

UK-NATIONAL USE OF NATO-COMMITTED
✓ FORCES

DECLASSIFIED	
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By	MMK NLDDE Date 8/20/10

~~TOP SECRET~~

March 24, 1960

Dear Foy:

I thought you would be interested in an exchange of letters that has recently taken place between the British Chief of Staff for Air, Air Chief Marshal Sir Thomas G. Pike, and General Norstad. Air Chief Marshal Pike's letter of March 21, reads in part as follows:

"As you know, over the past few years, we have been compelled to reduce our permanent garrisons in the Middle and Far East theatres and in order to meet possible U.K. defense commitments outside Europe we have had to lean more and more on a policy of reinforcement.

"In consequence, in the event of certain emergencies short of global war arising outside Allied Command Europe, I shall have to utilize one or two of the Canberra bomber squadrons assigned to SHAPE. We should not, of course, temporarily withdraw any squadrons from Germany without consulting you, although necessarily the warning I could give you might be very short.

"The tasks for which these squadrons will be required involve tactics other than L.A.B.S. You will, therefore, appreciate that they must be given periodical refresher training in their alternative role, as well as familiarisation training in the conditions under which they may be required to operate.

"I propose, therefore, to withdraw 8 aircraft from each Canberra Strike Squadron, one squadron at a time, each for a separate period of three weeks a year, for training in the Middle East theatre. On each occasion four aircraft would be left behind in Germany. The 8 aircraft would be able to return to Germany within 24 hours in time of serious crisis.

"I should like to withdraw one squadron from 22nd April to 19th May and the second for a similar period in October. The implementations of these detachments would, of course, be subject to the state of the political situation vis-a-vis Russia.

The Honorable
Foy D. Kohler,
Assistant Secretary of State
for European Affairs
Department of State,
Washington.

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"It would be most helpful if I might have your agreement to these arrangements, subject to the proviso I have mentioned.

In his reply Norstad indicated his agreement with these arrangements. The fact is that Norstad looks favorably upon the deployment within his Command of forces which, though committed to NATO in the event of general hostilities, are also employable for national purposes outside the NATO area. There are obvious advantages of such arrangements from the viewpoint of efficient use of resources, and the need for mobility means better equipment and higher training standards.

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It would be awkward if it should become known to the British that U.S. agencies are acquainted with the exchange between Pike and Norstad, so I exhort discretion on that score.

Sincerely,

cc: Mr. Barbour
Mr. Fessenden

Raymond L. Thurston