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Mike Mansfield 1903-2001
STATEMENT OF SENATOR MIKE MANSEFIELD (D., MONTANA)

On April 26 and May 3 of this year, the Combined Subcommittee of Foreign Relations and Armed Services Committees on the Subject of U.S. Troops in Europe heard testimony from Secretary McNamara, Secretary Rusk and Under Secretary Katzenbach on the resolutions and amendments referred to the Subcommittee and on various related matters. The transcript of these hearings, with deletions deemed necessary by the Executive Branch in the interest of security, is being released today.

It will be recalled that at the time of these hearings the United States, Great Britain, and the Federal Republic of Germany were just concluding seven months of trilateral discussions on allied troop levels in West Germany and associated questions of foreign exchange costs. The record will show that Executive officials expressed considerable satisfaction with the agreements which were reached in these talks, as well as with the thoroughness with which the trilateral negotiators had canvassed and resolved a number of difficult issues. At the time, I expressed the personal view that the proposal to redeploy 35,000 U.S. forces and their dependents from West Germany to the United States,
which was announced at the conclusion of the trilateral talks, made sense as a good start in a much needed adjustment of our relationships with the Western European nations in NATO.

Since that time, however, the West German Government has announced a decision to reduce German defense expenditures in the years 1968 to 1971, and to embark on a searching reappraisal of the German military effort. As was noted on July 13, this unexpected decision cast the earlier trilateral arrangements in a new and rather unfavorable light. Since that time, it appears that the British government has also decided on a major retrenchment in its defense effort. This decision will mean first and foremost a further reduction in the British military presence East of Suez. In my view it also augurs new pressures for adjustments downward in the level and costs of the British defense effort in NATO.

In my judgment events are rapidly proving that the reappraisal carried out by the trilateral negotiators was not sufficiently searching, and that the edifice of the trilateral agreements was constructed on the sands of faulty assumptions. Some of these assumptions were noted in my July 13 statement. I would only like to emphasize again my personal belief that the far-reaching changes which have taken place in Europe in recent years require something more than a token and tentative response. Indeed, these recent developments
would appear to suggest the desirability of adjustments in U.S. troop levels in Western Europe, which go beyond those decided in the tripartite talks.

Members of the Combined Subcommittee will now give further attention to the question of U.S. troop deployment in Western Europe. In view of the recent decisions of the West German and British governments, and of straws in the wind indicating some cut-backs in the defense efforts of various other NATO allies, I expect that the hearings released today will assume added value for members of the Combined Subcommittee and other members of the Senate.