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RELEASED IN PART  
B1, 1.4(D)

DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
CMC REARCS

PAGE 01 OF 02 ALGIERS 02133 00 OF 03 221709Z 017304 8011178  
INFO: SNP (01)

ALGIERS 02133 00 OF 03 221709Z 017304 8011178  
CONTRIBUTED SIGNIFICANTLY TO THE READINESS OF STATES POSSESSING NUCLEAR WEAPONS TO INTERVENE IN THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES AND HAS INCREASED THEIR FEELINGS OF INSECURITY."

ACTION OES-09

INFO LOG-00 ACDA-13 ADS-00 AMAD-01 CEQ-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00  
DOEE-00 EAP-00 EB-00 EUR-00 H-01 INRE-00 INR-01  
JO-19 L-03 NEA-00 NRC-02 NSAE-00 NSCE-00 OIC-02  
PA-01 PH-00 PRS-01 SNP-00 SP-00 SS-00 T-01  
EPAE-00 /063W

PRC PRESIDENT  
5. (U) ON MAY 19, RADIO ALGIERS REPORTED THAT THE PRESIDENT OF THE PRC HAD DENIED ACCUSATIONS THAT CHINA WAS HELPING ALGERIA MANUFACTURE A BOMB.

-----694F71 221831Z /48 49

MINISTER-DELEGATE FOR RESEARCH AND TECHNOLOGY

P 221708Z MAY 91  
FM AMEMBASSY ALGIERS  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0443  
INFO AMEMBASSY BEIJING  
AMEMBASSY LONDON  
AMEMBASSY PARIS  
AMEMBASSY RABAT  
AMEMBASSY TUNIS

*Sec  
H-cc  
file*

6. (U) ON MAY 20, ALGERIAN TELEVISION PROGRAMMED A FEATURE ON THE CHINESE-ASSISTED NUCLEAR PROJECT. WE ARE ATTEMPTING TO OBTAIN A VIDEOTAPE OF THIS PROGRAM, WHICH INCLUDED BRIEF FOOTAGE SHOT AT THE SITE (INCLUDING THE SKELETON OF A COOLING TOWER, PLATFORMS, WALLS, AND SCAFFOLDING), AS WELL AS INTERVIEWS WITH MINISTER-DELEGATE FOR RESEARCH AND TECHNOLOGY CHERIF HADJ-SLIMANE AND PROJECT DIRECTOR BOUALEM TATAH, FOR FORWARDING TO WASHINGTON. IN THE INTERVIEW PORTION, HADJ-SLIMANE AND TATAH STATED THAT:

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E.O. 12356; DECL: OADR  
TAGS: PARM, MNUC, ENRG, TRGY, YNNP, IATA, CH, AG  
SUBJECT: ALGERIAN NUCLEAR DEVELOPMENTS

REF: A) ALGIERS 1742  
B) USVIENNA 964 NOTAL  
C) ALGIERS 1993 NOTAL

1. SUMMARY. SINCE THE APRIL 29 PRESS CONFERENCE BY SUBORDINATES OF THE MINISTER-DELEGATE

FOR RESEARCH AND TECHNOLOGY (REFTEL, ALGERIAN AND CHINESE SPOKESMEN HAVE REPEATEDLY ADDRESSED VARIOUS ASPECTS OF THE ALGERIAN NUCLEAR PROGRAM AND ALGERIA'S POLICY ON THE NPT, AND AN ALGERIAN TELEVISION PROGRAM HAS VISITED THE NEW REACTOR. THE PURPOSE HAS BEEN TO SHOW THAT, NOTWITHSTANDING ALGERIA'S REFUSAL TO SIGN THE NPT, ITS NUCLEAR PROGRAM IS DEVOTED TO PEACEFUL USES. WE INTEND TO KEEP THE SAFEGUARDS ISSUE BEFORE OUR ALGERIAN CONTACTS. END SUMMARY.

ASSEMBLY SPEAKER BELKHADEM

2. (U) SPEAKING BEFORE THE 85TH INTERPARLIAMENTARY CONFERENCE IN PYONGYANG IN EARLY MAY, THE SPEAKER OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY, ABDELAZIZ BELKHADEM, AFFIRMED THAT ALGERIA'S NUCLEAR PROGRAM WAS MEANT SOLELY FOR PEACEFUL ENDS, PARTICULARLY IN THE "POST-OIL" ERA.

3. (U) BELKHADEM WENT ON TO SAY, HOWEVER, THAT THIS DID NOT MEAN ALGERIA WOULD SIGN THE NON-PROLIFERATION TREATY (NPT). THIS TREATY HAD MANY "INSUFFICIENCIES," AMONG THEM THAT IT NEITHER STOPPED PROLIFERATION AMONG THE HAVE-NOTS NOR CONTROLLED THE MANUFACTURE, STOCKPILING, AND IMPROVEMENT OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS AMONG THE HAVES.

4. (U) ALLUDING TO ALGERIA'S FEARS OF MILITARY CONFRONTATION BETWEEN THE NATO COUNTRIES "OF THE

NORTH" AND THE MAGHREB COUNTRIES "OF THE SOUTH," BELKHADEM ASSERTED THAT U.S. DEPLOYMENT OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS IN NON-NUCLEAR NATO COUNTRIES WAS NOT SANCTIONED BY THE NPT. BEYOND THIS, "THE USE OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS AS INSTRUMENTS OF INTERNATIONAL POWER AND THEIR PROLIFERATION AROUND THE WORLD HAS

-- ALGERIA IS NOT CONSIDERING THE FABRICATION OF A NUCLEAR BOMB; ITS OBJECTIVE IS TO MASTER NUCLEAR TECHNOLOGY FOR PEACEFUL PURPOSES.

-- THE CAMPAIGN THAT THE WESTERN MEDIA HAVE MOUNTED ON THIS SUBJECT IS IN FACT MEANT TO PREVENT ALGERIA FROM MASTERING NUCLEAR TECHNOLOGY AND PUNISH IT FOR ITS FOREIGN POLICY. IT IS ALSO MEANT TO AFFECT CONSIDERATION OF CHINA'S MFN STATUS.

-- THE REACTOR NEAR AIN OUSSERA IS TO BE CALLED

"PEACE" (AS-SALAM), BECAUSE THE AREA IN WHICH IT IS LOCATED IS CALLED "PEACE KNOLL."

-- THE OVERALL PROJECT, "AT BIRINE" (A VILLAGE 36 KMS NORTHEAST OF AIN OUSSERA), IS MEANT TO PURSUE PEACEFUL RESEARCH ON AND APPLICATIONS OF NUCLEAR TECHNOLOGY IN THE FIELDS OF MEDICINE, AGRICULTURE, AND INDUSTRY, NOTABLY THAT OF THE STRENGTH OF MATERIALS (RESISTANCE DES MATERIAUX).

-- THE REACTOR WAS NOT DESIGNED FOR MILITARY USES. IT CANNOT PRODUCE PLUTONIUM BECAUSE IT HAS NEITHER THE NECESSARY EQUIPMENT NOR THE NECESSARY POWER. THE POWER LEVEL OF THE PRESENT-REACTOR IS 15 MEGAWATTS, WHEREAS TO PRODUCE PLUTONIUM IT WOULD NEED 100.

-- ALGERIA HAS NO INTENTION OF INCREASING THE POWER LEVEL OF THE REACTOR TO 100 MEGAWATTS, AS SOME ALLEGE. ITS POWER LEVEL COULD BE INCREASED TO A MAXIMUM OF 20 MEGAWATTS, BUT EVEN THIS IS NOT BEING CONTEMPLATED.

-- THE AIN OUSSERA REGION WAS CHOSEN FOR THE PROJECT FOR STRICTLY TECHNICAL REASONS. IT IS THE AREA IN ALGERIA LEAST PRONE TO EARTHQUAKES. IT ALSO HAS ENOUGH WATER TO COOL THE REACTOR.

-- CHINA WAS CHOSEN ONLY AFTER ALGERIA HAD CONTACTED SEVERAL WESTERN COUNTRIES (FRANCE, GREAT

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
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BRITAIN, THE U.S., GERMANY, ETC.). SOME TRIED TO  
POSE POLITICAL CONDITIONS; OTHERS ASKED "FABULOUS"  
SUMS FOR THEIR SERVICES; STILL OTHERS TRIED TO  
BLOCK THE PROJECT BY DELAYING A RESPONSE. CHINA  
HAD ASKED MERELY THAT THE PROJECT BE LIMITED TO  
PEACEFUL PURPOSES. TO THIS, ALGERIA HAD READILY  
AGREED, ESPECIALLY SINCE THE SUM THAT CHINA HAD  
SOUGHT FOR ITS SERVICES WAS REASONABLE.

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MEDITERRANEAN COAST." THE "AS-SALAM" REACTOR THAT  
IS THE CORE OF THE SINO-ALGERIAN PROGRAM IS BEING  
BUILT BETWEEN BIRINE (3537N/0313E) AND AIN OUSSERA  
(3527N/0254E) ON THE HIGH PLATEAU OVER THE ATLAS  
MOUNTAINS STRAIGHT SOUTH OF ALGIERS. THE SITE IS  
ROUGHLY 130 KMS (8 MILES) FROM THE CAPITAL AS THE  
CROW FLIES AND 209 KMS (130 MILES) BY ROAD. END  
COMMENT.

-- SOME TWO THOUSAND ALGERIANS ARE EMPLOYED AS  
ENGINEERS, RESEARCHERS, SKILLED TECHNICIANS, AND  
WORKERS IN THE NUCLEAR FIELD. SOME FOREIGNERS DO  
COME FOR SHORT STAYS FROM TIME TO TIME IN THE  
CONTEXT OF PROGRAMS OF SCIENTIFIC COOPERATION, BUT  
THEY ARE IN NO WAY ADVISORS.

ROSS

COMMENT  
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7. (U) NOW THAT MULTIPLE WESTERN PRESS STORIES HAVE  
RIPPED THE VEIL OF SECRECY OFF THE "AS-SALAM"  
PROJECT, THE ALGERIAN GOVERNMENT SEEMS TO HAVE  
DECIDED TO REVEAL PROGRESSIVELY MORE DETAILS TO THE  
ALGERIAN AND INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC, AS IF THIS HAD  
BEEN ITS INTENTION ALL ALONG. ITS OBVIOUS HOPE IS  
THAT THE REASSURANCES AND TECHNICAL DETAILS IT IS  
PROVIDING WILL HAVE THE CUMULATIVE EFFECT OF  
CONVINCING INTERESTED PARTIES THAT ITS INTENTIONS  
ARE INDEED PEACEFUL AND THAT FEARS OF A MILITARY  
PROGRAM ARE MISPLACED.

8. (U) THE PRIVATE REMARKS OF ALGERIAN AND CHINESE  
OFFICIALS MIRROR THIS PUBLIC APPROACH. ALGERIAN  
MILITARY OFFICERS WITH WHOM WE TALKED DURING THE  
VISIT OF THE NATIONAL WAR COLLEGE LAST WEEK  
POOH-POOHED THE IDEA OF A MILITARY NUCLEAR PROGRAM,  
NOTING AMONG OTHER THINGS THAT ALGERIA DID NOT HAVE  
THE RESOURCES FOR THAT KIND OF AMBITION. THE  
PEACEFUL NUCLEAR PROGRAM ON WHICH ALGERIA WAS  
EMBARKEED, THEY SAID, WAS DESIGNED TO GIVE THEIR  
COUNTRY THE BENEFIT OF MODERN NUCLEAR TECHNOLOGY,  
ESPECIALLY IN THE "POST-OIL" PHASE.

9. (U) THE CHINESE AMBASSADOR, FOR HIS PART, TOLD  
THE AMBASSADOR MAY 13 THAT CHINA HAD NO INTENTION  
OF LENDING ITSELF TO ANY KIND OF MILITARY NUCLEAR  
PROGRAM AND THAT ITS NUCLEAR COOPERATION WITH  
ALGERIA WAS STRICTLY FOR PEACEFUL RESEARCH AND  
INDUSTRIAL APPLICATIONS. OVER THE LONGER TERM, HE  
SAID, THERE MIGHT BE AN ELECTRICAL POWER COMPONENT  
AS WELL, BUT CONSIDERATION OF SUCH A POSSIBILITY  
WAS SOME TIME OFF.

10. (U) WE WILL CONTINUE TO MONITOR PUBLIC AND  
PRIVATE STATEMENTS IN ALGIERS, PARTICULARLY WITH  
REGARD TO IAEA SAFEGUARDS, WHICH SHOULD REASSURE  
THE OUTSIDE WORLD FAR MORE THAN MERE WORDS.  
REFTELS B AND C INDICATE THAT ALGERIA HAS BEGUN A  
DISCUSSION OF SAFEGUARDS WITH THE IAEA, BUT THEIR  
TIMING REMAINS UNCLEAR. WE WILL CONTINUE TO ARGUE  
THAT EARLIER IS BETTER.

11. (U) ONE GEOGRAPHIC NOTE: DESCRIPTIONS AND  
ASSESSMENTS OF THE SINO-ALGERIAN NUCLEAR PROGRAM  
HAVE INCLUDED NUMEROUS FAULTY REFERENCES TO  
GEOGRAPHY EVER SINCE THE FIRST LEAK ASSERTED THAT  
THE REACTOR IN QUESTION WAS BEING BUILT "ON THE

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