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1976
WASHINGTON, OCT. 30 (SPECIAL) -- THE FOLLOWING COLUMN BY C.L. SULZBERGER APPEARS IN TODAY'S NEW YORK TIMES:

PARIS -- EFFORTS BY THE UNITED STATES TO FORM A KIND OF INTERNATIONAL CARTEL AND CONTROL THE SPREAD OF NUCLEAR INSTALLATIONS FOR WEAPONS MANUFACTURE HAVE ONLY PARTIALLY SUCCEEDED. ALL COUNTRIES KNOWN TO POSSESS NUCLEAR WARHEADS ARE INCLUDED -- EXCEPT FOR CHINA, INDIA AND ISRAEL.

LATE IN 1974 DEPUTY SECRETARY OF STATE INGERSOLL SOUGHT TO INITIATE A SEVEN-NATION ANTIPROLIFERATION GROUP INCLUDING THE UNITED STATES, THE SOVIET UNION, FRANCE, BRITAIN (ALL IN THE ATOMIC ARMS BUSINESS) AND CANADA, JAPAN AND WEST GERMANY (NOT MAKING WARHEADS). WEST GERMANY AND JAPAN, WHICH HADN'T THEN RATIFIED THE NONPROLIFERATION TREATY, HAVE DONE SO SINCE; FRANCE HAS NOT.

LAST DECEMBER THE SEVEN APPROVED A SET OF BASIC GUIDELINES ESTABLISHING MINIMUM SAFETY CONDITIONS FOR A "NUCLEAR OPEC" TO WHICH ALL WOULD SUBSCRIBE WHEN SELLING PEACEFUL NUCLEAR INSTALLATIONS TO OTHER NATIONS. THESE WERE BASED ON A FRENCH DRAFT.

PARIS HAD ALREADY ADVISED WASHINGTON IT WAS NEGOTIATING WITH SOUTH KOREA AND PAKISTAN FOR THE SALE OF SMALL PLANTS TO REPROCESS THE PLUTONIUM PRODUCED BY REACTORS. WASHINGTON WAS UNHAPPY ABOUT THIS BECAUSE ANY RECIPIENT COUNTRY COULD COPY SUCH A SMALL PLANT. THEN THE COPY WOULD NOT BE SUBJECTED TO THE SAME CONTROLS AS THE ORIGINAL MODELS PURCHASED BECAUSE, AS THE TREATY WAS ENVISIONED, COPIES WOULDN'T COME UNDER AUTOMATIC INSPECTION.

FRANCE PROPOSED THAT COPIES OF REPROCESSING PLANTS SHOULD BE SUBMITTED TO THE SAME SAFEGUARDS AS ORIGINAL INSTALLATIONS PURCHASED - FOR A PERIOD OF 20 YEARS. SOUTH KOREA WAS PREPARED TO ACCEPT THIS LIMITATION. PAKISTAN, HOWEVER, VIGOROUSLY OBJECTED TO THE RESTRICTION.

THE OBVIOUS REASON FOR PAKISTAN'S RELUCTANCE IS THAT ITS ARCH-RIVAL, INDIA, HAS CONDUCTED A SUCCESSFUL ATOMIC TEST AND IS ALREADY KNOWN TO HAVE A SMALL STOCKPILE OF WARHEADS. OBVIOUSLY, PAKISTAN INTENDS IF POSSIBLE TO ACCUMULATE PLUTONIUM AND SECRETLY START MANUFACTURING WEAPONS.

MEANWHILE, THE UNITED STATES EXERTED PRESSURE AGAINST SOUTH KOREA, AND SEOUL UNHAPPILY CANCELED ITS FRENCH DEAL. BUT ALMOST IMMEDIATELY AFTERWARD, THE FRANCO-PAKISTANI ACCORD WAS CONCLUDED -- WITH NO CLAUSE SAFEGUARDING COPIED REPROCESSING PLANTS.

WASHINGTON APPEARS TO HAVE INSUFFICIENT DIPLOMATIC CLOUT IN ISLAMABAD TO INDUCE IT TO EMULATE SEOUL, AND PARIS HAS REFUSED TO VOID THE CONTRACT, POINTING OUT THAT IT FOLLOWED ALL GUIDELINES AGREED ON IN 1975 EVEN IF IT DIDN'T ACCEPT SUBSEQUENT STIPULATIONS ON REPROCESSING, WHICH PAKISTAN SPURNED.

THE U.S. GOVERNMENT IS DISTRESSED BY THIS, CRITICIZING FRANCE, AND FEARING EVENTUAL TENSION IN SOUTH ASIA WHEN BOTH INDIA AND PAKISTAN HAVE SMALL STOCKPILES. THE FRENCH RESENT ANY IMPLICATION THAT THEY ARE EITHER IGNORING THEIR OBLIGATIONS TO THE SEVEN-NATION CARTEL OR ENDANGERING PEACE.

(PTO)

WORLD-(1)--A LEAK IN THE "NUCLEAR OPEC"

THEY ARGUE THAT, IN THE END, THE KIND OF WARHEADS BEING MADE IN INDIA AND ULTIMATELY PERHAPS TO BE EMULATED IN PAKISTAN COULD PROBABLY BE NO MORE DANGEROUS TO HUMAN LIFE THAN THE HOLOCAUST FOLLOWING PARTITION OF THE SUBCONTINENT. THIS IS CYNICAL LOGIC.

NEVERTHELESS, THE FRENCH SAY IT IS FAR MORE IMPORTANT TO INSURE THAT NEITHER WEST GERMANY NOR EAST GERMANY NOR JAPAN GET INTO THE WEAPONS BUSINESS, BECAUSE THAT MIGHT UPSET THE INTERNATIONAL BALANCE.

MOREOVER, PARIS IS VITALLY INTERESTED IN KEEPING ITS OWN PROMINENT PLACE IN THE WORLD MARKET FOR PEACETIME NUCLEAR FACILITIES. HAVING HARDLY ANY FOSSIL FUELS OF ITS OWN, FRANCE IS VIGOROUSLY DEVELOPING ITS OWN REACTOR PROGRAM AND HOPES TO HELP FINANCE IT WITH SALES ABROAD.

ELECTRICITE DE FRANCE, THE ENERGY CONGLOMERATE, NOW BUILDS ONLY NUCLEAR PLANTS. ALREADY THEY PRODUCE SOMETHING OVER 10 PERCENT OF THE ENERGY THIS NATION REQUIRES. BY 1985 NUCLEAR POWER WILL PROVIDE ABOUT TWO-THIRDS OF FRANCE'S ENERGY REQUIREMENTS.

WHILE PARIS HAS AGREED TO JOIN THE LOOSELY-CONSTRUCTED NUCLEAR CARTEL, IT HAS AN OLD GRUDGE AGAINST THE U.S.A. ON ATOMIC MATTERS. ALTHOUGH FREE FRENCH SCIENTISTS PARTICIPATED WITH AMERICANS, BRITISH AND CANADIANS WORKING ON THE FIRST A-BOMB, WASHINGTON NEVER QUALIFIED FRANCE AS ELIGIBLE FOR NUCLEAR WEAPONS OR SECRETS FOLLOWING WORLD WAR II -- WHEN IT DID SO QUALIFY BRITAIN.

FOR YEARS THEREAFTER AMERICA HAD A NEAR MONOPOLY ON URANIUM ENRICHMENT PROCESSES AND COULD THUS REFUEL VIRTUALLY ALL FREE WORLD NUCLEAR ENERGY PLANTS. IN 1971 FRANCE BROKE THE MONOPOLY BY CONTRACTING WITH MOSCOW TO SEND NATURAL URANIUM TO THE SOVIET UNION TO BE ENRICHED, AND THEN RETURNED HERE. MOREOVER, THE RUSSIANS GAVE BETTER TERMS FOR THE DEAL THAN THE AMERICANS.

DESPITE IMPROVEMENT IN FRANCO-U.S. RELATIONS DURING THE PAST FEW YEARS AND DESPITE BASIC ACCORD ON THE SEVEN-NATION CARTEL -- A KIND OF BRANCH OF THAT NONPROLIFERATION TREATY TO WHICH FRANCE DOESN'T ADHERE -- THE NEEDLESSLY ACERB ARGUMENT NOW OVER PAKISTAN IS PERHAPS OF EXAGGERATED IMPORTANCE.

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