

NORTH ATLANTIC COUNCIL DEPUTIES

CONFIDENTIALDOCUMENT:AC2-D/3 (2nd Revise)ENG. ONLY6th April, 1951.EXCHANGE OF VIEWS ON MATTERS OF COMMON
POLITICAL CONCERN

(Proposal by the Political Working Group)

At their meeting held on 19th March, 1951, the Council Deputies instructed the Political Working Group to study the question of procedure to be followed in future discussions and to put forward proposals for consideration by the Council Deputies (Summary Record D-R(51)22, Item III).

I. Object of Exchange of views on Political Questions

2. Under their terms of reference the Council Deputies are authorized to "exchange views on political matters of common interest within the scope of the Treaty". The Deputies' discussion of political questions should serve the following main purposes:

- (a) to provide an informal means of exchanging information and points of view on political matters of common interest within the scope of the Treaty. Examples of this type of discussion were the Deputies' recent exchanges of views on conditions in Yugoslavia and the satellite states;
- (b) to provide a summary of this exchange of information which will show the points on which there are common views and those on which views differ;
- (c) to provide a channel for inter-governmental consultation on political questions of common concern within the scope of the Treaty. Such questions might either be proposed by agreement of the Deputies themselves, or might be taken up at the request of one or more of the N.A.T. governments. Examples of such consultations are the recent request from the United States Government for an
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expression of views by the other NAT Governments with respect to United States assistance to Yugoslavia, and the discussions on the question of Berlin security. Such consultation might also refer to matters of common concern to NATO as a whole, which might be under discussion elsewhere on a tripartite or quadra-partite basis;

(d) where appropriate, as a result of such consultation, to make recommendations to governments for specific action. An example of this is the resolution which was approved by the Deputies as a result of the discussions on Berlin security.

II. Present Procedure

3. The procedure which has normally been followed in these discussions has consisted of six stages:-

- (a) selection of topic;
- (b) discussion by the Deputies;
- (c) preparation of a draft summary by the Secretariat;
- (d) consideration and amendments of the draft summary by the Working Group;
- (e) consideration of their resulting report by Governments.
- (f) approval, and where appropriate, further discussion by the Deputies.

III. Proposal for revised procedure

The Working Group suggests that the following procedure be followed in the discussion of political questions:

- (a) Choice of questions for discussion.

The Working Group is of the opinion that it is for the Deputies themselves to decide which questions of general policy should be discussed.

- (b) Exact delimitation of questions for discussion.

The Working Group considers that it would frequently be advisable that topics chosen by the Deputies for a subsequent exchange of views should be the subject of a preliminary survey with a view to delimiting in advance the scope of the discussion and bringing out the points worth special attention.

This preliminary survey should normally be entrusted to a Working Group. In appropriate cases, however, the Council Deputies may designate one or several Delegations, or one of the "special assistants" to the Chairman, to undertake this task.

(c) After a convenient lapse of time to enable Deputies to consult their Governments, discussion of the topic by the Council Deputies on the basis of the conclusions of the preliminary survey carried out on the lines described in paragraph (b) above.

(d) Drafting an Agreed Minute on the outcome of the discussion.

This task should normally fall to the Working Group, which should work on the basis of the Draft Minutes prepared by the Secretariat of the Organization, or by one of the "Special assistants" to the Chairman.

(e) Consideration of their resulting report by Governments;

(f) Approval and, where appropriate, further discussion by the Deputies.