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INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA
AMEMBASSY COLOMBO
AMEMBASSY DACCA
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AMCONSUL KARACHI
AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

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C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (CCY FOR PRA 1)

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MNUC, PEPR, PK, US, FR
SUBJECT: REPROCESSING PLANT DISCUSSED IN FULL BY MAGAZINE

REF: KARACHI 5272 (NOTAL)

1. BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED: OCTOBER 21 ISSUE OF PAKISTAN ECONOMIST
CONTAINS A LENGTHY EDITORIAL/ARTICLE ON REPROCESSING, WHICH IS
QUITE REMARKABLE FOR ITS DEPTH, SCOPE, AND REASONABLE APPROACH.
THE ARTICLE, WHICH WE UNDERSTAND WAS WRITTEN BY THE PAK ECONO-

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IM/IPS/CR/IR 76, Date: 10/11/97
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MISTS' EDITOR, IBNUL HASAN, SUGGESTS THAT "THE REPROCESSING
PLANT IS A GROSS MISUSE OF THE NATION'S MEAGRE TECHNICAL AND
FINANCIAL RESOURCES AND HAS SEVERELY DAMAGED THE INTERNATIONAL
IMAGE OF THE COUNTRY."

2. THE ARTICLE:

--CONTAINS THE FIRST FULLJQ PUBLIC EXPLANATION OF REPRO-
CESSING TECHNOLOGY, AND DISCUSSES ITS ADVANTAGES AND
DISADVANTAGES;

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-- DISCUSSES THE HISTORY OF PAKISTAN'S ATTEMPT TO ACQUIRE REPROCESSING TECHNOLOGY, LAYING THE IDEA SQUARELY AT FORMER PRIMIN BHUTTO'S FEET;

--ANALYSES AND ECONOMIC VALUE OF THE REPROCESSING PLANT AND CONCLUDES THAT THE "/PLANT IS NOT REQUIRED" FOR A "NUCLEAR POWER PROGRAM" IN PAKISTAN, AND IS UNJUSTIFIED BY THE QUANTITY OF SPENT FUEL TO BE PROCESSED;

--CONTENDS THAT PAKISTAN'S FIRST PRIORITY IN ITS NUCLEAR PROGRAM SHOULD HAVE BEEN THE CONSTRUCTION OF A FUEL FABRI29 :-589, 0)-,5. THE ARTICLE CLAIMS THAT A FUEL FABRICATION FACILITY, BUILT BY PAKISTANI ENGINEERS, WILL BE COMPLETED BY THE END OF 1978;

--OPENLY DISCUSSES THE ROLE OF REPROCESSING TECHNOLOGY IN THE PRODUCTION OF NUCELEAR WEAPONS. THE ARTICLE CONCLUDES THAT "INFORMED PUBLIC OPINION" SUSPECTS THAT WEAPONS PRODUCTION IS THE REASON PAKISTAN SOUGHT REPROCESSING TECHNOLOGY.

--DISCUSSES THE POSSIBILITY OF USING URANIUM ENRICHMENT OT PRODUCE A NUCLEAR WEAPON. AFTER CONCLUDING WHAT REPROCESSING TECHNOLOGY COULD NOT HAVE BEEN FOR THE PRODUCTION OF A BOMB -(TOO SLOW, TOO MANY SAFEGUARDS), THE ARTICLE NOTES THAT URANIUM ENRICHMENT IS THE "MUCH MORE EFFICIENT" ROUTE, AS THE TECHNOLOGY IS "EASIER TO



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HANDLE AND OFFERS GREATER DESIGN FLEXIBILITY FOR MAKING A NUCELEAR EXPLOSIVE." END UNCLASSIFIED.

2. BEGIN CONFIDENTIAL COMMENT: IT IS UNCLEAR WHAT PURPOSE THE ARTICLE IS DESIGNED TO SERVE, OTHER THAN TO MAKE HASAN'S VIEW ON REPORCESSING KNOWN AND FORCEFULLY PRESENT AN HONESTLY HELD VIEW. MORE COMPLICATED CONSIDERATIONS MIGHT BE AT PLAY, HOWEVER;

--THE ARTICLE CAN BE READ AS A SWIPE AT BHUTTO, PLACING IT IN A LONG LINE OF ANTI-BHUTTO MATERIAL THAT HAS APPEARED IN THE PAK ECONOMIST. THE GOVERNMENT, ALONG WITH THE MAGAZINE, MAY BE ATTEMPTING TO SHIFT THE BLAME TO BHUTTO NOW THAT THE WORD IS OUT THAT THE FRENCH HAVE DECIDED TO CANCEL THE CONTRACT.

--THE ARTICLE ALSO ATTACKS, BY NAME, PAKISTAN ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION CHAIRMAN NUMIR AHMED KHAN, NOTING THAT THE REPORCESSING PLANT HAD BECOME KHAN'S "HOBB-HORSE" AND THAT PAEC OFFICIALS WERE "OBSTINATE" IN THEIR PURSUAL OF THE PLANT. THE ARTICLE IS WELL-INFORMED ENOUGH TO SHOW SIGNS OF A CAREFUL BRIEFING FROM A DISAFFECTED PAEC EMPLOYEE.

3. COPIES OF THE ARTICLE POUCHED NOVEMBER 2 TO ADDRESSEES. HUMMEL



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