

RELEASED IN PART  
B1, 1.4(B), 1.4(D)

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ACTION EUR-01

|      |        |         |         |        |         |         |         |
|------|--------|---------|---------|--------|---------|---------|---------|
| INFO | LOG-00 | ACDA-13 | AMAD-01 | CEQ-01 | CIAE-00 | DODE-00 | DOEE-00 |
|      | EB-01  | H-01    | INRE-00 | INR-01 | IO-19   | L-03    | ADS-00  |
|      | NRC-02 | NSAE-00 | NSCE-00 | OES-09 | OIC-02  | PM-01   | P-01    |
|      | SNP-01 | SP-01   | SS-01   | T-01   | EPAE-00 | /060W   |         |

-----01996A 091925Z /48

P 091905Z JAN 92  
 FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW  
 TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6272  
 INFO AMEMBASSY BERN  
 AMEMBASSY ROME  
 USMISSION USVIENNA 0076

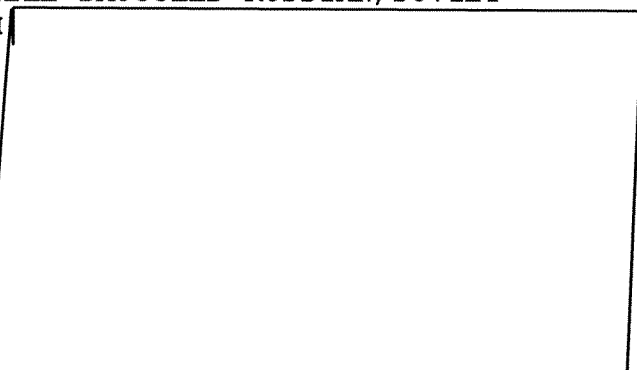
S E C R E T MOSCOW 000747

USVIENNA FOR UNVIE

E.O. 12356:OADR  
 TAGS: PREL, PNUC, IAEA, KNNP, KN, KS, US, UR  
 SUBJECT: BLACKMARKET IN SOVIET NUCLEAR  
 - MATERIALS: LESS THAN MEETS THE EYE?

REF (A) STATE 000396 (B) MOSCOW 000275 (NOTAL)

- SECRET - ENTIRE TEXT
- PER PARA 6 REF A, S&TCOUNS RAISED U.S. CONCERNS OVER REPORTS OF POSSIBLE SMUGGLED RUSSIAN/SOVIET NUCLEAR MATERIAL WITH



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GIVEN THE RUSSIAN CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS,  
 FIRST OPPORTUNITY TO DO SO WAS THE EVENING OF JANUARY  
 8.

- BOTH OFFICIALS ARE AWARE OF THE PRESS REPORTS, BUT EACH SCOFFED AT THE IDEA THAT NUCLEAR MATERIAL, PLUTONIUM, OR ENRICHED URANIUM HAD BEEN SMUGGLED OUT

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OF RUSSIA OR THE FORMER SOVIET UNION. EACH SUGGESTED THAT SUCH PRESS REPORTS WERE NOT THE FIRST, NOR WOULD THEY BE THE LAST, TO APPEAR. [REDACTED] SAID HE WAS NOT AWARE OF ANY NUCLEAR MATERIALS PROCESSING OR OTHER FACILITY AT THE "IRKUTSK MILITARY CENTER." HE SAID IT IS THEORETICALLY CONCEIVABLE THAT "SOMEONE MAY HAVE SAWED OFF A PIECE OF A WARHEAD," BUT SAID THE PROBABILITY OF SUCH AN EVENT WAS LESS THAN ZERO.

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4. [REDACTED] DENIED THAT THE RUSSIAN GOVERNMENT EITHER HAD APPROACHED, OR BEEN APPROACHED BY, THE ITALIAN OR SWISS GOVERNMENTS REGARDING THE REPORTS. BOTH TOOK THE VIEW THAT SUCH OF PRESS REPORTS ARE UNRELIABLE AND ARE NOT THE KINDS OF SOLID REPORTS THAT WOULD MERIT RESPONSE FROM THE RUSSIAN, OR THE PRIOR SOVIET, GOVERNMENT. [REDACTED] SAID HIS MINISTRY WOULD OF COURSE INVESTIGATE FULLY ANY OFFICIAL INFORMATION FROM THE GOVERNMENTS DIRECTLY INVOLVED. [REDACTED] CONFIRMED THAT THE RUSSIAN GOVERNMENT IS NOT INVESTIGATING THE ITALIAN/SWISS REPORTS.

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TADJIK NUCLEAR EXPORTS

5. [REDACTED] HOWEVER, SAID HE WOULD NOT BE SURPRISED IF ONE OR MORE CENTRAL ASIAN FORMER REPUBLICS WERE TO EXPORT URANIUM ORE OR SEMIPROCESSED MATERIALS. HE QUICKLY ADDED THAT HE DID NOT HAVE A SHRED OF EVIDENCE THAT SUCH EXPORTS HAD OCCURRED; HE WAS SPEAKING ONLY OF CAPABILITIES. UZBEKISTAN AND KAZAKHSTAN HAVE URANIUM MINES, AND TADJIKSTAN, FOR EXAMPLE, HAS A FACILITY FOR PRODUCING YELLOW CAKE FROM ORE MINED IN UZBEKISTAN AND KAZAKHSTAN. KAZAKHSTAN ALSO HAS A PELLET-PRODUCING FACILITY AT UST' KAMENOGORSK FOR SUPPLYING REACTORS ON RUSSIAN TERRITORY. THAT WOULD BE A FAR CRY, HE SAID, FROM EXPORTING WEAPONS-GRADE OR ENRICHED NUCLEAR MATERIAL AND/OR EQUIPMENT. NONE OF THOSE FORMER REPUBLICS, HE AVERRED, HAVE ANY ENRICHMENT CAPABILITY.

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6. [REDACTED] ON HIS OWN RAISED RECENT REPORTS (REF B) THAT TADJIKSTAN HAS EXPORTED MATERIAL. HE SAID THAT THE RUSSIAN GOVERNMENT HAS MADE INQUIRIES AND THAT TADJIK AUTHORITIES INFORMED RUSSIA THAT NO SUCH EXPORTS HAVE OCCURRED AND THAT THE TADJIK GOVERNMENT HAS NO INTENTION OF PERMITTING EXPORTS OF ENRICHED

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MATERIAL. HE SAID HE IS SATISFIED WITH THOSE ASSURANCES.

7. [REDACTED] ADDED THAT THE FORMER REPUBLICS ARE WORKING OUT AN INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENT UNDER WHICH THEY WOULD ADHERE TO "THE LONDON GUIDELINES" AND TO PREVIOUSLY EXISTING SOVIET RULES AND

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REGULATIONS COVERING EXPORTS OF CONTROLLED NUCLEAR MATERIALS. AT THE SAME TIME, [REDACTED] DID NOT DENY THE POSSIBILITY THAT, DURING THIS TRANSITIONAL PERIOD, "LOCAL AUTHORITIES" MIGHT ATTEMPT TO SMUGGLE SOME CONTROLLED MATERIAL UNDER THEIR CONTROL.  
STRAUSS

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