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October 24, 1957 S/AE-1088/1A

MEMORANDUM FOR THE FILE

SUBJECT: Macmillan Talks--U.S.-U.K. Atomic Weapons Cooperation

At their meeting on the morning of October 24, the President and the Prime Minister requested Admiral Strauss and Sir Edwin Plowden in the atomic energy field, and Mr. Quarles and Sir Richard Powell in the missiles and weapons field to submit by the end of the day recommendations on the basis for future U.S.-U.K. cooperation. It was agreed by the four representatives that a single report should be submitted rather than two separate reports. The group worked in Admiral Strauss' office from lunch straight through until about 5:30 p.m. The initial drafting was undertaken by Sir Edwin Plowden, Sir Richard Powell, Gerard Smith, and Philip Farley. Their draft was reviewed by Admiral Strauss and General Loper in the middle of the afternoon. Admiral Strauss commented that the draft was excellent; he made a few changes and then cleared it with the other members of the Commission who were in the AEC building. General Loper suggested only that it should be specified that if possible administrative determinations regarding information which might be discussed without amendment of the Atomic Energy Act should be made before the committee of experts from the two countries commenced its work. Mr. Quarles also reviewed the draft and suggested one or two changes. The draft was then typed in final form for Admiral Strauss to take to the White House.

When the report had been agreed and while final typing was underway the two British representatives left. Admiral Strauss then said he wished to advise the American side (at this time Mr. Quarles, General Loper, Mr. Smith, and Mr. Farley) that he had spoken to the President privately and had obtained the President's concurrence that regardless of what was stated in the report, there was no intention to communicate to the British information on important design principles such as boosting, radiation implosion, and (as understood by Mr. Farley) fusion. General Loper immediately said that if all modern U.S. nuclear weapons were thus to be excluded there would be little point to the agreement which had just been drawn up. Admiral Strauss protested that this would not bar U.S. furnishing weapons to the U.K. for retention in U.S. custody. He felt that it would be desirable for the U.K. to give up nuclear weapons production itself, and it would thus not need detailed information on design. Mr. Smith doubted whether the U.K. would want to depend on anything but the most modern weapons or on U.S. weapons whose design it was not entirely familiar and satisfied with. Admiral Strauss felt that the U.K. willingness to accept IRBM warheads met this objection. General Loper pointed out that on Admiral Strauss' plan we would be giving the British less than the Russians already knew, since their latest tests were generally agreed to indicate familiarity with the two-stage thermonuclear weapon and boosting. Admiral Strauss said he

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did not understand the Russians to be familiar with radiation implosion. General Loper said that for a two-stage thermonuclear weapon they would have to master either radiation implosion or something equally as good or better. Mr. Smith said that if this was to be the U.S. interpretation of the agreement, it would come as a great shock to the British since in effect they would have been told "full partnership" by the President in the morning, have worked jointly in the afternoon to prepare agreement on the "full partnership" principle, and then be told in the evening that actually they would not get anything the Russians did not already have, and perhaps less. Nevertheless he felt that the British should be told the basis on which the U.S. would plan to carry out the agreement. He wondered whether the President could even describe to the British, under the Atomic Energy Act, the limitations mentioned by Admiral Strauss. Admiral Strauss said that the President was going to tell them in some way.

Upon returning to the Department, Mr. Smith called the Secretary at home and described to him in general terms where matters stood. He advised the Secretary that in his judgment the report was excellent but that to take the reservation stated by Admiral Strauss would be to make it meaningless and would be inconsistent with the guidance from the President and the Prime Minister as he had understood it.

S/AE:PJFarley:jd

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