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WSH 44

U.S. -- CARTER FACES PROBLEM OF LIMITING NUCLEAR CLUB

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WASHINGTON, MARCH 28 (SPECIAL) - THE BALTIMORE SUN TODAY CARRIED THIS ANALYSIS BY HENRY TREWHITT:

WASHINGTON- INCREASINGLY PRESIDENT CARTER HAS ADOPTED THE IMPROBABLE ROLE OF BLACKBALLING CANDIDATES FOR AN EXCLUSIVE CLUB.

THE CLUB IS THE NUCLEAR CLUB, THAT SELECT CIRCLE OF NATIONS, MANY OF THEM OTHERWISE INCOMPATIBLE, THAT POSSESSES NUCLEAR WEAPONS. MR. CARTER, MORE THAN HIS PREDECESSORS, HAS UNDERTAKEN TO KEEP MEMBERSHIP AT SIX - OR SEVEN, IF ISRAEL, AS MANY BELIEVE, HAS THE BOMB.

EACH CANDIDATE, OR POTENTIAL CANDIDATE, PRESENTS A DIFFERENT SET OF POLITICAL CONSIDERATIONS. SOME CLEARLY WANT NUCLEAR WEAPONS, WITHOUT ACKNOWLEDGING IT. SOME WANT THE NUCLEAR TECHNOLOGY - AND SOME POSSESS IT - THAT CRATES ELECTRICITY FOR CIVILIAN USE BUT ALSO COULD CREATE WEAPONS. THUS, SOME ARE POTENTIAL CANDIDATES WITHOUT BEING APPLICANTS. SOME SIMPLY ARE COMMITTED TO SELL THE TECHNOLOGY.

OVERALL, SAYS ONE AMERICAN SPECIALIST, " I WOULD CALL IT A CRISIS. EXCEPT THAT ONE THINKS OF CRISES IN IMMEDIATE TERMS AND THIS ONE IS GOING TO CONTINUE FOR YEARS."

IT ALSO HAS BEEN DEVELOPING FOR YEARS, RECEIVING VARYING ATTENTION FROM WORLD POWERS. UNDER PUBLIC AND CONGRESSIONAL PRESSURE, PRESIDENT GERALD R. FORD AND HENRY A. KISSINGER, HIS SECRETARY OF STATE, GAVE IT INCREASING ATTENTION.

IT HAS FALLEN TO MR. CARTER, WHOSE OWN VIEWS ON THE SUBJECT ARE STRONG, TO MAKE WHAT IS CALLED NONPORLIFERATION A CENTRAL ELEMENT OF FOREIGN POLICY. THE IMPACT HAS BEEN FELT IN RELATIONS WITH A WIDE SPECTRUM OF COUNTRIES - WEST GERMANY, BRAZIL, FRANCE, PAKISTAN AND JAPAN, PLUS OTHERS TO A LESSER DEGREE.

SOME OF THOSE COUNTRIES, QUITE OBVIOUSLY, ARE CLOSE FRIENDS OF THE UNITED STATES WITH NO INTENTION TO BUILD NUCLEAR WEAPONS.

THE CASE OF JAPAN EMBRACES MANY OF THE COMPLEXITIES. CLOSELY ALLIED WITH THE UNITED STATES, DEPENDENT ON THE U.S. FOR STRATEGIC PROTECTION, JAPAN HAS ADOPTED THE 1968 NONPROLIFERATION TREATY. IT COMMITS NON-NUCLEAR NATIONS AGAINST ACQUIRING WEAPONS AND NUCLEAR POWERS AGAINST HELPING OTHERS ACQUIRE THEM.

YET JAPAN IS AN ADVANCED INDUSTRIAL NATION WITH HIGH REFINED NUCLEAR POWER TECHNOLOGY. IT HAS INVESTED \$200 MILLION IN A PILOT NUCLEAR REPROCESSING PLANT WHICH IT EXPECTS TO ACTIVATE NEXT SUMMER IN A HIGHLY SOPHISTICATED RESEARCH PROGRAM.

REPROCESSING DRAWS PLUTONIUM, A POTENTIAL WEAPONS MATERIAL, FROM USED ENRICHED URANIUM FUEL. BUT TO ENGAGE THE PROCESS, JAPAN NEEDS AMERICAN CONSENT; SINCE THE UNITED STATES SUPPLIED THE ORIGINAL FUEL. UNTIL MR. CARTER TOOK OFFICE, JAPAN HAD NO REASON TO DOUBT THAT CONSENT WOULD BE FORTHCOMING.

(PTO)

U.S. (1) - CARTER FACES PROBLEM OF LIMITING NUCLEAR CLUB

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FOR MR. CARTER THE QUESTION IS: WHAT TO SAY? AMERICAN OFFICIALS TREAT THE PROBLEM AS ONE OF PRINCIPLE AND PRECEDENT. IN FACT, THE UNITED STATES HAS SEVERELY CURTAILED ITS INTERNATIONAL SHIPMENTS OF URANIUM FUEL WHILE IT DEVELOPS A MORE COHERENT POLICY.

BUT IN THEIR MORE PRIVATE MOMENTS SOME AMERICAN OFFICIALS ALSO ACKNOWLEDGE PRIVATELY THAT U.S.-JAPANESE RELATIONS MIGHT NOT ALWAYS BE SO WARM. INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS ARE SELDOM CONSTANT FOREVER. EVEN NOW JAPAN IS NERVOUS ABOUT AMERICA'S PLANS TO WITHDRAW GROUND TROOPS FROM SOUTH KOREA.

IF THE U.S. SAYS NO REGARDING THE PILOT PLANT, THAT NERVOUSNESS ALMOST CERTAINLY WILL GROW, WITH ESCALATING EFFECT. JAPANESE GOVERNMENTS HAVE TOTTERED OVER ISSUES LESS CONSEQUENTIAL THAN THE ACCUSATION THAT THEY HAD WASTED \$200 MILLION BECAUSE OF THE WHIM OF WATERGATE.

ONE ANSWER MIGHT BE TO CIRCUMVENT THE ISSUES BY ENGAGING JAPAN IN A CO-OPERATIVE PROGRAM WITH THE U.S. THAT SOLUTION IS UNDER CONSIDERATION NOW IN WASHINGTON. BUT IT HAS NOT BEEN ADOPTED, AND NO ONE HERE KNOWS WHETHER IT WOULD BE ACCEPTABLE IN TOKYO.

SOME AMERICAN OFFICIALS ARE CONSIDERING THE SAME APPROACH TO AN EVEN MORE COMPLEX CASE, THE INTERNATIONAL PARLAY INVOLVING THE U.S. BRAZIL AND GERMANY. THE ONLY THING SIMPLE ABOUT IT IS THE POINT OF DEPARTURE. A GERMAN CONTRACT TO SUPPLY BRAZIL NUCLEAR INSTALLATIONS WORTH AS MUCH AS \$8 BILLION - AND AS MANY AS 100,000 JOBS IN WEST GERMANY - OVER 50 TO 10 YEARS.

THAT CONTRACT COVERS A REPROCESSING PLANT, AND THUS THE POTENTIAL FOR NUCLEAR WEAPONS. NO ONE IN WASHINGTON, AT LEAST, DOUBTS THAT BRAZIL HAS ONE FUNDAMENTAL PURPOSE: TO BECOME A NUCLEAR WEAPONS POWER.

WASHINGTON'S INTERVENTION TO PREVENT THAT FROM HAPPENING IS HANDICAPPED BY ITS OWN LACK OF A COMPREHENSIVE POLICY, THOUGH ONE IS DEVELOPING. FOR THE GERMANS THE ECONOMIC CONSEQUENCES ARE ENORMOUS. GERMANY'S POSITION OF THE MOMENT, THEREFORE, IS STRAIGHTFORWARD: NEVER AGAIN, BUT FOR NOW A CONTRACT IS A CONTRACT. THE BONN GOVERNMENT ALSO OFFERS A POLITICAL ARGUMENT WHICH AMERICAN OFFICIALS CONCEDE HAS MERIT. IT IS THAT BRAZIL HAS THE ECONOMIC STRENGTH TO BECOME A NUCLEAR POWER WITHOUT OUTSIDE HELP. THEREFORE, THE ARGUMENT GOES, IT MAY BE BETTER TO BRING BRAZIL INTO THE NUCLEAR CLUB UNDER WHAT AMOUNTS TO SUPERVISION, UNDER THE TIGHTEST CONTROL EVER DEvised.

BUT FOR THE MOMENT THE SITUATION IS CHAOTIC, STRAINING THE CLOSE U.S.-GERMAN RELATIONSHIP AND WRECKING THE U.S.-BRAZILIAN AGREEMENT ON CO-OPERATION SIGNED ONLY A YEAR AGO. SOME AMERICAN OFFICIALS SUGGEST THAT HERE, TOO, THE BEST SOLUTION MAY BE A CO-OPERATIVE ONE THAT PROVIDES BRAZIL WITH NUCLEAR POWER - BUT NOT WEAPONS.

A SOLUTION IN THE CASE OF FRANCE AND PAKISTAN APPEARS TO BE MORE EASILY ATTAINABLE. FOR PAKISTAN THE ORDER FOR A FRENCH REPROCESSING PLANT APPEARED TO HAVE ONLY ONE OBJECTIVE: NUCLEAR WEAPONS POTENTIAL TO OFFSET THAT OF INDIA.

BUT AMERICAN OFFICIALS BELIEVE PAKISTAN MAY BE SATISFIED WITH ADEQUATE CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS. THAT PROSPECT HAS BEEN BRIGHTENED BY THE SUGGESTION OF MORARJI DESAI, INDIA'S NEW PRIME MINISTER, THAT INDIA MIGHT GET OUT OF THE NUCLEAR WEAPONS FIELD. FRANCE IS SAID TO BE LESS THAN ADAMANT BOTH BECAUSE THE ECONOMIC STAKES ARE NOT GREAT AND IT WAS NOT A VERY GOOD DEAL FOR FRANCE, ANYWAY.

U.S. (2) - CARTER FACES PROBLEM OF LIMITING NUCLEAR CLUB

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MR. CARTER CLEARLY FEELS HIS PROSPECTS FOR PREVENTING THE SPREAD OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS ARE AT LEAST REASONABLE. HE IS COMMITTED TO AN END TO ALL NUCLEAR TESTING, AN IMPORTANT STEP IN THE PROCESS. MOREOVER, HE ALSO OBVIOUSLY IS PREPARED TO SPEND A GREAT DEAL OF POLITICAL CAPITAL.

BY ALL ACCOUNTS IT WILL BE COSTLY. THE COMPLICATIONS ARE EVEN GREATER IN SOME CASES THAN THE NUCLEAR ISSUES ALONE. BRAZIL, FOR EXAMPLE, IS BEING ASKED TO FORGO ITS OBVIOUS BUT UNACKNOWLEDGED AMBITIONS AT A TIME WHEN ITS WRANGLING WITH THE UNITED STATES OVER TREATMENT OF POLITICAL DISSENTERS.

WEST GERMANY, AMERICA'S CLOSEST ALLY, IS BEING ASKED TO RISK VAST ECONOMIC LOSSES WHILE THE U.S. ALSO URGES THAT IT REINFLATE ITS ECONOMY FOR THE COMMON GOOD. THE UNITED STATES, ONE OFFICIAL SAYS, MUST CONVINCING THE GERMAN, AT LEAST THAT "WE'RE NOT JUST TRYING TO RIG SOMETHING THAT GIVES US BRAZIL'S BUSINESS."

IT DOES NOT HELP THAT THE DEBATE IS RECEIVING MORE AND MORE PUBLIC ATTENTION, THE SOURCE SAYS, BECAUSE "THAT TENDS TO MAKE THE WHOLE AFFAIR A MATTER OF NATIONAL HONOR." IN ANY EVENT, HE CONCLUDES, "NO ONE SOLUTION WILL SUFFICE. IT IS ONE OF THE MOST COMPLEX PROBLEMS OF OUR TIME, AND IT WILL BE WITH US FOR A LONG TIME."

"UNFORTUNATELY, WE CAN'T BE SURE, EVEN IF WE ARE SUCCESSFUL FOR NOW, THAT NUCLEAR WEAPONS WON'T CROP OUT ALL OVER THE PLACE IN A FEW YEARS. BUT WE HAVE TO TRY TO PREVENT IT."

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