

January 23, 1968

**US Embassy Bonn Telegram 7557 to State
Department, 'FRG Defense Council Meeting on NPT'**

Citation:

"US Embassy Bonn Telegram 7557 to State Department, 'FRG Defense Council Meeting on NPT'", January 23, 1968, Wilson Center Digital Archive, NARA, RG 59, Subject-Numeric Files 1967-1969, DEF 18-6. Contributed to NPIHP by Bill Burr.
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Summary:

This telegram detailed an FRG Defense Council Meeting on the NPT. While recognizing that the agreement on Article III was "progress," Kiesinger continued to criticize the treaty's "inflexibility," which he saw as a danger to West Germany's "longer term" security interests. Kiesinger, however, professed willingness to consider signing the Treaty, even to be an early signer, if Washington could comply with a few basic "requests," such as "safeguards against Soviet pressure" and some improvements in Article III.

Credits:

This document was made possible with support from Carnegie Corporation of New York (CCNY)

Original Language:

English

Contents:

Original Scan

Departn

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INFO MM 01/026 W

P 231812Z JAN 68
FM AMEMBASSY BONN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6780

S E C R E T BONN 7557

E X D I S

SUBJ: FRG DEFENSE COUNCIL MEETING ON NPT

1. A MEMBER OF THE FONOFF DISARMAMENT STAFF HAS GIVEN US, IN STRICTEST CONFIDENCE, THE FOLLOWING ACCOUNT OF YESTERDAY'S NATIONAL DEFENSE COUNCIL MEETING WHICH HE ATTENDED IN A STAFF CAPACITY. THE MEETING WAS CHAIRED BY THE CHANCELLOR AND ATTENDED BY BRANDT, STOLTENBERG, STRAUSS AND VON HASE.

2. THE CHANCELLOR CONFIRMED THE FRG'S DECISION TO WELCOME RATHER THAN OPPOSE PUBLICLY THE TABLING OF NPT TO AVOID A SITUATION IN WHICH GERMANY COULD BE HELD RESPONSIBLE FOR OPPOSING THE TREATY AT THIS STAGE. HOWEVER, OUR SOURCE SAID THE ATMOSPHERE AT THE MEETING WAS HEAVY AND DESPONDENT, ALTHOUGH THERE WAS GENERAL RECOGNITION THAT THE RUSSIAN AGREEMENT, PARTICULARLY AS REGARDS ARTICLE III, REPRESENTED PROGRESS.

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LARY AS REGARDS ARTICLE III, REPRESENTED PROGRESS.

3. THE COUNCIL'S PRINCIPAL CONCERN FOCUSED ON THE NPT'S CONTINUING "INFLEXIBILITY". THE CHANCELLOR SPOKE AT LENGTH ON THIS POINT, NOTING HIS PERSONAL DISAPPOINTMENT THAT LITTLE HAD BEEN DONE TO MEET HIS REQUESTS ON THIS SCORE. HE AND THE

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OTHERS AGREED THAT THE PRESENT RATE OF TECHNOLOGICAL CHANGE WAS SUCH THAT THE TREATY'S "INFLEXIBILITY" REPRESENTED A REAL DANGER FOR THE FRG'S SECURITY INTERESTS IN THE LONGER TERM.

4. IT WAS DECIDED THAT A FURTHER DEMARCHE SHOULD THEREFORE BE MADE TO THE US ON THIS POINT, PROBABLY BY KNAPPSTEIN IN WASHINGTON. THE FONOFF WILL TRY TO STEER IT AWAY FROM DURATION AS SUCH, TOWARD LIBERALIZATION OF THE REVIEW CONFERENCE PROVISION. THE DEMARCHE PROBABLY WILL BE MADE AFTER TOMORROW'S CABINET MEETING.

5. OUR SOURCE, EMPHASIZING THE SPECIAL SENSITIVITY OF THIS POINT, THEN EXPLAINED THAT THIS WOULD PROBABLY BE THE ONLY FURTHER MAJOR REQUEST THE FRG WOULD MAKE OF THE US ON NPT. THERE WERE IMPORTANT ADDITIONAL CONCERNS, FOR INSTANCE AS REGARDS NUCLEAR BLACKMAIL; FOR THERE WAS A GROWING NUMBER IN THE

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FONOFF DEEPLY WORRIED THAT FURTHER WESTERN TROOP WITHDRAWALS WERE INEVITABLE AND THAT POSSIBLE SAFEGUARDS AGAINST SOVIET PRESSURES SHOULD BE OBTAINED. THERE WERE ALSO IMPORTANT POINTS STILL TO BE DEALT UNDER ARTICLE III. HOWEVER, BRANDT AND THE CHANCELLOR WERE EVIDENTLY AGREED, NOW THAT THE US AND THE USSR HAD REACHED A BASICALLY ACCEPTABLE UNDERSTANDING THAT THE FRG SHOULD NOT STAND IN THE WAY, AND SHOULD PROVE NOT ONLY ITS SUPPORT FOR NON-PROLIFERATION BUT THAT IT IS A GOOD ALLY. THE FRG WOULD THEREFORE LIMIT ITS FURTHER REQUESTS TO THE ESSENTIALS.

6. FOR THE SAME REASON, THE CHANCELLOR IS MOVING TOWARDS A DECISION THAT THE FRG SHOULD, IF SOME GREATER FLEXIBILITY CAN BE ACHIEVED, NOT ONLY SIGN THE NPT, BUT PERHAPS TRY TO BE ONE OF THE FIRST TO SIGN. THE CHANCELLOR HAS EVEN BEGUN THINKING OF THE KIND OF SPEECH HE COULD MAKE RECOMMENDING NPT TO THE BUNDESTAG. HE IS AWARE THAT HE MUST MAKE A PERSUASIVE CASE. FOR THIS REASON ALSO HE IS DISAPPOINTED AND FRUSTRATED THAT HE IS NOT IN A POSITION TO REPORT THAT THE FRG SUCCEEDED IN GETTING SATISFACTION ON FLEXIBILITY, PARTICULARLY SINCE IT IS KNOWN

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THAT HE PERSONALLY HAD ASKED FOR THIS.

7. AS REGARDS ARTICLE III, THERE WAS DISCUSSION OF FRENCH ATTITUDES ON EURATOM-IAEA NEGOTIATIONS AND SOME QUESTIONS ABOUT THE PRECISE US VIEW OF VERIFICATION. OUR SOURCE BELIEVES THAT BRANDT RECOGNIZES THAT VERIFICATION INVOLVES MORE THAN A PAPER RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EURATOM AND IAEA, BUT THOUGHT PERSONALLY THAT IT WOULD BE USEFUL FOR US TO RESTATE OUR POSITION ON THIS POINT, IF AND WHEN THE QUESTION IS RAISED BY THE GERMAN SIDE.

8. AS REGARDS THE OTHER PARTICIPANTS AT THE DEFENSE COUNCIL MEETING, STRAUSS WAS THE ONLY ONE WHO FORCEFULLY CALLED FOR A DECISION TO REJECT NPT AT THIS STAGE. STRAUSS ARGUED THAT FURTHER ALLIED FORCES ARE BOUND TO BE WITHDRAWN AND THAT, UNDER THESE CIRCUMSTANCES, EUROPE COULD NOT AFFORD TO BE LEFT WITHOUT A NUCLEAR DEFENSE. THE FRG, THEREFORE, SHOULD NOT BOX ITSELF IN WITH SUCH A TREATY. HE DID NOT, HOWEVER, THREATEN TO RESIGN. MCGHEE

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