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By K.C. NARA Date 12/30/87



DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Washington, D.C. 20520

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October 6, 1971

10/6/71

To : PM - Mr. Joseph T. Kendrick

From : S/PC - Seymour Weiss *Seuy.*

Subject: US-UK Nuclear Relations

1. You asked for comments on the above subject memorandum. In general, I think it is excellent, quite comprehensive, and, in my view, generally correct in both its approaches and conclusions. I do however have a few thoughts which you and Mr. DePorte might wish to consider incorporating.

2. UK-FRG Strategic Doctrine. Although it is perhaps a matter of degree, the paper seems to me to draw too sharp a dichotomy as between UK and French strategic views. It is, of course, correct, as the paper points out, that the British force is coordinated with the SIOP. This is not quite the same however as saying that the French are counter value oriented and the British counter force. When one digs into British views on nuclear strategy, one finds that in a great many respects they parallel those of the French. Beyond that, however, there is some evidence that the ultimate British strategic reliance is on counter-value retaliation. They are willing to integrate their own force within the total SIOP because the total SIOP has such a large Assured Destruction component. If it did not, I doubt that the British would accept the degree of coordination that is implied. While not conclusive evidence to support this thesis, I recently learned while in Europe that the British are uneasy about the prospect of a SALT agreement containing a larger Soviet ABM system than was

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originally contemplated. They want to be sure to be able to penetrate to Moscow or at least to have the Soviets believe that they have such a capability. This concern is further borne out by their current efforts to upgrade Polaris, efforts which might not be required if they were solely content to hit a limited number of soft counter-force targets (the only kind which their submarine launched missiles can destroy with high confidence). If one enters into a discussion with the British on the strategic question, in the last analysis one is reminded that the British commitment of their submarine force is subject to withdrawal if required in the supreme national interest. I would not, myself, bet against the existence of a British national targeting option of counter-value strikes in the event the US did not activate SIOP and the British felt their "supreme national interest" in jeopardy.

3. SALT. I wanted to make three points here. The first I have already mentioned, namely the British concern about a large ABM tending to jeopardize their nuclear penetration capability. Second, I suspect that at least this British Government (which in many respects is quite tough) is now, and will increasingly become, uneasy about what is occurring in the US-USSR strategic balance. If a SALT agreement not only codifies nuclear parity (whatever that is), but appears to leave room for the Soviets achieving a significant numerical superiority (which some fear could be the case), they will not, as your paper suggests, be caught up in a detente atmosphere. In short, except perhaps for a relatively short period during which there could be some detente relaxation, the British and French view of the US-USSR strategic balance will relate almost solely to what we and the Russians are doing, not what we say. If the balance seems to be widening in favor of the Soviets, whether SALT or not, uncertainty about the US commitment and concern for considering options other than reliance on

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the US strategic commitment is likely to grow. Third, there is a degree of ambivalence in European attitudes toward SALT. On the one hand our allies concede that our consultation has for the most part been good, while on the other they retain a residual suspicion of the US and USSR holding secret talks. Especially if the SALT proposal involves "no transfer" agreements, I think this suspicion will be much enlarged. Perhaps more to the substantive point, your paper ought to emphasize that, depending on how such no transfer provisos are interpreted, this could limit or even preclude our assisting the British and French. This could create very serious problems in their relations with us and could accelerate their mutual cooperation.

4. Decoupling. There is concern in some quarters in Europe that the effect of a SALT agreement between the US and USSR will be to sterilize both homelands against the prospect of strategic weapons use by either side. This could result in an effective decoupling of the strategic deterrent. The argument is made that this could in turn leave Europe as the cockpit for future wars, including those involving the two super powers. Should this view spread (I have heard it attributed to the Germans) it could act as still another inducement toward the development of a European force, centered on existing UK-French forces.

5. Cultural Factors. The reference to the cultural ties between the US and the UK and the role they play in US and UK policy and cooperation is mentioned once, and that in passing. I think this is not an unimportant deficiency in the paper. In my view, we have greatly underestimated in the past how strong these cultural and historical ties are. A paragraph or two on this subject may be warranted.

6. French-UK Cooperation. A small point, on page 26, it is speculated that a UK move into the Community could result in "some" French-UK cooperation at a very early

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date. It is my impression that there is already "some" cooperation. The real question is whether it will become significant.

✓ 7. Ostpolitik, Detente, Etc. This parallels my earlier comments on British attitudes. It is my judgment that at least the present British and French Governments take a rather hard headed view toward Ostpolitik and detente, and, contrary to the statement on page 33 and 34, whether or not these activities dominate the European atmosphere, the British and French could well have the "political energy" for nuclear cooperation. It is other practical considerations, mentioned elsewhere in your paper, which are more significant limiting factors to such cooperation.

✓ 8. Options. I confess that I am not entirely clear as to the distinction between options 1 and 2. I would have thought that most observers would believe that our current approach is a relatively flexible one. Perhaps it is a matter of emphasis. In any event, I suggest that you consider whether the real alternatives are not between a combination of options 1 and 2 and options 3.

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