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By **MSNARA** Date **2-23-05**

Copy for Department of State

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

February 28, 1964

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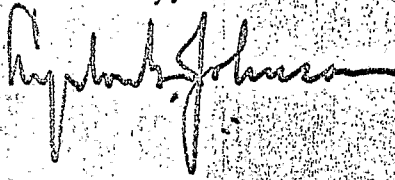
Dear Mr. Prime Minister:

In our talks in Washington we agreed that we would reaffirm together the understandings of our two Governments with regard to consultation in the use of nuclear weapons. I now confirm this agreement in the attached Memorandum of Understanding. It is very much like the one which President Kennedy sent to Prime Minister Macmillan in February 1961, except for minor but necessary editorial changes and the deletion of references to the IRBM (Thor) force which is no longer operational.

I note also that our two Governments have a continuing commitment to consult with the North Atlantic Council concerning the use of nuclear weapons anywhere, if time permits.

Let me take this occasion to say again how much Mrs. Johnson and I enjoyed your visit, and how clear its value is as we continue to work together on hard problems all around the world.

Sincerely,



The Right Honorable  
Sir Alec Douglas-Home, M. P.,  
Prime Minister,  
London, England.

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Understandings with the British on the Use  
 of British Bases and Nuclear Weapons

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\*, SACEUR-assigned forces in the UK, and U. S. Polaris submarines in British territorial waters. The basic understanding is contained in the communique of January 9, 1952 covering the Truman-Churchill talks:

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

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:

"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."

\*Excluding aircraft of such Command equipped with British nuclear weapons.

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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.

"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."

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

"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."

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. \*\* The other U. S. nuclear forces under SACEUR and SACLANT would only be covered by the more general understanding to consult if time permits.

\*\* 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.

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