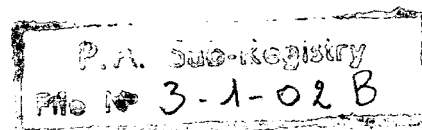


25 October 1967

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Special Group. /67/2

NATO CONFIDENTIAL

To: Secretary General
 c.c. Deputy Secretary General
 — Assistant Secretary General/Political Affairs

From: Deputy Executive Secretary

Summary Record of a Private Meeting of Permanent
 Representatives held on Wednesday, 25th October, at 3.30.m.

PREPARATION OF THE MEETING OF THE SPECIAL GROUP ON 7TH NOVEMBER, 1967

The CHAIRMAN said that this meeting had been called to have a preliminary discussion at this stage; the stage of direct governmental responsibility which does not mean that governmental positions should be frozen now. He expected these positions to be better defined at the meeting of 7th November and that is why he had called this discussion a preliminary one.

2. He then asked how this preliminary discussion should proceed. In his opinion he thought it useful to use what had been done as a starting point as it would hardly be possible to resume discussion from scratch. At the same time he thought methods should be avoided which may present the disadvantage of emphasising divergencies, even if from a logical point of view, they appeared plausible. Thus, he thought, it would be practical to identify the main questions which arose through past work.

3. Which this starting point should be, he preferred should be considered by the Group. There was a summary which had the great advantage of having no status, of quoting no source and of committing no-one. He did not wish to prejudice the issue and he preferred that Representatives open the discussion and indicate from which point and how they would prefer to start it without any commitment at this stage on any point.

4. The UNITED KINGDOM REPRESENTATIVE stated that both the Ministerial mandate to the Special Group and the build-up of public expectation call for a substantial result at the December Ministerial Meeting. On the other hand, it would not be necessary to provide answers to all questions by then. In fact, some areas would clearly have to be studied further (e.g. European Security and Arms Control). The report to Ministers should contain suggestions for the relevant part of the Communiqué.

5. He felt the Special Group should base its work, for practical reasons, on the "resumé" (PO/67/770) which set out the questions in a useful manner, be it too categorical in some instances. Therefore, some changes would be appropriate and he was prepared to circulate some suggestions to illustrate his remarks.

6. The TURKISH REPRESENTATIVE said he wondered whether to amend the "resumé" would not mean to change its present nature of a non-committal paper.

7. The UNITED KINGDOM REPRESENTATIVE considered that it would be reasonable to take this necessary step now.

8. The DANISH REPRESENTATIVE reiterated his remarks of the previous meeting concerning the importance of substantial results at the Ministerial Meeting. He supported his Canadian colleague's view equally stated at the Group's previous meeting, that the report to Ministers would not terminate the exercise but only mark a first phase of a continuing process. He shared his United Kingdom colleague's remarks on the rigidity of some of the statements contained in PO/67/770.

9. The FRENCH REPRESENTATIVE expressed doubts as to the nature of PO/67/770 while admitting that it would mean a problem if there would be no useful starting point.

10. The TURKISH REPRESENTATIVE felt that there were now two options for a starting point: (a) an amended resumé or (b) the four Rapporteurs' reports. He suggested that it might facilitate the search for an acceptable procedure if difficulties could be stated frankly.

11. The UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE wondered whether there was not a third option somewhere between the two put forward by his Turkish colleague; e.g. to use the gist of PO/67/770, namely its systematic sequence of points treated in the four reports, to permit for an orderly discussion on 7th November. There was no need to accept PO/67/770 as the starting basis for a drafting exercise.

12. He felt the report for Ministers should be tackled after the meeting of 7th November.

13. The FRENCH REPRESENTATIVE thought that he could accept a paper with a systematic sequence of points as an instrument to prepare discussions of 7th November meeting.

14. The DANISH REPRESENTATIVE supported the proposal of his United States colleague.

15. The NETHERLANDS REPRESENTATIVE stressed that in the light of the need for a substantial result at the Ministerial Meeting, differences of views had to be overcome. Like his Turkish colleague, he favoured, to this end, frank statements on what appeared unacceptable but also on what appeared acceptable.

16. The BELGIAN REPRESENTATIVE suggested a list of points to be drafted by the International Staff. Concerning governmental comments on such points, he thought they would best be obtained after the 7th November. In this way it could be avoided that the Special Group would discuss substance rather than procedure.

17. The CHAIRMAN invited further views on the questions of the list of points for discussion and also on the question of whether areas of agreement and disagreement should be identified at this stage.

18. The TURKISH REPRESENTATIVE thought that to identify agreed versus unagreed points would lead to discussion on substance. He sympathised with the proposal made by his Belgian colleague for a list to be drafted by the Secretariat but wondered whether it would be possible to draft a list substantially different from the one represented in PO/67/770.

19. The GERMAN REPRESENTATIVE ^{stressed} ~~wondered whether~~ the need to agree on a report for the December Ministerial Meeting ^{which} would reduce, not increase, difficulties. A list of points might usefully be more concentrated than PO/67/770; on the other hand, he would not object to an early start in identifying cautiously areas of agreement or disagreement.

20. The CANADIAN REPRESENTATIVE also suggested a list of points to be drafted by the Secretariat which had been represented at all meetings.

21. The ITALIAN REPRESENTATIVE, referring to the Chairman's remark that it would be difficult to ignore the work done so far by the Rapporteurs, saw no need to be embarrassed by the documents they had produced. He could agree to prepare the meeting of 7th November, only concerning procedure. He did not think it likely that PO/67/770 could be amended to a point where it would suit all.

22. The CANADIAN REPRESENTATIVE replying to a question by the Chairman, stated that the secretarial list should not aim at identifying areas of agreement and disagreement.

23. The BELGIAN REPRESENTATIVE supported this line of thought. In the light of the fact that Representatives in the Sub-Groups had usually spoken in a personal capacity, it would not be possible to conclude from Sub-Groups ^(discussions) what the positions of governments themselves actually were.

24. The FRENCH REPRESENTATIVE explained by means of an example why he was unable to accept either the four reports or PO/67/770 as a starting point for any discussion. A secretarial list, indicating areas of agreement and disagreement might represent a way out of this difficulty.

25. The NETHERLANDS REPRESENTATIVE warned against giving an impossible task to the International Staff at a time when the ground had not been sufficiently cleared. He hoped that the statement of his French colleague was not meant to question the mandate given to the Council by Ministers(1) to "examine ways of improving consultation within the Alliance...". This basic aim should not be removed from the objectives of the Harmel Study.

26. The TURKISH REPRESENTATIVE pointed out that following the non-committal phase where the participants in this study had been free to express personal thought, it was the phase of governmental position, that was now beginning. He did not seriously consider a working method that would leave completely aside the study work done so far.

27. The DANISH REPRESENTATIVE shared the views of his Netherlands colleague that to suggest a list to be drafted by the International Staff would mean to ask for an impossible thing on unacceptable grounds. Referring to the statements of the French and Netherlands Representatives, he thought that the Ministerial mandate was not interpreted by his authorities as leading towards a hammering out in Council of a common policy for all members of the Alliance. He supported the German proposal to summarize PC/67/770.

28. The NORWEGIAN REPRESENTATIVE stated that in his view, preparation for the meeting of 7th November would imply discussion on substance. Not wishing to minimize the difficulties lying in such a course, he was convinced that it would be easier to start early and in the present forum rather than at a higher level and later.

29. The UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE pleaded to confine the preparation of the meeting of 7th November to creating the procedural conditions for an exchange of views on substance. Referring to his French colleague's misgiving, he said that he too was of the opinion that it was not the task of the Council to discuss national policies. On the other hand, this was not expressed in PC/67/770. The meeting of the Special Group should, in his view, bring about such clarifications. He saw difficulties for the International Staff to produce a useful paper before governmental views had been made known, which would happen on 7th November.

30. The UNITED KINGDOM REPRESENTATIVE also believed that the purpose of the forthcoming discussion could best be described as a search for acceptable language.

31. The CHAIRMAN considered that progress in this delicate question would require two things:

- (a) the meeting of 7th November should allow for a discussion of substance. It was not possible to ignore the work done so far, including the documents. This was not irreconcilable with the fact that some wanted to refer to existing documents while others did not wish to do so. In his view, everyone was free to refer or not to refer as he pleased. The same would be true for any additional paper that might be drafted between now and then;

(b) while there did not seem to be agreement on the best date to begin a discussion of substance, there was obviously a consensus that a list of *problems to be discussed* ~~items~~ would facilitate such a discussion but obstacles to a discussion of substance might prove to be too high at this stage.

32. The GERMAN REPRESENTATIVE associated himself with the United Kingdom view that it would be possible to find acceptable language.

33. The UNITED KINGDOM REPRESENTATIVE felt that this should particularly be true for an acceptable definition of "consultation".

34. The NETHERLANDS REPRESENTATIVE shared the views of those that would not undertake to have the list also identify areas of agreement and disagreement. That task should be left to the meeting of 7th November.

35. The TURKISH REPRESENTATIVE showed himself impressed by his German and United Kingdom colleagues' confidence that an acceptable language could be found. In any event such language would eventually have to find its way into a paper in order to register the results of the exercise.

36. The DANISH REPRESENTATIVE considered that the time was not yet ripe to tackle the language and that it would, therefore, be wise to confine this phase to enumerate the items for the discussion in a list.

37. The CHAIRMAN recalled the generally agreed aim to present some accepted results in December. There seemed to be a majority in favour of starting the substantial discussion only on 7th November. At that discussion everyone should feel free to refer or not to refer to existing documents. Concerning the list the International Staff was asked to set up, he wondered whether it should be submitted to Permanent Representatives for their approval, which time might make difficult, or whether the list should be introduced directly into the meeting of 7th November.

38. Concluding a short discussion on this point, he said he would circulate the list by Tuesday, 31st October, if possible. If this list would, in the view of any of the Permanent Representatives call for a discussion, he proposed the date of Friday, 3rd November at 10.00 a.m. for such a discussion.

39. PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVES:

accepted these proposals by the Chairman.

Fritz C. Menne
Fritz C. MENNE

38. The CANADIAN REPRESENTATIVE raised the question that the document should not merely be a list of subjects but it should contain a substantial explanation of the problem to be solved. The CHAIRMAN agreed with this and said that the list should be objective and also correspond to the proposal of the German Representative, that is, it should be a kind of "summary of the Ditchley summary", presented in an impartial form.