

The original documents are located in Box 124, folder “Mutual and Balanced Force Reductions” of the Ron Nessen Papers at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

Copyright Notice

The copyright law of the United States (Title 17, United States Code) governs the making of photocopies or other reproductions of copyrighted material. Ron Nessen donated to the United States of America his copyrights in all of his unpublished writings in National Archives collections. Works prepared by U.S. Government employees as part of their official duties are in the public domain. The copyrights to materials written by other individuals or organizations are presumed to remain with them. If you think any of the information displayed in the PDF is subject to a valid copyright claim, please contact the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

April 21, 1975

MBFR PROGRESS

Q: The MBFR negotiations have been going on for over a year and a half now and appear to be stalemated. Is there any reason to think the talks will produce results? Could some reductions be made while the talks continue?

A: We have known from the start that these negotiations would be very complex and difficult, and that we should not expect quick results. The issues being addressed in the MBFR talks go to the very heart of the structure of European security and affect the vital interests of some 19 participating countries.

The discussions have been treated seriously so far and neither side has used them as a propaganda forum. If they continue in this spirit, meaningful results will eventually be achieved. The sixth session of the talks has just begun in Vienna. We do not consider the talks to be stalemated and are hopeful about the eventual outcome. As I said at the recent NATO summit "NATO should be prepared to take appropriate initiatives in these negotiations if that will help us meet our objectives. But the Soviet Union and its allies should also be prepared to respond in good faith on the common objectives both sides should be working toward -- undiminished security for all but at a lower level of forces."

There will be no US withdrawals while the talks continue.

US forces are in Europe for very good reasons and the level of those forces should be no lower given the threat posed by the other side.