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Memorandum of Conversation

PART III OF III

DATE: January 23, 1968
Time: 6:30 pm
Place: Assistant Secretary's Office

SUBJECT: U.S. Air Force Routes

PARTICIPANTS: Ambassador Torben Rønne, Embassy of Denmark
Mr. Per Fergo, Minister-Counselor, Embassy of Denmark
Assistant Secretary John M. Leddy, EUR
Deputy Assistant Secretary Walter J. Stoessel, Jr., EUR
Mr. David H. McKillop, Country Director, SCAN
Mr. Eugene Klebenov, Country Desk Officer, SCAN

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31 JAN 1968

Mr. Leddy said that the statements by Danish Government leaders on nuclear storage and overflights had come as a surprise to us. Ambassador Rønne said that Prime Minister Krag and Foreign Minister Tabor had merely re-stated Danish nuclear policy. Mr. Leddy said that we did not want to go any further into this question; that we saw no utility in pursuing the matter. Ambassador Rønne said that Danish nuclear policy covers Greenland, as the Krag and Tabor statements had pointed out. Mr. Leddy replied that we had not contradicted these statements, but that we do not want to get into a public discussion on the matter of routes; that we believe it would be most unwise to open such a discussion. Therefore, we could not add to the statement (attachment B) a reference to overflights. Under the circumstances, it would probably be just as well to have no statement at all.

Ambassador Rønne said that Premier Krag would, the following day, be questioned on Danish nuclear policy. The Ambassador added that Mr. Leddy was familiar with Denmark's policy in this area. Mr. Leddy said that he felt the statement could create more problems than it solved but that he would accede to its release. He added that we did not want to set off another round of routes discussion and that we could not go any further than the present statement.

Ambassador Rønne said that lack of further U.S. comment could indicate that the U.S. does not accept Denmark's foreign policy on nuclear matters. Mr. Leddy said that it was simply that we do not comment in a way that could lead people to speculate on alert flight routes. Ambassador Rønne said that the lack of U.S. Government comment left him in a very difficult situation. Mr. Leddy pointed out that the Danish Government had made its policy statements; that we did not

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challenge these statements but will not comment further on this subject. Ambassador Rønne said that he was very unhappy with the situation, and that he would be informing his Government.

Ambassador Rønne said that he would call later in the evening and let us know if the Danish Government concurred in the two press statements. Mr. Leddy said that, on receiving concurrence from the Danes, we would notify the Department of Defense for an 8:00 am release, January 27.

[Since the Danish Government found the shorter statement (attachment B) inadequate, the USG did not release it.]

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