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cc. (Reg PA)
F/7249/67SUB-GROUP 4

To: Members of Sub-group 4
From: the Rapporteur

Date: 23 June, 1967

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I enclose a new section for the report of sub-group 4, which should follow the general introduction (par. 1 - 14) and precede the second part of my report which we discussed in the meeting of the 23rd of May.

The purpose of this new text is the following. The objections against the idea of NATO cooperation for problems outside the NATO-area are so persistent that the report of our sub-group should argue the case for such activities more fully. At the same time the events in the Middle East have presented us with a dramatic test case.

I therefore propose to insert, between the introduction and the discussion of categories of problems which could affect the interests of the Alliance, the attached section which I propose to call "Reflections on the role of NATO in world affairs".

The revision of the texts which we discussed at our last meeting will be presented to you at a later date.

C.L. Patijn

Sub-group 4.

Reflections on the role of NATO in world affairs.

15. The hope that NATO would become the active centre of discussion and coordination of policy for its members, also for problems outside the Atlantic area, has not been fulfilled. NATO has at its disposal a wealth of information of Expert Working Groups, the Atlantic Policy Advisory Group and other commissions with regard to specific problems. What seems to be lacking is a more deliberate effort to present the Council with policy implications for the members of the Alliance. The conspicuous absence of a common policy in international crises outside the NATO area is not due to lack of information or knowledge. Nor is NATO's inability to prevent conflict elsewhere due to lack of influence of its members. NATO's silence reflects a disbelief in the possibility of Western collective diplomacy. For problems outside the NATO-area the allies have been at odds over policy in almost every part of the world, and therefore very reluctant to accept common responsibilities.
16. The interests of the members of the Alliance are, of course, not always identical and therefore the NATO-Council would find no difficulty in agreeing on a permissible range of divergence. But the present crisis of NATO as a policy making body has deeper and more disturbing causes: a profound division of opinion regarding the desirability of common political action, and the absence of any serious contingency planning for emergencies and suddenly erupting political crises outside the NATO-area. The future of the Alliance as an instrument for Western diplomacy on a world scale now depends on two questions:
- do we need a multilateral approach of the North American and Western European allies for certain categories of problems outside the NATO area?

- do we need contingency planning and a system of crisis management for multilateral decision making in case of a major political crisis outside the NATO area?

17. Several members of the Alliance are inclined to view the scope of NATO-responsibilities in more and more limited terms. But the present tendency to limit the functions of the Alliance strictly to the protection of the NATO defence perimeter, will not add one inch to the security of the world. For the ebb of NATO has not been followed by the rise of any other form of Western impact.

18. In the absence of a common NATO approach the political options for the members of the Alliance in their dealing with problems outside the NATO area would seem to be the following:

- to rely upon remedial action by the United Nations.
- to support existing international institutions or arrangements for the area or the problem concerned.
- to wait for great power agreements, including the Soviet Union and/or China.
- to accept the political direction of the strongest member of the Alliance.
- to follow an independent national policy, in the hope that the collective effect of individual policies will be satisfactory.

The present crisis in the Middle East has borne out the insufficiency of any of these lines of action.

19. The United Nations have failed to prevent the outbreak of hostilities in the Middle East (the UNEF was hastily withdrawn in the hour of conflict at the request of the parties), and has not been able to propose a constructive solution after the fighting. The organisation may again be used as the best framework for diplomatic action, legal arrangements and modest peace keeping activities, but the power to restore stability and to guarantee the new order must

come from elsewhere.

20. Special arrangements or stabilising international institutions did no longer exist, since the Tripartite Declaration of the United States, Britain and France of 1950 which contained a great power guarantee for the armistice frontiers between Israel and its neighbours, had lost its credibility in the days of the Suez crisis of 1956. In the weeks in which the last crisis was building up there was simply no Western policy for the Middle East.
21. Even more utopian is the idea that the great powers, including the Soviet Union, will come together, oversee the battle field, sit in judgement and decide in common accord how things should be arranged in the unruly parts of contiguous or more remote zones. In the 19th century the European great powers, in their more fortunate moments, could compose local conflicts on the basis of a harmony of interest. But the present world, in which the West is drawn into a confrontation with the Soviet Union in the power vacuum of the Middle East, leaves little hope for such great power arrangements.
22. Nor is it always possible for the members of the Alliance to follow the lead of the strongest member (especially if there is no such lead, as was the case in the crisis of the Middle East). Where the United States is deeply engaged in trying to restore single-handed stability in East Asia, no European nation is prepared to follow. And no member of the Alliance, even if the distribution of power in this world sometimes forces them to welcome a supporting role to the initiatives of the United States, would accept the political direction of the leading nation as a matter of principle.
23. Of course, the way remains open for the members of the Alliance to pursue purely national foreign policies. Some members will use their national

influence on the world scene actively, but the question remains whether the interest shown on the basis of a national approach will be relevant to the rest of the world. Among the smaller nations of the Alliance the forced reduction of their international activities to action on a national scale only, would provoke a rapid spread of neutralism. In a period in which the respect for international law is declining, the United Nations paralyzed and alliances desintegrating, the role of smaller nations cannot be very great. If their contributions to world order, which are valuable in the context of adequate international institutions, do not find the right framework for action, the will to shoulder new responsibilities cannot be maintained. This is one of the reasons for the curious silence in Europe at the moment of conflagration in the Middle East, at the doorstep of her own house.

24. In view of the evident insufficiency of other approaches to problems outside the NATO-area, it seems justified to ask the more reluctant members of NATO to reconsider their objections against new efforts for policy planning and common diplomatic action in the NATO context. The present trend of limiting NATO responsibilities will be self-defeating, if it leaves the political initiatives in the world to the enemies of stability or the emotions of parochial conflict. Could the situation have deteriorated as it has done, if the NATO Alliance would have had a declared and united policy with regard to the Middle East? The dangers in situations of local conflict require the full impact of Western cooperation. Most of these conflicts have an inbuilt tendency to escalate, or to bring about a confrontation of the great powers. NATO may not be called upon to prevent conflicts or to deter their escalation elsewhere. But once the Alliance decides on a common policy for its members, the effect will be very great.