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March 22, 1962

SUBJECT: Suggested NATO Nuclear Program

After approval by the President, the United States should outline the following elements in NAC, at appropriate times and in suitable detail. These elements should be discussed in the context of revised strategy. Within this framework, the need for improved conventional forces should be stressed and elaborated in necessary detail, and the extent to which the nuclear proposals are dependent on an adequate conventional program should be made clear.

1. NATO Participation: Measures should be instituted to give NATO greater information about US nuclear strategy, and greater participation in the formulation of that strategy.

(Specific actions to this end currently under study by the State and Defense Departments should be included, if they are found to be useful.) As part of these measures:

(a) Procedures should be instituted under which we would share information about our nuclear forces and consult about basic plans and arrangements for their use in the NAC and the Standing Group - Military Committee.

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we can and should provide a considerable body of information, including targetting policy, nuclear force strengths, analysis of the force capabilities, some intelligence on Soviet Bloc strengths, and constraint policies. In putting forth this information, the US would stress the extent to which planned uses of this US strategic force are devoted to European as well as North American interests, the importance of responsible, centralized control over nuclear forces, the strength of the present and future nuclear capabilities of the US, and the probable consequences if a nuclear war were to occur. To facilitate this enlarged participation by NATO in over-all nuclear planning and operations, increased functions regarding these matters could be assigned to appropriate bodies, such as a small special group and the NATO Standing Group-Military Committee.

(b) An attempt should be made to work out NATO guidelines, which the US President would agree to observe, regarding use of all US nuclear weapons in defending NATO.

2. US Forces Outside the Continent:

(a) The US should indicate to its allies that an appropriate portion of US external forces will be directed against targets of special concern to Europe.

(b) The US should state that it is prepared to commit

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to NATO US nuclear forces outside the European continent (additional to those US forces already committed, in amounts to be determined). This might be the force indicated under (c).

(c) To meet on an interim basis any political need for having MRBM's based in the European area which would come under NATO wartime military command, Polaris submarines should, as promised by the President in May 1961, be committed to NATO. The US should furnish NATO with a schedule calling for the progressive commitment of Polaris submarines as the total Polaris force grows.

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3. Multilaterally Manned NATO Force: The US should indicate its willingness to join its allies, if they wish, in developing a modest-sized (on the order of 200 missiles) fully multilateral NATO sea-based MRBM force. It should not urge this course, and should indicate its view that MRBM forces are not urgently needed for military reasons, in view of already programmed U.S. strategic forces; it should make clear that it would be prepared to facilitate procurement of MRBM's only under multilateral ownership, control, and manning.

(a) Targetting and Weapons. The question of the targetting for a multilateral force, and the question of the kind of missile and vessel to be used in the force, should be determined in the light of NATO's continuing consideration of strategy, the role of the force in that strategy, and other relevant factors.

(b) Participation. The US should only be prepared to proceed if the venture had adequate allied participation,

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so that it did not appear to be a thinly disguised US-German operation.

(c) Costs. The costs should be equitably shared. The US should make clear that it would [not be prepared to make a major contribution to the cost but would] expect the greater part of the burden to be borne by the allies.

(d) Mixed Manning. The US should require a sufficient degree of mixed manning to ensure that one nationality does not appear to be predominant in the manning - and is not, in fact, in control - of any vessel or of the missiles aboard any vessel in the multilateral force. Members of the mixed crews would be recruited from national armed forces into the NATO MRBM force and would thereafter be under the control of that Force; for trial and punishment of major crimes, they would be returned to their country of origin.

(i) Centralized Command. In presenting these views, the US would stress its belief that the defense of the NATO area is indivisible and that a NATO Force, if one is created, could

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not fragment this unified task. Planning for its use should, therefore, assume that it would be employed in integral association with other alliance nuclear forces. Construction of such a Force along the lines suggested above would thus not imply that the separate defense of Europe was its purpose or likely effect. On the contrary, our willingness to join in creating such a force should be dramatic evidence of our unconditional commitment to the defense of the entire alliance.

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In connection with NATO consideration of the multilateral force the United States should make plain that transfer of nuclear warheads or procedures for using the force without United States concurrence would require amending existing United States law and could well entail other obstacles depending on the character of the arrangements. The United States should indicate, however, that it is willing to consider any proposal which is put to us by a clear majority of the Alliance.

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