



INTERNATIONAL  
SECURITY AFFAIRS

ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301

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For review DM  
✓  
APR 1973

In reply refer to:  
1-35193/73

MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

SUBJECT: NSSM 175 - U.S. Nuclear Defense Policy Toward France (TS/SENS) -  
INFORMATION MEMORANDUM

~~(TS/SENS)~~ We have held an initial Steering Group meeting on NSSM 175 and reached substantial agreement on the major issues to be addressed and an organizational approach, so I thought I would provide you a short summary of those matters and an indication of the time frame in which we propose to complete the work.

~~(TS/SENS)~~ As you will recall, the NSSM itself (Tab A) is in two parts:

- an essentially military-technical analysis to be chaired by DOD, and
- a political assessment chaired by State.

At the Steering Group meeting, Dr. Foster, Dr. Walske, Mr. Spiers, General Seith and I agreed that, in addition to the specific questions posed in the NSSM, we needed to review the broader purposes of the cooperation in view of some of the new assistance being considered. The objective of our limited assistance up to the present has been political: to create a new climate for productive U.S.-French relations. With expanded assistance being considered, we agreed that the NSSM 175 study should address the basic question of whether it is in the overall interest of the United States to assist in the development of a viable, independent French strategic capability. Therefore, the outlines which have been developed and coordinated for the two halves of the study (Tab B) contain important sections dealing with the military and political considerations involved in reaching such a judgment. In the discussion at the Steering Group meeting I was gratified to see others as concerned with this difficult question as I have been. My aim is to make this study a sound basis for a serious high-level interaction on this important question.

~~27151~~

DM - Info

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~~(TS/SENS)~~ The second major policy issue which the NSSM raises is the question of how we relate whatever nuclear policy toward France we select to our broader European objectives over the next decade or two. The NSSM puts this important matter into the section which State is to chair, but I have made our strong interest in this problem known to Ron Spiers. He understands that the stimulus for this NSSM was from Defense and has agreed that we work closely together in developing the options for our future nuclear relations with Europe.

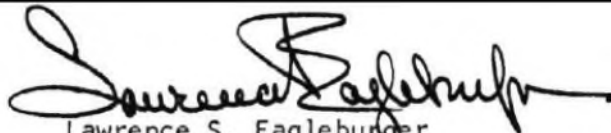
(S) Our preliminary discussion also revealed that while the range of additional assistance we might consider offering France is theoretically quite large, there are substantial legal and Congressional constraints that will have to be either recognized or overcome in one way or another. In my guidance to the Working Group, I have stressed that these problems must be clearly identified as constraints, but they must not become excuses for arbitrarily constraining the analysis of possible new assistance. It seems to me we need a very broad review of what is possible together with an assessment of what may be desirable before we allow our thinking to be confined by constraints. These latter are real and cannot be ignored, but when a review of policy as fundamental as this one is underway they must not be allowed prematurely to inhibit the analysis.

(U) With respect to timing for completion of the work, I have insisted we abide by the April 15 deadline prescribed in the NSSM; this will put us in a position to have a high-level interagency review of the problem in the late spring prior to any trip to Europe the President may schedule for the summer. We are forcing the pace of the drafting of the study somewhat because I want to provide time to send a completed draft to you for review before we transmit it to the NSC Staff for SRG consideration.

(S) Two final items are worthy of mention. As you may have noted, the NSSM was not circulated to the AEC in spite of their direct interest in much of the subject matter. I have confirmed with the NSC Staff that this omission was intentional and related to the AEC's very close relationship with the Joint Congressional Committee on Atomic Energy. With the concurrence of the NSC Staff, therefore, we are not including the AEC in drafting the response to this NSSM. [REDACTED]

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Lawrence S. Eagleburger  
Acting Assistant Secretary

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