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American Embassy.

IBW

Authorized By: H. D. Brewster

August 5, 1960.

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~~OFFICIAL - INFORMAL~~

August 4, 1975

*File per [unclear] James*  
*EUR/6/6/61*

CC BNA

Dear Ivan:

I appreciate very much the opportunity given me by your letter of July 21, 1960, to comment on the policy governing the storage of nuclear weapons [redacted]. It may well be that present policy as outlined in your letter best meets United States interests, but I would have less doubts of this if a high level review of this policy could be made taking into account the following points.

[redacted] and Other Nato Allies.

It is my understanding that the United States will not store nuclear warheads in any other Nato country without the agreement of the country concerned. I also understand that both the Defense Agreement with [redacted] and the Leased Bases Agreement with Canada do not preclude the introduction and storage of nuclear weapons but that the United States will not store nuclear weapons in Canada without the consent of the Canadian Government. Presumably the United States considered unacceptable the risks which would be involved if the clandestine storage of nuclear warheads in Canada was discovered.

A policy which treats [redacted] less favorably than Canada or any other Nato ally would, it seems to me, have to be justified on the basis that the importance of having nuclear warheads in [redacted] is sufficiently vital to the United States to outweigh the risks involved should the clandestine storage of these warheads be discovered. It is the validity of such a justification which, I believe, requires review.

It is possible that the competent Defense Department officials would hold that the storage of nuclear warheads in [redacted] is less important than in Canada, which was consulted in advance, and in fact less important than in many if not all other Nato countries, each of which would be consulted in advance.

The paragraph from Philip J. Farley's letter of July 17, 1959, to William E. Lange, Director of the Office of Foreign Military Rights Affairs, OASD, quoted in your letter accurately evaluates the probable

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impact

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Ivan B. White, Esquire,  
Deputy Assistant Secretary for  
European Affairs,  
Department of State,  
Washington, D.C.

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STATE DEPT. DECLASSIFICATION REVIEW

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impact of the disclosure of the storage of nuclear warheads without prior agreement, particularly during peace time, on United States- [ ] relations. In addition, the possibility of [ ] withdrawal from Nato in protest should not be overlooked. Although the probable impact on other countries is outside my area of responsibility, a dramatic row with [ ] over this issue could be expected to have an unfortunate effect on our friends and allies, to affect adversely our interests as far as neutrals are concerned, and to provide a propaganda field day for our enemies.

#### New Situation.

The major point made by [ ] in his letter of September 30, 1957, and confirmed in his letter of July 31, 1959, is that prior consultation with the [ ] would multiply the risks of the presence of these weapons in [ ] becoming known to the Soviets. This is certainly true and is the reason he gave for recommending against prior consultation.

Important as secrecy is in these matters, there seems to be greater flexibility now than in 1957. For example, the press has carried reports on the agreement with Canada regarding the storage of nuclear weapons there. The Soviets should have no difficulty in figuring out where in Canada at least some of these weapons will probably be stored. The communique following the December 1957 Nato Ministerial Meeting and the public announcement regarding the Atomic Energy Cooperation Agreements with Germany, [ ] and [ ] were clear indications of our intentions. Furthermore, the Soviets, to be on the safe side, must assume that the United States already has nuclear weapons in storage in [ ]

Under the circumstances, whatever increased risk of disclosure is involved in consulting the [ ] Government would not seem of great importance.

Another important new element in the situation is that the [ ] Foreign Minister in June 1960 formally asked whether the United States had atomic weapons stored in [ ] and whether atomic weapons were carried through [ ] in transit [ ] (June 21, 1960). This interest would indicate the likelihood of a comparable question at some future time. Hardboiled and realistic as the United States approach to this problem must be, I find it difficult to visualize our informing the Government of [ ] that we have no nuclear warheads in [ ] if in fact we do.

Incidentally,

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Incidentally, [redacted] statement in his September 30, 1957, letter that "if we are ever found out it will be under circumstances that would make accusations of deception and bad faith inconsequential in comparison with what would be happening" is certainly true if disclosure occurred when hostilities were imminent but would not be true if disclosure occurred in peace time.

Security Problem.

There is some question in my mind as to how minimal the risk of the [redacted] learning of the storage of nuclear warheads would be. The security problem at the [redacted] base is complicated by the small size of the secure areas, the accessibility of the base to the public, the small community atmosphere there with everyone knowing to a large extent what is going on, and the speculation which new and stricter security regulations might arouse.

[redacted] Position on Storage of Nuclear Warheads.

[redacted] concern as stated in his letters over prior consultation with the [redacted] was based on the fear of disclosure rather than the possibility of a negative reply from [redacted]. In fact such a possibility was not mentioned.

I do not believe that it is possible to predict with any certainty what the response of the [redacted] would be to a request to store nuclear warheads here without prior informal discussion of the matter with the Foreign Minister or the Prime Minister.

From the point of view of respect for the rights and sovereignty of [redacted] the fact that it might not agree to the storage of nuclear weapons here could be considered as making prior consultation all the more necessary.

Conclusion.

In reviewing United States policy regarding the storage of nuclear warheads in [redacted] it is suggested that the following alternatives be considered:

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(1) that facilities

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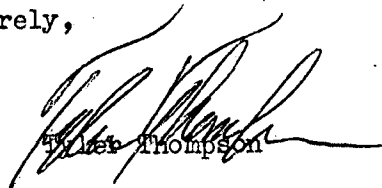
- (1) that facilities for the storage of nuclear weapons, if required and not yet built, be constructed; that nuclear-capable weapons be stored in [ ] when required; and that no nuclear warheads be stored in [ ] without the prior agreement of the [ ]
- (2) that unless vital military requirements would not be met or unacceptable logistic problems would result, the question of moving nuclear warheads into [ ] be postponed until hostilities appeared imminent, under which circumstances the possibility of objections on the part of [ ] would be minimized; and
- (3) that should a review of United States policy result in a decision not to request [ ] prior agreement for the storage of nuclear warheads, the introduction of such warheads into [ ] be delayed if feasible until hostilities are imminent.

Although our present policy may be the best we can develop, I would feel more comfortable if a good hard look at it could be taken.

With best regards,

Sincerely,

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EO25x6 OSD, Department of State



Walter Thompson

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