

European Security, 1969–1976

“Bureaucratic Steamroller,” January 1969–
November 1970

1. Memorandum of Conversation¹

Washington, April 4, 1969, 2:30–3:30 p.m.

SUBJECT

European Security Conference

PARTICIPANTS

Anatoliy F. Dobrynin, Soviet Ambassador
Under Secretary Richardson
Morton Abramowitz, Special Assistant, U
Adolph Dubs, Acting Country Director, EUR/SOV

Ambassador Dobrynin said he was calling on the instructions of his Government to draw the attention of the U.S. Government to the Appeal on European Security issued by the Warsaw Pact countries at Budapest on March 17.² The Warsaw Pact countries attach great importance to a conference on European security. They believe that the

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 725, Country Files, Europe, USSR–Memcon’s, Dobrynin/Richardson, April 1969. Confidential. Part I of II. Drafted by Dubs. The meeting was held in the Under Secretary’s office. The day before, Dobrynin initially raised the issue of a European security conference in a meeting with Kissinger at 3:30 p.m. Kissinger wrote in a memorandum to the President on April 3:

“Dobrynin began the conversation by saying that he had been instructed by the highest level of the politburo to give me an advance indication of a note that was going to be presented at the State Department tomorrow morning. This note in effect presents the Budapest Declaration of the Warsaw Pact nations, and asks for a European Security Conference. (I am sending you a separate memorandum on this.) Dobrynin asked me for my views. I told him a European Security Conference which excluded the United States would meet with strong opposition. Dobrynin said that Moscow has no intention of prescribing the membership; if one of our allies proposed United States participation, Moscow would agree. (This represents a major change in Soviet policy.)”

The full text of the memorandum is in *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, volume XII, Document 32. For Kissinger’s memorandum to the President, see Document 2.

² The Budapest Appeal of the Warsaw Pact to all European Countries is printed in *Documents on Disarmament, 1969*, pp. 106–108.

Appeal represents a serious attempt to facilitate security in Europe and cooperation among European States in the economic, technological and scientific fields. No conditions are being attached to the holding of such a conference. The Soviet Union and its allies are prepared to discuss any issues. The views of these countries about a security conference are spelled out in the Appeal. This is not a propaganda exercise but a serious approach to an important matter. It was visualized that a preparatory committee should meet to discuss the time, place and agenda for such a conference.

Ambassador Dobrynin said he knew that the question of U.S. participation would arise. This would be a matter for the European countries to consider and to decide. If all European states believe that U.S. participation is necessary or desirable, then the Soviet Union would have no objection. Dobrynin indicated that the Appeal was being delivered to various governments by the Hungarian Government since the Appeal originated at the Budapest meeting. Soviet ambassadors were under instructions to present the Appeal to governments in Western Europe.

Mr. Richardson commented that Ambassador Dobrynin had anticipated several questions. He noted that the Soviet Union visualized that the conference would be held without any preconditions. He couldn't help but note that the Appeal had stated that fundamental preconditions for Europe's security included such things as confirmation of existing European borders, recognition of the existence of the GDR, etc. Ambassador Dobrynin interjected that these were not preconditions and that all countries could propose any questions which they thought relevant. Participants could also make any statements they wished. All questions raised could be considered by the preparatory group.

Mr. Richardson asked whether U.S. participation would take place only if there were unanimous agreement among European states. Ambassador Dobrynin replied that he did not know whether there would be voting or not on such issues. He had no authorization to speak for European governments. In any event, there would be no objection from the Soviet side to U.S. participation. Mr. Richardson asked about possible Canadian participation. Ambassador Dobrynin answered that he was not sure whether this would be a main concern of the participants or whether the Canadians themselves wished to take part in a security conference. At this point he could only say that he frankly didn't know whether Canada would be included or excluded from such a meeting.

Mr. Richardson asked whether the Soviet Union was prepared to consider arrangements for Europe other than those specified as prerequisites to European security in the Budapest Appeal. Specifically, would the Soviets consider arrangements regarding the FRG and the GDR other than those spelled out in the Appeal? Furthermore, would the Soviets be willing to consider such questions as access to Berlin?

Dobrynin noted again that any questions could be raised and that the agenda would no doubt be broad-ranging. The main objectives would be to work toward the security and tranquility of Europe. The Soviet Union feels strongly that recognition of the present borders would be a stabilizing factor. Great importance is attached to this point. He added that at some point in the future, various issues could be discussed in large forums while other matters could be discussed in smaller groupings. Dobrynin suggested that the US and the USSR might even have some preliminary exchanges of views on issues that might be discussed. The Soviet Union recognizes that all objectives cannot be achieved overnight. Perhaps the first security conference might be just a beginning and a prelude to future meetings.

Mr. Richardson concluded by noting that the Appeal no doubt would be discussed at the forthcoming NATO Ministerial meeting³ and that the Appeal would also be discussed between our Western allies themselves. It was useful to have the Ambassador's views on questions that were raised.

³ Scheduled for April 10–11 in Washington.

2. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to President Nixon¹

Washington, April 4, 1969.

SUBJECT

Soviet Initiative for a European Security Conference

The Soviets and East Europeans are currently pushing, diplomatically and through propaganda, an "appeal" adopted by the Warsaw Pact countries in Budapest on March 17 which proposes an early conference on European security. Ambassador Dobrynin today delivered a copy to Elliot Richardson.² (You will recall that Prime Minister Rumor³ raised the subject with you on April 1.)

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 392, Subject Files, Soviet Affairs. Secret. Sent for information.

² See Document 1.

³ Mariano Rumor, Prime Minister of Italy.

The appeal has aroused interest in the West because it almost completely is devoid of the polemical attacks on the US and the Federal Republic which normally appear in Communist declarations of this sort. There are no really significant new substantive proposals on how to go about getting a European settlement in this document—its main concrete proposition is that officials from interested European states should meet to arrange a conference and its agenda. Its main theme is that if the present status quo is recognized in Europe, especially by the Federal Republic, there could then be extensive east-west cooperation on economic and technical matters and military alliances could be abolished.

On the face of it, the appeal excludes the United States from participation in the proposed conference. But in the past when this criticism was levelled against their European security proposals, the Soviets have indicated that they are prepared to see a US role. They have maintained this line privately in the present instance, too.

Soviet Objectives

There has been speculation about the reasons why this appeal should have been issued at this time. The timing may be connected with the impending NATO meeting: the Soviets may hope that the trend toward better cohesion in NATO after Czechoslovakia and as a result of your European visit can be halted or reversed by a conciliatory proposition from them. Beyond this tactical motivation, the Soviets may in fact be interested in restoring some of the east-west contacts, including economic ones, that were disrupted by their invasion of Czechoslovakia. Since the document makes a number of demands on the FRG—including recognition of East Germany, the Oder-Neisse Line⁴ and the “special status” of West Berlin, as well as renunciation of nuclear weapons—the Soviets may have wanted to lay the groundwork for renewed political contacts with Bonn. The obverse side of that coin is, as it always has been, an effort to isolate the Federal Republic by picturing it as the main obstacle to a European settlement if it fails to meet Communist demands.

Another motivation that may have played a role relates to Soviet efforts to consolidate the Warsaw Pact: this is the first major document in some time that all the East Europeans, including Romania, have been willing to sign.

⁴ At the Potsdam Conference, the Heads of Government of the United States, United Kingdom, and the Soviet Union agreed on August 1, 1945, that “pending the final determination of Poland’s western frontier, the former German territories” east of the Oder and western Neisse Rivers would “be under the administration of the Polish State.” See *Documents on Germany, 1944–1985*, p. 63. Based on the decisions at Potsdam, Poland declared that its border with Germany, the Oder-Neisse line, was permanent. In contrast, the United States, concurring with the FRG, argued that the final delimitation of the Polish-German border would have to await a German peace treaty.

Our Attitude

Although I do not believe that in and of itself this “appeal” does anything to advance the prospects of a European settlement, I believe we should not give it a negative response. Rather, we might use it in our effort to impress on the Soviets the need to talk concretely about the issues that exist between us.

What we have said about the inutility and, indeed, dangers of holding grandiose conferences at this stage should hold true in this case also; but we need not rule out eventual meetings, after the necessary spadework has been done to ensure that they get somewhere.

I do not believe that we should make an issue of our attendance at such meetings. Anyone who is serious about making progress on European problems knows that we must be a party; we should not make the Soviets think that they are doing us a favor if they agree to such an obvious fact of life.

I do believe that in the context of a constructive response we should make clear that

(1) in our view a real settlement in Europe is incompatible with gross intervention in the domestic affairs of other countries, and

(2) cannot be based on discrimination against Germany, since this would undermine any settlement from the beginning.

All of this, of course, looks very far into the future. But I think it would be desirable for us to be in a positive if cautious posture on this range of issues. This, judging from discussions at NATO, is also the position of our allies in Europe.

3. Memorandum From the President’s Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to President Nixon¹

Washington, April 8, 1969.

SUBJECT

The Recent Warsaw Pact Proposal for a European Security Conference

It now appears that the so-called Budapest Appeal of March 17, in which the Warsaw Pact countries proposed holding a conference on

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 256, Agency Files, NATO, Vol. IV. Secret. Sent for action.

European security, is going to be an item of major interest at the NATO Ministerial meeting.² Most of the allies feel that NATO should make a positive response, although all of them would agree that an early conference would be undesirable.

I believe that we could accept the principle of an eventual conference on European problems but that the actual convening of such a meeting must await signs of progress on concrete European issues. Without such progress, a conference would probably find the East European countries closely aligned with a rigid Soviet position, while the western participants would be competing with each other to find ways to “break the deadlock.” The net result might well be frustration and western disunity, both of which would tend to set back prospects for an eventual resolution of European issues.

Consequently, our emphasis should be on the need for talks on concrete issues and for consultations within NATO designed to develop coherent western positions on such issues.³

Recommendation

If you approve of the above approach to the question of a European security conference, I would like to provide it to the Secretary of State for his guidance in the forthcoming NATO Ministerial meeting.⁴

² The NSC discussed the upcoming NATO meeting, including the U.S. stance on a European security conference, at a meeting on April 8. According to Haig’s handwritten notes from the meeting, Hillenbrand characterized the European security conference as “a tactical ploy by Warsaw Pact—but also perhaps effort to improve.” Haig noted that “HAK favors para. 2—issue is degree to which we accept Warsaw’s.” Nixon asked, “Aren’t Italians pushing détente language?” Kissinger responded: “Problem w/security conference is there are few items for agenda.” Nixon stated: “Our purpose is to help with language—probably will never be a conference.” Hillenbrand suggested, “Italians will probably push some economic or cultural multilateral conference as a first step—we’ll listen. Para. 44 on force levels is also contentious—reductions—unilateral w/a phased mutual [withdrawal]—unilateral is effort to tie down U.S. in State’s view. HAK (according to Hillenbrand) favors other language. Kind of paper is easy w/only minor contentions.” (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-109, NSC Minutes 1969, Originals)

³ On April 7, Rogers wrote the President that at the upcoming Washington NATO Ministerial meeting “euphoria, as a complement to the prospect of East-West negotiations, is threatening” and that the Warsaw Pact appeal for an ESC “is adversely affecting our Allies’ determination to maintain defense contributions.” Rogers recommended an allied response that was “cautious and conditioned by a call for concrete evidence of sincerity. The Allies also should stress, we believe, the need to maintain military strength as a precondition to negotiation.” (Ibid., RG 59, S/S Conference Files, 1966–1972, Entry 3051B, Box 66, CF-354)

⁴ The President initialed his approval. In an April 9 memorandum, Kissinger informed Rogers that “the President has considered our attitude toward the recent Warsaw Pact proposal for a conference on European security. He asks that all concerned be guided by the following:” At this point, Kissinger inserted verbatim the second and third paragraphs of his memorandum to Nixon. (Ibid., Rogers Office Files, Entry No. 5439, Box 3, Chronological Files, 1969–1973)

4. Memorandum of Conversation¹

Washington, July 4, 1969, 11:25 a.m.–12:15 p.m.

PARTICIPANTS

Ambassador Rolf Pauls
Henry A. Kissinger
Helmut Sonnenfeldt
William A. K. Lake

[Omitted here is discussion of matters other than the European security conference or MBFR.]

European Security Conference

Ambassador Pauls said that in his view the decisive point is not whether or not to hold a European Security Conference, but whether diplomatic political approaches could be taken which would improve the prospects for a meaningful conference. Mr. Kissinger stated that the U.S. would not try to veto the holding of such a conference if the Europeans desired it, but warned that he personally thought the Germans could live to regret it since they would often be a minority of one. He asked what specifically might be discussed at such a conference. Ambassador Pauls suggested mutual troop withdrawals. Mr. Kissinger pointed out the difficulties involved in such withdrawals, since U.S. troops must be withdrawn thousands of miles while the Russian troops would fall back only a few hundred. In addition, negotiating troop reductions simultaneously with SALT would be complicated.

If the German Foreign Office talks about troop withdrawals, Mr. Kissinger continued, U.S. public opinion—and the U.S. Senate—will be encouraged to call for them. Europeans should remember that when they make proposals, we may accept them. Ambassador Pauls hurriedly said that he was not proposing mutual withdrawals but simply thought that they could be discussed at a conference.

The Ambassador mentioned in passing the possibility of talking about Berlin and the German problem in preparing for a conference. He agreed, however, that as of now, a conference would make no sense. Such a conference might make sense later if there were diplomatic movement in the meantime. Mr. Kissinger said that he thought this would be an interesting subject to discuss during the Chancellor's visit; we could consider what might come out of a conference.

[Omitted here is discussion of matters other than the European security conference or MBFR.]

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 682, Country Files, Europe, Germany, Vol. III. Secret. The meeting was held in Kissinger's office.

5. Memorandum From Helmut Sonnenfeldt of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)¹

Washington, October 2, 1969.

SUBJECT

European Security and Forthcoming NATO Meetings—The Bureaucratic Steamroller Pushes Irresistibly Forward

The Brussels machinery with heavy US prodding has been grinding out huge quantities of paper on European Security issues. Based on Ministerial decisions at Reykjavik the year before,² a vastly elaborate study of mutual force cuts in Europe has also been proceeding.

With the Deputy Foreign Ministers' meeting scheduled for November (Elliot Richardson is going from here) and the full Ministerial the month after, State is now moving to take the lead in pushing into the next phase of crystallizing issues and a public Western position favoring an eventual conference.

For some reason, the view at State seems to be that we must either take the lead (as we also did on the Berlin "probe")³ or end up being isolated. I find it hard to believe that our diplomacy cannot be skillful enough to operate in the middle ground between these extremes.

I have tried at various times to urge a little less activism and to impress on State the Presidential interest in this whole range of effort. But the flood-tide continues to roll.

In the attached Tabs, I have tried to give you a feel for what has been happening and for what State is planning to do next. I urge you to plow through these materials, at your earliest convenience.

Then I would strongly urge that we get together with Richardson and Hillenbrand to go over this entire subject matter so that we can decide on a US posture consistent with other things in play. Certainly, you and Elliot should have a meeting of minds⁴ before he goes off to

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 257, Agency Files, NATO, Vol. VI. Secret. Sent for action.

² The text of the communiqué of the June 25, 1968, North Atlantic Council Ministerial meeting in Reykjavik, along with a Declaration on Mutual Force Reductions adopted by the countries participating in the NATO Defense Program, are in the Department of State *Bulletin*, July 15, 1968, pp. 75–78.

³ Regarding the tripartite "sounding" on Berlin, see *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, volume XL, Germany and Berlin, 1969–1972, Document 21.

⁴ In an October 10 memorandum, Sonnenfeldt recommended that Kissinger raise with Richardson "your interest in the preparations for the NATO deputy foreign ministers and foreign ministers meetings. You are particularly interested in the preparations

the NATO Deputy Foreign Ministers and the immediately following European Chiefs of Mission meeting early in November.

Recommendation

1. That you promptly look over the attached materials.
2. That your office set up an early meeting including Richardson, Hillenbrand, plus one other State officer of their choosing, you and me.

Approve⁵

LCDR Howe set up meeting

Disapprove

Other

Tab A

EUROPEAN SECURITY ISSUES

State has initiated an exchange with Bob Ellsworth outlining a position it proposes to take in the forthcoming NATO meetings. (Summary and cables attached).⁶

The essence of the proposed position is that the Deputy Foreign Ministers would recommend a large step forward on European Security: we would endorse the idea of a Conference, and single out two issues for further study and eventually for a formal proposal to the USSR. The two issues are:

- (1) Balanced force reductions in Central Europe, and
- (2) a declaration of principles underlying European security.

By June 1970 the Ministers would approve a negotiating position.

Balanced force reduction is an old, old issue, which has been reworked by a study group. The result is a guidelines paper establishing the basis for further study of negotiating positions (outline at Tab B).

There are several other items on the extensive list of European Security issues (Tab C). Though they are not very inspiring, they should be given further consideration, especially if there is a disposition among the Europeans to put them forward for possible negotiations.

dealing with East-West issues and a European Security Conference. *Suggest* an early briefing and discussion session with Richardson and Hillenbrand." (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 337, Subject Files, HAK/Richardson Meetings, May–December 1969)

⁵ Kissinger initialed his approval on October 6. No record of Kissinger's meeting with Richardson has been found.

⁶ For the summary, see Tab B below. The cables are not attached.

It is worth recalling that the basic position stated in the April communiqué was that a list should be compiled of issues that “lend themselves to fruitful and early resolution.”⁷ It is difficult to see how balanced force reductions would qualify as an issue for “early” resolution.

The declaration of principles also raises some problems. On the one hand, it is relatively harmless and might serve to test the Soviet interest in negotiating. On the other hand, it is not very meaningful, even if the Soviets signed immediately. They would interpret it as a ratification of their actions in Czechoslovakia. Or, they would attach their own “principles”—recognition of existing boundaries, the two Germans etc.

The European Security issues are complicated by efforts currently launched: the three-power approach to the Soviets on Berlin, and the Soviet-FRG bilateral on renunciation of force. Apparently both initiatives would proceed. Since they were regarded as somewhat of a test of Soviet attitudes, the results some months hence might not justify forward movement on either balanced force reductions or a general declaration.

Finally, we will have to face possible French resistance to a bloc-to-bloc approach on European Security, which our proposed position implies if adopted by the Ministers.

Tactical Considerations

—Most Ministers will want the Alliance to stake out a forthcoming approach on European Security;

—if we are the only hold-out, we could be isolated;

—we prefer to proceed with multilateral and bilateral discussion with Eastern states to test the negotiating climate, to offer prospects of reduced tensions, and to improve the atmosphere for a European Security Conference;

—we could: participate in negotiations on individual items drawn from the agreed list; continue Berlin contacts; and examine economic, scientific and technological cooperation in bilateral East-West contacts;

—encouraging this general approach should avoid intra-alliance strains and maintain cohesion during an active period of East-West diplomacy;

—West European opinion will welcome a more forthcoming attitude, we will have solid tactical position, and if the Soviets refuse to bargain they will bear the onus for failure to make progress.

⁷ The final NAC communiqué also stated “that any negotiations must be well prepared in advance, and that all Governments whose participation would be necessary to achieve a political settlement in Europe should take part,” and that “the Allies will also pursue their efforts and studies in the field of disarmament and practical arms control, including balanced force reductions and the initiatives already undertaken for the renunciation of the use of force.” (Department of State *Bulletin*, April 28, 1969, pp. 354–356)

December Ministerial Communiqué

The Ministers would:

- a. Publicly endorse the principle of a well-prepared security conference with US and Canadian participation.
- b. Indicate belief that progress in negotiations on some concrete issues can move East and West closer to an eventual conference.
- c. Publicly indicate those specific areas which are being developed for initial exploration with the East:
 - Balanced force reductions; and
 - joint declaration of principles underlying European Security.

Balanced Force Reductions

Presented as opening step toward future negotiation on fundamental questions, such as issues related to Germany/Berlin:

- Would have domestic political advantages;
- studies are sufficiently advanced for formulating one or two illustrative proposals;
- Deputy Foreign Ministers in November would recommend studies of, say, 10, 20, and 30 percent staged reductions.

Joint Declaration of Principles

—For exploratory purposes, a declaration might contain the following elements:

- (a) non-intervention in internal affairs;
- (b) abstention from the use of threat of force;
- (c) respect for independence and territorial integrity;
- (d) agreement to settle differences through peaceful means.

—The declaration would:

- (a) test willingness of the Soviets to improve the East-West climate;
- (b) help increase flexibility of East European states in their dealings with West;
- (c) put Soviets on defensive;
- (d) appeal to Eastern and Western public opinion.

Other Issues

1. *Germany-Berlin*

—Depending on the state of the tripartite soundings already launched, Ministers express continued support for improved intra-German relations;

—should leave it to Germans to determine the rate of progress on Germany and Berlin issues.

2. *Confidence-Building Measures*

—Not sufficiently important or tactically advantageous to warrant inclusion in basic Western position.

3. *Economic, Technological and Cultural*

—Best left to bilateral effort or other multilateral approaches and not included as specific elements of NATO response.

Scenario

—September/October Political Advisors and disarmament experts in NATO will shape East-West issue study to spotlight the proposals outlined above;

—October 15 Permanent Representatives receive final report and begin to prepare package for Ministers;

—November 5–6 Foreign Ministers consider report and prepare recommendations to take action on balanced force reductions and joint declaration of principles;

—December Ministerial Meeting, adopt communiqué to

(a) “prepare a possible negotiating position on balanced force reductions which the Ministers could consider at their next meeting in June 1970 and might thereafter serve as a realistic basis for active exploration of means of achieving mutual and balanced force reductions;”

(b) “in their contacts with the Soviet Union and other countries of Eastern Europe to examine the possibility of a joint declaration of those principles which should form the foundation of a meaningful and lasting security in Europe” (followed by list of principles, non-intervention, etc.).

Tab B

GUIDELINES FOR BALANCED FORCE REDUCTION

(Draft Council Report Accepted ad referendum, September 25)

The main points in the guidelines are:

—to apply to indigenous and stationed forces in Central Europe, Germany, Benelux, E. Germany, Poland and Czechoslovakia;

—to exclude study of buffer or demilitarized zones;

—to include all conventional, nuclear and dual capable forces but not naval forces;

—ground forces to be considered primary element;

—to measure reductions primarily in terms of manpower;

—to vary timing of reduction in relation to size of cut; e.g. a ten percent reduction in one period, a 30 percent over several defined periods;

—personnel to be demobilized or placed in reserves, equipment could be reused to bring units up to strength;

—minimum extent of reduction about 10 percent, maximum 30 percent;

—as a matter for negotiation there could be asymmetrical reductions i.e., trading nuclear forces for conventional, balancing different types of conventional, etc.;

—need to be adequate verification, (further study needed).

Tab C

LIST OF EUROPEAN SECURITY ISSUES

Without trying to duplicate the entire list, the following gives the flavor of the exercise.

There are three different categories of issues:

1. Issues which warrant consideration for early negotiation.
2. Issues which appear to require further examination prior to consideration for further negotiation.
3. Issues already under negotiation.

Early in the proceedings, the Berlin-Germany issue was referred to the Bonn group.

Some, but not all, of the items hashed over (some for the Nth time in recent years) include:

- Renunciation of the use of force
- A code of good conduct (*sic*)
- Military observation at maneuvers
- Observation posts
- Elimination of restrictions on Allied Military Missions
- East-West study on techniques and methods of disarmament inspection
- Study of measures to prevent outbreak of a nuclear attack through surprise or error
- Mutual freeze of nuclear weapons
- Nuclear-free zones
- Cut-off of production of fissionable materials
- Ban on biological and chemical warfare
- Strengthening East-West cooperation (technological, health, environment)
- Expansion of tourism

6. **Memorandum From Helmut Sonnenfeldt of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)¹**

Washington, October 22, 1969.

SUBJECT

Your Meeting with Elliot Richardson, Thursday, October 23, 4:30 p.m.²—NATO Issues

This meeting is for the purpose of getting you briefed on the state of play on the issues associated with the European Security Conference and of assuring that our policy is coherent and has Presidential approval.

Background

Last April you issued an instruction in the President's name to the effect that we could approve a European Security conference (ESC) in principle but that we should concentrate on making progress on concrete issues (Tab A).³ The NATO Ministerial communiqué at that time was in general conformity with this approach, although several Ministers wanted a more positive endorsement of the ESC (Tab B).⁴

In the period since then, NATO has been busy compiling a list of issues for possible negotiation. These have been grouped under three categories: (1) issues which warrant consideration for early negotiation; (2) issues for further examination; and (3) issues already under negotiation. The items on this list (Tab C) would be pursued by allies in bilateral or multilateral negotiations with the East, with a full-scale Conference occurring when concrete results on fundamental issues dividing East and West might be expected.

In preparation for the December ministerial meeting, State wants to work up a draft communiqué which endorses an eventual Security Conference and narrows down the subjects for negotiations with the East in the period leading up to such a conference to (1) balanced force reductions and (2) a joint declaration on principles underlying European security. (Other negotiations, such as SALT, Berlin, non-use of force, would be pursued in various forums by the allies concerned.) The two negotiating items cited above would be given further study after the Decem-

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 337, Subject Files, HAK/Richardson Meetings, May–December 1969. Secret. Sent for information. Tabs A–E are attached but not printed.

² No record of Kissinger's meeting with Richardson has been found.

³ See footnote 4, Document 3.

⁴ See footnote 7, Document 5.

ber meeting so that they could then be formally offered as topics to the East after the June 1970 ministerial meeting (Tabs D⁵ and E).

As you know, I have held up an instruction to Ellsworth pending your review of these matters with Elliot Richardson.⁶

You may wish to take up the following issues:

1. *European Security Conference*. Why should we take the lead in endorsing it, even in the presently contemplated cautious formulation (“eventual . . . properly prepared . . . including US and Canadian participation.”)?

2. *Balanced Force Reductions*. There has been an extensive study underway since the NATO Ministerial Meeting in Reykjavik in the spring of 1968.

The last Administration took the view that a forthcoming position on negotiations with the Soviets for mutual force cuts was needed to meet Senator Mansfield’s pressure for unilateral cuts. It is still widely argued that if we are going to cut anyway, why not get something from the Soviets in return. These propositions are open to question and in any case they have never been put to the President. We are now beginning a NSSM on alternate strategies and force postures in Europe. Until we are well along in that we will have no criteria, comparable to those we have for SALT, for evaluating possible arrangements with the Soviets.

Moreover, even under the best of circumstances it is hard to see how this problem can qualify as one susceptible of early resolution. There is indeed a question whether it is advisable to deal with military questions in Europe without progress on political ones.

The question therefore is whether we should be in a position to promote this as the first item for concrete negotiation with the East, as State’s instructions propose.

3. *Declaration of Principles*. The question is whether this qualifies as a concrete issue and whether we should promote early negotiations on it. A good deal of work has been done on possible language and

⁵ Tab D is telegram 165553 to USNATO, September 30. For a summary, see Tab A, Document 5.

⁶ Hillenbrand reported to Richardson in an October 21 memorandum: “The NSC Staff is unable to clear on our instructions to Ambassador Ellsworth with regard to European security.” Hillenbrand stated: “The Staff contends that ‘a generally forthcoming attitude’ is not consistent with the President’s policy on an ESC and that we should revise the language to more fully indicate the President’s skepticism and say that ‘we plan to impose no objection to an eventual ESC.’” With regard to the Department’s principal suggestions, balanced force reductions and a Joint Declaration on Principles, Hillenbrand reported that “the Staff feels that we should confine our efforts on BFR to ‘further studies’ and merely reiterate language along the lines of the Reykjavik and Washington Communiqués with regard to BFR.” (National Archives, RG 59, S/S–NSC Files: Lot 80 D 212, NSSM 44, 4/19/69, US Positions for NATO Nuclear Planning Group)

State favors inclusion of such elements as (1) non-intervention in internal affairs, including among members of an alliance, (2) abstention from threat or use of force, (3) respect for the independence and territorial integrity of states, and (4) agreement to settle differences through peaceful means.

Offhand it would seem that if the Russians accept something like this it will be branded as hollow from the outset since they would obviously assert that what they did in Czechoslovakia was compatible with it. If the Russians do not accept it, there will be endless wrangling with no benefit to East-West relations.⁷

Perhaps the alliance should consider issuing such a statement unilaterally as the basis on which it conducts itself and invite adherence by the East.

But as a negotiating issue this would hardly seem to be suited.⁸

⁷ In his October 21 memorandum, Hillenbrand wrote that “the NSC Staff appears to feel that the White House believes that such declarations [Joint Declaration on Principles] have little credibility. They recognize, however, that the ‘principles’ idea may have support amongst the Europeans. Therefore, they feel that the current language in the earlier instruction [telegram 165553 to USNATO] is not clear as to whether or not the Allies are to prepare a joint declaration for ‘negotiating’ with the East or merely a document to which the East could adhere if it so wished but which the Allies would use as a basic guide in their day-to-day conduct of relations with the East. (This we can clarify.) The problem, according to the Staff, is that they feel that the White House does not believe that anything we did in this field would preclude the Soviets from pulling another Czechoslovakia or regarding it in any way as impeding their freedom.”

⁸ Hillenbrand explained to Richardson in his October 21 memorandum: “While a certain amount of tinkering with language is possible on these various issues, the fact remains that we are far apart on substance. Where we feel that BFR and the Joint Declaration are examples of ‘concrete issues which might lend themselves to fruitful negotiation’ and would, therefore, be something the Allies could, after proper preparation, discuss with the East, the NSC Staff feels that the White House does not wish to move beyond, regarding them as *potential* concrete issues which require *further detailed study*. In short, there is a fundamental difference of view.”

7. Editorial Note

In the wake of the National Security Council staff’s intervention (see Document 6), the Department of State revised its draft instructions to Ambassador Robert Ellsworth regarding a European security conference. The Department cabled the revised instructions, cleared by President’s Assistant for National Security Affairs Henry Kissinger, in telegram 181393 to USNATO on October 25, 1969. It contained instructions that were “supplementary” to telegram 165553, September 30 (for a summary of the telegram, see Tab A, Document 5). With regard

to “US views of eventual ESC and how to get there,” the revised instructions read:

“A) We assume majority of Allies will wish to adopt in December a more forthcoming attitude toward an eventual ESC than in April communiqué. In that likely event, we would wish to avoid a negative posture, and thus would be willing to go along with a consensus favoring mention in the communiqué of willingness to look toward an eventual ESC. We would of course insist that any ESC be properly prepared, and include US and Canadian participation from the outset.

“B) To further clarify our views, you also should indicate that we share the concern expressed by some Allies at October 1 NAC meeting that current NATO activity on East-West list may be creating public impression that East-West issues exercise, based on para 5 of April Ministerial communiqué, represents preparation for a European Security conference. You should make clear that we do not see the current issues exercise as directly related to preparations for an eventual ESC—that ‘vision of the future’ so aptly phrased by UK PermRep Burrows—or to write an agenda for such a conference. Rather, pending the time when such a conference promises concrete results, we prefer that Allies proceed with multilateral and bilateral discussions with the Eastern states on specific issues that might (a) test the negotiating climate; (b) offer the prospect of reducing tensions; and (c) contribute toward improving the atmosphere for eventual ESC.”

With regard to the communiqué for the December NATO Ministerial meeting, the instructions read: “You might wish to state that we are, of course, most interested in the views of our European Allies on the question of referring to an ESC in the December Ministerial communiqué. We also believe that communiqué should contain firm statement about maintenance of Allied defense capability and cohesion.”

On the subject of balanced force reductions (BFR), the cable noted that recent messages from the Mission to NATO suggested “that we face problem of how best to moderate a possible rush towards BFR by our Allies which would carry us farther than we want to go, without at same time appearing obstructive and foot-dragging on steps to reduce East-West tension. We believe following position on BFR most appropriate for these circumstances: (a) support moderate signal in December communiqué [. . .]; (b) support preparations, with participation of NMAS, of illustrative negotiating proposals to be considered at June Ministerial; (c) indicate that we will be better prepared to assess desirability and timeliness of more active gesture toward the Pact at June Ministerial when we will have had the opportunity to consider illustrative negotiating proposals.”

With regard to the preparation of a Joint Declaration of Principles on European Security, the cable reads: “After giving further thought to

Joint Declaration, we have concluded that scenario for preparation, consideration and public presentation of Joint Declaration would entail: (a) development by PermReps following December Ministerial meeting of draft of Joint Declaration of Principles on European Security [. . .]; (b) adoption and publication thereafter by NAC of Joint Declaration of Principles guiding Allies in the conduct of their international relations; and (c) NAC consideration of invitation to USSR and its allies to publicly adhere to these principles.” (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 683, Country Files, Europe, Germany, Vol. IV)

8. Editorial Note

On October 28, 1969, West German Ambassador to the United States Rolf Pauls met with President’s Assistant for National Security Affairs Kissinger to discuss issues relating to defense and European security. In preparation for the meeting, National Security Council staff member Helmut Sonnenfeldt submitted a memorandum to Kissinger on October 27. Sonnenfeldt wrote the following with regard to a European security conference:

“Elliot Richardson has twice talked with Pauls along the lines of the *original* State cable—before you talked with him and State changed the message. Since in the past you have hit Pauls rather hard on this subject, he may be confused or think there has been a major change in our policy. You may want to say that

“—we remain skeptical about a conference but won’t resist a groundswell if the Europeans generate it;

“—we are prepared to continue studying the question of mutual troop cuts in Europe but have made no decision on whether to pursue this with the Soviets;

“—we are prepared to participate in drafting principles of East-West relations at NATO; but the question of whether to seek to negotiate this with the Soviets is not decided. In this connection, we will be interested in how the Germans fare in their negotiations on renunciation of force.” (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 682, Country Files, Europe, Germany, Vol. III)

At the October 28 meeting, Pauls brought up both a European security conference and balanced force reductions in his discussion with Kissinger. According to the memorandum of conversation, prepared by Sonnenfeldt on October 28:

“[Pauls] then asked what we expected from the forthcoming Deputy Foreign Ministers’ meeting in Brussels. Mr. Kissinger said that

we would not take any initiatives in the European security field, but if the Europeans wanted to move in that area, and in particular if they were interested in a European Security Conference, we would go along. Mr. Kissinger noted that items had been suggested for possible exploration with the East and had been under discussion among the Allies. But he stressed again that the US would not take the initiative and that the whole subject was not a major point in the foreign policy of the United States. The Ambassador pointed out that German issues were central to the question of European security and should be explored before proceeding to any conference. Moreover, Germany probably should not be on the agenda of any large European conference. Mr. Kissinger noted that the Germans had not made these views known officially and that perhaps they should do so.

“The Ambassador finally raised the question of balanced force reductions in Europe. Mr. Kissinger, noting that there had been discussion of this subject in Brussels, said that we had begun to take a look at this problem here and probably would be less pressing from now on. Mr. Kissinger acknowledged that there was an argument that it might be possible to meet pressures for unilateral force reductions by proposing mutual cuts with the Russians. The Ambassador asserted that ‘the worst mutual reduction is better than the best unilateral reduction.’ Mr. Kissinger noted that this might not necessarily be the case. What was needed was an agreed strategic concept among the Allies.” (Ibid.)

9. Memorandum From Helmut Sonnenfeldt of the National Security Council Staff to the President’s Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)¹

Washington, October 29, 1969.

SUBJECT

State Again Pushes the “Groundswell” on European Security

Literally within a day of our getting State to tone down its basic instruction to Ellsworth on European security² (so that we would be

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 257, Agency Files, NATO, Vol. VI. Secret. Sent for information. A note on the first page reads: “HAK has seen, Nov 20, 1969.”

² See Document 7.

responding to European support for a conference rather than taking an initiative ourselves), Elliot Richardson signed out a message that again puts us ahead of the pack. The reason for doing this was fear that as the result of the impending Warsaw Pact Foreign Ministers meeting the other side will get the initiative on this subject. Ellsworth is now instructed to suggest to Brosio a public affairs guideline in which the principle of an eventual ESC would be said to be acceptable (Tab A).³

The point here is that while this may well be the case, why should *we* be the ones to run to Brosio with the suggestion.

Moreover, as a matter of substance, why must we assume that we cannot get at least as much “initiative” out of our eminently sensible insistence on “negotiation of concrete issues,” as the East gets out of their phony slogan for a European security conference. If our whole diplomatic and public posture in the six months since the President’s April directive⁴ had been oriented around our preferred approach, instead of being concerned with handling “groundswells”—which we ourselves keep adding to—we would be in a far stronger position today.

You told Pauls recently that “European security” is not a major element in our foreign policy at present.⁵ You (and I) are alone in expressing this view. Unless the President himself says so—perhaps in response to the State memo that you and Elliot agreed would be sent over—we will never get this situation under control.

³ Attached but not printed at Tab A is telegram 182080 to USNATO, October 28, which reads: “Objective at the Deputy Foreign Ministers Meeting or in council discussion thereafter would be early agreement on public affairs ‘guidelines’ along following lines: that the principle is acceptable of an eventual European security conference, properly prepared and with U.S. participation; that the problem of European security is complicated and must be approached through dealing with concrete issues and not propaganda measures; that the allies are examining such issues for consideration in December to determine those on which progress might be made in bilateral and multilateral discussions with the Soviet Union and its allies.”

⁴ See Document 3 and footnote 4 thereto.

⁵ See Document 8.

10. Memorandum From Secretary of State Rogers to President Nixon¹

Washington, October 31, 1969.

SUBJECT

United States and Allied Approaches to the Current Issues of European Security

The problem of how the Alliance should respond to the appeal for a European Security Conference issued by the Warsaw Pact at Budapest last March will be the major item of business during the NATO Deputy Foreign Ministers meeting in November and the Ministerial meeting in December.

We must hold the Allies together in fashioning a coherent, convincing and collective response to the Budapest appeal that will demonstrate to public opinion Western willingness to negotiate in a constructive spirit the real issues of European security.

We believe, moreover, that we should aim to enter into a process of negotiation with the Soviets from a solid tactical position. The Alliance should find it possible to make reasonable and attractive proposals that would permit us to deal confidently with the Soviets if they wish to negotiate. If the Soviets refuse to negotiate on this basis, there is good reason to hope that Moscow could be made to bear most of the public blame for the resulting impasse.

The Present European Security Equation

We do not believe that basic East-West differences—such as the continuing division of Germany and the future of Berlin—are subject to easy or early resolution, or that a European Security Conference is likely to accomplish much in the period immediately ahead. Successful negotiations on European security can only result from a lengthy process, not from a single climactic event.

We also know that the ultimate Soviet aim in putting this proposal in play with the West is to place a seal of legitimacy upon the division of Germany and Europe, while we would hope for the opposite result from any process of European security negotiations. Moreover, the

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 683, Country Files, Europe, Germany, Vol. IV. Secret. On November 5, Sonnenfeldt forwarded Rogers's memorandum to Kissinger. In a covering memorandum he wrote that it "raises again the major problem of holding State back from over-commitment to the idea of such a conference simply in order to appear to respond positively to the Warsaw Pact overtures, so that we 'demonstrate to public opinion' our willingness to negotiate European security issues constructively with the Soviets." (Ibid.)

mere convening of a European Security Conference with East German participation would, of itself, go far toward achieving this Soviet goal—which means that West German views on the matter will merit particular attention.

Nonetheless, the fact remains that the Warsaw Pact's European Security Conference proposal has a certain resonance in Western European public opinion. Last April, as you will recall, several Allied governments urged that a direct and generally favorable response to the Warsaw Pact proposal be included in the communiqué of the Washington Ministerial meeting. Their ardor was dampened largely—and at the last minute—by a Tass release issued just before the meeting that attacked NATO in typical Cold War language. The communiqué of the Washington meeting thus avoided mention of a European Security Conference and went no further than a commitment “to explore with the Soviet Union and the other countries of Eastern Europe which concrete issues best lend themselves to fruitful negotiation and an early resolution.” The Ministers instructed the Council in Permanent Session to study the matter, and the result has been a full-dress substantive review by the Allies of the issues on which East-West discussions might be held. This List of Issues (a copy is enclosed)² will be the main substantive underpinning for the November and December meetings of the Council at higher levels.

Since April, the Soviets and their Allies have given renewed signs of interest in a European Security Conference, and we have reports that the Warsaw Pact will meet to draw up a proposed “agenda” in the near future. The November and December NATO meetings thus will have to decide whether the Alliance should respond directly to this Warsaw Pact proposal, and if so, how.

In making the essentially tactical judgment about the appropriate US attitude toward the issue of a European Security Conference, we begin with the assessment that the majority of our Allies will wish to adopt a generally favorable posture toward such a conference.

In that likely event, it is also our belief that we should not take a negative stance and oppose, in principle, an Allied statement that, at the end of a long preparatory path, a European Security Conference could be convened, with United States and Canadian participation from the outset. Many West Europeans look upon European security negotiations as their equivalent to SALT—as the vehicle by which Western European governments can engage visibly in negotiations with the East on issues relating to their security. Thus Western European pres-

² Not attached. NATO Document C–M(69)46, “List of Issues for Possible Negotiation with the East,” October 2, is *ibid.* It is summarized in Tab C to Document 5.

tures for a European Security Conference may well grow as SALT gets underway, and it would hardly be appropriate for us to appear to stand in the way.

We also believe that the Alliance has no need to react in purely defensive fashion to the Warsaw Pact's European Security Conference gambit. Rather it should put forward in December substantive proposals that would meet Alliance interests if they could be negotiated with the East, that appeal to Western public opinion, and that—where possible—have divisive effects on the Warsaw Pact or put the Soviets on the defensive. The probability that some proposals are non-negotiable with the Soviets is thus not necessarily a bar to advancing them.

Issues for Possible Negotiation

The opinion amongst most NATO countries now is that an offer to negotiate balanced force reductions in Central Europe with the Eastern European countries should be one of the central elements in the Allied position. We share their view of the balanced force reductions approach because:

—The Alliance had publicly registered agreement in principle to balanced force reductions in June 1968 and again in April 1969.³

—The preparatory studies are well-advanced and could be converted fairly soon into proposals for consideration as possible negotiating positions.

—Balanced force reductions proposal would be useful in the internal political debates of member countries, including the United States, as an argument against unilateral force reductions.

—It would appeal to a Western public opinion anxious for tangible signs of progress toward disarmament. In the likely event that the Soviets refuse to discuss this question seriously, we would presumably be better placed to maintain the position that unilateral force reductions would be self-defeating.

While the German question remains, of course, central to the problem of European security, we did not think it appropriate in the present political context for the United States to take the initiative on a matter of the most direct and immediate interest to the Federal Republic and concerning which German diplomacy has itself been very active in the last few years. The new German Government⁴ also will undoubtedly have an active Eastern policy and consult with us about it.

Hence, for the purposes of the present exercise, on Germany and Berlin, we would limit ourselves to an effort to build Allied support

³ See footnotes 2 and 7, Document 5.

⁴ Parliamentary elections in West Germany on September 28 resulted in the formation of a new coalition government with Willy Brandt of the Social Democratic Party (SPD) as Chancellor and Walter Scheel of the Free Democratic Party (FDP) as Vice Chancellor and Foreign Minister.

for the tripartite efforts to ease pressures on Berlin and for the Eastern policy initiatives which the Brandt government will be pursuing.

However, we feel balanced force reductions—a proposal long in play—is not enough by itself for us to propose in November and December as the American suggestion for the collective Allied response to the Warsaw Pact initiative.

Thus, we also believe that we should endorse a Joint Declaration on the Principles of European Security as a proposal of tactical utility. It could be advanced as a means of placing an additional restraint—however slight—upon the Soviet Union’s use of force to discipline its Allies. It could be designed to remind Western public opinion of the past transgressions of the Soviet Union and to have divisive effects within the Warsaw Pact. The declaration should encompass such principles as non-intervention in internal affairs, including among members of an Alliance, abstention from the use or threat of force; respect for the independence and territorial integrity of states; and agreement to settle differences by peaceful means—all points now extant in the United Nations Charter but packaged in a declaration of applicability to the European area.

You may recall that the British advanced an East-West Code of Good Conduct proposal before the Czech crisis, but have left it dormant since. The French also have suggested East-West agreement on a Declaration of Non-Intervention that would be designed, implicitly at least, to inhibit a repetition of the Czech affair. Foreign Minister Schumann floated it in Moscow recently⁵ and—not surprisingly—found the Soviets reticent. We have reports that the Warsaw Pact may advance a Code of Good Conduct proposal of its own.

In summary, as we now see it, the total Western response in December to the Warsaw Pact initiative will comprise five main points:

1. Balanced force reductions—a renewed and stronger signal of Allied willingness to negotiate.
2. Reference to a Joint Declaration on the Principles of European Security.
3. Berlin-Germany—support for the tripartite probe⁶ and the Federal Republic of Germany’s initiatives on inner-German relations.
4. Hortatory statements on enhanced East-West economic, technical and cultural exchanges, which some of the Allies—notably the Italians—will insist upon.

⁵ Schumann visited Moscow October 9–14. The joint Franco-Soviet communiqué envisioned a “properly prepared European conference” that “could constitute an effective means of developing co-operation between all the European States” and end “the division of Europe into blocs.” (*Keesing’s Contemporary Archives*, 1969–1970, p. 23864A)

⁶ See footnote 3, Document 5.

5. Statement of willingness to consider an eventual European Security Conference, provided it is properly prepared in advance and includes the United States and Canada from the outset.

State telegram number 181393 (enclosed) to USNATO,⁷ which was cleared by Dr. Kissinger, sets forth our preliminary guidance on the foregoing points.

We believe this cautious but positive approach is consonant with your policy toward Europe and plan to proceed along the above lines.

WPR

⁷ See Document 7.

11. Telegram From the Department of State to the Mission to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization¹

Washington, November 20, 1969, 0016Z.

195006. USNATO deliver Eagleburger 0830 Thursday, November 20. FYI and Noforn (except as noted in para 4 below). Subj: Soviet Approach on European Security Conference. Memorandum below is unclassified and subject to revision upon review.

1. Ambassador Dobrynin asked for an appointment with Secretary on November 18. They met at 9 a.m. on November 19. Dobrynin then proceeded to summarize lengthy "informal oral statement," text of which he later handed to Secretary. Full text of statement follows:

"(1) Soviet Government proceeds from assumption that possibilities for holding all-European conference are now increasing. During time that passed since Bucharest Declaration by socialist countries, and especially since Budapest Appeal, the intentions of countries which sponsored proposals for all-European conference have become more clearly understood by other European countries. A number of wrong interpretations have been dropped which did not correspond to real

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 711, Country Files, Europe, USSR, Vol. VI. Confidential; Immediate. Also sent to Moscow and repeated to Bucharest, Budapest, Prague, Sofia, and Warsaw. Drafted by Thompson R. Buchanan (EUR/SOV); approved by Dubs, McGuire, Herbert S. Okun (S), Springsteen, and Melvyn Levitsky (S/S). Sonnenfeldt forwarded a copy of the telegram to Kissinger with a covering memorandum on December 23. (Ibid.)

position of socialist countries. Discussion of proposal for an all-European conference has become businesslike and is being focused on its agenda, possible results and body of participants. The well known initiative of Finland played positive role in this respect. Thus the question of preparation and convocation of all-European conference will now arise on a more practical plane.

Socialist countries which proposed all-European conference have carefully analyzed existing points of view, considered the opinions expressed in course of bilateral contacts and have taken into account positions of interested states. In particular, they paid due attention to opinions regarding the necessity of thorough preparation for all-European conference, its possible participants and desirability to select for the discussion at the all-European conference such questions which would allow for a broad consensus in the present conditions in Europe, and regarding which all possible participants in the all-European conference would have sufficient degree of confidence as to their productive consideration at the conference itself.

Having taken into account all above mentioned points, countries-signatories to Budapest Appeal found it useful and timely to come out with new initiative to detail further steps for convening all-European conference and to provide answers to questions, which arose in the course of discussion with various countries of the proposal to convene the conference.

(2) The Soviet Government is convinced that convening of all-European conference in near future would serve interests of strengthening peace and security in Europe as well as interests of all European and not only European states. It stands to reason that preparatory work must be aimed at practical fulfillment of proposal for convening conference instead of being used as pretext for its delay or for raising various preliminary conditions. In opinion of countries-participants in Prague meeting, the all-European conference could take place in first half of 1970.²

As for place of conference, the states-signatories of the Prague statement hold the opinion that it could take place in Helsinki in view of the role played by Government of Finland in this matter.

(3) Soviet Government fully shares view of states which believe that all-European conference must end in success—all the more so that it would be the first meeting of all European countries in the post-war years.

² On October 30–31, the Foreign Ministers of the Warsaw Pact countries met in Prague, where they adopted a declaration calling for an All-European Conference to be held in Helsinki in the first half of 1970.

In our opinion, two items suggested by Prague statement for inclusion in agenda of an all-European conference—‘on the assurance of European security and on the renunciation of use of force or threat of its use in mutual relations among states in Europe’ and ‘on expansion of trade, economic, scientific and technical ties on equal terms aimed at developing political cooperation among European states’—can become subjects on which broad agreement can be reached, given sufficient good will of the parties. (*Comment: Dobrynin handed the Secretary the text of these draft documents.*)

Discussion of first question mentioned above could, it is believed, result in signing of final document that would proclaim principle of renunciation of use of force or threat of its use in mutual relations among states in Europe. Adoption of such document would actually mean proclamation of principle of renunciation of war in Europe which is of special significance in view of fact that it is on the European continent that the two most powerful military-political groupings confront each other with their military forces concentrated there in immediate proximity of each other. Establishment on regional basis of principle to renounce use of force or threat of its use is in keeping with provisions of UN Charter and serves their further development. Besides it should be borne in mind that not all of states concerned—future participants in the all-European conference—are members of the UN. It goes without saying that adoption of document on non-use of force by all-European conference would by no means affect commitments assumed by states-participants in all-European conference through existing multilateral and bilateral treaties and agreements.

Discussion of second question on agenda which could also result in adoption of appropriate document, would allow movement forward toward normalization of relations among European states, prepare ground for consideration of concrete questions of trade, economic, scientific and technical cooperation among all European states and for removal of obstacles in the mentioned fields.

An accord achieved on both mentioned questions would contribute to improvement of general political atmosphere in Europe and to growth of trust, would secure principles of peaceful coexistence and would pave way for future consideration of other problems of interest to European states, the solution of which would contribute to strengthening of European security and development of broad cooperation among all European states.

We would like to make clear, that at all-European conference, as we see it, every state-participant will be given an opportunity to set forth its viewpoint on questions regarding the situation in Europe and means of strengthening peace and security on the European continent,

as well as to give suggestions and considerations for development of peaceful cooperation among European countries. In other words, we have in mind that there will take place a free discussion at the conference, and that decisions will be taken on the two proposed concrete questions at the conclusion of the conference. We would like to emphasize the idea that working out agreed drafts of the possible final documents in consultations even before convocation of an all-European conference would guarantee the success of conference to a considerable extent.

(4) As it follows from Prague statement, the Soviet Union and other socialist countries are prepared to consider any other proposals aimed at practical preparation for and ensuring the success of all-European conference.

Sometimes an opinion is voiced to effect that questions advanced by socialist countries are allegedly not of major scale and that cardinal problems such as German problem should be introduced at all-European conference. We do not agree with such statements at all. Suggestions to effect that German problem or other problems be included in the agenda—and such problems are understood by the West in a specific way which is clearly unacceptable to the socialist countries—would only serve to complicate if not downright torpedo convocation or, at any rate, fruitful work of the conference. One cannot but take into consideration also that as far as German problem goes there is special responsibility of victorious powers in World War II who signed the Potsdam agreement.³

Nor do we agree with attempts to raise the question of West Berlin since this is a special question and it does not belong to the all-European conference.

(5) Referring to questions which have been raised with me by U.S. officials as to attitude of Soviet Union toward U.S. participation in an all-European conference, we would like to make the following clarification.

All-European conference is of a regional nature, open for participation by all interested European states, including, of course, the GDR on an equal footing with the FRG and on equal terms with other participants.⁴ With this qualification as to the body of participants the Soviet Government believes that the United States, if there is a wish on her part, can also take part in all-European conference, since it bears

³ After this sentence, Sonnenfeldt wrote, “n.b., France did not sign.”

⁴ Sonnenfeldt underlined “on an equal footing with the FRG and on equal terms with other participants.” He placed quotation marks around “footing” and “terms” and wrote in the margin, “quid pro quo.”

definite responsibility ensuing from Potsdam and other Allied agreements in force for peaceful settlement in Europe.⁵ In setting forth our position as to agenda for the conference we took into account previous contacts with U.S. representatives and, in particular, the view expressed here to the effect that acute questions, especially those within the responsibility of the participants in the Potsdam conference, be considered outside of the framework of the all-European conference. The items we propose to include in the agenda also correspond to suggestions by the American side that such questions be taken up at the conference which could productively be discussed and acted upon. We expect that further contacts will enable us together and for the benefit of the cause (sic) to discuss problems related to preparation and holding of an all-European conference.

(6) We would like to express hope that U.S. Government will give its due attention to proposals advanced by states which signed Prague statement, and to considerations of USSR Government on this score, and on its part will make efforts toward preparation of convening and successful holding of all-European conference. Soviet Government would appreciate considerations and suggestions which U.S. Government may think useful to express in this connection."⁶

2. After Dobrynin finished his summary of oral statement, the Secretary asked how long the Soviet Government would envisage duration of proposed ESC.⁷ Ambassador replied conference need not be long at all if agreement can be reached on draft documents beforehand through bilateral discussions. Obviously if conference were to discuss substance of controversial issues it could last very long time. It would be Soviet hope, however, that agreement could be reached on draft documents prepared at Prague conference before ESC convenes. The USSR assumed, Dobrynin said, that NATO countries might have two or three other issues which they would like to raise at ESC; these could also be discussed through diplomatic channels ahead of time.

3. Draft documents handed Secretary noted in para (3) above are identical with texts transmitted in London's 9176. (Text being repeated to addressees who did not receive London Embtel.)

⁵ Sonnenfeldt circled Potsdam, underlined "and other Allied agreements in force," and wrote a question mark in the margin.

⁶ Sonnenfeldt underlined part of the previous sentence, beginning with "would." In the margin he wrote, "requests reply."

⁷ Sonnenfeldt underlined "how long the Soviet Government would envisage duration of proposed ESC" and wrote an exclamation point in the margin.

4. For USNATO—at November 20 Polads discussion of Eastern European follow-up to Prague declaration, you may inform Allies of Dobrynin call on Secretary. You may also make oral summary of principal points which Dobrynin made.

Rogers

12. National Security Study Memorandum 83¹

Washington, November 21, 1969.

TO

The Secretary of State
The Secretary of Defense

SUBJECT

U.S. Approach to Current Issues of European Security

In connection with developments in the field of European security, the President wishes to have a meeting of the National Security Council early in the New Year. At that time he wishes to consider the status of our own and NATO actions on this subject and the range of options open to us in the light of East-West diplomatic exchanges and of pertinent strategic issues. As a result of the identification and discussion of the major issues involved, the President will provide guidance for further U.S. actions.

A paper providing the basis for this NSC meeting should be prepared by the Interdepartmental Group for Europe and should be submitted for consideration by the NSC Review Group by January 15, 1970.²

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-166, NSSM 83, 3 of 4. Secret. Copies were sent to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Director of Central Intelligence. Sonnenfeldt, who drafted the NSSM, wrote in the covering memorandum to Haig: "At Henry's request, I have redone the memorandum to Secretary Rogers on European Security issues as a NSSM." Sonnenfeldt noted Kissinger was "very anxious to have this go out *today*." Haig wrote in the margin, "So am I!!" At the bottom of the covering memorandum, Kissinger wrote, "Send out signed NSSM."

² The response to National Security Study Memorandum 83, January 26, 1970, is scheduled for publication in *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, volume XLI, Western Europe; NATO, 1969–1972.

In the interim, the President's approach to the proposal for a European Security Conference remains as stated in the directive of April 9, 1969.³ Pending the NSC meeting, the President wishes to have specific U.S. negotiating proposals in this area held in abeyance.⁴

Henry A. Kissinger

³ See footnote 4, Document 3.

⁴ In a November 25 memorandum, Sonnenfeldt wrote to Kissinger: "NSSM 83 notwithstanding, Ambassador Ellsworth has now been furnished a 'Declaration on European Security' by the Department of State (Tab A), which, inter alia, commits us to establishing criteria for mutual force reductions, the preparation of a model (it used to be 'models') for such reductions, and willingness to begin explorations at an early date with the Eastern countries. State has not so far sent the basic papers relating to the NATO Ministerial Meeting for which the Secretaries of State, Defense and Treasury are departing early next week." Tab A to Sonnenfeldt's memorandum was telegram 196793 to USNATO, November 23. (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 667, Country Files, Europe, Europe General)

13. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to President Nixon¹

Washington, December 3, 1969.

SUBJECT

Scope and Objectives of Secretary Rogers' European Trip

On November 29, a memorandum was received from the Secretary of State setting forth the general scope and objectives of the visit he begins early this week to Brussels, Bonn and Paris (Tab B).² The Secretary, together with Secretaries Laird and Kennedy, will attend the semi-annual NATO Ministerial meetings in Brussels and he will then proceed to Germany and France for bilateral talks with the leaders of those countries.

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 258, Agency Files, NATO, Vol. VII. Secret. Sent for action.

² Tab B, a memorandum from Rogers to the President, November 28, is not attached. In it Rogers stated that on European security problems "we are proceeding on the basis outlined in my October 31 memorandum to you [Document 10]." (National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1967-69, NATO 3 BEL)

1. As regards the *NATO meetings*, the Secretary plans

—to issue our undertaking for firm force commitments to NATO through 1970 (this will involve certain reductions in forces, particularly naval, committed to NATO, but not stationed in Europe, resulting from our Defense budget cuts);

—to support a five-point response to recent Warsaw Pact initiatives on European security, as follows:

a. a new “signal” to the East, that NATO is prepared to consider the possibility of balanced East-West force reductions in Europe;

b. a further probe by the US, UK and France of the possibilities for improving the situation in Berlin and NATO support for the Federal Republic’s Eastern policy;

c. reference to a possible Joint Declaration on the Principles Governing Relations between States (this would essentially be the Western counter to the Brezhnev Doctrine³);

d. references to increased East-West cultural, technical and economic exchanges; and

e. in response to majority sentiment in the Alliance, a reference to the Warsaw Pact-proposed European Security conference but stipulating that it be properly prepared, offers prospects of concrete progress and includes the US and Canada.

The Secretary states in his memorandum that he does not believe he requires additional guidance for the NATO meetings but will seek it if required.

2. With regard to his stop in *Bonn*, the Secretary plans

—to establish close working relations with the new German leadership and to dispel German suspicions that we favor the CDU over the SPD;

—to urge the Germans not to base their policy on the assumption that US troop withdrawals are inevitable;

—to support German efforts to improve relations with the East provided this does not impair Western security;

—to tell Brandt that he will be welcome in Washington whenever a convenient time can be arranged.

3. In *Paris*, the Secretary plans

—to confer with our delegation to the Vietnam talks;

—establish personal contact with President Pompidou and assure him of the importance you attach to his forthcoming visit; and

³ Reference is to Soviet claims to a right to intervene in the internal affairs of Bloc states. The Brezhnev Doctrine was originally set out by Soviet Communist Party spokesman Sergei Kovalev in a September 26, 1968, *Pravda* article, “Sovereignty and International Responsibility in Socialist Countries.” A translation is printed in *Current Digest of the Soviet Press*, October 16, 1968.

—to elicit Prime Minister Chaban-Delmas' views on French domestic affairs.

I believe following the Secretary's return, a review of the state of play on European security by the NSC will be desirable so that you will be able to consider the range of options open to us in the light of sentiment in the Alliance (the French, for example, have reservations about a NATO initiative on East-West force cuts), Warsaw Pact initiatives and our own interests. A study of pertinent issues will be prepared through the NSC machinery for a possible NSC meeting before the Wilson and Pompidou visits early next year.⁴

If you agree, I will send the attached acknowledgment of the Secretary's memorandum to the Acting Secretary of State (Tab A).⁵

Recommendation

That you approve my sending the attached memorandum to the Acting Secretary of State (Tab A).⁶

⁴ Wilson and Pompidou visited Washington January 27–28 and February 24–26, respectively. Documentation on both visits is scheduled for publication in *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, volume XLI, Western Europe; NATO, 1969–1972.

⁵ Not attached.

⁶ Nixon initialed his approval on December 15. The word "changed" was written in the margin, and "Acting Secretary" was struck out and replaced with "Secretary" since Rogers returned from his European trip on December 8 and Richardson was no longer Acting Secretary. Kissinger sent the revised memorandum to Rogers on December 16. He wrote: "The President has noted your memorandum concerning the scope and objectives of your participation in the recently concluded NATO meetings and of your talks in Bonn and Paris. A National Security Council review of the range of options open to us on the issues involved is to be scheduled for early next year." (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 258, Agency Files, NATO, Vol. VII)

14. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to President Nixon¹

Washington, December 15, 1969.

SUBJECT

Secretary Rogers' European Trip

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 281, Agency Files, Dept of State, Vol. V. Secret. Sent for action. A notation on the first page reads: "The President has seen." In a handwritten comment at the top of the memorandum, Kissinger wrote on December 29, "I don't have to get Pres. to approve notes to Rogers."

Secretary Rogers has sent you the attached memorandum summarizing the accomplishments of his recent European trip (Tab B).²

The Secretary feels that the NATO meeting was useful in containing the eagerness of some European leaders for the Warsaw Pact-proposed European security conference by advancing a sound Allied position on relations and negotiations with the East. The Secretary also notes that ten allied countries agreed to increase their military efforts while we assured the allies that we would maintain our troop levels at essentially present levels through FY 1971.

With respect to his conversations with German leaders, both in Brussels and in Bonn, the Secretary reports Brandt's assurances that the Germans would not be adventurous in their Eastern policy. The Secretary expressed our support and stressed that recent reports of US suspiciousness of German policy were incorrect. Chancellor Brandt indicated a preference for April or May for his visit to Washington. (We will pick up this matter again with the German Embassy here.)

In France, the Secretary found our relations improving although differences remain especially on the Middle East and Vietnam. (A separate memorandum on the latter subject is being forwarded to you.)³

I agree with the Secretary that the NATO meeting put forward a reasonable Western position on relations with the East. It is not yet clear, however, whether the pressures for a European security conference have been contained for good. In addition, of course, the Alliance is now committed to specific concrete negotiations with the East, particularly on Berlin and possible mutual East-West troop reductions. An NSC meeting is being tentatively scheduled for mid-January to enable you to review our NATO and European policy and to give guidance for future policy, both short-term and longer-range. This will also help to prepare for the visits of Prime Minister Wilson later in January and of President Pompidou in late February.

If you agree, I will send the attached memorandum (Tab A) to the Secretary of State, acknowledging his report to you.

² Tab B is attached but not printed. Rogers wrote in his memorandum to the President, December 8: "On the *European Security Conference* and East-West relations, we achieved a realistic and cautious NATO stand which stressed the need for further explorations and better prospects for significant results before we agreed to go to a Conference. We also obtained Alliance agreement on NATO initiatives vis-à-vis Eastern Europe, including preparation of a negotiating position for mutual and balanced force reductions, support for initiatives on Germany and Berlin, and support for some moves in economic, social and cultural fields. The Declaration accompanying the Communiqué contains a strong reference to principles which should guide relations of States, stressing non-intervention in the affairs of any state by any other state 'whatever its social or political system.' Euphoria for a conference for a conference's sake was contained, and the result is a sound Alliance position on this issue."

³ Not found.

Recommendation

That you approve the memorandum at Tab A to Secretary Rogers.⁴

⁴ The draft memorandum from Kissinger to Rogers is attached but not printed. Nixon crossed out the "Approve" and "Disapprove" options and wrote: "I covered orally by phone—Set up N.S.C. meeting as planned—to cover NATO generally—with particular emphasis on Germany, Italy, France, Britain (in that order). Also—a look at Greece." Below the handwritten note is the date, "Dec 29, 1969."

15. Editorial Note

President's Assistant for National Security Affairs Kissinger met with Soviet Ambassador Anatoly Dobrynin for dinner on the evening of December 22, 1969. In preparation for the meeting, Kissinger forwarded a memorandum to President Richard Nixon for his approval regarding the points that he proposed to make to Dobrynin that evening. With regard to Europe and a European security conference, Kissinger wrote:

"The Soviets are continuing their pressure for a European security conference; they assert that the West Europeans are showing interest in the proposal but that we are spearheading the effort to prevent the conference. I will say that:

"—we have no interest in a conference at this time since we know of no concrete European issue that could be resolved through a mass conference; if the Europeans want to have a conference, we will not stand in their way but we will reserve the decision as to whether we have any interest in attending;

"—what we are interested in are substantive negotiations on the concrete issues among the parties directly concerned;

"—we will watch with interest how the various negotiations on which the Germans are now embarking with the Eastern countries are going to progress, and we will watch whether the USSR is interested in improving the Berlin situation so that it is not a source of constant crisis;

"—if some new forms of cultural, technical and economic cooperation can be worked out between East and West in Europe we have no objection; but the past has shown that such arrangements are highly vulnerable to political tensions; so we hope no one will have the illusion that they are doing something about security as long as crucial political problems are unresolved."

Nixon initialed and approved Kissinger's proposed talking points. (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 489, President's Trip Files, Dobrynin/Kissinger, 1969, Pt. 1)

At their meeting that evening, Dobrynin brought up a European security conference. Kissinger wrote in his summary for the President that Dobrynin charged that the United States "managed to convey the idea that we are making everything conditional on something else. For example, we were asking them to show their good intentions in Berlin before we agreed to a European security conference." Kissinger continued:

"I told Dobrynin that we remained interested in good relations with the Soviet Union. We were the two great powers, and we had to avoid conflict; we should speak while we were still in a position to make definitive decisions. At the same time, as the President had repeatedly pointed out, we wanted to have concrete, detailed negotiations. Until he told me just what he [Dobrynin] was aiming at, it was very hard for me to comment on his points, since I did not know what he understood by progress. For example, we had heard a great deal about the European Security Conference, but I did not know just exactly what the Soviet Union hoped to achieve there. Dobrynin said, 'Well, why don't you ask us. We would be glad to tell you at any level.' I said, 'Well, maybe we should ask you, but why don't you tell me now.' Dobrynin said, 'We want existing frontiers recognized.' I said, 'No one is challenging the existing frontiers.' Dobrynin said that he had the impression we were challenging the status quo in Germany. I told him we were not challenging the status quo in Germany, but there was a big difference between challenging it and giving juridical recognition to East Germany."

Later in the conversation, Dobrynin returned to the issue of a European security conference. "One result of the distrust between Washington and Moscow, Dobrynin said, was that a number of other countries could attempt to maneuver between us. For example, the British were always going to the Soviet Union and telling them that the United States was preventing a European Security Conference, but the Soviet Union knew the British game. The British thought they had to keep the Soviet Union and the United States apart so that they could maneuver—that if the United States and the Soviet Union were together, Britain was nothing." Kissinger responded that he "did not know to which statements" Dobrynin was referring, but that the British and the United States "were in rather close accord." (Ibid.) For the full text of the December 24 memorandum, see *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, volume XII, Soviet Union, January 1969–October 1970, Document 110.

16. Memorandum of Conversation¹

Washington, December 30, 1969, 11 a.m.

SUBJECT

Balanced Force Reductions in Europe

PARTICIPANTS

Soviet Ambassador Anatoliy F. Dobrynin
Acting Secretary Richardson
Mr. James F. Leonard, ACDA
Mr. Lewis W. Bowden, EUR/SOV

The Acting Secretary said he would like to mention one other matter. He said he assumed the Ambassador was aware of a reference in the recent NATO declaration² to balanced forces reduction (BFR). We think this subject offers the possibility of fruitful negotiation and that, among other things, it would supplement our efforts in the strategic arms field and make a real contribution to the reduction of tensions in Europe.

Dobrynin asked whether we were linking the two matters in any way and Mr. Richardson assured him we were not, but we did see one action could be complementary to the other.

Dobrynin said that the Soviets had had nothing in the way of a reply from us to their *démarche* of November 19 on European Security³ except the recent NATO declaration and communiqué. Mr. Richardson observed that the military people in NATO are now working on possible packages of balanced forces reductions which are to be considered in June by the Defense Ministers. The earliest time, therefore, that we could make a formal proposal to the Soviets on this subject would be after the June meeting.

Dobrynin queried as to why we had raised the matter now in the absence of a concrete proposal. He agreed that in general the idea of force reductions in Europe was a good one, pointing out that both the

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 711, Country Files, Europe, USSR, Vol. VI. Secret; Exdis. Part II of V. Drafted by Bowden, concurred in by Leonard, and approved by Morton Abramowitz (U) on December 31. The meeting was held in the Under Secretary's office. At the top of the first page is a handwritten notation, "Sonnenfeldt—FYI."

² The Declaration of the North Atlantic Council, approved by the Foreign, Defense, and Finance Ministers of the NATO states at their Ministerial meeting in Brussels, December 4–5, 1969, is in North Atlantic Treaty Organization, *NATO Final Communiqués, 1949–1974*, pp. 229–232.

³ See Document 11.

Soviets and the Poles have made proposals in this field for many years. He said that if we would give them a concrete and reasonable proposal they would give it the most serious consideration. The Acting Secretary replied that we had raised the matter at this time to indicate to the Soviets the great seriousness we attach to it and thought that they might want to give some thought to what their approach would be before any formal proposals were made.

Dobrynin stated that the Soviets would be prepared to give us an opinion on any specific proposals. They did not accept the raising of BFR in the NATO declaration as a counter-proposal to their proposals on a European Security Conference. The Ambassador indicated the Soviets considered the mention of BFR at Brussels as essentially a propaganda response to their moves on European Security, observing that we are now apparently putting off an answer to their proposals until after June.

Once again Mr. Richardson repeated that we were indeed serious about this subject. As the Ambassador knew, the subject was very complicated and the formulation of specific proposals was extremely difficult. Dobrynin said he had told Secretary Rogers how the Soviets felt about European security and had asked for our comments. At the time we had replied that the State Department would need to examine his proposals before replying. Then came the NATO communiqué but the Soviets had gotten no official reply from us on their European security démarche. Dobrynin said he could not understand why we now raised only one particular issue related to the European context, and he thought the Ministry of Foreign Affairs would find it difficult to put our approach up to the Soviet Government unless it were somehow more closely related to the larger concept of European security.

The Acting Secretary said that he did not necessarily connect BFR and a European Security Conference. Dobrynin quickly agreed, saying that the Soviets were not anxious either to combine these two issues. They had, however, got the impression from the NATO communiqué that we were attempting to do exactly that.

Dobrynin said he found another aspect of this problem difficult to understand. He pointed out that the Pentagon and others have announced US plans to keep our forces in Europe at their present strength until 1971. If we had therefore already decided on our deployment what would we negotiate about? Mr. Richardson acknowledged that Administration policy was to maintain US force levels in Europe but indicated that plans can be changed through successful negotiation. The reductions must be on both sides, however, and it is obvious that if we both pull troops out of Europe the Soviets have a shorter line of return than we do. Our great problem is how to work out reasonable standards of comparability. That is essentially what the negotiations would be about.

Dobrynin repeated that if we come forth with serious proposals they will give them the most serious consideration. He thought perhaps we could reach an agreement privately about parallel actions, but did not specify further.

Ambassador Leonard explained that studies were going forward at the present time in ACDA on this problem and that it was very complex. He assured Dobrynin that we had studied carefully previous Soviet and Polish ideas on force reductions, but that a complete new review was called for because so much time had passed since those proposals. He also mentioned that the verification aspect of any troop reduction agreement would pose many problems.

Dobrynin cautioned that one should not over-emphasize the distance factor in talking about withdrawal of forces from Central Europe because dimensions are quite different now with our new transport system from what they used to be. Ambassador Leonard acknowledged that may be true but said that was only one factor, there being other problems of comparability that arose at every step.

Dobrynin said finally that they would be waiting for our proposals after the June meeting and that if we had any interim thoughts on this subject he would send them on to Moscow and be prepared to discuss them with us. He observed that heretofore this subject has been “mixed up” with political matters when it should stand on its own merits.

17. Memorandum From Helmut Sonnenfeldt of the National Security Council Staff to the President’s Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)¹

Washington, January 8, 1970.

SUBJECT

US-Soviet Diplomacy on European Security

Our dealings with the USSR on European issues, at least in recent years, are not strictly speaking analogous to our talks with them on the Middle East or arms control questions. On these latter matters we have

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 667, Country Files, Europe, European Security Issues (U.S. and Soviet Diplomacy). Secret; Nodis. Sent for information. Sent under a covering memorandum from Haig to Kissinger on January 9.

had sustained negotiations either culminating in an agreed document (arms control) or revolving around such a document (Middle East). Since 1959, we have not really had this type of negotiation on European matters.

Rather there have been a series of long-range artillery duels via public declarations (usually, though not exclusively, issued by our respective alliance groupings), interspersed with occasional, random and disjointed bilateral conversations at various levels.

We have, by and large, been scrupulous in not making ourselves the Western negotiating agent on Europe; even if we had wanted it otherwise, it is not now likely that our allies would let us. If, on the other hand, we wanted to begin dealing with the Soviets on European questions, without the blessing of the allies, the effect on NATO would almost certainly be chaotic. In this connection, it is of interest that Gromyko has now come forward with the suggestion to Ambassador Beam that there should be bilateral US-Soviet talks on a European security conference.² Dobrynin's strongly reiterated insistence on a direct US reply to the Soviet *démarche* of November 19 is undoubtedly also related to this.³

Diplomacy in this area has also been complicated by numerous side-shows—not unnaturally, since the interests of a great number of states, East and West, are involved. A review of US and Soviet exchanges therefore does not provide a complete picture—although it does provide the essence. The present paper⁴ does not attempt to include the mass of exchanges, public and private, among individual European states, nor our own occasional exchanges, notably with the Poles and Romanians who, while supporting Soviet and Warsaw Pact positions, do so for reasons and with accents of their own.

It should also be noted that some US-Soviet negotiations, while ostensibly or mainly on matters other than regional European ones, have profound impact on Europe. This was true of the test ban negotiations⁵

² In telegram 88 from Moscow, January 7, Beam reported: "According to Gromyko, question of US and Canadian participation was 'clear' and provided both German states would also participate in conference. US Government on the other hand seems to be trying to convince others that conference not a good idea, that agenda should be broader and that questions such as balanced reduction of forces, which has been in dispute for 25 years, should be considered. Gromyko said that although his information comes from reliable sources, he cannot say precisely that US is against conference, but if so, he would like to know why. US says it advocates improvement of general relations and therefore should take broad approach." Beam stated that in concluding, Gromyko offered bilateral consultations regarding "the conference, its agenda, etc., in order to ascertain the real attitude of our government." (*Ibid.*)

³ See Document 16.

⁴ Attached but not printed.

⁵ Reference is to the negotiations that culminated in the Limited Test Ban Treaty of 1963.

in several different ways, profoundly true of the NPT negotiations and will be even more true of SALT. We have not tried in the present paper to analyze these interrelationships.

Finally, European security, broadly construed, includes economic and technical matters, in addition to political and military ones. While these have not recently figured in US-Soviet exchanges, they have done so at various times in the past and they remain very prominent in intra-European contacts on East-West issues. (Eastern Europe's relationship to the European Communities is a problem complex of increasing weight if and as the Communities develop and may in the middle run outweigh most if not all the other East-West issues in Europe.) In any case, we do not get into this entire area in the present paper.

Basically, despite the huge volume of documents and the smaller, though considerable volume of private talk, the fact is that European issues have not been ripe for concrete negotiation between ourselves and the Soviets. Even today, with the volume of private talk picking up, the issues have been largely procedural: do we or do we not have a conference; how should it be prepared, etc. (For the Soviets, admittedly, this has substantive interest since the mere convening of a conference is of advantage to them.)

The one real substantive subject, that of our and Soviet troops, has not been talked about seriously since Khrushchev and LBJ exchanged pen-pal letters in 1964⁶ (Note: this is not generally known), when we rejected the idea of mutual cuts. While Dobrynin has now responded to Elliot Richardson's prodding by indicating that the Soviets would give serious consideration to a NATO proposal, it is far from clear that serious *US-Soviet* negotiations on this matter will (or should) be undertaken.

Other potential negotiating issues relate to Germany. You will recall that the President in his letter to Kosygin last April⁷ offered bilateral soundings on Berlin, and the Soviets have shown some interest. But we are probably well out of the bilateral channel on this one since (a) the subject hardly promises to be productive for us and (b) we should do nothing to undermine allied cohesion on this subject.

In sum, when all is said and done, direct US-Soviet negotiations on Europe which would in any sense be directed at changing the status quo would at present be either (a) artificial and contrived, or (b) not in our interest, or (c) not in the Soviet interest. At the same time, while the status quo is not all that bad right now for us, at least when compared to other status quos, it is not desirable, or feasible, to seek

⁶ Khrushchev's message is in *Foreign Relations, 1964–1968*, volume XIV, Soviet Union, Document 36.

⁷ Dated March 26; see *ibid.*, 1969–1976, volume XII, Soviet Union, January 1969–October 1970, Document 28.

US-Soviet negotiations which would sanctify it. Of all the Western powers we should be the last one to underwrite Moscow's free hand in Eastern Europe (especially since we are in process of developing a special relationship with Romania); and we certainly have no interest in negotiating the disruption of the Western alliance with Moscow.

This would not rule out conversations with the Soviets to see what if anything of substance they want to talk to us about on Europe; but we should do so with the utmost caution and take meticulous care that the Allies are kept informed.

This paper includes the following parts:⁸

Part I—A résumé of the issues that have figured in US-Soviet exchanges, public and private (Tab I)

Part II—A chronology of major statements by both sides (Tab II)

Part II—A comprehensive selection of documents (Tab III)⁹

⁸ All three tabs are attached but not printed.

⁹ "Held in Washington" is handwritten in the margin.

18. Editorial Note

On January 19, 1970, Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs G. Warren Nutter wrote in a memorandum to Secretary of Defense Melvin Laird: "There seems to be a decided difference of view between State and DoD with regard to BFR; most particularly in the speed and vigor with which it should be pressed by the U.S. at this time." Nutter, citing Acting Secretary of State Elliot Richardson's meeting with Soviet Ambassador Dobrynin (see Document 16) as evidence, wrote: "During the course of that meeting Mr. Richardson brought up the subject of BFR and expressed his interpretations of U.S. and NATO enthusiasms for early movement in that direction, implying NATO readiness to present concrete proposals after the May Ministerial." After suggesting Laird read the memorandum of conversation, Nutter stated that Richardson's interpretations "run counter to our impressions of USG agreed policy, which we understand to be that of moving cautiously toward BFR by stages, with active negotiations only after careful evaluation of NATO studies now in process and impossible to complete by, or even soon after, the May Ministerial. We consider this to be a sound approach, and that pressing for early negotiations is both unsound and dangerous." (Ford Library, Laird Papers, Box 2, NATO, Vol. III)

In a follow-up memorandum to Laird on January 30, Nutter wrote: "In addition to Under Secretary Richardson's approach to Ambassador Dobrynin, two developments last week have further emphasized the need for clarifying this issue with State. In a speech in Chicago, Mr. Richardson stated that, 'One of the most promising areas of potential progress with the Eastern European nations lies, we believe, in reaching agreement on mutual and balanced force reductions.' Ambassador Ellsworth during his visit to the Pentagon revealed that he believes he had been the 'dynamo' on MBFR in NATO, a role which would appear inconsistent with State-Defense agreed guidance on moderating any rush toward MBFR." (Attachment to letter from Laird to Rogers, February 8; *ibid.*) A memorandum of Ambassador Ellsworth's January 20 conversation with Laird at the Pentagon, dated February 2, is in National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, DEF 6 NATO.

On February 8, Laird sent Secretary of State William Rogers a letter drafted by Nutter: "With NATO now embarked on the development of Mutual and Balanced Force Reductions (MBFR) models and the question of further movement likely to loom large in the May ministerials, I think it would be useful to make sure that Defense and State share a common understanding of our policy on the question." Laird suggested that U.S. policy, as stated in telegram 165553 to USNATO (see Document 7), "called for a moderate signal on MBFR in the December NATO communiqué" and that the ongoing U.S. examination of MBFR had to be completed before assessing the "desirability and timeliness of further movement on the issue." Laird wrote: "I must say that I am not convinced that we can complete this examination in time to permit a considered decision to move ahead on MBFR at the May Ministerial. I think that in keeping with the agreed policy sketched above, our basic stance on MBFR is one of caution and reserve." (Ford Library, Laird Papers, Box 2, NATO, Vol. III)

On February 23, Acting Secretary of State Richardson replied in a letter to Laird drafted by James Goodby of the Office of NATO and Atlantic Political-Military Affairs: "After reading your letter of February 8 regarding mutual and balanced force reductions in Europe, I think I can safely say that our two Departments are in general agreement on this question. If there are any differences, I would judge that these lie in the area of tactics rather than substance. Certainly the Department of State has reached no conclusions with respect to the desirability of any specific MBFR arrangement." Richardson continued: "We have made it clear to all concerned that the United States has made no decisions on these matters. I believe, therefore, that our future decisions have not been prejudiced by our past actions, except for the effect produced by three separate NATO declarations expressing an interest in MBFR. These declarations have put the Alliance on record as at least predisposed in favor of mutual and balanced force reductions, provided an acceptable

arrangement can be devised and can be negotiated. This does not mean that we are committed to negotiations or to advancing any proposals for consideration by the USSR or anyone else. It does mean, in our view, that we can take a positive attitude towards the principle of mutual and balanced force reductions, while reserving judgment on the desirability of any specific MBFR arrangement." Richardson concluded: "I understand that the NATO Military Authorities have started the studies which we have asked them to undertake in this field. Nevertheless, I also can well anticipate, as you suggest, that these studies may not be as far advanced by May as I think we all would like. In that case, I can assure you that the Department of State would not expect the Allies to move into an immediate negotiation on any specific MBFR model." After offering to expand further on "any areas of difference or imprecision," Richardson reminded Laird "that there also will be NSC discussions on NSSM 83 and subsequent decisions by the President that will further clarify the matter." (National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, DEF 6 NATO)

19. Minutes of a National Security Council Meeting¹

Washington, January 28, 1970.

MINUTES OF NSC MEETING ON EUROPE

PARTICIPANTS

The President
Vice President Agnew
Secretary of State Rogers
Secretary of Defense Laird
Attorney General Mitchell
General Lincoln, Director, OEP
Admiral Moorer, Acting Chairman, JCS

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-110, NSC Meeting Minutes, NSC Minutes, Originals, 1970. Secret. The full text of the minutes of the meeting is scheduled for publication *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, volume XLI, Western Europe; NATO, 1969–1972. On January 27, Kissinger discussed the meeting in a telephone conversation with Richardson: "We are having an NSC meeting tomorrow with Wilson attending. We will talk about some European issues, and I will begin with 5 or 10 minutes of outline of the issues. The President wanted to call the Secretary [Rogers] now, but I know he can't be reached. Could he talk about the European Security Conference for 5–10 minutes? Do you think that can be done?" Richardson replied, "I think so." (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, Henry A. Kissinger Telephone Transcripts (Telcons), Box 4, Chronological File)

Director of Central Intelligence Helms
 Under Secretary of State Richardson
 Assistant to the President Henry A. Kissinger
 Ambassador Walter H. Annenberg
 Prime Minister Harold Wilson
 Foreign Secretary Michael Stewart
 Ambassador John Freeman
 William Watts, NSC Staff
 Helmut Sonnenfeldt, NSC Staff

[Omitted here is discussion of matters other than the European security conference or MBFR.]

President: What about European security matters?

Rogers: The problem concerning disengagement as a policy is that the USSR is seeking to create the impression that we have in fact opted for alternative #3.² The fact is that we are going from alternative #1³ to alternative #2⁴ at a sensible pace. We must reinforce this impression.

We are a strong supporter of the present Alliance—for example, the President's trip to Europe,⁵ my stand at the NATO conference,⁶ and Elliot Richardson's speech on the European security situation.⁷

We must encourage cohesion and give economic aid.

² Rogers was referring to the response to National Security Study Memoranda 60, 65, 79, 83, and 84, January 26, which listed "three patterns of relationship (or systems or models) which are sufficiently within the realm of the possible and have enough advocates to be worth examining." Alternative 3 reads: "*Disengagement*: a formal European military and political settlement involving the disengagement of American and Soviet forces from at least Central Europe." Text of the response is scheduled for publication in *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, volume XLI, Western Europe; NATO, 1969–1972.

³ Alternative 1 in the response to NSSMs 60, 65, 79, 83, and 84 reads: "*The present structure*: The continuation of, essentially, the present relationships, i.e., basically a bipolar structure of power in which the USSR dominates Eastern Europe and the US is the preponderant military and political power in Western Europe; Western Europe is loosely organized economically and politically (although the Common Market has brought its six members partly along the road to economic union) and heavily dependent on the US militarily; Germany remains divided."

⁴ Alternative 2 in the response to NSSMs 60, 65, 79, 83, and 84 reads in part: "*Enhanced Western Europe*: a modified bipolar structure in which a more highly organized Western Europe becomes a significant independent power complex still linked to the US in a defense treaty and relying, ultimately, on a US nuclear guarantee, but which has an increased defense capability of its own. Germany remains formally divided, but the Western European complex consciously expands its trade and other relationships with the smaller Eastern European countries, including the GDR. In this situation, even though the East European countries would doubtless remain linked in defense arrangements with the Soviet Union, they might become more independent in their domestic and foreign economic and social policies."

⁵ Nixon visited Europe February 23–March 2, 1969.

⁶ See Document 14.

⁷ Reference is to Richardson's speech of November 20, 1969, at a regional foreign policy conference co-sponsored by the Department of State and the World Affairs Council of Los Angeles. See Department of State *Bulletin*, December 22, 1969, pp. 584–588.

We must also understand what the USSR is up to. We want to negotiate; we will not just be belligerent.

On SALT, we are convinced that they are interested in serious discussions. Concerning our own troop strength, we will maintain it at present levels through 1971. In short, the foundationstone of our own security is NATO.

Concerning the European Security Conference, the Soviets do not give the intention of getting into serious discussions. First of all, they don't even talk to us; rather for 6 to 8 months they discussed as to whether or not to invite us into the party. If they don't talk to all interested parties at the same time, the offer would not have been made in good faith.

Beyond that, the Soviet approach does not deal with real security questions. The issues they have raised—trade and renunciation of forces—for example, have already been covered.

[Omitted here is discussion of matters other than the European security conference or MBFR.]

Wilson: I find this discussion fascinating as a form of governmental process. Even the inclusion of a third option for "intellectual symmetry" is most important.

And I agree that this third option is pretty well dead, although we must quiet the critics from time to time. The trouble is that the main danger to NATO is that it can be taken for granted. Czechoslovakia jerked everybody up, but there is a continuing need for external vigilance and more unity.

If we look at the Brezhnev Doctrine, it is interesting to note that the USSR has never chosen a country in the NATO Alliance. Actually Brezhnev has shown a high degree of military efficiency in imposing colonial policies.

As far as the European Security Conference is concerned, it was never really in doubt that the U.S. and Canada would be invited in. The Soviets never meant to be exclusive on this.

The question is just who is taking who for a ride. The right way to respond is not just to say no. But we must be properly prepared and deal with meaningful issues. Perhaps we should show a bit of rigidity, and crowd them a bit. It is my impression that Brandt is doing a bit of this. He is getting away from the old metaphors and pushing Ulbricht around. But he would never sacrifice security.

[Omitted here is discussion of matters other than the European security conference or MBFR.]

Stewart: [Omitted here are unrelated comments.] It is important to remember that NATO is not just a defensive alliance. I am worried about the opposition to the Alliance. "Is the damsel dead or only sleepeth?"

We must try to avoid growth on that strand of opinion which attacks NATO as a waste. NATO is not just an armed camp; its existence does, in fact, relax tension and further relaxation may be attainable.

I would like to make four points:

- (1) We must not underwrite the Brezhnev Doctrine.
- (2) We must not just approve a limited agenda.
- (3) We must present the Soviets with real questions on such things as mutual force reductions and the German question, and
- (4) We must not be too showy. We must get some relaxation.

Wilson: I think we must avoid any big buildup about a European Security Conference—there would be too much hope for nothing.

Rogers: There is no problem here with public opinion. People are amazed at how ready we are to negotiate. We do not want to have some kind of big agreement in public on the agenda. But we do want to show ourselves as forthcoming.

RN: How would some kind of standing committee work?⁸

Stewart: It would have to do some preparatory bilateral discussion. Prime Minister Wilson is going to Moscow, and he may be able to find out if the Soviets are serious. Trade questions can go to existing organizations. As far as mutual force reductions are concerned, the neutrals are not interested. From time to time, certainly, we may want to bring the ministers together.

Wilson: It would be a good idea to have a heavy dose of safe subjects, such as cultural exchange and trade. We can compare notes on these, and give the standing committee a context, not exclusively related to difficult questions.

RN: It would be a good idea to keep the pressure on them, but I have one fundamental understanding concerning any conference. A conference in and of itself helps them; a conference in and of itself does not help us.

Look at Glassboro—there was just an appearance of détente and euphoria.

[Omitted here is discussion of matters other than the European security conference or MBFR.]

RN: The Soviets themselves have serious internal economic problems and problems with East Europe. East Europe will move increasingly toward Western Europe.

⁸ In a speech to Parliament on December 9, 1969, Stewart proposed the idea of a standing committee on East-West relations consisting of representatives from NATO and the Warsaw Pact. It was an idea, he said, that "NATO should most carefully consider." See *Documents on British Policy Overseas*, Series III, Vol. 1, p. 199, fn. 8.

[Omitted here is discussion of matters other than the European security conference or MBFR.]

Wilson: Don't under-rate the effect of the top Soviet leaders with contacts in the outside world. Soviet businessmen with whom we have considerable contact are increasingly questioning the rigidity of the system.

RN: That's right; Kosygin is manager.

Wilson: There will be no Rapallo⁹ from Brandt; but the USSR is looking for a new Rapallo.

The French approaches under DeGaulle were mischievous more than fundamental.

[Omitted here is discussion of matters other than the European security conference or MBFR.]

RN: Let me add one thing. I have great confidence in European politicians. But as far as dealing with the managers in the Soviet Union is concerned, I wouldn't want to leave the impression that the future of Europe should be left in the hands of the German, French and Italian businessmen.

Wilson: Yes, especially the Italians.

⁹ Germany and the Soviet Union signed the Treaty of Rapallo in 1922, which opened the way for economic cooperation and German rearmament on Soviet soil. The implication of "Rapallo" was a German-Soviet deal behind the West's back.

20. Memorandum From Helmut Sonnenfeldt of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)¹

Washington, March 25, 1970.

SUBJECT

NSSM-83,² European Security—May NATO Ministerial Meeting

Though the Review Group on this study is, unfortunately, several weeks away, I thought you might want to familiarize yourself with this

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-166, National Security Study Memoranda, NSSM 83, 1 of 4. Secret. Sent for action.

² Document 12.

study. The attached package includes an analytical summary (Tab A), the study and its summary (Tab B), a box score done by State of the various Western ideas that have been floating around (Tab C), plus a copy of an earlier memo on German views which are becoming of special importance (Tab D).³

As a basic examination of policy options, the paper itself suffers from several defects. It does not present an in-depth discussion of the broad concepts of European Security and how they might be achieved. Nor does it take up the German and Berlin issues. It also does not go into the problems of conducting a strategy review, on the one hand, and conducting an active (or passive) European Security policy, on the other.

Thus, the study is largely a tactical-procedural paper. *Nevertheless, the tactical issues have become quite important. This study is probably the only way to get an NSC framework for and some Presidential control over the decisions that will be made in NATO in May on a European conference and a proposal on balanced force reductions.* You will recall that Brosio mentioned to you how important it was for the other Allies to know the US position *well before* May.⁴

As it now stands, the schedule does not permit an NSC before *early May*. Thus, some policy will again be made by cables. Since Secretary Rogers will be personally involved in the Rome meeting, an NSC meeting would be the proper vehicle to involve the President. If it slips beyond the first week in May, I see no way to intervene in the dialogue between Brussels and the Department, which by then will be fairly frantic in any case.

One alternative might be to squeeze in a Review Group meeting and send an agreed memo to the President concentrating on the question of a conference and balanced force reductions, with some expanded argumentation and background.

³ Tabs B–D are attached but not printed. Tab B is the draft response to NSSM 83, prepared by the Interagency Working Group on Europe, on February 24; it apparently updated the January 26 response (see footnote 2, Document 12).

⁴ A memorandum of a conversation between Kissinger and Brosio, March 20, reads in part: "On East-West relations, Brosio noted the growing sentiment in favor of a conference. He pointed out that the German position was crucial. Brandt seemed to feel that he could facilitate his Eastern negotiations by supporting a conference, specifically one that would take up force reductions." According to the memorandum: "Brosio urged that the US make known its position on an East-West conference well before the May Ministerial meeting, rather than at the last minute. The other Allies would be influenced by the position we took. Brosio noted the Belgian idea for exploratory East-West talks and felt that this might be an acceptable fallback. He did not think that the British idea of a commission was a good one." (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 259, Agency Files, NATO, Vol. VIII)

Whatever you decide, it seems to me that these will be the issues to lift out of the paper and present to the NSC or the President:

1. Do we still want to try to impose certain preconditions to any multilateral conference:

—if so, on what issues should we insist on progress: Berlin, Bonn’s negotiations?

—is there any action on our part called for?

2. Is it in our interest to allow balanced force reductions to become the central negotiating issue, assuming the Soviets can be brought around?

—if not, how do we defuse it without causing a great conflict with the Allies?

—if we *do* want to move forward, is it for psychological reasons (i.e., to provide excuses not to make unilateral cuts) or for serious purposes; the difference would matter in developing a negotiating stance.

We will be in a somewhat better position after the military analysis of balanced force reduction models by the Military Committee is finished on April 20. But it seems likely that we will face a State-Defense split with State wanting to move ahead for political reasons and Defense rejecting any BFR proposals that might be negotiable. This is another, and perhaps the most important reason for putting the issues under Presidential aegis.

*Recommendations:*⁵

1. That you consider speeding up RG consideration of this paper.
2. That you consider requesting State to forward promptly a supplementary paper on the issues to be resolved before the May NATO Ministerial meeting.⁶

Tab A⁷

NSSM 83—CURRENT ISSUES OF EUROPEAN SECURITY

(Analytical Summary)

Introduction

—There are as yet few hard indications the Soviets would agree to proposals acceptably settling the central issues of European Security.

⁵ Kissinger initialed his approval of both recommendations.

⁶ Jeanne Davis wrote in the margin next to Recommendation 2: “State Jim Carson, EUR/IG uniformed, 3/31—JWD.”

⁷ Drafted by the NSC staff.

—We and our Allies do not want to ratify the present bisection of the continent or permanent Soviet hegemony in Eastern Europe.

—Relations today are at an uncertain half way point.

—Negotiations for the near future are likely to center on discreet, and well-defined subjects that are essentially peripheral to the basic political and security problems of Europe.

Comment:

By setting the stage in this manner, the paper, as will be seen, is reduced to essentially tactical-procedural issues. There is an opportunity if not a real need, to discuss at some length differing concepts of European Security. The study states we have no interest in ratifying the “bisection” of Europe. If so, then it would be worth exploring the supporting arguments, including the German view that the only road to rapprochement between East and West Europe is through acknowledgement of the “realities.” After such exploration, conclusions could be drawn.

The statement that negotiations are likely to center on discreet and well defined *peripheral* subjects has no supporting foundation. Is it because we do not want to take up more central issues (if so, why not), or because they are being dealt with by the Germans, or because the Soviets are resisting an expansion of an agenda, or, finally, because the objective situation makes any other approach unfeasible?

These are the real issues of any European Security paper.

I. The Setting

A. Antecedents to Today’s Negotiating Situation.

B. Current Soviet/Eastern European Approaches to European Security.

Comment: These are standard and present no great problems. At the same time they are so superficial as to be of no value.

C. Current Western Approaches to European Security.

1. *US Goals.*

—A stable and peaceful situation effectively guaranteeing the independence and sovereignty of *all* European states, based on a military equilibrium sufficient to ensure that this settlement is on terms satisfactory to the US and its Allies;

—strengthened prosperous Western Europe;

—resolution of the German question;

—peaceful and constructive relations with the USSR and Eastern Europe;

—diminution of Soviet control in Eastern Europe and gradual liberalization of regimes.

Comment: If our prime goal is stability, then some of the other goals are obviously in conflict: guaranteeing the “sovereignty” of all European

states is not necessarily compatible with stability, nor is a resolution of the German question. Diminution of Soviet control in Eastern Europe and peaceful constructive relations with the USSR would be quite a trick.

In short these goals (taken from the Summary paper used at the NSC meeting with Wilson) are too vague to be of any particular meaning for this study.

2. *Tripartite and FRG Approaches to the Problems of Germany and Berlin.*

"The German question and the status of Berlin lies at the heart of European security."

Comment: This is the last you will read of Germany-Berlin issues. They are *not discussed any further in the paper.* *"This German policy (of Brandt's) contains few risks for the West and even the achievement of limited successes would be in our own interest. The danger of substantial weakening of FRG ties with the West as it seeks to improve its relations with the East seems remote."*

Comment: These statements are open to serious challenge. If, as the study acknowledges, German-Berlin issues are at the heart of European security, then one would assume that a discussion of possible options would be warranted—especially if limited success is in our interest. If the Western position is to insist on progress on concrete issues, there should be a discussion of what constitutes such progress: would a Soviet-German agreement qualify? the settlement of the Oder-Neisse?⁸ If so, should we have a position other than watchful waiting?

The risks in Brandt's policies are well known to you. Yet State adamantly refuses to acknowledge any. You will recall that when we prepared a paper on European issues, they criticized it for being "anti-German."⁹ Yet the same points are being made forcefully by the French. In any case, relations between the two Germanys are changing, and this should be a major consideration in any discussion of European security.

3. *Other Western and Neutral Initiatives.*

4. *NATO Initiative.*

⁸ In February 1970, the FRG entered into negotiations with Poland on renunciation of force with regard to the Oder-Neisse line.

⁹ Reference is to a draft version of the response to NSSMs 60, 65, 79, 83, and 84, which originally included a section on Bonn's Ostpolitik. At a meeting of the NSC Review Group on January 23, Hillenbrand criticized the draft, prepared by the NSC staff, for being "loaded with anti-German assumptions." At the end of the meeting, Kissinger decided to drop Germany from the subjects to be discussed by the NSC on January 28. For information on the paper and the Review Group meeting, see *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, volume XL, Germany and Berlin, 1969–1972, Document 49.

Comment: A factual recitation. This would be the place for more elaboration of European attitudes, which are frequently cited as one of the motivating forces behind Allied interest in a conference of some kind.

II. The Issues

This section summarizes the advantages and disadvantages of the specific Options as related to issues to be considered at the May 1970 NATO Ministerial Meeting.

Comment: In other words, only the tactical or procedural issues are covered. While these should be sorted out for the President before the Ministerial Meeting there should also be organizing concepts for discussion.

A. Basic US Approaches to Resolution of East-West Issues

Options:

1. Negotiate settlement directly with the USSR, not in consultation with our Allies.

Comment: It is difficult to treat this one seriously as written. If reformulated as an emphasis on US-Soviet stability, it might deserve more serious consideration.

2. Conserve the present balance and territorial division, not seeking a resolution, eventually agreeing to a new Locarno type treaty.¹⁰

—Conceding the status quo reduces friction, but would nourish a tendency toward neutralism, encourage Warsaw Pact adventurism, and reduce our security by reducing our influence in Europe.

Comment: One faintly suspects that the authors of the study do not like this Option very much. Yet, it touches on a major subject: should the status quo be accepted and formalized in some treaty or understanding, or otherwise institutionalized. There are some in Europe who believe that this is now the only realistic approach. Moreover, the Locarno idea should probably not be dismissed so airily.

Moreover, in the Berlin negotiations it would seem that we are considering “conserving” the status quo; indeed, the Germans are prepared to trade an acknowledgement of their ties to West Berlin for virtual recognition of the incorporation of East Berlin into the GDR. Similarly, for an improvement in humanitarian concerns, we presumably

¹⁰ In the Treaty of Locarno of October 16, 1925, Germany, France, and Belgium recognized their mutual borders resulting from the Treaty of Versailles (1919), which had ended World War I. Great Britain and Italy offered a security guarantee to the three main signatories. Presumably, Sonnenfeldt is referring to this arrangement, rather than the fact that the treaty left open the issue of Germany’s eastern borders with Poland and Czechoslovakia.

will not challenge the political status quo. This is not necessarily wrong, but it points up that the Option cannot be readily thrown out, especially with specious arguments about increasing Warsaw Pact “adventurism.” One would suspect that the Warsaw Pact would be well satisfied and would hardly become more aggressive in the military sense.

3. *Adopt a leading role in resolving issues looking toward a comprehensive plan (similar to the Herter Plan of 1959)*¹¹ with appropriate consultations in NATO and among the four powers.

—Would strengthen NATO as an instrument of cooperation, put pressures on the USSR to make progress to reduce East-West tension.

—Allies would view as premature, and negotiations on plan acceptable to the US would not succeed.

4. *Continue pragmatic efforts along present lines to make bilateral and multilateral progress on concrete issues where and when possible.*

—Dealing individually and flexibly with issues allows them to be used to probe Soviet intentions, advance our interests in Eastern Europe, take advantage of openings for genuine if perhaps unspectacular progress without necessarily linking negotiation or involving euphoria.

—Thus far this approach has had limited appeal to European public opinion.

Comment: Obviously this is the Option preferred by the study, and its description and the supposed advantages are clearly slanted. The main fault is that it has no real meaning; translated from NATO communiqué-style language, this Option means to do very little and leave it largely to the Germans, as things now stand.

B. Basic Approaches to a European Security Conference

We would *favor* a carefully prepared ESC which deals with meaningful issues; benefits would depend on price Soviets willing to pay to convene a conference and on the outcome in terms of real gains in resolving issues.

Comment: This too is baffling, since we are not proposing to consider major “problems of security” nor do we seem very clear what the price is that the Soviets are expected to pay.

Options:

1. Continue present policy, retaining ESC as long term objective.

¹¹ Popular name for the Western Peace Plan submitted to the Geneva Foreign Ministers Meeting on May 14, 1959. The plan, named after Secretary of State Christian Herter, provided for the unification of Germany by stages, parallel to disarmament measures in Central Europe. The Soviet Union rejected the proposal. For the text of the proposal, see *Documents on Germany, 1944–1985*, pp. 624–629.

2. Accept view that some progress in East-West negotiations and inscription of one or more “concrete” security issues on the agenda represents a sufficient precondition for convening a meeting.

3. Agree to an early conference to discuss issues not central to European security.

4. Indicate to our Allies that we do not object to early ESC, but will *not* participate ourselves.

Comment: Support for Option 1 among the Allies is waning, and their approach is now Option 2. No one is supporting Option 3 though it has some attractive advantages in terms of adding something from East Europeans. After insisting on our participation as a major condition, it would be difficult for us to back off now though this could combine with Option 3, i.e., a conference on trade, exchanges, etc., limited to Europeans.

The problem is that there is not much analysis to support a choice, but merely whether to move ahead, stand still, or pedal backward.

C. *Basic Approach to Negotiating Modalities other than a European Security Conference*

Options:

1. Standing Commission on East-West Relations (SCEWR) the UK plan;¹² composed of NATO, Warsaw Pact reps, and neutrals:

—would receive public support, provide private forum for continuing discussion;

—GDR participation creates difficulties; not enough progress on issues to give meaningful work to such a commission.

2. Encourage greater use of Group of Ten;

—nobody really cares about this Group.

3. Continue present ad hoc utilization of various appropriate forums;

—avoids an ESC and its risks;

—does not provide adequate psychological counter to the “public appeal” of the Warsaw Pact proposal; gives impression NATO is dragging its feet.

Comment: It does not seem that these are *three* separate Options; one could adopt No. 3, and encompass the other two. The issue here is whether we want to move toward some institutionalization, as the British propose, or stay loose.

¹² See footnote 8, Document 19.

D. Issues for Possible East-West Negotiations

The following have been identified by the Allies.

1. *Mutual East-West Force Reductions Balanced in Scope and Timing Decision on the future direction of MBFR should await the outcome of the NATO studies currently underway.*

Two generalizations are possible:

—BFR would be preferable to unilateral cuts;

—advantages and disadvantages would vary with the terms of an agreement:

a. Asymmetrical reductions, larger cuts for Warsaw Pact would be advantageous in ensuring security, but probably not negotiable.

b. Large, equal percentage cuts (30 percent) could reduce confrontation, but NATO area probably could not be defended with forces remaining.

c. Small cuts could make the military disadvantages less severe and allow some savings in costs, but would be difficult to verify and there would still be some military disadvantages.

Outline of Possible NATO Proposals

Illustrative basic elements:

—geographic area involved would be West Germany and Benelux, GDR, Poland, and Czechoslovakia;

—all indigenous and stationed (foreign) forces involved;

—conventional, nuclear and dual capable forces involved;

—air reductions proportionately less than ground;

—agreed limitations as a first step, but conditional on a reduction agreement;

—verification needs to be adequate to detect breaches.

Background Note: The NATO Working Group has developed one symmetrical model and four asymmetrical models, which have now been submitted to the Military Committee; the MC will issue a report to the Senior Polads on April 20, they, in turn, will provide political comments, and prepare recommendations for the Ministers to consider in late May in Rome.

Symmetrical model is 30 percent reduction of ground force and 10 percent air force in geographical area noted above.

Four asymmetrical models break down along the following lines:

—same area, all NATO reductions are 5, 8, 10 percent, Warsaw Pact either 15, 30, 40 percent, or 10, 20, 30 with special emphasis on reduction in tanks; air force cuts of Warsaw Pact only 15 percent;

—area covered expanded to include Baltic, Byelorussian and Carpathian military districts of USSR, NATO cuts the same, but Pact reductions 10, 20, 30, or 10, 15, 20 with special emphasis on tanks; air force cuts of 20 percent for Warsaw Pact in former case, or 15 percent in latter.

In sum, all asymmetrical models call for minimum five percent NATO reductions against minimum 10–15 percent Warsaw Pact reductions, plus Pact air force reduction *only*, with area covered varying.

—The central dilemma is that these asymmetrical models are probably non-negotiable, while symmetrical ones might jeopardize NATO security.

In this light these are Options presented in the study:

1. Kill the MBFR project by studying it to death.
2. Attempt to develop a consensus to kill it.
3. Continue studies, analyses, etc., with objective of explorations with USSR/Warsaw Pact after May meeting in order to provide a basis for assessment of desirability and timeliness of negotiations.
4. Press forward with study to decide in May on negotiating proposals.
5. If NATO study aborts, consider other approaches to balanced force reductions (i.e. mutual example, US-Soviet cuts only).

Comment: As you can see these are strictly tactical options. No discussion, evaluation of the concept, our interests, the positions of the Allies, etc., relationship to other issues. There are no criteria for deciding whether to press forward, slow down, kill, etc.

The fact is that we are fairly close to being committed to make some concrete proposals to the USSR, as a result of conversations with Dobrynin¹³ and the past record. The chances are, however, that the Military Committee will only endorse those studies which confer major advantage to us. This will not provide any basis for an exploration of Soviet intentions.

In any case, as you know, this entire scheme creates problems. If the Soviets turn around and move toward a BFR conference or negotiations, we are probably in major trouble.

2. *Lesser Disarmament and Confidence Building Measures*

NATO has endorsed several for discussion: exchange of observers at maneuvers, advance notification of military movements and maneuvers, observation posts and joint study of methods of inspection.

The issue seems to be whether to develop negotiating proposals together with or separate from balanced force reductions.

¹³ See Document 16. Secretary Rogers also spoke briefly with Dobrynin about an ESC during a conversation on January 30. Telegram 16128 to Moscow, February 3, contains a record of the conversation. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL US–USSR)

Options:

1. Unilaterally frustrate a conclusion of NATO studies.
2. Keep work in phase with MBFR.
3. Independently work on BFR, press forward with studies on confidence building measures.

Comment: It is difficult to know whether to press forward or backward if there is no discussion of the merits of any of these issues in some pattern. The pros and cons are in terms of whether we make BFR more or less complicated.

3. *Joint East-West Declaration of Principles*

(This is not a very live issue at present.)

Options:

1. Not pursue it further.
2. Ask Eastern countries to subscribe to our principles without negotiations.
3. Seek Allied agreement to negotiate with East on joint statement.

—Not pressing would please most of Allies, but would “deny West” issues for possible negotiations.

—*Unilateral* declaration would provide evidence of Allied willingness to seek East-West accords (*sic*), but East might respond by proposing European security conference to discuss it.

—Negotiating joint statement would have same advantage, but negotiations could create false impression of greater security.

Comment: The critique of this is self-evident.

4. *Stimulating Trade and Other Cooperation*

NATO is on record for freer movement of peoples, goods and ideas. Central issue is how far to go in pressing trade issues in view of tight controls over our exports.

A. *US Bilateral*

Options:

1. Maintain present permissive but not promotional attitude toward trade with the East.
2. Stimulate contacts with the East to maximum extent feasible within bounds of current legislation.
3. Attempt to obtain Congressional approval for further loosening of selective restrictions on trade.

Comment: All of this would seem out of place in this paper, which is not the place to decide major trade policy.

B. *Multilateral Efforts*

Option: Stimulate enhanced East-West trade through ECE and greater use of OECD and GATT.

5. *Environment*

Option: To pursue actively East-West cooperation in environmental studies through ECE; through proposals put forward by OECD, and eventually through NATO CCMS.

—Would provide opportunities for joint endeavor but could politicize environmental issue.

21. **National Security Study Memorandum 92¹**

Washington, April 13, 1970.

TO

The Secretary of State
The Secretary of Defense
Director of Central Intelligence
Director, ACDA

SUBJECT

Mutual and Balanced Force Reductions Between NATO and the Warsaw Pact (MBFR)

The President has directed that a comprehensive study be prepared on the subject of mutual and balanced force reductions between NATO and the Warsaw Pact.²

The study should develop the analysis and supporting evidence related to all the major issues. In particular, alternative approaches to the problem should be examined, and an analysis made of such factors as the extent of reductions, forces and equipment involved, timing, geographic areas covered, verification aspects, problem of negotiability,

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 259, Agency Files, NATO, Vol. VIII. Secret. Copies were sent to the Attorney General and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

² In an attached covering memorandum to the same addressees, April 14, Kissinger wrote: "The President has requested the study called for in the enclosed NSSM in light of his conversation with Chancellor Brandt." Kissinger was apparently referring to a one-on-one conversation between Nixon and Brandt on April 10, in which they discussed MBFR. No U.S. record of the conversation has been found. For a German record, see *Akten zur Auswärtigen Politik der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, 1970*, Vol. 1, pp. 591–595. For discussion of European security and balanced force reductions arising from Brandt's visit to the United States April 10–11, see *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, volume XL, Germany and Berlin, 1969–1972, Documents 78 and 79.

Allied viewpoints, potential cost savings for the US, and any other factors deemed pertinent. On the basis of the foregoing analysis various Options should be developed to illustrate the differing concepts and variations for each Option. There should also be an assessment of the strategic effect on NATO defense, as well as on Warsaw Pact capabilities.

The study should take into account the work already completed or underway in NATO but should not be bound by it. The overall responsibility for the study is assigned to the Verification Panel established for SALT; the Verification Panel Working Group will undertake the basic work, in the same manner as the SALT studies.³

In view of the work proceeding in NATO, it is desirable that the study be completed on July 15, 1970.

Henry A. Kissinger

³ In a telephone conversation with Nixon on April 9 at 8:05 p.m., Kissinger mentioned that one of the topics Brandt was planning to raise during his visit was mutual balanced force reductions. Nixon replied, "Handle like SALT with careful preparation." (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, Henry A. Kissinger Telephone Transcripts (Telcons), Box 4, Chronological File)

22. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to President Nixon¹

Washington, April 18, 1970.

SUBJECT

Guidance for the May NATO Ministerial Meeting

In order to meet the needs of Ambassador Ellsworth in his consultation with the Allies as we prepare for the NATO meeting in May, State and Defense have agreed on some tentative guidance. It deals with tactical and procedural handling of European security questions.

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-043, SRG Meetings, Issues of European Security, 4/16/70. Secret. Sent for action. Sonnenfeldt forwarded a draft of the memorandum to Kissinger on April 16. (Ibid.)

The main points are:

—to hold to the present position that any European Security Conference must be carefully prepared and deal with concrete issues, based on prior progress on such issues;

—on Mutual and Balanced Force Reductions we would propose to establish a NATO Commission to coordinate further explorations with the Soviets;

—on non-security issues, such as trade, and cultural and technical exchanges, we would propose the establishment of a special Committee to study the issues and possibly hold some ad hoc conferences.

We discussed this approach in the Review Group meeting on April 16,² and there was no opposition. We also agreed it would be worthwhile to hold an NSC meeting before the NATO session, to discuss some of the more basic long-term issues relating to European security questions.

If you approve I will ask that such a study be completed for early NSC consideration.

Recommendations

1. That you authorize me to concur in the instruction to Brussels as outlined above, with the proviso that substantive positions on the question of balanced force reductions will be derived from the internal study authorized in NSSM 92.

2. That we prepare a more basic study of European security issues for an early NSC meeting.³

² The minutes of the SRG meeting, April 16, listed the following “summary of decisions”: “1. To drop the discussion of mutual balanced force reductions from the IG paper, without prejudice, pending completion of the study requested in NSSM 92; 2. To keep the IG paper as a basic Review Group paper for the NATO Ministerial meeting and to clear with the President the guidance telegram to Ambassador Ellsworth; 3. To prepare a new paper for an NSC meeting in May, discussing the broader question of European security over a three-to-five year period, including Germany and Berlin, with a view to: (a) getting Presidential guidance on a US program for the Ministerial Meeting; and (b) getting a Presidential decision on our objectives over the long term.” (Ibid., Box H-111, SRG Minutes, Originals) The paper by the Interagency Working Group for Europe, “NSSM 83: Current Issues of European Security,” February 24, is *ibid.*, Box H-166, National Security Study Memoranda, NSSM 83, 1 of 4. An analytical summary of the paper is Tab A, Document 20.

³ Nixon initialed his approval of both recommendations on April 21. The cable, telegram 58023 to USNATO, April 18, is *ibid.*, NSC Files, Box 259, Agency Files, NATO, Vol. VIII.

23. Memorandum From Helmut Sonnenfeldt of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)¹

Washington, May 20, 1970.

SUBJECT

Ambassador Ellsworth's Report on NATO Communiqué Debate—You Should Talk to Elliot Richardson

The Ambassador has sent you a back channel message² reporting on the status of the maneuvering in NATO over the communiqué for the Rome Ministerial meeting. He covers the same ground as our status report (Log #10237). (Tab A)³

On MBFR, he reports we have agreed to the idea of a separate declaration, based on a Canadian compromise, which would commit us to further explorations (bilateral) but no commitment to actual negotiations. While all the Allies want a strong signal, only the UK, Belgium and the Scandinavians want to go much further.

On a European Security Conference, there is a much wider split. The British-Belgium approach, supported by Scandinavians, would be only one step short of agreeing to a conference, since it would involve "multilateral exploratory talks." If accepted, it would be almost impossible to avoid getting into substance in such explorations; the talks would be viewed as preparatory talks, thus conceding a major point to the Soviets, with nothing in return, and would in effect put great pressures on the Germans to complete their bilaterals with the Soviets, Poles and GDR, before the general questions involved were introduced into a multilateral forum.

In short, what the UK wants out of the Rome meeting is a multilateral European conference with no limitation on the number of participants and they want it now. The UK also wants a broad and undefined agenda.

The Ambassador reports that in the last few days many of the Allies have really come to understand just how broad—and dangerous—the total package is.

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 259, Agency Files, NATO, Vol. VIII. Secret. Sent for action.

² Attached but not printed. Ellsworth sent the backchannel message, 654 from Brussels, to Kissinger and Sonnenfeldt on May 17.

³ The memorandum from Hyland to Kissinger, May 13, is not attached. A copy is in Library of Congress, Kissinger Papers, Box CL 290, Memoranda to the President.

The French, of course, are opposed to MBFR because it presumes a bloc-to-bloc approach and are unprepared to agree to multilateral exploratory talks.

The FRG is wavering. Schmidt wants something on MBFR.⁴ The Germans were aligned with the British at first. Now they have moved back toward our position, mainly because they are concerned with the impact of a call for multilateral exploratory talks on renunciation of force might have on their Ostpolitik.

Our three objectives, Ellsworth believes, should be (1) to maintain a position of strategic and political leadership within the Alliance; (2) prevent our Allies from being pushed into folly by their own internal political problems; (3) gain some propaganda advantage to show that NATO is not a stumbling block to sensible dialogue with the East. He rates our chances of holding the line as better than 50–50.

Since this cable to you, Brosio has had a composite draft prepared with alternative language, etc., and the British have circulated a non-paper, explaining their ideas. It may be that the issues will finally go to the Ministers without resolution. Though Ellsworth did not ask for your intervention, and State has not touched base on this whole sorry affair, the question is do you want to intervene? *At a minimum, you may want to take this up with Richardson, and indicate your opposition to the British approach, and emphasize that the Canadian compromise which we support is the furthest we can go.* In addition you could stress that we cannot buy any specific criteria on MBFR that would limit the substance of our position, which is under review in the Verification Panel working group.⁵

Recommendation

That you take the question up with Elliot Richardson and indicate your support for Ellsworth's approach and your opposition to the British-Belgian position.⁶

⁴ In a May 8 covering memorandum to a letter from Schmidt, April 22, Sonnenfeldt wrote to Kissinger, "He [Schmidt] has sent you a letter urging understanding for the German position on Balanced Force Reductions." Sonnenfeldt stated: "The main points in their position are that NATO should formulate a 'specific offer' of talks to the Warsaw Pact, and that the NATO communiqué should list several criteria of mutual force reductions." (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 683, Country Files, Europe, Germany, Vol. V)

⁵ See Document 21.

⁶ At the bottom of the page, there is a handwritten notation by David R. Young of the NSC staff, dated May 21: "HAK 'discussed with Richardson; will go with Canadian.'"

24. Editorial Note

The North Atlantic Council met in Ministerial session from May 26 to 27, 1970, in Rome. On May 28, Secretary of State Rogers reported on the meeting to President Nixon in telegram Secto 28/2149 from Madrid: "At the NATO Ministerial meeting concluded today, I think we achieved a good deal, although there are signs of increasing European desire to move toward a security conference." Rogers reported: "Everybody went away with a good feeling about the meeting and the results. The UK, Belgium, and the Scandinavians were pleased with the tone of initiative on MBFR and European security. Germany, Italy, the UK, and France, as well as Greece, Turkey, and Portugal, were satisfied (though not necessarily for the same reasons) that in being positive no commitment was made to a European security conference. We were able to avoid any early multilateral meetings that might lead toward a conference." Rogers then reviewed the sessions: "At the start of the meeting Stewart (UK) pressed hard for immediate 'multilateral' contacts with Eastern Europe to explore the prospects for later multilateral 'negotiations.' Concerned that early 'multilateral' contacts would quickly become converted to a preparatory meeting for a conference, I urged we continue on a bilateral basis. We finally reached a satisfactory consensus on language calling for bilateral contacts until the next NATO meeting in December. We will then examine whether there has been enough progress on Germany and Berlin to proceed to 'multilateral exploratory' contacts. Even with modest success in the current talks on Germany and Berlin, or on SALT, however, I see increased pressures at that time. Our European allies were also interested, as we were, in a positive approach to Eastern European mutual and balanced force reductions. I think the declaration we agreed on will demonstrate seriousness both to Eastern Europe and Western Europe while leaving open the specific negotiating positions we might want to take." (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 259, Agency Files, NATO, Vol. VIII) The communiqué from the Rome NATO Ministerial meeting, along with a declaration on Mutual and Balanced Force Reductions, are in North Atlantic Treaty Organization, *NATO Final Communiqués, 1949–1974* pages 233–238.

25. **Backchannel Message From the Ambassador to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (Ellsworth) to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)**¹

Brussels, May 29, 1970, 1541Z.

713. I have little to add to the Secretary's report to the President on the Rome ministerial.² What we came out with was a communiqué which has given the Alliance some propaganda mileage, without moving very much closer to an ESC.

The way the French and Germans played the meeting was interesting. The French were active, and were almost indispensable in finding a compromise position on multilateral explorations which all could accept. The FRG, on the other hand, did its best to avoid taking a position on anything.

We can hardly say that France has decided to play a more active role in NATO, but Schumann's actions at Rome, coming on the heels of a more cooperative French attitude here over the past few months, may give us some reason to think this could be the case.

German silence was probably a short-term tactical device aimed at maintaining domestic and international flexibility until it is clearer how their Ostpolitik will go. But it is also possible that the FRG is feeling its way toward a new relationship with the West—a relationship which will be both less solid and less stolid.

The U.S. will face some tough decisions between now and the December NATO meeting. Our allies are almost certain to be pushing hard for some formal system of multilateral negotiations with the Warsaw Pact. The degree of pressure will to some degree depend on what we decide to do about troop levels, how the Soviets respond to NATO's MBFR proposal, how Ostpolitik and the quadripartite negotiations on Berlin progress, and SALT. But pressure there will be—particularly if troop cuts look likely.

We will need to keep in mind the relationship between what comes from SALT and the U.S. position in Europe. One impact of an agreement would almost certainly be to encourage our European allies toward a more active role in East-West negotiations. At the same

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 259, Agency Files, NATO, Vol. VIII. Secret; Eyes Only.

² Sonnenfeldt underlined "Secretary's report to the President on the Rome" and wrote a question mark in the margin. For the Secretary's report, see Document 24.

time, the longer SALT continues the more we will be squeezed between Soviet demands that we include forward based aircraft and exclude MR/IRBMS, and West European demands to the contrary.

In any event, our problems in December will be sufficiently complex, and the decisions taken at the December meeting sufficiently important to longer-term U.S. interests that the USG should begin now to examine the range of issues that are likely to arise, the options open to us, and the limits to which we would be prepared to go.

Warm regards.³

³ A notation at the end of the message reads, "OBE per Sonnenfeldt."

26. Memorandum of Conversation¹

Washington, June 9, 1970.

SUBJECT

MBFR

PARTICIPANTS

Under Secretary Elliot L. Richardson
Ambassador Dobrynin

After preliminary remarks, I handed Dobrynin the MBFR guidelines.² He then asked me a series of questions which I answered in substance as follows: The NATO allies have no fixed views as to the composition of the group of countries which should participate in

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL US–USSR. Secret; Exdis. Drafted by Richardson on June 10. The conversation took place during lunch at the Soviet Embassy. On June 16, Hillenbrand forwarded a copy to Ellsworth. In an attached letter, Hillenbrand wrote: "Our telegraphic summary of that conversation was somewhat abridged because—as you will see from the full memcon enclosed—the Under Secretary's remarks, while illustrative in nature, do break new ground and go somewhat beyond what has thus far been agreed among the Allies. I am not sure how you would wish to handle those elements of the Richardson–Dobrynin exchange which we left out of the telegraphic summary. The best course might be to wait and see whether the Soviets play them back to the Allies. If they do, you could then confirm, if appropriate, that the ideas in question were put forward on an illustrative basis but not as the formal position of the US government." (Ibid., DEF 6 NATO)

² See Document 28.

MBFR negotiations. I illustrated a possible grouping on our side as comprising the countries having forces in Central Europe and including the UK, France, FRG, US, plus, say, one country from each of the NATO flanks, e.g., Norway and Italy. Two or more neutrals might perhaps be included as observers. With respect to the forces and weapons systems included, I said that this might depend in part on the definition of "strategic weapons" agreed to in SALT: if this definition were ultimately to exclude forward-based aircraft, IR/MRBMs and SLCMs, then the latter could be covered in the MBFR talks. In any case, reductions could optimally embrace a total combat slice from forward ground troops back to supporting aircraft and tactical nuclear forces. Alternatively, initial negotiations might focus on troop strength per se. In response to my remark that the subject is, in many respects, at least as complex as SALT, Dobrynin pointed out that, in the case of SALT, we are dealing merely on a bilateral basis, whereas here much greater additional complications would be introduced by the necessity for each of us to get our allies' agreement.

Dobrynin asked how we could propose that there be no political preconditions on MBFR when, as he understood it, we had been putting preconditions on a possible Conference on European Security. I explained that in the case of the CES we have wanted to assess progress in the Quadripartite talks, the bilateral talks between the FRG and the USSR, GDR and Poland, SALT, etc., in order to assure that the CES was not held simply for propaganda effect but rested rather on a basis of genuine progress toward détente. In the case of MBFR, however, we consider the subject as one meriting negotiation on its own terms without reference to progress or the lack of it in any other context.

To the question why we made a distinction between the "forum" and the "participants," I said that both words were used in order to reflect our awareness of such possible alternatives as dealing with the matter through a specially convened ad hoc body or, conceivably, through a commission or subcommittee established at a CES. (I had previously identified useful progress in exploratory talks on MBFR as one of the things which, in some combination with the others mentioned above, could help to justify holding a CES.) In response to a crack by Dobrynin that our military representatives must be pretty lazy because they've had all the time since Reykjavik and still haven't produced an MBFR model, I said that nothing would speed them up so much as to have a full-dress conference set for next October 15. Dobrynin said that this would be a little too soon even for the USSR. In general, however, his questions were straightforwardly directed toward eliciting information and in no sense reflected a negative attitude.

27. Memorandum of Conversation¹

Washington, June 10, 1970, 7:30 p.m.–1 a.m.

PARTICIPANTS

Ambassador Dobrynin
Henry A. Kissinger

[Omitted here is discussion of matters other than the European security conference or MBFR.]

Europe

We then turned to Europe. Dobrynin said that we were the chief obstacle to the European Security Conference idea that they had put forward. I said that they had never explained satisfactorily why it was necessary to have a big conference simply to settle cultural and trade matters. Dobrynin said that it was impossible to please the United States. When they had proposed to Johnson to have a European Security Conference, they had been accused of wanting to settle too much. In this Administration, they were accused of trying to settle too little. He said we were oscillating between being too specific and being too vague.

For example, he simply did not know what we meant by mutual balanced force reductions and, frankly, he had the impression that we didn't know ourselves what we meant by the term. As an example of how impossible it was to deal with us, he mentioned the luncheon conversation he had had with Elliot Richardson.² He said Richardson had handed him a State Department working paper on mutual balanced force reductions³ and had asked him to comment on it. Dobrynin replied it was very unusual for a foreign diplomat to comment on a working paper of another foreign office. When he had called this to the attention of Richardson, the latter replied that he needed Dobrynin's comments in order to bring the military around in our country. I told Dobrynin that I would be ready to talk in concrete details about mutual balanced force reductions later this summer, after we had worked out our own thinking a little more fully.

[Omitted here is discussion of matters other than the European security conference or MBFR.]

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 489, President's Trip Files, Dobrynin/Kissinger, 1970, Part 2, Vol. I. Top Secret; Sensitive; Nodis. The conversation took place on the Presidential yacht *Sequoia*. For the full text of the memorandum, see *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, volume XII, Soviet Union, January 1969–October 1970, Document 168.

² See Document 26.

³ The paper consisted of the text of the guidelines printed in full in Document 28.

28. Editorial Note

In telegram 92834 to USNATO, June 13, 1970, the Department summarized conversations with Soviet Ambassador Dobrynin on European security and balanced force reductions in the wake of the NATO Ministerial meeting in Rome. On June 5, Dobrynin discussed the communiqué from the meeting with Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs Martin Hillenbrand. Citing the communiqué, Dobrynin inquired about the Allies' stated readiness to enter into multilateral contacts. He asked "what the definition of 'progress' would be. Hillenbrand responded that this would obviously be a matter for NATO FonMins to determine. They will meet again in Brussels in December, by which time it might be possible to determine prospects for success in the various 'on-going talks.'

"3. On the MBFR declaration, Dobrynin asked whether we saw this as the subject of a separate conference or as CES agenda item. Hillenbrand said that thrust of declaration was to treat MBFR as separate subject procedurally since it was regarded as riper for progress at this point. However, forward movement on MBFR might be one of the criteria which could influence NATO Ministers to decide time had come for the multilateral exploratory talks mentioned in the communiqué itself."

The telegram then summarized Dobrynin's conversation with Under Secretary of State Elliot Richardson on June 9; see Document 26. The cable included the text of the U.S. guidelines or "illustrative points" regarding MBFR that Richardson had handed to Dobrynin:

"A. The objective of mutual and balanced force reductions would be to reduce the level of military confrontation in Central Europe while maintaining the security interest of both sides.

"B. There should be no political preconditions to a mutual and balanced force reductions discussion or agreement.

"C. Reductions would be reciprocal and in agreed quantities over agreed periods of time with the fulfillment of one step as a precondition for the next.

"D. Reductions should include stationed and indigenous forces and their weapons systems in the area concerned.

"E. Withdrawals on both sides would be a matter for negotiation on the basis of specific proposals.

"F. Adequate and mutually acceptable verification of mutual and balanced force reductions corresponding to the nature and extent of reductions would be essential.

"Negotiation would take place in a forum and with participants to be mutually agreed." (Ford Library, Laird Papers, Box 2, NATO, Vol. IV, June–August 1970, June)

29. Memorandum From the Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs (Nutter) to Secretary of Defense Laird¹

Washington, June 23, 1970.

SUBJECT

Discussion on MBFR Between Elliot Richardson and Soviet Ambassador Dobrynin

On 9 June Elliott Richardson lunched with Ambassador Dobrynin and discussed MBFR among other matters (Memcon at Tab B).² Mr. Richardson gave Dobrynin a paper on MBFR objectives and guidelines (Tab C),³ which differ significantly from those agreed to in the 28 May NATO Ministerial Declaration on MBFR (Tab D).⁴ He also made substantive remarks concerning the participants in MBFR negotiations, the forces and weapons systems which might be included, and whether there are preconditions to a Conference on European Security and MBFR. Furthermore, he inferred that the definition of “strategic weapons” agreed to in SALT might ultimately exclude forward-based aircraft, IR/MRBMs and SLCMs, and that these subjects might be covered in MBFR talks.

Mr. Richardson’s presentation represents a significant departure from agreed U.S. policy and could harm our position with respect to our Allies and the Soviets on both MBFR and SALT. This presentation was not coordinated with DOD, and, despite our objections, the substance of the conversation was transmitted to USNATO and NATO capitals without any restriction on disclosure of the contents to our Allies (Tab E).⁵ (We did not have the full text of the memorandum of conversation when we argued with State against sending out the cable.) Additionally, ACDA and State plan to transmit the substance of the conversation to our Mission in Geneva for guidance or background.

Attached for your signature is a letter to Secretary Rogers (Tab A)⁶ registering the concern of DOD and suggesting that no useful purpose would be served by continuing along the lines laid down by Mr. Richardson.

G. Warren Nutter

¹ Source: Ford Library, Laird Papers, Box 2, NATO, Vol. IV. Secret.

² Document 26.

³ Attached but not printed. Document 28 contains a list of the guidelines.

⁴ See Document 24.

⁵ See Document 28.

⁶ Attached but not printed. Laird did not sign the letter. A note attached to the memorandum reads: “As you’ll note, attached is OBE. . . . Gen P’s [?] note states ‘Sec Def covered verbally’ . . . Return to ISA.”

30. Memorandum From Secretary of State Rogers to President Nixon¹

Washington, June 28, 1970.

SUBJECT

Warsaw Pact Foreign Ministers' Reply to NATO Ministerial Communiqué

The Hungarian Foreign Ministry handed to Embassy Budapest June 26 four documents² that constitute an official response prepared by Warsaw Pact Foreign Ministers to the Communiqué of the May 26–27 NATO Ministerial Meeting.³

In summary, the Pact documents reinforce 1969 appeals for a Conference on European Security (CES) and reiterate proposals for a CES agenda covering (a) renunciation of the use of force, and (b) expansion of East-West commercial, economic, scientific and technical relations. Additionally, however, the response includes new aspects deriving in part from the NATO Communiqué:

—an additional proposed agenda item would cover establishment by CES of “an organ” to deal with questions of security and cooperation in Europe;

—“reduction of foreign armed forces on the territories of European states” is indicated as an issue that “might” be taken up by “an organ” to be established by CES, or “in any other form acceptable to interested states.”

—cultural relations and environmental issues are indicated to be appropriate for East-West discussion;

—the US and Canada are formally acknowledged, with the GDR, as appropriate CES participants;

—Helsinki is said to have been agreed as the CES site.

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, DEF 4 Warsaw Pact. Secret. Drafted by Streater. A notation at the top of the first page reads: “Signed by the Secy on the plane travelling to San Francisco.”

² The four documents have not been found. The Foreign Ministers of the Warsaw Pact states met in Budapest June 21–22, and approved a memorandum regarding a European security conference. For a summary of the relevant excerpts of the memorandum, see *Keesing's Contemporary Archives, 1969–1970*, p. 24075.

³ See Document 24.

Initial Appraisal

While attempting to appear forthcoming and devoid of polemics, the Pact response reflects little real advance toward Allied positions:

—the Pact rejects the NATO-agreed position that there must be recorded progress on security issues before multilateral explorations for a conference can be considered;

—Allied willingness to consider under certain conditions establishing a permanent East-West body as a means of embarking upon multilateral negotiations is warped into a proposal for a permanent body or bodies to be set up at CES;

—NATO proposals for Mutual and Balanced Force Reductions (MBFR) are echoed for the first time on the Pact record, but there is no assurance that the Pact would seriously pursue such discussions at or after a CES on terms acceptable to the Allies;

—The Allied call for the free movement of people and ideas is ignored;

—Pact proposals for economic and scientific-technical exchanges are designed to commit NATO to steps *now* to free-up restraints on exchanges.

Next Steps

We propose to consult in NATO with our Allies before responding to the Warsaw Pact proposals. In Allied consultations many may prefer to defer further steps until NATO's December Ministerial Meeting. However, Belgium, Denmark, Norway, and probably to a lesser extent the UK and the Netherlands, will likely favor an early and positive NATO reaction, particularly in the light of the indications the Pact is prepared to broach at least the issues related to MBFR. Thus, we likely will face increasing pressures for further movement toward a preparatory conference for a CES earlier rather than later, regardless of progress in other East-West discussions.

William P. Rogers⁴

⁴ Printed from a copy that bears this typed signature.

31. Memorandum of Conversation¹

Washington, July 20, 1970, 10:30 a.m.

PARTICIPANTS

Ambassador Anatoliy Dobrynin
Mr. Henry A. Kissinger

[Omitted here is discussion of matters other than the European security conference or MBFR.]

European Security

Dobrynin then turned to the subject at hand. He read me a Note Verbale which his government had asked him to transmit to us. The text is as follows:

“In continuation of our exchange of views on the questions touched upon at our meeting of June 10² I would like to say the following to be transmitted to President Nixon.

“The affirmations made in the course of the above meeting by President Nixon and, on his instructions, by you, Dr. Kissinger, concerning the interest of the US in maintaining the territorial status quo in Europe and the absence of intentions on the part of the US to act counter to this or in general to take any steps in the direction of aggravation of the situation in Europe, have been noted in Moscow. Likewise noted in Moscow was President Nixon’s statement to the effect that the US Government recognizes special interests of the Soviet Union in Eastern Europe and has no intention to ignore or undermine them due to the unrealistic nature of such a course. Those are, without doubt, realistic judgments.

“Likewise, the Soviet Union is convinced that recognition of the realities that have come into being in Europe, constitute that necessary foundation upon which a stable peace on the continent as well as in the world at large can and must be built.

“An important step on the way to strengthening peace in Europe would be speedy preparation and convocation of an all-European conference on problems of security and cooperation in Europe as proposed by the Soviet Union and other European Socialist countries.

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 489, President’s Trip Files, Dobrynin/Kissinger, 1970, Pt. I, Vol. I. Top Secret; Sensitive; Eyes Only. The conversation took place in the White House Map Room. The full text of the memorandum of conversation is in *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, volume XII, Soviet Union, January 1969–October 1970, Document 183.

² See *ibid.*, Document 168.

“It should be emphasized that the Memorandum adopted by the Governments of European Socialist countries in Budapest on June 22³ takes into account also the wishes of other possible participants in such a conference expressed in the course of bilateral and multilateral consultations. Taken into account, too, are the wishes expressed by the American side both with regard to participation of the US in the all-European conference and regarding questions to be discussed at the conference or in connection with it.

“Taking into consideration, in particular, the wishes of the US Government the Soviet Government together with the other Governments which adopted the said Memorandum, have come to the conclusion that consideration of the question of reducing foreign armed forces on the territory of European states would serve the interests of détente and security in Europe.

“In our view, this question could be discussed in a body on questions of security and cooperation in Europe which is proposed to be established at the all-European conference. At the same time we are prepared to discuss this question also in another manner acceptable to interested states, outside of the framework of the conference. Such an approach opens wide possibilities in selecting appropriate methods of discussing this question and takes into account the experience that has already been accumulated in considering outstanding problems of such kind, in particular between the USSR and the US.

“The questions of man’s environment, which the American side is interested in, could be, in our opinion, discussed within item 2 of the proposed agenda for the all-European conference.⁴

“We proceed from the assumption that in view of these clarifications the United States should have no reason for delaying further the convocation of the all-European conference by way of presenting various preconditions. We hope that the US Government will adopt a more constructive position and will thereby contribute to making the preparation of the all-European conference a more practical business.”

I asked what the phrase meant that in connection with a mutual balanced force reduction, an approach “opens wide possibilities in selecting appropriate methods of discussing this question” on a bilateral

³ See Document 30.

⁴ The Warsaw Pact Foreign Ministers proposed at their meeting in Prague October 30–31, 1969, the convening of a “pan-European conference” in Helsinki in the first half of 1970. They proposed two agenda items: first, to “organize European security on the basis of the renunciation of the use or threat of force in the relations between European states,” and second, to “expand commercial, economic and scientific-technical relations on a basis of equality of rights and in a spirit of political co-operation between European countries.” See also Document 11.

basis. He responded that the choice of appropriate forums could be determined after we had agreed in principle. He said he recognized that he owed me some answers to other questions, and they would be forthcoming within the next few weeks. I told him, of course, that I had to check my answer with the President, and I wanted to remind him that I had listed European Security as one of the three topics at our last conversation. I thought the tone of his note was constructive, and we would try to handle our reply in a constructive manner. I would let him know what the response would be.

[Omitted here is discussion of matters other than the European security conference or MBFR.]

32. Minutes of a Combined Senior Review Group and Verification Panel Meeting¹

San Clemente, California, August 31, 1970, 11:08–11:40 a.m.

SUBJECT

US Strategies and Forces for NATO (NSSM 84)²
MBFR (NSSM 92)³

PARTICIPANTS

Chairman—Henry A. Kissinger	Attorney General John N. Mitchell
<i>State</i>	<i>ACDA</i>
U. Alexis Johnson	Vice Adm. John M. Lee
Martin Hillenbrand	Thomas J. Hirschfeld
Leon Sloss	<i>Treasury</i>
<i>Defense</i>	Anthony Jurich
David Packard	
Reginald Bartholomew	
John Morse	

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-111, SRG Minutes, Originals, 1970. Top Secret. Printed from a copy with handwritten corrections, which have been incorporated into the text printed here. The minutes are dated September 1, but according to Kissinger's record of schedule, the meeting took place on August 31. (Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box 438, Miscellany, 1968–76) The full text of the minutes is scheduled for publication in *Foreign Relations*, 1969–1976, volume XLI, Western Europe; NATO, 1969–1972.

² NSSM 84 is scheduled for publication *ibid.*

³ Document 21.

CIA
Gen. Robert E. Cushman
Bruce Clarke
JCS
Adm. Thomas H. Moorer
Col. John Wickham

NSC Staff
Helmet Sonnenfeldt
William Hyland
Wayne Smith
John Court
Col. Richard T. Kennedy
Marshall Wright
Jeanne W. Davis

SUMMARY OF DECISIONS

[Omitted here is discussion of matters other than MBFR.]

NSSM 92

It was agreed that the Verification Panel Working Group should develop and analyze specific “building blocks” with a view to dealing with individual parts of the problem which might be put together in various options packages. These topics should include:

- . . . tanks,
- . . . tactical aircraft,
- . . . mobilization and reinforcement (including prepositioning of supplies and equipment),
- . . . tactical nuclear weapons, and
- . . . manpower reductions.

[Omitted here is discussion of matters other than MBFR.]

Mutual and Balanced Force Reductions—NSSM 92

Dr. Kissinger: We deeply appreciate what the departments and working groups have done on these papers.⁴ We recognize that the deadlines have been very short and hope all will agree that the results are worthwhile. The difficulty with the MBFR paper⁵ was that it was done in isolation and that some of the concerns were answered in terms of the NSSM 84 study.⁶ We could conclude that there should not

⁴ Reference is to an ongoing series of studies on MBFR being prepared by an interagency working group. On July 30, Kissinger met with the Verification Panel to discuss progress on the various papers. According to notes from the meeting, Kissinger said: “Today, we will go over in [a] preliminary way [the] work done on NSSM 92 and see if we can develop an analytic framework for BFR like for SALT. Idea is building blocks, so we can move from option to option, as with SALT. BFR [is] more complex. [We are] not so far advanced in [our] thinking. The paper work has been done. The Working Group efforts are in two categories: 11 options [for balanced force reductions]—set aside for time being until get some other considerations; [and a] series of studies on conceptual problems.” (Ford Library, Records of the National Security Adviser, Program Analysis, Box 6, Verification Panel Subseries)

⁵ Reference to a 57-page evaluation report on MBFR, August 26, prepared by the interagency working group on MBFR. (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-107, Verification Panel Minutes, Originals, 1969-3/8/72)

⁶ See footnotes 2–4, Document 19.

be any discussion of MBFR. It is necessary, however, in view of present political pressures in many countries, and since SALT and Ostpolitik will both have mutual balanced force reductions as their logical conclusions. Also, it is better than unilateral force reductions. It is hard to have realistic schemes without knowing precisely how the military situation is being affected. We have not yet done the type of analysis we did in SALT, in which we took various elements of an agreement and analyzed their implications for our strategic situation. After that analysis had been completed, we put together various packages. In the case of MBFR, we have put together the packages before we have produced the building blocks through careful analyses. As a result, we have a package in which some say this and others say that. We cannot go to the President until we have more carefully defined these positions and have narrowed these disagreements to the smallest amount. We must have a more rigorous and systematic analysis of the various components—tanks, reinforcement problems, warning problems, etc.

Mr. Johnson: An important element is the political context in which this takes place. If there is a reduction in tensions, MBFR assumes a different aspect than in a Berlin crisis. If the political situation develops along positive lines in the next year or two, MBFR will be one thing; if not, it will be another.

Adm. Moorer: Perhaps we should wait for other things to jell before proceeding with MBFR.

Mr. Johnson: We should not wait, but should do the work now to enable us to move ahead on various assumptions.

Dr. Kissinger: We will need a position in time for the December NATO Ministerial meeting. An arbitrary percentage cut is, of course, easiest but we might use the MBFR exercise to assert intellectual leadership and approach the NATO strategy problems in that way.

Mr. Packard: The problems do not relate only to the level of forces—there are other factors. We could negotiate lower force levels, could fix up certain things that need fixing, and have as good a conventional capability as we have today.

Dr. Kissinger: In the SALT analysis we attempted to determine what worried us most. In the present situation, tanks and reinforcement capability worry us most. Could we undertake a separate study—for example, if we limit tanks, how should we do it. We may find that we wish to place some ceiling on tanks when we put a package together. So far we have not done enough homework to do this.

Mr. Packard: I agree the papers are awfully general.

Adm. Lee: We haven't a sufficient basis for measurement. The options packages are too gross.

Dr. Kissinger: If our tactical air in Europe is highly vulnerable, but if it can also be moved quickly, why is it necessary to keep tactical

aircraft in Europe. If we pull a division out, it would have tremendous political significance. If we pull an air wing out, we might sell it on strategic grounds. A promise to put the air wing back, if necessary, has credibility since it would be for the purpose of protecting our own forces. Since the Europeans are most concerned about ground forces, the withdrawal of an air wing with a promise to return it could be placed in a different political context.

Adm. Lee: These are the kinds of things which should be analyzed with a view to working out tradeoffs.

Adm. Moorer: This could be done, but it would be most important to retain our bases even if we withdrew some aircraft.

Mr. Johnson: We would have to retain bases to make it credible.

Mr. Kissinger: We might want to have more bases in Europe. What could we offer in a tradeoff? Is the high mobility of our aircraft overseas a trade for some things we want them to move out? We need some indication of how we might package asymmetrical cuts. With regard to manpower cuts, we have a good general analysis of the relative advantages and disadvantages of stationed forces and local forces. We need the same kinds of numbers as in the NSSM 84 study. The U.S. and USSR aside, are Western European NATO forces superior to Warsaw Pact forces? The political symbolism is a factor too. We will need more systematic analysis along the lines of SALT, weapons system by weapons system, under asymmetrical cuts. We need to see about tradeoffs. The Europeans cannot object to our doing our homework on what is, in fact, their proposal. Without this analysis, we will be in danger of being driven into one gimmick after another by the pressure of negotiations and will wind up in unilateral reductions. (To Wayne Smith) Is it possible to get that sort of analysis?

Mr. Smith: Yes. We will get agreement on some basic numbers.

Mr. Packard: We should limit this to a few elements and not try for this kind of analysis across the board.

Dr. Kissinger: Agreed. We should focus on tanks and tactical air. The general proposals are there, and the agencies should work together in the working groups to spell them out in more detail.

The reinforcement problem also requires more concrete analysis. Prepositioning of supplies is an important consideration. Who would suffer more from a limitation on the prepositioning of supplies? Do we wish to require that supplies and equipment leave also when troops are withdrawn?

Adm. Lee: It would be easier for them than for us.

Dr. Kissinger: Is this true? Can we come back at all in any meaningful way without prepositioning supplies? Where are we relatively if we move out without leaving supplies and equipment behind?

Adm. Moorer: At a disadvantage. They would reinforce through friendly territory while we would reinforce through hostile territory—waters predominantly occupied by some 350 submarines.

Mr. Packard: We could reinforce for only a few days using C-5A's and would then have to go to sea deliveries.

Dr. Kissinger: On the assumption that repositioning of equipment is permitted, how real are manpower cuts?

Mr. Johnson: They would be important in symmetrical cuts.

Dr. Kissinger: I am more attracted to asymmetrical cuts.

Mr. Johnson: So am I.

Gen. Cushman: They will be more difficult to negotiate.

Dr. Kissinger: I agree but, as in SALT, the Soviets may be ready to listen to serious proposals.

Adm. Lee: The situation is more confusing than SALT.

Dr. Kissinger: At least we do not understand it as well.

Adm. Moorer: We understand it, but there is an infinite number of variables.

Dr. Kissinger: We need to get an assessment of: (1) what the reinforcement problem is with regard to repositioning of supplies and equipment; and (2) how to get on top of the problem through verification means. We should assume that we would get some warning. Have we ever done anything with regard to mobilization in response to Soviet moves—at the time of the Berlin crisis, for example?

Mr. Hillenbrand: Yes, we moved one battalion temporarily for training purposes.

Dr. Kissinger: We did not move anything with the battalion, however.

Mr. Johnson: We may well be reluctant to take measures that might increase tension.

Mr. Clark: We have had some success in determining the degree of Soviet mobilization.

Dr. Kissinger: If the system is extremely sensitive to our reaction to a detection of Soviet mobilization, then such reaction may magnify tensions. However, the record of our reaction to mobilization isn't very good.

Adm. Lee: We can't tell whether the mobilization of one division makes that much difference.

Adm. Moorer: It is a symbol of intent, however.

Mr. Hillenbrand: We did build up at the time of the Berlin crisis.

Mr. Kissinger: That was in response to a political situation and was not necessarily a reaction to Soviet mobilization.

Mr. Sonnenfeldt: It also reflected a change in military doctrine.

Dr. Kissinger: We need an analysis of the countermeasures that would be required to react to whatever we pick up on Soviet mobilization. In SALT the amount of the violation would be so large and it would take so long, that we could react. If the violation were small, however, and it would require a massive U.S. movement to offset it, we should know it. If the tanks go out and then come back in, and we learn about it, what do we do with the information. I believe this is the direction in which the study should go. Does anyone else have any ideas.

Mr. Johnson: I think this is a good approach.

All agreed.

(The meeting adjourned at 11:40 PDT)

33. Editorial Note

On August 31, 1970, after the morning meeting on NSSMs 84 and 92 (see Document 32), the Senior Review Group (SRG) met again in the afternoon in San Clemente to discuss NSSM 83 on European security. The meeting focused exclusively on Berlin and West German Ostpolitik; there was no substantive discussion of a European security conference or mutual and balanced force reductions. For the minutes of the meeting, see *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, volume XL, Germany and Berlin, 1969–1972, Document 111.

At the meeting the SRG discussed a paper prepared by the Department of State, "A Longer Term Perspective on Key Issues of European Security," which dealt mainly with Ostpolitik and Berlin. For excerpts, see *ibid.*, Document 110. The full text of the paper is in National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), SRG Meeting Files, Senior Review Group, 8-31-70, European Security.

34. Memorandum of Conversation¹

Naples, September 30, 1970.

PRESENT WERE

The President
 Secretary General Manlio Brosio
 Dr. Kissinger
 Ambassador Ellsworth

I. Brosio opened the conversation by stating that the Alliance's main problem at the moment is the problem of U.S. force levels. A unilateral cut, other than in an MBFR context, would be disastrous. The President interjected that he appreciated that and agreed with it.

Brosio went on to say that there were three points he would like to make in connection with the question of US force levels:

a. First, he thought it was important to stress, politically and publicly, the possibility of serious discussions on MBFR—quite apart from any tie or link with the possible Conference on European Security—as a way to hold force levels against unilateral cuts.

b. Second, Brosio felt that the AD-70² exercise, which he had instituted in response to the President's foreign policy report of last February,³ would provide a rationale for the Europeans to maintain and

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 467, President's Trip Files, Presidential European Trip, MemCons, September 27–October 5, 1970. Secret; Nodis; Sensitive. In a backchannel message to Kissinger, September 19, Ellsworth wrote: "For more than a year now, the Alliance has been in the throes of trying to decide how to handle Warsaw Pact proposals for a CES. Throughout the debate we have taken an extremely reserved position, arguing that the proposals, if accepted, would strengthen the international position of the GDR and split the alliance." Ellsworth noted he had prevented an "unseemly rush to an early and unstructured conference, but pressure from our more détente-minded allies (particularly the Scandinavians and Benelux) has pushed NATO ever closer to agreement to begin 'exploring' the possibilities of a CES with the East." Ellsworth noted: "Brosio is personally opposed to a CES, and has done what he can to slow things down." (Ibid., Box 466, President's Trip Files, Presidential European Trip, Vol. I)

² The Defense Planning Committee of NATO commissioned a study in May 1970, "Alliance Defense Problems for the 1970's," known as AD-70, to discuss the problems the Alliance would face in the next decade, determine priorities for the Alliance, and propose solutions.

³ On February 18, in his First Annual Report to the Congress on United States Foreign Policy for the 1970's, Nixon stated: "In choosing a strategy for our general purpose forces for the 1970's, we decided to continue our support for the present NATO strategy. And the Secretary of State and the Secretary of Defense announced at the NATO Council meeting in December that we would maintain current U.S. troop levels in Europe at least through mid-1971. At the same time, we recognized that we must use this time to conduct a thorough study of our strategy for the defense of Western Europe, including a full and candid exchange of views with our allies." See *Public Papers: Nixon, 1970*, p. 129.

even possibly increase their military support and readiness for the Alliance strategy, which would also provide a modern rationalization for keeping forces at an appropriate level of strength; and

c. Third, Brosio felt that the Europeans should be pushed, and pushed hard, to do their best, not only in terms of picking up some of the financial burden as far as US forces were concerned, but also and primarily, to improve their own military efforts—and Brosio hoped this would help the President keep U.S. forces strong in Europe.

II. In response, the President said that we would welcome MBFR—that is what we have to say politically, especially in Europe. With regard to a possible Conference on European Security, such a Conference would not be useful for us, although we have to agree to hold it. Pending the development of MBFR, however, there can be no reduction of NATO forces, the President added, because that would leave us with nothing to bargain. Meanwhile, the Soviets keep increasing and improving their strength in Europe, so we cannot cut. Any force reductions in Europe must be mutual.

III. On burden sharing, the President said that we would welcome budgetary sharing but of course it could not be put on a mercenary basis. Actually, it would be better for the Europeans to increase the readiness of their own forces. In the final analysis there would have to be a combination of effort from the Europeans, with primary emphasis on increases in European military efforts—although, of course, as both he and Brosio know, the Germans represent a special case for a variety of reasons.

The President said that, as far as actual cost sharing is concerned, the main significance of that would be political not military.

[Omitted here is discussion of matters other than the European security conference or MBFR.]

35. Paper Prepared by the National Security Council Staff¹

Washington, undated.

European Security Conference

Current Situation

The Soviets have long proposed a conference designed to ratify the status quo in Europe, including the permanent division of Germany and Soviet hegemony in Eastern Europe. Until recently, however, their proposed agenda has avoided all concrete issues and dealt with such matters as economic cooperation and renunciation of force.

We and the NATO allies have taken the view that a conference at some point may have a role but that it is pointless and dangerous if it is held and results in failure. NATO in Brussels with our participation has been attempting to identify concrete issues that might be dealt with. The problem is that the real issues between East and West in Europe relate to Germany and these are being negotiated separately.² Lately, the idea has gained ground that the question of mutual and balanced force reductions (MBFR)³ might be a subject to be discussed and the Soviets in their latest proposals suggested that a conference might set up a commission which could negotiate the reduction or withdrawal of foreign forces from Europe (an old Soviet staple). Our own studies are still in process and it is proving extremely complex to come up with options or packages that would be (1) realistic given Soviet geographic proximity and our remoteness, (2) negotiable, and (3) leave NATO with forces with which to conduct a rational strategy.⁴

(*Note:* The idea of a conference has also been advocated by Romania which believes that the mere existence of an ongoing negotiating forum would afford it additional protection against Soviet pressure or attack; the Romanians also have the idea that somehow the conference could be used to vitiate the Brezhnev Doctrine. Tito, as you recall, was rather cool to the idea [though Yugoslav diplomats have also

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, HAK Office Files, Box 71, Country Files, Europe, USSR, Gromyko 1970. Secret; Nodis; Sensitive. Kissinger sent the paper to the President as an attachment (Tab C) to an October 19 memorandum preparing the President for his upcoming meeting with Gromyko.

² Nixon underlined the sentence, beginning with the words "the real issues."

³ Nixon underlined "question of mutual and balanced force reductions (MBFR)."

⁴ Nixon underlined "extremely complex to come up with" and the three points.

advocated it strongly]⁵ unless there was careful preparation and a very concrete agenda.)

Gromyko may

- start by accusing us of dragging our feet;⁶
- note that the Soviets of course would have no objection⁷ if we and Canada participated;
- claim that the very holding of a conference would improve the atmosphere;⁸
- note that the Soviets have no objection to eventual talks about mutual reductions in foreign forces.

You may wish to say that

- you have no objection in principle to a conference⁹ and we have not made special efforts to prevent it;
- you do believe that conferences of this kind should not be held¹⁰ for their own sake but deal with concrete issues and have some promise of success;¹¹
- simply to talk about more trade and exchanges seems unnecessary because other forums already exist for that;¹²
- each of us should take a careful look at the question of mutual force reductions and then determine whether some negotiating effort is worthwhile.¹³

(You may wish to refer to Tito's comments to you.)

⁵ Nixon visited Yugoslavia September 30–October 2. Tito apparently spoke with Nixon about a European security conference on the night of September 30; no record of this conversation has been found. For documentation on Nixon's visit to Yugoslavia, see *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, volume XXIX, Eastern Europe; Eastern Mediterranean, 1969–1972, Documents 220–221. Brackets are in the original.

⁶ Nixon underlined "accusing us of dragging our feet."

⁷ Nixon underlined "Soviets of course would have no objection."

⁸ Nixon underlined "the very holding of a conference would improve the atmosphere."

⁹ Nixon underlined "objection in principle to a conference."

¹⁰ Nixon underlined "kind should not be held."

¹¹ Nixon underlined "but deal with concrete issues and have some promise of success."

¹² Nixon underlined "seems" and "other forums already exist."

¹³ Nixon underlined "mutual force" and "and then determine whether some negotiating effort is worthwhile."

36. Memorandum of Conversation¹

Washington, October 22, 1970, 11 a.m.–1:30 p.m.

PARTICIPANTS

US:

The President

William P. Rogers, Secretary of State

Henry A. Kissinger, Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs

William D. Krimer, Interpreter, Department of State

USSR:

A. A. Gromyko, Soviet Foreign Minister

A. F. Dobrynin, Soviet Ambassador

Viktor Sukhodrev, Interpreter, Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs

[Omitted here is discussion of matters other than the European security conference or MBFR.]

European Security Conference

Mr. Gromyko inquired about the attitude of the United States Government toward the idea of convening a European Security Conference. He did not know whether the President had had the opportunity of becoming acquainted with the Soviet proposal to call such a conference. The substance of that proposal was to call a conference of all European states, as well as Canada and the United States, in order to see if there was a chance of improving the relations between various states in Europe in the interests of a political *détente*. The United States had said that it favored such a *détente*, and so had the Soviet Union. On the other hand, he had the impression that the U.S. was somewhat apprehensive in regard to the ESC. It should be clear that any decisions adopted at such a conference would be joint decisions, taken in the interests of all the states concerned. There was no question of trying to impose a one-sided solution on any state during this conference. For this reason, he believed the U.S. apprehensiveness was quite unfounded. According to information he had received, the United States seemed to be bringing its influence to bear on some other countries, to discourage them from taking a positive attitude toward the ESC. He wanted to emphasize that the Soviet Union had no intention of trying to claim the major credit for calling such a conference, that it was the position of the Soviet Government that a *détente* in Europe, which

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 490, President's Trip Files, Dobrynin/Kissinger 1970, Vol. 3. Top Secret; Sensitive. The conversation took place in the Oval Office. The full text of the memorandum is scheduled for publication in *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, volume XIII, Soviet Union, October 1970–October 1971.

could result from the ESC, would benefit all interested parties and the world as a whole.

The President wanted to tell Mr. Gromyko quite directly that in our view the success of such a conference would depend primarily on the United States and the Soviet Union. Mr. Gromyko's impression that we were trying to discourage the convening of the conference was incorrect. We took the position that for the successful conduct of a conference it would be necessary to sit down and explore an appropriate agenda. By saying that the success would depend on our two countries primarily, he did not mean to speak of a condominium of the two powers in Europe.

Secretary Rogers remarked that there was no point in having a conference unless we could foresee what results would likely be achieved. In this respect, our Berlin negotiations could serve as a good indicator. If we could make progress on the question of Berlin, the prospects for a European conference would improve. But, if no progress was achieved on Berlin, what would be the purpose of holding another conference?

Secondly, we were not too sure that the Communiqué of the Warsaw Pact Powers² had indicated a willingness to discuss reduction of military forces in Europe. Was the Soviet Union suggesting that this question be included on the agenda of a European Conference? With respect to reduction of forces, what did the Soviet Union mean by foreign troops? Did this include Russian troops in Eastern Europe? Mr. Gromyko replied that in the Soviet view, it would be better not to consider military questions at the European Conference. We could agree, however, that if some kind of a body—perhaps even permanent—were created at the European Conference, this body could discuss the question of troops. The Soviet Union would be agreeable to such a procedure. As for the term "foreign troops," it had been meant to include Soviet troops as well.

President Nixon remarked that a Soviet-American understanding on primary issues, such as SALT and Berlin, would have a beneficial influence upon any possible conference of European states.

Secretary Rogers said that if complex questions were to be excluded from discussion at a European Conference, it was difficult to see what could be accomplished. In brief, if we could foresee the achievement of positive results, we would be interested. If not, we would have doubts about the usefulness of such a conference.

Mr. Gromyko said we could not ignore the fact that for 25 years the Soviet Union had discussed disarmament questions in the United Nations with the United States, and with other countries, without

² See footnote 2, Document 30.

being able to find any solutions. For this reason, the question of disarmament and force reduction was not perhaps quite suitable for discussion at an ESC. Should a body be created by that conference, however, he would have no objection to force reduction being discussed in that body. The President said that in principle we were not opposed to the conference. We would be in favor of it if preliminary discussions showed that it would be helpful.

[Omitted here is discussion of matters other than the European security conference or MBFR.]

37. Minutes of a National Security Council Meeting¹

Washington, November 19, 1970, 10 a.m.

PARTICIPANTS

President Nixon
William P. Rogers, Secretary of State
Melvin Laird, Secretary of Defense
George A. Lincoln, Director, Office of Emergency Preparedness
David M. Kennedy, Secretary of the Treasury
John N. Mitchell, Attorney General
Admiral Thomas H. Moorer, Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff
Richard Helms, Director of Central Intelligence
George P. Shultz, Director, Office of Management and Budget
Amb. Robert F. Ellsworth, U.S. Permanent Representative to NATO
Gen. Andrew J. Goodpaster, Supreme Allied Commander, Europe
David Packard, Deputy Secretary of Defense
John N. Irwin II, Under Secretary of State
Philip J. Farley, Acting Director, Arms Control and Disarmament Agency
George S. Springsteen, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs
Henry A. Kissinger, Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs
Dr. Edward David, Science Advisor to the President
Col. Richard T. Kennedy, NSC Staff
Dr. K. Wayne Smith, NSC Staff
Mr. Helmut Sonnenfeldt, NSC Staff

SUBJECT

NSC Meeting: NATO & MBFR

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-109, NSC Minutes, Originals 1970, 1 of 3. Top Secret. The meeting was held in the Cabinet Room. According to the President's Daily Diary, the meeting lasted from 10:09 a.m. to 12:12 p.m. (Ibid., White House Central Files, President's Daily Diary)

[The meeting began with a briefing by Director Helms on the NATO/Warsaw Pact military balance in Europe.]²

President Nixon: The assumption used to be that any war in the NATO area would escalate automatically into general nuclear war. That was the view in the old McNamara period.³ Is there an estimate now in the NATO area that there is less chance of escalation to nuclear war?

General Goodpaster: The estimates are much more qualified now.

President Nixon: I really don't see why. It seems more likely that they might use nuclear weapons now.

General Goodpaster: Our capability for assured destruction against the Soviets is very high.

President Nixon: But what about the risks we would take if we do that?

General Goodpaster: The Soviet attitude seems to be this. Since the Cuban missile crisis, they have a much more sobered view of the risks to them of a high-intensity provocation of the U.S. The same is true in Europe; they have shown more inhibition than before. The Europeans are convinced of this; they see the U.S. assured destruction capability as inhibiting the Soviet use of their MRBM's or IRBM's against Europe.

President Nixon: But Americans are more afraid than previously.

[Director Helms resumes his briefing with a discussion of MBFR.]

President Nixon: Are there any questions of Director Helms?

Director Lincoln: What is the view of the NATO countries on the results of a nuclear exchange?

General Goodpaster: They haven't any positive views. They are sensitive to the location of our nuclear weapons in our forward bases, particularly those countries where our forward-based Tac Air are located.

Acting Director Farley: The Soviets are concerned in SALT about our forward-based aircraft. They want to limit them in the agreement.

Secretary Laird: Only a few of them can reach the Soviet Union. The F-111's will increase the number, however.

Admiral Moorer: The Soviets don't distinguish between tac-nucs and strategic weapons if they are landing in the USSR.

President Nixon: Henry? Could you review the issues?

² All brackets are in the original. Helms's briefing was not found.

³ Robert S. McNamara, Secretary of Defense under Presidents Kennedy and Johnson, 1961–1968.

Dr. Kissinger: I want to emphasize two basic points:

First, at the height of the period of American nuclear superiority, the Europeans always asked us for a tangible guarantee of our commitment. They wanted U.S. forces to be stationed in areas we considered vital. Thus even during the period of the massive retaliation doctrine, we had large American conventional forces in areas where a nuclear thrust was most plausible. Thus, secondly, we were trying to give our forces a military role and our allies wanted them to have a political role—for them it was not so much a military role as a role in eliminating the threat of general nuclear war.

The problem now is to work out what objectives we seek and can achieve with these forces. We want to avoid any actions which would lead our allies in the direction of neutralism but we also want to avoid a situation in which our forces exist there but without any viable strategy.

Thus we did a comprehensive study⁴ and we found the following:

—NATO is within reach of a capability to defend against large-scale Soviet conventional attacks.

—They—the Soviets—have a faster capability for mobilization than NATO.

—There is a serious supply imbalance.

—An important consideration is our intelligence capability and our ability to make quick political decisions. If they get a two-week jump, they have a big advantage.

—Whether NATO wants to close the gap is a question.

—There is also the fact that we know more about what goes on in East Germany than in Western Russia, and that is a problem.

—If we can get warning and can react quickly, we can do reasonably well.

—The best-equipped of our forces are deployed in the Southern NATO area, whereas this is not the likely major attack route. That is also the location of our major supply backup.

—If the President wants the Alliance to have a substantial conventional capability in Europe, it is within reach. The Allies can and should move. If the gaps are not closed, then we should look at other alternatives which would make the forces we have there relevant.

—We have large tactical nuclear weapons storage in Europe. How would they be used? Would it help in defense? Would it be an irrevocable move toward strategic war? We have improved our command and control procedures. But the study we did could not develop a clear picture of the use of tactical nuclear weapons.

—Against this background we looked at MBFR. Tactical nuclear forces have an important bearing in this area.

⁴ The 36-page report, "NSSM 92 Evaluation Report: Mutual and Balanced Force Reductions Between NATO and the Warsaw Pact," October 16, is in National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-048, Senior Review Group/VP Meeting, NATO Strategies and Forces (NSSM 84-92), 10/28/70.

The tentative conclusions of the MBFR study are the following:

—Symmetrical reductions favor the Warsaw Pact, unless they are so small as to be purely symbolic.

—Ideally, reductions should favor the defense over the offense in order to reduce the incentive for attack.

—Thus we should look at asymmetrical reductions. We are now doing so, in order to develop trade-off packages. These analyses are not yet sufficiently advanced to make recommendations.

The basic guidance needed is what strategy you wish to pursue.⁵ If we depend on our strategic nuclear forces, then the question of American forces in Europe is not so relevant. But if our forces are geared to an intermediate objective, we need a doctrine for the use of theater nuclear weapons. If we think the nuclear threat is diminishing or if we want our forces on the continent for political reasons, we still need a strategy which makes them militarily relevant if their continued deployment is to be supported by the American people, the Congress and our allies. We need then to make the improvements that we have discussed.

Our approach to MBFR is then cast in the light of our decisions.

Secretary Rogers: The word “balanced” in MBFR means they have to be balanced. That is the key. Balanced does not mean symmetrical. Secondly we must not negotiate under time pressure. It is clear that the Soviets are not thinking about negotiations. It’s a convenient way to delay a European Security Conference which we don’t want. And we should not move to unilateral reductions. We have to decide whether we want to reduce unilaterally—I am against it. Our policy of keeping them there is sound. Our forces are essential to the security arrangements in Europe and to the credibility of our policy. Unilateral reductions would concern our allies and lead them to seek deals with the USSR that would be harmful to our security.

We should not decide anything on MBFR now. We should continue to study it. But we should give a clear signal to our allies that we

⁵ The study was discussed at a combined Senior Review Group and Verification Panel meeting, October 28. The minutes of the meeting list the following summary of decisions: “It was agreed to: 1. Get an estimate of what needs to be done to remedy the supply situation so as to bring our NATO allies up to the level required to permit an indefinite conventional war, how long it would take and how much it would cost; 2. Get an analysis of the meaning of a 60-day supply concept for us and for our allies in terms of number of forces, combat capability, cost, and the nature of the deterrent; 3. Study the various ways of looking at the problems of use of nuclear weapons in Europe; 4. Get an analysis of the ways in which the situation would be affected by a 10 percent symmetrical reduction, a 30 percent symmetrical reduction and asymmetrical reductions, including the military costs and benefits, if any; 5. Get an analysis of the various elements of an MBFR agreement, similar to the SALT analysis, and their verifiability.” (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-111, SRG Minutes, Originals, 1970) The full text of the meeting minutes is scheduled for publication in *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, volume XLI, Western Europe; NATO, 1969–1972.

intend to keep our forces there and will not unilaterally reduce them. But we should make clear that they need to do more; that is important for our Congressional attitudes.

Secretary Laird: The primary objective of our military strategy is to give the President a choice other than between losing Western Europe and going to an all-out strategic exchange. Our strategy has to give us more than a few days of conventional defense. We need a conventional force which is a major deterrent—and that involves a tactical nuclear capability.

We have to depend more on our allies' contribution if we are going to have this posture. The allies don't want to recognize this. Their assumption is that the U.S. has a sufficient deterrent so that any conventional attack means an inevitable strategic exchange. This idea has permeated allied thinking. We must get the allies to see that things have changed. They can afford it and so can we. Their GNP is a third greater than the Pact's; their manpower is equal to that of the Pact and the USSR. We have to provide for sufficient forces to assure a conventional deterrent.

I don't think the paper faces up to the manpower, fiscal and political problems that we face in the United States. NATO problems are fortunately handled by the right Congressional Committees; we have these commitments before the Armed Services Committees which are favorable to the Administration.

It is important to talk about capabilities, not specific numbers. We should talk not about specific numbers of personnel or items of equipment—we should talk about capabilities. The allies have the ball in their court; they are for the first time discussing ways in which they can share the burden and increase their own forces. They admit they are not sharing the burden properly. Schmidt is discussing in the UK now; Carrington will be here next week. They are pressing each other. Our contribution has increased annually over the last ten years, and this is not the case for most of the allies.

Ambassador Ellsworth: The trend of the thinking in the NAC ministers' meeting is this: There is increased awareness by the allies of the changed nature of the strategic balance. There is increased awareness of the need for a local conventional balance. The Allied study (AD-70)⁶ has got them thinking of the need for improved and increased efforts in specific areas to make meaningful a viable conventional strategy. The trend of their thinking, therefore, is toward a real conventional defense strategy, and the defense ministries want to support this.

⁶ See footnote 2, Document 34.

There must be follow-up both in NATO and in governments. We need a shift of focus in the NATO organizations and in governments toward conventional forces and the related budgets. This should be the glamour side now, not the nuclear side.

Our presentation must be that US force levels are tied to our strategy. I hope all of us will relate to the basic questions of our strategic objective and to the political facts, rather than to our own budget process.

President Nixon: Are you selling the Senators? [to Ambassador Ellsworth]

Ambassador Ellsworth: I'm not sure they've been sold but I'm making strong efforts.

Secretary Laird: There have been many statements by the Parliamentarians. They unanimously favored financial assistance to ease the US burden of keeping our forces there. Rivers⁷ brought them along. Vinson⁸ has been pressing Armed Services on the grounds that because the Germans are agreeing with the USSR, we should make substantial reductions.

President Nixon: The key to what we do is what effect does it have on Germany. Isn't it possible that reductions could result in the opposite reaction by the Germans? Some Europeans would think to move toward the Russians because they are uneasy about more US reductions. Will we reassure them if we retain our forces, or will we shock them into doing more by reducing ourselves?

Ambassador Ellsworth: I agree that reductions would push them toward the Russians.

Secretary Rogers: I agree with Ellsworth.

General Goodpaster: Brandt will accelerate his policy if we reduce. If the other party comes in, it would be unpredictable.

Secretary Rogers: Some in the German government would want to move more toward the USSR, and a move on our part to reduce our forces would play into their hands. If we stay firm we can keep Brandt firm; otherwise we can't.

Can we set up a group like the NPG for conventional forces?

Secretary Laird: It's being discussed by the DPC.

Secretary Rogers: Can we move faster?

Ambassador Ellsworth: We need to set up machinery to follow up on the AD-70 study.

⁷ Representative L. Mendel Rivers (D-SC), Chairman of the House Armed Services Committee.

⁸ Former House Representative Carl Vinson (D-GA), former Chairman of the House Armed Services Committee.

Secretary Laird: We will do this at the next meeting.

Secretary Rogers: Unilateral reductions would be wrong.

Secretary Laird: The manpower problem has a serious effect on our strategy. The FRG has a short-term draft and is moving in the direction of a shorter term of service. This has a bad effect on readiness.

President Nixon: Andy, how do you see the problem?

General Goodpaster: Mr. President, the work we have done is substantial. It's ten years since we have had a real NATO policy. There is promise now that the Europeans see they need to take on more of the burden and improve their own forces. This has gotten to the political levels now.

Much of the ammunition and POL is common. They know we have stocks and they have planned to use them. We should press them to increase their own stocks. Given our assumptions about the length of a war, it would be unsound to make the decision not to provide uninterrupted support for our forces. Reserve stocks of Soviets remains a major question. We don't know what they have beyond 30 days even though their facilities exist far beyond this. 60 days is not a finite limit. You would ration to extend this on both sides in practice, but this means the forces are less than fully effective.

We shouldn't forget that there is a normal process of adjustment of forces. New systems come in and make some forces redundant and permit some reductions.

Let me say something about the strategy question we've been discussing and the role of nuclear weapons. Our strategy is more concrete than just a doctrine of flexible response. It is based primarily on the deterrent but it cannot be divorced from our actual defense capability. It is a strong deterrent based on a limited defense capability, at medium risk and medium cost. A full conventional defense capability would be a low-risk/high-cost strategy. A high-risk/low-cost strategy would be the tripwire approach.

A limited defense capability means the following: At present, we have a high prospect of success against small-scale or limited attacks. That is important.

Against a full-scale sustained attack, we have a limited capability in time. We just can't say how long we could hold exactly but we expect we could hold for a significant period but not indefinitely. But we are not even certain of that. The crucial factors are not assessable—like leadership, the direction of attack, etc.

What about the tactical nuclear option? We have a near full capability, probably superior to the Pact's. But the outcomes are rather murky; our requirements are based on the premise of destroying the enemy order of battle. Escalation is always possible but perhaps unlikely

because of the strategic deterrent. Soviet officers have an acute sense of the importance of protection of the homeland. Assured destruction is always the back-up which supports the other elements of the strategy.

We have some problems. One is redeployments. A change of boundaries to the north would probably result in having fewer Belgians forward. On tactical nuclear weapons, there are divisive problems here. The Europeans want to see nuclears used but on the Green Belt theory, i.e., on territory that is not their own. On the question of theater use of nuclear weapons, the first concept is selective use to meet the local situation with the maximum possible constraint. Many of the above aspects of this strategy would be the subject of debate if we wanted to make them more explicit.

We need to hold firm.

The consensus seems to be that we must keep our conventional forces in SACEUR. The fact that the Russians are looking both ways—they have even more divisions on the Chinese border—adds validity to this imperative.

Director Lincoln: We would have less of a danger of having to use tactical nuclear weapons if our conventional force are stronger.

President Nixon: It is clear from the discussion that any strategy without a credible deterrent would mean the Soviet domination of Europe. In the 1950s massive retaliation and the tripwire approach were valid. When in the 1960s we accepted nuclear parity, it became no longer credible that a conventional force attack would result in a tactical or strategic nuclear attack—but at the same time it is not now credible that a conventional attack could be met with a purely conventional response. Under these circumstances, if the deterrent is credible we must have nuclear parity and also a significant conventional capability in which we are an important part. If we are without that capability, the Soviets could move.

This discussion must center on the effect on the Germans of what we do. Their response will not necessarily be rational; probably it will be emotional. They are a vigorous people, denied the use of their own weapons, who will make a deal with whoever is Number One. If they reach the conclusion that the U.S. is withdrawing, they will go into a psychological frenzy.

It is not insignificant that the Russians always emphasize that they think they are superior to the US in nuclear forces. They say this to get France, the UK, Germany and Japan to have doubts about the credibility of the US nuclear deterrent and also to show who is Number One. We lose leverage as Number Two. We know the facts but we want to emphasize them to those who don't know them. So no one should concede that the USSR is ahead. We should point out, as we do, that they are moving ahead with SS-9s and nuclear subs—but we should stress

that our overall strength is sufficient. Otherwise we are in a dangerous position with the Japanese and the NATO allies, particularly the FRG.

We need to rethink our whole NATO strategy. We never will use the tactical nuclears, but we let the USSR see them there. Without a credible conventional force that can hold for 90 days or more, the Russians could be tempted.

General Goodpaster: This is why we should press on making improvements and not debate about reductions. Confidence and standing firm is the keynote. The note of readiness to act and to act affirmatively is important to our allies.

Mr. Packard: We can't do this with lower budgets.

President Nixon: I know that.

[The meeting adjourned.]

38. Memorandum From Helmut Sonnenfeldt of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)¹

Washington, November 20, 1970.

SUBJECT

MBFR and the NATO Ministerial

The Current Commitment

At the Rome meeting in May we took a fairly large step forward in issuing a separate statement on MBFR. This statement invited interested states to hold exploratory talks on MBFR in Europe, with special reference to the Central Region. Further, we agreed that in such talks we would put forward the following considerations:

—MBFR should be compatible with vital security interests, should not operate to the disadvantage of either side.

—Reductions should be based on reciprocity, and a balance in scope and timing.

—Reductions *should include stationed and indigenous forces and their weapons systems.*

—There must be adequate verification and controls etc.

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-049, SRG Meeting, MBFR, 11-23-70. Confidential. Sent for information.

Following the “exploratory” bilateral talks, the Alliance would then determine what further individual *or joint* exploration might be useful. The overall exercise was directed toward “developing in detail the criteria and objectives” for substantive negotiations to follow “at an appropriate stage” and “in a forum to be determined.”²

The Pact Response and the Exploratory Talks

On June 24, the Warsaw Pact responded by finally picking up MBFR in the context of their proposal for a European Security Conference.³ But they did so only by including on the Conference agenda a discussion of the question of establishing an “organ to deal with question of security and cooperation.” In this context, they proposed a discussion of “reduction of foreign armed forces in the territories of European States,” but this item would be taken up by the organ proposed to be established at the ESC.

After some preliminary sparring, the Soviets confirmed that “foreign” meant non-indigenous, rather than non-European (e.g., American, Canadian). But the Soviets in all the bilateral conversations have continued to resist strongly MBFR as a separate and distinct negotiating issue and forum.

It must be noted, however, that the Soviets, over the summer and fall, have made some progress in softening up opposition to the European Conference, not only by this formal proposal on MBFR (which is especially attractive to the British who dreamed up the permanent organ) but also to the French, when Pompidou was in Moscow, to the Germans in connection with the Moscow treaty negotiations, and most recently when Gromyko was in Rome.⁴ Moreover, the Soviets have pressed hard for “preparatory” talks on CES, including the Finnish proposal for an Ambassadorial tea party.⁵

² See Document 24.

³ See footnote 2, Document 30.

⁴ Gromyko visited Rome November 10–12.

⁵ In a November 18 memorandum, Sonnenfeldt summarized for Kissinger a conversation that he had held with Ralph Enckell, Finland’s Roving Ambassador on European Security: “He [Enckell] explained the latest Finnish idea, which is to hold a ‘gathering’ of Ambassadors in Helsinki to talk about a conference. The theory is that this might serve as a catalyst, and only in this way could one really know if there was any prospect for a more formal meeting that might have a chance of success. He reports growing enthusiasm, except for British coolness, and, he implied, American skepticism. He stressed that his effort was not at Soviet behest, and in fact, reported that the Finns during Kekkonen’s visit to Moscow had to warn the Soviets off of embracing the Finnish idea lest Soviet endorsement turn it into a Warsaw Pact proposal. He said the Finns would soon send formal notes with their proposal to all interested states.” (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 673, Country Files, Europe, Finland, Vol. I)

A related development that will be important at the Ministerial in December, is the shift in the German position on both CES and MBFR. The Germans now have formally informed us and NATO collectively that they want to see progress not only in Berlin *but on the inner German modus vivendi as well* before moving ahead with any multilateral preparations for a European Conference. They have also said that while there should be no strict preconditions for MBFR, they now want only to continue bilateral contacts on MBFR, and should multilateral contacts later seem to be worthwhile, to decide on the basis of the political atmosphere prevailing at the time whether progress on the Berlin talks, the inner German talks, and the SALT discussions revealed a genuine preparedness by the East for negotiation.

This in effect, puts some major conditions on moving ahead on MBFR; if this is your inclination, it is manna from heaven.

—There are some hookers, however.

—The Germans also want to endorse the specific idea of cuts in stationed forces, provided the reductions are linked to reductions in indigenous forces in a later phase.

—Most of the Allies are going to be favorable in this last proposition (indeed many want to go much further because they want to appear responsive to the Warsaw Pact).

The Issues

In light of the post-Rome developments we seem to face the following issues:

1. *Do we want to maintain MBFR as an issue distinct and separate from a European Security Conference?*

—The overwhelming sentiment in NATO is to maintain the separation; but we should recognize that sentiment for a European Conference is gaining ground little by little, and if there is no MBFR because of Soviet resistance for another 6–12 months or because of our lack of preparations, there could be a shift in favor of putting MBFR squarely on the CES agenda and going to a conference on this condition only.

2. *If we maintain a separate MBFR, do we want to remain general in our commitments and endorsements, or move to a more specific and defined approach, such as emphasizing a negotiating position on stationed forces:*

—This issue, of course, is related directly to the work we have done in NSSM-92.⁶

—*If we want to opt for a strictly political approach, we could have it with no trouble in the Alliance; indeed if we do not want it one task will be to stonewall against the easy political gesture.*

⁶ See Document 21 and footnote 4, Document 32.

—If we want to study further the corrective approaches, it follows that we do not want to go beyond the commitments in the Rome meeting.

—We must face up to the fact that in so stalling MBFR, we will have to be willing to obligate ourselves to take the lead in NATO studies, and this means turning over to the NATO Working Group a major input from what we have done so far (in a sanitized version) and making another input later in the early spring before the May Ministerial. By then we will have to have a negotiating proposal.

3. *Assuming we decide to remain general in our approach and to continue studies, do we, nevertheless, want to move from bilateral to multilateral contacts:*

—At first glance the answer would seem, clearly, no; moving to multilateral “contacts” is close to beginning substantive negotiations and we are not ready.

—On the other hand, willingness to move in this direction might pacify many of the smaller NATO members and give them a role; it might force the Soviets to respond, if that is really what we want.

—On balance it would seem imprudent to open the door to multilaterals.

In sum, I assume your game plan would be along the lines that follow:

—MBFR as a separate issue, mainly to counter pressures within and outside the Alliance for the Grand Conference.

—A general commitment to continue with our studies, but no new definition of principles or new specific MBFR proposals. The Germans are now pressing for a “building block” approach in the internal NATO studies, and we could join them in this approach as the opening wedge to a corrective proposal. On the other hand, many of the smaller NATO allies want to dump all asymmetrical studies, while the British have put in a tentative paper on reduction of foreign (stationed) forces.

In short, the NATO model building exercise has all but collapsed as it should have.

—On this basis, continuing bilateral explorations, but no multilaterals, perhaps considering the German formula which poses further conditions to multilaterization.

The bureaucratic problem is that State and ACDA will argue that we must be forthcoming. They will say there is a rising tide for more active movements, that we have been footdragging, that the Europeans want a political approach, that we should also, since asymmetrical is non-negotiable. All of this is justified by *détente*.

Frankly, I doubt that MBFR is all that urgent (that also seemed to be the view at the NSC on November 19).⁷ Most Europeans will be so

⁷ See Document 37.

pleased and dazed by our NSSM–84 posture⁸ that MBFR will recede into the background for a time. I suspect that the real problem will come when the Soviets, learning the outcome of our NSC deliberations, will finally wake up to MBFR and begin making their European Conference a prime forum for MBFR.

⁸ NSSM 84, “U.S. Strategies and Forces for NATO,” November 21, 1969, is scheduled for publication in *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, volume XLI, Western Europe; NATO, 1969–1972.

39. Minutes of a Senior Review Group Meeting¹

Washington, November 23, 1970, 3:40–4:15 p.m.

SUBJECT

Military [*Mutual*] Balanced Force Reductions

PARTICIPATION

Chairman—Henry A. Kissinger	<i>JCS</i>
<i>State</i>	Lt. Gen. Richard Knowles
John N. Irwin	Col. Robert E. Fiss
George Springsteen	<i>ACDA</i>
Leon Sloss	Philip J. Farley
Seymour Weiss	David Linebaugh
<i>Defense</i>	<i>NSC Staff</i>
David Packard	Mr. Sonnenfeldt
G. Warren Nutter	Dr. Smith
John H. Morse	Mr. Hamilton
Philip A. Odeen	Col. Kennedy
<i>CIA</i>	Jeanne W. Davis
Richard Helms	
Bruce C. Clarke	

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-111, SRG Minutes, Originals 1970. Top Secret; Codeword. The meeting was held in the White House Situation Room. In a memorandum for the record, November 25, Nutter and Morse summarized the meeting. They concluded: “The meeting was relatively short and seemed designed primarily to convey the message that we should go very slow on MBFR, for the time being at least.” (Ford Library, Laird Papers, Box 16, NATO, Vol. VI)

SUMMARY OF DECISIONS

It was agreed:

1. to form a Working Group, with CIA chairing and representation from DIA, to analyze our ability to monitor an MBFR agreement and whether and how our intelligence capabilities should be strengthened for this purpose; this group would compile our sources of information, the kind of information we get and the kind we need;

2. to develop an illustrative plan, or the elements of a plan, for asymmetrical cuts;

3. that, at the December NATO Ministerial Meeting, we would approach the question of MBFR informally on an exploratory basis, express our interest in the matter, stress the need for clarification but avoid being too specific or taking any substantive position;

4. to examine the political procedures for mobilization in various countries to determine how quickly our allies could be expected to act on receipt of warning of mobilization by the other side.

Mr. Kissinger: This will be a brief meeting to review where we stand on MBFR and agree where we go from here. We have identified a number of approaches: 1) an approach that is basically political; 2) an arms control approach which attempts to preserve or enhance our military position through asymmetrical cuts. I have the impression from our work on NSSM 84 and the NSC meeting that there is a general consensus that symmetrical cuts of any significant size are not very desirable from the security point of view. The only symmetrical cuts that would not be undesirable would be so small as to be symbolic, and even these might run counter to attempts to improve our posture. This leaves us with an attempt to develop an asymmetrical approach. Conceptually an asymmetrical approach represents a tough problem. Contrary to the SALT exercise, we have developed no criteria for comparison—we have no yard-sticks. Nor have we worked out questions of collateral restraints, either symmetrical or asymmetrical. Our biggest problem is related to the mobilization date. Ideally, we should develop constraints designed to give maximum warning or to impede mobilization and reinforcement. We haven't yet worked out what specific constraints would be most effective. (to Mr. Helms) We haven't had a systematic analysis of how our intelligence capabilities could be strengthened to help us monitor an agreement. This is a tough problem.

Mr. Helms: I agree that this should be done for MBFR in the same way as it was for SALT, but I don't know how long it would take us. We have only taken a swat at it in big chunks as I indicated in my NSC briefing—we have determined that we can do this better than that with current resources.

Mr. Kissinger: I have an NSC staff paper which discusses our intelligence capability in East Germany and in Western Russia. We seem

to be fairly well off in East Germany, but very poorly off in Western Russia.

Mr. Helms: I agree.

Mr. Kissinger: At what point could we relate the situation in Western Russia to movements in East Germany, particularly if they restrict the travel of foreigners so we do not have reports of troop trains moving, etc?

Mr. Helms: We did an exhaustive study of the intelligence aspects of the move into Czechoslovakia. That would help some.

Mr. Kissinger: Did they restrict the travel of foreigners at that time?

Mr. Helms: I think not but I'm not sure.

Mr. Springsteen: They put some restrictions on in East Germany.

Mr. Kissinger: (to Wayne Smith) Let's get a working panel to work on this, chaired by CIA with DIA representation.

Mr. Packard: That's a good idea. Also, we have some new capability which we are looking at as an independent matter.

Mr. Kissinger: [2 lines not declassified]

General Knowles: It gives us a general idea.

Mr. Kissinger: We need a compilation of all the sources of our information, what sort of information we get and what sort we need. For example, I noticed a reference to the fact that if the Soviet forces were returned to the Moscow and Kiev Military Districts this wouldn't help us. Why would it not help us somewhat to have Soviet forces moved 1000 miles back? Why would it be necessary for them to go beyond the Urals? I can see the relationship of a move 1000 miles back by the Soviets to a 3000 mile move by the U.S., but it should help some. (to Wayne Smith) Let's get this compilation.

Mr. Irwin: At least we would get an idea of the time span of our uncoverage.

Mr. Helms: The idea of a task force is first class.

Dr. Smith: Has anyone done any work on the recent Warsaw Pact exercises in this regard? We could learn something from it.

Mr. Packard: We have done some work but nothing very detailed.

Mr. Kissinger: We must try to be as concrete as possible. For example, we speak of troops being disbanded. Do we mean that these troops would go into reserve status; would their weapons be destroyed; if not, where would their weapons be moved? We must know what we are talking about. We can't hold our allies together if we start down this road on the basis of abstract discussions.

Mr. Packard: We can't get this done before the NATO Ministerial Meeting.

Mr. Irwin: No we can't. There are two important considerations in that connection: 1) the Secretary would like to go the Ministerial with

some flexibility in the sense of being able to take a positive position but not indicating either a symmetrical or asymmetrical approach; he would like to take the third position (in the State Department paper on specific issues for the NATO Ministerial Meeting)² in which he would refer to the June Budapest Memorandum and indicate our willingness to discuss reductions but not their kind or extent; and 2) he would like to be able to exchange studies with our allies.

Mr. Kissinger: I think we should go further with our own studies before we start exchanging them. In SALT we knew what we were talking about. It would not have been wise to exchange some of our preliminary drafts.

Mr. Irwin: I agree. We can say we will exchange information with our allies but give no indication as to the timing.

Mr. Packard: I think we could take a very informal approach in the initial stages. We could exchange ideas but not get to specific proposals. We need time to develop anything we could feel secure about.

Mr. Irwin: I have some question as to whether we would be better off with symmetrical or asymmetrical cuts depending on whether asymmetrical cuts were negotiable.

Mr. Kissinger: Everything depends on what is negotiable.

Mr. Irwin: I am talking only about the elements of the packages. We have no packages.

Mr. Kissinger: I haven't seen any asymmetrical plan so I don't know how we would do it. I think the agencies should come up with an illustrative scheme or at least the various elements of a plan and see how they might be put together. They would not be committed to anything. Some studies indicate that a fixed percentage cut favors the offense and those with more rapid mobilization capability. This, of course, is the USSR. We have two problems: 1) symmetrical cuts of any significance don't appear too promising for us; and 2) cuts so small as to be meaningless might inhibit real improvements that might be within reach. I haven't seen enough on asymmetrical cuts to make any judgment.

² The paper, "Outline of MBFR Issues," forwarded to Kissinger by Eliot on November 23, stated: "There are four hypothetical alternative policies the US could adopt with respect to treatment of MBFR in the NATO Communiqué: 1. Retreat from previous Communiqué language which had put NATO on record as favoring MBFR in principle; 2. Reaffirm previous NATO positions on MBFR without advancing beyond them; 3. Refer to the June Budapest Memorandum and indicate Allied willingness to discuss reductions in stationed forces as a first step in MBFR, to be followed by reductions in indigenous forces; 4. Put the Allies on record as favoring MBFR entailing, say, a small, perhaps 10%, cut in stationed ground forces in a specified area." (National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, DEF 6 NATO)

Mr. Irwin: If it should develop that asymmetrical cuts are non-negotiable, we could be better off with straight percentage cuts.

Mr. Kissinger: We might be better off with no cuts in these circumstances.

Mr. Irwin: There is some difference between no cuts and the political advantage of symmetrical cuts. State tends to feel that symmetrical cuts might be advantageous politically.

Mr. Kissinger: The Secretary denied State was thinking of symmetrical cuts.

Mr. Irwin: State is leaning toward that possibility.

Mr. Kissinger: We would have to define what our political position is.

Mr. Sonnenfeldt: The Secretary may have taken that line as a way to defend against the European Security Conference idea. The Russians say that MBFR has to come after ESC.

Mr. Kissinger: But that doesn't mean we have to have symmetrical cuts.

Mr. Farley: There is an important difference between preparations for MBFR and for SALT. SALT was a bilateral exercise, and MBFR involves our allies. NATO has been studying MBFR for a year or more. Some of these studies aren't bad, but I think they need some input from us to keep them more realistic. Some people say MBFR undercuts any move to get force improvements.

Mr. Kissinger: I am only talking now of various proposals on purely political grounds, saying we should weigh the political gains against the political losses. On grounds of security, we must make sure we know what we are talking about. I agree that it is much harder to do militarily than was SALT.

Mr. Farley: If we wait until our studies are perfect we will be in trouble with our NATO allies.

Mr. Irwin: I think we should proceed along the lines Mr. Packard suggests. We could be responsive to any suggestion for discussion of reductions, initially on an exploratory basis.

Mr. Packard: We could approach it informally without being too specific. We could sound out our allies.

Mr. Kissinger: I have observed that all European leaders who have visited us have been worried about Ostpolitik but no one was willing to say so. I don't want to get ourselves in a position where everyone is worried about MBFR but no one will say so. Someone has to say what he thinks. Let's be sure we don't lock ourselves in on something we don't understand. It's all right to explore ideas, but there is a tendency to create a degree of momentum which gets us locked in. Why

could we not stick with the Rome position?³ Why should we go beyond it?

Mr. Springsteen: A head of steam has been built up, primarily by the Germans who floated a specific proposal in NATO which they said had been cleared by their Federal Council. Basically it took our third position (in the State Department paper) of responding to the Budapest declaration. We would be willing to explore bilateral reduction of stationed forces, but the Germans say that such discussions would be linked to subsequent reductions in indigenous forces. They had hoped to hold off their proposal until they knew our views, but had decided to surface it so it could be considered at the December Ministerial.

Mr. Kissinger: What would happen if we stuck with the Rome language? Who else wants the German proposal. Do the French?

Mr. Springsteen: The French are ambivalent about it. They might associate themselves with it if it were strictly bilateral. It is the smaller countries, with the exception of the Netherlands, who support it. The Germans are pushing this because they believe if we want to hold the Rome position on ESC we should be prepared to give on MBFR.

Mr. Kissinger: Why?

Mr. Springsteen: To keep the allies in hand. We can expect increased pressure at the Ministerial.

Mr. Kissinger: And we could keep them in hand by being forthcoming on MBFR? I have a summary of attitudes of the NATO countries: two countries—France and Greece—are not interested in MBFR; five countries—Belgium, Portugal, UK, Turkey, Netherlands—will stick with the Rome position; three countries—Canada, Denmark, Germany—welcome the third position—reference to the Budapest Memorandum and indicate willingness to discuss reductions in stationed forces, followed by reductions in indigenous forces; and three countries—Iceland, Luxembourg, Italy—have no position. I don't consider that this is a steamroller to force us beyond the Rome position which was, in itself, an advance.

Mr. Packard: We shouldn't go much beyond the Rome position. We can express interest, stress the need for clarification, avoid being too specific too soon, and keep the issue open in a constructive way.

Mr. Weiss: Why can't we let the Europeans take the lead in this?

Mr. Irwin: I agree. We can leave the issue open and see what happens. The Secretary doesn't think this will become a real issue for a long time.

³ See Document 24.

Mr. Packard: Let's not make it an issue.

Mr. Kissinger: Let's be sure we don't create a record that will let the other side say we are committed to anything. We would live to regret it if we should do it to keep a few countries happy.

Mr. Irwin: We have to be prepared, though. We may find more pressure in the meeting for ESC or for some indication that we are not rejecting the Budapest position.

Mr. Sonnenfeldt: We could say the Budapest Memorandum is in response to the Rome communiqué and that we need more clarification of its meaning.

Mr. Kissinger: We need to develop some of these packages. Also, we have always assumed that if we had one week's warning of mobilization by the other side we would know what to do. We shouldn't take this for granted, but should look at the political procedures for mobilization in various countries and determine how quickly our allies could be expected to act.

Mr. Irwin: I agree. The problem is not our intelligence indicators but what happens after we have the information.

40. Memorandum From Acting Secretary of State Johnson to President Nixon¹

Washington, November 27, 1970.

SUBJECT

Positions to be Taken at December Ministerial Meetings

We were informed in NSDM 95 of November 25² that you wish to review positions to be taken by the United States at the December 1970

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Executive Secretariat, Conference Files: Lot 70 D 387, Box 522, Volume II, NATO Ministerial, Dec. 2–4. Secret.

² NSDM 95, "U.S. Strategy and Forces for NATO," November 25, stated with regard to MBFR: "The President also has decided that the United States should continue to give general support to the concept of Mutual and Balanced Force Reductions in Europe. Further studies of MBFR, both within the U.S. Government and in NATO, will be necessary to provide a realistic evaluation of approaches (particularly asymmetrical force package approaches) to MBFR which would operate to maintain or enhance NATO's military security relative to the Warsaw Pact. Until these studies have been completed by the Verification Panel and reviewed by the President, the U.S. shall assume no commitments as to specific elements of a formal MBFR proposals or agreement." The full text of NSDM 95 is scheduled for publication in *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, volume XLI, Western Europe; NATO, 1969–1972.

NATO Ministerial meetings with respect to US strategy and forces for NATO, and mutual and balanced force reductions (MBFR).

By separate memorandum (copy enclosed),³ the Secretary has sent to you for approval a personal message from you to the NATO Allies for use during the forthcoming Ministerial meeting in stating the US position on future US force levels in Europe and on the Alliance's study on defense problems for the 1970's.

Concerning MBFR, the Secretary plans to take the following approach, looking toward further probes by the Allies of Soviet interest in moving toward meaningful relaxation of tensions by again urging the Warsaw Pact in the Ministerial Communiqué to join early East-West exploration of possibilities for MBFR:

—note that the Warsaw Pact has finally responded to NATO MBFR Proposals by saying they were prepared to discuss the reduction of "foreign armed forces" on the territories of the European states, but that they are insisting such talks come only after a CES.

—affirm US concern that CES would prove an unwieldy forum for any eventual negotiations on MBFR, which is why we have preferred to envisage discussions prior to CES in a more limited framework, while not ruling out eventual broader discussions.

—call for rejection by the Allies of the idea of discussing MBFR only after a European Security Conference and state that we should again urge Pact members to agree to engage in exploratory MBFR talks next year.

—if others favor this, concur that in the MBFR exploratory talks NATO members should indicate a willingness for MBFR negotiations initially to cover stationed forces, and later embrace indigenous forces.⁴

U. Alexis Johnson

³ Attached but not printed.

⁴ On November 30, Kissinger responded in a memorandum to Johnson: "The positions set forth in your memorandum of November 27 relating to MBFR and CES have been reviewed in accordance with NSDM 95, and have been approved for use at the Ministerial meeting." (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 260, Agency Files, NATO, Vol. IX)