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THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20301

3 DEC 1974

Honorable Henry A. Kissinger
Secretary of State
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Henry:

OSD REVIEWED 08-Mar-2011: NO OBJECTION TO DECLASSIFICATION

It has been evident that we could not move on MBFR until the SALT stage had been set. However, now I believe it important that we move without delay into NATO with a proposal to advance MBFR by giving the nuclear signal to the East in Vienna before the end of this round of negotiations. The following factors bear on such a decision:

- We see a need to make progress in MBFR soon -- as long as we do not damage our basic security interests in the process. We do not know what kind of pressure the new Congress will put on us, but it could be significant.
- The Soviets are making "new" non-substantive MBFR proposals to put the East in a better public position.
- The SALT FBS issue has been set aside for the mid-term future.
- We are planning on drawing down a good number of nuclear warheads. We would want to get MBFR credit for warheads coming out of Central Europe.
- We and our Allies have identified some complexities associated with aircraft and missile reductions. These are not insurmountable, but warhead reductions are less complex, and NATO should be able to agree to them right away.

Equipment constraints can be worked out satisfactorily in connection with the introduction of nuclear elements. The act of agreeing to equipment reductions should establish an obligation on the US and the Soviet Union not to exceed the residual level of armaments specified in the agreement for reduction except for normal rotation and training purposes. Some reciprocal limitations on elements similar to those reduced by the other side should be imposed on each side by some form of non-circumvention provisions. These would be designed not to leave NATO at any real or apparent relative disadvantage. Non-circumvention formulations could be as general or as specific as the negotiating circumstances demand, and possibilities cover a spectrum of varying constraint. In any case appropriate constraints are feasible and should not hold back play of Option III elements.

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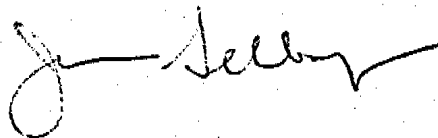
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We want to reduce Soviet capability in the Warsaw Pact area through the removal of tank forces; and we want to retain a strong US capability. If we judiciously play out our negotiating hand in MBFR and hold firm to our basic position, the Soviets may accommodate us. Advancing the signal before the break (December 12) would give the Allies a leg on the East and would permit the Allies and the East to use the December-January recess to prepare for serious discussion in the next session.

We might pursue a scenario along the following lines to achieve this end:

- Introduce into the NAC the first week of December a proposal to inform the East in Vienna before the December break that the Allies would be prepared to consider including substantial US nuclear capability in the form of 1,000 warheads in US Phase I reduction provided the East is willing to consider accepting our Phase I objectives, including reduction of a Soviet tank army.
- We would inform the Allies we would not rule out the possibility of following later with other Option III elements (27 PERSHING and 48 F-4), depending on the situation, and this would require further consultation with NATO.

If we are to make this new proposal before the end of this negotiating round we will have to move forward immediately in the Alliance. Assuming we do that in the next several days, you and I then could put the capstone on Alliance agreement at the Ministerials. Because the last plenary session in Vienna is scheduled for 12 December it might be necessary to hold some delegation members in Vienna a few days longer.



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