

Record Number 59124

SET Nuclear Nonproliferation 2
DATE 06/28/1963
CIRCD
TIME
TITLE Tour d'Horizon
CTIT [Anglo-American Discussions of Problems and Prospects of
~~NATO~~ Multilateral Force]
DOCUMENT TYPE Memorandum of Conversation
DOCNO US/MC/6
CLASS. Top Secret
ORIGIN United States. Department of State. Bureau of European
Affairs
DESTO
DESTP
SIGNATOR Jones, Lewis
SIGNATOR Burdett, William
LENGTH 10
VARTY
NAMES Rusk, Dean
NAMES Douglas-Home, Alexander Frederick
NAMES Bundy, McGeorge
NAMES Couve de Murville, Maurice
NAMES Peyrefitte, Alain
NAMES Kennedy, John F.
NAMES Thorneycroft, Peter
NAMES Mountbatten, Louis
NAMES Bruce, David K.E.
NAMES Heath, Edward
NAMES Messmer, Pierre
ORGAN North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Atlantic Command.
Supreme Allied Commander
ORGAN North Atlantic Treaty Organization
TERMS Nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarines
TERMS Multilateral Nuclear Force
TERMS Nuclear sharing
TERMS Command and control
TERMS Medium-range ballistic missiles
LOCOR National Archives
CLLNO Record Group 59. Records of the Department of State.
Executive Secretariat Conference Files, 1949-72
BOX 318
FOLDR CF 2275 President's Trip to Europe 6/23-7/2/63 Memcons
PUBAU
PUBCA
PUBTI
PUBL
WEB
WDATE
IPHRS nuclear Germany--preventing thru MLF
AFOIN
SEQNO
FOISN

DECLASSIFIED

Authority NND 979037
By BA NARA Date 1/25/12

John Lewis

8

The President's European Trip

Approved in S 7/5/63

June 1963

TOP SECRET
US/MC/6

Summary Record of Conversation

Subject: Tour d'Horizon

Date: June 28, 1963

Time: 1:00 p.m.

Place: 1 Carlton Gardens,
London

Participants:

U.S.

The Secretary of State
Mr. McGeorge Bundy
Mr. Lewis Jones
Mr. William Burdett
Ambassador Bruce (later)

British

Lord Home
Minister of Defence Thorneycroft
Sir Harold Caccia
Ambassador Ormsby-Gore
Sir Robert Scott, Ministry of Defence
Lord Privy Seal Heath
Oliver Wright, Private Secretary to
Lord Home

For distribution see page 10.

Berlin:

The Secretary asked Lord Home whether he had seen the latest intelligence reports from Berlin. ~~He had seen reports from the French Foreign Minister's measurements.~~ The Secretary thought we might be in for a tense week-end.

Mr. Bundy's Visit to Paris

The Secretary suggested that Mr. Bundy tell the table what had transpired in the course of his talk with the French Foreign Minister. Mr. Bundy said that the French as usual were working on two levels. Couvé de Murville was very reassuring regarding the French attitude towards the United States generally and the President's visit to Europe, at the same time that Alain Peyrefitte was casting doubts upon the long range intentions of the United States. There was not much else to report.

TOP SECRET

TOP SECRET

-2-

Iberlant Command

The Secretary said that an idea new to him had emerged from talks with French Minister of Defense Messmer, i.e., it might be possible to arrange for the French to have a new NATO command which would cover part of the channel and the coasts of France and Spain. Most of this new command, if created, would come from SACLANT. The French might then recommit naval forces to NATO. He wondered if the UK had any views on this possibility.

Thorneycroft said that he thought this idea was worth looking at closely. Sir Robert Scott agreed.

MLF

Lord Home said MLF has no parliamentary support and this was crucial to the UK moving forward. A new objection to MLF had arisen lately, i.e., that this new weapons system would create new East-West tensions at a time "when our purpose is by and large to calm things down." He said many parliamentarians think the German interest in MLF is merely a stepping-stone towards the possession of nuclear weapons.

Thorneycroft said that Admiral Ricketts' visit had been most useful and he believed that all those who had studied the matter now accepted MLF as a feasible system: the vessels could be made to work. However, there was the new political argument against MLF: i.e., the new system would exacerbate tensions. Moreover, the British military are not convinced that MLF will add measurably to Western defense. He said he knew of no parliamentarians prepared to say a word in favor of MLF.

Lord Home commented that he did not believe that the President would expect a British decision on MLF immediately. The President was going on to Rome and would be sounding out the Italians.

The Secretary commented that the President would not wish to "tie his hands" re MLF at Birch Grove, but he must say that among the alternatives available one is not sitting where we are.

Lord Home wondered whether the Germans might not be given what they wanted by giving them a share in the control of NATO nuclear weapons without getting Germans on ships.

TOP SECRET

TOP SECRET

-3-

The Secretary commented that any control given the Germans in the present systems would have to involve MRBM's, presumably in Germany.

Mr. Bundy ^{said} ~~made the point~~ that the British argument for nuclear submarines was primarily a political one. They did not argue that the new British submarines would contribute importantly to the mega-tonnage available to defend the West. Mr. Bundy said the United States is not in a tremendous hurry but it is highly important that we made the European conscious of their problems.

Lord Home suggested that a body might be set-up consisting of the three nuclear powers plus Germany "plus two rotators." This control mechanism might be the first thing to tackle.

The Secretary objected that this involved honorary membership of Germany in a club. This would not be very meaningful. Lord Home said that the nuclear powers would retain the veto.

Mr. Bundy said that it was important to avoid one thing: i.e., that the Germans would come to say that they were all set with the U.S. for the MLEF but that at the last minute the British had stopped the project. If this idea became widely disseminated it would make for trouble in the future.

Lord Home asked the Secretary exactly why the U.S. objects to nuclear submarines. Did Dickie Mountbatten "bump" the U. S. off of the scheme for submarines? It might help the UK with its difficulties to know why the U.S. considered submarines not feasible.

The Secretary replied that the problems of surface vessels are much less than with sub-surface vessels. Another factor was the genuine U.S. fear that the security of the mechanism nuclear submarines might be compromised; some of the NATO partners have security systems less tight than our own.

Lord Home wondered aloud what would happen if the idea was "put into NATO" of some sort of mixed manned system without saying exactly what; he wondered whether anything would come out.

Thorneycroft said that anything put into NATO would raise the issue of France and the other countries.

TOP SECRET

DECLASSIFIED

Authority NND 979037
by BA NARA Date 1/25/12

TOP SECRET

-4-

The Secretary thought putting it into NATO would represent duplication of years of thought and effort which had already gone into MLF planning. He said that U.S. believes the USSR has made the decision to increase its armaments. This being so, he believed the West should increase its armaments and that the U.S. should assist in this endeavor.

Thorneycroft said that there was the unresolved problem of nuclear versus conventional weapons. He exclaimed "The U.S. is the only place in the world where the Congress urges more defense expenditures!" When the Secretary said "We need both conventional and unconventional", Thorneycroft replied "You will not get both from Europe."

Mr. Bundy commented that Europeans feel fully protected but not fully involved.

Lord Home asked whether we might get the French geared into some management machinery for nuclear weapons. It would be a good thing to get France in on jointly-managed forces.

Lord Home said that the prospects for parliamentary approval being so dim, he supposed that the U.S. might go ahead with the Germans and the Italians.

The Secretary said "If we did this, could you stay out?"

Lord Home in effect answered "Yes, since it is not possible for the UK to go in."

Nassau

The Secretary said it was important to get down to the "guts" of the matter. He recalled the agreement made at Nassau and wondered what the British attitude was to cutting the Germans into a role--a role British public opinion is not ready for? Wasn't that the problem?

Lord Home said it was partly the problem, but the idea that MLF would create new tensions was held very strongly in many quarters. It was a new angle - a new problem.

TOP SECRET

TOP SECRET

-5-

Thorneycroft said that if you are to create a European force you must have France in from the start: France is the heart of Europe. France is going ahead with developing the nuclear weapons. He thought the U.S. and the UK must do some sharing of knowledge with France if they are to achieve some cooperation on the nuclear side.

Mr. Bundy asked "What is there in that for the Germans?"

Lord Home seemed to say "nothing."

The Secretary said that if a European nuclear deterrent means that 5 percent of the West's total nuclear power can decide regarding the use of 95 percent of the West's nuclear power (i.e., U.S. power), Europe should recognize that this was just not a possibility. The U.S. would not stand for it.

Lord Home said that he thought the Secretary was perfectly right. The U.S. must, in any European effort, be a "leading member of the board."

Mr. Bundy said that Von Hassel has been talking for his European constituents of getting the American veto out and the Europeans in. However, the Germans would be more dangerous if left out of the party. He thought it was of importance to the Germans that the MLEF be kept alive and "plainly on the table." He did not say that some way other than MLEF might not be developed, but it was the best system yet devised.

The Secretary reiterated the point that 5 percent could never control the 95 percent.

Asked for his views, Mr. Heath said that he could see no complete or satisfactory answer. The Germans want a greater voice in nuclear weapons, but at the same time they want to retain their alliance with the U.S. The Germans have a psychological problem. They want to be able to say they have a share in the European nuclear deterrent. To Erhard and Schroeder the MLEF is a part of the ideas for European integration.

The Secretary reminded the table that the Germans have profoundly resented, more deeply than many realize, the idea of there being tripartite meetings with regard to Germany and Berlin before there are quadripartite meetings. We have been able to get quadripartite action accepted by the French only recently.

DECLASSIFIED

Authority NND 979037
By BR NARA Date 1/25/12

TOP SECRET

-6-

Mr. Bundy said that he admitted the odds are against the MLF but it is important to keep the project alive and on the table. To the Germans, MLF is a touchstone of Western seriousness.

Lord Home asserted there were difficulties about the nature of the force: MLF ships would operate in the trade lanes of merchant vessels.

The Secretary said that the alternative was MRBM's in Germany in German hands.

Thorneycroft raised the question of a much-needed NATO strategic reexamination.

Mr. Bundy commented there was a paradox: the Germans already owned missiles (but not warheads). They were probably closer to a nuclear capability now in some ways than they would be under MLF.

Lord Home said that things would be much easier for HMG if a request were to come from NATO for seaborne surface missiles.

Mr. Bundy asked what he meant by NATO: surely not all 15!

Lord Home dodged the question and said that the request might come out of the "NATO alliance" following a strategic review.

Mr. Bundy said that the result of any strategic review in strictly military terms would be clear: the result would be a call for putting land-based missiles in France and on the canals. Mr. Bundy admitted that "ships look silly when you consider the alternatives."

Sir Robert Scott then said that he had been talking to the Germans lately and their principal preoccupation is to have a 100 percent U.S. involvement: at the same time they also want Europe to have its deterrent.

The Secretary commented that it was all right if Europe wants to organize its own forces but the problem for Europe is either interdependence or independences. The U.S. was not like the Hessian mercenaries brought to fight in America by Lord Home's ancestors.

TOP SECRET

DECLASSIFIED

Authority NND 979037
By BR NARA Date 1/25/12

TOP SECRET

-7-

Thorneycroft then said that France in four years or less will have its own deterrent, i. e., France will have a trigger. This means it is wise to get France in now.

The Secretary said that Mr. Thorneycroft had raised a problem so grave that he did not wish to comment on it at length, but he would like Mr. Thorneycroft to consider whether the U.S. would permit France's weapon to trigger U. S. nuclear might.

Sir Harold Caccia made the suggestion that France might participate in the control of the multinational forces. There were some nods at the table but this idea was not developed.

Lord Home coming back full circle then suggested the possibility of putting to the NATO committee whether NATO wanted seaborne MRBM's.

The Secretary replied firmly that he was skeptical of a NATO review of a subject such as this because the outcome will be the consensus of the voices of governments; it could not be otherwise. A review of this kind would not get anywhere.

Lord Home said that the MLF has divisive aspects: for example, the Norwegians and some of the other countries would like to veto MLF. They are happy with one finger on the trigger, i. e., the U. S. finger.

Mr. Bundy said we agree that the question should be studied, but the question should be the role of the Europeans in missile defense. We would be willing to see 5 or 6 NATO countries work on the problem seriously "within the NATO framework" but certainly not all 15. He was strongly against referring the problem to NATO proper. What should be considered by the five or six countries within the NATO framework was, "After present forces, What?"

The Secretary reminded the table that for a long time the U.S. said that it would be willing to look at European views on this question. But at Nassau something happened. After Nassau we felt that we had better be more specific re the MLF. The fact that the British are now raising far-reaching questions of principle places the U.S. in some embarrassment. We are embarrassed vis-a-vis the Germans, and vis-a-vis the Italians. We are also embarrassed vis-a-vis Paris since General de Gaulle can only

TOP SECRET

DECLASSIFIED

Authority NND 979037
By BA NARA Date 1/25/12

TOP SECRET

-8-

deduce that it lies in his power to stop MLF in its tracks. It would be a calamity if, after Nassau, it appears that the U. S. and the UK are in full retreat from MLF.

Thorneycroft said that in his view we should press on with strategic studies and then consider the weapons system needed to meet the established requirements.

The Secretary was rather scornful of this idea. He said that in this strategic business you can go round and round the barn and meet yourself. He was not sure that more strategic studies were required. He admitted, however, that the Berlin problem distorts the requirements of NATO.

Lord Home suggested that the French might be asked: Mr. Bundy thought that the French should be asked but strongly doubted that they would come in.

Thorneycroft said the question is whether MLF would unite or divide NATO.

Mr. Bundy said we are in a bad box if, having said publicly, we would use our best efforts to work towards MLF, we now back away. Mr. Bundy thought that British-French heart-to-heart talks would be highly illuminating to the UK. He did not think the French would give an inch.

The Secretary said that the French are sitting on the top of the mountain waiting for us to climb to them.

Thorneycroft said that intimate talks with France were required to which Bundy replied that the U. S. has tried six times to have special talks and has got nowhere.

Lord Home, having listened to this exchange, indicated that he did not agree with Thorneycroft in regard to talking with the French.

Ambassador Bruce reminded the table of the genesis of the MLF idea and the Secretary commented that the real genesis was an effort to keep 600 MRBM's out of Germany.

TOP SECRET

TOP SECRET

-9-

The Secretary said that he would like to put to Lord Home a rude question: "If an MLF force comes into being, will HMG want to participate in it?"

Lord Home replied rather sadly that HMG has tried hard to sell the idea but it had been unsuccessful. The people were not prepared at this time to accept Germans on ships. It was acceptable to give the Germans a share in NATO planning but he did not see how the British Government can plump now for a new weapons system in which there would be physical German participation.

Mr. Heath commented that we were trying to solve a military problem by political means. The political difficulty for the UK was created by a combination of adverse factors: 1) underlying anti-German sentiment; 2) the U. S. origin of the plan; 3) the opinions of all retired military personnel led by Admiral Mounbatten; 4) finance.

The political difficulty for the United States arose from the following: 1) its own prestige was committed; 2) Germany was committed; 3) Italy was committed, or at least the previous government was; 4) France wanted to see the project fail. Some way must be found to reconcile these respective political difficulties.

The Secretary asked whether anti-German sentiments and costs were the most important factors in the British mind. Mr. Thorneycroft replied that the opinion of retired military personnel was the most important. While costs did not figure prominently at present, this aspect would explode when the problem was gone into more deeply.

Mr. Heath suggested that the MLF should not be considered on its military merits, but in terms of whether there are political means to solve two very difficult sets of problems. Mr. Bundy agreed and added that the blessing of the Bonn conversations was that they took the time limit off. However, the Germans must show at least that something is under consideration; that the MLF has not been forgotten. Consideration of the matter by NATO would smother it to death. We needed a special working group. Lord Home asked to see a written formula for such a group.

TOP SECRET

DECLASSIFIED

Authority NND 979037
By BA NARA Date 1/25/12

TOP SECRET

-10-

Mr. Thorneycroft asked whether the West did not have too many missiles already. Mr. Bundy replied that we could not get into a position where we think we need more, but that the alliance does not.

The Secretary again expressed his scepticism of the usefulness of the strategic studies approach. Such studies are made on instructions and take into account the decisions the Governments want to make. Mr. Thorneycroft differed, remarking that the study on strategy was a disembodied one.

Lord Home asked whether participation in international signals on land would satisfy the Germans. The Secretary said that if the MLF falls through, the Germans would go back to their demand for MRBM's in Germany, offer German-manned vessels for the paragraph 6 force, or make an agreement with the French. Mr. Bundy said that all the Germans asked today was that the British study the problem.

Lord Home again said that he would like to see a formula for a broad study and for a group to conduct it.

cc: G	S/MF
S/S-2	Aembassy Moscow
S/P	Aembassy Bonn
EUR	Aembassy Paris
GER	Aembassy London
DOD/ISA	USRO Paris

MIN - Lewis Jones
EUR - Mr. Burdett

TOP SECRET

**NATIONAL
SECURITY
ARCHIVE**

This document is from the holdings of:

The National Security Archive

Suite 701, Gelman Library, The George Washington University

2130 H Street, NW, Washington, D.C., 20037

Phone: 202/994-7000, Fax: 202/994-7005, nsarchiv@gwu.edu