

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: TECH, PARM, IN, US
SUBJECT: PRESS COMMENT ON NUCLEAR MATTERS

REF: LONDON 532 (NOTAL)

1. AN EDITORIAL IN THE JANUARY 12 "STATESMAN", CONCEDED THAT THE JOINT INDO-US DECLARATION AND PRIME MINISTER DESAI'S EXPLANATORY REMARKS TO US REPORTERS MIGHT HAVE CREATED AN IMPRESSION OF A "MORE FLEXIBLE" INDIAN POSITION ON SAFEGUARDS AND THE NPT, BUT STRESSED THAT DESAI HAD NOT CHANGED HIS VIEWS ON THE SUBJECT SINCE PRESIDENT CARTER'S VISIT TO INDIA. THE EDITORIAL REJECTED AS DISCRIMINATORY THE US/BRITISH/SOVIET CONTENTION THAT EFFORTS TO CONTROL NUCLEAR PROLIFERATION MUST START WITH ARRANGEMENTS TO PREVENT MORE COUNTRIES FROM ACQUIRING NUCLEAR WEAPONS, RATHER THAN WITH REDUCING EXISTING WEAPONS STOCKPILES. ARGUING THAT VERTICAL PROLIFERATION POSES A GREATER THREAT THAN THE POSSIBILITY OF FURTHER SPREAD OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS, THE "STATESMAN" DECLARED THAT NUCLEAR STATES WOULD HAVE TO DO MORE THAN MERELY ENDORSE THE DESIRABILITY OF ELIMINATING NUCLEAR WEAPONS
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TO CONVINCE OTHERS THAT ELIMINATION IS SERIOUSLY INTENDED. LIKEWISE, "ANOTHER SALT AGREEMENT WILL NOT CARRY CONVICTION" NOR WILL A CTB, SINCE THE SUPERPOWERS HAVE VIRTUALLY PERFECTED WARHEAD DESIGN AND ARE NOW CONCENTRATING ON IMPROVING DELIVERY SYSTEMS.

2. THE "STATESMAN" REAFFIRMED THE RELEVANCE OF BREEDER

TECHNOLOGY TO POWER GENERATION AND WELCOMED AS A CHALLENGE
TO INDIA'S TECHNICAL SKILL DESAI'S WARNING THAT IF
ENRICHED URANIUM FOR TARAPUR IS NOT AVAILABLE FROM THE US,
INDIA MIGHT "IMPROVISE" WITH A PLUTONIUM/URANIUM FUEL
MIXTURE.

3. AN EDITORIAL THE SAME DAY IN THE "NATIONAL HERALD"
APPRECIATED BRITISH PRIME MINISTER CALLAGHAN'S DIPLOMATIC
APPROACH TO NPT, IN CONTRAST TO WASHINGTON'S
"SUPERCILIOUSNESS". WHILE NOTING THAT "ALL THE NUCLEAR
POWERS SEEM TO BE THINKING ALIKE," THE EDITORIAL URGED
BRITAIN TO "IMPRESS UPON THE OTHER POWERS THE NEED TO
WORK AGAINST BIG-POWER NUCLEAR HEGEMONY."

4. IN THE JANUARY 12 "INDIAN EXPRESS", MARIONBYWATER
OUTLINED A REPORTED CONTROVERSY BETWEEN THE US AND THE
EEC OVER THE US DESIRE TO MODIFY A 20-YEAR-OLD FUEL
SUPPLY AGREEMENT WITH EURATOM. KULDIP NAYAR, IN THE
SAME EDITION, THOUGHT THAT A LOT OF WISHFUL THINKING
SURROUNDED THE VISITS OF PRESIDENT CARTER AND PRIME
MINISTER CALLAGHAN. NAYAR NOTED THAT AT PRESENT INDIA'S
SELF-INTEREST PRECLUDES ADHERING TO THE NPT. HE
EXPRESSED HIS BELIEF THAT INDIA COULD PRESENT A PLAUSIBLE
CASE FOR ITS ACTION, WHILE THE UK AND THE US COULD
DO NO SUCH THING REGARDING THE MILITARIZATION OF
DIEGO GARCIA. (THIS IS THE FIRST REFERENCE TO DIEGO GARCIA
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WE'VE SEEN IN THE "MAINSTREAM" PRESS FOR SOME TIME.)
GOHEEN

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