

NSF 210 Army  
12/61-1/62

UNCLASSIFIED

Mr. George Bundy  
The White House

123  
10a

256.

NSEC 179/1  
Kayser

January 20, 1962

~~SECRET~~

Dear Bob:

As you know, I share the concern expressed by the President in our discussion with him yesterday, that no action be taken to effect a reduction in our military forces overseas lest this be construed as a willingness on the part of the United States to diminish its military posture during this period of crises. In this connection, I appreciated the prompt action taken by Mr. Nitze and other members of your Department to correct the misimpression that grew out of the recently issued directive to USAFEUR to undertake tentative planning for force withdrawals to begin as early as this February. I am, of course, aware that DOD Fiscal Year '63 budgetary plans do anticipate a reduction in forces, providing international political circumstances permit. Moreover, I presume that there is a point beyond which delay in developing such plans, and more importantly delay in their implementation, creates serious internal administrative problems for the Department of Defense.

Given the foregoing considerations, I believe it would be helpful if we knew present Department of Defense thinking with respect to the alternatives which are open to us in meeting any force reductions which might be contemplated, as well as with regard to the timing of such reductions. In this connection, I would appreciate any information you could give us on the following questions:

- 1. Under

The Honorable  
Robert S. McNamara,  
Secretary of Defense.

~~SECRET~~

BEST AVAILABLE COPY

NSEC 179/2

~~SECRET~~

-2-

1. Under present budgetary plans, how much of a reduction would be required from forces presently in being?
2. What are the alternative possibilities from the Defense Department point of view for effecting such reductions with specific reference to the degree of latitude which we have as between (a) forces overseas and forces in the United States, and (b) forces in the various theaters overseas?
3. For how long a period can we safely put off the decision to reduce our forces without creating unmanageable budgetary and administrative problems for the Department of Defense?
4. Assuming the decision were made not to go through with the force reduction, what would be the budgetary impact and what legislative problems, if any, would we face?

I will be back in Washington by February 1, and would hope we might together then review this situation to see whether we should make some recommendations to the President on the question.

In light of their interest in this matter, I am sending copies of this letter to Mac Bundy and General Taylor.

Sincerely yours,

Dean Rusk

G/FR:Swiss

G:UAJohnson:mw

1/19/62

BEST AVAILABLE COPY

~~SECRET~~