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JPRS L/10179

10 December 1981

Latin America Report

(FOUO 28/81)



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LATIN AMERICA REPORT

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COUNTRY SECTION

CUBA

CASTRO CRITICIZES U.S. POLICY ON RED SUNDAY

PA160346 Havana PRELA in Spanish 0121 GMT 16 Nov 81

[Text] Havana, 15 Nov (PL)--Prime Minister Fidel Castro said today that "in line with the spirit of these days, we must be prepared for two battles: production and defense."

He made this remark at the end of a tour to various work centers in Havana and Havana Province.

Castro visited two hospitals under construction in two highly populated districts of this capital, a metallurgical factory, a factory that makes various articles and another that makes spare parts.

Castro's tour, which began early this morning, was prompted by more than 2 million workers who participated in a Red Sunday of volunteer work in this country. Red Sunday commemorates the October Revolution (7 November).

Speaking about the international situation, Castro said that a broad and intense solidarity campaign in favor of Cuba was carried out throughout the world "which uncovered the lying nature of U.S. imperialism."

Castro added that the U.S. Government is in a very embarrassing position because it has not been able to rise to the challenge to submit proof of the alleged presence of Cuban troops in Nicaragua.

"They said that they had proof and they have not been able to prove anything, because it is all a lie. Even in the United States many people have taken notice of these lies," Castro indicated.

"Not only has there been a wide international solidarity with Cuba, but also wide disapproval of U.S. foreign policy, because it is evident to everyone that such policy inevitably leads to a catastrophic war," he added.

"The U.S. economy finds itself stagnating between recession and inflation due to Reagan's irresponsible economic policy which engages in an unrestrained arms race," the Cuban leader points out.

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There are people who think that U.S. threats will intimidate the Cuban people, who have proudly faced 23 years of attacks, Castro said.

The wisest thing for a solution to the Central American problem is a negotiated political solution, Castro indicated, referring to the situation in this region of the continent. Any military action will only make the problem worse, he added.

They (the North Americans) are opposed to a negotiated political solution to the conflict, because they want a military solution in order to destroy the revolutionaries to the last man, but this has never happened and it never will.

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COUNTRY SECTION

CUBA

HERBERTO PADILLA ON REPRESSION IN COUNTRY

Madrid CAMBIO 16 in Spanish 12 Oct 81 pp 118, 119

[Text] He is like a tornado of words, motions, feelings, memories and passions constantly flowing in a conversation where his logic is as flawless as the words which the poet selects with care and relish. Herberto Padilla is 100 percent Cuban and, therefore, the "critical mind" which he has exercised at the cost of having his life ripped apart is encompassed within an extrovert and warm personality.

Taking puffs from a cigar which keeps on going out and wearing big glasses which make his eyes seem disproportionately large and make his face look like a Caribbean owl, Padilla confesses: "Man, I am tired of being a 'case' but no man chooses the role assigned to him by history and this is why I must answer questions, I must bear witness to what happened to me."

The "Padilla case" started to flare up in 1968 when an international panel, which also included prestigious Cuban literary figures, declared him the winner of the Julian del Casal Prize for Poetry for his work "Fuera de juego" [out of the game]. The critical nature of Padilla's poetry immediately clashed with Fidel Castro's regime. But the Cuban Writers Union [UNEAC] had to publish his book although the edition carried an introduction passing judgment on the author.

Ten year ago, in 1971, Padilla was arrested and this was immediately followed by a barrage of statements, denials and confessions like in the "Moscow Trials," followed by a decade of working in obscurity as a translator. Freedom came in March 1980 and after an eloquent period of silence, Padilla launched his public attack on the regime.

Now Herberto Padilla is in Spain to present his novel "En mi jardin pastan los heroes" [Heros Are Grazing in my Garden] (Ediciones Argos Vergara) on the very same day--and Padilla has pointed out the happy coincidence--when the International PEN Club is making for the first time the International Day of Imprisoned Writers. "In my view, this initiative is a very positive step and it is one of the reasons the 'Padilla case' should be declared close. I did not really suffer. Those who are suffering are the writers in prison. Prisoners are a much more important issue, as in the case of Armando Valladares, the poet who has been in prison for 20 years in a wheelchair. Or the cases of Angel Cuadra, Ernesto Diaz Rodriguez, Vals and others."

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Valladares, a Martyr

Valladares' suffering is a particular source of irritation for Padilla: "We must get him out of prison as soon as possible by convincing the Cuban Government that it is absurd to keep in hail a man who is paralyzed and has not done anything wrong. It is even more absurd considering that 2 years ago there was an amnesty in Cuba which released former CIA agents who were active enemies of the revolution."

"Valladares is a moral giant. He does not mind if he sacrifices himself. This is why it is pointless to victimize him so much. What happened is that he made very harsh statements, he spoke terrible truths. He dared to write poetry which in days to come will be remembered even in my country's textbooks."

Valladares is a hero. But Padilla's book is a heartrending portrayal of characters who go beyond all heroic dimension. It starts with a preface recounting Padilla's imprisonment and telling an anecdote which typifies the relations between the communist regime and the dissident intellectual: an official hits Padilla on the head with the manuscript of his own book sending him to the hospital. "He was," Padilla says with a bitter smile, "my most forceful critic."

The characters of the novel--dissident intellectuals Julio and Gregorio; Luisa, Gloria and Ona, representing the intervals of love and tenderness that rescue them from despair--live in a stifling atmosphere. "This is what I am trying to convey: the story of a stress, the account of feelings of suffocation, the lack of communication between the stereotypes found in political life and the everyday life, the personal adventure."

Julio--a translator who dreams of controversial interviews with Fidel Castro and with Herbert Marcuse--and Gregorio--a semialcoholic writer so much at odds with his social environment that he is suspected of being a "snitcher"--embody the frustration of two intellectuals initially committed to the revolution but who turned to criticism when that revolution went into its communist phase. Full of doubts, eager to go back to being believers, they end up by getting drunk on a beach while pretending to be Marx and Engels. But hidden in the twists and turns of the novel, there is a code between the two characters and every reader must seek it.

The theme of destruction is superimposed on the theme of the vital need for participation. Julio dreams of conducting an interview with Fidel during which he fearfully reproaches the latter for not allowing the people to participate in the government's decision-making process.

"Because the revolution is a collective summons and the people's ultimate goal is to carry out a revolution to see their own image reflected in it. If the people are not allowed to participate, they feel manipulated, used, and they pull out. This act of pulling out is not so much an act of negative militancy as a wrenching. It comes a time--and I mention this in my novel--when the people do not want to command or to obey, they want to escape."

Padilla remembers, as his characters do, the heroic early period when euphoria permeated everything. "I disagree with those who criticize the entire process of the Cuban Revolution. Our process was entirely justified from the historical viewpoint. I think that the subsequent distortions are regrettable but they cannot cancel the initial positive nature of the revolution."

"Cuba had a revolutionary government which we all approved because it had brought a new moral and social dimension to Cuba. That was positive. I approve and am in favor of that." This is why 10 years after it happened, when I am asked to judge the Padilla case, my thoughts are that from a personal point of view I am happy to be in Spain and ready to carry on with my task.

"If I have one regret seeing what has happened, it is that the revolution has deviated from its ideals. Today, Cuba is a country which entirely subscribes to the policy of blocs. We are associated with the USSR and the Soviet Union has its own interests."

Fidel, the African

"The most terrible thing, for instance, is the African question. You get a telegram telling you to report to your unit without fail. And you never see your family again. Those who can, come back 2 years later. Many return sick, wounded or disabled. People cannot understand. And this subject cannot be mentioned. It is a very unpopular thing but nobody can discuss it."

This heartbreaking situation affects all the characters. "In Cuba, the intellectual is an outcast. The communist world has a Leninist tradition of preventing intellectuals from becoming the critical conscience of society."

Julio and Gregorio live through that persecution with the grievous feeling of being betrayed, cheated. "It is a logical feeling among those who have played a leading role in the revolutionary process and who refuse to completely abandon their hopes," Padilla notes. "But the bureaucracy eliminates all debate and prevents participation. Any expression of ideas is curtailed even when they do not entail criticism. Then you feel stifled. Such feeling is presented even in the cover illustration of my book which shows a devastating tropical sun. The characters dream about the snow; they want to plant a bomb that will destroy the never ending summer. It is a symbolic counterpoint to enhance the tiredness and suffocation which extend beyond political life."

Apart from the regime's oppression, there is also the oppression of the solemn fools who cause so much harm that one of the characters dreams of setting up an early-warning office in Argentina or Uruguay. "The reason for it is that the expression 'serious or solemn fools' is used in the River Plate region and I find it most suitable. In Latin America, a general or a terrorist are well defined extremes in the political spectrum. The solemn fools are those intellectuals who become instruments of their own ignorance."

"The solemn fool is a puppet of the bureaucracy. He loves people in an abstract sense. When a popular leader turns into a Lech Walesa, the solemn fool disregards him. The solemn fools love to go around hotels all over the world and it only takes them a week to produce a book on what is happening in Cuba. In my book, they are portrayed sitting by swimming pools and drinking daiquiris and 'mojitos.' The first to turn up are the solemn fools from Italy and France then, after they make their favorable reports, come the Swedes, the Germans and so on. The solemn fools love a colorful tyrant and their interest increases in proportion to the degree of cruelty of a revolution."

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Personal and Literary Commitment

The solemn fool is always a racist. Democracy is good for Europe or for his Latin American country of origin. But not for the Cubans, for the Chinese or for the Poles who are "different," who are following a different "model." This is why the solemn fools become the instrument of the most vicious policies in the name of great historical goals. What, 200,000 people must be killed to "save" a revolution? Then, let us do it; history will absolve us.

Gabriela Mistral, the famous Chilean poet, used to call these people "luxury democrats."

These "advance warnings" which Padilla mentions also reveal that he wants his literary work, his poetry and his life to go on being committed. "In my view, the role of the intellectual is essential in Latin America because people listen to him. In Europe, it is different. But for us, who labor under dictatorships, the novel must have other functions besides its purely literary one.

We must speak about urban life, we must give advice, issue warnings, we must practice a critical awareness. And we must do this in Caracas in Buenos Aires, in Mexico, in Cuba. People must be told about their lives instead of just offering them wonderful pictures of the reality and grandiloquent descriptions of unusual things which are usually intended for the European public."

Is it hard to be an exile? "I do not feel that I am an exile," answers Padilla. "I teach in New York. I am in constant contact with my people and my country. And I do not feel like an exile in Spain, this new Spain so full of good examples. I am deeply moved by the discussions, the demonstrations, the maturity shown both by the people and by the political parties."

What is the matter, Mr Padilla, haven't you heard people talk about their disenchantment?

"Yes, I have. How foolish, how wicked the disenchantments seem to me. The new Spain is full of charm and intelligence."

"But it has not been able to avoid the solemn fools. Freedom and democracy seem boring to these people. In any case, I think that what is happening in Spain is so admirable that even the solemn fools are entitled to enjoy this democracy which they are trying to viciously fight with their disenchantment."

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COUNTRY SECTION

CUBA

PLO LEADER 'ARAFAT SENDS MESSAGE TO CASTRO

PA180236 Havana PRELA in English 1831 GMT 17 Nov 81

[Quotation marks as received]

[Text] Beirut, Nov 18 (PL)--Yasir 'Arafat, chairman of the executive committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), sent a message to the president of Cuba, Fidel Castro, in which he reaffirms his support in the face of the U.S. threats.

The complete text of the message issued here follows:

Comrade Fidel Castro:

"I would like to express in the name of our Palestinian Arab people, in the name of my brothers and sisters, members of the executive committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization and in my own name, our firm and principled stand at the side of friendly Cuba and its heroic people, against Cuba, that is constructing socialism under your courageous and wise leadership.

"These threats, headed by U.S. imperialism, are none other than another link in the series of conspiracies planned against the combative Cuban people and against the friendly Latin American peoples who are struggling to reaffirm their independence, their sovereignty and their freedom, and to end the domination and the stealing of the wealth of those peoples by that enraged imperialism.

We have full confidence that the friendly people of Cuba and their armed forces, under your courageous leadership will defeat these threats and anyone who may try to harm the independence of Cuba, its sovereignty and its freedom.

Brother President, without a doubt these U.S. threats against Cuba are an inseparable part of the U.S. threats launched against the Arab nation. The rapid deployment forces and the "Bright Star" maneuvers that are being held in the region, as well as the formation of the "multicountry force" that will be deployed in the Sinai, are aimed at bringing our Arab nation to its knees, subjecting it to imperialist rule and robbing it of its wealth."

The military maneuvers that the Zionist enemy is carrying out in the north of occupied Palestine, aimed against our Palestinian Arab people, against the Lebanese sister people and sister Syria, are none other than a part of these threats, that crown the declaration of U.S.-Israeli strategic cooperation.

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Our Palestinian Arab people that are carrying out inflexible resistance against the new plan of slavery known as autonomy or self-administration, will continue their just struggle with the support of our Arab nation and the support of all honest and free men and women of the world, for the purpose of recovering their inalienable legitimate rights; return self-determination and the establishment of the independent Palestinian state in their national territory.

I would like on this occasion to praise the relations of combative solidarity that unite our friendly Palestinian and Cuban peoples, in favor of the interests of peace of our two peoples and of all the peoples of the world.

"I wish you good health and your people more progress and well-being for achieving their aspirations in economic construction, social well-being and the defeat of their enemies.

Revolution until victory

Yasir 'Arafat, chairman of the executive committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization, and commander in chief of the forces of the Palestinian revolution.

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COUNTRY SECTION

CUBA

SAHARAN LEADER SENDS CASTRO SOLIDARITY NOTE

PA162248 Havana PRELA in English 1949 GMT 16 Nov 81

[Text] Algiers, Nov 17 (PL)--Saharan leader Mohammed Abdelaziz sent a letter to the chairman of the movement of nonaligned countries, Fidel Castro, in which he denounces growing U.S. interference in the Western Sahara.

Abdelaziz, general secretary of the POLISARIO front and president of the Council of Command of the Revolution of the Saharan Republic, draws the attention of the movement to the seriousness for the region of Washington's decision to support Morocco even more in its war of occupation in the Sahara.

"The United States is no longer content with merely supporting Moroccan expansionism," the letter says, "it is devoted to encouraging Morocco and equipping it with means of death and destruction, so as to subject to its desires a small people who have been fighting without respite for almost 9 years to make their rights, universally recognized, to self-determination, existence, freedom and national sovereignty, prevail."

"Since 1975," the Saharan leader recalls, "the United States has satisfied promptly all the requests for arms made by Morocco in its war of plundering."

He underlines further on that in the face of Saharan tenacity, whose aim is to install peace in the region, the United States is preparing to intervene even more directly in the conflict, that is none other than a case of decolonization.

The document addressed to Fidel Castro as current chairman of the nonaligned movement, makes manifest the recent visit of a U.S. military delegation to the Western Sahara for studying on the spot the military needs of the Moroccan Army.

"As if its military advisers, its F-5-A, F-5-E, OV-10 planes, radar and other perfected detection equipment were not enough," the letter adds.

The Reagan administration is now preparing to send to Morocco an impressive arsenal of new arms, not to defend the undiscussed borders of Morocco, but to allow that country to "continue its macabre work of destruction and extermination of the Saharan people and the occupation of their territory," it points out.

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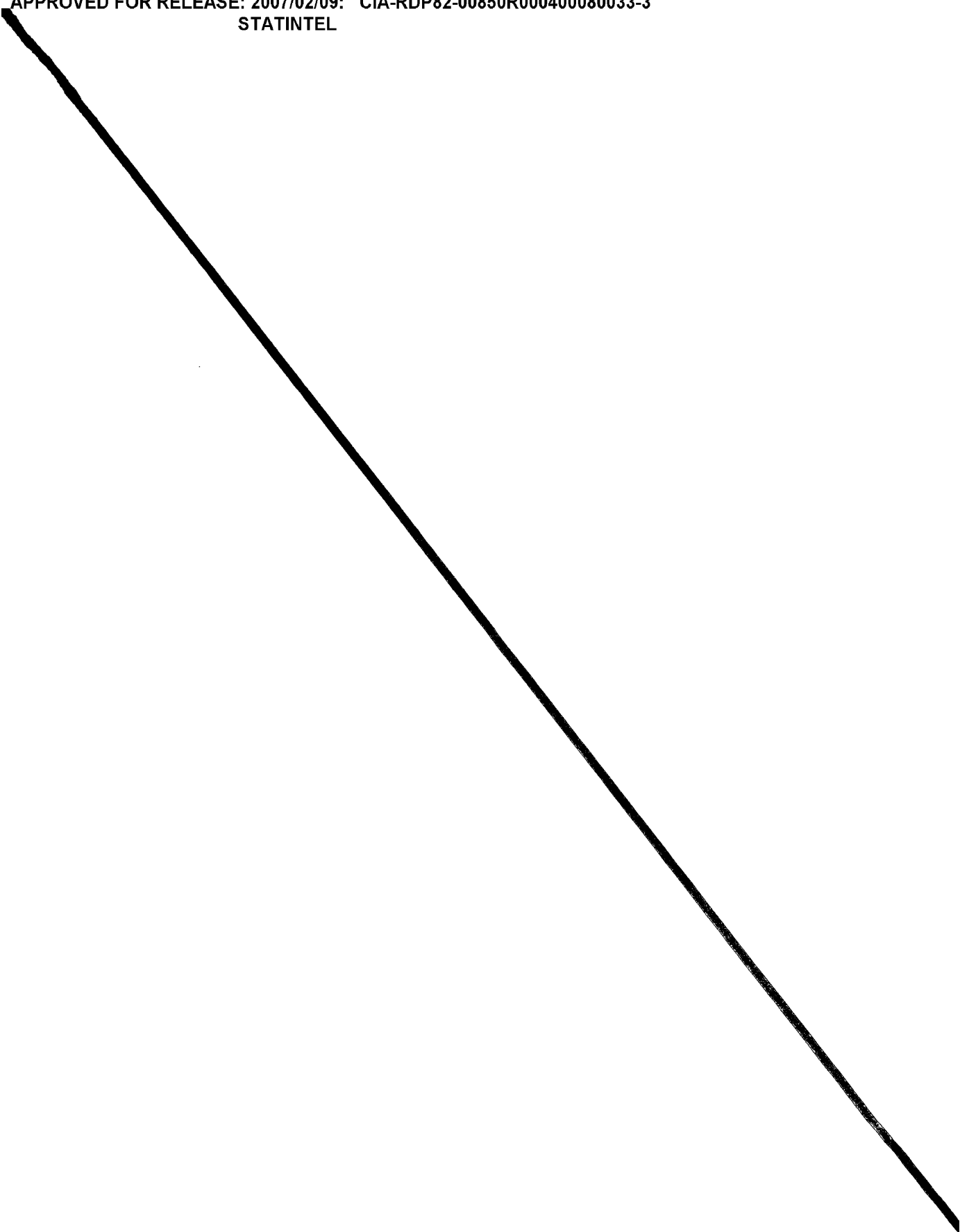
The letter, datelined Hawza, in the liberated territories, states that this interference is aggravating tensions in northwest Africa and can make all the efforts of the international organizations to find a peaceful, fair and lasting solution to the conflict, fail.

With its stand, it underlines, Washington not only shows its scorn of the international community's desire for peace, but that it declares open war on the OAU, the United Nations and the movement of nonaligned countries.

Finally, Mohammed Abdelaziz launches an appeal to the movement of nonaligned countries "to assume its responsibilities regarding a problem that directly concerns it" and that "it unite its efforts to reinforce the possibilities of peace in northwest Africa and for returning to the Saharan people their natural rights to independence and national sovereignty."

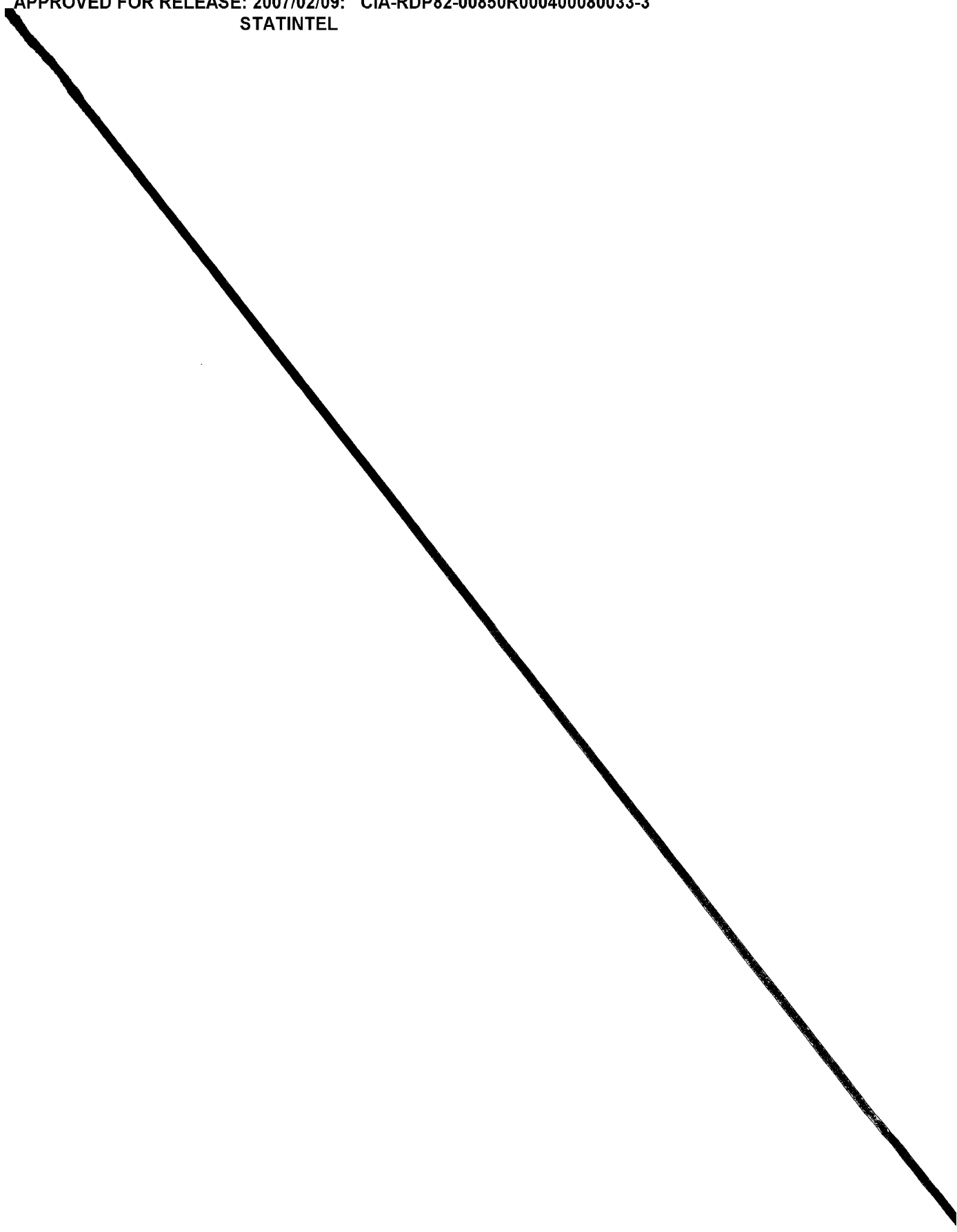
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COUNTRY SECTION

PERU

DOMESTIC MANUFACTURE OF MILITARY ARMS, EQUIPMENT

Madrid DEFENSA in Spanish Aug-Sep 81 p 156

[Text] The Weapons Manufacturing Center (CEFAR) of the Industrial Service of the Navy (SIMA) is series producing a light rifle, easily handled and very effective, not only for domestic requirements but also for export.

These light rifles are the first of a series of weapons designed by SIMA specialists. The light rifle in production is the MGP-79, weighing one kilogram less than imported weapons, it is also much cheaper and easy to disassemble, since it is made of fewer parts. It has a rifled barrel with 12 grooves, instead of 5, which similar imported weapons have; as a result, its fire is very accurate. It has two fire cadences, of 600 and 900 rounds per minute. The MGP-79 is being produced at CEFAR in quantities of 3,000 units per month for equipping the Civil Guard and the Republican Guard, and there is a contract to export 20,000 units for a value of 550 million pesetas.

The MGP-70 is the culmination of 3 years of experiments. It will be followed by the production of an assault rifle, a 9mm pistol, a mortar, and sporting weapons.

An agreement in principle has been reached between the Italian firm Aeromacchi and Peruvian authorities for the construction of a factory intended for the production under license of the MB-339 aircraft, in its training version, MB-339A, and tactical support version, MB-339K Veltro-2. Although economic problems remain to be resolved, the figure of 70 aircraft of this type has been mentioned which, in principle, will reportedly be produced.

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COUNTRY SECTION

PERU

BRIEFS

SOVIET DELEGATION VISIT --Lima, 21 Nov (PL)--The Peruvian foreign minister announced today that a delegation of the Soviet Union Supreme Soviet will visit Peru, starting on Tuesday. The mission, which will remain in Peru for 5 days is headed by Antanas S. Barkauskas, vice president of the Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic Central Committee. The visitors will be received by Peruvian Foreign Minister Javier Arias Stella and by Lima's Mayor Eduardo Orrego. [Text] [PA212315 Havana PRELA in Spanish 1540 GMT 21 Nov 81]

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COUNTRY SECTION

SURINAME

RUSLAND HAILS STRUGGLE OF SALVADORAN PEOPLE

Celebrates International Students Day

FL181749 Bridgetown CANA in English 1740 GMT 18 Nov 81

[Text] Paramaribo, Suriname, 18 Nov (CANA)--A Suriname Government minister has said here that the struggle of the people of El Salvador was not an isolated case, but part of a worldwide movement for liberation and end to colonialism and for economic emancipation. Minister of Education Harold Rusland made the observation while speaking at a mass rally yesterday to more than 10,000 school-children following a march around the town to mark international students day, with the theme "solidarity with the people of El Salvador."

At the U.S. Embassy, they presented a petition to an officer, calling for an end to U.S. intervention in El Salvador; the officer in turn gave the petitioners a booklet entitled "Towards a Peaceful Solution in El Salvador."

The rally passed three resolutions, one to be sent to President Ronald Reagan, another for the people of El Salvador and the third for the Suriname Government, pledging support to the administration and the revolutionary process taking place in the country.

Mr Rusland told the students he was pleased at their revolutionary fervor. What is taking place in Suriname was part of a worldwide struggle, he said, adding it was the same way in El Salvador.

The students also offered to help the government in its literacy campaign and, welcoming the offer, the minister invited those willing to do so to register their names at the ministry.

The march and solidarity rally was organized by the Suriname-El Salvador Committee, the People's Revolutionary Party and the recently-established revolutionary youth movement.

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Student Rally

PA201530 Havana PRELA in Spanish 1451 GMT 20 Nov 81

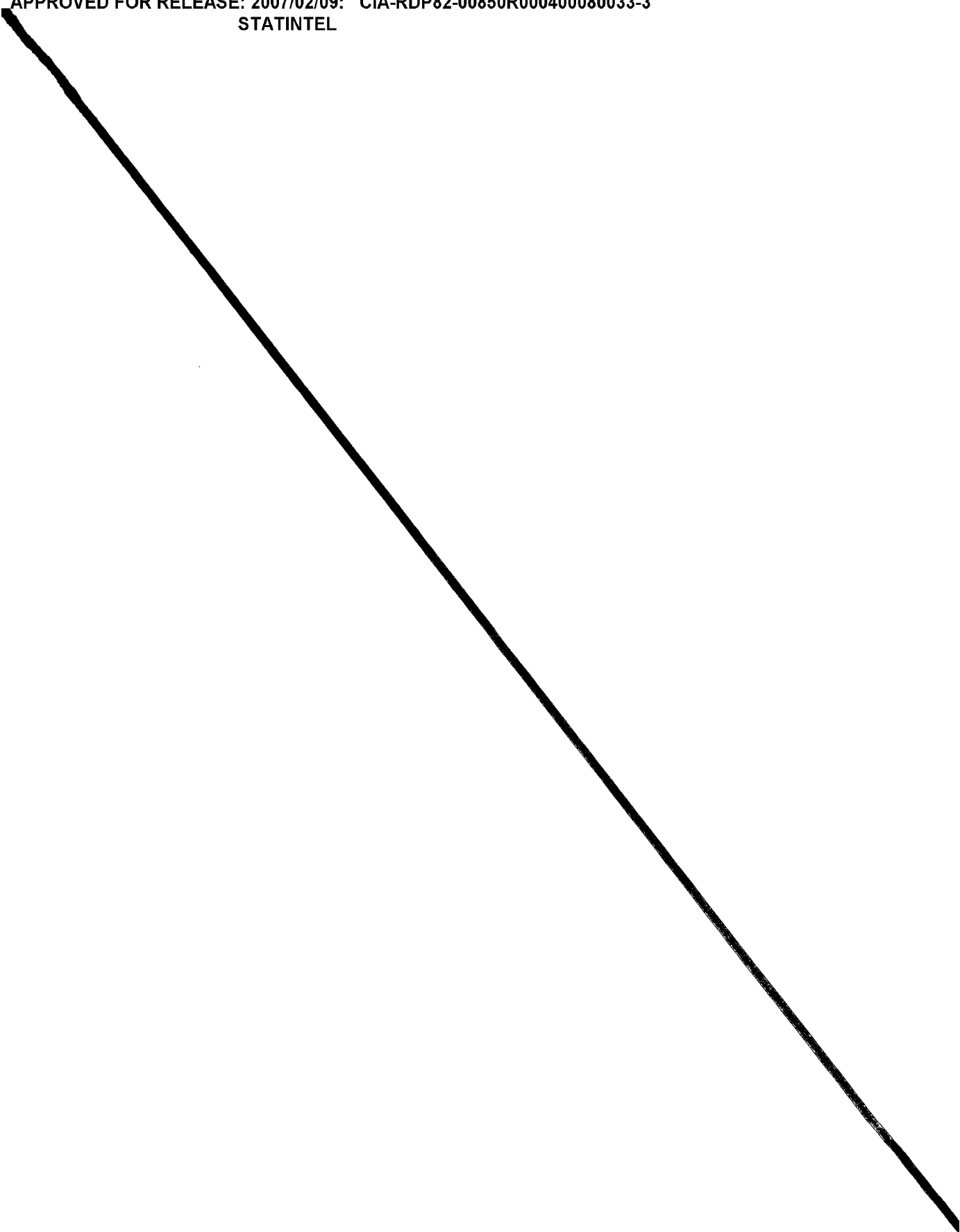
[Text] Paramaribo, 20 Nov (PL)--Hundreds of Surinamese students gathered in front of the U.S. Embassy here to protest the U.S. intervention in the domestic affairs of El Salvador.

The student protest joined that of Education Minister Harold Rusland, who said that the Salvadoran people's struggle is part of a wider worldwide struggle for liberation and is intended to put an end to colonialism.

A message addressed to the FMLN and the Revolutionary Democratic Front which was endorsed by thousands of Surinamese students, was read during the rally. In this message, the students expressed "their admiration of the heroic struggle against exploitation and oppression."

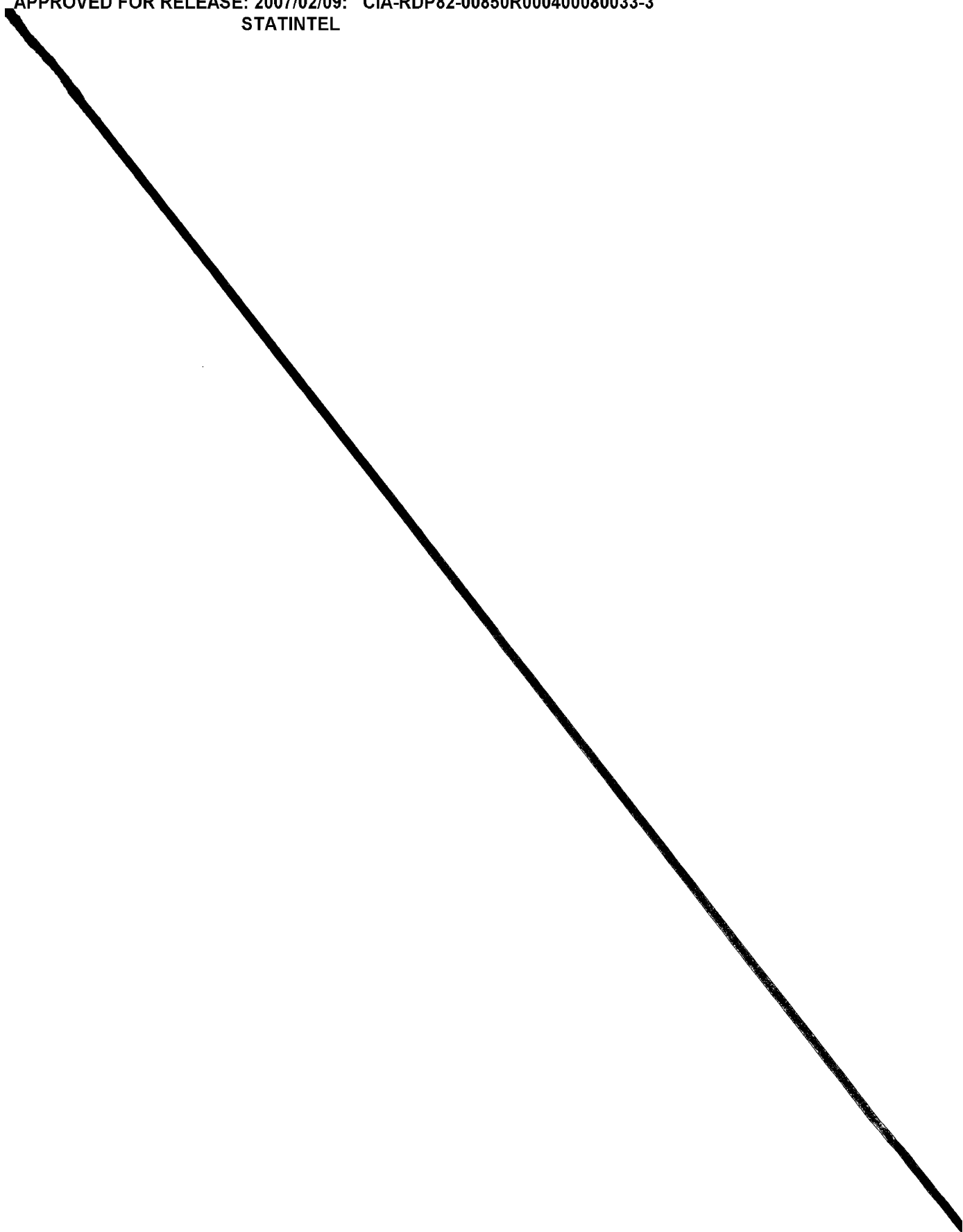
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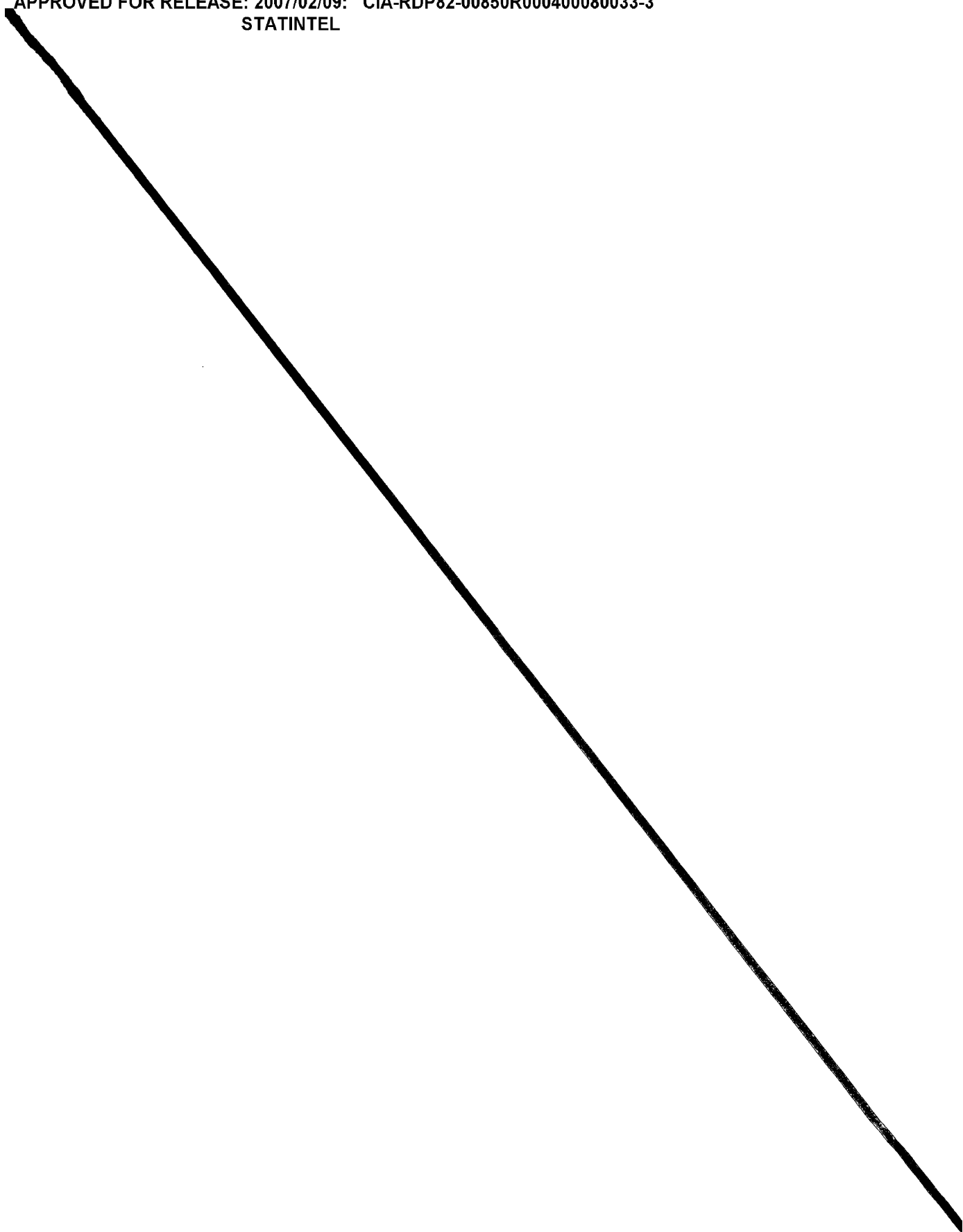
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