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Suggestions for improving the political
consultation in NATO.

(for developments outside the NATO-area)

To: Members of Sub-group 4.

Date: 23 June 1967

From: The Rapporteur

I attach a number of suggestions for improving political consultation, crisis management and policy planning in the Alliance. I should like your views on those suggestions, in order to be able to consult with the other rapporteurs who will be confronted with the same problem in their sections of the Harmel-study.

I will reconsider my proposals at a later stage in the light of your comments and the consultation with the other rapporteurs.

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SUB-GROUP 4

Outline of possibilities for improving political consultation

1. We need an Alliance-system for the handling of crises, and continuous discussion of political objectives and assumptions which should guide the members of NATO in world affairs.
2. Crisis management implies:
 - a) contingency planning: the study of conflicts before they become acute.
 - b) policy planning: how to turn latent common interests into active common policy.
 - c) study in depth of political objectives and assumptions for the Western world.
 - d) translation of such planning and study into institutional terms.
3. Contingency planning is not the drawing up of firm plans for a variety of hypotheses, but a question of deciding what should be the general scope of a reaction to possible international events.
4. The purpose of policy planning within NATO would be the development of common policies for Europe and America. Under the present circumstances their common interests in the world outside the NATO-area are only latent and not of accomplished fact. In view of the common dangers in the present world the necessary common policies should be developed.
5. The NATO-Council should consider the establishment within NATO of special groups of NATO-member countries, prepared to study problems concerning specific regions outside the Atlantic area. The groups should be limited to member-countries possessing special knowledge of the region concerned, or acknowledging a genuine stake in and concern with it. Their main task would be contingency planning for

the prevention of conflict. These groups should meet without publicity or press releases, with a minimum of paper-work, and should be served by a small secretariat. The groups should be composed of experts on the policy making level. They should meet alternatively in Paris (Brussels) and Washington.

6. The NATO-Council should consider also the establishment of a NATO Policy Planning Council. Its task would be to develop common policies for the members of the Alliance in studying the long term objectives and assumptions which should guide the members of NATO in taking action with regard to specific problems. Its members should be appointed by the Governments on the basis of their ability and political standing.
7. The Policy Planning Council should be assisted by a small standing commission of "wise men", independent of Governments but entitled to propose policy measures on a world wide scale. The purpose of this Commission would be to supply the Alliance with the centre of initiative which, under the present constitution, it lacks. The Commission's recommendations should not be binding on Governments, but the reputation of its component members should be such that their views would compel attention. They should be responsible to the NATO-Council. The "wise men" should not be chosen in an honorary capacity; therefore they should not be too old. The Commission should have great freedom of action and consultation, and should be assisted by a small staff.
8. The European nations, especially the members of the European Communities and Great Britain, should consider the formation of a permanent consultative arrangement between their Governments for the formulation of common European points of view within the Alliance.
9. The NATO-Council should assist the members which are prepared to maintain standing peace-keeping contingents for United Nations peace-keeping activities. NATO could provide such members with logistic support.
10. NATO consultation within the United Nations is practically non-existent and should be strengthened.