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NODIS/CHEROKEE

FOR S/AS-AMB. SMITH AND OES-ASST. SECY PICKERING

E.O. 12065: RDS 2,3,4 7/25/00 (HARTMAN, A.) OR-M

TAGS: TECH, PARM, MNUC, FR, PK, SF, IZ

SUBJ: NUCLEAR NON-PROLIFERATION MATTERS

REF: STATE 192465

1. S - ENTIRE TEXT.

2. PAKISTAN--SCICOUNS MET WITH MFA NON-PROLIFERATION ADVISOR DE COMMINES AND GAVE HIM SECRET NON-PAPER ON STATUS OF PAKISTAN NUCLEAR PROGRAM AS PER REFTEL. SCICOUNS TOLD DE COMMINES THAT ESSENTIALLY ALL THE INFORMATION INCLUDED IN NON-PAPER HAD, OF COURSE, ALREADY BEEN MADE AVAILABLE TO FRENCH ON THE OCCASION OF NUMEROUS EXCHANGES OF INFORMATION IN THIS AREA WITH DE COMMINES AND HIS ASSOCIATES; THE NON-PAPER, HOWEVER, IS A VERY GOOD SUMMARY OF THE SITUATION. DE COMMINES WAS ADVISED THAT THE INFORMATION WAS ALSO BEING SHARED WITH THE OTHER COUNTRIES LISTED IN REFTEL. DE COMMINES HAD NO COMMENT OTHER THAN TO EXPRESS APPRECIATION FOR BEING KEPT INFORMED.

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3. SINCE INTER-MINISTERIAL EXTERNAL NUCLEAR POLICY COMMITTEE HAD MET AFTERNOON OF PREVIOUS DAY AND NO OFFICIAL INFORMATION OR COMMUNIQUE WAS ISSUED, SCICOUNS USED THE OPPORTUNITY OF MEETING TO SOUND OUT DE COMMINES ON DECISIONS THAT MAY HAVE BEEN TAKEN BY COMMITTEE. (INTER-MINISTERIAL COMMITTEE WAS CHAIRED BY PRESIDENT GISCARD D'ESTAING AND PARTICIPANTS WERE PRIME MINISTER BARRE, FOREIGN

AFFAIRS MINISTER FRANCOIS-PONCET, INDUSTRY MINISTER GIRAUD, DEFENSE MINISTER BOURGES, EXTERNAL COMMERCE MINISTER DENIAU, ECONOMICS MINISTER MONORY, FINANCE MINISTER PAPON AND DE COMMINES AS EXECUTIVE SECRETARY). DE COMMINES STRESSED SENSITIVITY OF INFORMATION HE WAS PASSING ON. IT WAS APPARENT THAT DE COMMINES WAS NOT SPECIFICALLY AUTHORIZED TO GIVE US ANY INFORMATION AND WE NEED TO KEEP THIS CLOSE IN ORDER TO PROTECT HIM. IF ANY PART OF THIS INFORMATION SHOULD COME OUT, OUR ABILITY TO CONTINUE SENSITIVE EXCHANGES WITH FRANCE WILL END. (THIS IS REASON FOR OUR HIGH CLASSIFICATION.)

4. SOUTH AFRICA--DE COMMINES SAID THAT THE PRESIDENT WANTS FRANCE TO TAKE A PASSIVE ATTITUDE REGARDING ANY FURTHER ACTIONS ON THE QUESTION OF FUEL SUPPLY FOR KOEBERG. DE COMMINES SAID THAT THE BALL IS NOW IN OUR COURT. THEY ARE STILL WAITING FOR AN ANSWER FROM US REGARDING OUR POSITION ON A DOUBLE OR TRIPLE VETO (THE THIRD

POSSIBLE VETOING COUNTRY HE WAS REFERRING TO WAS THE U.K. HE SAID THAT A DOUBLE VETO CONSISTING OF THE GCF AND U.K. WOULD NOT BE SUFFICIENT, BUT A VETO

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COMMITMENT BY THE U.S. AND FRANCE WOULD AND THAT A VETO COMMITMENT BY ALL THREE WOULD BE BEST). DE COMMINES POINTED OUT THAT GDF HAS NO RESPONSIBILITY TO SUPPLY FUEL TO KOEBERG, ONLY TO FABRICATE FUEL OF U.S. ORIGIN. SINCE IT IS THE U.S. THAT HAS A CONTRACTUAL OBLIGATION WITH SOUTH AFRICA REGARDING FUEL SUPPLY, SOUTH AFRICA WILL THEREFORE HAVE TO WORK OUT SOMETHING WITH THE U.S. SCICOUNS GOT THE IMPRESSION THAT GDF MAY BE HAVING SECOND THOUGHTS ABOUT ANY ARRANGEMENT UNDER WHICH THEY WOULD PICK UP A PORTION OF THE U.S. CONTRACT FOR FUEL SUPPLY.

9. IRAQ--THE CRITICAL PUBLIC REACTION TO THE FRENCH RESEARCH REACTOR AND REACTOR FUEL SUPPLY TO IRAQ WAS ALSO A TOPIC OF DISCUSSION AT THE INTER-MINISTERIAL MEETING. DE COMMINES SAID THAT, AS WE KNOW, THE FRENCH HAVE BEEN AWARE OF THE PROBLEMS

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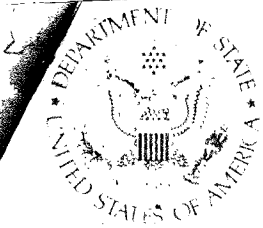
NODIS/CHEROKEE

ASSOCIATED WITH THEIR HEU SUPPLY TO IRAQ FOR SOME TIME AND HE STRESSED THE PRECAUTIONS THEY HAVE TAKEN AND ARE TAKING. THEY FIND THEMSELVES IN A DILEMMA, HOWEVER, SINCE THEY CANNOT PUBLICLY DESCRIBE ALL THE PRECAUTIONS THEY ARE TAKING, IN VIEW OF THE FACT THAT THE IRAQIS THEMSELVES ARE UNAWARE OF SOME OF THE PREVENTATIVE MEASURES WHICH THE FRENCH ARE TAKING; AS A CONSEQUENCE THE GOP CANNOT EFFECTIVELY RESPOND TO SOME OF THE PRESS CRITICISM. THE PRINCIPAL PREVENTATIVE ACTION TAKEN BY THE FRENCH (AND WHICH IRAQ IS NOT AWARE OF) IS THAT THE HEU IS PRE-IRRADIATED BEFORE LEAVING FRANCE (PLEASE STRICTLY PROTECT) AND HENCE IS NOT USABLE AS A WEAPONS MATERIAL. A SECOND PRECAUTION IS TO SUPPLY ONLY ONE CORE-LOADING AT A TIME AND TO PLACE IT DIRECTLY IN THE SMALL RESEARCH REACTOR ALREADY IN PLACE IN IRAQ. THE THIRD CONTROL IS THE FRENCH PRESENCE ON THE REACTOR SITE (DE COMMINES SAID THERE ARE SOME 50 FRENCH TECHNICIANS ON THE SITE AND THE FRENCH ARE WITH THE HEU FROM THE MOMENT IT LEAVES FRANCE UNTIL

IT IS IN THE REACTOR AND THE REACTOR IS STARTED UP). DE COMMINES SAID THAT HE PERSONALLY WOULD LIKE TO MAKE MUCH MORE INFORMATION AVAILABLE TO THE GENERAL

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PUBLIC BUT THIS IS STILL UNDER DISCUSSION WITHIN THE GOVERNMENT. HE BELIEVES A DECISION WILL BE MADE TODAY ON WHETHER TO ISSUE A COMMUNIQUE ON SOME ASPECTS OF THE INTER-MINISTERIAL COMMITTEE MEETING OF YESTERDAY AND HE HOPES THAT IF ONE IS ISSUED IT CAN INCLUDE A LITTLE MORE DETAIL ON FRENCH CONCERNS AND PRECAUTIONS REGARDING THE FRANCO-IRAQI COOPERATION.

THE FRENCH SEEM SOMEWHAT SURPRISED AT THE LACK OF PUBLIC CRITICISM OF ITALY IN VIEW OF THE DEGREE OF ITALIAN ASSISTANCE IN SENSITIVE NUCLEAR AREAS TO IRAQ. THE FRENCH ARE PARTICULARLY CONCERNED ABOUT THE POSSIBLE SUPPLY TO IRAQ BY ITALY OF A HEAVY WATER REACTOR. DE COMMINES SAID THAT THE GOP INTENDS TO SEND A HIGH-LEVEL MISSION TO IRAQ TO DISSUADE IRAQ FROM PURCHASING A NATURAL URANIUM

HEAVY WATER REACTOR AND TO OFFER INSTEAD A PWR OF FRENCH MANUFACTURE.

HARTMAN

SECRET