

Letter from John Bushell to Cecil Gough on the controls performed by the Agency for the Control of Armaments (London, 15 February 1957)

Caption: On 15 February 1957, John Bushell from the British Foreign Office sends a letter to Cecil E. Gough at the Ministry of Defence, in which he asks for clarification about the armaments subject to control by the Western European (WEU) Agency for the Control of Armaments (ACA) and the definition of the phrase 'stationed on the mainland of Europe', especially in relation to controlling levels of naval forces which spend most of their time in non-European waters.

Source: The National Archives of the UK (TNA). Foreign Office, Political Departments: General Correspondence from 1906-1966. WESTERN ORGANISATIONS (WU): Western European Union - WEU (WUW). Arms Control Agency. 01/01/1957-31/12/1957, FO 371/131152 (Former Reference Dep: File 11191).

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CONFIDENTIAL

FOREIGN OFFICE, S.W.1.

February 15, 1957

Mr Cecil,

You have probably seen Western European Union document C (57) 14 about two questions which Admiral Ferreri has submitted for Council decision. One deals with the "control of production", under "off-shore" purchase contracts, of armaments subject to control; and the other with the definition of the phrase "stationed on the mainland of Europe" for the purpose of controlling levels of naval forces. In case you have not seen the paper I enclose one for ease of reference.

2. The Council considered the first problem at its meeting on January 23 and decided to instruct the Secretary-General to seek the agreement of the United States and Canadian Governments to the extension of field controls to "off-shore" armaments subject to control (CR (57) 2 Item II 2). The second problem is to be discussed by the Council at its next meeting on February 20. I should be grateful for your views therefore, and for those of Allingham to whom I am sending a copy of this letter together with the enclosure referred to in paragraph 1 above, if possible by Tuesday afternoon next.

3. The first point which struck us about the French proposal in the second of these notes was the suggestion that NATO ships planned for use in European waters (category A(a)) are subject to Agency control; this is true of course only so far as, in accordance with Articles 8, 13 and 14 of Protocol IV, information about their levels is passed to the Agency by NATO and subsequently verified. Can I take it that there would be no difficulty in this connexion about our naval forces at Gibraltar which are assigned or earmarked to CINCPACMED?

4. Ships and aircraft in category B (c) and (d) are presumably subject to Agency control either as internal defence and police forces or as oversea defence forces (under the Agreement contemplated in Article 5 of the Protocol II or alternatively under Article 16 of Protocol IV ("other forces under national control")). May I assume we have no national (i.e. non-NATO) ships or aircraft at Gibraltar?

5. We have some difficulty in understanding the problem of the ships and aircraft in Category C(e) and (f), which we take to mean forces earmarked to SACLANT (as opposed to

/CINCHAN

C.E.F. Gough, Esq., C.M.G.,
Ministry of Defence.

CINCHAN and SACEUR) which spend most of their time in non-European waters although they may sometimes visit metropolitan ports. Perhaps Allingham could clear our minds about the stationing of ships? Would he say that e.g. French ships in West Indian waters which put into Brest for six weeks of the year are "stationed" on the mainland? It would be logical, if they spend a substantial period in home ports each year refitting or taking on stores, to put such ships into the same category as those in A (a) i.e. subject to Agency control through the NATO authorities. But what would be "a substantial period" for this purpose? Two or six weeks or 3 months? Perhaps the Admiralty could advise us on this and on whether there are United Kingdom ships "stationed" at Gibraltar and earmarked to SACLANT which would be affected by this proposal.

6. I do not think there is any doubt that the ships and aircraft in categories D (g) and (h) should not be subject to Agency control.

7. I am also sending a copy of this letter with enclosure to Bonn, in case Ward has views.

Yours ever

J.C.W.

(J.C.W. Bushell)