

November 30, 1968

MEMORANDUM

TO: RN

FROM: Ellsworth

RE: I. Background press briefings, London and Paris  
II. European interests in U.S. policy  
III. Opportunities to develop lines of communication

This is a brief summary of the accompanying memorandum.

I. Background press briefings, London and Paris: The elite of the international press of London and Paris have been briefed as to our "line" on the election strategy which resulted in a genuinely national and centrist victory for Nixon because of Nixon's wise, perceptive and strong campaign.

II. European interests in U.S. policy: Europeans, while seeing the need for a special relationship between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R., are deeply concerned to make sure that their interests are represented as the U.S.-U.S.S.R. relationship develops. They would appreciate it if Nixon could visit Europe before he visits Moscow; they very much appreciate Nixon's intention to insure thorough preparation before the U.S.-U.S.S.R. heads of state meeting.

NB: It might be a good idea to assign as Ambassador to NATO a figure who is thought to have clout with Nixon, such as Scranton, and give him the main job of making sure the Europeans feel in on the U.S.-U.S.S.R. developments.

III. Opportunities to develop lines of communication:

Not only some of the elite members of the press of London and Paris, but also the Institute for Strategic Studies can be used immediately to send messages. For example, I told the French press that Nixon is looking forward to establishing close relations with the De Gaulle government immediately.

I also indicated that Nixon would be skeptical of calling an international monetary conference until such time as there seemed to be a consensus on the direction such a conference should take and until there seemed to be a reasonable chance for such a conference to be successful.

I'm sure these messages will be passed on.

November 30, 1968

MEMORANDUM

TO: RN

FROM: Ellsworth

RE: I. Background press briefings, London and Paris  
II. European Interests in U.S. Policy  
III. Opportunities to develop lines of communication

Pursuing Safire's memo of November 20, I ate dinner in London Wednesday evening, November 27, with the top political or diplomatic or general editorial writers from: Sunday Times, Daily Mail, London Sun, The Economist, London Times, BBC, Sunday Telegraph and Daily Express.

The following day, Thursday, November 28, I ate lunch in Paris with similar figures from France-Soir, Europe I (a radio station), Le Figaro, L'Express, French TV News and Le Monde.

Killian of the Daily Express and Worsthorne of the Sunday Telegraph in London and Andre Fontaine of Le Monde in Paris all asked me to convey their personal congratulations and good wishes.

The thought behind Safire's memorandum was that we should establish a line on the election, its salient points, and its interpretation. This was done, and it was seemingly well received, although there was also naturally intense

interest in plans and thinking for the future.

Part I of this memo will cover the line that was set; Part II will cover the areas of greatest interest insofar as future plans and thinking are concerned; Part III will cover the need to exploit these types of journalists as communication channels (not in terms of what they print but in terms of their direct and indirect Government contacts) in the conduct of international politics.

Part I: The American Presidential Campaign, 1968.

The Nixon Presidential campaign of 1968, guided to success through the most complicated and turbulent political year in modern American history, showed Nixon to be a wise and strong political leader. The shape of the victory established Nixon as the winner of a truly national and centrist mandate.

(1) The Primaries. The decision to enter the primaries involved very high risks but the brilliant and substantial victories in all the primaries succeeded in effectively abolishing the "loser image", proved Nixon's popularity, and laid the groundwork for the handling of issues in the general campaign, both as to content and technique. Nixon won every primary he entered (and he entered all of them except those like D. C. and West Virginia, of no significance in the Republican Party, or those like California that had bona fide favorite son Governors), with 70 percent of the

vote or more. The two salient primary victories, however, were New Hampshire and Oregon. In New Hampshire, the Nixon appeal was so strong that the popular and energetic Romney, who had just been reelected by an overwhelming margin as Governor of Michigan, one of our major industrial states, and who had the total backing of the Eastern Establishment of the Republican Party, was forced to withdraw from the race before election day in order to minimize the size of the humiliation of his defeat.

In Oregon, where Dewey "stopped" Stassen in 1948 after Stassen had swept all the primaries, where Rockefeller had won his only Republican primary victory in 1964, and where both Rockefeller and Reagan in 1968 had truly full scale media and organizational campaigns conducted in their behalf, Nixon surprised everyone by winning with nearly 70 percent of the votes.

(2) The Convention. Nixon's success through the primaries assured him of more than enough convention delegates to win the nomination, and even to be able to afford some erosion in delegate strength. For this reason, and also to be able to ask for and receive genuine unity throughout the Party, Nixon adopted a Convention strategy of avoiding controversy. The fundamental strategy of Rockefeller and Reagan, on the other hand, had to be a strategy of seeking

to find controversial issues that would force delegates away from Nixon and into either the Rockefeller or the Reagan camp. Nixon's strategy of avoiding controversy at that point and seeking accommodation while suffering some erosion nonetheless proved to be successful in that he did receive the nomination and was able to ask for and receive, immediately after the Convention, widespread Party unity.

(3) Agnew. The selection of Agnew seemed wise at the time of Miami and in retrospect appears to have been brilliant. A Tower or a Reagan would have lost, for the ticket, Ohio and Illinois and California -- or at least two of those. Their presence on the ticket might have won Texas, but that would not have been enough.

On the other side, a Lindsay or a Rockefeller on the ticket would have caused the loss of Tennessee, Kentucky, North Carolina, Virginia and South Carolina (the "border states" with 54 electoral votes) plus Florida with 14, as against the possibility of capturing Pennsylvania with 29. It would not have been enough.

NB: A fascinating observation on the difference between the French reaction and the British reaction to this particular analysis: the French understood perfectly and expressed admiration, whereas the British felt the personal

and political shortcomings of Agnew, as perceived by them, and as those shortcomings seemed to speak to his ability to be President, should have ruled him out. Of course, at this point I put on a hard sell for Agnew's intelligence, character and personality, but the British would have picked somebody else even though they recognize it would have endangered the election.

(4) The strategy of the Democrats, as foreseen by Nixon at the very beginning of the general election campaign. Nixon foresaw that the Democratic Party would come back together. He knew that Kennedy and O'Brien would be able to bring most of the East back; he knew that at some point in time, during the campaign, McCarthy would endorse Humphrey with something less than full enthusiasm but nonetheless substantial effect; and he knew that the leadership of organized labor would generate very great activity, and with very great effect, to recapture for the Democratic ticket those rank-and-file members whose sentiments were with Wallace in September. In fact, all these things did happen; but the fact that Nixon had foreseen them and designed his own basic campaign strategy to account for them, permitted him to win anyway.

(5) The effect of the bombing halt. The bombing halt had been foreseen; when it did come, its effect was massive.

In fact, Lou Harris has said since the election that he was convinced on the day before election day that Nixon had been beat by the bombing halt.

The Nixon camp, at the beginning of the campaign, had in mind McNamara's statements immediately before the 1966 Congressional election about reducing the draft and about troops being home by Christmas. Thus, a major peace move of some kind was to be foreseen, and a bombing halt would be the most likely. The Humphrey camp, it was known, anticipated the bombing halt announcement almost every day starting with Humphrey's Salt Lake City speech.

Nixon, of course, was able to appeal to the electorate on the war and peace issue by his call for negotiation (from strength) instead of confrontation, and also by his support for the bombing halt expressed in mid-October in the Johnstown, Pennsylvania speech and thereafter. In any case, Nixon steadfastly maintained his cool and in the final analysis the nation got both the bombing halt and a Nixon Presidency.

(6) Nixon's basic strategy. Nixon adopted a so-called "big states" strategy designed to concentrate most of his time and the funds of the campaign, and the Surrogate Candidate activity in the big electoral vote count states: California, Texas, Ohio, Illinois, Michigan, New York, Pennsylvania,

and New Jersey. Of these, he won four: New Jersey, Illinois, Ohio, and California -- and he won all of those by very substantial margins of 40,000 or more, not by miniscule margins of under 10,000 as had been the case with the key Kennedy states in 1960.

A secondary part of the Nixon strategy was aimed at the border states which he won. A third part of his strategy was to campaign to the Negroes in the country by means of continuous references to his Black Capitalism program and by continuous references to justice whenever law and order were mentioned. Nixon never thought he would get a substantial percentage of the Negro vote, but he wanted to be in a position to be able to communicate with them as President.

The result of the Nixon strategy now is that Nixon has won a truly national election -- unlike Wilson's election when he carried only New Hampshire in the East, and unlike the election Humphrey was trying to win, i.e., without any support in the South or the West.

Conclusion: Thus, Nixon has won a truly national and centrist victory. As Joseph Kraft and others have pointed out, he is now in a position to govern effectively.

Part II: The Areas of Greatest Interest Insofar as Future Plans and Thinking are Concerned.

This section reflects areas of strong interest and conveys the substantive views not only of the elite of the London and Paris press, but also of the staff at the Institute for Strategic Studies, Mr. Minos Zombanakis (a Greek citizen who represents the Manufacturers Hanover bank in London, continental Europe and the Middle East. He sends his personal congratulations and good wishes to RN. RN will remember meeting him in Rome the spring of 1967), as well as at least a portion of the Harriman/Vance staff in Paris.

(1) The Europeans (and the British regard themselves as Europeans in this context) recognize that the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. have special responsibilities and therefore need to have a special relationship. They hope that the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. pursue the Nixon formula for detailed negotiations: first at the Ambassadorial level, then at the Foreign Minister level, and finally, when appropriate at the highest level -- covering Vietnam, the Middle East, and strategic weapons.

However, the Europeans feel that they have interests that require consideration as these matters develop between the two super powers, and they should be kept au courant and even, to the extent possible, should be involved and represented,

in some way, in the new developments.

For example, while the Russians hope and expect Nixon's first trip abroad to be very soon after his inauguration, and to Moscow, such a trip would be inconsistent with Nixon's emphasis on preparatory talks at lower levels; it seems to me that the best opportunity for an early Nixon trip abroad would be if the Paris peace talks should reach a stage that would make it appropriate for a Presidential visit.

In any case, Europe is on the way to Moscow, so to speak, both geographically and politically. A visit to Europe before a visit to Moscow would be one way to symbolize the Nixon concern for the interests of the nations of Europe.

Another way would be to send as Ambassador to NATO a prestigious figure who was also known to be close to Nixon. Such an individual could authoritatively and continuously keep the nations of Europe fully informed and their interests adequately represented, in connection with the development of U.S.-U.S.S.R. relations.

In fact, the U.S. Ambassador in Moscow (e.g. Thompson, Beam, Alexis Johnson or whatever top professional RN sends there), together with the Ambassador to NATO (e.g. Scranton), and RN, should think of themselves as a three-way system in this context, with a need for close communication between the NATO man and the Moscow man, and the need for the NATO man to understand his particular responsibility in handling the Europeans being of particular importance.

(2) The Middle East. The two salient facts with regard to the Middle East today are, first, the high level of Soviet activity in the Middle East, and second, the serious instability that is afflicting the Arab world.

The Soviet activity is thought to be motivated by three impulses: (1) the traditional desire for Russian access through the Black Sea and into the Mediterranean, (2) as a reaction to a recent McNamara speech in Athens where he announced the intention to increase NATO activity in the eastern Mediterranean, and (3) penetration of the petroleum zones in northern Africa, Arabia and Iran.

The Soviets of course are very large in Egypt and the Yemen; Nasser is regarded as having very little ability to control Egypt but for the presence of Soviet help -- student riots, etc.

Without getting into the subtleties of the Arab-Israeli conflict, there is strong and widespread hope in Europe that RN will not feel that he has to be too hasty in fulfilling his campaign promise to provide the Israelis with phantom jets. It is specifically felt that to send them in before the Israelis need them would only provoke the Russians into accelerating their build up in that area. In any case, it is doubted that the Arabs and the Israelis will agree to a settlement of their disputes at any time in the foreseeable future. If a settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict comes

about, it will have to be on the basis of a give-up by the Israelis of the occupied territory in exchange for a permanent recognition by Egypt (others will follow) of the right of Israel to exist as a state, but this will probably have to be imposed from the outside on the respective states by the United States and the U.S.S.R.

(3) The Monetary Crisis. There is a great deal of talk in Europe, in the press and elsewhere, about the need for a world monetary conference, a latter day Bretton Woods. No one, however, claims that there is any agreement or consensus about what direction the conference should move in. Burns, on his recent trip, created some misunderstanding when he said that most academics in the United States would favor flexible exchange rates. It had to be clarified later that he himself did not favor flexible exchange rates.

Government-imposed austerity in Britain is causing severe political backlash, and the French feel that they are in for a year of great difficulty, what with inflation and trade union demands.

With regard to these matters, insofar as Nixon's moves in the next few weeks are concerned, it would be well to keep in mind that Burns is very highly regarded in Europe as a sensible pragmatist. Nixon is said to be receiving advice from others in this area who are not so sensible. There is very high regard for Charles Coombs of the New York Federal

Reserve and considerable sentiment would support his appointment as Under Secretary of the Treasury for Monetary Affairs since he is already the de facto leader of U.S. policy and operations in this field and to put him in the strong public position of de jure leadership would strengthen respect for United States leadership in this critical area all over the world. The present Treasury team is regarded with contempt.

(4) Vietnam. Two salient facts should be known with regard to the Harriman/Vance mission in Paris. One, the mission has received no guidance on the President-elect's wishes. Absolutely none. Second, the South Vietnamese deeply fear that they are going to be sold out. They are still stalling in sending personnel to Paris. For example, secret bilaterals were to have begun today, Saturday, November 30, between the U.S. and Hanoi with regard to physical and procedural arrangements for the initial procedural four-way conversations. South Vietnam personnel were supposed to be in Paris by now so that they could be kept informed, but they had not shown up as of Friday.

The fact that Nixon had seen Kissinger three times in the past week had been noted by the members of the Harriman/Vance mission. Kissinger is said to be one who really knows what's going on.

The Soviets, by the way, played a major catalytic role in working out the bombing halt understanding.

Also, when the record is made available to the new administration and is examined with care, it will be clear that the bombing halt agreements could have been made much earlier than they actually were. This is something to be kept in mind for February and March, on the political side.

(NB: Holbrook said he assumed Nixon's objective would be to settle the Vietnam conflict by means of negotiations as distinguished from settling it by means of military escalation, but the settlement would have to be on an honorable basis -- i.e., on a basis that would not make it appear that Nixon had sold out what his predecessor had fought for. I told Holbrook that was extremely well put. Holbrook suggested that such a formulation might end up with a statement by us that, since our presence in South Vietnam was designed to protect the South Vietnamese from the foreign invasion, we would withdraw our troops from South Vietnam if, as, and when they withdraw their troops from South Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia. This will cause very substantial problems with the Saigon regime, but the feeling is we are going to have to force the Saigon regime in various ways to accept more of the responsibility for their own fate.)

(Thoughts on the selection of the Ambassador to Saigon: He should be young and strong. His job will be far more debilitating than any Cabinet job. He should be someone who is particularly close to the President's thinking, knows what the President wants. He should be one who is profoundly skeptical. Bunker, for example, has been too easily hoodwinked by the lying, cheating, coniving leaders of the South Vietnamese Government. He need not be a person who has had great diplomatic experience or who has credentials as an expert on Southeast Asia or South Vietnam. (There do not seem to be any genuine experts on Southeast Asia or South Vietnam.) Mitchell?)

### Part III: Use of Journalists as Communication Channels.

The London Institute for Strategic Studies, because of its unique structure and mode of operation can serve as an extraordinarily effective channel of international communication, when one is needed outside of regular government channels. The same thing can now be said of the elite of the international press in London and Paris.

First, with regard to the press: obviously they are not set up on a structured basis as is the ISS, but there is now in existence a certain good feeling, a feeling of confidence and reliability that exists among and between the

following particular individuals, out of the groups I met with in London and Paris: Roy Lewis of the London Times, Nancy Balfour of The Economist, Henry Branden of the Sunday Times, Bruce Rothwell of the Daily Mail, Andre Fontaine of Le Monde (now editor, formerly foreign editor), Jean-Jacques Faust, Assistant Editor of L'Express, and Andre Rabache, Editor of France Soir (formerly foreign editor). These people can be used, not so much with regard to what they write, as for their channels of communication to officials of their own governments as well as elite journalists and officials of foreign governments.

The Institute, however, is much more readily structured to serve these purposes immediately. Their financing is all non-government and is truly international, flowing mostly from the Ford and Rockefeller Foundations in this country, the Wolfson Foundation and the Nuffield and Leverhulme Trusts in the U.K. and the Volkswagen Foundation in Germany. In addition, their staff is international, including British, Americans, Germans, Japanese and Australians. Their membership is international, including government officials, politicians, corporations, and members of the press. All their work is unclassified and all their sources are supposedly unclassified. In any case they operate on that basis. But

they have marvelous access on a global basis. For example, the morning I was there they had had a staff consultation with a general from the Israeli general staff. The Associate Director, Kenneth Hunt, had just returned from Vietnam where he had been out in the field fighting with the marines. This is against the law but his contacts are such that it had been no problem for him to get into that position. Also, they move in the circle of academic, quasi-academic and government think tanks everywhere, including RAND, IDA, Princeton, Harvard, MIT in the U.S.; Chatham House in England, the government-sponsored institutes in France, Yugoslavia, Poland and Czechoslovakia and the privately financed institutes in Germany, Japan and Australia.

Thus, quite apart from the possibility of modeling an in-house White House institute on similar lines, which will be the subject of a separate memorandum, this institute can be exploited immediately, even in the transition period as a fast and respectable means of communication about intentions, etc., with regard to international strategic matters.

Kissinger, by the way, can be immediately useful in this as he is most highly regarded by the London Institute staff and apparently moves widely among all of the similar institutes listed above.

November 30, 1968

MEMORANDUM

TO: RN

FROM: Ellsworth

RE: The London Institute for Strategic Studies

Summary

I. This is an organization which is unique in the field of think tank type of operations.

It is international; it is small; it has no relationship with any government, and it is conveniently located, geographically, in the sense that London is a convenient and regular jet transfer point between continental Europe (including Russia) and North America.

II. In a general way, the Institute suggests itself as a model for a White House executive office institution, although such an in-house institution would have to be radically different in basic ways from the London Institute.

III. The facilities and personnel of the London Institute can be exploited much more heavily than they have been.

November 30, 1968

The London Institute for Strategic Studies

I. The ISS is unique.

The London Institute is unique in a number of ways. First of all, it is truly international. It is international in its financing. Following is a table of its sources of funds for 1967-68:

SOURCE	1967-68 (in pounds)
<u>A - Basic Finance</u>	
Ford Foundation (U.S.)	39,275
Rockefeller Foundation (U.S.)	4,167
Wolfson Foundation (U.K.)	500
Membership	14,750
Donations	3,285
Investments	1,000
Agency fees	500
Publications (net)	500
Total - Basic Finance	63,977
<u>B - Specific Grants</u>	
Rockefeller Foundation (Third World Studies)	6,875
Nuffield Trust (U.K.) (Library)	2,250
Leverhulme Trust (U.K.) (Junior Research Associate)	1,025
Wolfson Foundation (U.K.) (Middle East Studies)	2,450
Wolkswagen Foundation (Germany) (European Security)	7,970
European Institutes	550
Total - Specific Grants	21,120
GRAND TOTAL	85,097

Its staff is also international, including members from the U.K., the U.S., Germany, Japan and Australia.

Its "membership" is international, including corporations as well as individual members, newspapermen, governments, etc., from over 40 different nations.

"Members" pay a small annual dues of under \$200. This entitles them to come to "meetings" at which papers are presented, to use the library, to consult the staff on a limited basis, and to receive publications -- books, papers, etc.

And, of course, the distribution of the Institute's material is international.

None of the other think tanks in the world are as truly international. Some of the other institutes are actually supported by their governments; others, such as some of the academic institutes in this country, are supported entirely by funds which flow from or relate to the interests of one particular nation.

That the Institute is centrally located from the standpoint of jet travel these days back and forth between Europe and North America is self-evident.

The Institute is not tied to any government, whereas our Rand and IDA in this country and other institutes in other countries are. Also note the London Institute does no contract work.

And, finally, the London Institute is unique in that it has a very small staff: four permanent staff and eight visiting staff, for a total of twelve. Obviously, with such a small staff, every staff member must possess extraordinary ability; the projects undertaken must be so unique in concept that they are non-competitive with projects being undertaken by other, larger, think tanks; and yet the output must be relevant enough to policy makers to keep the Institute's output in demand; and all the staff must be good enough not to make any mistakes (certainly not very many) since a bad project for the year by one staff member would mean an eight and one-half percent error in the Institute's work for the year.

## II. The Institute as a model.

Obviously, this kind of institute could not function in the White House, or anywhere else within a government. At the same time, our government already has the Rand Corporation and IDA doing this kind of work on a very large scale, and with access to classified information, and all done from the standpoint of the best interests of the United States. Moreover, we have the gigantic Brookings Institution located in Washington and designed to provide high government officials with the best in thought on economic and social issues, research on such matters, etc.

However, in a way roughly similar to the way which the top management of many top corporations have provided themselves with small groups of "wild birds", so also the President might provide himself with a small staff of no more than three or four men whose assignment would be to (a) keep in touch with the ten or twelve top men in this field on a worldwide basis (Kissinger, Bucham, Sjnederek, etc.), and (b) develop material based on their own intuition and research.

### III. Greater Use of the Institute.

Immediately, through the United States "membership" in the London Institute (two officers of our embassy in London have been provided with "memberships" by our government) the Institute could be asked for a consultation or a short paper on some aspect of policy that is going to require some immediate action. For example, the Institute could be asked to prepare a quick paper, from a totally unbiased point of view, and without reference to the interests of any one country, on the subject of the adequacy of the inspection provisions of the Non-proliferation Treaty, not only in terms of the possibility of nations evading inspection but also in terms of their effect on the international politics involved in getting further ratifications. Also, the question

of inspection is obviously going to loom very large in any talks with the U.S.S.R. with regard to strategic weapons. The Institute might be asked to suggest guidelines on this point. (None of these items was either suggested by or discussed with the Institute or anyone else. This is strictly my own idea. In fact, as I reflect on it, it would probably be better to have such a request not come from our London embassy "members" but from some corporate or individual "member".)

Also, the Institute, through its widespread press and academic contacts, can be exploited to send signals and messages on a pretty far-ranging basis and into powerful and influential circles.

LARRY  
12/10 38

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT-ELECT

RICHARD M. NIXON

WASHINGTON, D.C.

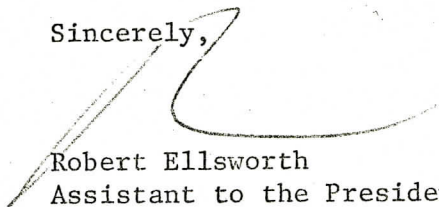
December 6, 1968

Dr. Henry Kissinger  
Office of the President-elect  
Hotel Pierre  
New York, New York

Dear Dr. Kissinger:

I am sending you the enclosed for your information and possible use.

Sincerely,



Robert Ellsworth  
Assistant to the President-elect

Enclosure

*Mr. Eisenhower*  
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

SUITE 610, 1825 K STREET, N.W., WASHINGTON, D. C. 20006

CARL F. STOVER  
President

AREA CODE (202)  
296-0903

November 27, 1968

Mr. Robert Ellsworth  
Attorney at Law  
Waterhouse  
3526 K Street, N. W.  
Washington, D. C.

Dear Bob:

Today, Jim Grant, Vice President of the Institute, stopped by my office and told me that Mr. Richard Barnett, Co-Director of the Institute for Policy Studies, has just returned from a trip to Eastern Europe and Soviet Russia. While in the USSR Dick had several chats with members of the Party's Central Committee and, I believe, of the Presidium.

Dick feels strongly enough about the nature of these conversations to offer to share them with an appropriate representative of RN's incoming administration. Apparently, he sensed a strong desire on the part of Soviet leadership to communicate through whatever means possible.

To give you some background, the IPS is a liberally oriented research outfit sponsored by non-government funds which typically interests itself in "leading edge" notions that are often contrary to accepted national policy. Dick Barnett did his apprenticeship in the State Department and has recently authored a book entitled, Intervention and Revolution: The United States in the Third World.

If such an informal conversation makes sense, please let me know.

Sincerely,



John M. McGwire

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→ File - Silsurath

Hand delivered 4:00 p.m. Palm Court PLAZA Hotel New York City 12/18/68

I have informed Moscow of our conversation on the 8th of December when you stated President Nixon's considerations concerning a possible meeting of President Johnson with the Soviet leaders.

In this connection I am instructed to convey you for President Nixon the following.

Since, as it is apparent now, Mr. Nixon is obviously not aware of all the circumstances of this matter, we would like to state for his information that the question of President Johnson's wish to meet with the Soviet leaders was raised on the initiative of the American side at the beginning of July this year. Then in the middle of September and again at the end of November the American side - on its own initiative as well - returned to this question.

Supposing that Mr. Nixon was informed of the course of affairs in the exchange of opinions between Moscow and Washington on this matter, we on our part were planning nevertheless to find out ~~this~~ his attitude towards the possibility of President Johnson's meeting with the Soviet leaders before any final decision was reached on this matter.

Now the situation in this respect ~~has~~ been clarified. It is of course difficult for us to judge the character of American side's intentions concerning a summit meeting and hence - how successful it could be under present circumstances. Mr. Nixon is of course in a better position to judge this.

So far as our own attitude to such meetings is concerned we can say absolutely firmly that this attitude is being determined not by any motivations of the moment. We approached and still approach the question of such meetings with all seriousness, having in mind that for the leaders of such two states as the United States and the Soviet Union there is always something to exchange the opinions of in the interests of our two countries as well as in the interests of universal peace and security.

As to the problem of curbing the race in the strategic armaments we can state also with all certainty that our approach to the discussion of this problem - be it at summit, be it at any other level - is most serious. We had proceeded precisely from this when an agreement was reached between the Governments of the Soviet Union and the United States, which was proclaimed on the 1st of July this year, to enter in the near future into negotiations concerning complex limitation and reduction of offensive strategic nuclear weapons delivery systems as well as systems of defense against ballistic ~~rock~~ missiles.

The problem of limitation and subsequent reduction of strategic weapons is undoubtedly one of the biggest questions in the relations between our countries. The results of discussion of this problem will, of course, depend on positions of both sides. If the Governemtn of the United States really wishes, as we do, to facilitate the cessation of armaments race then there is no doubt that these results can be positive.

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Verbal:

If there is any reply to this, Tcherniakoff is ready to receive it and convey it to Moscow.


→ File - Ellsworth

December 16, 1968

MEMORANDUM

DEC 18 1968

TO: Henry Kissinger

FROM: Bob Ellsworth 

Following our conversation on the plane the other evening, I have had my conversation with Mr. Atanasiu of the Rumanian Embassy. I have not yet had my conversations with the German and the Japanese, but will by the end of the week and will report to you.

The Rumanian reminded me of the warm personal feeling that exists between Mr. Ceausescu and RN; emphasized the great difficulties Rumania has had preserving its independence and integrity over the last few months since the Russian invasion of Czechoslovakia; underscored the importance to U.S. and Western policy of the continuing Rumanian independence and integrity; touched upon the material benefits expected to flow from the scientific and cultural exchanges between Rumania and the United States and --

expressed hope that the Congress of the United States would see fit to extend Most Favored Nation treatment

to Rumania so that Rumania would be at least in the same category as Poland and Yugoslavia already are as far as access to the U.S. market is concerned.

Recommendation: That serious consideration be given to having Harlow take soundings as to Congressional sentiment on this, with the thought that if Rumania could be granted MFN status this could be utilized to say that Ceausescu's maintenance of independence may have its rewards as well as its costs.

\* HAW: Plenty of work has already been done on this. It's a worthwhile idea & could give Nixon the right kind of FE image. However, there are real Congressional problems, so let's wait until after the 20th. MK

Monday evening, December 30, 1968

In addition to handing me the enclosed materials, Tcherniakov and I had a conversation which covered the following points, among others:

(1) He expressed dismay over the Joseph Alsop column in the Washington Post that morning, which had been to the effect that a military victory was not only possible but desirable in Vietnam. Tcherniakov disputed this as unrealistic.

(2) He brought up the subject of Czechoslovakia, saying that not many people realized it but that if Soviet troops had not entered Czechoslovakia in August, the Germans would probably have commenced hostilities themselves within two or three years. He went to some pains to emphasize that the situation in Czechoslovakia today is not a military occupation even though Soviet troops are there. He mentioned the stability, independence and autonomy of Hungary, and emphasized that the Russian entry of Czechoslovakia was much less objectionable to the West than the Hungarian incident.

I noted that, although the German threat may have seemed realistic to him, it would be extremely difficult for anyone in the United States to believe the German threat theory as a justification for the Soviet action in Czechoslovakia.

(3) He expressed as his personal opinion, emphasizing he was not authorized to say so, that the German plan to have their election in West Berlin in the spring would be regarded as "a matter of death and life" by the Soviets -- a matter of utmost gravity.