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28th February 1984

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NOTE FOR THE RECORD OF A MEETING WITH THE US DEFENCE SECRETARY,
MR WEINBERGER, ON TUESDAY 28TH FEBRUARY 1984
AT THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

Those present:

The Rt Hon Michael Heseltine MP
Secretary of State for Defence

Mr Weinberger
US Defence Secretary

Mr J N H Bletloch
DUS(P)

Ambassador Charles H Price II

Mr R C Mottram
Private Secretary to the
Secretary of State for Defence

Mr Perle

Mr Weinberger said that the US Government were at present addressing the problem that if they deployed some D-5 missiles with 8 warheads and some with 12, they would all count as 12 warhead missiles under present conventions for arms control agreements. He was conscious of the commitment which they had entered into to supply us with the D-5 missile with the 12 RBA Bus and had been anxious that we should be aware of this problem so that account could be taken of our thinking. He found it difficult to see why our interest and the US interest should be affected by counting rules developed in the SALT negotiations and set out in a treaty which the United States had refused to ratify. Mr Perle commented that any future arms control agreement would have to include a counting rule on the number of warheads which each missile was deemed to carry. It would be important to ensure that such a rule applied equally to both sides: in SALT the Americans had accepted an interpretation which meant that the limit on their side equated to the actual number of warheads deployed but in the case of the Russian SS18 missile, the number counted was less than the maximum carrying capacity. The Americans were looking at ways in which an agreement might provide for both the 8 and 12 RBA options since the US Navy wished itself to deploy both types of missile.

2. The Secretary of State drew attention to the importance for us of ensuring that D-5 Bus remained compatible with the Mark IV RBA. Our plans assumed that we would buy into the end of the US production line for the Mark IV RBA. Given the number of RBAs of this design which the US already had in service, we were assuming that they would also have an interest in ensuring that the D-5 Bus was compatible with it.



The American side confirmed that their existing planning included the 12 Mark IV RBA option and that our requirement in this respect was well understood. Mr Perle asked when we would reach decisions in this area. The Secretary of State explained that he had yet to consult his colleagues on our requirements and would do so over the next 2 months. Mr Perle said that the Americans would need themselves to clarify their own thinking although there was a natural tendency to try to put off decisions.

Rm

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