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CIANESAF IR 98-40320CXC



# Intelligence Report

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Office of Near Eastern, South Asian, and African Analysis

30 December 1998

South Asia-Iran: Shifting Regional Ties Isolating Islamabad

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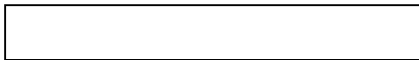
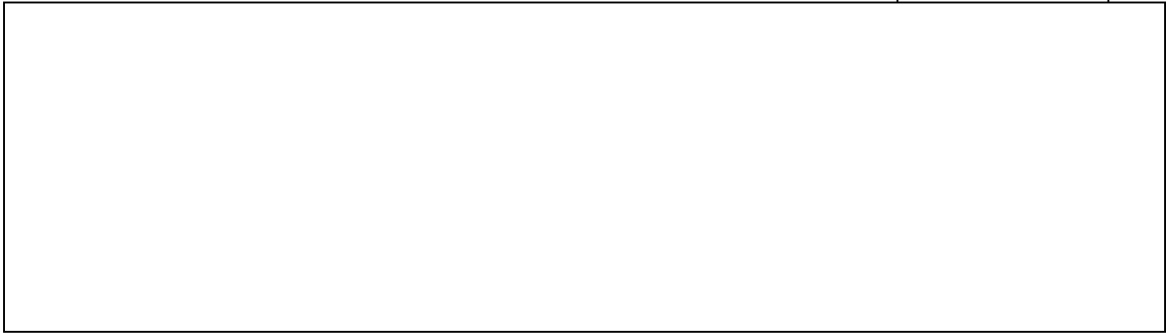
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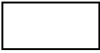
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**South Asia-Iran: Shifting Regional Ties Isolating Islamabad**




**Pakistani-Iranian Relations Sour**




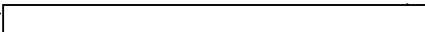
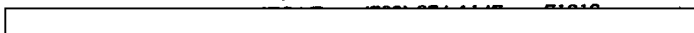
Pakistan has long realized the necessity of maintaining good relations with neighboring Iran, but differences over Afghanistan--which both countries view as central to their respective foreign policies--have strained relations since September 1995, when the Pakistani-sponsored Taliban took control of the Iran-Afghan border and Tehran began actively supporting the anti-Taliban coalition:

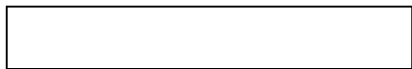


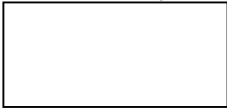
- Although some Pakistani diplomats have warned that continued support to the Taliban could backfire, most Pakistani officials believe the Taliban offers the best chance of establishing a stable, pro-Pakistan government in Afghanistan, which would benefit Pakistan geostrategically and economically. 

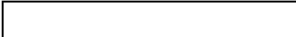
Tehran resents Pakistan's support for the Sunni Taliban, which Iran views as a threat to stability along its eastern border and the well-being of Shia minorities in the region. Tehran considers the Taliban a national security threat because of the group's trafficking in illicit drugs across Iranian territory, the potential for the Taliban to incite unrest among Iran's Sunni minority, and the Taliban's challenge to Iran's Islamic leadership in the region:

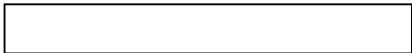
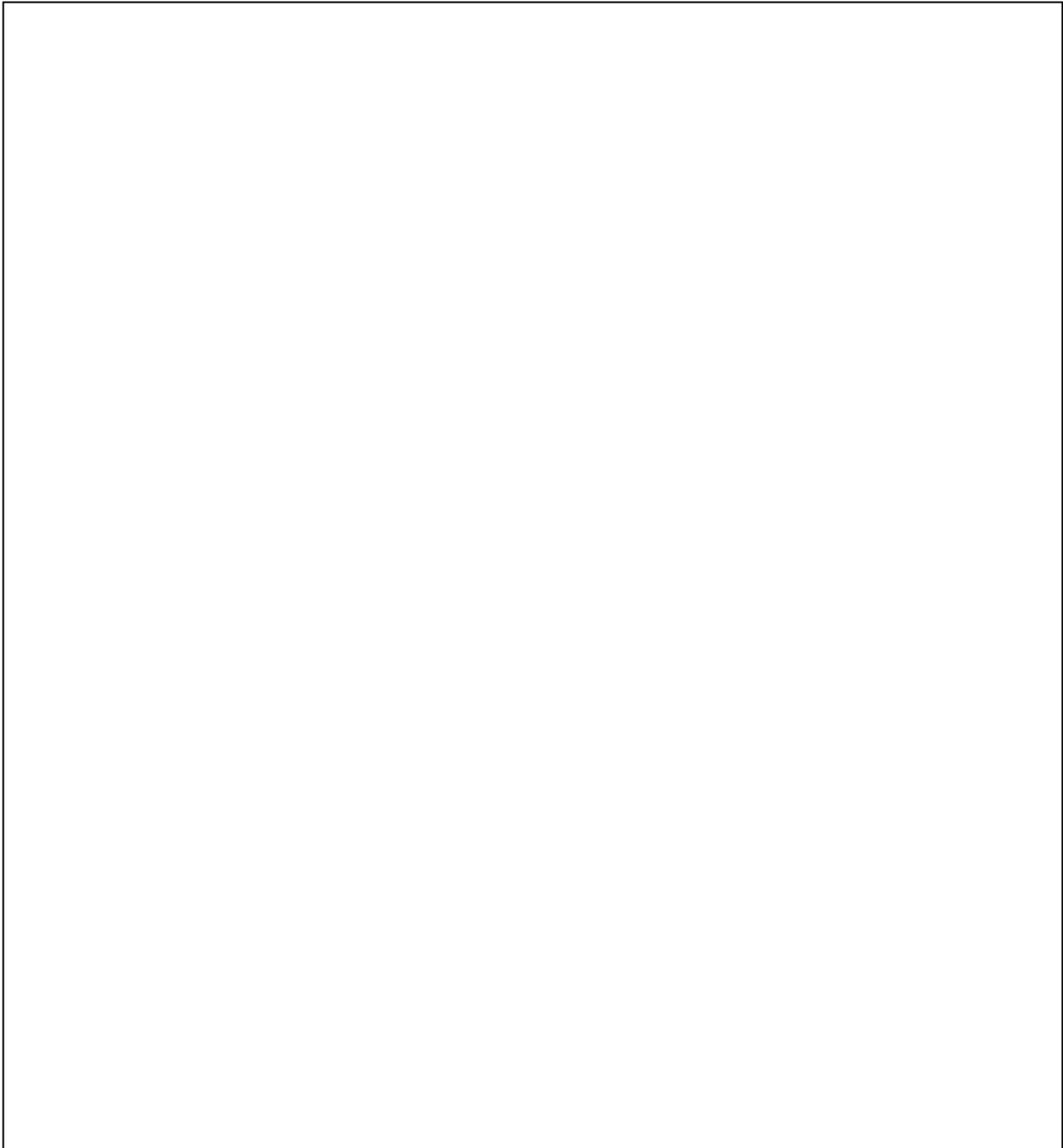
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Iran's suspicion of Pakistan's Afghan policy has increased since the killing last September of nine Iranian diplomats by the Taliban, for which Tehran blames Islamabad.

This report was prepared by  Office of Near Eastern, South Asian, and African Analysis. It was coordinated with the Directorate of Operations. Comments and queries are welcome and may be directed to the 

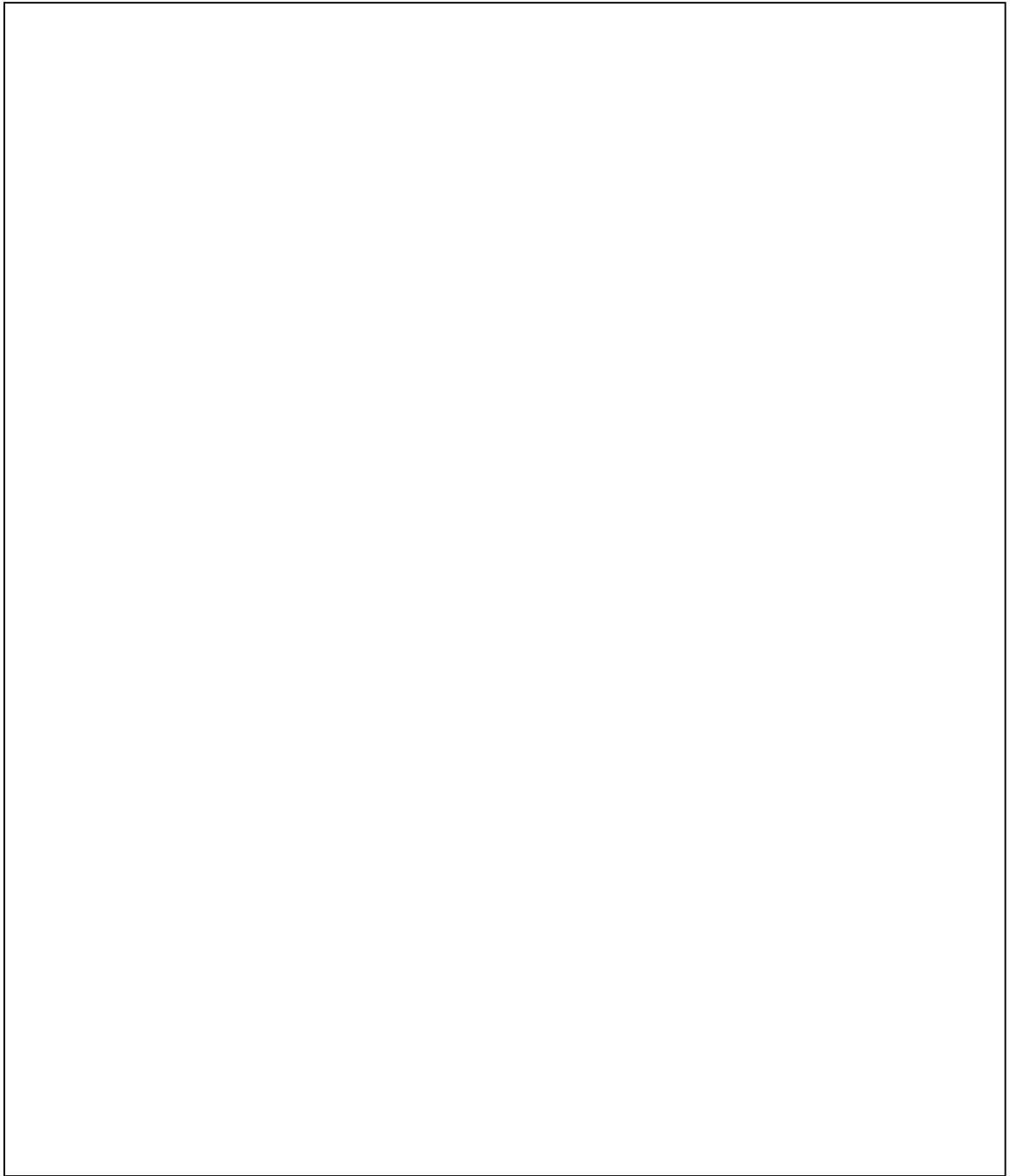
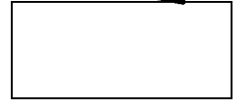




- Tehran projects itself as a regional leader and views Pakistani support of the Taliban as a move to dominate Afghanistan and undermine Iran's influence and economic interests in the region, 

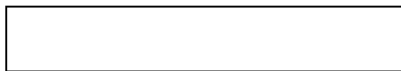
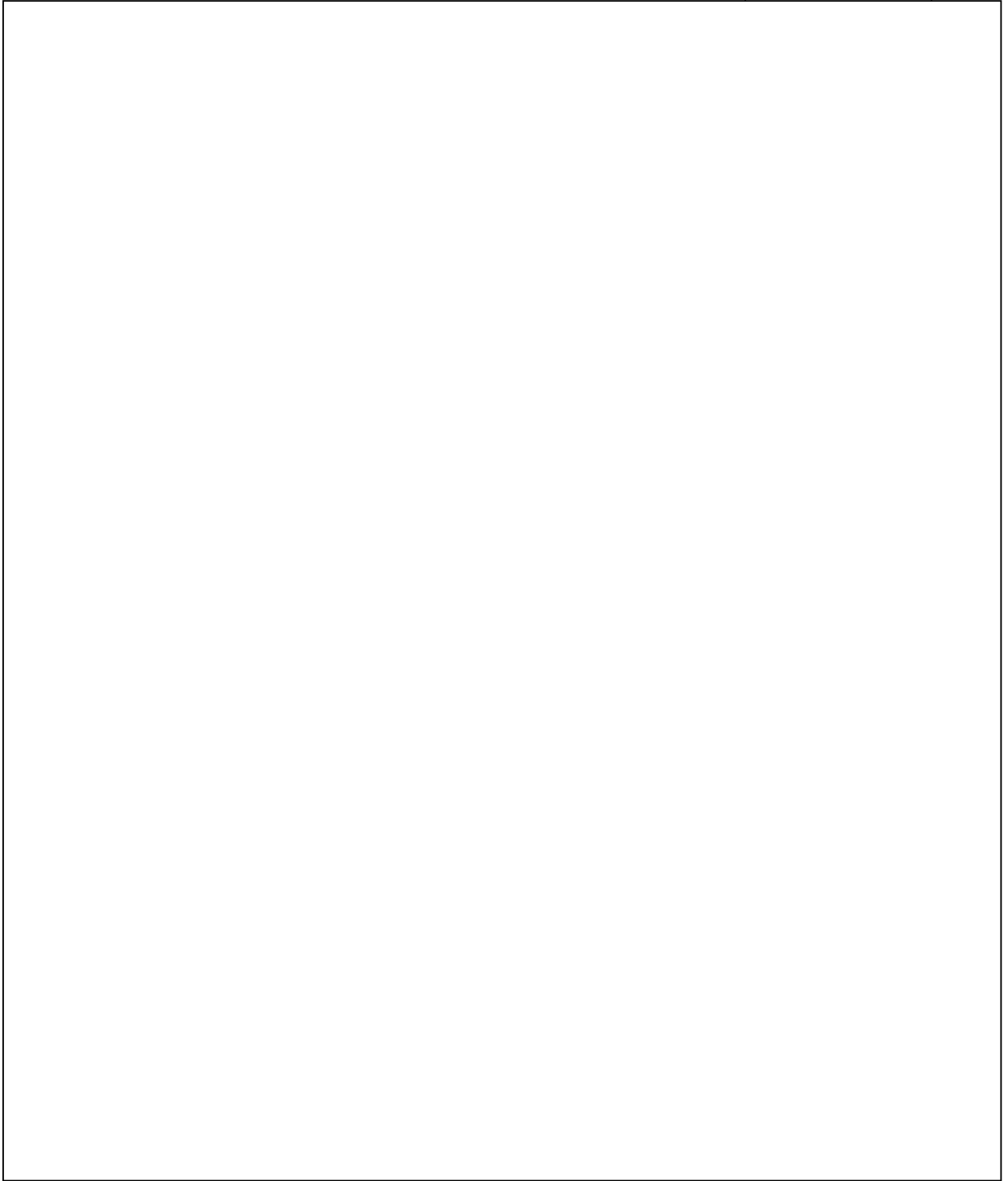


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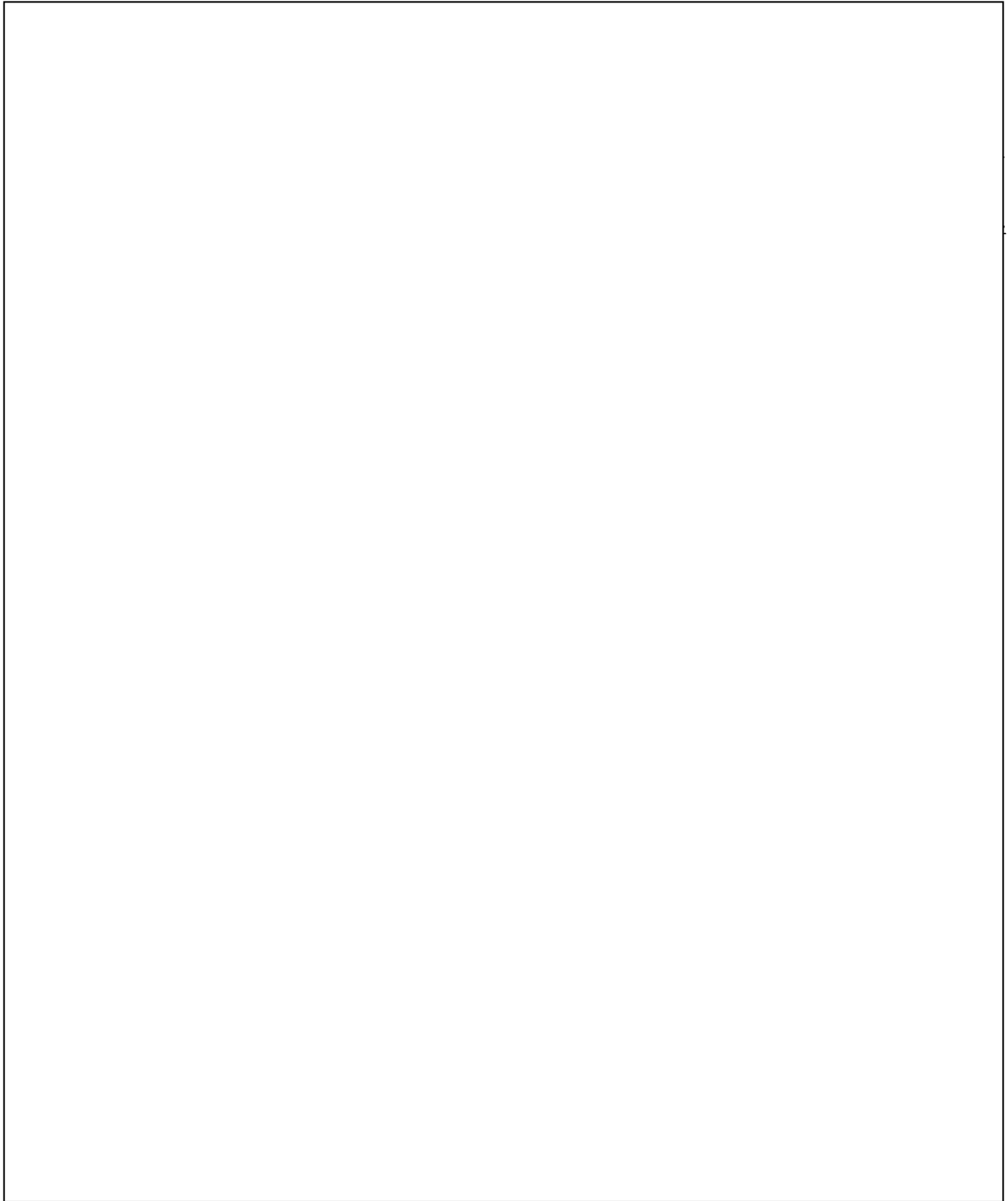
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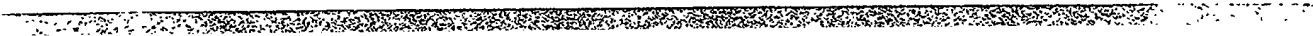
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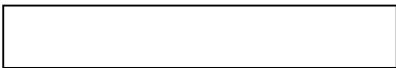


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