



CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF



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7 MARCH 1966

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DAILY BRIEF
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1. Guatemala

Backers of Julio Cesar Mendez and the Revolutionary Party are claiming victory on the basis of their own tabulation of the vote. Their figures show that Mendez now has 129,300 votes, with 68,900 for Ponciano and 67,700 for Aguilar, the government's candidate.

The US defense attaché in Guatemala City stressed that none of these figures is official and that the electoral council has stopped releasing reports. The next tabulation is not expected until late tonight or early tomorrow.

If no one gets an absolute majority of the vote, the congress will have to decide between the two top candidates when it meets in May.

2. Ecuador

The military junta has made a number of inept or highly controversial moves recently which have aroused almost all of Ecuador's still important civilian leaders. As a result a new front has been formed by leaders of several political parties

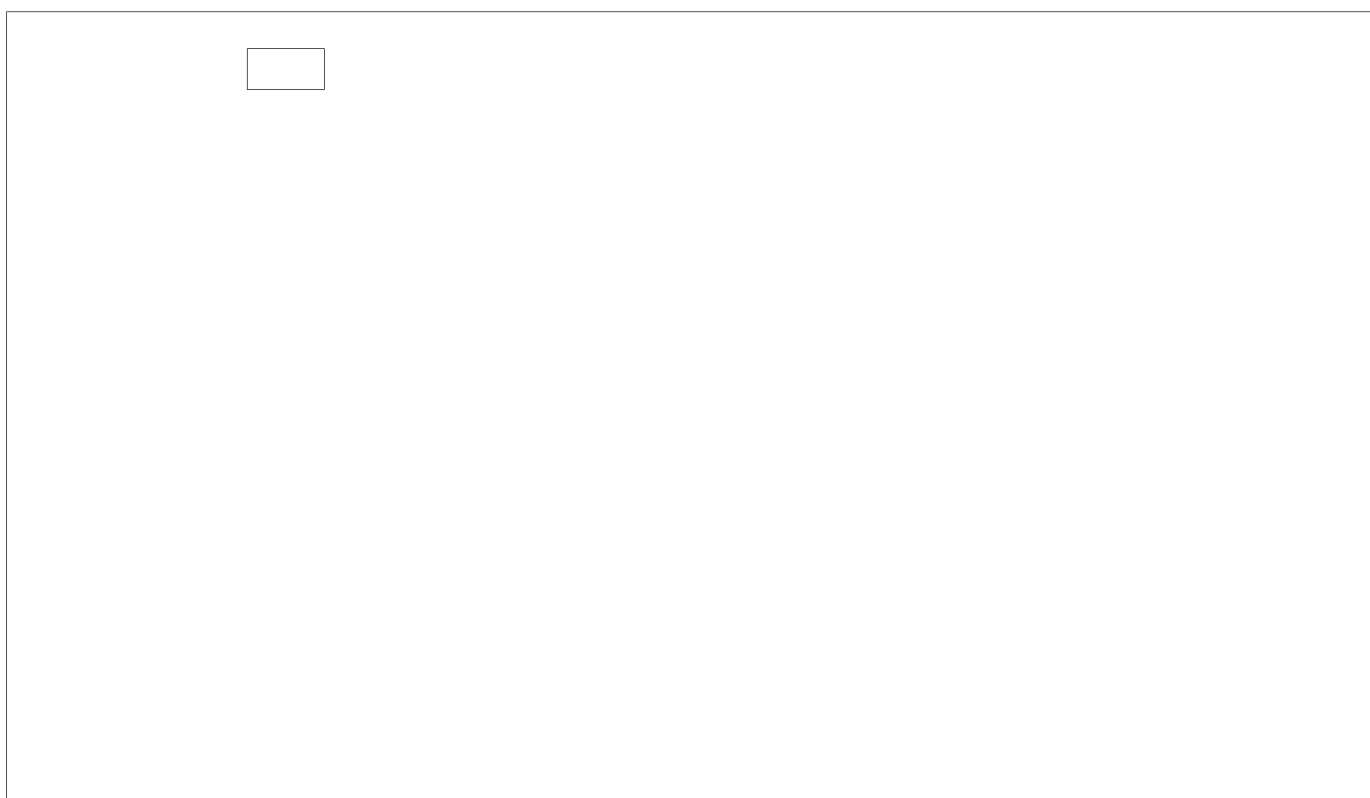
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Military unity--the key to stability--still seems to be intact at the moment, but our ambassador believes that the government could be upset with little warning.

3. Syria

There may be violence in Damascus tomorrow in connection with celebrations commemorating three years of Baathist rule. Other festivities had been planned in Aleppo, but they apparently have been called off--probably because of uncertainty there over the loyalty of the military. Some disgruntled army elements--particularly the key units on the Israeli border--might even take advantage of disorders to try a counter coup.

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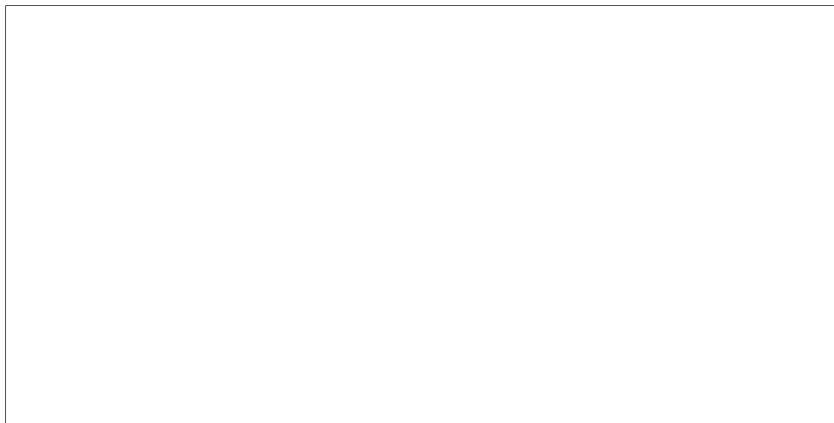
4. Ghana

Ambassador Battle raises the possibility that Nasir will try to take over the leadership of a radical African group dedicated to returning Nkrumah to power. The ambassador notes that an Egyptian official has been trying to line up hotel rooms in Cairo "for a conference of all countries opposed to the Ghanaian regime" later in the month.

Nkrumah, along with Guinea's Sekou Touré, flew to Mali today apparently in an effort to get some kind of support from President Keita.

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5. Soviet Union



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6. India-Pakistan

Reports from New Delhi indicate that the Indo-Pakistani talks last week in Rawalpindi were a total failure. The Pakistanis were only interested in discussing the Kashmir question, an issue on which the Indians of course refused to negotiate. Both sides were disappointed at this setback to the implementation of the Tashkent declaration, but are being careful to keep the door open for more high-level exchanges.

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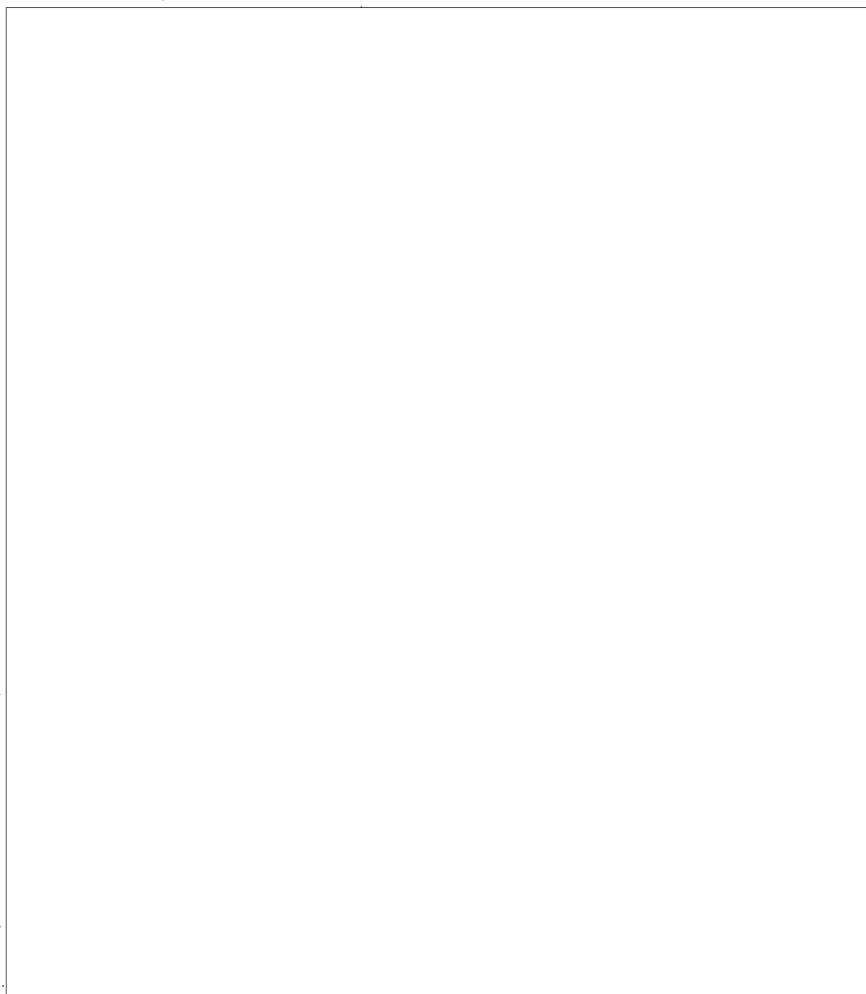
7. South Vietnam

The government will risk a breakdown in its relations with the powerful Chinese business community in Saigon if it carries out the death sentence handed down today against a wealthy businessman of Chinese descent. The businessman was found guilty of profiteering, and the case has become a test of Ky's vaunted anticorruption policy.

On the political side, there is continuing progress in the selection of members for the advisory "Council for Building Democracy." The ruling Directorate now hopes to announce the formation of the council by the middle of next week.

8. Cuba

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