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By **MS/NARA** Date **2-23-05**

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For your information, following are texts of February 6 letter and enclosure from President to Prime Minister. Signed original delivered by Secretary to Caccia today.

QUOTE

Dear Mr. Prime Minister:

On January 26 you will recall that you sent me a message through your Ambassador concerning the continuance of Anglo-United States Understandings with regard to consultation before the use of nuclear weapons and the use of bases in the United Kingdom. Meanwhile Mr. Rusk has received from Sir Harold confirmation that in general the memorandum on this subject handed him on January 9, 1961 correctly represents your understanding of the position subject, however, to three points of clarification which do not involve substance.

I am writing now to tell you that these three points of clarification are entirely acceptable to me and reflect our own interpretation of these Understandings. I am happy, therefore, to confirm to you that these Understandings reflect the agreements in force between our two Governments. In

Drafted by: **BOH:RA:JYMellor:bpw**  
2/7/61

Telegraphic transmission and classification approved by: **S/S - Mr. Strosser**

Clearances: **BNA - Mr. Burdett**  
**UMB**

**RA - Mr. Fessenden**  
**R7**

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order that they be set down in identical form in each of our records, I enclose the memorandum on the subject given Sir Harold on January 9, 1961 footnoted to reflect the three points of clarification which were requested.

Needless to say, I welcome this continuing evidence of the intimacy with which our two countries work together in all matters of the common defense as well as in other aspects of our relationship.

Sincerely, ~~JOHN F.~~

John F. Kennedy

Enclosure: 1. Footnoted Memorandum of the Understandings. UNQUOTE

Enclosure (Titled) QUOTE Understandings with the British on the Use of British Bases and Nuclear Weapons

BEGIN TEXT

1. Our understanding on the use of British bases is that the President and Prime Minister will reach a joint decision by speaking personally with each other before certain forces equipped with U.S. nuclear weapons and operating from bases in the United Kingdom will use nuclear weapons, namely SAC, British Bomber Command (Foot-note: Excluding aircraft of such Command equipped with British nuclear weapons but including the IRBM (Thor) force set up under the Anglo-United States Agreement of February 22, 1958.), and SACEUR-assigned forces in the UK. (U.S. Polaris submarines in British territorial waters should now be added to this list.) The basic understanding is contained in the communique of January 9, 1952 covering the Truman-Churchill talks:

INNERQUOTE Under arrangements made for the common defense, the United States has the use of certain bases in the United Kingdom. We reaffirm the understanding

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that the use of these bases in an emergency would be a matter for joint decision by His Majesty's Government and the United States Government in the light of circumstances prevailing at the time. END INNERQUOTE

Procedures for carrying out this basic understanding were agreed upon in the Murphy-Dean Agreement of June 7, 1958, which was approved by the President and the Prime Minister. The covering document, the Report to the President and the Prime Minister, repeats almost literally the language of the Truman-Churchill communique:

INNERQUOTE 2. The basic understanding between the United Kingdom and United States Governments, regarding the use of bases in the United Kingdom by United States forces, provides that such use in an emergency shall be a matter for joint decision by the two Governments in the light of the circumstances at the time. END INNERQUOTE

2. There is a second, more general understanding with the British that we will consult with them before using nuclear weapons anywhere, if possible. The basic understanding on this point is contained in a memorandum of conversation of a meeting between the President and Eden on March 9, 1953. Eden had asked for an assurance of consultation by the President with the Prime Minister prior to U.S. use of any nuclear weapon.

INNERQUOTE He (the President) said that the United States would, of course, in the event of increased tension or the threat of war, take every possible step to consult with Britain and our other allies. END INNERQUOTE

The President reaffirmed this understanding when he wrote to the Prime Minister on October 27, 1960, in connection with the Holy Loch berthing:

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INNERQUOTE With reference to the launching of missiles from U.S. Polaris submarines, I give you the following assurance, which of course is not intended to be used publicly. In the event of an emergency, such as increased tension or the threat of war, the U.S. will take every possible step to consult with Britain and other Allies. This reaffirms the assurance I gave Foreign Secretary Eden on March 9, 1953. END INNERQUOTE

3. It should be noted that the agreement for joint decision by the President and the Prime Minister does not extend to all U.S. forces under SACEUR and SACLANT but only covers those SACEUR-assigned forces (strike squadrons) based in the UK.

(Footnote 2: This should not be taken to exclude U.S. nuclear forces based in the UK which might be assigned to a NATO commander in the future. In such event such forces would be brought within the terms of the Murphy-Dean Report by appropriate amendment of that Report.) The other U.S. nuclear forces under SACEUR and SACLANT would only be covered by the more general understanding to consult if time permits. UNQUOTE

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