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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON
8/4/78

Zbig Brzezinski

The attached is forwarded to you for appropriate handling.

Rick Hutcheson

cc: Jim McIntyre

General Services Administration
Federal Preparedness Agency
Washington, DC 20405

July 27, 1978

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: Joe Mitchell

THROUGH: Jay Solomon

SUBJECT: Report on NATO Senior Civil Emergency Planning Committee, Plenary Session, Brussels, June 1978

Congratulations on the economic summit. From news reports here, your participation and comments were as successful as could be hoped in light of the extremely difficult situation created by the trials.

One week before you left for Bonn, I returned from the Spring Plenary Session of NATO's Senior Civil Emergency Planning Committee in Brussels, and I wanted to give you my observations. My role at the NATO conference was to represent the United States as Director of the Federal Preparedness Agency and to discuss emergency planning in connection with the long-term defense initiatives you proposed at the NATO Heads of Government meeting here in May.

Before the session, I met with General Haig at SHAPE and General Huyser at the U.S. European Command in Stuttgart. These visits provided me with an overview of military problems and with the opportunity to hear the Generals' ideas on how well U.S. and European civil resources are being programmed to support our military forces. Both officers were complimentary of a number of recent NATO airlift and sealift civil reinforcement exercises, which will help expedite movement of troops and materials in crisis situations.

In the committee meeting itself, a great deal of time was devoted to discussion of improving civil support for and implementation of the long-term defense program. In spite of the slowness with which the NATO machinery seems to react at times, I believe the NATO civil emergency planners have done a good job in developing implementation for the long-term defense program, making a significant contribution to the Alliance's deterrent posture.

Interestingly, I found that almost every official I talked with expressed great interest in the newly-proposed Federal Emergency Management Agency. Response to the reorganization plan was universally favorable.

It is evident to me that providing adequate U.S. leadership to our NATO allies in the civil preparedness area depends greatly on having our own house in order and strong Presidential policy direction. Much was accomplished by your reorganization initiative -- the U.S. position is now clear to our allies as to how we will administer emergency planning.

The question most frequently asked during my visit was, "Does this initiative change U.S. civil defense policy?" I said that it does not. When you presented the plan to the press, you made that clear, and Jim McIntyre stressed this in response to some difficult questions. It is my understanding that a Presidential Review Memorandum on this issue is currently being prepared for your consideration. Civilian planners here and among our NATO allies will be greatly interested in any changes of U.S. policy in this area.

As regards reorganization, I am working closely with OMB and the Reorganization team to prepare for implementation of the new agency when Congressional approval is finalized. One of the important strengths I hope the new agency can provide you is a highly competent, analytical staff to advise you on pre-crisis domestic emergency decisions. A team of this kind should anticipate those predictable national emergency situations such as work stoppages and energy interruptions or shortages, and other potentially far-reaching crises that might require your direct involvement. I think this should be a strong function of the Federal Emergency Management Agency. If used correctly, such a staff can greatly assist you in avoiding damaging crisis situations and in acting quickly and decisively when an unavoidable emergency strikes. I am working positively toward this goal within FPA now.