

September 21, 1967

Memorandum from George Brown to Harold Wilson

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Summary:

When the USSR and the USA submitted a draft non-proliferation treaty in the early autumn of 1967, British representatives were enthusiastically arguing that as a prospective member of EURATOM, any British position must axiomatically take account of European interests. As the negotiations moved forward, though, Wilson's government found itself caught in a three-sided trap of its own devising: fearful of being labelled "bad Europeans," anxious about being seen by Washington as "unreliable allies," and concerned about Moscow viewing them as part of the "treacherous West." Balancing out these competing concerns was becoming foremost in the minds of senior ministers.

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[illegible handwritten note]

CONFIDENTIAL

PRIME MINISTER

I have not followed this in detail lately and may therefore be much at sea. But, on the basis of hunch, instinct or what-you-will, it rings an alarm bell in my mind.

May we get the worst of all worlds by:-

(a) not saying that we share the fears of the Euratom people - "bad Europeans"

(b) letting the Americans put forward a text and then voting on it later - "unreliable allies"

(c) letting the Russians think we and the Americans are playing tricks - "the treacherous West"?

I am rather re-inforced in the foregoing by the account of the differing view points expressed at the NATO Council Meeting and recorded in the two telegrams from UKDEL NATO attached below and which have arrived since I saw the Foreign Office telegram; and particularly to note from X at the end of the first one, that our man at NATO was also unhappy about his instructions.

May I raise these questions on your behalf and call for a report?

[signature]

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