

Speaking Notes

This is an important meeting and we have a great deal of work to do. I therefore do not want to make too long a speech at this stage of the proceedings.

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We owe a great debt to M. Harmel for his initiative in starting this study. *conf - conduct open - wide scope - sub's bet for* I am sure it is important to demonstrate to our own peoples and to the world that the alliance is not only still necessary but that it is lively, vigorous and capable of taking on whatever tasks are needed. The alliance has kept the peace in Europe successfully for twenty years. *Is success story brought out clearly* Although the prospect of aggression has receded it could easily return. The military capabilities of the Soviet Union and its allies continue to increase. The need for effective defence and deterrence still remains.

But I also believe that there will *increasingly be room for adjustment* be new tasks for the alliance in the years to come and particularly in the 1970s; above all, we must be ready to seize any opportunities which may arise, and we believe that they will arise for promoting détente in East-West relations.

The Secretary-General has given us a most useful paper and this, with the other papers which have been worked out by the Rapporteurs during the past few months, form the background to our discussions today. But our /present....

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present task is to reach agreement on the main points of substance, so that we can report to the Foreign Ministers at their meeting here in December. The time remaining for this is all too short and we cannot waste it if we are going to point the way to the fields in which effective action is needed in the future. It would be a sorry confession of failure if we had to admit that after a year's work we could not define our purposes or reach agreement on the tasks before us. I for one am sure that this can be done and that we must do it.

M. Harmel has given us a useful lead in setting out his own views of the ground which our report should cover. I find myself ^{very much in general} ~~in very broad~~ agreement with him. } Mr. Rostow has spoken on the military tasks of the alliance and I am sure that our German colleague will be speaking on the German question. } For my part I should like to concentrate on the political work of the alliance.

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This alliance has never been a military organisation alone. It has from the start been a group of like-minded states with many common political purposes. At a time when we are all agreed that the Soviet challenge has changed its form and that new opportunities are opening up for a genuine relaxation of East-West tension, it is not only appropriate but, in my view, also essential

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that the members of this alliance should play their part in promoting an improvement of relations between East and West and thus helping to achieve a just and lasting political order in Europe.

As was recognised by our Rapporteurs, there is room for much progress in economic, technical and cultural cooperation between Eastern and Western Europe. Much has already been done in these fields. The study of disarmament and arms control measures, including the possibility of balanced mutual force reductions, also reflects the political will of the alliance to work for an effective détente with the East. We should press forward with this side of the work.

In the same way it is clearly important that the allies should continue to work in harmony together for a solution of the German problem and for a balanced and viable system of European security. This calls for active and constant preparation for the time when fruitful East-West discussions of these questions will be possible. I am sure that one of the results of this exercise should be an agreement to keep this problem under continuing review.

Apart from the substance of East-West détente, there are many different ways of promoting it. At present

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we believe that the best progress is likely to be made by bilateral contacts between the countries of Western and Eastern Europe. We are all contributing already to this process. But there is clearly a limit to the progress which can be made bilaterally. Many subjects, notably European security and arms control, by their very nature require multilateral treatment. We agree that the time for a comprehensive European security conference, designed to solve all the problems in this field, has not yet come. In particular, I think we are all agreed that the Soviet Union is not ready to cooperate in producing fruitful results. But we should remain ready to seize any useful opportunity for multilateral negotiation and we should actively prepare against that time. Nor indeed need all our present activities be exclusively bilateral. I for one should like to see a regular unofficial conference organised between personalities of East and West, where our common problems could be freely discussed without committing governments. The conference organised by the Institute for Strategic Studies at Vienna in October 1966 was an excellent example of what I have in mind.

But it is not only in the field of East-West relations that we see room for closer political consultation and cooperation. This alliance is not a single political unit and I do not imagine that it ever will be. Its

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purpose continues to be expressed through the national policies of its member states. But, as I have said, we are bound together by many common political purposes and these purposes are reflected in our individual national policies. They will be all the more clearly reflected if they are based on close and intimate knowledge of each other's problems and objectives. This, to my mind, points to the need for member states to take the fullest possible account of the wishes of others and to work towards the highest possible measure of harmonisation with each other's policies. This indeed was the message of the report of the Three Wise Men in 1956 and there is nothing new in the practice of close political consultation within the alliance. Moreover, as far as possible, consultation if it is to be effective should take place at the formative stage of policy and should leave room for adjustments to take account of the views of other allies.

For our part, I should like to say how valuable we have found political consultation in the past. ~~For example, in the cooperation which we received at the time of our difficulties with Indonesia or again in the efforts which we have been making to restore order in Rhodesia.~~ I am sure that we shall all find future opportunities to harness our policies to common ends.

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In an alliance of sovereign states there is no obligation to subordinate national policies to collective decision; we certainly should not expect to see any such doctrine established. But I am sure that the actions of all the allies will be more effective and more influential when, particularly in matters of close concern to them all, they ~~come~~^{act} in accordance with a framework of policy which is, so far as possible, agreed by all of them. I do not believe that there need be any division between us on political consultation envisaged in this way.

In speaking of political consultation, I should not want it to be thought that I was speaking of the North Atlantic area alone. The North Atlantic area cannot be divorced from the rest of the world. Our interests are engaged within that area and outside it. Some of us are more directly concerned than others in different parts of the world. I am sure we should all agree that it would not be advisable for the alliance as such to intervene in a conflict situations outside its own area. But the actions of one ally, within the area or outside it, inevitably to a greater or lesser degree affect the interests of other allies. This, to my mind, is a problem which calls for close consultation and, where appropriate, for cooperation and mutual assistance.

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I am not at present concerned so much with machinery but I believe that we should make arrangements to concentrate our political consultation on those parts of the world of particular concern to the alliance, such as the Mediterranean, ^{and which I spoke of recently here all.} or even China, to which reference has been made in the Rapporteurs' reports. We certainly should not regard it as essential for every ally to take part in discussion of every problem. In the nuclear consultation machinery we have successfully made use of the idea of open-ended groups and this is a useful precedent to follow.

In conclusion, I should like to welcome the suggestion ^{*} which has been made that ~~we~~ should try to formulate a programme of work, and this might well extend over the next five years. This is not a five-year plan in the sense that we should be trying to build progressively year by year. But I think we can identify the subjects, such as European security, disarmament or the situation in the Mediterranean, which are most likely to concern us in the next five years and beyond. Rather than diffuse our efforts, as has sometimes been the tendency in the past, it is on those subjects that we should seek to concentrate. These are pre-eminently the future tasks of the alliance and it is to these and to the way

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in which we hope to carry them out that I believe our report should draw attention.