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W. Chapman

18 October 1967

P.A. Sub-Group

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Special Group (67) 2

NATO CONFIDENTIAL

To: Secretary General  
 c.c: Deputy Secretary General  
 ✓ Assistant Secretary General/Political Affairs  
 From: Deputy Executive Secretary  
 Subject: Summary Record of a Private Meeting of Permanent Representatives held on Wednesday, 18th October, at 10.30 a.m.

I. FUTURE BUSINESS OF THE SPECIAL GROUP ON THE FUTURE TASKS OF THE ALLIANCE

The CHAIRMAN referred to the Summary of the Rapporteurs' reports circulated in PO/67/770. Along with this document there were, of course, the four reports by the Rapporteurs which had been distributed directly to delegations.

2. The meeting of to-day should, in his mind, be limited to questions of procedure, in particular:

- if, when and at what level should the Special Group discuss substance? If the need for a meeting was accepted, as seemed to be the case, then the point of timing would depend, to some degree on the desire of delegations to obtain instructions on the documents received so far. The Belgian Representative had expressed, in the last Council meeting, the preference of his authorities to have some Ministers attend the meeting. Whatever the level, it would seem practical to have any meeting of the Special Group preceded by a meeting of Permanent Representatives;
- the question of whether and when a report should be drafted for submission to the Special Group and, later, to Ministers. Who would draft such a report?
- those who would draft the report would wish to know the bases on which to found their drafting activity.

3. The BELGIAN REPRESENTATIVE confirmed that he had suggested a special, high-level meeting of the Special Group, that his Foreign Minister intended to attend and that a session of two days would appear appropriate.
4. The UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE agreed with the Chairman's suggestion of two phases; the meeting of the Special Group would be attended by Mr. Eugene Rostow, who would be available on 1st November but not on 3rd November.
5. The GERMAN REPRESENTATIVE favoured the week beginning 6th November, since time to study the reports was needed. His authorities had no particular preference on the length of a special meeting, nor on its level. He agreed with the Chairman's proposal to have a Special Group meeting preceded by a meeting of Permanent Representatives.
6. The NETHERLANDS REPRESENTATIVE stressed the need for a thorough preparation of this Ministerial Meeting, where interest would be focusing on the Harmel Study.
7. The DANISH REPRESENTATIVE felt that the meeting of the Special Group with high-level representation from capitals should not be scheduled at too late a date since such timing would make it too close to the Ministerial Meeting. He was also in favour of the suggestion to first have a meeting of Permanent Representatives.
8. The CANADIAN REPRESENTATIVE associated himself with the remarks made on the need to well-prepare any meeting at a high level. He warned against assuming that any final results of the Harmel Study would be available on 12th December.
9. Referring to an invitation for a farewell luncheon extended to him by M. Couve de Murville for 6th November, the CHAIRMAN wondered whether it would be acceptable to plan the meeting of the Special Group for 7th November.
10. The ITALIAN REPRESENTATIVE also expressed preference for the date of 7th November. He did not exclude the possibility of two meetings of the Special Group with representatives from capitals.
11. The UNITED KINGDOM REPRESENTATIVE insisted that the Harmel Study should produce some results for the Ministerial Meeting and agreed that Permanent Representatives should prepare the work in the first phase. He found the paper on the meeting of Rapporteurs to be helpful. In his mind it appeared natural that M. Harmel would attend the meeting of the Special Group since he was the author of this study. His authorities were considering the attendance of Mr. Fred Mulley, Minister of State, Foreign Office. Any drafting activity should best take place after the first meeting of the Special Group with attendance from capitals. He supported the suggestion of his Italian colleague to consider two meetings of the Special Group.

12. The DANISH REPRESENTATIVE pointed out that the main interest of the public, on the occasion of the December Ministerial Meeting, would be focused on the Harmel Study and that it was, therefore, necessary to produce some results. As to the timing of the first meeting, governments would wish to have a fortnight or so to study before it would take place.

13. The GREEK REPRESENTATIVE also favoured 7th November, for the meeting of the Special Group with representatives from capitals.

14. The TURKISH REPRESENTATIVE shared the doubts expressed on the wisdom of having too many Ministers attend the meeting of the Special Group presently planned for 7th November. The case of M. Harmel represented an exception, as had been stated by some colleagues. He also agreed that the study would have to show some results by the time of the December Ministerial Meeting.

15. The LUXEMBOURG REPRESENTATIVE expressed himself in general favour of a Special Group with high-level attendance.

16. The NORWEGIAN REPRESENTATIVE reserved his position with respect to the date for a meeting with high-level attendance and associated himself with the need for careful preparation of this urgent matter.

17. The FRENCH REPRESENTATIVE generally supported the remarks made by his German, Netherlands and Canadian colleagues. He wondered whether, for the purpose of any discussion, the resumé (PO/67/770) could be considered to be of the same standing as the reports prepared by the Rapporteurs. Had it to be considered as an addition?

18. To this question the CHAIRMAN suggested that it might be called "un document adjoint".

19. The PORTUGUESE REPRESENTATIVE agreed that the first meeting be at Permanent Representative level, which would then be followed by a meeting of the Special Group with high-level attendance; such high-level attendance should not, however, in his view, lead to the presence of too many Ministers. Concerning the date, he reserved his view; he also felt that there should be a certain time delay between the first and second meetings so as to allow for instructions to be obtained.

20. The ICELANDIC REPRESENTATIVE confirmed the interest of his authorities in the Harmel Exercise generally.

21. The NETHERLANDS REPRESENTATIVE also spoke in favour of a sufficient time delay between the first and second meetings. He felt that an early meeting of Permanent Representatives was possible, since everyone knew whether the views of Rapporteurs differed from those of the members of their Sub-Groups.

22. The BELGIAN REPRESENTATIVE reiterated his authorities' interest that the Special Group meeting with high-level attendance should be the first, rather than the second. He was, however, prepared to yield should all others prefer the opposite order of following.

23. The UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE agreed in general with the need for preparation. In his view, such preparation would best be achieved through informal meetings. Concerning the substance, he was afraid that some of those problems under study seemed to go away from any possible solution. However, there was a definite need to achieve progress in the Harmel Exercise.

24. The TURKISH REPRESENTATIVE associated himself with the suggestion that Permanent Representatives should assure the first phase of the discussions.

25. The CHAIRMAN then brought up the question of when the drafting should be done most appropriately. Unless it were acceptable that the drafting took place before the Special Group with high-level attendance met, he foresaw a need for holding two meetings of the Special Group.

26. While stressing the need for progress in the Harmel Study once more, the CANADIAN REPRESENTATIVE was certain that there would not be final answers at the time of the Ministerial Meeting, for all the questions posed in the framework of the Study. A certain number of results, however, should be ready for presentation at that time. He thought that the perspective of two Special Group meetings with high-level attendance might, perhaps, be likely to create an exaggerated public expectation. With respect to the drafting, it was his view that there would have to be both a confidential report for Ministers and something for publication.

27. The GERMAN REPRESENTATIVE felt that Governments had not yet made up their minds about which parts of the Rapporteurs' Reports they were prepared to subscribe to and to which parts they were not. Any drafting could, in his view, only take place after a substantial discussion of the Rapporteurs' Reports. For the time being he wanted to reserve his view on who would be invited to do the drafting.

28. The BELGIAN REPRESENTATIVE saw fit to agree that the first phase should be informal but he felt that it might be unwise to foresee too limited a rôle for the subsequent Special Group meeting.

29. This view was shared by the ITALIAN REPRESENTATIVE who also subscribed to the position of several of his colleagues that some results would have to be ready by the time of the Ministerial Meeting. He would advise against giving publicity to the fact that documents would be discussed.

30. The TURKISH REPRESENTATIVE preferred to have a report drafted only after the meeting of the Special Group with high-level attendance; such a report would have to be based mainly on the Rapporteurs' Reports. He thought that it would be primarily in the sphere of principles that any results could be produced to the public in December.

31. The UNITED KINGDOM REPRESENTATIVE felt that the majority of problems outlined by the Harmel Study could not receive a final answer yet in the confidential report for Ministers. Still, there was a strong need for some substantial results in view of the build-up of expectation in public opinion. Time was obviously very short, since any documents for the Ministerial Meeting would have to be circulated some two or three weeks prior to the meeting. He

was, therefore, in favour of an early November date for the meeting of the Special Group with high-level attendance. The decision whether the second meeting of the Special Group were necessary could be left until a later date. The drafting activity should best commence after the first meeting of the Special Group.

32. The PORTUGUESE REPRESENTATIVE shared the views that all reports for the Ministerial Meeting would have to be based mainly on the four reports by the Rapporteurs. In his view also, drafting should begin after the first meeting of the Special Group.

33. The FRENCH REPRESENTATIVE thought that it would be all right to start the substantial discussion directly in the Special Group with high-level attendance if agreement were likely among them. Such, however, not being the case, he advocated strongly in favour of a thorough preparation by Permanent Representatives.

34. Considering that drafting would represent part of the preparatory activities, the CHAIRMAN wondered whether it would be better to have the Special Group discussion with high-level attendance based on a draft.

35. The TURKISH REPRESENTATIVE maintained that it would be preferable not to put anything down in chapters and paragraphs before the Special Group meeting but admitted that the preparatory discussions would, of course, aim at establishing areas of agreement and areas of disagreement.

36. This view was supported by the UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE who preferred that the high-level executives from capitals should participate in the reconciliation process. Still, this process had to be prepared carefully.

37. In the light of these remarks, the NETHERLANDS REPRESENTATIVE considered that the preparatory work of Permanent Representatives might, therefore, be rather in the nature of suggesting a detailed agenda.

38. The PORTUGUESE REPRESENTATIVE preferred having the first confrontation among Permanent Representatives rather than among high-level executives from capitals.

39. The CHAIRMAN, <sup>referred to in</sup> summing up the discussion so far, stated that the necessity of ~~a~~ meeting of Permanent Representatives was generally recognised. Further, there was agreement that this should be done in a private manner and that it would serve to clear the ground for the Special Group by identifying questions and assessing them. All felt that the need to obtain instructions would speak in favour of a certain time delay between the meeting of Permanent Representatives and that of the Special Group.

40. There was also a consensus that the meeting of the Special Group should take place in the presence of high-level representatives from capitals. Concerning the attendance of Ministers, the special case of M. Harmel was generally recognised but was considered not to apply throughout. The date of 7th November, for the meeting of the Special Group, seemed to meet with agreement by all. On the other hand, all seemed to agree that the drafting work should begin only after that meeting.

41. Finally, broad consensus seemed to exist that work would have to be done both on a report for Ministers and on a text for the public. He felt that the discussions on both would have to take place simultaneously. Also, any documents for the two purposes should be drafted, if possible, by the same drafting group. All accepted that the meeting should be confidential, while it would not obviously be possible that the fact of the meetings could be kept secret.

42. The CANADIAN REPRESENTATIVE wondered whether some limited tasks could not be entrusted to a drafting working group that could, for instance, eliminate existing overlaps of the four reports, as well as at present existing differences of views between them. Concerning texts for the public, he felt that such would best be accommodated in the Communiqué of the Ministerial Meeting.

43. The GERMAN REPRESENTATIVE did not consider that Permanent Representatives were bound by the reports submitted by the Rapporteurs which were, of course, informal. Concerning the appropriate time to begin drafting, he would wish to reserve his opinion until after the first discussion of substance.

44. This latter view was shared by the BELGIAN REPRESENTATIVE.

45. Answering questions put by several Representatives, the CHAIRMAN thought that any text for the public would best be accommodated in the Ministerial Communiqué but this did not exclude the wisdom of starting the drafting work on such a text at an early moment. The content of the Communiqué, of course, would have to be agreed by Ministers.

46. Subject to confirmation, the Permanent Representatives agreed:

- (1) that the meeting of Permanent Representatives to prepare the Special Group meeting should take place on Wednesday, 25th October, at 3.30 p.m.; and
- (2) that the meeting of the Special Group with high-level attendance from capitals should take place on Tuesday, 7th November, at 10.15 a.m.

  
Fritz C. MENNE

45. Answering questions put by several Representatives, the CHAIRMAN agreed to the observation of Ambassador Grewe, which had raised no objection to the question of a possible early drafting being left open for the substantive meeting of Permanent Representatives. He felt also that the question of issuing, at the Ministerial Meeting, a public report or a special section in the Communiqué may be handled separately and without interfering with the substantive drafting of the document at an early moment. The content of the Communiqué, of course, would have to be agreed by Ministers.\*