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RMBeaudry/afm
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INTERDEPARTMENTAL REGIONAL GROUP
FOR EUROPE

DOE, & STATE
review(s) completed.

Minutes of Meeting of February 14, 1968

Chairman: John M. Leddy

Present: DOD - Mr. Halperin, Mr. Lehmann, Dr. Larsen
AEC - Commissioner Tape, Mr. Hudgins, Mr. Boger
JCS - Brig. General Marshall
25X1A CIA -
WH - Mr. Fried, Mr. Keeny
USIA - Mr. Weld
G/PM - Mr. Trippe
L/EUR - Mr. Berlack
ACDA - Mr. Van Doren
EUR/BMI - Mr. Cheslaw
EUR/RPM - Mr. Collins
EUR - Mr. Beaudry

Conclusions

1. The meeting noted that the minutes of the meeting of January 10 had been approved as amended.
2. The IRG/EUR agreed that Part IV, C, "Preferred U.S. Position," of the paper was generally acceptable to the members but that it should be redrafted to reflect certain clarifications which were developed during the course of the meeting. The redraft would be circulated for approval prior to sending the paper to the SIG with the request for approval of the course of action proposed.

Mr. Cheslaw explained the reason for considering this paper, noting that we must make up our minds whether to continue this arrangement beyond the present cut-off date of 1969 during the course of the present year. He also noted that the British have put in a request for submarine fuel which would be delivered after the termination date. Our response to this request will depend on our basic stance toward the U.K. on nuclear matters. Mr. Cheslaw cited statements by Defense Minister Healy/^{indicating} that the U.K. is determined to retain its nuclear capability. It is in U.S. interest to assist them in this course.

The Chairman stated that we have three possibilities: we can urge the British to expand their nuclear capability; we can attempt to force them out of the nuclear business; or we can proceed to cooperate with the British, letting them set their own pace either to wind-down or to up-grade their capability.

Mr. Halperin and Mr. Keeny both noted that the paper called for us to help the U.K. maintain their nuclear capability in "as near first rate condition as possible." Was it our intention to assist the British in undertaking a/^{major} modernization which would introduce them to the most advanced state of the art? Dr. Larsen remarked that if the U.K. merely intended to keep its present nuclear force alive for prestige purposes, the U.S. would have a passive role merely assisting them on request. On the other hand,

if the U.K. wanted to improve its capability we would face the question of deciding whether to give them information which would involve important security considerations.

Mr. Leddy pointed out that the intent of this paper was to provide general policy guidance for U.S. officials and that it was not intended to spell out in detail what should be provided to the British in specific cases. He concurred in Commissioner Tape's comment that the intent is to leave the initiative with the British.

Mr. Van Doren commented that everyone was agreed that the agreement should be renewed since it provided a framework under which specific programs could be dealt with on a case-by-case basis.

The DOD position, as outlined by Dr. Larsen, was that we should be prepared to assist at the present level or contribute to a significant improvement of the U.K. capability provided we retained the right to determine our contributions strictly on a case-by-case basis. The Chairman agreed that this was clearly the intent of the paper and said that the IRG appeared to be in agreement that (a) we were prepared to respond to British requests, which in turn would depend on what the British themselves were prepared to put into their program, (b) the U.S. response would be subject to fundamental security considerations.

and (c) the question of any new weapons system, such as Poseidon, would be decided outside the agreement, which deals only with weapons information and materials assistance.

Mr. Keeny cautioned that the broad language of the paper may conceal certain issues of policy in providing information to the British. For example, the British presently are in a position where they lack sufficient information to make a proper request and we would have to provide it to facilitate their decision on what proposal to put to us. This could involve us in supplying extremely sensitive information on advanced systems.

Mr. Keeny and Commissioner Tape commented concerning the value to the U.S. of the information received in an exchange. It was noted that this depended on the level of activity the British were prepared to undertake. It was agreed that the U.S. interest would be best served if the U.K. had a first-rate capability.

Commissioner Tape indicated his agreement with the paper although he suggested that there might be a few minor adjustments of language in the interest of precision. He noted that the U.K. request for submarine fuel makes it necessary for us to respond probably within the next two months. Beyond this he understands that the U.K. will probably make a decision on up-grading of Polaris about May or June.

Mr. Halperin's suggestion that the operative section of the paper be redrafted to reflect the sense of the meeting was adopted.

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The Proposal

The US/UK nuclear relationship should be permitted to proceed at a pace commensurate with what the British have in mind for their own force. We should not exercise our option to terminate selective release of nuclear weapons information by the end of 1969. As for material assistance in the weapons field, if the British request we should extend those provisions for another ten years beyond 1969 but limit such assistance to what seems reasonably required to keep their force viable in the 1970's. In the course of the negotiations on the extension of these arrangements we would say to the British that these negotiations deal only with the framework for continued cooperation on weapons information and materials assistance, that other subjects, such as new weapons or delivery systems, would remain subject to separate consideration on a case-by-case basis, and that we reserve the right to evaluate any request in this area in the light of all factors at the time.

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