

Référence SG/67/166

2nd May, 1967.

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To: Secretaries of all Delegations  
From: Directeur du Cabinet du Secrétaire Général

Special Group on the Future Tasks of the Alliance

Sub-Group 2: Inter-Allied Relations

I am enclosing, for circulation to interested members of your Delegation, copies of a paper giving some preliminary observations of the Secretary General on the Questionnaire of Sub-Group 2, dated 18th April 1967.

( A French translation will be sent very soon to those Delegations who normally receive documents in this language. )

enclosed.

26th April, 1967

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Some preliminary observations on the  
Questionnaire of Sub-Group 2

SECTION II

1. This section considers the basis and the unity of the Alliance and contains very far-reaching questions. In particular, the questions try to define the real character of the Atlantic Alliance; whether it is purely military, whether it has a political character, and whether it leads necessarily towards a community as stated in the report of the Three Wise Men. In my opinion the Atlantic Alliance was certainly established in order to resist the Russian threat which, at that time, appeared both military and political. The military threat, after the Berlin blockade and before NATO could establish a defensive set-up, appeared to be paramount. But, of course, even in those early days it was realised that our Alliance could not be confined to the worst case, that is, an armed attack. Articles II, IV and IX of the Treaty bear witness to the political will of the contracting parties to establish a political solidarity. In considering this group of questions, and especially questions 5 - 8, I would observe that the political threat to the common interests of the Atlantic Alliance is constituted by the foreign policy of Soviet Russia, more than by international communism. Of course, Soviet Russia makes full use of the ideological weapon, but this one is instrumental to her foreign policy and, for my part, I should put less emphasis on the ideological basis of the Alliance. As a hypothesis, if Soviet Russia were no longer communist, I think that the interests of Russia and of the Western world would still be in contrast to each other.

2. As far as the development of an Atlantic Community is concerned, I think that the concept indicated by the report of the Three Wise Men reflects a long-term objective, whose implementation does not seem to me to be of immediate political interest.

3. Questions 9 - 13 consider the political solidarity of the Alliance and the link between the Alliance and the Organization. I agree that Article IX of the Treaty, which is the source of the Organization, is a key one. The creation of the Council is proof of the will of the parties to act from a common political basis. In this framework I do not think that the problem of the military organization is so relevant, especially nowadays.

4. As far as question 14 is concerned, I would reply in the affirmative, but to do so I do not think it is necessary to agree with the assumptions in this question. In any case, to avoid the dangerous situation which is pointed out in question 14, I think that the allied countries should take an engagement not to avail themselves of the withdrawal clause; if they should wish to do so, it should only be for very serious political reasons, and only after full and timely political consultation.

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SECTION III

5. In general, I think that even without military integration, there is a case for strengthening the political ties between the allied countries. The political unity of the Alliance is even more necessary at the moment in which there is a trend towards detente and in which the Soviet Union has more possibilities to make political and diplomatic manoeuvres aiming at splitting the Alliance. In this respect, I would reply strongly in the negative to the question put at No. 20, and I would add that it is all the more so after the accession of the Federal Republic of Germany to the Atlantic Alliance through the Paris Protocols and the Resolution of Association of 1954 - 1955.

6. I think that it is right to raise the issue of consultation in the sub-group, for the reasons I have outlined in point 5. In any case, we are now facing the practical problem of consultation leading to a common basic attitude towards the very problems of the Alliance, that is, East-West relations and the settlement of the Central European question. It is certainly true, as it is pointed out in question 26, that in the past it was mainly the problems outside the NATO area which caused difficulties to the Alliance. In the present diplomatic phase, however, issues like possible agreements with the Soviet Union and the non-proliferation treaty are those which may cause more serious difficulties to the Alliance.

7. I would be very doubtful about replying in the affirmative to question 27, while I have doubts whether one can extend consultation without parallel commitments. In any case, an exchange of information on issues for which not all the allied countries have commitments is more than welcome, but it could not be defined as true consultation.

SECTIONS IV & V

8. In this section of questions I would limit myself to few observations. There is no doubt that the perspective will change according to the kind of united Europe, if any, we may have. At the same time, I think that in our Alliance we must leave the issue of European unity to the Europeans. The Alliance as such cannot solve the European problems, neither can prejudge them. All aspects of a possible process towards European unification should be left to the Europeans. In this respect, the signing of a treaty of non-proliferation is certainly important, but such a treaty would not basically change the position of Europe within the Alliance as there are two European nuclear powers. It might rather be said that such a treaty would make the process of European unification more difficult, but this has little to do with the relations between a united Europe and the other member countries of the Alliance.

9. As far as the two last questions are concerned, Nos. 38 and 39, I think that the unification of Europe is conceivable and desirable, even if it is not foreseen for the immediate future. On the other hand, it is not advanced enough to permit the assessment of any consequences of it for the Alliance.

10. I think that it should be clear that when we talk of a united Europe, we are talking of a united Western Europe. Any misunderstanding on this subject would be dangerous and raise a particularly important issue which is widely exploited by the Soviet Union. They are trying to advance the idea of a Europe with no differentiation between the Western and Eastern countries, which they sometimes call a pan-Europe in this sense. Such a Europe would be conceived as an entity in itself, severed from, and therefore in opposition to, the United States. This would mean, of course, the end of the Atlantic Alliance, which is a bridge between the United States and Canada, and Western Europe. It would send back American forces and subtract all significance from the United States and Canadian guarantee if they were transformed in a general guarantee to all European countries for mutual respect. On the contrary, if this idea of Europe were fostered, the bridge would collapse and Europe would remain under the practical domination of the country which is by far the strongest, that is, the Soviet Union, which in turn might choose her allies amongst the European countries in order to isolate those which she wants to press or to lure away. It is the same idea which is behind the suggestion for a European security pact, which would practically take the place of the existing alliances, styled as blocs in a derogatory way. I believe this theme should be carefully considered in Sub-Group 2 as one of the essential subjects of its discussions.

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