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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

SECRET/SENSITIVE

MEETING OF THE NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

Thursday, January 23, 1975
10:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. (60 minutes)
The Cabinet Room

From: Henry A. Kissinger *K*

I. PURPOSE

To review the background and status of the Mutual and Balanced Force Reduction (MBFR) talks and consider alternative modifications which might be made to the present Alliance position.

II. BACKGROUND, PARTICIPANTS & PRESS ARRANGEMENTS

A. Background: After a long history of Soviet proposals for a European security conference to bless the postwar boundaries, NATO proposed force reduction talks in June of 1968. The Soviets were not interested at that time, fearing that they might be accused of freeing up U.S. troops for Vietnam. As the war wound down and it became clear that the proposed security conference would not get off the ground without parallel discussions on military issues, the Warsaw Pact ministers announced their interest in troop reductions in June 1970. During my trip to Moscow in 1972, we reached an understanding that the security conference (CSCE) and a discussion of European force reductions (MBFR) would proceed in parallel.

Our proposal to hold force reduction talks was originally conceived as (1) a response to the Soviet CSCE proposal, and (2) a vehicle for containing Congressional pressures for unilateral U.S. reductions. However, once the talks became a reality, we concluded that our position should be based on NATO's security requirements, not just political factors.

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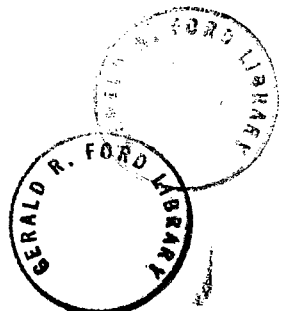
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DECLASSIFIED

E.O. 12356, Sec. 3A 7/21/99

NSC with State letter 9/25/98
MBFR-40, #12j

By let NARA Date 10/20/98, 7/21/99



The U.S. approach to MBFR was derived from detailed military studies conducted over a period of three years. It was first presented to NATO in May 1973, and it has remained the basis for the Alliance position in MBFR up to the present time. It calls for two phases of reductions, beginning with U.S. and Soviet withdrawals of 29,000 and 68,000 troops, respectively. The Soviet forces would be in the form of a "tank army", including 1700 of the Pact's 16,000 tanks. The second phase would focus on countries other than the U.S. and USSR. An additional 157,000 Pact and 48,000 NATO troops would be reduced in order to reach a common ceiling of 700,000.

Within a few weeks after the MBFR talks began in October 1973, the Soviets tabled a draft agreement calling for equal percentage reductions on both sides. All states and all force elements -- ground, air, and nuclear -- would participate in the reductions from the outset. Reductions of each country's forces would be in proportion to the relative size of its forces, and national ceilings would be established for each country.

Recognizing that the NATO demands for a Soviet tank army and significantly larger Pact troop reductions would be difficult to achieve without further NATO concessions, the U.S. told the Alliance in June 1973 that NATO should be prepared eventually to offer to reduce its nuclear forces in order to achieve the Pact "tank army" reductions. However, this move has never been made by the Alliance.

In summary, after a year of debate, each side has offered only minor modifications to its original position, and the talks have reached a stalemate. There is disagreement on three fundamental issues:

-- Whose forces should be reduced? -- We say that U.S. and Soviet withdrawals should come before those of our Allies; the Pact says that all direct participants should commit themselves to specific reductions from the outset.

-- What type of forces should be reduced? -- Our present position calls for reductions in ground forces only, but NATO is studying the possible inclusion of air forces; the Pact says that all types of forces -- ground, air, and nuclear -- must be reduced.



-- What ratio of NATO to Warsaw Pact forces should be reduced? -- We say that because of existing disparities, the Pact should reduce significantly more than NATO, leading toward a common ceiling; the Pact insists on equal numerical or equal percentage reductions based on total forces in the area.

Various alternatives for breaking the stalemate have been considered by the Verification Panel. In general, there are three categories of adjustments which could be made to the Allied position:

-- The Allies could move ahead on the earlier U.S. suggestion of reducing nuclear forces (warheads, F-4 aircraft, and Pershing missiles). NATO has an advantage over the Pact in nuclear forces, so this reduction would be presented as an offset to the asymmetrical reduction of Pact tanks and manpower included in the Allied proposal.

-- German forces could be included in the NATO reduction, meeting the major Soviet objective of getting control of the German army.

-- We could move toward the Pact concept of equal percentage reductions, essentially abandoning our goal of reaching a common ceiling.

Of these approaches, there is a general consensus in the Verification Panel that nuclear elements continue to be the best. Both of the other alternatives would be strongly opposed by our Allies, and including German forces would be counterproductive to our efforts to shift the burden of European defense to the Europeans. Furthermore, there are good military reasons for restructuring our European nuclear stockpile, and in any event, we are under Congressional pressure to do so.

In summary, the major issue to be decided now is whether this is an appropriate time to modify the Alliance MBFR position. A failure to do so will inevitably prolong the stalemate, but hasty movement may be wasted if the Soviet leadership is not in a position to offer corresponding concessions on their side. If we do modify our position, there is general consensus that it should be done by adding an offer to reduce NATO nuclear forces, in return for a heavy reduction of Pact tanks and manpower.



Director Colby is prepared to give a briefing on the military balance in Europe. Secretary Schlesinger might also wish to make some remarks on that subject.

After your opening remarks, I suggest that you ask Bill Colby for his briefing, then ask me to review the status of the negotiations and the issues to be decided.

- B. Participants: (List at Tab A)
- C. Press Arrangements: The meeting, but not the subject, will be announced. White House photographer only.

III. TALKING POINTS

A. At the Opening of the Meeting

1. The purpose of this meeting is to review the status of the force reduction talks and consider the options for possible modifications to the Alliance position. With the Vienna talks at a stalemate, we should take a hard look at our MBFR objectives and our negotiating stance to see if there is cause to change either.
2. Bill (Colby), would you give us a rundown on the current military balance in Central Europe?
3. Henry, would you review the bidding for us in the negotiations and lay out the options we should consider for modifying our position?

B. At the Close of the Meeting

1. I believe we should get the talks moving again in MBFR. Since there are several reasonable ways to go, I would like to give this subject careful thought before making a decision.
2. Stan (Resor), we will get instructions to you and to NATO within a few days.



THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

TALKING POINTS

NSC MEETING

Thursday, January 23, 1975 -- 10:30 a.m.

-- Mr. President, the purpose of this meeting is to review the background and status of the MBFR talks and go over alternative modifications which might be made to the present Alliance MBFR position.

-- Since this is the first NSC meeting on MBFR for you and the Vice President, I would like to start my remarks with a brief sketch of how we got to where we are in MBFR.

Genesis of MBFR

-- In the 1950's Moscow made proposals both for a conference on European security and for withdrawals of foreign troops from Germany. During the 60's, the Soviets lost interest in European force reductions, lest they appear to free up troops for service in Vietnam. But they continued their efforts to generate a conference on European security as a way to gain international blessing of the post-war boundaries in Europe.

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E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.1

NSC letter 2/19/99

MR 98-40, #13; State letter 9/25/98

NARA, Date 10/21/98, 7/21/99



-- We made it clear, for our part, that their long cherished security conference would not get off the ground unless they agreed to parallel discussions on military issues.

-- By my September 1972 trip to Moscow, we had reached an understanding that the security conference (CSCE) and a discussion of military issues (MBFR) would proceed in parallel.

-- Our original proposal to hold MBFR negotiations was largely a political move in response to Soviet CSCE initiatives and a vehicle for containing pressures for unilateral Western reductions.

-- Once the talks became a reality, we concluded that MBFR should be based on real NATO military security requirements, not simply on political factors. The U. S. approach presented to NATO in May 1973 was based on detailed military analyses conducted over a period of three years.

-- We were concerned that the negotiations might provide an excuse for some of our Allies to slacken their defense efforts. So our approach called for maintenance and improvement of Alliance military capabilities while the negotiations proceeded, and adherence to the principle that reductions would be made only as part of an agreement with the Pact.



Evolution of the Alliance Position

-- The U. S. approach presented three alternatives, each considered to be militarily acceptable:

- A common ceiling on ground force manpower to be reached in two phases, ten percent withdrawals of stationed forces followed by ten percent cuts of indigenous forces.
- An equal percentage cut in U. S. and Soviet forces, which would lead toward parity in total ground force manpower on the two sides.
- Reduction of dissimilar threatening elements. This was "Option Three", and it envisioned offering 1000 nuclear warheads, 36 Pershing launchers and 54 F-4 aircraft in exchange for about 20% of the Soviet tanks in Central Europe.

-- The Allies agreed on an approach combining all three of these options. We would seek a common ceiling on ground force manpower to be achieved in two phases of negotiation:

- A first phase, in which the U. S. and USSR would reduce equal percentages of their ground manpower, with the Soviet cut in the form of a tank army. This would amount to about 29,000 Americans, 68,000 Soviets, and 1700 Soviet tanks.

- A second phase, to be negotiated separately, in which all the participants on both sides would further reduce to a common ceiling on ground forces of about 700,000. This would require a ratio of Pact-to-NATO cuts in Phase Two of about three-to-one.



-- Nuclear elements up to the limits of Option Three were to be withheld, to be available as additional leverage to achieve the tank army objective. From the outset it was assumed that these elements would have to be used, and that without them the Alliance proposal was rather one-sided.

Status of the Negotiations

-- The MBFR talks began on October 30, 1973. NATO put forward its agreed position while the Pact tabled a draft treaty calling for three stages of reductions:

- an initial "token" reduction of 20,000 men per side
- a further cut of 5% by each side in CY 1975
- a third stage of 10% reductions by each side in CY 1976.

-- Under the Pact draft treaty:

- all countries and all force elements, ground, air, and nuclear manpower and equipment, would be included in each stage.
- reductions would be equal for each side, divided among all participants in proportion to the relative size of their forces.
- each nation would sign the treaty individually, thereby creating a ceiling on its forces.

-- The Soviet approach indicated a greater interest in getting German reductions, and in placing limits on European forces and flexibility, than in getting American troops off the continent.

Trade Germans for peace forces



-- Our earliest military analysis concluded that equal reductions or equal percentage reductions of NATO and Pact forces would favor the Pact by magnifying the effects of the existing armor and manpower disparities. For this reason we have consistently rejected the Eastern approach.

-- The Soviets have shown some flexibility in their proposal regarding the makeup of the initial 20,000 man reduction:

- they have agreed that the reductions could be made up largely of U. S. and Soviet forces.
- they have hinted that air and nuclear elements might be deferred to the second stage.
- they have remained adamant, however, that the size of the reductions for the two sides must be equal.

-- In the last round the East proposed a freeze on each country's forces while the negotiations continue. It came on the heels of our announced intention to beef up our combat forces in Europe at the expense of support forces, and seems a rather transparent attempt to limit Alliance forces to existing levels and inhibit flexibility.

Major Issues in the Negotiations

-- NATO and the Pact still disagree on three fundamental issues:

- Whose forces should be reduced and when. Our position is that reductions by the U. S. and USSR should precede any specific



commitments by the other direct participants to reduce. The Soviets insist that all direct participants should at least commit themselves to the size and timing of reductions from the outset.

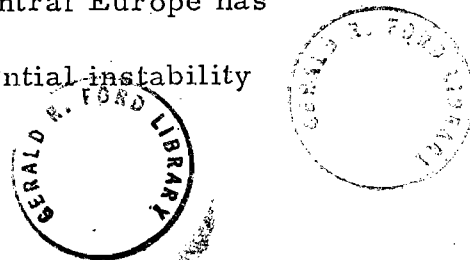
• What should be the reduction ratio. Our position holds that because of existing disparities in ground forces, reductions should be asymmetrical and lead toward a common ceiling. The Pact insists on equal numerical reductions, or at least equal percentage reductions based on total NATO/Pact forces in the reductions area.

• What forces should be reduced. The Allied position calls for reductions in ground forces only. However, we have proposed a freeze on air manpower levels between phases, and possible U.S. air manpower reductions are currently under discussion in the Alliance. The Pact has insisted from the outset that all types of forces -- ground, air, and nuclear -- should be reduced in units, with their armaments.

-- Against this background we need to take another hard look at our objectives in MBFR and any developments that might cause us to want to change them.

Our Negotiating Objectives

-- The SALT negotiations and the Vladivostok accord have established the principle of overall parity between the strategic forces of the U.S. and the Soviet Union. Because of this development, the current imbalance in conventional forces in Central Europe has emerged as an even more important source of potential instability between East and West.



-- From the very beginning we have pursued the common ceiling concept because it would help to remove this imbalance, and enhance stability by establishing the principle of approximate parity in the conventional forces of the two sides. We have also sought the withdrawal of a Soviet tank army -- a step toward altering the clearly offensive orientation of Soviet armored formations and reducing the very large advantage the Pact holds in numbers of tanks.

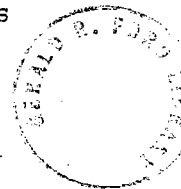
-- The Pact negotiators have consistently rejected the Allied proposal as too favorable to the West, and as an attempt to gain unilateral military advantage. This is true to the extent that our proposal seeks parity of outcome, requiring disproportionate reductions from the other side, yet offers the East nothing to offset their larger reductions.

-- MBFR has been accorded a relatively low priority by the Soviet leadership and there is little incentive for them to move the negotiations forward. The current stalemate is likely to continue unless the Western position is modified.

Modifications to the Alliance Position

A. Changing what is asked from the other side.

-- We could modify the Alliance proposal by changing what is asked of the other side. Specifically we could reduce the asymmetry in the proposed manpower reductions for Phase I (29,000 U.S. troops for 68,000 Soviet).



- Any major modification (to an asymmetry of 2 to 1 or less) would so increase the disparity in Phase II reductions required to reach the common ceiling as to make Eastern agreement to the concept very unlikely.

- We might find it difficult to avoid an MBFR outcome that effectively froze NATO/Pact forces at disparate levels and formalized Pact superiority in Central Europe.

-- The twin Allied goals of manpower parity and reduction of offensive elements continue to make both military and political sense. Reducing the asymmetries in our Phase I proposal would undercut our efforts to obtain these goals as outcomes for MBFR. What is needed is an additional element which can be added to the Allied position to serve as an offset for these asymmetries.

B. Adding elements to the current Alliance position.

-- We could modify our position on phasing and suggest European reductions as part of Phase I.

- Early European reductions (especially German) have emerged as the prime Soviet desiderata in MBFR.

- While parliamentary pressures for troop reductions have increased European interest in MBFR, not one country has explicitly asked to be included in Phase I reductions.



- It may not be in our interest to suggest such participation, running counter to our efforts to get our NATO allies to improve their conventional military capability and accept more of the burden of their own defense.

-- Nuclear elements might serve as the basis of a trade of substantial U. S. nuclear capability for a Soviet tank army (including both the manpower asymmetry, and the tanks and associated armaments).

- Introduction of these elements has been delayed because they were also part of the FBS issue in SALT. With that issue resolved, we can now consider introducing nuclear elements into MBFR.

- Nuclear warhead reductions pose little difficulty. There is general consensus within the executive that the warhead stockpiles in Europe are too high. Congress shares this view and has begun pressuring Defense for reductions.

- The other two elements, F-4s and Pershings, raise questions about the sorts of constraints that will result from reducing these systems, and what limits should be sought on Soviet nuclear systems.

- There is consensus within the Verification Panel that acceptable solutions to these problems can be devised in the context of the negotiations, and that reduction of these elements in exchange for a tank army remains a good trade.



C. Combine the addition of elements with a change in what is asked from the other side.

-- We could add new elements to the negotiations while at the same time altering what is asked from the other side. We might introduce both nuclear elements and European reductions, while reducing the asymmetry in our proposed manpower reductions.

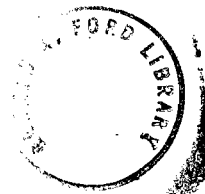
-- This approach would leave the West very little to bargain with in seeking further asymmetrical reductions to a common ceiling in the next phase of negotiations.

-- It would force the parties to resolve all the major issues in the negotiations before even an initial agreement could be concluded. This would complicate the process of obtaining internal agreement -- both within NATO and within the Soviet hierarchy without really advancing our MBFR objectives.

-- We could still move to this approach after introducing nuclear elements if the Allies began to press for early reductions, and we would have the benefit of Soviet reaction to our nuclear proposal.

Approach to the Allies

-- Our NATO Allies will want extensive discussion on any proposal to modify the current Alliance position. Coming forward with a single proposal has the best chance of focusing this debate and obtaining timely agreement.



-- This approach would work well if the addition of nuclear elements is suggested. The Allies have long been on notice of our interest in introducing these elements, and would not feel this proposal required a complete review of the Alliance position.

-- Any other modification would be much less expected and cause a much more comprehensive review. In this case we might want to submit a series of options for altering the Alliance position, without indicating any specific preference.

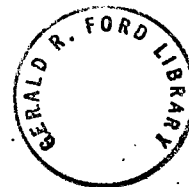
-- This would be particularly useful if we were considering European participation in Phase I, so as to avoid any appearance that the U. S. was pressuring its Allies into reductions.

-- Let me summarize the issues before us:

- Should a modification be made to the current Alliance position on MBFR?

- Should that modification involve a change in what we ask of the other side, the addition of new elements to the current Alliance position -- either early European reductions or U. S. nuclear systems, or a combination of these two approaches?

- How should such a modification be presented to our Allies, as a single proposal or as one of a series of possible options to be the basis for extensive Alliance review?



NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE
ATTACHMENTS

February 3, 1975

MEMORANDUM FOR GENERAL SCOWCROFT

FROM: Jeanne W. Davis *JWD*

SUBJECT: Minutes of NSC Meeting on
MBFR, January 23, 1975

Herewith, Jan Lodal's minutes of the NSC meeting on MBFR.
We are preparing a summary memorandum for your signature
to the Vice President.

Attachment *(handwritten mark)*

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ATTACHMENTS



NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION
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WITHDRAWAL ID 09166

REASON FOR WITHDRAWAL National security restriction
TYPE OF MATERIAL Minute
CREATOR'S NAME Jan Lodal
RECEIVER'S NAME President Ford
TITLE Minutes, NSC Meeting, 1/23/75
CREATION DATE 01/23/1975
VOLUME 24 pages
COLLECTION/SERIES/FOLDER ID . 031200008
COLLECTION TITLE National Security Adviser. National
Security Council Meetings File
BOX NUMBER 1
FOLDER TITLE NSC Meeting, 1/23/75
DATE WITHDRAWN 02/25/1998
WITHDRAWING ARCHIVIST LET

*excised NSC letter 2/10/99
LFS/99*

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20506

~~TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE~~

MINUTES
NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL MEETING

DATE: Thursday, January 23, 1975
TIME: 10:37 a.m. to 11:35 a.m.
PLACE: Cabinet Room, The White House
SUBJECT: MBFR

Principals

The President
Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger
Secretary of Defense James Schlesinger
Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. George S. Brown
Director of Arms Control and Disarmament Agency Fred Ikle
Director of Central Intelligence William Colby

Other Attendees

State: Deputy Secretary Robert Ingersoll
Ambassador Stanley Resor

CIA: Benjamin Rutherford

White House: Mr. Donald Rumsfeld, Assistant to the
President
Lt. Gen. Brent Scowcroft

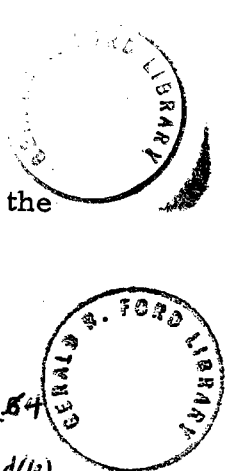
NSC: Jan M. Lodal *JML*

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With PORTIONS EXEMPTED
E.O. 12958 Sec. 1.5 (b) (i) and (b)
3.4

MR 98-39, #14, NSC 64a 2/10/99
By WT, NARA, Date 5/24/99



President Ford: Thank you all very much for coming. As you know, this meeting is on the topic of MBFR. I would like to be updated on where we stand. I'm familiar with our offer and the Soviets' counteroffer, and when I was Vice President, I had an in depth briefing by Bruce Clarke. But I've not had anything since then, except that I talked briefly to Stan last September. Stan, you go back Sunday?

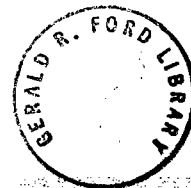
Ambassador Resor: Yes. Our first meeting with the other side will be on January 30.

President Ford: Bill, do you have a briefing for us?

Mr. Colby: Mr. President, MBFR focuses on Central Europe, where the largest and most critical elements of military strength on both sides are located. However, the discussions exclude substantial military forces in the flank states of both sides, even though they are important to the overall military balance in Europe. Further, reinforcements from France, Britain, and the Soviet Union are close enough to Central Europe to alter the balance there if time permits. But the reductions area would be the decisive battleground. Should conflict erupt there suddenly, the forces shown on this next board -- expanded, of course, by local mobilization -- would be the principal combat elements immediately available to both sides. These numbers are based on our most recent intelligence. There are minor disagreements between these numbers and the agreed NATO numbers. It is in Central Europe that the Pact has the greatest preponderance of ground forces, and it is this imbalance that we are addressing in the MBFR negotiations.

The national forces of both sides in Central Europe are approximately the same size. The major disparity between NATO and the Pact strengths stems from the Soviet forces stationed in the reductions area. These constitute approximately half of the forces available to the Pact, and the major part of the Pact's offensive power. Furthermore, Soviet forces in the reduction area have been increased by about 100,000 men in the past 8 years -- and have significant strength in tanks -- while NATO forces have not grown appreciably.

The withdrawal of a Soviet Army from Central Europe would reduce Soviet offensive capability significantly. Just as importantly, it would probably force the Soviets to change their plan of attack. I can illustrate this briefly. We have good evidence that the Soviet generals believe their forces in the reduction area are capable of undertaking major offensive operations against NATO's center region without prior reinforcement



from the USSR. Although they clearly expect reinforcement after a week or so, exercises as far back as 1969 consistently indicate that they intend to exploit their initial numerical superiority by a high-speed offensive once hostilities begin. I would like to add, Mr. President, that.....

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President Ford:

Mr. Colby:

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Secretary Kissinger: Is that just your theory, or based on some information?

Mr. Colby:

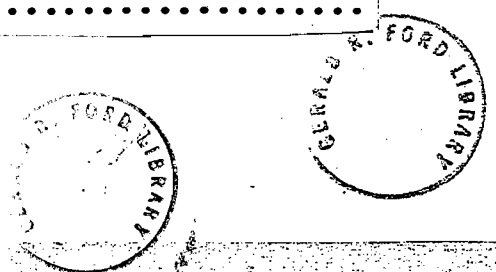
Secretary Kissinger: Mr. President, that is essentially the

Mr. Colby: It's more like a

Secretary Schlesinger:

President Ford:

Mr. Colby:



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Secretary Schlesinger: Mr. President, the quality of U.S. tactical air vastly exceeds the quality of Soviet air. On the overall balance, taking quality into account, the air situation looks quite good. Looking only at the numbers would lead you to be unduly pessimistic. This same analysis does not apply to the tanks --

President Ford: The 2 to 1 aircraft advantage looks awesome.

Secretary Schlesinger: That also leaves out our reinforcement capability. We could have an additional 1500 aircraft in Europe very quickly.

President Ford: From where?

Secretary Schlesinger: From the U.S. We can't reinforce quickly with tanks, but we can with aircraft.

President Ford: But you say the quality of their tanks is different?

Secretary Schlesinger: Their tanks essentially match our capabilities.

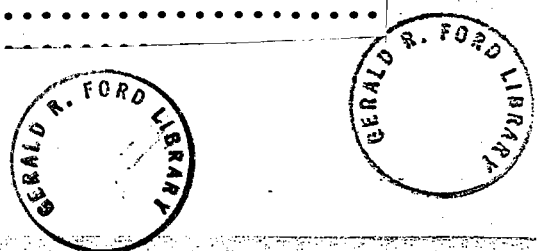
President Ford: Incidentally, how are you coming with the expedited MC-60 program?

Secretary Schlesinger: Very well. We will be up to 600 in June and up to 1,000 by 1976.

President Ford: Per year?

Secretary Schlesinger: Yes sir.

Mr. Colby: They would also hope to
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President Ford: Are those IRBMs?

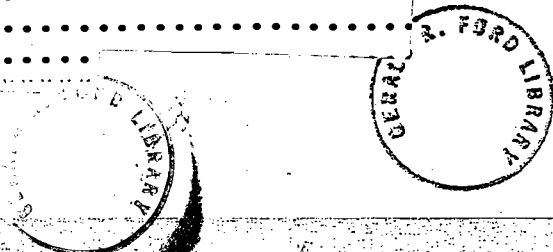
Mr. Colby: No -- Scuds and Frogs.

Secretary Schlesinger: This is only in the NATO guidelines area.

Mr. Colby: It is now less important than air delivery systems. However, it certainly cannot be ignored.

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Some mention should be made of our Allies and their attitudes toward MBFR. Britain, West Germany, Canada, Belgium, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg are directly participating in the negotiations -- the other Allies are observers. The West European Allies entered into MBFR reluctantly. They did not want to see the US military presence in Europe reduced, and feared that the negotiations themselves would be divisive. Now, because of economic and political pressures, the British, Dutch, and Belgians would like to cut their own forces. The West Germans are of course not feeling the economic pinch so much, but would expect to be a part of any Western reductions.

Finally, the Soviets have an interest in some progress in MBFR, since they probably see the negotiations as contributing to their overall objectives in East-West detente. They need, at a minimum, to keep the talks going in order to help maintain movement in the Conference on European Security. But they also have real security interests in the MBFR outcome -- especially their hope of at least constraining the growth of, or, ideally, reducing West German military strength. With respect to the US, they would like to see a reduction in our nuclear capability in Europe -- but not at the expense of an increased West German capability. In regard to their own forces, the Soviets can be expected to drive a hard bargain. They will stress equality of reduction rather than equality of remaining forces. In particular, they will focus on US nuclear strength and the German military potential.

President Ford: Thank you very much Bill. Henry, would you like to bring us up to date on where we stand --

Secretary Kissinger: I would like to sum up the history of the negotiations, following on to what Bill Colby has said, and review the modifications which might be made to the Alliance position now.

MBFR originated in the 1950s with Soviet proposals for both a European security conference and for withdrawal of foreign troops from Germany. During the 1960s, the Soviets lost interest in European force reductions, lest they appear to release forces for service in Vietnam. But during the late '60s, their interest seemed renewed for a variety of reasons. In the end, we went along with MBFR for basically two reasons: First, as a response to Soviet CSCE initiatives and second, for Congressional reasons, as a counter to Mansfield Resolution pressures. The Europeans went along for essentially the same reasons.



As the talks started, we developed an interest in seeing if we could use MBFR for rationalizing the analysis of NATO strategic issues. In NATO, a serious discussion of these issues had not taken place, and we thought MBFR might be helpful in getting one started.

So we went into MBFR with a mix of motives. It has to be seen in that context.

The US developed essentially three concepts for the reductions. The first was a common ceiling on ground force manpower to be reached in two phases -- 10 percent withdrawals of stationed forces followed by 10 percent cuts of indigenous forces.

The second was an equal percentage in US and Soviet forces which would lead to a common ceiling on ground force manpower.

The third was a reduction of dissimilar threatening elements, including 1,000 nuclear warheads, 36 Pershings, and 54 F-4s. This led to a discussion with George Brown where he's been able to change the size of the squadrons to get the reduction he wants!!(laughter) This is the so-called nuclear option.

The Allies agreed on an approach combining all three of these options. We would seek a common ceiling on ground force manpower to be achieved in two phases of negotiation.



There would be a first phase, in which the US and USSR would reduce equal percentages of the ground force manpower, with the Soviet cut being in the form of the tank army. We would take out manpower only, 29,000 troops, while the Soviets would take out 68,000 troops and an additional 1700 tanks.

President Ford: 68,000 would be included in the tank army?

Secretary Kissinger: Yes -- the 68,000 represents the tank army.

Secretary Schlesinger: In addition, each side would take out 15% of its manpower.

Secretary Kissinger: The percentage cut would be the same. We figured out that the tank army would be 68,000, and took the same percentage cut for the US.

We have had trouble figuring out why Stan Resor has not been able to convince the Soviets to accept this approach. It must be because he is a Yale man (laughter).

We also proposed a second phase, in which both sides would reduce further to a common ceiling of about 700,000. Again, this would require a three to one ratio of Pact to NATO cuts in the second phase.

Predictably, the Soviets did not accept our proposal. They put forth a proposal with several differences. Where we have stressed equal percentage reductions, they stressed equal numbers. We said the US and Soviets should reduce first, and the Soviets were more interested in NATO and Warsaw Pact allied reductions. This is because the larger the German slice they could get, the more they were able to trade good German divisions for lousy East European divisions.

It is important to realize that the significance of cuts are two-fold: the cut itself, but also that a cut establishes a ceiling. 54 F-4 aircraft is not a large number but it does establish a ceiling on this type of aircraft. This is why the Soviets were anxious on German reductions since even a small cut would have the great advantage of establishing a ceiling on all German forces.

The Soviets have shown some flexibility in their proposal. They have proposed an initial reduction of 20,000, made up largely of US and Soviet forces. But even a reduction of 1,000 Germans would have the additional effect



of putting a ceiling on the Germans. They have hinted that their nuclear reductions might be deferred to the second phase, but they have remained adamant that the size of the reductions for the two sides must be equal.

Initially, the Allies were content to let the US and the Soviets reduce only their forces. They saw putting off their reductions to the second phase as a device to keep their forces up. Leber and others stated that if the reductions were in the second phase, they could go to their parliaments and tell them that reductions were eventually coming, but after by some time. But the domestic pressures have increased in Europe, and the tendency now is for the Europeans to want to be included in the first phase.

Secretary Schlesinger: Except the Germans who have tended to move in the opposite direction.

President Ford: To keep their forces up?

Secretary Schlesinger: Schmidt has moved in the opposite direction as opposed to Brandt, who wanted to reduce.

Secretary Kissinger: They also don't want to give up a tremendous bargaining chip, namely a ceiling on their forces.

President Ford: Does their changed attitude follow through to US reductions?

Secretary Schlesinger: No, they are prepared to see us reduce.

Secretary Kissinger: They view our reductions largely as a reaction to Mansfield. The Europeans believe that reductions we take in MBFR would be less than what we would take unilaterally.

NATO and the Pact still disagree on three fundamental issues. First, whose forces should be reduced and when. We believe that the US and the USSR should reduce first, but the Pact insists that all participants reduce from the outset.

Second, what should be the reduction ratio? Our position is that reductions should be asymmetrical and lead to a common ceiling. Our position is equal percentages, but they believe the reduction should be equal numbers, a position not supported by our figures.



Finally, what forces should be reduced. Our position calls for reductions in ground forces only, but we have proposed a freeze on air manpower, and possible US reductions of air manpower. The Pact has insisted from the outset that all types of forces -- ground, air, and nuclear -- should be reduced in units with their armaments.

These disagreements are why we need to take another look at our objectives in MBFR and in developments that might cause us to reconsider them.

The SALT negotiations at Vladivostok established the principal of equality and gave us a good argument for equality in MBFR. Vladivostok also adds urgency, since the movement to a balance in strategic forces adds urgency on the conventional front. Once strategic equality is accepted around the world as a fact of life, conventional imbalances will be even more important. So, as Bill Colby said, we have taken an approach which attempts to enhance the defense and reduce the offensive capability.

So far, the Soviets have shown no major interest in MBFR. Nothing they have said to you, Mr. President, or to me in our negotiations shows any great interest. They simply repeat to you or to me what they say to Stan in Vienna. This means the Politburo has not yet engaged the issue. We will have to see whether or not in the next six months the Soviets will put this on the front burner. If they have a desire to keep detente going, they will do so.

Secretary Schlesinger: There is an embassy cable in indicating that there might be some growth in their interest in MBFR.

Secretary Kissinger: Yes. If that is true, some change in our position is imperative if we are to make progress. No Soviet leader can go to the Politburo and say he has traded 29,000 Americans for a tank army including 68,000 Soviets.

President Ford: The tank army withdrawal would reduce tanks by how many?

Secretary Schlesinger: 1700.

Secretary Kissinger: Intellectually, we have several ways of going:



-- We could change what's asked from the other side. We could bring the numbers closer together. This might make the first phase more salable, but in the second phase, we will have to get even greater asymmetries in the Pact cuts. This could push the common ceiling indefinitely into the future.

-- Secondly, we could add elements to the current Alliance position. For example, we could move up indigenous reductions, something of great interest to the Soviets because of their concerns for Germany, or we could add nuclear elements -- a thousand warheads, 54 F-4s, and 36 Pershing launchers. And finally, we could combine these approaches with a slight reduction in the Pact withdrawals we propose and introduce some nuclear forces.

I believe there was a consensus within the Verification Panel that we should go no further at this time than to introduce the nuclear package -- a thousand warheads, 54 F-4s, and 36 Pershing launchers.

Secretary Schlesinger: We would like to increase that to 2,000 warheads.

Secretary Kissinger: The nuclear package our Allies know about is a thousand warheads, 54 aircraft, and 36 Pershings. Perhaps in June, after telling them we have been restudying this, we could go to 2,000.

President Ford: Out of 9,000?

Secretary Kissinger: Seven thousand.

Secretary Schlesinger: Out of 5,000 in the NATO guidelines area.

Director Ikle: Forty percent of those in the area.

Secretary Kissinger: In addition, we have to look at the tactical question. The only thing the Allies know about is 1,000 warheads. We could either stick with the present package, or give up the 1,000 additional immediately. The worst thing would be to tell the Allies we want to reduce 2,000, but only put forth a reduction of 1,000. The Russians will know we have something else to offer and wait for it. If we want to hold back, we don't want to brief the Allies on the additional 1,000.

I believe there is a consensus that it is time to introduce the nuclear package. Some modifications may be necessary as time goes on, but I believe it would be premature to handle these now. We need to get the Soviet reaction to the introduction of the nuclear package first.



There has also been consideration given to introducing the nuclear package piecemeal --

President Ford: Pershings, and then F-4s? --

Secretary Kissinger: Right. There is a consensus that we should introduce it all at once. On the question of whether we should add a thousand warheads, we have not had a full discussion. Jim just worked out the agreement that we could get up to 2,000.

Stan will need approval of some kind of approach, Mr. President, before he leaves on Sunday.

President Ford: Jim, do you have anything to add?

Secretary Schlesinger: Mr. President, I have two comments. I recommend that we stick with our objective of getting the tank army because our ability to verify manpower reductions is minimal. The intelligence community has increased the estimates by 70,000 in the last year. Verifying the movement of manpower is difficult without a series of collateral constraints which will be almost impossible to negotiate. We have to have something that we can verify.

Second, the Chiefs have recommended reduction of 1,600 warheads as part of the readjustment of US tactical nuclear forces. In addition, we have to give Congress a report on the Nunn Amendment. Personally, I believe it is more likely that Congress will move on warhead reductions than on the Mansfield approach.

President Ford: More likely than on manpower?

Secretary Schlesinger: Yes. Also, we can move warheads back in rapidly in an emergency. Therefore, I would recommend the package the Chiefs recommend, but add to the package enough to bring it up to 2,000 warheads.

Henry referred to deficiencies in NATO's strategic discussions. But in the last year, I think there has been much increased understanding in NATO. They've accepted our flexible response strategy based on three legs of the Triad. They are coming to understand the importance of conventional defense. That is why it is important for us to emphasize our agreement with the importance of conventional defense.



The Soviets moved in 100,000 men during the Czechoslovakian coup. But the US had made many improvements. For example, the Seventh Army was in poor shape during the Vietnam War, but is now back in good condition.

President Ford: Our Seventh Army?

Secretary Schlesinger: Yes. And we have added two brigades by converting support forces to combat forces. The Germans can field 1.2 million men in 48 hours. So the balance has probably improved slightly to the advantage of the West in the last year. Over the last six or seven years NATO has been retreating, but last year, it improved.

Our objectives on MBFR have been two. First, to improve security in Western Europe. This had led us to concentrate on getting out the tank army. And we have agreed not to be stampeded into movement that does not serve our ultimate objective of improved security.

Second, we want to get the Allies to do more. If we place limits on Western forces, we cannot get them to increase their manpower and budgetary support.

It is important not to undermine these basic objectives by accepting some short term possible deal held out by the Soviets.

The Soviet objectives are first to thwart movement toward European unity.



Second, their other objective is to get control of the Bundeswehr -- the German Army. This, of course, conflicts directly with our own objective of getting the Germans to do more.

We should keep in mind these two objectives. I think so far that the negotiations have gone well.

Finally, I think the Congressional situation on the Mansfield resolution has improved.

President Ford: Even with the new Congress?

Secretary Schlesinger: Yes -- I have sat down with some of the new Democrats. They are not Bella Abzug; they want to make a serious appraisal of defense needs, and not only react to Vietnam. I believe we can hold the House, and the climate in the Senate is better than it was a few months ago.

President Ford: I hope you are right, but my visceral reaction leads me to the opposite conclusion.

Secretary Kissinger: I can't judge votes, but in meetings with them, the new members seem somewhat less ideological, but I don't know how they will vote.

Secretary Schlesinger: Brock Adams just gave a long speech on security to the New York Delegation which was well received. Getting their ideological mind-set out of Vietnam is very important.

President Ford: My analysis is predicated on two events. First, Eddie Hebert was the leader of the anti-Mansfield forces. His being thrown out will lead to less anti-Mansfield sentiment. Second, Phil Burton has become to a considerable extent a force. His voting record, I suspect, has been consistently in favor of Mansfield. I believe the Speaker is on our side, although O'Neill is on the other side. Mel Price has consistently supported Hebert's view, but he's not the hard tough speaker and debator that Hebert has been. He will stand up -- he's a good man, but he's not the tough leader Hebert was.

Secretary Schlesinger: Hebert's ouster had more to do with personality than policy --



President Ford: I hope you're right.

Secretary Schlesinger: Even in the press, the New York Times and the Christian Science Monitor and other publications are now coming out in favor of NATO.

Secretary Kissinger: They all wanted out of Vietnam, and now they will work on getting out of NATO.

Secretary Schlesinger: I believe they are changing on NATO.

President Ford: This Congressional situation argues for two things -- first, a stronger positive public support for national defense. Second, a more realistic appraisal of our MBFR position.

George, do you have any comments?

General Brown: The chiefs recommended 1600 warheads. But with some arm twisting, I got them to agree to accept 2000. They had recently reviewed our deployment plans and concluded that we could take out a total in NATO of 2200. If we took all these out of the NATO guideline's area, this would bring the total to 2800. But I have been working for some time to get our number down to a more defensible level. The basis on which our requirements have been stated have been indefensible. For example, a lot of it is based on target lists which includes things like each command post. Some of these are mobile, and we don't have the intelligence to know where they are to hit them.

Secretary Kissinger: I think we should avoid loading the nuclear reduction up too much. First, the Allies will think you made some secret agreement in Vladivostok. Second, we have to look at this not only in terms of the inherent capability of the forces, but from broader political considerations. Third, I remember when Secretary McNamara would present detailed analyses telling them how they should change their forces. While he might have been right, although I disagreed with him on many issues of substance, the issue with the Allies was the volatility of the American position.

For example, withdrawal of nuclear..... would have an effect quite apart from the direct military implications. There would be significant foreign policy consequences.

I don't mind these withdrawals in the context of MBFR, but I'm worried about any unilateral reductions. The timing would have to be very careful.



I would lean toward presenting only what the Allies heard before Vladivostok, and saving the 600 to 1000 additional warheads for later.

President Ford: These negotiations as I understand them do not

.....

Ambassador Resor: That is correct.

Secretary Kissinger: It's somewhat the reverse of what I said in the Verification Panel when I argued against bleeding out elements one at a time, but I am worried that if we throw in the additional thousand warheads, given the mentality of the Europeans, they will say "what the hell has happened?" So I recommend presenting the existing package first, and then do some missionary work on them before adding the others.

President Ford: The thousand warheads, 36 Pershings, and 54 F-4's --

Secretary Kissinger: Yes, which they have heard before Vladivostok and cannot say you made up only because of Vladivostok.

Ambassador Resor: This is the package Don presented to them in July of 1973.

Secretary Kissinger: This is not an insignificant package, especially when you consider that the Soviets also get ceilings on nuclear forces, F-4's and Pershings. They cannot sluff this off. If we have an additional thousand warheads, we can throw them in later.

Secretary Schlesinger: To some extent I believe I disagree with you. Not with respect to diplomatic tactics,

..... But in the NATO guidelines area, the British support substantial US reductions. In Germany, the SPD supports reductions and the CDU has said in its conference that it is prepared to see a reduction from 7000 warheads to 5000 warheads, although this is throughout Europe as a whole. With this kind of change, even in the CDU, we can move forward, so long as the US improves its nuclear capabilities.

President Ford: You mean our tactical nuclear capabilities?



Secretary Schlesinger: Yes. And we would not touch the weapons given to Germany..... under our program of cooperation. Also, I am not sure we can hold onto these warheads with Congress. I would leave the tactics to Henry, but I believe the Allies are ready for the introductions.

Dr. Ikle: I think we can gain a great deal by adding 600 or a 1000 warheads. This will make the Russians see that we are really in business. On the other hand, it will be sensitive with the Allies. But if we sit on these nuclear reductions, we may get blamed for holding up change for reasons of MBFR.

President Ford: Stan, have you gotten any reaction on these nuclear forces from the Soviets -- have you talked to them about these, or have they negotiated only with our NATO Allies?

Ambassador Resor: Not even that really. In July of 1973, Don told the Allies of our recommendation to put in Option III. NATO then got General Goodpaster as SACEUR to do an estimate of the military implications, and SACEUR found it reasonable. We had trilateral discussions with the UK and FRG last spring, and the UK gave us a paper this fall that had been coordinated with the Germans on the nuclear package. It took the line that we couldn't move in MBFR without using it, that we would have to put it in. But we have not had active discussions with the Allies since last spring, and that was purely academic.

Mr. Rumsfeld: Although it leaked into the newspapers so the Warsaw Pact countries are not unaware of the proposal.

Ambassador Resor: Yes. The Pact must be wondering why we haven't used it yet. Their recent tactic has been to propose a very small initial step.

President Ford: A small number of ground force reductions?

Ambassador Resor: Yes, or a freeze on manpower.

Dr. Ikle: Given their knowledge of Option III, perhaps adding the extra thousand warheads would be something new.

Secretary Kissinger: They haven't seen the package yet, so that must indicate to them that there has been some problem with it. We've never had any reaction from them on it. To sweeten it right away might give them the wrong idea, particularly since they are in a state of flux themselves.



President Ford: How long will it take them to react to a proposal such as this?

Ambassador Resor: It is hard to say. It will probably be March 15 before we can get something through the Alliance and therefore March 27 before we can have it on the table. They will have to send it to Moscow, and Henry has a better feel than I on how long it would take to react, but it would be several weeks.

Secretary Kissinger: I believe it depends, Mr. President, on how they want to gear it to Brezhnev's meeting with you. If they want to gear it to the meeting, you will hear in your channels about it. That is why I would hold the additional warheads until we get a response. It would probably be a month at least.

This will be the first approach to FBS reductions we will have ever made. In that sense it should be seen as a major breakthrough. I don't think they will accept the proposal but they can't ignore it.

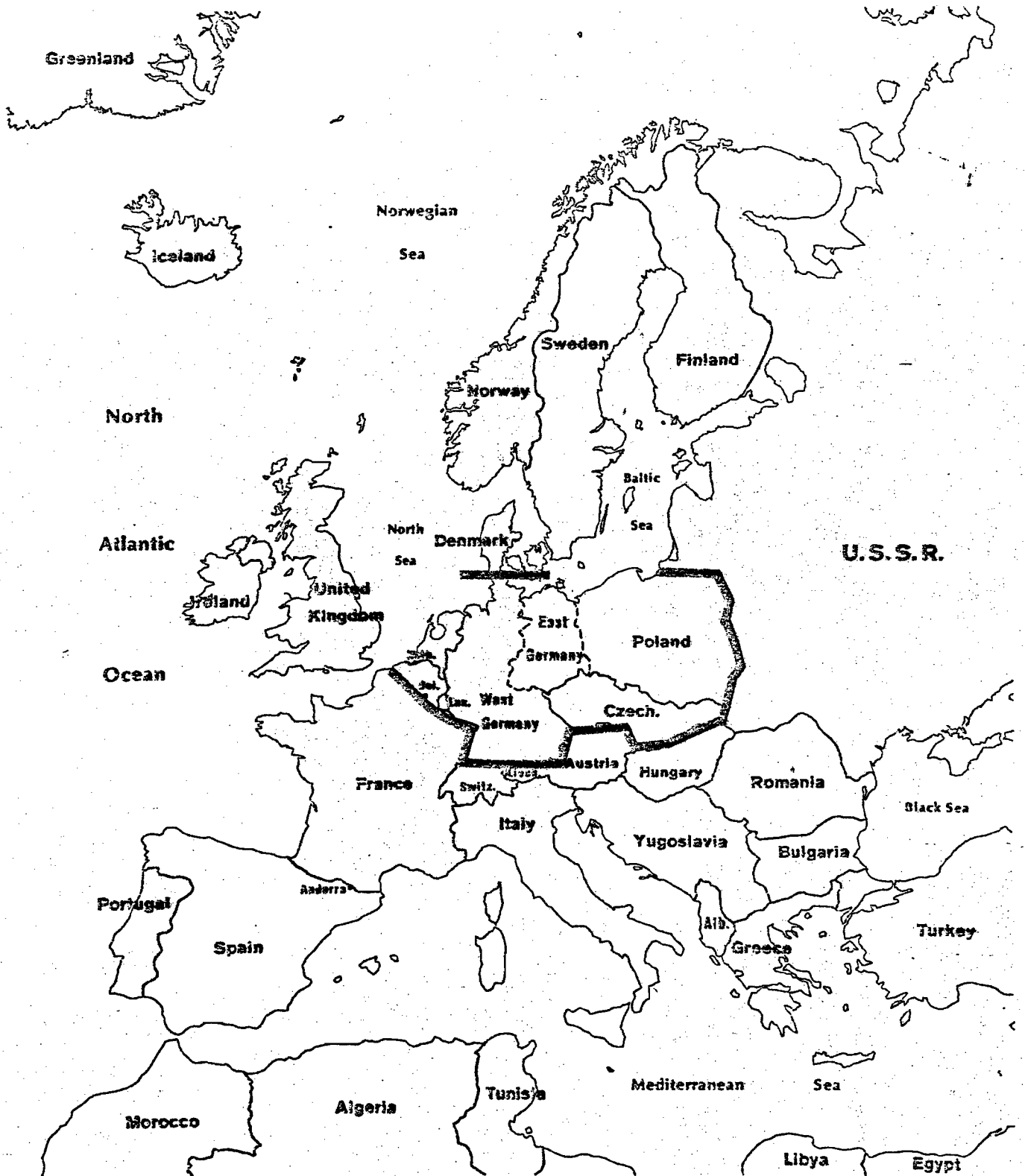
President Ford: Anyone else? Before you go back Sunday Stan, we will give you some guidelines. I do think we ought to find some solution. I think your analysis in DOD has been very helpful. But I would tend toward the lower figure. This is no final answer now, but I believe it would be a better strategic approach. I will let you know by Sunday morning.

Ambassador Resor: One final point -- I have seen several Congressmen recently, and they always ask if we have a realistic position which may initially succeed. I believe that if we can get this down, we will be in a better position to convince them that we do.

President Ford: Thank you all once again.



MSR REDUCTION AREA



NATO

WARSAW PACT

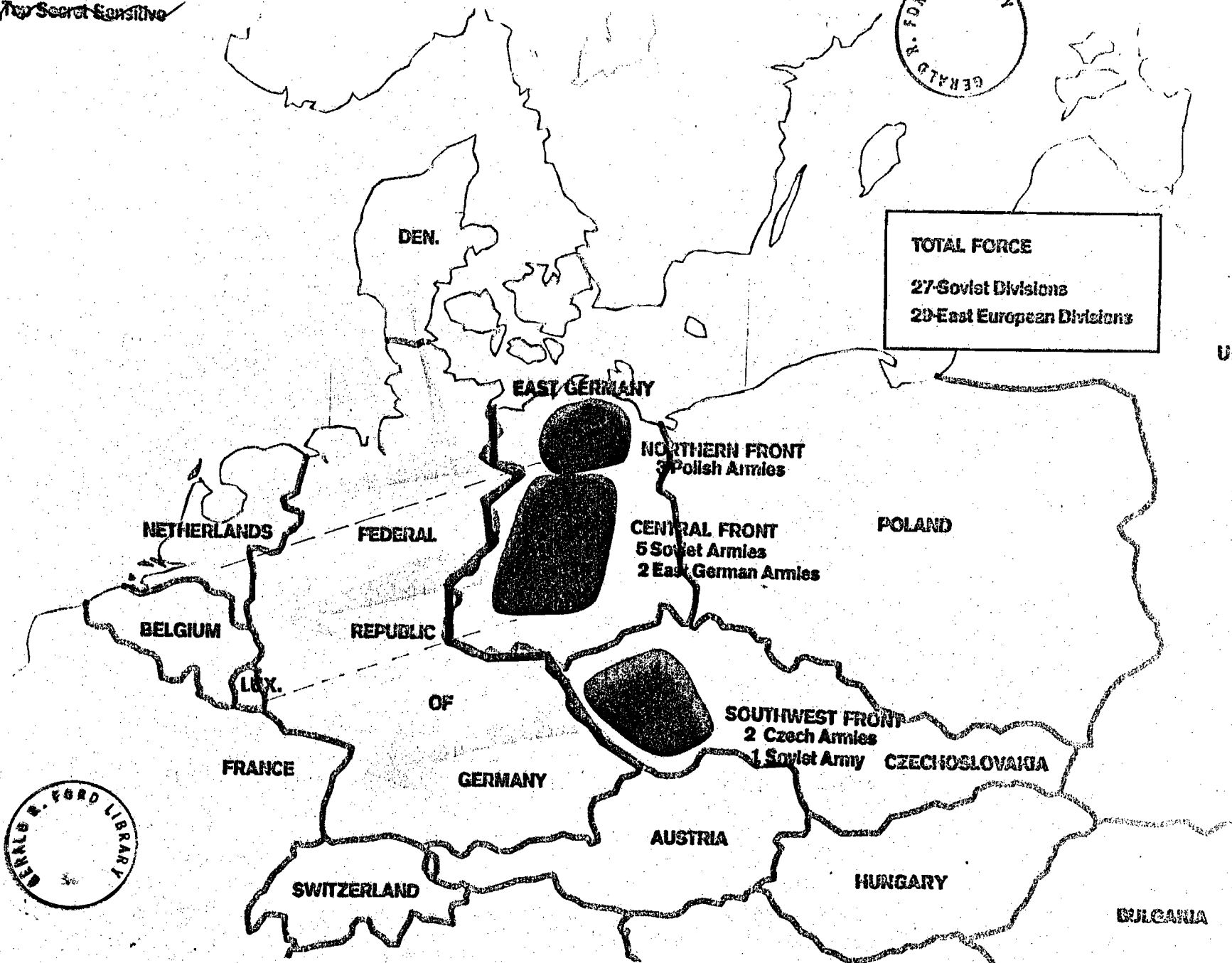


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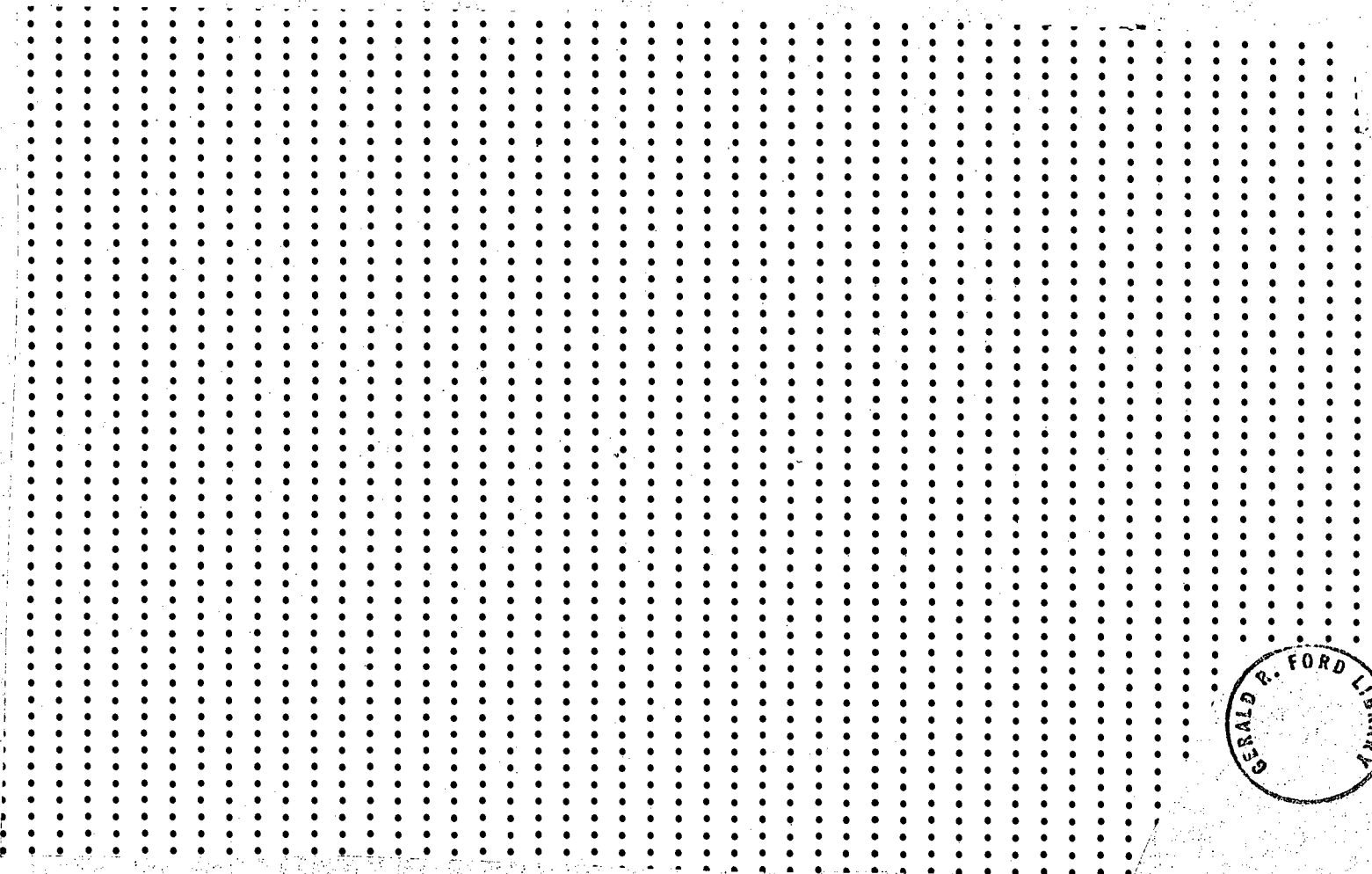


TOTAL FORCE
27 Soviet Divisions
20 East European Divisions

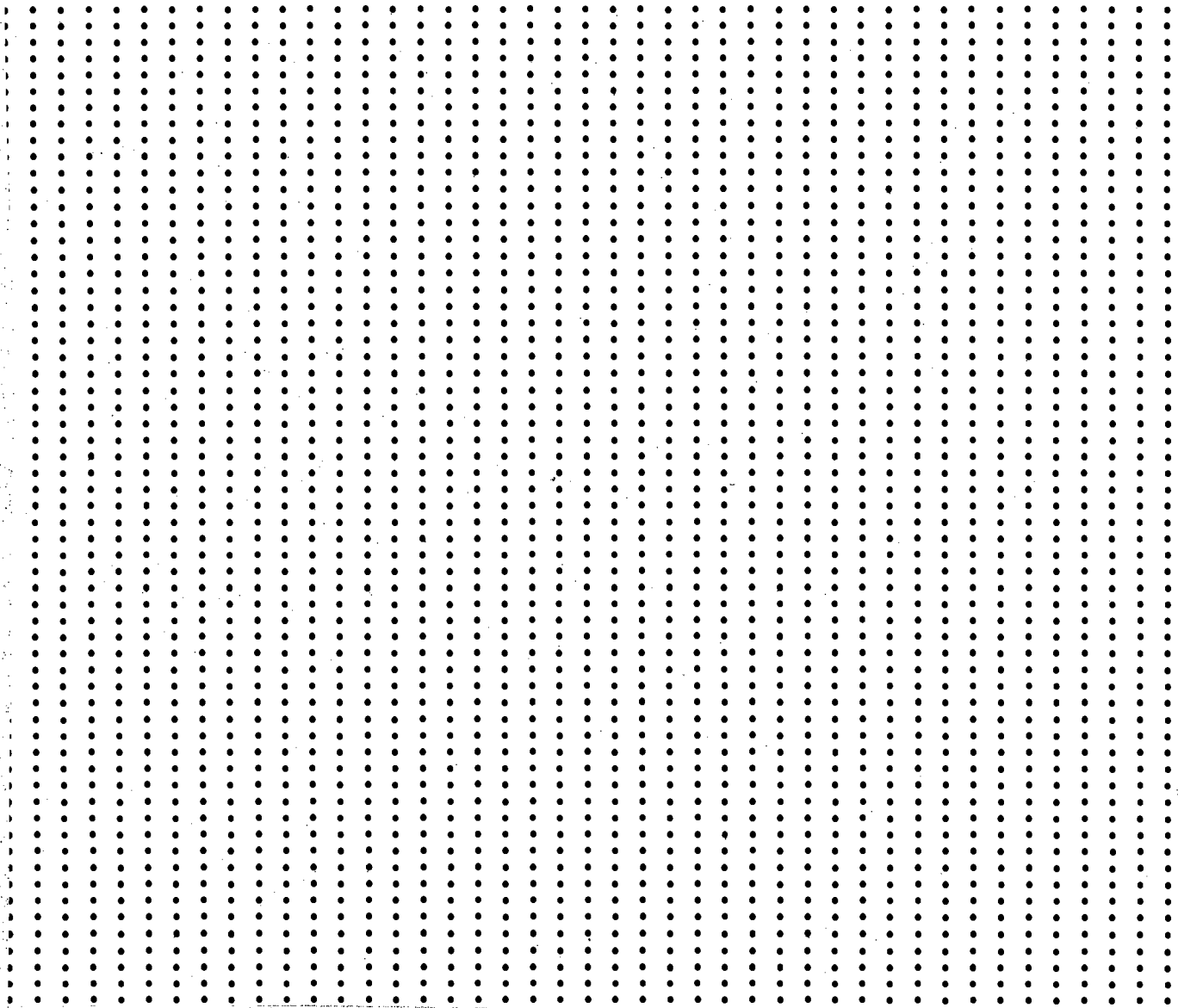
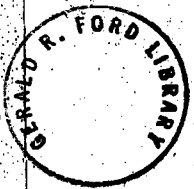
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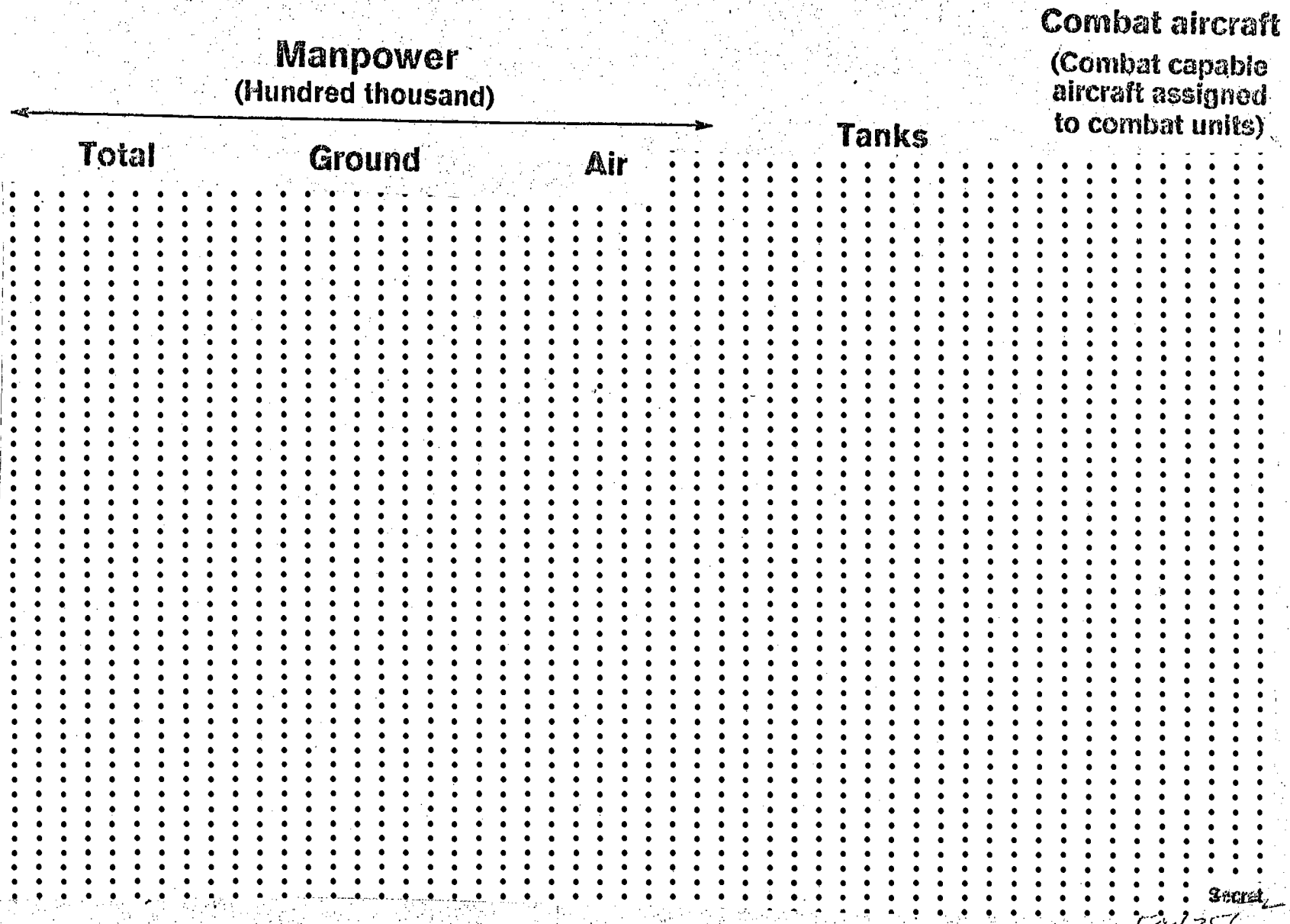
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Major force elements in the reduction area

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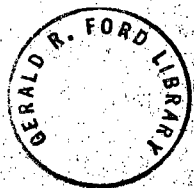
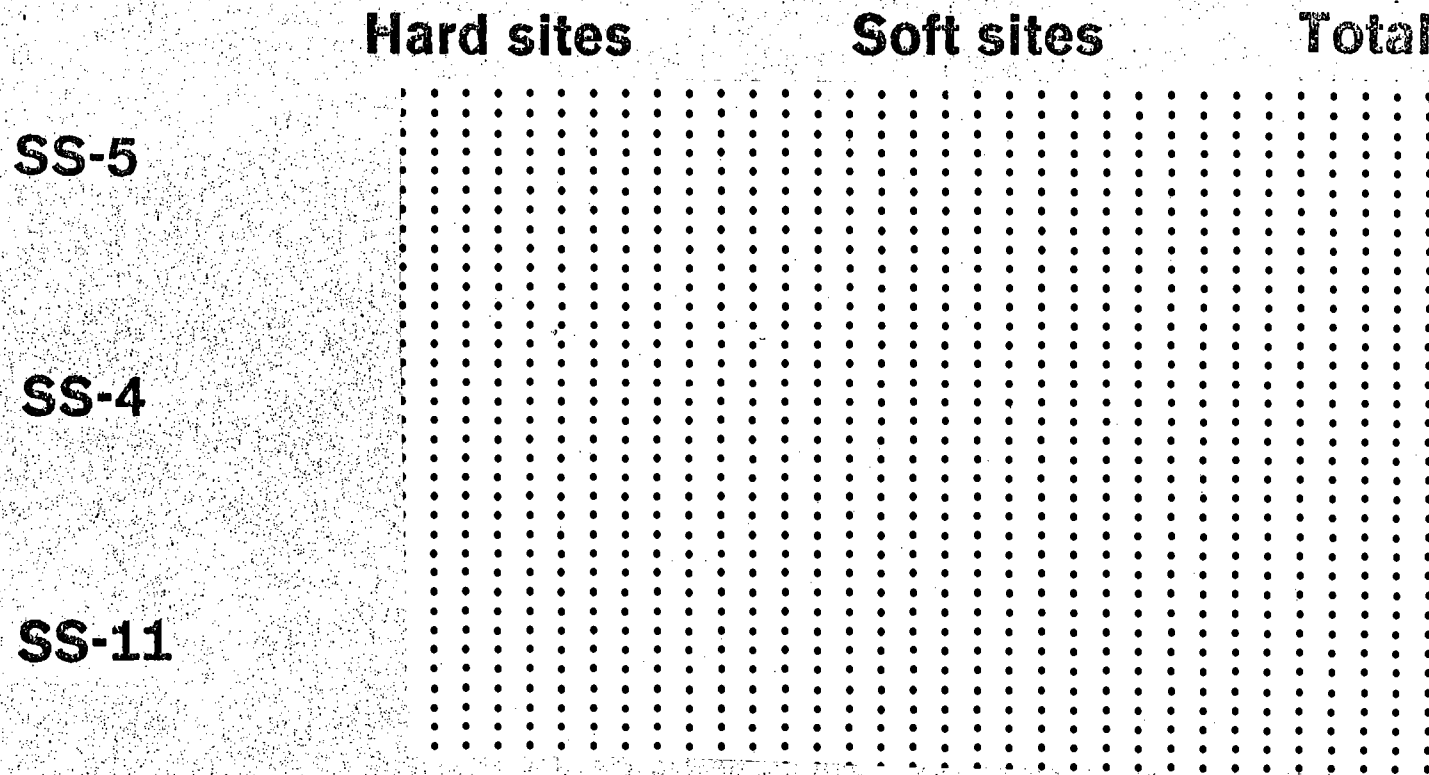


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