

Polish-Czech Reactor Proposal Creates Major Interest in U.S.

Post-192866

A Polish-Czech proposal on international monitoring of peaceful nuclear reactors to be sure they will not produce weapons material has created major interest in Washington.

One reason for the high degree of interest is a Polish-Czech indication that the two Communist regimes may be concerned about more than stirring up new trouble for West Germany.

This came in the form of assurances to the Bonn government that Poland and Czechoslovakia are not insisting that East Germany also be involved. The East Germans

already had indicated interest in being included, leading Bonn originally to suspect that the Polish-Czech proposal was more a political than an arms control move.

The Polish-Czech suggestion, made last month at a conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency, a United Nations organization including both Communist and non-Communist nations, was that Warsaw and Prague would agree to IAEA inspection of their reactors if Bonn also would agree.

The idea is to make sure that no plutonium, a by prod-

uct of the peaceful reactors which chiefly produce electricity, was diverted to weapons use.

West Germany promised to "earnestly examine" the proposal but Bonn also is wary that the idea might be a Communist ploy to gain diplomatic recognition for East Germany. Hence the importance of the subsequent Polish-Czech disclaimer.

As of now no Communist nation has accepted IAEA inspection. The United States has been putting its many bilateral pacts on reactors under IAEC inspection and would like to see the European member nations of Euratom do likewise. The key members of Euratom in this respect are West Germany and France.

France, however, appears to be rejecting any IAEA controls and to have spurned the Polish-Czech proposal. French President de Gaulle, already at war with Euratom, opposes any international restraints on national sovereignty.

Yesterday a State Department spokesman said the U.S. was "confident" that Euratom's members were giving the Polish-Czech proposal "the most serious consideration." The U.S. believes, he added, that "both East and West should give it deliberate and constructive consideration."

As to Washington's own interest, the spokesman declared that "I can assure you that we intend to continue our consideration of the proposal as carefully, as deliberately, and as wisely as this complex question obviously requires."