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THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
WASHINGTON 20301

Honorable William C. Foster
Director
U. S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency
Department of State
Washington 25, D. C.

Dear Bill:

I am enclosing copies of JCSM-685-63, 3 September 1963, and JCSM-773-63, 4 October 1963. These two papers present the views of the Joint Chiefs of Staff on a militarily acceptable U. S. position on the exchange of observation posts to reduce the risks of war by surprise attack or miscalculation. I believe that these two papers provide an excellent basis for the development of a U. S. position.

An observation system, such as recommended below, would be advantageous to the United States. While such a system could not provide a guarantee against surprise attack, it could, if properly designed, provide a measure of advance warning that would make it more difficult for a State or group of States to initiate a major surprise conventional offensive operation. Such a system could increase confidence, reduce tensions, test Soviet intentions, and begin the process of opening up the Bloc.

A successful policy on such an observation system can only emerge from full and open discussion in the North Atlantic Council. These discussions may be difficult but they are essential. Successful negotiation of such an agreement with the Soviet Union probably will increase existing pressures within the United States and abroad for reductions of defense expenditures. In addition, observation posts located in the U. S. would result in some increase of Soviet knowledge of our response to crisis situations on a world-wide basis. Therefore, such posts would limit our flexibility to some extent. However, on balance it appears that negotiation of an agreement as outlined herein would be advantageous to the U. S.

An agreement on observation posts is acceptable within the guidelines outlined below. However, the preferred position, as outlined in the following subparagraphs includes provisions for a reduction of forces in Europe after implementation of the observation system. The preferred position includes:

(1) Ground observation posts in the Warsaw Pact area established on the basis of reciprocity in rights and privileges and an equitable balance in numbers. Posts would cover ports, rail centers, motor highway junctions and air bases and would have adequate surface and air

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mobility to be able to observe movements on the local transportation complex (see TAB A to Annex A to Appendix to JCSM-773-63). Details of requirements for access to military facilities, transportation facilities and vehicles and for communications will have to be developed. Proposed restrictions on the location of Warsaw Pact posts on NATO territory are as indicated in Annex B to Appendix to JCSM-773-63.

(2) Mobile observation teams assigned on an area basis to observe military activities within that area (see TAB A to Annex A to Appendix to JCSM-773-63.) Again details of requirements for access to various facilities and vehicles will have to be developed. There should be provisions for advance notification of major land ~~movements~~ movements (brigade/regiment or higher) of forces through or within areas of responsibility of observation posts/teams (see Appendix to JCSM-773-63, p. 6.)

(3) Aerial surveillance on a 24-hour, all-weather basis, with no restriction on sensing equipment, to encompass at least the area covered by the observation posts/teams (see Appendix to JCSM-773-63, p. 5.) Aerial inspection of those portions of the USSR bordering Turkey and Iran would be included if the USSR insists on aerial inspection in those countries.

(4) Overlapping radar coverage as indicated in the Norstad Plan.

(5) Reduction of all foreign troops in Europe to five divisions on each side contingent upon agreement on and implementation of the preceding four points. We should develop a U. S. position on the composition of the five NATO divisions. This must be done prior to bringing up the subject in the North Atlantic Council. We may want the five NATO divisions to be all U. S. or some combination (say, 2 U.S., 1 U.K., 1 French, 1 Benelux-Canadian) of NATO forces with U. S.

Soviet negotiating initiative on the observation question (or their response to a U. S. proposal) would probably take one of the following three general lines of approach:

a. An observation post agreement, perhaps coupled to an advance notification of military movements provision and/or other minor measure.

b. A non-aggression pact, perhaps in return for some kind of observation agreement.

c. An observation system agreement, perhaps coupled to a withdrawal of weapons of mass destruction and/or their delivery vehicles from Germany or Europe.

We should formulate our position to make possible negotiations on the basis of either the first or second possibility. However, an agreement within NATO to withdraw or reduce nuclear weapons and/or their delivery vehicles appears impossible at this time. It is also clear that a NATO consensus on a non-aggression pact would be very difficult to obtain.

Without a fundamental change in German attitudes and a considerable alteration of the views of other NATO members, we could only discuss a non-aggression pact as a part of a broader European settlement. However, the IAC might be willing to agree to the development of a declaration against aggression, in which case, the U. S. could support it in return for an agreement on an observation system.

It is recommended that the U. S. Government prepare two negotiating proposals:

a. A complete observation system consisting of the five elements listed above.

b. An observation system consisting of the same elements, except reduction of forces, a number of which could be separated from the negotiating package as detailed below.

Elimination of overlapping radar coverage and aerial surveillance from the agreement would not make it unacceptable, however, it would eliminate consideration of a reduction of forces since surveillance capabilities would be materially reduced.

Elimination of mobile observation teams, overlapping radar coverage and aerial surveillance would not make the agreement unacceptable. It would eliminate our willingness to accept a reduction in forces, and would increase the importance of the location, number and mobility of the fixed posts and of the other associated arrangements which would optimize safeguards against surprise attack.

I think that it is necessary for me to emphasize the problem of gaining a consensus in NATO. There already seems to be a consensus in the NAC on the five principles enumerated by the Belgian representative that an agreement on observation posts (1) must not compromise alliance security, (2) must not alter the East-West military balance, (3) must not prejudice the reunification of Germany, (4) must not do anything towards recognition of East Germany, and (5) must not make the Berlin situation more difficult. If we cannot achieve a genuine consensus without subjecting the alliance to major stresses and strains, then I think that the Committee of Principals would want to be exceedingly cautious in recommending to the President that we pursue such an agreement. In view of the foregoing, I recommend that when the proposed position has been formulated and discussed by our representatives, it be the subject of an early meeting of the Committee of Principals.

Sincerely,

2 Enclosures

JCSM-685-63, 3 Sept. 1963

JCSM-773-63, 4 Oct. 1963

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