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WESTERN EUROPE – CANADA – INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

This publication is prepared for regional specialists in the Washington community by the Western Europe Division, Office of Current Intelligence, with occasional contributions from other offices within the Directorate of Intelligence. Comments and queries are welcome. They should be directed to the authors of the individual articles.

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France and Guinea Restore Diplomatic Relations

Guinea resumed diplomatic relations with France on July 14 after a ten-year break. Relations with Paris were broken in 1965 subsequent to charges by Guinean President Sekou Toure that France and Ivory Coast were plotting to overthrow his regime. Restoration of relations follows several months of difficult negotiations between Paris and Conakry in which several thorny issues were settled and other problems were left for future discussion.

Paris apparently initiated the contacts to normalize relations and made several gestures to meet conditions raised by Toure. The French have reportedly agreed to pay $44 million dollars to the Guinean government for pensions to Guinean veterans of the French army. Paris suspended the pension payments when relations were broken. They have also stopped publication of a Guinean exile newspaper in France in a move to curb activities of anti-Toure elements in France. The French, however, have refused Toure's demand that Guinean exiles in France be turned over to his government.

Over the past year, Toure--who is clearly angling for French aid to help Guinea's chronically troubled economy--has released a number of French citizens who have been imprisoned in Guinea on charges of conspiring against his government. According to Paris radio 18 more French prisoners were released yesterday, but four are still being held. Considering the history of stormy relations between Guinea and France, both countries are likely to be cautious in their dealings with each other and French economic aid may not be as forthcoming as Toure envisions.

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Another Base Problem In Iceland

The Keflavik naval station's practice of using base personnel to perform minor repair and maintenance jobs is creating a political storm in Iceland.

Such "self-help" programs are common to nearly all US military bases both at home and abroad. The practice had not been criticized previously in Iceland where there had been a labor shortage as recently as a year ago. This is no longer the case, however, and complaints from unemployed Icelandic workers have stirred to action trade union leaders and politicians in all the major parties.

The staunchest defenders of the Icelandic Defense Force have warned the US ambassador not to continue the "self-help" projects, which they termed contrary to the interests of the base and the present friendly Icelandic leadership. Foreign Minister Agustsson drafted a set of stringent "guidelines" governing the type of work that can be performed by military personnel. He agreed not to publish them for a few days in order to give the embassy and base authorities time to develop counter proposals.

The current dispute over employment is significant in that all political parties seem united, just as they are on the fishing limits issue--another basic issue in Icelandic politics. An obvious compromise would be to turn over to the Icelanders the highly visible outdoor jobs such as road repair, painting, and roofing, in order to satisfy the government's demands.

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Reaction to Secretary Kissinger's Speech in Milwaukee

Members of the European Community as well as a number of the developing states have responded favorably to Secretary Kissinger's speech in Milwaukee on the problems facing the UN. At the session of the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) in Geneva, where preparations for this fall's special session of the UN General Assembly on development are under way, delegates from Yugoslavia, Jamaica, Pakistan, West Germany, Denmark, the Netherlands and the UK expressed their general approval to US officials.

The Europeans asked, however, whether the Secretary's speech would be the final word from the US before the UN special session or whether further initiatives could be expected. The Dutch, Danish and British representatives felt that unless the US comes forward with a positive proposal for the UN special session during the ECOSOC meeting--which ends August 1--a continuation of the wrangling between rich and poor states over development is inevitable.

Delegates of the moderate developing countries echoed this theme. The Jamaican and Pakistani said that most developing states are now convinced that the US is in fact sensitive to their problems but action is necessary to prevent a failure of the special session. Other developing country delegates stressed the need for at least token movement by the US before the non-aligned foreign ministers meet in Lima in August to work out a policy line for the developing countries at the UN meeting.

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These delegates argue that moderate developing states dominate the drafting group of the developing country caucus in Geneva, and that failure to reach agreement with this body will leave the field open for radical states to shape the developing states' policy for the UN special session. [redacted]

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