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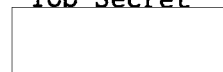


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CUBA - CENTRAL AMERICA: Promoting Revolution

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The Castro regime, sensing a reluctance in Washington to send US military units to El Salvador, appears determined to pursue its aggressive policy of promoting revolution in Central America. [redacted]

President Castro last week told a Western diplomat that he believed US policymakers were still vacillating on what to do about Cuba, and that Havana will not alter its policies. [redacted]

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In addition, Cuban media were quick to hail the announcement earlier this month of a coalition among four Guatemalan insurgent groups, stressing the familiar theme that "unity is a key factor for victory." On 11 February, the Cuban press quoted a Salvadoran guerrilla spokesman in Havana as saying that "Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras will have their hour of liberation and the Sandinista Revolution was the first flame in that process."

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Comment: Havana believes that US military support to El Salvador precludes a guerrilla victory for now, but the Castro regime intends to continue aiding the insurgents in the expectation that international public opinion will eventually force the US to withdraw and thereby open the way for a guerrilla victory. To that end, the Cubans will supplement their arms shipments with an intensified worldwide propaganda effort. [redacted]

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At the same time, Havana is raising the ante in Guatemala, counting on increased bloodshed there to sour public opinion, particularly in the US, and to undermine international support for the government. [redacted]

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The Cubans do not believe that Honduras is ready for insurgency, but the willingness of the tightly controlled Cuban media to quote the Salvadoran guerrilla on Honduras indicates that Havana intends eventually to spread revolution to that country. [redacted]

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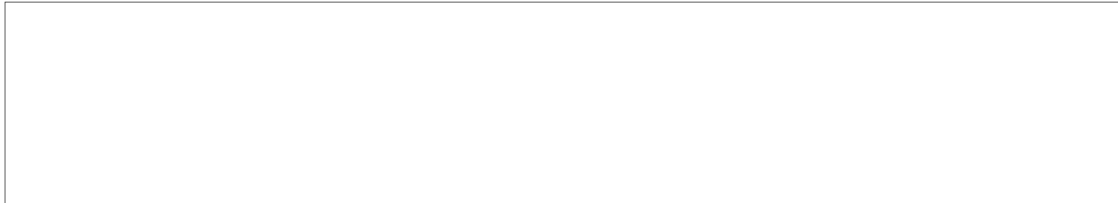
ZIMBABWE: Reactions to Nkomo's Ouster

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Tension remains high over the recent ouster of Joshua Nkomo from the cabinet.

British military advisers in Zimbabwe report that the Army is calm. Nonetheless, Nkomo's return over the weekend to Bulawayo in southwestern Zimbabwe, where most of his followers live, could be a catalyst for demonstrations.

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Nkomo's Zimbabwe African People's Union is divided over how to respond to Mugabe's actions. ZAPU's vice president, who was removed last week as Minister of Transport, has decided to work with Mugabe in establishing a one-party state. One of the remaining four senior members of ZAPU in the government has decided to stay.

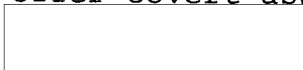
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Comment: Although ZAPU may not be able to organize any active opposition to the government over the next few weeks, the long-term potential for clashes between Mugabe's and Nkomo's supporters will remain high. The country's worsening economic prospects will add to the frustrations of Nkomo's supporters, who may link their lack of economic progress to their underrepresentation in the government.

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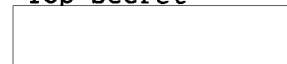
South Africa will cite Zimbabwe's instability as another reason for demanding outside guarantees in a settlement on Namibia. Over the long term, Pretoria--as it has done in Mozambique and Angola--probably will offer covert assistance to Mugabe's opponents.

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CHINA-FRANCE: Contracts With French Communists

China's recent decision to reopen direct channels with the French Communist Party by inviting a delegation to Beijing in April suggests a desire to increase its role in the Communist movement and reflects a more active and self-reliant foreign policy.

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The low-level French delegation reportedly will arrange a visit to China by party chief Marchais in September. China had largely ignored the pro-Soviet French Communist Party until early this month, when the Chinese Ambassador to France attended the French party congress as an observer--the highest level Chinese representation at a congress and the first publicized attendance by the Chinese since 1964.

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French Communist officials last visited China in the early 1960s. Shortly thereafter, the French party's support for Moscow in the Sino-Soviet dispute ruptured relations with the Chinese.

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Comment: Until this month, Beijing had concentrated its attention in Western Europe on developing ties with independent-minded parties, including the Italian and Spanish Communist Parties, which share views critical of Moscow. In dealing with the French, the Chinese may now want to portray themselves as sufficiently flexible to discuss party-to-party contacts with a close Soviet ally. Such a shift would jibe with China's generally more assertive foreign policy over the past year.

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[redacted]

POLAND: Food Supplies Improve

Food supplies in the Warsaw area have generally improved since prices increased on 1 February, according to the US Embassy. Supplies of meat are adequate to satisfy rationing requirements, and amounts of dairy products and vegetables seem to be in sufficient supply to meet consumer demand. Some food supplies have increased because many consumers cannot afford to pay higher prices. A kilogram of cheese, for example, now costs almost the daily average wage. [redacted]

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Comment: The regime apparently also is flooding the market with food in order to gain consumer acceptance for the increases. Adequate supplies of eggs, poultry, and many other foods, however, will not continue because of shortages and ineffective procurement from private farmers. [redacted]

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USSR-CHINA: Note on Border Talks

Diplomatic sources in Beijing report that the Soviets have delivered another note to the Chinese urging a resumption of the Sino-Soviet border talks. The note-- a response to the Chinese message in late December that agreed "in principle" to a resumption of the talks but stressed the need for "serious preparations"--reportedly stated that the Soviets are ready to start negotiations in Moscow. [redacted]

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Comment: The note points up the USSR's growing impatience with the Chinese, who continue to insist that relations have no prospects for improving. The Soviets may hope that the publicity will put more pressure on the Chinese to respond positively and that it will convey the impression that relations are improving. The Chinese may hope to discourage the Soviets for now from continuing to push the issue, while reminding the US again of Moscow's interest in improved Sino-Soviet ties. [redacted]

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[redacted]

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WESTERN SAHARA: Polisario Seated at OAU Meeting

Polisario Front representatives were formally seated at the OAU ministerial meeting in Addis Ababa yesterday, marking the first time the guerrilla organization has been accorded such status. The Moroccans left in protest, but the proceedings continued after going into closed session.

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Comment: The Polisario probably will be granted official status for only this meeting. Nonetheless, the guerrilla movement is likely to exploit this precedent to seek admission at the OAU summit next summer. Its prospects for success, however, will depend heavily on Morocco's willingness to cooperate with OAU mediation efforts.

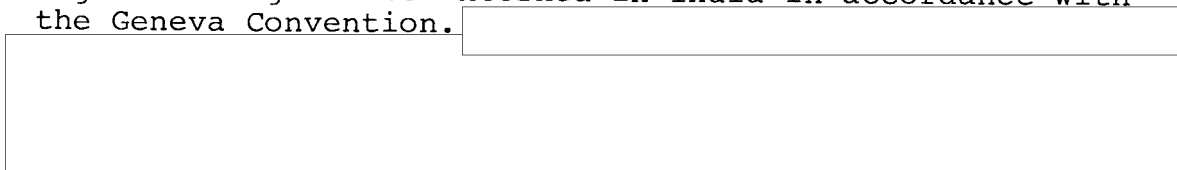
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INDIA-USSR-AFGHANISTAN: Prisoner Internment

India has agreed to a proposal by the International Committee for the Red Cross that Soviet prisoners of the Afghan insurgents be interned in India in accordance with the Geneva Convention.

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Comment: Most Afghans would assume the prisoners would end up in the USSR after transfer, but some groups may cooperate, hoping this will give them belligerent status. Acceptance by even some insurgents would serve both Soviet and Indian interests. The desire of the Soviets to repatriate the dozen or so captives in insurgent hands and to set up a means for recovering future prisoners evidently now outweighs their reluctance to permit any step tending to give the insurgents official status. India's cooperation will please the USSR while doing little damage to its nonaligned image, because operation of the plan would rest with the Red Cross.

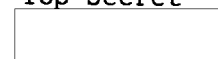
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