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NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20506

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state dept 8/4/00

INFORMATION

MEMORANDUM FOR GENERAL SCOWCROFT

FROM: A. Denis Clift *ADClift*

SUBJECT: US-UK Consultations on Use of Nuclear Weapons

Prime Minister Wilson has proposed to President Ford that the US and UK Governments reaffirm the Memorandum of Understandings regarding consultations on the use of nuclear weapons (attached package).

In principle, the proposal is fine. The one issue requiring close attention is the proposed UK revision of Paragraph 3 of the Memorandum. In my opinion, the UK proposal is acceptable. They are seeking to pin down U.S. agreement to reach a joint decision on use of nuclear weapons by U.S. forces operating from the U.K. land bases, in U.K. territorial waters [redacted] without the somewhat ambiguous current reference to SACEUR and SACLANT in the memorandum as presently drafted.

I do not know whether you or Secretary Kissinger have discussed this proposal with the British. To me, from the policy/political level it makes sense, for the reason that NATO procedures call for consultations. While most U.S. forces operating from the U.K. are "earmarked" for NATO rather than "assigned", we have to go through the NATO alert process -- which involves Presidential decision and consultation -- before they are assigned.

Accordingly, I have drafted the attached package recommending acceptance of the proposed new U.K. language.

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If the attached package is acceptable, there is also the question of advising Defense -- either at the Secretary or Chairman, JCS, level -- of the updated Memorandum of Understandings.

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