

SUB-GROUP 2*In record
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"THE IDEALOGICAL BASIS AND THE UNITY OF THE ALLIANCE"

Report by the Rapporteur of Sub-Group No. 2

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19th September, 1957.

INTRODUCTION

The Terms of Reference for the work entrusted to Sub-Group No. 2 involve first and foremost an examination of the ideological basis and the unity of the Alliance.

Discussions within the Sub-Group and between the rapporteurs have shown that the question could be expressed in the following terms: What did the Atlantic Alliance represent in 1949? What has it done since then? What form could it take?

In order to measure the divergency between yesterday's resolve and today's reality, it appears essential to recall the facts which led up to the creation of the Alliance, and to summarise its evolution.

SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

- I. What did the Atlantic Alliance represent in 1949?
- II. What has the Atlantic Alliance done since 1949?
- III. The détente and its political implications.
- IV. What form can the Alliance take tomorrow?

I. WHAT DID THE ATLANTIC ALLIANCE REPRESENT IN 1949?

In order to appreciate fully what happened, it must be borne in mind that the Alliance which sprang from the Treaty of Washington was not the kind desired by the leaders of the victorious Western powers during the Second World War and in the years immediately following the end of hostilities.

The hope entertained by responsible statesmen was to maintain the alliance with the USSR which had made victory possible.

The treaty between the USSR and the United Kingdom, between the USSR and France and the decisions taken at Yalta, were stages in this policy which culminated in the creation of the United Nations.

It was hoped that this Organization, which was to be world-wide and within which the five major powers had reserved special rights, could take over responsibility for keeping the peace.

This line of approach, although theoretically sound, soon proved to be wide of the mark.

It rapidly became clear that the USSR under Stalin was not prepared to contribute to the success of such a policy. Within the space of a few years the USSR frittered away the fund of goodwill it had built up. Soviet policy in the Balkans, Central Europe, Germany, Iran, Turkey, the abuse of its right of veto and a ceaseless stream of propaganda against its allies, made it impossible to continue nourishing any illusions in this connection.

Western Governments were reluctant and slow to give up hope.

The Soviet Union's refusal to participate in the economic rebuilding of Europe proposed by General Marshall in 1947, and the seizure of power in Prague in 1948, shattered any remaining illusions.

At this time, responsible statesmen in the West, representing all shades of political thought, became convinced of the need to unite in order to halt Communist expansionist policy in Europe. The Treaty of Washington was born of this conviction. Its prime purpose was to protect the democratic countries of Europe from aggression and to put a stop to Communist expansion.

It is sometimes difficult for a new generation to understand the state of mind of the preceding generation. Changes take place, the facts of political problems alter. It is impossible to prove that events which did not take place, although they were possible and even probable, would have occurred if certain precautions had not been taken. It is obvious that those who did not experience certain fears cannot react in the same way as those who were in their grip.

What is true is that the main objective of the authors of the Atlantic Treaty has been achieved. In Europe, since 1949, there have been no Communist conquests. Communism has made no further progress. No country of the Atlantic Alliance has suffered the fate of those countries which, between 1945 and 1948, came under Communist control against the wishes of the majority of their inhabitants.

The Atlantic Alliance has thus solved the specific political problem which confronted Europe in 1949. It has proved equal to the task of containing the threat of Stalinist imperialism.

There can be no doubt that the will to resist possible aggression existed. The wording of the Treaty is quite definite on this point; at the signing in Washington on 4th April, 1949, all those who spoke laid stress on this aspect.

This resolve to overcome a specific and pressing problem was, however, approached from a wider political angle.

The countries of Western Europe, the United States and Canada, were at this time aware of the Communist threat to the world at large and of the need for unity in the defence of democratic principles.

Traces of this outlook are to be found in the articles of the Treaty. In the preamble, for example, where the contracting parties state that they are "determined to safeguard the freedom, common heritage and civilisation of their peoples, founded on the principles of democracy, individual liberty and the rule of law".

Article 2 is even more explicit; "the parties will contribute toward the further development of peaceful and friendly international relations by strengthening their free institutions, by bringing about a better understanding of the principles upon which these institutions are founded, and by promoting conditions of stability and well-being".

Such a goal is a blueprint for a policy which goes beyond the solution of the immediate problem of how to resist the threat of aggression.

It was these general and long-term aims which gave the Treaty of Washington its fullness and meaning and made the Atlantic Alliance different from any other previous alliance in history.

II. WHAT HAS THE ATLANTIC ALLIANCE DONE SINCE 1949?

The first years of the Atlantic Alliance were entirely taken up with the gigantic and urgent task of military organization.

It slowly became apparent, however, that the scope of the Alliance would have to be widened. It was becoming increasingly clear that common defence was meaningless without a common foreign policy, while it was borne in upon the leaders of the Alliance that it was difficult to be allies in one part of the world and rivals elsewhere. Geographically the Alliance was too restricted.

As early as 1956, the Foreign Ministers of the member countries felt the need to clarify, in the light of seven years' experience, the aims of their Alliance and the means of achieving them. Three Foreign Ministers, Mr. Pearson, Mr. Lang and Mr. Martino, were asked to study the question. In NATO parlance, the result of their work became known as the Report of the Three Wise Men. This is a basic document which sheds light on the thinking of the leaders of the Alliance at the time and on the direction in which they hoped the Alliance would progress.

The general introduction is worth quoting in full, but the ideas it contains may be faithfully summarized as follows:

- (a) The policy of defence against possible aggression must be continued no matter what interpretation is placed on the events which have occurred since 1949. Each member must retain its will and capacity to play its full part in discharging the political commitment for collective action against aggression which it has undertaken.
- (b) This aim can only be achieved if the political and economic relations between the members of the Alliance are co-operative and close. An alliance in which the members ignore one another's interests or engage in political or economic conflict, or harbour suspicions of one another, cannot be effective either for deterrence or defence.

- (c) Such a policy is only possible because "while fear may have been the main urge for the creation of NATO, there was also the realization - conscious or instinctive - that in a shrinking nuclear world it was wise and timely to bring about a closer association of kindred Atlantic and Western European nations for other than defence purposes alone; that a partial pooling of sovereignty for mutual protection should also promote progress and co-operation generally. There was a feeling among the governments and peoples concerned that this close unity was both natural and desirable; that the common cultural traditions, free institutions and democratic concepts which were being challenged, and were marked for destruction, were things which should also bring the NATO nations closer together, not only for their defence but for their development. There was, in reality, a sense of Atlantic Community, alongside the realization of an immediate common danger."
- (d) Such a policy leads to the "development of an Atlantic Community whose roots are deeper even than the necessity for common defence". This implies nothing less than the permanent association of the free Atlantic peoples for the promotion of their greater unity and the protection and the advancement of the interests which, as free democracies, they have in common.
- (e) Such a policy is designed to meet the political threat of Communism. This threat "comes from the revolutionary doctrines of Communism which have, by careful design of the Communist leaders over many years, been sowing seeds of falsehood concerning our way of life and our democracy".
- (f) In order to succeed such a policy should remind members of the Alliance that their influence and interests "are not confined to the area covered by the Treaty, and that common interests of the Atlantic Community can be seriously affected by developments outside the Treaty area".

All this is clear and intelligible. In 1957, the Three Wise Men, whose report was approved by their colleagues, were dealing with a military, political and economic alliance against possible Communist aggression, a group of countries united in defence of the principles of Western civilisation. They saw this Alliance as leading step-by-step to the creation of an Atlantic Community.

The practical means for achieving this goal were dealt with at length in the report. It is worth recording that the Three Wise Men advocated a significant strengthening of political consultation. It was recommended that political consultation should take place prior to any action, regardless of the problem concerned and whether it fell within or outside the geographical area of the Treaty.

After very full discussions in December 1956, the conclusions of the Three Wise Men were adopted unanimously. It is therefore clear that their report was an accurate expression of the purpose of the fifteen member Governments.

For several years, the majority of member countries sought to implement the guide-lines which had been adopted. Full and regular consultation took place on such questions as German reunification, the status of Berlin, disarmament and, in a more general way, relations with the USSR.

With regard to problems outside the Treaty area, political consultation turned out to be less fruitful. Most of these problems arose not from the Communist challenge but from a variety of reasons.

Regional economic integration, decolonization and co-operation with the developing countries were among the issues where national interests did not necessarily coincide and where public opinion in member countries did not always react in the same way. The result was that a number of Governments decided to go their own way without prior consultation with their Allies. This was especially true in the case of decolonization.

At the end of 1958, the French Government suggested to the United States and the United Kingdom that a triumvirate should be set up to deal with world problems on behalf of the West. The United States and British Governments turned down this proposal.

From then on, the French Government changed its policy and gradually withdrew from the NATO organization, finally leaving altogether in 1966. Moreover, since that time, the French Government has been pursuing a foreign policy which has been more and more at variance with that of the United States Government and with that of most of the members of the Atlantic Alliance.

III. THE DETENTE AND ITS POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS

No one would think of denying that changes have occurred in the policy of the USSR since the death of Stalin.

It may, however, be asked to what extent the very existence of the Atlantic Alliance has been a factor in this evolution, and what the consequences might be if it were weakened or were to disappear.

An attempt must be made to understand clearly what peaceful co-existence means for the Communists, and to sum up its results.

In this connection there can be no possible doubt. The Communists have made themselves very clear. For them, peaceful co-existence is not a consequence of their principles. It is a policy which is forced on them by the facts. Peaceful co-existence is the latest manifestation of a "policy of expediency", which led the Russian leaders to ally themselves with Hitler in 1939, with the Western democracies in 1941, and to wage the cold war as soon as the Second World War ended.

There can be no doubt whatever about this. Khrushchev expressed himself very frankly and very clearly. In a speech made early in 1960, he declared that the USSR, although militarily more powerful than she had ever been, was determined not to make war, since it was impossible to protect her population against an atomic attack.

The situation is dominated, and doctrines upset by the Bomb. Khrushchev said: "The class struggle cannot be settled by the atomic bomb".

This being the case, Communism cannot hope to impose itself by war but, while abandoning this method, it has renounced none of its aims and still hopes to defeat its opponents in every other field - political, economic, social and cultural. That is what peaceful co-existence means for the Communists.

The West cannot reject peaceful co-existence. To the extent that its civilisation is based on the exchange of ideas, peaceful co-existence represents the application of its most essential principles.

In any case, the West has no reason to reject it. The West has no need to fear a comparison between its achievements and those of the Communists. In the material sphere, its successes are indisputably greater and life as a whole is infinitely more pleasant in the West than in the East. The Berlin Wall is both the proof and a symbol of this fact.

We must not be surprised, therefore, if the results of peaceful co-existence are modest. Commercial and cultural exchanges between the East and West have developed satisfactorily but, from the military and political standpoint, no really important result has been obtained. The Russian armed forces have not been reduced and the Soviet attitude to the German problem has not altered.

Furthermore, it is most unwise to think that the Communist danger has disappeared. The policy of China appears to be at least as dangerous as was that of the USSR twenty years ago, and a conference like the one in Havana shows to what extent revolutionary forces are still active. Admittedly, the danger to Europe has receded geographically into the past, but it would be unduly optimistic to imagine that it had disappeared. Any European countries which committed themselves at the present time to a policy of neutrality would be sacrificing their future security for an immediate advantage. The encirclement of Europe by hostile countries is still a possibility. The fact that it may occur under the direction of China rather than that of the USSR makes no fundamental difference.

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IV. WHAT FORM CAN THE ALLIANCE TAKE TOMORROW?

The Atlantic Alliance should not be content, in my view, to continue to be, as it was twenty years ago, a union of countries which have joined forces to defend themselves against possible aggression, but should become a union of countries which come together to seek solutions to the major world problems of the present time: the survival of a democratic society, its economic and social development and the assistance to be given to the emergent countries.

The most important fact is that all the members of the Alliance believe that it must continue. Most, if not all, say that it must continue after 1969. What the governments are looking for are the deep-seated reasons for their decisions. These reasons must be understood and accepted by the general public which no longer seems to have the same fears as in 1949 and which, in its desire for better relations with the Communist countries of the Eastern bloc, is anxious that the Alliance should not constitute an obstacle.

The fundamental reason for the governments' belief probably lies in military considerations and the realisation that every country of the Alliance, with the exception of the

United States, is incapable of defending itself effectively if it has to rely on its own forces. This is the conclusion that will very probably be reached by Sub-Groups Nos. 1 and 3. However, there is a deep-seated desire to justify the existence of the Alliance by other than military considerations. These are what Sub-Group No. 2 must put into words.

Therefore, assuming that, despite the détente, the Atlantic Alliance is still the only right answer to the problems raised today by the relative strengths of the military forces in Europe, we should try to make it clear what the Alliance demands from the political stand-point and how it can contribute to the consolidation of peace.

To this end, it may be of some help to draw a distinction between the short- or medium-term justifications for the existence of the Alliance and the long-term possibilities for its development.

A. The continued existence of the Alliance depends on a common and not merely concerted, policy on the problems raised by the reunification of Germany and the status of Berlin.

It is highly desirable that the Germans should themselves define the areas of negotiation in which they plan to pursue their efforts to achieve their reunification and that the members of the Alliance confirm their readiness to give them their support and do what they can to assist the Germans in following the path chosen by common accord.

Divergencies of views on German policy would speedily bring the Atlantic Alliance to an end.

B. The NATO countries must work out a common policy on disarmament and on security and defence problems.

It seems advisable to take stock of what has been done in this field and, in putting forward proposals, to take account of the situation as it is seen to stand today.

It should be possible, with an effort of imagination, to suggest new ideas which might prove to be so many stepping-stones towards disarmament. The slightest progress in this direction would be welcomed by public opinion.

The important thing is to preserve the closest cohesion between the members of the Alliance. The controversy over the non-proliferation treaty shows how essential it is to adhere to a concerted policy.

C. It is within the Atlantic Alliance that general rules for relations with the USSR and the European Communist countries should be laid down.

As regards their application, each country must undoubtedly be left some latitude, but it should keep its NATO partners continually briefed on the actions it decides to take. In these matters, the North Atlantic Council should be a kind of "clearing house" ensuring that the new ideas can be examined and discussed at any time.

D. The fact must be highlighted that co-ordinated relations between two groups of powers are much more effective than those which might be established with one another by some twenty countries acting individually. A settled scheme of things in Europe will not be created by adding one bilateral agreement to another. It will be achieved much more surely through a policy applied by groups of countries acting together. It is in this way that true equilibrium can be established for the common good. The days of individual action are over. The time has come for collective action.

E. It is within the Atlantic Alliance that the guidelines for a common policy towards the emergent countries should be laid down.

So far, this idea has always been rejected. The Atlantic Alliance includes nearly all the countries that could do something positive in this field. Logically, they should co-ordinate their intentions, leaving of course the implementation of the broad directives to other organizations.

F. It is only within the Atlantic Alliance that the countries of Europe can hope to influence the policy of the United States.

Ideally, of course, Europe should be able to speak with one voice within the Alliance. The implications of this will be discussed later in this paper. Until Europe can act as one unit, some account could probably be taken of the "fact of Europe" by giving the European countries of the Alliance a broader measure of joint responsibility in the field of defence and more particularly in regard to their nuclear defence.

Sub-Group No. 4 will be asked to give its opinion on the difficult, but vital question of the extent to which political consultation between NATO members should cover parts of the world lying outside the geographical area defined by the Washington Treaty. No one attempting to determine what the short- or medium-term tasks of the Alliance should be can afford to disregard this problem.

It now only remains to consider the long-term possibilities for the Alliance.

We must take account of the psychological change in Europe. In 1949, she was poor and apprehensive. In 1967, her fears have been allayed, perhaps too well, and she is rich.

Part of European opinion is suffering from an inferiority or frustration complex in regard to the United States. Its spokesmen complain that this country plays an unduly dominant rôle within the Alliance. They appear to feel that the freedom of action and political independence of the European countries are hampered by the overwhelming power of their American partner.

Personally, although I am aware of this admittedly prevalent feeling, I cannot share these views.

Within the geographical area covered by the Treaty, I cannot call to mind any political or military course of action imposed by the United States on the other NATO member countries, nor can I remember any occasion on which a move towards a rapprochement with the USSR was prevented by the United States.

Within the geographical area covered by the Alliance, international policy has always been pursued by the countries concerned in perfect unison.

The same cannot be said of the policy pursued outside the geographical area of the Treaty. In several important matters, the United States has acted alone and sometimes contrary to the wishes of its western allies. This cannot be denied and it is a threat to the cohesion of the Alliance, but it must be admitted that by their protests the European countries are passing judgment on their own weakness. It is because their partnership no longer counts in the solution of world problems that this situation is possible.

The remedy is not, of course, for each country to withdraw into an antiquated form of nationalism and an illusory attitude of neutrality.

The only remedy for the European countries is to unite so that they can speak with authority.

The long-term future of the Atlantic Alliance depends on the progress which will be made towards the unification of Europe. This is why the question whether or not the United Kingdom will become a member of the Common Market is of paramount importance.

The course logic dictates to those who wish to see Europe play a more significant rôle tomorrow than today, is to aim first at establishing Europe on the broadest possible basis and then to bring this new Europe to follow the example of the United States and the USSR in shouldering world-wide responsibilities.

Europe of the Six, although it is a major economic entity, cannot carry any weight as a political force between the USSR and the English-speaking world.

On the other hand, Europe of the Six, plus the United Kingdom and such other countries as might join the Common Market, by going beyond an economic union and by making a reality of the political goals implicitly in the Rome Treaty, would become, within the Atlantic Alliance, a partner worthy of the United States and one of the great forces capable of influencing world politics.

If this were to be achieved in Europe, the work of the Alliance would be profoundly affected. In the present circumstances, the path seems to be beset with difficulties, not because of the technical problems, all of which can be overcome if the political will to do so exists, but because a united Europe is visualised in some circles as a third force instead of an element of the Atlantic Alliance.

As long as this fundamental divergency of views exists, no real progress can be made.