

~~It is important to demonstrate to our own peoples and to the world~~ We are convinced that the North Atlantic Alliance is not only still necessary but that it is lively, vigorous and capable of taking on whatever tasks are needed.

The basic objective of the North Atlantic Treaty is to provide effective protection for the territorial integrity, political independence and security of its members. So far this has been successfully achieved by maintaining sufficient military strength to defend the territory of the Allies against the risk of deliberate attack and all hostilities by accident or miscalculation. The Alliance has kept the peace in Europe successfully for 20 years. On present assessment direct aggression in Europe is unlikely; but though the prospect has receded it could easily return. The formidable military capabilities of the Warsaw Pact countries are growing. Furthermore instability outside the Treaty area is a continuing threat to peace, and in today's world conflict is difficult to isolate. Therefore so long as the differences underlying the tensions between East and West have not been resolved, the Alliance requires the full spectrum of military capabilities necessary to reassure those of us who are most exposed to deter aggression and to counter it if necessary.

The 14 allies who maintain an integrated defence

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system are making effective use of their improved defence machine. They are improving their force planning in order to relate their strategy and forces to their capabilities. The recently-created machinery for nuclear planning provides opportunities for the non-nuclear allies to participate more effectively in this work. Consultation on military questions is being ~~improved~~^{strengthened} through the collocation of the Military Committee with the Council and the regular exchange of information in the Situation Centre.

This strategic balance, and the gradual evolution of Soviet policy, have provided a political climate in which the Allies can hope to pursue their aim of establishing their security on a firmer basis by working to remove the causes of tension and eliminate the barriers which now divide Europe and especially Germany. The ultimate political purpose of the Allies in Europe is to achieve a just and lasting peaceful order there, guaranteed by a balanced and viable system of European security.

In effect European security rests on two pillars: first, the need to provide effective defence and deterrent against aggression; and secondly, the need to establish a ~~stable~~ and peaceful relationship within which a new system of security can be constructed.

The Alliance has never been a military organisation alone. It has from the start been a group of like

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minded states with many common political purposes. At a time when the Soviet challenge has changed its form and opportunities are opening up for a genuine relaxation of East and West tension, it is not only appropriate but also essential that the members of the Alliance should play their full part in promoting an improvement of relations between East and West and thus help to achieve a just and lasting political order in Europe.

This purpose can hardly be obtained at a time of tension and massive military confrontation of two blocs. It requires to be pursued in a climate of détente. The Allies have accordingly embarked on a policy of reducing tensions. They will continue to further this policy by realistic measures to reduce the risk of conflict in a number of fields including economic co-operation, arms control and disarmament, and the solution of political questions.

There is room for much progress in economic, technical and cultural co-operation between Eastern and Western Europe. Much is already being done to forge mutual beneficial links in these fields. The study of disarmament and arms control measures, including the possibility of balanced mutual force reductions, also reflects the political will of the Alliance to work for an effective détente with the East. We should press forward with this side of the work.

No substantial progress can be made towards a European settlement without the co-operation of the Soviet Union. Many East European régimes regard Soviet support as necessary for them.

The Soviet and East European governments now also seem to see advantage in a selective relaxation of tensions. But some of their aims differ from ours, and how far they are prepared to go in co-operating with the Allies in establishing a more peaceful European order is still uncertain. Certain forces, notably new economic and technological requirements and the growth of nationalism in Eastern Europe, work in favour of this co-operation, but others operate against it. The evolution of Soviet and East European policies gives some ground for hope that they can gradually be convinced by patient persuasion of the advantages to them in collaborating in a stable settlement. No such settlement is possible without a solution of the German Question, which lies at the heart of present tensions. In the circumstances progress towards a settlement is likely to be slow.

The Allies should continue to work in harmony together for a solution of the German problem and for a balanced and viable system of European security. This calls for active and constant preparation for the time when fruitful East-West discussions of these questions will be possible.

At present we believe that the best progress is likely to be made by bilateral contacts between the countries of Western and Eastern Europe. We are all contributing already to this process. But there is clearly a limit to the progress which can be made

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bilaterally. Many subjects, notably European security and arms control, by their very nature require multi-lateral treatment. We agree that the time for a comprehensive European security conference, designed to solve all the problems in this field, has not yet come. In particular, the Soviet Union does not seem ready to co-operate in producing fruitful results. But we should remain ready to seize any useful opportunity for multi-lateral negotiation and we should actively prepare against that time.

This Alliance is not a single political unit ~~and~~ ~~do not imagine that it ever will be.~~ Its purpose continues to be expressed through the national policies of its member states. But we are bound together by many common political purposes and these purposes are reflected in our individual national policies. They will be all the more clearly reflected if they are based on close and intimate knowledge of each others problems and objectives. This points to the need for member states to take the fullest possible account of the wishes of others and to work towards the highest possible measure of harmonisation with each others policies. This indeed was the message of the report of the Three Wise Men in 1956 and there is nothing new in the practice of close political consultation within the Alliance. Moreover, as far as possible, consultation if it is to be effective should take place at the formative stage of policy and should leave room for adjustments to take account of the views of other Allies.

In an alliance of sovereign states there is no

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obligation to subordinate national policies to collective decision; we certainly should not expect to see any such doctrine established. ~~It is not true that~~ the actions of all the Allies will be more effective and more influential when, particularly in matters of close concern to them all, they act in accordance with a framework of policy which is, so far as possible, agreed by all of them. ~~I do not believe that there need be any division between us on political consultation envisaged in this way.~~

The North Atlantic area cannot be divorced from the rest of the world. Our interests are engaged within that area and outside it. Some of us are more directly concerned than others in different parts of the world. It would not be advisable for the Alliance as such to intervene in conflict situations outside its own area but the actions of one ally, within the area or outside it, inevitably to a greater or lesser degree affect the interests of other allies. The North Atlantic Council continues to provide a means for the Allies to keep themselves constantly informed of the extent of the security interests of each Ally. In some cases it is possible and desirable for the Alliance to consider in advance likely developments and action which can be taken to prevent or limit crises that threaten to endanger the purposes of the Alliance. This is a problem which calls for close consultation and where appropriate for co-operation and mutual assistance.

In this context we should make arrangements to concentrate our political consultation on those parts of the world of particular concern to the Alliance, such as the Mediterranean where recent events are of concern to us all, or China, ^{even} ~~to which reference has been made in the~~

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~~Rapporteurs' reports.~~ We certainly should not regard it as essential for every Ally to take part in discussion of every problem. In the nuclear consultation machinery we have successfully made use of the idea of open-ended groups and this is a useful precedent to follow.

This should form the basis of a programme of work for the Alliance extending over the next few years. We have sought to identify the subjects, such as European security, disarmament and situations in areas affecting our common security, which are most likely to concern us in the coming years. Rather than diffuse the efforts of the Alliance as has sometimes been the tendency in the past, it is on these subjects and on these future tasks that we should now seek to concentrate.