

19 Sep 1958

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RELEASABLE TO FOREIGN NATIONALSDRAFT MESSAGE TO STATE DEPARTMENT IN REPLY TO AIR GRAM G-143, 6 AUG 58

In SACEUR's opinion, the proposal set forth in paragraph 3 of your message G-143 would be of great psychological benefit to the Alliance. No effort should be spared to maximize the dramatic impact of this generous US offer. Since the precise wording of the proposal may greatly affect its impact, we propose for your consideration a revised statement designed to maximize the psychological benefits to be derived:

At the Heads of Government Meeting of December 1957 it was decided to establish stocks of nuclear warheads, which would be readily available for the for the defence of the Alliance in case of need.

Since that time planning for the NATO Stockpile has progressed to the point where it is now appropriate to refine our procedures for release of atomic weapons in case of emergency. Certainly we should strive for the most expeditious procedures possible. To this end the President of the United States is willing to pre-delegate to NATO the authority to release agreed portions of the weapons furnished to the NATO Atomic Stockpile for immediate use under certain clearly defined conditions. Thus the decision to release would be made by NATO without recourse to U.S. national authority.

The conditions for release and the procedures to be followed would be prescribed by the North Atlantic Council. In the view of the United States the conditions which would warrant such automatic release would be,

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By MMK NLDDE Date

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in general, those cases where a major NATO military unit is under direct attack or those cases where the scale of attack in one area is of **such magnitude** as to indicate, beyond reasonable doubt, that a state of general war exists throughout the NATO area.

The United States considers that the arrangement suggested above would constitute a major forward step in strengthening the Alliance against surprise attack. Accordingly, the United States earnestly recommends that its partners in the Alliance adopt this proposal and establish procedures to increase the state of readiness of the military forces to which we have committed our joint defense.

We recognize that this issue is complicated by many factors and that the U.S. may find it impossible to make this offer. Furthermore, it is possible that even if the proposal is submitted to the NATO Council that they may find difficulty in resolving the issues and agreeing on release procedures. However, it is apparent here that this question cannot be avoided much longer. As surface-to-air missiles using nuclear warheads are placed in the hands of non-US forces, some of them only a few minutes flying time from the Iron Curtain, we will no longer be able to tolerate a release procedure which does not reduce the time delay to the absolute minimum. Therefore, we feel that it is absolutely essential that the U.S. have a prepared position, preferably along the lines suggested in Mr. Dulles' proposal but in any event adequate to cover the issues that will be raised by the introduction of atomic surface-to-air missile forces.

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