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Agency Information

AGENCY : LBJ
RECORD NUMBER : 177-10002-10108

RECORD SERIES : NSF, INTELL. BRIEFINGS, 11/23-12/5/63, INTELL. CHECKLIST, BOX 1

AGENCY FILE NUMBER :

Document Information

ORIGINATOR : CIA
FROM :
TO :

TITLE : INTELLIGENCE CHECKLIST

DATE : 11/24/1963
PAGES : 11

SUBJECTS :

DOCUMENT TYPE : PAPER, TEXTUAL DOCUMENT
CLASSIFICATION : Unclassified
RESTRICTIONS : 1B; Mandatory Review Material
CURRENT STATUS : Redact
DATE OF LAST REVIEW : 01/29/1998

OPENING CRITERIA :

COMMENTS : DOC. #2

2

THE PRESIDENT'S INTELLIGENCE CHECKLIST

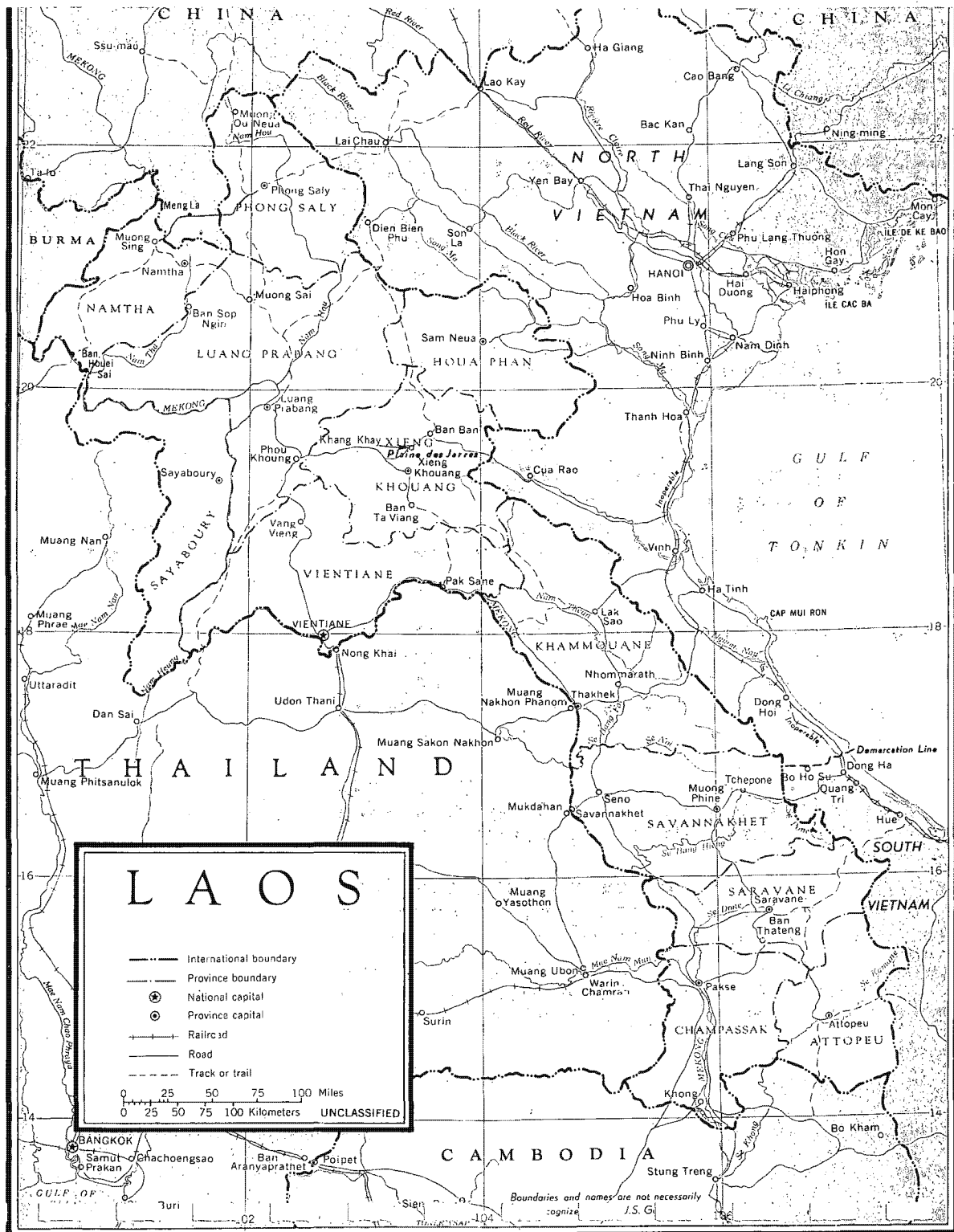
ISSUED BY THE
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

24 NOVEMBER 1963
TOP SECRET

1. North Vietnam - a. North Vietnamese leaders
South Vietnam are pressing their campaign for neu-
tralization of South Vietnam.
- b. They can count on Cambodia's support. Prince Sihanouk has said he believes neutralization of South Vietnam to be the only way to keep his country and the rest of the area from falling eventually into Communist hands.
- c. The French feel the same way. Indeed, Souvanna Phouma reportedly told a closed session of the Laotian National Assembly that the French were urging him to support Hanoi in this.
- d. Moreover, according to one of our clandestine sources, the North Vietnamese have talked Souvanna into backing the neutralization proposition in the UN.
- e. The troublesome Polish ICC delegate in Laos, Marek Thee (who will be going home soon), has just returned to Vientiane from Hanoi and is trying, with somewhat less success, to enlist British support too.

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f. As part of the same campaign, the North Vietnamese have told the French they believe sentiment is growing in the US for withdrawal of US forces. They reportedly plan to keep the heat on to encourage it.

g. Hanoi is at the same time trying quietly to encourage the belief that it is ready to be reasonable.

h. To hear Thee tell it, North Vietnamese leaders feel that neutrality for South Vietnam and eventual reunification is the only way they, too, can escape from Peiping's clutches.

2. Laos

a. As is usual in Laos, the tentative agreement for a cease-fire reached last week between Kong Le and Pathet Lao commander Singkapo came to naught.

b. Each side accuses the other of planning to use a cease-fire to screen preparations for larger attacks.

c. There is scattered fighting in the Plaine des Jarres. Lao Army, neutralist, and Meo guerrilla elements are jointly engaged in a limited offensive in the Vang Vieng

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area north of Vientiane on Route 13. They hope to gain control of that town and its small airfield.

d. We have been anticipating an expansion of the fighting with the recent advent of the dry season.

3. Cambodia

a. Sihanouk knows his actions against us have increased his vulnerability to the Communist bloc, and he is looking to the French to bail him out.

b. He has intimated that aid from France would be most welcome, and he has asked that French advisors stay on.

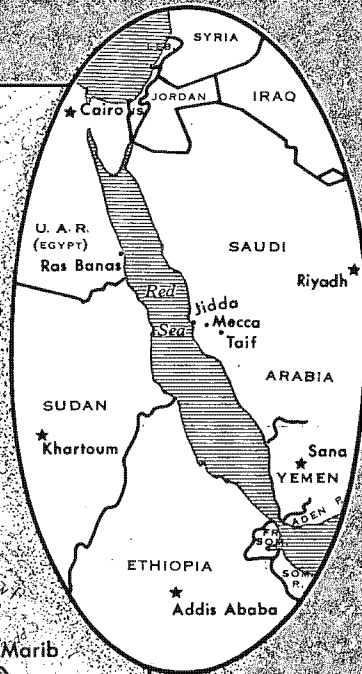
c. He apparently hopes that the availability of French aid will enable him to keep his balance with the Communists and fend off their pressure.

d. The French have told our Embassy in Paris that plans are afoot for French Defense Minister Messmer to go to Cambodia in January.

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YEMEN



Area of Recent Clashes

e. Sihanouk's actions toward the US have not been universally popular. This is particularly true among government officials, the business community (who have reason to fear stepped-up nationalization), and the military, where the US retains a considerable reservoir of goodwill.

f. Indications are that Sihanouk will try to win fuller support by creating new feuds with neighboring South Vietnam and Thailand. This is a gambit he has used to advantage in past difficulties.

4. Yemen-Egypt

a. A number of Yemeni leaders have told us they want the Egyptians to get out of the Yemen. They want to be left alone to solve their own problems.

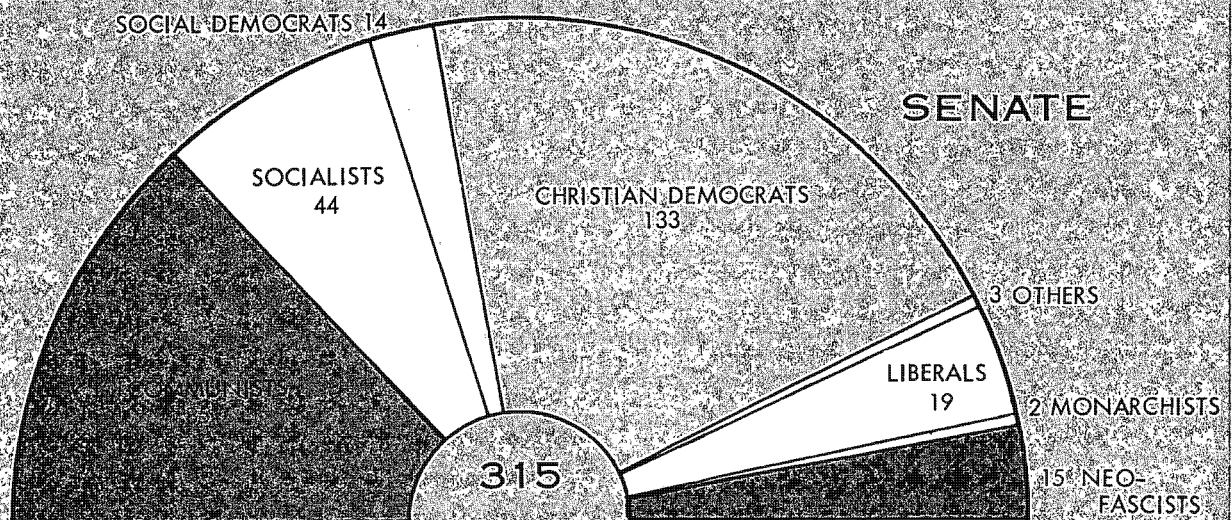
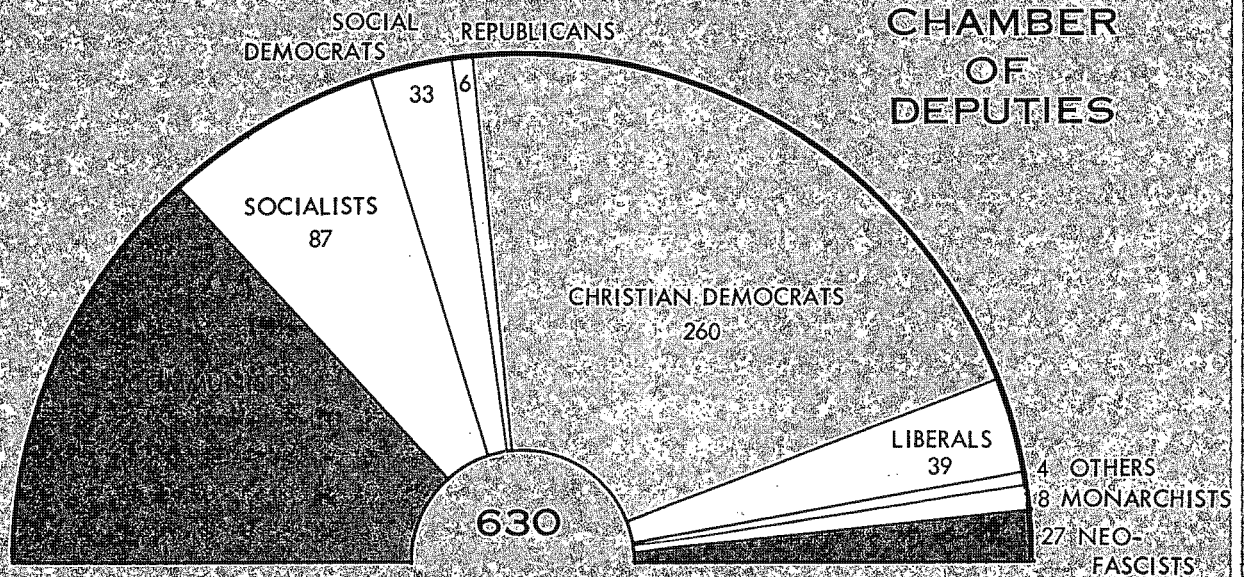
b. This is especially true of those Sheikhs with large tribal followings.

c. A general uprising against the Egyptians is not likely at the moment, but the longer they remain, the greater the possibility of major pro-government tribes deserting to the royalists.

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PARTY COMPOSITION OF THE ITALIAN PARLIAMENT OCTOBER 1963



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d. Nasir, with some 30,000 troops in the Yemen, has grudgingly promised to pull out 5,000 before the end of the year. So far there has been no sign he is preparing to do so.

e. So far as we can tell, Faysal has kept to his promise not to supply the Royalists before the latest extension of the UN observation mission runs out on 4 January.

f. But he has made plain his intention to resume supplying them thereafter. There has been a substantial build up of Saudi supply points north of the border.

5. Italy

a. The Christian Democrats and Socialists have finally reached an agreement on cabinet assignments and a program for a "centerleft" coalition government.

b. Negotiations were especially tough, but apparently President Kennedy's death acted as a catalyst, to bring the two together.

(Cont'd)

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NOTES

- A. India-USSR The Indian military attache in Moscow feels that the Russians are dragging their feet in the matter of military assistance for India. Meanwhile, we have a report (not yet confirmed) from New Delhi that Defense Minister Chavan has decided to look to us hereafter for fighter aircraft.
- B. USSR Our Embassy in Moscow has gotten word of strikes recently at Ryazan, near Moscow, and in Leningrad. The cause of the Ryazan incident is not clear, but bread shortages apparently were behind the Leningrad strikes. Similar disturbances were reported last month from several points in southern Russia.

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c. We do not yet have any information on how differences in key issues such as MLF were worked out.

d. With Moro premier, Nenni will probably become vice-premier. Saragat, who is pro-US and pro-NATO, is most likely to be named Foreign Minister.

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