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Director of
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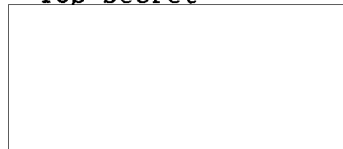
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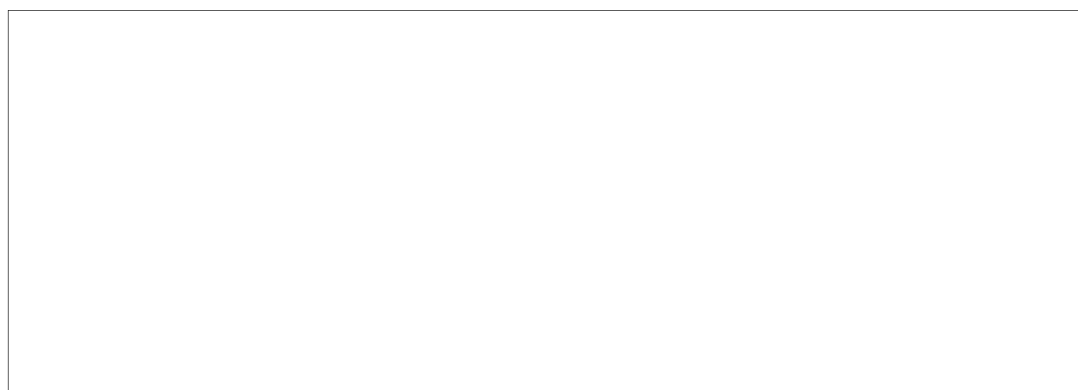
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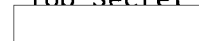
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EL SALVADOR: Possible Election Agreement

The major political parties evidently have agreed to support national elections in 1983. [redacted]

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President Magana has informed the US Ambassador that the political commission, made up of independents and representatives of the three parties in the government, has endorsed moving the timetable up from March 1984. Additional commission meetings have been scheduled. Magana also intends to hold discussions with some minor party leaders. [redacted]

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Defense Minister Garcia, the commission's only military representative, attended the meeting Wednesday. National Guard leader General Vides Casanova also was present. [redacted]

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Comment: The apparent decision to speed up elections probably reflects the government's efforts to regain the political and propaganda initiatives it fears it has lost to the guerrillas. Nevertheless, some political leaders are likely to be concerned that the impact of the move has been lessened by recent public disclosures and by the possibility that it will be viewed as dictated by the US. [redacted]

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Vides Casanova, who is a moderate and pragmatic officer, is next in line to replace Garcia as Defense Minister. [redacted]

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AUSTRALIA: Election Campaign Ends

The Labor Party continues its lead in the polls over Prime Minister Fraser's Liberal - National Party coalition as Australians prepare to vote tomorrow. [redacted]

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The three-week campaign has focused largely on economic issues, despite Fraser's attempts to alarm voters with claims that a Labor victory would threaten relations with the US. Labor leader Hawke has presented an appearance of unprecedented party unity during the campaign. Labor also has appealed to voters by retreating from plans to devalue the Australian dollar, assuring against a sudden withdrawal of Australian troops from the Sinai Multinational Force, and tempering objections to uranium development and joint Australian-US facilities. [redacted]

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Polls indicate many voters blame Fraser's conservative policies for failing to reduce 11-percent inflation and 9- to 10-percent unemployment. At the same time, they are wary of Labor's calls for increased government spending to stimulate economic growth and ease unemployment.

[redacted]

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Comment: Labor's 11- to 13-point lead in the latest polls has raised the party's hopes that it will achieve the 11-seat swing needed to win the election. Previous elections, however, have shown that voters tend to rally around the Liberal - National Party coalition at the last minute. As a result, political observers in Australia believe the election will be close. [redacted]

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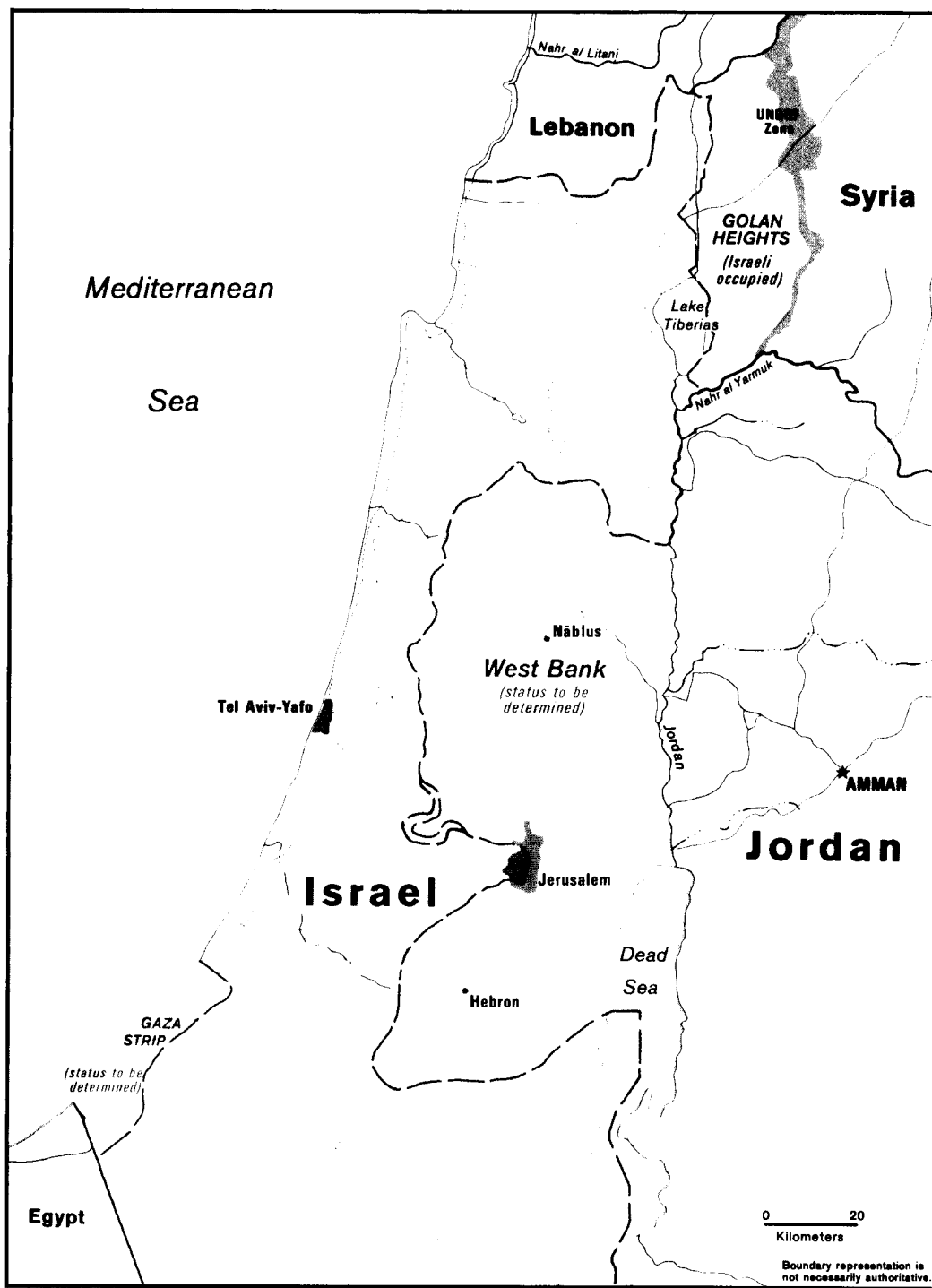
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ISRAEL: New Violence in the West Bank

Israeli authorities have failed so far to contain a new outbreak of violence in the West Bank between extremist Jewish settlers and Arab residents. The latest disturbances began with the bombing on Friday of a mosque in Hebron. Violent protests by Arab youths have led to the closing of several schools and the imposition of curfews in Hebron and Nablus. Militant Jewish settlers have formed vigilante squads that have made several attacks on Arabs. [redacted]

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Comment: Periodic outbursts of violence are common in the West Bank, but this round has been marked by increased lawlessness on the part of radical Jewish settlers. Although Israeli authorities yesterday for the first time began house-to-house searches of Jewish settlements near Hebron, the government is unlikely to completely prevent violence by the settlers. The continuing expansion of settlements in the West Bank assures a worsening of relations between Arabs and Jews there. [redacted]

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PAKISTAN-AFGHANISTAN: Killings in Peshawar

The US Consul in Peshawar, Pakistan, confirms two prominent members of moderate Afghan insurgent groups were murdered recently outside the city. Leaders of the groups claim rival fundamentalist insurgents have killed at least six other guerrilla commanders in the last two months. Pakistani police have no direct evidence of fundamentalist involvement and believe Soviet and Afghan agents may be responsible. The Soviets reportedly have long been using Afghan agents and assassination teams in an attempt to incite infighting among insurgent groups in Pakistan. [redacted]

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Comment: In addition to weakening the insurgents, the Soviets may believe that fomenting violence among guerrillas in Pakistan could harm the insurgents' relations with Islamabad, leading to restrictions on the guerrillas' access to weapons and on activity near the border with Afghanistan. The killings, however, also may be the result of continuing personal, political, and religious differences among the Afghan exiles. [redacted]

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INDONESIA: Reelection of Soeharto

The 11-day session of the government-controlled People's Consultative Assembly that opened on Tuesday will reelect President Soeharto to his fourth five-year term, approve his selection for vice president, and endorse political and economic guidelines for the next five years. Soeharto's designation of retired Army General Umar Wirahadikusumah as the candidate for vice president further concentrates power in his hands by sidetracking better known potential candidates for succession. Rumored cabinet shifts expected after the Assembly include the ouster of Defense Minister Jusuf and leading technocrats. [redacted]

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Comment: These appointments may reflect how Soeharto intends to deal with the country's serious financial problems. The current account deficit this year is likely to be between \$9 billion and \$11 billion and could force adoption of more stringent austerity measures. Soeharto also faces tensions and problems resulting from generational change in both the military and the civilian leadership. [redacted]

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