



Director of
Central
Intelligence

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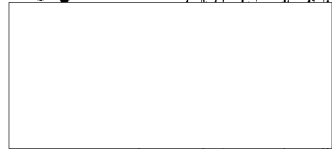
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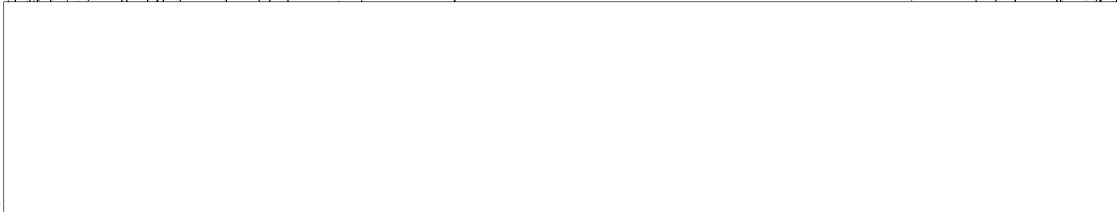
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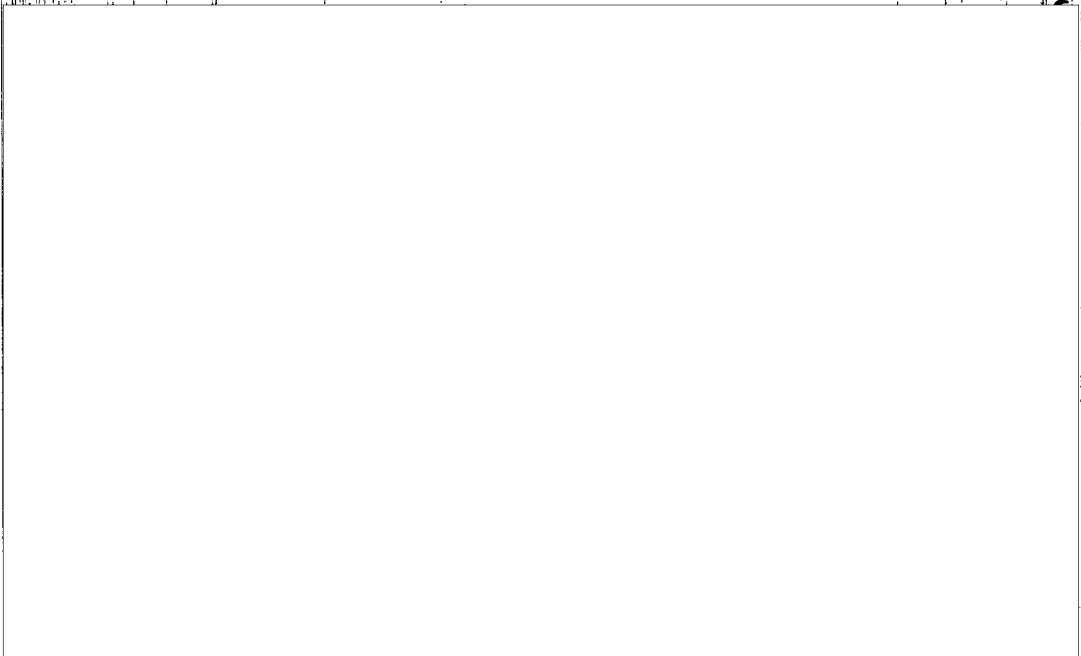
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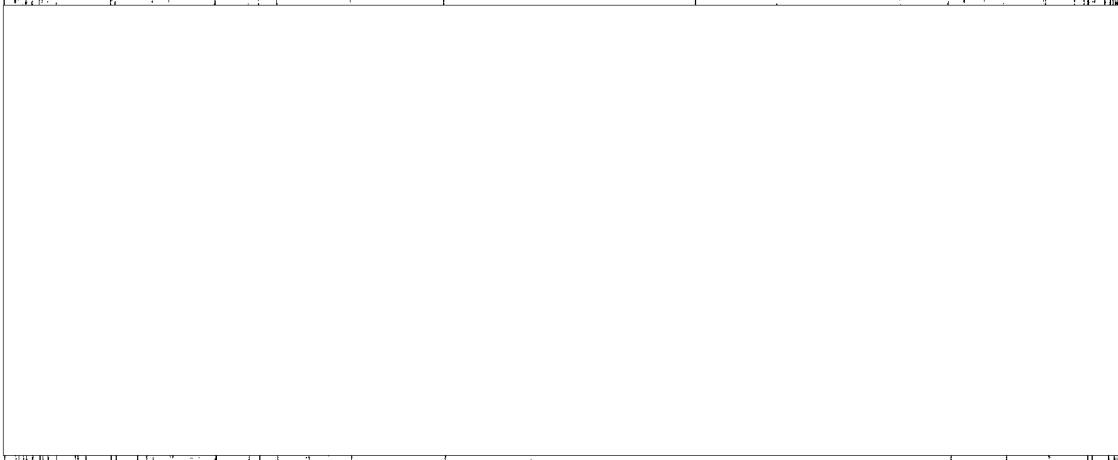
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FRANCE: Ballistic Missile Submarine Program

The fifth French ballistic missile submarine will go on sea trials this spring. Completion of a sixth unit, which was postponed in 1976, plus research and development on a new class of submarines, were authorized last fall by the National Assembly as part of the French program to upgrade naval and tactical nuclear forces. The sixth unit and the new class of ballistic missile submarine will be designed to accommodate the new, multiple warhead M-4 missile, which is under development. The M-4 missile will provide a several-fold increase in French capabilities [redacted] France also plans to retrofit the M-4 into the other five submarines, which now carry 16 single-warhead missiles. When the sixth unit becomes operational in about 1986, France will be able for the first time to keep two ballistic missile submarines continuously on patrol.

[redacted]