MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

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PA/HO Department of State
E.O. 12958, as amended
June 22, 2004

CONFIDENTIAL

INFORMATION

June 2, 1969

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: Henry A. Kissinger HK

SUBJECT: Implementation of Your NATO Proposals

The North Atlantic Council (NAC) has now discussed your proposal for establishing a Committee on the Challenges of Modern Society (on May 14), and the proposals for periodic meetings at the Deputy Foreign Minister level and creation of a more powerful Special Political Planning Committee (on May 21).

The discussions in Brussels have made clear that the considered Allied reaction has been generally positive though cautious to the idea of a Committee on the Challenges of Modern Society, and generally negative on Deputy Foreign Minister meetings and a new planning group.

At Tab A is a memorandum from Elliot Richardson giving details of the status of the proposal for a Committee on the Challenges of Modern Society, which has been considered in some detail with the Allies. The Permanent Representatives have agreed ad referendum to (a) visits this summer by NATO Secretary General Brosio to Allied capitals to discuss your proposals; and (b) a special NAC meeting this autumn, reinforced by high-level experts on environmental affairs, to discuss this subject.

My own review of the reporting from Brussels leads me to conclude that there are three basic reasons for the slowness and skepticism of our Allies in responding to your proposals:

-- first, and most important, the proposals have been advanced through NAC, where the Permanent Representatives tend to see the new structures as challenges to their own prerogatives, and to interpret US advocacy of change as implying that NAC has not been doing its job properly;

-- second, your proposals tend to cut across bureaucratic lines and suggest a NATO role for agencies of Allied Governments outside the Foreign Ministries, which causes consternation among professional diplomats in the capitals; and

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-- third, the Allies traditionally are suspicious of plans to create new NATO mechanisms until it is perfectly clear why they are required and how they will be used.

The State Department is currently undertaking a further series of bilateral approaches to the allies both in allied capitals and by calling in Ambassadors or Deputy Mission chiefs here. An aide memoire giving additional details on how the Committee on Challenges of Modern Society would function is being handed to all allied foreign ministers.

I think this is the right approach since it may cut through some of the inertia. If, after we have obtained responses to these demarches, the pace still seems unsatisfactory we could consider a personal letter from you to NATO heads of government. Elliot Richardson will provide a further progress report in a few days.

THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN.

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NOTE

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INFORMATION
May 19, 1969

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MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: Henry A. Kissinger HK

SUBJECT: Implementation of your NATO Proposals

Attached at Tab A is a progress report on the implementation of the three proposals you made in your speech of April 10 to the NATO Ministers. Our ambassadors are now in the process of laying the groundwork in NATO capitals so that our NATO delegation will be in a position to submit formal proposals to the North Atlantic Council.

Attachment

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THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE
WASHINGTON

May 6, 1969

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MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

Subject: Implementation of your Proposals to the NATO Ministerial Meeting

In your address at the commemorative session of the North Atlantic Council on April 10, you called for the following three measures to improve Western political consultation:

-- Periodic meetings of Deputy Foreign Ministers;
-- Creation of a special political planning group;
-- Establishment of a committee on the challenges of modern society.

Discussions at the Ministerial Meeting and comments thereafter from capitals and NATO Permanent Representatives indicate considerable interest in implementing these proposals. Predictably, there are areas of resistance from certain quarters: some Allies have expressed concern over an expansion of NATO's current structure; others have taken a conventional view towards expanding NATO's consultative role to include environmental problems. On the other hand, there have been strong expressions of support for your proposals from a number of the Allies; the Germans and Dutch, for example, have evinced enthusiastic interest in NATO discussions on problems of modern society.

Based on reports we have received thus far, we considered it advisable to instruct Ambassadors in Allied capitals to make bilateral approaches in order to develop support for your proposals at the political level. We

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also believe it important to try to break this subject out of traditional Foreign Office channels. As a further useful step in this direction, NATO Secretary General Brosio may soon tour Allied capitals in order to obtain high-level views on your proposals.

Specifically, we have taken the following steps on each of your suggestions:

-- Periodic Meetings of Deputy Foreign Ministers:

We have urged that the first meeting take place in September, leaving to participating officials the question of the schedule for subsequent meetings. We have suggested that topics for consultation by Deputy Foreign Ministers might include European security issues which lend themselves to negotiation with the countries of Eastern Europe; formal establishment of the Committee on the Challenges of Modern Society, and of guidelines for this committee; and a discussion of the work of the Special Political Planning Group.

-- Special Political Planning Group:

We have called for the establishment of a planning group which would consult on long-term issues beyond current Alliance operational concerns. We believe this body should examine trends in an effort to identify at early stages the problems that might arise, or could be prevented from arising through advance action. If possible, we would like to organize the first session of this group in June.

-- Committee on Challenges of Modern Society:

Our first objective in this area is to obtain early agreement in principle among the Permanent Representatives for establishing this committee. Once this decision is taken, we believe that an ad hoc exploratory group should be convened to discuss topics to be brought before the committee, as well as organizational arrangements for carrying this work forward. We have proposed that Allied representatives to this ad hoc group should be of the caliber of Pat Moynihan, Arthur Burns or James Allen.

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This ad hoc committee would report its findings to Deputy Foreign Ministers at their September meeting; they in turn would endorse or amend decisions of the ad hoc group. The Committee on Challenges of Modern Society would then be formed to meet in October or November.

The Council at Permanent Representatives level will meet to consider these proposals again on May 14. We will complete our bilateral discussions in capitals before then. In the light of these discussions we will prepare additional instructions to our NATO Ambassador to use at that meeting. That session should result in further clarification of Allied views and be the first step towards an action program.

Elliot L. Richardson

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE
WASHINGTON

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May 19, 1969

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MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

Subject: Implementation of Your Proposal for Establishing a Committee on the Challenges of Modern Society

In my memorandum of May 6, I outlined steps in NATO to implement the proposals you made in your April 10 address for improving NATO's consultative machinery. On May 14, the North Atlantic Council exchanged views on the establishment of a Committee on the Challenges of Modern Society.

Prior to the May 14 Council meeting, we had instructed our Ambassadors in NATO capitals to make approaches at high levels of government to gain support for your proposals. Nonetheless, Allied views expressed in the Council May 14 showed that further effort is needed to achieve consensus on establishing the new Committee on Challenges of Modern Society.

However, the Permanent Representatives agreed ad referendum to a) visits this summer by NATO Secretary General Brosio to Allied capitals to discuss your proposals; and b) a special meeting this autumn of the Council, reinforced by high-level experts on environmental affairs, to discuss this subject.

Although we fully support the Brosio tour, we would also like to see an early meeting of officials who have direct responsibilities in this field to prepare recommendations for consideration by the Council on the procedure and substance of future Allied consultations on the problems of modern society. We thus plan to instruct our Ambassadors to make another round of approaches in NATO capitals on your proposals and have

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suggested that the North Atlantic Council have another full discussion on this subject in June. Our hope is to have an exploratory group of high-level experts in the environmental field meet in early September, prior to the reinforced Council meeting and the proposed meeting of Deputy Foreign Ministers.

The Department will also be in touch with NATO Embassies in Washington to emphasize our interest in this project.

On May 21, the Council will discuss your other two proposals for improving NATO's consultative machinery: periodic meetings of Deputy Foreign Ministers and the establishment of a special political planning group.

Acting Secretary