

**September 23, 1978**  
**US Embassy Paris cable 31540 to State Department,**  
**'Elysée Views on Reprocessing Issues'**

**Citation:**

"US Embassy Paris cable 31540 to State Department, 'Elysée Views on Reprocessing Issues'", September 23, 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/112845>

**Summary:**

A source in President Giscard's staff informed the US embassy that Pakistan was determined to complete the reprocessing plant and was searching for another country willing to supply the necessary technology. Also discusses a developing nuclear deal between West Germany and Brazil.

**Credits:**

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**Original Language:**

English

**Contents:**

Original Scan

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7835  
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 PARIS 31540

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TAGS: TECH, MNUC, PARM, FR, PK, P/DR, BR, GW

SUBJECT: ELYSEE VIEWS ON REPROCESSING ISSUES

1. SUMMARY. PRESIDENT GISCARD'S STAFF BELIEVES THAT PAKISTAN INTENDS TO COMPLETE THE REPROCESSING PLANT ON ITS OWN; THE FRENCH HAVE INFORMATION THAT THE PAKS HAVE APPROACHED ITALY, JAPAN, AND SPAIN TO TRY TO BUY EQUIPMENT FOR THAT PURPOSE. ON THE FRG-BRAZIL DEAL, GISCARD DID NOT RAISE THE ISSUE WITH SCHMIDT; NOR DOES HIS STAFF THINK HE IS LIKELY TO RAISE IT DURING HIS VISIT TO BRAZIL IN EARLY OCTOBER. OUR SOURCE SAID THAT THE US HAS MORE LEVERAGE IN BRAZIL THAN FRANCE, AND IS THUS IN A BETTER POSITION TO EXPLOIT THE FRENCH DECISION ON PAKISTAN THAN FRANCE HERSELF IS. END SUMMARY.

2. ELYSEE INTERNATIONAL STAFF SOURCE (PROTECT) HAS EXPRESSED TO US THE BELIEF THAT PAKISTAN IS SEEKING ASSISTANCE THAT WILL ALLOW IT TO COMPLETE THE REPROCESSING PLANT ON ITS OWN. HE SAID THE FRENCH HAVE INFORMATION.

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
REVIEW AUTHORITY: ROBERT O HOMME  
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TION THAT THE PAKS HAVE MADE PROBES IN ROME, TOKYO, AND MADRID; AND HE ASSUMES THAT THEY ARE PROBABLY MAKING EFFORTS IN OTHER COUNTRIES AS WELL. HE THEORIZES THAT THE PAKS MAY BE SEEKING TO MAKE A BOMB WITHOUT TESTING IT, IN THE HOPE THAT THEY CAN AVOID THE INTERNATIONAL OUTCRY THAT A NUCLEAR EXPLOSION WOULD PROVOKE WHILE AT THE SAME TIME GIVING THEMSELVES THE MEANS TO RESIST POSSIBLE NUCLEAR BLACKMAIL BY INDIA. SOURCE WAS LESS OPTIMISTIC THAN OUR MFA CONTACTS THAT THE PROSPECT OF FRENCH AND US MILITARY AND ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE COULD DISSUADE THE PAKS.

3. REFLECTING SOMEWHAT GREATER SENSITIVITY THAN OUR MFA CONTACTS TO DOMESTIC FRENCH CONSIDERATIONS, SOURCE SAW LITTLE PROSPECT THAT THE GDF WOULD REVERSE ITS DECISION NOT TO PROVIDE THE US OFFICIAL ASSURANCES THAT THE PAKISTAN DEAL IS DEFINITELY OFF. HE EXPRESSED GREAT SKEPTICISM THAT FRENCH ASSURANCES COULD BE KEPT PRIVATE ONCE THE US GOVERNMENT HAD BEGUN ITS CONSULTATION PROCESS WITH THE CONGRESS. HIS COMMENTS INDICATED THAT THE ELYSEE IS WORRIED THAT, IF SUCH FRENCH ASSURANCES BECOME PUBLIC, THE GAULLISTS WOULD BE ABLE TO CHARGE US-FRENCH COLLUSION AND BREACH OF CONTRACT BY FRANCE (FOR DOMESTIC POLITICAL REASONS THE ELYSEE

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BACKGROUNDING OF THE FRENCH DECISION HAD STRESSED THAT  
THE GDF HAD OFFERED THE PAKS VARIOUS ALTERNATIVES  
CONSISTENT WITH THE CONTRACT).

4. ELYSEE SOURCE SAID THAT GISCARD HAD NOT MENTIONED  
THE BRAZIL DEAL WITH SCHMIDT AT THEIR MEETINGS IN  
AACHEN SEPTEMBER 14 AND 15, ALTHOUGH NOTHING HE SAID  
INDICATED THAT THE FRENCH ARE ANY LESS CONCERNED  
ABOUT COMPLETION OF THE FRG-BRAZIL DEAL. THE IMPLI-  
CATION WAS THAT MONETARY ISSUES HAD TAKEN UP TOO MUCH  
TIME FOR OTHER QUESTIONS TO BE DISCUSSED. SOURCE ADDED,  
HOWEVER, THAT HE DOUBTED GISCARD WOULD RAISE THE ISSUE  
WITH THE BRAZILIANS DURING HIS EARLY-OCTOBER VISIT TO  
BRAZIL. WHILE SOURCE DEPLORED THE PROLIFERATION  
POSSIBILITIES IN LATIN AMERICA IF BRAZIL WERE TO MAKE A  
BOMB, HE SAID THAT FRANCE, NOT BEING A PARTY TO THE  
CONTRACT, WAS IN NO POSITION TO OPPOSE IT AT THIS  
POINT. IN ANY CASE, FRANCE HAS LITTLE LEVERAGE ON  
BRAZIL, WHILE THE US (HE ADDED) HAS MUCH MORE. HE  
ASKED IF THE US HAD RECENTLY EXPRESSED ITS CONCERN TO  
THE /FRG OR TO BRAZIL, WE ANSWERED THAT IT HAS DONE SO

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GETEN IN THE PAST BUT COULD NOT CONFIRM WHETHER WE HAVE  
MADE ANY DEMARCHES FOLLOWING THE FRENCH DECISION TO  
TERMINATE THE PAKISTAN CONTRACT.  
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