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THORNEYCROFT VISIT
September 11-14, 1962
Washington, D.C.SCOPE PAPERIntroduction

On Minister Thorneycroft's appointment to the Defense Ministry in the July 13 Cabinet shakeup, Secretary McNamara cabled that he would be pleased to have him visit Washington if he believed that joint discussion prior to the December NATO meeting would be helpful. Minister Thorneycroft's acceptance of this invitation places certain initiative in his hands but still leaves the thrust of talks open to Secretary McNamara to develop, particularly in view of the subjects proposed by Minister Thorneycroft.

Since moving from the Ministry of Aviation to the Defense Ministry, Thorneycroft has taken actions in keeping with his reputed vigor and decisiveness. On 1 August he announced that the 60-missile THOR system would be phased out in 1963. As recently as 1 May, his predecessor had reaffirmed to Secretary McNamara that the system would be phased out about 31 October 1964. On August 10th, he published a broad list of other actions in both the R&D and production fields, some at considerable variance with prior policy. Principal of these was cancellation of BLUE WATER, the major British effort in the missile field. This and other information from London, such as a report that the attack carrier approved in principle under MOD Watkinson, would have to be rejustified, indicates that MOD Thorneycroft is forcing a searching review of the entire U.K. defense establishment and that serious action is coming out of this review. This is verified by the broad scope of his first agenda item for talks with Secretary, "Deployment of Defence Resources..."

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over-kill capability already at Saceur's disposal; he has could eventually end in a European strategic nuclear force.

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In these circumstances Minister Thorneycroft's visit should be viewed as an unusual opportunity to bring British defense thinking into better coordination with our own efforts. Much of Thorneycroft's recent action in phasing out THOR in 1963 (despite the fact that it was done abruptly), cancelling BLUEWATER and placing orders for modern conventional force weapons, is quite in line with the thrust of U.S. efforts in the Alliance. While this does not seem to have its origin in defense policy change so much as in domestic financial problems, it appears quite possible that the U.K. may be moving in the defense area, as it is in the Common Market negotiations, toward a degree of coordination with the U.S. and the Alliance not reached before. Minister Thorneycroft has stated in Commons the U.K. determination to maintain the independent deterrent in the V-Bomber force but at this stage of his tenure in office and that of the revised Cabinet, he could not have done otherwise. The high cost of this force and the increasing cost that will come with its modernization with BLUE STEEL and then SKYBOLT will reinforce the questions put by papers like the Guardian and Economist as to whether the U.K. and NATO should not admit dependence on the U.S. strategic deterrent.

Minister Thorneycroft's vigorous actions in his new cabinet post should be viewed in context with the Conservative Party efforts to show new vitality in the government. It is Thorneycroft's activities that appear to have more promise of achieving domestic political success than those of others in the cabinet who are having problems with inherited policy continued. This must be giving him more freedom of action than is normally held by a Defence Minister.

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The visit of MOD Thorneycroft comes at a time of great flux in British defense and foreign policy. It is too early for Thorneycroft to have fixed his future directions, he is just finishing his second month in Defence. It appears to be an unusual opportunity for frankness on the part of the British for drawing together the defense policies of the U.S. and the U.K.

U.S. Objectives

1. Development of the "special relationship" on defense matters between the U.S. and U.K. into a broader NATO and Atlantic context.
2. Promotion of further U.K. understanding and support for U.S. concepts of NATO strategy and Berlin contingency planning.
3. An agreed understanding concerning the future of the British strategic deterrent, the modernization of the V-Bomber force and its deployment, recognizing the possibility that the U.K. may not join the European Economic Community.
4. Exploration of a mutually coordinated U.S.-U.K. approach on both strategic and tactical nuclear weapons policy within NATO, including alternatives to national nuclear weapons systems.
5. Motivation of a greater U.K. defense effort, particularly through
 - a) strengthening the BAOR in both manpower and equipment to the NATO goals
 - and b) organization of an effective and rapidly deployable strategic reserve in the U.K.
6. Achievement of a reasonable measure of agreement on future research and development, and of understanding regarding the respective roles of both nations in military production.
7. Achievement of mutual understanding of respective defense limitations due to balance of payment problems and recognition that coordinated but dynamic effort by the West is the proper approach.

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7. Exploration of U.S. views on the value of further NAC talks on NATO strategy. The thrust of the U.K. position will be a desire to keep nuclear deterrent strategy out of the Council through the December Ministerial Meeting in order to avoid disturbance of the negotiations on U.K. entry into the EEC.

8. Achievement of a new general agreement on coordinated U.S.-U.K. research and developments efforts, perhaps along lines of the recent Rubel proposal. Included will be efforts to obtain exclusive U.K. R&D projects such as TOW/SWINGFIRE, and U.K. production in some U.S.-NATO project such as the C-130 (Tyne engine). In any case a real test of U.S. willingness in the present or new agreement will be sought.

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