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DEFENSE PROGRAM REVIEW COMMITTEE

Wednesday, August 4, 1971

Time and Place: 3:55 - 4:30, White House Situation Room

Subject: NATO Force Improvements

Participation:-

Chairman: Henry A. Kissinger

OMB: Casper Weinberger  
Kenneth Dam

State: U. Alexis Johnson  
Leon Sloss  
Ralph McGuire  
Seymour Weiss

ACDA: Philip Farley

CEA: Paul McCracken

Defense: David Packard  
Philip Odeen  
Henry Gaffney

OST: Edward David

JCS: Adm. Thomas H. Moorer  
B/Gen. Francis J. Roberts  
Lt. Walter B. Ratliffe

NSC Staff: Col. Richard T. Kennedy  
Mr. Wayne Smith  
Mr. Helmut Sonnenfeldt  
Mr. John Court  
Adm. Robert O. Welander  
Jeanne W. Davis

CIA: Lt. Gen. Robert E. Cushman

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SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS

It was agreed to obtain:

- Information on how much of our equipment is in storage.
- A realistic estimate of the combat readiness of stored equipment.
- More and better information on the war reserve situation of our allies.

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NSS, OSD,  
State Dept.  
reviews  
completed

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Mr. Kissinger: We have three issues today: 1) the relationship of MBFR to force improvements; 2) to review what we're trying to do; and 3) which package to push as a first increment. With regard to the first -- MBFR and force improvements -- I am told that some think these are mutually exclusive. If so, that is a somber conclusion. The justification for the initial increment of MBFR was that it did not change the existing strategic balance. We had concluded that the balance was adequate but that there needed to be some alterations within the balance. If we don't make the force improvements, we will be freezing the anomalies in the situation which the alterations were designed to correct.

Mr. Packard: This is true if we're talking about increases in numbers, but not if we talk about increased readiness.

Mr. Kissinger: I agree. We can't increase the numbers but we can do other things.

Mr. Johnson: We're after qualitative improvement.

Adm. Moorer: The problem is partly psychological. We've got to keep up the will of the NATO countries to do what they have already agreed to do.

Mr. Packard: You may ask if it is consistent to increase the number of tanks while talking about MBFR. We certainly shouldn't hold up qualitative improvements. But I don't believe either we should hold up on 1,000 additional tanks for NATO.

Adm. Moorer: I think they should go ahead with the improvement program.

Mr. Kissinger: That's our view, but I wanted to be sure that everyone understood it.

Adm. Moorer: The problem is keeping our allies interested.

Mr. Kissinger: They've just got to believe that the situation is serious. A Mansfield resolution will surely pass if they don't make a bigger effort.

Mr. Johnson: Our allies will say MBFR and force improvements are inconsistent but we will just have to marshal our arguments and deal with that problem.

Mr. Kissinger: I just wanted to be sure all of us were aboard on this.

Now, I'd like to clear up my understanding on some things. The number of tanks fluctuate from meeting to meeting. I hope our intelligence on the Soviets is better than it is on ourselves. Do we now believe the Soviets have 8,200 tanks rather than 10,000?

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Gen. Cushman: That is our conclusion. (The subsequent dialogue indicated that General Cushman had misunderstood and thought the discussion was on aircraft rather than tanks.)

Mr. Smith: I think the basic difference (in overall strength) relates to the <sup>25X1</sup> Polish and Czech divisions.

We don't define them as being at full strength, but DIA thinks <sup>25X1</sup> they should be included. CIA doesn't differ with DIA on the number of tanks.

Gen. Cushman: We're talking about the combat readiness of the division as oppose to the total numbers.

Mr. Kissinger: About our anti-tank capacity; are we equating one anti-tank weapon for each tank? Do we consider that a balance?

Adm. Moorer: It depends on the type of anti-tank weapon -- they have different ranges. You can't equate them on a one-for-one basis. You can kill tanks with other things -- land mines, planes, etc.

Mr. Kissinger: Have we found some additional anti-tank weapons too?

Adm. Moorer: Some very old ones in storage and in reserve.

Mr. Odeen : In the NSSM-84 study we considered only heavy anti-tank weapons and compared them to tanks for the sake of convenience. The absolute numbers are not as important as the trends. The Army has done a detailed analysis of the equation of tanks to anti-tank weapons but I don't believe it's one-for-one.

Mr. Kissinger: I'm told that counting tanks this way is a mistake because most of them can't run. Can we get an estimate of combat readiness of our stored equipment?

Adm. Moorer: That's the purpose of the REFORGER operation -- to break out our equipment once a year to make certain that it would run.

Mr. Odeen : They had more problems in the last exercise than anticipated. The Army has increased its funds so as to perform more and better maintenance.

Mr. Kissinger: Can we get a realistic estimate of how ready we are?

Mr. Packard: We don't have a comparable estimate of Pact readiness, but I'm sure our equipment is as ready as theirs.

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Mr. Kissinger: How much of their equipment is in storage?

Mr. Smith: 35%.

Adm. Moorer: They flesh out existing units rather than create new units.

Mr. Kissinger: Can we get a rough estimate of ours?

Adm. Moorer: Sure.

Mr. Kissinger: Can we talk about war reserve stocks. I was reassured by the proposition that the Germans have 37.5 days of 105 mm ammunition which, at US consumption rates, amounts to 80 days. But whereas the Germans report having 37.5 days of 155 mm ammunition, by US standards they have only 31 days. This 37.5 days transferred into 80 days can be consoling if it is consumed at US rates. But suppose it is consumed at German rates. Either the Germans must change their standard operating procedure to conform to ours or they will run out of ammunition. Or their rate of consumption is more realistic than ours.

Adm. Moorer: It is a question of the planning factor. NATO has a standard day of supply, and we have multiplied that figure and matched it to the US planning factor. NATO includes an intensity factor -- they assume a higher expenditure the first month, a leveling off in the second month, and the third month the same. We straight-line it. The NATO intensity factor means that their estimate is different after 30 days than it is at 90 days.

Mr. Kissinger: If the Germans can go 37.5 days, they don't care what happens after 38 days. Either the Germans must adjust their planning to our expectations or run out of ammunition.

Adm. Moorer: I have a letter from General De Maiziere, my German counterpart in which he points out that their ammunition dependency is 60% from the US; 10% from the UK; 10% from France; 10% from Belgium; and 10% from all others. After six months of war, the FRG could be independent in the production of ammunition, if war conditions permit.

Mr. Kissinger: If they weren't overrun. If he thinks he has 37.5 days of ammunition that's his own planning factor.

Adm. Moorer: No, that's based on the NATO planning factor. They consider the expenditure will be greater initially, then will taper off. We straight-line.

Mr. Kissinger: But if the NATO planning factor is correct, the Germans will run out of ammunition after 37.5 days. If they're right about the expenditure rate, we will run out about the same time as they do. If we're right, we will both have 80 days.

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Adm. Moorer: Not if you take into account the intensity factor.

Mr. Kissinger: That won't change the rate once the operations starts. If they are expending at that rate and the combat goes as they think it will, they will run out.

Adm. Moorer: But they will have an additional procurement capability by 1972-- they will be able to resupply in 60 days.

Mr. Kissinger: Either they're right or we're right. If they're right, we will be expending at the same rate they are.

Mr. Odeen: The paper says we need a better understanding of how this system works. How much is expended depends in part on how much we want to conserve.

Mr. Kissinger: Of course they can stretch it out if they are given an arbitrary allocation. But where we have two different planning factors, only one of them is likely to be correct. We can't convert one to the other. If the higher rate is realistic, we would sacrifice combat effectiveness by expending less, or they could expend what they are planning and jeopardize the length of the operation.

Adm. Moorer: We should start with the stockpile and use the same planning factors for both.

Mr. Kissinger: Can we do that?

Adm. Moorer: If the intensity is great initially, it shouldn't be as bad later on.

Mr. Packard: You also have lots of variables, in tactics for example.

Mr. Odeen: We know the SHAPE rates but we don't know the rates of the others.

Mr. Johnson: It would certainly help the discussion to use a common factor.

Mr. Kissinger: Or know the implications of the two factors.

Adm. Moorer: What are we talking about when we say we will fight a 90-day war? Is this strategic or logistic guidance? Are we planning to fight 90 days and then go nuclear or surrender, or is this a logistic figure?

Mr. Kissinger: I have always considered it a logistic figure.

Adm. Moorer: Phil Odeen doesn't. I agree it should be logistic.

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Mr. Johnson : I've assumed that in 90 days we could get our resupply going.

Mr. Kissinger: That's been our assumption. We never thought we would surrender after 90 days if the front were intact. There is a question, of course, of whether we stretch out our forces all along the line or concentrate our war-fighting capability. I'm not convinced we can get to 40 days, much less 90 days. There is a tremendous gap between an M-15 and M-30. If we can last 90 days we will have our logistic system operating and can fight indefinitely. If we don't improve our war-fighting capability we won't get to 90 days.

Adm. Moorer: You're not assuming we're not going past 90 days.

Mr. Kissinger: We're not assuming we will stop at 90 days.

Mr. Packard: In talking about expenditure rates, you have to use the standards of the country. The UK supplies will be used up in 30 days according to their standards. But if you convert this to US standards, some items will last 70 days and some 4 days.

Mr. Kissinger: But that's unrealistic. They will fire at their own rates. They either have to change their tactics or their stocks.

Mr. Odeen : We don't really know their rates.

Col. Kennedy: They just can't mount sustained fire at some of rates indicated here. They would have no tubes left.

Mr. Kissinger: We're not planning at stopping at 90 days, but we have to give immediate attention to our war-fighting capability. The problem is how to get started on an improvement program. The shortages are patent in every category. We have three sets of priorities -- to concentrate on M-Day or deal in the longer term. I suggest we concentrate on M-Day forces initially, without prejudice to the longer term.

Adm. Moorer: The minute war starts, I assume we will start pushing all supplies to Europe as fast as we can get them there.

Mr. Kissinger: I understand the 90 days as logistic guidance.

Mr. Johnson: No question about it.

Mr. Odeen : The guidance in the paper is consistent with this.

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Mr. Kissinger: As long as you keep in being the capacity to reinforce during the 90 days. Let's move to some specific packages we can discuss. Let's restudy the war supply reserve situation.

Adm. Moorer: The State Department has to help in the forthcoming meeting on MBFR -- to keep prodding our allies to go ahead on their December commitments.

Mr. Kissinger: Yes, we must not present MBFR as an alternative to force improvements.

Adm. Moorer: They were all enthusiastic in December, but there was a marked difference in their attitude at the recent MPD meeting.

Mr. Weiss: That's inevitable. It's tough to get Ministers to go to their Parliaments and say they want to increase their defense budgets while they're talking reduction of forces.

Mr. Kissinger: They just have to face facts. The party is over.

Mr. Johnson: This is a problem we'll just have to deal with.

Mr. Packard: We're not giving our allies enough credit. They are increasing at the rate of \$3 billion a year. They are doing lots of things they don't get credit for.

Adm. Moorer: But they will back away if we press on MBFR. They will fight for cuts and against increases.

Mr. Kissinger: We will have trouble with our Congress too. I think all agree that we should have a strong brief for the NATO meeting.

Adm. Moorer: There was considerable let-down at Lisbon.

Mr. Kissinger: That was right after the Mansfield debate and we were all a little shell-shocked. We will have to come back stronger this time.

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