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Embtel 672; Note Atomic Stockpile Agreement

Emhoff met August 9 with representatives Foreign Office (Fridham, Western Department, and Harding, Permanent Undersecretary's Department) and Defense Ministry (Gibbon) to discuss draft atomic stockpile agreement transmitted Department's CA-8800. Gibbon did most of talking for UK, Emhoff apparently not having developed position of its own. Upshot of meeting was that UK, which had not previously appreciated reasons why US desired Umbrella type agreement, agreed to reconsider matter in light arguments advanced by Emhoff. Deptel 670 badly garbled and available only in fragmentary form at time of meeting.

Gibbon said Defense Ministry had two main objections to US proposal. First, they thought Umbrella agreement was superfluous, as all its main features included in Corporal agreement and in new draft agreement worked out by War Office and USAEUR. While UK could see merit in concluding Umbrella type agreement with country with which we had no previous agreement on atomic support, in case of UK such an agreement would have effect of adding to rather than reducing number of support agreements. Secondly, and apparently most important in UK eyes, Umbrella agreement would tend to "tie our hands" in future. This was particularly true as regarded support for Royal Navy, where arrangements for atomic support had not been fully worked out. If it should develop that arrangements for Navy did not fit in with Umbrella agreement, it would then be necessary to amend latter. As illustration, Gibbon mentioned possibility that UK aircraft carriers might wish pick up atomic weapons in US ports rather than receiving them at "points of entry" referred to in US draft. He acknowledged of course that points of this kind could be handled through redrafting but feared that we could not at this stage anticipate everything. For these reasons UK preferred to conclude USAEUR - War Office agreement at government

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level and, as requirements for other services became clear, to conclude similar agreements for them.

Burden of Euboff's reply was that it was precisely for reasons of flexibility that US preferred Umbrella type agreement. It should be possible to draft Umbrella agreement in sufficiently broad terms to cover all likely eventualities. Thereafter, detailed agreements for particular types of support could be worked out between services concerned. Euboff put considerable weight, and perhaps embellished a bit, on complications of US procedures involved in reaching government-level agreements. Substantial part of these procedures, he said, could be dispensed with in arriving at service-to-service agreements, provided latter were in implementation of existing government-level agreement. Furthermore, by concluding new USAREUR - War Office agreement at government level, we would in fact be tying our hands much more thoroughly than would be case with Umbrella agreement. USAREUR - War Office draft agreement was very detailed and hence much more likely require future revision which would involve complicated internal US procedures previously referred to, if it was government agreement. Finally, Euboff said on personal basis that if UK should insist and US agree that USAREUR - War Office agreement be concluded at government level, Embassy and Foreign Office might well then find themselves in position of having to renegotiate, or at least redraft, this lengthy document.

UK representatives accepted the above arguments surprisingly readily, and Gibbon agreed to have matter reconsidered by British services and Defense Ministry. He hoped, however, that US could agree that Umbrella agreement should cover only essential points and be as general as possible, so as to minimize possibility that eventual service-to-service arrangements would be in conflict with it. Euboff said he felt sure US shared this objective and, if there were specific points where UK thought draft could be improved in this sense, he would be glad to submit them for consideration.

Only other point discussed was whether Umbrella agreement would be registered with United Nations. Euboff said he presumed it would not be as it was to remain classified. UK representatives indicated they strongly preferred to keep document classified but queried whether US draft was not in form which would require registration. Appreciate Department comment this point.

Embassy will do what it can to expedite British reconsideration of our proposal. Point was emphasized in August 9 discussion that action urgent to avoid delays in providing atomic support for UK Honest John units. Meanwhile Embassy suggests Department and Defense review draft agreement with view determining whether some amendments may be required to take care of SACLANC requirements (Deptel 894).

WHITNEY

POL/AE/WC/Truchessart:pa

CON: MIN - Mr. Morris (in draft)

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