



CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF



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30 MARCH 1966

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DAILY BRIEF
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LATE ITEM

Ecuador

Clemente Yerovi's inauguration as president has failed to end disorders.

Although Quito is calm today, leftists have maintained the momentum of last night's demonstrations and disorders by taking control in some other localities. A specific instance of this was the seizure of the governorship of Lora Province by one Potari Maldonado Paz, an extreme leftist leader with ties to Cuba.

Security forces stood by both in this case and during the extremist takeover of the neighboring province of Azuay.

At Guayaquil, Communist-led students briefly occupied the provincial building but were dislodged by the marines.

Until such time as the military straightens itself out and demonstrates some willingness to restore order, extremists can be expected to probe every weakness of the regime.

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1. South Vietnam

Antigovernment activity flared again in the restive northern provinces, and "struggle groups" there have injected a more virulent strain of anti-Americanism into the agitation.

In Da Nang, for example, agitators seized upon and distorted a minor traffic accident involving US marines to broadcast fairly inflammatory anti-American material. [redacted] further demonstrations are planned tomorrow in connection with ceremonies marking a Vietnamese holiday.

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Saigon remained calm again today. Tri Quang has returned to the capital, however, and the Buddhists are said to be trying to organize a major antigovernment demonstration tomorrow. [redacted]

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Government security forces have been alerted and are taking extensive precautions to prevent the situation from getting entirely out of hand. American personnel have been told to keep away from the area involved.

Meanwhile, the tone of recent utterances by Catholic spokesmen suggests that they entertain doubts that Ky will survive the current wave of Buddhist agitation.

2. Soviet Union

The Soviets, judging from [redacted] of their instrumentation ships, will attempt another lunar probe tomorrow. As in the 13 previous attempts--only one of which was successful--the aim will probably be to soft-land an instrumentation package.

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[redacted]

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3. Communist China

Peking is attempting to spike the rumors growing out of Mao's record absence from public view. Last week, foreign newsmen were given an indignant denial that he is ill, and yesterday a Hong Kong Communist newspaper front-paged a blurry picture of Mao, Chou En-lai, and a girl militia member in some indeterminate city square.

These seemingly lame expedients contrast with the method usually used in dealing with previous rumors that Mao was seriously ill--producing a seemingly healthy Mao at a public function--and add to the impression that something is wrong with the old man.

4. Africa

The heads of government of 11 east and central African states are meeting today in Nairobi. They will probably hold themselves to innocuous topics such as noninterference in each others' affairs and regional economic cooperation, since they appear to realize there is little they can do about Rhodesia. Tanzania, in fact, may be looking for some face-saving way to restore diplomatic relations with Britain.

In West Africa, Touré appears to be backing off from his grandiose scheme to return Nkrumah to power and may even be coming to regard Nkrumah's presence in Conakry as a millstone on his neck.

5. Communist World

Prospects for the winter crops, now some months from harvesting, are fair in the USSR and Eastern Europe but poor in Communist China and North Vietnam.

Winter wheat is down some 15 to 20 percent in the USSR, while East Europe's winter grain prospects are below last year's everywhere except in Czechoslovakia.

In Communist China, where winter grains usually account for some 20 percent of the annual grain harvest, the wheat crop in particular will probably be no better than the very poor early harvest last year. North Vietnam's spring rice crop, usually about a third of the total, is likely to be poor, and prospects for tubers, corn, and other rice substitutes are not much better.

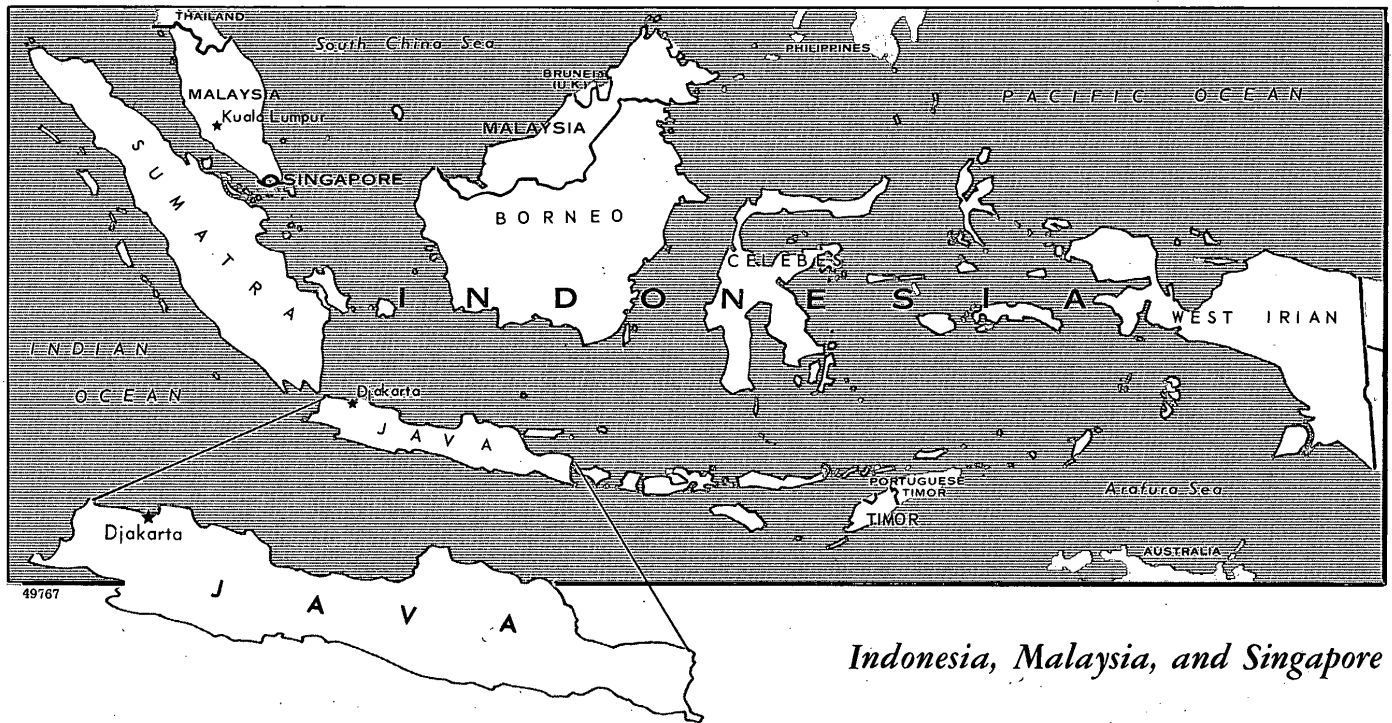
6. Pakistan

The public reception of Liu Shao-chi and his party has been wildly enthusiastic. Their tumultuous welcome in Lahore on Monday was described as the largest in the city's history.

The US Embassy feels that the display of Chinese military hardware in last week's National Day parade gave the visit a big boost, by helping to picture Peking as the "true friend" who can be counted on for material aid against the Indian enemy.

Ayub and his government, however, have treated their visitors correctly but cautiously, avoiding identification with any criticism of the US role in Vietnam.

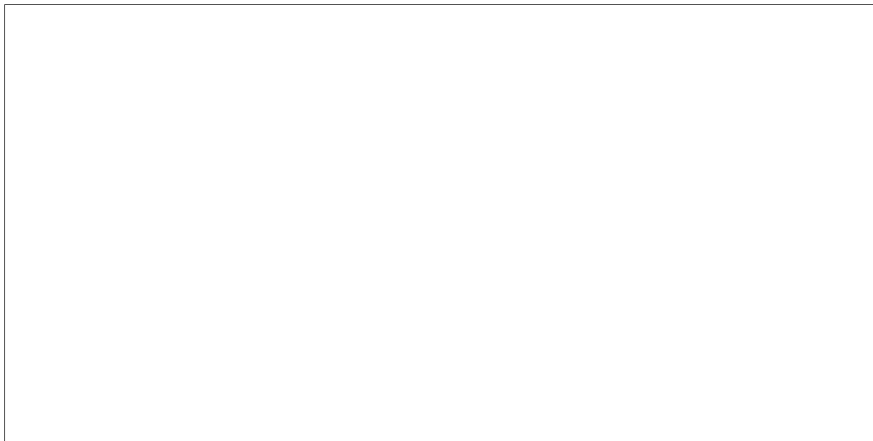
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Indonesia, Malaysia, and Singapore

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7. Indonesia



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