that the French "mutiny of the generals" may be a thing of the past, the question whether the United States helped save the day for President de Gaulle is perhaps less important than what is believed in France, in North Africa and elsewhere about the United States' role in the events.

News Analysis

Former Gen. Maurice Challe, leader of the mutiny, hoped for United States support and said so publicly.

but President Kennedy quickly sent a message pledging full support to President de Gaulle. Immediately after the collapse of the mutiny, President Kennedy publicly expressed his satisfaction and congratulated President de Gaulle. The position of the United States Government was never in doubt.

Rumors Widely Circulated

These facts have not, however, prevented the wide circulation, and at least partial acceptance here and in North Africa, of rumors that General Challe and his fellow mutineers had received specific encouragement from United States intelligence agents.

Emphatic official denials from United States authorities have not put a stop to the rumors.

No French official has denied them. French comment has been decidedly equivocal. At a news conference Saturday night in Algiers, Louis Joxe, French Minister for Algeria, said:

"I do not know whether foreign agents encouraged the insurrectional movement or whether those responsible for the coup profited from foreign subsidies. This sad affair among Frenchmen is enough, for the moment, to keep me busy. I have no reason to try to find out whether the insurgents received foreign aid."

Source Is Uncertain

The source of the rumors is difficult to determine. Some observers attribute them to Communists, others to the highest French authorities.

A dispatch to The Observer in London said yesterday that one reaction after the collapse, "at least in President de Gaulle's own entourage and perhaps inspired by him, is to blame the Americans. Repeated

American denials that any American military or civilian officials encouraged General Challe's rebellion have not succeeded in preventing French official spokesmen from telling journalists there must have been some unofficial American backing.

The rumors, which include at least one written report circulating here, repeated speculation in the French press, a dispatch from Washington to the Tunisian weekly *Afrique* and widespread speculation in Left-wing circles, boil down to this:

President Kennedy is said to have reacted as he did because he had learned of encouragement to the mutineers by the Central Intelligence Agency, which is said to have become a "reactionary state-within-a-state in the United States.

United States agents are said to have encouraged the mutiny either because they feared communism in the ranks of the Algerian rebel National Liberation Front, with which President De Gaulle is expected to negotiate Algerian independence, or because they hoped to precipitate the downfall of President de Gaulle and thus eliminate his opposition to "integration" of the forces of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

Meetings With Agents Alleged

United States sympathy for the movement is said to have begun as early as last December, when Jacques Soustelle, former Governor General of Algeria and a foe of President de Gaulle's policies, was reported to have had lunch with Richard M. Bissell Jr., a C. I. A. official.

At a meeting in Madrid on April 12 or 13, a United States agent is said to have told Gen. Raoul Salan, one of the mutineers, that the United States would recognize a new government in France within forty-eight hours after its successful establishment if there were no attack on Tunisia or Morocco.

The speculation does not take cognizance of the fact that former Gen. Challe spent nearly a year as a North Atlantic Treaty Organization commander at the Fontainebleau headquarters, near here. He undoubtedly heard frequent and bitter criticism of President de Gaulle by Allied officers who disagreed with his policies on NATO.

The possibility is cited that M. Challe was guilty of wishful thinking and believed the

attitudes of the military leaders reflected the political thinking of the Allied governments.

No matter what the source of the rumors may be, no matter how false they may be, their existence is a fact. The credence they have gained, despite United States denials, is considered a serious threat to French-United States relations and to the prestige of the United States among the Algerian nationalists and in North Africa in general.

The equivocation with which French officials have treated the rumors has been regarded as a major factor in their propagation.