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N A T O S E C R E T15th February, 1973AGV(73)3REPORT BY THE AD HOC GROUP IN VIENNA
DATED 14TH FEBRUARY, 1973

I herewith circulate the ad hoc group report presented to the North Atlantic Council by Ambassador Quarles van Ufford on 14th February, 1973.

I have directed that the report be forwarded to Capitals via NATO-Wide Communications System.

(Signed) Joseph M.A.H. LUNS

N A T O S E C R E TAD HOC GROUP REPORT PRESENTED BY AMBASSADOR QUARLES TO
THE NORTH ATLANTIC COUNCIL ON FEBRUARY 14, 1973

1. We have encountered two main problems. They might be called the Rumanian and the Hungarian questions.
2. The Rumanian question is primarily a matter of arranging procedures. We have insisted that there should be a distinction between the countries directly involved in Central Europe -- the direct participants -- and the flank countries -- the special participants. We have also insisted contrary to the Warsaw Pact view that Bulgaria and Rumania must from the outset be special participants and that this distinction must be symbolised by some identifiable differences between the direct and the special participants. The Warsaw Pact countries have largely given way on these basic questions but it may be difficult to reach a final agreement until the Hungary question is settled.

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consists of 5 pages.

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3. The east has thus far paid little attention to the question of neutral and non-aligned participation and is not at present pressing this issue with vigor. This therefore no longer seems at this point to be an obstacle to the beginning of plenary sessions of the MBFR talks, although the east may well choose to return to the question of enlargement to include the neutrals and non-aligned in the course of the present talks. Moreover, the allies and the east are quite close to agreement on most aspects of the procedures which are to be used in the MBFR talks.

4. Thus, the Rumanian question is virtually solved if the Hungarian question can also be solved. The Hungary question which was raised for the first time after we arrived in Vienna can be stated simply. The Russians say that Hungary ought not to be included in Central Europe or, alternatively, that if it is included, Italy should also be included on the participation issue. The Russians have three alternative proposals. The first is that all 19 delegations should participate equally, but they have virtually given this up in connection with the Rumanian problem. A variant of this proposal is that direct and special participants be distinguished as to whether or not they would be involved in future measures of force reductions, but that it not be specified which states should belong to each group. The second proposal is that Hungary should be treated as a flank country like Bulgaria, Rumania and the five flank countries on our side, but if we agree on this we should have heavily prejudiced the possibility of Hungary being directly involved in the substantive negotiations. The third is that Hungary should be included as a full participant on condition that Italy is likewise, but this is of course unacceptable.

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5. In reply to this sudden Soviet demand (which may not represent the real wishes of the Hungarian government) we have pointed to their failure to raise the question in the diplomatic exchanges before we came to Vienna. We have insisted that on both geographical and military grounds Hungary is part of Central Europe. We have said that the Hungarian question is linked with the procedural problems and that both must be solved before plenary sessions can begin. We have put the NATO position very firmly.
6. The Soviets have produced various inconsistent replies and they have admitted that they have raised the Hungarian question at this stage for tactical reasons. At the same time they have said that it is an important substantive problem for them. We are inclined to believe that this is true; that in any event they would at a later stage have raised the Hungarian question as a substantive issue, and that at that moment they would have bargained hard on whether Hungary should participate at all. They have for their part rejected our proposal that Hungary should be included with a disclaimer to the effect that direct participation in exploratory talks does not prejudice future MEFR agreements.
7. At present we may be facing a deadlock. On the Hungarian question NATO wants to tilt matters in the direction of Hungarian inclusion in the substantive negotiations and the Russians are resisting this.
8. In assessing the situation at this point, it is clear there is a blend of both tactical and substantive purposes and concerns in the Soviet's position on the Hungarian question. There can be, however, different views of the relative weight of these considerations in Soviet thinking, and of how hard and long they may hold to the position they have taken on the status of Hungary in these talks.
9. The Soviets have made a number of different statements about their preferred solution to the Hungary question. Their latest position is that "in the reduction of armed forces and armaments in Central Europe, the Soviet government confirms its view that the potential participants should include the following states: USSR, Poland, Czechoslovakia, GDR, USA, UK, Canada, FRG, Belgium,

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the Netherlands and Luxembourg". The omission of Hungary is said to be "in line with the basic principle that there should be no damage to the security of the participants." When the west resisted this proposal the Soviets put forward the following formulation "if the western participants insist on the inclusion of Hungary among the participants in force reductions, the government of Hungary could agree to such participation on condition that Italy would be a direct participant."

10. There is general agreement within the group that the Soviet position on Hungary is important and substantive, that the Russians always intended to raise Hungary as a substantive issue at some point and that they have brought it forward now (as they have themselves admitted) as a tactical ploy. At this point assessments within the group on the real Soviet position begin to diverge.

11. Some delegations think that the Soviet position as stated is not their final one and that they are carefully keeping a number of options open. These delegations think it is still possible that the Russians may acquiesce in the western position, especially if the west brings additional pressure to bear by action with Warsaw Pact governments outside Vienna. It is not clear that all the Warsaw Pact countries share the Soviet position. There have in fact been indications that the Hungarians are uncomfortable with the position that the Soviets have taken. Taken as a whole, these views could suggest that the Soviets might not hold to their line on Hungary in the face of persistent and sustained western pressures.

12. Other delegations think that with Soviet presentations to allied representatives on February 10-13, it has become increasingly apparent that, whatever the tactical considerations involved in its timing, Soviet arguments for their position on Hungarian participation have a definitive quality. In their bilateral talks, the Soviets have now repeatedly implied that, as they see it, Hungarian participation is a strategic question touching on Soviet strategic concepts and interests, rather than a matter of geographical definition; and that the question is linked for them to the essential principle of undiminished security for both sides. In this connection, Soviet representatives have repeatedly stated that it would be inequitable for them to involve all territories where their forces are stationed abroad in a region of potential reductions while this does

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not hold true for all US or other NATO forces stationed elsewhere in Europe. The Soviets may additionally see in the Hungarian question a means of prejudicing future negotiations by establishing as the sole criterion for direct participation the commitment to participate in reduction agreements, and counteracting the Western concept of constraints by focusing exclusively on reductions. Taken as a whole, these factors and views concerning the Soviet approach on Hungary could suggest that the Soviets will continue to resist the Western position of classification of Hungary as a direct participant among the 12 and that accordingly, the prospect is one of final deadlock.

13. Still other delegations took an intermediate position or considered that it was premature to come to a firm assessment now.

14. In such a situation it is possible to envisage omitting Hungary from the list of direct participants with inclusion of a specific statement that membership by Hungary in one or the other groups was an open question to be resolved at a later stage. Alternatively, we could continue to maintain our present position which involves bringing Hungary in as a direct participant from the outset in the hope that there would be some give on the Soviet side. A further alternative would be to retain this position for only a specified or limited time. In either event, we might consider backing up the Western position with some collateral action. For example, these could include high level bilateral approaches in Warsaw Pact capitals and/or hints that the Soviet attitude on the MBFR exploratory talks could have consequences for the MPT at Helsinki.

15. The Russians sometimes speak as if they wish to negotiate the substantive question of Hungary now, i.e., whether and under what conditions Hungary should be included in troop reductions and related measures. Both sides expect that the exploratory talks will cover such issues as participation in the negotiations and in discussing the agenda. Accordingly, even if we finesse the Hungarian question at the present stage, it may arise again in the very near future if the substance is now avoided. Accordingly, this may be a further problem that the Council will wish to take into account.

16. The ad hoc group has discussed these possibilities and views of the situation and has charged me to lay them before the Council. We have not attempted to come to a conclusion. It is for the Council to decide what is in the best interest of the Alliance.

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