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THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301

June 13, 1980

LRTNF
Doc #160 (54)

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: HAROLD BROWN

SUBJECT: Proposal for a Freeze on LRTNF

The first part of this paper is a brief history, the second consists of talking points for you to use with Schmidt.

Attachment

cc: Secretary of State
Deputy Secretary of State

No DIA objection to declassification subject to the results of concurrent State review. JDC 14 Jan 15

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5 U.S.C. § 552

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The Schmidt Proposal

In his June 9 speech at the SPD convention in Essen, Schmidt made the following statement:

"My recent effort to use the time available to us for negotiations before any future deployment occurred was rejected by the Soviet side. A few in the West have diligently sought to misunderstand the proposal as (my) going soft.

"I stand by what I said: It would be useful for peace if on both sides one did not deploy for the next three years, rather negotiated instead over mutual limitations (of weapons)."

Embassy Bonn believes Schmidt's major motive in making this statement was to set the stage for the Soviets to ease away from their reluctance to enter into TNF negotiations, perhaps as early as during his trip to Moscow. The German press interpreted the June 9 statement as a marker to the Soviets that Schmidt intends to discuss his proposal with them. Other possible factors behind Schmidt's returning to his TNF arms control proposal include (a) a genuine concern about a perceived impasse in arms control and a desire to impart new momentum in that area, and (b) pacifying the left wing of his party.

Schmidt's actual position and motivations are made somewhat unclear by the ambiguity stemming from his earlier statements on TNF arms control and the Federal German Government's subsequent clarifications. In mid-April, he told an audience in Essen:

"The Soviet Union's objection that it would be prepared to negotiate only if NATO lifts the double decision of Brussels is not acceptable. A first step in the right direction could be if both sides simultaneously for a certain number of years renounced the stationing of new or additional medium range missiles, or if they used this time for negotiations."

Several days later, the Federal Chancellery denied that Schmidt's remarks applied equally to the NATO and the Warsaw Pact:

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"...The Soviet Union should also not deploy any additional modern LRTNF during the next three years just as is already the case on the Western side.... Let it be noted that, during the three years, the only thing which would not be done would be that which one can effectively verify, i.e., the deployment of operational weapons."

The FRG mission to NATO similarly issued a clarification of Schmidt's remarks, but with a different twist: "...it would make the negotiations easier if the Soviet Union would be prepared to discontinue the production and deployment of additional modern medium range systems."

In both these clarifications, the FRG affirmed its continued support of the December 1979 decisions.

None of the statements or clarifications contained any reference to a production freeze by the West, or to a halt in base construction by either NATO or the USSR.

Senator Biden, who met with Schmidt earlier this week, said he (Biden) believes the FRG "will keep its position consistent with regard to TNF modernization, will maintain a position consistent with that taken by the alliance in December, will not suggest or offer the slowing up of the siting process."

The Soviet SS-20 Program

The Soviets currently have 18 operational SS-20 bases with 162 launchers. Another 8 bases are in various stages of construction. We estimate that construction will begin on 7 additional bases within the next several years.

The NATO LRTNF Modernization Program

We have agreement in principle with the UK, FRG and Italy on the phasing of LRTNF deployments. We expect GLCM, site selections by the end of the summer. GLCM construction will begin in the UK in June 1981, in Italy in January 1982, and in the FRG in August 1983. The Belgians have not lived up to their commitment to endorse the December 1979 decision, and it appears increasingly doubtful that they will do so in the near future. Elements of the Belgian Flemish Socialist Party have been quoted to the effect that either (a) Soviet willingness to enter LRTNF negotiations or (b) a Soviet moratorium on SS-20 deployments would be sufficient to obviate the requirement for deployment of GLCMs in Belgium. The Netherlands has also not endorsed the December 1979 decision, and a review of their position is not expected before late 1981. There is no evidence that the Dutch government will then be any more prepared to take a positive decision than it was last December.

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Implications of a Deployment Moratorium
for the Soviet and NATO Programs

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An SS-20 deployment moratorium would be difficult to verify without a halt in SS-20 base construction, but that could create pressures for a freeze on construction of NATO LRTNF facilities -- which we could not accept. ✓

Were the Soviets, in accepting a moratorium, to finish all SS-20 bases currently under construction but declare that no missiles would be deployed to those bases, we would be hard pressed to verify with high confidence their compliance. In order to verify positively such a Soviet move, it would be necessary for the Soviets to cease construction on all currently unfinished SS-20 bases, and we could then have some confidence that no new SS-20 missiles were being deployed.

On the other hand, such a Soviet construction halt would create pressures for a similar freeze on NATO's part, and some of our NATO allies might regard this as a fair arrangement. The NATO program requires a number of construction and construction-related activities, however, which must begin fairly soon and occur at a rapid pace if the GLCM/PII IOC of 1983 is to be met. Thus a reciprocal Soviet requirement for a halt in NATO construction would impede, and possibly prevent, the implementation of the LRTNF decision.

o A mutual LRTNF deployment moratorium could legitimize the Soviet lead in LRTNF and severely prejudice any real progress in LRTNF arms control negotiations.

The Alliance position on LRTNF arms control continues to be that those negotiations can only be successful if they are based on equality in rights and ceilings. A freeze which NATO agreed to could legitimize the current Soviet advantage -- even if that freeze lasted only for three years. Furthermore, the Soviets could claim that they entered into LRTNF negotiations based on the existing LRTNF balance in Europe, which they claim is equal. This would undercut the agreed NATO position, and could affect the outcome of the negotiations.

o The Soviets could manipulate a freeze to retain the current imbalance after the scheduled end of the freeze. ✓

If LRTNF arms control negotiations were in progress in mid-late 1983, pressure would be placed on the US, the FRG and the UK by both the Soviets and some NATO allies to delay the scheduled GLCM and PII deployments. This could occur even if the arms control talks were neither particularly fruitful nor close to agreement. The European left could argue that the negotiations were in fact occurring, in large part thanks to a moratorium, and that deployments of new LRTNF by NATO would jeopardize not only the conclusions of an agreement but even the talks themselves. The Soviets could be expected to engage in similar

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propaganda. The net result, of course, would be a perpetuation of the current imbalance for an indefinite period of time.

o The achievement or even the pursuit of a freeze could undermine the Dec 12 NATO discussion.

The Belgians are looking for excuses not to confirm their decision to participate. They said they would confirm it within six months of Dec. 12 if the Soviets were not forthcoming on LRTNF arms control. The Soviets have not been, but they could easily respond to the Schmidt approach by saying they'd discuss a freeze. The Belgians could take that as a basis for concluding the Soviets had been forthcoming, and explicitly adopt the Dutch position, withdrawing their endorsement of the Dec. 12, 1979 decision. Given Danish and potential Norwegian softness, this would put great pressure on Italy to renege on its acceptance of GLCM deployments and with that, Schmidt's own conditions for participation would cease to be met.

Conclusions.

For Schmidt, the benefits of his proposal are short-term: to give a push to LRTNF arms control, to halt Soviet SS-20 deployments, and, perhaps, to score a coup during his Moscow visit, and to assuage the left wing of the SPD prior to the election. For NATO, the risks are more long term and are potentially quite serious: (1) we may curtail our ability to deploy LRTNF in 1983. (2) we may fail as an Alliance to implement the December 12 LRTNF decision. (3) we may lose an opportunity through arms control to achieve equality in LRTNF, and (4) we may create a situation in which Soviet opportunities for driving wedges between NATO members are greatly increased.

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