

4th March, 1967.

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TEXT OF AN OPENING STATEMENT OF THE SECRETARY GENERAL  
AT THE MEETING OF THE SPECIAL GROUP ON THE FUTURE TASKS  
OF THE ALLIANCE ON MONDAY 6TH MARCH, 1967 AT 10 A.M.

You may wish to say:

As I envisage it, this first meeting of the Special Group should be devoted to reaching decisions on two points: (a) what subjects should be studied, and (b) how should these studies be carried out. Essentially, our task this morning is one of organisation and procedure, but of necessity our discussion will range to include questions of substance, notably that of arriving at a common understanding of the objectives of this whole exercise.

Let me turn first to the list of subjects to be studied. While, of course, other formulations are equally possible (as for instance in the Belgian questions just circulated), may I suggest as a starting point for the discussion the following enumeration of subjects:

- (a) Soviet foreign policy, the threat, and the Soviet interpretation of peaceful coexistence and détente.
- (b) The general defence policy of the Alliance in the present situation; basic principles underlying the level and deployment of forces; mutual disarmament and arms control, and their effects on the balance of forces.
- (c) The general political aims of the Alliance in East-West relations: allied views of the purposes and practice of détente, European security and the German problem, the nature of a European settlement.

- (d) Western Europe and its specific contribution to the aims of the Alliance.
- (e) Tasks of the Alliance in the regions outside the NATO area and its responsibilities towards world order generally.
- (f) The consultative process in NATO and its relation to the commitment of members.

I think that my list covers essentially the same points as those in the Belgian paper.

Obviously each of these groups of questions raises major problems and may lead to the expression of quite different points of views. I welcome this prospect since we all aim at a frank and thorough dialogue. Yet the franker our discussion, the more necessary it becomes for us to clarify the final objectives and tasks arising out of this exercise. I believe that at least for most of the subjects, such tasks may already be outlined now, at least in a preliminary manner; for others however, we cannot, at this stage, go much further than an analysis of situations.

Now let me give examples of some of the salient questions arising, in my view, under each subject. While, for instance, it may be accepted that Soviet foreign policy does not anymore entertain the idea of military adventures, it may also be maintained that the Soviets are still pursuing an active policy in Europe to divide and weaken the Alliance, Western Europe and Germany. This is, in my view, the central point to be considered, although of course other opinions may be held and expressed here as well.

As regards the general defence policy of the Alliance, our purpose should not be the establishment of force levels or the duplication of work which is already undertaken by our military and political staffs elsewhere. Rather our task should be to reassert the fundamental necessity of an adequate

*and to reach*  
balance of forces, ~~of reaching~~ an agreement on certain basic military concepts such as, strategic and political warning, ~~The~~ degree of readiness required, the possibilities of mobilisation, short or long war, the relationship between conventional and nuclear weapons. Of course differing opinions are inevitable on all these points but we should strive after a reconciliation of views.

Again, referring to the political aims of the Alliance, our main task would seem to be the reassertion of the essential solidarity of free Europe and the United States and Canada, in trying to reach a fair and acceptable settlement with the Soviet Union, and the East European countries. The process of détente should be pursued with this end in view. A European settlement should be considered not as the end of the Alliance, but as a reasonable arrangement between free Europe and the Soviet Union and Eastern European countries, guaranteed by the United States and Canada and supported by the Atlantic Alliance for as long as necessary. We should also insist upon including a satisfactory solution of the German problem in such a settlement, as well as measures of security and disarmament and a final definition of frontiers. Within this framework, many different approaches are conceivable.

Again, one way to deal with the issue of Western Europe and its specific contribution to the aims of the Alliance, would be to underline the close connection between the political and economic solidarity, and possibly the unity, of free Europe on the one hand, and the maintenance of the strength and solidarity of the Alliance as a whole, on the other. Here too, the discussion may well reveal important

differences about the exact meaning of the well-known two-pillar theory; nor can we avoid the question as to who, either the Alliance as a whole or the European countries concerned, should take the initiative to bring about this European solidarity and possibly unity.

On the other hand, I would be at a loss to indicate now the tasks of the Alliance in regions outside the NATO area and vis-à-vis the world order generally. One ultimate aim which might be suggested would be, of course, to decide whether or not there should be an extension of the responsibilities of the Alliance outside the NATO area. The question might also be raised whether rules of behaviour could be established in connection with the problems of member countries themselves outside the NATO area, to be respected by all Alliance countries; while finally various aspects of consultation in this context might be examined.

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As regards the consultative process in NATO and its relation to the commitments of members, our major problem and main aim are not, it seems to me, to repeat the thinking and recommendations of the Three Wise Men which are still relevant and valid. We should rather try to examine the degree of co-ordination which NATO consultation implies for member countries. We should also enquire what unity of action should follow consultation, particularly in dealing with problems of East-West relations.

Once we have agreed on a list of the subjects to be covered, we should then decide on how to proceed. There is a variety of ways we could go about our task, but upon reflection, I have concluded on a preference for one procedure which I want to submit to you for your consideration:

We might create an open-ended sub-group to study and discuss each subject. Clearly the sub-groups will vary in the number of their members and in their composition.

Each subject might be entrusted to a national delegation or to the International Staff for the preparation of the initial paper. These papers would serve as the basis of discussion in the sub-groups.

The International Secretariat should then be asked to co-ordinate and rewrite the papers in the light of these discussions. These papers should reflect faithfully the character of the discussions and the views expressed.

Finally, all the papers should be discussed together in the Special Group as a whole. The Group would decide on the progress report to the Council to be prepared by the International Staff for eventual submission to Ministers in June.

Such a procedure would ensure the widest possible participation of the Allies, and would enable the Special Group to move ahead concurrently with all its studies.

I should, however, point out that we will have to allow maybe one whole month to prepare the first reports. Nevertheless, it might be useful to continue preliminary exchanges of views prior to the receipt of these reports.

Before concluding our discussion on procedures, I wish to mention two other points: (1) the Military Committee has asked, in the POLADS, whether the Special Group might not find it useful to have a military representative participate in its work. An answer to this question is in order. I suppose that we shall certainly be calling on the assistance of the military in discussions on matters of defence, but that the bulk of the studies is essentially political in nature and thus does not appear at this time to require military judgements or contributions; (2) the other point is with regard to records. I believe that the deliberations of this Group should be as free and open as possible. Therefore I propose that no records be kept.

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I am afraid I have already spoken too long. Let me however add one point: we shall have to examine, in due course, the presentation of the results of our work to public opinion in a way which is understandable and acceptable to both the old and young generations. In drawing up the final reports I will carefully bear this point in mind, and I am sure that the Group attaches no less importance to it than I do. May I now open the discussion: first on the list of subjects and purposes of this exercise, second on the procedures to be adopted to carry out our work.

CC/vc/LMR