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ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301

INTERNATIONAL
SECURITY AFFAIRS

In reply refer to:
I-23015/76

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

SUBJECT: Meeting with UK Ambassador Ramsbotham

UK Participants

UK Ambassador, Sir Peter Ramsbotham
Head, British Defence Staff, LGEN Sir Rollo Pain
Minister, Defence Research and Development, Jack S. Shayler

United States

Secretary of Defense, Donald Rumsfeld
Deputy Secretary of Defense, Robert Ellsworth
Assistant Secretary of Defense (ISA), Eugene McAuliffe
Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (European and NATO Affairs),
Maynard Gitman
Assistant for the UK, James H. Timberlake

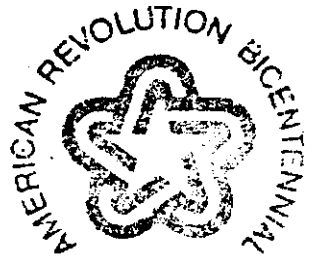
Time: 1047 - 1115, 1 July 1976

Place: Office of Deputy Secretary Ellsworth, Pentagon

Ambassador Ramsbotham opened by saying that he had asked to see Secretary Rumsfeld, but the Secretary could only see him at a time when he had to attend a decoration ceremony. He would be making an award to Dean Rusk of a KBE and to Bob Hope of a CBE. The purpose of his visit to the Pentagon was to talk about the tank gun, and to urge the US to make no decision on the matter during the current visit of MOD Leber to Washington. He understood that the US, in the interest of standardization, is considering adopting a 120mm instead of a 105mm gun for the XM-1 tank considerably earlier than previously planned. Mr. McAuliffe said that we are considering them all and that our objectives are to obtain the most effective weapon and to achieve as much commonality as possible. Mr. Ellsworth noted that both Robert Kleiman of the New York Times and Senator McClellan have got the idea that the US and FRG are thinking--about buying the other's

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SUBJECT TO GENERAL DECLASSIFICATION SCHEDULE OF
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tank. Kleiman thinks it would be a good idea to standardize on one of the tanks; Senator McClellan thinks it would be a terrible idea, Mr. Ellsworth said that what we and the Germans have in mind is to evaluate the two tanks, with all three countries represented, and to assess them fairly and accurately. Both tanks are excellent, and we doubt that one will emerge clearly superior to the other. Both sides are benefiting from the process; we are learning from each other during the evaluation, achieving a degree of commonality, and exchanging subsystems with one another. He has explained all of this to Kleiman, and the New York Times has dropped its campaign for a common tank.

Ambassador Ramsbotham remarked that whatever tank is chosen, the purpose should be to gain more commonality with respect to the gun and ammunition. In that connection, he wanted the US to recognize the advantage to NATO of standardizing on the UK gun. The UK has had a 120mm rifled gun in service for ten years and now has some 900 tanks in service equipped with it. The UK is developing improved ammunition (fin stabilized, long rod penetrator) for this gun and hopes to have pre-production quantities in about a year, with full production starting in late 1978. Firing trials show that the existing gun with the improved ammunition more than meets NATO requirements for accuracy and penetration and fully matches the best results achieved during the trilateral evaluation. If the US wishes to evaluate the gun and ammunition, the UK is willing to provide two *guns* and one hundred rounds of ammunition by this autumn. Ambassador Ramsbotham noted that in a little longer timescale, the UK will have an improved 120mm gun of higher strength steels, which will show even better results.

Ambassador Ramsbotham stressed the advantages of the UK rifled gun. It can fire a range of improved spun ammunition, as well as fin stabilized ammunition, and thus offers more flexibility to counter the armor threat of future. FRG unspun ammunition offers only one option. The UK gun is also a proven weapon, with an already established production base: If the US and FRG adopted it, the three powers could achieve standardization as early as about 1979. That would be impossible with the FRG gun. Ambassador Ramsbotham closed with a plea that the US not make a precipitous decision in favor of the FRG smooth bore gun.

Mr. Ellsworth replied that there is no danger of a precipitous move and that the US will make no decision without full consultation with the UK. The main thing is to do what is right for NATO, looking ahead to the 1980s. Ambassador Ramsbotham and General Pain both said they were encouraged to hear this.

Secretary Rumsfeld joined the meeting at this point, and reiterated the US interest in obtaining the most effective weapon for ourselves and the Alliance. Secretary Rumsfeld then went on to discuss NATO rationalization and standardization in general. He stressed the importance of a capability for deterrence and defense and the need to obtain the best product at the best price. We all have the same political problem and must arrange it so that no one ends up short of business and jobs. We must push for a degree of commonality that makes sense. One of our problems is that Allied programs are out



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of synchronization. General Pain observed that standardization is not completely achievable unless we overcome the problem of synchronization. We must break the circle; some have to extend their time, or others must advance theirs. Secretary Rumsfeld said that he was tired of hearing excuses why we cannot standardize. He is concerned about Soviet capabilities and the pressures on everyone's defense budgets. We are on the edge of possibilities of doing something about standardization, he believes, and the answer may be for the NAC to get involved and set a deadline beyond which we should not go. NATO forces, he noted, still cannot communicate with one another. In our own case, DoD is not organized to oversee a NATO program from its inception to the end. ISA deals with NATO, DDREE with the CNADs, and the Joint Chiefs with the Military Committee. The tracks go along separately and then at a later point-someone says you can't do it. Ambassador Ramsbotham asked what had happened to the DoD organization he and former Secretary Schlesinger had discussed in this regard. Mr. Ellsworth said that DoD has established a rationalization/standardization organization under General Bowman and it is trying to solve the problem pointed to by Secretary Rumsfeld.

Ambassador Ramsbotham repeated his argument on the UK tank gun and ammunition and emphasized again that it was the only way the three powers could achieve standardization by 1979. When asked why the UK could not adopt the German gun, he replied that it was because the UK already had 900 tanks in service with the gun. Secretary Rumsfeld noted the pay-off that would come from standardization in fuel, ammunition, tracks, logistics, and subsystems. Each step toward standardization makes the next step easier. Ambassador Ramsbotham noted the psychological boost that would also result from standardization on such a glamorous item as a tank. He gave Mr. McAuliffe a copy of his talking brief.

Prepared by:
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OASD/ISA/EUR

Approved by: *[Signature]*
Date: 7/12/76

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