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FOR SCI; Pass AEC

Evidence appears to be accumulating that a conscious effort is underway to develop closer cooperation between France and Germany in the atomic energy field. Two groups of French nuclear experts, one comprising industry representatives and the other government nuclear scientists, have recently visited the Federal Republic.

We have been informed that a group of fifteen French industrialists made up of representatives of the chemical, metallurgical and electronic industries involved in the French atomic program visited Bonn on December 13 for consultations with representatives of the ATOM FORUM. (The latter organization is composed of representatives of German industry, science and government and has as its objective the promotion of a more intensive nuclear energy program in the Federal Republic.) The visit was arranged by Prince Otto Bismarck, one of the directors of the ATOM FORUM and a member of the German parliament. According to Dr. Adolphe Lutz, French Scientific Attache in Bonn, it was the avowed purpose of this visit to establish closer relations between French and German industries serving the nuclear energy fields. Dr. Lutz did make an interesting remark in stating that the Germans had something to learn organizationally from the French on the delineation of nuclear energy activities between government and industry. Perhaps this was implied by the fact that Professor Jean Lamberton, president of the

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French atomic forum, A.T.E.N., addressed a selected group of Germans on the subject "Relationships between the Atomic Industry and Government in France". We learned quite by accident through a chance remark made by Staatssekretaer Cartellieri of the Ministry for Scientific Research (previously the Ministry for Atomic Energy) that this group had also conferred with Ministry officials.

We subsequently learned from Dr. Hans Sauer of the Ministry for Scientific Research that exchange visits by French and German nuclear scientists, respectively, had been under way for some time with the objective of exploring possibilities for undertaking cooperative research. Sauer himself had, during the past year, visited a number of French nuclear science installations. We were also advised that there had been an interchange of letters between Dr. Palevski of the French Ministry of Science and Professor Dr. Balke, former Federal Minister for Atomic Energy, and that arrangements had been formalized for a meeting of scientific experts in Bonn - a conference which took place on December 19-20. The French delegation was led by a Dr. Leperrin (?). Discussions covered possible cooperative research on such problems as (a) re-processing of spent nuclear fuels with particular reference to R&D involving liquid-liquid extraction procedures and fundamental work entailing the use of fused melts in purification procedures; and (b) the fundamental chemistry of plutonium. Dr. Sauer stated rather positively that the Germans prefer bi-lateral agreements to multi-lateral relationships on technical problems. He also stated that the Ministry for Scientific Research had obtained a tentative commitment for the coming year of some 2-3 million DM as an initial contribution to finance such a joint research effort. Dr. Sauer also stated that AEC would be advised of the nature of the work to be undertaken jointly by the French and the Germans. He also indicated that discussions covered the possible construction and establishment of a jointly operated research center whose personnel would be made up of representative groups of French and German scientists.

COMMENT: We have previously pointed out that the DeGaulle visit to Bonn had been followed by exploratory talks designed to effect closer cooperation between Germany and France in the scientific, technical and educational areas. It is our surmise that the present visits represent further efforts on the part of the respective governments to implement the DeGaulle-Adenauer mandate although, interestingly enough, the Foreign Office professed to know nothing about these arrangements. So far as we are aware, no similar discussions and conversations have taken place between German groups and other EEC member states. During the course of conversations with Dr. Sauer we did learn that the Italian nuclear energy agency had made overtures to the French organization for a joint Franco-Italian program. Apparently this fact had been used by the French to speed up Franco-German negotiations, i.e., to force the FRG into making commitments with respect to Franco-German cooperative efforts.

The Embassy has noted a news report, datelined Bonn, on the meeting of the industrialists which appeared in The Times, London, December 21, and which

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largely confirms the information available to us except that none of the Germans have mentioned the possibility of a connection between this project and EURATOM.

For the Ambassador:



Ludwig F. Audrieth
Scientific Attache

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