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Central Intelligence Agency

Washington, D.C. 20505

DIRECTORATE OF INTELLIGENCE

16 March 1982

THE SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL [redacted] 25X1

Summary

The Socialist International (SI) is a loosely organized, but increasingly influential, group of about 50 socialist and social democratic parties. It was established with a clear statement of principles that there can be no socialism without democracy and that communism had deformed socialism while creating a new imperialism. By the early 1970s, the SI began to move away from its clear commitment to political democracy when Third World countries were at issue, hoping to establish good working relations with Third World parties that would lead them to democracy in the longer run. [redacted] 25X1

While most of the West European members of the SI support their governments' continued membership in NATO, they advocate detente and disarmament, and support nonalignment as a policy choice for the Third World. They increasingly ascribe political turmoil in the Third World to economic and social problems, rather than Soviet influence. [redacted] 25X1

This memorandum, requested by the Vice President, was prepared by [redacted] the Office of European Analysis. The paper was coordinated with the National Intelligence Officer for Western Europe and the Office of African and Latin American Analysis. The NIO/LA expressed disagreement with the paper and did not coordinate. Research was completed on 15 March 1982. Questions and comments may be addressed to the Chief of the European Issues Division, [redacted] 25X1 25X1

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The issues on which the SI concentrates vary according to the interests of its members and to the organization's perception of its ability to have an impact. East-West matters--especially arms control--are a constant concern. At the moment, the issue of greatest concern to the SI and of greatest potential conflict with the US is Central America. [redacted] 25X1

The SI long supported the Sandinistas and the Salvadoran opposition, but began to question that position as the West European members became more familiar with developments in the region. After March 1981, it no longer called for the overthrow of the Salvadoran junta, but instead for negotiations between moderate factions on both sides. Virtually all members refuse to support this month's elections. [redacted] 25X1

The SI members disagree far more in their attitudes toward the Sandinistas. Most are deeply concerned at Nicaraguan internal repression, military buildup and ties to Cuba, but they differ on how much pressure they should put on the regime to change, and on how much a threat from the US is responsible for the evolution of the Sandinistas. [redacted] 25X1

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The members increasingly value the SI as a mechanism for pursuing policy aims that their individual parties do not have enough power to implement, and that their governments--either separately or together--may feel constrained from adopting. They therefore place a high value on maintaining internal unity, and on winning external recognition of the importance of the SI as an entity that amounts to more than the sum of its individual parts. While they are wary of US pressure on the organization, they are also quick to take offense at signs that the US is ignoring its existence. [redacted] 25X1

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