

U.S. SOUNDING OUT ALLIES ABOUT HAIG AS CHIEF OF NATO

—SEP—6 1974

Bonn Said to Be Amenable
but Dutch Are Reported
Trying to Block Move
NYTimes

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Special to The New York Times

BONN, Sept. 5—The United States has sounded out its 14 NATO allies in Brussels on the naming of Gen. Alexander M. Haig Jr. as supreme commander of the alliance and of United States forces in Europe, according to German and American officials here.

A highly placed West German Government source said today that Bonn had no objection to the naming of General Haig. The Dutch, however, were reported to be trying to organize opposition to the appointment.

The appointment of the supreme commander of NATO normally requires the approval of the allies.

[An authoritative official in Washington said that President Ford intended to nominate Peter M. Flanigan, a prominent figure in the Nixon Administration, as Ambassador to Spain, and had offered Senator J. W. Fulbright the ambassadorship in London. Page 11.]

Move to White House in '73

General Haig left active duty in August, 1973, to become White House chief of staff during the height of the Watergate scandals, and then played a key role in persuading President Nixon to resign because of them.

President Ford is expected to return him to active duty as a four-star general and name him to replace Gen. Andrew J. Goodpaster, who has held the post of Supreme Allied Commander, Europe, since 1959.

"We don't want to cause embarrassment to our Dutch friends," the German official said, "but we think this is entirely a prerogative of the U.S. Government. General Haig has been an important commander before and we think he should have the chance to be one again."

It was not clear to what previous command of General Haig the West German official was referring. One major objection to General Haig among his fellow officers is that in his rise from colonel to four-star general while serving on the National Security Council during the Nixon Administration, he never held a major command.

The German position was regarded by American military officers here as crucial. The bulk of the 300,000-man Amer-

Continued on Page 10, Column 4

ican force in Europe is stationed in Germany, and the 465,000-man German Bundeswehr is NATO's largest peacetime force.

While there were reports that the Dutch Foreign Minister, Max Van Der Stoel, opposed the nomination, apparently because of General Haig's association with Watergate, a Dutch Embassy official here denied that Mr. Van Der Stoel had expressed such an opinion and said, "the nomination is a matter of normal consultations between allies, and a decision should be taken by consensus."