

# Secretary-General’s note on NATO–WEU relations (London, 14 March 1967)


**Caption:** On 14 March 1967, the Secretary-General circulates a note on relations between the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) and Western European Union (WEU) which aims to examine how the action taken by France with regard to NATO will affect the obligations and tasks undertaken by the seven Member States of the modified Brussels Treaty. The note particularly focuses on the limitation of forces and armaments, quantitative control of levels of armaments, the definition of armaments subject to control and the operation of the Standing Armaments Committee. The note also incorporates two French memoranda concerning NATO, sent to the other 14 NATO countries, which set out the measures France intends to take after withdrawing from the integrated military command.

**Source:** Council of the Western European Union. Secretary-General’s note. NATO-WEU relations. London: 14.03.1967. WPM (580). Copy No 58. 20 p. Archives nationales de Luxembourg (ANLux). <http://www.anlux.lu>. Western European Union Archives. Secretariat-General/Council’s Archives. 1954-1987. Interpretation of Brussels Treaty & Paris Protocols. Year: 1966, 01/03/1966-30/03/1967. File 113.2. Volume 1/2.

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**Last updated:** 25/10/2016



# WESTERN EUROPEAN UNION

W.E.U. CONFIDENTIAL

Original: English/French

WPM (580)

Copy No. 58


14th March 1967

## SECRETARY-GENERAL'S NOTE

### NATO - W.E.U. Relations

The Secretary-General circulates herewith a revised version of the note on NATO - W.E.U. relations circulated to delegations as WPM (578).

This version incorporates the amendments made by the working group on 13th March. It is accompanied by a list of the points to which the Council's particular attention is drawn.

  
9, Grosvenor Place,  
London, S.W.1.

W.E.U. CONFIDENTIAL

Relations between NATO and W.E.U.

PREAMBLE

1. Article IV of the revised Brussels Treaty reads as follows:

"In the execution of the Treaty, the High Contracting Parties and any Organs established by Them under the Treaty shall work in close co-operation with the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation.

Recognising the undesirability of duplicating the military staffs of NATO, the Council and its Agency will rely on the appropriate military authorities of NATO for information and advice on military matters."

Furthermore, under the Protocols to the revised Brussels Treaty both Organisations have certain duties to perform and are thus bound to co-operate closely.

2. The purpose of this note is to examine how far the action taken by France in regard to the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation is likely to affect the application of the provisions of the revised Brussels Treaty.

3. France has remained a party to the North Atlantic Treaty and a member of the North Atlantic Council. However, it is clear from the memoranda addressed by the French Government to the other fourteen members of NATO on 11th and 29th March 1966,\* that France has withdrawn her forces from the integrated command arrangements set up within the Atlantic Alliance.

/4. France ...

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\* c.f. Annex

W.E.U. CONFIDENTIAL

WPM (580)

4. France remains a party to the revised Brussels Treaty.

5. This study will deal with the repercussions of the French decision on the following obligations and tasks undertaken by the seven member States of the Brussels Treaty:

- limitation of forces and armaments
- quantitative control of levels of armaments
- definition of armaments subject to control
- activities of the Standing Armaments Committee.

I. LIMITATION OF FORCES AND ARMAMENTS

(Section IV of the Final Act of the London Conference of 3rd October 1954 and Resolution of the North Atlantic Council of 22nd October 1954 to implement section IV of the Final Act; Articles I, II and III of Protocol No. II and Resolution of the W.E.U. Council of 15th September 1956; Article V of Protocol No. II and Agreement signed in Paris on 14th December 1957)

1. Level of forces and armaments under NATO command

a) The French Government has decided to withdraw all its forces from NATO command and these forces have passed under national command. They therefore come within the limitations prescribed in Article V of Protocol No. II and in the Agreement of 14th December 1957. Thus, they cannot in future be the subject of recommendations by permanent representatives on the basis of the NATO Annual Review.

/b) As France ...

W.E.U. CONFIDENTIAL

W.E.U. CONFIDENTIAL

WPM (580)

b) As France has no forces under NATO command and is not taking part in the NATO Annual Review, certain problems may arise, in particular with regard to the Resolution of 15th September 1956, implementing Article III of Protocol No. II.

Under this procedure, any increase in the level of forces above the limits specified must be subject to unanimous decision taken by member States in the Council of W.E.U., after the permanent representatives of W.E.U. in the North Atlantic Council have deliberated and expressed a recommendation.

2. Levels of forces and armaments under national command

a) All French forces now come into the category of forces under national command, which are subdivided by the texts in force, as follows: common defence, overseas defence, internal defence and police forces. /These forces will be submitted, under the same conditions as hitherto, to the procedure laid down in the texts in force/\*

b) According to Article 4 of the Agreement of 14th December 1957, the strengths of the forces for common defence have to be communicated annually by the North Atlantic Council to the Council of W.E.U., who are required to accept them. The French Government will continue to follow this procedure.

c) With regard to the strengths of forces for overseas defence, internal defence and police, these are notified direct to the Council of W.E.U. and no problem arises (Articles 1, 3, 5 and 6 of the Agreement of 14th December 1957).

/d) Levels...

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\* Text proposed by the French delegation.

W.E.U. CONFIDENTIAL



W.E.U. CONFIDENTIAL

WFM (580)

d) Levels of armaments for forces in all categories are notified by member States through the Armaments Control Agency. Transmission can therefore continue as hitherto.

e) It is recalled that the Council of W.E.U. fixes, by unanimous decision, the strengths and armaments of internal defence forces (Articles 3 and 6, Agreement of 14th December 1957). Article 6 (c) of the Agreement of 14th December 1957 further stipulates that, when considering or reviewing the tables, the Council shall take into account inter alia any change in the command status of forces which may be decided upon by the North Atlantic Council.

## II. QUANTITATIVE CONTROL OF LEVELS OF ARMAMENTS

(Protocol No. II, Articles I, II and III; Protocol No. III, Articles III and IV; Annex IV; Protocol No. IV, Articles VII, paragraphs 1b and 2, VIII, XIII, paragraphs 1, 2 and 3, XIV, XV, XVI, XVII, XVIII, XIX and XXI; Agreement of 14th December 1957)

### 1. Armaments of forces under NATO command

a) Protocol No. IV (and in particular Articles VII 2a, XIII 3, XIV) provides for the transmission of documents by NATO to the Armaments Control Agency for purposes of control, the co-ordination of information received by the two Organisations and the consultation of the competent NATO military authorities in order to determine levels of armaments consistent with the approved conclusions of the Annual Review.

- As French forces are now wholly under national command, such transmission and co-ordination have no further purpose in their case.

- The same applies to the armaments of French forces, for the same reason, as regards consultation by the Agency of the appropriate NATO authorities who no longer include French officers.

/Under the ...

W.E.U. CONFIDENTIAL

W.E.U. CONFIDENTIAL

WPM (580)

b) Under the terms of Article VIII of Protocol No. IV, test checks, visits and inspections of forces and depots under NATO authority have to be undertaken by the appropriate NATO authorities.

In accordance with Article IV of Protocol No. II and Article VIII of Protocol No. IV, the Council receive notification of the information acquired as a result of these inspections through the medium of a high-ranking officer designated by the Supreme Allied Commander Europe; this information is then passed on to the Agency. As it has so far proved impossible to distinguish between depots under NATO authority and other depots, the procedure of combined Agency/SHAPE inspections was introduced. This procedure has to be approved each year by both NATO and the Council.

- As all French forces are now under national command, only the Agency is entitled to inspect French units and depots. There can therefore be no combined Agency/SHAPE inspections of French depots.

- The high-ranking officer will therefore no longer have to transmit any information on French forces to the Council.

- The communication of information transmitted to the Council by the high-ranking officer designated by SACEUR should normally raise no difficulty, except in so far as French forces are concerned. The Council will, of course, continue in any case to receive information on French forces through the procedure for forces under national command.

## 2. Armaments of forces under national command

The relevant regulations apply to the armaments of French forces [under the same conditions as hitherto.]\*

/3. A, B, C ...

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\*Amendment proposed by the French delegation.

W.E.U. CONFIDENTIAL

W.E.U. CONFIDENTIAL  
WPM (580)

3. A, B, C weapons

No legal problem arises here as there is no provision for action by NATO (Article XVIII of Protocol No. IV).

III. DEFINITION OF ARMAMENTS SUBJECT TO CONTROL

The only occasion on which NATO is required to act is in the case of the weapons covered by Annex III to Protocol No. III, where provision is made for alterations (Article II of Protocol No. III). The list of weapons contained in Annex III may be the subject of amendments or deletions by a two-thirds majority decision of the Council if, to meet the requirements of the armed forces assigned to him, the competent Supreme Commander of NATO presents a recommendation and if the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany submits a request to the Council to this effect.

Although France has withdrawn from the integrated command arrangements of NATO, no change appears to be required in this procedure.

IV. EFFECTS ON THE ACTIVITIES OF THE STANDING ARMAMENTS COMMITTEE

The S.A.C. was set up by the Decision of the Council of W.E.U. taken on 7th May 1955 in implementation of Article VIII, 2 of the revised Brussels Treaty. Its terms of reference and working rules can therefore be amended in the same way, without amending the Treaty or Protocols. Any member government may submit proposals for amendment to the Council (Article 12 of the aforesaid Decision).

/The ...

W.E.U. CONFIDENTIAL



W.E.U. CONFIDENTIAL

WPM (580)

The representatives of member countries of W.E.U. on the S.A.C. are in many cases members of their national delegation to NATO, but this is not a requirement under Article 2.

Observers from NATO may be associated with the work of the S.A.C. (optional) (Article 4).

Agreements or arrangements may be concluded between all the countries of W.E.U. or between some of them (Article 10).

Article 10 provides expressly for the maintenance of close contact between the S.A.C. and NATO but lays down no specific procedure.

Article I states that the S.A.C. shall be in Paris in order that the closest contact may be maintained with NATO. It is for the Council to decide whether such contact can be maintained after NATO's move to Brussels.

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The Council's attention is drawn to the following points:

.../...

W.E.U. CONFIDENTIAL

I. 1. level of forces and armaments under NATO  
command

"a) The French Government has decided to withdraw all its forces from NATO command and these forces have passed under national command. They therefore come within the limitations prescribed in Article V of Protocol No. II and in the Agreement of 14th December 1957. Thus, they cannot in future be the subject of recommendations by permanent representatives on the basis of the NATO Annual Review."

I. 1. "b) As France has no forces under NATO command and is not taking part in the NATO Annual Review, certain problems may arise, in particular with regard to the Resolution of 15th September 1956, implementing Article III of Protocol No. II.

Under this procedure, any increase in the level of forces above the limits specified must be subject to unanimous decision taken by member States in the Council of W.E.U., after the permanent representatives of W.E.U. in the North Atlantic Council have deliberated and expressed a recommendation."

/I. 2. ...

I. 2. Levels of forces and armaments under national command

"a) All French forces now come into the category of forces under national command, which are subdivided by the texts in force, as follows: common defence, overseas defence, internal defence and police forces. /These forces will be submitted, under the same conditions as hitherto, to the procedure laid down in the texts in force/\* "

\* Text proposed by the French delegation.

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I. 2. "b) According to Article 4 of the Agreement of 14th December 1957, the strengths of the forces for common defence have to be communicated annually by the North Atlantic Council to the Council of W.E.U., who are required to accept them. The French Government will continue to follow this procedure."

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I. 2. "e) It is recalled that the Council of W.E.U. fixes, by unanimous decision, the strengths and armaments of internal defence forces (Articles 3 and 6, Agreement of 14th December 1957). Article 6 (c) of the Agreement of 14th December 1957 further stipulates that, when considering or reviewing the tables, the Council shall take into account inter alia any change in the command status of forces which may be decided upon by the North Atlantic Council."

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/II. 1. ...

II. 1. Armaments of forces under NATO command

b) third paragraph

" - As all French forces are now under national command, only the Agency is entitled to inspect French units and depots. There can therefore be no combined Agency/SHAPE inspections of French depots."

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II. 2. Armaments of forces under national command

"The relevant regulations apply to the armaments of French forces under the same conditions as hitherto.<sup>7</sup>\* "

\* Amendment proposed by the French delegation.

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III. DEFINITION OF ARMAMENTS SUBJECT TO CONTROL

"The only occasion on which NATO is required to act is in the case of the weapons covered by Annex III to Protocol No. III, where provision is made for alterations (Article II of Protocol No. III). The list of weapons contained in Annex III may be the subject of amendments or deletions by a two-thirds majority decision of the Council if, to meet the requirements of the armed forces assigned to him, the competent Supreme Commander of NATO presents a recommendation and if the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany submits a request to the Council to this effect.

Although France has withdrawn from the integrated command arrangements of NATO, no change appears to be required in this procedure."

/IV ...

W.E.U. CONFIDENTIAL  
WPM (580)

IV. EFFECTS ON THE ACTIVITIES OF THE STANDING ARMAMENTS  
COMMITTEE

Last paragraph

"Article I states that the S.A.C. shall be in Paris in order that the closest contact may be maintained with NATO. It is for the Council to decide whether such contact can be maintained after NATO's move to Brussels."

.../...

W.E.U. CONFIDENTIAL



W.E.U. CONFIDENTIAL

WPM (580)

ANNEX

French memoranda concerning NATO

- (1) Memorandum addressed to the other 14  
NATO countries dated 11th March 1966

"For several years, the French Government has repeatedly indicated, both in public and in talks with the allied governments, that in its view the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, insofar as France was concerned, no longer corresponded to the world conditions prevailing at present and which are fundamentally different from those of 1949 and of the following years.

There has been a change in the nature of the threats to the western world, and particularly to Europe, which had led to the conclusion of the Treaty. They are no longer as imminent or as menacing as they were formerly. Moreover, the European countries have restored their economies and have therefore recovered means for action. In particular, France is equipping herself with atomic weapons, the very nature of which precludes her integration. Thirdly, the substitution of the balance of nuclear power between the Soviet Union and the United States for the United States' monopoly in this field has transformed the general conditions of western defence. Finally, it is a fact that Europe is no longer the centre of international crises. This centre is now elsewhere, particularly in Asia, where the countries of the Atlantic Alliance as a group are obviously not involved.

This evolution does not in any way lead the French Government to call in question the Treaty signed in Washington on 4th April 1949. In other words, unless events in the years to come were to bring about a radical change in East-West relations, the French Government does not intend to take advantage in 1969 of the terms of Article 13 of the Treaty, and considers that the Alliance must continue as long as it appears to be necessary.

This having been categorically stated, there arises the problem of the organisation, that is to say, of all the agreements, arrangements and decisions made after the signature of the Treaty, either in multilateral or in bilateral form. The French Government considers that this organisation no longer corresponds to what, in its view, is required.

/It would ...

W.E.U. CONFIDENTIAL

W.E.U. CONFIDENTIAL

WEM (580)

ANNEX

It would no doubt have been possible to envisage a negotiation to modify the present arrangements by common agreement. The French Government would have been happy to make this proposal if it had had reason to think that negotiations would have led to the result it had in mind. Unfortunately, all the evidence shows that such action would be bound to fail, since all France's partners either appear to be, or say that they are, in favour of maintaining the status quo, if not of reinforcing everything which France henceforth considers unacceptable.

Therefore France is constrained, insofar as she is concerned, to draw conclusions regarding the consequences of the situation, in other words, to take for her part measures which seem to her necessary and which, in her view, are in no way incompatible with her membership in the Alliance nor with her participation, should the need arise, in military operations at the side of her allies.

In the past, the French Government has already taken steps in this direction with respect to her naval forces assigned to NATO, either in the Mediterranean or in the Atlantic. It is now a question of the land and air forces stationed in Germany which are assigned to the Allied Command in Europe. France intends to terminate such assignments. This decision will entail her simultaneous withdrawal from the two integrated commands on which these forces depend, and in which she participates within the NATO framework, namely, from the Supreme Allied Command Europe and the Central Europe Command and, ipso facto, the transfer from French territory of the Headquarters of these two Commands.

The implementation of all these measures naturally raise a number of problems, which the French Government is now ready to discuss with its allies (and in particular with the United States of America (1)). It will be advisable to consider what arrangements should be made for liaison between the French command and NATO commands, and to determine the conditions in which the French forces, particularly those in Germany, would participate in time of war, should Article 5 of the Treaty of Washington become operative, in joint military actions, as regards both the command and the operations themselves. This presupposes, in particular, that the French land and air forces currently stationed in Germany will be kept there within the framework of the Conventions of 23rd October 1954, which the French Government, for its part, is prepared to do.

/ / It is ready ...

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(1) Text included only in the memorandum to the United States.

W.E.U. CONFIDENTIAL

W.E.U. CONFIDENTIAL

WPM (580)

ANNEX

/It is ready to examine the situation with the Federal Government and, if necessary, to discuss the facilities granted to the German forces in France under the Terms of the Agreement of 25th October 1960 (1).7

It will be also necessary to consider the problems which may arise for France in regard to the Military Committee and the Standing Group, including the problem of liaison arrangements to be made, in the case of need, between these bodies and the French command.

These are, in broad outline, the steps which the French Government plans to take, in those matters which are its concern, in order to adapt to the new conditions the arrangements for its participation in the Atlantic Alliance. It is ready to start discussions on the practical implementing measures to be taken and hopes that adequate arrangements can be made by common agreement between all the allies.

/The multilateral problems are not, however, the only ones to arise for the United States and France, for the two countries have in the past concluded a series of bilateral agreements which are still in force, on the following matters:

- warehouses at Déols-La Martinerie;
- the placing of certain airfields and installations in France at the disposal of the United States forces;
- line of supply;
- United States Headquarters at St. Germain;
- pipeline.

The French Government considers that these agreements, taken as a whole, are no longer in harmony with present conditions, which lead it to recover the full exercise of its sovereignty on French territory, in other words, no longer to accept the presence of foreign units, installations or bases in France falling in any respect under the control of authorities other than the French authorities. It is ready to study and, if possible, to settle with the Government of the United States the question of the practical consequences of this decision..

/The French ...

(1) Text included only in the memorandum to the Federal Republic of Germany

W.E.U. CONFIDENTIAL



W.E.U. CONFIDENTIAL

WPM (580)

ANNEX

The French Government is also disposed to enter into a discussion on the military facilities which might be placed at the disposal of the Government of the United States on French territory in the event of a conflict in which both countries would participate by virtue of the Atlantic Alliance. These facilities could be the subject of an agreement to be concluded between the two governments(1).7

✓The multilateral problems are not, however, the only ones to arise for Canada and France, for the two countries have in the past concluded agreements relating to the construction and use of airfields on French territory to be occupied by the Royal Canadian Air Corps.

The French Government considers that ~~these~~ agreements are no longer in harmony with present conditions, which lead it to recover the full exercise of its sovereignty on French territory, in other words, no longer to accept the presence of foreign units, installations or bases in France falling in any respect under the control of authorities other than the French authorities. It is ready to study and, if possible, to settle with the Government of Canada the question of the practical consequences of this decision.

The French Government is also disposed to enter into a discussion on the military facilities which might be placed at the disposal of the Government of Canada on French territory in the event of a conflict in which both countries would participate by virtue of the Atlantic Alliance. These facilities could be the subject of an agreement to be concluded between the two governments(2).7"

/(ii) ...

(1) Text included only in the memorandum to the United States.

(2) Text included only in the memorandum to Canada.

W.E.U. CONFIDENTIAL

W.E.U. CONFIDENTIAL

WPM (580)

ANNEX

(ii) Memorandum addressed to the other 14 NATO countries  
dated 29th March 1966

"In its memorandum of 11th March 1966, the French Government informed the..... Government of the measures it had been led to take because of the impossibility of amending the provisions at present in force in the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation by joint agreement and in satisfactory conditions. This impossibility was confirmed by the declaration made on 18th March by the other 14 members of the Atlantic Alliance, including .....

/In a memorandum of 25th March, the United States Government called for details of the measures envisaged by the French Government and the position of the French Government concerning the bilateral agreements between the two countries. The French Government has the honour to give the following details, as requested (1)./

The French Government has the honour to give the following details on the measures in question.

1. The French Government has announced that it proposes to terminate the assignment to the Allied Command in Europe of French land and air forces stationed in Germany.

It has the honour to inform the ..... Government that this assignment will end on 1st July 1966.

/So far as the French Government is concerned, it does not, however, exclude the possibility of maintaining those French land and air forces in Germany which are already stationed there. It is prepared, as it has already stated, to consider the situation with the Federal Government and if need be to decide on the necessary arrangements. It is specified that, for the case in question, French forces would be stationed in Germany by virtue of the Convention of 23rd October 1954 on the presence of foreign forces on the territory of the Federal Republic of Germany.

/If need be ...

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(1) Text included only in the memorandum to the United States.

W.E.U. CONFIDENTIAL



W.E.U. CONFIDENTIAL

WPM (580)

ANNEX

If need be, the French Government is ready to discuss at the same time the facilities granted to German forces in France by virtue of the Agreement of 25th October 1960 (1)./

2. The re-establishment of entirely French command over French forces will lead to the withdrawal, on the same date, of French personnel assigned to the integrated allied commands: i.e. the Supreme Allied Command Europe, the Central Europe and Southern Europe Commands and their subordinate commands, and the NATO Defence College.

The permanent staff and Frenchmen who are attending the courses will be withdrawn after the present term, which will end on 23rd July 1966.

The French Government considers it would be desirable, after French participation ends, to assign liaison missions to the general staffs concerned. French officers could thus assist the allied general staffs, in particular in operations for their transfer off French territory.

Such liaison with the allied commands would also facilitate the study of the conditions in which French forces, and in particular those in Germany, if they continue to be stationed on the territory of the Federal Republic, could participate in common military action in the event of war, both with regard to the command and actual operations. Should this be the case, French forces would be stationed in Germany by virtue of the Convention of 23rd October 1954 on the presence of foreign forces on the territory of the Federal Republic of Germany.

3. The withdrawal of the French elements assigned to allied general staffs (SHAPE and the Central Europe Command) as well as the NATO College, involves the removal of these headquarters from French territory.

It appears that one year would be sufficient to carry out the necessary measures in this regard and that by 1st April 1967 the entire operation could be completed.

/As a result ...

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(1) Text included only in the memorandum to the Federal Republic of Germany.

W.E.U. CONFIDENTIAL

W.E.U. CONFIDENTIAL

WPM (580)

ANNEX

As a result, the French Government, by virtue of Article 16 of the Protocol of 28th August 1952 on the Status of the Headquarters, will notify the United States Government of its denunciation of this Protocol, which will cease to be in effect on 31st March 1967.

4. The above-mentioned naturally do not exhaust the list of problems which will have to be settled with regard to NATO. The French Government is prepared to discuss these other problems in a bilateral or multilateral framework, as appropriate.

✓ In its previous memorandum, the French Government informed the United States Government that it considered certain bilateral agreements between France and the United States were no longer in accordance with present conditions, which led it to resume complete sovereignty over French territory. Further, the main elements of these agreements as a whole would no longer be applicable in view of the arrangements made by the French Government with regard to its participation in the Atlantic Organisation. It would appear that, generally speaking, the same date, 1st April 1967, would be appropriate for completing the necessary operations, such as the transfer of the headquarters of the American forces in Europe (Camp des Loges) and various American army and air force installations. Longer periods might be envisaged for overcoming certain complex problems, such as, in particular, those raised by the existence of the Déols-La Martinerie depot. Special arrangements might also be made, if the United States Government so wishes, concerning conditions for continuing the operation of the pipeline which was the subject of the agreement of 30th June 1953.

The French Government is ready to start immediate discussions with the United States Government on the practical arrangements which need to be made on these various points concerning the bilateral agreements.

Finally, if the United States Government so wishes, the French Government is also willing to discuss the military facilities, mentioned in the memorandum of 11th March, which the two Governments might grant each other in the event of a conflict in which one or other country might take part by virtue of the Atlantic Alliance (1).✓

// In its previous ...

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(1) Text included only in the memorandum to the United States.

W.E.U. CONFIDENTIAL

W.E.U. CONFIDENTIAL

WPM (580)

ANNEX

In its previous memorandum, the French Government informed the Canadian Government that it considered certain bilateral agreements between France and Canada were no longer in accordance with present conditions, which led it to resume complete sovereignty over French territory. Further, the main elements of these agreements would no longer be applicable in view of the arrangements made by the French Government with regard to its participation in the Atlantic Organisation. It would appear that, generally speaking, the same date, 1st April 1967, would be appropriate for completing the necessary operations, such as the transfer of the various Royal Canadian Air Force installations.

The French Government is prepared to start immediate discussions with the Canadian Government on the practical arrangements which need to be made on these various points concerning the bilateral agreements.

Finally, if the Canadian Government so wishes, the French Government is also willing to discuss the military facilities, mentioned in the memorandum of 11th March, which the two governments might grant each other in the event of a conflict in which one or other country might take part by virtue of the Atlantic Alliance (1).<sup>7</sup>"

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(1) Text included only in the memorandum to Canada.

W.E.U. CONFIDENTIAL