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MEMORANDUM

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

REFER TO DOS

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INFORMATION

June 9, 1973

*Handwritten initials and scribbles, including 'S' and 'GWS'.*

MEMORANDUM FOR DR. KISSINGER

FROM: Phil Odeen *PO*

*Handwritten notes: "Non sense - 1/8" and "was a distraction".*

SUBJECT: NATO Defense Ministers Meeting

DOS REVIEWED 18-Mar-2011: NO OBJECTION TO DECLASSIFICATION.

Last week's meeting of NATO Defense Ministers (June 7) went reasonably well from the standpoint of advancing U.S. security initiatives in connection with the Year of Europe. *HK*

Our basic strategy for the meeting was:

-- To put forward our burdensharing and force improvement proposals but not let them get bogged down in the NATO bureaucracy.

-- To get the Allies thinking about strategy but stop short of getting the NATO bureaucracy involved in a major strategic review.

The focus of our effort was on Schlesinger's speech. The preparation was a real bureaucratic donnybrook with the military and ISA trying to excise anything that "might cause problems." But the result advanced our interests. In addition to outlining our burdensharing and force improvement proposals, Schlesinger made two key points.

-- That the U.S. Congress is not likely to continue supporting a U.S. defense posture premised on a major conventional defense option for Europe if the Allies continue to plan for a nuclear trip wire.

-- A major conventional defense option is within reach of NATO and does not require a massive buildup that would be politically unacceptable.

Hal Sonnenfeldt had some concern that the speech turned out to be too incrementalist -- that is, that we only need to take small steps to shore up NATO's defenses. I agree; it probably should have gone further to stress the difficult actions needed. This was one result of the bureaucratic infighting, but it may not have been bad tactics (we do not want to get NATO involved in the basic review of strategy and force structure yet) and did not detract from the overall thrust of the presentation that NATO had to face a number of tough issues.

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OSD REVIEWED 15-Mar-2011: NO OBJECTION TO DECLASSIFICATION.

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At the end of the DPC, Luns drew attention to the U.S. proposals for force improvements and burdensharing, which he said called for development of a multilateral program. As we had planned, Luns gave action to the Permanent Representatives to formulate an appropriate approach and did not hand our initiatives to the existing AD 70 bodies.

Another positive aspect to the meeting was the Dutch effort to get NATO to examine greater specialization of Defense Missions on the Central Front. The Ministers agreed to such a study and this will give us an opportunity to advance our own views on restructuring NATO's defense.

Coming back on the plane, Jim Schlesinger gave Dave Aaron his own view of the meeting. Basically, Jim felt that the Defense Ministers he talked to may not have understood what he was saying, but did hear that we were saying something new. He characterized his speech as a "warning shot across their bow" which they clearly noticed, but without yet absorbing the full implications of what we are about.

Schlesinger also expressed concern at the ossification he found in NATO both in the organization itself and in U.S. Mission. We share this concern. A surprising number of people in our Mission have been there for years and are simply tending the machine.

The DPC enabled us to place our proposals on security issues before the Allies, but to get concrete action we will have to follow up with specifics both in terms of substance as well as procedures. The latter is particularly important if the initiatives we are pursuing are to support your efforts in the Year of Europe and if they are not to disappear into the NATO woodwork. Schlesinger appears to be quite aware of these problems and willing to work with us on them.

cc: Hal Sonnenfeldt  
Larry Eagleburger

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