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ENVELOPE

(b)(3):10 USC 424;(b)(3):50 USC 3024(i)

HEADER

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161512Z JAN 09
FM (b)(3):10 USC 424;(b)(3):50 USC 3024(i)

TO RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC
INFO (b)(3):50 USC 3024(i)

(b)(3):50 USC 3024(i)

RHMFISS/CDR USCENCOM MACDILL AFB FL (b)(3):50 USC 3024(i)
RUZEHAA/CDR USEUCOM (b)(3):50 USC 3024(i) VAHINGEN GE (b)(3):50 USC 3024(i)
RUZFMXI/CDR USTRANSCOM (b)(3):50 USC 3024(i) SCOTT AFB IL
(b)(3):50 USC 3024(i)

(b)(3):50 USC 3024(i)
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC (b)(3):50 USC 3024(i)
RHMFISS/CNO WASHINGTON DC (b)(3):50 USC 3024(i)

(b)(3):50 USC 3024(i)

RUEPWDC/DA (b)(3):50 USC 3024(i) WASHINGTON DC
RUEADWD/DA WASHINGTON DC (b)(3):50 USC 3024(i)
RHMFISS/DEPT OF ENERGY WASHINGTON DC
RHMFISS/DEPT OF HOMELAND SECURITY WASHINGTON DC (b)(3):50 USC 3024(i)
(b)(3):50 USC 3024(i)

RUETIAA/DIRNSA FT GEORGE G MEADE MD (b)(3):50 USC 3024(i)
RUEIDN/DNI WASHINGTON DC
RHMFISS/FBI WASHINGTON DC
RUCNFB/FBI WASHINGTON DC
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(b)(3):50 USC 3024(i)

RHMFSS/HQ USEUCOM VAIHINGEN GE

(b)(3):50 USC 3024(i)

RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC (b)(3):50 USC 3024(i)

RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC (b)(3):50 USC 3024(i)

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RUMICEA/USCENTCOM (b)(3):50 USC 3024(i) MACDILL AFB FL//CCJ2//

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RUCQSAB/USSOCOM (b)(3):50 USC 3024(i) MACDILL AFB FL

RHMFSS/USSTRATCOM (b)(3):50 USC 3024(i) OFFUTT AFB NE (b)(3):50 USC 3024(i)

(b)(3):50 USC 3024(i)

RHEHWSR/WHITE HOUSE SITUATION ROOM WASHINGTON DC

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CONTROLS

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SECTION 1 OF 2

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

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

BODY

COUNTRY: (U) ISRAEL (ISR).

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IPSP: (U)

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SUBJ: (b)(3):10 USC 424 / ISRAEL MINISTRY OF DEFENSE (MOD) OBJECTS TO LOCAL CRITICISM REGARDING ISRAEL'S DEVELOPMENT OF THE IRON DOME SHORT-RANGE ROCKET DEFENSE SYSTEM (U).

WARNING: (U) THIS IS AN INFORMATION REPORT, NOT FINALLY EVALUATED INTELLIGENCE. REPORT CLASSIFIED

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DOI: (U) 20090112.

REQS: (U)

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SOURCE:

SOURCE A.

1. (U) DESCRIPTION -- //OPEN SOURCE//OPEN SOURCE. "JERUSALEM POST", A DAILY NEWSPAPER PRINTED IN JERUSALEM, ISRAEL IN ENGLISH. SOMEWHAT RIGHT-WING, ESPECIALLY IN THE OP-ED SECTION. DATE OF SOURCE: 20090112.

2. (U) CONTEXT STATEMENT -- THE ARTICLE APPEARED IN THE 12 JANUARY 2009 EDITION UNDER THE HEADLINE (QUOTE) IRON DOME IS THE RIGHT SYSTEM TO USE (UNQUOTE).

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

TEXT: 1. (U//FOUO) EXECUTIVE SUMMARY. OPEN SOURCE MEDIA INDICATES SOME ISRAELI RESERVE OFFICERS AND SCIENTISTS ARE APPLYING SHARP CRITICISM TO THE ISRAEL MINISTRY OF DEFENSE (MOD) PURSUIT OF RAFAEL'S IRON DOME SHORT-RANGE ROCKET INTERCEPTION SYSTEM AND THEY ISRAEL SHOULD NOT HAVE ABANDONED THE SKYGUARD DEFENSE SYSTEM. MOD OFFICIALS REJECT THE CRITICISM, COUNTERING THAT IRON DOME IS PROCEEDING AT A GOOD PACE AND IS STILL ON TRACK FOR DEPLOYMENT EARLY 2010.

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2. (U//~~FOUO~~) OPEN SOURCE MEDIA REPORTS THAT ISRAELI SECURITY OFFICIALS ARE ANGRY OVER CLAIMS MADE BY SOME RESERVE OFFICERS, SCIENTISTS, AND OTHER ANALYSTS IN NEWSPAPER ARTICLES AND AT PUBLIC MEETINGS, AND ECHOED PRIVATELY BY SOME ISRAELI POLITICIANS, THAT THE US SKYGUARD MISSILE DEFENSE SYSTEM COULD HAVE BEEN DEPLOYED TO PROTECT THE SOUTH OF ISRAEL AND THE REGION AROUND THE GAZA STRIP IF ISRAEL HAD NOT ABANDONED ITS INTEREST IN THE PROJECT IN 2005.

3. (U//~~FOUO~~) THE ARTICLE STATES THAT FORMER SENIOR MILITARY OFFICERS PLAYED UP SKYGUARD'S OSTENSIBLE CAPABILITIES AT A RECENT CONFERENCE DEDICATED TO PROTECTING ISRAEL'S HOME FRONT. THEY CLAIMED THAT NORTHROP GRUMMAN'S SKYGUARD, WHICH USES LASERS TO SHOOT DOWN INCOMING MISSILES AND ROCKETS, IS CHEAPER, MORE EFFECTIVE, AND COULD BE READY FOR USE MORE QUICKLY THAN THE ALTERNATIVE BEING PURSUED BY THE ISRAELI MINISTRY OF DEFENSE (MOD), LOCAL CONTRACTOR RAFAEL'S IRON DOME, WHICH EMPLOYS SHORT-RANGE MISSILES TO INTERCEPT INCOMING FIRE.

4. (U//~~FOUO~~) MOD OFFICIALS BITTERLY REJECT THE CRITICISM. THEY NOTE THAT ISRAEL INVESTED 120 MILLION USD IN THE NAUTILUS SYSTEM (THE NAME BY WHICH SKYGUARD WAS ORIGINALLY KNOWN) ALONG WITH 280 MILLION USD IN AMERICAN FUNDING. FAR FROM BEING A BETTER ALTERNATIVE TO IRON DOME, THE MOD INDICATES EXTENSIVE EVALUATION LED BOTH ISRAEL AND THE US TO CONCLUDE THAT SKYGUARD WAS NOT A VIABLE SOLUTION TO THE SHORT-RANGE ROCKET THREAT.

5. (c)

(b)(1);Sec. 1.4(c);Sec. 1.4(b);Sec. 1.4(d)

6. (c)

(b)(1);Sec. 1.4(c);Sec. 1.4(b);Sec. 1.4(d)

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7. (U//~~FOUO~~) LASER EXPERT AND FORMER RAFAEL EMPLOYEE DR. ODED ((AMIHAI)) HAS INDICATED THAT IRON DOME IS INCAPABLE OF PROTECTING SDEROT DUE TO THE SHORT DISTANCES BETWEEN GAZA AND SDEROT. MOD OFFICIALS COUNTER THAT IRON DOME HAS RECENTLY BEEN UPDATED AND WAS CAPABLE OF HITTING INCOMING ROCKETS FIRED AT A RANGE OF AS LITTLE AS FOUR KILOMETERS (KM) AND AS MUCH AS 70 KM, WHICH WOULD ACCOUNT FOR THE OVERWHELMING MAJORITY OF ROCKETS FIRED FROM GAZA IN THE CURRENT CONFLICT DURING THE ISRAEL DEFENSE FORCES (IDF) OPERATION CAST LEAD. (FIELD COMMENT - ALTHOUGH THE ARTICLE STATES THE IRON DOME WAS CAPABLE OF HITTING ROCKETS FROM FOUR KM TO 70 KM, NO INTERCEPTION TESTS HAVE OCCURRED IN THE IRON DOME DEVELOPMENT. SOURCE WAS LIKELY REFERRING TO IRON DOME INTERCEPT SIMULATIONS USED TO DETERMINE IRON DOME VIABILITY IN INTERCEPTING TARGETS).

(b)(1);Sec. 1.4(c);Sec. 1.4(b);Sec. 1.4(d)

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Withheld pursuant to exemption

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of the Freedom of Information and Privacy Act