

Top Secret

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NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE DAILY CABLE

Tuesday 18 October 1977 CG NIDC 77/242C

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National Intelligence Daily Cable for Tuesday, 18 October 1977.

The NID Cable is for the purpose of informing senior US officials.

CONTENTS

[Redacted]

INDIA-USSR: Desai's Coming Visit	Page 2
USSR: Intensified Propaganda	Page 3
LEBANON-PLO: No Withdrawal Yet	Page 4

[Redacted]

NAMIBIA: Talks with SWAPO	Page 6
WESTERN SAHARA: Mediation Efforts	Page 8
EGYPT: Rumored Cabinet Changes	Page 9

[Redacted]

CANADA: Elections	Page 11
BRIEFS	Page 11

France
Czechoslovakia
[Redacted]
Nicaragua

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INDIA-USSR: Desai's Coming Visit

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[Redacted] //During his six-day visit to the USSR beginning this Friday, Indian Prime Minister Desai will probably seek to convince Soviet leaders that his policy of "true non-alignment" presents no dangers to Soviet interests. The Indians believe--correctly in our view--that Moscow is concerned that India is moving much closer to the US/

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[Redacted]

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[Redacted] //The Indians would like to diversify their foreign sources of arms but are well aware that they have little alternative to reliance on the USSR for many years to come. Although Desai will try to ease his hosts' worries, he is unlikely to give automatic support--as his predecessors sometimes did in Moscow--to Soviet positions on international issues.//

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[Redacted] //There has been no significant change in the past six months in Soviet willingness to supply economic aid and weapons to India. Moscow sees its economic and military aid to New Delhi as the basis of its presence in India.//

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[Redacted] //Last month, Premier Kosygin expressed concern to the secretary general of Desai's Janata Party about the future Soviet role in major development projects in India. The Soviets want to emphasize projects that give them both visibility and economic influence. Even under former Prime Minister Gandhi, there were differences between the two countries over issues such as India's desire for more sophisticated technology and over Soviet-Indian economic competition in some third world countries.//

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[Redacted]

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[redacted] //Desai's advisers believe that Moscow is attempting to offset his policies by organizing a rival pro-Soviet bloc within the Janata Party and by increasing Soviet influence with Indian Communists--not only the pro-Moscow party, but also the independent Marxist Communists who now rule West Bengal state. Previous Indian prime ministers have enjoyed Soviet support even when it conflicted with the interests of Indian Communists.//

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[redacted] //India has been the cornerstone of Soviet policy in South Asia and the Indian Ocean since the early 1960s. The Soviets have seen India as the only power in the region capable of balancing the Chinese. More recently, they have begun to view India as a possible counterweight to Iran.//

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[redacted] //Since the Janata Party's victory in March, the Soviets have been concerned over what they have characterized as a trend to the right in South Asia, represented by the changes of government in India, Sri Lanka, and Pakistan. [redacted]

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USSR: Intensified Propaganda

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[redacted] An *Izvestia* article published on Sunday indicates that Soviet propagandists are responding aggressively to Western criticisms voiced at the current Belgrade CSCE conference on the USSR's human rights record, especially on the free exchange of information. The recent house arrests of Jewish activists in Moscow, meanwhile, seem to have ended. The increased rate of Jewish emigration evident during the summer, and mainly in September, is apparently continuing and may even have increased.

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[redacted] The *Izvestia* article, elaborating on an earlier *Pravda* attack on the proposed reorganization of the United States Information Agency, charged that the US is moving into open "psychological warfare" against the USSR. Focusing on Radio Liberty and Radio Free Europe, *Izvestia* calls both "shameful symbols" of the "psychological warfare" that it says characterizes the whole US approach to cultural exchanges.

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[redacted] *Izvestia's* attack clearly reflects Soviet sensitivity toward the West's ability to transmit information directly to

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Soviet citizens and toward the established appeal for Soviet intellectuals of academic and cultural exchanges with the West and especially with the US.

25X1 [redacted] Additionally, *Izvestia* last Saturday rehashed the now-familiar charges of espionage leveled against a number of former US correspondents in Moscow, and again called Robert Toth of the *Los Angeles Times* a "spy." It did not repeat earlier allegations of CIA connections with some US journalists, but charged once again that Moscow-based US correspondents incite dissidents and Jewish activists.

25X1 [redacted] While public agitation by Soviet Jews continues to be curbed, the house arrest of several Moscow Jews reportedly ended on 10 October. The timing of this harassment suggests the purpose was to prevent a sit-in or other demonstration during the recent sessions of the Supreme Soviet, whose pro forma approval of the new Soviet constitution received worldwide publicity.

25X1 [redacted] The rate of Soviet Jewish emigration for the first half of October, meanwhile, seems to have remained at least at the significantly higher levels observed in September and may be rising. The Belgrade conference clearly has been the foremost factor influencing Soviet emigration policy in recent months. If the current trend continues, Jewish emigration could approach 2,000 per month, in contrast to the 1,100 to 1,200 monthly average that prevailed for several years and until June of this year. [redacted]

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LEBANON-PLO: No Withdrawal Yet

25X1 [redacted] *The Lebanese Government and the Palestinians have yet to implement phase III of the shaturah accord, which calls for a Palestinian withdrawal in southern Lebanon and the deployment of Lebanese Army units to strategic points along the Lebanese-Israeli border.*

25X1 [redacted] The government is blaming the delay on "technical difficulties," but the real cause is the absence of any resolution of conflicting Palestinian and Israeli concerns. The Palestinians wish to avoid the appearance of withdrawing under Israeli pressure and want assurances that the Lebanese Army

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will be able to block the Christian militias from expanding their enclaves. Israel wants to prevent the disbandment of the Christian militias, both to assure its continued political control in the immediate border area and to preserve its "good fence" program.

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[redacted] Artillery exchanges between Palestinians and Lebanese Christian forces in southern Lebanon, which escalated toward the end of last week, abated on Sunday. The Palestinians have complained of Israeli participation in several of last week's violations; the Israelis have publicly acknowledged their involvement. [redacted]

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NAMIBIA: Talks with SWAPO

25X1 [redacted] *The delegation from the South-West Africa People's Organization that is meeting with the Western contact group in New York has rejected South Africa's plan to withdraw only part of its troops from Namibia before an independent government is established. SWAPO's counterproposals stipulate that all the troops must be withdrawn before a preindependence election is conducted. Although the SWAPO delegates are adamant on this primary issue, they appear anxious to avert a collapse of the Western effort to devise an internationally acceptable independence program. The talks may exert a moderating influence on the UN General Assembly's discussion of the Namibia problem that is to begin today.*

25X1 [redacted] The detailed transitional program that the SWAPO delegates presented to the Western contact group last Saturday confirms SWAPO's previous offer to implement a cease-fire as soon as South African troops begin a phased withdrawal. SWAPO is adamant, however, that a cease-fire agreement include several points from its transitional program:

- A UN peacekeeping force must be phased in as the South African troops leave.

-- The withdrawal must be completed within three months of a cease-fire.

-- There must be six-month interval between the withdrawal and a preindependence election.

25X1 [] The SWAPO delegates believe that any remaining South African troops might continue repressive tactics, and they insist that SWAPO's exiled leadership must have ample time to return home and carry out an unfettered election campaign. The South Africans, for their part, fear that an unchecked UN force would allow SWAPO cadres to use coercive tactics and seem determined to keep enough troops in place to counteract any resumption of SWAPO guerrilla incursions from Angola. In addition, South Africa's latest transitional proposals stipulate that an election must be held within six weeks of the partial troop withdrawal.

25X1 [] Although neither side seems disposed to compromise on these issues, the SWAPO delegates now appear as anxious as the South Africans at least to avoid blame for scuttling the Western diplomatic initiative.

25X1 [] On Saturday, the SWAPO delegates accepted a Western proposal that the South African administrator-general, who assumed office in Namibia last month, work in tandem with a special UN representative throughout the transitional period. The delegates showed flexibility on other significant points; they intimated, for example, that SWAPO would not insist on a one-for-one replacement of South African troops with UN troops.

25X1 [] The SWAPO delegates also promised the contact group that the details of the South African withdrawal plan--submitted to them by the contact group--would not be mentioned in the course of the UN General Assembly debate on Namibia. It seems unlikely, however, that the SWAPO spokesmen in the General Assembly will forgo the opportunity to assert demands for a complete troop withdrawal before the start of a pre-election campaign. []

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WESTERN SAHARA: Mediation Efforts

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[] Recent efforts by Saudi Arabia, Senegal, and Tunisia to mediate Algeria's dispute with Morocco and Mauritania over Western Sahara have foundered over the continuing unwillingness of either side to compromise its basic position.

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[] Algeria has not budged from its insistence on consultations with the people of Western Sahara through an internationally supervised referendum, and it continues to support Polisario Front guerrillas seeking independence for the former Spanish territory. Morocco and Mauritania are unwilling to allow such consultations and want to limit any negotiations to reducing tensions in the region.

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[] The most persistent mediator has been Saudi Arabia, which over the past year has made several attempts to resolve the dispute. Its primary concern is to keep the dispute from escalating into open hostilities between Morocco and Algeria that could become another distraction from the broader Arab interest in the Arab-Israeli situation.

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[] A Senegalese initiative last month was motivated by a growing concern over Polisario guerrilla attacks against neighboring Mauritania, the weakest party to the dispute. Although Senegalese President Senghor's public proposal for a referendum never got off the ground, he may have been reassured by King Hassan that Morocco would continue to provide Mauritania with military support against guerrilla attacks.

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[] Tunisian Foreign Minister Chatti held separate talks with Algerian President Boumediene, Mauritanian President Ould Daddah, and King Hassan this week in an apparent effort to act as an intermediary. Chatti had earlier expressed hope that the dispute might be resolved by negotiations at the Arab foreign ministers' conference scheduled to be held in Tunis on 12 November. He would like Tunisia to share credit if talks do take place. []

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EGYPT: Rumored Cabinet Changes

25X1 [] Recent articles in the semiofficial Egyptian newspaper *Al-Ahram* lend credence to rumors that President Sadat plans to form a new government soon. Changes in the cabinet probably would be largely cosmetic, designed to reduce popular frustration by fostering the impression that Sadat is assembling a team better able to deal with pressing economic problems and Middle East negotiations.

25X1 [] According to *Al-Ahram*, Prime Minister Salim has already begun consultations with candidates for ministerial positions and has accepted the resignation of at least one cabinet member. A companion commentary--written by an editor who apparently has personal ties with Sadat--listed improvement in the economy, further political liberalization, and improvement of relations with the USSR and Libya as high priorities for the new government.

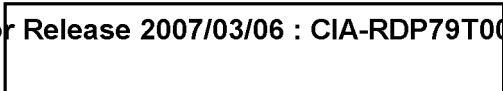
25X1 [] If the *Al-Ahram* articles were inspired by Sadat, it would appear that the two most prominent figures in the current government--Salim and Foreign Minister Fahmi--will retain their posts. Fahmi has strongly advocated a more balanced policy toward the USSR, and in so doing has annoyed but perhaps influenced Sadat.

25X1 [] Before the current Middle East peace initiative gained momentum, there was considerable speculation that Sadat would remove Fahmi because of the latter's "pro-Soviet" position, his close association with step-by-step diplomacy, and his poor relations with key Saudi and Syrian diplomats.

25X1 [] Although Sadat's relationship with the Foreign Minister has been cool for months, Sadat may now see some merit in allowing Fahmi to temper Egyptian policy toward Moscow. This would help mute domestic criticism of Sadat's antagonistic treatment of the Soviets and would accommodate what the Egyptians interpret as a US decision to give the Soviets a greater role in the peace negotiations.

25X1 [] Sadat's retention of Salim would be puzzling. Salim is not a popular prime minister and has been widely criticized for mishandling the events that touched off nationwide rioting

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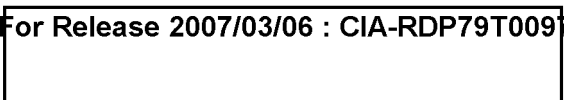
last January. He has not demonstrated much talent for running the government or for leading Sadat's centrist party in the Egyptian parliament. Salim's failure to contain a recent upsurge in extremist political activity by both the Egyptian right and left has undermined Sadat's confidence in Salim's once highly touted performance in the security and intelligence fields. It is possible, however, that Salim will be given another chance because of his close personal ties with Sadat.

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CANADA: Elections

25X1 [redacted] //An upset election victory by the Progressive Conservatives in Manitoba Province earlier this week has enhanced the Tories' prospects in Canada's national election that is widely predicted for next spring.//

25X1 [redacted] //The provincial Tories, led by Sterling Lyon, won 33 of the 57 seats in the provincial assembly, a gain of 10, while the incumbent New Democratic Party under Edward Schreyer held onto only 23 of its 31 seats. The Liberals, who had looked on the election as a test of their resurgence in the western provinces where the Tories and the New Democrats are dominant, were able to retain only one of the three seats they held going into the contest.//

25X1 [redacted] //For conservative leader Joe Clark, the victory provides an especially welcome boost before the Tories' annual party conference next month. The Conservatives now head five of Canada's ten provinces, and all five premiers have solidly endorsed Clark's leadership.//

25X1 [redacted] //The latest Gallup poll shows that the Liberals now trail the Conservatives in western Canada for the first time in four months and may be losing ground in Quebec and Ontario, the Liberals' traditional base of power. Although the Liberals maintain a sizable edge over the Tories in voter popularity nationwide, the poll indicates that a record 38 percent of the electorate is now undecided--further evidence that the wide popularity Prime Minister Trudeau's Liberal Party enjoyed this summer was fragile and may be lost well before any election next spring. [redacted]

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BRIEFS

France

25X1 [redacted] More complete data on a recent public opinion poll indicates that the Communist-Socialist-Left Radical alliance is not losing as much support among the voters as appeared to be the case following the breakdown of negotiations on the Common Program on 22 September. According to the poll, which was

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taken between 30 September and 4 October, 50 percent of the voters now intend to vote for the Left Alliance, 47 percent for the governing coalition, and 3 percent for the ecologists. It was the first time that voters had been given an opportunity to declare in favor of the ecologists.

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[redacted] Another poll indicates that seven out of 10 voters who favor the ecologists would cast their vote for a leftist candidate in the second round. Assuming that these percentages hold and that the Left parties reach an electoral accord, they could probably still count on getting 52 percent of the total vote in the two rounds--enough to overcome gerrymandering and give the Left a victory at the polls next March. / [redacted]

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Czechoslovakia

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[redacted] Czechoslovak authorities yesterday began a closed trial of four prominent dissidents. The stiffest charges have been lodged against former theater director Ota Ornest and journalist Jiri Lederer, who were accused of maintaining "conspiratorial links" with Czechoslovak emigres and smuggling anti-state articles abroad. They could get up to 10 years in jail. The other two defendants, theater director Frantisek Pavlicek and playwright Vaclav Havel, face maximum prison sentences of five and three years, respectively.

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[redacted] All except Ornest are signatories of the Charter 77 human rights manifesto released last January. The authorities apparently have pushed the Ornest case to the forefront, partly because they may have the best evidence against him and partly to prove their contention that the trials are not aimed specifically at Charter 77.

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[redacted] Ornest reportedly was the only one of the four to plead guilty yesterday. All but the closest relatives of the accused have been barred from the courtroom, but some 50 people gathered nearby yesterday. Around 20 of the Charter 77 signatories were reportedly held briefly by the police, who warned them to stay away from the courthouse. [redacted]

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Nicaragua

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[redacted] Leftist Sandinist National Liberation Front guerrillas in Nicaragua fought National Guard troops in Managua and other urban centers yesterday. Guerrillas attacked National Guard headquarters and a patrol in the capital and killed four soldiers nine miles southeast of Managua while ambushing a convoy. Last week, Sandinist guerrillas attacked National Guard troops at two widely separated locations, killing 10 soldiers.

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[redacted] The recent upsurge in guerrilla activity seems to indicate some increased outside support for the Sandinists, who had been generally quiescent. They probably have been spurred by the lifting of martial law and President Somoza's heart attack in July. Somoza reportedly is directing counterinsurgency operations. Guard troops outnumber the guerrillas by at least 20 to one. [redacted]

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