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DRAFTED BY S/S: PTARNOFF: BABS
APPROVED BY D - MR. CHRISTOPHER
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SECRET STATE 190653 TOSEC 080314

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CHEROKEE, FOR THE SECRETARY FROM WARREN CHRISTOPHER

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, SF, US

SUBJECT: SOUTH AFRICAN NUCLEAR POTENTIAL

REF: STATE 189626

1. ON THE BASIS OF PRELIMINARY INTELLIGENCE, WE HAVE TENTATIVELY CONCLUDED THAT SOUTH AFRICA IS PROBABLY PREPARING A NUCLEAR TEST SITE IN THE DESERT AND THUS THAT THEIR NUCLEAR WEAPONS PROGRAM MAY BE SOMewhat FURTHER ALONG THAN PREVIOUSLY REALIZED. ON AN URGENT BASIS WE ARE PROCEEDING TO UPDATE THESE ASSESSMENTS AND EXPECT A BETTER PICTURE OF THE STATE OF AFFAIRS BY TOMORROW OR SATURDAY.

2. YOU WILL KNOW BEST WHETHER TO MENTION THIS DEVELOPMENT TO BOTHA UNDER ALL THE CIRCUMSTANCES.

3. CABLES ON OUR EARLIER APPROACH TO SAG IN PRETORIA ON SECRET

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THE SAME SUBJECT AND THE SAG REPLY HAVE BEEN REPEATED TO YOU. CHRISTOPHER

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3. CABLES ON OUR EARLIER APPROACH TO SAG IN PRETORIA ON THE SAME SUBJECT AND THE SAG REPLY HAVE BEEN REPEATED TO YOU. CHRISTOPHER UNQUOTE CHRISTOPHER

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