

SUBJECT: EUROPEAN BRIEF [REDACTED] FOR 17 MARCH 1989.

[REDACTED] YUGOSLAVIA: ETHNIC ALBANIAN STRIKES GROWING [REDACTED]

STRIKES AND PASSIVE RESISTANCE BY ETHNIC ALBANIANS IN KOSOVO PROVINCE HAVE SPREAD TO NEARLY ALL MINES AND TO SOME FACTORIES AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS, ACCORDING TO NEWS REPORTS IN BELGRADE. THE PRESS ALSO REPORTS ALBANIAN WOMEN AND CHILDREN WILL TAKE TO THE STREETS IN THE PROVINCIAL CAPITAL ON 24 MARCH, WHEN THE KOSOVO ASSEMBLY IS TO VOTE ON CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS INCREASING SERBIA'S POWER OVER THE PROVINCE. VARIOUS SOURCES INDICATE THE INCREASED PRESENCE OF SECURITY OFFICIALS IN MAJOR STRIKE AREAS; SPECIAL ARMY TROOPS IN THE PROVINCE HAVE HELD A HIGHLY VISIBLE EXERCISE, AND MILITARY UNITS ARE POSITIONED ALONG KEY HIGHWAYS TO CONTROL ACCESS TO THE PROVINCE. SLOVENE OFFICIALS, MEANWHILE, WARNED PRO-SERB FORCES PLANNING A PROTEST IN SLOVENIA NEXT WEEK THAT SECURITY FORCES WILL STOP IT. [REDACTED]

~~SECRET~~

[REDACTED] THE ALBANIAN STRIKES WILL PROBABLY CONTINUE IN AN EFFORT TO INFLUENCE THE KOSOVO ASSEMBLY'S VOTE. IN RESPONSE, AUTHORITIES WILL PROBABLY INCREASE THE ACTIVITY OF MILITARY AND SECURITY FORCES TO CONVINCE ALBANIANS OF THEIR RESOLVE AND TO REASSURE THE NON-ALBANIAN POPULATION. SERBIAN LEADER MILOSEVIC IS PROBABLY ENGINEERING THE DEMONSTRATION IN SLOVENIA TO WEAKEN THOSE REPUBLICS OPPOSING GREATER SERBIAN INFLUENCE. IT MIGHT LEAD TO CLASHES AND SERIOUSLY HARM ALREADY STRAINED RELATIONS BETWEEN THE LIBERAL NORTH AND THE PRO-MILOSEVIC SOUTH. [REDACTED]