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12 May, 1967

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To:            Directeur du Cabinet

From:          W. Bühling

c.c.:          ASG for Political Affairs  
               Acting ASG for Economics & Finance

Subject:       Future Tasks of the Alliance: Sub-Group No. 3

As requested, I have had prepared the attached draft note which the Secretary General, subject to any amendments he might wish to be made, may wish to circulate prior to the next meeting of the Sub-Group.

*W. Bühling*  
(Dr. W. Bühling)

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12 May, 1967

Future Tasks of the Alliance - Sub-Group No. 3Comments by the Secretary General

References: Note by the United States Delegation 17 April 1967; ✓  
Note by the German Delegation 5 May 1967. ✓

At their next meeting to be held on 18 May, the Sub-Group will be considering further how to proceed with the study on the future tasks of the Alliance in the field of defence to be submitted to Ministers in June. If I may, I should like to put forward some personal comments for the consideration of the Group.

2. The study should be both forward-looking and concise. For that reason I suggest that the introductory passages be kept as brief as possible and that it might be preferable to dispense entirely with a review of past NATO defence policy. The study, I feel, would gain in impact if it were to start with a general discussion of deterrence in the mid-1960s, including a short account of how NATO is presently fulfilling its deterrent function as well as of the possible effect on future developments of the current trends in the Warsaw Pact and NATO countries in the political, economic and technological fields. I strongly support the view that the group should not attempt to duplicate the work on force requirements and strategy already being undertaken in other NATO bodies, although it may be necessary to draw upon the findings of these bodies. I am sure that the guidance recently given by Ministers to the NATO Military Authorities will not be overlooked.

3. My own feeling is that the chief purpose of the report should be to demonstrate the rôle which NATO's military force posture and structure can play both in ensuring the security of member countries and in furthering the political objectives of the Alliance. A chief postulate of the study might be the continuing need for balance between East and West which can only be achieved if the military power of the North American countries is united, and is seen to be united, with that of the European member states. The fact that the vast

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majority of the nuclear forces available to the defence of the Alliance are provided by the United States is, clearly, one of the most important reasons why our American ally is an essential element in the military balance between East and West. Developments in weapons technology, both nuclear and non-nuclear, make it probable that the immense economic and technological resources of the United States will be more, not less, necessary in the future to the maintenance of a creditable deterrent. They will certainly reinforce the need to consider all aspects of defence policy from the point of view of the Alliance rather than from that of individual member countries, for several of whom the rapidly increasing cost of modern weapon systems is beginning to present considerable financial problems.

4. Certainly the position and influence of the European member countries both within the Alliance and in the wider international context are important questions which will have to be considered. But the construction of Europe is not itself a question which can properly be dealt with in a NATO report; NATO's military structure has been, and should continue to be, sufficiently flexible to adapt itself to changing political conditions. Indeed, we have recently approved procedures designed precisely to ensure that our military posture does take account of changes in the military, economic and political situation. The emergence of a strong and united Europe would represent an important contribution to our military security; in the meanwhile, it is our duty to ensure that, so long as a threat exists, we maintain an effective instrument of defence and an adequate counter-weight to the forces at present confronting us.

5. While I have laid stress on the importance of maintaining military strength and cohesion in the years to come, I also agree that the study should lay strong emphasis on the contribution our military posture can make to achieving the political aims of the Alliance - in particular to bringing about a peaceful settlement in Europe and a lasting relaxation of tension in East and West relations. Stable peaceful relations cannot be based on fear; an objective of our military power must be to create the conditions of confidence

in which an understanding with the Soviet Union and its allies becomes possible. This is particularly true as regards a settlement in Europe which would have to be guaranteed by the combined military power of the NATO allies.