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May 7, 1963

NATIONAL SECURITY ACTION MEMORANDUM NO. 241

**TO: The Secretary of State
 The Director of Central Intelligence
 The Chairman, Atomic Energy Commission**

SUBJECT: Report on French Gaseous Diffusion Plant

The President noted the attached report. He would like to have the Director of Central Intelligence, together with the Chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission, prepare immediately a report and an appraisal of this project.

On the basis of the report and estimate, the Secretary of State should coordinate policy recommendations for the President.

McGeorge Bundy

CC:
Mrs. Lincoln
Mr. Bundy
Mr. Johnson
NSC Files

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By: SICE	NLK-88-93	3/90
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FRANCE

a. Paris has asked West Germany for financial and technical assistance to complete the Pierrelatte gaseous diffusion plant.

b. The French now estimate that the cost of the plant will rise to about \$1 billion and technical snags have set back the expected completion date to 1967. The French are counting on the output of this plant for their second-generation nuclear force based on missile-delivered thermonuclear weapons.

c. West German officials say they have not decided on their answer to the French approach for financial assistance. A group of West German experts thinks that the Germans might be asked to put in as much as \$250 million.

d. French and German officials deny that joint nuclear weapons research and development is contemplated, with one German official saying that Germany is interested only in an additional non-US source of enriched uranium fuel. German technical assistance probably could be covered under the broad scientific-technical provisions of the proposed Franco-German Treaty.

e. Paris reportedly declined an Italian offer of assistance two years ago, but, we understand, has now reopened the question with the Italians.

Sources:

- Message from Bonn 2878
- Airgram from Brussels EGBUS A-634
- Message to Rome 2187

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