

MBFR and the Conference on European Security, December 1970–December 1971

41. Memorandum From Secretary of State Rogers to President Nixon¹

Washington, December 5, 1970.

SUBJECT

NATO Ministerial Meeting

The December 2–4 NATO Ministerial meetings² were characterized by a new degree of Allied unity, a realistic reading of East-West détente possibilities, and a re-affirmation of the need to maintain and improve Allied conventional defense capabilities.

There was universal appreciation for your statement affirming U.S. intent to maintain forces in Europe at current levels in the absence of reciprocal reductions and given a similar approach by our Allies.³ The decision by most European members of the Alliance on a long-term burden-sharing program reflected a recognition by our European allies of their responsibility to do more. Indeed, I sensed at the meeting an enhanced degree of understanding with us, based at least in part on Europe's rising confidence in itself and in NATO's prudent policies of the past two years.

The meeting concluded with a strong communiqué which is compatible with our policies and objectives in the European area. For the immediate future there is unanimity that the touchstone of future progress toward détente is the Berlin negotiations.⁴ Should these reach

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Conference Files, 1966–1972, Entry 3051B, Box 100, CF 482, Volume II, NATO Ministerial, Dec. 2–4. Confidential.

² Held in Brussels.

³ The Ministers of the North Atlantic Council stated in their final communiqué of December 4: "The Council received a statement from President Nixon which pledged that, given a similar approach by the other Allies, the United States would maintain and improve its own forces in Europe and would not reduce them except in the context of reciprocal East-West action. Ministers expressed their profound satisfaction at the reaffirmation of Alliance solidarity expressed in this statement." See North Atlantic Treaty Organization, *NATO Final Communiqués, 1949–1974*, p. 243.

⁴ The final communiqué reads in part: "They affirmed the readiness of their governments as soon as the talks on Berlin have reached a satisfactory conclusion and in so far as the other ongoing talks are proceeding favorably, to enter into multilateral contacts with all interested governments to explore when it would be possible to convene a conference, or a series of conferences, on security and cooperation in Europe. In this event, the Council would give immediate attention to this question."

a satisfactory agreement, there will be increased pressure to move towards a European Security Conference.

On mutual and balanced force reductions we are agreed to continue to seek exchanges with Eastern Europe. The NATO proposal is to discuss a balanced reduction of “stationed” forces as an integral program including indigenous forces and to do so through bilateral “exploratory talks” now. (The Warsaw Pact had talked about “foreign” forces, had not referred to any balance, and had sought to defer discussions until after a security conference.)⁵

Mediterranean security was discussed by both Foreign and Defense Ministers, and there was general recognition of the need to improve NATO’s presence there.

Many Ministers spoke highly of the Committee on Challenges of Modern Society. It is now solidly launched, and its action on oil-spills marks a tangible achievement widely praised in Europe.

The meeting also provided me opportunities to talk to the Greeks and the Turks. I urged the former to impress on the Prime Minister the need to move more quickly to return to constitutionalism. The Turk indicated that his Prime Minister had postponed visiting Washington until he secures legislation on controlling opium production.

My German, British and French colleagues joined me in a constructive discussion of Germany’s Eastern Policy and on Berlin. We all affirmed that it was up to the Soviets to be forthcoming if agreement on Berlin were to be achieved.

William P. Rogers

⁵ In the communiqué, the NATO Ministers “reemphasized the importance” of “mutual and balanced force reductions as a means of reducing tensions and lessening the military confrontation in Europe.” They noted that the Warsaw Pact countries “did not directly respond” to the Reykjavik (1968) and Rome (1970) Declarations of the NAC; instead, the Eastern countries “mentioned the possibility of a discussion at some future time of the question of reducing foreign armed forces on the territory of European states.” The NATO Ministers “renewed their invitation to interested states to hold exploratory talks on the basis of their Rome Declaration, and also indicated their readiness within this framework to examine different possibilities in the field of force reductions in the Central Region of Europe, including the possible mutual and balanced reduction of stationed forces, as part of an integral program for the reduction of both stationed and indigenous forces.”

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

Washington, January 18, 1971.

SUBJECT

Soviet Reaction Against December NATO Meeting

As reported in the attached memorandum from Secretary Rogers (Tab A),² Ambassador Dobrynin handed us a Soviet aide-mémoire on December 28, criticizing NATO, and especially the US, for impeding détente in Europe. Specifically, the Soviets are complaining about measures taken at the recent Ministerial meeting to strengthen NATO militarily. More important, they come down hard against NATO's linking progress toward a European security conference with a Berlin agreement, and other ongoing East-West talks. In familiar fashion, the Soviets present their anti-linkage position, terming insistence on "preconditions" as "unsound method of conducting international affairs." They contend they are ready to proceed now, on both a bilateral and multilateral basis, with preparations for a European conference, citing again the Finnish proposal for preliminary consultations in Helsinki. Finally, Moscow tries to single out the US from other NATO allies and implies that, contrary to the spirit of your recent conversation with Foreign Minister Gromyko,³ we are preventing progress on European security.

Undoubtedly meant to express general Soviet displeasure with what they see as a US brake on Ostpolitik and pressure on them to be forthcoming in SALT and in the Berlin negotiations, the Soviet paper seems mainly directed at influencing the policies of our European allies. As the Secretary observes, the Soviets want to establish a case against us. During the past week, Soviet ambassadors have delivered similar representation—either orally or in writing—in five other NATO capitals. The North Atlantic Council has already taken note of the various Soviet approaches and will be coordinating allied responses. The British have already replied in terms close to our own. We expect our other allies will do likewise, adhering to the terms of the NATO communiqué.

The Secretary gave an oral response to Dobrynin when he delivered the Soviet note, reaffirming our interest in a Berlin agreement and

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 714, Country Files, USSR, Vol. XII. Confidential. Sent for information. A notation on the memorandum reads: "The President has seen."

² Rogers's January 5 memorandum is attached but not printed.

³ See Document 36.

arguing that the Soviets have not been very forthcoming in the negotiations. He also took exception to the Soviet portrayal of our attitude toward a European conference, and your interest in making progress on European security.⁴ In a subsequent talk with Dobrynin, Assistant Secretary Hillenbrand also took a firm line.⁵ State is planning to draft a formal written reply to the Soviet démarche.

⁴ In telegram 211169 to Moscow, December 30, the Department summarized the meeting between Rogers and Dobrynin on December 28: "Secretary took exception to statement's portrayal of U.S. attitude toward a CES. Secretary noted we and our allies place great emphasis on satisfactory negotiation of talks on Berlin and progress in ongoing negotiations in evaluating prospects for productive East-West contacts. USG's interest in promoting European security found full expression in President's special message to NATO Council meeting. Among other things, President noted that there must be reciprocal East-West action in measures taken to advance mutual security. Secretary also emphasized our continued interest in mutual and balanced force reductions as a means of lessening military confrontation in Europe." (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 261, Agency Files, NATO, Vol. X, Part 3)

⁵ In telegram 3105 to Moscow, January 8, the Department reported that Hillenbrand told Dobrynin that the "decision taken at Brussels NATO ministerial meeting on East-West relations was unanimous" and that "draft language setting forth linkage between a possible CES and progress on Berlin and other ongoing negotiations was basically formulated by two NATO countries known for their independent policies. U.S. accepted proposed draft and did not participate in any arm-twisting exercise, literally or figuratively." Dobrynin then "queried Hillenbrand on U.S. reaction to Finnish proposal calling for multilateralization of contacts in Helsinki. Hillenbrand said that Finnish proposal was only one variant of a formula for proceeding with multilateral contacts. When and if time comes to proceed into this phase, Finnish formula may prove to be best available, but no decision has been taken on this matter as yet." (Ibid.) Regarding the Finnish proposal, see footnote 5, Document 38.

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

Washington, March 24, 1971.

SUBJECT

Memorandum from Secretary Rogers to the President Reporting USSR Démarche on European Security

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 714, Country Files, USSR, Vol. XII. Confidential. Sent for action.

Secretary Rogers has sent the President a memorandum reporting on Dobrynin's oral statement of March 17 on a European Security Conference.²

—The statement called for immediate preparatory steps: agreement on an agenda and a date.³

—It argues strongly against linkage, and accuses us of blocking a European conference.⁴

The State memorandum notes that this is the most specific Soviet proposal we have had for beginning preparations for the conference. The aim is to keep the notion of a conference alive to demonstrate Soviet initiative at the Party Congress, and to play on continuing European interest in a conference.

This current note, however, does not seem to be much more than a pro forma exercise, which the Soviets are more or less obliged to engage in as a follow up to the Warsaw Pact meeting of mid-February.⁵

If the Soviets were really interested in a conference, their most effective tactic would be to respond on MBFR, which would have a great appeal in NATO. The fact that they have not even alluded to it since last June,⁶ suggests that despite their protestations they in fact accept the Berlin linkage as the precondition to the conference. Indeed, they may prefer to see Berlin settled and the German treaties on the way to ratification in order to keep German issues entirely separate from an atmospheric conference.

In any case, with the NATO Ministerial two months away, discussion in NATO of a conference is picking up again. I have just cleared

² Attached to Rogers's March 23 memorandum is an oral statement on a European security conference that Dobrynin gave to Hillenbrand on March 17; both attached but not printed.

³ Rogers wrote in his attached memorandum to the President: "The Soviet statement proposes movement forthwith to meetings leading to the convening of CES. The Soviets claim that several matters are not disputed (relaxation of tension as the aim of CES, Helsinki as the site, the attendance of all European states plus the US and Canada) and could be agreed on immediately; then agreement on an agenda and on a date could be negotiated. Or, they say, all of these questions could be decided simultaneously."

⁴ Rogers wrote in his attached memorandum to the President: "On the polemical side, the statement's main thrust is against the West's linkage of CES with an agreement in the Berlin talks. All sorts of linkages are possible, the Soviets say—for example, ratification of the FRG-Soviet and FRG-Polish Treaties would help the Berlin talks—but making linkages merely hinders progress towards détente." Rogers stated: "We find the Soviet statement a logical but heavy-handed development of their argument for a Conference and their attempt to portray the US as blocking movement in that direction."

⁵ The Warsaw Pact's Foreign Ministers met from February 18 to 19 in Bucharest. A brief summary and analysis of the communiqué from their meeting is in telegram 30094 to USNATO, February 22, in National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, DEF 4 WARSAW PACT.

⁶ See Document 30.

a long State instruction for Ellsworth's use,⁷ which gives him something to say on how we might go about the exploratory and preparatory processes for a conference *after* there is a Berlin settlement. (As you recall, Berlin was put up as a pre-condition for a conference at last December's Rome [Brussels] NATO Ministerial Meeting.) This is all rather academic as of now but the allies all want to be busy and we can only exercise control over the internal NATO studies by saying something ourselves. At the Lisbon Ministerial in June the communiqué will stand essentially on the same formula, even though some of the smaller countries would like to dilute the pre-condition from "satisfactory solution" to "progress." Our paper outlines extended careful exploratory and preparatory phases, with enough flexibility to back away should the project look distinctly to our disadvantage. I will send you a copy of the State instruction as soon as we get a clean copy of it.

Recommendation

That you forward the attached memorandum to the President at Tab A.⁸

⁷ Telegram 49306 to USNATO, March 24. (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 261, Agency Files, NATO, Vol. X)

⁸ Document 44.

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

Washington, March 29, 1971.

SUBJECT

New Soviet Pressures for a European Security Conference

While calling on the Under Secretary of State on another matter recently, Ambassador Dobrynin presented an oral statement on the need for further movement toward a European Security Conference (Tab A).²

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 714, Country Files, Europe, USSR, Vol. XII. Confidential. Sent for information. A notation on the memorandum reads: "The President has seen."

² Attached but not printed. See footnotes 3 and 4, Document 43.

The main points were:

—sufficient agreement exists on such broad issues as the need to relax tension in Europe that preparatory discussion for a conference should begin immediately;

—an agenda and date could be negotiated, or all of these questions relating to preliminary steps and preparations could be agreed simultaneously.

This is the most specific proposition from the Soviets for early talks which would be clearly identified as preparatory to a general conference. Much of their presentation, however, is in the form of arguments against NATO's current policy of linking any movement toward a conference to a satisfactory conclusion of the Berlin negotiations. The Soviets argue strongly against such pre-conditions, and accuse us of opposing a conference.

It seems that this is a rather routine Soviet effort to keep alive the notion of a conference and keep some pressure on the Europeans (who received similar notes) to reduce pre-conditions to a conference. In fact, the Europeans are uneasy about sticking to the agreement that Berlin must be settled first of all. Some now talk of "progress" on Berlin as a sufficient prerequisite for a conference.

The next NATO Ministerial Meeting in June will have to deal with some problems of the conference issues if Berlin is settled. We are engaging the Allies in more discussion to point up the many problems that have to be dealt with not only in terms of procedures, but also in terms of substance. We will also discuss in the Senior Review Group some of the issues that we foresee arising following a Berlin agreement.

45. National Security Study Memorandum 121¹

Washington, April 13, 1971.

TO

The Secretary of State
The Secretary of Defense

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 365, Subject Files, National Security Study Memoranda, Nos. 104–206. Secret. Copies were sent to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Director of Central Intelligence.

SUBJECT

June NATO Ministerial Meeting

The President wishes to have a meeting of the National Security Council before the Lisbon NATO Ministerial meeting to review the major issues that are to be considered. The President desires, in particular, to examine the status of work on East-West relations in progress within the NATO framework, as well as developments in the area of NATO defense since the last Ministerial meeting. U.S. strategy and force guidance for NATO remain as set forth in NSDM 95.²

In the preparation for the NSC meeting, a paper should be submitted setting forth (1) the major issues expected to arise at Lisbon, and (2) problems requiring decision, including recommendations or choices, where appropriate. The paper should discuss our objectives and highlight any important Allied differences. It should also outline the problems that will have to be dealt with after the Lisbon meeting.

The NSC IG/EUR, constituted appropriately in the discretion of the Chairman, should submit the paper to the Assistant to the President for preliminary consideration in the Senior Review Group by May 1.

Henry A. Kissinger

² NSDM 95 is scheduled for publication in *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, volume XLI, Western Europe; NATO, 1969–1972.

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

Washington, April 22, 1971.

SUBJECT

Verification Panel Meeting on MBFR: Tactical Issues

In your discussion at the Verification Panel meeting *you should not be diverted to the tactical issues of the relations of MBFR to CES and Berlin,*

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-008, Verification Panel Meeting, MBFR, 4/23/71. Secret. Sent for information.

though State is actively interested in this issue. We will handle these questions in the study of issues arising at the June NATO Meeting; NSSM 121² is scheduled for the SRG on May 13.

To clarify the state of play, the following is where we stand on MBFR and CES:

—Our position, previously supported in the Alliance, is that MBFR is a separate issue, worthy of being pursued independently of a CES and Berlin. This has been the Alliance position.

—However, there is growing feeling in the Alliance that MBFR should also be included on CES agenda, in order to give a conference some real substance. This is the German position, and they have gathered near unanimous support in NATO.

—We have not fallen in with this position, though State feels that we will probably have to at some point.³

—All of this, however, has so far not weakened NATO's precondition of a "Berlin settlement" prior to CES. (The definition of a "Berlin settlement" may erode.)

—The danger may be that if Berlin is hopelessly deadlocked or drags on, or is only marginally improved, the Soviets will use Alliance interest in MBFR to overcome the Berlin precondition to a CES.⁴ Recent Soviet statements point in this direction.

² Document 45.

³ In a letter to Laird, April 12, Rogers wrote that at the Lisbon NATO Ministerial meeting, June 3–4, "we should agree with the current FRG suggestion that the Allies propose that MBFR be included on any CES agenda. As you know, the Allies have maintained MBFR on a track separate but parallel to CES, in anticipation of the possibility that MBFR might be discussed before a CES was convened. So far the Warsaw Pact has not responded to our willingness to explore MBFR. With a satisfactory resolution in the Berlin talks we are likely to be under strong pressure to proceed to early multilateral East-West exploratory talks, looking toward CES. At that time the two tracks of CES and MBFR will cross. We believe most Allies would wish to address MBFR in general terms at CES, looking toward negotiations later in a more suitable forum." (Ford Library, Laird Papers, Box 4, NATO, Vol. VII)

⁴ On April 21, Laird replied to Rogers's letter of April 12: "I have serious reservations about whether a United States proposal to link MBFR and CES in the manner suggested is necessary to accomplish these ends. It is not clear to me that the CES and MBFR tracks will inevitably cross with the conclusion of a Berlin agreement. It is conceivable that we could discuss MBFR before we reach agreement on Berlin. Even after a Berlin agreement, it is still not clear that the tracks will cross, and I think it is desirable to work to keep discussion of these issues in separate forums." Laird suggested that "given the Alliance position on the Berlin precondition to CES, it seems to me that a CES-MBFR nexus could make it more difficult for us to resist pressures for undesirable concessions on a Berlin agreement from those Allies favoring MBFR. If we did stand firm in such a case, we would then be seen to be resisting progress on MBFR as well as on CES." (Ibid.)

47. Editorial Note

On April 21, 1971, Wayne Smith of the National Security Council staff wrote President's Assistant for National Security Affairs Kissinger: "A Verification Panel meeting on mutual and balanced force reductions in Europe is scheduled for Friday, April 23, 1971, at 3:00 p.m. The meeting will focus on two broad problems:

"—The desirability of choosing now a basic approach to MBFR for further development and, if so, either the 'military' approach sponsored by DOD or the 'political' approach advanced by State;

"—The position on MBFR to be taken by the U.S. in NATO and the probable NATO consensus with the Warsaw Pact. The basic issue here is whether or not the U.S. wants to go along with a 'political' approach to MBFR (see below) and, if not, what steps need to be taken to protect our options."

Smith wrote that the new evaluation report on MBFR "represents a substantial extension and refinement of our earlier work arising out of the November 23 Verification Panel meeting." He continued: "*Given these improvements in our analytical approach, I believe that this report represents a comprehensive and basically sound evaluation of the full spectrum of possible MBFR agreements including both the asymmetrical and mixed package options that you found interesting.* As you would suspect, however, there are some strong bureaucratic differences on the MBFR approaches outlined and their evaluation." He noted: "State/ACDA are wholeheartedly committed to a 'political' approach involving small symmetrical reductions designed for ease of negotiability. They probably will press at the meeting for a decision on an approach. DOD, particularly the JCS, are more interested in 'military' approaches emphasizing assistance [*asymmetrical?*] or mixed reduction packages." Smith summarized: "Thus, there are very strong and well-established differences of views within the bureaucracy on MBFR that will, I believe, be surfaced at the meeting. Given the strong momentum in NATO for proceeding with a 'political' approach to MBFR, similar to that sponsored by State, I think that there is a real danger that we will be locked into an MBFR position in NATO that may not be consistent with the President's wishes unless some action is taken. Your choices are:

"—To let State and our Allies proceed but be prepared to act forcefully if and when action becomes necessary, i.e., after a Berlin agreement or initiation of CES.

"—To attempt to exercise leadership over the NATO MBFR effort to maintain Alliance flexibility. Since our evaluation of the security problems involved is better than the Alliance's, its transmission to NATO could reopen the issue along the substantive lines we support.

“Clearly, the first alternative—continued State leadership—should be avoided, and both Hal Sonnenfeldt and I feel it *may be desirable to go further than in the past in exercising active leadership over the NATO MBFR effort while preparing a more detailed formulation of 3–5 most reasonable MBFR packages.*” (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-008, Verification Panel Meeting, MBFR, 4/23/71)

The minutes of the Verification Panel meeting, April 23, include the following “summary of conclusions”:

“The Working Group would make a new analysis of the comparative impact of reductions, assuming a lag [*less than 1 line not declassified*] in NATO mobilization;

“The Working Group will try to answer some of the questions raised in this meeting in terms of some specific options: e.g., two types of symmetrical reductions; two types of asymmetrical reductions, including common ceilings; and one or two mixed packages. These options should include the collateral restraints that would be required to overcome disadvantages to the NATO forces. They should also include consideration of our nuclear weapons.

“The Working Group will prepare a sanitized version of the current IG paper for transmission to the North Atlantic Council.” (Ibid., Box H-107, Verification Panel Minutes, Originals, 1969–3/8/72) The full text of the meeting minutes is scheduled for publication in *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, volume XLI, Western Europe; NATO, 1969–1972. The IG paper or evaluation report, “Mutual and Balanced Force Reductions Between NATO and the Warsaw Pact,” April 12, was prepared by the working group constituted after the November 23, 1970, Senior Review Group meeting (see Document 39). A copy is in National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 482, President’s Trip Files, MBFR/CSCE Backup Book, Part I.

48. Minutes of a Senior Review Group Meeting¹

Washington, May 14, 1971, 3:25–4:10 p.m.

SUBJECT

June NATO Ministerial Meeting

PARTICIPATION

Chairman—Henry A. Kissinger	CIA
<i>State</i>	Richard Helms
U. Alexis Johnson	Peter Dixon Davis
George Springsteen	ACDA
Ronald Spiers	Philip Farley
<i>Defense</i>	NSC Staff
Armistead I. Selden	Col. R.T. Kennedy
Brig. Gen. Harrison Lobdell	William Hyland
Lt. Col. Edward O'Connor	Wilfred Kohl
JCS	Helmut Sonnenfeldt
Vice Adm. J.P. Weinell	John Court
Capt. R.A. Kamorowski	Jeanne W. Davis

SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS

It was agreed that:

1. the IG for Europe will prepare a paper on what strategy we want to follow with regard to a Conference on European Security, including the question of permanent machinery;
2. the IG will do a paper on a negotiating scenario for MBFR;
3. an NSC meeting on the NATO issues will not be necessary; they will be dealt with in a memorandum to the President.

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-112, SRG Minutes, Originals, 1971. Secret. The meeting was held in the White House Situation Room. In a briefing memorandum of May 10, Sonnenfeldt informed Kissinger: “*The main issues are:* (1) Can we continue to hold the position that a ‘satisfactory’ Berlin settlement is the precondition to a Conference on European Security? (2) Assuming our conditions are met, what are our objectives in a CES, or in any other East-West negotiations such as MBFR. (3) What steps are needed now and after the Lisbon meeting to move toward the kind of negotiations that would be most in our interest. (4) In light of the preceding considerations how do we handle *current tactical issues*, of which the main ones are (a) how specific a signal to give on MBFR negotiations, (b) the linkage, if any, between negotiations on MBFR and multilateral exploratory talks leading to CES; (c) whether to press the concept of establishing East-West machinery as one result of a CES; and (d) how to handle issues on the current putative CES agenda.” (Ibid., Box H-057, SRG Meeting on NSSM 121, NATO, 5/14/71)

Mr. Kissinger: The principal purpose of this meeting is to go over the issues which will come up at the NATO meeting and to decide whether an NSC meeting is necessary.

Mr. Johnson: We have no differences on the issues.

Mr. Kissinger: I see no major issues. I originally thought we would need an NSC meeting but it now appears we can handle it in a memo to the President.

Mr. Helms: The issue is pretty thin for an NSC meeting.

Mr. Kissinger: We also have Brezhnev's statement on MBFR.² Are our allies reasonably content with our position that a satisfactory Berlin agreement is a precondition for a Conference on European Security? Is there any pressure to break the linkage, particularly since there has been no obvious progress on Berlin?³ When are they meeting next?

Mr. Springsteen: They are meeting in London Monday and Tuesday.⁴

Mr. Kissinger: And our position will be to maintain the linkage between Berlin and CES. Do we expect any challenge?

Mr. Springsteen: No. The only cloud on the horizon is the confusion over what went on with regard to CES when Schumann went to Moscow.⁵ We do not have a full reading on his conversations, but we do have two conflicting press versions—one saying he maintained the linkage and another indicating that he did not. It's probable that Schumann said more to the press than he did to Gromyko. We think the linkage will prevail, however.

Mr. Kissinger: There would be a problem if an agreement were reached on Berlin and the eastern treaties should fail in the German Parliament. Barzel⁶ has told me he would vote against a treaty. What about the other condition—that "other on-going talks" were proceeding favorably. I'm not sure what that means.

Mr. Springsteen: Before the NATO Ministerial meeting last December the Germans said there could be no CES without a satisfactory outcome on Berlin and in the inter-German talks. Harmel added "other

² See Document 49.

³ In his memorandum to Kissinger, Sonnenfeldt stated: "NATO's position is that a 'satisfactory conclusion' of the Berlin talks is a *precondition to moving into multilateral exploratory talks on CES*. All of the *Allies are currently content* with this linkage, but there is some restiveness over the possibility of prolonged Berlin negotiations or failure." Sonnenfeldt added: "It would seem to be clearly in our interest to strengthen or at least hold the line, since we *gain some leverage in the Berlin talks* from the apparent Soviet desire for a CES."

⁴ May 17–18.

⁵ Schumann visited Moscow on May 7.

⁶ Rainer Barzel, chairman of the opposition CDU/CSU faction in the West German Parliament, the Bundestag.

on-going talks” to the Berlin condition to head off a more specific condition from the Germans. There is a split within NATO on this. Some people want to get rid of the condition, or convert it to language on the “general atmosphere.” We think there is some merit to keeping the present wording, since removing or changing it could be interpreted as a signal of some sort. We won’t take the lead on this, though.

Mr. Johnson: Could they think it refers to SALT?

Mr. Springsteen: We have clearly indicated that it is *not* SALT.

Mr. Helms: Then it’s a mystery as to what it does refer to.

Mr. Kissinger: If it’s not SALT and if the internal German issue is wrapped up, who else is negotiating?

Mr. Johnson: It has no meaning.

Mr. Kissinger: It may have some advantage in keeping the Russians on their toes. Am I correct in saying that we don’t know to what it refers, but if someone proposes that we drop it, we won’t oppose it?

Gen. Lobdell: By leaving Berlin as the only precondition, are we putting pressure on the quadripartite powers to bring Berlin to a conclusion?

Mr. Kissinger: The biggest pressure on this comes from the Germans, not the allies. Would we apply this to the preliminary discussions of the Ambassadors in Helsinki—that there would be no discussion of CES before a Berlin agreement?

Mr. Springsteen: Yes.

Mr. Kissinger: Assuming Berlin is out of the way and we are moving toward a CES, do we know what we want to accomplish?⁷ There are two issues: (reading from Mr. Sonnenfeldt’s memo)

—“the principles which should govern relations between states, including renunciation of forces;

—the development of international relations with a view to contributing to the freer movement of people, ideas and information and to developing cooperation in the cultural, economic, technical and scientific fields as well as in the field of human environment.”

⁷ Sonnenfeldt wrote in his May 10 memorandum: “There is widespread Allied acceptance of a ‘hortatory’ CES that will be largely devoid of substance. If we wish to shift to a more substantive concept and approach, we probably have to begin to do so at the Lisbon meeting and continue hereafter. Otherwise, we will continue drifting to a Conference that will yield high dividends to the Soviets and produce almost meaningless atmospherics for us. —The Allied attitude is that a conference is ‘inevitable,’ depends only on a Berlin settlement, would serve a useful purpose in domestic terms, would be useful in reducing tensions, and consequently, the range of issues will necessarily be narrow.”

Since we won't go to a conference such as this to attack the Soviets, isn't it a meaningless psychological exercise?⁸ Won't it make it harder to make progress in NATO?

Mr. Springsteen: There is a risk that it might create a state of euphoria which would make holding the allies together that much more difficult.

Mr. Kissinger: There are a number of things we could do. We could make it a damage limiting operation; we could try for a series of conferences on specific items; or we could take it more seriously and wrap it up with MBFR, which is the only real issue.⁹

Mr. Johnson: The Soviet concept is that the Ministers get together, say nice nothings and appoint sub-groups to do any work.

Mr. Springsteen: That's the French position on procedure. The Soviet desires are clear. They want a renunciation of force agreement, recognition of the status quo in Europe, an opening wedge for increasing economic and cultural contacts with the West, and creation of a sense of euphoria for what divisive effect it can have.

Mr. Kissinger: I don't see this as a major issue now, but we need to know what strategy we want to pursue on CES. Let's ask the IG to do a paper taking another look at CES in the light of the Soviet Party Congress.

⁸ In his May 10 memorandum, Sonnenfeldt wrote to Kissinger regarding the two potential issues at a CES: "*As you can see this approach would probably be a disaster. Principles governing state relations can either be an affirmation of the political/territorial status quo, or, as currently viewed in some NATO quarters, as means of belaboring the Soviets for Czechoslovakia. Almost certainly the Allies will not go to a conference to assault the Soviets, so we will end up with the slightly disguised non-aggression type declaration. As for the other issues—economic, cultural, environment, freer movement—they are only marginally related to European Security. We, of course, cannot oppose them; indeed, we are the leaders in promoting the 'freer movement' idea. But these questions simply conceal the fact that there is no substance to a CES.*"

⁹ Sonnenfeldt listed three "broad choices" for CES in his May 10 memorandum. The first choice, he wrote, was "*A damage limiting operation: Largely proceeding on the present path, recognizing the vapid content of a CES, and trying to avoid further meetings or concessions to the Soviets. It may be that this is all that we can reasonably expect or hope for, given the European mood. An attempt to add more hard substance could cause major problems, if interpreted in the Alliance as a US effort to block the actual conference.*" He continued: "*2. Alternatively, we could try to narrow any conference or series of conferences to specific items such as cultural exchanges, or a conference solely on economic relations, or a conference only to launch MBFR, etc.*" As a third option, he wrote: "*Finally, we could take the affair of the conference more seriously, and try to build into the Allied preparations some more substance related to security.*" Sonnenfeldt suggested that "*we could take the position that in any such conference it had to deal with the issues of military security. This would mean linking the MBFR issue to CES, perhaps as the initial order of business (more on this below). It would also mean that the declaration of 'principles,' etc., should include some concrete measures, perhaps in the field of constraints on troop movements, maneuvers, observers—in this way using the declaration as part of the move to MBFR.*"

Mr. Johnson: Okay.

Mr. Kissinger: How about MBFR?

Mr. Johnson: We will have to take account of the Brezhnev statement. It will obviously be a subject of discussion at Lisbon. How do we handle it? We should do some probing—send our Ambassador in to find out what the statement means.

Mr. Springsteen: A possible scenario would be to discuss it with the allies in Brussels, while we probe bilaterally with the Russians to see what the statement means. Then we can develop a position that the Ministers can agree on as to how to handle the issue in the post-Lisbon period. The Russians are no more prepared than we are to negotiate on MBFR. Whatever emerges from Lisbon, we should probably intensify our efforts to find out what the Russians have in mind.

Mr. Kissinger: (to Mr. Farley) Weren't we going to brief NATO on MBFR?

Mr. Farley: The paper is being sanitized now for that purpose.

Mr. Kissinger: I think this is essential. We are light-years ahead of the Europeans in our thinking on this. How quickly can we do this?

Mr. Court: In about two weeks.

Mr. Kissinger: Let's push our own discussions so when the Soviets start pressing we'll be ready. Let's get a paper on what strategy we want to follow. Should that be done by the IG or by ACDA? Who would handle the negotiations? Let's ask the IG to do a paper on a negotiating scenario. We can't have all of Europe in the room. Who will do the negotiating. Would we negotiate simultaneously with SALT? What would the first meeting look like—would it be a meeting of principals?

Mr. Farley: We might consider a phased approach. Brezhnev is out ahead of us on this. He was much more pointed as to negotiations.

Mr. Kissinger: There would be no condition to an MBFR agreement?

Mr. Johnson: No.

Mr. Sonnenfeldt: There might be a problem with the GDR.

Mr. Springsteen: That would not be unmanageable. NATO will probably try to avoid the term "negotiations" and use "exploratory discussions."

Mr. Johnson: We have to get ourselves in position for this.

Mr. Kissinger: We need a position next week in connection with the Mansfield resolution. We have to answer those Senators—tell them we are ready to negotiate.

Mr. Helms: Damn right!!

Mr. Johnson: We can't appear any less ready than the Soviets.

Mr. Kissinger: How about the question of permanent East-West machinery?¹⁰

Mr. Johnson: We can make this part of the CES study.

Mr. Springsteen: The question has already come up. The British proposed permanent machinery as a substitute for CES. The Russians are talking in the context of CES. This could be one of the alternatives we might consider.

Mr. Kissinger: On the defense issues, these won't be coming up at this NATO meeting, will they? Are we agreed that we don't need an NSC meeting? If so, we will produce a memorandum for the President.

Gen. Lobdell: Could we consider this matter of "on-going talks" a little more?

Mr. Springsteen: That is not our phrase.

Mr. Kissinger: How can you give up something you can't define?

Capt. Kamorowski: That's the basis of many a love story.

Mr. Kissinger: What Department are you from?

Capt. Kamorowski: Department of Defense.

Mr. Johnson: That sounds like "make love, not war"!

¹⁰ Sonnenfeldt wrote in his May 10 memorandum the establishment of some permanent machinery "is an idea worth some US consideration (State has been opposed) to understand more thoroughly whether there is some advantage to it. Our main interest might be in using some organ to inhibit Soviet actions in East Europe. Admittedly, it would be a weak reed, but added to some arms control, collateral measures or MBFR, it could add some substance to the atmospherics of European security. *In short, should the US link into it more thoroughly? If not, we can probably scuttle it either at Lisbon or later. If we are interested, however, we could push it slightly at this meeting, and take it up inside our government and NATO in the next six months.*"

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

Washington, May 15, 1971.

SUBJECT

Brezhnev on Mutual Troop Reductions in Europe: Help in our fight against Mansfield Amendment,² but Problems Later

In a major speech in Soviet Georgia,³ Brezhnev went out of his way to emphasize Soviet readiness to begin negotiations over mutual troop reductions in Europe. This is a logical follow up to his Party Congress speech, which also mentioned mutual reductions of troops and armaments in Central Europe, but without specifying the previous Soviet condition that the issue had to be tied to the European Security Conference.⁴ Brezhnev's more forthright offer also seems to bear out my earlier speculation that after the Congress he would want to demonstrate some tangible results of his "peace program."

In noting speculation in the West about his Party Congress speech, Brezhnev said that Western spokesmen were asking "whose armed force—foreign or national—what armaments, nuclear or conventional, are to be reduced." He compared such speculation to a man who tries to judge the flavor of wine by its appearance without imbibing it.

Brezhnev's answer to this rather playful recitation was:

"you have to muster the resolve to try the proposals you are interested in according to its taste. *Translated into diplomatic language this means—to start negotiations.*"

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 715, Country Files, Europe, USSR, Vol. XIII. Secret. Sent for information. A notation on the memorandum reads: "The President has seen." Sonnenfeldt drafted the memorandum and forwarded it to Kissinger under a covering memorandum of May 14. (Ibid., NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-057, SRG Meeting, NSSM 121, NATO, 5/14/71)

² The Mansfield Resolution, drafted by Senator Michael Mansfield, called for a one-half reduction in the United States military presence in Europe. The Senate defeated the resolution 61–36 on May 19. (Kissinger, *White House Years*, p. 949) On November 23, the Senate voted 39–54 to reject an Appropriations Committee provision that limited the number of U.S. troops in Europe to 250,000 and called for the cessation of funds in excess of that limit by June 15, 1972. (*Congress and the Nation, 1969–1972*, Vol. III, pp. 214–215)

³ Brezhnev delivered the speech on May 13 in Tbilisi. (*Current Digest of the Soviet Press*, Vol. XXIII, No. 20 (June 15, 1971), p. 5)

⁴ In his speech on March 30, Brezhnev said: "We are for the dismantling of foreign military bases. We stand for the reduction of armed forces and armaments in areas where military confrontation is especially dangerous, above all in Central Europe." (Ibid., Vol. XXIII, No. 12 (April 20, 1971), p. 13)

While such a flat offer to negotiate is a windfall in terms of the debate in this country over the Mansfield Amendment, Brezhnev's main target may well be the NATO meeting in Lisbon. One of the issues at that meeting is how the Alliance should respond to Brezhnev's previous remarks. *This new speech will no doubt strengthen sentiment in Europe for a positive move toward early negotiations for mutual reductions.*

The major question is why, after considerable stalling on this issue, the Soviets seem ready to negotiate.

—It may be that there are genuine economic pressures resulting from the continuing buildup of Soviet forces in the Far East, which recent intelligence indicates is continuing.

—It could also be related to Czechoslovakia, and a Soviet desire to lower their profile there. In this regard the Soviet greetings to the Czech Party Congress noted that the situation has been "normalized"; such a claim could be a justification for some withdrawal of some Soviet forces there. Brezhnev may try to trade in any such withdrawal for Western cutbacks.

—The Soviets may be coming to see negotiations on force reductions as a way to get to their goal of a European Security Conference. The West has made progress on Berlin a precondition for such a conference but not for troop negotiations. Any such negotiations would almost certainly have to involve the GDR, a major Soviet goal in the European security conference proposal.

—Finally, the Soviets may be convinced that this is a serious Western offer, and see some advantage in exploiting the desire among all Europeans for reductions in military spending. As we move into the more intensive phase of improving the quality of NATO forces through the plans worked out last year, the prospect of negotiations on troop reductions with the Soviets could slow down or undermine the effort.⁵ This risk has always been inherent in the Alliance's dual approach to mutual force reductions, negotiations and improvement of forces.

In short, *Brezhnev's offer "to start negotiations" can be turned to our advantage in the next few days.* At the same time, it means that we may be entering the path of new negotiations, which our studies have shown could be turned against the Alliance, if not handled properly and with prudence.

⁵ Nixon underlined this sentence and wrote in the margin, "Probably a major factor in his move."

50. Conversation Among President Nixon, the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger), Secretary of Defense Laird, Acting Secretary of State Johnson, and the Republican Congressional Leadership¹

Washington, May 18, 1971, 8:02–9:02 a.m.

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

Nixon: So important to our negotiations on Mutual Force Reductions of course, which everybody's been talking about.

Johnson: Yeah.

Nixon: So that's another thing, which is down the road, the European Security Conference. Eventually there will be one. Eventually. We don't know when. Not in the immediate future, but we all assume that something will happen.

Johnson: And, it's all part of that. I think that's—

Nixon: Yes.

Johnson: You all know about Brezhnev's speech last Thursday.² Ambassador Beam went in to see Gromyko yesterday³ and questioned Gromyko about what was the meaning of that speech, and whether or not the Soviets were serious in wanting to go, move ahead with negotiations on Mutual Balanced Force Reductions that would involve not just Soviet [unclear] troops but troops on both sides.

Nixon: The whole of Eastern Europe.

Johnson: The whole Eastern Europe.

Nixon: Right.

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, White House Tapes, Conversation 58-1. No classification marking. The editors transcribed the portions of the tape recording printed here specifically for this volume. Attending the meeting from Congress were Robert Griffin (R-MI), Norris Cotton (R-NH), Peter Dominick (R-CO), Gerald Ford (R-MI), Leslie Arends (R-IL), John Anderson (R-CA), Barber Conable (R-NY), Richard Poff (R-VA), Bob Wilson (R-CA), John Rhodes (R-AZ), Robert Stafford (R-VT), H. Allen Smith (R-CA), and Robert Dole (R-KS). Also attending were Peter Peterson, Shultz, Ehrlichman, MacGregor, Timmons, Dent, Ziegler, Harlow, and LeBieu. The conversation took place in the Cabinet Room.

² See Document 49.

³ Telegram 3243 from Moscow, May 17, contains an account of the discussion. (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 715, Country Files, Europe, USSR, Vol. XIII) For a summary of the discussion, see Document 54.

Johnson: And Gromyko's answer was affirmative, that they're prepared to do so. And, they're prepared to do so outside of, the interesting thing, outside of the conference on European security.⁴

Nixon: Hmm.

Johnson: They're prepared to do so—

Nixon: Bilaterally?

Johnson: Bilaterally between NATO and Warsaw. Presumably they, we didn't get into specifics.

Nixon: I see.

Johnson: But he confirmed that they were looking to do so outside of a conference on European security and before a conference on European security. This is a very significant lift, I think. And—

Nixon: Before taking up the whole complex of issues—

Johnson: The whole complex of issues.

Nixon: Take this particular issue and they'll sort it out.

Johnson: He seemed to indicate this. Like most public statements, it's, there're ambiguities of course and, but this—

Nixon: —is quite normal with ours, too. [laughter]

Johnson: And, so we made the statement last night on this. Just to summarize the facts. I didn't see the *New York Times* this morning. Chalmers Roberts at the *Post* has a bit of summary of this for those of you who are interested.⁵ The next step of course, we will be talking to our, in the NATO Council on this during the course of this weekend. And then Secretary Rogers and Secretary Laird will be taking this up at the Lisbon meeting next month, in the early part of June. So, now of all times, we've got the Soviets moving towards talking about a mutual reduction. It's, in our view, clearly not the time to do anything unilaterally.

⁴ Telegram 3243 from Moscow reported that Gromyko said "the question of force reductions deserved serious attention. With respect to the Rome proposals [of NATO], Moscow proceeded from the assumption that the West had once posed the question in the context of a CES. While the USSR deemed it a positive fact that NATO had referred favorably to a CES, Gromyko said they had expressed the view that discussion of this question at a CES, at least at the first meeting, would complicate the situation and put too heavy a burden on the conference. Therefore, the Soviets posed the question in terms of the possible reduction of foreign forces in Europe. This is simpler way. It could be done by a special body of the CES or in any other forum. If the Western powers agree that the question should be examined outside a CES, this would be much simpler and more productive."

⁵ Roberts reported that Gromyko in his meeting with Beam on May 17 "offered to separate talks on cutting East-West military forces and armaments from the Kremlin's long-sought European security conference." See "Soviets Offer to Separate Troop Talks," *Washington Post*, May 18, 1971, p. A1.

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

[Unknown participant]: Mr. President, what's the significance of the Brezhnev statement that seems incredible to me and, as I see it, he made it and the timing was completely amazing.

Laird: Well, it was really a follow up of his March 30th statement before the Party Congress.⁶ He merely enlarged on that statement in the Georgia speech. Because, that statement that he made on March 30th was really the first indication of a response to the NATO Council's statement of last December.

Johnson: We've been, for three years we have been pushing. We, ourselves, the United States, and NATO have been trying to, been pushing on the discussions of what we call MBFR—Mutual Balanced Force Reductions. And this March 30 speech of Brezhnev was the first breakthrough I'd say we've had. And this Georgia speech last Thursday was, as Mel says, it was an enlargement on this. Now, why, don't ask me why, the Soviets do things. I understand that there's some who are tending to give us a little credit for that speech. We could take some—[laughter]

Nixon: Yeah.

Laird: All right. Well, I think—I think it'd be very helpful. I think it may be helpful now but we have to be careful about what it means too because it could be an effort to stampede us into this thing. And I think we want to be very careful about how we interpret it. It may help us campaign up at the Congress.

[Unknown participant]: Yes.

Laird: So we can look at it squarely on that basis.

Nixon: Well, it could be a, first burst of the idea. I know something, I mean, Mike [Mansfield] said that we pulled that just at the right time. [laughter] We got influences some places but I'm afraid not in that one at the moment. But, what I think is, what I think, I think Mel is, with his usual, waiting to see what's going on. To me, [unclear]. It isn't just a, I don't think Brezhnev's speech was really directed towards what's going on in the Senate.

[Unknown participant]: No.

Nixon: They actually follow this and so forth. It's like the, despite Stu Symington's, Bill Fulbright's suggestion that it's really the Congress that brought all this about. He didn't agree, but he didn't seem to totally [unclear] the situation. But nevertheless, what is also quite right, see, Brezhnev's speech moved in this direction. With the NATO meeting coming up in a couple of weeks, it could well have been that it was sort of directed toward that, if it was directed toward anything.

⁶ See footnote 4, Document 49.

The idea being that we, that they fake it. We get the impression that, well, if they're going to do down, why don't we.

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

Nixon: Now here with this one, I think that really they are trying to upset, I do not, let me put, putting it all in its fairest context, I think we could say, and I think Alex would agree, I think we could say that the Soviet, at this time, very well may want, in previous years they may have used: "Well, let's reduce our forces and so forth," for the purpose simply of disintegrating in Europe the Alliance. But at the present time, they may well want to reduce the burden that they have with their danger to the West, because if they look, if they see from the East. It may be that there are other reasons that they want to. They may also have budget problems as we see, but they do have a problem with regard to their flat economy over the past four or five years. But whatever the race, reason may be, all based on the track record, there has never been an instance where the Soviet actually asked to either reduce its force levels or reduce a weapons system or not go forward with a weapons system, lacking a direct reciprocal deal. That's really what it gets down to. And so, in our case, here, I think we should take the Brezhnev speech on face value. I think there may be, we don't know [unclear]. But he has come out and in his speech, to the Party Congress, it [unclear] use the term "conciliatory." At least was, well, it was not conciliatory, if you read what it was really saying in terms of some of the demands and so forth. It was one that was the least inflammatory by far of any speech ever made by a Soviet leader, including even Khrushchev's speech on peaceful competition. Now, what does that mean? What it may mean to us, and only time will tell, is that the Soviet, for reasons that have nothing to do with their believing that we in good faith want to do this or that, or that the Europeans no longer threaten, or this or that. They aren't worried about that. And they don't think that we threaten. It may be that the Soviet, because of their internal problems on their economy, because of the problems they have in Eastern Europe which are quite significant. We don't know how much. You remember the German riots⁷ and so forth and so on, and over a period of time. And because of their problems in the East vis-à-vis the Chinese, they may look at their situation in the West and say this is the time when we can, on a reciprocal basis, perhaps reduce the level of tension here. Reduce the level of forces. Reduce the cost to us. And, now, if for their reasons, they want to do that, and we want to for our reasons, then we're in a very, it seems to me, strategic position at this point. But we must not, we must not assume, I mean the

⁷ Nixon is apparently referring to the June 1953 uprising in East Germany.

greatest danger would be to assume that the way to get that, to reciprocate, would be for us to prove our good faith by going first. The moment we do that, then forget it. That means it's over.

Johnson: Yeah. We have no basis for negotiation.

Dole: Mr. President, in addition to the Mansfield Amendment there're about three or four substitutes floating around which may be as harmful as the Mansfield Amendment. I've been out of town the last few days but I read about it in the paper. [laughter] And—

Nixon: We weren't referring to you a moment ago. [laughter]

Dole: But, I understand that, I assume we're opposed to any of the substitutes. Is that right, Mel?

Laird: Absolutely.

Dole: [unclear] says we don't, if they don't [unclear].

[Unknown participant]: Probably the one that may be the most difficult is the new Mathias Amendment as of yesterday which is cosponsored by [Jacob] Javits, [Hubert] Humphrey, and [unclear]. It just says that, "The Congress renews its support for the North Atlantic Alliance, reaffirms the policy of the United States with full partnership in defense of Europe, and the President's request to enter in the negotiations within the NATO framework to achieve Mutual and Balanced Force Reductions in Europe between NATO and Warsaw Pact forces. The President requests, in addition to regular consultations, to negotiate within NATO on the reduction of U.S. forces while financial arrangements, which remain in Europe, consist of a balance of payment situation in the United States. And then he'll report to the Congress on September 5, 1971, nearly six months hereafter, on the project's success." That one of course is—

Nixon: [unclear].

[Unknown participant]: [unclear].

Laird: Well, that's the Humphrey—

[Unknown participant]: This is a side Humphrey has.

[Unknown participant]: Humphrey may not put his name on it much.

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

Nixon: As far as Europe is concerned, what we are doing there is to, we already prevailed upon the Europeans to take a far greater responsibility in terms of their own defense. Upgrading their forces and so forth, which is very important in terms of getting a good bargaining position for the Mutual Balanced Force Reduction. Now let's look at the Soviet thing. The, it's rather interesting to me that the Senate has finally discovered that for the past two years, ever since we've been in, we've been talking to the Soviets about this. We've been talking to

them through State Department channels, through other channels and so forth. We are ready. The Europeans certainly are going to be ready. You can be sure that every possible effort is going to be made, one, in conjunction with our NATO allies to get them to assume more of the burden for their own defense. And second, every possible effort, having done that with our NATO allies, is being made to, from that position of strength, to develop the modalities of the possible negotiation with the Soviet. And it will come. I'm convinced it's going to come. The question is, is it in the national interest to have on our part, on the part of our government [unclear]. We won't be keeping any of this secret. We won't. Nothing is secret when going to the NATO conference. It all leaks out. Very little is secret when you talk with the Russians. But on the other hand, is it really in our interest to come back every six months to the Senate of the United States and to report that the Soviet says nothing? You report about, when you talk to our NATO allies and they fail to do this and they tell you what we've done. Is that really in our interest? The way to do it? In other words, the real question: Do you want it done or do you want to have it talked about? Henry, you want to say about—

Kissinger: Actually, the Mathias Amendment asked us to do that and in defense of MBFR, to negotiate with the Europeans to reduce our forces and then to report every six months about that. Anyone who has worked with the Europeans knows that the most important way we can get them to do more and maintain our relationship is to give them some sense of stability. If they are told that it is the policy of the United States to reduce its forces and to negotiate them in front of it and to report back to the Congress every six months on unilateral reduction, which is the second part of this, any possibility for a stable NATO policy is down the drain. And therefore, the difference between that and Mansfield is really only the difference in numbers. It's that they don't give a number. It's a [unclear] with apparently additional disadvantages but there's one, some turmoil because we're under the gun every six months to report about unilateral reductions. What we have been trying to do in this administration is to get away with talking with the Europeans. When you were over there, you said, we don't want these forces there just for political and symbolic reasons. We want them to make sense. We've got them to address the question of what makes sense. We've got them to put more money into it. If now we have the charter, not what makes sense but how can we reduce unilaterally, I think that whole policy will be in severe jeopardy. That is the part of the Mathias resolution that's going to give us even more trouble than the one of reporting every six months about the negotiations with the Russians, which is also—

[unclear]

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

[Unknown participant]: Do you want to put yourself in the position, Mr. President, if the Senate then adopts the Mathias substitute, of having it be interpreted as a defeat for the administration? Seems to me it could be a victory for the administration. And then, in conference taken out. Take out the report requirement.

Nixon: No they, it would be if it were, except for the interpretation I think we have to put on it in terms of the Mathias Amendment. Apart from it, it'd be a victory for the administration, it would raise havoc in our relations with the Europeans, and would be, in my opinion, it would be seriously detrimental to our long range objective of getting a mutual force reduction with the Russians. Now if that's what the Senate wants, let them [unclear] the Mathias Amendment. But it's cold turkey. As far as we're concerned, we're against it. We have to be against it. I can understand individual senators reaching different conclusions but we can't. We can't. But we could talk about this [unclear]. If you get down to the tactics of what is it that we, what is a victory for the administration, I agree. Well, we got Mathias and that isn't as bad as Mansfield. But you look at Mathias and what it does in terms of our overall bargaining position. Our bargaining position within NATO. Our bargaining position vis-à-vis the Soviet. And however we interpret it here, in the day-to-day battle of confidence and all the rest, the Mathias Amendment would have a very detrimental effect in our relations within NATO and also looking down the road in the bigger game, the bigger game further down the road, the dealing with the Soviet. I don't know. What's your—?

[Unknown participant]: Oh, I entirely agree Mr. President. Entirely agree. Yes. Yes.

51. **Conversation Among President Nixon, Secretary of Defense Laird, and the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)¹**

Washington, May 19, 1971, 2:10–2:56 p.m.

Laird: There are several things that I did want to bring up [unclear]. I'm going to be meeting, as I told Henry, on Saturday for the Defense Planning Committee meeting—

Nixon: NATO.

Laird: —NATO, with all the Defense Ministers, and also the Nuclear Planning Group.² And those will be going on for four days, two at each. Two at Brussels and two in Germany. Saturday, I'm coming back to meet with a group of cabinet administrators from all over Europe. But it's a personal sort of a thing. They're all former parliamentarians who were friends over a long period of time. And we had a prayer group—

Nixon: —Where will that be?

Laird: And that will be in France. It's going to be out in the country in France, it's just a day meeting. People like Harmel and Helmut Schmidt. And one of the subjects we're talking about is what we can do in the field of curtailing violence, and there are other topics. It doesn't have anything to do—

Nixon: —Good. Excellent.

Laird: But it's just a talk sort of a thing. So I'll be there one day, and that will be next Saturday, and then I will be home next Saturday night. But there are, this is a rather important time to be meeting with all these people, with what's been going on in the last week or so over here. And I think we can give them certain assurances [unclear] a great deal of turbulence as far as—

Nixon: —I think so.

Laird: —And they will want to go forward with discussions on how you will proceed with the Mutual and Balanced Forced Reduction,

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, White House Tapes, Conversation 501–18. No classification marking. The conversation took place in the Oval Office. The editors transcribed the portions of the tape recording printed here specifically for this volume.

² The NATO Nuclear Planning Group met May 25–27 in Mittenwald, Germany. On May 28, Sonnenfeldt summarized the main points that Laird made with Carrington, Schmidt, and Brosio: "We are determined to maintain our NATO commitments, despite the Mansfield amendment," and "the US wanted to go slow on MBFR; our studies would be available to NATO by late July after an NSC meeting in late June. We should explore bilaterally for now; the Europeans should not be discouraged (Carrington and Schmidt) by the atmospherics of détente; it was more important than ever to maintain a strong Western position." (Ibid., NSC Files, Box 227, Agency Files, Defense, Vol. XII)

especially. And they want to take a position to recommend to the Council meeting, which comes the next week. Make a recommendation. And I think we can lead that to the point, take these models that they're using and they're in NATO and the fact that we have a better study going on here,³ which we will share with them and we will be ready to share with them, maybe by the first of July.

Kissinger: That's really essential, Mr. President, because what they've got is so superficial.

Laird: Right.

Kissinger: And also, our experience in SALT really shows that when we do it on a well-prepared basis, we didn't stampede into those talks after a lot of pressure. And we've got a really first-class study. A lot of it was done by Mel's shop, which we're now sanitizing. And it's, that would be the basis of the Alliance position, which we'd be a hell of a lot better off than the superficial work they've done.

Nixon: Sure.

Laird: And that's my point here, Henry, that I make to you, that I want to stress the idea of not stampeding ahead on this thing, because some of them really want a [unclear].

Nixon: Brezhnev is clever, clever. Kosygin [unclear] the other side [unclear]. You go first, boys, the hell with their issues, it would be very different. We can get some sort of agreement at some time with the Soviet, Warsaw Pact, but only on the basis of, well, we both have our forces and we intend to continue them until we get an agreement. You're not going to do it by either side going first with some half-assed, either unilateral action or some jackass statement. Either one, right? We've got to control the game, in other words. That's what it really gets down to. The Soviet will control their game, that's for sure.

Laird: Well, and I think it's important not to get tied up in the context of the European security conference. And I think that, Henry and I have talked about that.

Nixon: What about that? I noticed that briefing paper this morning⁴ we should, what do the Europeans want? Are they trying to tie it up or separate it?

Laird: Some of them will want to tie it up with it. But I think that we can—

Nixon: —What should we want?

³ Reference is to the evaluation report, "Mutual and Balanced Force Reductions Between NATO and the Warsaw Pact," April 12. For discussion of the evaluation report and the decision to sanitize it for presentation to NATO, see Document 47.

⁴ Reference is to Kissinger's daily briefing memorandum for the President of May 19. (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 33, President's Daily Briefs, May 17–31, 1971)

Kissinger: Mr. President, it's strongly in our interest not to tie it up with the European security conference. The Soviets are eager to get a European security conference, we can sell it to them separately. A European security conference also is going to have the most vapid sort of generalities, which will then be used to undercut the whole NATO effort. And it's in our interest to get the Russians to negotiate something concretely, like force reductions rather than trade and cultural things and that sort of—

Nixon: —Good point.

Laird: It really is important—

Nixon: —In another word, you have in mind that the, what would be the format of such negotiations we're talking about? How would it, how would it be done? How do we see the picture? You've got to have a conference in order to negotiate.

Kissinger: Well, I think we ought to do it the way we did it on SALT. We ought to express a general readiness, then we ought to find a negotiating forum. I don't think we'll be ready to talk much before fall. Then we also have—

Nixon: Do you agree, Mel?

Kissinger: Then we ought to have a—

Laird: —We won't be ready.

Nixon: The thing is, though, let's be sure that both Mel and Bill⁵ take that position with these people when they go to Europe, because I think the Europeans, particularly after this announcement tomorrow,⁶ they're all going to say, "Well now, what the hell?" Let's get—

Kissinger: —Well, I'm not so sure, Mr. President.

⁵ Secretary of State Rogers.

⁶ On May 20, Nixon announced an understanding between the United States and the Soviet Union to work to conclude a strategic arms limitation agreement (SALT) by the end of the year. For the text of Nixon's remarks, see *Public Papers: Nixon, 1971*, p. 648. Nixon expressed his concern again about the European reaction to the SALT announcement in the context of MBFR in a conversation later in the evening on May 19 with Kissinger, Scali, and Haldeman: Kissinger: "In the first press conference, I won't use the word 'linkage,' but I'll say, 'The President has consistently taken the position that success and progress in one negotiation is bound to improve prospects in other negotiations. This is particularly true when the fields are so related as they are with Mutual Force Reductions and SALT, both of which are in the arms control field. So if we can make progress in that field, we think that this will create a good basis.'" Nixon: "What does that do now, Henry, to NATO?" Nixon continued: "Does that shake the hell out of them?" Kissinger: "What, the agreement? If you don't make it sound as if a condominium is starting between the Soviets and us." Nixon: "Right." (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, White House Tapes, Oval Office, Conversation 501–29)

Nixon: They may panic.

Kissinger: I'm not so sure because the Europeans were for this force reduction idea as a way of keeping our forces there, figuring that the negotiations wouldn't get anywhere. That's why they, many of them came around to it.

Nixon: Negotiation of what?

Kissinger: The Euro—

Laird: —The force reduction. They—

Nixon: —No, no. I am talking about after the announcement on SALT tomorrow.

Kissinger: Oh.

Nixon: Now anything is possible with the Russians, get my point?

Kissinger: The Russians, I don't read the Gromyko thing as if they're ready to negotiate.

Nixon: The Kosygin?

Kissinger: The Gromyko–Beam conversation.⁷

Nixon: Well—

Kissinger: So, let, all they're left at is let's both review our positions.

Nixon: Well, Kosygin made some statement with—

Kissinger: —Well—

Nixon: —that asshole Trudeau.⁸

Kissinger: But my guess is if we meet in September and have the first session the way we did it on SALT, on principle, and then—

Nixon: —Now when you say, "We'd be," who's "we"?

Kissinger: Well—

Nixon: The Europeans meet first for a private meeting?

Laird: Well I think there should be meetings between the U.S. and the Russians first before you go to a Warsaw Pact–NATO meeting.

⁷ See Document 54.

⁸ Kosygin visited Canada October 17–26; at the end of his visit, he and Prime Minister Trudeau issued a joint communiqué that Canada and the Soviet Union "declared themselves in favor of a properly-prepared conference on security and cooperation in Europe with the participation of all European states, Canada, and the United States." With regard to balanced force reductions, the statement reads: "Since the military confrontation in central Europe is particularly dangerous, it was agreed that early steps should be taken to seek a general agreement on the mutual reduction of armed forces and armaments in that area without detriment to the participating states." (*Keesing's Contemporary Archives*, 1971–1972, p. 24948–24949)

Nixon: I see.

Laird: That meeting will be to carry on the same kind of consultations—

Kissinger: We need June to work out before, there's a trip before. Because we've got every ally there.

Laird: Yeah.

Kissinger: You're going to have the damndest gap—

[unclear exchange]

Nixon: [unclear] is what do we do? What are you going to say?

Laird: Well, I'm going to say that we have this study going—

Nixon: I think you ought to say it, you and Bill, you both should use the same line.

Laird: It's most important that we'll share this study with them in July.

Kissinger: In June. In July—yes.

Laird: Well, I'd like to put it out in July—

Kissinger: In July. July, no you're right.

Nixon: The more you can put off anything the better.

Laird: Yeah [unclear]. This study will be in July.

Nixon: Cause also, I think you need that much time.

Laird: Sure. Then we can lay that before them at that time, and that's the only thing that will take place, we'll share any discussions we have at this point. We can work out our [unclear] and our negotiating position at that time. They've got to see the study. They've got to see the study. The problem is that they're going to run into this thing. They're going to, some people will try to stampede at you in Lisbon. If we can get the Defense Ministers to stand pat [unclear] just to stampede [unclear] Lisbon.

Kissinger: I'll talk to Bill also.

Laird: I just felt—

Nixon: —When do you leave? When do you leave?

Laird: I'm going to leave Saturday. See, I don't have much time.

Nixon: When does the, yeah.

Laird: And Bill will leave the day that I get back.

Nixon: Oh.

Laird: I'm not going to go to Lisbon. I don't believe I should be gone, see. I told Bill that I could not go to Lisbon because—

Nixon: When does Bill go? And I think we better get, I better talk to Bill before—

Laird: This Sunday?

Kissinger: A week from Sunday.

Nixon: Oh, yeah.

Kissinger: So we have the whole week next week.

Laird: We've got all next week, but he's in Toronto [unclear].

Kissinger: But luckily, however, [unclear] Bill.

Laird: But I can see no reason for my going to Lisbon, because that's another weekend with all these [unclear].

Nixon: It seems to me you ought to go [unclear] talk to Bill as to what you're constantly talking about, so that he'll know. Next week, we'll be sure that we're all on the same wavelength. You feel that we ought to wait till July, right?

Laird: Well, I'll talk to him before I go.

Nixon: Right. And the line you'll take is July is the, that you'll try to keep the Europeans from going off or anything weird. [unclear] right, and that's the way to get a deal, too.

Laird: And I don't think it should come down to, for sure, as to the method of the kind of negotiations, whether it should be strictly Warsaw–NATO context. We shouldn't agree on that now.

Kissinger: We should decide that in June.

Laird: Right.

Nixon: Yeah, but if they raise the European security conference between [unclear] that should be recommended for everything.

Kissinger: And the Russians are not all that eager to link the two for some—

Laird: They weren't for a while.

Kissinger: But now they are.

Laird: They've backed away from it now.

[Omitted here is discussion of matters unrelated to the European security conference or MBFR.]

52. Memorandum From K. Wayne Smith and Helmut Sonnenfeldt of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)¹

Washington, May 21, 1971.

SUBJECT

U.S. Position on MBFR: Proposed NSDM

The events of the past two weeks undoubtedly have created the expectation within the U.S. bureaucracy, the Congress and NATO that we will now take a vigorous lead in moving the alliance into "Mutual and Balanced Force Reductions" in Europe. The Soviets (and Mansfield) have put the ball squarely in our court.

The problem is that we have no agreement within the U.S. Government—much less with our allies—concerning either what kinds of possible elements of a "MBFR" we are most interested in pursuing nor the procedural approach to be taken leading up to or in negotiations.

The Substantive Problem

As you know, the variables—and the possible focus of an eventual MBFR—are far more numerous than the ones which we faced in SALT. Among them are:

- The geographical areas for MBFR;
- The participants (e.g., all NATO, all Pact members, or selected countries);
- The question of whether to reduce both "foreign" or "stationed" forces or only one of them;
- The variety of force components, including ban on conventional and nuclear forces, both manpower and equipment, and both active and reserve or cadre units;
- How deep to cut, and the phasing of reductions;
- The formality of the agreement and its post reduction features.

In order to surface the substantive strategic arms control and verification issues, both we and NATO have concentrated our analysis on fairly comprehensive MBFR approaches, involving detailed reduction models which:

- Imply formal bloc to bloc agreements;
- Involve most or all of the nations with forces in the European Central Region;
- Involve detailed verification.

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 261, NATO, Vol. X, Part 2. Secret; Sensitive. Sent for urgent action.

However, it is also possible to envision (although not necessarily desirable to negotiate) an MBFR which was limited to Soviet and U.S. forces at least as the first step. This could be negotiated formally by the two countries alone and reduced to paper, or could be achieved by “mutual example” parallel steps. Of course, we would be obliged to obtain the consent of our allies for such an approach.

The point is that we and our allies need to narrow the range of variables considerably before we get into negotiations with the other side. The progress report you requested on our MBFR preparations is enclosed at Tab C.²

The Operational Problem

The most immediate operational problem which we face is that State and Defense may be converging on a “game plan” for the NATO Ministerials which would unduly restrict the President’s choices. At Tab B³ is a draft of a Defense Department paper, prepared for Secretary Laird, after seeing the President, which recommends that he:

—“Interject” MBFR into the discussion at the Defense Planning Council in Brussels on May 28 (it is now only on the agenda of the NAC in Lisbon the following week); (This procedure would scrub the French who are not in the DPC).

—Declare that the U.S. “would be agreeable to multilateral exploratory talks on MBFR in the near future if the allies felt this was in the best interests of NATO.”

Meanwhile, State is preparing an IG–EUR paper for the President outlining several optional ways of handling MBFR at the Ministerial and thereafter. Although the paper is not yet available, it apparently will also stress *early multilateralization of MBFR exploratory talks with the Warsaw Pact*.

There are two dangers inherent in this approach:

1. It focuses on procedures, ignoring substantive issues which should be decided, before even exploratory talks are started. Some of these issues may best be decided after further bilateral and/or multi-

² In Tab C, an attached memorandum from Smith to Kissinger, May 21, Smith noted that the agencies had “prepared a ‘sanitized’ version of our analysis and evaluation of MBFR approaches for presentation to the North Atlantic Council”; “further developed the military analysis of MBFR to include non-simultaneous mobilization scenarios”; and “prepared a detailed formulation of six options embodying the symmetrical, asymmetrical and mixed package approaches to MBFR.” The JCS, Smith noted, was “balky” about presenting the sanitized analysis to NATO and was engaging in “a stalling tactic.” “I strongly urge,” Smith wrote, “that the available paper be sent to NATO when the time comes, any JCS objections notwithstanding.”

³ Tab B, an undated memorandum received on May 19 in the White House Situation Room, is attached but not printed.

lateral talks with the Warsaw Pact *but it is essential that the issues be surfaced and examined within the U.S. Government before an intensive round of talks (bilateral or multilateral) is launched.*

2. It involves substantive issues but does not face up to them. For example, multilateral MBFR talks would raise the problem of East German participation. The effect would be to undermine our position in the Berlin talks.

[There may be ways around this problem—e.g., a conference of MBFR “experts” or designation of one individual or nation, such as the British, as the agent of the alliance. But the issue needs to be squarely faced.]⁴

These issues should have been aired before the principals depart for the NATO Ministerials. Unfortunately, the first available forum already on the NSC schedule is the DPRC meeting set for Tuesday, May 25. At that time, Secretary Laird will already be in Europe for the NPG meeting which precedes the DPC. The only way to slow down this process is either: (a) unilaterally issue a NSDM; or (b) wait for the State paper and issue guidance. The latter, however, will probably leave the field to Secretary Laird for the next week.

Given the extreme difficulties that may be unnecessarily created by these agency activities and the real need to deal with the Brezhnev initiative and protect our Congressional flank, we recommend that you issue a NSDM stating the present U.S. position on MBFR and setting the stage for Presidential consideration of the issues prior to any further commitment by the agencies.

The NSDM at Tab A⁵ directs that:

—The U.S. supports accelerated substantive preparations within NATO and will make a contribution (the sanitized NSSM-92).⁶

—We will encourage bilateral, but *not* multilateral contacts on MBFR; such contacts will deal with the modalities of negotiations but not their substance.

—We will support, as the President indicated in his Foreign Policy Report, a first phase of MBFR devoted to an examination of principles, rather than exchange of concrete proposals.

—The Agencies will complete for the Verification Panel a study of options and related substantive issues by June 21.

—We prefer to separate MBFR from CES.

Recommendation

That you sign the NSDM at Tab A.

⁴ Brackets are in the original.

⁵ Tab A as signed is Document 53.

⁶ Document 21.

53. National Security Decision Memorandum 108¹

Washington, May 21, 1971.

TO

The Secretary of State
The Secretary of Defense

SUBJECT

Guidance on Mutual and Balanced Force Reductions

After studying the proposed “game plan” for MBFR submitted by the Secretary of Defense,² the President has directed that the following guidance will be used for dealing with issues related to Mutual and Balanced Force Reductions.

We should urge the Allies to accelerate substantive preparations with particular attention at this stage to the full range of possible elements of a Mutual and Balanced Force Reduction proposal or proposals. The United States will contribute to this work and will provide the Allies shortly with the detailed results of our own analysis.

The United States is prepared to enter into formal negotiations with the USSR or the Warsaw Pact only after comprehensive consultations with the Allies and the development of an Allied consensus on the major substantive issues and the procedures to be used in the negotiations. The Department of State will submit a scenario for this consultative process by June 1.

We should clearly distinguish between (1) diplomatic explorations, which can be pursued at this time; and (2) the first phase of formal negotiations, which we will not begin until further preparations are accomplished.

Our position concerning the content and purpose of diplomatic explorations is that they should be concerned with a clearer identification of Soviet objectives and positions, and the modalities for eventual formal negotiations. The Department of State will submit a proposal for these exploratory talks by June 1.

Our position concerning the first phase of actual negotiations is that they should concentrate, as in SALT, on examining broad issues

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 364, Subject Files, National Security Decision Memoranda (NSDMs), Nos. 97–144. Secret; Sensitive. Copies were sent to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Director of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency.

² Summarized in Document 52, to which the paper is attached as Tab B.

to discover whether a substantive foundation for concrete proposals could be developed. In both respects, we will consult fully with the Allies and ensure that all of them, including France, will participate in the Alliance effort on MBFR.

The United States position is that the MBFR negotiations should remain separated from negotiations and contacts, exploratory or otherwise, related to a Conference on European Security. A precondition to a Conference on European Security continues to be a satisfactory outcome of the current Four Power negotiations on Berlin. On the other aspects of a European Security Conference, current instructions issued to USNATO by the Secretary of State remain in force.

In preparation for further Presidential consideration of the U.S. position on MBFR, the Verification Panel shall prepare an evaluation of the substantive and procedural issues involved for consideration by the National Security Council. Drawing upon earlier interagency preparations, the paper should address the elements of MBFR which could form the basis of any U.S. position in consultation with our allies, giving the major alternatives and the pros and cons. The paper should also propose plans for further consultations with our allies. This paper should be completed and received by the Verification Panel no later than June 15, 1971.

Henry A. Kissinger

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

Washington, May 26, 1971.

SUBJECT

Gromyko–Beam Conversation on MBFR

Ambassador Beam's conversations with Gromyko concerning Brezhnev's remarks on mutual force reductions,² confirms the apparently complete reversal the Soviets have now made on the link between a Conference on European Security and MBFR. Gromyko alluded to their former position, linking the two issues, but continued that "if the Western powers agree that the question (MBFR) should be examined outside a CES, this would be much simpler *and more productive*." Since questions such as scale of reductions of foreign or national troops as well as other questions arise, Gromyko said, "a non CES forum would be better."

Beyond this, however, nothing much was clarified. Gromyko was given NATO's broad criteria for MBFR. He was obviously prepared to deal with them because he fixed on one point, the use of the term "balanced" reductions. Apparently the Soviets suspect that balanced may mean asymmetrical or unequal, and Gromyko noted that this concept could prevent reductions. He said the Soviet view was that there should be no "preconditions" set up for the very idea of discussion.

No particular urgency was conveyed by Gromyko. He suggested both sides review each other's position and should feel free to discuss the question further, "between us," i.e. bilaterally.

It may be that the reversal of the Soviet position is related to SALT. The prospect of MBFR talks in Europe could be a justification for the

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 715, Country Files, USSR, Vol. XIII. Secret; Sensitive; Outside System. Sent for information. A notation on the first page reads: "The President has seen." Sonnenfeldt drafted this memorandum and forwarded it to Kissinger on May 18 for his signature. In a covering memorandum, Sonnenfeldt wrote: "As you requested, I have redone my memorandum to you on this subject as a memorandum for the President. I have omitted the comments on Secretary Rogers' remarks." In his original memorandum to Kissinger, May 17 (also attached), Sonnenfeldt wrote that "our own position" on MBFR "is becoming highly confused, since the Secretary of State on Sunday stated that we had always favored MBFR as part of CES (completely wrong), and if the Soviets now come around to that position we would favor it (also wrong since we are maintaining the Berlin precondition)." For Rogers's comments to journalists on the National Broadcasting Company's television and radio program, "Meet the Press," see Department of State *Bulletin*, June 7, 1971, pp. 734–736.

² As reported in telegram 3243 from Moscow, May 17; attached but not printed. See also footnotes 4 and 5, Document 50.

Soviets circumventing the forward-based systems issues in SALT, as they may now be doing.

Also the Soviets may have felt that the inclination in NATO to accept the former Soviet position and add MBFR into the CES (thereby making it subject to the Berlin precondition of a satisfactory Berlin settlement) conflicted with the kind of simple declaratory CES that the Soviets want. Thus this move gives the Soviets good leverage for a separate MBFR negotiation whenever they are so disposed—with such a negotiation inevitably upgrading the GDR. The Soviets appear to be wising up to the fact that MBFR negotiations, whatever their concrete outcome, could give them most of what they want out of a CES.

As a result of this publicized meeting between Beam and Gromyko we are rapidly being cast in the role of the leading champions of MBFR, though our major Allies (Paris, London and Bonn) are cooling to the project and our own studies give ample reason for being skeptical on the substance.

In short, after the Mansfield furor is over, we will have to decide how specific an offer we and our Allies should make to start negotiations. We must bear in mind that in light of the new Soviet position Moscow can force early negotiations, and we have been put on notice by Gromyko that intricate, asymmetrical approaches will certainly be resisted.

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

Washington, June 1, 1971.

SUBJECT

Guidance for Lisbon Meeting and Follow-On Work on MBFR

State has sent two documents: (1) a memorandum from Secretary Rogers to the President, laying out the Secretary's position at the NATO meeting (Tab B);² and (2) a telegram for clearance, giving instructions

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 261, Agency Files, NATO, Vol. X, Part 2. Secret. Sent for action. Sonnenfeldt did not initial the memorandum.

² Tab B is attached but not printed.

for follow-on work on MBFR, also cleared by Secretary Rogers and by Defense (Tab C).³

1. *Secretary Rogers' Position Paper*

This follows fairly closely the guidance in NSDM 108,⁴ and presents no major problems.

—On MBFR it does state, however, that the Lisbon communiqué should indicate (a) Allied intention to *move as soon as practical to negotiations*, (b) Allied readiness to *consult promptly with the Warsaw Pact on substantive and procedural approaches to negotiations*, and (c) to convene NATO Deputy Foreign Ministers to review the “results of discussions” (this last point takes care of Secretary Laird’s problems).⁵

—The Secretary’s talking points call for him to note that “early and visible” movement toward MBFR will assist the US in maintaining force levels.

—The “proposal” for prompt discussion, followed by Deputy Foreign Ministers meeting, would retain NATO’s initiative and leave time for further consultation.

—Allies are urged to accelerate substantive preparations, to which we will contribute.

(On other issues, CES, Berlin, the paper is orthodox and presents no problems.)

This seems to move roughly in the direction indicated in NSDM 108, but emphasizes more the “promptness” of explorations on “substance.” Since there is no agreement on substance beyond the criteria agreed in Rome last year, it is difficult to understand how these explorations will proceed. Some of these problems are taken care of, however, in the telegram (see below).

2. *Further Guidance on Follow-On Work on MBFR*

This instructs the NATO delegation to indicate the nature of the follow-on work and our contributions.

³ Tab C is attached but not printed.

⁴ Document 53.

⁵ On May 30, Laird wrote to Rogers about an earlier draft of the instructions at Tab C: “A careful reading of the US proposed language on MBFR procedure which has been circulated to our Allies for inclusion in the Lisbon Communiqué (State 092077) could indicate that we expect the special meeting of the Deputy Foreign Ministers to determine NATO’s *negotiating* procedure at an early date. This proposed language would build up expectation for the specifics of negotiations, such as the time, place and proposed agenda.” Laird continued: “If we allow ourselves to be forced into announcing specific negotiating parameters this early, I fear that we will find ourselves ill prepared and prematurely committed to positions that could work to the disadvantage of the US and NATO.” (National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, DEF 6 NATO)

(a) *Guidelines for Exploratory Work*

Allies can immediately *intensify bilateral explorations* on the basis of the Rome declaration,⁶ but, if desired by the Allies, the US will participate in revision of the Rome criteria.

(b) *Approach to Negotiations*

The telegram supports the SALT approach to the first phase of negotiations: that is, exploration of “building blocks.” To this end the *US will support drafting by NATO of a building blocks paper, which could be used in discussions with the Pact.* The paper would be a vehicle for seeking Pact agreement on such issues as alternative areas of reduction, types of forces, relationship between stationed and indigenous, etc.

(c) *Negotiating Fora*

NATO should *turn “as soon as possible” after Lisbon to an examination of possible fora for ultimate negotiations with the Pact.* Allied views are to be solicited in view of special problems for the Germans.

(d) *Development of Substantive Positions*

The US anticipates tabling in the next few weeks a further paper drawing on US analysis of MBFR. Later we will table papers to help in developing an agreed NATO position.

Recommendation

In view of the time problem, and the need for the real work at Lisbon to proceed in the corridors before the meeting, you should:

1. Authorize clearance of the telegram (*I will clear it by COB today if you have no specific problems.*) (Tab C)⁷

2. Sign the memo to State indicating that the paper submitted by Secretary Rogers on his position has been approved (Tab A).⁸ (I see no virtue in sending this to the President since it is all tactics and agrees with the previous guidance.)

⁶ See Document 41.

⁷ Kissinger initialed his approval, but added a handwritten notation: “but let’s take out some of the more urgent language.”

⁸ Kissinger signed the attached undated memorandum, addressed to the Acting Secretary of State, but its text was crossed out, and the memorandum was apparently not sent. The text reads: “Secretary Rogers’ memorandum to the President of May 29, 1971, concerning the Lisbon Ministerial Meeting has been approved. With regard to MBFR, however, it should be made clear that negotiations are dependent on (1) the results of further bilateral explorations and (2) the completion of comprehensive substantive preparations by the Alliance.”

56. Memorandum for the Record¹

Washington, June 2, 1971.

SUBJECT

Ambassador Pauls–Mr. Kissinger Conversation

The Ambassador wanted to know what the President might expect Chancellor Brandt to tell him during their forthcoming meeting on June 15, and vice versa. Mr. Kissinger said that problems connected with NATO and the Mansfield amendment would presumably be high on the agenda. [Omitted here is discussion of matters other than the European security conference or MBFR.]

Next, Mr. Kissinger said East-West relations and Berlin would presumably figure in the conversation. He said that he could detect no disagreement between the two governments but it was important to synchronize approaches. MBFR would also figure under this heading.

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

Switching to MBFR, Pauls commented that there was a problem of moving ahead on this subject without having made progress on Berlin. Mr. Kissinger wondered whether the Soviets would accept a percentage cut as balanced. In any event, we were still working on our position although we would shortly have some of our analytical work available for submission to the Allies.

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

Pauls asked about Soviet motives in regard to MBFR. Mr. Kissinger conjectured that the Soviets might want to pull out some of their troops in Czechoslovakia and trade them in for US troops in Germany. Beyond this, the Soviets have apparently recognized that they could not have a separate détente with the Europeans alone. At the very least such a policy was not a feasible one in terms of German domestic politics. In addition, the Soviets could not make progress on Berlin under conditions of hostility with the United States. Additional factors in the Soviets' motivations may be China, domestic Soviet considerations and the hope of weakening Western cohesion. Pauls added that the Sovi-

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 685, Country Files, Europe, Germany (Bonn), Vol. IX. Confidential. Sent for information. Drafted on June 3 by Sonnenfeldt. A notation at the end of the memorandum indicates that it went to Kissinger.

ets may want to switch the discussion of FBS to the MBFR forum. He also thought that economic considerations figured in the Soviet motivation. [Omitted here is discussion of matters other than the European security conference or MBFR.]

57. Editorial Note

In telegram 1859 from Lisbon, June 4, 1971, Secretary of State Rogers reported to President Nixon on the outcome of the NATO Ministerial meeting in Lisbon, including the discussions on a European security conference and mutual and balanced force reductions. Rogers wrote: "This was the most constructive and least contentious NATO meeting I have yet attended. When we finished our work today, we did so in complete agreement on the procedural steps NATO should take towards force reduction talks and on the necessity of a satisfactory conclusion of the Berlin negotiations before multilateral consultations on a European Security Conference are undertaken. I also had several good bilateral talks. Your active leadership in defeating the Mansfield amendment made a deep impression on our allies and contributed to a sense of confidence in us which helped pull the Alliance together in spite of diverse opinions on details of the force reduction issue."

Turning to the European security conference, Rogers wrote: "Based on statements from Gromyko that the Soviet Union recognized in fact that a European Security Conference could not precede a Berlin settlement, Schumann tried at some length to alter the communiqué language so that it no longer would clearly state that a satisfactory conclusion was a precondition. With the support of Scheel and Sir Alec I insisted that the language must be as clear as last year, though its tone could be more positive. Schumann finally conceded. The communiqué expressed the hope that before our next meeting negotiations 'will have reached a successful conclusion' and that multilateral conversations intended to lead to a conference on security and cooperation 'may then be undertaken.'"

With regard to MBFR, Rogers wrote: "Real opinion on MBFR ranges from the French, who again refrained from participation; to the British, who have some doubts that reductions can be brought about without some security disadvantage; to the Germans, who favor the idea but do not want it to get ahead of Berlin; to the Scandinavians, Canada and Belgium, who want to push forward promptly, mainly for

domestic public opinion reasons. But in the light of Brezhnev's recent remarks and of our own political battle over unilateral reductions everyone agreed NATO needed to maintain the initiative. Our proposals for (a) bilateral contacts to probe Soviet intentions more fully over the next few months, accompanied by the preparation of NATO negotiating position, (b) a deputy foreign minister or comparable level meeting in the fall to assess results and to take necessary further decisions hit just the right balance between prompt action and prudence. Several other countries suggested that we might appoint a single representative to consult for us now. I added this to our suggestion as a step that might ensue from the deputy meeting. This produced full agreement. The course of MBFR talks as now agreed will be:

“(a) Transmission of the communiqué to the Soviet Union and others by Moro.

“(b) Bilateral explorations with the Soviet Union and preparation of our negotiating views.

“(c) A deputy foreign minister or ‘high official’ level meeting at an early date (in the fall) to consult on ‘substantive and procedural approaches to MBFR.’

“(d) Willingness to appoint ‘at the appropriate time,’ a representative or representatives responsible to the Council for conducting further exploratory talks, and a willingness eventually to work out the time, place, arrangements and agenda for negotiations.” (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 284, Agency Files, Department of State, Vol. XII)

Kissinger forwarded Rogers's telegram to Nixon on June 10 as an attachment to a summary memorandum. Kissinger wrote with regard to a European security conference: “A satisfactory Berlin solution as a condition to movement toward the Soviet-proposed European Security Conference was maintained, despite French efforts to weaken the linkage.” With regard to MBFR, he wrote: “The outcome of the discussion struck a balance between some forward movement toward negotiations and a pace that will allow us to take soundings of the Soviets and complete internal NATO preparations. After exploratory contacts this summer, NATO will convene in the early fall at a Deputy Foreign Ministers level to review the bidding. As for actual negotiations the decision was left open whether the Alliance might appoint a single representative.” (Ibid.)

During a meeting with Senator John Sherman Cooper (R-KY) in the Oval Office on June 11, Nixon summarized the outcome of the NATO meeting. Also present were President's Assistant for National Security Affairs Kissinger and Counsel to the President on Congressional Relations Clark MacGregor. Nixon, citing Rogers's report on the NATO meeting, said with regard to MBFR: “The Europeans want to move just like we do here. They don't want to move too fast. You see, if we move too fast, and you ought to tell your colleagues down there, and it may surprise you—I think it surprised Bill as a matter of fact—

but it was very comforting to me. The Europeans realize that they have an awful lot." Nixon continued: "I can tell you that we've been working on the mutual balanced force reduction thing for over a year. As a matter, we started 20 months ago as far as our own position is concerned. We've been working with the Allies since that time. We're in the position now to make movement. Now, this does not mean that you're going to have something. Doesn't mean you're going to have something two months from now, three months from now, five months from now, six months from now. You will note that the Europeans, however, not with regard to MBFR but with regard to the Security Conference, everybody thought, 'Well, the United States ought to be the [unclear].' They conditioned it on Berlin." (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, White House Tapes, Oval Office, Conversation 517–6) The editors transcribed the portions of the tape recording printed here specifically for this volume.

58. Minutes of a Verification Panel Meeting¹

Washington, June 11, 1971, 3:35–4:55 p.m.

SUBJECT

MBFR

PARTICIPATION

Chairman—Henry A. Kissinger

State

Mr. John N. Irwin

Mr. Raymond L. Garthoff

Mr. Martin J. Hillenbrand

Defense

Mr. Warren Nutter

Mr. Robert Pranger

Mr. Philip Odeen

CIA

Mr. Bruce Clarke

Mr. Carl Duckett

OST

Dr. Hubert Heffner

OMB

Mr. James Schlesinger

NSC Staff

Col. Richard Kennedy

Mr. Wayne Smith

Mr. Helmut Sonnenfeldt

Mr. William G. Hyland

Mr. John C. Court

Mr. Wilfrid L. Kohl

Mr. Mark Wandler

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-107, Verification Panel Minutes, Originals, 1969 through 3/8/72. Top Secret; Sensitive.

JCS

Admiral Thomas H. Moorer
Major Gen. Marvin C. Demler

Justice

Attorney General John Mitchell

ACDA

Ambassador Gerard Smith
Mr. David Linebaugh

SUMMARY OF DECISIONS

It was agreed that:

—Exploratory conversations on MBFR should be kept on a procedural level and should not get into substantive matters until the U.S. and NATO Allies have formed a position.

—A reduction of indigenous troops only would be unacceptable to the U.S. from political and intelligence points of view.

—A sanitized version of the Evaluation Report² will be given to the North Atlantic Council, with the Department of Defense expressing its reservations in the covering letter.

—The State Department and ACDA should prepare a paper for the upcoming NSC meeting on how the MBFR negotiations should be conducted.

—The Working Group should provide an analysis of the effect of including the three Western Military Districts of the Soviet Union in the area of force reductions, if nuclear weapons are to be considered in the reductions. The analysis should include discussion of forward-based and nuclear delivery systems on the Allied side and IRBMs on the Soviet side.

—The Working Group should prepare a sensitivity analysis of the safety margin built into the present NATO situation. The analysis should discuss the consequences of 10 and 30% symmetrical reductions. It should also discuss asymmetrical reductions and mixed packages.

—The Working Group should prepare an analysis of their [*the?*] effect of on-site observers on verification.

—The Working Group should prepare an analysis of the reductions of indigenous forces. The analysis should specifically deal with the equipment aspect.

—The President should be made aware of our desire to have the Deputy Defense Ministers of NATO attend the Deputy Foreign Minister meeting this Fall.

² See footnote 4, Document 65.

—ACDA should review the force reduction work it did in 1957,³ with the thought that this experience might be relevant to the current issue.

[Omitted here is the Verification Panel's discussion of MBFR.]

³ For documentation relating to U.S. disarmament policy in 1957, see *Foreign Relations, 1955–1957*, volume XX, Regulation of Armaments and Atomic Energy.

59. Conversation Between President Nixon and West German Chancellor Brandt¹

Washington, June 15, 1971, 11:02 a.m.–12:34 p.m.

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

Nixon: We've had the Mansfield Amendment since we talked to you. Beat that.

Brandt: Yes.

Nixon: We've got the restraining permit. I'd like to get your, your report on, your reactions to that, to the whole business of, you know, the MBFR [unclear] economic point.

Brandt: Yes, yes. Well, Mr. President, again as far as the Lisbon meeting² was concerned, I think it was of great importance that we could agree on how to handle the MBFR. This meeting of the deputy ministers in September will be held. The [unclear], which you mentioned, might be asked to find out what the Russians really think. There's one thing I would like to mention in that connection. Secretary Laird said that the United States will table their paper on MBFR in the NATO Council talks at the end of July. If it were possible before it is

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, White House Tapes, Recording of Conversation between Richard Nixon and Willy Brandt, Oval Office, Conversation 520–6. No classification marking. The editors transcribed the portions of the tape recording printed here specifically for this volume. Also present for the conversation were Kissinger and Bahr. For portions of the conversation dealing specifically with Germany, see *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, volume XL, Germany and Berlin, 1969–1972, Document 254.

² See Document 57.

tabled formally, to have some kind of consultation with some of the main partners in Europe, this might help, because otherwise things might get rather, you know how things are, if they—

Nixon: What is the, what is the procedure?

Kissinger: Well, the formal procedure is that we table it in Brussels. But if the Chancellor wanted to send somebody over here for some informal discussions, we could certainly do that.

Brandt: This would, I would appreciate that.

Kissinger: It wouldn't have to be announced, would it?

Brandt: No. No.

Nixon: It would be in private.

Brandt: Of course.

Nixon: Let's set that up then. A private discussion—

Brandt: Yes.

Nixon: Where we could do it, so we could keep it under the hat. But we would like to be helpful, to do that before we [unclear].

Kissinger: [unclear]

Brandt: Especially, Mr. President, since some of these things, like I said, these middle range missiles thing, which has [unclear] would come in under the new cover of MBFR. Especially interested so that we could have private discussion for expert service.

Nixon: All right.

Kissinger: Egon³ could be in touch with me through our channel.

Nixon: All right. All right. Fine.

[Omitted here is discussion of matters unrelated to MBFR.]

Nixon: With regard to the problem of, we mentioned in passing, the problem of [unclear], we have to recognize, as I said earlier, that there is a growing disenchantment in this country with more expenditures [unclear]. There is a feeling that other parts of the world should pay more of the burden. Now, we fought this Mansfield Amendment out and won only because we gave assurances, one, that we would do our best to get others to, you know, bear their fair share of the burden; and second, that, of course, we did, we were working on MBFR, but it had to be done in an orderly way, and a neutral way. However, it has to be recognized that to the extent that you can [unclear] reassure leaders and opinion makers, Senators, etc., etc., reassure them of the [unclear] without getting into the specifics of offset and all the rest, that's a matter to be negotiated. The main thing is the spirit. The main

³ Egon Bahr.

thing is the extreme criticism of those who believe that we in this government are not doing enough [unclear]. On MBFR, it seems to me there that this must be, and I emphasize again, I take into account this [unclear] we will have some private consultation, the process must be orderly.

Brandt: Yes.

Nixon: It must be orderly. And we must not rush in with some half-baked scheme that [unclear] the whole texture of the alliance. That's really what we have in mind, [unclear] what we face here. How do you feel about MBFR? What is your procedure?

Brandt: [unclear] Plainly, we need that period of bilateral explorations, and we have to make here a decision together if and when it should move into the period of multilateral talks. I think we both agree that this could not be for a longer time a thing between the United States and the Soviet Union [unclear] it will be in practice. It must be [unclear].

Nixon: Right.

Brandt: Which does not necessarily mean that everyone has to be engaged.

Nixon: Yeah.

Brandt: [unclear] the greater negotiate on behalf of the lesser [unclear].

Kissinger: It almost has to be done that way.

Brandt: Yes.

Kissinger: Because we couldn't have all 15.

Nixon: Oh, no way. No way. And well, actually those with the biggest stakes have to have the biggest voices. Now we can talk all we want about the United Nations. That's why it's ridiculous to suggest that the General Assembly, where a country of 25,000 has the same vote and the same voice as a country of 200 or 400 million. It's interesting, it's a nice debating society, but it isn't going to work in terms of [unclear]. No nation of power is going to submit its interests to the decision of that.

Kissinger: I think it's safe to tell the Chancellor that we've worked out various schemes in these negotiations that work, but not one of them is purely bilateral US-Soviet.

Nixon: No, sir.

Kissinger: The big problem is that if everybody negotiates it's going to be a disaster.

Brandt: Yeah.

Kissinger: We'll have to find a group that can make contributions and still have a good negotiation. We will have some suggestions when [unclear].

Brandt: For us, of course, it's very important also, what should be the territory or territories, which will be covered by the MBFR negotiation, and two, how should one start? I saw the other day that the Secretary of State had made a remark that we'd be starting with the symbolic, which is so badly needed. And this man⁴ was in Moscow last year, negotiated our treaty,⁵ he raised the question of MBFR with Gromyko. And his first reaction was that they had not made enough progress. And [unclear] made the remark that he could believe that one could agree upon some symbolic [unclear].

Nixon: [unclear]

Brandt: When I discussed this with Helmut Schmidt, my Minister of Defense, who has worked on the problem, he said this would not be so bad because it would be something which would occur [unclear] while still apart from more serious discussions.

[Omitted here is discussion of matters unrelated to MBFR.]

⁴ Egon Bahr.

⁵ The Treaty between the Federal Republic of Germany and the Soviet Union, signed at Moscow on August 12, 1970, is in *Documents on Germany, 1944–1985*, pp. 1105–1106.

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

Washington, June 16, 1971.

SUBJECT

NSC Meeting on Mutual Force Reductions in Europe (MBFR)

A NSC meeting on Mutual and Balanced Force Reductions in Europe is scheduled for 3:30 pm, June 17, 1971.

The issues for discussion are:

—What substantive position should the United States take on the basic framework of an MBFR? We need to resolve such questions as

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-031, NSC Meeting Folders, NSC Meeting on MBFR, 6/17/71. Top Secret. The memorandum was drafted by K. Wayne Smith of the NSC staff and forwarded to Kissinger on June 15.

the *area for reductions*, the *size of reductions*, whether to reduce “stationed” forces only (mainly U.S. and Soviet) or both “indigenous” and “stationed” forces, and the related verification questions.

—How should the United States proceed in coming months to explore and eventually negotiate with the Soviet Union on MBFR? A related question for consultations with our allies to develop an alliance consensus on the substance and procedure of negotiations?

The Verification Panel has reviewed the substantive work performed over the past year and agrees that we are now ready to establish the basic framework of a U.S. position on MBFR.²

The Substantive U.S. Position

The principal issues to be resolved involve:

—The geographic area to serve as a base for reductions. While we should not rule out wider areas, the principal area for MBFR is Central Europe. Our work indicates that either the NATO Guidelines or Rapacki areas³ should be used initially for consultations.

—*The size of reductions.* All symmetrical reductions of ground forces slightly enhance NATO’s position before mobilization, and thus reduce the Pact’s capability to launch a successful attack if they do not have time to mobilize. However, MBFR degrades NATO’s relative position following a short period of mobilization. Thus, the risk of a Pact attack after a fast, full mobilization may be somewhat larger after MBFR.

—*The nationality of forces to be reduced.* In the past, we have supported the inclusion of both stationed and indigenous forces in a reduction program. However, the reduction of stationed forces would probably be to NATO’s military advantage as well as presenting fewer problems of negotiation and verification than reduction of indigenous forces. On the other hand, our allies, particularly the FRG, might be unwilling to accept this position since they want to reduce their forces for domestic reasons.

—*The verification provisions to be included.* We cannot verify reductions of less than 10 percent in stationed forces or reductions taken in units of less than regimental size even in East Germany. The issue is whether we want to consider reductions which cannot be verified by national means and, if so, what provisions for on-site inspection we wish to make.

² See Document 58.

³ The “Rapacki Plan” refers to the 1957 proposal of the Polish Foreign Minister, Adam Rapacki, to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Europe embracing Poland, East Germany, West Germany, and Czechoslovakia.

In general, the agencies seem to be converging on a U.S. approach toward MBFR involving fairly substantial (say 20 percent) reduction in the stationed and indigenous ground forces of the NATO Guidelines Area with heavier weight given, if possible, to stationed forces. Nevertheless, there are significant differences among the agencies that should be discussed at the NSC meeting.

Operational Issues

We are now approaching our own internal evaluation of MBFR with a sound two-phased approach:

—*First, consideration of the basic framework of possible MBFR agreements.* This corresponds to the “building block” stage we went through for SALT.

—*Second, development of a range of specific options within this basic framework.* Based on past guidance, detailed MBFR options have now been formulated and are being assessed. They will be revised on the basis of your decisions on our basic position for MBFR.

In principle, our approach toward consultations with our NATO allies and eventual negotiations with the Warsaw Pact should be designed to follow the same general approach as our internal preparations. This would involve:

—*In NATO,* an immediate effort this summer to focus on substantive discussions with our allies to determine the basic elements to be considered as part of MBFR. With a large infusion of U.S. substantive help, this process could hopefully lead to an allied consensus on an MBFR framework by late summer. At the moment, we are light years ahead of our allies.

—*With the Soviets,* we should continuously explore their understanding about what MBFR involves. Neither we nor our allies should, however, get very deep into substantive exploration with the Pact until a NATO position has emerged. The problem is how to hold back on substantive discussions without appearing to be less than serious about MBFR.

The Conduct of the Meeting

The purpose of the meeting is to discuss:

—The issues involved in formulating a basic substantive framework for the U.S. position on MBFR.

—The substantive and procedural issues that will arise in consultation with our allies and negotiations with the Soviet Union.

Mr. Helms has prepared a brief on the Soviet proposals and the present comparative force postures of the Warsaw Pact and NATO.

I am prepared then to present the principal issues and alternatives involved in the substantive U.S. position on MBFR.

Your Red Book Contains

- Talking points;⁴
- A summary of the issues and alternatives.

Attachment⁵

The President's Summary

Since Brezhnev's speech last month, the prospects for negotiations on mutual force reductions (MBFR) in Central Europe have become more serious.

The Diplomatic Background

The Soviets were finally responding to repeated NATO offers to discuss MBFR. The NATO Rome Declaration of May 1970 (joined by all Alliance members except France) invited "all interested parties" to join in exploratory talks on MBFR of stationed and indigenous forces and their weapon systems in the European Central Region. This position was repeated in December, 1970. The Lisbon (June, 1971) communiqué replied to the Soviets by stating NATO's intention "to move as soon as may be practical to negotiations." An early meeting of NATO Deputy Foreign Ministers to consult on substantive and procedural approaches to MBFR was agreed.

Last week, the Soviets were critical of NATO's stalling while expressing a readiness to discuss reductions of both "foreign" and "national" armed forces in Europe to possibly include a limitation on naval deployments.

The Issues

In preparing to explore and clarify the Soviet position, and prepare for eventual negotiation, the United States and its NATO Allies now must begin active consultations to develop a common negotiating framework. The issues which must be decided at this time are:

—The substantive position which the United States should take in the forthcoming consultations with NATO.

—The operational procedure we and our Allies should follow in exploratory talks and eventual negotiation with the Soviet Union and its Warsaw Pact allies.

⁴ Attached but not printed.

⁵ No classification marking.

A. *The Geographic Area of Reductions*

MBFR is most clearly related to NATO and Warsaw Pact armed forces in Central Europe. This has been acknowledged by both NATO and the Soviet Union. However, reducing forces in this area might be unappealing to other Allies, such as Norway, Denmark, Turkey, Greece, Portugal and possibly Italy:

—Nevertheless, the Central Region is the *main area of confrontation* between the ground forces and tactical air forces of both sides and, if MBFR is to be a serious arms control measure, it must focus there. This area contains large numbers of both stationed and indigenous forces—over one million men on each side, depending on the precise region specified.

—In the NATO flank regions, MBFR would involve mainly indigenous forces (including Soviet), and could greatly complicate the problems of negotiating and verifying an agreement. This is particularly true for U.S. naval forces in the Mediterranean and their nuclear delivery systems.

Within Central Europe, the choice of an area depends in part on the type and nationality of forces to be reduced or limited, and in part on the comprehensiveness of an agreement, including its verification provisions.

1. *The first question is the choice of a specific area for reduction within Central Europe.* The main alternatives are:

(a) For MBFR involving either stationed forces or stationed and indigenous forces in Central Europe only, the “*Rapacki Plan Area*” is the most advantageous to NATO of the areas which exclude Soviet territory. The Rapacki Plan Area covers the two Germanies, Poland and Czechoslovakia. It includes all Soviet forces in Europe stationed beyond Soviet borders except for Soviet troops in Hungary. It also includes all NATO stationed forces except 1–2,000 men in Belgium and the Netherlands.

(b) There may be pressures within NATO or from the Soviets for inclusion of some additional NATO territory. The “*NATO Guidelines Area*,” favored in some NATO studies, adds the territory of Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg (Benelux). There is a rough balance of ground forces manpower in this area (Warsaw Pact 818,000 men; NATO 744,000 men).

For reductions of stationed forces only, the Guidelines Area produces military effects similar to the Rapacki Area. However, *for reductions of both stationed and indigenous forces*, the Guidelines Area is less advantageous to NATO.

(Including portions of France or the United Kingdom would be highly disadvantageous to NATO without restrictions on Soviet territory.)

(c) *Limiting reductions to East and West Germany only would be disadvantageous to NATO in view of the Soviet forces in Czechoslovakia and in Poland though the stationed forces in the Germanies are roughly in balance in this area and our initial offer to reduce stationed forces only might focus on this area.*

(d) Whereas the two Germanies offer the narrowest base for reductions, the most comprehensive base would be *the NATO Guidelines area plus the European portions of the Soviet Union itself*. If reduced Soviet forces are simply redeployed to the Western sectors of the Soviet Union, they could return far more quickly, and in greater numbers, than U.S. forces redeployed to the United States. *Thus, MBFR in which redeployed Soviet forces are not disbanded or transferred beyond easy reinforcing distance (e.g., East of the Urals) could be relatively disadvantageous to NATO in terms of the military balance following a short period of mobilization*. On military grounds, therefore, it would be desirable for an MBFR agreement to cover forces inside the Soviet Union itself.

However, the Soviets may be unwilling to agree to limitations or reductions of Soviet ground forces in part or all of the Soviet Union without compensating restrictions on the territory of France, the United Kingdom and probably the United States. In addition, existing national collection means are inadequate for verification of ground force limitations or reductions in the Soviet Union. To achieve any on-site inspection—let alone a system adequate to detect a rapid Soviet build-up opposite Central Europe in the early stages of mobilization—could pose severe negotiating difficulties. *For these reasons, limitation and reduction of Soviet ground forces in the Soviet Union should only be considered for inclusion in comprehensive MBFR options, particularly those entailing very substantial reductions in NATO's forces*. It might be possible, however, to include USSR territory if U.S. forces withdrawn from Europe were demobilized, along with the Soviet forces.

2. *The next choice is the size of force reductions to be considered.*

For a given geographical area, a range in the size of reduction could be postulated, such as

—A *freeze of forces* at present levels. While a reasonable first step in an agreement, a freeze would not satisfy unilateral pressures by Congress for reduction.

—A mutual reduction at a *minimum level*. Our verification studies indicate that this should be at least 10%.

—A mutual reduction of a *greater size*. Our studies of mobilization and reinforcement indicate that 30% may be a dangerous cut unless the Pact mobilization and reinforcement disadvantage can be overcome through restrictions on Soviet ground forces with the USSR or substantial improvements in the mobilization base of our Allies. [We have found that the Pact's advantage in mobilization and

reinforcement during the first month of mobilization is increased in proportion to the size of the reduction in stationed forces (U.S., Canadian, Belgian or Dutch) *unless reduced Pact forces are disbanded and their equipment destroyed.*⁶

—*A common ceiling at a given level, or other asymmetrical reductions in which the Pact reduces more than NATO. Our studies indicate this approach is advantageous only when NATO's reductions are minimal (less than 10%) and when the ceiling is based on active tank forces (which would require a major restructuring of Soviet forces in Central Europe).*

In sum,

—*No MBFR improves the military situation for NATO if the Pact is able to mobilize reduced forces and reinforce the Center Region. On the other hand, it is very important to note that most MBFR agreements considered do improve NATO's relative capabilities prior to reinforcement by either side. This could be an important advantage in a crisis leading to a sudden attack by the Pact in which they had not reinforced.*

—*After a 10% MBFR restricted to the NATO Guidelines Area, NATO is 4–6% worse off at M+21 days compared to the present, in terms of the ratio of opposing forces.*

—*After 30% MBFR restricted to the NATO Guidelines Area at M+21 NATO is 10–17% worse off.*

These figures show adverse trends, but do not tell us whether NATO will still retain an initial conventional defense capability after MBFR of 10% or 30%. While we believe that NATO's conventional option would not be lost with small mutual reductions, we are still working on a precise answer to this question.

Clearly, at this stage we should consider large reductions on the order of 30% in connection with comprehensive agreements which restrict the Soviet reinforcement capability or compensate NATO in some tangible way (e.g., unequal tank reductions). Smaller reductions might be considered with few, if any, restrictions on Soviet reinforcement.

3. *The choice of the nationality and type of forces for reduction.*

Military forces in Europe are either “indigenous” to the country where they are garrisoned, or they are “stationed” beyond their national borders. In Central Europe, on the NATO side, the principal stationed force include Belgian, British, Canadian, Dutch, French, and U.S. forces in West Germany. On the Warsaw Pact side, Soviet forces are stationed in East Germany, Czechoslovakia, Poland and Hungary.

⁶ All brackets are in the original.

MBFR could include either *stationed forces only*, or *both stationed and indigenous forces*. [To reduce indigenous forces only would be illogical and politically unacceptable to the United States.]

—Important qualitative differences aside, it makes little difference in the resulting force ratios whether reductions are taken in stationed forces only or in both stationed and indigenous forces.

—*However, stationed force redeployments are verifiable by national means, while verification of indigenous force reductions may require enhanced on-site inspections in Central Europe.* (A minimum degree of on-site inspection in East Germany is allowed by the Potsdam agreement.) Elimination of indigenous force equipment poses a particularly thorny verification problem.

Thus, the most advantageous form of an MBFR agreement would appear to be one limited to or heavily weighted toward redeployment of stationed forces in Central Europe though political considerations may dictate that indigenous forces also be included. In addition, it would be to NATO's advantage to:

—Seek reduction of both conventional and nuclear Pact capabilities in exchange for NATO dual-capable weapon systems.

—Reduce only equipment in active units, since NATO, unlike the Pact, has substantial war reserves of combat equipment, such as tanks, in Central Europe.

However, both these approaches involve very complex problems that need further study.

4. *Verification and warning.*

The immediate issue is whether to consider agreements that cannot be verified by unilateral U.S. means, and if so, the degree of on-site inspection we would insist upon, if any. It is generally agreed that some on-site inspection will be required to verify that reductions are being carried out. The question is the degree of verification we will require in the post reduction phase.

—We cannot verify the reduction of ground force units of less than regimental size (3–5,000 men) anywhere in Central Europe.

—Outside East Germany we would have difficulty verifying the reduction of even division size forces with any reliability unless NATO military attachés and military liaison personnel were increased in numbers and restrictions on their movements were cancelled.

—However, improved technical collection systems may increase the frequency and detail of our coverage of Central Europe, enhancing our verification capability, although *we would probably not be able to detect changes in individual unit strengths and equipment levels unless these were larger than 10%.*

Given these limitations on the verifiability of either unit or manning reductions at the 10% level, we have to consider whether or not we are willing

to consider reductions of this size. This problem is particularly significant because our Allies, at this point, all favor a NATO position that would call for reductions of this unverifiable size. If MBFR is to be a serious arms control effort, it must involve reductions that are large enough to be verifiable even in the initial stage.

Options for Negotiation

Within the foregoing framework, *we could consider a range of options of increasing comprehensiveness for discussion with our allies and exploratory talks with the Soviet Union.*

(a) *A limited option* involving an immediate 15% reduction of stationed ground and air forces in Central Europe, with national means of verification. This could reduce U.S. force levels by 25,000–30,000 men.

(b) *A more comprehensive option* involving both a further 10% reduction of stationed forces and a 10–20% reduction of indigenous forces. This agreement should include on-site inspection in Central Europe, other constraining measures such as restrictions on the size of maneuvers, and *limitations on theater nuclear forces.*

(c) Finally, we could propose *a comprehensive option* involving deeper cuts in stationed and indigenous forces or stationed forces only, provided *redeployed Soviet and U.S. forces were disbanded, their equipment was destroyed and on-site inspection was adequate.* (Accepting such constraints on U.S. forces in the United States would not necessarily be disadvantageous. Meanwhile, proposing the option could help constrain further congressional pairing of the defense establishment.)⁷

⁷ Two tables, "Total and National Indigenous Ground Forces Presently on Active Duty in Various Geographical Areas Considered for MBFR" and "The Warsaw Pact/NATO Force Balance," are attached but not printed.

61. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in the Soviet Union¹

Washington, June 17, 1971, 1647Z.

107924. Subj: Secretary–Dobrynin Conversation, June 16: MBFR.²

1. Secretary called in Dobrynin June 16 to sound out Soviet position regarding force reductions in Europe. After pointing out that NATO is prepared to have negotiations as soon as practical, he posed series of specific questions:

(A) In what time frame do Soviets place MBFR negotiations?

(B) Do Soviets agree that MBFR negotiations can be conducted without connection with CES?

(C) Do Soviets agree that both stationed and indigenous forces will be included in negotiations?

(D) Are Soviets prepared to discuss not only numbers of personnel but also weapons systems?

2. Dobrynin replied (A) Soviet Government wishes to negotiate force reductions as soon as possible;

(B) In regard to CES, Soviets are prepared to discuss force reduction either in committee established by CES, or in entirely separate forum, without convening CES in advance;

(C) Soviet Government prepared to discuss both stationed and indigenous forces; and

(D) He assumed that negotiations would cover both personnel and weapons systems, but has no specific instructions on this point.

3. Dobrynin professed to believe that NATO Lisbon Communiqué linked negotiations on force reduction with Berlin settlement, and said that his government would consider that an unacceptable precondition.

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-224, National Security Decision Memoranda, NSDM 116. Secret; Exdis. Drafted by Matlock and approved by Davies. Repeated to the U.S. Mission to NATO, Ottawa, Athens, Ankara, and all European diplomatic posts. Sonnenfeldt forwarded a copy to Kissinger on June 18 with an attached summary. (Ibid.)

² In a conversation in the Oval Office with Nixon, Haig, and Ziegler on the afternoon of June 14, Rogers announced his intention to see Dobrynin to discuss MBFR: "We told, with NATO we said we're going to consult with them bilaterally. And [Jonathan] Dean is not back there so I thought I'd get Dobrynin in and talk to him about it, and see what he has in mind. I think I'll have to say that we're, just what I said before we went to NATO, and that is, 'Obviously we're in such negotiations. We've been in since 1968.' And as, we've so indicated. And now they're finally indicating that they're interested. Fine, we'll talk to them about it. See what they have in mind." (Ibid., White House Tapes, Oval Office, Conversation 519–7) The editors transcribed the portions of the tape recording printed here specifically for this volume.

Secretary replied that our position is that CES should not be convened until after Berlin settlement reached, but that MBFR negotiations are not linked to Berlin settlement. Dobrynin also expressed concern that holding up negotiations for exploratory talks and meeting of NATO Deputy Foreign Ministers could delay negotiations until 1972. Secretary assured him that this is not the case and that if exploratory talks satisfactory, negotiations might be possible as early as October or November.

4. Discussion turned to the Rome principles, with Dobrynin observing that Soviets had taken cautious approach because they not sure of definition of some of terms used. He asked specifically about the meaning of "balanced" force reduction. Secretary explained that "balanced" reduction simply recognizes the fact that symmetrical reduction could in many instances be disadvantageous to one side or the other. The term is not meant to be deceptive, but merely to signal that reductions must be scaled and timed so as not to operate to the military disadvantage of either side. In any case, Secretary stressed, Rome principles should not be considered preconditions to negotiation, but rather indication of an approach which we consider most likely to be fruitful. We would welcome Soviet counter-proposals. Dobrynin observed that Soviets could not accept Rome principles without further definition, but have no objection to their being presented for discussion in negotiations.

5. After Dobrynin asked why a person could not be appointed to begin serious talks, Secretary asked whether Soviets had in mind one person negotiating for each side. Dobrynin said that he would have to refer this question to his government, and requested suggestions from us. Secretary said that one possibility would be for each side (i.e. NATO and Warsaw Pact) to appoint a representative or a small group to conduct preliminary talks. Dobrynin asked when such a representative or representatives could be named and Secretary replied that it would be easier to do so following the meeting of the NATO Deputy Foreign Ministers, but that it possible to do so sooner. Dobrynin also inquired whether representatives could come from U.S. and USSR. Secretary said we open minded about identity of representatives: U.S. and Soviet nationals could presumably participate in team of representatives if so designated. Important point is that negotiations be on behalf of Alliance and not bilateral between U.S. and Soviets. Dobrynin also asked whether we preferred one representative or a small group. Secretary said that we have some preference for single representative from each side, whereupon Dobrynin observed that NATO, with SecGen and Secretariat, is in better position to appoint representative than Warsaw Pact. Secretary stressed again that appointment of representatives is merely idea, and that we would welcome Soviet suggestions on the subject.

6. Dobrynin was unable to provide any details regarding Soviet thoughts on how force reduction would operate. He also was unable

to confirm that Soviet Government prepared accept principle of negotiations between Warsaw Pact and NATO. He indicated, however, that he expected prompt reply from Soviet Government and appeared eager to pursue subject further in near future.

Rogers

62. Memorandum of Conversation¹

Washington, June 17, 1971, 2:30 p.m.

SUBJECT

MBFR

PARTICIPANTS

German

Egon Bahr—State Secretary, Chancellor's Office

Guenther van Well—Assistant Secretary, Foreign Office

American

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

Helmuth Sonnenfeldt—Senior Member, National Security Council

James S. Sutterlin—Director, Office of German Affairs

State Secretary Bahr opened the conversation by telling Mr. Kissinger that he had discussed MBFR with Assistant Secretary Hillenbrand the day before. He was sure that a memorandum on that conversation would be circulated.² To recapitulate, the Federal Republic was of the opinion that any balanced force reduction must include indigenous as well as stationed forces.

Mr. Kissinger asked why the Federal Government held this view. Bahr replied that if balanced force reductions are carried out between East and West a balance must also be maintained among the forces in

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL GER W–US. Secret; Exdis. Drafted by Sutterlin. Part I of III. The conversation took place in Kissinger's office. For Part II of the conversation on Berlin negotiations, see *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, volume XL, Germany and Berlin, 1969–1972, Document 257. For Part III of the conversation on Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty, see *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, Eastern Europe; Eastern Mediterranean, 1969–1972, volume XXIX, Document 56.

² Telegram 109971 to Bonn, June 19, contains a summary of Hillenbrand's conversation with Bahr. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL GER W–US) Earlier, Rogers discussed MBFR with Brandt and Bahr. (Memorandum of conversation, June 15; *ibid.*, POL 7 GER W)

the Western side. Aside from the United States and possibly Canada, the Federal Republic's allies would not like to see the Bundeswehr left in a position after the withdrawal of some U.S. forces where its size would be out of proportion to other European forces.

Mr. Kissinger said that no conclusions have been reached on this question yet in Washington. He could understand the argument which Bahr had advanced. He noted, however, that there were also the following arguments in favor of reductions only in stationed forces. First, the verification problem for indigenous forces would be monumental. Secondly, it is the Soviet forces in the central European area which are best equipped for offensive action. Therefore, it is by reducing Soviet forces that one reduces the offensive capacity of the Communist side. Thirdly—and this, Mr. Kissinger noted, might not be so attractive to the German side—it would be attractive domestically if the size of the U.S. deployment in Europe could be reduced while the force strength of our European allies remained unchanged, since this would signify some equalization of the defense burden. Mr. Kissinger noted that there would be a meeting of the NSC at 3:30 p.m. to consider all of these questions.³ Decisions would not be made at the meeting, but conclusions would be reached for presentation to the President.

Bahr said that he could understand the domestic American interest in concentrating reductions on stationed forces. In this German and U.S. interests might diverge a bit. Perhaps one could bridge this over through the timing of the various stages in a troop reduction plan. If one began with only a small first step which would really be symbolic in nature, then the U.S. domestic argument would be persuasive.

Bahr said he could also see the point concerning the offensive capacity of Soviet forces. Here, of course, the question arose as to which territory would be included in a plan. From the German point of view it was desirable that the reductions not be limited solely to the territory of the FRG and the GDR. Mr. Kissinger replied that various options were included in the NSC study, one of which was such a restricted territorial approach. He considered this most unlikely, however, indeed unthinkable. Bahr then made the point that even a small first step could, by its nature, strongly influence the character of further stages in a mutual reduction plan. For this reason it would be unfortunate if the plan began on the basis of too small an area. Mr. Kissinger agreed and said again that he did not think it likely that any plan would be limited to German territory. He added that, as the President had emphasized the previous day to the Chancellor,⁴ the United States will not move unilaterally on any of these points.

³ See Document 63.

⁴ See Document 59.

Bahr felt that the Soviets would probably argue for the inclusion of indigenous forces since the Bundeswehr is considerably larger than the East German Army. He added that for home consumption in the Federal Republic it would be good if the Bundeswehr could be reduced. All of the Western Europeans would be inclined to say if the U.S. is reducing its burden why shouldn't they do likewise? Mr. Kissinger acknowledged that such a reaction would be natural but pointed out that from the American point of view we would consider this the kind of more equitable sharing of the defense burden which has long been desirable. Bahr thought that nonetheless this reaction should be expected.

Bahr digressed at this point to state that he had found in conversing with Senator Mansfield that only two arguments had any impact. First, U.S. forces in Europe could not be replaced by European forces because of their nuclear capacity. Secondly, the U.S. is a super power and therefore simply cannot run away.

Returning to MBFR, Bahr commented that we must be careful lest a kind of euphoria arise precisely at a time when, because of the reductions, the security situation may actually deteriorate somewhat. Mr. Kissinger agreed that this was a valid point which could be even more relevant if the size of the reductions were substantial. The studies which we have made, he said, show that a relatively small reduction would not affect the Western defense capacity adversely. Beyond ten percent, however, reductions would have a progressively more negative effect on our defense capacity. If 30 percent reductions were carried out our defense situation would be substantially inferior until M-Day + 60, a time which Mr. Kissinger doubted we would ever reach. Bahr said that German experts had come to the same conclusion. Their studies showed, however, that if the figure went above 40 percent the situation might reverse itself somewhat in favor of the Western side. Mr. Kissinger pointed out that the defensive forces must cover the whole area of their responsibility while offensive forces can concentrate their strength in a selected area.

63. Notes of a National Security Council Meeting¹

Washington, June 17, 1971, 3:37–5:12 p.m.

RN [Richard Nixon]: Subj. today old but timely. Have been dis. tangentially with Brandt.² Purpose is to get position understood on basis of interagency group work. Not agree on position to take but see how we should move in conversations within alliance + with SU. Should know where we want to come out.

Helms: *Briefing*.³ BR [balanced reductions] prog. has both milit. and polit. implications.

Forces: 52 Sov divs. 29 EE [Eastern Europe]. (Text from CIA.)

Verification: Tasks: (1) assessment of forces before red. (2) reduction. (3) reduction adhered to . . . Problems; limitations. Collection means.

Soviet position. Get initiative. Avoid concessions in Berlin stalemate. Increase NATO strains; underscore temporary nature of U.S. presence and permanency Sov. Enhance GDR.

Military advantage. Bulk of forces for def. ag. NATO; hence, if NATO reduces, so can Sovs. Redeploy to China; economic strains.

Put NATO on defensive with simple proposals, say 30% cut. But will keep options open till they see what happens. May just manipulate.

NATO reactions.

- (1) Mansfield caught them off balance.
- (2) Want initiative.
- (3) But cautious; Germany worried about Berlin; also worried might become bilateral like SALT.
- (4) Pleased by Lisbon formula.
- (5) France still cautious and did not join in Lisbon communiqué.
- (6) Awaiting further U.S. work.

Rogers: Briefing reflects views of individuals but not of Fonmins. Scheel quite willing to have negots as long as not in ESC.

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-110, NSC Meeting Minutes, Originals, 1971 through 6/20/74. No classification marking. The notes were handwritten by Wayne Smith. According to the President's Daily Diary, the following attended the meeting: the President, Rogers, Laird, Connally, Lincoln, Mitchell, Packard, Helms, Moorer, Gerard Smith, Farley, Irwin, Hillenbrand, Kissinger, Wayne Smith, and Sonnenfeldt. The time of the meeting is also from the President's Daily Diary. (Ibid., White House Central Files, President's Daily Diary)

² See Document 59.

³ The notes for Helms's briefing are in National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-031, NSC Meeting, MBFR, 6/17/71.

Schumann had little to say. Wanted to be helpful to us. U.S. had done more than it should. The others should do more; but not opposition to us. Pompidou pointed this out. Meeting generally most successful. Canadians proposed immediate negs. But we wanted to wait. We left everything flexible, including on timing. Emissary “when appropriate.” We have positive communiqué but very flexible + can wait as long as we want. Brandt satisfied.

RN: What is effect of reductions of Sov forces on EG [East Germans], Poles, Czechs, Hungarians; realize talking about 10%–20%. To what extent do present forces maintain regimes in power?

RH [Richard Helms]: All want Sovs [illegible] down occupation forces. Question about reliability of EE. But would want [illegible] own forces down to get Sovs down. Accept, except in GDR. Situation here very foggy.

RN: Sov forces drain on GDR economy?

RH: Yes.

HAK: Sev. mtgs of VP [Verification Panel] to lay out positions prior to Allied decisions + our own.

Following issues: p. 2 talking pts.⁴

(1) Size. (p. 3 TP’s [talking points]).⁵

Table passed out. *Explains figures* (Tab A).⁶ My M+60 effects erased because of replenishments.

M-Day: more favorable for NATO; decrease chance of surprise attack.

No MBFR improves NATO sit. after mobilization. Page 4 of TP’s.⁷ pp. 5–6.

On asymmetry: Shouldn’t encumber negotiations since no effect.

⁴ Kissinger’s talking points for the meeting, drafted by Wayne Smith and forwarded to Kissinger on June 15, are in National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-031, NSC Meeting on MBFR, 6/17/71.

⁵ Kissinger’s talking points discussed possible sizes for an MBFR reduction: a freeze, a common ceiling, a small mutual reduction of about 10 percent, or a large mutual reduction of about 30 percent. Page 3 reads in part: “At this point, while it is neither necessary nor desirable to determine the size reduction we should aim for, it is useful to consider the effects on the military balance of each size reduction and determine the range of reductions we should actively consider in the future.”

⁶ Reference is to a chart attached to Kissinger’s talking points: “The Warsaw Pact/ NATO Force Balance: Illustrative MBFR of Stationed and Indigenous Forces in the NATO Guidelines Area.”

⁷ Kissinger’s talking points reads in part: “Following full mobilization and reinforcement by both sides, it is clear that MBFR has little or no effect on the conventional balance since all the withdrawn forces on each side can be returned.”

Tentative conclusion: Between 10–30% (see p. 6).⁸

(2) *Geographic Area*. Table handed out. Tab B.⁹

p 6, Talking points.

p. 7.

p. 8.¹⁰

If area *too* wide, verification very poor + Sovs would ask for UK, France + perhaps parts of U.S.

If cuts exceed 30%, should include Sov. territ + we should have inspection dec. of reinforcement. Two Germany's alone politically unacceptable.

(3) *Nationality + Type* (p. 9)

Reduction of indigenous forces extremely complex.

Concentrate on stationed forces.

Pro:

(1) reduce Sov forces.

(2) meet Cong. press.

(3) improve proportionate share of allies.

WR [William Rogers]: NATO ministers did not feel indigenous forces necess., but want to *talk* about so won't be left out.

Con:

(1) First step of U.S. withdrawal (the best of circumstances).

(2) Enhance German weight.

RN: How many US in Europe?

ML [Melvin Laird]: 304,000.

RN: Sov?

Adm. Moorer: 370,000.

RN: We talking about Sov-Amer. reductions?

HAK: In our interest: our Germans better than their Poles + Czechs.

⁸ Page 6 of Kissinger's talking points reads in part: "For this reason, I would suggest that we consider an overall symmetrical reduction of 30% the outer limit for NATO until we have a better grasp of ways in which the mobilization/reinforcement disadvantage can be overcome. Conversely, we must bear in mind the effect on our support in Congress if we appeared to be stalling reductions or considering only marginal reductions, such as 10% or less."

⁹ Kissinger's talking points contained a second table, "Total National and Indigenous Ground Forces Presently on Active Duty in Various Geographic Regions Considered for MBFR."

¹⁰ Kissinger's talking points discussed the various advantages and disadvantages of carrying out MBFR reductions in the NATO guidelines area, the Rapacki Plan area, East and West Germany, or the NATO guidelines area plus the three western military districts of the Soviet Union.

RN: Recalls Polish troops, honor guard in 1959,¹¹ cheering at RN. Wouldn't rely on Poles.

WR: 30–90,000 US.

RN: We may talk about NATO, WP, but we mean US–SU. Reduction of Sov forces much greater blow to Sovs. Indigenous forces unreliable. They must know this; hence negots will be tough.

WR: Only France would be against bec. of fear of Germany.

RN: That's too bad.

HAK: Could do stationed first; indigenous later; or different magnitudes. *But primary principle is that cut in stationed forces is in our interest.*

4. *Verification* (p. 12, T.P.).¹²

Smith has pointed out Sov's have been less rigid re inspection in Europe.

Study of verif. has driven us to recommend cuts of at least 10%; less not monitorable + turn into *unilateral cuts*.

Defers *discussion of models*.

Trying to get answers to composition of various cuts (see p. 15).

Preparations with Allies (see pp. 15–16).¹³

RN: Deputy For Ministers in Sept?

WR: Or October.

RN: *We stay where we are as far as talking to Sovs concerned. Quiet in Public.*

WR: No problem. Saw Dob. yesterday.¹⁴ He wanted to get into substance. *WR talked about procedure*. Forum, participants, etc. He said he would get answers.

¹¹ Regarding Nixon's 1959 visit to Poland as Vice President, see *Foreign Relations, 1958–1960*, volume X, Part 2, Eastern Europe Region; Poland; Greece; Turkey; Yugoslavia, pp. 190–225.

¹² The discussion of verification in Kissinger's talking points reads in part as follows: "*The issue here is whether we want to consider agreements that cannot be verified by unilateral U.S. means, and if so, the degree of on-site inspection we would insist upon, if any.*" The points continued: "*We cannot verify manpower reductions by national means unless the reductions are taken in identifiable units, with their equipment.*"

¹³ Pages 15–16 of Kissinger's talking points reads in part: "We have organized our ongoing work in the Verification Panel so that we will be prepared for intensive consultations with our allies on the substance of an MBFR position or positions which can form the basis for the initial stage of negotiations with the Soviet Union. We will send a 'sanitized' version of a thorough evaluation of MBFR approaches to NATO before the end of the month for presentation to the North Atlantic Council. By July 1, we should give our allies our position on the elements which form the basic framework of our MBFR position, with detailed rationales drawn from the Evaluation Report and other previous work submitted to NATO." The points continued: "In the coming weeks, we will review the ongoing interagency work on MBFR options in the light of decisions which emerge from this meeting, and speed up the assessment of options."

¹⁴ See Document 61.

ML: Problem with Allies. Found with Def Mins. they don't know what to do with Def. Planning. They face budget cuts. Should discuss proposals with military + Def Ministers since it won't mean reduction for them in contrib to defense of Europe. Never had to hold hands, so much before. Russians shot rug out from under them.

RN: Only involves US–Sov. They won't be able to cut.

Irwin: Would involve UK + France, if phrased as “stationed.”

RN: 10% not much.

HAK: French would only withdraw across Rhine.

WR: Didn't find what M.L. found. Fonmins very encouraged.

Moorer: Found Brits + Germans discouraged. AD–70¹⁵ being discouraged by MBFR. Real problem of losing momentum.

WR: Fonmins said they *had* to keep up improvements.

Moorer: *Fouquet* said Europeans would *not* improve.

ML: Have to keep pressure on Europeans. Bring Goodpaster in to make sure he keeps pressure.

WR: Fonmins feel that MBFR will prevent US from making unilateral cuts, especially if successful.

RN: Excellent preparations. Sovs not prepared (as WR said).

ML: Brits have done good work.

[Gerard] Smith: (1) Need better focus on main purpose:

- (a) Some say improve NATO position
- (b) Some say *détente*
- (c) Some think just ag. Mansfield.

Need clarity.

(2) Relationship betw. European focus cuts + overall force cuts. Soviets would just redeploy, we would demobilize. Case for resuming 1964 US–Sov dialogue on mutual cuts.

(3) Should not go too far in saying we can do with unilateral verification. Should have a good deal of o-s [onsite] inspection. Sovs have made proposals on this since 1957.

ML: Sovs might throw in other issues: aircraft, navies. We need to do additional work.

HAK: FBS may be drawn in. Nuclear issue.

¹⁵ See footnote 2, Document 34. The NATO Ministerial meeting in Brussels in December 1970 approved an annex to the main communiqué on AD–70; it noted that ten of the European members of NATO had agreed to adopt a European Defense Improvement Program (EDIP), providing for additional European outlays for NATO's defense. EDIP became an ongoing topic of discussion within NATO. See North Atlantic Treaty Organization, *NATO Final Communiqués, 1949–1974*, pp. 249–252.

ML: The longer talks last, the worse we are off. Bargaining chip gets lost.

HAK: If nuclear MBFR, we may need different geographic area bec. Sov threat is in W SU.

WR: Should start with simple, conventional cuts.

Lincoln: People will say we will cut 10–30% anyway even if we say MBFR. Hard to hold line if negots last; long time, as Sov negot history shows.

RN: Very useful exercise. We have to press forward; despite victory over Mansfield, support in country declining. We have to give American people hope.

[Omitted here is discussion of leaks of classified material to the press.]

64. Editorial Note

United States Embassies in Europe reported on the reaction of the European allies to Secretary Rogers's conversation with Soviet Ambassador Dobrynin on June 16, 1971, with regard to MBFR (see Document 61). On June 21, the United States Mission to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization reported the reaction of the NATO Political Advisers to the conversation: "Canadian rep requested (and was given) assurance that Rogers–Dobrynin exchange was bilateral sounding only and that Secretary Rogers was not speaking for the alliance." The report continued: "Dutch also asked whether we felt US–Soviet exchanges on MBFR were developing into the principal bilateral channel on the subject, to the exclusion of the other NATO allies. We replied that we did not consider this the case, that US and Soviets were simply discussing matters in context of normal bilateral soundings which other allies were presumably also undertaking." (Telegram 2640 from USNATO, June 21; National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 261, Agency Files, NATO, Vol. X)

On June 24, the Embassy in London reported on the British reaction to Rogers's conversation: "British officials have uniformly expressed concern that NATO may be drifting too rapidly and without adequate preparation into MBFR negotiations. They are perplexed by lack of U.S. contribution to NATO studies and papers. They are concerned about U.S. intentions in light of Rogers–Dobrynin conversation of 16 June and reports of U.S. interest in 'small' but symmetrical force

reductions via MBFR. British believe that serious damage to NATO's security can only be prevented by a slower pace, a clearer understanding of our objectives, and agreement prior to negotiations both among allies and with other side on basic principles." (Telegram 5892 from London, June 24; *ibid.*, Box 728, Country Files, Europe, United Kingdom, Vol. VI)

On June 28, the Embassy in Bonn reported: "Senior FRG officials continue highly concerned about the possibility of U.S. bilateral negotiations with the USSR on aspects of MBFR. FRG DefMin Schmidt has made a strong appeal to the Ambassador to avoid all bilateralism. FRG Disarmament Commissioner Roth is also concerned by this possibility, particularly in light of what he considers to be strong internal pressures in the U.S. to achieve quick initial results on MBFR." (Telegram 7900 from Bonn, June 28; *ibid.*, Box 685, Country Files, Europe, Germany, Vol. VIII)

On July 8, the Embassy in Bonn reported on the French and German reaction to United States interest in MBFR as expressed at a Franco-German summit meeting:

"A responsible Foreign Office disarmament official has informed us in the strictest confidence concerning the MBFR–defense aspects of the Franco-German summit consultations July 5–6 in Bonn. Reading from a memorandum covering the conversations on MBFR, our source said that French President Pompidou, Defense Minister Debre and Foreign Minister Schumann had told Chancellor Brandt, Defense Minister Schmidt and Foreign Minister Scheel that the USG had 'definitively decided' to reduce American troop levels in Europe. The French said that this was a profound change in US policy since the December 1970 NATO Ministerial, that the Soviet Union was aware of this decision and would use it to reinforce tendencies toward neutralism in small European countries and in the Central European area likely to be affected by such US troop reductions. France was gravely concerned, and thought such troop reductions, whether unilateral or under the umbrella of an MBFR agreement, would lead inevitably, whatever the US intention, to American political disengagement in Europe." (Telegram 8368 from Bonn, July 8; *ibid.*)

65. National Security Decision Memorandum 116¹

Washington, June 28, 1971.

TO

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

SUBJECT

The U.S. Policy on Mutual Force Reductions in Europe (MBFR)

Following the June 17 NSC meeting² the President has decided that U.S. explorations with the Soviet Union and consultations with our Allies in NATO on the subject of mutual force reductions shall be based on the following approach.

In general, the U.S. objective is to develop a consensus within the NATO Alliance governing the substantive elements of its position on mutual reductions of forces in Europe. Regarding specific elements, the Verification Panel will prepare a formulation and assessment of alternative options for MBFR for consideration by the National Security Council based on the following policy:

—Reductions should cover both stationed and indigenous forces, either simultaneously or in succeeding phases. The primary U.S. objective, however, is to maximize the reduction of Soviet forces, and, for this reason, proportionately large Soviet and American (or stationed force) reductions should be emphasized rather than balanced stationed and indigenous reductions. A reduction of indigenous forces only should be excluded.

—Another important U.S. objective in reductions should be to establish constraints on the reintroduction of stationed (Soviet) forces or equipment into the zone of reductions. Such constraints should be correspondingly comprehensive, possibly to include Soviet territory, as the size of reductions is increased. On the other hand, it is not essential that the area for reductions include the territory of the USSR.

—The area of reductions should not be confined to the Germanies alone; it is preferable that the area include Czechoslovakia and Poland, especially insofar as Soviet ground forces are concerned. While not de-

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 364, Subject Files, National Security Decision Memorandum (NSDMs), Nos. 97–144. Top Secret.

² See Document 63.

sirable, the inclusion of the Benelux countries is acceptable. The inclusion of other NATO countries could be considered with an appropriate expansion of the area for Warsaw Pact reductions.

—A full range of symmetrical and asymmetrical reductions should be considered based on various degrees of severity, the requirements for adequate verification and their effects upon the conventional balance.

In developing a consensus within the NATO Alliance on this policy, the U.S. shall prepare for future transmission to the NAC:

—The “sanitized” April 12 *Evaluation Report*³ with an appropriate covering memorandum indicating that its conclusions are still tentative. This study should be completed no later than July 2, 1971.⁴

—A revised version of the June 1971 *Elements of MBFR* study,⁵ modified to indicate the decisions in this memorandum. This study should be completed by July 6, 1971.

—A range of specific MBFR options and a thorough assessment of their implications. These options should range from limited symmetrical reductions to more comprehensive reductions possibly involving a wider area and a variety of reductions as well as verification provisions and collateral constraints. This study should be completed by August 1, 1971.

These preparations for consultations should be made by the agencies responsible under the overall direction of the Verification Panel. Prior to the development and consideration by the President of specific mutual force reduction options, it is understood that the substance of our consultations with our NATO allies shall not go beyond existing Presidential guidance. In no instance will reductions figures be discussed with our allies. Regarding the procedure, forum, and timing of exploratory or preparatory talks with the Warsaw Pact, the U.S. should give full weight to the views of the allies.

Henry A. Kissinger

³ See Document 47.

⁴ Telegram 130817 to USNATO, July 20, instructed the Mission “to circulate the sanitized version of the April 12 MBFR evaluation report, entitled ‘MBFR—Some Assumptions, Models, and Implications’ in the NAC and other NATO fora you deem advisable at the earliest appropriate time following receipt. The paper should be covered by an appropriate memorandum indicating that its conclusions are still tentative.” (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 261, Agency Files, NATO, Vol. X) On July 12, Wayne Smith reported in a memorandum to Kissinger that transmission of the sanitized report had been delayed owing to objections from Goodpaster. Smith’s memorandum is scheduled for publication in see *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, volume XLI, Western Europe; NATO, 1969–1972.

⁵ Not found.

66. Telegram From the Embassy in the Soviet Union to the Department of State¹

Moscow, July 28, 1971, 1635Z.

5366. Subject: Gromyko on force reductions. Ref: State 135527.²

1. *Summary:* Gromyko indicated July 28 that Soviets are prepared to discuss force reductions in all of Europe and not just central Europe. He opposed discussion on bloc to bloc basis, noting this position shared by certain other governments. He stated that first order of business was clear statement by governments concerned as to whether or not they accept Soviet proposal for discussions. He emphasized that Soviets do not consider that USG has made such response, since US statements on subject have been hedged with reservations. *End summary.*

2. During general survey with me July 28 (septel)³ Gromyko briefly referred to question of force reductions in Europe (he corrected his interpreter who had used term central Europe and said he did not just have central Europe in mind). He noted that there had been discussions on this subject before and he hoped there would soon be opportunity for further discussions, including bilateral ones. He claimed to see substantial possibilities for the future in this area.

3. I returned to subject later, noting I wanted to be sure both sides understood where we stand now in discussion this question. Secretary had raised certain questions with Dobrynin in their conversation June 16⁴ and Dobrynin had said he would endeavor get replies. Subsequent informal discussions between Korniyenko and Klossen⁵ were useful but naturally did not lead to specific replies since this is complex question and both sides need time for study. I said our present understanding is that Dobrynin will reply to Secretary in due course. For our part, we are willing to continue and expedite preparations for substantive discussions. I asked whether Gromyko viewed present situation as we do.

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL US–USSR. Secret.

² Telegram 135527 to Moscow, July 27, provided Beam instructions on MBFR for his meeting with Gromyko. It stated that “you may wish to reiterate our interest in moving forward as rapidly as is feasible on this complex question involving so many governments. As reflected in the Lisbon communiqué, the question of MBFR will be the subject of intensive discussion for the next few months within NATO.” (Ibid., Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 715, Country Files, Europe, USSR, Vol. XIV)

³ Telegram 5367 from Moscow, July 28. (Ibid., RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL US–USSR)

⁴ See Document 61.

⁵ Telegram 4351 from Moscow, June 23, reported on the conversation. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, DEF 6 EUR)

4. In reply, Gromyko said he was acquainted with the Secretary's talk with Dobrynin in June. In this connection he wished to emphasize that Soviet Government is against approaching problem on bloc to bloc basis. This view is shared by other governments. Although on first glance this appeared to be procedural or organizational question, in reality it was political one. Secretary had referred to meeting of NATO and Warsaw Pact representatives. Some countries would give a failing grade to this approach. Matters did not need to be complicated by being put in this form. Problem already very complex, and he did not exclude need for further bilateral exchanges. He hoped this would not be last time we discussed problem on bilateral basis.

5. Gromyko repeatedly emphasized that the Soviets want a clear answer from potential participants in force reduction discussions as to whether or not they accept the Soviet proposal. He claimed the position of USG and other governments was not clear on this point. The USG had made a statement but it had been hedged with various reservations. From Soviet standpoint, it was not clear whether positive elements in US statement or the reservations were the main thing. USG should clarify its position, either publicly or in written form. He said Soviets are still in process considering various other questions related to this subject, but these could be introduced at later stage after Soviets learn how many and which countries accept Soviet proposal.

6. I noted in response that force reduction concept was not new. It had been advanced several years before. In terms Soviets had proposed it, we obviously accepted it as topic for negotiation and as a desirable agreed goal, but procedural issues were now one of main problems. Soviets had made one proposal, which we were considering together with NATO colleagues. We would welcome Soviet ideas as to where we go from here and how we should push forward with exchanges. In meantime, I said that Washington was under the impression that Dobrynin would be giving a fuller response to the Secretary's questions.

7. Gromyko would not go beyond saying that Soviets would think about questions posed by Secretary and might return to them in the future. In response my observation that there might be meeting of NATO deputy foreign ministers in several weeks during which force reduction question would be considered, Gromyko said (half-seriously by his own admission) that he did not understand how such wise men as NATO ministers could meet without reaching decision on force reduction discussions devoid of any reservations.

8. Department pass as desired.

Beam

67. Editorial Note

On August 3, 1971, Helmut Sonnenfeldt of the National Security Council staff sent President's Assistant for National Security Affairs Kissinger a briefing memorandum for the latter's upcoming meeting with French Ambassador Charles Lucet later that same day. Sonnenfeldt wrote:

"During his other pre-departure calls, Lucet has been stressing *MBFR*. He has indicated that France does not wish to reduce its own forces, is in favor of 'global' rather than regional disarmament, and is against the concept of a NATO 'explorer' such as Brosio which infers bloc to bloc negotiations opposed by the French.

"You may wish to indicate that

"—we are willing to consider other approaches than just a single explorer, since we would welcome French participation if there are resulting negotiations;

"—we recognize the security risks involved in *MBFR*, and for that reason we have urged NATO to continue to study the issues, such as those raised in the US paper recently submitted to the Council;

"—finally, we feel ourselves under no particular time pressure for *MBFR*." (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 678, Country Files, Europe, France, Vol. VIII)

At the meeting on August 3, Lucet raised the subject of *MBFR* with Kissinger. According to a memorandum prepared by Sonnenfeldt:

"Lucet then turned to *MBFR* and recited long standing French reasons for opposing it. He stressed that France cannot be committed by NATO decisions. Dr. Kissinger referred to the US domestic situation. He noted that we were somewhat better off in this regard at the moment and *MBFR* was not the most burning issue with us. As long as the domestic situation remains relatively quiet, we have time to move deliberately on *MBFR*. Lucet said that the French would not participate in the NATO Deputy Foreign Ministers' meeting, although they might send an observer. Dr. Kissinger said we would not protest and this would not become an issue between our two Presidents." (Memorandum for the Record, August 4; *ibid.*)

68. Editorial Note

West German Chancellor Willy Brandt visited the Soviet Union for two days of talks with Soviet General Secretary Leonid Brezhnev September 17–18, 1971. Among the topics they discussed were a European security conference and mutual force reductions. On September 20, the State Secretary in the Chancellor's Office, Egon Bahr, provided Ambassador to Germany Kenneth Rush with an account of the talks. Rush summarized Bahr's comments in telegram 11676 from Bonn the same day: "Brezhnev indicated that he was interested in MBFR negotiations but not sure of what criteria should be applied to force reductions. He said the Soviet Government was studying the subject seriously and was willing to negotiate on all aspects of it. At no point did he mention the word 'balanced,' but did on several occasions state that reductions should be 'of the same quality.' He mentioned reductions of troops but not of military equipment. Both Brandt and Brezhnev agreed that neither side should profit from a MBFR agreement at the expense of the other. They agreed that MBFR negotiations should not be a topic reserved solely to the great powers, should not solely involve stationed forces, but should cover all forces in the area of application of an agreement and should not cover Germany alone, but a broader area. It was agreed that the MBFR topic could be broached in the framework of a Conference on European Security, but should not be a substitute for the latter. Brezhnev should [*said*] he realized that the parties in the CES would not be identical as those involved in the MBFR and that MBFR negotiations would probably take longer than a successful CES would take. Bahr said Brandt was pleased that the joint FRG-Soviet communiqué explicitly mentioned participation in a CES by the United States and Canada; he believed it was the first explicit mention in a formal Soviet communiqué of this point. Brezhnev urged Brandt to take the same positive attitude towards the CES as the French Government. Brandt responded that his position on this topic was closer to that of the United States. There should be cautious progress and full advance preparation. Brezhnev said the CES project should be pushed vigorously after December, thus indicating clearly his expectation that the inner-German talks would be concluded by mid-December prior to the NATO ministerial meeting." (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 686, Country Files, Europe, Germany (Bonn), Vol. X)

The same day, September 20, Chancellor Brandt sent his own summary of his meeting with Brezhnev in a letter to President Nixon. He discussed his conversations with Brezhnev on European security and MBFR: "The discussion with Secretary General Brezhnev left me with the impression that he is anxious to emphasize his interest in further détente in Europe. This is expressed in Soviet readiness to discuss com-

plicated questions such as troop reductions and that in concrete terms and with the qualification that they must not lead to disadvantages for any of the parties concerned. The Soviet side obviously has not yet developed a perfect concept, not even for the criteria to be followed. This could put our alliance into a favorable position to influence Soviet thinking. I attach particular importance to the conference to be held on this issue in the framework of NATO in early October. At least Mr. Brezhnev has commented in a positive sense on our view that a troop reduction should include also national forces, that it should not be limited to the territory of the two states in Germany, and that it should be balanced. According to my impression the Soviet Union continues to attach great importance to convening a conference on security and cooperation in Europe; it has realized that the actual questions of security cannot be left aside, and it is also aware that careful preparations are necessary. My host was interested to learn whether the Federal Republic would raise special objections during the preparation of such a conference. I have, of course, based my answer on what has been agreed in the Alliance." Brandt continued: "You will be interested, dear Mr. President, that Mr. Brezhnev addressed himself on several occasions to the American policy, and that in a different sense than he did a year ago. Certainly, at that time he also underlined that he did not wish to drive a wedge between us and our allies, especially our principal ally. This time, however, he expressed, at least by his words, his interest in the best possible relations, especially with the United States. He mentioned this both in discussing MBFR and in general." For the full text of the letter, see *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, volume XL, Germany and Berlin, 1969–1972, Document 330.

National Security Council staff member Sonnenfeldt forwarded Brandt's letter to President's Assistant for National Security Affairs Kissinger the same day. In a covering memorandum, Sonnenfeldt characterized the letter as "a highly euphoric and, I feel, a misleading account." Sonnenfeldt explained: "I have done a brief memorandum to the President, gisting Brandt's main points, which include favorable Brezhnev references to the US and to the President. I have not tried to critique the Soviet visit for the President, but from our point of view it is pretty bad. Brandt clearly accepted the Soviet scenario of a CES (the communiqué says 'accelerate preparations') before MBFR. And on MBFR he enlisted Brezhnev's support for the position the Germans are pressing for in NATO—definite inclusion of national, i.e., German forces, an area not limited to Germany, and some vague acknowledgment that reductions should be of the 'same quality' or without disadvantage to either side. In his press conference, Brandt refers to equality of reductions—a phrase that will haunt us. All of this merely confirms that Brandt has mortgaged his policies to Brezhnev and in each succeeding phase he will have to pay an installment." In the margin of the memorandum, Kissinger wrote

back to Sonnenfeldt with regard to Brandt's Soviet visit: "You should critique it—along these lines *soonest*." (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 686, Country Files, Germany (Bonn), Vol. X)

On September 28, Kissinger forwarded to the President the translation of Brandt's letter. In a covering memorandum, drafted by Sonnenfeldt, Kissinger wrote: "Chancellor Brandt spent some 16 hours in conversation with Brezhnev during their recent meeting." He then characterized the problem: "Brandt's report of his conversations borders on the euphoric. In fact, however, on most of the issues—mutual force reductions (MBFR) and a European security conference (CES)—Brandt seems to have largely gone along with Soviet views. In response to Brezhnev's pressure for an early CES, [*less than 1 line not declassified*] Brandt agreed that there should be a preliminary conference (which is a Soviet view). He told Brezhnev that this was in accord with a discussion he had had with you on this subject. On MBFR prospects Brandt seems to have implied that MBFR could await the convocation of a CES. This contrasts with the US position that the issue of force level reduction is independent of a CES and should proceed as soon as possible without regard to the possibilities for convening a CES. Brandt also seems to have secured Brezhnev's support for the position the Germans have been pressing within NATO that national forces (German) should be reduced in addition to stationed (US) forces, and that the area of reductions should be wider than both Germanies." For the full text of the memorandum, see *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, volume XL, Germany and Berlin, 1969–1972, Document 331.

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

Washington, September 20, 1971.

SUBJECT

MBFR and CES

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-009, Verification Panel Meetings, Verification Panel Meeting MBFR 9/21/71. Confidential. Sent for information.

In addition to the MBFR issues in Wayne Smith's briefing book for the Tuesday's Verification Panel,² you may wish to take up the *relationship of MBFR to CES*.

The State Department paper³ recommends that our position

—stress that Berlin agreement be completed before beginning multilateral CES discussion (no problem);

—indicate that eventual CES would include some reference to MBFR (ambiguous; a new departure);

—support “vigorous Allied pursuit of studies currently in progress looking toward common negotiating positions and possible forms of agreement” (i.e., not the issues, but the procedure).

*The NAC study on MBFR*⁴ also includes some language on linkage:

—that MBFR negotiations, if they start before (CES) should be held in such a way as to allow the possibility of incorporation in the general framework of CES.

—If CES takes place first, the Alliance should support MBFR as an agenda item.

As you can see, this is more of linkage than we have ever established in any White House guidance. Heretofore, our position has been that MBFR should be separate from CES and should clearly come first—on the grounds that MBFR dealt with a real security concern, while CES would be most likely to deal in atmospherics.

The Soviets naturally have maintained the linkage, though more ambiguously in recent months. In the follow up to Brezhnev's Tbilisi speech,⁵ which seemed to separate MBFR and CES, Gromyko confirmed to Beam that it should be taken up separately.⁶ More recently, however, especially in the wake of the Berlin agreement, the Soviets are back tracking.

—Kosygin pushed for CES with Harold Wilson mentioning the start of active preparations after the first of the year.

—Brezhnev also mentioned as his timetable a “vigorous” effort after December. The Brandt–Brezhnev communiqué states that “the situation now shaping Europe facilitates the convocation of the all-European Conference. The Soviet and the Federal Republic intend to hold consultations shortly with each other, with their allies and with other European states in order *to accelerate the holding of the conference.*”⁷

² Memorandum from Smith to Kissinger, September 21. (Ibid.)

³ Memorandum from Acting Secretary Irwin to Kissinger, September 17. (Ibid.)

⁴ Not found.

⁵ See Document 49.

⁶ See Document 66.

⁷ See Document 68.

—Moreover, according to Bahr’s briefing Brandt and Brezhnev agreed that the MBFR topic could be broached in the framework of a conference on European security, but should not be a substitute for the latter.

—Finally, the UK in NATO suggests that a “procedural” linkage be established between CES and MBFR. Their motive, however, is their concern over MBFR and the possibility of postponing it or submerging it in CES. In addition, if Wilson now pushes a CES, the Conservatives will have to show themselves more active.

—The French, of course, support CES.

In sum, we need to sort out the linkage problem, especially if we intend to oppose drawing the two problems together. If we do not, the current drift is such that the Soviets will be in a position to have their own program: a CES first, then a MBFR under the aegis of the CES.

70. Minutes of a Verification Panel Meeting¹

Washington, September 21, 1971, 3:08–4:04 p.m.

SUBJECT

MBFR

PARTICIPANTS

Chairman—Henry A. Kissinger	<i>ACDA</i>
<i>State</i>	Philip J. Farley
John N. Irwin	Thomas Hirschfeld
Martin J. Hillenbrand	<i>OST</i>
Ronald L. Spiers	Dr. Edward David
Ralph J. McGuire	<i>OMB</i>
<i>Defense</i>	Kenneth Dam
David Packard	<i>Justice</i>
G. Warren Nutter	John Mitchell
Lawrence S. Eagleburger	
Clayton E. McManaway	

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-107, Verification Panel Minutes Originals, 1969–3/8/72. Top Secret. The meeting took place in the White House Situation Room. Davis forwarded the minutes to Kissinger, Smith, Sonnenfeldt, and Kennedy on October 2 under a covering memorandum. A notation on the covering memorandum dated November 6 reads, “HAK has seen.”

JCS
Adm. Thomas H. Moorer
Maj. Gen. Willis Crittenberger
CIA
Richard Helms
Bruce Clarke

NSC Staff
Dr. Smith
Mr. Hyland
Adm. Welander
Mr. Court
Mr. Hackett

SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS

It was agreed that:

—A preferred U.S. position cannot be ready in time for the Deputy Foreign Ministers Meeting in early October, but we must present something at that meeting. We require a clear elaboration of the options open to us and a specific statement of the mandate the Explorer is to be given. The Working Group will prepare a paper along these lines.

—The U.S. proposal must be reasonable, realistic, attainable and must represent a serious effort.

—The Allies cannot be permitted to use MBFR reductions as a rationale for further cuts of their national forces or defense budgets.

—The Rapacki Plan Area is our first choice of area, but we could accept either the NATO Guidelines Area plus Hungary or the NATO Guidelines Area alone as fallback choices.

—The Explorer should not present alternatives to the Russians. His visit is intended merely to feel them out and ascertain their thinking on MBFR.²

—The Explorer should visit Moscow first, report back to the NATO Foreign Ministers and then go to Eastern Europe only if his Moscow visit showed signs of promise. There appears to be no compelling reason for the Explorer to visit neutral nations and this should not be encouraged.

—Another meeting of the Verification Panel will be held on September 30 to discuss the options to be presented to the Explorer.

Dr. Kissinger: We seem to have three matters to review today in preparation for Jack Irwin's trip to the Deputy Foreign Ministers Meeting at which MBFR approaches to the Soviets will be discussed. The three issues are: (a) the substance of the Alliance position on MBFR that will later be provided as guidance for the MBFR Explorer, (b) the approach Jack is to take at the Deputy Foreign Ministers Meeting and (c) the future actions we should take within the U.S. Government to insure that we and the Alliance are fully prepared to deal with whatever develops.

² The NATO Council appointed Brosio as NATO's "explorer" for talks with the Soviet Union and Warsaw Pact states on MBFR.

The NATO guidelines appear to be pretty unexceptionable. There is no disagreement within the Alliance that reductions are to be mutual and balanced, that they are to be substantial, that they are to be adequately verified and concerned with a specified area and specified type of forces. There is no agreement on what the area is to consist of, what types of forces and what numbers or percentages of them are to be reduced and the relative weight to be given stationed and indigenous forces. I have a personal problem with the idea of an explorer. The Communists are not bashful about letting us know what they think. However, it's a good way to get the ball rolling. Is there anything we don't know about this?

Mr. Irwin: Well, an important factor in these discussions is the domestic situation in this country. We have real pressures in the Congress and in the country for a reduction of forces in Europe, and since we won't be sitting down with the Soviets for some time, this NATO approach provides an important interim step which may help to lessen some of our domestic political pressures. We get something out of it, and it's a good idea even if we can't get much.

Dr. Kissinger: I agree that we should do it, but, as an aside, I'm not in favor of getting into discussions with the Soviets to try to placate Congress. You can win a two week respite from Congressional criticism and end up paying the Soviets for years. When the Communists have a position they will let you know it; they hit you over the head with a baseball bat.

Mr. Packard: I agree we're probably not likely to turn up anything. We should have a position, though. We should know what we want before getting out on a limb.

Mr. Irwin: That's right. We have the problem, though, that our NATO Allies think we haven't been sufficiently forthcoming. They are skeptical that we may see this as a means of unilateral withdrawal and we should be able to present a proposal as soon as possible that will allay some of their fears.

Mr. Packard: We shouldn't get too far out in front.

Adm. Moorer: It's just too early for us to come up with decisions on some of these questions. We need more time to consider all the ramifications and all the possibilities before deciding on the exact area and the exact items to be reduced and on the problem of verification.

Dr. Kissinger: The U.S. role is complicated. On the one hand, our Allies think we're not being candid. On the other, if we press too hard, they may feel we are trying to get out of Europe and are willing to pay any price to do so. They are already suspicious of our financial activities, which they consider a subterfuge to get our troops out. Is anyone from Treasury here?

Mrs. Davis: No one from Treasury is at the meeting.

Mr. Irwin: We should be prepared to discuss alternative options with our allies and to be flexible in our discussions with them.

Mr. Hillenbrand: The NATO countries have been suspicious of our intentions all along. We promised last July to have elements and options papers for their consideration prior to the Deputy Foreign Ministers Meeting, but we have not been able to get them ready in time.

Dr. Kissinger: Why not? (to Wayne Smith) Aren't you working on these papers?

Mr. Smith: We are working on an options paper and I expect to have it ready soon.

Dr. Kissinger: In a couple of weeks?

Mr. Smith: I hope so, but it hasn't been gamed in DOD and I suspect it's weeks away.

Mr. Irwin: Whether or not we have it for the meeting, what I say must be agreed and accurate and we must be willing to live up to it.

Dr. Kissinger: So we have one basic choice to make: do we present them at this meeting with a preferred US position, or would it be better to go one more round, keeping our options open. We might be better off to complete our paper, review it in this group, and then give it to them—even if it hasn't been completely gamed.

Mr. Packard: Maybe not before the Deputy Foreign Ministers' meeting but before the December Ministerial.

Dr. Kissinger: Could we have another meeting of this group before the Deputy Foreign Ministers meeting to review options so we can give them some idea of our thinking, and then give them a detailed paper about three weeks after the meeting?

Mr. Smith: I'd be reluctant to promise the paper before mid-November.

Mr. Packard: I don't think we should put anything out until we are on more solid ground. We might give them an idea of the range of things we are considering.

Dr. Kissinger: I think they are entitled to be told about the options. It will make them very insecure to say we're studying things but won't tell them what we are studying.

Mr. Nutter: They know what we have been thinking about; we have had consultations with them for some time on these questions.

Mr. Hillenbrand: Ambassador (Robert) Ellsworth promised the NATO Allies a paper by July which would contain (a) the elements of an agreement and (b) the specific MBFR options open to us with their implications. We have not delivered to date and it looks as though there will be further delays.

Mr. Smith: We gave them an elements paper last April.³

Mr. Nutter: And we discussed it with them at the end of August.

Dr. Kissinger: I think it's premature to give them our position, but we have to arm Jack (Irwin) with something more than just the comment that we are thinking about the problem. We should be able to give our Allies at least a little clue of what we have been considering and where our explorations have led us, and then follow up with a more complete paper on our position in November.

Mr. Packard: These questions of area and items are very involved. There are some 632 permutations of the ten positions listed in the draft paper. We have to check them out carefully.

Dr. Kissinger: But dammit, we need something that can be understood by more than just six systems analysts.

Mr. Irwin: Our position must be reasonable and realistic. It is important that we present a position that will convince our Congress and the people that we are making a serious effort. I asked about a model the other day and was told our options envisaged cutting 8,000 Pact tanks and 300 NATO tanks.

Adm. Moorer: That's the common ceiling option. It's a good place to start.

Mr. Irwin: We can make a good case for the common ceiling, but the numbers are unrealistic even to the Congress.

Adm. Moorer: It just highlights how much more they have than we do.

Mr. Packard: But we don't want to start with what we want to end with.

Dr. Kissinger: I agree that we must be serious.

Mr. Packard: I don't think we are ready to set out a specific position as the preferred U.S. position. We have to study the complexities of the proposed reductions more carefully.

Dr. Kissinger: (to Irwin) Are you willing to go in without a preferred position?

Mr. Irwin: Yes, if I can say what we are studying.

Mr. Packard: We can work out a range of things.

Dr. Kissinger: (to Irwin) Can we have another session before your departure to go over the options to be discussed with the Allies. If ours is absurd or unrealistic . . .

Mr. Irwin: Unattainable.

³ See Document 47.

Dr. Kissinger: Or unattainable, we can drop it. As I understand it the consensus of this group is not to come down on one preferred position but to put before our Allies the content of our thinking and give them an opportunity to participate in the elaboration of that thinking, within a time schedule. Is that fair?

Mr. Hillenbrand: Our allies are looking for leadership.

Dr. Kissinger: (to Irwin) When are you leaving?

Mr. Irwin: A week from Sunday.

Dr. Kissinger: We'll have another meeting next Thursday.

Now I would like to discuss some of the specific points under consideration. On the question of reduction of stationed versus indigenous forces, as I understand it State views a ratio of two stationed to one indigenous as desirable.

Mr. Irwin: The Allies will insist on indigenous cuts, but I think there should be as wide disparity as possible between those and the cuts in stationed forces. I would rather see U.S. and Soviet forces cut than those of the other countries. It would help our balance of payments and get Soviet troops out of Eastern Europe.

Dr. Kissinger: This makes sense for two reasons, first the most effective Pact forces are the Soviet forces, and second, it pulls the teeth of the burden-sharing argument.

Mr. Irwin: We will probably have to agree to a 10% reduction in indigenous forces but we would try to hold down anything over 10% as much as possible.

Dr. Kissinger: (to Irwin) But you are not going to discuss specific percentages except in terms of options. These are preliminary discussions and we can get into specifics later. The Allies must understand two things: 1) we're not using MBFR as a way to bug out of Europe; and 2) they can help us by letting us use MBFR to show our critics that they are willing to assume a slightly larger burden with slightly increased defense budgets.

Mr. Irwin: That's exactly right.

Dr. Kissinger: They have to understand that a percentage cut cannot be used as a rationale for further cuts in their national forces or budgets. They can't keep playing domestic politics in their countries with NATO force reductions. Our Congress will start cutting our forces.

Mr. Packard: They also have to put a little more emphasis on force improvements. We have to convince them that force improvements would be helpful in this regard.

Mr. Irwin: We should make them maintain the force improvements they've already agreed to.

Mr. Packard: It's not necessary to be quite that restrictive.

Dr. Kissinger: The President has approved the conclusions of the DPRC meeting last August.⁴ We are going to issue a directive which will state that force improvements will be a high priority objective, and that they have been made more necessary by the MBFR discussions.

Adm. Moorer: I'm not sure all of NATO will be included in the 10% cut. We have substantial NATO forces in Turkey, which will be outside the scope of the cut.

Dr. Kissinger: They would be excluded anyway.

Mr. Irwin: We plan to concentrate on Central Europe, although we will not exclude other areas or non-ground forces.

Dr. Kissinger: Without tying it to a particular percentage, we should make a strong point that force improvement packages will be given great weight. Some disparity between cuts in indigenous and stationed forces is essential, and it would seem best to do it on substantive grounds. Would this be a good occasion?

Mr. Irwin: Yes.

Adm. Moorer: We should do as little as possible that might encourage our allies to cut their forces. They will still use improvements as an argument to cut the size of their forces; they do it every time.

Dr. Kissinger: I agree; by logic, they should increase their forces. To use the US cut or force improvements as an excuse to cut their own forces is insanity. It is their defense we are talking about.

Mr. Irwin: I agree, but we're locked in. Our allies feel strongly that if we cut our forces, they have to cut theirs for internal political reasons.

Adm. Moorer: Most of them cut their forces six or seven years ago.

Dr. Kissinger: I've seen an intelligence report recently which said that the Germans are planning more cuts.

Adm. Moorer: The Germans are having manpower problems.

Dr. Kissinger: The next question is that of area. It does not have to be settled now, but I would say that the NATO Guidelines plus Hungary would be the best area from our point of view. It contains the largest number of Soviets forces, therefore would mean the largest cut if it were on a percentage basis. Do the Europeans have any views on this?

Mr. Irwin: My preference would be the Rapacki Plan Area (East and West Germany, Poland and Czechoslovakia). We could then drop back to the NATO Guidelines (East and West Germany, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Benelux) plus Hungary, or NATO Guidelines without Belgium. The Belgian position is that we should either add Hungary or drop Belgium.

⁴ The minutes of the Defense Program Review Committee's meeting of August 4 are scheduled for publication in *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, volume XLI, Western Europe; NATO, 1969–1972.

Dr. Kissinger: Do we have a position on this question? Do we have to take one?

Mr. Irwin: It would be helpful to take a position. If we go to the NATO Guidelines, it would be better to add Hungary.

Mr. Packard: Your position is fine.

Mr. Hillenbrand: Brosio wants as much specific guidance as he can get—he will be pleading for specificity on various points. We can trot out the two possible positions.

Adm. Moorer: There's another—including three districts in the Soviet Union.

Mr. Hillenbrand: NATO isn't thinking in that area now. Why not take a position in favor of the Rapacki Plan area, but indicate we could accept the NATO Guidelines area?

Dr. Kissinger: Why do we like the Rapacki Area?

Mr. Hillenbrand: Mainly because it includes Eastern European countries and only one Western European country.

Dr. Kissinger: This is all assuming symmetrical reductions. We mustn't give the impression that we are limiting our thinking to symmetrical reductions.

Mr. Packard: What about some collateral restraints.

Mr. Irwin: If you include nuclear devices, you would have to add part of the Western USSR.

Adm. Moorer: We can't go one by one; they are all interrelated. We could give Brosio several "for instances" for the Russians, and have the Russians give him some "for instances."

Dr. Kissinger: The trouble with that is that they will pick the wrong one as they did in SALT.

Adm. Moorer: Why not give them one we don't want.

Mr. Hillenbrand: Brosio won't buy an obvious fake.

Dr. Kissinger: When is Brosio starting his tour—in November? The Soviet leaders will all be travelling until then.

Mr. Hillenbrand: Soon after the meeting of the Deputy Foreign Ministers (October 5–6).

Attorney General: Does he want to start negotiations then?

Mr. Hillenbrand: He wants to get an idea of how the Soviets react to the Allied alternatives.

Dr. Kissinger: If you give the Soviets the alternatives, they will pick the wrong one and we may not be able to deliver.

Mr. Hillenbrand: Having the Explorer in motion will be a good counter-thrust to a new Mansfield proposal in the fall. If it's a phony operation that falls flat, we won't have much to argue with.

Dr. Kissinger: Our experience indicates that when you do something to make your life easier in the Senate for four weeks, you pay for it later. You're better off to take the Senate on head on.

Mr. Irwin: I think what Marty (Hillenbrand) is saying is that whatever we do should be seen as being on a serious and rational basis.

Dr. Kissinger: We haven't done our homework on the options. On what basis could Brosio talk options? Why not have him talk principles for negotiation? The Soviets used to like that.

Mr. Packard: Brosio doesn't have to have specifics in his pocket.

Mr. Hillenbrand: Brosio can't make the trip if we give him only the original guidelines and tell him to try to re-sell them.

Dr. Kissinger: What should he have? Could we have a "for instance" as to what he should talk about?

Mr. Hillenbrand: We have ten or so points still at issue. He could talk about as many as we can settle before he goes.

Dr. Kissinger: Such as the area to be considered?

Mr. Hillenbrand: That's right.

Dr. Kissinger: He had better tell them what we want rather than ask them what they want.

Mr. Hillenbrand: To the extent we know what we want.

Dr. Kissinger: If we don't know what we want, why ask them?

Mr. Hillenbrand: The purpose of the Explorer is not to freeze positions but to get an idea of their thinking. He would report back to the December Ministerial meeting on the outcome of his discussions.

Dr. Kissinger: What if the outcome of his discussions proves to be unacceptable?

Mr. Hillenbrand: NATO could reject them. Brandt has already explored Soviet thinking. If we don't do it through Brosio, the countries will start to do it bilaterally.

Dr. Kissinger: They'll do it anyhow. If we can get agreement within the Alliance on the area, I have no objection to his raising it. If the Allies disagree and we ask the Russians for a proposal, we are inviting them to play one country off against another. Brosio's explorations should start only where the Allies agree. Why make the Russians a participant in our internal debates?

Mr. Irwin: He can talk principles or a specific area.

Dr. Kissinger: Can we decide at our meeting next week which countries we want to include in our position? If we can live with any area, I don't mind his putting forth options.

Mr. Packard: We should have some flexibility to permit our allies to participate in the decision.

Dr. Kissinger: Yes. Do I understand correctly that we prefer the Rapaacki Plan Area but can live with any of the three possibilities we have discussed?

Mr. Irwin: I think some people may prefer the NATO Guidelines area, or NATO plus Hungary. Tom (Moorer), what are your reasons for wanting to include the Western USSR. Could you give us your rationalization for that next week?

Adm. Moorer: If you can get more Soviet forces out of the Pact countries, they will have a better chance to attain greater independence. Also, the further eastward we can get Soviet forces to move, the better off we are. They want us to move 3,000 miles.

Dr. Kissinger: How about the relative weight to give to cuts in stationed vs. indigenous forces. What Brosio is to explore should emerge as the concensus from the Deputy Foreign Ministers.

Mr. Irwin: We start from the proposition that any reduction is not helpful to the military situation. We are primarily responding to political pressures.

Dr. Kissinger: For the next meeting, I think we need a clearer elaboration of the options and the issues on which we are prepared to arm the Explorer with a mandate or range of mandates we would be willing to accept.

Mr. Farley: Before we let Brosio talk about stationed and indigenous forces, it might be good to know how he feels about the issue.

Dr. Kissinger: The secret dream of the Europeans is to reverse the proportion.

Mr. Farley: We are giving him pretty thin stuff to go on.

Dr. Kissinger: Is Brosio going to a lot of capitals or just to Moscow?

Mr. Irwin: We need our own ideas on this. Possibly just to Moscow; possibly to the countries where there would be reductions; possibly plus the flank countries; possibly plus some neutrals.

Dr. Kissinger: What neutrals? Like Yugoslavia?

Mr. Irwin: Sweden has been mentioned.

Dr. Kissinger: Why do we give a damn what Sweden thinks about MBFR? Why are we interested in whether the Swedes reduce their forces? Why go there? They're not very friendly to us anyway. I'm worried that we are going to run around and generate so much activity it will be counter-productive. What can the neutrals contribute—Sweden, Switzerland, Yugoslavia?

Mr. Irwin: I don't see the purpose of going to the neutrals.

Attorney General: We should remember the old adage that you shouldn't ask for advice unless you are willing to take it.

Dr. Kissinger: Brosio may have some views, and the negotiator may become the determining force.

Attorney General: The best way to avoid that is to give Brosio as clear instructions as possible.

Dr. Kissinger: He should first consult the Allies at the DFM meeting; then go to the countries on the other side.

Mr. Irwin: If the Soviets wish to, they might designate one person to meet with Brosio for a bilateral discussion.

Dr. Kissinger: We should consider whether we want to validate the Brezhnev doctrine that the Soviets can speak for all of Eastern Europe.

Mr. Irwin: It would be better for Brosio to go to all the countries.

Mr. Nutter: Including East Germany?

Mr. Irwin: He would have to.

Mr. Hillenbrand: We can live with that if he goes to Moscow first. Then he can come back to the Council and receive his instructions on approaches to the other countries. If the Moscow visit is a bust, there's no point in going anywhere else.

Dr. Kissinger: We can live with that.

Mr. Nutter: We have been talking as though Brosio is to be the Explorer. He doesn't have to be the Explorer, we are just assuming that. We want an Explorer who will follow instructions; if Brosio won't, we should get someone else.

Mr. Hillenbrand: Brosio is an excellent choice, he knows the situation thoroughly.

Dr. Kissinger: We should try to settle these issues at our meeting next week. Can we have an input from State and Defense on what we should consider for decision at the next meeting and what we can hold in suspense. We will meet on Thursday morning, September 30.

Attorney General: We should have a paper on guidelines for Brosio.

Mr. Irwin: We will. No Explorer wants to be used as a ploy. Brosio will do anything we ask if it is reasonably based.

Dr. Kissinger: His attitude is very constructive. He's not eager to give anything away. He's a good friend of ours—we couldn't get a better man.

71. Memorandum for the President's File by the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)¹

Washington, September 29, 1971.

SUBJECT

President Nixon's Meeting with USSR Foreign Minister Gromyko on September 29, 1971 from 3:00 p.m. to 4:40 p.m. in the Oval Office of the White House (List of participants is attached)²

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

European Security Conference

On the subject of the situation in Europe, Mr. Gromyko said that he could speak a great deal and at great length. Above all he wanted to emphasize the utmost importance his government attached to the situation in Europe. The Soviet Union wanted conditions there to improve rather than deteriorate and wanted tensions reduced rather than increased. He believed that the agreement on Berlin signed recently created better conditions for such improvement.³ He stressed the need to convene an all-European conference on security. He recalled that last year when he and the President had exchanged views on this subject, the President's attitude had not been negative; however, he also recalled that the President and some other people had taken the point of view that progress on the West Berlin problem was what was needed as a first step. In this connection he had taken note of Secretary Rogers' remarks the other day that more favorable conditions had now appeared for convening an all-European security conference.⁴ He hoped that the Government of the United States would now take a more definite stand in favor of this conference, and just as he had done last year, he would like to emphasize again that in calling for such an all-European conference the Soviet Union was not looking for any unilateral advantage. His government believes that a conference of that type

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 492, President's Trip Files, Dobrynin/Kissinger, 1971, Vol. 7, Pt. 1. Secret; Nodis. The full text of this memorandum is scheduled for publication in *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, volume XIII, Soviet Union, October 1970–October 1971.

² Attached but not printed. The participants included Nixon, Rogers, Kissinger, and William Krimer (interpreter) from the U.S. side and Gromyko, Dobrynin, and Sukhodrev (interpreter) from the Soviet side.

³ See Document 68.

⁴ Telegram 2877 from USUN, September 25, contains a record of Rogers's conversation with Gromyko on September 24. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL US–USSR)

would be useful for all European countries as well as for the United States and Canada as prospective participants in this conference. He was saying this because the President, also, had repeatedly said that he advocated a relaxation of tensions throughout the world in general and in Europe in particular. He would like to hear the President's views on this score.

The President said that the Foreign Minister had been correct in indicating that now that we had made progress on the Berlin problem, we could look more favorably upon consideration of other European questions on which we might make some progress. He believed that once the Berlin situation had been completely resolved, and he understood that there were still some actions that needed to be taken for that purpose, then exploration of a conference could proceed. He felt that on this subject it would be very important for the two major powers to have preliminary discussions before conferring with our respective friends in NATO and in the Warsaw Pact. By this he did not mean that we would not consult with our friends, but for the two powers to participate in a conference without knowing how we would come out of it would not be realistic. He believed that after the Berlin matter had been settled completely we should on a very confidential basis discuss between us what such a conference would mean and what we expected to come out of it. Of course, neither one of us should act without consulting and agreeing with our friends, but if we were simply to proceed to hold a big conference, it might turn out to be something like a United Nations gathering.

Secretary Rogers said that Mr. Gromyko had the other day suggested convening a preliminary meeting for the purpose of planning a conference on European security. The Secretary had replied that such a preliminary meeting was likely itself to take on the character of a conference. If we were to do any preliminary preparatory work, it would have to be done on a private basis between our two countries. As the President had said, we needed to have some idea of the possible outcome of such a conference.

Mr. Gromyko inquired whether he had understood correctly that what the President had in mind were bilateral consultations on a bloc basis between NATO and the Warsaw Pact powers. The Soviet Union was ready to enter upon consultations of some aspects of this conference, its preparation and its possible outcome. He asked whether upon his return to Moscow he could report to his government that the U.S. Government was, in principle, in favor of convening a European conference. If so, the Soviet Union would be ready to proceed to discuss the questions of procedures, agenda, place and time, and this could be done without any further delay. He had in mind that preliminary consultations would be held for these purposes in the immediate future and that the conference would be convened next year. He asked

whether he could report this as being the President's view when he returned to Moscow or whether the President would care to clarify the U.S. position further.

The President said that he would prefer for the Foreign Minister to report the following: The United States would be willing to discuss the setting up of a European security conference provided that our discussions would indicate that such a conference would serve a useful purpose which we would proceed to implement. When he had spoken of bilateral consultations, he was not referring to anything formal—he had had in mind some private conversations between our two countries that would answer some questions in our mind and some in the mind of the Soviet side. He believed Mr. Gromyko could report to Moscow that now that we had moved on Berlin, we should begin some preliminary discussions of this matter with the purpose of holding a conference that both sides would agree would serve a useful purpose. He was certain that neither side wanted to hold a conference just for the sake of the conference itself.

Secretary Rogers remarked that the discussions between the two Germanies were not as yet complete. The President noted that he had intended to qualify his remarks by saying "When the Berlin thing was wrapped up." Secretary Rogers expressed the hope that the German negotiations would proceed without difficulty.

Mr. Gromyko said that, in principle, he believed that the fewer conditions were set for convening the conference, the better. It was his feeling that if everything was lumped into one knot, this would complicate matters and lead us astray. Was he correct in understanding that the President had said that the United States would be ready to proceed to preliminary consultations without publicity and in the near future?

The President believed that in terms of preliminary private talks that was something we could do. However, he believed it important that in no circumstances any indication be given of a *fait accompli*. He did not want to create the impression that today, at this meeting, we had decided that such a conference would be convened. We should rather confine ourselves to saying that discussions could take place that would lead to a conference. As Secretary Rogers had said, getting the rest of the German question out of the way was most important before anything surfaced. It was this surfacing problem that was predominant. Mr. Gromyko inquired again whether the U.S. would be ready for a private exchange of views in the near future. The President said that would not concern him. After all, we had already had some private exchanges on this subject. He would emphasize that we were not trying to pressure the Soviet Union in regard to the German treaty. We did have a problem while the German talks were in

progress, but if preliminary talks were kept strictly private, this might be possible.⁵

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

⁵ On the evening of September 30, Gromyko followed up on his discussion with Nixon on European security in a conversation with Kissinger at the Soviet Embassy. A memorandum of their conversation reads in part: "Gromyko then turned to European security and said the Soviet Union was prepared for preliminary exchanges. He was a little puzzled by the fact that the President had told him the day before, when they were alone, that I would handle the discussions, while Rogers had told him at lunch that he would handle the preliminary discussions. I said that the best way to conduct it would be to have technical matters handled between Dobrynin and Rogers and major substantive issues between Dobrynin and me. But it was essential for these divisions to be carried through without an attempt at playing them off. Gromyko said, 'Exactly our view.'" (Ibid., Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 492, President's Trip Files, Dobrynin/Kissinger, 1971, Vol. 7, Pt. 1) The full text of the memorandum of conversation is scheduled for publication in *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, volume XIII, Soviet Union, October 1970–October 1971.

72. Draft Minutes of a Verification Panel Meeting¹

Washington, September 30, 1971, 2:55–3:55 p.m.

Dr. Kissinger: I think we should go through the issues before us both for the Deputy Foreign Ministers Meeting and to develop guidance for the Explorer.

Mr. Irwin: Before we get into specific issues, I'd like to express a few thoughts. We have been partly motivated in talking about symmetrical reductions by two needs.

Dr. Kissinger: Who is "we"? The State Department?

Mr. Irwin: That's right. We—the State Department—see first the matter of Congressional pressure and the need for some forward movement to withstand the next Mansfield attack. We have been inclined to make a domestic political judgment on this question. Now we may be wrong in that estimate, and if so, it may not be necessary to move so quickly. If our estimate of the importance of heading off Mansfield is wrong, that would put a different cast on the situation. The second

¹ Ford Library, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Meeting Minutes (Originals), Verification Panel, 1971–75. No classification marking. Drafted by Commander Jonathan T. Howe, USN, of the NSC staff. Handwritten corrections have been incorporated into the text printed here.

need, we believe, is to show our NATO allies some leadership from our side. If we don't do so, the NATO countries will drag their feet. The British are not enthusiastic about MBFR, nor are the French. The tempo of the scenario will come from our efforts. No, I don't say that we must present a preferred position. But if we do go in with a preferred position, the pace will be up to us. If we want to move slower, we can go in with options. I see no problem in just going to the meeting and speaking to the issues before us, but I would like some guidance on the overall tenor I am to take. Without getting into specifics, what are our general views on the basic points?

Dr. Kissinger: When Gromyko met with the President yesterday,² I don't recall that he mentioned MBFR at all. I don't think the Russians will be pushing MBFR hard, if at all. When I saw (Manlio) Brosio the other day,³ he told me that he did not feel that he needed a preferred position or that we needed one, but that he wanted some general guidance. Of course, you all have equal access to Brosio and you may have more to add to that. We are not under enormous pressure from Brosio. He doesn't need a preferred U.S. position to validate our claim to leadership. I think the best way to lead NATO is to tell them what we think is right. They will have their own ideas, but we should tell them what we think and then ought to go as fast as our analysis permits.

Mr. Irwin: I agree with your interpretation of Brosio's views. He does not feel that he needs a decision on the options, only on the specific issues that are outlined in the issues paper.⁴ It comes down to the question of where we want to go. Perhaps this comes back to a reading of the motivation of Congress, that we need a reduction of forces in Europe. If that pressure is not too great, perhaps we don't have to move so fast.

Dr. Kissinger: My instinct is that the President has pretty well decided to do what he thinks is right and will do things as fast as he can. If Congress wants to take the responsibility for going faster, fine. Mansfield won't be satisfied by a 10% reduction.

Mr. Nutter: We have known all along that we were going to face one thing after another from Mansfield, but Secretary Laird feels that we can fight Mansfield on this issue and are in a good position to beat it.

Dr. Kissinger: Why don't we give NATO more of our studies and let them know what we are thinking?

² See Document 71.

³ No memorandum of Kissinger's conversation with Brosio has been found.

⁴ Not found.

Mr. Irwin: We are way behind on the studies; we don't have them to give to our allies.

Dr. Kissinger: Well, we have some information; can we give them an interim report? Why can't we let them know as much as this panel knows? If it leaks to the Russians, it will take them years to understand it.

Mr. Irwin: My third point is a desire to clarify what we consider negotiable from our point of view. Some of the asymmetrical ideas that have been considered are not necessarily negative. Why don't we discuss the specifics of some of these points?

Dr. Kissinger: We should be able to present some kind of paper to our allies. They will get nervous if we don't give them anything.

Mr. Irwin: Well, we are held up because we haven't been able to give them the papers we hoped to have ready. Shall we consider a symmetrical reduction of 10% as a starting point?

Dr. Kissinger: I don't detect a consensus. People talk about 10% only because it is an easy figure to fasten on. We really don't know what is in our best interests and we won't know until the studies are complete. We did the same thing on SALT. We all sat in this room and agreed on NCA and I still don't understand the rationale that led us to that decision.

Mr. Nutter: We asked Brosio if the Europeans were really itching to have a preferred position and he indicated that they were not.

Dr. Kissinger: (to Mr. Corr) Weren't we going to have a paper completed in October?

Mr. Corr: We did hope to have a paper ready by mid-October, but I think we will need another two weeks. We should have something by early November.

Dr. Kissinger: Then what is it the allies want now?

Mr. Eagleburger: They would like a finished paper.

Mr. Irwin: I would like to have a list of everything we promised them with our best estimate of when each paper will be ready. Can I have that before I leave?

Mr. Eagleburger: Fine.

Dr. Kissinger: They want us to lead, whatever that means in their own minds, and at the same time they are concerned that we are moving toward unilateral disarmament in Europe. Can't we reassure them that we are not going to withdraw unilaterally?

Mr. Irwin: I'm not at all sure that they really want us to "lead."

Mr. Springsteen: We have to demonstrate some initiative. If we don't lead, no one will. The Europeans are not going to take the initiative themselves.

Dr. Kissinger: That's the problem.

Mr. Irwin: Brosio told me he thought that all of the allies would agree to the reduction of stationed forces while retaining their indigenous forces.

Mr. Eagleburger: That's not exactly the way he stated it to us. Brosio told us the Europeans would want to reduce stationed forces first but that they would not rule out the subsequent reduction of indigenous forces.

Mr. Springsteen: Yes, that's the way we understood it. (Helmut) Schmidt told us recently that he would like to cut some of his own forces.

Dr. Kissinger: I am sure that Schmidt would like to cut his own forces. Germany is not noted for its foresight in such matters.

Mr. Irwin: We should avoid that if we can.

Dr. Kissinger: We should stop fooling around and tell the Europeans that the force improvement package is as important as any cuts we can arrange through MBFR.

Mr. Nutter: It would be terribly naive if the Germans were to cut their national forces, using MBFR reductions as an excuse.

Dr. Kissinger: It would not be the first time the Germans have taken shortsighted actions.

Mr. Irwin: We should move ahead with our studies as rapidly as possible and show our good faith to our allies. We ought to demonstrate to them that we are not backing away from MBFR. Now I know that there is one voice in State that disagrees with this position. Sy (Weiss) feels that any cut at all would be damaging to us—(to Weiss) would you like to explain your views?

Mr. Weiss: Well, in the first place, we have been talking about reductions of 20%, not 10%, and 20% would resound like a bombshell in Europe. It would be hard for us to justify a reduction of that level on either political or military grounds. If we don't press an emphasis on stationed troops, the Europeans could buy a slow approach to MBFR.

Gen. Westmoreland: I share that view.

Dr. Kissinger: I have six points here that we should consider. 1. the geographic area of reductions, 2. the type of forces to be cut, 3. nationality of forces, stationed versus indigenous, 4. the type of reduction, symmetrical or asymmetrical, 5. verification, with or without inspection, and 6. phasing, a sequential approach such as that favored by the Germans, or not.

Now on the geographic area, I understand that State prefers the Rapacki plan area while the Joint Chiefs of Staff prefer the NATO guidelines area. Is that right?

Gen. Westmoreland: That's right, we prefer the guidelines area as a starting position.

Dr. Kissinger: State would prefer the addition of Hungary to the guidelines area.

Mr. Irwin: I have no strong preference for the Rapacki area but I think the Germans would not agree to it and that it may not be a negotiable position for us to adopt.

Dr. Kissinger: Can't we agree among ourselves on what is intellectually best from our point of view, regardless of whether or not it is negotiable? Let's leave the question of negotiability aside for the moment. Why is the guidelines area preferable to the Rapacki plan area?

Mr. Irwin: I think what is negotiable is very important.

Dr. Kissinger: Exactly what does the guidelines area include?

Mr. Sonnenfeldt: The two Germanys, Poland, Czechoslovakia and Benelux. It is the Rapacki area plus Benelux.

Mr. Nutter: The Rapacki area provides a better ratio of their forces to ours, but if you ask for too much they (the Russians) may lose interest right at the beginning of the discussions.

Dr. Kissinger: I am surprised that the JCS did not ask for the Rapacki area and the three western provinces of the Soviet Union.

Mr. Irwin: The Explorer is not to go into specifics such as these.

Dr. Kissinger: Why do the Belgians want Hungary included?

Mr. Sonnenfeldt: I don't know that the Belgians are pressing for it. It is just that the inclusion of Hungary would balance the numbers of forces. It would be a better trade-off.

Dr. Kissinger: Is there a consensus that we can live with either the guidelines and Hungary or with just the guidelines?

Mr. Irwin: We can live with any of them.

Dr. Kissinger: Isn't this a good position for us to be in? We think the Rapacki plan provides the best ratio, but we can live with any of them. I don't think Brosio would go to the Russians and talk about the three western provinces of the USSR. What do the Europeans think?

Mr. Weiss: The Netherlands favors the Rapacki area, all the others favor the guidelines.

Dr. Kissinger: Isn't it better for us to take the position that we consider best? Then if the allies protest we can go to the guidelines. I don't understand what the Germans get out of the guidelines that would make them prefer it to the Rapacki area.

Mr. Nutter: They don't want to be the only Western country to have reductions take place on their soil. Our reading is that several countries favor the Rapacki area, including Canada, Italy, the Netherlands and Portugal, in addition to us. Benelux and the British favor the guidelines.

Mr. Irwin: If we go outside the guidelines area, we may open the door to other countries being added.

Mr. Sonnenfeldt: Well, if Brosio tosses out Italy as a talking point and the Russians say O.K. to Italy, he doesn't have to agree to it.

Dr. Kissinger: Now on the type of forces, as I understand it the question is whether naval forces are to be included.

Mr. Irwin: I don't think the navy represents much of a problem. The big question is nuclear. As I understand our positions, there is not much difference between State and Defense on this point. We (State) would like to go to the meeting and say that nuclear items are not excluded from consideration. The Department of Defense would be more negative and say nothing at all about them, but then what do you say if the question is raised?

Dr. Kissinger: If we want to keep open the possibility of asymmetrical reductions, we must keep open a number of options that we have not seriously considered. Tactical nukes for example. [*1½ lines not declassified*] so if the possibility of including them in an asymmetrical reduction arises, we should be prepared to keep it open.

Mr. Nutter: [*1½ lines not declassified*]

Dr. Kissinger: We should tell the allies that we don't rule out other options.

Mr. Irwin: I would rather say that they would not necessarily be excluded.

Dr. Kissinger: I am not interested in the semantics, say it any way you wish.

Gen. Westmoreland: If nuclear weapons are discussed, I consider it essential that we also discuss the western districts of the USSR.

Dr. Kissinger: Yes, if we get into tactical nukes we should discuss the western districts of Russia. Didn't we have an SRG meeting that considered nuclear reductions?⁵

Mr. Corr: Yes, the question was discussed at an SRG meeting.

Dr. Kissinger: What happened to that study?

Mr. Corr: It's one of the options in our paper.

Mr. Weiss: If we get into tactical nukes we have to differentiate between weapons in the theater and those which may be brought in with outside units.

Mr. Irwin: I'm sorry, but I have to go up to Congress in a few minutes to talk about my trip.

⁵ Not further identified.

Dr. Kissinger: We'll move along. On the question of the size and type of reductions to be considered, we are not going to be specific and must inform the Europeans that we are not negotiating under pressure from Senator Mansfield. We don't need a specific position. We have seen enough changes of Russian positions to know that they are flexible. Now what about phasing?

Mr. Irwin: I think we want to begin in a phased manner.

Mr. Nutter: We are studying this point but are not ready to discuss it yet.

Dr. Kissinger: Can we agree that we are not to exclude inspection? Do we all agree that inspection by national means is acceptable?

Gen. Cushman: We should try to get on-site inspection.

Mr. Irwin: I agree it is something we should try to get.

Gen. Cushman: It may be extremely hard to verify force reductions by national means. I would urge a major effort to get on-site inspection.

Dr. Kissinger: Let's discuss a possible link between MBFR and CES. We will be issuing a NSSM shortly for a study of CES. The President is very uneasy to get involved in discussions about a European security agreement until we have carefully studied the whole question and know where we are going. He does not want MBFR and CES linked. He is concerned about the disproportion between Soviet eagerness to push a European security agreement and what they talk about wanting to get out of it. There must be something else they want and until we have a clearer idea what it is, the President wants to avoid it. (to Mr. Irwin) The President has already presented his thoughts on this to the Secretary (of State). Gromyko raised this yesterday at his meeting with the President and the President said he wanted to keep CES and MBFR separate.

Mr. Irwin: OSD wants to keep them on separate tracks, but for how long, forever?

Dr. Kissinger: I don't know about forever, but we want to keep them separate for now. I don't care if it is for all time or not, so long as they are not linked now.

Mr. Irwin: So if CES is raised I should pass?

Dr. Kissinger: It is better to keep aloof on this matter. For one thing, the German treaties have to be concluded before we can get into this.

Mr. Springsteen: Are we to avoid multi-lateral discussions on this subject too?

Mr. Sonnenfeldt: At least until the Berlin agreement.

Dr. Kissinger: Gromyko was so interested in CES that we want a NSSM on it. Multi-lateral talks are not necessarily excluded but the President does *not* want to push forward on a European Security Treaty.

(to Mr. Sonnenfeldt) We ought to get moving on that NSSM. (to Mr. Irwin) Jack, we want to have our options paper ready for the ministerial meeting, when is it to be held?

Mr. Springsteen: It will be in Brussels on December 8, 9 and 10. What about the elements paper, when can we expect it?

Mr. Eagleburger: That's already done. You have the elements paper.⁶

Dr. Kissinger: We need something on the nuclear options as well as a paper to cover general questions. We should have an NSC meeting on it before December.

Gen. Westmoreland: If we take a reduction as small as 10% it will be disadvantageous to us. That would, in effect, wipe out our reserves. The Warsaw Pact countries can move their reserves on line in 16 days, with a 10% reduction it will take us 60 to 90 days, and will hurt our position. I would like to see us get a fixed numerical reduction and avoid the percentages.

Dr. Kissinger: There is no dispute that any reduction will reduce our military effectiveness, but I agree that we don't necessarily have to go along with a percentage reduction.

Mr. Irwin: Well, this is something we can explore. A firm position isn't necessary at this point.

⁶ See Document 47 and footnote 4, Document 65.

73. National Security Decision Memorandum 134¹

Washington, October 2, 1971.

TO

The Secretary of State
The Secretary of Defense

SUBJECT

Policy Guidance on Mutual and Balanced Force Reductions

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 364, Subject Files, National Security Decision Memoranda (NSDMs), Nos. 97–144. Top Secret. Copies were sent to the Attorney General, the Director of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Director of Central Intelligence, and the Secretary of the Treasury.

The President has reviewed the results of the Verification Panel meeting of September 30, 1971,² and the memoranda prepared by the Under Secretary of State³ and the Secretary of Defense.⁴ He wishes the following guidance to be followed at the meeting of the Deputy Foreign Ministers in Brussels and in all other consultations and discussions with our NATO on the subject of Mutual and Balanced Force Reductions (MBFR).

1. *General Approach to MBFR*

We seriously seek to achieve a more stable military balance in Europe at lower levels of forces. Therefore, the U.S. endorses the Alliance's exploration with the Warsaw Pact of the framework for possible mutual force limitations and reductions. In this regard it is critical that our Allies understand that further improvements in NATO's conventional forces are integral to successful MBFR negotiations as well as the U.S. commitment to maintain its forces in Europe.

The U.S. has not yet arrived at a preferred approach to mutual reductions. For this reason, our approach shall be to hold open for consideration alternative approaches ranging from limited symmetrical reductions to more elaborate verification provisions and collateral constraints. Our objective shall be for an Alliance consensus on negotiations to arise out of a careful and systematic consideration of the full range of possible approaches to MBFR.

2. *The U.S. Position for Explorations*

The U.S. position on the specific framework for explorations shall be as follows:

—At this time, the United States has the following order of preference with respect to the area of reductions: (1) the Rapacki Area, (2) the NATO Guidelines Area plus Hungary, and (3) the NATO Guidelines Area. These preferences are without prejudice to possible force reductions or limitations that may involve other areas.

—The United States favors initial emphasis on the reduction of Soviet and American (or stationed forces) in size and timing. Indigenous force reductions should, however, not be excluded from reduction.

—The United States would prefer not to exclude particular types of forces from consideration, though it recognizes that as long as the focus is on the Center Region, naval forces should not be considered.

² See Document 72.

³ Scheduled for publication in *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, volume XLI, Western Europe; NATO, 1969–1972.

⁴ Laird's memorandum to Kissinger, September 29, is in the National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-009, Verification Panel Meeting MBFR 9/30/71.

—We are unable at this time to indicate preferences on the size and type of reductions; the broad categories of options being considered within the U.S. government, however, may be described to our Allies to illustrate the direction and scope of our current preparations. It should be made clear, however, that our considerations shall not be limited to these options nor should they be interpreted as representing the preferred U.S. approach to MBFR.

—At this time, we cannot exclude the need for inspection, since this decision would depend on the type and size of reductions.

—We should indicate to our Allies our interest in a more thorough evaluation of the German phased approach to MBFR, and our disposition to consider this general concept favorably.

On the issue of the relationship of mutual force reductions to a European Security Conference, U.S. officials should indicate that we believe these two issues should not be linked at this time, especially in any exploratory discussion of MBFR with Warsaw Pact countries. Moreover, we cannot agree to any preliminary or exploratory multilateral talks on a European Conference, at least until the Berlin agreements come into force and until we have gained a better understanding of what a Conference might achieve in terms of U.S. interests.

3. Further Preparations

In preparation for further consultations, it will be necessary to accelerate our formulation of specific MBFR options and a thorough assessment of their implications. In particular,

—The formulation of a full range of specific options shall be completed by October 8, 1971. In this regard, it will be necessary to consider again the design of appropriate asymmetrical and/or mixed package options.

—The assessments of the military implications of these nuclear and conventional options shall be completed by October 15, 1971. In regard to nuclear options, a special effort will have to be made to assess a variety of nuclear doctrines, the forces required in Europe, and the MBFR options consistent with them.

—The general assessments of collateral constraints and the verification measures required as well as their application to specific options should be completed by October 22, 1971.

These preparations shall be carried out by the agencies responsible under the overall direction of the Verification Panel. Following their completion, an overall assessment of the options shall be completed by early November prior to its consideration by the President in a NSC meeting in preparation for the December Ministerial meetings in NATO.

Henry A. Kissinger

74. National Security Study Memorandum 138¹

Washington, October 2, 1971.

TO

The Secretary of State
The Secretary of Defense

SUBJECT

European Security Conference

The President has directed that an interagency study be prepared to examine all the issues related to a Conference on European Security. Taking account of studies submitted to NATO as well as known Soviet proposals, the study should discuss differing concepts of such a conference and what US objectives might be under alternative concepts.

The study should address such specific issues as

- various methods for preparing a conference;
- possible agenda items, including possible US initiatives;
- the possible modalities of a conference;
- possible outcomes of a conference and follow-up actions to it (e.g., the question of “permanent machinery”).

In discussing the issues associated with a conference, the study should not be limited to matters already agreed within NATO in its preparations to date.

The study should include consideration of the views of our NATO allies and of other European states and it should discuss the probable aims of the USSR and of other Warsaw Pact members.

The study should examine how the US posture toward a conference might be affected by developments in such related areas as the Berlin agreement, the status of the Soviet-German treaty, MBFR and SALT.

The study should be prepared by the Interdepartmental Group for Europe and be submitted for consideration by the NSC Senior Review Group by November 1, 1971.

Henry A. Kissinger

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 365, Subject Files, National Security Study Memoranda (NSSMs), Nos. 104–206. Secret. Initialed by Haig. Copies were sent to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Director of Central Intelligence.

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

Washington, October 21, 1971.

SUBJECT

Secretary Laird's Memorandum to the President on MBFR, CES (Tab B)²
(Urgent: he is leaving this weekend.)

Secretary Laird has expressed his fear that MBFR may become subsumed in a CES, as many Europeans prefer. If so, he believes the entire MBFR project will become wholly unmanageable. Therefore he asks the President to approve his intended statement to the NATO Nuclear Planning Group next week, that "under present and foreseeable circumstances the US will not agree to negotiate MBFR at a CES."

This memorandum presents some problems. It is an obvious effort to freeze positions, without reference to State, even though the President has publicly given Secretary Rogers the mandate for CES consultations. Moreover, it ignores the fact that we have asked for a NSSM on CES;³ including the very issue of linkage between MBFR and CES. Finally, it advocates a rigid position, which, in fact, we may want to change in light of the summit and whatever comes out of private discussions.

Therefore, I have prepared a memorandum from Mr. Kissinger⁴ to Secretary Laird approving his proposed position, but asking him not to make any statement that would preclude some MBFR–CES linkage if that should become unavoidable.

(Frankly, I am inclined to think that by putting MBFR into a CES context we might, if we want to, be able to postpone a negotiation that is going to be extremely difficult and dangerous, and I will send Mr. Kissinger a memo on this issue.)

Recommendation

That you sign the memorandum to the President at Tab A.⁵

¹ Source: Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box CL 17, Chronological File. Secret; Sensitive. Sent for urgent action.

² Laird's October 19 memorandum to the President is attached but not printed.

³ Document 73.

⁴ Sonnenfeldt wrote in by hand the phrase, "or you."

⁵ Attached but not printed. Haig did not sign the draft memorandum to the President, but checked the approval line and wrote, "Done—Defense told to send copy of summary to State."

(Note: Laird's memo did *not* go to Rogers. State people will be on Laird's delegation and they may see our response. Hence you should get Laird to send a copy of his memo to Rogers and also send our response to the latter.)⁶

⁶ On October 22, Haig sent Laird a memorandum, copied to Rogers: "The President has reviewed your memorandum on these subjects, and the position you propose to take at the Nuclear Planning Group meeting. He approves the points you intend to make, but wishes that you not make any statements that would deny us the option of having some linkage between MBFR and a European Conference, should this be unavoidable or desirable later. These issues will be considered further in connection with the NSC study requested in NSSM 138." (Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box CL 17, Chronological File)

76. Paper Prepared by the National Security Council Staff¹

Washington, undated.

NSSM 138²
A CONFERENCE ON EUROPEAN SECURITY
(ANALYTICAL SUMMARY)

I. Assumptions, Objectives: CES Perspective

Following is a capsule summary of the present state of play:

—We and the Allies have a commitment to begin *multilateral phase* of preparations for a Conference "as soon as feasible" after completion of the Berlin agreements (all phases);

—Acceleration of Berlin talks makes CES a live issue; decisions at this NATO session and in the next 2–3 months will determine the direction of Allied policy.

—Almost all West Europeans favor CES in some degree; French are willing to begin preparations now; Germans committed to "accelerate" preparations, but will not do so until Berlin is wrapped up, and preferably until their treaties are ratified; British inclined to believe CES is an unavoidable evil, to be disposed of as quickly as possible.

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-063, SRG Meeting, European Security Conference 11/23/71. Secret. The paper is an analytical summary of an undated response to NSSM 138, prepared by the Interdepartmental Working Group on Europe (IG/EUR). (Ibid.)

² Document 74.

As it now stands, the Soviets will make some clear gains in such a Conference: ratification of political and territorial status quo in East Europe, greater influence in West Europe, possible deepening of trends toward American withdrawal, etc.

—On the other hand, East Europeans—Romania, Yugoslavia, and perhaps Poland—want a conference to create psychological barriers to the Brezhnev doctrine.

Our objectives: (assuming a Conference is inevitable)

- To avoid allowing issues of a Conference to split US from Allies;
- Minimize damage to Alliance that flows from atmospherics of détente;
- Institutionalize US role as European power and participant in the East-West dialogue;
- Provide some help for East Europeans.

II. Alternative Approaches to CES

Assuming the US could delay, but not arrest, movement toward CES, *there follow three illustrative approaches:*

1. CES as Now Envisaged

- a. A Conference for the sake of détente;
 - b. A Conference making some concessions but protecting Western interests.
2. A Conference on European Cooperation (i.e., without security issues).
 3. A New Approach—designed mainly to emphasize security issues and follow on machinery.

A. CES as Now Envisaged

1. The Agenda

Warsaw Pact

1. Force renunciation and respect for existing borders;
2. Economic, scientific, technical, cultural and environmental cooperation;
3. A permanent “organ” for questions of security and cooperation in Europe.

NATO

1. Principles which should govern relations between states, including renunciation of the use of force;
2. (a) Economic, scientific, technical, cultural and environmental cooperation; (b) Freer movement of people, ideas and information;
3. *Possible* establishment of a permanent body (though publicly stated to date only as a means of embarking on multilateral negotiations).

Pact and Allied positions on these items are:

a. *Principles Governing Relations Between States.* The core of the conference, from the Soviet viewpoint, is the first Warsaw Pact agenda item which would pledge respect for existing frontiers in Europe and force renunciation. To broaden the scope of this item, NATO Ministers proposed that CES discussions should treat, in addition to force renunciation, general principles governing interstate relations, such as sovereign equality, political independence and territorial integrity, non-interference and non-intervention in internal affairs. Allied Ministers have affirmed that these principles would apply “regardless of political and social systems.”

A declaration that reaffirmed such principles in a conference where the GDR was a full participant could have adverse implications for Quadripartite rights and responsibilities in Germany as a whole and Berlin, as could a declaration on frontiers. There would have to be disclaimer about non-recognition of the GDR and about non-recognition of frontiers by US, UK and France.

b. *Cooperation.* None expect that CES could negotiate specific agreements on economic, technical and scientific exchanges or environmental cooperation, though some believe discussions in CES, and also in a permanent body established by CES, might stimulate bilateral and multilateral efforts, as in ECE.

c. *Freer Movements of People, Ideas and Information.* The Soviets would resist any concrete concessions in this area, though there are tactical and propaganda advantages in keeping the issue in play, and there might be some significant Soviet concessions, if the Allies press firmly. We have suggested that the Allies, at CES and preliminaries, urge the Warsaw Pact states to:

- end radio jamming;
 - relax exit restrictions on their nationals;
 - permit freer circulation of books, magazines and periodicals;
- and
- allow foreign journalists normal working conditions.

Many Allies, however, would prefer to treat only easier issues, seeking initially little more than minor improvements in the closely controlled programs of East-West cultural exchanges, and hoping reduced tensions following CES would abet further progress.

d. *Permanent Machinery.* The Pact in June 1970 proposed that CES create a permanent “organ” to discuss questions of security and cooperation.³

³ See Document 30.

An illustrative US proposal (Annex I),⁴ tabled but not yet discussed in NATO, suggested that either a permanent secretariat, or a negotiating forum with procedures roughly similar to those of the Committee of the Conference on Disarmament (CCD) might be considered. A permanent body could not assume meaningful responsibility for maintenance of European security, but could open the way toward a continuing East-West dialogue.

2. *Procedural Approaches*

We prefer careful explorations followed, if appropriate, by more structured preparatory talks, at official level, that would draft agreed texts, leaving a minimum of disputed points for resolution at a short Ministerial conference.

The French favor shorter preparatory talks mainly on procedure and not on draft texts of possible agreement, leading to an initial meeting where Foreign Ministers would discuss the issues and establish official-level working groups. Thereafter, Foreign Ministers would reconvene to negotiate themselves the questions unresolved by the working groups. The French have gained more Allied support for this approach, which is consistent with France's general preference to enhance the appearance of an independent status in relations with the East.

3. *Possible Results of CES as Now Conceived: Two Variants:*

a. *A Conference for the Sake of Détente.* After extensive discussions touching only marginally on fundamental East-West differences, Ministers would agree on declaratory texts on general themes that do not bind participants to specific actions, and that

—affirm generally accepted principles governing relations between states, including force renunciation and respect for existing frontiers;

—declare the intent of participants to promote cooperation in all fields; and

—establish a permanent body.

Participants might also express their views on regional disarmament questions, including MBFR.

Assessment. This approach, in effect, accepts the Soviet concept. The likely results would meet immediate political goals of the Soviet Union and Eastern Europeans, and corresponds to the current aims of France, most neutrals, and the smaller, more détente-oriented Allies states. Once an inter-German modus vivendi is reached, the FRG, too,

⁴ Not attached. The reference is apparently to a proposal transmitted in telegram 160785 to USNATO, September 1, on possible post-CES machinery. (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-063, SRG Meeting, European Security Conference 11/23/71)

will likely seek to enhance the détente climate by avoiding confrontation with the East.

b. *A Conference Making Some Concessions but Protecting Western Interests.* In this damage-limiting approach, the Allies would decline to meet major Soviet aims, including a declaration of respect for existing frontiers, unless the Soviets also make significant concessions, agreeing, for example, to freer movement. Preparatory sessions would be prolonged and probably marked by heated discussions, reflected in media reporting. Substantively, the conference might result in

- a compromise, in which the Soviets make some concrete concessions on freer movement and accept a declaration on principles that would apply regardless of political or social systems, while the Allies agree to a formulation pledging “respect” for existing European frontiers;
- modest Soviet concessions on freer movement;
- agreement to pursue issues of economic and technical cooperation; and
- establishment of permanent machinery.

Assessment. Some minimum goals of major participants would be met as a result of public reports of East-West debates in the course of CES, and the results of the conference would be portrayed as Western acceptance of the territorial situation in Eastern Europe, but not Soviet political domination.

B. *A Conference on Cooperation in Europe*

An alternative CES approach could entail *limiting the agenda of the meeting to issues of cooperation in the economic, technical, scientific, cultural and environmental spheres*. Issues of security, including renunciation of the use of force and principles governing interstate relations would be specifically excluded, and the title of the conference changed.

The conference would result in declarations of intent to promote cooperation, leaving detailed agreements to subsequent bilateral and multilateral negotiations in other fora.

Assessment. The Soviets would probably resist an Allied proposal to change the terms of reference and to make such a change publicly clear. They might charge the Allies with bad faith, noting repeated public statements in NATO Ministerial communiqués of willingness to begin preparations for a “conference on security and cooperation in Europe” under proper circumstances. Most Allied governments might also oppose such a change, fearing charges from important sectors of domestic opinion that NATO was reneging on a commitment at the very moment when fulfillment of the precondition (a satisfactory Berlin agreement) seemed in sight.

Comment: The idea that we can limit damage by introducing contentious issues such as freer movement of peoples, etc., is probably an illusion. Once Soviets pocket concessions about frontiers, non-use of

force, etc., they have achieved their purpose and will probably be able to resist any major change in intra European cooperation. Damage-limiting strategy which is in effect our current policy is a weak rationale.

If a conference is inevitable (this is not necessarily so) and Allies really want it for the atmospherics of détente, there are stronger arguments for playing along rather than putting up weak and ineffective rear guard action. In this case, the French approach seems sound: move to a Conference without long wrangling session and close it out as soon as feasible.

The main tactical problem is that the heart of the Conference will be a declaration on non-use of force and respect for current borders; some of the Allies have already made this concession: in the Soviet and Polish treaties,⁵ the French Declaration of Principles,⁶ the Canadian-Soviet communiqué,⁷ and in effect, the Berlin treaties which include non-use of force. The main Soviet aim is to gain American signature. Present Allied position more or less concedes this Soviet position.

C. *A New Approach: CES as a Step Toward Maintaining a US Role in Europe.*

This new concept of CES departs from the damage-limiting approach we are now pursuing. *It would entail a new US initiative in NATO and international CES planning aimed at:*

—increased emphasis on permanent machinery to provide an institutional framework involving the US intimately in a long-term process of East-West negotiation of issues of security and cooperation, while maintaining and improving present Western security; and

—added weight to issues of security—MBFR, and other arms control and disarmament matters.

Under this concept, moreover,

—the US would exert leadership in approaching CES;

—we could help offset Allied fears that the US is on the verge of massive disengagement, at a time when their doubts are reinforced by current international economic difficulties;

⁵ For the text of the Moscow Treaty between the Soviet Union and the Federal Republic of Germany, August 12, 1970, and the Warsaw Treaty between Poland and the Federal Republic of Germany, December 7, 1970, see *Documents on Germany, 1944–1985*, pp. 1103–1105 and pp. 1125–1127, respectively.

⁶ For a summary of “The Principles of Cooperation Between the USSR and France,” signed by Pompidou and Brezhnev during the latter’s visit to France, October 25–30, 1971, see *Keesing’s Contemporary Archives, 1971–1972*, p. 24958.

⁷ See footnote 8, Document 51.

—CES would be considered a positive step in the longer process of strengthening the transatlantic community, and maintaining its defenses, while the US and our Allies seek further relaxation of East-West tensions designed to enhance European stability on a basis that accords with Allied objectives by making clear the importance they attach to issues of security, and to progress in East-West cooperation in non-security matters, such as freer movement of people, ideas, and information, and economic and technical exchanges.

1. *Agenda.* To meet these objectives, the Allies could propose in the December 1971 Ministerial Communiqué the following CES agenda as an alternative to that advanced by the Pact:

a. *Issues of East-West Security*

(1) continuing arms control and disarmament efforts and renunciation of the use of force and universal respect for principles governing relations between states, regardless of political or social systems. It is possible that any consensus that emerged might be embodied in an East-West declaration, which might be pursued in permanent machinery established by CES (See Part II C1C, below).

(2) associated with the foregoing, or separately, statements of support for MBFR. If MBFR negotiations had begun prior to CES, reference could be made in CES to progress to date, based upon reports by participating MBFR states. Otherwise, CES could encourage states directly involved in MBFR to negotiate. Although MBFR could also operate under the “umbrella” of a CES (see Part III), the conference would have no authority to direct or approve the form or substance of MBFR negotiations.

b. *Issues of East-West Cooperation*

(1) freer movement of people, ideas, and information, stressing the importance the Allies attach to this issue;

(2) economic, technical, scientific, cultural and environmental cooperation. Economic issues for discussion could include a range of improvements on both sides to encourage increased trade and possible ties to Western international economic institutions. In the environmental sphere, support could be sought for strengthening ECE efforts. Beyond this, enhanced bilateral contacts in the other areas could be encouraged, as well as efforts in UN and other appropriate fora.

c. *Permanent Machinery Established by CES*

(1) *Possible Functions*

The US has tabled in NATO illustrative views on permanent machinery (Annex I). We proposed that such machinery might discuss problems of security, cooperation and arms control and disarmament, along the following lines:

(a) *Security*

—as a framework for quiet diplomacy to resolve disputes endangering European security; and

—for dealing with grievances, permitting states to raise actual or potential violations of a possible CES declaration on principles that should govern interstate relations.

(b) *Cooperation*

—for discussion of policy issues that impede East-West cooperation in various fields, leaving detailed implementation to the ECE or other appropriate fora.

(c) *Regional Disarmament*

—in connection with MBFR, while this issue undoubtedly would be referred to in CES, actual negotiations have been envisaged in a body comprising states directly concerned. Results of MBFR negotiations, however, could be reported by the states directly involved in MBFR negotiations to CES for noting, as appropriate; and

—if agreed among the Allies, for discussion of complaints of non-compliance with arms control and disarmament agreements; and for examination and dissemination of reports produced under any arrangements that may eventually be developed on verification and collateral constraints.

Beyond the foregoing, it is possible that permanent machinery could evolve further, embracing additional functions in a continuing East-West dialogue. However, the USSR and others should not be allowed to manipulate or characterize CES permanent machinery as a substitute for NATO, or as superceding Western security arrangements generally.

2. *Assessment.*

US adoption of a positive approach to CES could entail the following advantages and disadvantages:

Advantages

—would conform to the realities of the situation in Europe by giving at least equal attention to security issues;

—because it would explicitly assert the continuing US role in the evolution of Europe, it would deny the Soviets their basic objective of getting the US out of Europe;

—by emphasizing the continuing character of East-West negotiations, Allied defense expenditures might be more easily sustained;

—the basic situation of the East European states would not be altered, but their desire for a more independent voice in discussions surrounding a conference would be met;

Disadvantages

—there likely would be no immediate concrete results beyond those possible under other suggested approaches to CES;

—a possible CES declaration on arms control and disarmament might strengthen public reluctance, in Allied countries, to support the substantial force improvements we seek; and

—other disadvantages at worst could approximate those flowing from a conference making some concessions but protecting Western interests, but would be far less than from a conference for the sake of détente or a conference on cooperation.

3. *Developing Allied Consensus.*

A positive approach to a CES conforms more closely with the majority Allied view than our present approach. Therefore, we anticipate no difficulty in gaining Allied concurrence. Discussion of arms control and disarmament at CES conforms to current Allied thinking, and therefore poses no problem. Reference in CES to MBFR will be welcomed by most Allies.

The following illustrative steps would facilitate building an Allied consensus around a US preference:

—the US could underline the Berlin precondition, and *clarify its attitude toward CES*, and perhaps toward economic and defense aims generally, *in a major address on European affairs by the Secretary sometime in November;*

—the US position would be conveyed to the Allies in time to allow for consultations at NATO *in advance of the December Ministerial meeting;*

—the US would introduce into the Council draft formulations for the December Ministerial communiqué;

—depending on the status of the Berlin agreement, *NATO Deputy Foreign Ministers could meet in April 1972 to assess prospects for opening multilateral East-West talks* and to discuss the substance and procedures for multilateral East-West talks; and

—after conclusion of the Berlin accord, and *following the President's visit to Moscow, East-West multilateral talks could open.*

Comment: The basic issue here seems to be along the following lines: If we must go to CES, is there any conceivable way it can be turned to our marginal advantage, recognizing that in the short turn, at least, the Soviets will score major gains?

This “new” approach is, of course, an old idea favored by many observers. Its essence is that we use the inevitable Soviet “principles” as a bridge to some more practical measures; i.e., if the Soviets claim non-use of force, we propose restraint on force movements, possibly European observer teams, pre-announcement of maneuvers—in short, many of the MBFR collateral measures. In this way, we at least give some substance to the vacuous declarations of a Conference.

Second, we establish an institution which will have little real power, but will have some psychological benefit for the East Europeans in that they can invoke the permanent machinery in times of tensions or crisis.

If there is anything in this proposal for a change in attitude, it is mainly in the possible longer term gains that would tend to blur the sharp divisions in Europe. Why the Soviets would agree to such potential danger is another issue, but it is, after all, their conference, and this “new” approach puts them on the tactical defensive. If introduced

early in the preparations, it would certainly protract the preliminary discussion—another possible advantage.

As reported in the study, the concept is still too vague; it lacks precision in what the Conference would produce in terms of arms control statements, practical implementation measures and the authority of the permanent machinery. If adopted, this would have to be clarified in some detail.

The disadvantages are understated, presumably because this is the favored option. The real disadvantages are

—First, our Allies may well misconstrue our new enthusiasm as another form of superpower collaboration; they might be rather unimpressed by the claims that we would gain some concrete security measures; they would still think in terms of atmospherics, and conclude we were only looking for a rationalization of the same objectives.

—If it became clear that we meant business, and really wanted some practical achievements, the Allies might retreat since the last thing they want is that CES become a contentious meeting.

—The second disadvantage is that regardless of our aspirations we must deal with the Soviets who are not about to allow their pet project to be turned against them. Their interest is still in the fact of the Conference, rather than its concrete measures. We will still have to go through a first phase of declarations and pledges to get to the second stage of applications of arms control measures or a permanent institution. The Soviets will see to it that nothing effective happens.

In short, this is a gamble. *But we would be no worse off for having made the attempt than if we supinely drift into the Soviet type conference that now appears unavoidable.*

In many ways, this approach to a CES is less damaging than the current prospects for two losers: MBFR and then a meaningless CES. If we were to move in this new direction on CES, logic would suggest that MBFR be deferred, and the CES would endorse it, though not control it. MBFR would thus be a tangible result of CES, and, if it dealt with principles of force reductions, these might be taken over by all Europe.

Operationally,

—*CES would not begin until after the Moscow summit: then preliminaries would take a few months and the actual conference would meet in, say, late 1972 or early 1973.*

—MBFR might begin before that, but if we chose to, we could use the CES as a means to defer MBFR.

III. CES and MBFR

Most Allies and non-aligned states wish to establish a connection now between MBFR and CES. At the same time, most recognize that

CES would be too unwieldy a forum for negotiation of so complex and sensitive a subject as MBFR, and that actual negotiations should be restricted to the states directly concerned.

The US has preferred to keep the two issues on separate tracks, in effect assuming that the tracks might cross at some point, but leaving open the option of separately initiating either CES or MBFR discussions. Our approach to MBFR, moreover, has recognized that

—MBFR addresses the military confrontation of major powers whose forces and territory are directly involved; other states, though interested, have less at stake in such negotiations, and many would likely mount pressures for reductions without necessarily insisting on essential safeguards; and

—involvement of non-aligned countries would complicate and delay MBFR negotiations, causing inter alia possible Congressional pressures for unilateral reductions.

Given the general preference expressed over past weeks by our Allies, however, for including MBFR in some fashion on a CES agenda—based largely on their view that MBFR would provide a concrete issue of security for CES in discussion and evidence of movement toward détente—we are *virtually isolated on this issue, and will likely need to deal with it at Ministerial level in December.*

Since we cannot prevent participants in CES from referring to MBFR, the alternatives are: (a) to strive for agreement among the Allies (and perhaps with the Soviets) for procedural arrangements to be made in the initial phase of CES that would avoid more than general reference in CES to MBFR; or (b) to deal with the substance of MBFR in CES.

Comment: Clearly, the latter is a non-starter and a potential disaster.

IV. CES and SALT

Provided there is a satisfactory resolution on Berlin, the issue arises of the relationship between CES and SALT. The possibilities lie between the following alternatives:

—linkage between achieving success in SALT and proceeding with CES; and

—considering SALT along with other issues as part of the complex of US/Soviet relations which needs to be taken into account in assessing Soviet intentions in regard to CES.

Linkage would have the following implications:

—while it may be argued that Soviet interest in CES could provide additional leverage in SALT, it is unlikely that this interest would affect the Soviet position on SALT issues, since they deal with fundamental matters of state security;

—such linkage would run a considerable risk of damaging SALT at a stage in which the negotiations are both delicate and nearing fruition. Since we have consistently eschewed linking SALT with extraneous issues, a reversal on our part would cause the Soviets to question our basic objectives in SALT, thus delaying and diverting the talks—precisely the opposite of what would be intended.

Comment: This part of the discussion is badly rigged by State and ACDA who are deathly afraid that SALT will be endangered. Yet, it makes absolutely no sense to think about European *security* in any real sense if the US and the USSR cannot make even a limited arrangement on strategic arms control. The original idea of including this discussion in the study was to emphasize this point, so that the US could at least tell the Allies of our reluctance to proceed with the actual CES if SALT had not reached some agreement. In fact, this is not a revolutionary position. Until the last NATO meeting, our preconditions for CES were the Berlin agreement *and* “progress” on other East-West issues, which was specifically defined to mean SALT. This latter condition was dropped under French pressures.⁸ All that would be involved in reviving it would be rather clear warnings that CES could not be expected to achieve anything if SALT was stalemated.

⁸ See Document 57.

77. Memorandum From Secretary of Defense Laird to President Nixon¹

Washington, November 9, 1971.

SUBJECT

Report on My Trip to Europe

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, Box 229, Agency Files, Defense, Vol. XIV. Top Secret; Sensitive. A stamped notation on the first page reads: “The President has seen.” Nixon wrote several notes to Kissinger on the memorandum, including the following with regard to MBFR: “We need a better game plan—with *ball* control on MBFR,” and “K—how about a ltr [letter] to Brosio from RN on MBFR—and also touching on other fears (reassure them)—which he could make *public*?” On an attached routing memorandum, Hyland wrote on December 17: “I understand this was seen by Pres already and *no action required*.”

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

MBFR

In my talks with Schmidt and Carrington, it was made quite clear that neither were in any hurry to negotiate any force reductions in Europe.² MOD Tanassi of Italy also favored a go-slow approach to MBFR. From recent talks Schmidt had with French authorities, it is clear that France continues to oppose MBFR at this time. This attitude of caution—particularly on the part of Schmidt—is a complete turn-around from a year ago when he, for one, was pressing me to take the initiative in negotiating troop reductions with the USSR. I believe their main concern today is that the US will move too fast toward troop reductions in Europe in order to placate the well-publicized views of some prominent Members of Congress like Senator Mansfield. Once troop reductions start, they believe NATO will gradually fade away and that all this will take place before Western Europe has had an opportunity to resolve its political problems. I am sure that Schmidt would like more time for Ostpolitik to succeed, and feels that troop reductions now might lessen the Soviet Union's ardor for German political initiatives.

As far as a Conference on European Security (CES) and MBFR are concerned, Schmidt now feels that there is an advantage to combining the two. More than likely his real reason is to slow down movement toward negotiations on MBFR which he senses might bear fruit. But his expressed reason to me was that combining CES and MBFR would be the only way to get the French to participate in MBFR, since they have already said that they would attend the CES.³ Schmidt feels that it is very important to have France involved in any final MBFR decisions. On this same subject, Carrington differed with his own Foreign Office which favors combining these negotiations; he personally prefers to keep them separate.

I took the opportunity to stress the point that in considering preparations for MBFR negotiations the primary factor must be the security of Europe and that we must not look on MBFR as a tool to solve political problems. Regardless of any enticing overtures from the Soviet

² Nixon underlined "neither were in any hurry to negotiate any force reductions in Europe" and wrote in the margin, "I agree." A memorandum of Laird's conversation with Schmidt, October 26, is *ibid.*, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL GER W–US. A memorandum of Laird's conversation with Carrington, October 25, is in the Ford Library, Laird Papers, Box 18, Document No. 358.

³ Nixon bracketed the entire paragraph up to this point and underlined the phrase, "combining CES and MBFR would be the only way to get the French to participate in MBFR, since they have already said that they would attend the CES." Nixon wrote in the margin, "K—an interesting idea."

Union to reduce forces, we still had to press for force improvements and additions that were agreed to in the AD-70 study and EDIP.

In discussing the kind of organization needed to conduct the actual MBFR negotiations after the Explorer's (Ambassador Brosio) work is finished, it was quite evident that no one had an acceptable plan. SYG Luns figured that Brosio would "fade away" after his exploring mission but offered no substitute solution. Carrington had a scheme which would, for all practical purposes, put a British officer in charge. I believe the US should move quickly to lay a workable plan before our NATO Allies. Therefore, in the next week, I plan to circulate a proposal which would include:

- A prospective main negotiator (Brosio is a possibility)⁴
- A limitation on participating countries
- The establishment of a NATO back-stopping group dominated by US and including countries whose forces would be reduced
- A method to keep the rest of NATO informed
- Emphasis on the importance of adequate Defense Department representation and participation in both preparations for and conduct of these negotiations.

I am convinced that all of NATO is waiting for the US to take the lead in MBFR and that they are most anxious to learn which of the options under consideration we prefer.⁵ I am also convinced that we would encounter a strong opposition to a US proposal which limits cuts to stationed forces only. Our proposals, therefore, should take these feelings into account and provide for some adjustments in indigenous forces in the long run. I recently sent Henry Kissinger a paper on MBFR which suggests approaches which would take these considerations into account.⁶

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

⁴ Nixon underlined this point and wrote in the margin, "Good."

⁵ Nixon underlined the sentence, beginning with the word "all," and wrote in the margin, "I agree."

⁶ See footnote 4, Document 73.

78. Minutes of a Senior Review Group Meeting¹

Washington, November 23, 1971, 3:15–4:16 p.m.

SUBJECT

European Security Conference

PARTICIPANTS

Chairman—Henry A. Kissinger

State

Mr. George Springsteen

Mr. Ralph J. McGuire

Mr. Herbert Spiro

NSC Staff

Mr. William Hyland

R/Adm. Robert O. Welander

Mr. Mark Wandler

DOD

Mr. Armistead Selden

B/Gen. Harrison Lobdell, Jr.

Mr. Peter Smith

JCS

Adm. Thomas H. Moorer

B/Gen. Francis J. Roberts

CIA

Lt. Gen. Robert E. Cushman

Mr. James P. Hanrahan

Treasury

Mr. John J. McGinnis

ACDA

Mr. Philip Farley

It was agreed that:

—Short of a Presidential approval, we will not agree to a preparatory meeting on CES. If a further meeting is necessary, we should encourage a Deputy Foreign Ministers meeting after the President's trip to Moscow.

—The State Department will circulate its draft paper on "Possible Post-CES Machinery."²

—Using the State Department's outlines as a point of departure, further study should be done on such substantive aspects of a CES as trade and cultural exchange, permanent machinery and the use of collateral constraints developed for MBFR.

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-112, SRG Minutes, Originals, 1971. Secret. The meeting took place in the White House Situation Room. All brackets are in the original.

² Not found. See footnote 4, Document 76.

Dr. Kissinger: All our meetings seem to be about losers. I'm talking about subjects, not personnel.

Adm. Moorer: We've got two dillies here.

Dr. Kissinger: I've read all the papers. I would like somebody to explain to me what we would get out of a conference on European Security. What advantage would a conference be to the United States?

Mr. Springsteen: In a static sense, there really would be none.

Dr. Kissinger: What about in a dynamic sense?

Mr. Springsteen: In a way, we are stuck with the conference. The question is how do we operate so that we maximize our gains and minimize our losses. This project has been in the works for a long time, and we have been negative on it. Now we are being pushed by our Allies. We think the time has come for us to fish or cut bait.

Dr. Kissinger: Why do our Allies want the conference?

Mr. Springsteen: I think a good part of it has to do with détente fever. The French, for example, think the conference may open some windows to the west for the Eastern European countries with such things as an increased flow of people. Of course, the implicit idea is that the Eastern European countries will get out from under the Russian thumb. The French are the leading exponents of this view.

Dr. Kissinger: If that's the case, it seems strange that the Russians are such strong advocates of the conference.

Mr. Springsteen: There is of course an element of risk in this for the Russians. Nevertheless, they feel a conference will be a great help to their image in the West.

Dr. Kissinger: Are the Russians facing such great obstacles in their bilateral dealings with the West that they are being forced to take this route [the conference]?

Mr. Springsteen: No. I don't share the French thesis, either. I was just expressing their point of view.

Dr. Kissinger: The French, among others, are not interested in MBFR. They may be pushing CES in order to prevent MBFR. And if that continues, we will be in a never-never land.

Mr. Springsteen: Isn't that where we are now?

Dr. Kissinger: At what point do we draw the line? When do we say the party's over? As usual, I'm just trying to be the devil's advocate. As you know, no agreement on MBFR will improve our position. I agree with your [Springsteen's] characterization that we should cut our losses and maximize the pluses. But I don't understand why the Russians are so eager for the conference. Do they see something in it that we don't see?

Adm. Moorer: Their basic objective is to break up NATO. West Europe has not taken a united stance, and the Russians feel that a security conference would be a good way of publicizing this disagreement.

Mr. Springsteen: They [the Russians] also want a conference to put a seal of approval on the territorial status quo and on the Bonn-Moscow and Bonn-Warsaw treaties.³

Adm. Moorer: The only military problem the Russians see is with NATO. As I said before, their basic objective is to weaken NATO. Then they can go on with their other activities in the Middle East, China and in other areas.

Dr. Kissinger: What is the plan for the upcoming NATO meeting?

Mr. Springsteen: At the moment, Germany, Great Britain and France are saying that the status of the Berlin arrangements is far enough along—even though Phase III is being delayed until the treaties are ratified—for multilateral preparatory talks to begin. Our position is that ratification of the treaties and the signing of the final protocol come first and that we shouldn't move on to multilateral discussions until we have those things. The other countries say we should move now. They say they are certain the treaties will be ratified and the protocol will be signed in due course.

Dr. Kissinger: Would they still want to move even if we say we are not eager to go along with them?

Mr. Springsteen: I am trying to get something out on this subject right now.

Dr. Kissinger: Who's stopping you?

Mr. Springsteen: No one—yet. The Secretary, as you know, is strong on this precondition.

Dr. Kissinger: I admit the precondition could be seen as somewhat phony. The main point, though, is that we want to delay the conference. If this precondition is no good, we will help you find a better one. We are not eager to have a conference before the summit meeting, and I'm not sure we will be eager for one after the meeting. I'm interested in someone telling me what the hell can come out of this conference.

Mr. Springsteen: Do you mean if it drags on?

Dr. Kissinger: It won't drag on. The Berlin negotiations stretched out for two years. How could the trade issue be dragged out, if it's on the agenda.

³ See footnote 5, Document 76.

Mr. Springsteen: You can negotiate ad nauseum. The problem for better or worse, is how do we go through the process. The French, for one, want to leapfrog.

Dr. Kissinger: We want to delay as long as possible. We want to delay the preparatory process. If our Allies in NATO come up with an unreasonable proposal, why do we have to rush in? (to Mr. Springsteen) Are you sure they will have one?

Mr. Springsteen: The senior advisors have been meeting in Berlin, and Bahr says the meetings will be concluded by December 3. Great Britain, Germany and France say we should move now to the multilateral preparation. Hillenbrand said, though, that we will not move until the final protocol is signed. He cited what I thought was a very good example. Suppose we go very far down the conference road, he pointed out, and the Bundestag doesn't ratify the treaties. Then the Russians wouldn't sign the treaties. Where would we be then?

Dr. Kissinger: That wouldn't break Brandt's heart. In fact, it would give him another argument for early preparatory talks for a conference.

Mr. Springsteen: Hillenbrand was looking at it from our point of view.

Dr. Kissinger: Couldn't we have a Deputy Foreign Ministers meeting first, before we begin the multilateral preparatory discussions? Would that be unreasonable?

Mr. Springsteen: That, in fact, is what we envisioned.

Dr. Kissinger: Suppose we tell the Allies that we want a Deputy Foreign Ministers meeting first, but they don't want to wait. What happens?

Mr. Springsteen: We would like to swing them [the Allies] around and get them to agree to having the final protocol signed first, followed by a Deputy Foreign Ministers meeting where we can all try to see where we are going. We would encourage a Deputy Foreign Ministers meeting this spring. This scenario also calls for no multilateral exploratory talks.

Dr. Kissinger: Do we all agree with that? (to Mr. Selden) What is Defense's position?

Mr. Selden: We agree with State that we should cut our losses. The longer we delay, the better off we are.

Dr. Kissinger: (to Mr. Farley) Phil, what do you think?

Mr. Farley: We would like very much to keep disarmament out of the conference, if it ever takes place.

Dr. Kissinger: Why do you want to do that? Because you think it would screw up the SALT talks? Or are you afraid that you will have the only substantive topic at the conference?

Mr. Farley: There would be no substance to discussions unless the conference did not deal with MBFR, and CES is simply the wrong place to get involved in that.

Mr. Selden: How would we keep it out of the conference?

Dr. Kissinger: The Russians wouldn't want to discuss MBFR at the conference. They want a renunciation of forces agreement and other things which will prove that military blocs are not necessary.

Mr. Springsteen: The Russians have suggested that MBFR can be discussed at the conference, but not negotiated.

Mr. Farley: It would be hard not to do that.

Dr. Kissinger: It's not that MBFR is such a winner, either, judging from the paper I read. At what point do we concentrate on substance, or do we go on in this never-never land? We keep getting high level letters from Soviet leaders to the President, urging a conference to discuss such things as cultural exchange and trade. All of this is done bilaterally now.

Mr. Springsteen: The agenda the Soviets are proposing stresses force renunciation and respect for existing borders.

Dr. Kissinger: That's in the UN charter, isn't it?

Mr. Springsteen: That's right. NATO, nevertheless, has been doing some homework on this. In fact, there is a NATO draft agreement, but it hasn't got government clearances.

Dr. Kissinger: Is this a U.S. draft?

Mr. Springsteen: It's not a draft from one country. It's just a staff operation.

Dr. Kissinger: What happens if the Allies say this is a brilliant draft?

Mr. Springsteen: I don't think that will happen. There are actually three drafts—from us, the Germans and someone else.

Dr. Kissinger: Are these individual products? Is our paper a U.S. Government draft? Are we behind it?

Mr. Springsteen: No. None of you are signed on.

Dr. Kissinger: This is the first I have ever heard of such a draft. (to Mr. Selden) Do you know about it?

Mr. Selden: No.

Dr. Kissinger: (to Adm. Moorer) Do you?

Adm. Moorer: No.

Mr. Springsteen: The draft is more or less a product of an EUR graduate seminar. The U.S. Government is not committed to it in any way. We simply tried to point out some of the pitfalls involved in these discussions.

Dr. Kissinger: If the Allies like the paper, why would we not be committed?

Mr. Springsteen: We have made it very plain to them that this paper was done on the staff level.

Dr. Kissinger: We are now negotiating in the mid-East on the basis of a paper prepared by the head of our U.S. Interests Section.

Mr. Springsteen: I can assure you that this is not at all the situation with our paper.

Dr. Kissinger: Can we see the paper?

Mr. Springsteen: Surely. In fact, big chunks of it were cleared here, if I recall correctly.

Dr. Kissinger: That is not inconceivable to me. Can we get some coherence into this whole process? If not, we run the risk of eroding everything that has been built up over 25 years. Governments that are weak or dependent on elections very often like to pretend that something is happening when in fact nothing is happening. We should not be feeding that process. Ideally, we should have a Deputy Foreign Ministers meeting first, and our role in that meeting should be as concrete as possible. Second, when there is a proposal we should all look at it and drive to make it as concrete as possible. Otherwise, there is too much incoherence. (to Mr. Springsteen) I'm sure this is your view, too.

Mr. Springsteen: It is. We have seen the monster coming down the road for some time now, and consequently we have done a good deal of work.

Dr. Kissinger: Have you worked with the agencies here?

Mr. Springsteen: Yes. With Defense and Treasury.

Dr. Kissinger: What is the title of this draft paper you prepared?

Mr. Springsteen: "Possible Post-CES Machinery."

Gen. Lobdell: We worked on certain sections of it.

Dr. Kissinger: We need a systematic review of all the concrete proposals that are surfaced, and we need to have meetings on these proposals, when appropriate.

Mr. Springsteen: We welcome that.

Dr. Kissinger: Do we all agree then that we will not agree—short of Presidential approval—to a preparatory meeting? If a further meeting is necessary, it should be a Deputy Foreign Ministers meeting after the summit.

All agreed.

Dr. Kissinger: As far as the basic approach to the conference is concerned, we have broad choices: the Soviet approach and the "new" State approach. Both deal in some degree with security considerations.

Mr. Springsteen: It's true that they deal with security considerations, but we also would hope to achieve something concrete. In order to do that, we would have to step in and take an active role. We don't

want the conference as an end to itself, the way the Soviets do. Instead, we want to institutionalize the continuing role of the United States in the future of West Europe.

Dr. Kissinger: How would we go about doing that?

Mr. Springsteen: By giving strong leadership. We could tell our Allies what we are working on and win them to our positions.

Dr. Kissinger: We are an activist government. Once we adopt a policy of activism on CES, two things will happen: (a) we will all become very active, which is no crime in itself; and (b) when the Europeans say that something we want doesn't meet with their favor, we will end up with the Soviet position under American leadership. Let the Soviets drive the process. We should drive the substance.

Mr. Springsteen: The Allies already think we are dragging our feet on the conference. We can tell them we are prepared to have a conference. We can say that the Soviets can drive the process if they want but that we think we should try to figure out how to turn the conference to our advantage. For example, there might be an advantage for us in establishing permanent machinery.

Dr. Kissinger: We should look at that carefully. I have no views on it, and I am pretty sure that the President has not addressed it. Just off the top of my head, though, I would say that anything the Soviets can exhibit as a substitute for NATO would be a disadvantage for us.

Mr. Springsteen: We have not rejected the idea of permanent machinery.

Dr. Kissinger: We should have another meeting after the NATO Ministerial to discuss force renunciation and other things we have been studying at the staff level.

Mr. Springsteen: We've already given you an outline of our thinking on the subject.

Dr. Kissinger: You should use this outline as a point of departure for further study. Take the topics we consider useful and flesh them out. For example: What would we say about trade and cultural exchange? What would we say about permanent machinery? What, if Phil [Farley] permits, would we say about CES using some of the collateral constraints we developed for MBFR?

Mr. Springsteen: All of this is fine, but we have a more immediate problem, too. The Secretary will be expected to say something about CES at the NATO Ministerial. The line he has used the last two years has been pretty stubborn and negative. Does he parrot that line again, or does he indicate to the Allies that we are prepared to approach various alternatives?

Dr. Kissinger: Why does he have to say more than we are willing to discuss concrete issues after the final protocol has been signed?

Mr. Springsteen: The Allies will counter by saying that this is what we have all been doing.

Dr. Kissinger: The Secretary can then say that the issues are not concrete enough.

Mr. Farley: They [the Allies] can't point to a consensus in the Alliance.

Mr. Hyland: Our line is that we are not yet ready on substance, especially on security considerations.

Mr. Springsteen: I hadn't realized Phil [Farley] was so adamant on disarmament.

Mr. Farley: I have several practical concerns. Suppose, for example, that CES borrows the MBFR collateral constraints and creates some kind of compliance machinery. Then, if we are relying on national means to detect violations, I would hate to rely on CES as a court of appeals. Also, if we give CES a heavy security cast, we could be left with only a regional security organization. I don't mean to be negative, but the papers we have done so far don't show how we move on to the next steps.

Dr. Kissinger: If that's the case, then we don't go on to the next steps.

Mr. Springsteen: But we haven't even taken the first step.

Dr. Kissinger: If we want to avoid going 1000 miles, we should not take the first step.

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

Washington, undated.

SUBJECT

NSC Consideration of NATO Issues:

- (1) Mutual Force Reductions
- (2) European Security Conference

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-032, NSC Meeting CES/MBFR (NATO Ministerial) 12/1/71. Top Secret; Sensitive. A notation on the first page indicates that the President saw the memorandum.

The meetings of NATO Ministers next week (December 8–10) will be dominated by two issues: the question of a Western position on Mutual and Balanced Force Reductions (MBFR) and preparations for a European Conference on Security and Cooperation. On both subjects our Allies will be looking to the U.S. for an indication of how we wish to deal with them.

—*Both of these issues bear importantly on Western security interests. If not handled properly the results could be highly dangerous. It is important that we maintain our focus on the implications for the military balance of any force reductions and on the substance of European security, rather than drift into ill-defined negotiations that will only work to the Soviet advantage.*

—*On neither of these issues is the Western Alliance in a position to move ahead; there is no consensus on the aims of either mutual force reductions or a European conference.*

—*We need more time to develop concrete proposals.*

—*Finally, multilateral negotiations of this sort on European issues should come after, not before your meeting in Moscow. Moreover, we should have some greater assurance of a satisfactory outcome in SALT.*

Background

MBFR: The Western initiative, dating back to 1968, for negotiations on the reduction of forces in Central Europe was largely academic until last Spring when Brezhnev offered to begin negotiations. As a consequence of the Soviet response, we have intensified our study of the issues. Within the Alliance there has been a sharp revival of interest in negotiations because of: (1) the Soviet response on MBFR; (2) the ongoing U.S. and FRG negotiations with the Soviets; and, (3) the Mansfield proposals for unilateral reductions.

Our own studies have shown that *almost every model for reductions that would be negotiable with the Soviets would damage the Western military position.* Small reductions that minimize the adverse consequences are almost impossible to verify, whereas larger reductions do major damage mainly because the Soviets withdraw only to Western Russia while we withdraw across the Atlantic.

Though these conclusions are not surprising, they are being submerged in other considerations. For various reasons MBFR negotiations have become a highly political issue in Europe.

—Many Allies (and some in our own government) believe that our Congressional critics can be placated by MBFR negotiations.

—Others believe that MBFR is an instrument for European détente, and should be pursued for this purpose.

—In addition, some of our Allies suspect that we want to arrange a bilateral reduction with the USSR and wish to forestall this through early negotiations.

Our objective, therefore, must be to impress the Allies that we are not interested in reductions for the sake of a better atmosphere and to assure them that no bilateral bargain will be made with the USSR. We want to force our Allies to recognize the problems and implications of MBFR and to focus on the security consequences to the Alliance's military posture. Unless maintenance of a military balance is the principal criteria for judging MBFR, we will be engaged in the impossible task of trading military security for some vague and undefinable degree of détente.

A Conference on European Security and Cooperation. This issue has been pressed with varying degrees of urgency by the Soviets since 1954, and for good reason. As they define it, such a Conference would issue declarations of non-aggression, recognize existing borders, and agree on increased economic cooperation. Their aim is to solidify the status quo in Eastern Europe, while extending their own influence in the Western Alliance.

On this issue there is growing Allied pressure simply to move to negotiations. The Alliance consideration of the subjects to be discussed and what the Western position would be has been limited and without consensus. Negotiations at this point would almost certainly result in a Soviet-style conference agreeing on broad generalities.

We need to redirect the work of the Allies so that principles of security are translated into specific measures. If we can do this, a negotiation later may actually enhance the Western position.

Priorities and Timing

We have set no precondition for MBFR, but the Soviets are clearly dragging their feet by refusing thus far to accept Brosio as the NATO "explorer" of MBFR principles. Until they do agree to receive Brosio we need make no further effort to open negotiations; we should use the time for the Alliance to digest the analytical result of our studies. We have just completed a major study and transmitted it to NATO. One approach which deserves further discussion involves phased negotiations, with extensive discussion of principles in the early stages and prior to negotiations on reductions.

On a European conference we are committed to begin the preparations once the Berlin issue is completed. Some Allies, notably Britain and France, and perhaps West Germany, would be willing to move toward a conference as soon as the current phase of the Berlin talks, between East and West Germany, is completed (perhaps late this week). We want to stick to the condition of completely wrapping up Berlin. The Soviets appear to be insisting that Berlin will be held open until their German treaty is ratified in Bonn. If so, preparations of a European conference will be put over until the spring and, thus, should be held up until your meeting in Moscow. In this case, agreement to begin a European conference might be a summit decision.

Proposed Conduct of the Meeting

Since we can anticipate pressure from the Allies to show “movement” at the Ministerial meeting, *it will be important for you to impress on the NSC meeting that we will not move until we are assured that in both issues (MBFR and a conference) we can develop a common Western position that insures that our security interests will be maintained intact.*

(You may wish to say that both issues should be delayed until after the summit.)

I suggest that you conduct the meeting as follows:

—Call on Director Helms to brief on the outcome of the November 30 Warsaw Pact meeting on MBFR and the European conference.

—Call on me to outline the issues and alternatives.

—Make clear that you do not want a substantive movement on these issues now.

—Discuss the conclusions we draw from the MBFR options analysis and Allied reactions, calling first on Secretary Rogers.

—Discuss the sequence of MBFR negotiations, once started.

—Discuss the preconditions (Berlin) for a Conference.

—Discuss the character of the Conference we want.

Your Talking Points² are written in the above fashion.

² Not attached, but the talking points are *ibid.*

80. Minutes of a National Security Council Meeting¹

Washington, December 1, 1971.

NSC MEETING ON MBFR AND CES

PARTICIPANTS

President Nixon

Secretary of State William Rogers

Martin Hillenbrand, Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs

Philip Farley, ACDA Director

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-110, NSC Minutes Originals 1971 through 6-20-74. Secret; Sensitive. Tabs A-C are attached but not printed. All brackets are in the original. According to the President's Daily Diary, the meeting took place from 10:10 to 11 a.m. in the Cabinet Room. (*Ibid.*, White House Central Files, President's Daily Diary)

Richard Helms, Director of Central Intelligence
John N. Mitchell, Attorney General
General George Lincoln, OEP Director
Melvin Laird, Secretary of Defense
David Packard, Deputy Secretary of Defense
Admiral Thomas Moorer, Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff
Dr. Henry A. Kissinger, Assistant to the President for NSA
Mr. Helmut Sonnenfeldt, NSC Staff
Philip Odeen, NSC Staff
William Hyland, NSC Staff

President: We have two issues for discussion today, MBFR and the European Security Conference. Dick [Helms], will you start off?

[Director Helms gave his briefing.]²

President: Henry, will you discuss the issues?

Kissinger: I will sum up briefly the issues as they have emerged from the work of the Senior Review Group.

First, MBFR. The idea goes back to the 1950s, when it was called “disengagement.” It has been taken up in recent years for a variety of reasons, which have consequences for determining the strategy for dealing with the issues. It was initiated by the previous administration as an argument against pressures from the Congress for force reductions. Secretary General Brosio then picked it up as a means of forestalling unilateral reductions by the U.S. The Soviets, for some reason not entirely clear, became interested.

But until your administration, Mr. President, there was no systematic analysis done. There was no idea of the impact of mutual reductions on the military balance. In the interagency group we have done several studies in depth. We reviewed 15 cases of possible combinations of reductions, with such elements as limits on stationed forces, limits on indigenous forces, and various combinations.

We have studied four categories:

- First, small symmetrical reductions, of say 10 percent.
- Second, larger symmetrical reductions of 30 percent.
- Third, a common ceiling.
- Fourth, a mixed package, though in this case we have not done as much work as in the others.

The following conclusions have emerged from our analysis: Though there is considerable debate over methodology, the conclusions do not differ. A reduction on the order of 10 percent or less cannot be verified. We would not know if the other side had actually reduced. This size of reductions would minimize the deleterious military effects.

² The text of Helms’s briefing is *ibid.*

There would still be a deleterious effect, but not a major one. Any other percentage reductions will make the situation worse; the larger the cut the worse the effects.

Dr. Kissinger asked that several charts be distributed. [See Tab A.]

These charts show how the deterioration in the time for Soviet forces would reach the Weser and then the Rhine rivers. The other charts show how the ratios of the Warsaw Pact and NATO forces before and after reductions would deteriorate. [Tab B.]

The option of a mixed package is probably not negotiable. And the common ceiling—where we would reduce by 10,000 and the other side by 100,000—is probably not negotiable. Secretary Laird submitted a paper combining the different packages, and it is being staffed.³

It is not necessary to come down on one solution. As Dick Helms said, there is no progress on the Soviets' side. We have sent to NATO the results of our study.⁴ Have they received them, Bill [Rogers]?

Rogers: Yes, they have gone this morning, but six months late.

Laird: These are only examples, not conclusions.

Kissinger: The major point to stress to the Allies is to analyze what the effect is on security. If the work is driven by a desire for negotiations, there will be a consensus for a percentage reduction, but this is the most deleterious. The danger is that MBFR will become a political debate. We have done serious work in analyzing the effects, but the others want MBFR for détente, for a bargaining chip, or because of their own internal domestic opinion. It is in our interest to force the European Allies to focus on security in order to have an understanding of the military consequences; otherwise we are in a never-never land. At the NATO meetings, Secretary Rogers could say that we will follow up our studies with more presentations, including models submitted by Secretary Laird.

Let me turn now to the European Security Conference.

³ Not further identified.

⁴ On November 19, the Verification Panel met and discussed how to handle giving NATO the results of the Verification Panel's completed MBFR analysis. According to a memorandum for the record, November 26, "Dr. Kissinger said that continuing Allied uncertainty about our MBFR proposals is doing more harm than any conclusions drawn from the analysis conceivably could. Their knowledge of the subject is 'abysmal'; if we don't get something to them soon, it is likely they will end up 'doing the wrong things' out of ignorance." The memorandum continued: "Mr. Irwin said that we should proceed immediately to sanitize the Evaluation Report and try to get it to NATO by Monday, November 29. Dr. Kissinger said that it seemed to be the consensus that we should go ahead on Mr. Irwin's schedule, caveating the report as necessary." (Memorandum I-29441/71; Ford Library, Laird Papers, Box 5, NATO, Vol. X) No minutes from the meeting have been found.

This is a nightmare. First, it was started with the idea of including all security issues. Then Berlin was broken out; then MBFR. Now the Soviets want an agenda with three issues: (1) renunciation of force and respect for frontiers, (2) expansion of economic, cultural and other contacts, and (3) establishment of some permanent machinery. On our side we are proposing similarly vague general principles. [See Tab C] The good paper developed by State⁵ opens the way to addressing the security issues, to give concreteness to a conference.

If we look at the enormous effort the Soviets have been making for a conference—including Gromyko's talks with you, Mr. President,⁶—and compare their effort with the conceivable results, there must be some objective beyond trade and cultural relations. They will use a climate of détente to argue that NATO is unnecessary. A permanent security organ would be offered as a substitute for the alliances. Now, Brandt is already in hock to the Soviets, to show progress in Ostpolitik. The French have two motives: first to outmaneuver the Germans in Moscow, and second to take the steam out of MBFR. The danger is that we will get both CES and MBFR.

The problem of the substance of a Conference is whether in addition to the general topics we can incorporate security issues. The pro is that it makes the conference more concrete; the con is that a conference is probably not the forum to deal with issues of monitoring force movements, for example.

Because dealing with an agenda, however, we have the question of how rapidly to move. The French and Germans are committed. The Soviets are pressing for preparatory talks. Normally, preparatory talks could be used to delay, but the issues do not lend themselves to delay. Up to now we have said that a Berlin agreement is a precondition for preparatory talks. But once the inner-German talks are finished, this may be a tough position to hold. But we can say Berlin must be completed. There will be enormous pressures if we say this, because this will bring pressure on the Bundestag to ratify the treaties.

In summary, we can use Berlin to delay further preparations, and we can use the argument that we need a unified Western position and should have a Western Foreign Ministers' meeting. Third, we can delay in the preparatory talks, but there are divided views on how to string out these talks.

⁵ Apparent reference to the undated response to NSSM 138, prepared by the Interdepartmental Working Group on Europe (IG/EUR), which is in National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-063, SRG Meeting European Security Conference 11/23/71. For an analytical summary of the paper prepared by the NSC staff, see Document 76.

⁶ See Document 71.

It is premature to debate what would be in a conference until we decide how to string out the timing.

President: How long before the Berlin talks are wrapped up?

Rogers: I talked with State Secretary Frank and he said it will take 2–3 months for the Bundestag to take up the treaty. We can figure out ways to delay. I have told the Russians that it was unrealistic to think of a conference in 1972.⁷ There are pressures for preparatory talks, but we can fend these off over Berlin.

Kissinger: The Soviets are playing into our hands in linking Berlin and the treaty.

Rogers: Second, MBFR is related to a conference, but no one is sure how they relate. But since the Soviets are not inviting Brosio, the blame is on them.⁸ Third, you will be meeting with Pompidou, Brandt and Heath, and there should be no decision before that. Fourth, you are going to Moscow. If you agree, we could show interest in holding talks, but hold a Deputy Foreign Ministers' meeting some time after signing the Final Quadripartite protocol. We will try to be forthcoming, but dilatory.

President: We will do nothing?

Rogers: Brosio should go to Moscow.

President: But there will be no formal meetings. I have read recently somewhere that we may be setting up meetings with the Soviets.

Rogers: Well, we need to clarify the agenda. They proposed the conference, it is their proposal. But when we ask them, they talk in vague terms, but they have no items of security. I am putting emphasis on cooperation rather than security, but all the Allies favor a conference. We can probably stick, but a conference might be turned to our advantage. The Eastern Europeans want it. Romania and Yugoslavia favor it to undercut the Brezhnev doctrine. There was a statement in the Brezhnev–Tito communiqué that we might use.

President: But can we delay beyond, to 1973?

⁷ Telegram 214288 to Moscow, November 26, reported on Rogers's conversation with Dobrynin the same day: "As to timing of a security conference, the Secretary pointed out that it was unrealistic to expect the U.S. to participate next year. However, a date in 1973—it would take that long to prepare properly for such a meeting—might be a real possibility if some progress could be made in other areas and in the planning phase. They agreed to talk about this issue when Dobrynin returned to Washington at the end of December." (National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL US–USSR)

⁸ At the December NATO Ministerial meeting in Brussels, the Ministers "noted with regret" the Soviet refusal to receive Brosio. (North Atlantic Treaty Organization, *NATO Final Communiqués, 1949–1974*, p. 269)

Rogers: Yes, I have said there can be no conference in 1972. Maybe it should be at a lower level. We would not call it preparatory. We will get word out that there will be no conference in 1972, but we have to be sure we are not accused of dragging our feet.

President: Mel, have you some thoughts? I have the impression that the defense ministers are concerned about MBFR.

Laird: The U.S. can give leadership, and they will go along with our suggestions. Carrington will give me a British study. The British and Germans have an input but are willing and ready to follow our leadership. The question in their minds is our unilateral reductions. I reassured them. It is important for us to work out, and develop in the very near future, a position. My paper has two alternative approaches. We do not need a position before a ministerial meeting, but we need to develop one and give leadership. But we don't want an approach to solve our own political problems. We can get votes to support us. But it is urgent to give leadership. I agree with Secretary Rogers that we should not get into a debate with thirty nations. That would be a mistake. Decisions need to be made on security considerations. All the departments are now addressing the issues. We are in a better position than two years ago.

Rogers: I doubt that the Soviets are really interested in MBFR; their real interest is in a conference. They are putting a great deal of diplomatic pressure on every Eastern European I talk to, to put on the pressures. The Soviet position on MBFR is ancillary. They are proposing to put it on the agenda, but to set up the machinery to handle it after the conference. This is a device for getting a conference. There is no pressure on MBFR but real pressures from our allies on the conference.

Kissinger: In my judgment, everyone is moving to anticipate everyone else. The French move to delay MBFR for a CES; the others to delay CES for MBFR. No one really wants a conference but no one wants to be in a position of turning it down.

Rogers: The Scandinavians and Italians want it, and the British came up with the idea of permanent machinery.

Kissinger: That was the Labour Government.

Rogers: Most of the allies favor the conference for reasons of internal domestic political support.

Laird: Sooner or later Brosio will be received in Moscow, but it puts the other side on the defensive.

Moorer: Some of the allies are suspicious that we will use MBFR to justify our reductions unilaterally. Also there is the problem of not allowing force improvements to fall by the wayside. We are working so closely with the allies to take a forthcoming position. The British and Germans have made studies that by and large reach our conclusion

that reduction will not contribute to security of NATO. The Soviets object to balance; they really object to the common ceiling. In the case of MBFR and CES, the key Soviet objective is to divide the US from NATO.

Kissinger: There is also the allied fear of unilateral withdrawals on the one hand, and a bilateral Soviet-American reduction on the other. We should do what we can to reassure them.

Laird: The Soviets are planting stories around Europe that they will make a unilateral cut in their own forces just before the summit. This would be tough politically.

Rogers: Mel, could you say something about burden-sharing? This is a tough one. Until recently we meant force improvements, but now . . .

Laird: There are four ways of burden-sharing. The President's statement in Ireland⁹ and in Naples¹⁰ is what we should stay with: The allies should be taking over more of our functions in NATO. They should be modernizing their forces. It is not just a question of paying dollars to the U.S. I am for being tough on things like offset, but it should not be made the primary effort.

Rogers: The offset deal can be worked out. But when we talk, our allies are convinced we are talking about direct contributions. But the President said they did not need to pay for us, but to help improve the forces.

Laird: We cannot let the allies back away from their five-year commitment to the AD-70 program. In the next 6–7 years, we will see that this is to our advantage.

Rogers: How are the allies doing on improving their forces?

Moorer: They are building some aircraft shelters. The Germans are improving their logistics. The UK is building some new ships.

Laird: It is not as much as we want them to do. The Germans have increased their budget by 13 percent. There is also some increase in the UK, but the others' share is decreasing. Both the Germans and the British should be encouraged. Norway and Belgium are not doing their share. We must try to get the burden shared, not get dollars. Of course, we should get as much for our forces, like rents and barracks, but not only in the dollar context. We should keep going in the Naples context.

President: What about the readiness of the Warsaw Pact forces?

⁹ President Nixon's remarks to reporters, October 4, 1970, in County Clare, Ireland, are in *Public Papers: Nixon, 1970*, pp. 804–809.

¹⁰ President Nixon's remarks upon his arrival at NATO Southern Command in Naples, September 30, 1970, are *ibid.*, pp. 786–787.

Helms: You will recall I briefed on this last June. There has been no change since then. It's the same number of divisions. There are rumors of Soviet reductions in Germany, but I think these are to soften us up on the MBFR thing.

Laird: Our forces in Europe are in the best shape than any time since the Vietnam war began. We will have problems with the Congressional amendment on reducing 50,000 man-years. We have to do it in two quarters. We will be about 10,000 short in Europe in March, but we can bring it up by early in the fiscal year. This is not bad. When we took office we were short about 30,000 spaces.

President: So we delay without getting caught.

[The meeting ended.]

81. National Security Decision Memorandum 142¹

Washington, December 2, 1971.

TO

The Secretary of State
The Secretary of Defense
The Attorney General
The Director of Central Intelligence
The Director, Arms Control and Disarmament Agency

SUBJECT

Presidential Guidance on Mutual and Balanced Force Reductions and a European Conference

As a result of the discussion at the December 1 NSC Meeting² the President has directed that the following guidance be followed in consultations with our Allies on the issues related to Mutual and Balanced Force Reductions and preparations for a European Conference.

After considering the discussions at the meeting, the President has concluded that we are not prepared for definitive decisions with respect to MBFR or CES and that our general approach should be to

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 364, Subject Files, National Security Decision Memoranda (NSDM's), Nos. 97–144. Top Secret.

² See Document 80.

proceed slowly while developing consensus within the Alliance on positions which clearly maintain our security.

It should be stressed to our Allies that the principal criterion for judging any MBFR proposals must be maintenance of Western military security. This will be the U.S. position in Alliance consultations on preferred MBFR models that would serve as the basis for negotiation. U.S. representatives should develop a maximum consensus on this principle.

At this time, the U.S. cannot support any single approach to reductions. We should urge the Allies to continue analysis of possible reduction models. Meanwhile, we should complete ongoing analysis and undertake further studies of asymmetrical models that emphasize limitations and reductions on Warsaw Pact offensive capabilities. We should also complete a study on options dealing with nuclear weapons and pursue further work on collateral constraints.

Our Allies should be told that the U.S. supports the concept of a sequential approach to negotiation similar to that proposed by the FRG. This approach should be applied to further analysis of MBFR models.

In Allied consultations, U.S. representatives should provide reassurance that we will not negotiate bilateral reductions with the USSR.

Until the Brosio mission to Moscow has been completed, the U.S. cannot support other efforts towards MBFR negotiations. While we would consider alternatives to the Brosio mission, if it proves unacceptable to the USSR, it remains essential that an exploratory phase similar to that authorized for Mr. Brosio be undertaken before any multilateral negotiations.

European Conference

We should insist that the final Quadripartite Protocol on Berlin be signed before agreeing to any multilateral preparations for a European Conference. Following the signing of the Berlin Protocol, the U.S. should urge a meeting of NATO countries at the Deputy Foreign Minister level to coordinate a common approach to the issues that may be raised by the other side before going into preparatory talks.

At present, Western preparations on substantive issues are insufficiently developed to enter into multilateral East-West contacts. The U.S. will be prepared to contribute to the work of the Alliance on substantive points by submitting more concrete proposals for Western consideration. In particular, security issues (other than MBFR) that might be topics in a Conference will be given more emphasis.

The U.S. has no interest in a conference in 1972 and all preparatory work within the Alliance and with Eastern and other European countries should be geared to this consideration.

The U.S. does not wish to alter its current position of keeping MBFR and a European Conference separate.

Burdensharing

The U.S. should continue to stress to its Allies the importance of additional European force improvements meeting the objectives set by NSDM 133.³ MBFR should in no way conflict with the force improvements developed under the AD-70 programs; these two concepts must be complementary.

Henry A. Kissinger

³ NSDM 133, "U.S. Strategies and Forces for NATO; Allied Force Improvements," is scheduled for publication in *Foreign Relations*, 1969–1976, volume XLI, Western Europe; NATO, 1969–1972.

82. Editorial Note

From December 9 to 10, 1971, the European security conference NATO's Foreign Ministers met in Brussels to discuss, among other topics, the European security conference and MBFR. The State Department's account of the meeting is scheduled for publication in *Foreign Relations*, 1969–1976, volume XLI, Western Europe; NATO, 1969–1972. The meeting's final communiqué is in North Atlantic Treaty Organization, On-Line Library, Ministerial Communiqués 1970–1979, *NATO Final Communiqués, 1949–1974*, <http://www.nato.int/docu/comm/49-95/c711209a.htm>.