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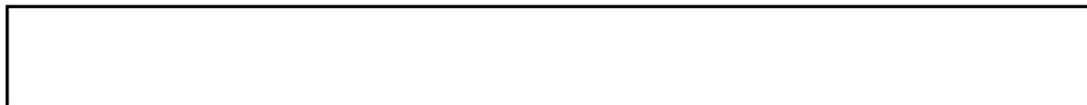
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WEST GERMANY - USSR - EAST GERMANY: Soviet and East German officials continue to encourage West German hopes for progress on Berlin, but without indicating much in the way of specific concessions.

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[redacted] on 19 February [redacted]

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[redacted] Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister Semenov expressed hope that Four-Power talks would produce an agreement "in the near future."

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In the same vein the new Soviet Ambassador to West Germany Falin, as he has often done before, told [redacted]

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[redacted] that Moscow is willing to make unspecified concessions.

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[redacted]

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[redacted] neither of these remarks goes beyond positions which have frequently been taken by Soviet officials in the past. The Soviets moreover still suggest that Bonn could achieve more if it were prepared to negotiate agreements without awaiting progress in the Four-Power negotiations on Berlin.

The desire to appear forthcoming has also been reflected by East Germany. Pankow yesterday agreed to begin discussions on Thursday on Easter passes for West Berliners. Also, Michael Kohl, in his seventh round of talks with Bonn's emissary Egon Bahr, last Friday complained of the lack of give in Bonn's position on a transport agreement. Kohl, however, adopted his most conciliatory manner so far and indicated that the "concessions" at which he hinted in their previous meeting were still on the table. Furthermore [redacted] Kohl asked Bahr to formulate a positive and nonpolemical proposal for discussing transit between the two states. Bahr for his part apparently has stuck closely to the agreed Allied position that Berlin transit cannot be negotiated until there is a mandate from the Four Powers. The two men agreed to begin intensive discussions on a model transit treaty, the first drafts of which will be tabled at their meeting next Monday.

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(continued)

[redacted]

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The West Germans no doubt believe that Bahr has succeeded in engaging the East Germans in a dialogue about their relations as a whole, rather than on such limited subjects as Berlin access and transport matters, and that progress is being made toward drawing Pankow into additional and more meaningful contacts.

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URUGUAY: The Tupamaros released US agronomist Claude Fly last night after he suffered a heart attack while being held hostage.

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[Redacted]

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The guerrillas still show a sensitivity toward public opinion and were evidently ready to release Fly rather than risk his death in their hands. Last August when they murdered a captive USAID adviser the terrorists suffered a significant loss of public prestige and sympathy.

The Tupamaros still hold the British ambassador whom they kidnaped in January. After releasing the Brazilian consul in a private ransom deal last week and being forced by circumstances to give up Fly for no return, the terrorists will probably be more inclined to drive a hard bargain for the British envoy's release. The Pacheco government, which has refused to grant any terrorist demands, will be, on the other hand, even more convinced that it has adopted the correct position. In this election year, the administration seems even more determined to press its hard-line policies.

The Tupamaros, despite serious personnel losses to the government's counterterrorist campaign, continue to demonstrate a capability for well-planned, large-scale operations. In an attempt to recoup lost prestige, the group may now increase direct terrorist attacks. Similarly, there has been no indication that the urban group has decided to abandon kidnaping as a tactic.

[Redacted]

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[Redacted]

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