

NORTH ATLANTIC COUNCIL

CONSEIL DE L'ATLANTIQUE NORD

NATO UNCLASSIFIED

and

PUBLIC DISCLOSED

~~TOP SECRET~~

September 17, 1949

C/IR/1

NORTH ATLANTIC COUNCIL**SECRET**

First Session

Washington, September 17, 1949

Approved Summary Minutes

MR. ACHESON welcomed the representatives of the Parties to Washington and noted that the first session of the Council was being held in the same room in which the Treaty had been finally adopted some months previously. He observed that since that time all the legislative bodies of the Parties had ratified the Treaty in an impressive manner, the most impressive being Canada, where the Parliament was unanimous.

He reported that the United States as depository government for the North Atlantic Treaty had registered it with the United Nations. He thought that act itself symbolised the underlying meaning of the Treaty, since the Treaty was in accordance with the Charter and sought the same objective of the Charter - the preservation of peace.

MR. ACHESON thought that the Council, in working out the organisation under the Treaty, should be guided by two principles. First, the machinery should be as simple as possible and the organisation should not be multiplied merely for the purpose of setting up many committees. He knew that it would be much appreciated in the United States if the organisation were kept as simple as possible. Secondly, the machinery should be businesslike and should reflect underlying realities. This was important because the character of the Treaty being of a nature to prevent war and preserve peace had already had a beneficial effect. The effect would be even greater if it was made clear that the Treaty organisation was to be businesslike, determined, and effective.

He noted that the first item on the agenda was the election of a provisional chairman and asked for nominations.

MR. BEVIN proposed that the Council invite Mr. Acheson to be the provisional chairman.

MR. SCHUMAN said that the Council could only approve this proposal.

There being no objections, Mr. Acheson was elected provisional chairman.

MR. ACHESON drew attention to the agenda suggested and asked for comments. There being no objections, the suggested agenda was adopted.

/He

~~SECRET~~

2.

~~TOP SECRET~~

He then proceeded to the next item on the agenda - consideration of the "Report of the Working Group on Organisation". It was agreed that the Report should be considered by sections tentatively, and that its adoption should be considered after the study of each section was completed.

Section I, entitled "Organisation" was tentatively approved.

Section II, entitled "Council" was tentatively approved.

Section III, entitled "Defence Committee" was tentatively approved.

Section IV, entitled "Military Committee" was tentatively approved.

Section V, entitled "Standing Group" was then considered.

MR. STIKKER referred to the paragraph entitled "Terms of Reference" and the words therein which read, "To achieve the unified defence of the North Atlantic area". He asked whether it was understood that the Parties aimed at the defence of the whole of their territories as soon as the forces available made this possible.

MR. ACHESON thought the question was answered by the Treaty itself, the purpose being to maintain the security of the whole area covered by the Treaty and to restore the security of that area, or any part of it, should it be disturbed. He thought that the answer to Mr. Stikker's question was "Yes".

MR. LANGE referred to Article 6 of the Treaty and read as follows: "For the purpose of Article 5 an armed attack on one or more of the Parties is deemed to include an armed attack on the territory of any of the Parties in Europe or North America, on the Algerian Departments of France, on the occupation forces of any Party in Europe, on the islands under the jurisdiction of any Party in the North Atlantic area north of the Tropic of Cancer or on the vessels or aircraft in this area of any of the Parties". He thought that these words were very clear with respect to the question posed by Mr. Stikker.

MR. CAEIRO DA MATTA spoke with reference to the composition of the Standing Group, which had given rise to a reservation on the part of Portugal in the Report of the Working Group. The reservation concerned a question which was essential in the view of the Portuguese Government, and it desired that its position be expressed.

He expressed appreciation for the work accomplished by the Working Group in preparing the report which had been submitted and which was a remarkable document that bore witness to the spirit of cooperation which inspired the Parties.

/The

2.

SECRET

3.

~~TOP SECRET~~

The Portuguese reservation was based on a question of principle, the actual principle of participation of the interested Parties in an organisation called upon to represent them. The Standing Group had first been presented as an agency for coordination and transmission. That initial concept had undergone a certain evolution in the course of the preliminary work, but in spite of some progress made in the sense of defining and limiting its functions, the Standing Group might nonetheless be called upon to play too considerable a directing role, of an importance that could not be ignored. All present were representatives of the Parties to the Treaty, yet in the Standing Group there was room for only three countries designated in advance. He thought it clear that in agreeing to permanent representation by those three countries consideration was given to their role in the Treaty, but the principle of representation for all the other countries was not assured. The idea of the participation of two of the other Parties would, in the opinion of the Portuguese Government, be an acceptable formula, which should not give rise to any objection, for assuring such representation. His Government had decided that it should present this point of view to the Council; however, his Government would not insist on the acceptance of that formula or of a similar one, if a general agreement were arrived at within the meaning of the report being considered.

MR. ACHESON said that as he understood the statement of Mr. Caeiro da Matta, it was to bring to the attention of the Council the views of his Government and to make clear that if the Council was otherwise unanimous with respect to the report being considered, aside from the view of the Portuguese Government, then that Government would agree with the rest of the Parties and not press its point of view. This understanding was confirmed by Mr. Caeiro da Matta. Mr. Acheson asked if there were any other comments on the section on the "Standing Group". In the absence of comments, he assumed that it had the approval of all the Parties including the Portuguese Government.

MR. ACHESON then asked for comments on Section VI entitled "Regional Planning Groups".

COUNT SFORZA quoted the three paragraphs entitled "Northern European Regional Planning Group", "Western European Regional Planning Group", and "Southern European-Western Mediterranean Regional Planning Group". He suggested that at the end of the paragraph on the Southern European-Western Mediterranean Regional Planning Group it would be most useful, safer, and more complete to insert a paragraph reading as follows: "It is recognised that there are problems which are clearly common to the defence of the areas covered by the three European Regional Planning Groups. It is, therefore, important that arrangements be made by the Defence Committee with a view to ensuring full cooperation between two, or if the need arises, all three groups".

/MR. ACHESON

3.

SECRET

4.

~~TOP SECRET~~

MR. ACHESON thought there was merit in the suggestion made by Count Sforza and asked for the comments of the other representatives. There being no objection, Count Sforza's suggestion was inserted in the Report.

COUNT SFORZA said that since the Report showed that there had been certain Italian reservations he wished to state the Italian point of view because he believed that complete frankness between the Parties was always a good contribution to the common work. He felt it his duty to offer an explanation as to the reasons which stood behind the Italian position, set forth in discussions both before and after his arrival in Washington, concerning the safest way to ensure the full and most fruitful participation of Italy in the Western European Regional Planning Group. The position of the Italian Government had never been prompted by mere reasons of prestige; it was true that Italy's demographic force and geographical position might make it natural for Italy to have a permanent place on the Standing Group, but fully aware of its superior European duties the Italian Government had bowed for the time being to present necessities.

What Italy had wanted was to be in constant contact with the other Parties so that there could occur a constant exchange of views on all problems concerning the organisation of the defence of Italy and its neighbours. The frank conversations which Count Sforza had had with some of the other representatives during the past few days, the results of which were briefly embodied in the paragraph which had been inserted in the Report, had helped to clear a fundamental issue which he thought could be stated in a few words: the organisation being set up was not an end in itself but was a means of achieving an end.

Although for practical purposes it had been deemed desirable to divide the planning functions into different bodies covering different areas, the aim was to attain a common strategic plan which would cover all sectors with a realisation that they were all equally vital from a moral, political, and military point of view. This was the only way to achieve the common ends: preservation of peace and defence against aggression.

With respect to development of joint efforts for the maintenance of peace, Count Sforza thought that none of the statesmen or military leaders who prepared against war should forget for a moment that any future war would be one of a different and much more terrible nature than the last two which had torn Europe and the world. It would be a war to be fought not only with armies, but also with all the moral forces available of all men and women of good will. For this reason, he thought that any step which might result in a feeling of frustration and insecurity on the part of any of the Parties would contain seeds of dangers far greater than any practical inconveniences. He felt that Italy would have done its duty toward all the Parties if it had succeeded in making the solidarity more active and effectual in all sectors.

/MR. ACHESON

4.

SECRET

5.

~~TOP SECRET~~

MR. ACHESON thought that he could say on behalf of all the representatives that at no time in the discussions which had taken place had there been a belief that the views which Count Sforza expressed were based in any way on a desire for prestige. Everyone had known that Count Sforza was making the contribution he felt it was his duty to make to the great effort in which all the Parties were involved. The great and magnificent reputation which Count Sforza had built and maintained through more years than some of the representatives could remember was enough assurance of that. Count Sforza's words would be a constant guide to the work of the Council.

There being no other comments on Section VI, it was tentatively approved.

The Council then passed to the consideration of Section VII.

MR. PEARSON noted that Section VII left it to the Working Group to decide to which agency, the Defence Committee or the Council, it should submit its recommendations. He was not clear as to the meaning of that provision.

MR. ACHESON explained that a desire to have the Working Group report to whichever body met first had been the basis for this provision.

MR. PEARSON wondered if the Defence Committee's action on the recommendations would constitute final approval or would they be submitted to the Defence Committee and then to the Council for final approval.

MR. ACHESON thought that final decision would rest with the Council. However, if unanimity were obtained on working arrangements, they could tentatively be put into effect before final approval by the Council. This explanation was satisfactory to Mr. Pearson.

In the absence of further comments, Section VII was approved and the Council turned to consideration of Section VIII.

Regarding Section VIII, MR. PEARSON spoke with reference to any organisation which might be set up under Article 9 to study the importance of economic and financial factors in the development and implementation of military plans for the defence of the North Atlantic area. This had been of some concern to the Canadian Government, which was anxious that any position taken at this time by the Council should not exclude or prejudice at some time in the future the establishment of economic and financial machinery required in the implementation of articles in the Treaty other than Articles 3 and 5. He was not suggesting that such machinery was required at the present time, but he thought that the Council would be well advised to make certain that the establishment of such machinery in the future should not be precluded if it were considered desirable.

/His

5.

DECLASSIFIED - PUBLIC DISCLOSURE / DECLASSIFIE - MISE EN LECTURE PUBLIQUE

SECRET

~~SECRET~~
~~TOP SECRET~~

6.

His preoccupation on this point was increased by the fact that in the opening paragraph of the Working Group's Report it was stated that the Working Group had been constituted in Washington and had studied the nature of the organisation to be established under Article 9. Article 9 was the only article in the Treaty which dealt with organisation, not only military and defence organisation, but any kind of organisation which might be required under any article of the Treaty. He did not think that the Working Group's Report should be considered as exhaustive or exclusive in relation to any kind of desirable organisation. He assumed that what the Working Group had been doing and doing so very well was considering what the organisation should be with respect to Articles 3 and 5 and not any other. His observations, therefore, were merely directed to the desirability of making quite clear in the Report that nothing had been done which would prevent any other form of organisation which might be required at some future date under some article of the Treaty other than Articles 3 and 5.

MR. SCHUMAN, speaking in the same sense as Mr. Pearson, said that the Council was at the present time implementing Article 9 of the Treaty in relation to Articles 3 and 5. At the same time, it should not be forgotten that there were other and definite provisions under Article 2. It was normal to implement Article 9 with respect to Articles 3 and 5 at first, and to treat later on in a broader sense the economic questions covered by Article 2, in particular the second sentence thereof, which reads, "They will seek to eliminate conflict in their international economic policies and will encourage economic collaboration between any or all of them". He suggested that the Council, at its next meeting, should consider devising a working method for studying these problems.

MR. LANGE thought that there was nothing in the Report which would prevent the Council from going beyond the present stage and setting up at a later date the machinery necessary to implement Article 2. The last paragraph of Section II of the Report read in part, "Additional political bodies shall not be established unless and until experience had demonstrated their need". He thought that meant that additional bodies would have to be established. He agreed with the representatives from Canada and France that Article 2 must not be forgotten and that the Council should proceed at an early date to a consideration of what machinery should be established.

MR. ACHESON thought there was unanimity on the observations of Messieurs Pearson and Schuman that it would be wise and pertinent to engage the attention of the Council on this subject at a later date. He suggested that it be recorded that the Council, as pointed out by Mr. Lange, had not exhausted by its present actions its powers to create additional agencies, but that it had created those agencies thought to be immediately necessary, reserving for the future the consideration of other agencies. (This met the views of Mr. Pearson, Mr. Schuman, Mr. Lange, and the representatives of the other Parties).

/MR. ACHESON

6.

SECRET

SECRET

~~TOP SECRET~~

7.

MR. ACHESON noted that the Council had considered all Sections of the Working Group's Report. It was his understanding that the reservations at the end of the Report could be removed. The Report was unanimously adopted as amended by the suggestion of Count Sforza.

The Council then considered the "Suggested Directive to the Defence Committee". It was amended in the appropriate place by inserting the proposal made by Count Sforza with respect to the Report. As amended, the Directive to the Defence Committee was unanimously adopted.

The Council then considered the "Suggested Directive to the Working Group". It was unanimously adopted without amendment.

There was no other business suggested for the Council's consideration.

The Council then considered the suggested Communiqué. It was amended by inserting in the appropriate place the suggestion made by Count Sforza with respect to the Report. As amended, the Communiqué was unanimously agreed. (The Communiqué was issued September 17, 1949).

There being no further business to come before the Council, the meeting was adjourned at 12 noon.

Departmental Auditorium

Washington, D.C.

DECLASSIFIED - PUBLIC DISCLOSURE / DECLASSIFIED - MISE EN LECTURE PUBLIQUE