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Authority EG 12958By AR NARA Date 2/4/04

NSDM 103

MEMORANDUM

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

SECRET/SENSITIVE
EXCLUSIVELY EYES ONLYACTION
February 3, 1973

MEMORANDUM FOR MR. KISSINGER

FROM: Helmut Sonnenfeldt

SUBJECT: Missile Assistance to France -- New NSSM

Shortly before leaving office Secretary Laird sent the President a memorandum on the status of our missile assistance to France (Tab C).

His main points are:

- that we have reached the limits of the kinds of assistance that we can provide, under the existing guidance (NSDMs 103 and 104);
- the French are probing for additional help;
- before Defense can proceed, however, they need new Presidential authorization;
- in addition, Defense proposes a new study.

Thus far we have helped the French in the area of missile reliability, which had some plausible justification in terms of safety. Now we would be moving into more sensitive fields such as hardening of the RVs. The French have even inquired about the Poseidon design, so that their next submarine might be made compatible with the Poseidon.

Laird recommends that Defense be authorized to proceed in some limited areas in order to sustain the momentum of the assistance program. These areas are (1) information on nuclear effects simulator types, characteristics and usage; (b) the sale of small simulators; (c) general hardening technology applicable to missiles, reentry vehicles and silos; and (d) Soviet ABM information which can be conveyed without an intelligence codeword designator.

[EYES ONLY] This last item I believe has already been handled adequately by General Walters without Defense's involvement. So there has in fact been 'momentum.' [EYES ONLY]

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I have drafted a memorandum from you approving the additional assistance in those areas listed by Defense, but asking that all ABM information be coordinated with the CIA (in order that the Defense effort not contradict what General Walters has already done -- you will have to get Walters instructed to work with Defense.)

Beard
- make me this copy.

I have drafted a NSSM for a new study of US-French nuclear relations, which is based on a draft submitted by Defense, with a deadline of April 1, 1973.

RECOMMENDATION

1. That you sign the memorandum to the Secretary of Defense at Tab A.
2. That you sign the NSSM at Tab B.

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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

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MEMORANDUM FOR

THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

SUBJECT: US Assistance to the French Missile Program

The President has approved the recommendations in Secretary Laird's memorandum of January 23, on this subject, to proceed on an interim basis with limited assistance to France in the areas of (a) information on nuclear effects simulator types, characteristics and usage; (b) the sale of small simulators; (c) general hardening technology applicable to missiles, reentry vehicles and silos; and (d) Soviet ABM information.

All information passed to France on Soviet ABM systems should be developed jointly by the Director of Central Intelligence and the Department of Defense.

This authority for proceeding with limited assistance will remain valid until a basic study has been completed and new Presidential guidance has been issued.

Henry A. Kissinger

cc: Director of Central Intelligence

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XGDS (3)
DECLAS Indeterminate
BYAUTH Henry A. Kissinger

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By AR NARA Date 2/4/04

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20506

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National Security Study Memorandum

TO: The Secretary of State
The Secretary of Defense

SUBJECT: US Nuclear Defense Policy Toward France

1. The President has directed that a study be prepared to review all aspects of the present and alternative US nuclear defense relationships with France. The study should include:

a. A concise description of accomplishments under NSDMs 103 and 104, together with a statement of practical and substantive difficulties encountered due to the constraints included in the NSDMs.

b. A report on the items of current interest to France in the missile area now precluded by the NSDMs, and an analysis of the pros and cons of expanding the assistance into these areas, including:

-- an evaluation of the benefits to France and the impact on the effectiveness of French strategic forces;

-- an evaluation of the security risks inherent in furnishing assistance on each of the items in question;

-- an evaluation of the potential reactions of the Soviet Union in the SALT II context to a US decision to expand US missile assistance to France;

-- an evaluation of UK, FRG and other European reactions to such a decision;

-- an analysis of changes in legislation, if any, necessary to carry out such assistance, and the likely reactions of the Congress.

c. An examination of the feasibility of a US offer to France to conduct future French nuclear tests at US underground nuclear test facilities in Nevada.

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2.

d. An evaluation of the advantages and disadvantages of renewing the nuclear information exchange agreement with France to permit transmission of RD/FRD information.

e. An analysis of overall defense policy alternatives available to the US within which US-French nuclear defense relations might develop, as well as the political objectives appropriate to each, including:

- the preservation of the UK "special relationship" as the main vehicle for US-European nuclear relations;
- the development of roughly equivalent nuclear relationships with the UK and France on a bilateral basis;
- the development of new US nuclear relationships with both countries based on their agreement to pursue their nuclear development efforts in concert.

2. In view of the sensitivity of this subject, participation in the work of the study must be strictly limited and the entire subject handled on a highly classified, restricted access basis.

3. This study will be prepared by an ad hoc group comprising representatives of the addressees and the NSC staff and will be chaired by the Department of Defense. The completed study should be forwarded to the President not later than April 1, 1973.

Henry A. Kissinger

cc: Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff
Director of Central Intelligence
Director, Arms Control and Disarmament Agency
Chairman, Atomic Energy Commission

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THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
 WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301

23 JAN 1973

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

SUBJECT: US-French Relations: The Defense Dimension

From the outset of your administration you have made clear your determination to place US-French relations on a better footing. During the past four years the Department of Defense has done what it could to help realize this objective. This memorandum is intended as:

- a brief review of the part DOD has played;
- a sketch of the basic choices we now confront in US defense policy toward France, especially in the missile assistance area; and
- a vehicle for making some recommendations on the future of the programs of particular interest to this Department.

STRATEGIC MISSILE ASSISTANCE

The limited program of strategic missile assistance to France which began in 1970 was a decisive step on the path toward a new relationship with France. Nothing established more clearly for the French our willingness to turn the page on the past record, particularly because we did not seek any immediate quid pro quo. We have given the French considerable help within the limits of your guidance, and have saved them appreciable time and money (as the report at Tab A indicates). The main emphasis of the assistance has been on improving the operability and reliability of their current missiles (e.g., propulsion, hydraulic systems, electrical systems, ignition safety procedures, materials, test, checkout and quality control procedures). That the program has achieved its purpose is clear from the expressions of appreciation we have received from people such as Debre.

During the summer and fall the French launched a concerted effort to secure missile assistance in new areas (e.g., re-entry vehicle hardening, penetration aids, Soviet ABM information) clearly beyond the previously agreed limits. We have indicated to the French, in response, that we are not prepared for the moment, to go beyond our current guidelines. Any decision on whether we should go further, and if so how far, must be yours to make.

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EXEMPTED FROM GENERAL DECLASSIFICATION SCHEDULE OF
 EXECUTIVE ORDER 11652. EXEMPTION CATEGORY 3
 REASON: ON Indeterminate

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NUCLEAR SAFETY TALKS

In addition to missile assistance, you also authorized us in 1970 to begin a dialogue with the French on nuclear safety. Because of the need to brief the Joint Committee on Atomic Energy prior to actually beginning any discussions with the French, our first exchanges did not occur until after we had initiated our missile assistance talks. We have now held two conferences on the safety issue with officials of the French defense and atomic energy establishments, and have found the information exchange useful to both sides. To date there have been no substantial problems in keeping within our guidance, and there are additional subjects (still within current guidelines) on which further exchanges would be useful.

During Debre's visit last July, I sought to build on this good beginning by initiating discussions on other bilateral defense subjects on which I believed progress would be to our mutual benefit, and consistent with our basic objectives vis-a-vis France.

FRELOC AND LOC

Since then--and at least partly because of my talks with Debre-- discussions have gone forward on:

- a settlement on the US claims against France for the costs of relocating our forces in 1966 (FRELOC);
- a military line of communication (LOC) across France.

In my view these two efforts share a common logic consistent with our larger French policy. We cannot go very far in developing a solid relationship without a mutual effort in the defense area, i.e., without concrete steps by the French that demonstrate a willingness on their part to move with us in new directions. The Congress will need some solid evidence of French support for our presence in Europe if it, in turn, is to support forward movement in our relations with France.

You have been informed of our progress on FRELOC. I am reasonably optimistic about the prospects for a satisfactory settlement. French acceptance of the fact that we do have a legitimate claim, and their agreement to work with us toward a political settlement of the issue are, in themselves, important evidence of their willingness to turn the page on an unhappy period in our history.

As for the LOC question, a line through France could improve and make more secure support for our forces in Germany. We have been seeking to open technical discussions with the French on the feasibility of such a line, and have developed papers on the kind of logistic assistance that

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might be useful should the French be prepared to provide it. During the course of our conversations with the French thus far, we have emphasized that LOC assistance is a matter of mutual interest since US forces are in Europe for the common defense.

We have, of course, encountered the well known French position that there can be no automatic commitment to make the LOC available in war time, as well as French reserve on the question of US military personnel and installations on French soil. My own view is that even within these constraints we may be able to lead them to agree to plan in advance what LOC facilities would be available to us in the event we were both engaged in hostilities. This would be of substantial political and some military value, and could set the stage for further steps as the Franco-American atmosphere continues to improve.

OTHER ISSUES

In addition to these contacts with the French on FRELOC and LOC, we have also discussed possible coordination of nuclear planning (e.g., tactical nuclear doctrine and planning, strategic nuclear doctrine and planning, and perhaps nuclear targeting), a matter I first raised with Debre. Debre was noncommittal, and French reticence since then indicates that the time may not now be ripe to push the matter further. But we should keep this issue in reserve, and move it forward as soon as they evidence a willingness to pursue it.

One of the important by-products of contacts between DOD and the French MOD in the strategic missile program and on FRELOC and LOC has been the development of a pattern of contacts and confident dealings that should be an important asset in moving further in defense cooperation. The French, for their part, have chosen this channel to raise two issues of interest to them: competition in international arms sales and consultations on COCOM cases. No significant new ground has been broken on either, but channels are open, and useful exchanges may develop.

THE FUTURE

We have pursued the opening phase of our effort to improve defense relationships with the French about as far as we can within existing guidelines. As I see it, the key issue on which most other questions depend is the future of our missile assistance program. And, as I indicated earlier, the decision on whether and how far to expand our cooperation is one only you can make. In making that decision, you will want to consider:

- the degree of linkage between movement on our part and progress in other areas of defense cooperation;
- the SALT implications, and the broader political effects on US-Soviet relations;

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- the program's place and contribution in the broad framework of our European policy (with particular reference to the UK and FRG);
- the implications for the security and vulnerability of our own weapons systems.

As I see it, there are three fundamental alternatives for future US nuclear relationships with Europe:

- a continued emphasis on the special relationship with the UK, albeit with some efforts to extend an olive branch to France in this area;
- the development of roughly equivalent nuclear assistance efforts with the UK and France on a bilateral basis; or
- the development of a new US nuclear relationship with the two countries based on their agreement to develop their nuclear programs in concert.

On our side, this latter trilateral alternative would involve some momentous changes in policy, further complicated by necessary changes in legislation. In any case, we cannot give an adequate answer to the question of how far and fast we are prepared to proceed with the French in missile assistance without coming to grips with identical questions where the UK is concerned, and without more clearly identifying how these programs fit into our overall European and SALT policies.

These are substantial policy questions that it will take some time to analyze adequately. In the interim, however, I do not believe that we can, or should, either cut off assistance at the current level or continue to hold the French off for too long in the face of their desire to move into new areas of cooperation. There are some limited steps forward we can take to maintain the momentum of our improving relations without preempting the more fundamental decisions on overall policy direction. These steps could include:

- information on nuclear effects simulator types, characteristics and usage;
- the sale of small simulators;
- general hardening technology (as opposed to design specifics or design assistance) applicable to missiles, reentry vehicles and silos;
- Soviet ABM information which could be conveyed without an intelligence code-word designator.

Finally, I think it essential that we key any expansion of missile assistance to France--even of an interim nature--to continued movement on their side on issues of importance to us (particularly the claims question).

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This is not a matter of explicit quids or linkages, nor should it be presented to the French as such. It is simply that the measure of value of providing substantial assistance to the French cannot simply be a matter of better feelings between the two nations. The French have come to understand this, as evidenced by their movement on claims. We ought not now, after having broken the logjam, give them any reason to feel they can get something without continuing to give in return.

I fully realize that there are policy areas in which the French could take steps of great use to us--particularly in the areas of trade and international finance. However, I think it would be unwise to use strategic missile assistance as an instrument for these purposes to the detriment of its logical role in developing a better defense relationship between us.

Recommendations:

1. That you authorize the Department of Defense to expand US missile assistance to France, on an interim basis, to include: (a) information on nuclear effects simulator types, characteristics and usage; (b) the sale of small simulators; (c) general hardening technology applicable to missiles, reentry vehicles and silos; (d) Soviet ABM information which can be conveyed without an intelligence code-word designator.

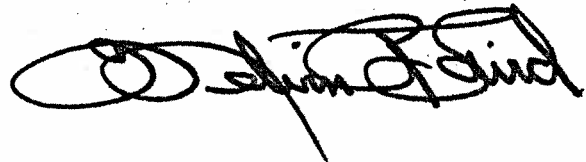
Approve _____

Disapprove _____

2. That you order an inter-agency study of US defense policy toward France (a draft NSSM is at Tab B).

Approve _____

Disapprove _____



Enclosures
a/s

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