September 15, 1978

'Congressional Consultations on Pakistan,' State Department cable 235372 to US Embassy Vienna

Citation:

"'Congressional Consultations on Pakistan,' State Department cable 235372 to US Embassy Vienna", September 15, 1978, Wilson Center Digital Archive, Mandatory Declassification Review request. Obtained and contributed by William Burr and included in NPIHP Research Update #3.

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Summary:

Plans for meetings with Congress members to discuss resuming aid to Pakistan. Talking points include the cancellation of the French reprocessing plant deal and the importance of Pakistan's position in the Middle East. Also includes discussion of Pakistan's nuclear ambitions, technical capabilities, and the United States' efforts to block their nuclear development.

Credits:

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Original Language:

English

Contents:

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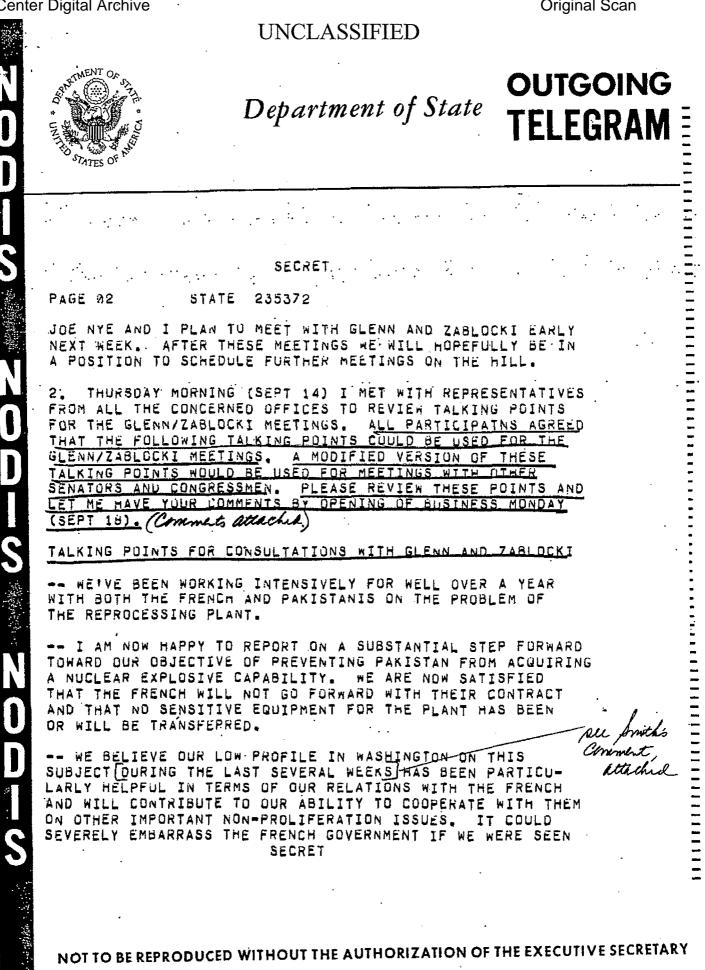
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Department of State

PAGE 03 STATE 235372

TO BE TAKING CREDIT FOR WHAT IS THEIR DECISION.

-- (IF ASKED ABOUT ASSURANCES: FOR DUMESTIC PULITICAL REASONS NEITHER THE FRENCH NOR PARISTANI GOVERNMENTS WISH TO MAKE PUBLIC THE FACT OF CANCELLATION, AND WE BELIEVE IT WOULD BE COUNTER-PRODUCTIVE IN TERMS OF OUR RELATIONS WITH BOTH COUNTRIES TO TRY TO HAVE THEM DO SD.)

-- NE HAVE COME TO DISCUSS WITH YOU HOW WE CAN NOW GO FORWARD TO RESTORE A NORMAL RELATIONSHIP WITH PAKISTAN.

-- WE BELIEVE THAT PAKISTAN IS AN IMPORTANT COUNTRY AND THAT WE HAVE IMPORTANT INTERESTS IN THE REGION. THE SITUATION IN IRAN IS WORRISOME AND AFGHANISTAN CONSTI-TUTES A SERIOUS DESTABILIZING FACTOR. INTERNALLY PAKISTAN IS A DEEPLY TROUBLED LAND. THE BHUTTO PROBLEM HANGS LIKE A SHADOW OVER THE POLITICAL LANDSCAPE. PAKISTAN FEELS THREATENED BOTH FROM WITHIN AND WITHUUT. A DISINTEGRATING OR RADICALIZED PAKISTAN COULD DIRECTLY THREATEN OUR MAJOR INTERESTS IN THE ARABIAN PENINSULA AND THE PERSIAN GULF.

-- PAKISTAN SEES HERSELF SURROUNDED BY UNFRIENDLY OR UNSTABLE STATES, AND IS LOSING CONFIDENCE IN THE WILL AND ABILITY OF THE US, OTHER WESTERN COUNTRIES AND CENTO TO PROVIDE SECURITY DURING THIS DIFFICULT PERIOD.

-- TAKING INTO ACCOUNT BOTH OUR NON-PROLIFERATION INTERESTS AND OUR BROADER REGIONAL CONCERNS, WE BELIEVE IT IMPORTANT TO MOVE FORWARD TO RESTORE MORE NORMAL RELATIONS WITH PAKISTAN NOW THAT THE SPECIFIC ISSUE OF THE FRENCH REPROCESSING PLANT IS BEHIND US. WE BELIEVE

THAT A RESUMPTION OF AID AND LIMITED MILITARY SALES COULD GIVE US SOME INFLUENCE ON GDP POLICIES AND PERHAPS RELIEVE SOME OF THE TENSION AND SENSE OF SELRET

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TELEGRAM



Department of State

SECRET PAGE 24 STATE 235372

ISOLATION WHICH GIVE PAKISTAN GREATER INCENTIVE TO MOVE COVERTLY IN THE NUCLEAR FIELD.

-- AS I SAID AT THE OUTSET, CANCELLATION OF THE REPRO-CESSING CUNTRACT IS AN IMPORTANT STEP FORWARD. NEVER-THELESS, THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THIS OBJECTIVE ON THE REPROCESSING PLANT ODES NOT SOLVE THE PROBLEM OF PAKISTAN AS A POTENTIAL PROLIFERATOR. I WOULD LIKE TO SHARE WITH YOU OUR THINKING AS WE LOOK BEYOND THIS IMPORTANT MILESTONE.

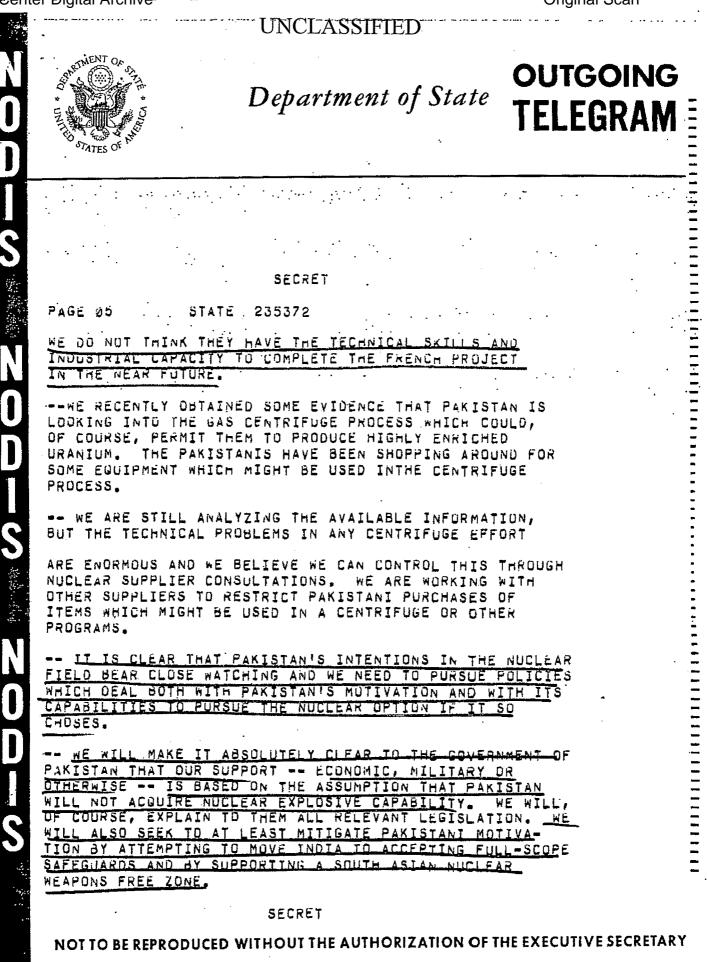
-- THE MOTIVATING FORCE FOR A NUCLEAR OPTION REMAINS UNDIMINISHED -- NAMELY THE FEAR OF INUIA AND PAKISTAN'S DESIRE TO COMPENSATE FOR A PERCEIVED INDIAN NUCLEAR CAPABILITY. IN RECENT MONTHS, PAKISTAN'S SECURITY CON-CERNS HAVE BEEN HEIGHTENED BY THE <u>AEGHAN REVOLUTION</u>. WHICH HAS LED TO INCREASED SOVIET INFLUENCE IN KABUL. PAKISTAN IS ALSO DEEPLY CONCERNED ABOUT ANY INSTABILITY IN IRAN.

-- AWARE OF PAKISTAN'S STRONG MOTIVATION, WE HAVE BEEN MONITORING THE SITUATION VERY CAREFULLY AND, I MIGHT ADD, WE WILL CONTINUE TO DD SO. THIS WILL FOCUS NOT ONLY ON ANY INDIGENOUS EFFORT AT REPROCESSING, BUT UN DTHER AREAS AS WELL.

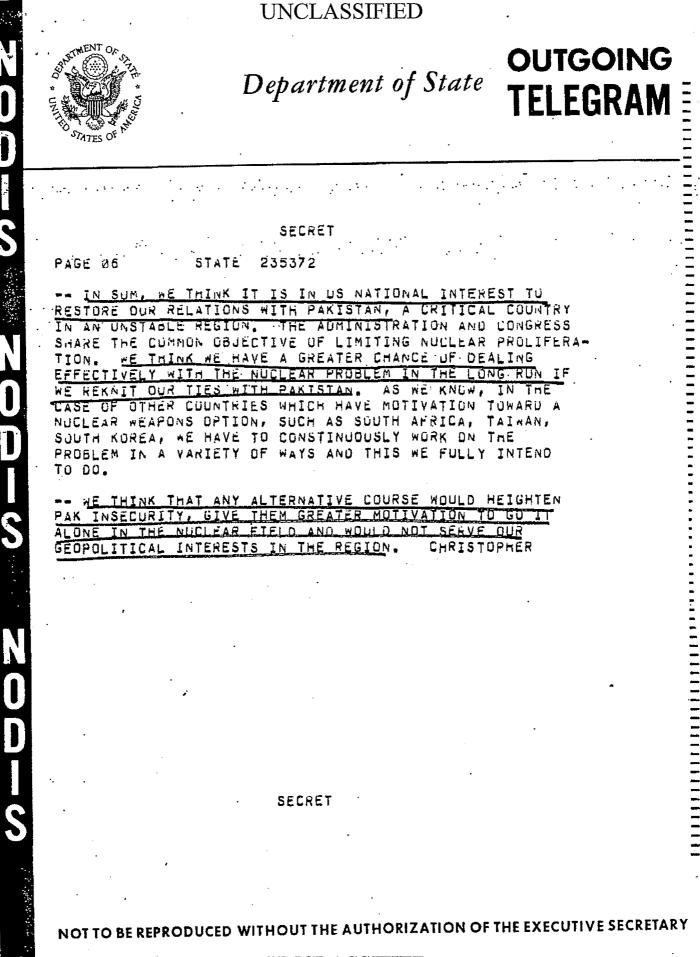
-- WE DO NOT BELIEVE THAT PAKISTAN CAN OBTAIN SENSITIVE ASSISTANCE FROM OTHER COUNTRIES FOR THE FRENCH REPRU-CESSING PLANT. YOU MAY HAVE SEEN PRESS REPORTS ABOUT POSSIBLE CHINESE ASSISTANCE BUT WE HAVE BEEN ASSURED BY THE CHINESE THAT THEY HAVE NO INTENTION TO DO SO. WE HAVE ALSO UNDERTAKEN A STUDY OURSELVES OF PAKISTANI CAPABILITY TO PROCEED WITH THE PLANT ON ITS OWN, AND SECRET

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	PAK TALKING POINTS SEEM FINE, IN THIRD PARA I'D STRIKE "DURING THE LAST SEVERAL WEEKS". WE HAVE LAID LOW FOR A YEAR. I BRIEFED ZABLOCKI'S COMMITTEE ON NON- PROLIF ISSUES LAST FALL AND ASKED THEM NOT TO ASK ABOUT PAKISTAN, THEY RESPECTED THIS REQUEST. I SUGGEST YOU COMMEND THEM AND SAY HOW HELPFUL THIS CONGRESSIONAL RESTRAINT HAS BEEN. SMITH	
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