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WESTERN EUROPE - US: Visit of EDU Delegation

*The European Democratic Union delegation that arrives in Washington on Monday represents a group of conservative West European political parties that is trying to establish itself as a counterweight to the Socialist International.* [REDACTED]

Comment: The EDU, which was organized in 1977, provides an international forum for the French Gaullists, [REDACTED] and other conservative parties. Most affiliated parties believe membership gives them publicity and prestige that will improve their political prospects. The Italian and Benelux Christian Democrats participate only as observers, however, because they apparently fear formal association with the more rightist members would make them vulnerable to political attack. [REDACTED]

The EDU supports the maintenance of NATO, individualism, and free market economies. At its annual conference last year, the union called for a restoration of the military balance in Europe, endorsed the INF and strategic arms negotiations in Geneva, and favored international sanctions against states that abet terrorism. Partly because the members are reluctant to coordinate policies within the organization, however, the Union so far has failed to exert noticeable influence on the policies of West European governments. [REDACTED]

Union President Mock, who also is Chairman of the Austrian People's Party, probably will discuss the group's plans for this summer to organize an international democratic union. The new group would link the EDU with the newly formed Pacific Democratic Union--comprising right-of-center parties from [REDACTED] and New Zealand--and a prospective North American democratic union. [REDACTED]

The European group hopes the proposed worldwide body would become a counterweight to the Socialist International on global and North-South issues. An international democratic union probably would be less influential than the Socialist International, however, because it would have far fewer Third World affiliates. [REDACTED]

-CIA, DIA, NSA-

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