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#14

EAST EUROPE BRANCH NOTES 14 Feb. 1974

State Dept. review completed

ROMANIA-LIBYA

Qadhafi and Ceausescu Disagree, But Amicably

The US Embassy in Tripoli reports that talks between Ceausescu and his Libyan host produced expected disagreements on some Middle East issues. Judging by the tone of speeches and press ballyhoo, it nevertheless appears that this first visit by an East European Leader to Libya is well buffered by amicable verbiage. Two differences that have come to light are Ceausescu's forceful support for the disengagement of the Middle East combatants and Qadhafi's statement that Romania should stop helping Soviet Jews to emigrate to Israel. Neither side has publicly broached the sensitive issue of a threatened Arab boycott against Romanian exports.

An interesting sidelight of the visit is the presence in Ceausescu's retinue of Romania's foreign intelligence chief, Nicolae Doicaru. Doicaru is listed as "presidential counsellor" in official announcements. This is a new post for him and could, if it is not just a temporary cover, indicate that he has joined Ceausescu's Council of State staff. The latter is a body that is somewhat similar to the US NSC, and Ceausescu appears increasingly to rely on it both for advice and problem-solving.

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EAST GERMANY

Another Meeting with the French

Party First Secretary Honecker had a chance to talk over political affairs on Monday with George Marchais, Secretary General of the French Communist Party. They considered that the recent Brussels conference of West European Communist parties had strengthened the world Communist movement. They also agreed that the time was ripe for a new conference of the Communist parties throughout Europe and stressed that parties would do everything they could to make such a conference succeed.

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CZECHOSLOVAKIA

Reopening of Talks with the Vatican Desired

Prague has been pressing the Vatican for a resumption of the bilateral talks broken off last spring, but the Vatican is not rushing to accept the invitation. Prague is eager to have the suffragan dioceses of Kosice and Roznava detached from their metropolitan see at Esztergom, Hungary. The bulk of the Archdiocese of Esztergom--some 460 parishes--falls within Slovakia, while only 60-70 parishes are in Hungary. Cardinal Mindszenty always opposed the rationalization of church boundaries, but now that he is out of the picture the Holy See is presumably willing to make the change.

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POLAND

The Poor Little Rich Country

With a touch of pride, Polish authorities have periodically been reminding their countrymen that the nation is well-primed to weather an ecological crisis, at least insofar as underground resources are concerned. The official news service PAP on 13 February, for example, quotes the government's chief geologist to the effect that Poland ranks third in the world in terms of solid mineral output per square kilometer of land. If the common man does not dwell on the small print in the geological survey, i.e. that crude oil and quality iron ore deposits are negligible, then he cannot help but consider his country's future bright. It is doubtful, though, that this logic will distract many Poles from the current realities of a shortage-ridden economy.

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HUNGARY

Budapest Hosts Expert-Level Energy Conference

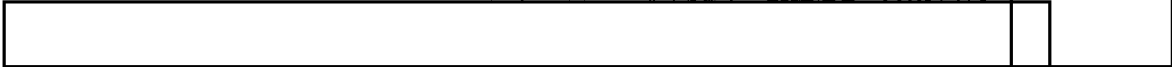
Representatives of scientific-technical associations in the Warsaw Pact countries and France attended a conference on

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on the problems of "industrial energy economy" in Budapest on February 13-14. A Hungarian English-language press release said that the increased emphasis on "energy economy" had made it advisable to hold energy conferences more frequently than in the past. The statement claimed that the normal practice had been to hold a meeting once every three years.



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