

23rd March, 1967NATO CONFIDENTIAL

(10.15 a.m.)

Private Meeting of Permanent Representatives,
under the Chairmanship of the Deputy Secretary
General: Special Working Group on Future
Tasks of the Alliance.

The Deputy Secretary General said that he had asked the Permanent Representatives to come together to give guidance with respect to a change in the allocation of the rapporteurships for the sub-groups working on the future tasks of the Alliance exercise. Ambassador Ritchie had reported that his Government could not assume the responsibility it had been asked to undertake in connexion with the work of the fourth sub-group. The Deputy Secretary General hoped that a decision on a replacement for Canada might be taken at the present meeting; should this not prove possible, he would urge that a decision be reached no later than the following Tuesday. Certain countries had been specifically mentioned as possible replacements; these were Norway, the Netherlands, Italy and Greece.

Ambassador Kristiansen said that he personally regarded it as very unlikely that the Norwegian Authorities would accede to a request to assume the rapporteurship of the sub-group in question.

Mr. Farley noted that the Italian Government had always responded favourably to appeals to undertake special tasks and suggested that all those present urge Mr. Orlandi-Contucci to ask his Government whether the Italians would not assume this responsibility. Mr. Orlandi-Contucci expressed his thanks to the US Delegation for their proposal. He reported that he had already been in touch with his Government by telephone that morning and had been informed that his Authorities felt the Italians had already given their help and co-operation during the last six months on numerous special projects even beyond their possibilities. He was unable, therefore, to undertake any commitment and could only report the wish expressed by Mr. Farley to Rome with no assurance that the Italians would accept. Both Mr. Pasmazoglu and Ambassador Birgi supported Mr. Farley's suggestion. Ambassador Birgi proposed that, in case

Italy could not accept, one might think of the Netherlands as a suitable replacement for Canada.

Ambassador Boon stated his view that Italy was in a good position to assume the responsibility. On the other hand, should Italy decline and his colleagues not object to having two Benelux countries assume responsibilities in connexion with the work of the sub-groups, he was prepared to recommend to his Authorities that the Dutch undertake the task. He pointed out that, however, there was at the present time no Government in the Netherlands. Ambassadors Kristiansen and Hjorth-Nielsen said that they would perceive no objection to having two Benelux countries act as rapporteurs of two different sub-groups.

Ambassador Ritchie wondered whether it might not be appropriate, in view of the diversity and scope of the task, to have two countries as rapporteurs.

Summing up, the Deputy Secretary General noted that there was very solid support for the suggestion that the Italian Government undertake the responsibility. He would therefore ask Mr. Orlandi-Contucci to press his Authorities to accept. Speaking personally, he felt that the problem was geographically divisible but thought it preferable to have a single rapporteur. He suggested that the Permanent Representatives might leave the matter in his hands; he would consult with the Italian Delegation over the weekend, and should there be any difficulties, the Permanent Representatives might meet again on Tuesday and perhaps consider sub-dividing the problem.

Mr. Orlandi-Contucci suggested that, in order to be able to resolve the problem as quickly as possible, an appeal might be addressed simultaneously to the Netherlands and Italian Governments. Ambassador Boon pointed out that he had tried to indicate the Dutch would be available only in case no one else was willing to undertake the responsibility. As the Italians had undertaken to consider the matter, he felt that it would be difficult to convince his Authorities to give a favourable reply to any request addressed to them at the present time.

Personal to Secretary General -

I have further information to give you regarding my later conversation with Ambassador Boon.

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J.R.

The Deputy Secretary General observed that, at the meeting of the Council on the previous day, the Secretary General had envisaged meetings of the sub-groups on 10th and 11th April. Subsequently, it had developed that these dates caused certain delegations difficulties. Consequently, he would suggest that the sub-groups might meet on 13th and 14th April. These dates would be confirmed in writing early the following week.

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