

DECLASSIFIED

E.O. 12958, as amended, Sect 3.5

SC/Soubers to Smith 09/06/2002

By hfr Date 02/13/07

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20506

February 13, 1973

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National Security Study Memorandum 168

TO: The Secretary of State
 The Secretary of Defense
 The Director, Central Intelligence

SUBJECT: U.S. NATO Policies and Programs

The President has directed a comprehensive study of NATO strategy, U.S. policy choices and programs supporting the NATO Allies. He directs the study be given the highest priority.

The study will consider both political and military aspects of factors affecting the NATO Alliance in two parts:

-- Part I should define NATO's strategy and focus on the near term issues facing the Alliance over the next couple of years in implementing this strategy. It should identify weaknesses in NATO's defense capabilities and develop alternative programs to correct these deficiencies. The study should consider, as a minimum:

-- The structure, equipping, disposition, and readiness of in-place Allied and U.S. forces in Europe and known deficiencies in these forces. Our current capabilities and deployment plans should be assessed with regard to our capability to reinforce our NATO Allies. The impact of alternative programs designed to enhance our capabilities should be determined. Known deficiencies in Allied/U.S. planning should also be considered (e.g., Allied and U.S. logistics planning for ammunition stocks, etc.).

-- The political issues affecting Alliance cohesion including among other factors the impact of MBFR and SALT negotiations and how current and future problems could be further aggravated or alleviated by alternative U.S. approaches to MBFR and SALT.

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-- The study should assess NATO's current nuclear doctrines, forces, and employment planning and evaluate alternative doctrines which could support our future planning. The relationship between these alternative doctrines and U.S. nuclear delivery systems, warhead stockpile and deployments should be defined. The future role and possible functions of the Nuclear Planning Group should be evaluated in coordinating Alliance nuclear policy also.

-- Develop alternative approaches for correcting identified military and political problems in terms of the contribution the Allies could make and the steps the U.S. would be willing to undertake.

Part I of the study should be done by an ad hoc group composed of representatives of the addressees and NSC staff and chaired by a representative of the Secretary of Defense. It should be submitted for DPRC review by April 1, 1973.

-- Part II should focus on fundamental long-range prospects for NATO. It should assess the direction in which the Allies are moving on security issues (both military and political). In particular, it should analyze various pressures in Europe for lower defense effort. It should examine the long-term U.S. role in the Alliance and especially alternative combinations of U.S. and European contributions. The study should relate east-west (including U.S. -Soviet) political developments to alternative U.S. strategies in Europe in the late 1970s; in particular, alternative force postures and political strategies for the U.S. and NATO.

Part II of the study should be prepared by an interdepartmental group consisting of the addressees and the NSC staff and chaired by a representative of the Secretary of State. It should be completed by May 1, 1973, for review by the Senior Review Group, before consideration by the President.

In view of the sensitive nature of this review and possible misinterpretation of its purposes, the President has directed that its existence be closely held and access to this NSSM and the study material closely controlled.


Henry A. Kissinger