

Draft reply by the British and French delegations to the WEU Council to question 160 put by a member of the Assembly on nuclear forces (London, 10 July 1975)

Caption: On 10 July 1975, the Secretariat-General of Western European Union (WEU) circulates the draft reply prepared by the British and French delegations to question 160 put to the WEU Council by Mr Krieg, a member of the Assembly. The member had asked if the nuclear forces of two WEU member countries — France and the United Kingdom — are capable of playing a role in a western defence system based on selective nuclear retaliation. The two delegations reply that any nuclear force could be assigned to such a system, but they note that the assignment of forces is a matter for political decision. The United Kingdom's nuclear forces are assigned to the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), while those of France are not. But the delegations emphasise the fact that the Declaration on Atlantic Relations signed in Ottawa explicitly recognises the deterrent role of France and the United Kingdom in the overall strengthening of the deterrence of the Alliance.

Source: Council of the Western European Union. Secretariat-General note. Written question 160 put to the Council by a member of the Assembly. London: 08.07.1975. WPM (75) 24. Copy 57. 2 p. Archives nationales de Luxembourg (ANLux). <http://www.anlux.lu>. Western European Union Archives. Secretariat-General/Council's Archives. 1954-1987. Organs of the Western European Union. Year: 1975, 01/05/1975-30/04/1976. File 202.413.22. Volume 1/1.

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URL:

http://www.cvce.eu/obj/draft_reply_by_the_british_and_french_delegations_to_the_weu_council_to_question_160_put_by_a_member_of_the_assembly_on_nuclear_forces_london_10_july_1975-en-1eca1d20-1a67-471a-82a1-78d9b008a836.html



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SECRETARIAT-GENERAL NOTE

Written question 160 put to the Council
by a member of the Assembly

The Secretariat-General circulates herewith a draft reply, prepared by the French and United Kingdom delegations, to written question 160, put to the Council by M. Krieg, a member of the Assembly, and circulated on 15th May, 1975 as C (75) 75.

This draft will be considered at a forthcoming meeting of the working group.

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Text of written question 160 put to the Council

by M. Krieg

(C (75) 75)

Do the Council consider that the nuclear forces of two W.E.U. member countries are capable of playing a role in a western defence system based on selective nuclear retaliation?

Draft reply

Any strategic nuclear force could be assigned to and play a role in a defence system which had a selective targeting doctrine. Whether any nation's force is in the event so assigned is a matter for political decision. The United Kingdom's nuclear forces are assigned to NATO. Those of France, the other W.E.U. member which is a nuclear power, are not.

However, the Declaration on Atlantic Relations, approved on 19th June, 1974, at Ottawa by the North Atlantic Council, recognised explicitly that two of the European members "possess nuclear forces capable of playing a deterrent role of their own contributing to the overall strengthening of the deterrence of the Alliance".

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