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DEPARTMENT OF STATE
Washington, D.C. 20520

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LARGE

January 30, 1976

SECRET

To: EUR - Mr. Hartman
Through: EUR - Mr. Lowenstein
EUR/RPE - Mr. Albrecht, Acting
From: EUR/RPE - David H. Swartz
Subject: Demarche to Pakistan on Nuclear Fuel Reprocessing

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SUMMARY

Pakistan is attempting to acquire a nuclear fuel cycle capability, ostensibly to support its tiny civil nuclear program. Intelligence estimates indicate that Pakistan intends to apply that hoped-for capability in a crash program to develop nuclear weapons. A key element in its program is the acquisition of a "pilot" reprocessing facility from France and

END SUMMARY

DISCUSSION

Pakistan has had for some time an interest in expanding its civil nuclear program to include the full fuel cycle. There is currently only one nuclear power plant in the country--a heavy water reactor utilizing natural uranium fuel of the Canadian CANDU type. Apparently in tandem with efforts to increase its nuclear power generation capacity through the purchase of more reactors, Pakistan is

further, the Pakistanis are close to agreement with the French whereby the latter would provide Pakistan with a "pilot" reprocessing facility capable of separating several kilograms of plutonium per year from the reactor's spent fuel.

The reprocessing facility is particularly disturbing, since there can be no present (or, probably, future) economic

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justification for such a capability. Heavy water reactors cannot utilize reprocessed plutonium for fuel as they operate only on natural unenriched uranium. Even if Pakistan were to acquire several light water reactors, plutonium reprocessing would not be an economically viable proposition. |

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cc: EUR/CE - Mr. Anderson
EUR/WE - Mr. Barbour
EUR/CAN - Mr. Rouse

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