

5/AE-1009/64

Nos. 1 and 2 - Mr. Sprague
Nos. 3 ~~4~~ - RMR
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No. 5 - BNA
No. 6 - SAE FILE COPY

Nos 7+8 - S/S Trussaint

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AUG 23 1957

Dear Mr. Sprague:

I refer to your letter of June 21, 1957 regarding the introduction and storage of SAC and air defense weapons at Thule Air Force Base in Greenland.

While the Department agrees that our Agreement with Denmark is sufficiently broad to permit the use of facilities in Greenland for the introduction and storage of such weapons, we have queried Ambassador Peterson in Copenhagen to seek his views regarding the approach to be made to the Danish Government. The pertinent portions of the Embassy's reply are as follows:

"We are in agreement that perhaps the best way to proceed here would be informally to ask the Director of the Political Department in the Foreign Office whether, in the event that the United States should desire to store atomic warheads at one of the Greenland bases, the Danish Government would wish to be so informed. If the reply should be in the affirmative, we could explain what we intended to do, assuming in our conversations that the authorization is clearly contained in the Agreement, and therefore not raising the question of approval.

"It is our thought that this formula would have the advantage of avoiding giving the information to the Danes if they prefer not to have it. As you know, there is considerable sentiment in Denmark against the receiving of atomic weapons if they should be offered, and the Prime Minister has on at least two occasions in recent months stated publicly that if Denmark has been offered

such weapons

The Honorable
Mansfield D. Sprague,
Assistant Secretary of Defense.

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such weapons the reply would have been 'no thanks.' For this reason it is possible that the Government would rather not know officially about our storing atomic warheads on Greenland.

"We will await your instructions before mentioning the matter at the Foreign Office and would suggest that, if you agree on this procedure, sufficient time be allowed before the weapons are introduced to permit the Danes to raise a question, if they have any."

It appears to us that the course of action outlined in the Embassy's letter is the proper course to be followed. However, before instructing the Embassy to proceed, I would appreciate your views.

Sincerely yours,

A true copy of
the signed original
RMH

Robert Murphy
Deputy Under Secretary

S/AB:RMWinfree:all
8/23/57

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