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National Intelligence Daily for Monday, 27 March 1989

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Summary:

The CIA's National Intelligence Daily for 27 March 1989 covers developments in Haiti, the Soviet Union, Afghanistan, Iran, Turkey, Ecuador, Lebanon, and East Germany. Certain portions of the document are redacted due to b(1) and b(3) exemptions.

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Director of Central Intelligence

NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE DAILY

Monday, 27 March 1989

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27 March 1989

Approved for Release
Date JUN 1999

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Avril's Moves Toward Elections

17 September 1988	Takes power in coup.
Late September	Begins discussions with national political leaders.
21 October	Pledges to govern in spirit of 1987 Constitution but stops short of formally reinstating that document.
Early November	Circulates draft decree establishing council to control electoral process.
9-17 February 1989	In response to criticism of draft decree, convenes forum of political leaders to suggest alternative text.
25 February	Issues decree, based on recommendations from forum and parts of 1987 Constitution, establishing nine-member independent council to control elections; only one member is to be appointed by the government.
13 March	Formally restores all but 36 articles of 1987 Constitution, including Article 291 banning former Duvalierists from running for public office until 1997.
22 March	Deadline for nominations to the electoral council. Catholic Church, labor unions, and government are allowed up to one-week delay.

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HAITI: Setting Electoral Course

Recent moves by President Avril suggest he is committed to holding elections in Haiti, probably in a belief that this is the best way to regain foreign aid; his pace implies that voting may occur within 18 months.
[redacted] b3

Avril has restored the 1987 Constitution—except for articles he deemed inconsistent with his military government. [redacted] b3 press reports indicate most politicians favor Avril's move but believe the Constitution should have been restored sooner and in full. Three centrist leaders told [redacted] that, although they remain skeptical, they believe Avril will continue moving toward democratic elections. They blasted critics like Sylvio Claude and Louis Dejoie for failing to applaud recent positive developments. [redacted] b3 b3

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[redacted]

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b3 [redacted] The President continues to keep his critics on the defensive. Restoring the Constitution deprived them of another issue they had hoped to use to rally support against him. Avril is not likely to make hasty moves, such as removing key commanders, that might abort the electoral process. He probably will try to co-opt restive former Duvalierists prohibited from running for office by building support among them for a centrist candidate, like Bazin, and allowing them to run in legislative races [redacted] b3

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USSR: Yel'tsin Appears Headed for Big Win

Initial returns of the first contested Soviet state elections in more than 50 years show maverick Boris Yel'tsin winning a landslide victory over a party-backed candidate in Moscow's at-large district. Nationalist activists in several non-Russian republics called for a boycott to protest the elections, and turnout in the Baltic republics was reported to be slightly lower than in Moscow. General Secretary Gorbachev yesterday repeated his opposition to a multiparty system but admitted the current electoral process needs reform. Hand counting of ballots will delay announcement of the first results until later today, although officials have 10 days to release the final totals. [redacted] b3

b3 [redacted] Gorbachev's comment on the need for further electoral changes may be a response to accusations that the process has been rigged by the party. Yel'tsin's apparent election to the 2,250-member Congress of People's Deputies shows strong grassroots support for his attacks on party privileges and calls for more radical reform. The magnitude of his victory may make it difficult for his opponents to deny him a seat in the new standing Supreme Soviet, which the new Congress will elect—reportedly on 24 April. Yel'tsin has indicated he intends to form a faction in the Supreme Soviet, and he may join forces with Baltic nationalist activists elected yesterday. Despite Yel'tsin's apparent win, however, the results of other less publicized races may be better indicators of popular attitudes toward Gorbachev's reform campaign. [redacted] b3

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AFGHANISTAN: Fighting Intensifies

Afghan resistance fighters launched renewed attacks on Jalalabad and Qandahar Saturday. According to press reports, insurgent leaders claim to have captured the post at Parkand and Logary village—both key defense lines for Jalalabad Airfield—and to have seized at least four other regime posts. Regime officials admitted the destruction of a key bridge on the Kabul-Jalalabad road last week. [redacted] b3

b3 [redacted] Kabul press coverage of the battles appears to be aimed at preparing regime supporters for the eventual fall of Jalalabad and Qandahar. The press in Kabul continues to describe fictitious successful regime operations and is emphasizing claims that Pakistani, Saudi, and US troops are directing the attacks, apparently to preempt criticism of future reverses. The regime has described the new offensive at Qandahar as one of the most serious since the Soviet pullout. A spokesman in the Afghan Foreign Ministry has called on the US to send a "factfinding mission" to Kabul to discuss ways to end the fighting. [redacted] b3

IRAN-TURKEY: New Controversy Over Islamic Dress

Iran is putting relations with Turkey at risk in order to protest Turkish actions Tehran considers "un-Islamic." Ayatollah Khomeini last week publicly condemned a Turkish court decision overturning recent legislation that allowed Turkish women to wear Islamic headdress on university campuses. Khomeini characterized the court's action as part of the broader assault on Islam exemplified by the Rushdie affair. The comments came shortly after a majority of Iran's 270-member Consultative Assembly issued a call for a reduction in relations with Turkey because of that court decision. The president of Turkey's parliament has sent a sharp protest to the Iranian Assembly, and the Turkish Foreign Ministry has called in the Iranian Ambassador to criticize Tehran's interference in Turkish affairs. [redacted] b3

b3 [redacted] Khomeini is using the court decision, as he did Rushdie's book, to rekindle Islamic and revolutionary fervor in Iran by portraying Islam as under assault from secular governments. The Assembly's action illustrates the Iranian leadership's heightened willingness since the Rushdie affair to risk political isolation in its defense of Islamic values. Although Ankara's secularism has made for frictions with Iran in the past, Tehran and Ankara have generally played them down to avoid jeopardizing important political and economic ties. [redacted] b3

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ECUADOR: Government Fortunes Ebbing

Opposition from several quarters has the Ecuadorian Government increasingly on the defensive. Former President Febres-Cordero broke several months of relative quiet by publicly criticizing the regime after the government charged his former personal secretary—and son-in-law—with corruption. [redacted] b3, b1

[redacted] Borja's other major rival, populist Abdala Bucaram, may return to Ecuador from self-imposed exile in Panama. In addition, the ruling coalition is on the verge of breaking up. [redacted] b1, b3 b1, b3

b3 [redacted] Borja's popularity has slipped this year largely because his economic policies have failed to stem inflation or prevent food shortages; many Ecuadorians now regard him as ineffective. He is especially vulnerable in Guayaquil, the country's largest city, where both Abdala Bucaram's party and Febres-Cordero are well positioned to exploit rising social discontent. If the ruling coalition collapses soon, as appears increasingly likely, the government's ability to push its legislative program through congress will be greatly complicated. [redacted] b3

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In Brief

East Asia

— **Philippines** relatively quiet before nationwide village elections tomorrow . . . violence. Communist intimidation likely on election day . . . insurgent attacks also expected Wednesday, 20th anniversary of Communist New People's Arm[redacted] b3

b1, b3 [redacted]

— Press reports say **Thai** Prime Minister to travel to **India** this week . . . highest ranking Thai to visit New Delhi . . . likely to discuss trade, India's desire for greater role in resolving **Cambodian** problem. [redacted] b3

— **China** canceled participation of senior trade delegates in EC session next month . . . probably following up sharp demarche on European Parliament's Tibet resolution . . . [redacted] b3, b1 minor disturbances continue in Lhasa. [redacted] b3

Americas

— **UK** charged senior **Peruvian** diplomat Saturday with smuggling cocaine worth more than $10 million . . . on personal travel, but used diplomatic bag . . . will heighten growing perception Lima's antidrug efforts are stymied by corruption. [redacted] b3

— Press says **Cuba's** top two union leaders dismissed . . . President Castro dissatisfied with labor's performance in campaign for economic efficiency . . . more changes likely at trade union congress later this year. [redacted] b3

Middle East

— Press reports yesterday say **Iranian** Deputy Foreign Minister Larijani resigned 19 March . . . one of leading pro-West officials . . . reflects increased strength of hardliners in Foreign Ministry, which had advocated moderate foreign policy. [redacted] b3

— **Jordan** yesterday postponed indefinitely deal for eight Tornado strike-fighter aircraft from **UK** . . . severe financial troubles cited . . . decision coincides with visit to Amman by IMF officials . . . move welcomed by military, business sectors. [redacted] b3

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Special Analysis

TURKEY: **Politics, Secularism, and Islam**

Turkey has long been committed to political secularism and an alliance with the West, although Islamic practices are becoming more visible and accepted, often with the active promotion of Prime Minister Ozal's government and to the dismay of the military and other secularists in the Turkish political elite. Although Islamic fundamentalism is not a threat, Islam is an important social and cultural force in Turkey and a growing factor in the political equation that will make for new frictions at home and may hurt Ankara's efforts to join the EC. ([redacted] b3

The handling of a law permitting women students to wear Islamic headdress to class has created considerable controversy. The Ozal government passed the legislation last year in response to a series of campus protests. President Evren—a staunch secularist—took the measure to court, however, claiming it contravened the constitutional principle of secularism; his claim was vindicated recently when the Constitutional Court overturned the law. ([redacted] b3

Several small demonstrations protested the ruling. Some spokesmen of the ruling Motherland Party, including Ozal, even called for a referendum to change the Constitution, although the Prime Minister has since backed off the idea [redacted] Iran is behind the demonstrations, and Evren has cautioned Ozal on the issue. Military leaders, meanwhile, have publicly reaffirmed their commitment to secular parliamentary democracy. ([redacted] b3 b1, b3

The reaction to the controversy surrounding the *The Satanic Verses* has been muted. Several small, uneventful protests have occurred, and Turkey's religious authorities have labeled Ayatollah Khomeini's death decree un-Islamic. The government has not taken a stand on the novel's publication or on the death sentence against author Salman Rushdie and has refused to endorse the EC's stand opposing Iranian policy. ([redacted] b3

Role of the Ozal Government

The visible observance of Islam is on the rise in Turkey largely as a result of social changes that have flooded the cities with people from the countryside who bring their conservative religious outlooks with them. Observers note a growing interest in Turkey's Islamic and Ottoman past as well, especially among the young. ([redacted] b3

Ozal's Motherland government, which has a well-organized wing of religious conservatives, has encouraged the rise in Islamic observance. Pandering to the prayer rug vote has gone on since the

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advent of multiparty politics in the late 1940s, but the Ozal government has been especially active. Its most noteworthy action includes promoting religious education in state schools; Ozal himself made a controversial personal pilgrimage to Mecca last year. The trend disturbs Turkey's secularized, urban elite, which accuses the government of consciously undermining secularism. [redacted] b3

Outlook

There are still powerful constraints on the growth of Islam as a political force in Turkey. Public opinion polls show support for an Islamic regime remains small at about 7 percent, and few question the secularist tradition bequeathed by Kemal Ataturk, founder of the Turkish Republic, or the Western orientation established after World War II. Moreover, most Turks—some 80 percent—are Sunni Muslims, and the absence of a hierarchical, politicized clergy makes it difficult for a religious leader to emerge. Turkey's rapid economic modernization also promotes closer ties to the West, and the military—the chief arbiter in Turkish politics—is committed to Ataturk's secular legacy. [redacted] b3

The more visible and accepted place of Islam in Turkish life will nonetheless remain. Many Islamic activists in Turkey, especially those in the Motherland Party, want no more than to expand the role of religious activity within the confines of the secular state. Ozal himself claims he simply supports greater freedom for personal religious expression, just like secular regimes in the West. [redacted] b3

Implications for the US

Even a strong trend toward Islam is not likely to affect Ankara's foreign and security policies. Geography has surrounded Turkey with real or potential enemies and left it badly in need of Western economic and security assistance. Moreover, the Ozal government pursues policies—close ties to the US, rapprochement with Greece, free market reforms—that promote ties to the West. Membership in the EC is the government's key foreign policy objective. [redacted] b3

Over the long term, a more visibly Islamic Turkey would reinforce a European reluctance to admit Turkey to the EC. A more Islamic Turkey might become less cooperative on specific issues. Additional differences with Western Europe, such as an eventual rejection of Ankara's bid to join the EC, could lead the Turks to see themselves as more Islamic than Western and might produce a qualitative change in Turkey's strong relationship with the West. [redacted] b3

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Military Situation

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Special Analysis

LEBANON: **Danger to US Presence Growing**

Even when the current round of fighting in Lebanon ebbs, the animosity dividing Lebanese factions, their propensity for senseless violence, and the abundance of heavy weaponry will pose serious risks to US personnel. [redacted] b3

Most of Lebanon's competing interest groups—the Muslim and Christian governments, the confessional militias—with the exception of Hizballah—and the Syrians—strongly support a continued US presence in Lebanon and are unlikely now to target US personnel or facilities directly. But the sudden unraveling of alliances and the rapid resort to violence in disagreements like that over the illegal ports could quickly endanger US lives. [redacted] b3

Threat From Intra-Christian Fighting

B1 [redacted] Christian Prime Minister Awn's Lebanese Armed Forces and Samir Jaja's Lebanese Forces militia, [redacted] control the territory around the US Embassy. Both view the US presence as a symbol of legitimacy for the Christian enclave and would not want the US to withdraw from Lebanon. [redacted] b3

The two Christian groups are bitter rivals, however, [redacted] Jaja wants to avoid further clashes with Awn's Army but believes Awn is preparing for such a clash. It is probably only a matter of time before the unpredictable Awn once again attacks Jaja's militia. [redacted] is near the strategically important coastal road and would be in the path of an Army advance to the sea. [redacted] B3 that Awn plans such a push in his next assault on the Lebanese Forces. [redacted] b3

B1

Threat From Christian-Muslim Clashes

B1 [redacted] US facilities have not been hit during the current wave of shelling, despite the devastation of nearby Lebanese Army buildings—probably on orders from Damascus to avoid US facilities. But, the Muslim militias, particularly the Shia Amal, are not known for accurate artillery fire, raising the risk that US installations may be struck by errant rounds. [redacted] b3

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No US citizen has been injured in the fighting, although shelling of the Lebanese Defense Ministry, [redacted] has been particularly intense at times. [redacted] was visiting the Ministry when it was shelled last week but was unhurt. Many of the roads regularly traveled by [redacted] personnel have been shelled, and firefights along these roads erupt frequently and without warning. [redacted] b3 B1, B3

Wild Cards

Several groups not directly involved in the Muslim-Christian controversy, particularly the pro-Iranian Hizballah and Ahmed Jibril's Syrian-supported Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine–General Command, also pose serious threats to US personnel. The latest car bombing in East Beirut near the British Embassy, probably by a pro-Syrian group, [redacted] A rupture in US-Syrian relations would reduce the restraining influence of Damascus on these groups and substantially increase the threat to US interests. [redacted] b3 B1, B3

The strike by guards at the Embassy in January that raised new concerns about the safety of US personnel in Beirut has receded, but the basic problem is still unresolved. Many of the guards are members of or loyal to the Lebanese Forces. [redacted] b3 B1, B3

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Special Analysis

EAST GERMANY: Challenges Ahead

New social and economic challenges are making it increasingly difficult for the East German regime to maintain domestic stability while pursuing faster economic growth. East German leader Honecker retains a firm grip on power, but his advanced age, 76, and rigid opposition to Soviet-style reform probably will make succession a live issue this year. [redacted] b3

The regime has sought to contain popular protests through both increased repression and limited liberalization. It has recently made travel and emigration rules seem looser, for instance, and has given citizens the right to judicial review of administrative decisions. Sit-ins by would-be emigrants and a human rights demonstration by several hundred persons in Leipzig, however, indicate that the regime's concessions have left many unsatisfied. Similarly, the relaxation a year ago of restrictions on travel to the West appears to have increased rather than diminished the number seeking to emigrate. [redacted] b3

Developments in the USSR also are fueling the demand for change. Various reports indicate that General Secretary Gorbachev's reforms enjoy widespread support in East Germany, among both the population at large and the party rank and file. For example, lower echelon party members recently were quite critical of the banning of a Soviet magazine that had reported Moscow's liberalization measures and efforts to reassess Soviet history. [redacted] b3 b1

Economic Malaise

Declining economic growth is further undermining the regime's position with the general population. Since the mid-1980s, GNP growth has fallen by about half, discrediting the regime's promises to improve living standards. The leadership is opposed to Soviet-style economic restructuring out of fear that economic decentralization and market-oriented reforms would reduce the party's power and bring on political instability. The regime still hopes the development of key technologies and selective imports of Western capital goods will increase labor productivity and satisfy consumers, but an economic rebound seems unlikely without market-oriented reforms. [redacted] b3

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Honecker's Position

Despite some disagreements in the leadership, particularly on the handling of dissidents and the extent of economic problems, Honecker seems to retain his firm grip on power. His age and resistance to change, however, are encouraging more and more East Germans to look to his eventual replacement. Many experts, East and West, expect him to leave office by the next party congress, scheduled for May 1990; he might then retain the mostly honorary post of Council of State Chairman. No clear successor has emerged, but East Berlin party leader Schabowski and Party Secretary for Security and Youth Affairs Krenz appear especially well situated to take over. [redacted] b3

Outlook

Unrest is likely to grow if the East German economy continues to stagnate while Gorbachev's domestic reforms proceed. As long as Honecker remains in charge, however, the regime is not likely to make any major policy shift in response. The leadership will continue to seek better relations with the US but is unlikely to move quickly on outstanding issues such as war-related US property claims and human rights violations. Even Honecker's eventual successors will approach political and economic liberalization with great caution. ([redacted] b3 [redacted] b3

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