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DEPARTMENT OF STATE
WASHINGTON

December 12, 1967

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MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

Subject: Response to Letter from Senator
Pastore Concerning the Supplying
of Fuel for British Nuclear
Submarines

Senator Pastore recently wrote you (letter at Tab B) about the UK's desire to obtain from us enriched uranium fuel for British submarines. The Senator believes that any uranium fuel arrangement between the US and UK would not be in our interest because it would:

- create difficulties with other countries who also want assistance for naval nuclear propulsion programs;
- permit the UK to compete more effectively with us in international nuclear power markets; and
- be unwarranted in view of the UK's trade with Red China, North Viet-Nam and Cuba.

The State Department has for some time strongly favored the sale to the UK of enriched uranium fuel for their submarine force, and so informed the AEC on June 21. We do not agree with Senator Pastore's belief that fuel sales to the UK would give us trouble with our other allies, nor do we agree that the British would be strengthened in the international power reactor market if we sell them fuel.

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Finally, we do not believe that the level of British trade with North Viet-Nam, Cuba and Communist China justifies a refusal to sell them nuclear fuel. If we were to refuse, the British would look on it as a slap in the face at a time when Harold Wilson is under strong domestic pressure to reduce his support for our Viet-Nam policies.

While I believe that the Senator deserves a full answer, I think it would be unwise for you personally to commit yourself in a detailed reply. I therefore recommend that you send him a brief letter enclosing our unsigned memo which deals directly with Pastore's specific questions. A suggested Presidential letter and blind memorandum are at Tab A.


Acting Secretary

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