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ENVELOPE

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RHMFSS/CNO WASHINGTON DC (b)(3):50 USC 3024(i)

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CONTROLS

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SERIAL: (b)(3):10 USC 424

COUNTRY: (U) SINGAPORE (SGP); ISRAEL (ISR).

IPSP: (U) (b)(3):10 USC 424

***** THIS IS A COMBINED MESSAGE *****

BODY

(b)(3):10 USC 424;(b)(3):50 USC 3024(i)
(U//~~FOUO~~)

WARNING: (U) THIS IS AN INFORMATION REPORT, NOT

FINALLY

EVALUATED INTELLIGENCE. REPORT CLASSIFIED

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DOI: (U) 20100325.

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SOURCE:

SOURCE A.

1. (U) DESCRIPTION -- //OPEN SOURCE//OPEN SOURCE 18. HAARETZ ONLINE DAILY NEWSPAPER FROM ISRAEL DATE OF SOURCE: 20100325.

2. (U) CONTEXT STATEMENT -- THE ARTICLE, "WAS IRON DOME DEFENSE SYSTEM ACTUALLY BUILT FOR SINGAPORE?" APPEARED IN THE 25 MAR 2010 ISSUE OF THE HAARETZ ONLINE NEWSPAPER.

SUMMARY: (U) SEE EXECUTIVE SUMMARY, TEXT PARAGRAPH 1, BELOW.

TEXT: 1. (U//~~FOUO~~) EXECUTIVE SUMMARY. THE ARTICLE IN THIS REPORT PROVIDES DATA TO SUPPORT THE CLAIM THAT THE ISRAELI IRON DOME DEFENSE SYSTEM WAS BUILT FOR SINGAPORE INSTEAD OF ISRAEL.

2. (U//~~FOUO~~) THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION IS FROM AN ARTICLE IN THE HAARETZ ONLINE NEWSPAPER TITLED, "WAS THE IRON DOME DEFENSE SYSTEM ACTUALLY BUILT FOR SINGAPORE".

A PARIS-BASED ONLINE MAGAZINE COVERING INTELLIGENCE AND SECURITY ISSUES THIS WEEK CALLED SINGAPORE ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT CUSTOMERS

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OF ISRAEL'S DEFENSE INDUSTRY, LAYING BARE THE ACTIVE, THOUGH SECRET, RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ISRAEL AND SINGAPORE THAT BEGAN MORE THAN 40 YEARS AGO. A STATEMENT THAT COMES AFTER YEARS IN WHICH ISRAEL CENSORED ALL LOCAL ARTICLES ON THE SUBJECT.

INTELLIGENCE ONLINE, WHICH IS PUBLISHED IN ENGLISH ON A BIMONTHLY BASIS, STATES THAT THE SOUTHEAST ASIAN ISLAND STATE HELPED FINANCE THE IRON DOME SYSTEM DESIGNED BY ISRAEL'S RAFAEL ADVANCED DEFENSE SYSTEMS TO INTERCEPT SHORT-RANGE MISSILES AND ROCKETS, IN EXCHANGE FOR WHICH IT IS SUPPOSED TO RECEIVE SEVERAL IRON DOME SYSTEMS TO DEPLOY ON ITS TERRITORY.

EVEN MORE INTERESTING IS THE POSSIBILITY THE ARTICLE RAISES THAT IRON DOME WAS DESIGNED FIRST AND FOREMOST FOR THE BENEFIT OF SINGAPORE, NOT FOR THE PROTECTION OF SDEROT AND THE SOUTHERN COMMUNITIES IN ISRAEL THAT SUFFERED FROM THE QASSAM ROCKET ATTACKS AND MORTAR FIRE FOR SEVEN YEARS AND ARE STILL SUFFERING (THOUGH IRON DOME IS NOT CAPABLE OF INTERCEPTING MORTAR SHELLS). ISRAELI MEDIA HAVE PREVIOUSLY HINTED AT THIS BUT THE DEFENSE MINISTRY HAS VEHEMENTLY DENIED IT. THE SUSPICIONS WERE BOLSTERED BY THE FACT THAT AFTER THE SYSTEM WAS DEVELOPED AND ONE BATTERY HAD BEEN DEPLOYED AT AN ISRAEL DEFENSE FORCES BASE, IT TURNED OUT THAT THE DEFENSE MINISTRY HAD NO BUDGET FOR ADDITIONAL BATTERIES. IN THAT CASE, WHY WAS THERE A NEED TO DEVELOP A SYSTEM FOR WHICH THERE IS NO BUDGET AND WHICH THE IDF DOES NOT INTEND TO DEPLOY?

IRON DOME, WHICH ITS DEVELOPERS SAID WAS TESTED SUCCESSFULLY A FEW MONTHS AGO, AS ISRAELI MEDIA HAVE PREVIOUSLY REPORTED, COST ROUGHLY \$250 MILLION TO DEVELOP.

ONE BATTERY, WHOSE PRODUCTION COST IS ABOUT \$50 MILLION, HAS ALREADY BEEN DEPLOYED AT A BASE IN THE SOUTH OF THE COUNTRY, BUT SO FAR HAS NOT BEEN READIED FOR OPERATIONAL PURPOSES AND HAS NOT YET BEEN ACTIVATED.

IN OTHER WORDS, THE DEFENSE MINISTRY MAY HAVE GIVEN RAFAEL A DEVELOPMENT BUDGET AS A WAY OF POSITIONING THE PROJECT AS AN ISRAELI MILITARY SYSTEM THAT IS OSTENSIBLY BEING USED BY THE IDF BUT IS REALLY AIMED AT IMPROVING ISRAEL'S CHANCES OF SELLING TO SINGAPORE AND OTHER COUNTRIES.

THE COOPERATION BETWEEN ISRAEL AND SINGAPORE RESTS ON THE TWO SMALL COUNTRIES SHARED SENSE OF BEING UNDER THREAT, SINCE BOTH ARE SURROUNDED BY A HOSTILE MUSLIM POPULATION AND WANT ADVANCED WEAPONS SYSTEMS TO MAINTAIN A QUALITATIVE ADVANTAGE OVER THEIR NEIGHBORS. ACCORDING TO THE ARTICLE, IMMEDIATELY AFTER SINGAPORE DECLARED ITS INDEPENDENCE IN 1965 IT ASKED ISRAEL TO HELP IT ESTABLISH AN ARMY. IDF OFFICERS INCLUDING REHAVAM ZE'EVY AND BENJAMIN BEN-ELIEZER WERE SENT TO SINGAPORE TO HEAD LARGE DELEGATIONS OF MILITARY ADVISORS, AND HELPED BUILD THE ARMY ON THE MODEL OF THE IDF. ISRAELI MILITARY REPRESENTATIVES HAVE BEEN ACTIVE SINCE THEN AT THE ISRAELI EMBASSY IN SINGAPORE, WHICH WAS OPENED IN 1969.

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ONE OF THE ISSUES THE IDF REPRESENTATIVES DEAL WITH IS PROMOTING LARGE ARMS DEALS. TRANSACTIONS MENTIONED IN THE ARTICLE INCLUDE SINGAPORE'S PURCHASE OF BARAK SURFACE-TO-AIR MISSILES MANUFACTURED BY ISRAEL AEROSPACE INDUSTRIES. IN ADDITION, RAFAEL SUPPLIED DRONES FOR NAVAL MISSIONS AND ISRAEL'S ELBIT SYSTEMS SUPPLIED ITS HERMES DRONE.

(b)(3):10 USC 424;(b)(3):50 USC 3024(i);Sec. 1.4(c)

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Withheld pursuant to exemption

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of the Freedom of Information and Privacy Act