

24th January, 1973

ISD/26

NOTES FOR THE CHAIRMAN

MEETING OF THE SENIOR POLITICAL COMMITTEE, 24TH JANUARY, 1973

CONTACTS WITH THE NEUTRALS

A. INITIAL COMMENTS

Mention that the question of neutral country participation in MBFR talks was raised by the Soviet response to our MBFR Invitation and that we may have to do something about it.

B. PROCEDURAL POINTS

(i) Timing and author of initiative

- We could take the initiative and approach the neutrals about this matter either:
 - now
 - or if the Soviets create further trouble over participation in their expected response to our latest note;
 - or later, if participation is discussed at the Exploratory Talks.
- Or we could wait for the neutrals to approach us.

(ii) Place of initiative

Allied initiatives could be made:

- to embassies of neutrals in Brussels;
- in Helsinki;
- in neutral capitals.

(iii) Recipients

Which countries should we address? :

(a) those on borders of NATO/WP territories

- Austria
- Switzerland
- Sweden
- Finland
- Yugoslavia

(b) others

Malta, Ireland, Spain, Cyprus, Albania.

C. SUBSTANTIVE QUESTIONS

What should we say to those neutral countries?
Our statements might include, for example:

- (1) brief references to the participation sections of:
 - (a) the Allied Invitation
 - (b) the Soviet and WP responses
 - (c) the Allied notes of 24th January
 - (d) further Soviet and WP responses;
- (ii) reference to the Allied initiative on MBFR at Reykjavik and since, which indicates a continuing belief that "measures in this field, including MBFR, can contribute significantly to the lessening of tension and to further reducing the danger of war" (Reykjavik Declaration and para. 3 of the Canadian note of 22nd January, 1973);
- (iii) the main area of concern is Central Europe, so countries having territories and/or maintaining forces there should participate fully (Canadian note, para. 4);
- (iv) other Allied countries should also participate in some way, since the security of each Alliance is indivisible. NATO has suggested arrangements for its flank countries, and could accept participation of Romania and Bulgaria (Canadian note, para. 5);
- (v) in this way the security of Europe, which is heavily dependent on the balance of power between the two Alliances, will be ensured (Canadian note, para. 5);
- (vi) Allied countries are very well aware of the interest of the neutrals in the outcome of MBFR negotiations, as indicated by the Brussels, 1972, Communiqué which said that MBFR in Central Europe "should not operate to the military disadvantage of any side (i.e. including the neutrals) and should enhance stability and security in Europe, as a whole". (Brussels, 1972, Communiqué, para. 11);

(vii) in fact, neutral countries would be better not to take part for their own sake. The talks are likely to be extremely complex; they will deal with very complicated subject matters, which are likely to be understood only by those with direct access to thinking on security matters, data, and so on, within the two Alliances. In this connection, one may even ask neutrals what they would prefer:

(a) an MBFR forum whose structure is tailored in such a fashion that it keeps open reasonable chances of success, but which would exclude third countries, or

(b) a forum which includes these third countries but which by its size would greatly put at risk the chances of concrete results;

(viii) we take it that these reasons for limiting participation will be understood and accepted by each neutral country concerned (Canadian note, para. 6);

(ix) we will keep the neutral countries well informed of the progress of the talks (Canadian note, para. 7).

D. PRESS STATEMENTS

When and how should NATO press spokesmen and Allied press officers reveal contacts with neutral countries on this issue?

How much of the substance of Allied statements should they reveal?

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