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OUTGOING  
 TELEGRAM

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 ORIGIN NEA-11

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STATE 046986

INFO OCT-00 AF-10 ADS-00 ACDA-12 CIAE-00 INR-10 10-14  
 L-03 NSAE-00 EB-08 NRC-02 OES-09 DODE-00 H-01  
 DOE-17 SS-15 SP-02 CEQ-01 PM-05 SAS-02 NSCE-00  
 SSO-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00 /122 R

DRAFTED BY NEA/IAI: JCOVEY/JPSILLANE: SMB  
 APPROVED BY NEA/IAI: JCOVEY  
 OES/NEP: MGHIN (SUBS.)  
 OES/N: LVHOSENZO (SUBS.)  
 INR/STA: JSIEGEL (SUBS.)  
 AF/S: LMACFARLANE (SUBS.)  
 NEA/P: GSHERMAN

-----100290 220237Z /61

O 220131Z FEB 80  
 FM SECSTATE WASHDC  
 TO AMEMBASSY PRETORIA IMMEDIATE  
 AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN IMMEDIATE  
 AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE  
 INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN IMMEDIATE  
 AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE  
 AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE  
 AMEMBASSY JIDDA IMMEDIATE

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CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 12065: N/A

TAGS: MNUC, IS

SUBJECT: CBS STORY ON ISRAELI NUCLEAR WEAPONS

1. (LOU ENTIRE TEXT.)
2. CBS EVENING NEWS RAN A MAJOR STORY FEBRUARY 21 IN WHICH IT CLAIMED THAT ISRAEL HAD PRODUCED DOZENS OF ATOMIC WEAPONS AS WELL AS SEVERAL HYDROGEN BOMBS. THE STORY, NARRATED BY CORRESPONDENT DAN RAVIV IN ROME, WAS BASED LARGELY ON THE WORK OF TWO ISRAELI JOURNALISTS, ELI TEICHER AND AMI DEROM (PHONETIC). STORY CLAIMED THAT ISRAEL EXPLODED A NUCLEAR WEAPON IN THE SOUTH ATLANTIC OCEAN SEPTEMBER 22, 1979, WITH THE ASSISTANCE AND COOPERATION OF SOUTH AFRICA. STORY ALSO CLAIMED THAT ISRAEL AND SOUTH AFRICA HAVE COOPERATED IN NUCLEAR WEAPONS PRODUCTION FOR DECADES, WITH SOUTH AFRICA PROVIDING URANIUM TO ISRAEL AND AT ONE POINT IN THE MID '60'S OFFERING FACILITIES FOR AN ISRAELI NUCLEAR TEST. ACCORDING TO THE STORY, ISRAEL DID NOT AT ANY TIME ASK FOR OR GET ANY ASSISTANCE FROM THE UNITED STATES.

3. FOLLOWING IS PRESS GUIDANCE PREPARED FOR USE BY DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN IN RESPONDING TO MEDIA INQUIRIES:

Q: DOES ISRAEL HAVE NUCLEAR WEAPONS, INCLUDING H BOMBS?

A: WHILE THERE HAVE BEEN VARIOUS ALLEGATIONS ON THIS SUBJECT, THE ONLY COMMENT I HAVE IS TO NOTE THE REPEATED STATEMENTS OF THE GOVERNMENT OF ISRAEL THAT THEY WILL NOT BE THE FIRST TO INTRODUCE NUCLEAR WEAPONS INTO THE MIDDLE EAST.

Q: DID ISRAEL AND SOUTH AFRICA COLLABORATE IN CONDUCTING A NUCLEAR TEST IN THE SOUTH ATLANTIC ON SEPTEMBER 22, 1979?

A: AS YOU KNOW, THE PANEL OF SCIENTIFIC EXPERTS CONVENED BY THE WHITE HOUSE HAS CONDUCTED A THOROUGH REVIEW OF ALL AVAILABLE INFORMATION CONCERNING THE NATURE AND PROBABLE SOURCE OF THE LIGHT SIGNAL RECORDED BY A U.S. SATELLITE OVER THE SOUTH ATLANTIC ON SEPTEMBER 22, 1979. AFTER REVIEWING BOTH CLASSIFIED AND UNCLASSIFIED INFORMATION AND CONDUCTING OTHER ANALYSES, THE PANEL WAS UNABLE TO CONCLUDE WHETHER THE SIGNAL WAS GENERATED BY A NUCLEAR EXPLOSION OR SOME OTHER PHENOMENON.

-- THE PANEL RECOMMENDED THAT FURTHER ANALYSES BE UNDERTAKEN TO IMPROVE OUR INTERSTANDING OF THE SIGNAL. THIS IS BEING UNDERTAKEN AND WE WILL CONTINUE TO REVIEW DATA AND INFORMATION CONCERNING THE EVENT. WHILE FOLLOW-ON INVESTIGATIONS MAY PROVIDE CORROBORATIVE DATA IF A NUCLEAR EXPLOSION OCCURRED, AT THIS TIME THERE IS NO INFORMATION THAT WOULD CLEARLY CORROBORATE SUCH AN OCCURRENCE. THERE IS NO PARTICULAR POINT IN MY SPECULATING AS TO WHO MIGHT HAVE BEEN RESPONSIBLE FOR AN EVENT THAT WE CANNOT CONCLUDE OCCURRED.

CHRISTOPHER

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