

DECLASSIFIED
Authority NND 949612
By JG NARA Date 2/22/03

This document consists of 2 pages
Number 1 of 10 copies, Series A

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
ASSISTANT SECRETARY
EUR

OCT 3 1961

TO: The Secretary
THROUGH: S/S
G - Mr. Johnson
FROM: EUR - William R. Tyler
SUBJECT: Atomic Stockpile Negotiations with Italy

wc
RA-RJA
RM/R
15730

Negotiations have been in progress with Italy for an atomic stockpile agreement since the summer of 1959. The purpose of the agreement is to set forth the conditions and arrangements under which U.S. nuclear weapons would be deployed to Italy in support of both Italian and U.S. forces assigned to NATO. Italy has already received nuclear capable delivery systems for which nuclear warhead support is required to implement fully SACEUR's plans for NATO defense. The Italian Government has permitted the U.S. to introduce nuclear weapons into Italy under an informal understanding. However, the Italian Government has indicated its strong desire to conclude formal arrangements for a nuclear weapons stockpile.

We have reached a critical stage in our negotiations with Italy. We believe rapid conclusion of this agreement is a matter of major importance to our relations with Italy and to the readiness of NATO forces in Italy during this period of crisis over Berlin. The Italians are waiting for our response on two major unresolved issues. A third and lesser issue involving cost arrangements will, we hope, be resolved by current technical discussions with the Italians.

On the two major issues the Department has reached positions which it has passed to Defense Department staffs for urgent coordination. We understand informally from Defense staffs that there may be difficulty in obtaining Defense concurrence in our positions, particularly on the expedited basis we believe desirable. I have telephoned Defense myself to communicate our sense of urgency. However, we believe it is desirable that you sign the attached letter (TAB A) to the Secretary of Defense which confirms our desire for urgent action and sets forth our basic arguments supporting our positions on the two major outstanding issues.

Of the two major issues, the most important is the Italian request for an arrangement which would provide for obtaining Italian Government consent prior to the use of any nuclear weapons in Italy. The second question is the Italian desire for greater assurance that the Italian Government is fully consulted in regard to decisions on numbers of nuclear weapons which would be stored in Italy under the stockpile agreement. The Department believes that we should promptly and gracefully indicate to the Italians that we are prepared to meet their desires on these two points. General Norstad believes we should accede to the Italian requests, so long as certain operational conditions are satisfied.

611.657
10-361

RM/R
Anal
Rev
Cat

FILED
OCT 23 1961

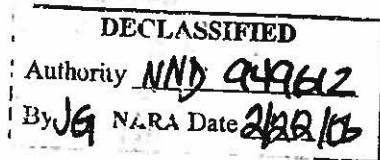
Recommendation

CLASSIFIED FILE

File EUR:RA-RJA Allright

SECRET

461440 10-19-61

SECRET

-2-

Recommendation

That you sign the letter to the Secretary of Defense (TAB A) which describes the urgency of concluding rapidly the current negotiations with Italy for an atomic stockpile agreement and presents views of the Department on proposed U.S. positions toward the major unresolved issues in the negotiations.

Attachment

1. TAB A - Proposed Letter to Secretary of Defense.

/s/ Dean

October 9, 1961

Concurrences:S/P - Mr. Owen *[Signature]*S/AE - Mr. Orwick *[Signature]*RA - Mr. Fessenden *[Signature]*G/PM - Mr. Newman *[Signature]*L/SFP - Mr. Chayes *[Signature]*Mr. Pender *[Signature]*WE - Mr. Brown *[Signature]*EUR - Mr. Tyler *[Signature]**Auth. for A7.*
EUR:RA:RJA:albright:scs

10/3/61

SECRET

DECLASSIFIED
Authority NND 949612
By JG NARA Date 2/22/16
41

This document consists of 3 pages
Number 3 of 10 copies
SUBV.
RETURN

SECRET

FILE 6731

October 9, 1961

SECRET

Dear Bob:

We have reached a critical stage in our negotiations for an atomic stockpile agreement with Italy. Rapid conclusion of this agreement has become a matter of major importance to our relations with Italy and to the readiness of NATO forces in Italy during this period of crisis over Berlin. I thought that a summary of our views on the issues remaining in the negotiations might facilitate consideration of the questions within the Defense Department. A draft message to our Embassy in Rome with instructions on these issues has been provided to Defense staffs for urgent coordination.

Three unresolved problems remain in the negotiations. First, and most important, is the Italian request for an arrangement which would provide for obtaining Italian Government consent prior to the use of any nuclear weapons in Italy. Second, is the Italian desire to participate more directly in determining the number of atomic weapons which would be stored in Italy under the stockpile agreement. Third, is Italian acceptance of certain costs under the agreement. On this last point, we hope that technical talks which are being arranged with the Italians on the costs question will lead to rapid resolution of this matter.

As for the first and most important point, we believe that the United States should agree promptly to the Italian request for a formal understanding which provides for obtaining the consent of the Italian Government prior to the use of any nuclear weapons in Italy. We already have written understandings with the United Kingdom and France which in effect bind us to the same obligation. However, our agreement with France does not now affect use of United States nuclear weapons since, as you know, France has not yet accepted United States nuclear weapons on its territory. The NSC policy directive, "NATO and the Atlantic Nations" which grew out of the Acheson recommendations and was approved by the President on April 21, 1961, stipulates that the concept of such a consent agreement is not contrary to our interests, and that it is not essential that the part of United States nuclear power deployed in Europe be veto-free.

It is

The Honorable
Robert S. McNamara,
Secretary of Defense.

(2)

EUR: RA:RJ ALBRIGHT
10/2/61

SECRET

Cleared
S/P
S/AE
4/5FP
EUR

CLASSIFIED FILE

611.657/10-961

DECLASSIFIED

Authority NND 949612By JG NARA Date 2/22/06SECRET

-2-

It is therefore our view that assurances of this type cannot be refused to a host country which requests it and which attaches political importance to it. In our view, there is political importance in the Italian case in the United States agreeing quickly and gracefully to a "consent" agreement. The Italian officials have suggested that the "consent to use" agreement follow the pattern of the JUPITER INRM agreement with Italy which already provides for the consent of the Italian Government prior to launching these missiles stationed in Italy.

General Norstad agrees with the need for acceding to the Italian request. General Norstad has also stated his view that it is essential that any "consent to use" agreement reached with Italy not have the effect of further complicating operational command arrangements. We strongly support this view, and we have already made clear to Italian officials that we believe it would be highly undesirable to establish additional complicating command arrangements for controlling the use of nuclear weapons. On the basis of preliminary discussions with Italian officials on their "consent to use" proposal and since the Italian Government has not sought complicating command arrangements under the JUPITER agreement, we doubt that Italian officials will seek to establish such undesirable arrangements under the proposed consent understanding.

General Norstad has suggested that in our response to Italian proposals for a "consent to use" agreement we should seek Italian agreement to language which provides for "consultation" rather than "agreement" with the Italian authorities. However, the Italians have specifically proposed that the word "agreement" be used. We believe we should repeat the formula already used in the JUPITER agreement and we oppose suggesting that an understanding on "consent to use" be based on a weaker commitment on our part. There might be operational difficulties also if there were discrepancies in the language of these two understandings.

We believe that the United States should also agree promptly to a formal understanding with Italy which would deal with Italian desires for greater assurance that the Italian Government is fully consulted in regard to decisions on numbers of nuclear weapons which would be stored in Italy under the stockpile agreement. Our Embassy has tried to reassure Italian officials that appropriate Italian authorities do participate through NATO planning in determining numbers and purposes of atomic weapons to be stored in Italy. However, we believe we should go as far as we can to satisfy Italian insistence for a more formal assurance in this regard. We believe such assurance can be given in a form which has minimal effect upon existing NATO procedures.

In the

SECRET

DECLASSIFIED
 Authority NND 949612
 By JG NARA Date 2/22/06

SECRET

-3-

In the draft instructions to our Embassy in Rome, which we have passed to Defense staffs for coordination, we propose that the understandings with Italy concerning a "consent to use" formula and decisions on numbers of weapons be contained in documents separate from the stockpile agreement itself. This approach should help to avoid the establishment of new complicating command arrangements and to reduce the possibility that any special arrangements in this stockpile agreement might become known to other countries with whom we have concluded similar stockpile agreements.

In conclusion, we concur in the view of Ambassador Reinhardt that it would be most unfortunate if we were to persist in positions in these negotiations which might undermine the vital basis of mutual trust which has existed in the atomic weapons field with Italy up to now. He fears that delays in concluding these negotiations may already have aroused unwarranted Italian suspicions of our intentions. Accordingly, I believe we should send as soon as possible the instructions to Embassy Rome which incorporate our above views on steps which we believe are necessary to conclude promptly the atomic stockpile negotiations with Italy.

with warmest personal regards,

Most sincerely,

/s/ Dean

Dean Rusk

S/S - RO

OCT 9 1961

A true copy of signed original

S/P - Mr. Owen (draft) *rya*
 S/AE - Mr. Orwick (draft) *rya*
 RA - Mr. Fessenden (draft) *R.F.*

L/SFP - *Mr. Chayes - draft*
 WE - Mr. Blue (draft) *rya*
 EUR - Mr. *Bryler*

mmf.

rya
 EUR:RA:RJAlbright;scs
 10/2/61 *Qyf*

1001001 v VII 15 31

SECRET



This document is from the holdings of:

The National Security Archive

Suite 701, Gelman Library, The George Washington University

2130 H Street, NW, Washington, D.C., 20037

Phone: 202/994-7000, Fax: 202/994-7005, nsarchiv@gwu.edu

[Read related article:](#)

**The U.S. Nuclear Presence in Western Europe,
1954-1962, Part II**

2020-09-17