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SPECIAL GROUP ON THE FUTURE TASKS OF THE ALLIANCE

THE FUTURE TASKS OF THE ALLIANCE

Draft Interim Report by the  
Special Group on the Future Tasks of the Alliance  
to the Council in Ministerial Session

The Special Group on the Future Tasks of the Alliance met on 29th May, 1967 and approved the text of this Interim Report to the North Atlantic Council, as requested by the Council's decision of 22nd February, 1967.(1)

2. The Council subsequently agreed to submit this Report to Ministers as envisaged by the Resolution adopted by the Council on 16th December, 1966. (2)

3. To implement the Resolution of 16th December, 1966, the Council met on a number of occasions in the ensuing weeks, and notably on 15th February with the participation of several Ministers and senior officials from capitals, and on 22nd February when it took the decision(1) to constitute a Special Group to "study (a) the development of political events as it affects the purpose of the Alliance and (b) the consequent future tasks of the Alliance". This Group is open-ended, composed of representatives designated by governments and chaired by the Secretary General. It met for the first time on 6th March, 1967.

4. Its initial task was to reach a decision on two specific points: (a) the list of subjects to be studied; and (b) the manner in which these studies should be organised. After several meetings the Special Group approved on 20th March a Working Paper which may be considered as its operating charter for carrying out the studies on the Future Tasks of the Alliance.

5. This paper divided the studies to be undertaken into the following four main subjects:

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- (1) C-R(67)9, paragraph 4 - in file PA 3-1-02 B (66+67) file  
(2) C-R(66)71, paragraph 1

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(1) East-West Relations

The political aims of the Alliance:

- (a) In general East-West relations in the light of an analysis of the foreign policy of the Soviet Union and of the Eastern European countries;
- (b) With regard to European security, the German problem and the nature of a European settlement.

(2) Inter-Allied Relations

Possibilities of strengthening the bonds between Alliance countries generally; possibilities of inter-European co-operation within the Alliance; long- and short-term consequences of the unification of Europe; the ideological bases and unity of the Alliance.

(3) General Defensive Policy of the Alliance

Evolution of collective and regional security; principles governing the strategy of the Alliance and the level and deployment of forces; effects of various proposals - arms control and disarmament; balanced reduction of forces, nuclear arrangements - on the balance of power.

(4) Developments in regions outside the NATO area.

6. The Special Group also decided to create four sub-groups to study these subjects and authorised the sub-groups to organise their work as they saw fit in order to allow freedom of discussion and flexibility of proceeding. They were open to all members of the Alliance and to the Secretary General and/or his representatives. Finally, it was agreed that the presentation of each subject be entrusted to a national delegation which might nominate a Rapporteur.

7. Accordingly the four sub-groups work under the guidance of the following Rapporteurs named by their Governments:

East-West relations

Mr. J.H.A. Watson, Assistant Under-Secretary of State, Foreign Office (United Kingdom)

Mr. K. Schütz, State Secretary, Foreign Office (Germany)

Inter-Allied relations

Mr. Paul-Henri Spaak, Minister of State (Belgium)

General Defence Policy Mr. Foy Kohler, Deputy Under-Secretary of State (United States)

Relations with other countries Dr. C.L. Patijn, Professor of International Political Relations, University of Utrecht (Netherlands).

8. Since their initial meetings on 17th and 18th April, 1967, all sub-groups have met a number of times and discussed questions of procedure and substance submitted verbally or in writing by the Rapporteurs, their members and the Secretary General. The discussions were marked by informality and a keen desire to examine the problems of the Alliance thoroughly and with fresh eyes. There was moreover a strong feeling that the sub-groups could not do justice to their subjects if they were rushed. Consequently and in view of the time needed in the planning stage, none of the sub-groups has yet sought to produce a substantive report.

9. In Sub-Group 1, the British and German co-rapporteurs produced a preliminary paper incorporating suggestions made by members of the Sub-Group. After proposing a basic common aim for the policies of the Allies towards the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe in the next decade, the paper sets out the questions which require consideration in the following fields:

- (i) East-West relations in general and the nature of the détente;
- (ii) A European settlement and the principles which should determine it;
- (iii) The German problem - a solution for which must be included in, or guaranteed by, any just and therefore lasting settlement;
- (iv) Practical steps and procedures open to the Alliance and to its individual members.

One annex to the paper lists the influences which may currently be pushing the Governments of the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe towards extending the détente. Another annex contains two outlines of how relations with Eastern Europe might develop over the next five years, taking the most optimistic and pessimistic probabilities, to indicate the limits within which the actual course of events will probably develop.

The discussions on matters of substance have hitherto dealt with East-West relations in general, the nature of the détente, and multilateralism and bilateralism in the present diplomatic context. The Sub-Group also considered whether the détente must be indivisible (as opposed to the Soviet tactic of reducing tension with some allies but not with others) and

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should not be limited to Europe, but include the North American members of the Alliance. It was not yet possible to discuss the substance of the German problem and of a European settlement.

10. In Sub-Group 2, Mr. Spaak submitted a questionnaire on the relations between Allies which was divided into five parts: I. Introduction; II. The ideological bases and unity of the Alliance; III. The possibilities of reinforcing the bonds among the countries of the Alliance as a whole; and IV. The possibilities of inter-European co-operation, and V. The consequences of eventual European unification. Following a meeting of the Sub-Group, Mr. Spaak offered to write an initial substantive report for the Sub-Group's consideration.

11. In Sub-Group 3, the Rapporteur produced a Preliminary Outline for the final report which might serve as a basis of discussion. Following the first meeting which considered this paper, the Rapporteur revised the Outline which was organized as follows: Introduction; I. The Current Politico-Military Situation; II. The Relationship of NATO Defence Policies and Programmes to the Broader Political Objectives of the Alliance; III. Conclusions: A. What are the major elements of a defence policy for the Alliance including appropriate measures of arms control? B. What should be the major short-term defence tasks of the Alliance given our assessment of the current politico-military situation and that for the immediate future? C. What should be the major future defence tasks of the Alliance given our estimate of political and military trends over the next several years?

12. In Sub-Group 4, after a meeting devoted to a discussion of its terms of reference, the Rapporteur submitted a draft substantive report. It was divided into a general introduction and an outline for discussion of problems outside the Atlantic area which could affect the interests or the cohesion of the Alliance. The outline itself was divided in three parts: I. Political events directly affecting the security of the Atlantic area; II. Political events not directly affecting the security of the Atlantic area, but in which individual NATO members are involved; III. International problems of a universal character for which the Western world has to assume part of the responsibility.

13. A most important aspect of the papers presented was that they all raised basic questions regarding the main issues before the Alliance. There was no attempt on the part of the Rapporteurs to shy away from knotty issues. This reveals the usefulness of the present exercise in providing a framework for a free discussion of difficult and delicate problems including those which are normally not raised in the ordinary course of our proceedings.

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14. The exercise is now in its first phase in which both the Rapporteurs and the members of the sub-groups are given broad freedom to suggest initiatives and express personal views. In accordance with the terms of reference of the study this phase will be followed by a second one of co-ordination and conclusions in which Governments' positions will be determining. The work done in the first phase is most promising and the Governments may expect to receive a study providing a useful basis for reaching constructive and far-reaching conclusions.