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Q DEF 18-6 27

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ACTION ACDA 16

INFO EUR 15, NEA 13, IO 13, SS 20, GPM 04, SAH 03, L 03, NSC 10, INR 07, E 11, CIAE 00, NSAE 00, RSC 01, DODE 00, SCI 05, NASA 04, AEC 11, OST 01, RSR 01, NIC 01, /138 W

Q 071391Z MAY 68
FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 110
AMCONSUL BOMBAY
INFO AMCONSUL CALCUTA UNN
USMISSION GENEVA
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMCONSUL MADRAS UNN
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
USMISSION USUN

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RISTO

SUBJ: CONVERSATION WITH SENIOR GOI NUCLEAR OFFICIAL

1. IN LONG CONVERSATION TODAY WITH HOMI SETHNA, MEMBER GOI ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION AND DIRECTOR BHABHA ATOMIC RESEARCH CENTER IN BOMBAY, FOLLOWING POINTS OF INTEREST EMERGED.

2. INDO-SOVIET NUCLEAR AGREEMENT:

SETHNA CHARACTERIZED AGREEMENT AS QTE SEVENTEEN PAGES OF CRAP UNQTE. SAID HE EXPECTED VERY LITTLE TO COME OUT OF ACCORD SINCE QTE SOVIETS ARE NEITHER FORTHRIGHT NOR HONEST IN THEIR DEALINGS IN NUCLEAR FIELD. UNQTE. SETHNA OBSERVED THAT ON EVERY VISIT TO DATE MADE BY INDIAN ATOMIC SCIENTISTS TO USSR QTE WE HAVE BEEN TREATED LIKE KINGS AND LIED TO AS IF WE WERE CHILDREN UNQTE. HE SAID SOVIET OBSESSION WITH SECRECY IN THEIR NUCLEAR PROGRAM WOULD MAKE

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VALUE OF COLLABORATION QTE ALMOST MEANINGLESS UNQTE
FROM INDIAN POINT OF VIEW.

3. GOI ATOMIC TEST MONITORING FACILITIES:

SETHNA EXPRESSED PERSONAL VIEW THAT MAIN REASON BEHIND
SUDDEN SOVIET INTEREST IN NUCLEAR COLLABORATION WAS MOSCOW'S
DESIRE TO OBTAIN GOI DATA ON CHICOM NUCLEAR TESTS. HE
STATED THAT ON BASIS INFORMATION OBTAINED FROM NEWSPAPERS
AND QTE FROM OTHER SOURCES UNQTE ON RESULTS OF USAEC'S
MONITORING OF CHICOM TESTS QTE OUR ACCURACY IS MUCH
SUPERIOR TO YOURS IN THIS FIELD UNQTE. HE ADDED THIS WAS
PARTICULARLY TRUE ON LAST THREE CHICOM TESTS.

4. SOVIET NUCLEAR FUEL RE-FABRICATION TECHNIQUES

SETHNA STATED THE QTE BEST SCIENTIST THE SOVIETS HAVE
UNQTE IN THE FIELD OF FUEL RE-FABRICATION TECHNIQUES
ACCOMPANIED THE MOROKHOV MISSION TO INDIA LAST MONTH.
ACCORDING SETHNA THIS SCIENTIST CONFIDENTLY TOLD SENIOR
MEMBER OF TROMBAY STAFF THAT INDIANS ARE QTE WAY AHEAD
UNQTE OF SOVIETS IN THIS AREA. SETHNA OBSERVED IT IS
POSSIBLE SOVIET WAS PLAYING ROLE OF FOOL, BUT FROM
EXTRAORDINARY INTEREST HE SHOWED IN INDIAN TECHNIQUES
SETHNA AND HIS COLLEAGUES DEDUCED THEY (INDIANS) WERE
PROBABLY AHEAD.

5. NPT

SETHNA SAID PERSONALLY ONLY THING HE OBJECTED TO IN
TREATY WAS INSPECTION PROVISIONS. HE ADMITTED THIS WAS
IRRATIONAL OBJECTION IN INTERNATIONAL CONTEXT BUT, LIKE IT
OR NOT, HE WOULD DO EVERYTHING IN HIS POWER TO KEEP OUTSIDERS
FROM QTE LOOKING OVER HIS SHOULDER! UNQTE. HE DID NOT
FORESEE AN INDIAN SIGNATURE TO NPT QTE UNLESS MRS. GANDHI
WANTS TO COMMIT POLITICAL SUICIDE UNQTE. HOWEVER, HE
DID NOT RULE OUT POSSIBILITY THAT VARIOUS CIRCUMSTANCES
MIGHT BRING ABOUT A CHANGE IN INDIAN THINKING IN A YEAR
OR SO.

6. PROTECT SOURCE.

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7. FOR BOMBAY. UNDERSTAND SETHNA MEETING WITH CHENEY
TOMORROW. PLEASE DO NOT RPT NOT ALLUDE TO THIS CONVERSATION
IN ANY WAY.

GP-3. WEATHERSBY

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