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NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20508

OFFICE OF THE
SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

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September 22, 1977

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MEMORANDUM FOR:

24 SEP 1977
SEC DEF HAS SEEN

The Secretary of State
The Secretary of Defense
The Director, Arms Control and
Disarmament Agency
The Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff
The Director of Central Intelligence

CIA
EO
13526
3.5(c)

SUBJECT:

Summary of SCC Meeting on MBFR

The attached summary of the SCC Meeting on MBFR, September 15, 1977, records the consensus U.S. position on major outstanding issues. That position should serve as guidance for U.S. representatives in upcoming discussions with Britain and the FRG, for the U.S. MBFR Delegation in Vienna, and for the U.S. Mission to NATO.

NATO 320.2 MBFR

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Authority: EO 13526
Chief, Records & Declass Div, WHS
Date: JUL 13 2016

Zbigniew Brzezinski

Office of the Secretary of Defense
Chief, RDD, ESD, WHS + 50 USC § 552
Date: 13 Jul 2016 Authority: EO 13526
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Zbigniew Brzezinski

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15-M-0257

330-80-0017, box 74, NATO, 320 MBFR (95 Sep - Dec) 1977

SEC DEF CONTR No. X-2754 ✓

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SPECIAL COORDINATING COMMITTEE MEETING

September 15, 1977

Time and Place: 4:00 p.m. - 5:05 p.m., White House Situation Room

Subject: MBFR

Participants:

State:
Deputy Secretary Christopher
Leslie Gelb
Reginald Bartholomew

CIA:
Robert Bowie
[REDACTED]

OSD 3.5(c)
CIA 3.5(c)

Defense:
Deputy Secretary Duncan
David McGiffert
Gen George Brown (JCS)
Gen Willie Y. Smith (JCS)

NSC:
Dr. Zbigniew Brzezinski
William Hyland
Gregory F. Treverton (Notetaker)

ACDA:
Director Paul Warnke
John Newhouse

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SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS

1. Data. The meeting began with a CIA review of the data. Since 1972, U. S. estimates of Warsaw Pact manpower have increased, partly because of force increases and partly because of refinements in estimates. At an irreducible minimum, the U. S. estimates the disparity between Western and Eastern forces at about 100,000; the more likely figure for the disparity is the NATO estimate of 160,000.

2. Review of Consultations with the FRG. ACDA reviewed the recent bilaterals with the FRG on the German initiative. The Germans were willing to consider presenting the initiative to the East before the data discussion is completed. Substantively, they were prepared to: (1) see NATO drop its demand for an integral tank army; (2) assent to voluntary U. S. unit reductions; (3) propose several alternatives for post-Phase I reduction commitments (though they also want to retain the possibility of a single-stage negotiation); (4) consider simplifying NATO's stabilizing measures and extend them to include non-U. S. NATO members and air manpower.

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3. Issues:

a. Form of Reductions: There was consensus that the Soviets should take its reductions in the form of units of no less than division size. The Soviets would be required to withdraw five divisions, comprising 68,000 men and 1,700 tanks. It was agreed that the US will be prepared to indicate its willingness voluntarily to take no more than 2/3 of its reductions in units or sub-units (i. e., including platoons).

b. Scope and Timing of Phase II Reductions. There was consensus that the US should agree to forward to NATO both alternatives discussed with the Germans (attached). ✓

c. Timing and Method of an Initiative. It was agreed that, after the trilaterals with the British, we should move the initiative rapidly into and through NATO, hoping to present the initiative to the East by late November.

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Commitments on Scope and Timing of Reductions by Non-U. S. NATO
Participants

Alternative A: Both sides would commit, during Phase I negotiations of U. S. and Soviet reductions, to make remaining reductions required to reach parity in two stages of Phase II. In the first stage, all participants but the U. S. and the Soviet Union would take reductions totalling an equal percentage (say, 40 percent) of the total reductions still required to reach parity. This stage would be completed in a fixed period (say, 18 months).

In a second stage, the remaining percentage of the overhang to parity would be eliminated; both sides would specify the number to be withdrawn by the U. S. and the Soviet Union and the total withdrawal by the other participants on each side. (This is a modification of the original German proposal.)

Alternative B: During Phase I both sides would specify the reductions to be taken during Phase II of U. S. and Soviet forces, and the total reductions by the other participants on each side. Phase II would be implemented in a fixed period (say, two years). (This is the existing NATO proposal modified to specify a total Phase II reduction commitment by non-U. S. NATO participants, and the period of its implementation.)

Under either alternative, the modality of reduction would be negotiated separately during Phase II. If there were no Phase II agreement on modality, both sides would be obligated to make the Phase II reductions they had committed, but could do so in any manner they chose. (FRG prefers the first alternative, has agreed to consider offering the second as well.)

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