

CIA/CR B 64-53

4 November 1964 (b)(1)
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INTELLIGENCE BRIEF

NEW CHILEAN GOVERNMENT LEADERS

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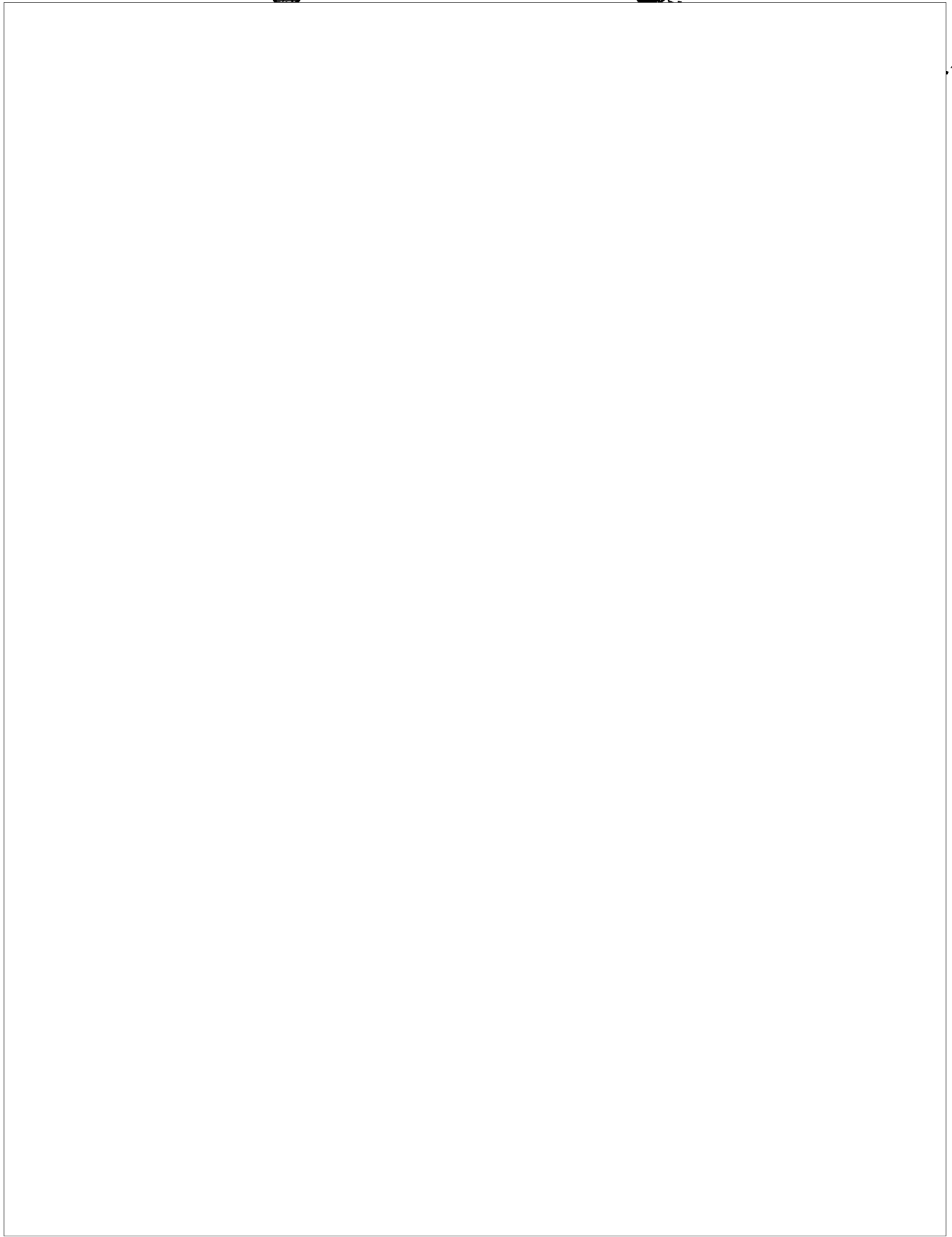
DIRECTORATE OF INTELLIGENCE

Office of Central Reference

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pg 1

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pg 3

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pg 4



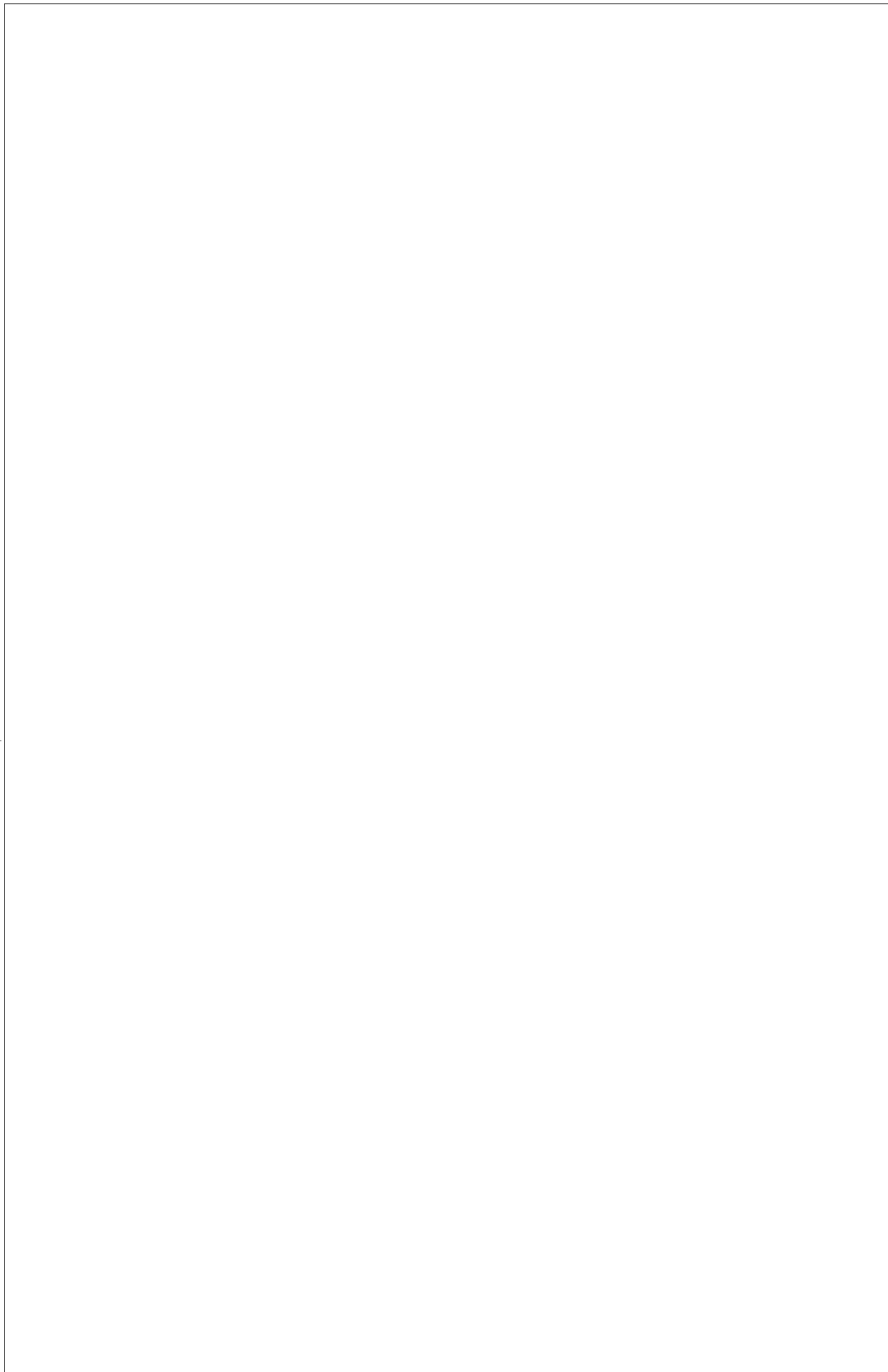
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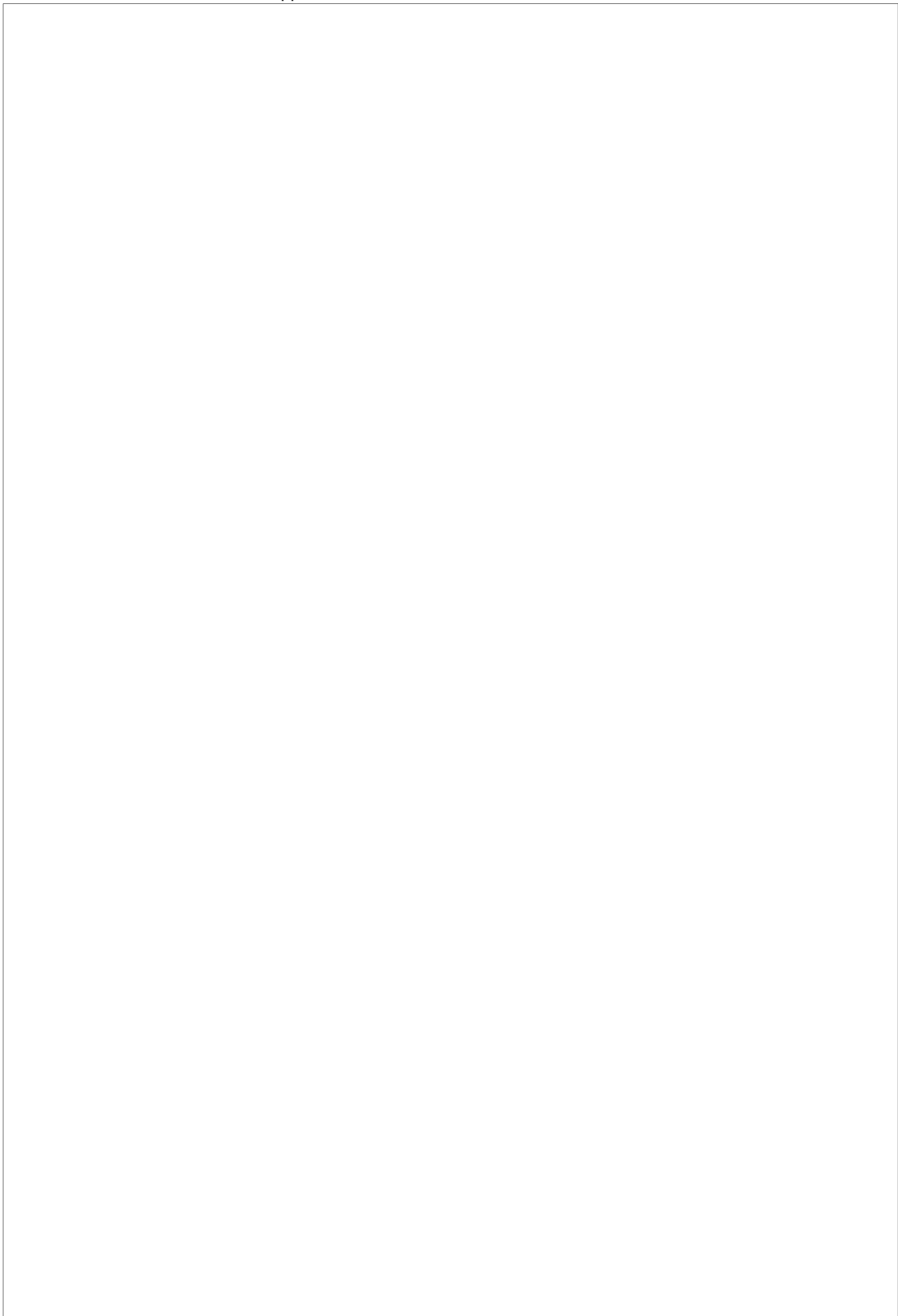
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109



pg 10

pg 11

pg 12

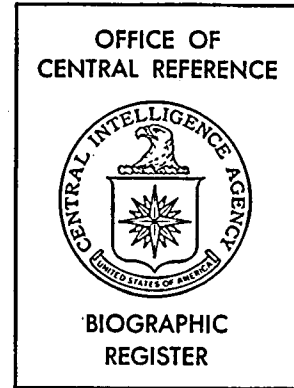


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CHILE

Bernardo LEIGHTON Guzmán

Minister of Interior



Bernardo Leighton, a seasoned politician and statesman who is considered the "grand old man" of the Christian Democrat Party (PDC), was named Minister of Interior by Eduardo Frei in October 1964. A middle-of-the-road member of the PDC, he has an outstanding reputation across the entire political spectrum, among both young and old leaders. [redacted] termed him an excellent choice for his new post, stating that in view of his background and their knowledge of him, he would probably hold healthy views on the handling of subversion and would be in all other respects a good man for the delicate Interior portfolio. After the by-election for Deputy in Curicó in March 1964 (which the far-leftist Popular Action Front won easily), Leighton was prominently mentioned as the only PDC leader who would be acceptable to all sectors of the party, should Frei decide to step down as the presidential candidate. In April he was named head of the political committee of the Frei campaign, a position formerly occupied by Frei himself. [redacted]

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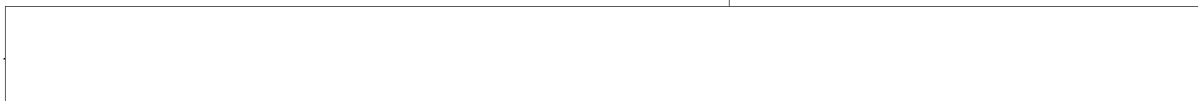
[redacted] his prestigious past, his integrity, and his famous sense of humor would help to bring together effectively all the forces with Frei and to assuage any differences which might arise.

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Bernardo Leighton Guzmán was born 16 August 1909 and graduated in 1933 as a lawyer from Catholic University, where he later taught philosophy of law. A former president of the Conservative Youth, he subsequently became one of the founders of the National Falange, predecessor of the PDC. Minister of Labor under Arturo Alessandri at the record age of 27, he later served as Minister of Education (1950-52) and as a National Deputy. In August 1962 he was defeated in a by-election for Deputy in Santiago's First District. He has held various posts within the PDC and has been the party's first vice president since November 1962. In September 1963 he was listed as a prospective delegate to the Fourth World Conference of Christian Democracy, Strasbourg, France.

Prior to 1951 Leighton had a pro-labor and anti-government record and was considered to be associated with Communist-front activities and to be a collaborator with local Communists. [redacted]

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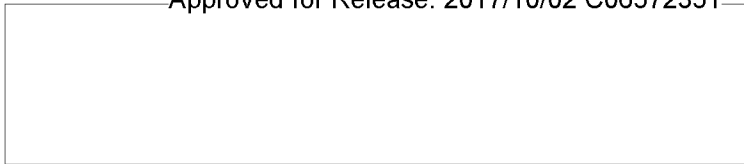


[redacted] Leighton had a burning desire to achieve a high



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pg 14



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Bernardo LEIGHTON Guzmán (cont.)

political post and that he was ready, willing and able to work with the Communists toward this goal, despite the fact that he was strongly Catholic.



By 1951, however, Leighton seemed to be moving away from his Communist connections and in fact was a primary Communist target during a tumult over an education agreement with the United States, signed while Leighton was Education Minister.



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intelligent and energetic and as an executive who knew how to delegate authority. Leighton is now believed to be anti-Communist.

The new Minister is married to the former Ana Fresno. In 1951 he was studying English but it is not known how much of that language he has learned.



October 1964

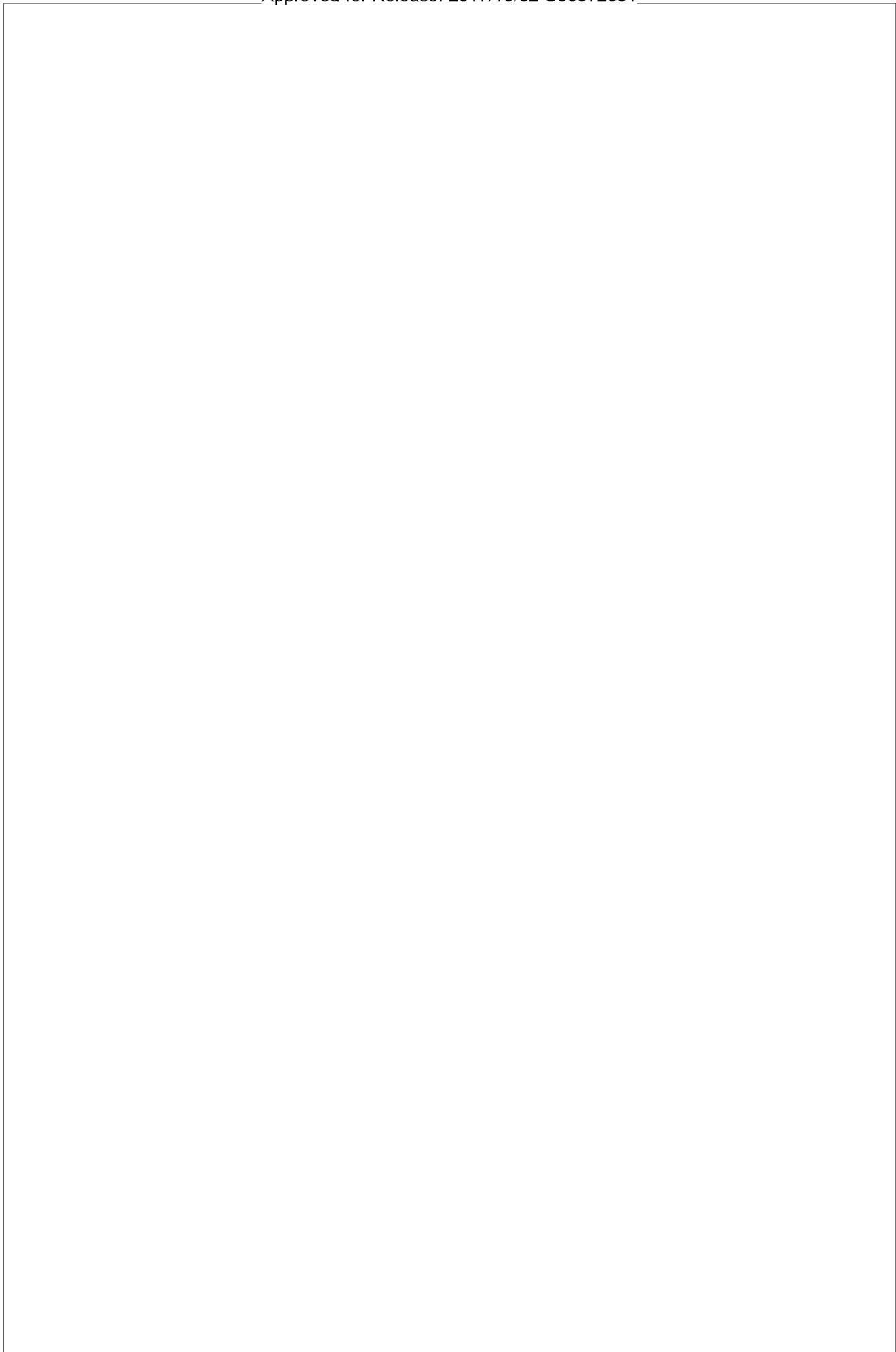
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pg 15

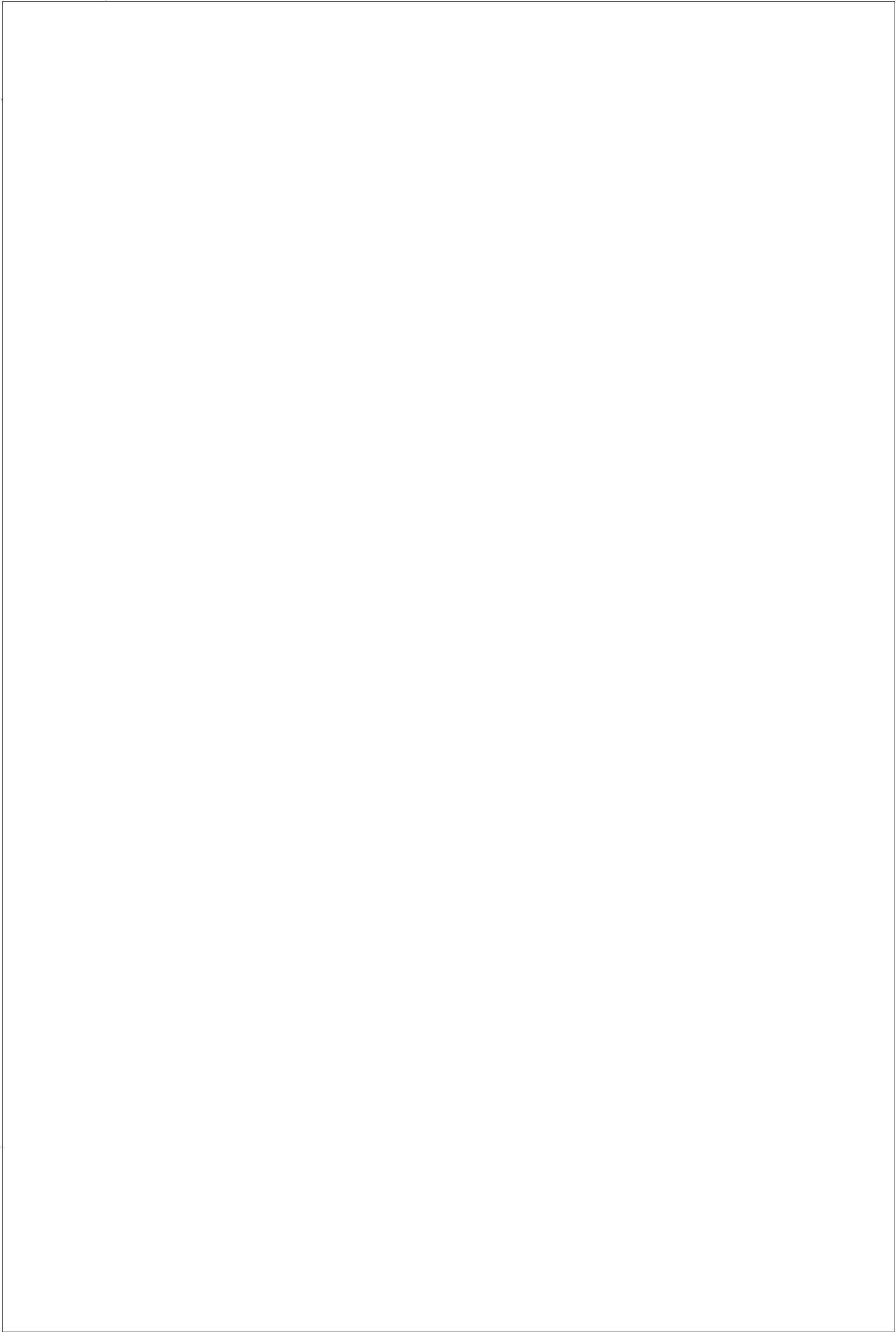
pg 6



10/17



pg 18





pg 20

pg 21



pg 22

pg 23



pg 24



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pg 26

127