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## TEXT

FOR RELEASE AFTER 1945 Belgian time (1845 GMT),  
THURSDAY, December 9, 1971

BRUSSELS, December 9, 1971 -- Following is the text of an interview with U.S. Secretary of State William P. Rogers by Rik Onckelinx of the Belgian Television (BRT):

MR. ONCKELINCKX: Mr. Secretary, the pressure is growing on your government to proceed to the retreat of the U.S. forces in Europe. Couldn't this explain why Moscow doesn't seem to be in a hurry to start talks on the mutual and balanced force reductions between the two blocs? In other words, why should Moscow start these negotiations if the United States might reduce its forces anyhow in Europe?

SECRETARY ROGERS: I'm sure you are speaking about the Congressional attempts to reduce our troop strength in NATO by legislation, when you say "pressure."

Well, as you know, the Congress has not succeeded in passing that legislation and we don't think that they're going to be able to succeed. President Nixon has made it clear that he intends to maintain our troop strength in Europe. We think it's essential to security in the world. Now, we don't know why the Soviet Union has not been responsive to our willingness to talk about these matters and as you know, we've designated former Secretary General Brosio as our explorer to go to Moscow to find out what the Russians are prepared to talk about and what they're prepared to do. So far they've not responded to our willingness to have him take that trip. We would hope very much that they would accept this initiative on our part.

Q. Is this pressure on your government not going to be one of the issues of the election?

A. No, I don't think so.

Q. The NATO meeting this winter is being held in rather bad, unfavorable conditions. We are facing a serious monetary crisis in Europe and in the United States, and maybe even a trade war between Western Europe and the

United States. Aren't you afraid this crisis will spread into the military field and weaken the Atlantic Alliance?

A. Well let me say as categorically as I can: No.

In the first place, it is true that we have some problems in the monetary field, but as you know from the reports that came out of the last Group of Ten meeting, there are encouraging signs that that can be resolved before too long. We do not anticipate a trade war. In fact, we think it's most unlikely. We also want to say that we've been pleased with the restraint that has been shown by the European nations to the action that we took. But we were faced with a very serious financial problem and balance of payments problem and I think that we will be able to find ways to resolve these differences and I think it will occur before too long. I don't think it will take too long. And I certainly do not think there is any possibility of a trade war.

Now, as to the latter part of your question, I don't think any of these things, however long they last and however serious they may become, is going to affect our relationship with NATO. President Nixon thinks that NATO is most important to the security not only Europe but of the world. And it has worked very well. It has prevented a World War III for a long, long time. So we have every intention of continuing to give full support to the Alliance.

Q. Yes, but public opinion is very much impressed by this threatening trade war and the feelings towards America are not as good as they used to be in this country. What do you think about that?

A. Well, I think that's probably true but any time you have difficulties you have ebbs and flows in public opinion -- how people feel about each other. Once it's over with -- and it was essential that we solve this problem, not only for the United States, but for the rest of the free world -- once it's over with, people are going to say, well it worked out very well.

Q. Could this be the main reason for the summit meetings between President Nixon and different European leaders?

A. Well, it certainly is one of the things that they will talk about, yes. Of course, in addition to that, President Nixon will talk to the European leaders about his forthcoming trips to both Peking and Moscow.

Q. Some Europeans have a strong feeling that the United States isn't as keen as it used to be to encourage the building of a united Europe. Could you comment on this?

A. Oh, well it just isn't so. We continue to keep a fairly low profile because it's essentially a European problem. But we have always favored it. We continue to favor it. And we are pleased that it seems to be succeeding.

Q. But is Europe not becoming a dangerous competitor for foreign trade for the United States?

A. Well, we don't, in the United States, look upon competition as a danger. In fact, our whole system is based on competition. One of the reasons that we've been successful economically is because we have a very competitive system in the United States. So there is nothing about competition that frightens the United States. We think that competition among friends based on fair rules is good for everyone -- everyone benefits. So the idea that we're going to be competitors doesn't frighten us at all and we're pleased about the prospect.

Q. What is your government's attitude toward the idea of a pan-European Security Conference? Will this not lead to a further gap between Europe and the United States? I mean collaboration between Western Europe and Eastern Europe?

A. No, I don't think so. I think that if it's conducted properly, if we prepare a conference well and if the conference is held and it results in -- the results are concrete it would be a good thing. No, I don't see any particular risk in a conference. I think it's important to make certain before we start a conference that we think there are possibilities of concrete results and we think that it should not be a device to solidify the division of Europe. But if it's a conference to ameliorate the differences and to create more contacts and more trade, and so forth, between different parts of Europe we think it would be desirable.

Q. The Russians at one moment thought that the Americans should not be implied in this Conference. What do you think of this?

A. They never seriously thought that. That was just something they said. And of course all of the members of the Alliance were very forthcoming about that. They said it wouldn't be sensible to have a conference without including the United States and Canada because of the Alliance.

Q. There is one big Summit Conference going on right now since about two years which we are very much interested in, though we are not part of it -- I mean the SALT. What are the prospects for SALT before President Nixon goes to Moscow next year?

A. Well, I wouldn't want to make any predictions about the timing of progress, but we are encouraged about the talks themselves and we think that they will result in an agreement. When that will come about we can't be sure.

Q. One final question Mr. Secretary. Will 1972 be a year of peace, or even larger wars?

A. Well, of course, there again, it is very dangerous to make any prediction. We're very distressed about the events in the Subcontinent now. We hope very much that that will not enlarge. We hope that a cease fire and mutual withdrawal can occur. I am particularly pleased about the result of the vote in the General Assembly which supported that position.

I would hope very much that 1972 could be a peaceful year. And I would hope very much, too, that we could actually look forward to a generation of peace. The prospects of a nuclear war are so horrendous that we just

hope that people are going to be more reasonable and understand that war doesn't solve any problems. So I think that there is a good prospect that not only '72 will be a peaceful year but we'll have a generation of peace.

Q. Would the setting up of an international peace police, in the United Nations, for instance, not make things more easy?

A. Well, its a very difficult problem. We have never totally opposed the idea but there are so many practical differences now, particularly because of the recent developments in the United Nations. And I'm not sure its a very practical idea. I think that the alliances that we have -- for example, NATO -- is a very important security factor. We must continue to support it and I'm glad to be here to make it clear that the United States' position is going to be one of continued support for this Alliance which we think is so important.

Q. Thank you very much.

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