

[REDACTED]

aug 01, 1990

TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO: Movement Toward Hostage Release

The release yesterday of Prime Minister Robinson has reduced the rebels' leverage, but they continue to hold about 40 other hostages. Government officials stress the rebels freed Robinson because the gunshot wounds he received during the storming of the Parliament building on Friday required medical attention. [REDACTED] the government may be willing to respond to rebel demands by offering amnesty and by considering Robinson's resignation. Rampant looting apparently has abated as residents are observing a strict curfew, although [REDACTED] growing public concern over shortages of food and other supplies. (S/NF)

Comment: The rebels may hope the release of Robinson will forestall further attacks by the security forces and increase the government's willingness to meet their demands. Government officials privately conveyed that any concessions they grant will have legal loopholes and that the rebels will be brought to justice. The security forces appear willing to give some ground to secure the release of the hostages, but their restraint will be tempered by their bitterness over the deaths of fellow officers and the destruction of police headquarters. (S/NF) -CIA, [REDACTED]

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APPROVED FOR RELEASE

MAR 1998

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