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## DEPARTMENT OF STATE

## Memorandum of Conversation

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DATE: September 13, 1962

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SUBJECT: Interview with British Minister of Defence Thorneycroft

 PARTICIPANTS: U.S.  
 Mr. William R. Tyler - EUR  
 Major Gen. Puryear (London) MAAG  
 Mr. M. G. Knox - BNA

U.K.  
 Minister of Defence Thorneycroft  
 Permanent Under Secretary Sir R. Scott  
 Science Advisor Sir S. Zuckerman  
 General Sir Michael West  
 Minister (British Embassy) Lord Hood

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Mr. Tyler inquired whether Minister of Defence Thorneycroft had observed any significantly new developments in Franco-German relations as a result of the deGaulle visit. Mr. Thorneycroft replied in the negative. He thought that France had two alternatives: either to go into "Little Europe" in a big way, including military cooperation with Germany in new weapons, or on the other hand to have the United Kingdom join the Common Market, and then France would be tilted toward the Atlantic.

Mr. Tyler commented that German youth appears to be thinking in European and Atlantic terms rather than in the more exclusive Franco-German terms affected by the older German generation.

Mr. Thorneycroft remarked how interesting and stimulating had been the luncheon held that day (Sept. 13) by Mr. Walter Rostow. He alluded to a subject broached at the luncheon, namely, the U.S. and the U.K. assessment of German military nuclear ambitions and wondered whether it might be possible now for the U.S. and U.K. to agree on a joint assessment of this matter. Lord Hood echoed this thought. Mr. Tyler indicated that the Germans probably were not really interested but that they did not wish to be discriminated against. Mr. Thorneycroft thought that German Defense Minister Strauss was desirous of possession of tactical nuclear weapons and of their location as far forward as possible. Mr. Tyler repeated that in his opinion the Germans were not keen to obtain a German nuclear deterrent, but that it was important that their amour propre not be hurt. Mr. Thorneycroft added that in Britain it is believed that the Germans are not unduly worried over the question of their being discriminated.

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discriminated against with regard to nuclear weapons and their control. In any case it was better not to raise this issue during the Common Market talks.

Mr. Thorneycroft referred to the difficulty of selling British manufactured arms abroad when they were linked in some way with technical information obtained from the U.S. He said that this constituted a source of irritation. Asked to illustrate his statement he remarked that the U. K. had wished to sell certain missile and anti-aircraft systems to countries such as Finland and Yugoslavia and, therefore, had consulted with the U.S. to determine whether there were any policy reasons why such sales should not be made. There were apparently no policy objections but U.S. technicians had claimed that the U.K. missiles could not be sold because one small element in the apparatus was American and was classified. Mr. Thorneycroft added his opinion that policy reasons should prevail in such cases and he was perfectly content to seek and obtain U.S. agreement from that point of view, but that once such agreement had been obtained it seemed excessive for sales to be denied for technical and comparatively trivial reasons.

Mr. Thorneycroft then raised the question of the U.S. refusal to allow the U.K. to permit a British firm to sell to France certain parts connected with the heat exchange systems of a nuclear submarine. He pointed out that it is politically important for Britain to be understanding of and helpful to France at the present time and that the British refusals, even if blamed on the U.S., would merely confirm the French in their idea of the Anglo-Saxon club from which France was excluded. Mr. Tyler suggested that he mention this matter to Under Secretary Ball.

Sir Robert Scott pointed out that British military power was very thinly deployed in Africa and that Britain would have no practical means of getting troops into Southern Rhodesia if Sir Roy Welensky should flare up, for example, as a by-product of the UN Congo policy, or if there were to be racial disturbances in the Rhodesias. Mr. Thorneycroft remarked that the British had nothing much between Suez and Singapore and that the British troops in Kenya were there not for African reasons but to protect the Persian Gulf.

Mr. Tyler concluded the talk by expressing the hope that the visit to the U.S. had been helpful and not too tiring. Mr. Thorneycroft was enthusiastic in his discussion of the visit, adding that he "had not been allowed to be idle".

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