



National Foreign Assessment Center

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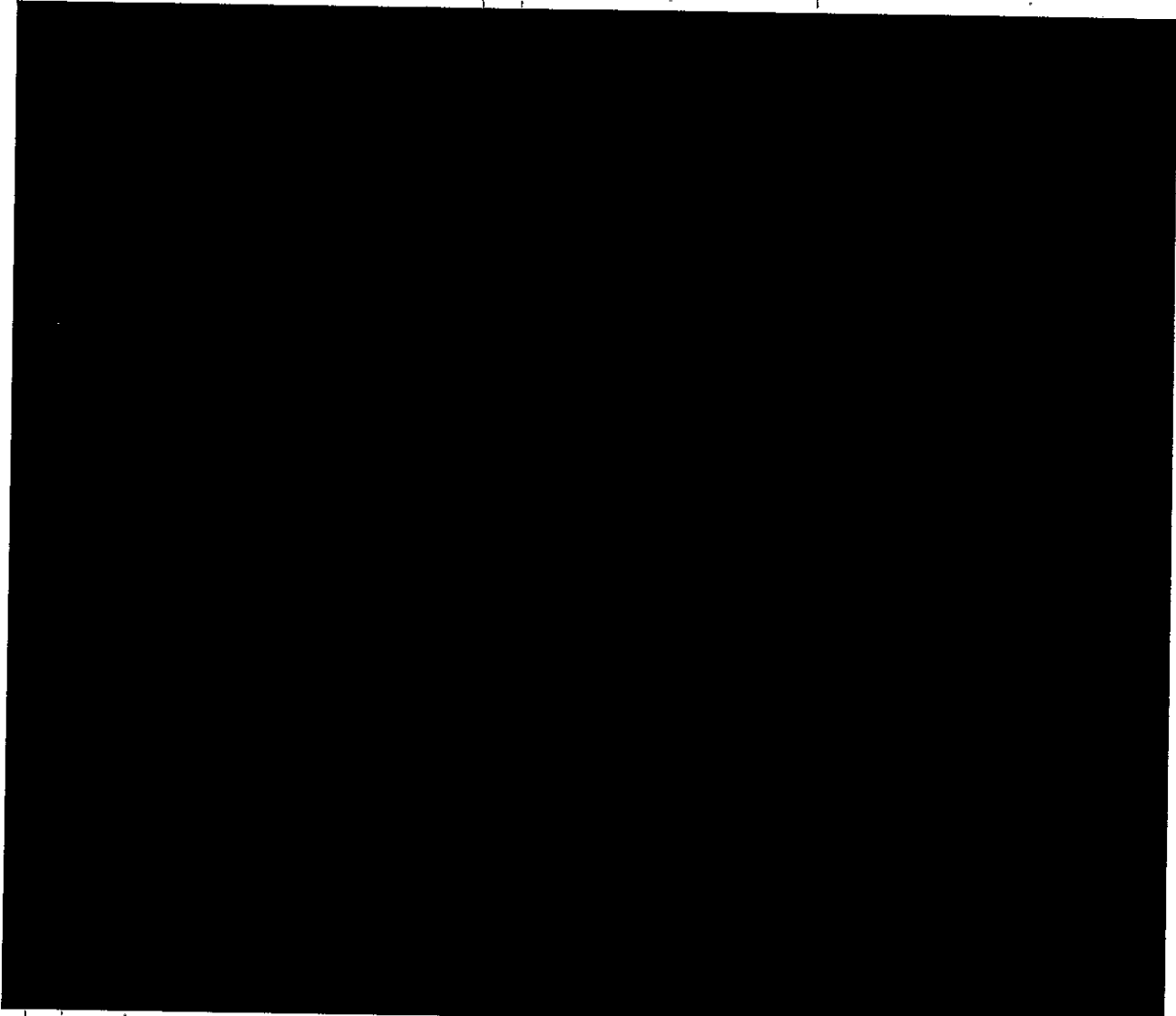
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Recent stationing of South African Army personnel at the Pelindaba center is interpreted as an indication that the production of significant quantities of weapons-usable uranium has begun. [REDACTED]

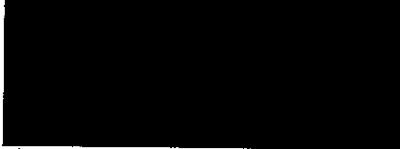
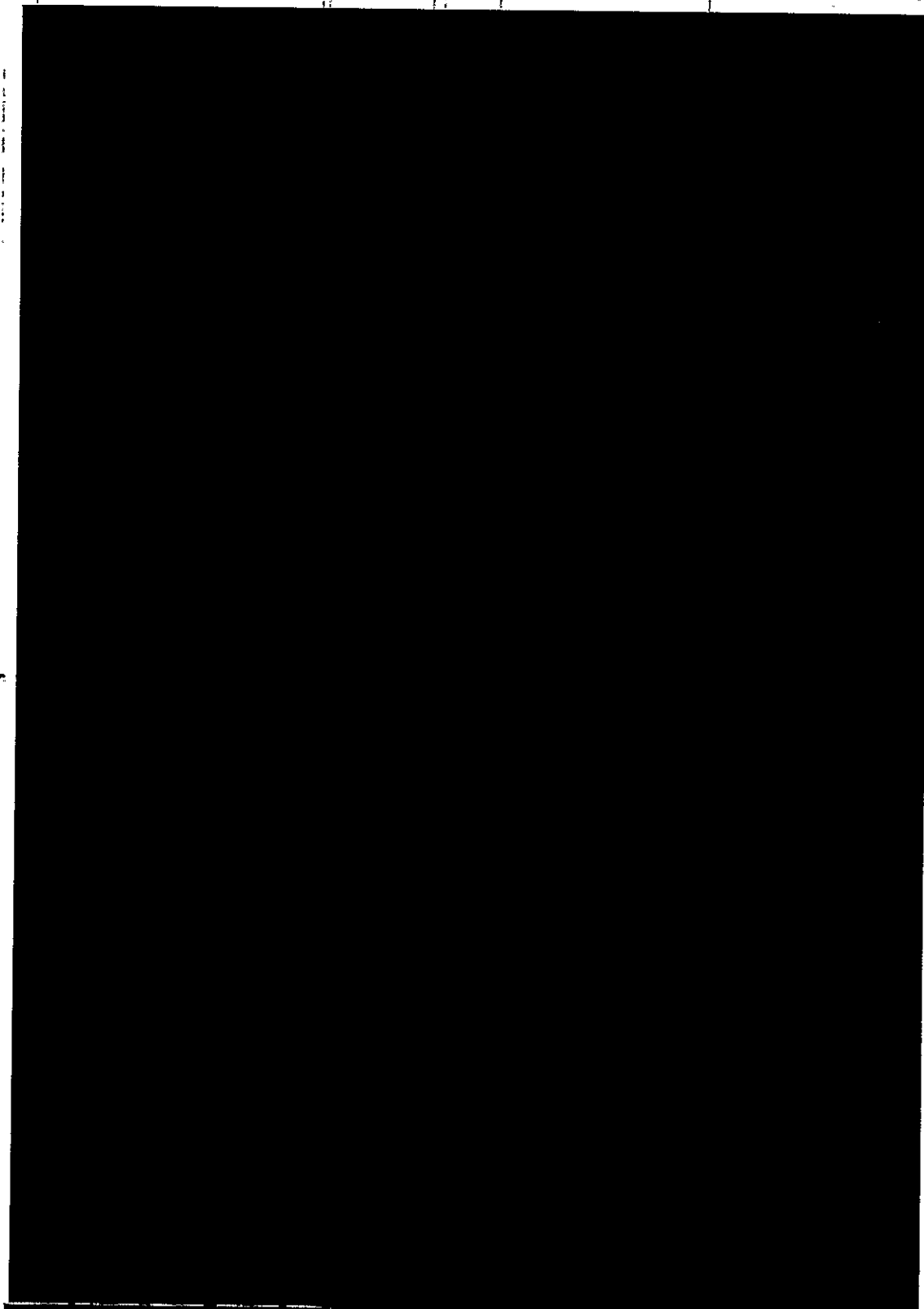


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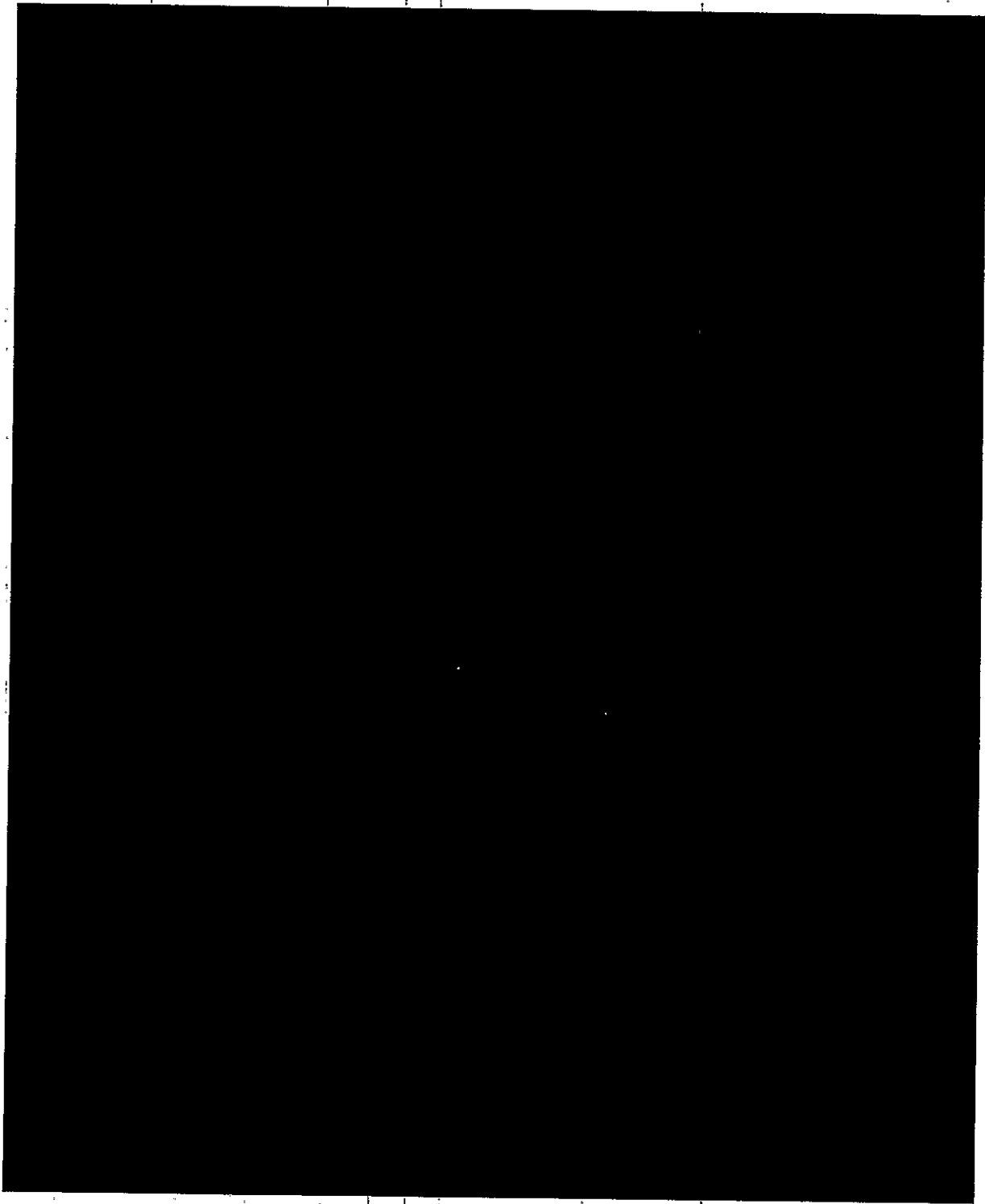
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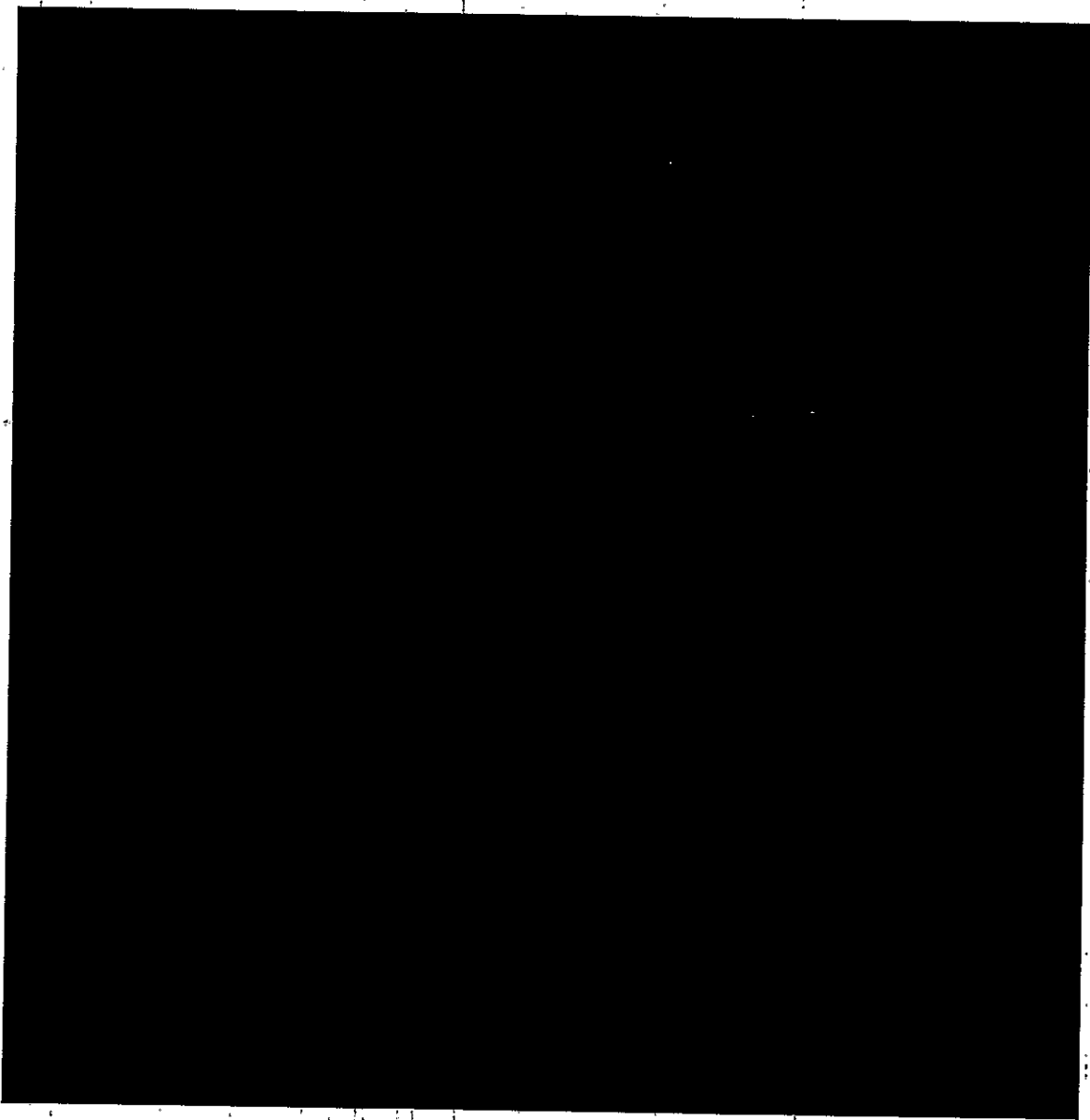
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[REDACTED]

South Africa: Military Personnel at the Pelindaba
Nuclear Research Center [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

The military presence at Pelindaba is unprecedented and, therefore, probably is associated with some new nuclear project or development. The only suspected activity that dates back to late 1978 is the production and chemical processing of weapons-usable uranium. Regardless of the intended use of this material, the South African Government might well require it to be protected by a security force such as the [REDACTED] Army presence, in part because the Atomic Energy Board security officers are prevented by law from carrying arms during the day.

[REDACTED]

The production and processing of weapons-usable uranium, beginning in this time frame, has been expected in connection with two projects. One is the domestic fabrication of fuel for the Safari research reactor, for which the necessary uranium almost certainly must be enriched to more than 20 percent uranium-235 (the internationally accepted threshold enrichment level for defining "weapons-usable uranium"). The other suspected project is the stockpiling of highly enriched uranium for possible military use, as part of a long-term effort to establish a nuclear weapons option.

[REDACTED]

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