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ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301

OFFICE OF THE  
SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

13 SEP 1977

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Chief, Records & Declass Div, ~~MBFR~~  
Date: JUN 01 2016

In reply refer to:  
I-24029/77

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MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

SUBJECT: MBFR Meeting with the FRG (U) - INFORMATION MEMORANDUM

(U) This memorandum follows up on our memorandum of September 10 advising you of the state of play on MBFR.

(U) Consultations with FRG Arms Control Commissioner Ruth were chaired by John Newhouse of ACDA and completed on 13 September. An SCC meeting is now scheduled for 15 September on MBFR, and this will be followed with trilateral consultations between the US, the UK, and the FRG.

(5) Agreement was reached with the Germans that, subject to British agreement, the FRG should sponsor an initiative in NATO designed to offer the East certain modifications in the Western MBFR position in order to move them to accept the basic elements of NATO's MBFR concept, and possibly to bring the East to be more forthcoming on data. The FRG intends to make certain modifications in their proposal reflecting the concept of an alternative interim solution not involving MBFR reductions.

(8) It was agreed that the U.S. would provide papers for discussion at the trilateral meetings dealing with (1) commitments to reductions to be taken by all participants as part of a Phase I agreement, (2) stabilizing measures, and (3) follow-on machinery. Ambassador Ruth said it would be useful for the Alliance to prepare itself for a time when we could see more clearly where the data discussion is leading us. He said that Chancellor Schmidt will probably wish to raise MBFR with Brezhnev (possibly at the end of November) and will want to push the goal of particular interest to the FRG--parity of outcome.

(6) With respect to timing of the initiative itself, he said that when the initiative would be used depended on (1) the Soviet reaction on data, and (2) the speed with which NATO addressed the proposed initiative. Ambassador Ruth said that it was not out of the question that an initiative could be put before the East this year since what the Germans were proposing did not deviate substantially from NATO's current position and was a fairly simple proposal.

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NATO 320-2 MBFR  
13 Sep 77

Doc#54

15-M-0256

~~Classified by D.L. DOD MBFR JF~~  
~~SUBJECT TO GENERAL DECLASSIFICATION SCHEDULE OF~~  
~~EXECUTIVE ORDER 11652, AUTOMATICALLY DOWNGRADED~~  
~~AT TWO YEAR INTERVALS. DECLASSIFIED ON 1 Dec 85~~

330-80-0017, box 74, NATO 320.2

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~~15~~ The following issues will probably be addressed by the SCC:

1. Should NATO produce an initiative at this time, and if so, to what end? To break the deadlock on data or to bypass the deadlock to achieve an interim solution?

The Germans made clear that agreement on data is very important. However, they visualize the initiative they proposed as telling the East what NATO would be prepared to do provided there is resolution of the data discussion. In other words, resolution of the data problem was not established as a pre-condition for putting forward an initiative. Both the British and the Germans believe an initiative will require Alliance study. The British appear to be somewhat more reserved about deciding on the timing of an initiative of the sort proposed by the FRG, which they see as a modest move.

The problem with the initiative is that it could result in only minor changes in NATO's position with correspondingly little prospect for a positive Soviet response. Moreover, it appears to add emphasis to the requirement that the East admit to a manpower disparity of substantial size and then reduce that disparity. Consideration should be given to a study of alternatives in NATO in the event that what comes out of NATO does not lead to any solution of the current impasse.

2. Should the East be given fairly specific guarantees on the size and timing of reductions by non-U.S. direct participants at the time of an agreement on U.S.-Soviet reductions? If so, how?

Probably the most important new development to emerge from the bilateral talks is that the FRG is now prepared to make commitments on the timing of reductions to be taken by non-U.S. and non-Soviet participants, and is also prepared to consider various formulas for making commitments on the scope of such reductions. The British probably will also be willing to work out language which could be used with the East on this issue.

3. What should be the NATO position on the Tank Army proposal? Should it be modified to make the common ceiling objective more negotiable?

The FRG paper also included a proposal to alter our demand on the Soviets from the withdrawal of a tank army to five divisions. Bilateral discussions brought out the point that such a modification was not central to their initiative. They believe that sufficient movement could be indicated to the East as NATO made clear to the East its position that the Soviets need not withdraw all the armaments of a tank army. NATO could tell the Soviets that only tanks need be withdrawn and only tanks would be limited.

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The British have expressed substantial reservations about falling off the requirement for a tank army to be withdrawn at this time but are willing to agree that the Soviets not be required to reduce all the armaments of a tank army.

Both the British and the Germans are also prepared to tell the East that the U.S. would take the majority of its reductions in units, just as the West demands of the East.

4. How can NATO develop a practical negotiating position to work for the overall asymmetrical Eastern manpower reduction required to reach the common ceiling?

The main element of the German proposition is the concept that the East reduce and finally eliminate the disparity in manpower between East and West in three steps. While there is little U.S. opposition to advancing such a proposal to the Soviets, few believe that the Soviets will have much interest in the proposal as such.

The British are particularly concerned about this proposition and are not yet prepared to put it forward to the East. They are prepared to undertake a longer term study. British concern is focused on the fact that data dependency is a major impediment to the German reduction formula. They also do not believe it would fit logically with the present NATO formula for Phase I U.S. and Soviet reductions and would eliminate the rationale for the maintenance of a demand for Soviet tanks. They take particular issue with the mathematical anomalies that occur under the German formula.

5. Should armaments be included in the negotiations, as in the mixed package of Option III, or in the context of a general weapons reduction proposal, or not at all?

Both the British and the Germans propose that the U.S. nuclear offer be maintained. The British recommend that NATO inform the East that, in the event U.S. F-4 aircraft are reduced, the U.S. would be willing to accept limits on all nuclear-capable aircraft including follow-on aircraft such as the F-16. The problem with this UK proposition is that it could cause premature discussion of limitations on surface-to-surface missiles and lead to questions about how the cruise missile would be treated in MBFR.

FRG comments noted that there was a relationship between the U.S. nuclear offer and a demand for a Soviet tank army and that, if the tank army demand were maintained, difficult questions about the U.S. nuclear offer would not come up.

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FRG statements of concern about the disparity in tanks were general in nature, and they had no specific proposals to make which would suggest any new moves by the West to alleviate this problem.

(S) The OSD staff has prepared an alternative modification to the German Initiative retaining many of its important elements but seeking to address the shortcomings it reflects; namely, data dependency and a reduced focus on Soviet reductions and limitations. This alternative could provide the basis for resolution of many negotiating problems at the appropriate time. The problem is that, if it is introduced into the trilateral discussions or into NATO now, it could divert attention from the construction of the modest initiative now underway.

(S) We recommend that you review the concept outlined at TAB A looking toward its possible introduction into the SCC for study in the USG against two contingencies. First, in the event that the FRG Initiative becomes so watered down through the process of trilateral consultations and NATO debate that the Alliance needs something more substantial. Second, in the event that the German Initiative is presented to the Soviets in Vienna and bears no fruit.

Attachment  
a/s



Walter Slecombe  
Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary  
of Defense  
International Security Affairs

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SUMMARY OF APPROACH

Phase I (1979)

- o US and USSR reduce approximate equal percentages (12 - 13%) of agreed US/Soviet ground force reduction base. Reductions set at 60,000 USSR and 25,000 US.
- o Reductions occur in units including a Tank Army as modified.
- o All participants agree to a three-phase reduction process that will result in a common collective ceiling on manpower at 1,000,000 or less men (illustratively) on each side.
- o Those participants not reducing in Phase I pledge themselves to reduce 50,000 collectively on each side in Phase II.
- o A Stabilizing Measures agreement is reached.

Phase II (1980)

- o Both sides negotiate the details of the equal numbers reduction of 50,000 on each side.
- o Negotiation on the base continues.
- o A no-increase between phases and agreement to principle of parity is continued from Phase I through Phase III.
- o All parties agree not to increase ground forces of the type reduced in Phase I and Phase II.

Phase III (1983)

- o All participants reduce collectively as part of reductions to achieve parity after final agreement has been reached on reduction base data.
- o The issues of armaments limitations are negotiated, including possibility of extended or expanded scope and area.

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