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C.(58) 49

COPY NO. 57

24th February, 1958

CABINET

INTERMEDIATE RANGE BALLISTIC MISSILES

Note by the Minister of Defence

As requested by the Cabinet on 12th February (C.C.(58) 16th Conclusions, Minute 5), I circulate the text of the statement which I propose to make in the House on Monday, 24th February, about the Agreement with the Americans on intermediate range ballistic missiles (Annex A). This has been approved by the Prime Minister.

2. I attach also the final text of the Agreement with the United States Government, which has been amended to take into account the points at the Cabinet discussion (Annex B).

D.S.

Ministry of Defence, S.W.1.

22nd February, 1958

ANNEX ADRAFT PARLIAMENTARY STATEMENT TO BE MADE
BY THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE

The House will recall that at the meeting in Bermuda last March, the Prime Minister and President Eisenhower agreed in principle that certain guided missiles would be made available by the United States for deployment in Britain.

2. This was followed by technical studies by the military and scientific staffs of the two countries. These studies having now been completed, Her Majesty's Government and the Government of the United States have concluded an Agreement, setting out the arrangements for the supply and deployment of these weapons.

3. The missiles will be manned and operated by units of the Royal Air Force.

4. The Agreement provides that the missiles shall not be launched except by a joint positive decision of both Governments.

5. The nuclear warheads will remain in American custody and will be kept in an unarmed condition so that there can be no risk of a nuclear explosion; and the weapon is designed in such a way that it would be impossible for it to be launched accidentally.

6. The United States will supply the missiles and specialised equipment at their expense and will also pay for the training of British personnel in America. Britain will meet the cost of providing and constructing the sites and supplying certain items of equipment. The British share of this expenditure is estimated at about £10 millions spread over two years.

7. The missiles will be deployed in small numbers on dispersed sites, mostly on active or disused R.A.F. airfields. These sites should be mainly in East Anglia, Lincolnshire and Yorkshire. It would obviously not be in the public interest to disclose the number of missiles, or the number of sites or their precise location.

8. The text of the Agreement is available as a White Paper in the Vote Office.

ANNEX B

MEMORANDUM

1. The Government of the United States shall supply to the Government of the United Kingdom an agreed number of intermediate range ballistic missiles and their related specialised equipment and make available training assistance in order to facilitate the deployment by the Government of the United Kingdom of the said missiles. The missiles shall be located only in the United Kingdom at such sites and under such conditions as may be agreed upon between the two Governments.

2. The United Kingdom Government shall provide the sites and supporting facilities required for the deployment of the missiles.

3. Ownership of the missiles and related equipment shall pass to the United Kingdom Government under established United States Mutual Assistance Program procedures as soon as the United Kingdom Government is in a position to man and operate the missiles.

4. The missiles will be manned and operated by United Kingdom personnel, who will be trained by the United States Government, for the purposes of this project at the earliest feasible date.

5. For the purposes of this Agreement, training and test-firing of missiles will normally take place on United States instrumented ranges but by agreement with the United States Government the United Kingdom Government may arrange with the Government of the Commonwealth of Australia for missiles to be test-fired on the Woomera Range in Australia.

6. Material, equipment, and training provided by the United States Government to the United Kingdom Government pursuant to the arrangements recorded herein will be furnished pursuant to the United States Mutual Security Act of 1954, as amended, acts amendatory or supplementary thereto, appropriations acts thereunder or any other applicable United States legislative provisions.

7. The decision to launch these missiles will be a matter for joint decision by the two Governments. Any such joint decision will be made in the light of the circumstances at the time and having regard to the undertaking the two Governments have assumed in Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty.

8. References to intermediate range ballistic missiles in this Agreement do not include the nuclear warheads for such missiles. The United States Government shall provide nuclear warheads for the missiles transferred to the United Kingdom Government pursuant to this Agreement. All nuclear warheads so provided shall remain in full United States ownership, custody and control in accordance with United States law.

9. The arrangements recorded herein are made in consonance with the North Atlantic Treaty and in pursuance of the Mutual Defense Assistance Agreement between the United Kingdom Government and the United States Government, signed January 27, 1950, as supplemented, and related agreements, and are subject to the applicable provisions thereof.

10. This Agreement shall be subject to revision by agreement between the two Governments and shall remain in force for not less than five years from the date of the Agreement but may thereafter be terminated by either Government upon six months' notice.

Washington, February 22, 1958.