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HEADER

R 130132Z APR 91
 FM JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC
 INFO RUEALGX/SAFE
 R 121421Z APR 91
 FM FBIS LONDON UK
 TO RUCWAAA/FBIS RESTON VA
 RUDPMAX/FAISA FT BRAGG NC
 RUEBFGA/VOA WASH DC
 RUEBHAA/STORAGE CENTER FBIS RESTON VA
 RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHINGTON DC//INR/SEE/SI//
 RUEKJCS/DEFINTAGENCY WASH DC
 RUEOACC/CDR PSYOPGP FT BRAGG NC//ASOF-POG-SB//
 RUETIAV/MPC FT GEO G MEADE MD
 RUFHVOA/VOA MUNICH GE
 RUMJBP/FBIS OKINAWA JA
 ACCT FBILD-EWDK

BT

CONTROLS

UNCLAS 3S/PMU/SU

SERIAL: LD1204142191

BODY

COUNTRY: USSR
 SUBJ: 'STRANGE ROAR' PRECEDES 'MYSTERIOUS BLAST' IN SASOVO
 SOURCE: MOSCOW TASS IN ENGLISH 1303 GMT 12 APR 91
 TEXT:

///((BY TASS CORRESPONDENT ANATOLIY KAKOVKIN))

((TEXT)) SASOVO, RYAZAN REGION IN CENTRAL RUSSIA APRIL 12 TASS --
 A SHATTERING EXPLOSION SHOOK THIS SMALL TOWN IN THE HEART OF RUSSIA
 SHORTLY AFTER MIDNIGHT TODAY, KNOCKING OUT MOST WINDOWS AND LEAVING
 SOME LOCALS SLIGHTLY INJURED BY SPLINTERED GLASS.

ACCORDING TO EARLY REPORTS, NO-ONE WAS SERIOUSLY HURT BY THE
 MYSTERIOUS BLAST, WHICH TOOK PLACE JUST OUTSIDE SASOVO IN THE RYAZAN
 REGION AT 01:30.

THOSE LIVING IN HIGH-RISES FELT THE BUILDINGS ROCK HEAVILY AS IF
 HIT BY AN EARTHQUAKE, BUT NO DAMAGE TYPICAL OF EARTH TREMORS WAS
 REGISTERED.

THE EXPLOSION, PRECEDED BY A STRANGE ROAR, LEFT A HUGE CRATER IN
 A FIELD 1.5 KILOMETERS FROM THE TOWN. THE CRATER IS 3.5 METERS DEEP
 AND 28 METERS IN DIAMETER.

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Approved for Release
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EXPERTS FROM THE REGIONAL COMMISSION ON EMERGENCIES RUSHED TO THE SITE TO EXPLORE IT AND TAKE GROUND AND ATMOSPHERIC SAMPLES. THEY DID NOT, HOWEVER, DETECT ANY CHANGES IN EITHER RADIATION LEVELS OR THE CHEMICAL COMPOSITION OF THE AIR.

THE MILITARY, FOR THEIR PART, REPORTED NO UNIDENTIFIED FLYING OBJECTS OVER THE AREA.

THE UNUSUAL FORM OF THE CRATER, WHICH HAS A BIG BUMP RIGHT IN ITS CENTRE, AS WELL AS LARGE CHUNKS OF EARTH REMAINING UNBROKEN ALMOST RULE OUT THE POSSIBILITY OF A BOMB BLAST OR THE EXPLOSION OF AN ARTILLERY SHELL, ACCORDING TO SASOVO MAYOR A. ROZHKOV.

HE TOLD TASS IN A TELEPHONE INTERVIEW THAT SCRAPS OF PAPER BAGS FOUND NEARBY SUGGEST THAT SOME SALTPETER, WHICH CAN SELF-EXPLODE UNDER CERTAIN CIRCUMSTANCES, MIGHT HAVE BEEN STORED IN THE FIELD AND GONE UP IN THE AIR.

THE FINAL CONCLUSION IS EXPECTED FROM THE EMERGENCY TASK FORCE INVESTIGATING THE BLAST.

ADMIN

(ENDALL) 12130 [REDACTED] 3/0023Z APR

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