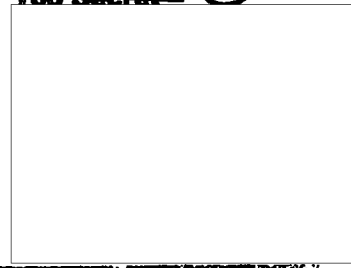




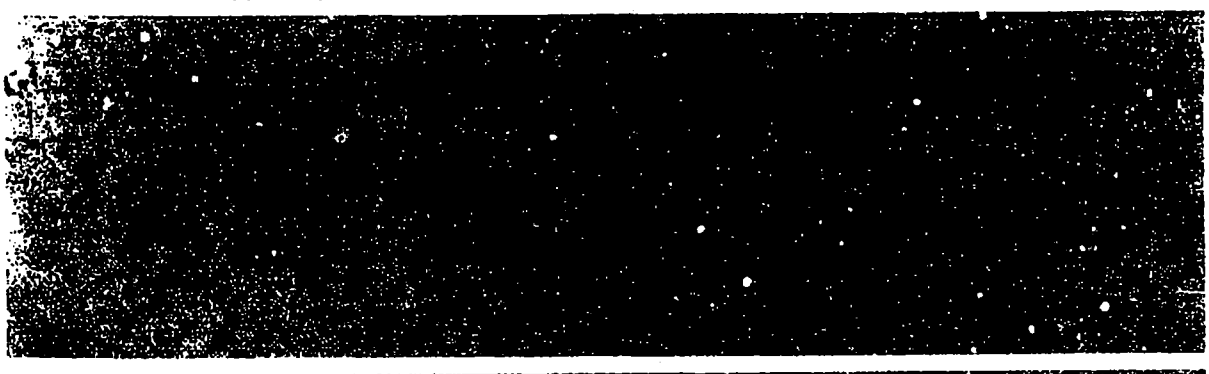
Director of
Central
Intelligence

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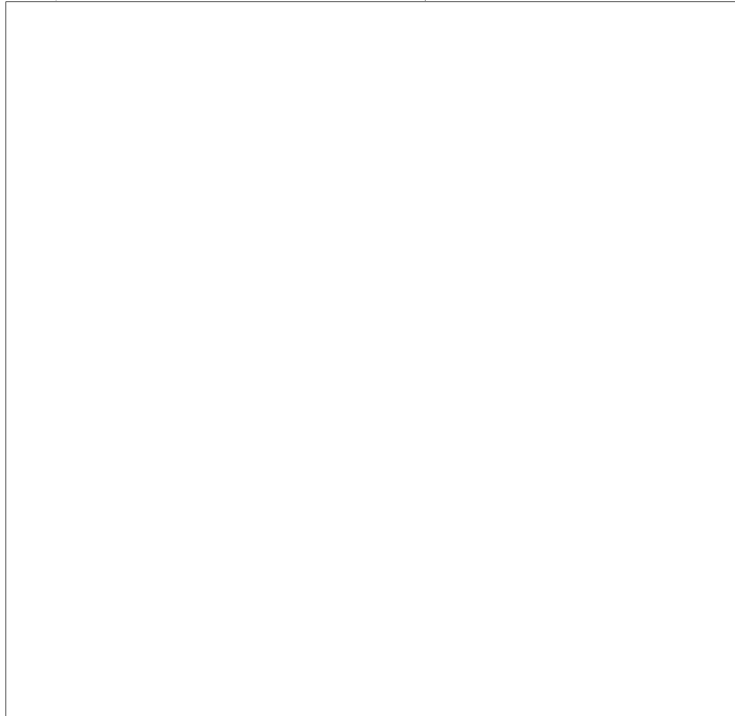
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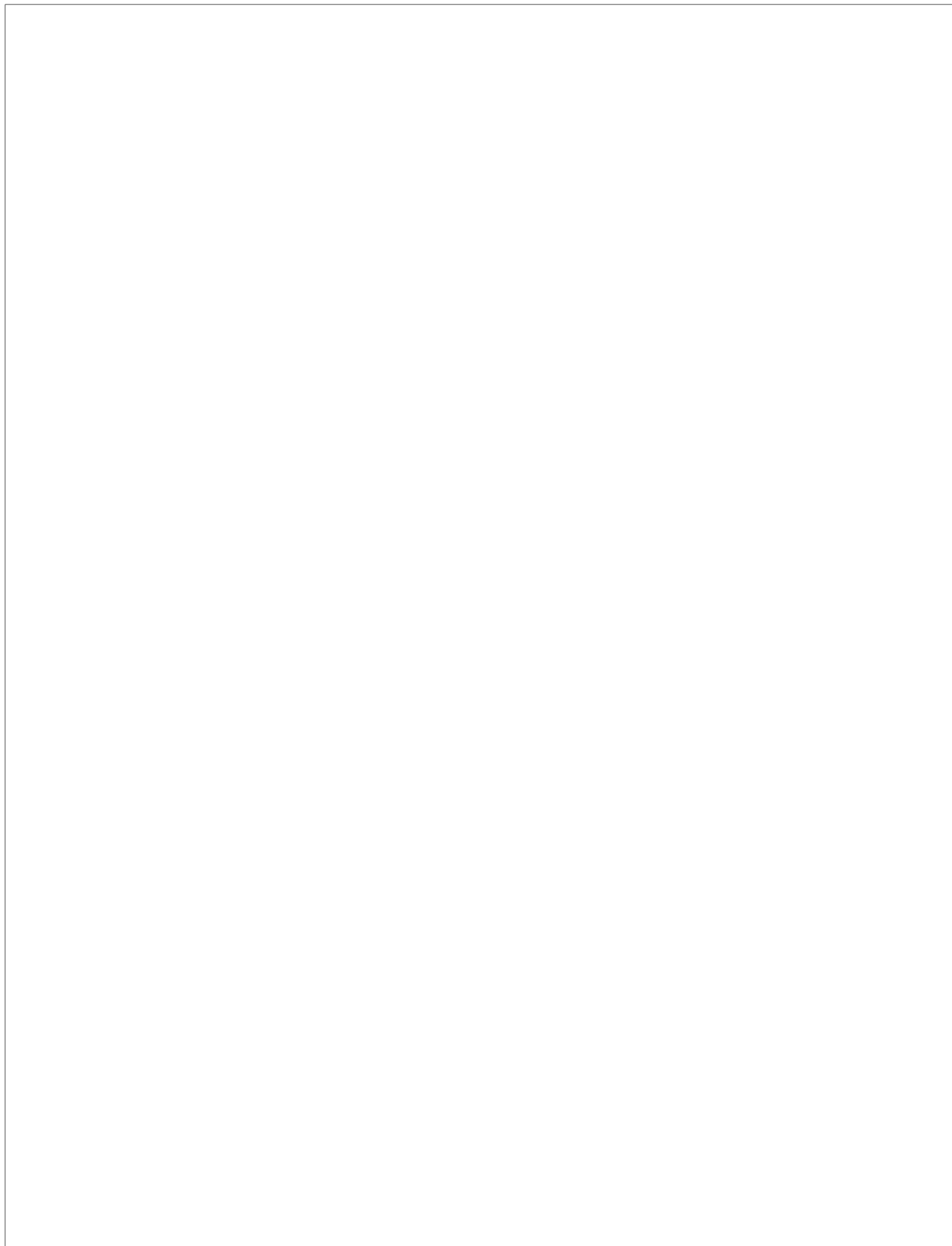


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ITALY:

Government Crisis

President Cossiga will begin the traditional process of forming a new government this morning, but preliminary reactions from the parties suggest that the government crisis will be difficult to resolve.

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The Cabinet will remain in office until a new government has been selected, and tradition dictates that Craxi as outgoing Prime Minister should be given first crack at forming a successor government. Craxi gave up his idea of seeking a vote of confidence when the Christian Democrats threatened to abandon him if he proceeded.

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(b)(1)³

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(b)(1)

(b)(3)

Craxi presented his version of the government's handling of the Achille Lauro affair to Parliament, stressing US highhandedness. He announced that Rome would formally protest the unauthorized US pursuit of the Egyptian airliner carrying Abu Abbas from Sigonella to Rome and presented himself as the defender of Italian sovereignty. He also insisted that Defense Minister Spadolini had been consulted about the decision to let Abu Abbas go.

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