

AMEMBASSY VIENNA

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Classification

CONTROL: 10-255
RECD: OCT 8, 1970
0632

ACTION: MIAA-8
INFO: AMB
DCM
P
E
RF
FILES

UN
11-2 Possible Pakistan Resolution on PNE.

R 071240Z OCT 70
FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 4056
INFO RUSBAY/AMCONSUL BOMBAY 8603
RUQVGM/AMEMBASSY RAWALPINDI 2447
RUFHAU/AMEMBASSY VIENNA 71
RUFHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 551
RUEHDT/USUN NEW YORK 737
RUSBTA/AMCONSUL CALCUTTA 5433
RUSBAS/AMCONSUL MADRAS 4188
BT

C O N F I D E N T I A L EW DELHI 12450

DEPARTMENT PASS USAEC

SUBJECT: GOI'S PNE INTENTIONS

REFS: A) STATE 160591; B) NEW DELHI 10014; KGL NEW DELHI 104836

1. OUR RECENT DISCUSSIONS WITH INDIAN SCIENTIFIC COMMUNITY, POLITICIANS, AND PRESS -- INCLUDING NOTABLY CONVERSATIONS WITH H.N. SETHNA, DIRECTOR, BHABHA ATOMIC RESEARCH CENTER AND K. SUBRAHMANYAM, DIRECTOR, INSTITUTE FOR DEFENCE ANALYSES -- CONFIRM IMPRESSION (REF B AND C) GOI HAS NEITHER EMBARKED ON DEVELOPMENT OF NUCLEAR EXPLOSIVES NOR DONE MUCH MORE THAN TALK ABOUT NECESSITY TO STUDY PNE TECHNOLOGY SERIOUSLY.

2. GOI HAS EVINced INTEREST IN POSSIBLE PNE FREQUENTLY SINCE 1964. PRIME MINISTER'S AND SARABHAI'S STATEMENTS THIS SUMMER SHOULD PROBABLY BE UNDERSTOOD AS (A) AN ATTEMPT TO BUY TIME FOR GOI WITH PARLIAMENTARIANS AND INTELLIGENTSIA DEMANDING GREATER INDIAN RESEARCH EFFORTS IN NUCLEAR FIELD, AND (B) INDICATION GENUINE GOI INTEREST IN ADVANCING FRONTIERS INDIA'S NUCLEAR KNOWLEDGEDO THAT IF SECURITY/DEFENSE SITUATION LATER WARRANTS, INDIA COULD UNDERTAKE SPEEDY NUCLEAR WEAPONS BSSLOPMENT. (NOTEWORTHY, HOWEVER, THAT MRS. GANDHI SEEMINGLY HAS NOT WAVERED IN DERTERMINATION NOT MANUFACTURE NUCLEAR WEAPONS. AT GAUHATI, ASSAM, PRESS CONFERENCE OCTOBER 5, SHE REPORTEDLY REPLIED TO QUESTION ON NUCLEAR INTENTIONS: "WE HAVE GONE INTO ALL ASPECTS AND WE DO NOT THINK IT WILL BE IN INTEREST OF DEFENSE OR

XR: AE/6 PAK Concern re Indian PNE

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OTHERWISE TO MANUFACTURE ATOM BOMBS. MOST COUNTRIES TODAY MAKING STOCKPILES OF ATOMIC POWER (SIC) AS MATTER OF PRESTIGE.") ALSO NOTE (A) MRS. GANDHI AND SARABHAI HAVE SAID EXPLICITLY "MUCH STUDY" NECESSARY BEFORE INDIA COULD UNDERTAKE UNDERGROUND TEST, AND (B) PRIME MINISTER'S REPEATED DENIAL THAT INDIA PLANS EXPLOSION BEFORE NEXT GENERAL ELECTION.

3. BECAUSE OF INDIGENOUS PRESSURES ON GOI TO STEP UP NUCLEAR RESEARCH, GOI MAY WELL BEGIN SERIOUS STUDY OF UNDERGROUND BLAST TECHNOLOGY, AS WELL AS ECONOMIC BENEFITS AND DISADVANTAGES. MEA'S UN DIVISION RECENTLY TOLD EMBOFF THAT DURING PRESENT UNGA SESSION GOI WILL ATTEMPT FEEL OUT NUCLEAR POWERS ON ECONOMIC BENEFITS OF PNE AND ON THEIR LIKELY REACTION TO AN LDC'S (READ INDIA) PNE (NEW DELHI A-495). ALSO, FONMIN SWARAN SINGH'S REMARKS IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY ADDRESS OCT 2 MADE EXPLICIT GOI'S INTEREST IN STUDYING THIS TECHNOLOGY.

4. EMBASSY UNAWARE IF USG HAS EVER EXPLAINED DIRECTLY TO GOI, US POSITION THAT NUCLEAR EXPLOSIONS FOR PEACEFUL USES AND FOR WEAPONS DEVELOPMENT INDISTINGUISHABLE, AND THAT, CONSEQUENTLY, INDIA'S USE OF US NUCLEAR ASSISTANCE IN DEVELOPMENT PNE WOULD VIOLATE US-GOI

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AGREEMENTS. WE RECALL THAT DURING EXTENSIVE NPT DISCUSSIONS IN WASHINGTON AND GENEVA THESE POINTS MADE TO GOI AT LEAST INFERENTIALLY. ALSO, SOME RECENT LOCAL EDITORIAL COMMENT ON POSSIBILITY OF INDIAN PNE HAS STATED THAT USE OF FOREIGN-SUPPLIED TECHNOLOGY WOULD BE CONSIDERED BY SUPPLIERS ABROGATION OF ASSISTANCE AGREEMENTS. HOWEVER, SOME DAE OFFICIALS HAVE IN PAST HINTED TO AMERICANS, AND TOLD CANADIANS DIRECTLY, THAT GOI DOES NOT AGREE THAT NPT COVERS ASSISTANCE AGREEMENTS SIGNED PRIOR TO ITS ENTRY INTO FORCE AND THAT, IN ANY CASE, NPT ITSELF PROMISES TREATY WILL NOT BE USED TO INHIBIT "PEACEFUL" NUCLEAR DEVELOPMENT BY NON-NUCLEAR WEAPONS COUNTRIES. (CANADIANS SAY THEY TAKE SAME POSITION ON USE OF CANADIAN-SUPPLIED TECHNOLOGY FOR PNE AS DOES US.) BECAUSE GOI PROBABLY RECOGNIZES US POSITION ON PNE AND POSSIBLE CONSEQUENCES FOR FUTURE INDO-US NUCLEAR COOPERATION IF INDIA USED US-SUPPLIED TECHNOLOGY TO DEVELOP EXPLOSIVE DEVICES, GOI WOULD DOUBTLESS PREFER, SHOULD IT DECIDE TO PRODUCE NUCLEAR EXPLOSIVES, TO FIND ANOTHER WAY TO ACCOMPLISH PURPOSE. IF ALTERNATIVE TO FOREIGN-SUPPLIED MATERIAL/TECHNOLOGY UNAVAILABLE, HOWEVER, WE THINK GOI WOULD PROCEED, USING WHATEVER AT ITS DISPOSAL ON GROUND EXPLOSIVES TO BE USED FOR "PEACEFUL" PURPOSES.

5. WE WOULD PREFER NOT TO MAKE HIGH-LEVEL APPROACH TO GOI RE US VIEWS ON US-SUPPLIED TECHNOLOGY BEFORE THERE IS REAL EVIDENCE OF INDIAN INTENTIONS AND TIMETABLE FOR DEVELOPING BLAST TECHNOLOGY. (INDIANS WOULD PROBABLY SEE OUR DEMARCHE AS ARISING FROM PAKISTANI IMPORTUNINGS, AND MIGHT RELATE IT PSYCHOLOGICALLY TO DISPARATE ISSUES IT NOT IN US INTEREST TO HAVE LINKED.) HOWEVER, US SHOULD CONTINUE TO PROBE GOI INTENTIONS IN NEW DELHI, GENEVA, VIENNA, AND NEW YORK (PARTICULARLY DURING PRESENT GA, SINCE INDIANS HAVE CHOSEN THAT FORUM TO GIVE HIGH-LEVEL EXPRESSION TO THEIR INTEREST IN PNE.) S SHOULD MAKE POINT ON APPROPRIATE OCCASIONS THAT WE STRONGLY BELIEVE SPIRIT OF NPT INVEIGHS AGAINST DEVELOPMENT BY NON-NUCLEAR WEAPONS STATES OF NUCLEAR EXPLOSIVE DEVICES, EVEN FOR UNDERGROUND BLAST FOR PEACEFUL PURPOSES. WE SHOULD ALSO EMPHASIZE COROLLARY THAT WE WOULD CONSIDER SUCH USE

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OF US TECHNOLOGY ABRIGATION OF EXISTING US-GOI AGREEMENTS. SPECIFICALLY, USAEC MEMBERS IN MEETING WITH VIKRAM SARABHAI SHOULD EXPLAIN TO HIM DIRECTLY RELATIONSHIP, AS US SEES IT, AMONG US-GOI AGREEMENTS, NPT, AND PNE. IN ADDITION, WE SHALL DISCUSS THESE RELATIONSHIPS AT MEA WORKING LEVEL.

6. BELIEVE PAKISTAN MISTAKEN IF IT SERIOUSLY BELIEVES GA RESOLUTION ON PNE WOULD STRENGTHEN ANTI-NUCLEAR WEAPONS FORCES IN INDIA (USUN 2028). MORE LIKELY, PAKISTANI-SPONSORED RESOLUTION WOULD CUT GROUND FROM UNDER THEM. PRO-BOMB INDIANS WOULD ARGUE THAT RESOLUTION, COMING IN YEAR WHEN CHICOMS EXPECTED TO TEST ICBM, FURTHER EVIDENCES SINO-PAK COLLUSION TO INHIBIT ADEQUATE INDIAN DEFENSE.

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