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To : Secretary General

From : A.S.G. for Political Affairs *J*

Subject : Future Tasks of the Alliance -
discussion of Permanent Represen-
tatives on 12th July, 1967

I submit herewith an analytical summary of the discussion which took place during your informal meeting with Permanent Representatives on 12th July, 1967.

When presenting this analysis to the Rapporteurs in Bonn, you may wish to add a comment of your own at Annexe A of the attached paper.

JJ/LMR.

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18th July, 1967

THE FUTURE TASKS OF THE ALLIANCEAnalysis of tendencies revealed in the discussion of
Permanent Representatives on 12th July, 1967

The above discussion revealed, grosso modo, a majority tendency aiming at a restriction in the field of both the objectives and procedures originally adopted for the Harmel Exercise, and a minority view which advocates their maintenance as originally laid down.

The majority view expressed apprehension about the way in which the work of the Sub-Groups seemed to be going and criticised what was called their "uneven progress". With regard to Sub-Group 2, for instance, concern was expressed about it's not having brought out the European and Atlantic aspects of the Alliance. With regard to Sub-Group 3, one Delegation went so far as to question the usefulness of the study undertaken by that Sub-Group.

In the field of objectives of the study, the restrictive view was expressed that the Exercise should really concentrate on a study of East/West relations with special regard to European security aspects of the matter, and on a study of the rôle of the Allies, if any, in the framework of the Alliance, in the world outside the Treaty Area.

In the same order of ideas, the majority of Delegations was apprehensive about the relatively independent course taken by some of the Rapporteurs in the preparation of their reports. Criticism was expressed about the facts that (a) so far political realities tended to be lost from sight, (b) certain aspects of the subjects were not given full attention, and (c) the Rapporteurs' independence could hamper the co-ordinating task to be undertaken later by the Special Group.

The suggestion was made that countries should prevail upon the Rapporteurs to recognise the relevant political realities and, secondly, that Delegations should make more written contributions to the Exercise.

It was also proposed that the Special Group meet at an earlier date than was originally foreseen.

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In short, a majority which includes some of the bigger powers in the Alliance revealed itself as not seeing the need for a real and genuine confrontation of the various conceptions which might be held on the future tasks of the Alliance and on the possible improvement of the Organisation. The implication of this majority's thoughts, at least at this meeting, seemed to be a serious questioning of the independent rôle of the Rapporteurs, even during the first stage of the Exercise.

There was, however, a minority which opposed this questioning, not to say attack on the objectives and procedures of the Exercise in this first stage. In particular the point was made that the task of the Exercise was not to solve such problems as, for instance, East/West relations or the German issue.

It was further pointed out that if there was a certain confusion between the work of the Rapporteurs, it was the inevitable consequence of their free and independent rôle, which was seen by the minority as being essential.

While admitting, as one Delegation pointed out, that the attempt to create a rôle for NATO outside the Treaty Area might be essentially divisive, it would be wrong to conclude from this that the Allies should, in this Exercise, lower their sights. Recent events had once more demonstrated that no matter how much the Allies might try to escape playing a rôle in the world outside the Treaty Area, developments there thrust such a rôle upon them. This was the kind of reality which, in the Harmel Exercise, should be squarely faced and not concealed by avoiding those issues on which there was no agreement.

The question of publicity of certain views of the Rapporteurs during the Exercise was raised. In answer to this, the view was expressed that it went without saying that nothing could be given to the public, either by the Rapporteurs or by the Governments, which would hint at the trend of the deliberations in the Sub-Groups. Moreover, the thought was expressed in this connection that at the present stage of the work, public opinion considerations were actually irrelevant. Only at a much later stage of the Exercise would these considerations enter into play.

As for the question as to whether hearings should be held as part of the preparation of the final report, as was done in connection with the Three Wise Men Exercise in 1956, the point was made that any comparison with the task of the Three was inappropriate. The latter's task, a decade ago, was to find out the best methods of consultation. Today's Exercise, dealing with the tasks of the future, was of a much more speculative nature. This did not, however, mean that such hearings were excluded for a later stage.