THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

~~SECRET~~ December 17, 1964

NATIONAL SECURITY ACTION MEMORANDUM NO. 322

TO: THE SECRETARY OF STATE
THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

SUBJECT: Guidelines for Discussions on the Nuclear Defense of the Atlantic Alliance

We now face very important discussions with our Allies on future plans for the nuclear defense of the Atlantic Alliance. I am sending you this memorandum to establish guidelines for this discussion.

1. Unless I give specific instructions to the contrary, I do not wish any American official in any forum to press for a binding agreement at this time. I wish to maintain the position established in our talks with Prime Minister Wilson -- namely, that the U.S. is not seeking to force its own views on any European nation, but wishes rather to find a way of responding effectively to the largest possible consensus among interested European allies.

2. At the same time I expect American negotiators to maintain the position that no agreement can be made with the U.K. that does not take account of the legitimate interests of Germany, and that similarly no agreement can be made with Germany that does not take account of the legitimate interests of other European states. The American negotiators should continue to encourage direct discussion among Europeans, and in particular they should urge the U.K. to seek agreement with Germany and vice versa.

3. I wish all American negotiators to avoid public or private quarrels with France, and to maintain in public and private the following position: We are interested in reducing our differences with France; we will never support any proposal for a nuclear force which is in fact directed against

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Authority NSC Memo 8-31-95
By M NARA, Date 12-15-95

France; we will not sign any agreement which does not contain open doors for France; nor will we make any agreement until after French opinion and French desires have been carefully and responsibly explored.

4. Any agreement we support must be a reinforcement to our basic policy of non-dissemination of nuclear weapons. We warmly support the inclusion in any agreement of strong undertakings to this end.

5. Our position on the American veto and on the European clause is as follows:

> "The United States takes the position that any charter for an Atlantic Force must provide for United States' consent to the firing of the nuclear weapons. If, however, major nations of Europe some day achieve full political unity with a central political authority capable of making the decision to use nuclear weapons, the United States recognizes that this will create a new situation in which reconsideration of various provisions of the charter would be appropriate. In any event, revision of the charter would be possible only with the unanimous approval of the members."

6. Our present position on other issues is as stated on December 8 in the U.S. memorandum of comments (attached at A) on the U.K. proposal, omitting the names of specific countries in paragraph 9, and leaving that paragraph in abeyance for the time being.

7. In my judgment, the principal advantages of any agreement will be:

(1) that it will lead the U.K. out of the field of strategic deterrence and thus reduce by one the number of powers aiming at this kind of nuclear strength;

(2) that it will greatly reduce the danger of any separate nuclear adventure by the Germans; and

(3) that it will advance the principle and practice of collective strategic defense, as against the proliferation of separate nuclear deterrents.

These three advantages are of great importance to the American public and to all who care for world peace in other countries, and it is essential that they be established in any agreement.

8. The provisions of NSAM 318 (attached at B) will remain in effect (except for the action in paragraph 6 which has been completed).

9. Finally, I find nothing in the position of this government or in the posture of the alliance which makes it necessary, from the point of view of the U.S. alone, that there should be final agreement or even agreement in principle within the next three months. I may take a different view on this in the light of new evidence, but this is my clear present position, and I wish all actions by American officials to be in conformity with it. If other governments for their own reasons find it important to reach early agreement, they will make their own efforts to this end, and in that case I do not desire that we on our side should drag our feet. But I do not wish anyone at any level to give the impression that we are eager to act on a short timetable, or are attempting in any way to force our own views upon Europe.