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Merchant presented to British (Ambassador Caccia and Ramsbotham of Foreign

H

Office) outline of US position on MRBM's as reported separate cable. Following

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UMSC points covered in discussion which followed:

SAE

(1) British raised question of presentation US position to NAC: i.e.,

MC

would our preferred position be given alone, with second alternative only introduced later if first rejected. Merchant replied that both would be presented and that he assumed this would be done along following lines:

RMR

Since President's 1957 commitment, there has been important new development of SACEUR's requirements for 1963. US prepared - and this would be our first choice - to offer alternative (1), which would ensure meeting SACEUR's requirements in time and would be less costly from point of view over-all resources of Alliance. If, after consideration, NAC refuses this alternative, US would be prepared offer assistance along lines alternative (2).

(2) British commented alternative (1) not only preferable/for reasons of time and cost, ~~for reasons~~ but was also politically more desirable. Less likely raise WEU amendment issue and would seem be more consistent with spirit recent Khrushchev-Eisenhower exchange. US commented Khrushchev-Eisenhower exchange



Drafted by: EUR/RA:RFessenden:nps 3-23-60

Telegraphic transmission and classification approved by:

M - Mr. Merchant

Clearances: S/S S/P MUK  
~~Defense Colonel Billingsley~~

S/S - Mr. Day

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did not seem to enter into picture and noted political aspects are for NAC consideration.

(3) US commented we feel alternative (2) does meet Presidential commitment, although we are under no illusions regarding stiffness of conditions, particularly commitment that production facilities set up under program are to be used solely to meet SACEUR's requirements.

(4) British raised question applicability WEU Protocols in connection with German participation in producing launching equipment under alternative (1). Clear from British comments that they considered any German participation ~~would~~ ~~arise~~ ~~questioned~~ under Annex III, Part IV, (long-range guided missiles and influence of WEU Council (among other requirements) missiles) which requires two-thirds vote ~~of WEU Council~~ ~~of the Treaty~~ and not ~~and hence would entail amendment of the Treaty.~~ question under Annex II, Part I (Atomic Weapons) which involves flat prohibition, Principal British question was whether launching equipment to be produced by Europeans covered by QTE ... assemblies specially designed for use in or with the weapons ... UNQTE in Paragraph (c) of Part IV. British indicated would of course ~~QTE assemblies UNQTE~~ be highly desirable if/ could be interpreted so as not to include launching ~~ly~~ equipment in order to avoid ~~the~~ political/difficult task of WEU decision by two-thirds vote.

(5) British raised question of whether we were thinking entirely in terms ~~They~~ mobile missiles. / Indicated strong preference for mobile missiles because (a) fixed, hardened sites politically unpopular; and (b) mobility would be technical argument useful to British in phasing out Blue Streak program. US indicated we were thinking in terms barges, trucks, rail launching equipment. Fixed sites not excluded entirely, but major emphasis certainly on mobile missiles.

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(6) British raised question whether launching equipment would be developed in Europe or US. US said we assumed development would be in US.

UK then raised Skybolt question. After US indicated willingness get answer as promptly as possible, UK pressed to have Secretary Gates be in position give answer to Watkinson March 30. US indicated answer probably not available by then but promised consider as matter first priority when Gates returns during week beginning April 4. After UK explained rationale behind Skybolt request, US noted that there were still many technical problems to be solved in development Skybolt. UK asked directly whether US reluctance agree now on Skybolt request resulted from our ~~willingness~~ unwillingness make bilateral deal this nature at very time we were in process seeking fulfill President's 1957 commitment on NATO-wide MRBM program. US acknowledged that this was ~~an~~ important element.

UK (Ramsbotham) indicated personal view UK would <sup>want to</sup> begin procure some Polaris missiles during 1965-1970 period when main UK reliance would be on V-Bombers equipped with Skybolt.



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