

September 13, 1978

**'Smith-Jacomet Meeting: French Position on
Cancellation of Pakistan Reprocessing Plant
Contract,' US Embassy Vienna cable to State
Department**

Citation:

"'Smith-Jacomet Meeting: French Position on Cancellation of Pakistan Reprocessing Plant Contract,' US Embassy Vienna cable to State Department", September 13, 1978, Wilson Center Digital Archive, Mandatory Declassification Review request. Obtained and contributed by William Burr and included in NPIHP Research Update #3.
<https://wilson-center.drivingcreative.com/document/112841>

Summary:

Summary of meeting between Gerald C. Smith and Andre Jacomet. France refuses to give a public announcement about the cancellation of the Pakistan reprocessing plant project due to fears of controversy in France.

Credits:

This document was made possible with support from Carnegie Corporation of New York (CCNY)

Original Language:

English

Contents:

Original Scan

UNCLASSIFIED

Original Scan

13 SEP 78Z 09 05

002683 R45



Department of State

INCOMING
TELEGRAM

RELEASED IN FULL

SECRET

NOD319

PAGE 01 VIENNA 08200 01 OF 02 130852Z
ACTION NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISD-00 /001 W

-----103302 130856Z /12

D 130840Z SEP 78
FM AMEMBASSY VIENNA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7930
INFO AMEMBASSY PARIS IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD IMMEDIATE

COPY 15^a OF 15 COPIES

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 VIENNA 08200

NODIS

DECAPTIONED

USIAEA

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: IAEA, TECH, FR, PK

SUBJECT: SMITH-JACOMET MEETING: FRENCH POSITION ON
CANCELLATION OF PAKISTAN REPROCESSING PLANT CONTRACT

1. SUMMARY: DURING GERARD SMITH MEETING IN PARIS
WITH JACOMET SEPTEMBER 11, JACOMET SAID FRENCH DECISION
TO CANCEL REPROCESSING PLANT CONTRACT WITH PAKISTAN
WAS FIRM, BUT FRANCE COULD NOT RPT NOT GIVE OFFICIAL
ASSURANCE OF CANCELLATION THAT US COULD USE IN CON-
GRESSIONAL CONSULTATIONS. GOVERNMENT STILL FEARS
SHARP ADVERSE REACTION IN FRENCH PUBLIC OPINION AND
TROUBLE FROM GAULLISTS AND THUS WILL NOT RPT NOT STATE
PUBLICLY THAT CONTRACT IS CANCELLED. FRENCH BELIEVE
AN ASSURANCE OF CANCELLATION GIVEN TO CONGRESS WOULD
ULTIMATELY APPEAR IN US PRESS. JACOMET URGED US TO SOON
RESUME PAKISTAN AID, SUGGESTING US DEAL WITH GLENN
AMENDMENT BY USING PAKISTANI STATEMENTS THAT FRANCE
HAD CANCELLED CONTRACT. ON FRG-BRAZIL REPROCESSING
CONTRACT, JACOMET SAID GISCARD MAY WELL RAISE SUBJECT
WITH SCHMIDT AT AACHEN SUMMIT BY "ASKING QUESTIONS"

SECRET

NOT TO BE REPRODUCED WITHOUT THE AUTHORIZATION OF THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE
REVIEW AUTHORITY: ROBERT O HOMME
DATE/CASE ID: 28 DEC 2010 201000057

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

*Department of State***INCOMING
TELEGRAM**

SECRET

PAGE 02

VIENNA 08200 01 OF 02 130852Z

RATHER THAN TRYING TO EXERT PRESSURE. SMITH AND JACOMET ALSO DISCUSSED PAKISTAN'S NUCLEAR INTENTIONS AND CAPABILITY. SMITH, ON PERSONAL BASIS, ASKED ABOUT POSSIBILITY OF US-FRENCH TECHNICAL EXCHANGE ON THOSE ISSUES. DISCUSSION OF SOUTH AFRICA, TAIWAN, THE PROPOSED FRENCH REACTOR SALE TO PRC, IAEA-EURATOM NEGOTIATIONS AND INFCE REPORTED SEPTEL. END SUMMARY.

2. EN ROUTE TO VIENNA FOR IAEA MEETINGS, GERARD SMITH MET FOR NEARLY TWO HOURS IN PARIS WITH ANDRE JACOMET, SENIOR FRENCH MFA NON-PROLIFERATION ADVISOR. ACCOMPANYING SMITH WERE ROBERT KELLEY, S/AS, AND WILLIAM SALMON, EMBASSY SCIENCE COUNSELOR. MFA'S PHILLIPE LOUET, HEAD OF NUCLEAR AFFAIRS OFFICE, ATTENDED ON FRENCH SIDE.

3. PAKISTAN. SMITH EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR FRENCH DECISION TO CANCEL REPROCESSING CONTRACT AND CONGRATULATED JACOMET ON HIS SKILLFUL MISSION TO ISLAMABAD. SMITH INDICATED US HAD NOT RPT NOT YET DECIDED ON TIMING AND CONTENT OF CONGRESSIONAL CONSULTATIONS. SMITH STRESSED THAT AN OFFICIAL ASSURANCE FROM JACOMET THAT THE CONTRACT WAS TERMINATED WOULD BE MOST HELPFUL IN ANY APPROACH TO CONGRESS AND WOULD BE HANDLED CONFIDENTIALLY.

4. JACOMET DECLINED TO GIVE ANY SUCH ASSURANCE. HE SAID HE HAD TALKED WITH SOUTOU EARLIER IN THE DAY AND SOUTOU'S VIEW WAS THAT THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT, IN LINE WITH ITS DECISION NOT TO MAKE ANY PUBLIC STATEMENT THAT THE CONTRACT WAS TERMINATED, WAS NOT IN A POSITION TO GIVE THIS ASSURANCE. JACOMET EMPHASIZED THAT THIS DID NOT RPT NOT MEAN THAT THE FRENCH WERE AMBIGUOUS ON THEIR

SECRET

NOT TO BE REPRODUCED WITHOUT THE AUTHORIZATION OF THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED



Department of State

INCOMING
TELEGRAM

SECRET

PAGE 03

VIENNA 08200 01 OF 02 130852Z

DECISION TO CANCEL. HE CONCEDED THAT THE FRENCH STATEMENT OF AUGUST 24 ON THE CONTRACT "DID NOT SAY MUCH."
(NOTE: THE STATEMENT CONFIRMED THAT GISCARD WROTE ZIA ON AUGUST 9 "TO SUGGEST THAT THE PAKISTANI GOVERNMENT STUDY COMMON MEASURES...TO HARMONIZE THE EXECUTION OF THE CONTRACT...WITH THE IMPERATIVES OF NON-PROLIFERATION AS DEFINED BY THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT....")
IN RESPONSE TO SMITH'S QUERY, JACOMET SAID THAT GISCARD'S LETTER TO ZIA DID NOT RPT NOT OFFER COPROCESSING AS AN ALTERNATIVE. THE CONTRACT WAS TERMINATED, AND "WE ARE NOT GOING BACK ON OUR DECISION," JACOMET STRESSED. FRANCE HAS NOT RPT NOT MADE A PUBLIC STATEMENT ANNOUNCING TERMINATION BECAUSE THE PUBLIC OPINION PROBLEM IN FRANCE WAS NOT RPT NOT "SOLVED" AND CHIRAC AND THE GAULLISTS WERE LIKELY TO MAKE AN ISSUE OF THE CANCELLATION IF IT WERE PUBLICIZED. JACOMET SAID THE GOVERNMENT'S GOAL WAS TO KEEP THE SITUATION--NOW "RATHER GOOD"--AS "QUIET AS POSSIBLE."

5. JACOMET SAID THE FRENCH BELIEVE THE US HAS SUFFICIENT INFORMATION ON THE CONTRACT FROM A NUMBER OF CHANNELS TO GO TO CONGRESS TO RESUME AID, "WHICH WOULD BE IN THE INTEREST OF THE FREE WORLD." IF CONGRESS WAS TOLD THAT THE FRENCH HAD ASSURED THE US THE CONTRACT WAS CANCELLED, THE ASSURANCE WOULD LIKELY APPEAR, SOONER OR LATER, IN THE US PRESS, IGNITING THE ISSUE IN FRANCE. AS AN ALTERNATIVE, JACOMET SUGGESTED THE US CITE THE STATEMENTS OF PAKISTANI OFFICIALS, E.G., ZIA THAT THE CONTRACT WAS CANCELLED.

6. SMITH PRESSED AGAIN FOR A FRENCH ASSURANCE, POINTING OUT THAT CONGRESS WOULD NATURALLY INQUIRE

SECRET

NOT TO BE REPRODUCED WITHOUT THE AUTHORIZATION OF THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED 09 05

002684



Department of State

INCOMING
TELEGRAM

SECRET

NOD321

PAGE 01 VIENNA 08200 02 OF 02 130856Z
ACTION NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 W

-----103450 130858Z /12

O 130840Z SEP 78
FM AMEMBASSY VIENNA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7931
INFO AMEMBASSY PARIS IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T SECTION 02 OF 02 VIENNA 08200

NODIS

USIAEA

AS TO WHAT THE FRENCH HAD TOLD THE US ABOUT THE STATUS
OF THE CONTRACT.

7. JACOMET DEMURRED. HE SAID THE FRENCH HAVE HEARD
THAT ZIA MAY REPLY BY LETTER TO THE GISCARD LETTER
OF AUGUST 9. SOUTOU BELIEVES THAT FRANCE WOULD HAVE
TO CONSIDER WHATEVER ZIA MIGHT SAY BEFORE DOING ANY
MORE THAN IT HAS ALREADY DONE.

8. SMITH SAID THAT TO WAIT FOR A POSSIBLE PAKISTANI
REACTION WOULD JUST MEAN MORE DELAY. THE ASSURANCE
WAS NEEDED NOW. IF FRANCE COULD NOT RPT NOT GIVE THAT
AUSSRANCE, THE US WOULD HAVE TO ACCEPT THAT BUT IT
WOULD NOT RPT NOT MAKE THE US AID EFFORT EASIER.
JACOMET GAVE NO SIGN THAT THERE WAS ANY POSSIBILITY
OF AN ASSURANCE, AND DID NOT RPT NOT OFFER TO TAKE
UP THE MATTER AGAIN WITH SOUTOU OR HIGHER FRENCH
OFFICIALS.

9. ON THE QUESTION OF PAKISTAN NUCLEAR INTENTIONS
AND CAPABILITIES, SMITH SAID THE US WOULD WELCOME MORE

SECRET

NOT TO BE REPRODUCED WITHOUT THE AUTHORIZATION OF THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED



Department of State

INCOMING
TELEGRAM

SECRET

PAGE 02

VIENNA 08200 02 OF 02 130856Z

INFORMATION THE FRENCH MIGHT HAVE. SMITH SUGGESTED THE US AND FRANCE CONSIDER CONTINUING THE EXCHANGE OF TECHNICAL INFORMATION WHICH BEGAN EARLIER WHEN THE US PROVIDED CERTAIN INFORMATION TO THE FRENCH ON THE PAKISTANI NUCLEAR PROGRAM.

10. JACOMET RESPONDED THAT THE FACT PAKISTAN WILL NOT RPT NOT BE RECEIVING FRENCH HELP UNDER THE CONTRACT MAKES ANY EFFORT TO COMPLETE THE PLANT MORE DIFFICULT. HOWEVER, FRANCE DOES NOT RPT NOT KNOW WHAT PAKISTAN'S INTENTIONS ARE. US EXPERTS HAVE BETTER INFORMATION THAN THE FRENCH. HE NOTED ZIA HAS BEEN CAUTIOUS IN HIS STATEMENTS AS TO PAKISTAN'S FUTURE COURSE. IN RESPONSE TO SMITH'S QUESTION AS TO THE STATUS OF FRENCH TECHNICIANS IN THE PAKISTAN NUCLEAR PROGRAM, JACOMET SAID THERE ARE TWO AT THE REPROCESSING PLANT SITE HELPING WITH THE "SHELL OF THE BUILDING." THEIR WORK IS NOT RPT NOT INVOLVED WITH SENSITIVE PARTS OF THE PLANT. JACOMET SAID THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT'S VIEW IS THAT THESE TWO SHOULD RETURN TO FRANCE "SOME TIME" BUT HE COULD NOT RPT NOT PREDICT WHEN. THEIR RETURN NOW WOULD NOT RPT NOT SERVE THE FRENCH DESIRE TO KEEP A LOW PROFILE. JACOMET UNDERTOOK TO GET BACK LATER TO THE US ON THE QUESTION OF A US-FRENCH EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION.

11. FRG-BRAZIL. ON THE FRG-BRAZIL NUCLEAR DEAL, SMITH SAID IT APPEARED NOTHING THE US COULD DO WOULD AFFECT THE SITUATION FOR THE TIME BEING. JACOMET SAID THE FRENCH HAVE NO NEW INFORMATION ON THE STATUS OF THE FRG-BRAZIL DEAL. HE SAID IT "MAY WELL BE" THAT GISCARD WILL RAISE THE MATTER WITH SCHMIDT AT THE AACHEN SUMMIT LATER IN SEPTEMBER. GISCARD WILL APPROACH THE ISSUE

SECRET

NOT TO BE REPRODUCED WITHOUT THE AUTHORIZATION OF THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

*Department of State***INCOMING
TELEGRAM**

SECRET

PAGE 03

VIENNA 08200 02 OF 02 130856Z

BY "ASKING QUESTIONS," RATHER THAN PRESSURING THE
CHANCELLOR. SMITH

NOTE: NOT PASSED AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD.

SECRET

NOT TO BE REPRODUCED WITHOUT THE AUTHORIZATION OF THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

UNCLASSIFIED