

Then the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, while recognizing the value of this offer, decided, after full consideration, not to avail himself of it because of doubts which had been expressed about the prospects of the success of the enterprise. As an alternative, the President offered the "Hound Dog" missile; but the "Hound Dog" missile cannot be used on British aircraft because it would put the bottom of the aircraft too close to the ground, causing danger to those operating the planes.

The statement continues:

"The Prime Minister then turned to the possibility of provision of the "Polaris" missile to the United Kingdom by the United States. After careful review, the President and the Prime Minister agreed that a decision on "Polaris" must be considered in the widest context both of the future defence of the Atlantic Alliance and of the safety of the whole free world. ... The Prime Minister suggested and the President agreed, that for the immediate future a start could be made by subscribing to NATO some part of the forces already in existence. This could include allocations from United States strategic forces, from United Kingdom Bomber Command, and from tactical nuclear forces now held in Europe. Such forces would be assigned as part of a NATO nuclear force and targeted in accordance with NATO plans."

Finally, they came out in favour of this multilateral NATO nuclear force. Returning to the "Polaris", the President and the Prime Minister agreed that the purpose of their two governments with respect to the provision of the "Polaris" missiles must be the development of a multilateral NATO nuclear force in the closest consultation with other NATO allies. Accordingly, they agreed that the United States would make available a contribution of "Polaris" missiles on a continuing basis for British submarines and that the nuclear warheads for "Polaris" missiles should also be provided. These forces, and at least equal United States forces, would be made available for inclusion in a NATO multilateral nuclear force. At the same time, while they set up this multilateral force in embryo, the last paragraph points out that the President and the Prime Minister agreed that, in addition to having a nuclear shield, it was important to have a non-nuclear sword. For this reason, the communique concludes, they agreed on the importance of increasing the effectiveness of their conventional forces on a world-wide basis.

That is a tremendous step -- a change in the philosophy of defence; a change in the views of NATO, if accepted by the NATO partners. Certainly it represents a change in the views of two nations which play such a large part in the NATO organization. They went further, as I understand it. They concluded that the day of the bomber is phasing out. Britain wanted a striking force of its own. Britain needed a delivery system produced at the lowest cost. Hence, the "Skybolt". With the advent of the "Polaris" missile, the United States believed there was no longer need for the "Skybolt", and this was agreed to by the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom. Who made the mistake? Are they to be condemned? No less than \$600 million was spent on the development of the "Skybolt", which was believed to be the essence of defence measures for the United Kingdom itself. I point this out because everywhere in the world, as a result of Khrushchov's changing moods, and vast improvements in technology both with respect to defensive and offensive warfare, the decisions of today are often negated tomorrow.