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DIRECTOR OF DEFENSE RESEARCH AND ENGINEERING
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20301

03 MAY 1976

Gene M

MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

SUBJECT: Trip to Europe, 26-30 April 1976 - INFORMATION MEMORANDUM

(U) Significant Meetings during my recent trip to Europe: 27-29 April, Conference of National Armament Directors (CNAD); 27 April, Sir Peter Hill-Norton; 28 April, Ambassador Strauss-Hupe and Defense Advisor Legere; 28 April, US/UK/FRG AWACS Meeting with Assistant Secretary General LaBerge; 29-30 April, Mr. Delpech, French MOD; 30 April, Ambassador Kenneth Rush. Highlights of meeting with Mr. Delpech and Ambassador Rush will be provided in a separate memorandum.

Europe

AWACS

~~(C)~~ **The CNAD, to avoid possible negative action by Ministers in June, are requesting no decisions beyond endorsement of \$15M pre-financing by interested nations to preserve until December 1976 the option for final production decision. NATO AWACS impetus was sustained by an air defense mix study which concludes that a NATO AEW and control system should be procured without delay as an essential part of the future air defense mix, since its cost over the next 20 years is more than offset by increased effectiveness of alliance assets. The UK and Germany stated support for AWACS, although the UK emphasized that AWACS, if it is to be selected, must be the most cost-effective solution and the FRG stated that a final German parliamentary decision may not be possible until February 1977.**

~~(C)~~ **Sir Peter Hill-Norton is pushing hard for AWACS in the Military Committee, which, except for the Dutch, is unanimous for AWACS as a priority one program. Holland's refusal to endorse AWACS at the 28 April Meeting caused a postponement of the Military Committee decision and a threat of resignation by Sir Peter if the proposed solution to the severe military problem is not endorsed. I plan to talk to General George Brown and General Dave Jones to work the Dutch problem.**

3 May 76

Rush

Classified by DDR&E
SUBJECT TO GENERAL DECLASSIFICATION SCHEDULE OF
EXECUTIVE ORDER 12958. AUTOMATICALLY DOWNGRADED

SEC DEF HAS SEEN
10 MAY 1976



~~(S)~~ Frank private discussions with my UK and FRG counterparts resulted in a plan which is probably the only practical way for establishing a NATO AWACS program. Two main problems must be overcome. First, NIMROD is becoming an increasingly serious threat, with strong internal UK industrial and political backing bolstered by the Boeing projected cost growth. Cornford (UK) said that he must continue to fund NIMROD as a backup until a firm commitment is made to AWACS, that NIMROD funding will increase sharply this September, and that it would probably be impossible to turn off NIMROD after its scheduled first flight March 1977. This need for a UK commitment to AWACS this year causes a second serious problem in that Germany, with its new parliament to be elected in October 1976, feels that a final commitment to AWACS cannot be obtained until February 1977. I have started work on the plan which Cornford, Eberhard and I evolved, and would like to discuss it with you in the next day or two. I also have a recommended approach for the June Minis te rials.

~~(C)~~ COMMUNICATIONS INTEROPERABILITY. I proposed a major new US initiative to have NATO adopt as standard the US Joint Tactical Information and Display System (which has been under development for five years) by encouraging France and Germany to drop their duplicative developments of non-interoperable jam- resistant communications. The US committed to provide specifications and test results to NATO nations at no R&D charge so they could design and manufacture their own inter-operable equipment. Initial reaction was positive.

(U) EPERVIER. As a follow-up to Belgian Minister Vanden Boeynants' letter to you about this Belgian development, Bob Basil of my staff visited MBL for a detailed program review and hardware inspection to determine our recommended course of action.

~~(C)~~ TANK GUN AMMUNITION. The US and Germany have still not resolved their differences on the statement to be presented to Ministers this June on tank gun ammunition interoperability. I feel the German-recommended wording could undermine the DoD position on our XM-1 program with Congress, and recommend sticking with our position.


Malcolm R. Currie

