



Director of
Central
Intelligence

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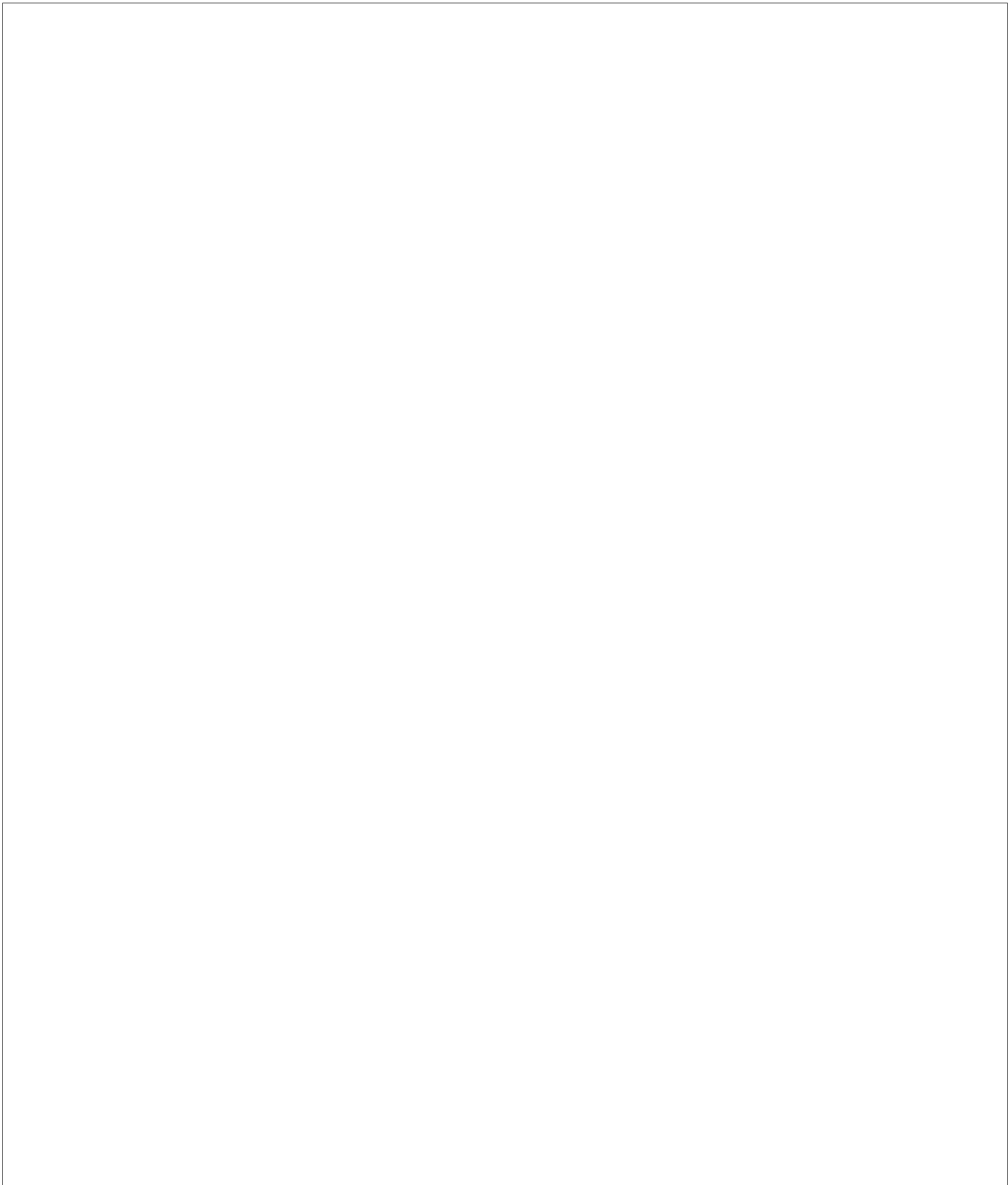
Wednesday
9 April 1980

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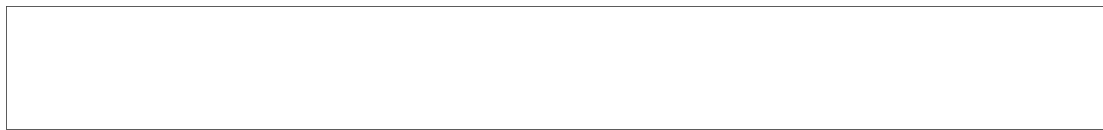
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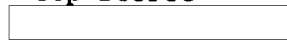


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SITUATION REPORT

IRAN

Iranian hardliners are confident that their political position has been strengthened by the US sanctions. [redacted]

Both Ayatollah Khomeini and the militants believe that the break in diplomatic ties with the US advances their efforts to eliminate American influence. The militants, moreover, probably hope that the break will undermine President Bani-Sadr's position and make further negotiations with the US impossible. [redacted]

Bani-Sadr told Iranians yesterday that the US moves mean "war," suggesting that he intends to take a tougher position toward the US in order to improve his domestic standing. His clerical opponents, meanwhile, probably will continue to try to reduce him to a figurehead. [redacted]

Tehran has urged Iranians to prepare for sacrifices and to maintain discipline against the US. Iran has also threatened to cut off oil exports to any country that backs Washington. [redacted]

International Reactions

The USSR continues to place the responsibility for the failure to resolve the hostage crisis squarely on the US. A TASS broadcast yesterday referred to the Iranian leadership's readiness to solve the hostage issue as soon as the US shows a "constructive approach." Soviet broadcasts yesterday in Farsi cited US press reports concerning US plans for a naval blockade. (U)

Moscow probably anticipates that the moderates in Tehran will lose ground to hardline elements who oppose any reconciliation with the US. The Soviets have been concerned that Bani-Sadr and Foreign Minister Ghotbzadeh were willing to settle the hostage crisis and possibly set the stage for improved US-Iranian relations. [redacted]

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Canada yesterday announced that it is consulting with its NATO allies on "the possibility of further action against Iran" should it continue to hold the US hostages. (U)

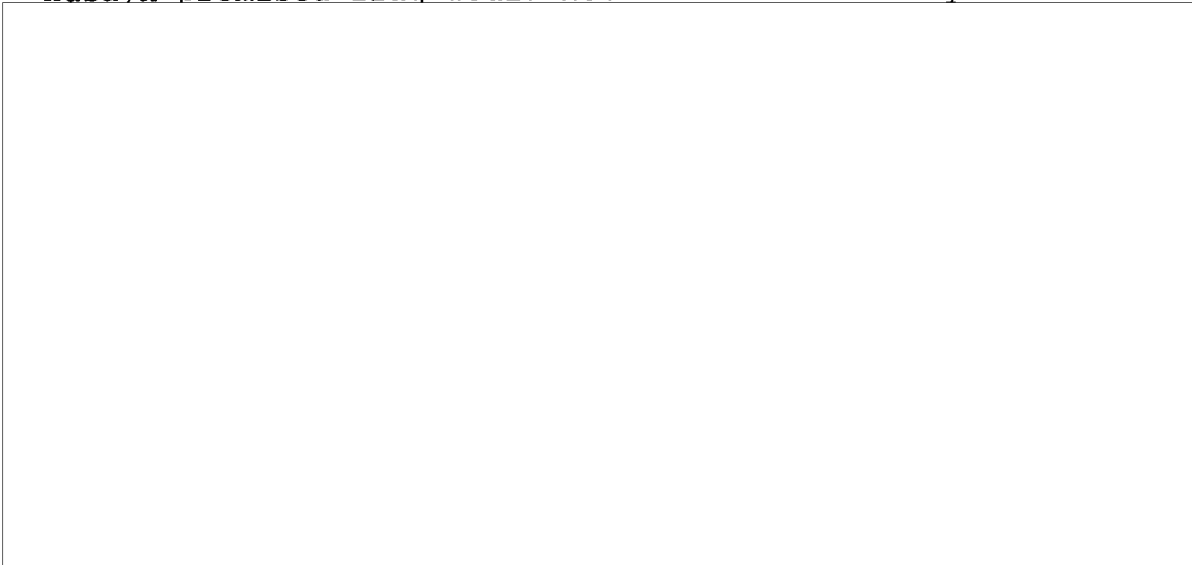
Australian Foreign Minister Peacock yesterday said that Canberra is responding to the US moves with a comprehensive review of all Australian relationships with Iran. The cabinet will convene on Monday to consider decisions on a new policy. [redacted]

The Chinese press has reported the break in diplomatic ties without comment. (U)

Pakistani President Zia said yesterday that there will be "no lack of assistance" from Islamabad for Tehran, but he did not directly refer to the US sanctions. (U)

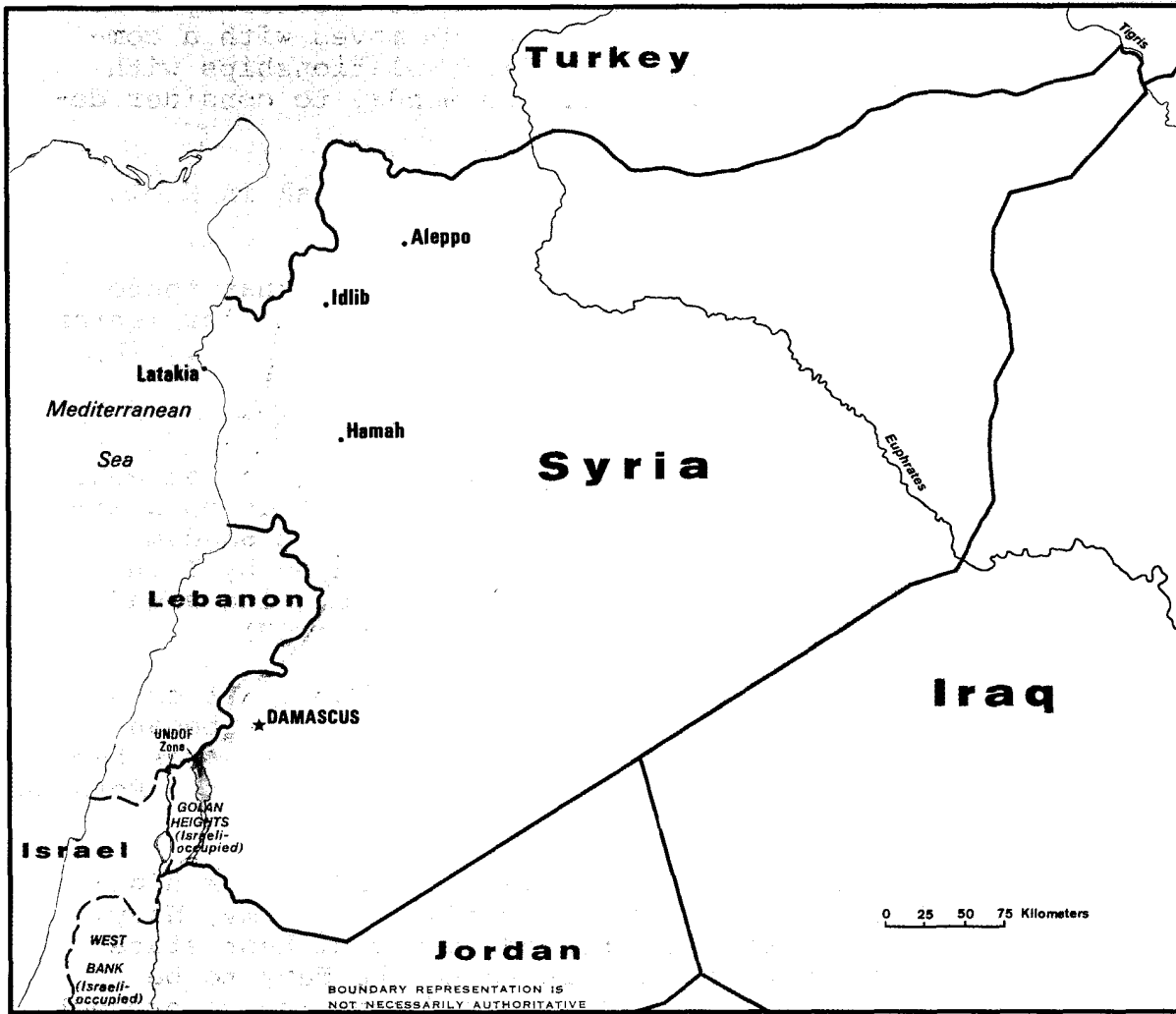
Relations with Iraq

Tehran and Baghdad kept up their propaganda attacks on each other yesterday. Khomeini urged Iraqis to overthrow the Baathist regime and Iraqi President Saddam Husayn promised Iraq would not be intimidated by Iran.



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BRIEFS AND COMMENTS

SYRIA: Assad Cracks Down

President Assad's decision to use sweeping repressive measures against his opponents in urban areas carries grave risks. [redacted]

Armored and artillery units moved last weekend into Aleppo, a stronghold of Sunni Muslim opposition to Assad's minority Alawite regime. A 24-hour curfew has been imposed, and military checkpoints have been established throughout the city. House-to-house searches for arms and suspected dissidents apparently have resulted in numerous arrests. [redacted]

[redacted]

Hamah, another center of Sunni agitation in recent weeks, has been sealed off and is said to be under a curfew. The cities of Latakia and Idlib reportedly also will be isolated and searched. [redacted]

If largely Sunni regular Army enlisted personnel are ordered to fight their civilian coreligionists, they may desert with their arms to join the opposition. Although Assad may be able to quell civil unrest in the short run, his resort to force will only increase popular resentment and almost certainly lead ultimately to more widespread opposition. [redacted]

CUBA: Possible Large-Scale Emigration

The 10,000 Cubans encamped at the Peruvian Embassy in Havana represent only a fraction of those who would leave the island if permission were granted. []

Cuba views large-scale emigration as a safety valve for domestic discontent, in this case caused by economic difficulties. The removal of the security force from the Embassy last weekend probably was calculated to precipitate a crisis and force the US and other countries to accept sizable numbers of new refugees. []

In 1965, when Fidel Castro opened the Port of Carmarioca to anyone who wished to leave, chaos ensued as thousands arrived in a matter of days. Havana and Washington subsequently agreed to an airlift that resulted in the departure of 360,000 Cubans between 1965 and 1973. The Castro regime probably assumes that at least that many would leave now if given the opportunity; in the past year, illegal departures have increased sharply. []

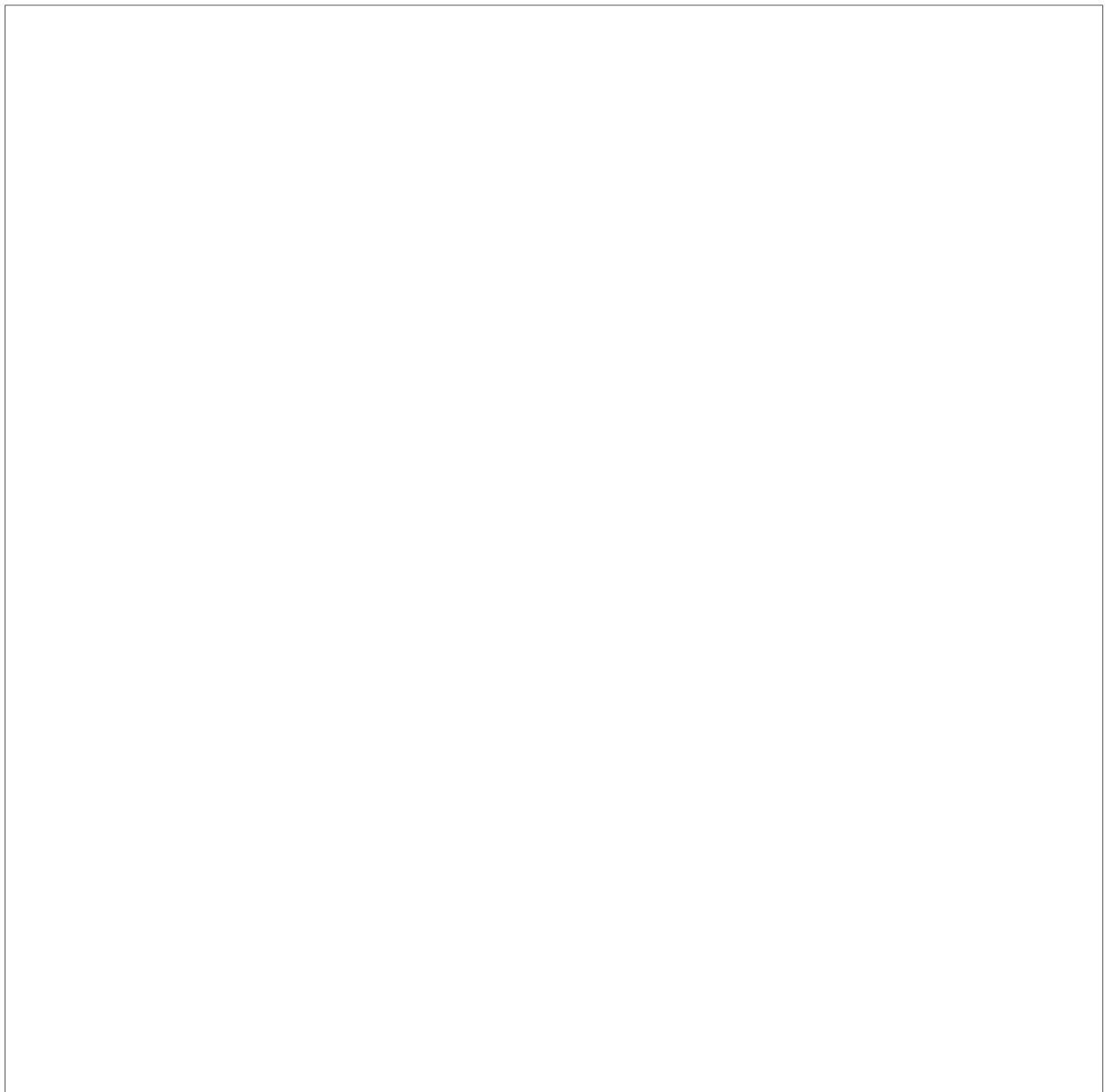
Although another major exodus would be embarrassing, it would help Havana reduce demand for scarce goods and services and would decrease the motivation for crimes and escape attempts. Without a major emigration, the regime probably will have to impose even harsher repressive measures, which could prompt international criticism from the left. []

Pressure is likely to build on the US to accept many of the would-be refugees. Peru has convoked a meeting of the Andean Pact to discuss the problem, but probably few of the members--with the possible exception of Venezuela--will accept more than a token number. []

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[Redacted]



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[Redacted]

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ALGERIA-NETHERLANDS: Gas Exports

Algeria, the Netherlands, and Norway are pressing to raise the price of their natural gas exports, which account for a large share of West European supplies, to the level of crude oil prices.

Algers, which supplies about 15 percent of French gas requirements, reportedly has suspended liquefied natural gas shipments to France, citing technical problems at the Skidka gas liquefaction plant. It has also cut off US gas deliveries equal to about 1 percent of US consumption and is threatening to suspend sales to other West European customers. The Algerians are seeking an increase from \$2 to \$3 per million Btu to \$6 per million Btu--a price roughly equivalent to that of crude oil.

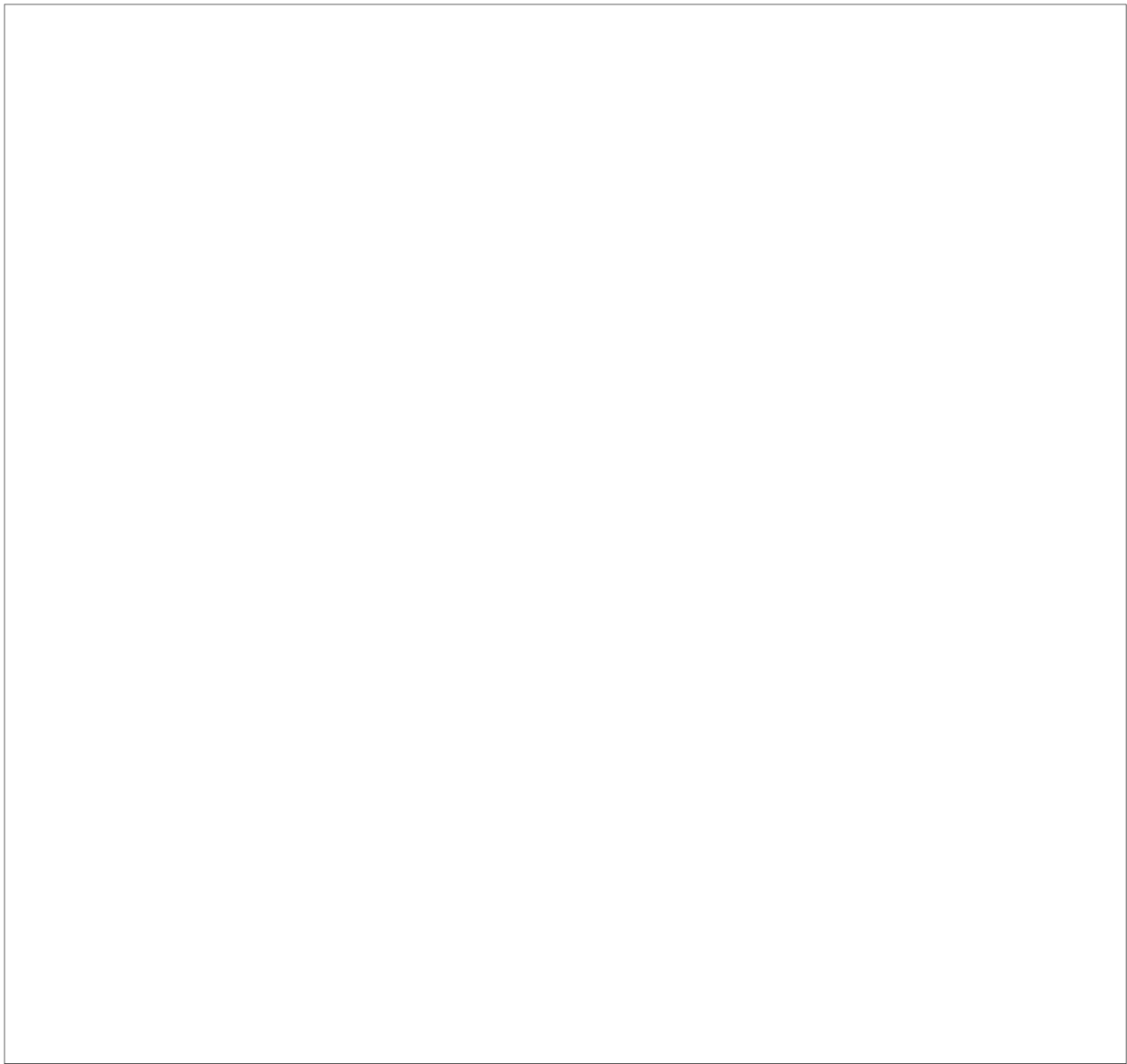
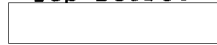
Netherlands Economics Minister van Aardenne has threatened to cut off Dutch exports to foreign customers if they refuse to accept an increase on new export contracts from an average price of \$2.50 per million Btu to about \$5.50 per million Btu. The Netherlands is Western Europe's largest supplier of natural gas, providing most of Belgium's gas supply, 40 percent of French and West German supplies, and about 15 percent of Italian supplies.

Norway has told oil companies that they will be seeking parity between oil and gas prices, but thus far no action has been taken. (U)

Algerian officials reportedly have also expressed interest in forming a gas exporters' cartel. We have no evidence that other major gas-exporting countries, including Mexico, are yet thinking along these lines, although they have taken part in informal consultations on pricing.

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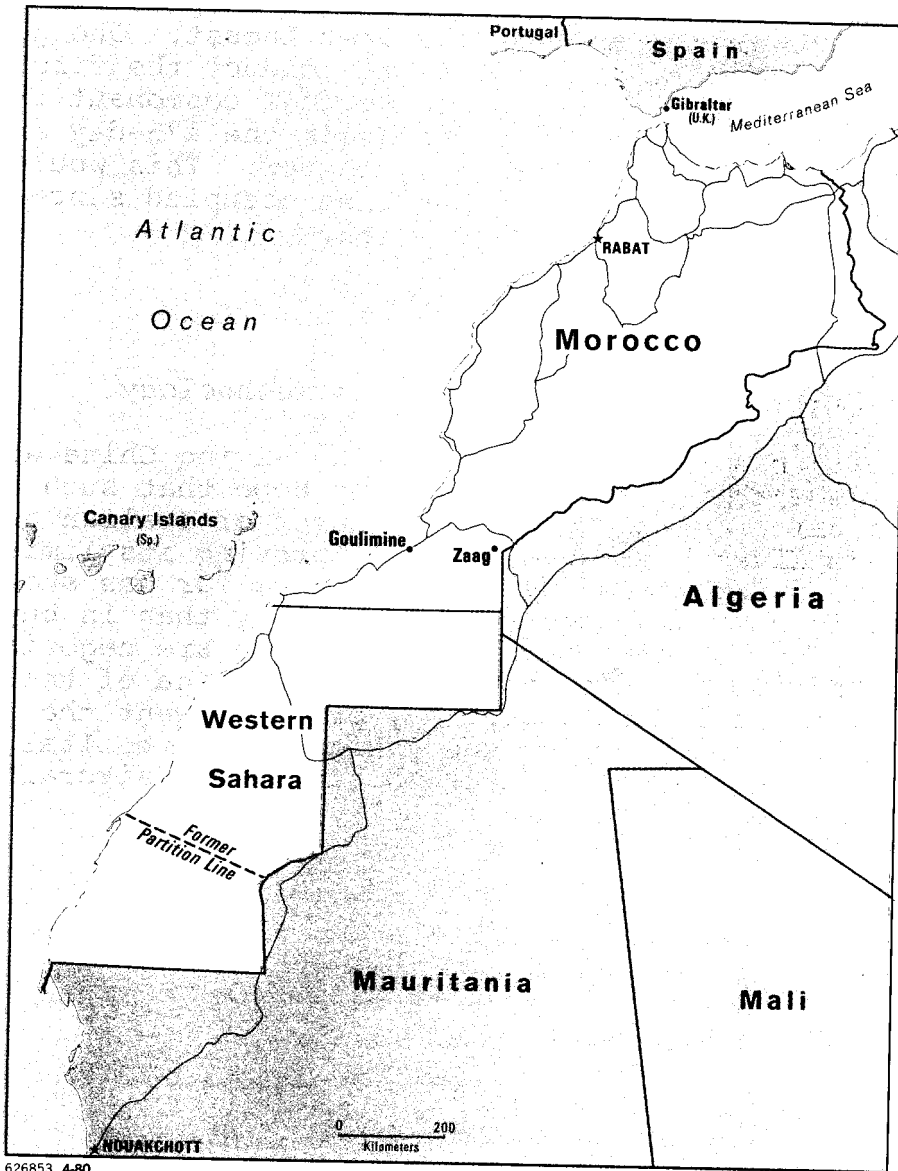
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MOROCCO - WESTERN SAHARA: Military Activity

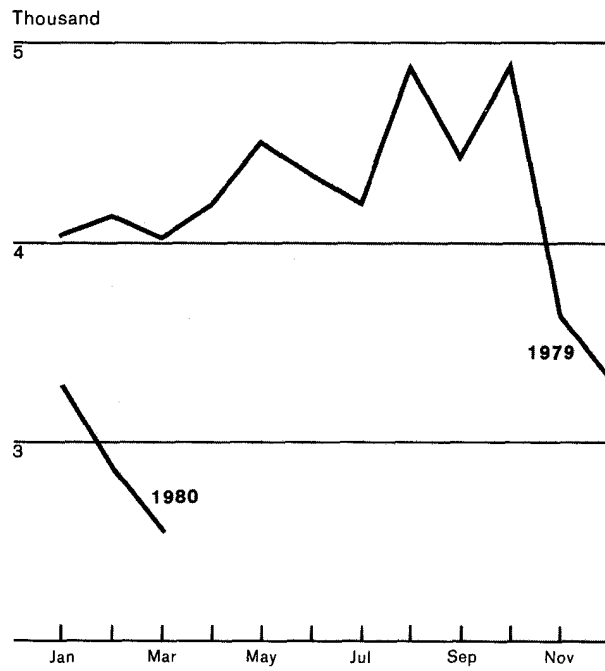
A newly assembled Moroccan task force reportedly is preparing to relieve the garrison of Zaag in south-eastern Morocco, where some 4,000 soldiers have been isolated by Polisario Front guerrillas. Subordinate units of the task force, which apparently consists of 6,000 troops, have been congregating near Goulimine for about two weeks. Although the Moroccans hope to score a major victory, the timing of the operation coincides with Polisario plans to concentrate activities in the same general area. [redacted]

USSR - SOUTHEAST ASIA: Firyubin's Overtures

Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister Firyubin's recent swing through Southeast Asia showed the Soviet flag after Chinese Foreign Minister Huang Hua's visit to the region last month, but it apparently accomplished little else. Stopping in Bangkok, Singapore, Hanoi, and Phnom Penh, Firyubin attempted to project an image of Soviet moderation on Southeast Asian issues to counteract concerns within the Association of Southeast Asian Nations about Soviet intentions after Afghanistan. While in Bangkok and Singapore, he argued for recognition of the Vietnamese-installed Heng Samrin government in Kampuchea and urged his hosts to ease strains with Vietnam by concluding bilateral nonaggression treaties. He repeated Moscow's position on the "irreversibility" of the situation in Kampuchea and offered only the standard Soviet explanations of the invasion of Afghanistan. His visit to Singapore followed bitter attacks on Soviet expansionism by senior Singapore officials and was particularly unproductive. [redacted]

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Soviet Jewish Emigration



1979 Total: 50,461

[Redacted]

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SPECIAL ANALYSIS

USSR: Suppression of Dissidents

[redacted]

As relations between the US and USSR have become more strained, Moscow has intensified its campaign against the Soviet dissident movement. The authorities have detained more than 40 dissidents since the crackdown began in October 1979, concentrating particularly on human rights activists such as members of the Helsinki Act Monitoring Group. The activists have been subjected to continual harassment, including repeated house searches and close surveillance.

[redacted]

The greatest blow to the dissidents was the exile in January of Andrey Sakharov to Gorkiy, which removed the human rights movement's most prominent spokesman. He is now isolated from contact with all but family members.

[redacted]

In the past, Sakharov's remarks automatically commanded the attention of Western correspondents in Moscow and shaped world opinion against Soviet tactics toward dissent. Without Sakharov, the members of the Moscow Helsinki group believe that they are being ignored by Western media at a time when the group is being decimated by arrests.

[redacted]

There was little publicity in the West when Malva Landa, one of the most prominent members of the Moscow group, recently was sentenced to three years of internal exile for "slandering the Soviet state." Trials of several other human rights activists in custody should follow shortly.

[redacted]

The Soviets had been expected to remove likely troublemakers before the Olympics, but the severity of this latest campaign appears aimed at paralyzing all forms of dissent. Following Sakharov's exile, a number

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of dissident activists reportedly were warned by Soviet officials that the action taken against Sakharov demonstrated that the authorities are prepared to take measures against any member of the dissident movement. Some reportedly were told that the authorities expect to "finish off" the movement within a couple of months. [redacted]

Dissidents Discouraged

[redacted] most dissidents believe that the Soviet human rights movement will survive the crackdown, while others are less optimistic that it will be able to continue in its present form. The Soviet intelligentsia has allegedly become disenchanted with the movement, partly because the dissidents are preoccupied with the arrests of their colleagues rather than focusing on the main problems in the USSR. [redacted]

In addition, the current climate of cynicism and apathy among students has resulted in fewer young people being drawn to the dissidents. Those who do become activists are attracted by the nationalist and religious dissident movements, which apparently have a broader base than does dissent over human rights. [redacted]

[redacted] the human rights movement has lost much of its sense of purpose and is being forced into a period of relative inactivity. [redacted]

Restrictions on Jewish Emigration

Although not directly linked with the crackdown on dissidents, new restrictions on Jewish emigration reportedly were introduced about the same time. A reduction in the number of visas became evident last November when the total dropped to 3,600 from the year's monthly average of 4,200. A slow decline has continued through March, lowering the total for the first quarter of 1980 by more than 25 percent as compared with the same period last year. [redacted]

The reduction is caused primarily by a severe cutback in emigration from the Ukraine, a result of strict enforcement of a regulation limiting sponsorship of emigrants to immediate family members living in Israel.

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Considerable variation in emigration practices is still apparent among the Soviet republics, however, with the majority showing a slight increase in the number of emigrants this year.

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