



**Central
Intelligence**



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1 March 1988**



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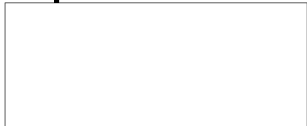
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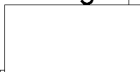
IRAN:

Preparing for an Afghan Settlement

Iran has reaffirmed support for an Afghan settlement that satisfies resistance leaders while trying to avoid offending the USSR. 

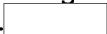
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Tehran publicly has lauded General Secretary Gorbachev's statement on withdrawal but indicated skepticism about whether it would follow through.



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Comment: The Iranians apparently are stressing their support in order to strengthen the insurgents' bargaining position in negotiations. Tehran is trying to force Pakistan to bear the brunt of fashioning an Afghan settlement or of supporting the resistance militarily if negotiations fail. The Iranians probably believe that good relations with the new Kabul government and Moscow depend on a political settlement acceptable to the resistance. If the negotiations fail, Iran probably expects Pakistan will have to continue supporting the resistance while Iran continues to limit its own involvement.



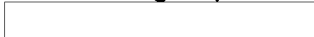
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Iran's military support to the resistance probably will increase if Pakistan attempts to force an agreement on the resistance. Iran would be reluctant to assume as large a role as Pakistan has played because the war with Iraq and support for Hizballah in Lebanon are already a burden. If Pakistan and the resistance have a falling out, Iran probably would marginally increase its military aid to the insurgents and threaten an expanded role to press Moscow and Islamabad to be more accommodating to the resistance. If this failed, Tehran probably would follow through on its threat.



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If civil war breaks out after a Soviet withdrawal, Iran's preoccupation with other issues would limit its involvement. It might aid its favored resistance groups while working with Pakistan to arrange a truce.



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ARGENTINA-UK: **Protesting Falklands Exercises**

Growing Argentine domestic opposition to British military exercises in the Falkland Islands has caused President Alfonsin to increase diplomatic protests of the exercises scheduled to take place from 7 through 31 March. [Redacted]

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Arguing that the emotional response the exercises are evoking will make further progress toward negotiations with the UK impossible, Alfonsin has requested US help in convincing London to cancel the reinforcement exercises. A regional grouping of Latin American countries, the Group of Eight, last week publicly criticized the exercises and urged London to resume talks with Buenos Aires over sovereignty. The OAS will consider an Argentine resolution today condemning the maneuvers. Foreign Minister Caputo has not ruled out taking the issue to the UN Security Council and made an unscheduled trip to New York after the Group of Eight meeting. [Redacted]

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Concerned that OAS action will encourage Argentina to pursue its case at the UN, London has asked for US help in moderating the OAS resolution. A British Embassy official also raised London's concerns about a possible US sale of arms to Argentina and a change in a longstanding US commitment to consult with London beforehand on any major arms transfers. [Redacted]

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The Alfonsin government is taking political advantage of intense domestic press coverage by playing up its actions in defense of Argentine interests, such as breaking ground for a new naval base in southern Argentina. [Redacted]

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Comment: The strength of the Argentine public opposition to the maneuvers will prevent Alfonsin from making further contact with the UK and may even set back progress made so far—such as Buenos Aires's readiness to declare an end to hostilities. Despite support from the Group of Eight and likely backing from the OAS, Buenos Aires probably will not bring the issue to the Security Council, fearing that it would fail to muster enough support there. Once the exercises are under way, Buenos Aires probably will not react militarily, but its verbal attacks against the UK will intensify and it may condemn the US for failing to persuade London not to proceed. [Redacted]

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London appears to have underestimated the strength of South American opposition to its exercises and may have second thoughts about timing. Still, OAS action and any US statements of concern are not likely to cause cancellation or delay of the exercises. Moreover, as long as Thatcher remains Prime Minister, the British will not negotiate on the issue of Falklands sovereignty. [Redacted]

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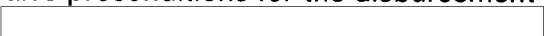

ARGENTINA: New Promises to IMF

An IMF agreement will give Argentina's economy some breathing room, but Buenos Aires probably will not be able to institute the sweeping reforms needed to resolve more fundamental problems. 

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Argentina's latest letter of intent with the IMF probably will be approved by the end of this month and calls for reducing the budget deficit to 2.7 percent of gross domestic product from the 7-percent level last year. Other terms include a drop in the monthly inflation rate to 4 percent by the end of 1988 and an economic growth rate of 4 percent in 1988. An IMF agreement will free \$225 million under a standby agreement and provide another \$175 million in funds to compensate for previous drops in export earnings. 

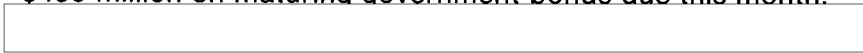
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Buenos Aires's Bank Advisory Committee also has recommended that creditor banks waive preconditions for the disbursement of another \$550 million,  US banks hope to avoid a deterioration in Argentina's creditworthiness that would occur if past due interest payments of \$250-300 million are not paid by 31 March. 


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The Argentine Treasury has started printing money to cover about \$70 million in debt to government suppliers and to pay a portion of \$430 million on maturing government bonds due this month.



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Comment: Printing money to cover internal debt payments will fuel inflation and will make it difficult for Buenos Aires to meet the watered-down IMF reform targets. Moreover, Argentina probably will achieve little, if any, economic growth this year. IMF and creditor bank arrangements should keep Argentina solvent until June or longer if—as appears likely—major banks commit to a new money package. There are few indications, however, that Buenos Aires will implement reform measures sufficient to stem the country's continuing economic deterioration. 

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FRANCE: Mitterrand's Position at NATO Summit

French President Mitterrand is likely to bring the doctrine of flexible response and the need for NATO to modernize short-range nuclear forces under public scrutiny during the NATO summit in Brussels this week, probably hoping to express support for West Germany and to play to French public opinion.

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During a meeting with Irish Prime Minister Haughey last week, Mitterrand said he did not favor modernization of NATO's SNF, according to the US Embassy in Paris. Mitterrand said publicly this week that Europe should try to negotiate a balance on conventional forces rather than modernize SNF systems at a time when the superpowers seemed to be making progress in arms control. He claims the US and NATO erred during the 1960s by adopting a strategy of flexible response.

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Comment: This will be only the second NATO summit a French President has attended since France left the integrated command in 1966. Mitterrand probably will restate his opposition to SNF modernization during the summit, at least in some bilateral meetings. French officials, and Mitterrand in particular, have increasingly sought a greater say in NATO policies in the aftermath of the US-Soviet summit meetings. Although Mitterrand had not previously raised SNF modernization of NATO publicly, such statements are consistent with his privately expressed doubts about flexible response and the utility of short-range systems, as well as his emphasis on the value of France's strategic nuclear deterrent.

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Any statement by Mitterrand at the summit that opposes Alliance SNF modernization probably would be in part to provide tactical support of West German Chancellor Kohl. He also may hope that if NATO postpones the modernization debate it will ease domestic pressure on Kohl to seek early SNF negotiations with the Warsaw Pact.

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Mitterrand, who is likely to announce in the next two weeks that he will seek a second term in the presidential election this spring, probably hopes to rally domestic support by supporting the arms control process and asserting his dominance over foreign policy and defense issues. His position was probably not coordinated with Prime Minister Chirac, who will also attend the summit. Chirac and his advisers probably disapprove of Mitterrand's stance but will be reluctant to take the lead in advocating Alliance SNF modernization before the election.

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IRAQ-IRAN: Iraqi Missile Attack on Tehran

Iraq used ballistic missiles yesterday and today for the first time in the war. As many as nine missiles were fired from near Al 'Amarah in southeastern Iraq at the Iranian capital—a distance of about 580 kilometers. At least three missiles hit the vicinity of Tehran. Baghdad threatened to fire more missiles at the Iranian capital in retaliation for Iranian artillery and missile attacks on Iraqi cities last weekend. [Redacted]

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Comment: Iraq's unprecedented missile strikes on Tehran suggest Baghdad's resolve to respond strongly to Iran's recent attacks even at the risk of starting a new war of the cities. Iraq's leaders will use the attacks to boost Iraqi morale by claiming that further Iranian Scud missile attacks on Baghdad will be met with more Iraqi missile attacks on Tehran. Iraq's claims last August that it had manufactured and tested a missile with a range of more than 600 kilometers are unconfirmed. Baghdad has been interested in acquiring longer range missiles from the Soviets or missiles and related technology from Argentina and Egypt. [Redacted]

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AFGHANISTAN: Trying To Sow Discord Among Rebels

Insurgent leader Rabbani recently warned Jamiat-i-Islami colleagues not to believe any regime announcements that former King Zahir Shah, Jamiat-i-Islami Commander Ahmad Shah Masood, or other prominent insurgent figures had accepted positions in a coalition government. The Mongolian Ambassador in Kabul told US officials that Masood was in Kabul negotiating with the regime. [Redacted]

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Comment: The Afghan regime almost certainly hopes to encourage infighting among the insurgents by claiming it has reached agreements with prominent commanders. Although Masood negotiated a cease-fire in 1984, he is not likely to do so now. He is in a stronger military position and negotiations would undermine his claim to political leadership after the war and disrupt the political and social organization he has painstakingly built in the north. [Redacted]

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BANGLADESH: Army Frustrated With Opposition Politics

Support for President Ershad has risen in the Bangladesh Army,

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troops blame the opposition for strikes that have damaged Bangladesh's economy and lowered living standards for their families. Soldiers also view the opposition parties as weak and increasingly ineffective. Nevertheless, many in the Army believe that the parliamentary election on Thursday—which the opposition is boycotting—will not solve the country's political crisis and that President Ershad has not tried to compromise with the opposition.

[Redacted]

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Comment:

[Redacted]

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[Redacted] the opposition's strategy to oust Ershad has backfired. Opposition leaders had hoped to foment enough unrest to cause the Army to move against him and call a new election under a caretaker government. The election this week will test the Army's support for the regime, and Ershad plans to deploy an Army company at each district headquarters to deter violence at the polls. If the opposition can pit soldiers against large numbers of angry citizens, the Army may yet decide that the damage to its reputation caused by continued backing of Ershad is too great.

[Redacted]

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PANAMA: General Strike Begins

More than half the nongovernment employees and many Panamanian banks took part in the general strike called by Panama's opposition Civil Crusade to protest President Delvalle's ouster, but it failed to paralyze economic activity. The number of closures increased after workers received paychecks in the morning, [Redacted]

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[Redacted] threats by government officials to use force to open closed shops discouraged some potential strikers. Although the police briefly detained a prominent Crusade leader, there were no major demonstrations or violence. [Redacted]

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Comment: The strike is the most successful opposition activity since the indictment was announced, and Crusade leaders will try to prolong it until participation begins to wane. Unless the strike quickly brings tangible political results, compliance by the business community is likely to fall off significantly because of concern about individual economic losses. [Redacted]

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BRAZIL: Debt Agreement

The agreement Brazil and its major creditor banks announced Sunday resolves several issues critical to a multiyear debt rescheduling and new money package, but a final accord will take a few more weeks. The two sides hope to reach agreement on remaining issues—such as the details of an exit bond program—within three weeks. [Redacted]

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Comment: The size of the new money package was a sticking point to an accord because Brazil originally had requested more than \$11 billion. Of the issues remaining, the most contentious probably will be the role of the IMF. Brazilian officials have promised an IMF-supported program, but they remain adamant that disbursements of money from commercial banks not be contingent on meeting IMF economic performance targets. Many foreign banks have expressed concern that, in the event of political turmoil, Brazil will quickly fall out of compliance with its IMF program. Already there are signs, for example, that President Sarney is backing away from many of the deficit reduction measures his Finance Minister proposed. [Redacted]

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THAILAND-US: Steps To Ease Tensions Over Refugees

Prime Minister Prem, in an effort to calm tension with the US over refugee issues, has ordered senior cabinet officials and their subordinates to end public criticism of the US and other countries that have pledged to resettle refugees.

[Redacted]

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Prem has also designated Thailand's National Security Council as the focal point for refugee matters.

[Redacted]

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[Redacted]

Comment: Prem probably hopes to end internal squabbling over the refugee issue, and his intervention is likely to ease official criticism of the US. Nonetheless, most ministers, including Sitthi and Prachuap, view the growing influx of Vietnamese boat refugees as a national security threat and are likely to remain critical of the slow rate of resettlement by Western countries. Although official policy is to continue providing asylum to Vietnamese who land on Thai shores while publicly discouraging future arrivals, dissension within the Prem government probably means enforcement will be difficult, and some mistreatment of refugees will continue.

[Redacted]

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BULGARIA: Air Force Modernization

Bulgaria is taking action to address weaknesses in air defense and combat readiness noted by Defense Minister Dzhurov in a speech in December. Bulgaria's Air Force this year probably will be the first among non-Soviet Warsaw Pact countries to receive MIG-29s—standardly equipped with sophisticated lookdown radar—

[Redacted]

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[Redacted] This follows recent delivery of modern SU-25 ground attack aircraft to a Bulgarian regiment.

[Redacted]

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Comment: The acquisition of MIG-29s and SU-25s will greatly improve Bulgaria's Air Forces. Moscow probably is encouraging the purchase to improve southern tier defenses. Sofia may be reacting to Yugoslavia's recent acquisition of a squadron of MIG-29s and continuing programs by NATO members Turkey and Greece to acquire modern US and French aircraft. Delivery of MIG-29s to Bulgaria marks the beginning of Pact-wide transition to Moscow's latest export interceptor, a move that will take place over the next decade.

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[Redacted]

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In Brief

Middle East

— Amal militia chief Nabih Barri asking **Iran's** Ayatollah Khomeini to send representative to southern **Lebanon** . . . probably reflects slipping Amal influence there after Higgins kidnaping as well as attempt to curry favor with Tehran. [Redacted]

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— Illegal sale of **Austrian** arms to **Iran** touching high-level Socialist politicians . . . party chairman offering to resign if President Waldheim does so also . . . conservatives rejecting deal, probably calculating scandal diverts attention from Waldheim. [Redacted]

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East Asia

[Redacted]

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— **Taiwan** legalizing indirect imports of raw materials from **China** . . . response to domestic pressure to lower input costs to maintain export competitiveness . . . broadens limited indirect trade, which reached \$1.5 billion last year. [Redacted]

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Americas

— **Uruguayan, Soviet** negotiators failed to reach agreement in talks last week . . . Montevideo reluctant to grant fishing rights or to consider countertrade . . . may send delegation to Moscow before President Sanguinetti's visit next week. [Redacted]

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— GATT to hold ministerial-level review of **Uruguay** Round in Montreal beginning 5 December . . . agenda not set yet . . . EC will obstruct US hope for agreement on agriculture unless accord on services, other issues, also reached. [Redacted]

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Europe

— Franco Nicolazzi, leader of small **Italian** Social Democratic Party in ruling coalition, resigned yesterday . . . follows allegations of corruption when public works minister in previous governments . . . unlikely to hasten Goria government's expected resignation. [Redacted]

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Africa

— **Senegal** declared emergency in Dakar yesterday, detained opposition leaders following student protests of President Diouf's reelection Sunday . . . unrest, threats of violence by opposition . . . unlikely to impair Diouf's control. [Redacted]

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Special Analysis**IRAN: Preparing for Offensive**

Iran's failure to launch an offensive so far this year may stem from domestic and international concerns, but its continuing military preparations suggest Tehran could initiate major ground operations over the next six weeks. The pressures facing Tehran are more likely to influence the timing and location of an offensive than to deter Iran from launching one. [redacted]

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Domestic political issues probably have influenced Iran's decisions about an offensive more heavily than in previous years. Recent edicts by Ayatollah Khomeini that dramatically expand the government's role in the economy and in preparation for a parliamentary election next month are causing factional infighting and diverting the attention of the same leaders who direct the war. Iranian leaders probably are concerned that an offensive will further unsettle the domestic scene, especially if it fails or results in heavy casualties. [redacted]

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Foreign developments have also contributed to the pressure to delay or forgo an offensive. Tehran probably is concerned that an offensive, by flouting the UN call for a cease-fire in Resolution 598, might be the final impetus the Security Council needed to pass an arms embargo resolution against Iran. The delay may also have been intended to encourage a reduction of US forces in the Gulf and to give UAE-brokered negotiations with the Gulf states a chance to work. An offensive this year is more likely than in previous years to result in serious damage to relations with the USSR, Syria, Japan, and Western Europe because of Resolution 598. [redacted]

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Nonetheless, postponing a major offensive presents risks to Tehran, and the military disadvantages of delaying action eventually may outweigh any advantages. With international opinion increasingly depicting US intervention in the Gulf as a victory for Washington and its regional allies, Tehran may come to believe that indefinite postponement of an offensive will create the appearance it is being checkmated in both the ground and naval wars. [redacted]

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Iranians in general might view inaction as a sign that the war is winding down, which might lower their willingness to respond to future mobilizations or to make sacrifices for the war. Hardliners in the regime—who often see their survival tied to success in the war—might become disgruntled and threaten regime stability if the war is not actively pursued. [redacted]

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Military Preparations Continue

Iran's preparations so far would enable it to launch multiple attacks of varying sizes from the Al Faw peninsula to northern Iran. Although there were a few reports of problems with the mobilization last fall, troop strengths and training have increased through early this year. With the acquisition and deployment of more tanks, artillery, and air defense systems during the past year, Iran has greatly increased its firepower. Iran's regular army appears to be taking greater steps to prepare for offensive operations this year. Iranian forces, however, still face strong Iraqi defenses, longstanding supply problems, and potential difficulties with using new weapons effectively.

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Iran's Options

The continuing military preparations suggest the regime could launch major offensive operations—with 50,000 or more soldiers—to score a significant victory during the next six weeks. A major attack against an important strategic objective such as Umm Qasr or Al Basrah would present great risks, but a victory may further strengthen support for the regime, reduce war weariness, and possibly weaken Iraq's will to resist.

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Tehran might try to limit international and domestic criticism by launching attacks that could be characterized favorably regardless of their outcome. The attacks may be away from the southern front to soothe Gulf Arab nerves and possibly limit damage to relations with Moscow and Damascus. By avoiding an assault on a heavily defended strategic target, the regime would be more likely to avoid high casualties in the period leading to the parliamentary elections next month.

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Tehran is almost certain to exploit militarily any initial success against the Iraqi forces if it perceives the opportunity for significant gain. Iranian leaders would expect a major victory to improve its overall position despite likely setbacks at the UN and with the Gulf Arabs.

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If the offensive remains relatively limited, Tehran would still have the option to launch a larger one in the fall. Khomeini could upset the regime's calculations at any time, however, by ordering an immediate, large-scale attack on a key Iraqi target. Passage of a UN embargo, a sharp downturn in relations with the Gulf Arabs, or clashes with the US also could result in more aggressive ground operations.

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Special Analysis

HAITI:

Religion and Politics

Key Haitian religious institutions continue to have the potential to profoundly affect the course of political events. [Redacted]

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The Catholic Church, which claims 80 percent of the population as members, is torn between moderate church leaders, who tacitly support President Manigat, and radical leftist clerics, who advocate revolutionary change, according to US Embassy reporting. To keep the division from growing wide enough to split the church, Catholic leaders will stay out of a central role in assisting Manigat to implement political and economic reform. The perception that Manigat is unwilling or unable to implement real change, however, might well move the church to take a more active opposition role as it did in the final months of the Duvalier regime. [Redacted]

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Protestant churches, which represent a growing minority of the population, appear unwilling to jeopardize their religious gains by becoming too active in politics. The Embassy suggests that Protestant leaders generally will probably maintain moderate political positions, such as reiterating calls for free elections, unless the government becomes brutally repressive or a dictatorship. [Redacted]

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Voodoo, the spiritualist folk religion that most Haitians practice in conjunction with Christianity, is generally apolitical but may be increasingly used by both the government and the opposition to further their political interests. Although voodoo is not easily compatible with a political ideology because it is loosely organized and channels disaffection into appeals to the supernatural, voodoo beliefs and practices can reinforce nationalism, xenophobia, and acceptance of arbitrary authority. The pervasive character of voodoo in Haitian society is a strong indication that it will remain a significant determinant of popular reaction to political events. [Redacted]

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The secretive nature of Haitian society raises the possibility that radical religious elements might be able to organize unrest that would not be easily detectable by foreign observers. Such activity might produce sudden popular outbursts for no apparent reason and with little warning. Radical Catholic clerics in particular appear to have made progress gaining followers of their liberation theology, and their parishes may become the basis for a grassroots subversive movement. [Redacted]

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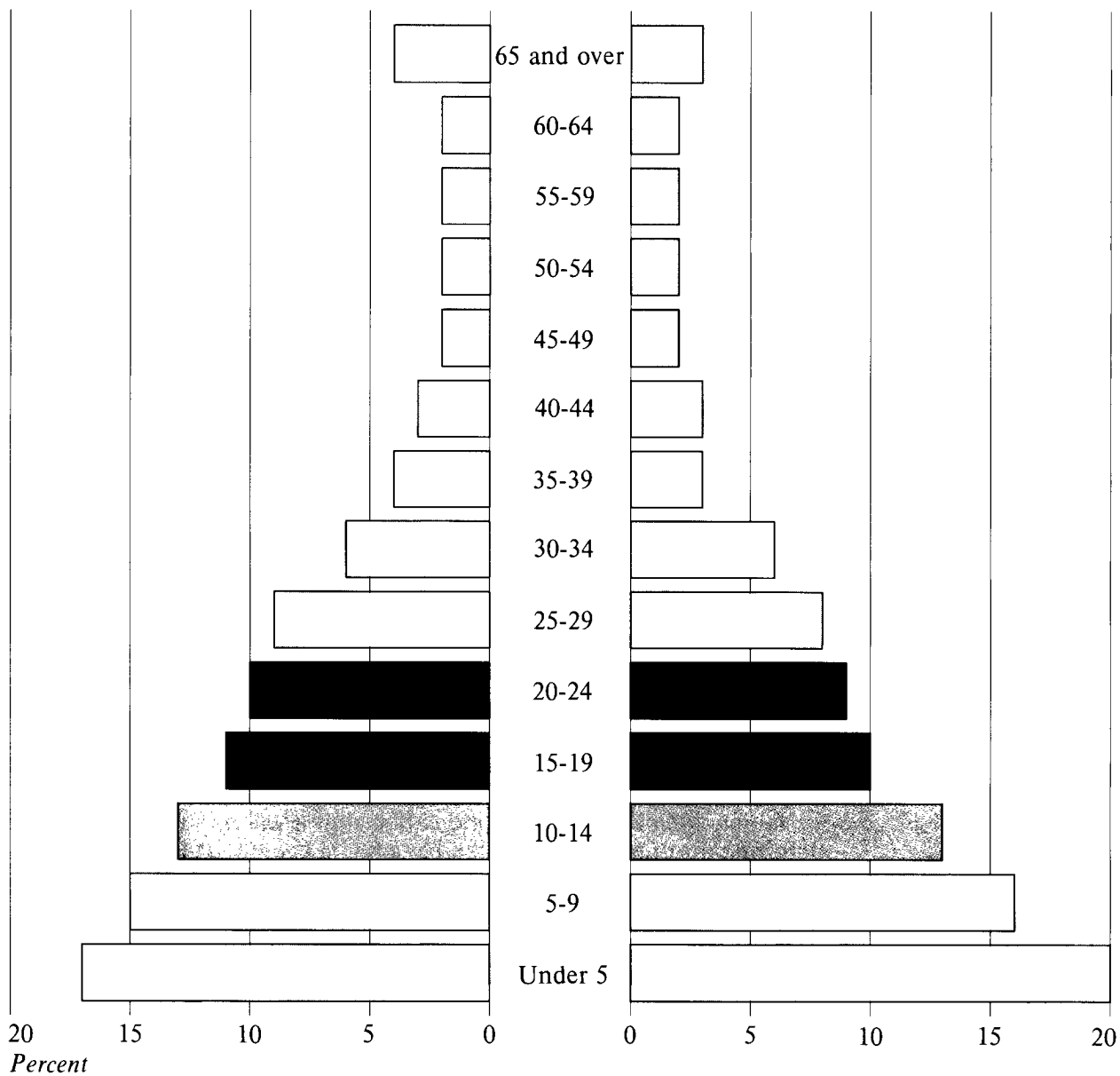
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Occupied Territories: Youth Bulge, 1988^a

West Bank

Age

Gaza



^a Compiled from December 1987 projections, US Census.

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Special Analysis**ISRAEL:****Youth Bulge Points to Trouble**

Israel will face a very young and increasingly disaffected population at home and in the occupied territories for the foreseeable future. A surge in the population of both young Arabs and young Jews will intensify strains on Israeli rule in Gaza and the West Bank throughout the next decade and test the patience of either side in seeking peaceful compromise. [redacted]

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By definition a "youth bulge" occurs when 15- to 24-year-olds make up about 20 percent or more of the population. It is almost always accompanied by instability of some sort, and, when high unemployment and ethnic or religious discrimination are added, the unrest is usually violent. The Arab youth bulge in the West Bank and Gaza is 21 and 19 percent, respectively. When the 10- to 14-year-olds—who have been active in recent unrest—are included, the youth bulge becomes a substantial 32 percent for Gaza and 34 percent for the West Bank. The bulge will remain high at least until the year 2000 because 65 percent of the population in the West Bank and Gaza currently is under 25 years old. [redacted]

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Two factors compound the frustrations of young Arabs in the occupied territories. First, they are among the best educated youths in the region. Second, they live and work in proximity to Israelis and have daily reminders of the inequality of the current situation. [redacted]

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Israel, too, has a smaller but still significant youth bulge of about 18 percent. Many of these young Israelis are moving to the suburbs in the West Bank, and many are religiously orthodox immigrants from other countries. Many have become the catalyst for local Arab hostility and themselves require increased Israeli police protection. [redacted]

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Young Gazans and West Bankers—spurred by sympathetic press coverage and their success in shutting down the territories—will be a wellspring of violent unrest for years to come. Israel seems to be having a particularly difficult time dealing with the spontaneity of the young Arab rioters. Despite speculation in the press and elsewhere about a "faceless organization" behind the Palestinian uprising, most observers, including [redacted] diplomatic sources, report that young Palestinians acted largely on their own and that their elders and the PLO have had to scramble to catch up. The persistence of unrest, however, reportedly has led to the emergence of neighborhood coordinating committees. The situation has left Tel Aviv with no focal point for negotiations and, by its own thinking, little alternative to its tough approach to the unrest. [redacted]

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