

#34A

→ Susan Doyle

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

June 1, 1979

Dear Helmut:

I was very pleased to receive your letter of May 23 and the enclosed memorandum, summarizing the views of the Federal Security Council on the question of long-range theater nuclear forces. I agree that the questions of new deployments of long-range TNF and the possibility of related arms control negotiations should be a major topic for our discussions on June 6.

We, too, have been reviewing this question. I believe that you will find that the results of our review, which I want to share with you briefly, closely parallel your thinking. As a result of our studies, I have concluded that the Alliance needs to deploy new, long-range nuclear systems in Europe capable of reaching Soviet territory -- such as the Pershing II ballistic missiles, cruise missiles, or a combination of them. This would demonstrate Alliance unity, strengthen deterrence by providing credible escalation options, and maintain the perception in both East and West of a firm US commitment to the defense of Europe. Deployments in the Federal Republic would be a necessary part of this step.

I share your view that new TNF deployments can only be undertaken on the basis of Alliance consensus. I hope that we can achieve that consensus by December 1979 so that US programs can proceed on schedule and we can avoid this issue's becoming highly charged during the political campaigns in our two countries in 1980.

DECLASSIFIED

E.O. 12958, Sec. 3.6

PER 9/14/92 NSC HR RE NLC-97-49
BY J NARS. DATE 5/5/99

It will not be easy to obtain an Alliance consensus, and there are many risks. This issue could provoke a major political debate in Europe, including the Federal Republic, and in the United States as well. The Soviets are sure to add fuel to that debate with a political and propaganda campaign. Many people in our countries -- and elsewhere in the Alliance -- will fear damage both to the humanitarian gains of detente and *Ostpolitik*, and to arms control progress. I do not believe that these fears are well founded or that progress in detente is in any way inconsistent with necessary Alliance defense efforts. In fact, as you have pointed out, without such efforts detente with the Soviet Union is not possible. If we fail to take this necessary defense step now, the problem will remain with the Alliance, seriously aggravated by the knowledge in the West and in Moscow that NATO was unable to respond to the challenge.

I am ready to do my part to lead the Alliance to a consensus, but I will need your active support. With it, I am prepared to work with other Allied countries and to suggest to each how they could contribute to an Alliance consensus -- through public support, sharing in costs, and hosting new deployments on their soil.

I understand and support the position the Federal Republic has taken in this matter, including the view that other countries should participate concretely in deployments. In view of the sensitive political problems that you and the Federal Republic face, I am determined to bring about these conditions. Of course, whether I succeed or not will depend heavily on whether others believe that the Federal Republic will also accept new deployments.

I also share your view that a deployment decision should be accompanied by sincere arms control efforts. The new NATO Special Group is making progress on the TNF arms control issue. Its

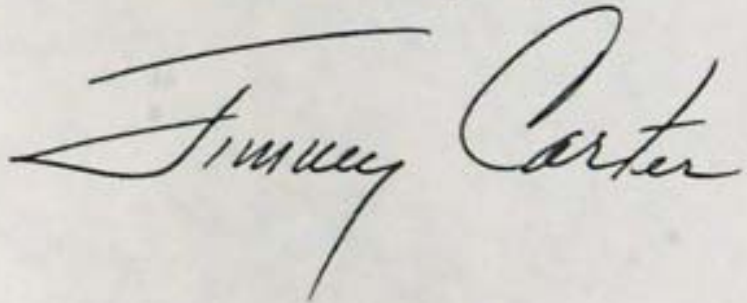
work -- and that of the High Level Group -- should provide the basis for agreement on a common Alliance approach by December -- including both TNF modernization and arms control. I think we can develop a serious arms control approach to long-range TNF which the US could pursue in SALT III on the basis of both agreed Alliance objectives and principles, and continuing Alliance consultations.

I expect that TNF arms control negotiations with the Soviet Union on this question will be long and difficult. Nevertheless, we cannot allow these negotiations to stand in the way of necessary deployments or make our deployment decisions hostage to Soviet arms control behavior. Nor can we realistically expect the Soviets to constrain their TNF deployments unless they are convinced that NATO is moving forward with its own deployments. Accordingly, the Alliance consensus should be accompanied by concrete statements about what each Alliance country is committed to do to implement the consensus. Even if we were to succeed in arms control, we would undoubtedly face a substantial Soviet long-range TNF threat. Thus, an important element of the Alliance consensus should be agreement that some essential deployments will be needed in any case.

In this connection, I hope that we will also be able to discuss the relation between MBFR progress and TNF deployments. I know from our previous exchanges that we are both determined to make progress in MBFR this year. As you know, there have recently been signs -- in Vienna and subsequently in Washington -- that the Soviets too might be interested in making progress. Although the Soviets have not yet been willing to be forthcoming on the critical data question, it appears that the opportunities for progress this year have increased. As with TNF arms control, I am sure that we can manage the process in a way that MBFR progress does not become an obstacle to TNF deployment decisions.

I am looking forward to a fruitful discussion with you on June 6. If you have any misgivings about the aims and course of action I have outlined, I hope that you will raise them with me at that time. We can also discuss in greater detail some of the steps that will be necessary between now and December to obtain an Alliance TNF consensus, and ways we might coordinate our diplomacy and public statements.

With best regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jimmy Carter". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the typed text "With best regards,".

His Excellency
Helmut Schmidt
Chancellor of the Federal Republic
of Germany
Bonn