



**Director of
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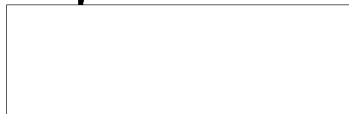
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CUBA-USSR: Frictions Over Grenada

Tensions in the Cuban-Soviet relationship—already uneasy over economic issues—have increased as a result of the events in Grenada. 

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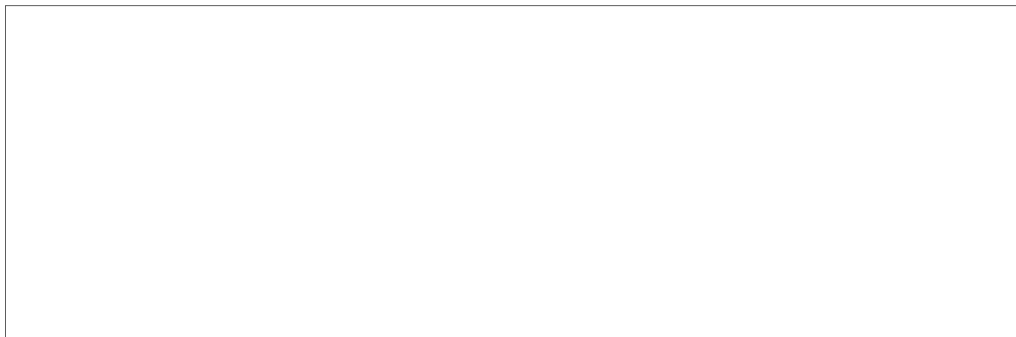
The Soviet Ambassador to Mexico reportedly has criticized the Cubans who sought refuge in the Soviet mission in St. Georges for trying to smuggle weapons aboard the US aircraft during the evacuation from Grenada. According to the US defense attache, Soviet Embassy officials in Mexico were markedly cool toward their Cuban counterparts during a recent reception marking the USSR's national day. 


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The Soviet Embassy reception in Havana—an important annual event attended by President Castro and other top Cuban leaders—was canceled this year, ostensibly because of Cuba's mourning over its dead in Grenada. According to a Western Ambassador, however, there were rumors in Havana that the Soviets had been told Castro would refuse to attend. 


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Comment: Havana—noting that Castro's frequent public criticisms of former Prime Minister Bishop's chief rival, Bernard Coard, have been ignored by the Soviet media—may harbor suspicions about the relationship between Moscow and Coard. In addition, Moscow's inaction during the demise of the Grenadian revolution was in sharp contrast to the Cubans' willingness to fight. The Soviet behavior probably has reminded Castro of his vulnerability and of the lack of a firm defense commitment from the USSR. 

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Despite these problems, however, economic necessities will force Castro to acquiesce to Soviet political and economic demands. Soviet economic aid to Cuba in 1982—almost \$4.6 billion—was equivalent to 20 to 30 percent of Havana's national output. 

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[Redacted]

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EL SALVADOR: Political and Military Developments

The Constituent Assembly has formally established 25 March 1984 as the date for the presidential election, and Defense Minister Vides plans important changes in military command and control.

[Redacted]

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The three largest parties in the Assembly have pushed through a temporary decree that enables the government to expedite the election process without the benefit of a completed constitution or permanent electoral law. The three smaller parties voted against the proposal, because it does not guarantee that an electoral registry will be used or that local municipal and legislative contests also will be held. [Redacted]

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Inauguration of a new president for a five-year term is scheduled for 1 June 1984. Military candidates will be permitted to run for office so long as they request retirement from active duty within eight days after a new constitution goes into effect. [Redacted]

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Meanwhile, recent battlefield reverses and US pressure may lead to important command changes within the armed forces, according to the US Embassy. The Defense Minister reportedly wants to restructure the six military zones to correspond more closely to actual guerrilla fronts, and he intends to install more capable leaders in combat roles. He also will seek agreement within the military hierarchy to appoint a new chief of staff who will work through an overall tactical commander. [Redacted]

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Comment: Legislative action on the election process follows a week of greater progress in the Assembly toward completion of a new constitution. Civilian politicians, who may be receiving advice from military officials, appear to be increasingly aware of the negative impact on national morale if the political process is allowed to languish. [Redacted]

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Although Vides now seems more anxious to restructure military command and control, he still will need the acquiescence of his colleagues in the officer corps. Moreover, any moves soon to improve the military's combat operations are unlikely to resolve other institutional problems. These include participation by security force personnel in death squads and other illegal activities. [Redacted]

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NICARAGUA: New Radar Site

The Sandinistas are constructing a radar site outside of Managua, according to the US defense attache. The installation, which is on the highest ground on Nicaragua's Pacific coast, includes a Soviet-produced early warning radar and what possibly are two height finders. The equipment reportedly was moved to the site at night last week, [Redacted]

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Local residents say Cubans are working on the installation. [Redacted]

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[Redacted]

Comment: Radars of the types described by the attache would considerably improve Sandinista capabilities to support the defensive operations of jet fighters, if Managua acquires MIGs [Redacted]

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[Redacted] or other such aircraft. The radars also can provide early warning information to anti-aircraft artillery sites in the region. [Redacted]

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EL SALVADOR-WEST GERMANY: Closer Ties

The Salvadoran Government will approve a recent West German request to post a new ambassador in San Salvador according to the US Embassy. Bonn recalled its Ambassador and suspended development aid in 1980, claiming that unrest in the country made it too dangerous for West German personnel to work there. The Bundestag committee for economic cooperation has approved a resumption of development aid for El Salvador, earmarking some \$7.5 million in the draft budget for 1984 for that purpose. [Redacted]

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Comment: Officials in the Foreign Ministry until now have resisted pressure from conservative elements in Chancellor Kohl's government to reverse this decision, largely out of fear that Bonn might become too closely associated with US policy in the region. The announcement that El Salvador will hold presidential elections next March will allow Bonn to point to positive political developments in El Salvador as justification for this reversal. The West German Government also probably hopes to improve the election prospects of the Salvadoran Christian Democratic Party. [Redacted]

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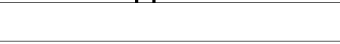


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POLAND: Releasing Political Prisoners

This week a member of the Polish legislature announced that only 77 persons convicted or temporarily arrested before 22 July for political offenses are still in jail. As recently as 4 November a government spokesman had said that 161 remained in jail, according to the US Embassy. The regime has extended to 31 December its offer of amnesty to martial law violators still in hiding. It claims that 686 have given themselves up thus far. 

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Comment: Church and underground Solidarity sources have told Embassy officers they accept the regime's statistics as accurate. The continuing release of political prisoners probably is intended as a conciliatory gesture at a time when tensions over proposed price increases for food are running high. Although the government clearly hopes more fugitives will take advantage of the amnesty, which would help promote the appearance of normalization, few are likely to respond. 

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USSR-BELGIUM: Gromyko's Planned Visit

Belgian officials report Foreign Minister Gromyko will visit Brussels in January or February. The trip is being arranged at the Soviets' initiative as a return visit for then-Foreign Minister Nothomb's trip to Moscow in 1981. Meanwhile, the officials say they expect a delegation from the Supreme Soviet—scheduled to arrive shortly in Belgium—to try to persuade Brussels that late last week the US withdrew an alleged INF proposal. [Redacted]

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Comment: A visit by Gromyko to Belgium early next year would be well-timed for the Soviets to try to exploit any reaction in Western Europe against NATO's initial INF deployments. The Belgian Government has not yet made a formal decision to proceed with the deployment of cruise missiles, now scheduled to be operational in early 1985. Nothomb and other Belgian officials have resisted Moscow's efforts to sow discord between Belgium and its NATO Allies, however, and Foreign Minister Tindemans is likely to maintain this firm position while dealing with Gromyko. [Redacted]

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USSR-ALBANIA: Soviet Reconciliation Efforts

TASS argued on Thursday for a normalization of the USSR's relations with Albania. Moscow's appeal was accompanied by allegations of a US threat to Albania's security. [Redacted]

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[Redacted]

Comment: The Soviets usually make public appeals for a normalization of relations around the time of Albania's national holiday on 29 November. The press appeal probably was meant to convey Moscow's continued interest [Redacted]

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[Redacted]

[Redacted] The Albanian leadership, can be counted on to reject the Soviet overtures. [Redacted]

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Special Analysis

PHILIPPINES: Opposition Becoming More Radical

Protest activities this weekend probably will rival the mass rally of 21 September, when hundreds of thousands participated. If so, the demonstrations will add to pressures on President Marcos to make major political concessions, which he has so far resisted. At the same time, it would make it harder for the moderate opposition to resist radical views and policies, because leftwing groups have been increasingly active in planning these events. [redacted]

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The moderate opposition has secured new support as a result of the widespread belief that the government was involved in the Aquino assassination, but it has been unable thus far to organize that support. It is divided internally, has lost its most charismatic leader, and lacks a strong organization. The moderates have been forced to yield ground to new alliances of radicals that are taking the lead in organizing protests. [redacted]

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Nonetheless, a broad consensus is emerging among the moderate opposition on the need for major reforms on succession and legislative elections. Members of the business elite share the concerns of moderate opposition politicians about the need for political reform, and in recent months they have organized frequent demonstrations in Manila's financial district and have been conducting a dialogue with Marcos. [redacted]

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The church tomorrow will have its third pastoral letter this year read throughout the country. The letter criticizes the government and calls for national reconciliation. [redacted]

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The Left's Growing Influence

Since the assassination, the Communist Party has been infiltrating legal opposition groups with great success. The US Embassy reports that the party's National Democratic Front has heavily penetrated the "Justice for Aquino, Justice for All" group, which is organizing much of the activity this week. Increasing leftist infiltration is making it more difficult to distinguish between moderate and leftist opposition groups and is the main reason for the growing anti-US tone of the demonstrations. [redacted]

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If the protests this weekend are as large as expected, much of the credit will go to the "Justice" group, and the moderate United Democratic Nationalist Organization will have difficulty reestablishing itself as the leading element of the opposition movement. [Redacted]

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In any case, the Communists are likely to continue making progress in the next few months—particularly among organized labor—because of the reaction to the financial crisis and recent austerity measures. Over the longer run, they probably will be the chief beneficiaries of the further polarization that seems certain to develop as a result of Marcos's refusal to allow the more substantial political reforms sought by the moderates. [Redacted]

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Challenges for Marcos

Marcos presumably views the disunity in the moderate opposition as an advantage that will help him survive the crisis. He has alternated between offering concessions to his opponents and threatening them. His agreement to restore the vice presidency in 1987 and to permit smaller electoral districts, as well as his promise to make new appointments to the elections commission, are unlikely to quiet dissent. [Redacted]

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If the demonstrations become violent this weekend, Marcos will have a difficult choice. Although the security forces in Manila probably can handle any violence, the President does not want to appear besieged. If a forceful crackdown on demonstrators were to produce more widespread violence, Marcos's standing would suffer in international financial circles. [Redacted]

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Outlook

If the demonstrations are small, Marcos will be more reluctant to move forward with political reforms. Barring serious health problems, his prospects for riding out the crisis would be improved, at least for the next few months. Nonetheless, the disaffection of some key interest groups from his government and the growing radicalization of the opposition encourage new challenges to his control in the longer term. [Redacted]

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