



CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF



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9 MARCH 1966

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1. South Vietnam

Ky will likely try to get rid of I Corps Commander General Thi tomorrow-- later tonight, Washington time. At a meeting of the military directorate, the prime minister plans to accuse the general of insubordination and ask the directorate to approve his removal.

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Ambassador Lodge has warned Ky and President Thieu of the risks involved in such a move, but the two Vietnamese leaders seem confident that Thi can be replaced without trouble.

If Ky is correct in his belief that most of the ten directorate members will go along with him, then Thi's chances for counteraction will be slim indeed. However, if Ky's optimism has led him to overestimate his support, a permanent split in the military could develop with unpredictable consequences for the Ky government.

Another question mark at this time is what action Ky would or could take if Thi ignores the meeting and stays at home.

2. North Vietnam

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3. India

India has been arranging for new military deliveries from the Soviet Union. A high-level Indian Air Force mission left for Moscow recently and the New Delhi press reports that agreement has been reached for Soviet delivery of some 40 helicopters.

The first major Soviet military deliveries to India since the fighting with Pakistan began arriving last month. Tanks, surface-to-air missile equipment, military aircraft, and naval equipment have been included in recent deliveries.

The value of military contracts with the Soviet Union since 1960 now exceeds \$600 million, making India the largest free world recipient of Soviet military hardware after Egypt and Indonesia.

4. Ghana

The new leaders are continuing to dismantle Nkrumah's old power structure. They have, for instance, abolished the Communist-supported "Young Pioneers," Nkrumah's vehicle for indoctrinating Ghana's youth. The Ghanaian public is still showing strong approval of the new regime's actions.

5. Panama

President Robles now seems pessimistic over the canal treaty negotiations with the US.

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This is a turnabout for Robles, who had earlier been speaking as though he felt the ultimate approval of a satisfactory treaty would be the key point in his career.

Robles is said also to feel that a treaty will probably not now be ready for signing until Panamanian politics become embroiled with the 1968 national elections.

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6. Guatemala

The losers in Sunday's elections are desperately seeking ways to prevent Julio Cesar Mendez from becoming Guatemala's next president. [REDACTED] 50X1

The anti-Mendez forces are obsessed by fear that Mendez' moderately leftist party will become the vehicle for a Communist resurgence. This is conceivable in Guatemala [REDACTED] 50X1

Most observers now concede that the balloting on Sunday was generally free, though there almost certainly had been considerable coercion prior to the elections in some areas and some padding afterward in the vote counting. At last report Mendez was ahead with about 44% of the vote, compared to 33% for the government candidate and 23% for the candidate further to the right.

If the elections are allowed to stand, therefore, the final selection will have to go to the newly elected congress when it meets in May. Mendez' party is leading here too, and partial returns indicate that it could win a bare majority in the 55-man body.

7. Belgium

Efforts to end the month-old political crisis are now turning to the possibility of a Catholic-Liberal coalition, eliminating the Socialists. Such a solution would remove Socialist Foreign Minister Spaak, long the source of Belgian foreign policy initiatives.

8. Soviet Union

There was a two-day standdown of Soviet military aviation activity Monday and Tuesday. This extended throughout the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe and at first seemed highly unusual. It now appears, however, that Tuesday was a newly declared legal holiday, International Women's Day, and the normal day of rest was moved from Sunday to Monday to provide a two-day holiday. Normal flying activity has resumed today.

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