



Director of
Central
Intelligence



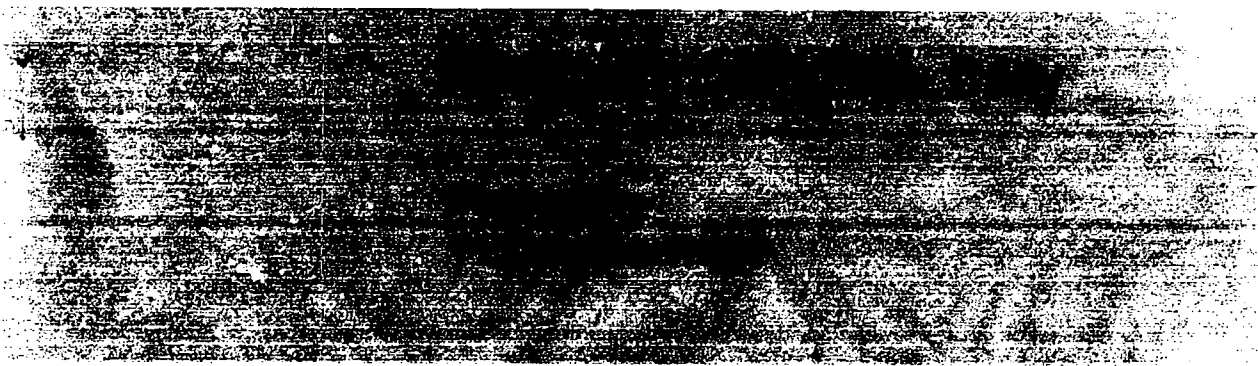
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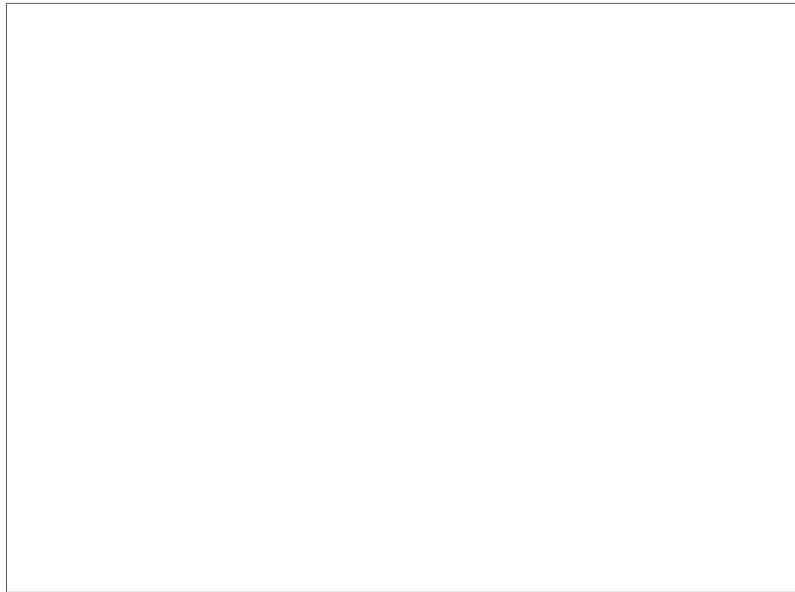
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ARGENTINA:

Political Problems

President Alfonsin has recently acted to deal with several controversial political issues, but he will remain vulnerable to political fallout over the economy. [Redacted]

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With Alfonsin's approval, trials of former junta members indicted for human rights violations in the 1970s were transferred last week to civilian courts. Senior commanders reportedly anticipate that the President will limit the number of officers affected by the trials. Lower ranking officers who fear they will be investigated, however, are voicing discontent. [Redacted]

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Alfonsin has enacted measures that the US Embassy believes move Argentina toward compliance with the recent IMF agreement although Fund officials reportedly are skeptical. Labor bosses and Alfonsin's political opponents have criticized the agreement and vowed to resist restrictions on wage increases. [Redacted]

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Meanwhile, the acceptance last week by Argentina and Chile of a settlement of the Beagle Channel dispute has prompted sharp public criticism from rightwing Argentine nationalists. [Redacted]

[Redacted] Alfonsin is highly sensitive to the political implications of these moves. [Redacted]

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Comment: Alfonsin probably will be able to mute military and other criticism concerning the trials and the Beagle Channel accord. He has successfully controlled the investigations so far, and convictions will be more difficult to obtain in civilian courts. Opinion polls on the Beagle Channel question show considerable popular support for an agreement. [Redacted]

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Economic issues will remain Alfonsin's greatest vulnerability. Constraints posed by the IMF accord leave him little latitude for concessions to the unions. He must show quick results from the agreement, including a significant reduction in inflation and a favorable rescheduling of the foreign debt, to avoid an increase in labor unrest that could aggravate military restiveness. [Redacted]

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