

CRISIS MANAGEMENT AND CONSULTATION

Mr. Dean Rusk (U.S.A.)

It will be revealing, I believe, to reflect on the record of the Cuban crisis from the point of view of crisis management. I do not in any sense cite it as an example but simply as a relevant recent experience which has some bearing on NATO conduct in the face of another crisis in another situation. The inter-play of information, communications, decisions, co-ordination and operations within the framework which was quite literally shifting from hour to hour, leads me to believe that crisis management within the Alliance needs urgent attention, including such obvious facilities as the most effective possible communications among governments, because even in a situation where two capitals were playing the central roles, communications between the two, in the normal channels, threatened not to be able to keep up with the pace of events and communications became concentrated on public statements, in the interest, I think of, time primarily.

We do hope that in NATO we can continue to try to improve the effectiveness of our political consultation: and if we have been doing better, that we can do better still. Just as we seek by advance military planning to prepare ourselves to meet sudden acts of aggression, so we can by further advanced political planning create a common foundation of policy which facilitates decisions.

I think we must devote the most serious attention to the problem of adapting the procedures of NATO consultation to two considerations: the foreshortened time scale of modern military technology and the global nature of the Communist threat.

CONSULTATIONS

M. Piccioni (Italie)

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The necessity of strengthening the political aspect of NATO is, as a matter of fact, felt by an increasing number of responsible statesmen of Member States, Senator Fulbright, for example, has recently expounded in Rome some very stimulating ideas about the re-organization of the political side of our Alliance, so as to enable it to better meet the challenge of the next few years. I believe that we should direct our attention to this essential target and I would like to suggest that we examine the possibility of having two more intermediate meetings of the North Atlantic Council at ministerial level, in addition to the present two annual meetings. Unlike the two present meetings these should

be organized so as to allow for a wide and informal exchange of views, with no fixed agenda, no final communiqué, no official speeches and press statements. As a matter of fact, I am afraid that our present meetings, however useful and necessary, do not really allow for a true exchange of views and a deep-going discussion of fundamental problems, owing to material lack of time. I fear also that our two annual meetings are too far apart to follow a rapidly evolving international situation.

M. Schuman (Luxembourg)

Enfin, le caractère indispensable de notre Alliance s'est manifesté une fois de plus. S'il s'agit d'étudier les phases ultérieures de la politique Est-Ouest, et notamment la position ferme et décidée qu'il convient de maintenir en ce qui concerne Berlin et l'Allemagne, je pense que le Conseil Atlantique doit être, plus encore que par le passé, le point de rencontre des idées en provenance de différentes capitales.

M. Spaak (Belgique)

Après chaque crise, lorsque, l'OTAN s'interroge et se demande : est-ce que notre mécanisme d'informations et de consultations est bon ? Et après chaque crise l'OTAN répond : non, il y a de graves lacunes. Ce n'est pas pour renouveler de pénibles souvenirs, mais c'est après la crise de Shez que nous nous sommes posé, la première fois, cette question de savoir si tout allait bien au sein de l'Alliance. Et nous avons eu une excellente idée, nous avons trouvé parmi nous trois sages, et trois sages qui étaient vraiment trois sages, et ils ont fait un excellent rapport, et pendant que M. Rusk parlait ce matin, je feuilletais ce rapport et je me rappelle ce fait que les trois sages avaient donné en 1958 toutes les réponses à toutes les questions que M. Rusk posait.

POLITICAL PLANNING (1)

MR. RUSK (Contd.)

We are reviewing the political attitudes of the West in the ambassadorial group in Washington but the dilemma with respect to political initiatives in the West is a very serious and a very simple one. We have not found the Soviet Union in the last 18 months prepared to think of any solution or any combination of ideas that rested upon the continued presence of the Western forces in West Berlin. But as they have rejected almost any suggestion that does not include that element, the removal of Western forces, we see no possibility of taking the initiative on proposals that remove or weaken the position of Western forces in West Berlin.

Mrs. Luns (Pays-Bas)

Il importe, M. le Président, qu'une consultation au sein de l'OTAN soit à la base de toute activité déployée par nos alliés américains dans leurs contacts avec les Soviétiques. Par conséquent, des consultations approfondies au sein du Conseil Permanent s'imposent afin de déterminer quelle impulsion nouvelle pourrait être donnée aux sondages.

D'autre part, il appartient également au Conseil de mettre au point des mesures politiques appropriées qui permettront à l'Alliance de contrecarrer d'éventuelles actions de la part des Russes. Bien que je reconnaisse pleinement qu'il nous faudra travailler sur des données souvent incomplètes ou incertaines, il me semble nécessaire que cette étude soit plus approfondie que le document qui a été récemment au Conseil par les quatre

En effet, j'étude de plans d'urgence politiques est jusqu'ici restée sensiblement en arrière par rapport aux plans d'urgence militaires. En ce qui concerne ces derniers, il nous semble que nous n'avons pas lieu d'être mécontents. Ces résultats devraient encourager l'OTAN à mettre sur pied des plans d'urgence dans d'autres domaines où l'Union soviétique pourrait créer des situations dangereuses.

Mrs. GREEN (Canada)

To maintain allied solidarity, we must know in advance what courses are open to us, because we cannot be certain precisely what circumstances will have to be faced, we need a catalogue of political plans on which we can draw as circumstances dictate. Just as we have developed such plans in the military and economic spheres,

POLITICAL PLANNING (Suite)Mes Spaak (Belgique)

Il y a un aisonnement - à mon avis purement théorique - qui consiste à dire: "Ce sont les Soviets qui ont créé les ennuis au sujet de Berlin; ils n'avaient pas, il y a quatre ans, soulevé la question de Berlin, peut-être n'en aurait-on jamais parlé. Puisque ce sont eux qui ont soulevé la question, c'est à eux de prendre l'initiative, et nous, il nous faut attendre." Eh bien Messieurs, pour les raisons que j'ai déjà exposées, je crois que cette position purement passive serait une erreur. Je n'ose pas dire que le moment est venu pour nous de prendre une initiative spectaculaire, ou une initiative quelconque, mais je crois qu'il faut nous préparer, qu'il faut savoir exactement ce que nous voulons et surtout qu'il faut être prêts à agir au moment où nous pourrions penser qu'une négociation plus poussée surrait des chances de réussir.

LORD HOME (U.K.)

It is possible that Mr. Khrushchev is finding Berlin rather too hot a potato to hold and he may decide to drop his present attitudes in favour of a modus vivendi. If so, we must be ready and that is why I thought, again, that many of my colleagues were wise to say - and the Dutch Foreign Minister again reminded us - that there are various proposals that we have put forward - proposals concerning the reunification of Germany, proposals concerning an all Berlin solution, proposals concerning a modus vivendi including the internationalisation of the access authority - which ought to be brought up to date and which we ought to have ready and upon which we ought to be agreed in case the Russians should make an approach to us. There must be only one test of a settlement or a modus vivendi on Berlin, and that is it must give to the city as good or better prospect for the future than it has under the present arrangements.

Mes LANGE (Norway)

No less energy should be put into political planning for constructive solutions to the various issues before us, than has been put into planning military or economic counter-measures to meet emergencies. It is of vital importance, as I see it, that we should put ourselves in a position to be able to act quickly and firmly not only in emergencies but that we should equally be able to take rapid and effective initiatives whenever the opportunity presents itself. And in that context I would also mention that whenever we discuss our defence effort, we should also keep in mind the possible political effects of whatever we do in the field on the readiness or willingness, prepare less, of the other side to enter into serious negotiation for the solution of problems that lie before us.

SEPARATE TREATY WITH EST/GERMANY

Mrs GREEN (Canada)

The Permanent Council has, in recent months, already explored a variety of military and economic counter-measures to enable the Alliance to be ready to meet contingencies which might arise from denial of access to Berlin. To my view, however, this is not enough. The Permanent Council should be considering parallel actions of a political or diplomatic nature, which would enable governments of the Alliance to be ready to answer such practical questions as, for example, what should be the nature of their relations with the East German régime, in the event that a separate peace treaty is signed with the Soviet Union, or if a Peace Conference is suddenly called. I am afraid that if either of these steps should be taken by the Russians now, NATO would begin to wonder what to do next, and we do suggest that there should be plenary talks on these particular points. It is not enough to wait until after the event to prepare to react to Soviet initiatives.

ACTIONS DIPLOMATIQUES (ONU)

Mu Luns (Pays-Bas)

+ Par exemple, les différentes possibilités d'un appel aux Nations Unies, si l'on devait avoir recours à celles-ci, méritaient d'être mieux élaborées. Je me permets donc de suggérer que notre réunion ministérielle décide que les plans d'urgence politiques devront dorénavant être étudiés à plus longue échéance.

ENSEIGNEMENTS DE CUBA

Mrs SCHRODER (Allemagne Fédérale)

What prospect results from all this for future developments? It occurs to us that, in the foreseeable future, the Soviets will, in general and with regard to the Berlin problem in particular, proceed with greater caution than up to now. As far as, in particular, the conclusions which one can draw from the Cuban Crisis or the Berlin Problem are concerned, we are not convinced by the often-heard argument that the Soviet reaction in the Cuban Crisis does not offer any indication of the Soviet attitude in the Berlin Crisis, because, so people say, Cuba was far removed from the Soviet Union while Berlin was within easy reach of Soviet weapons.

I do not deny that certain circumstances are different in the two cases. It is for this very reason that we consider it right and proper that NATO should make every effort to continue to strengthen the West's military potential available in Europe. However, it is a feature common to both situations that the Soviets do not want to wage an all-out nuclear war for the sake of limited objectives - which war they wished to avoid altogether because of their own superiority in inter-continental weapons - and that this can prevent the Soviets from taking too serious risks by displaying a determined attitude.

Mrs Green (Canada)

Western and Latin America can solidarity in the Cuban crisis, I think also played a very important part in shaping the Soviet decision to withdraw. In our opinion, it does not necessarily follow that the Soviet Union will react in the same way where their more vital interests are affected, where they are under fewer strategic disadvantages than they were in Cuba. I think particularly of Berlin and of the dangers in attempting to draw precise parallels between these two difficult problems. Nevertheless, the firm response to the threat in Cuba may make the Soviet Union hesitate to challenge vital Western interests in Berlin or elsewhere, or to resort to further threats which might be exposed as empty. Hence the absence of any new Soviet initiatives on Berlin and the caution shown over its threat to sign a separate peace treaty.

LORD HOME (U.K.)

I doubt if the Cuba situation, and I think Mr. Schröder himself said this, if the Cuba situation and the Berlin situation can be equated. Cuba was of vital importance to the United States and of marginal importance to Russia. Berlin is a major problem for both, although I would agree with the Dutch Foreign Minister that Berlin is only, for the Russians, a means to a further end and not an end in itself.

Passages de summing-up de M. Colonna

The proposal was made in this context by several Foreign Ministers that the NATO Council in permanent session should make a new and serious study of Western proposals made in the past concerning Berlin and the German question with a view to bringing them up to date and preparing Western positions for the day when negotiations might become possible. Closely related to this has been the proposal of a more imaginative political contingency planning to parallel and complement the contingency planning in the military and economic fields. I would think that the Permanent Council may well address itself to these problems and to these suggestions.

Concerning the future work of the NATO Council, many of you have expressed views about the development of political consultation. Satisfaction has been expressed by many Ministers with the degree of consultation which we have succeeded in developing. A satisfaction mixed with the demand for further improvement, both in depth and scope. The Council in permanent session will no doubt take this into very serious consideration, bearing in mind the view expressed by several Ministers that the global character of the East/West conflict has created a vital NATO interest in global consultation. Consciousness has also been expressed, however, of the limitations that consultation can have and I may be permitted here to quote the Greek Foreign Minister who said that in a moment of great crisis, he prefers, if need be, action without consultation to consultation without action.

While still on the subject of consultation, I would also remind you of the suggestion made by the Italian Foreign Minister that there should be a further two Ministerial Meetings a year, the additional two, however, being without an Agenda, without a final communiqué and perhaps also without a final summing up. It might be worthwhile to have an exchange of views in the Permanent Council on this interesting proposal.

I would also take this opportunity to remind you of the American Secretary of State's suggestion that the "crisis management" within the Alliance needs reconsideration and this includes the very important problem of communications. Perhaps the United States Government, through its Permanent Representative, will wish to spell out this idea in more detail so that the Permanent Council will be able to pursue this matter.

There have furthermore been two proposals for specific studies to be carried out by NATO, a study of the lessons to be drawn from the Cuban crisis and a study of the reactions of non-aligned countries to the Sino/Indian conflict. I hope that the Council in permanent session will make an early decision as to whether and by which particular body, these two studies should be carried out.