

September 19, 1978
**'French Export of Centrifuges for Pakistani
Reprocessing Plant,' State Department cable to
Paris Embassy 237312**

Citation:

"'French Export of Centrifuges for Pakistani Reprocessing Plant,' State Department cable to Paris Embassy 237312", September 19, 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:

Request for the Paris Embassy to discreetly look into an export license granted to the French company Robatel to export centrifuges to Pakistan.

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TAGS: TECH, MNUC, PARM, FR, PK, PFOR

SUBJECT: FRENCH EXPORT OF CENTRIFUGES FOR PAKISTANI
REPROCESSING PLANT

1. THE SEPTEMBER 4, 1978, EDITION OF LE POINT (NO. 311) ON PAGE 31 ASSERTS THAT THE LYON FIRM OF ROBATEL HAS RECEIVED A LICENSE TO EXPORT CENTRIFUGES FOR THE PAKISTAN REPROCESSING PLANT.
2. ACCORDING TO INFORMATION AVAILABLE IN WASHINGTON,
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ROBATEL SLPI (ADDRESS: RUE DE GENEVE, B.P. 20, 69740 GENAS, FRANCE) IS INVOLVED IN THE SUPPLY OF HOT CELLS AND LABS, GLOVE BOXES, SHIELDED CONTAINERS, AND DECONTAMINATION EQUIPMENT. IN ADDITION, A SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN ARTICLE ON REPROCESSING THAT APPEARED IN DECEMBER 1976 REPORTS THAT AN AXIAL-FLOW, MULTISTAGE CENTRIFUGAL CONTACTOR CALLED THE ROBATEL HAS BEEN DEVELOPED BY SAINT-GOBAIN TECHNIQUES NOUVELLES AS AN IMPROVEMENT OVER EXTRACTION COLUMNS AND MIXER SETTLERS.

3. IT WOULD BE PARTICULARLY USEFUL IF EMBASSY COULD ASCERTAIN IF THE CENTRIFUGES REFERRED TO IN THE LE POINT ARTICLE ARE THOSE USED TO HELP CLARIFY THE PROCESS STREAM AFTER DISSOLUTION OF THE SPENT FUEL, OR IF THE ARTICLE

IS REFERRING TO THE MORE CRITICAL CENTRIFUGAL CONTACTORS. IN EITHER CASE, DEPT WOULD BE INTERESTED TO LEARN IF AND WHEN THE EXPORT LICENSE FOR THIS EQUIPMENT WAS ISSUED, AND WHETHER THE CENTRIFUGES HAVE BEEN SHIPPED OR WHEN THEY ARE SCHEDULED FOR SHIPMENT.

4. DEPARTMENT IS OF COURSE AWARE OF THE SENSITIVITIES THAT RELATE TO THE WHOLE SUBJECT OF THE PAKISTANI RE-PROCESSING SALE. HOWEVER THIS INFORMATION APPEARS TO BE OF SUFFICIENT IMPORTANCE TO JUSTIFY EMBASSY'S DISCREET INQUIRY. VANCE

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