



January 26, 1968

**"Defence And Oversea Policy Committee:
Non-Proliferation: Memorandum By The Minister Of
State For Foreign Affairs "**

Citation:

"Defence And Oversea Policy Committee: Non-Proliferation: Memorandum By The Minister Of State For Foreign Affairs ", January 26, 1968, Wilson Center Digital Archive, TNA, Records of the Cabinet Office (CAB), 148/36. Contributed by Malcolm Craig. <https://wilson-center-digital-archive.dvincitest.com/document/300413>

Summary:

Subsequent to De Gaulle's November 1967 veto of Wilson's EEC application, senior British ministers still saw the European question as having considerable importance. Shortly before his departure from the role of Foreign Secretary, George Brown reported to the Defence and Oversea Policy Committee that the ructions over Article 3 of the NPT would be "particularly awkward for us as potential members of EURATOM and the E.E.C." De Gaulle's second "Non!" only served to postpone Britain's membership of the EEC, as Edward Heath's Conservative government successfully campaigned for accession, which took place in 1973.

Credits:

This document was made possible with support from Carnegie Corporation of New York (CCNY)

Original Language:

English

Contents:

Transcript - English

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OPD(68)6

26 January 1968

COPY NO. 66

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DEFENCE AND OVERSEA POLICY COMMITTEE

NON-PROLIFERATION

Memorandum by the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs

The tabling of the complete text of the Non-Proliferation Treaty when the Eighteen Nation Disarmament Committee resumed in Geneva on 18 January was a welcome development. This marked the positive step forward for which we had been hoping last year, and by laying the entire Treaty open for public discussion thereby made substantial amendments more difficult. The revised text also represents a considerable concession by the Russians. The full text as tabled is at Annex A, and the text of a speech made at Geneva on 23 January giving the U.K. views on this new version of the treaty is at Annex B.

2. In this situation we can afford to be more optimistic. Events are on the march, and it is reasonable to suppose that a Treaty is now within our grasp. The United Nations General Assembly Resolution called for a report to be submitted by the E.N.D.C. on or before 15 March. It should certainly be possible to meet that date; in fact we hope it may be possible to anticipate it. Thereafter there will be a resumed session of the General Assembly to consider the text and presumably open it for signature.

3. However, there may still be some difficulties ahead. Although it is too early yet to forecast precise reactions, some countries have given indications that they may be reluctant to sign. These countries can be divided roughly into two groups. The first comprises certain non-aligned states who for various reasons have the feeling that they may be victimised by the Treaty in some way, e.g. India, Brazil, Israel and the Arab States. These are countries whose views on the Treaty may however be affected by the decision reached on security assurances, (on which subject I am submitting a separate paper to the committee). In any case we hope that they may in the end bow to international pressure to sign. But we consider there is little to be gained at present by our trying to bring unilateral pressure to bear on these doubters now. If, when a Treaty is signed, they decide not to adhere, then universal pressure, in which the Soviet Union may well be ready to join the United States and ourselves, is likely to be more effective.

4. The second group consists of our NATO allies who are members of Euratom. Their doubts about the Treaty have sprung mainly from the wording of Article III on safeguards and its effect on the Euratom safeguards system. The formula now reached for Article III was considered by the Euratom countries as the most acceptable of the three alternatives put forward in NATO. Nevertheless they did not formally endorse it and both the Germans and the Italians have since said that the treaty will require some "improvements". There therefore remains the danger that the members of Euratom may eventually decide that they cannot accept this text. It is too early to say whether it would occur, in the E.N.D.C. or later at the General Assembly. It would be particularly awkward for us as potential members of the Euratom and the E.E.C. if such a confrontation of views arose at Geneva where Italy as the only representative of Euratom in the E.N.D.C. might feel called upon to object to the Treaty on behalf of the others. It would be less difficult if the objections came at New York where the Euratom countries may feel less constrained to present a united front. However the probability is that the Euratom countries, now that Article III has been tabled, will resign themselves to the fact that further substantial amendments are not possible and that this is the best that they can expect.

5. Apart from Article III the new Article and amendments in the tabled Treaty text are designed to meet points raised by the non-nuclear and non-aligned states. As such we have welcomed them: indeed we suggested some of them. In particular the new Article VI refers to the need to pursue negotiations in good faith on effective

measures regarding cessation of the nuclear arms race and disarmament, and on a treaty on general and complete disarmament under strong and effective international control. A number of countries may withhold their ratification of the Treaty until the nuclear-weapon states show that they are taking seriously the obligations which this Article imposes on them. It will therefore be essential to follow the Treaty up quickly with further disarmament measures if it is to be brought into force and remain in force thereafter. We have therefore begun work on a paper examining the most suitable measures on which we should concentrate our attention once a Non-Proliferation Treaty has been achieved.

F.M.

Foreign Office, S.W.1.
26 January 1968.