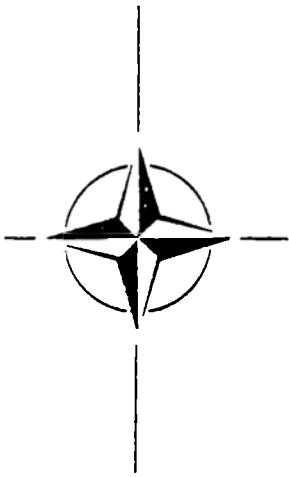


NATO
"HARMEL REPORT"



**THE
FUTURE TASKS
OF THE
ALLIANCE**

Introduction

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THE REPORT AND ITS IMPORTANCE

This report is important in several ways. First of all because it deals with basic questions and principles of the Alliance at a time when there is widespread questioning about alliances, secondly it is important because it is adopted unanimously by all fifteen members of the Alliance, and represents a strong reaffirmation of the aims and purpose of NATO and of the undivided agreement of all members to these principles.

Thirdly, whilst fully recognizing the altered international circumstances since 1949, it reiterates the continued relevance of the twin functions of the Alliance — political and military — to the changed setting. This is important in view of the doubts cast in some quarters on the relevance of NATO to-day, as was indicated above. The Report explicitly sets forth the ultimate political purpose of the Alliance : « to achieve a just and lasting peaceful order in Europe accompanied by appropriate security guarantees ». And finally, it identifies broad areas of major interest to the Alliance for future study.

ADAPTABILITY AND VITALITY OF THE ALLIANCE

This self-examination is not a new undertaking for the Alliance. Similar efforts have been made in the past, notably in 1956 and 1960/61. In 1956 the North Atlantic Council established a Committee composed of the Foreign Ministers of Italy, Canada and Norway — known as the " Three Wise Men " — to advise the Council on ways and means to improve and extend NATO cooperation in non-military fields. This led to a substantial report which produced a degree of reorganization of NATO and marked-

ly improved the means and scope of political consultation among the Allies.

In 1960/61 the Alliance carried out a Long-Term-Planning Exercise which resulted in a report approved by Ministers at their meeting in May 1961. This report examined the future development and role of the Alliance in the political, economic, civil emergency planning, and other fields. It provided a fresh opportunity to review progress and make necessary improvements.

These two examples from the past, together with the new and important study with which we are now confronted show that, throughout its existence, one of the important characteristics of the Alliance of fifteen nations has been its pragmatic methods and its ability to adapt itself to changing conditions. While remaining responsive to the issues of the day NATO does not lose sight of its ultimate objective. The present report is further evidence of the continuing vitality of the Alliance and of its forward-looking qualities.

As the Alliance approaches its 20th anniversary in 1969, certain elements of public opinion increasingly question the relevancy of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization especially with regard to the problems of Europe today. It has been said that peace

is now firmly established; that NATO tends to perpetuate the cold war; and that therefore both NATO and the Warsaw Pact should be disbanded. This view has been fostered by the fact that (thanks to the existence of NATO, incidentally) there has indeed been peace in Europe for over 20 years. The last serious crisis in Europe was over Berlin in 1961-62, some six years ago.

There has also been widespread misunderstanding of the duration of the Alliance as laid down in the North Atlantic Treaty. It has been erroneously but repeatedly stated — even in learned quarters — that in 1969 the Treaty would « expire » and would have to be « re-negotiated ». In reality, article 13 of the North Atlantic Treaty only provides that after twenty years any Party may cease to be a Party one year after its notice of denunciation has been given. It follows from this provision that no time limit has been set for the Alliance and that the Treaty will stay in force as long as it is considered useful. This misunderstanding about the significance of the 1969 date has been seized upon by communist propaganda to exploit the confusion. In their Declaration of April 1967 issued at Karlovy Vary, the leaders of the Communist Parties specifically mentioned 1969 as a target year, stating : « Everything must be done for a wide movement of the peaceful forces of our continent against the renewal or any readaptation of the Atlantic Pact ». Since then Communist Parties and Communist Front organizations in many NATO countries have made a continuous effort to spread the idea that in 1969 the North Atlantic Alliance would be doomed to fall apart.

THE "HARMEL PROPOSAL" AND ITS IMPLEMENTATION

It is against this background that at the meeting of NATO Ministers in December 1966, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Belgium, M. Pierre Harmel, made a proposal for the Alliance to undertake a broad analysis of international developments since the signing of the North Atlantic Treaty in 1949. The purpose of this undertaking was "to determine the influence of such developments on the Alliance and to identify the tasks which lie before it, in order to strengthen the Alliance as a factor of durable peace". (1) The Ministers unanimously endorsed this proposal in a Resolution which was annexed to the Final Communiqué of their meeting.

In the ensuing year the NATO Council carried out the mandate from the Ministers first by creating four sub-groups, each working on a broad subject of interest to the Alliance and each chaired by a Rapporteur of repute and eminently qualified to deal with the specific subject.

(1) Paragraph 13 of the Final Communiqué of the NATO Ministerial Meeting of 16th December, 1966.

THE SUBJECTS AND THE RAPORTEURS

The subjects and the Rapporteurs to whom the Council expressed its thanks were :

1. East-West Relations

Mr. K. SCHÜTZ,
State Secretary,
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
(Federal Republic of Germany)

Mr. J.H.A. WATSON,
Assistant Under Secretary of
State, Foreign Office (U.K.)

2. Inter-allied Relations

M. Paul-Henri SPAAK,
Minister of State (Belgium)

3. General Defence Policy

Mr. Foy KOHLER,
Deputy Under Secretary of State
(U.S.)

4. Relations with other
Countries

Dr. C.L. PATIJN,
Professor in International Political
Relations, University of
Utrecht (Netherlands)

Through a process of several stages of written reports, submitted and debated, an agreement was finally reached by the fifteen Governments on some basic principles, which were expressed in a document. This is the report presented below on "The Future Tasks of the Alliance" which was approved by all the NATO Ministers of Foreign Affairs at their meeting in December 1967.

The Report gives the answers, unanimously agreed by all member states, to a number of questions which may be asked about the future of the Alliance. The answers given below are taken textually from the relevant paragraphs of that document.

Is the Alliance incapable of adapting itself to changing conditions ?

The exercise has shown that the Alliance is a dynamic and vigorous organization which is constantly adapting itself to changing conditions. It also has shown that its future tasks can be handled within the terms of the Treaty by building on the methods and procedures which have proved their value over many years.

Have not conditions changed since 1949 and what has the Alliance achieved ?

Since the North Atlantic Treaty was signed in 1949 the international situation has changed significantly and the political tasks of the Alliance have assumed a new dimension. Amongst other developments, the Alliance has played a major part in stopping Communist expansion in Europe; the USSR has become one of the two world super powers but the Communist world is no longer monolithic; the Soviet doctrine of "peaceful co-existence" has changed the nature of the confrontation with the West but not the basic problems. Although the disparity between the power of the United States and that of the European states remains, Europe has recovered and is on its way towards unity. The process of decolonisation has transformed European relations with the rest of the world; at the same time, major problems have arisen in the relations between developed and developing countries.

The Atlantic Alliance has two main functions. Its first function is to maintain adequate military strength and political solidarity to deter aggression and other forms of pressure and to defend the territory of member countries if aggression should occur. Since its inception, the Alliance has successfully fulfilled this task. But the possibility of a crisis cannot be excluded as long as the central political issues in Europe, first and foremost the German question, remain unsolved. Moreover, the situation of instability and uncertainty still precludes

a balanced reduction of military forces. Under these conditions, the Allies will maintain as necessary, a suitable military capability to assure the balance of forces, thereby creating a climate of stability, security and confidence.

In this climate the Alliance can carry out its second function, to pursue the search for progress towards a more stable relationship in which the underlying political issues can be solved. Military security and a policy of détente are not contradictory but complementary. Collective defence is a stabilising factor in world politics. It is the necessary condition for effective policies directed towards a greater relaxation of tensions. The way to peace and stability in Europe rests in particular on the use of the Alliance constructively in the interest of détente. The participation of the USSR and the USA will be necessary to achieve a settlement of the political problems in Europe.

Does the Alliance provide stability within the Atlantic area ?

From the beginning the Atlantic Alliance has been a co-operative grouping of states sharing the same ideals and with a high degree of common interest. Their cohesion and solidarity provide an element of stability within the Atlantic area.

How far are the allies obliged to submit their policies to collective decision ?

As sovereign states the Allies are not obliged to subordinate their policies to collective decision. The Alliance affords an effective forum and clearing house for the exchange of information and views; thus, each Ally can decide its policy in the light of close knowledge of the problems and objectives of the others. To this end the practice of frank and timely consultations needs to be deepened and improved. Each Ally should play its full part in promoting an improvement in relations with the Soviet Union and the countries of Eastern Europe, bearing in mind that the pursuit of détente must not be allowed to split the Alliance. The chances of success will clearly be greatest if the Allies remain on parallel courses, especially in matters of close concern to them all; their actions will thus be all the more effective.

Could peace in Europe be achieved without a major effort by all concerned and what about the present division of Europe ?

No peaceful order in Europe is possible without a major effort by all concerned. The evolution of Soviet and East European policies gives ground for hope that those governments may eventually come to recognise the advantages to them of collaborating in working towards a peaceful settlement. But no final and stable settlement in Europe is possible without a solution of the German question which lies at the heart of present tensions in Europe. Any such settlement must end the unnatural barriers between Eastern and Western Europe, which are most clearly and cruelly manifested in the division of Germany.

Is the Alliance an obstacle to détente or are the allies directing their energies to a further détente in East-West relations ?

The Allies are resolved to direct their energies to this purpose by realistic measures designed to further a détente in East-West relations. The relaxation of tensions is not the final goal but is part of a long-term process to promote better relations and to foster a European settlement. The ultimate political purpose of the Alliance is to achieve a just and lasting peaceful order in Europe accompanied by appropriate security guarantees.

How should contacts between countries in Eastern and Western Europe be developed ?

Currently, the development of contacts between the countries of Western and Eastern Europe is mainly on a bilateral basis. Certain subjects, of course, require by their very nature a multilateral solution.

How should the problem of German re-unification be dealt with ?

The problem of German reunification and its relationship to a European settlement has normally been dealt with in exchanges between the Soviet Union and the three Western powers having special responsibilities in this field. In the preparation of such exchanges the Federal Republic of Germany has regularly joined the three Western powers in order to reach a common position. The other Allies will continue to have their views considered in timely discussions among the Allies about Western policy on this subject, without in any way impairing the special responsibilities in question.

Do the Allies intend to make suitable preparations for the time when fruitful discussions may be possible between Eastern and Western nations ?

The Allies will examine and review suitable policies designed to achieve a just and stable order in Europe, to overcome the division of Germany and to foster European security. This will be part of a process of active and constant preparation for the time when fruitful discussions of these complex questions may be possible bilaterally or multilaterally between Eastern and Western nations.

What efforts are the NATO allies making in the field of disarmament and possible balanced force reductions ?

The Allies are studying disarmament and practical arms control measures, including the possibility of balanced force reductions. These studies will be intensified. Their active pursuit reflects the will of the Allies to work for an effective détente with the East.

What about the exposed areas ?

The Allies will examine with particular attention the defence problems of the exposed areas e.g. the South-Eastern flank. In this respect the present situation

in the Mediterranean presents special problems, bearing in mind that the current crisis in the Middle-East falls within the responsibilities of the United Nations.

Can the Atlantic Treaty area be treated in isolation from the rest of the world ?

The North Atlantic Treaty area cannot be treated in isolation from the rest of the world. Crises and conflicts arising outside the area may impair its security either directly or by affecting the global balance. Allied countries contribute individually within the United Nations and other international organisations to the maintenance of international peace and security and to the solution of important international problems. In accordance with established usage the Allies, or such of them as wish to do so, will also continue to consult on such problems without commitment and as the case may demand.