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ON THE NORTH ATLANTIC COUNCIL

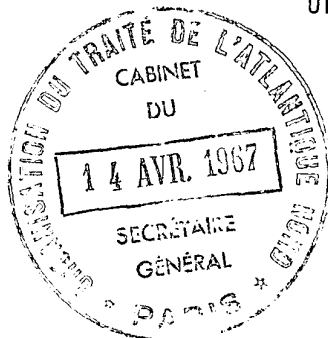
OTAN/NATO

PLACE DU MARÉCHAL DE LATTRE DE TASSIGNY

PARIS XVIe

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14 April 1967.



Dear Manlio

Future Tasks of the Alliance

I am circulating herewith to my colleagues, a paper by the United Kingdom rapporteur, Mr. Watson, which is intended as a preliminary contribution towards the discussion in sub-group No. 1 on 17 April.

Yours sincerely

Bernard Burrows

(Bernard Burrows)

Signor Manlio Brosio,
Secretary General,
OTAN/NATO.

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PRELIMINARY PAPER
BY THE RAPPORTEUR OF SUB-GROUP 1(a)

The present paper is intended to start off the meeting of our sub-group 1(a) on Monday, 17 April, by suggesting the headings under which we might consider the work of analysis. At the end of our discussion the present paper will be replaced by the guide-lines which we shall work out together.

THE SOVIET UNION

Background

We might begin by addressing ourselves to a number of questions concerning the pressures and circumstances which influence the policies of the Soviet Union and its associates, and their effects in practice.

Soviet policy aims to maintain the status quo in Europe and if possible to consolidate it. It is often suggested also that it may remain a basic aim of the Soviet Government, if circumstances permitted, to extend its influence on a global scale; and to establish throughout the world Communist governments responsive to the wishes of Moscow, establishing the Kremlin in an imperial relationship to the rest of the planet. Only a super power could entertain such aims at all. But its aims are very far removed from practical politics; and the men in the Kremlin today are conditioned not only by Communist dogma, but also by Russian history and tradition and by the strategic and other problems of the geographical area they administer, and also by the strength and resolution of the areas they do not administer.

1 ?

Soviet aggression against non-communist states in Europe, leading to war, has become unlikely. In Europe, with which we are essentially concerned, Soviet objectives in the last decade have been usually defined in such terms as: to hold together Eastern Europe under Soviet suzerainty and control; to maintain the present division of Germany and get others to accept it (this includes trying to divorce other governments and peoples from the German people's desire to reconstitute itself as a free nation); to weaken the political and military cohesion of the Western alliance; to push the United States out of Europe, and out of guaranteeing Europe; and to strengthen Soviet influence in non-communist Europe through local communist parties and by other means. In fact, it is a matter of common observation that the Soviet Government has been driven by various needs and pressures (high among which is the solidity of the North Atlantic Alliance) not only to limit their objectives in Europe and in the rest of the world, but even to make certain concessions; and to pursue a number of other objectives more acceptable to the West.

2 ?

Pressures

What are these pressures? They can be divided into internal and external. Among external pressures, is it useful to distinguish those caused by the policies and achievements of the Western alliance from others ?

3 ?

Internal

(A) What are the strength, and the effects, of:

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- (a) the Soviet Government's preoccupation with transforming the machinery of the Soviet economy onto a more realistic basis - decentralization, cost accounting, etc. - and the need for time to achieve this ?
 - (b) the huge and mounting cost of the arms race; and of modern technology generally ?
 - (c) the inadequacy of agriculture, leading in bad years to expenditure of up to \$¹/₂ billion on imports of food ?
 - (d) the wane of simplicistic dogma, and the growth of revisionism, especially among the intellectuals, scientists and the young ?
 - (e) the separate task of squaring the modernisation of the Soviet economy and Soviet society with the petty communist establishment and with ideological purity ?
 - (f) "The Rise of the Russian Consumer", particularly the increasing demand for more consumption goods, and the dangers of "surplus cash/rejection of inferior product", inflation ?
 - (g) claustrophobia and the (traditional Russian) desire for foreign contacts and travel, especially in managerial and cultural circles ?
 - (h) the belief that the Soviet Union is now, for the first time, strong enough to be safe from attack (though they took the lead in ABM installations) ?

External

What are the strength, and the effects, of:

I. Policies and achievements of the West

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- (a) The United States nuclear deterrent, both absolute and relative ?
 - (b) the solidity of the Western alliance, which blocks adventurous policies in Europe ?
 - (c) the manifestly peaceable intentions of the West (purely defensive nature of NATO, reality of de-colonisation, etc.) ?
 - (d) the readiness of the West, including its largest powers, to seek agreements with the Soviet Government ?
 - (e) the belief that Western solidarity is loosening, and that bilateral dealings can be used to drive wedges between the Allies ?
 - (f) the evolution of "capitalism" away from crisis: the relative prosperity of Western economies, the improving conditions of the working class ?
 - (g) /

- (g) the advantages to the Soviet Union of trade and scientific exchanges with the West ?

II. Other external pressures

- (a) the growth of pluralism, polycentrism and national communism ?
- (b) the Sino-Soviet conflict ?
- (c) the uneven Soviet performance in the Third World ?
- (d) aid problems, particularly the growing demand for food, which Soviet agriculture cannot supply ?
- (This question seems especially important).

EASTERN EUROPE

Background

The Governments of Eastern Europe, with the exception of Yugoslavia, were installed during Soviet occupation under Stalin. Recently these Governments have begun to evolve slowly towards independence and reflection of some national aspirations. It is no longer possible to lump the countries of Eastern Europe together. It will clearly be necessary to examine them country by country as well as generally. East European leaders today scarcely share the basic imperial aims of the Soviet Government. As old communists they would doubtless welcome the spread of communism: but as national leaders they increasingly tend to welcome a quiet prosperous life, and greater independence even more. They share many of the more limited objectives of the Soviets, which they have helped to shape in some degree. They seem anxious to emancipate themselves still further from Soviet control, and to show a greater degree of self-assertion. Most of them are more keenly aware than the Soviets of the advantages of détente and collaboration with the West. Their peoples 'remember' in a sense that the Soviet peoples do not: the critical difference between fifty years and twenty years of communism. 7

Pressures

Internal. What are the strength, and the effects, of:

- (a) patriotism as a driving force, in the peoples and in the Governments ?
- (b) the religious beliefs of the East European peoples ?
- (c) the conflict between economic decentralisation and communist party control ?
- (d) differing patterns of internal development and economic realism (reflecting independent judgments) ?
- (e) to (g) Questions (d) to (f) in Soviet Internal above ?

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External. What are the strength, and the effects, of:

- (a) the policies and achievements of the West, listed in Questions above, insofar as these differ from Soviet reactions ?
- (b) the growth of polycentrism and the Sino-Soviet split ?
- (c) historical affiliations and memories: especially the relations of certain countries with Germany and also Greece and Turkey ?
- (d) the sense of being members of "Europe" (especially the rôle of the nine-nation European Solidarity Conference) ?
- (e) the insistence on wider consultation within a looser Warsaw Pact and the limited scope of CMEA ?
- (f) Soviet economic nationalism and Soviet demands for higher prices for their raw materials ?
- (g) the points in paragraph 20 of 66/128 - "progressively more disposed to seek links which will serve their own immediate interests and an easier general relationship with the West", etc ?
- (h) awareness of the general value to Europe of a US/Soviet settlement ?
- (i) aid problems: desire to devote resources to national reconstruction; resentment at being used as agents of Soviet imperial policy in the Third World, Cuba, etc. ?

Economic

- (a) Are individual East European governments willing to go beyond the approximately 30 per cent ceiling they have set for their trade outside the East European bloc ?
- (b) what importance do the various East European countries attach to:
 - (i) purchase of Western technical know-how ?
 - (ii) linked production with Western firms ?
 - (iii) mixed enterprises ?
 - (iv) collaboration with the West in improving communications (the Danube, ports such as Hamburg, railways, underground railways, road surfaces and systems, radio and television, oil pipelines) ?
 - (v) Western investment capital ?
 - (vi) sending migrant workers to the West which would produce foreign currency and technical training ?
- (c) How do East European governments see the future rôle of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe ?

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foreign policy*

The proposed analysis should also examine more general issues.

For instance, the Secretary General has raised the need to re-think the meaning of words like "threat", "détente" and "balance of power". We should at least explain what we understand by these terms. 9

We might also ask ourselves about the significance of the Soviet Government's current policy of encouraging the penetration of power in non-communist countries by legal means, united fronts and other tactics, and the refusal or reduction of Soviet support for violent revolution in certain countries. Is this policy pursued with the aim of achieving respectability generally? Or an understanding in due course with the United States? Or does it spring from a sense of the limitations of Soviet capacity and interest to support remote revolutions and client states? We could also look at the concept that the Soviet Government tends to have "plan A and plan B": that is détente, united fronts and respectability as an alternative to seizure of power in places where and in times when this seems inexpedient or doomed to failure. Does revolutionary seizure of power remain plan A, a real aim in the medium term? Or are the Chinese right: are the Soviets now so revisionist in practice that their declarations of fidelity to revolution, and occasional support for it, are like "Church on Sundays"? Is it possible to identify groups or parties in the Soviet Union who incline towards one course more than another? If most of the Soviet leaders believe themselves to be faithful to the ideal of revolutionary seizures of power aided by them, and regard other policies as only provisional expedients, what will be the effect of finding that plan B pays them, and the Soviet people, better than plan A? What are the chances of some plan B proving "le provisoire qui dure" - the face that finally takes on the shape of the mask? 10?

Another possible area of investigation is the mixture of motives behind present Soviet aid to non-communist governments. The most notable case is India; but Soviet aid has also been given or offered to certain governments in Africa and Latin America which Castro and others claim actually hinders violent revolution and national liberation movements.

There are also some general questions to ask about the East European governments. For instance, what conflicts of policy are there between them? How far do East European governments welcome bilateral discussions with Western governments about relaxation of tension because they think this helps to emancipate them from Soviet control, and how far because they believe that the solidarity of the Warsaw Pact powers is greater than that of the West? 11
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What should
we do?

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Is there a leaven or process at work in the Eastern European countries which is reducing the social and political barriers between them and the rest of Europe? Yugoslavia is usually treated separately from the five countries more directly associated with the Soviet Union: how is this justified, and how far are they moving in the same general direction?

We should also perhaps look in particular at the effects on Soviet and East European society of increasing trade and technological exchanges with the West. Mr. Brzezinski of the United States has recently suggested that "multilateral economic co-operation in the long run runs counter to centralised direction of individual communist states, and therefore this kind of multilateral co-operation could provide the missing link between the technological progress of the Eastern society and the liberal political evolution of the communist system".

Finally, we should consider how much further we think the West could expect to push the Russians and the East Europeans along the new and more acceptable paths which our policies have induced them to take.

In this way, it seems to me, our analysis may throw light on the contradictions of Soviet and East European policies; their hesitations and quandaries; and their areas of ambivalence. It may help to define differences between these governments; and between the policies of governments and the aspirations of groups in those countries able to influence policy decisions.

WESTERN POLICY TOWARDS 'LE DETENTE

The analysis of Soviet and East European attitudes, suggested above, may enable us to make some constructive suggestions about Western initiatives, and in particular, on the rôle of NATO in making Western policies possible, defining the possibilities and co-ordinating action. The aim of pursuing the détente by a wide range of contacts is generally agreed. I suggest that we should regard this not merely as an end in itself, but as an instrument of policy in making possible progress on the main political problems.

I make no suggestions at this stage for filling out this section with specific ideas; I hope that our analysis will suggest some possibilities and that others will emerge in the course of our discussions.

Adam Watson