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The PA/HO Staff

October 26, 1976

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Limitations on the Inclusion in the Foreign Relations manuscripts of British and other foreign-originated documents

Over the past several years the experience of this Office with respect to the clearance for publication by the British Foreign Office of texts of British-originated documents has been uniformly disappointing. Generally speaking the Foreign Office has been unwilling to concur in the publication in our Foreign Relations series of any British document save for certain innocuous, high-level, courtesy correspondence. Some greater success has been experienced in securing British concurrence to the publication of multilateral documents.

In a communication of September 20 of this year to the Embassy in London (a copy of which is attached), the Foreign Office has again reiterated its disinclination to agree to the publication of British documents in the Foreign Relations series.

In view of the continuing unlikelihood of Foreign Office cooperation in the matter of clearance of British documents, we must more consciously design our selections of documents for the series with an eye to avoiding the inclusion of British-originated documents except those which appear to be absolutely critically important. We probably can continue to seek to print those of a multi-lateral nature which we might reasonably expect to be cleared.

The experience with the Foreign Office is by no means unique. The self-denying ordinance applied to British documents should probably also be applied to the documents of other friendly governments.

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Department of State, A/GIS/IPS/SRP

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