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SUPREME HEADQUARTERS ALLIED POWERS EUROPE  
GRAND QUARTIER GENERAL DES PUISSANCES ALLIEES EN EUROPE  
BELGIUM

26 June 1979

His Excellency Joseph M.A.H. Luns  
The Secretary General  
North Atlantic Treaty Organization  
Brussels/Zaventem Autoroute  
B-1110 Brussels, Belgium



Dear Joseph,

Thank you for your letter of June 25 setting out certain results of our joint work which have had, I believe, a direct and lasting effect on the formulation and realization of the allied defense program. For my part, I highly appreciate your cooperation and hope that you are equally satisfied.

On leaving the post of Supreme Allied Commander in Europe, I feel it my duty to stress once again certain aspects of allied strategy which demand our further attention and effort.

As you know, one of our presuppositions in nuclear planning is that, under certain circumstances likely to develop in Europe, we may be forced to make first use of nuclear weapons. This obviously requires that the allied nuclear deterrent should be strengthened and its links with major U.S. strategic systems tightened. Moreover, it is vital to speed up and finalize current projects for the limited use of U.S. nuclear forces in Europe and for other military measures at our disposal for a possible emergency. This strategy will be more realistic and effective if a decision on the modernization of allied tactical nuclear forces is taken.

With your help, a great deal of progress has been made recently toward strengthening the Alliance. Yet, in my view, planning for the deployment and use of modernized nuclear forces in Europe can be adequately accomplished only if full understanding and cooperation are achieved. It is therefore necessary to prepare, systematically and persistently, a basis for making a success of the NATO Council meeting in December, bearing in mind primarily the crisis inside the Alliance over neutron weapons deployment. Every effort should be made to counter any hesitation or vacillation among the allied nations during decision-making meetings.

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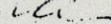
His Excellency Joseph M.A.H. Luns

We will never be able to put into effect our joint plans in this vital area unless quite exceptional efforts are made to check European tendencies toward neutralism, pacifism and unilateralism. To achieve this, it is necessary, I feel, to emphasize the theme that the nuclear weapons balance, particularly in the European theater, has changed sharply in favor of the East. We should constantly bear in mind the necessity of continuously directing attention to the Soviet military threat and of further activating our collaboration with the mass media.

If argument, persuasion and impacting the media fail, we are left with no alternative but to join the faint-hearted in Europe through the creation of situations, country by country as deemed necessary, to convince them where their interests lie. This would call for appropriate and effective action of a sensitive nature which we have frequently discussed and I have been greatly encouraged by the absence of disagreement between us regarding priorities. Back in the States, I shall not cease to monitor the European situation in any role I may be called upon to play and hope to continue our hitherto fruitful exchange of views. The courses of action which we have in mind may become the only sure means of securing the interests of the West.

To this end, your authority and your active assistance, especially in the Netherlands, can hardly be overestimated. I am aware that the work of coordination will place additional burdens on you. Yet I am sure that your devotion to allied objectives and ideals will enable you to shoulder this difficult task.

Sincerely,

  
ALEXANDER M. HAIG, JR.  
General, United States Army  
Supreme Allied Commander