

CONFIDENTIAL

NUCLEAR EXPLOSION PANEL

CHARTER

Purpose

The Panel should conduct a technical evaluation of whether or not a nuclear explosion occurred in the South Atlantic on September 22, 1979. Specifically, the Panel should:

1. Investigate the possibility that the signal recorded by our VELA satellite was of natural origin, possibly resulting from the coincidence of two or more natural phenomena and should attempt to establish quantitative limits on the probability of such an occurrence.

2. Evaluate the possibility that the signal in question was a "false alarm" resulting from technical malfunction such as interference from other electrical components on the VELA platform.

3. Review all available data from both classified and unclassified sources that could help corroborate the VELA signal and suggest any additional sources of data that might be helpful in this regard.

4. Prepare a brief interim report of its findings at the conclusion of the November 1-2 meeting, and perhaps a month or two later a final report following evaluation of any additional data that may be obtained which bears on the three tasks specified above.

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Review on November 1, 1985