

**April 22, 1972**

**State Department Cable 69551 to US Embassy  
United Kingdom, 'Indian Nuclear Intentions'**

**Citation:**

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**Summary:**

The Canadian embassy had asked the State Department for information on the intelligence reports from earlier in the year that an Indian nuclear test was "imminent." The State Department denied the request, but informed the Canadians that the reports were so numerous and their "congruity, apparent reliability, and seeming credibility" so striking that it had become necessary to update official thinking about Indian intentions.

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INR/RNA/SOA;DMCOCHRAN;WDHOWELLS;MHM  
4/21/72  
INR/RNA/CFJONES

NEA/INC; AEQUANTON  
INR/DDC; RHADDOX

S/S: MR. ELIOT

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ROUTINE LONDON, OTTAWA

ROUTINE NEW DELHI

EXDIS  
NOFORN

SUBJ: INDIAN NUCLEAR INTENTIONS

REF: LONDON 3414

CFJ  
DTC: WDA

AER  
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1. DEPARTMENT HAS ALSO RECEIVED QUERY FROM CANADIAN EMBASSY REGARDING NATURE OF INTELLIGENCE WHICH PROMPTED RECENT REVIEW OF INDIAN NUCLEAR INTENTIONS.

2. OUR INTEREST IN RE-CONSIDERING ASSESSMENT INDIAN INTENTIONS STIMULATED BY SMALL SPATE OF REPORTS AT TURN OF YEAR. IN VIEW GREAT SENSITIVITY OF SOURCES, DISCLOSURE OF DETAILS OF REPORTS NOT RPT NOT POSSIBLE. HOWEVER, THESE REPORTS SUFFICIENT IN NUMBER AND ADEQUATELY DIVERSE IN SOURCE TO PERMIT CONCLUSION THAT, AT VERY LEAST, RUMORS CIRCULATING IN NEW DELHI THAT TEST IMMINENT REQUIRED FURTHER SCRUTINY. ALTHOUGH NONE OF THESE REPORTS WOULD HAVE BEEN SIGNIFICANT IN ISOLATION, THEIR CONGRUITY, APPARENT RELIABILITY AND SEEMING CREDIBILITY, WHEN LAID AGAINST LOGIC OF SITUATION, WARRANTED REVIEW AND UPDATING OF OUR PREVIOUS ASSESSMENTS RE INDIAN INTENTION.

3. WE ARE PLANNING CONVEY SUBSTANCE PARA 2 TO BRITISH AND CANADA EMBASSY HERE. SHOULD WILFORD RAISE ISSUE WITH YOU AGAIN, YOU MAY DO SAME.44

SECRET/EXDIS/NORORN

