

NATO UNCLASSIFIED AND PUBLIC DISCLOSED

DEPUTY UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE
WASHINGTON

July 18, 1967

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Dear Manlio:

I regret that I will be unable to attend the Rapporteurs Meeting in Bonn this week, but the press of other business makes this impossible. I have asked Mr. Farley and Mr. Sloss to represent me, and they are fully cognizant of my views on the Future of the Alliance Study.

In addition, I thought it might be useful for me to summarize some of my current thinking in writing. This has been done in the enclosed memorandum.

I trust that you will have a successful meeting and that the efforts which have already begun so auspiciously will be further advanced at your meeting.

With best personal regards.

Sincerely,

Foy
Foy D. Kohler

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Enclosure.

The Honorable
Manlio Brosio,
Secretary General,
North Atlantic Treaty Organization,
Paris, France.

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MEMORANDUM FOR RAPPORTEURS

SUBJECT: Future of the Alliance Study

Inasmuch as I am unable to attend the Rapporteurs Meeting on July 21, I thought it may be useful to set down for you some of my views on the study. We are just beginning to work on my report, and some of these views are quite preliminary. Thus, I think it will be useful to continue to exchange views with you and others over the coming weeks.

Inevitably your reports are going to have a somewhat different focus than mine. I will be concerned primarily with defense problems and with the medium term - that is the period in which we will be hoping for forward movement in East-West relations, but not expecting any fundamental changes in Soviet policy and in European security arrangements. I assume that the other reports will be concerned more with political strategy and actions and also will consider longer-term policies. Nevertheless, I agree there will be much common ground covered, and it will be useful for us to know what assumptions the other is making.

Certainly one of the principal changes in the relations of the Alliance with Eastern Europe in recent years is a limited and rather selective relaxation of tensions. Despite this trend, relationships with the East will not be easy in the next few years. We can expect new relationships to develop slowly and unevenly. However, we must expect more diplomatic contacts between East and West than we have had in the past, and for this reason, we should do what we can in NATO to assure that members are fully cognizant of the impact on the security and political cohesion of Western Europe, of the progressive effects of these contacts and thus, where possible, we should coordinate our efforts.

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The existing NATO machinery and the practice which we have had already in consultation in NATO provides an asset on which we can build. It is important that bilateral contacts with the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe be supplemented by multilateral exchanges within NATO which will give all of the members of the Alliance an over-all picture of where we stand in our relationships with the East.

While NATO has a significant role to play, there will be limits on how far it will be possible and desirable to coordinate East-West contacts in NATO. It will be more important (and also more difficult) to coordinate some actions than it will others. I see no way of defining these limits precisely in advance, but we should be able to establish some benchmarks. I hope that the study by Group I will consider what actions will be particularly important to coordinate, and what the feasible limits may be on consultation about East-West contacts. For our part, we are prepared to engage fully in such consultation, and hope that others will take a similar view.

With respect to NATO security policy, it seems to me that the maintenance of an adequate deterrent remains fundamental to our relationships with the Communist states of Europe. Whatever progress we have made toward relaxation of tensions has been in large measure a result of the fact that the Soviets have concluded that military pressures will not serve their ends in Western Europe. They have reached this conclusion because the West has maintained adequate military strength and political cohesion and the two go together in my view. I believe that the maintenance of an effective deterrent continues to be essential as we gradually develop new relationships with the USSR and the states of Eastern Europe. And I am concerned that this may be forgotten as NATO inevitably moves toward greater emphasis on developing relationships with the East.

Even now, there seem to be dangerous, albeit understandable, tendencies to weaken our military forces. I am particularly concerned by the pressures to reduce the non-nuclear forces of the Alliance at a time when the Soviets are building up their strategic capabilities at a rapid rate. While

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we do not yet fully understand the potential implications of emerging strategic parity, I think it behooves us to maintain and improve our present non-nuclear capabilities until we do understand these implications more fully. For this reason, I have included, as one of the central themes of my report, a discussion of the relationship between deterrence and detente.

I think that it is important to try to set forth in the report just what detente is all about, what it means to NATO and what we can expect in the future. While we should not attempt a "Webster definition" of detente, I think we should try to set forth as explicitly as possible what we believe to be the Soviet objectives with respect to detente and what our own attitudes should be. Certainly the respective objectives of East and West continue to be fundamentally different. It also is quite clear that different members of the Alliance have different views of what detente means. For example, some of us, while wishing to extend relationships with Eastern Europe, are concerned by others dealing directly with the Soviet Union. This was evident in the discussions of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. While there clearly will be differing views of detente, as each member of the Alliance has a somewhat different perspective, unless we can have some measure of agreement on what detente means, then I do not see how we can devise any sort of a coordinated approach to our contacts with the East.

In my own view, the Soviets have in recent years come to see relaxation of tensions as meeting their own national interests. They hope, by relaxing tensions selectively, to weaken the cohesion of the Alliance, divide the states of Western Europe, and in particular, to isolate the Federal Republic and open up differences between Western Europe and the US. To some extent, they have been successful in this policy. In my view, the long-term Soviet objective is to reduce US influence in Western Europe and eventually remove the US presence from the continent. They hope to convince us that NATO is no longer relevant and that a US military presence in Western Europe is no longer required. A recognition of these Soviet objectives does not mean that we

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should abandon our efforts to improve East-West relationships. In fact, detente provides opportunities for the West as well - important opportunities to open the societies of Eastern Europe and weaken the influence of the Soviets in these states; also to promote the evolutionary process inside the Soviet Union itself.

With the above in mind, I intend that my report, in any event, will proceed on the following assumptions:

1. Deterrence is still very much relevant to NATO. It requires a balanced mix of nuclear and non-nuclear forces and continuing efforts to improve the capabilities of these forces, particularly in view of rapidly changing technology.

2. Quite aside from the need to deter, and NATO's role in this, I see a continued long-term need for a strong coalition military force to counterbalance Soviet military preponderance on the continent. Without such a counterbalancing force, which NATO members would be unable to provide acting individually, Soviet military superiority would be a source of political leverage and influence for application in Western Europe. NATO neutralizes this important potential. I consider this a vital function for the long run.

3. The present detente is limited. It involves risks as well as opportunities. The Soviets have not abandoned their basic objectives. They continue to seek means of dividing the members of the Alliance and removing the US presence in Europe. They continue their bitter hostility to Germany and their opposition to German unification on any basis that would be acceptable to the West. At the present time, they see a purposeful and selective relaxation of tensions as serving these objectives. Therefore, while seeking to take advantage of the opportunities offered by an improving East-West atmosphere, we must parry Soviet efforts to use detente for their own ends.

4. There is a need for the NATO members to harmonize their approaches toward Eastern Europe. We cannot expect to achieve, nor should we seek a monolithic NATO policy toward,

East-West relationships, but at least we can expect NATO to serve as a clearing house which will help to provide each member of the Alliance with an over-all view of the state of East-West relationships, and reduce the risks of the NATO governments working at cross purposes with each other.

5. There is a need also to coordinate arms control and disarmament policies. We should attempt to establish some agreement on the relative feasibility of various arms control measures and the priorities we attach to pursuing each.

6. NATO continues to be very much relevant to the current situation in Europe. This is true for at least two reasons. First, because the maintenance of a deterrent is still essential, and because deterrence requires not only adequate military strength, but common objectives and resolve. The deterrent can be weakened as readily by political differences between the members of the Alliance as it can by reductions in the physical capability of the forces. Secondly, NATO is relevant because, as contacts between East and West expand and proliferate, we need, even more than we have before, a forum in which we can exchange views and consult about specific policies and actions.

7. Finally, while this is less directly relevant to defense policy, an essential element for genuine and lasting accommodation and maximum long-range change in the Soviet society is the economic strength, political cohesion and social progress of the Atlantic nations. The greater is our progress and unity in the West, the more will the USSR (and Eastern Europe) be drawn away from an anachronistic ideology toward genuine cooperation with the West.

Security for the members of NATO has always been based on two fundamental propositions. First, the maintenance of adequate military strength. Second, a willingness to seek agreements with the East which would genuinely reduce the risk of conflict. In the early years of NATO there were relatively few opportunities for agreement. Therefore, the primary emphasis in the Alliance was on the coordination of effective military strength. In recent years, some opportunities have developed which have permitted the reduction of tensions. This does not invalidate the need for military

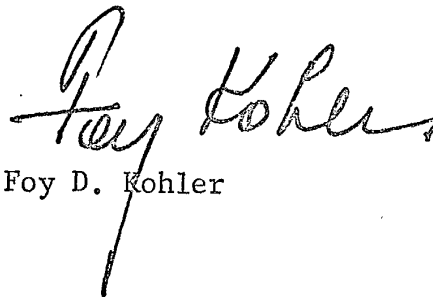
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strength, but it does force upon the NATO members the need to consider together opportunities for reducing tensions and how we should deal with these opportunities. This adds a new dimension to NATO's business.

It seems to me that a principal task before the Alliance is to find better means of consulting about the security issues that confront us. While our principal objective remains the security of the North Atlantic area, this now involves, to a greater extent, questions of political tactics and actions as well as military issues. There is a greater risk of disagreement amongst us because there are more choices to be made and greater room for maneuver. In this environment, it seems to me that maintenance of the NATO organization as a locus for consultation is more important than it has ever been. I know of no better way to improve the procedures of consultation than to use them more intensively. The existing institutions of NATO at least provide the point of departure.

19/7/57



Foy D. Kohler

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