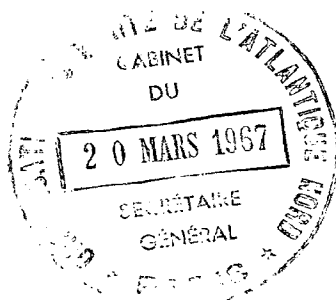


ORGANISATION DU TRAITE DE L'ATLANTIQUE NORD
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To : Secretary General

c.c. Deputy Secretary General
ASG for Political Affairs

From: Deputy Executive Secretary

SPECIAL GROUP ON THE FUTURE TASKS OF THE ALLIANCE

Summary record of a meeting held on Friday, 17th
March, 1967

The CHAIRMAN introduced the Working Paper (Revised) dated 14th March, 1967, a French translation of which had been circulated just before the beginning of the meeting, and invited comments.

2. The NETHERLANDS REPRESENTATIVE, together with the other representatives, stated that he could generally accept the paper.

3. The PORTUGUESE REPRESENTATIVE felt that not all suggestions had survived the process of compression of the subjects. Still, he could accept the paper and was confident that his authorities would do the same with an eventual report that would possibly not include all proposed subjects. As concerns the use of existing bodies, he wondered whether the Atlantic Policy Advisory Group (APAG) with their usual kind of discussion could be helpful.

4. The UNITED KINGDOM REPRESENTATIVE thought that the working paper struck too pessimistic a note about the contents of the interim report to be submitted to Ministers in June. In his view, the report should, for public relations purposes, be as substantial as possible. This suggestion appeared acceptable to all and the text of the last paragraph was amended accordingly(1).

5. The GREEK REPRESENTATIVE emphasized that any reports prepared by sub-groups would first go to the Special Group before being submitted to Ministers.

6. The GERMAN REPRESENTATIVE reiterated the need to distinguish between political and strategic subjects. It should therefore be understood that the Special Group and its sub-groups would deal only with the political aspects of the strategic questions. As concerns the qualifications of rapporteurs, it appeared difficult to establish whether the person to be nominated should be "well-known".

(1) The revised text was subsequently circulated as Working Paper (2nd Revise), dated 20th March, 1967.

7. This latter view was shared by several other speakers and it was agreed to delete the words "and preferably well known".

8. The BELGIAN REPRESENTATIVE asked whether it was necessary to insist on having only one rapporteur for each sub-group. A more flexible approach might be preferable.

9. The UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE thought that among the subjects listed, some would have to await the later phase of conclusions, e.g. "balanced reduction of forces". Like the German Representative, he had to insist that the Special Group and its sub-groups should deal only with the political aspects of strategy, thus avoiding as far as possible any overlap with the Defence Planning Committee (DPC) and the Nuclear Planning Group (NPG). In reply to a question by the ITALIAN REPRESENTATIVE, he said that any statement on the military situation of the Alliance could be obtained from existing bodies such as the DPC, the Military Committee (MC), or the Major NATO Commanders. For example, it would be the responsibility of these bodies to state whether and how far there existed a military stalemate, while it would be for the Special Group to examine whether this stalemate could be rendered less expensive.

10. The CANADIAN REPRESENTATIVE understood that experts from capitals might be needed to attend meetings of the Special Group as well as of the sub-groups; that delegations might run into difficulties should sub-groups meet simultaneously; and that work might not proceed at the same rate in all sub-groups.

11. The FRENCH REPRESENTATIVE referred to the problem of commitments mentioned in the penultimate paragraph of chapter I. In his view, the notion of commitment should not be related to the fourth group of subjects "Developments in regions outside the NATO area". After some discussion, the suggestion was accepted and the text modified accordingly(1). In a similar manner, the proposal was accepted that the report to Ministers should be submitted through the Council.

12. In summing up the discussion, the CHAIRMAN stated that the Working Paper (Revised) and the amendments made in discussion had been approved "ad referendum", while the French Delegation had reserved their position.

13. The Special Group then invited the following member governments to nominate rapporteurs:

- for Sub-Group 1 "East-West Relations":

Germany and the United Kingdom under an arrangement to be agreed between these two delegations and the Secretary General

(1) see Working Paper (2nd Revise).

- for Sub-Group 2 "Inter-Allied Relations"
Belgium
- for Sub-Group 3 "General defensive policy of the Alliance"
United States
- for Sub-Group 4 "Developments in regions outside the NATO area"
Canada.

14. The next meeting, originally scheduled for Monday, 20th March, was postponed to Wednesday, 22nd March, 1967, to follow right after the Council meeting.

Fritz C. Menne
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