

SUBJECT: EUROPEAN BRIEF [REDACTED] FOR 14 MARCH 1989.

YUGOSLAVIA: MINERS STRIKE SPREADING IN KOSOVO [REDACTED]

AN ETHNIC ALBANIAN MINERS STRIKE IS SPREADING THROUGHOUT SERBIA'S KOSOVO PROVINCE DESPITE A REGIONWIDE BACK-TO-WORK ORDER, ACCORDING TO REPORTS YESTERDAY IN THE BELGRADE MEDIA. THE STRIKERS ARE DEMANDING THAT THE AUTHORITIES ACCEPT THE RESIGNATIONS OF SERBIAN-BACKED KOSOVO LEADERS AND RELEASE AN IMPRISONED ETHNIC ALBANIAN OFFICIAL. PRESS REPORTS SAY SERBIA'S OTHER AUTONOMOUS PROVINCE, VOJVODINA, LAST WEEK ENDORSED CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS GIVING SERBIA MORE POWER OVER ITS PROVINCES. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] THE AUTHORITIES PROBABLY WILL TRY TO WAIT OUT THE STRIKERS BUT MAY ARREST SOME LEADERS AND TRY TO INTIMIDATE OTHERS WITH A HEIGHTENED MILITARY PRESENCE. THE STRIKES AND BOYCOTTS ARE BELOW LEVELS REACHED LAST MONTH BUT ARE LIKELY TO SPREAD TO OTHER INDUSTRIES, ESPECIALLY IF, AS IS LIKELY, THE KOSOVO ASSEMBLY BOWS TO SERBIAN PRESSURE AND PASSES THE CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS THIS MONTH. IF THE AMENDMENTS FAIL, ETHNIC SERBS ARE LIKELY TO DEMONSTRATE IN BELGRADE AND KOSOVO, RAISING ANEW THE PROSPECTS OF INTERETHNIC VIOLENCE. [REDACTED] BELGRADE ANTICIPATES THAT A LONG-TERM, HIGHLY VISIBLE PRESENCE IS NECESSARY IN THE REGION. AS TENSIONS INCREASE, THE LIKELIHOOD OF SPORADIC VIOLENCE BETWEEN ETHNIC ALBANIANS AND SECURITY FORCES WILL ALSO INCREASE. [REDACTED]