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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20505

DDI-144-82a
8 January 1982

MEMORANDUM FOR: Chairman, National Intelligence Council

FROM:

[Redacted]

Special Assistant for Nuclear Proliferation
Intelligence

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(b)(6)

SUBJECT: Perspective on Nuclear Developments During
1982

Attached is a memorandum on the subject that you requested
in your 4 January memorandum for the NIOs.

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cc: DDI
All NIOs
D/OSWR
D/ALA
D/EA
D/OGI
D/NESA

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DDI-144-82

Nuclear Trends: Perspective on 1982

"The United States will seek to prevent the spread of nuclear explosives to additional countries as a fundamental security and foreign policy objective . . . and will maintain a strong intelligence collection and assessment capability as an integral part of the US non-proliferation policy and actions pursuant to that policy."

Extract from National Security
Decision Directive Number 6,
"United States Non-Proliferation
and Peaceful Nuclear Cooperation
Policy," signed by President Reagan,
16 July 1981

General Perspective

Ongoing and extensive US diplomatic efforts aimed at achieving the Administration's non-proliferation objectives will have to take into account what is likely to be a continuing--and in some cases a strengthened--determination of certain countries to move ahead with the development of a capability to produce nuclear explosives. A corollary prospect is that countries now able or soon to be able to build nuclear weapons--India, Israel, South Africa, and Pakistan--could decide for security and other reasons to demonstrate their capability by conducting a nuclear test in the coming months. The effectiveness of the international safeguards system will erode even further in the face of many such developments. US interests will not necessarily be directly effected immediately by the acquisition of nuclear weapons by additional countries. But over the longer term, the regional tensions and possible conflicts that they would be likely to spawn inevitably would effect US policies and commitments toward countries involved. The challenge to intelligence throughout this year and beyond will be the anticipation and timely projection of events that effect US nonproliferation objectives and other interests, and that carry the potential for disrupting international order.


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Regional Developments

South Asia. Pakistan, now a US security partner, will press forward with its nuclear program and will begin to acquire fissile material-- certainly enriched uranium and possibly plutonium. It thereby will move closer to a capability to produce and test a nuclear explosive device. India will continue its close watch on Pakistan's progress and will keep open its option to strike key nuclear facilities near Islamabad. It could move to the production of nuclear weapons and their testing as another means of coping with the emerging Pakistani threat to its security.

Near East. By destroying the reactor near Baghdad, the Israelis only postponed what they continue to see as a potential and direct regional nuclear threat to their security. Of immediate concern to the Israelis is Pakistani nuclear progress and the advances being made by the Libyans in nuclear research with Soviet assistance. Egypt's commitment to build a large nuclear power industry eventually will give rise to suspicions about non-peaceful nuclear applications and potential.

Latin America. The nuclear "rivalry" between Argentina and Brazil will intensify. Each country perceives the other to be on a course leading to the development of an option to produce nuclear weapons. Argentina eventually will be able to produce substantial quantities of unsafeguarded fissile material and may already have acquired enough for a nuclear device. Brazil will continue its secret military-related nuclear research, and it could already be embarked on an effort to build a reactor for the production of plutonium suitable for nuclear weapons.

Africa. South Africa will produce additional amounts of enriched uranium some of which almost certainly will be used in its weapons program. It will free itself from reliance on the US for the supply of nuclear fuel by virtue of increased French assistance. It could activate its nuclear test site and prepare for a test, but this will depend upon evolving security perceptions and needs.

East Asia. Despite its official protestations to the contrary, the PRC has sold nuclear materials to countries of proliferation concern--South Africa and Argentina--and is likely to continue to do so in the coming months to include sales to India. Its insensitivity to safeguards needs and provisions in conjunction with such sales will undercut the ongoing efforts of the US and others to ensure that international nuclear cooperation is limited to peaceful applications. South Korea and Taiwan are likely to expand their activities and interests in basic research on reprocessing and uranium enrichment technologies and this could create new difficulties in bilateral relations with the US.

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Nuclear Terrorism

The possibility that terrorists will attempt to acquire nuclear weapons or materials will persist as a threat. Rising public apprehension, especially in Western Europe over nuclear-power development and nuclear weapons modernization could be exploited by terrorists. Some terrorist groups could do so by either attacking nuclear weapons, power plants, or by perpetrating a hoax.

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