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JPRS L/9091

15 May 1980

Latin America Report

(FOUO 11/80)

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LATIN AMERICA REPORT

(FOUO 11/80)

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DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

BRIEFS

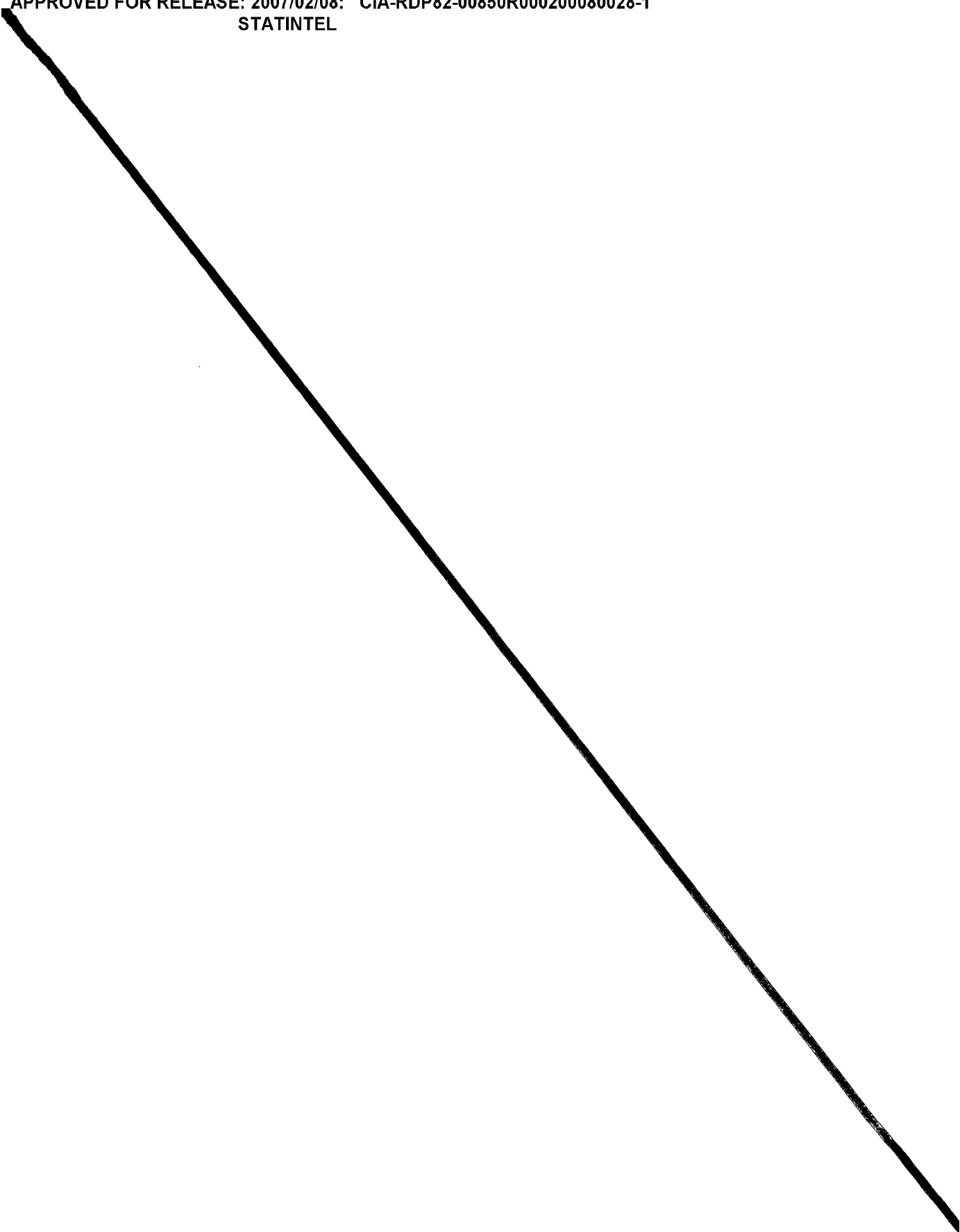
POLICE ATTACK DEMONSTRATORS--Santo Domingo, 3 May (PL)--A dozen persons beaten and imprisoned and two students seriously injured was the preliminary toll of police attacks against demonstrations held on the occasion of the 15th anniversary of the U.S. invasion of the Dominican Republic. Two youths were injured when taking part in a demonstration in the downtown zone of the capital, while in San Cristobal, 30 km from the capital, police agents arrested and beat up two communist militants. In La Romana in the southeast of the country, six members of the communist party were also detained and accused of putting up placards referring to those who fell during the U.S. invasion of the island. On 28 April 1976, the United States began a military intervention of the Dominican Republic with the support of the OAS and the so-called inter-American peace force, made up of Brazil, Costa Rica and Colombia. [Text] [PA021908 Havana PRELA in English 1715 GMT 2 May 80]

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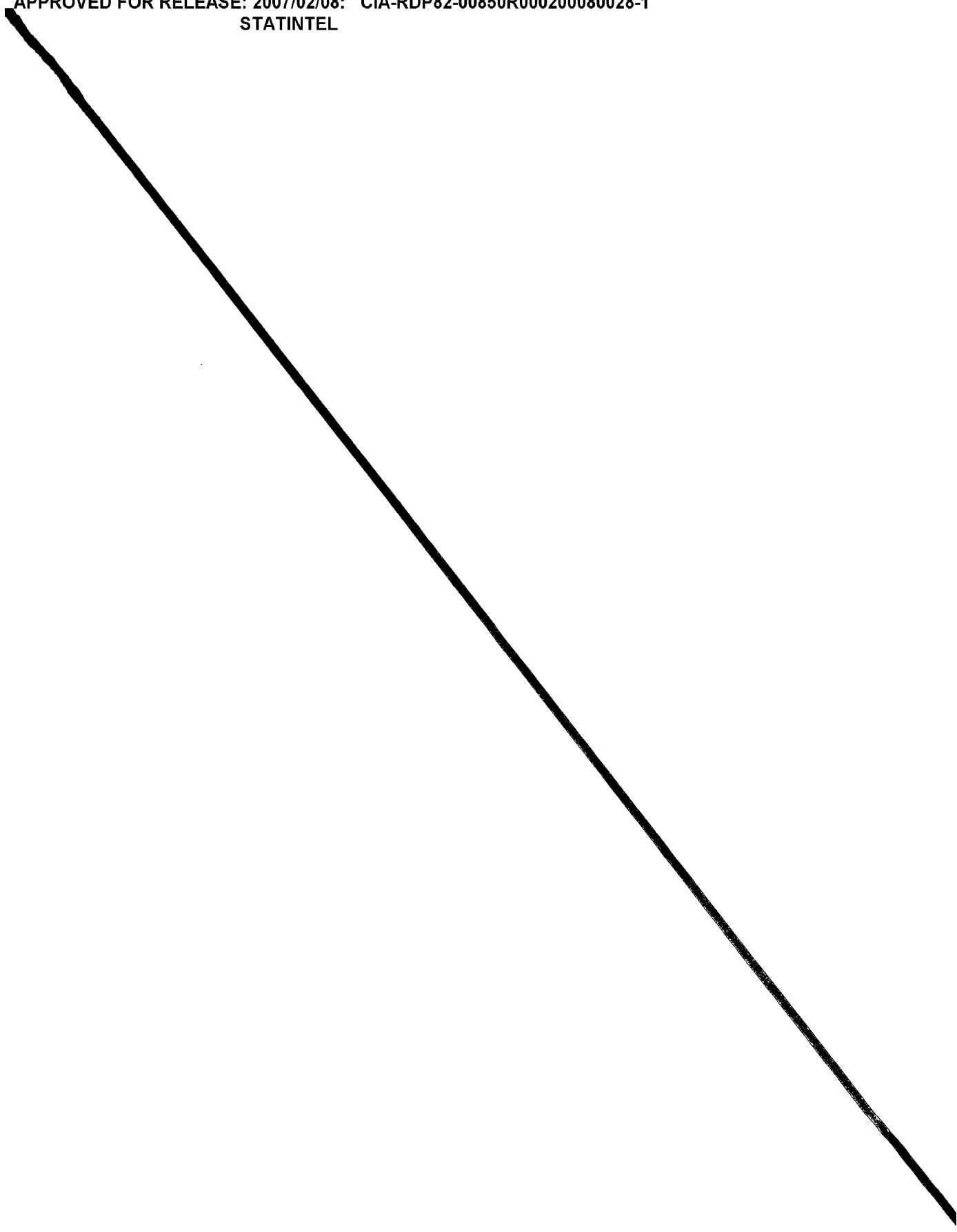
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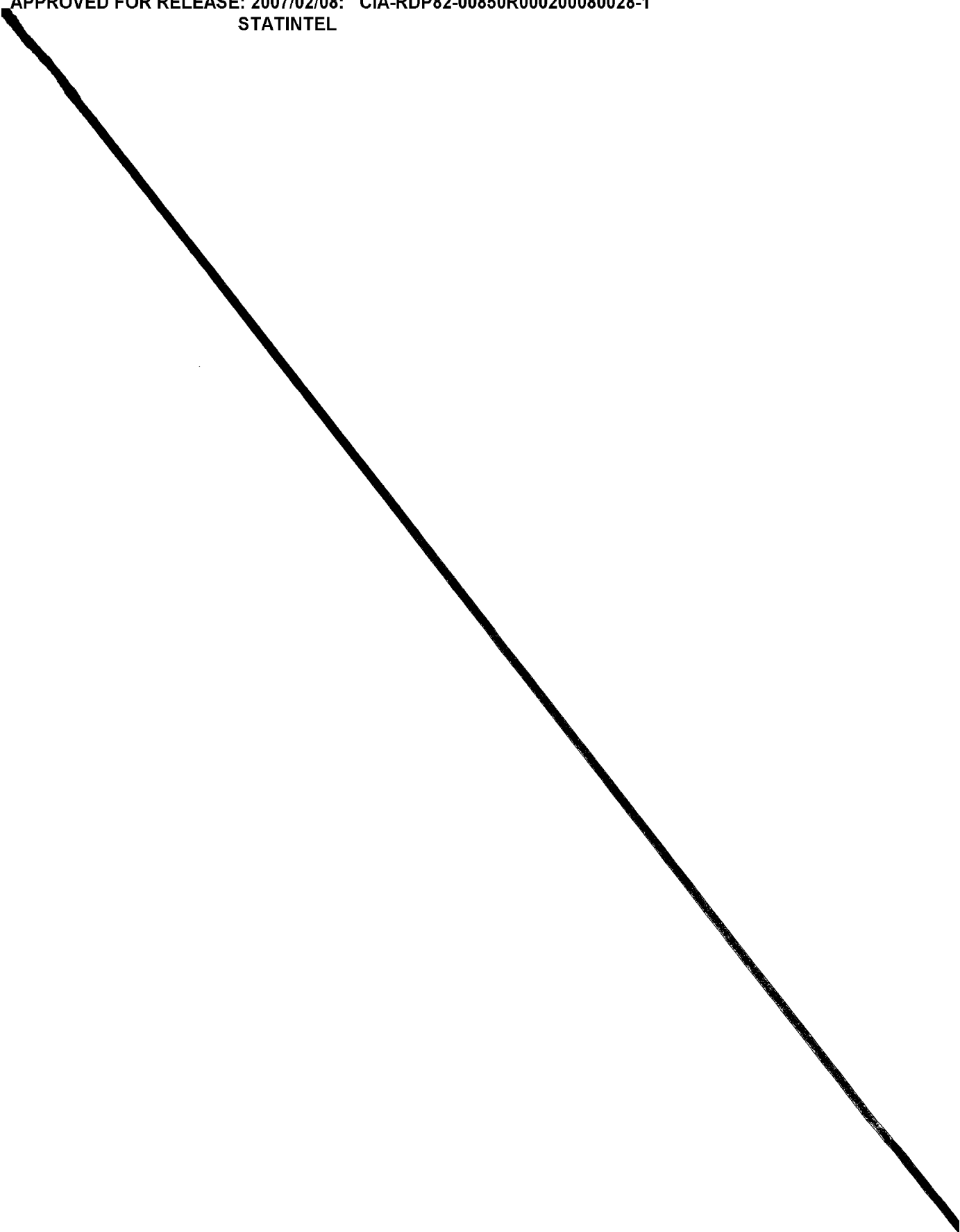
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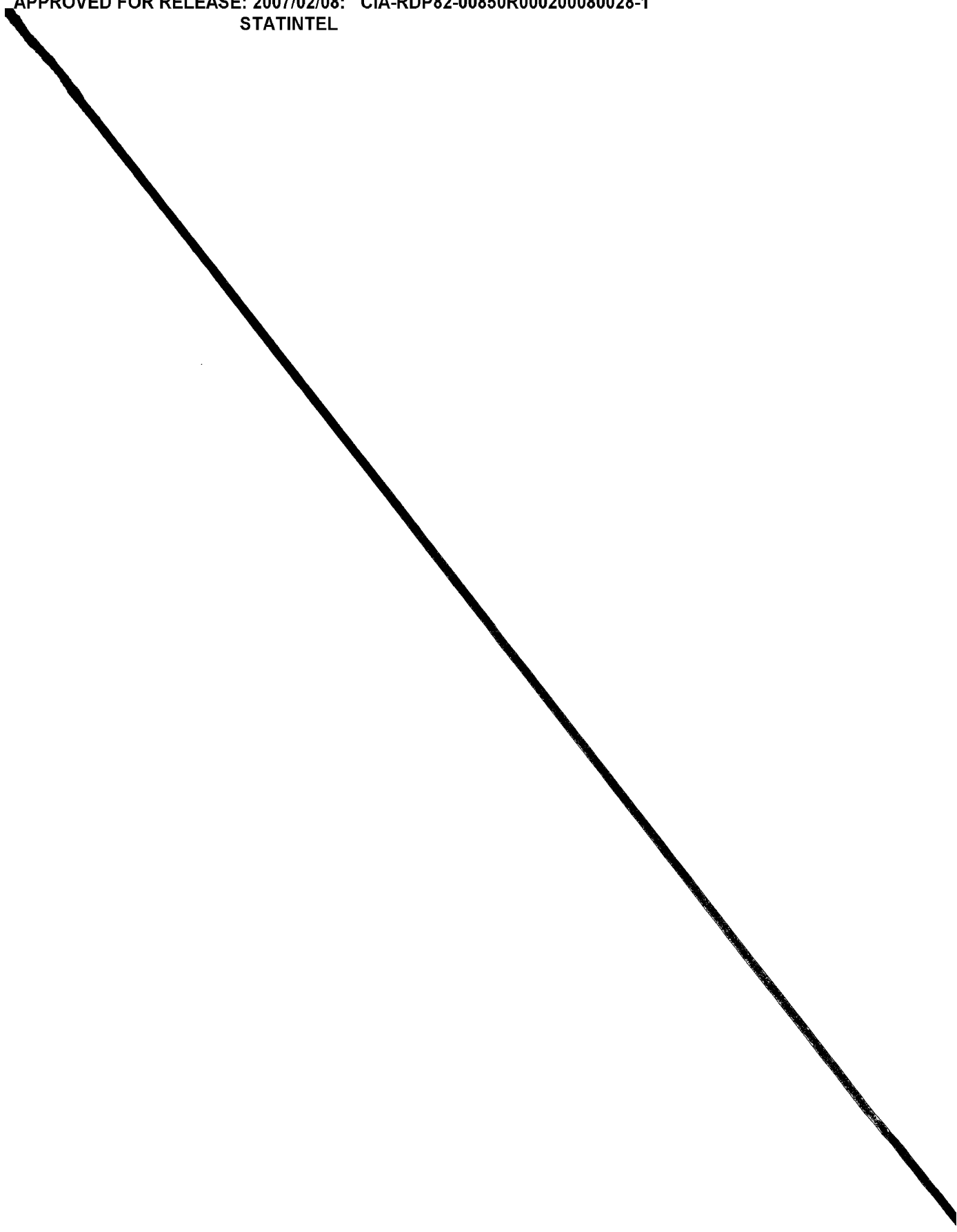
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HONDURAS

'PRENSA LATINA' INTERVIEW WITH PASO'S CARIAS

PA301411 Havana PRELA in Spanish 2326 GMT 28 Apr 80

[Interview with Virgilio Carias, secretary general of the Honduran Socialist Party]

[Text] San Jose, 28 Apr (PL)--The secretary general of the Honduran Socialist Party (PASO), Virgilio Carias, said the United States seeks to turn Honduras into a political gendarme with a democratic disguise in order to maintain its interests in Central America.

Carias explained that the international situation, pressures from some U.S. circles and the present conditions in Central America do not permit the role of gendarme to be evident; therefore, it must camouflage it with a democratic disguise.

The recent elections of 20 April to elect a national constituent assembly, with the unexpected victory of the Liberal Party, constitute part of that democratic disguise.

Referring to the main objective of the new U.S. policy for Central America, Carias said it is intended to maintain U.S. economic interests and those of its transnational in the area, which is currently affected by the Nicaraguan revolution and the present developments in El Salvador and Guatemala.

In need of a gendarme in the region, the United States is supplying Honduras with arms, munitions, technical assistance and capital, and has the support of the Honduran armed forces and private enterprises, he added.

This situation, he noted, will have unpredictable consequences for the nation because sooner or later the Honduran army would have to plunge into a war with Nicaragua and, on this occasion, the fight would not be against another army, but against a people in arms.

Carias called on the Honduran armed forces to unite and prevent the country from being turned into an isthmian police.

The 20 April elections held in Honduras, which some parties considered fraudulent, are described by some observers as a U.S. maneuver to give the nation a democratic appearance.

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MARTINIQUE

ISSUES OF CUBAN PRESENCE, AUTONOMY CONFRONT MARTINIQUE

Survey of Current Problems

Paris LE NOUVEL OBSERVATEUR in French 14-20 Apr 80 pp 50-51

[Article by Kathleen Evin: "The Collapse of Martinique"]

[Text] The police will not be enough to help Paul Dijoud cure the "Antilles fever" that is inexorably eating away at the French Caribbean islands.

"Order has been reestablished in Martinique.... The street fighting is over." A Belfast in the tropics? That is probably what Paul Dijoud wanted people to believe. He is the latest in a series of transitory state secretaries for Overseas Departments and Territories, and made this military statement in the issue of last 20 March in Robert Hersant's LE FIGARO. The next day, his remarks were broadly and obligingly repeated on the front page of Martinique's only local daily paper, FRANCE-ANTILLES, also owned by Robert Hersant. The people of Martinique didn't know whether to laugh or scowl. The truth is that nothing unusual had happened on the flowery island for several months. Nothing at all. Yet two weeks earlier, 220 mobile policemen with shaved heads and muscles bulging in shirtsleeves had been hastily disembarked from a regular Air France flight requisitioned for the occasion. Brute force!

Now the office of the state secretary for Overseas Departments and Territories is drawing up the "balance sheet" of the operation with obvious satisfaction: "We didn't even have to 'turn the the police loose.' It was enough to have them go out on patrol two or three times in Fort-de-France for everything to calm down." Everything? What everything? No one killed, of course, not even wounded; a few union demonstrations, the town blockaded for three hours one morning by angry taxi drivers (as was happening in Paris at the same time) and a manager was locked in his office for a day and a night, which was unheard of in a department traditionally respectful of authority. It was a non-violent incident but quite a scandal for the Martinique management elite.

But what about the street fighting? Oh, yes, it is true that people can recall a "barricade" going up in front of the police station on Oudinot St. on 20 October 1979. Of course, it was only made out of banana boxes. They were empty, and for good reason: there wasn't a single banana left on the island after

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hurricane David. That was last 20 October, 4 1/2 months before the 220 mobile policemen were sent in.

The most "informed" people immediately found the real reason for this deployment of forces: it is actually supposed to have been an attempt to intimidate the "Cubans," which the Hersant press has been denouncing for two months, as has the RPR [Rally for the Republic] local, for "infiltration" and other "subversive activities." Paul Dijoud showed surprise but then finally repeated these accusations of his own accord, though not overenthusiastically, without being able to supply the slightest proof. In Martinique, talk of the "bearded ones" makes people laugh, especially since a journalist (again from the Hersant press, need we say) hardly off the plane from Paris wrote a series of articles describing in detail the "Castroite invasion." Too much rum and sun? The discussion was cut short a few days ago when the virulent Martinique RPR "shock leader" and mayor of Marigot, Michel Renard, admitted at a press conference that he had "no material facts" proving there were Cubans on the island. "You may be sure that if I had a single such fact, I would have already used it," he concluded. With friends like him, who needs enemies?

No street fighting or Cubans. Actually, Martinique has still not recovered from hurricane David, which devastated the island last 29 August and worsened the endemic economic and social problems that afflict Martinique as they do other French overseas possessions. These problems are widely written up and violently denounced every year in National Assembly budget reports, which are, however, given to people elected by the majority. Here is a passage chosen at random from the 1979-80 fiscal year report: "Unemployment remaining at more than 20 percent in departments where young people comprise more than 60 percent of the population is creating an explosive situation.... A special effort to encourage productive investment must be undertaken if the economy is not to succumb to a system of income assistance unacceptable to all.... Agricultural jobs continue to decline (20.6 percent in 1978), the increase in secondary sector jobs is extremely slow (20.5 percent), and the tertiary sector is becoming saturated (58.9 percent)."

Decline and Bluster

Add to that social benefits and a minimum wage lower than in France, an increasing population outflow (down 7,000 in 1978), an increasing decline in the birth rate, and a 21 percent negative balance of trade in 1978, and you will have a succinct but not exhaustive idea of the problems. "Difficult, true, but exciting," according to the astonishing words of a young lion of Oudinot St. and former Martinique subprefect. The Antilleans must face these problems 30 years after a departmentalization that was supposed "to liquidate once and for all the vestiges of colonialism."

Yet the banana plantations and truck gardens had to be devastated by the hurricane, and almost all the agricultural workers and employees in related industries (transportation, packaging, retailers, etc.) had to be thrown out of work for the government finally to decide to provide unemployment benefits to the overseas "departments." In a monoculture economy, if agriculture sneezes

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all the other sectors catch a cold. After the hurricane, the prices of food and consumer goods rose 100 percent in some cases. Worry and discontent followed such increases.

With timing that was debatable at the very least, Paul Dijoud chose just that moment to announce that he was planning to adjust downward the living-cost bonus (now equal to 40 percent of salary) that overseas employees enjoy. Of course it was a necessary measure, but this privilege has been in effect since the Third Republic, and his announcement could have been put off till a better time. It was a fatal mistake. In a few days in October Paul Dijoud found himself faced not only with his usual opponents, unions, and opposition parties but also those who had always supported the regime: public workers, the Antillean bourgeoisie, "bekes" (creole whites) stunned by the announcement of forthcoming fiscal reform, and office holders in the majority. For everyone, hurricane David revealed as much as it destroyed.

From bluster to hasty retreat (the reduction of the employees' bonus and tax reform were put off indefinitely) the only thing left was a show of force to close the discussion. But, curiously, very few Martinicans, even majority-party voters, appreciated this sudden deployment of police. With exacerbated pride and sensitivity, Antilleans are always apprehensive of finding remnants of the old colonialist and racist scorn in authoritarian power plays in France. While the French Antilles had been oriented exclusively toward the mother country since the Colonial Pact, they have been finding in the last few months that they are surrounded not only by water but also by neighboring islands, which, large and small, have almost all now acceded to independence. It is a strange situation for the Martinicans and Guadeloupeans, who are uncertain about the attitude they should take towards the young republics of Dominica, St. Lucia, St. Vincent, or Grenada (all former possessions of the British crown), whether they should have a strong superiority complex due to their superior standard of living and socio-cultural development or whether they should feel humiliated to still be "colonials" while their beggarly neighbors are finally "free men."

The little rococo courthouse of Fort-de-France sits white and green in a garden of century-old mango and frondy palm trees. It is living out its last days in the overwhelming shadow of the "administrative complex," a crass pile of concrete mounted on pillars and soon to be dedicated. "Not only is it awful," exclaimed an elderly Foyalan lady indignantly (Fort-de-France used to be called Fort-Royal, whence the name of its inhabitants: "Foyalais"), "but a French company got the contract." If what she says is true, it is another stone thrown into the yard of the PPM (Martinique Progressive Party), which has traditionally inveighed against the "French bekés," who are the "illegal" holders of jobs rightfully belonging to Martinicans.

Fear of Sacrifice

Amused by the tumult and shouting unleashed by the recent interview in PARIS-MATCH, Aime Cesaire, deputy mayor of Fort-de-France, sharpened his words pointedly: "I believe in historical evolution. When I say Martinique will be

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independent sooner or later, it is not wishful thinking, it is obvious. Our political demand, on the other hand, is autonomy as a stage--more or less long, I don't know--towards this inescapable destiny. But to grant independence right now to this country debilitated by 30 years of departmentalization would be catastrophic. Actually, independence was a more realistic objective 30 years ago." Speaking as a poet more than as a politician, Aime Cesaire talks passionately about "the Martinican, a welfare client who has sold his soul for a mess of pottage," who must be given back "his dignity by taking away his fear of necessary sacrifice" that he must consent to in order to recover his identity. Returning to the Marxist language of his youth, he says, "Martinique has the superstructure of an overdeveloped country and the infrastructure of an underdeveloped country." This artificiality cannot last forever.

While no honest spokesman really disputes the PPM founder's diagnosis, "autonomists" and "departmentalists" do split over the remedies to be applied to the "Antillean illness." "Even more departmentalization," say some who are not yet tired of hearing each new prefect, minister, and presidential candidate since 1947 announce the early "disappearance of the last vestiges of colonialism." "Let's take our destiny into our own hands," say others, who are tired of being refused the least bit of autonomy by deciders who decide everything at a distance of 8,000 km. They have come to think of independence as the only way out. Rather than taking a middle course, the French government forces the Antilleans to make a Manichaeian choice between all or nothing. Nothing, as we know, is today. "Everything" has so far been the weak point of the "separatist" argument: how to keep an independent Martinique alive without selling once again its "mess of pottage" for a bundle of dollars or rubles? Neither the PCM [Martinique Communist Party] nor the PPM had yet provided an answer to this fundamental question.

Two events have helped clarify the debate. First, the independence of neighboring islands in recent years has proved that they may not be Peru, but they were not necessarily Cuba or Chili, either. On Grenada and especially St. Lucia, the new leaders have been careful to maintain their progressive image and have adroitly applied aid and foreign capital without striking their colors to either of these avid contributors.

The PPM had confined itself for some time to nationalism ("racism," its opponents say) and was joined after the March 1978 election by a group of intellectuals, younger than most of its leaders had been, more open to the problems of socialism in general, and better informed about economic realities. Men of the Martinique Socialist Party [PSM], which had come out of the moribund Socialist Party [PS], quickly made themselves indispensable. They took over the PPM weekly, LE PROGRESSISTE, with Cesaire's approval and continuing support, and they are presently refining the texts that are to be adopted at the next party congress, in June: plans for society and an economic program. The leader of these "young Turks," Dr Claude Lise, former PS federal secretary, recently won election easily as general councilor in the 4th canton of Fort-de-France. This attractive, intelligent-looking theoretician already appears

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to be Aime Cesaire's official heir apparent. People are saying that Cesaire may not run for reelection. At the age of 67, after 34 years in public life, Cesaire rightly thinks he has earned the right to devote himself to literature.

The Minister and the Halftracks

A recent illustration of the new PPM audience is the debate that has started over Antillean emigration and French immigration, which Aime Cesaire has called "genocide by substitution." "Martinique is being emptied of its vitality, its young people, who are being sent to take menial jobs in France, and French people are being imported en masse to take jobs that are said not to exist when Martinicans ask for them." Majority party representatives immediately clamored, "racism, racism," and were supported by their minister. "We ought not to have any complexes," retorted Roland Suvelor, editor in chief of LE PROGRESSISTE. "It's not racism. We have merely calculated from official statistics on immigration and the birth rate that there will be only 225,000 people in Martinique 20 years from now, and at least half of them will have come from France." Today the island has about 350,000 people, about 5,000 of whom are "bekes" and about 10,000 "metros" [French].

This is a simple argument that has upset not a few people and obliged the spokesmen of the UDF [French Democratic Union] and the RPR to "leften" their positions. We have even seen the strange spectacle of a departmental secretary of Jacques Chirac's party and a virulent opponent of Aime Cesaire publicly denounce the "bosses who behave like veritable colonialists," call for "sharing of local production," and "war on import-export big shots." The "Antillean disease" seems to be gaining ground, and neither the time-worn, vague promises of a transitory minister nor the halftracks of the police seem to be up to holding it back. Nor does the threat made last month by Paul Dijoud seem effective: resorting, in case of need, to nuclear force!

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Cesaire on Pro-Independence Sentiment

Paris PARIS MATCH in French 28 Mar 80 pp 36-37

[Interview of Aime Cesaire by Laurence Masurel: "Aime Cesaire: Martinique Will Soon Be Independent"; date and place of interview not given]

[Text] While Paris sends 300 mobile policemen and reinforcements. But to avoid too sudden a shock, he foresees an intermediate stage: autonomy.

"Out with the French." "Out with the French army." "Out with Dijoud." For two weeks now the walls of Fort-de-France have been studded with graffiti that the police try to erase at night. While a happy calm reigns in the streets, you can still feel that things aren't right in Martinique any more. There are looks and words that are unmistakable. People say the slightest

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incident could touch off the powder keg on this paradise island invaded by thousands of "metro" tourists every week in search of sun and tropical folklore.

Since the declarations of Paul Dijoud, state secretary for the DOM/TOM [Overseas Departments and Territories], who announced, after a series of social disturbances, that "order would be maintained on Martinique as in any French department" and that, "if necessary, France was ready to use atomic weapons to defend the French in the Antilles" threatened by Cuba, Martinicans are angry. The recent arrival of two squads of mobile policemen sent as reinforcements from France has only poisoned things. The wildest rumors circulate every day. This one, for example: several black women were said to have been raped by white military men.

Aime Cesaire sits in his tiny, pistachio-green office on the second floor of the courthouse, Place de la Savane, where the tricolor was burned in December 1974 and Giscard was blockaded by a hostile crowd. He is a former professor of literature, writer, poet of Negritude, 67 years old, and has been deputy mayor of the city for 35 years. He is one of the best-liked officials on the island, even though he is now being opposed in his own party (the Martinique Progressive Party) and by certain extremists. Like all his compatriots, he is anxious about the future of the department: "The minister's statements are provocations. We are terrified at the idea that a public official can think that the solution to the Martinican problem can be found in the use of the atomic bomb--it gives us too much credit--and that it can be found in sending 300 mobile policemen to the Antilles. That's crazy. True," he explains, "there have been strikes, but this is a republic. The right to strike exists in all French departments, and our strikes are infinitely less harsh than those I have seen in France. We are choir boys next to striking Frenchmen."

[Question] But Mr mayor, it's not just the strikes. If what Paul Dijoud says is to be believed, Cubans are also agitating and stirring up nationalism among Martinicans.

[Answer] Madame, have you met any Cubans on Martinique since you got here? I have never seen any, no more than I've seen Martians or UFO's. I get the impression that Paris is looking for a pretext and an alibi. There is no kind of Cuban influence here. I am also convinced that Fidel Castro has other fish to fry than Martinique, like Ethiopia, Angola, and even Somalia.

[Question] But just the same, at the conference of non-aligned countries in Havana in 1979, a chapter was devoted to the French Antilles, which was supposed to "get rid of French colonialism," and that leads people to think that Castro would be ready to help you.

[Answer] How could any French government think that the question of the French Antilles would never be brought up? It seems obvious to me that they would inevitably get around to it. But I don't think that Castro has decided to pay attention to the Caribbean; his attention is turned much more to South America. The only Cubans we have seen came to participate in the annual

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Fort-de-France festival. They were only one group among other Caribbean groups invited.

[Question] Yet it is said that the left wing of your party, the PPM, has excellent relations with the Cubans and that other grouplets are being financed directly by Cuba.

[Answer] Look, people will say anything! There is an incredible difference between what people say in France and what is actually happening here. It's as though Martinique were a two-month boat trip from France.

[Question] Still, people say some members of your party are pro-Cuban.

[Answer] Why shouldn't there be some? We are a democratic, anti-Stalinist, humanist, socialist, self-management opposition party. We respect all points of view.

[Question] Paris is afraid of a nationalist awakening on Martinique. What do you think?

[Answer] The issue is departmentalization. As it has been construed in France and applied to Martinique, it is a failure. I am very disappointed. We will just have to chalk it up as an unfortunate experience.

[Question] Yet you voted for it in 1946.

[Answer] Yes, because I believed in it, but I was wrong. Departmentalization has failed for three main reasons. First, it has caused cultural alienation on Martinique. Our children no longer learn about "our ancestors, the Gauls," in school, but the tendency is still there. We are not Frenchmen in blackface makeup, we are black Antilleans and proud of it, though we are culturally French. Second, departmentalization has struck a mortal blow against our industrialization and agriculture. Our sugar factories have closed one after the other. With the Common Market, our island has been invaded by European products. Our interests have not been protected. Third, our young people and unemployed have left en masse to look for work in France, and those who have stayed behind can't find work. Departmentalization has put the country on welfare. It has killed production on Martinique, and it is killing the soul of Martinique by debasing it.

[Question] But then, what should be done to combat the present malaise?

[Answer] The malaise can only increase, and Dijoud's awkward statements won't help matters any. I am really frightened by the political blindness of the men who claim to be statesmen. They must abandon their myths and get back to reality. We are an underdeveloped tropical country of colored people. We must treat the problem by the appropriate means and take the country as it is. When people tell you that Martinique is the show window of France, that Martinique is France, and that it is also "tropical Europe," what kind of solution do you get when the issue is stated that way?

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[Question] I repeat my question: what should be done?

[Answer] The system of departmentalization has actually been a colonialist, paternalist system. It has treated people like children. Look at what happened after last summer's hurricane. (If there hadn't been one, it would have had to be invented!) The helicopters came to bring help. And what did the French supervisors say? "You see, you people under your coconut trees? It's a good thing France is there, good old mother France! Without her, no help, no salvation! And behold perfidious Albion, who has abandoned the poor Dominicans to shift for themselves after the devastating tempest. We of France bring you succor. We send you our helicopters. We proclaim national solidarity." It's as though they were running for election. France quickly increases family allocations and institutes special bonuses for young mothers with children. The result is that France has set up a system of social parasitism at the cost of Martinicans' dignity. The young generation of Martinique has become embittered, revolted or resigned.

[Question] Well, autonomy or independence?

[Answer] It's a false problem: sooner or later, Martinique will be independent. Montesquieu foresaw that. Colonies are like fruit: when they're ripe, they fall. I'm sure the Antilles will soon be independent. Look at the map: Dominica, St. Lucia, Grenada, and others are independent. Any little old island is independent these days. Martinique will be independent whether Dijoud likes it or not.

[Question] Quickly?

[Answer] I don't read tea leaves. It's almost a dead issue as far as I'm concerned. What interests me is what happens afterwards, because that's when the real problems begin. We have to get ready. My friends the Martinicans will have to be told, "Very well, you'll be independent, but look out! You're going to have to roll up your sleeves and work. You can't tell me, 'I'm not working because the sun's too hot,' or 'I'm not going out because it's raining today.'" We have to do an immense job by ourselves. We must not believe that there will be a "providence" candidate who will bring us food, clothing, leisure, and what else.

[Question] You're not afraid of the difficulty?

[Answer] After 20 years of departmentalism, we are in a situation where it will be hard. For that reason we will have to get autonomy in a first phase. That phase will be necessary for a while because it would be a catastrophe to hurry the country along toward independence in the state it is in. It would be too big a shock.

[Question] What does autonomy mean to you?

[Answer] That is a very French question. The French are drunk on Jacobinism. They forget that Italy has regions, Germany has Laender, and the United States

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has states. Autonomy means taking oneself in hand, allocating the budget, and no longer having to ask Rue Grenelle in Paris for authorization to build a school on the south end of the island. But we are a small country and cannot maintain an army or an ambassador, so we can rely on France, a bigger country, for that.

[Question] Will this period of autonomy last a long time?

[Answer] It's hard to tell. If Martinicans like it, it could last a long time, maybe forever.

[Question] Won't you be overrun? Won't Cubans, fronting for the Soviets, try to meddle in your affairs?

[Answer] What's keeping the Soviets now from being in Paris within 24 hours? Do you really think France could protect us from the Soviets? This isn't the age of Napoleon any more. The danger is everywhere. We have to take risks, be intelligent, and follow the course of history.

[Question] Do you really think autonomy or even independence can bring prosperity to Martinique?

[Answer] Everything depends on the ability of the people in power. Why should Martinique become poor, like Haiti? When Senegal became independent, they told Senghor, "O.K., you're going to eat your own peanuts now!" Well, I have not seen Senegal decline in comparison to the Senegal I knew when the French were there, nor have I seen any decline in the Ivory Coast. So why always expect the worst to happen?

[Question] If nothing is done to move towards autonomy, will there be violent confrontation on Martinique?

[Answer] The present system is the one that is generating violence. The slightest incident could unleash anything because the situation is unhealthy. That's why I say we must not go on like that. It is high time for France to revise its policy, a lazy, too authoritarian or too demagogic policy that may cause trouble.

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Dijoud on Pro-French Alignment

Paris PARIS MATCH in French 18 Apr 80 pp 68-69

[Interview with French Secretary of State for Overseas Departments and Territories Paul Dijoud: "The Antilles Will Remain French" by Laurence Masurel; date and place of interview not given]

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[Text] In the past few months, the Antilles have been the most talked-about French departments. This is due partly to the book "The Dancers of France," by our editor in chief Philippe de Baleine, who judges harshly the policy that has been followed toward these islands in the last 35 years. It is also due to the remarks made in the interview with Aime Cesaire that appeared in No 1609 concerning the "future independence" of the island. These were sacrilegious remarks for many of his fellow citizens. They were scandalous for Paul Dijoud, state secretary for DOM/TOM [Overseas Departments and Territories], who felt the interview could not go unanswered. Paul Dijoud made the following reply to our correspondent Laurence Masurel, who also interviewed the mayor of Fort-de-France.

[Question] After the statements you made and your sending two squads of mobile policemen to Martinique, are you aware that you are a target for all the political parties on the island?

[Answer] I am not greatly concerned about my personal popularity. What is important for me is the final result of the actions I take. You know that in my political life some things count more than others. I have three ambitions above all else: to serve the president of the Republic, to whom I have been politically committed since the age of 14; to serve my country where I am and with all the sacrifices that implies without expecting anything in return; to serve the people I am in charge of, especially the Martinicans at present. They cannot always understand what I want to do with them, for them, and for their future. I always tell them the truth, even when it is unpleasant to hear. The truth may sometimes be a little rough, but the truth is always useful.

[Question] And what is the truth for Martinique? Isn't it too late for that? Isn't separation inescapable?

[Answer] I'm sure it isn't. There are difficulties everywhere overseas, it's true. But people pretend not to see how far we have come. Did you know that the product per inhabitant of Martinique doubled between 1975 and 1978 and is continuing to grow at an increasing rate?

[Question] Your opponents say they would accept being less well off if they could be independent.

[Answer] It's not a matter of being less well off but of accepting economic and social collapse. It has been estimated that breaking the links between Martinique and France would reduce the people's living standards to 1/5 their present level. Only an especially harsh dictatorship could force the population to endure an independence of bankruptcy and poverty. More than anything else, we defend freedom in our overseas departments, the right to live in a free society.

One Can Be Both French And Martinican

[Question] But then why are you opposed to autonomy, which would not break relations?

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[Answer] Autonomy has enabled overseas territories, particularly in Polynesia, to find stability. It makes it possible for local elected officials to manage their own affairs. That being the case, I note that by different ways but inescapably they conduct among themselves a French-style society by extending to their people the rights and duties that we also give to our fellow citizens in the departments of France. Autonomy is not at issue; it is, rather, the recognition of difference and respect for specificity. I said this not long ago in Fort-de-France: we must understand the expectation of Antilleans who wish to be unreservedly French and who do not always understand why it is taking so long to build a truly French civilization and society in their country (that is what departmentalization is). But it must also be understood, and the logical conclusions must be drawn, that Antilleans, especially the youngest, feel they have other roots, and we must help them find them. In a word, it is absurd to let our opponents alone meet the needs of culture and this aspiration to identity. We have to prove that you can perfectly well be both French and Polynesian, French and Martinican.

[Question] If you don't believe in independence for Martinique, why these mobile policemen? Why the open conflict with the Independentists?

[Answer] Everything came together at once: very real economic difficulties, reforms that were not always well understood, although necessary, and especially a great breakdown of law and order, with factories being occupied, wildcat strikes, restrictions on the right to work, and even the destruction of equipment. Elected officials often came to talk to me about it, call for firmness, tell of economic officials' discouragement, the people's confusion and desire for calm and their hostility toward agitation and blockades, which had become too frequent in the streets of Fort-de-France on the part of irresponsible and extremist groups. That being the case, it shouldn't be blown out of proportion. The problem was only in Fort-de-France. Everywhere else, Martinique is calm and does not have these tensions.

[Question] Why Fort-de-France?

[Answer] Because in Fort-de-France, which is an independentist community, the number of poor people has been allowed to grow. They live in slums and shantytowns, with their attendant anger and frustration that are systematically exploited to oppose France and the government. They are abandoned to their fate deliberately for fear they might realize what France can do for them.

The city must be renovated, and the shantytowns eliminated, with public housing constructed in their place. But the city does not do it and does not want it.

[Question] And if it did?

[Answer] I have always been ready to receive the elected officials of Fort-de-France and study with them a real plan for renovating the city and in that way meeting the real expectations of Martinicans. Instead of talking about independence or autonomy, Messrs Cesaire, Regis or d'Arsieres would do better to come and work with the government to solve real problems. But they never

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have come.

Social Dialogue Must Be Renewed

[Question] Let's get back to your taking over.

[Answer] I realized it was necessary. Weren't some people saying that France was letting the fruit rot so as to get rid of it quicker?

It had to be proved to the majority that France would not leave. I said it firmly. It had to be said that we would defend the freedom of Martinique against all foreign or subversive threats. I did so. The prefect had to be given the means he needed to oppose repeated attacks on public order. That is why the government provided him, in an obvious and even ostentatious manner, with two flying squads of police. Of course they will not stay in Martinique indefinitely, but they will be there as long as normal social dialogue has not been renewed precisely to avoid infiltration and provocation. That being the case, social dialogue should start up again.

The Real Problems: Jobs, Incomes, Lodging

[Question] Social dialogue?

[Answer] Yes. Order for order's sake is not our objective. At the same time as I was guaranteeing Martinicans their everyday safety, I undertook to reestablish contact with representative union organizations, who I know now want, as I do, real concerted action to be taken on the real problems: employment, incomes, the situation of public workers, public housing, etc.

I am ready for this concerted action, because Martinique has real possibilities for making progress and development, and we should get it back on the track very quickly.

[Question] Do you really think the overseas departments and territories can be developed?

[Answer] I am sure of it. Besides the results already achieved, as I was saying, put them far ahead in their region, whether it be Reunion island, Polynesia or the Antilles. But there is still a lot to be done. Our model of development is well known: transfer payments, public investment, and national and local government expenditures increase local demand, which is added to the revenues resulting from agriculture and tourism and which of itself stimulates and flow of imports, which creates jobs in the tertiary sector. Finally, through the protection of sea rights, which are actually protective tariffs overseen by the General Councils, many imports are gradually replaced by local industrial production. This model is now proving effective.

[Question] Do you think local leadership groups will accept having their privileged place disappear?

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[Answer] The difficulties should not be overstated. Importers become industrialists, as, for example, on Martinique and Reunion. In New Caledonia, the basic reform was deplored loudly at first but is now accepted by everyone. It is the recognized priority of the territory. It will enable Melanesians to get ahead. A united and reconciled society will be built in that territory, though it did not seem so obvious a few months ago.

[Question] Do the overseas departments and territories have a long-term interest for France?

[Answer] Certainly. The overseas territories make France the third largest sea power, and the sea is a great hope for the 21st century, with fishing, nodules and aquaculture. And then the overseas French will be increasingly our messengers and our cultural, technical, and commercial ambassadors wherever they are. That is a priceless asset for France.

[Question] Then the overseas territories will remain French, as you said, "whether they like it or not"?

[Answer] The overseas territories will remain French because the large majority of French people who live there want to remain French and because this majority is constantly growing, whether our enemies, detractors and all those who are betting we will leave like it or not.

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Martinique Communist Party Views

Paris LE MONDE in French 16 Apr 80 p 9

[Article by Firmin Reneville: "The Martinique Communist Party Advocates 'Struggle for National Liberation'"]

[Text] Fort-de-France--The 7th Martinique Communist Party congress was held at Lamentin, near Fort-de-France, on 12-13 April. It had been billed as an important event in the political life of the island by the Communist Party press for several weeks, and it was one indeed. A dozen foreign delegations were represented, several of which came from neighboring Caribbean islands for the first time. They were the Dominica Liberation Movement (MLD), Yulimo, from St. Vincent island, the Progressive Party of the People of Guyana, the Communist parties of Trinidad, Cuba, and Guadeloupe. Mr Philippe Herzog, a member of the political bureau of the French Communist Party and representatives of the Communist parties of Romania, Lebanon, and the Soviet Union were also present.

The head of the Cuban delegation, Mr Osvaldo Cardenas, a member of the Central Committee of the Cuban Communist Party and head of his party's Caribbean department, was undeniably the long-applauded star of this 7th congress. He said, notably, "Whenever a part of the Americas is under colonial domination, we cannot feel free. It is a principle of ours." Answering the accusations of

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Mr Dijoud, who had suspected Cuba of trying to destabilize the French Antilles, he exclaimed, "People who are afraid we might destabilize one of their territories have only to grant their colonies independence." Or, "Cuba is at home in the Caribbean. The others are foreigners."

The Soviet delegate, Mr Alexis Somonov, a member of the Review Commission of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and a deputy of the Russian Socialist Federation soviet, assured the Martinique Communist Party of the solidarity of the people of the USSR and said that the whole Soviet press had announced the 7th congress.

But the most important thing about the congress was its results. The Martinique Communist Party is now abandoning its former byword, "Popular and democratic autonomy within the framework of the French Republic." It will henceforth work for an autonomous people's democratic government.

Mr Armand Nicolas, general secretary of the Martinique Communist Party, explained, "Our former slogan caused some confusion among our members, who saw a contradiction between the will to change marked by the word autonomy and our willingness to belong, nevertheless, to the French Republic. Now we are still working for autonomy, but this autonomy fits into the perspective of independence for our country. For us, autonomy is a moment in our struggle for national liberation, because the peoples of the French Antilles cannot much longer accept being colonies in the Caribbean archipelago where all the countries are independent. We are a revolutionary party that listens to the masses, and our byword may change at any moment to adapt to the demands of the masses."

Henceforth, all opposition parties in Martinique, except the Socialist Federation, have set the island's independence as their final objective, although two of them, the Martinique Progressive Party and the Martinique Communist Party, consider autonomy as a stage or a "necessary moment."

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PANAMA

U.S. MILITARY MANEUVERS IN CARIBBEAN CONDEMNED

PDP Protest

PA301910 Havana PRELA in Spanish 0125 GMT 29 Apr 80

[Text] Panama City, 28 Apr (PL)--The Panamanian communists have emphatically protested the scheduled provocation implied by the landing of thousands of marines in Guantanamo, Cuba, in May and voiced their unshakable solidarity with the Cuban revolution.

Miguel Porcell, executive secretary of Panama's Communist Peoples Party [PDP], told this agency that the scheduled U.S. military maneuvers in the Caribbean are an act of aggression against the peoples of the region.

Our party denounced these maneuvers because they attempt to break the peoples spirit of struggle for national liberation, among other things, Procell said.

These maneuvers are a direct threat to the Cuban and Nicaraguan revolutions and a warning to the anti-imperialist struggles in El Salvador, Grenada, Panama and other Caribbean countries.

The scheduled landing of marines in Guantanamo is a warmongering provocation of the worst kind and set the world on the verge of war, the ranking communist leader stressed.

"We, the Panamanian communists, voice our unshakable solidarity with the Cuban revolution, which we will defend at all costs without stopping to consider sacrifices," Porcell stated.

CNTP Leader Warning

PA011614 Havana PRELA in Spanish 0130 GMT 1 May 80

[Text] Panama City, 30 Apr (PL)--Jose Manuel Meneses, secretary general of the National Central of Panamanian Workers [CNTP], has stated that the scheduled landing of U.S. Marines at Guantanamo Base next week is a flagrant violation of Cuban territory.

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In statements made to this agency, Meneses voiced the Panamanian workers' solidarity with the Cuban revolution and warned the United States that it may suffer as great a defeat as the one it experienced when the mercenaries landed in Playa Giron, Cuba, in 1961.

The landing of marines in a territory which they occupy against Cuba's will is the culmination of a number of provocative acts against Cuba which began with the incidents at the Peruvian and Venezuelan embassies in Havana, the labor leader stated.

Meneses also stated that the main international slogan of the 1 May parade will be the rejection of the U.S. aggressive maneuvers in the Caribbean, which constitute a trial for its interventionist objectives in the region.

He likewise urged all the workers of the world to express their solidarity with the Cuban and Nicaraguan revolutions as well as with the national liberation struggle in El Salvador, Grenada and other countries of the area.

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PANAMA

BRIEFS

U.S. MANEUVERS CRITICIZED--Panama City, 29 Apr (PL)--Valeriy Jelnin [name as received], deputy of the Supreme Soviet, has said that the U.S. military maneuvers in the Caribbean are a flagrant threat to peace in the region and the world. Jelnin, who heads a delegation of the Soviet Peace Committee which is visiting Panama at the invitation of the National Committee for the Defense of Sovereignty and Peace (CONADESOPAZ), stressed that the struggle for peace must be intensified to stop the growing aggressiveness of the Washington government. The maneuvers are a replay of the big stick era in Latin America. Their provocative nature is shown by the plan to land troops at the Guantanamo Naval Base, territory occupied by the United States against the wishes of Cuba. The United States also hopes to halt the revolutionary struggle in El Salvador and Nicaragua and to frustrate the independence aspirations of the Puerto Rican people, Jelnin added. [Text] [PA011245 Havana PRELA in Spanish 2005 GMT 29 Apr 80]

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VENEZUELA

MIR SAYS U.S. TRYING TO REACTIVATE COLD WAR IN CARIBBEAN

PA301543 Havana PRELA in Spanish 0015 GMT 29 Apr 80

[Text] Caracas, 28 Apr (PL)--The secretary general of the Movement of the Revolutionary Left [MIR], Moises Moleiro, today said the announced U.S. military maneuvers in the Caribbean are part of a general plan to reactivate the cold war.

He said the general plan's objectives are to ease the crisis in the capitalist system, which shows its irrationality, as the levels of unemployment, scarcity and hunger increase, and to offer the U.S. voters, "conditioned in a reactionary fashion, a sense of might and potential."

Moleiro, who is also a Venezuelan congressman, charged that "The gringo maneuvers in the Caribbean clearly seek to intimidate the Central American revolutionaries and corral the Cuban revolution."

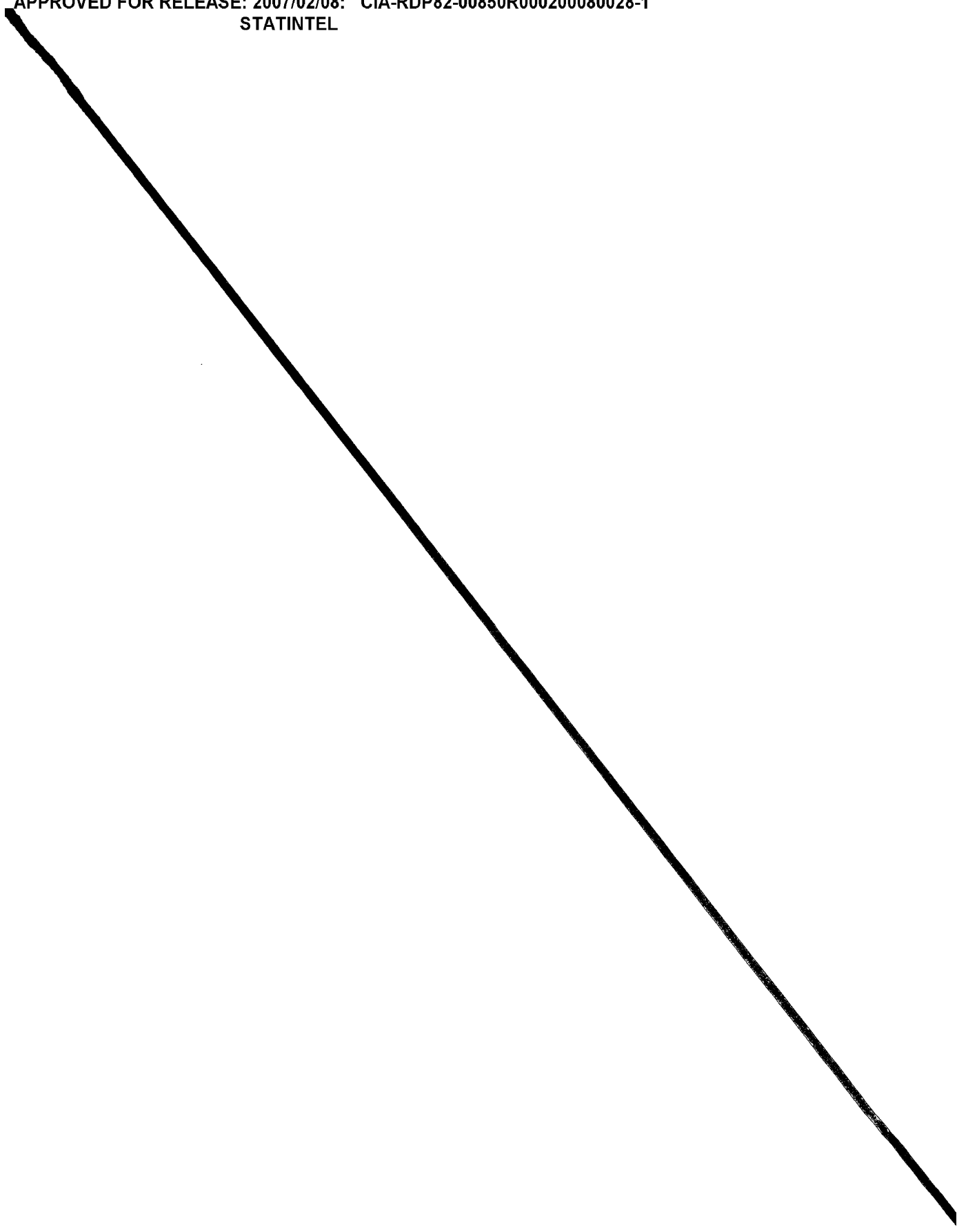
"Both," he noted "are absolutely impossible as evidenced by the increase of the Salvadoran people's struggle at present, and by the senseless and criminal blockade of Cuba 20 years ago."

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