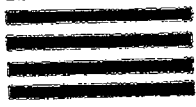
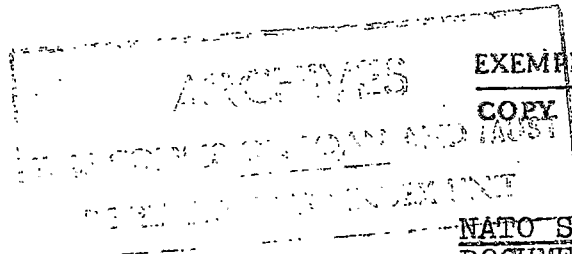


CONSEIL DE L'ATLANTIQUE NORD
NORTH ATLANTIC COUNCIL



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ANNUAL POLITICAL APPRAISAL

SPECIAL REPORT BY THE SECRETARY GENERAL

on

NATO DEFENCE POLICY

I. INTRODUCTORY

At their meeting in Oslo in May 1961 Ministers "requested the Council in Permanent Session as a matter of urgency to continue its examination of defence questions with the advice of the NATO military authorities ... and to develop policy guidelines for NATO defence plans and programmes within the framework of the Political Directive and related agreed military documents". The examination was to have been completed in time for consideration at the December Ministerial Meeting. As instructed, the Council pursued its debates on defence policy through the summer. Discussions while embracing many aspects of the question, tended to concentrate particularly on the rôle and organization of the Shield forces and various points were emphasised such as the need for flexibility, the credibility of the deterrent, the possibility of a graduated deterrent and the balance between conventional and nuclear forces. I endeavoured in a paper circulated informally to delegations on 1st September (PO/61/714) to present what appeared to me to be a general consensus of opinion on the rôle of NATO forces. This paper was found controversial by some delegations and owing to pressure of events in Berlin was never formally discussed in the Council and by the time the Ministers met in December I could do no more than give them a summary of the discussions which had taken place in the Council in the interval since their last meeting.

2. The December meeting itself was the occasion for some interesting and important statements on behalf of member governments - notably by United States and Federal German Ministers - on their respective views on the problems of NATO nuclear and

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non-nuclear defence. While the Ministers came to no definite conclusions, the debate helped to focus attention on some of the major issues facing the Alliance in the defence field and showed very clearly what were the main divergences to be reconciled. It was agreed that the Council in Permanent Session should resume its work on defence policy early in the New Year.

3. As Chairman of the Council I was particularly impressed by the difficulty of making progress with a discussion in which so many different yet inter-connected questions were involved and which was so apt to develop into a vicious circle. As I saw it, there were four main headings on which Council action was required: the control of the use of nuclear weapons; the MRBM requirement; the offer of commitment of Polaris submarines to NATO by the United States; NATO's requirements in conventional forces. It seemed to me that the only way we could hope to get ahead was to try to narrow down the field of discussion and to proceed step by step dealing with one subject at a time. At the same time I felt that we should be wise to avoid becoming too deeply involved in a theoretical discussion of NATO strategy and that we should carry out our examination of the four subjects mentioned on the basis of the existing Political Directive and NATO Strategic Concept, leaving any changes which might ultimately appear desirable in these latter to come out in a pragmatic way.

4. My recommendation, which the Council accepted, was that we should first of all attempt to reach agreement on the problem of the political control of nuclear weapons. It seemed to me that if we could establish methods for the control of the nuclear armoury at present at the disposal of NATO forces, we should both have created the basis on which to build methods of control for any subsequent nuclear weapons which the Alliance might acquire, and removed some of the uncertainties which inhibited consideration of the MRBM requirement. I proposed that without losing sight of the need for a relatively early decision, particularly as regards the latter, we should remit for subsequent consideration the problems raised by the other three questions.

5. My visit to Washington in early February reinforced my view that this was the right way in which to proceed and it encouraged me in the belief that the way to tackle the question of control of nuclear weapons was also step by step.

Briefly, I proposed in my paper NDP/62/2, that the Council proceed by the following stages:

Firstly, the present situation should be clarified by means of a formal assurance - from the United States that they would continue to make available for the Alliance the nuclear weapons adequate in number and kind to meet the needs of NATO defence - and from the United States and the United Kingdom governments that the operational plans of their strategic forces provided for the interdiction of all Soviet missile bases not presently covered by the forces of SACEUR

and SACLANT.

Secondly, with these assurances solidly behind us, we should explore the means of associating all members of the Alliance more closely with the political control over the use of the nuclear weapons now in possession of the forces assigned or earmarked to NATO. In NDP/62/2 I recalled some of the suggestions which have been put forward for the establishment of multilateral political control of what is sometimes known as a multilateral decision making machinery (e.g. decision by a restricted group acting on behalf of the Alliance, decision by the United States if the government of the country attacked so requested and if this request was supported by SACEUR, a system of weighted voting, creation of a NATO nuclear weapons agency). However, foreseeing that it might be difficult to reach agreement on any of these proposals I suggested that, in order to arrive at an early and at least temporary solution, the Council should seek the formal agreement of the United States government that the United States President act for NATO and, in reaching a decision on the use of nuclear weapons in defence of the NATO area, be governed by previously agreed principles or guidelines.

6. The Council agreed to continue its study on these lines and although we were not wholly successful in keeping out of our discussion on the control of nuclear weapons, issues of strategy and the rôle and needs for conventional forces, I am very gratified to be able to present for Ministers' consideration the following account of the progress we have made.

II. AVAILABILITY OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS AND COVERAGE OF TARGETS

(a) Assurances given by the United States and the United Kingdom

7. The United States Government has indicated that the United States will continue to make available for the Alliance nuclear weapons adequate in number and kind to meet the needs of NATO defence. The United States has a comprehensive programme for supplying nuclear weapons or for supporting its own and other countries' forces earmarked for SACEUR and SACLANT. As significant changes occur in the programme, such changes would be notified to its allies through whatever information mechanism is established for analysis and comment at that time as regards the effect on the adequacy of the overall capability at the disposal of the Alliance. The United States further agrees to consult its allies at that time and to take any allied views fully into consideration.

8. The United States Government has further stated its intention to ensure that its retaliatory power should grow faster than the Soviet striking power, and in combination with NATO forces to continue to cover as fully as possible all key elements of the

latter, including MRBM sites, giving equal priority to the installations threatening NATO Europe as to those threatening the United States. To this end action is in progress to increase the capacity of the strategic forces to survive a Soviet nuclear strike and to improve the speed of retaliation. There would at all times be the fullest co-ordination of the strategic forces maintained under national control with the nuclear forces under NATO commanders in order to ensure the most effective utilisation of the sum of the weapons available.

9. The United States Government has indicated that it is willing:

- (i) to co-operate in ensuring that the North Atlantic Council has at its disposal the fullest amount of information compatible with the requirements of security covering, in general terms types, numbers, striking power, deployment and targeting policy of nuclear weapons for the forces assigned or earmarked for assignment to SACEUR and SACLANT.
- (ii) to make appropriate information available with regard to the capabilities and intended plans of the strategic forces.

10. This confirmation of the United States Government's intentions provides a solid assurance -

- (i) that the means are and will continue to be available to provide Europe with an all-round nuclear defence;
- (ii) that the targets of special interest to the European allies which are beyond the range of the weapons currently at the disposal of the NATO forces will be covered as fully as possible;
- (iii) that the United States Government is willing, within the limits imposed by security, to co-operate in providing its NATO allies with all the information they require in order to give them a full insight into the overall problem of the organization and control of nuclear defence.

11. In stating their willingness to provide the aforementioned information and to consult on changes in their programme, for supplying nuclear weapons the United States have taken an important step in the direction of associating their allies with their nuclear defence policy. It is of course evident that such association would not be very meaningful if the United States' NATO allies were not in possession of the requisite knowledge of the United States nuclear capability and the overall plans and general arrangements for its use. Nor without such knowledge and

the possibility of reviewing the changing needs of the military situation, would it be possible for the Alliance to consult about what is the adequate level of nuclear weapons to which paragraph 7 above refers.

12. The United Kingdom has also confirmed that it can associate itself fully with the assurances given by the United States under paragraph 10 (ii) and (iii) above insofar as the United Kingdom strategic forces are concerned. These forces are constituted to cover targets of importance to the defence of Europe generally and to complement in this respect the NATO nuclear strike forces. The United Kingdom Government has further indicated its willingness to give appropriate information within the limits imposed by security about the nuclear capability of its strategic forces.

(b) Sharing of Nuclear Information

13. In light of the United States' and United Kingdom's undertakings, the Council's next task was to create the necessary conditions and machinery for the provision by these countries of the information which had been promised. The essence of the problem was to find a mean between the vital requirement of security and the need for the Council as a whole, and for member countries individually, to have all the information necessary to give them a proper insight into the problem of nuclear defence.

14. Agreement was quickly reached in principle on the proposal made by the United Kingdom that a special body should be created to receive nuclear information, and on the need for special security procedures to be evolved. A decision was accordingly taken on 13th April to set up a NATO Nuclear Committee (see text of Council decision at Annex). It was agreed that the Committee should work out its own functions in greater detail in light of experience, in particular as regards the possible need for establishing special channels for information and local or regional, rather than NATO-wide interest, and the potential rôle of the Committee as a consultative body on certain aspects of NATO nuclear policy.

15. Considerations of security have already played, and doubtless will continue to play an important part in the whole arrangement for the exchange of information on nuclear questions. The Council accordingly agreed to establish - on an interim basis - a special system for the handling of highly classified nuclear information.

III. THE ESTABLISHMENT OF GUIDELINES

16. Since it soon became apparent that none of the various suggestions which had been put forward for the creation of a multilateral decision-making machinery would command unanimous support, the Council turned its attention to the problems involved

in the establishment of guidelines. The suggestion that responsibility for decision be delegated to the United States President did not find acceptance. The Council's efforts were therefore directed to the elaboration of an agreed statement of what action would be necessary on the part of member countries collectively and individually in the various circumstances in which NATO might be faced with a decision to use nuclear weapons.

17. The United States Secretary of State had recalled at the December Ministerial meeting that United States policy in this respect was already the subject of guidelines whose terms were set out in the United States Permanent Representative's statement to the Council on 26th April 1961 (see PO/61/449, paragraph 16). The task facing the Council was therefore to examine the possibility of refining and extending these unilateral guidelines in a form which would be acceptable to all member governments so as to provide a common basis for action in the event of Soviet aggression against NATO.

18. The desirability of reaching such agreement had been enhanced by the indication given by the United States Government that it would be willing to consult its allies, not only about the use in support of NATO of its external strategic forces, but about the use of these forces anywhere.

19. After very thorough debate in the Council, I am able to submit for the approval of Ministers the text contained in paragraph 5 of the conclusions to the present report.

20. Among the various important points which emerged during the discussions leading up to the formulation of the text I have quoted above, special mention should be made of the following. It is generally understood that any decision to use nuclear weapons should be based on an evaluation by the major NATO Commander concerned of the the need for their employment in order to maintain or restore the military situation in the event of a Soviet attack. At the same time it would be within the normal prerogatives of any country which was the victim of such an attack to initiate a request for the use of nuclear weapons for the defence of its territory. It is further generally understood that, conscious as we all must be of the dangers of unlimited nuclear war, the targets against which nuclear weapons would be used should be restricted to those whose destruction was indispensable to the defence of NATO. There is, I believe, general agreement that these guidelines should be regarded as no more and no less than a constructive interpretation of the Political Directive and the Strategic Concept contained in MC 14/2 and 48/2.

21. The nature of the guidelines brings out very clearly that if we are to make consultation in the Council in time of crisis a reality and to ensure that we do not incur delays which could imperil the safety of our forces and of our peoples, there must at all times be the closest communication between Permanent Representatives and their governments. We must be certain that when consultation is necessary that the physical media exist to enable Permanent Representatives to give an immediate expression of their government's views. Finally, I should perhaps note that the Council has turned its attention to problems of military control as set out in MC 95. This document has naturally formed a background to our discussion and I have personally maintained the closest touch with the major NATO Commanders and the Standing Group at all stages.

IV. FUTURE WORK OF THE COUNCIL

22. In concluding this section of my report, it is only right that I should recall that the Permanent Council should now move on as soon as possible to the question of the possible introduction of MRBMs into the NATO armoury and of the build-up and rôle of the conventional forces.

23. As regards MRBMs, time is beginning to press, since we cannot long delay decisions which must be taken very soon if NATO and military planning after 1964 is not to be thrown out of gear. The military authorities, in execution of their responsibility for providing the Council with an assessment of force requirements for 1962-66, have in the Enclosures to document MC 26/4 indicated that there may be a requirement for MRBMs to replace certain elements of the tactical nuclear Air Strike forces - the confirmation of this requirement being subject to further guidance from the Council. Before, however, the Council can have a constructive discussion of this question, it will need to have basic technical information on the characteristics and performance of the weapons under development which would respond to the requirement indicated by the NATO military authorities. I hope this information will be available to the Council in the near future.

24. As regards conventional forces, I also hope that it will be possible to make progress in the coming months. We must clearly examine urgently the means of putting the forward strategy into operation wherever this is attainable, and in particular of overcoming the weaknesses which have hitherto impeded its full implementation in the Central region. In this context we shall have to give very careful consideration to NATO's needs in conventional forces, on which particular emphasis was laid by the United States Secretary of Defence in his statement at the December 1961 Ministerial meeting. This problem is of course closely linked with the Triennial Review now in progress, which will at one and the same time give us an up-to-date picture of member countries' planning over the next years and provide the vehicle through which we can secure progress towards a balanced deterrent embracing nuclear and non-nuclear forces.

V. CONCLUSIONS

25. Against this background I have prepared the following text of conclusions on which Ministers might be invited to agree at the meeting in Athens. Fourteen members of the Alliance have already indicated that they can accept this text, subject only in the case of some members to a preference for some minor amendments in paragraphs 5(b) and (c). The French Permanent Representative has informed the Council that his Government could accept paragraphs 1, 2, 3, 4 and 7, but that they have reservations in regard to paragraphs 5 and 6. Should it not be possible for France to lift these reservations, I would suggest that the Ministers could agree on this text on the understanding that these guidelines and the undertaking to consult in NATO would apply only to all those countries having effective responsibility for a decision to authorise the use of nuclear weapons and willing to accept these conclusions as a whole. It would naturally be open to France to participate in any consultation initiated by one of her Allies.

(1) That the Alliance has received the most satisfactory assurances, first, that the United States will continue to make available for the Alliance nuclear weapons adequate in number and kind to meet the needs of NATO defence; and second, that the United States and the United Kingdom strategic forces will continue to cover as fully as possible in combination with NATO forces all key elements of Soviet nuclear striking power, including MRBM sites, giving equal priority to those threatening the mainland of Europe as to those threatening the United States and the United Kingdom.

(2) That the Council welcomes the intention of the United States and United Kingdom Governments to furnish their NATO allies with the fullest amount of information compatible with the requirements of security on the nuclear weapons and external forces referred to in the preceding paragraph, with a view to assisting their allies in obtaining a full insight into the overall problem of the organization and control of NATO nuclear defence.

(3) In order to enable the flow of information to begin, a NATO Nuclear Committee, consisting of the Permanent Representatives, has been established to receive and study on a permanent and systematic basis nuclear information relating to NATO defence. The Committee should give consideration in the light of experience to problems of its own internal organization as well as to the possibility of defining more closely the scope and nature of the information of which it would be the recipient, and of extending its function into the consultative field.

(4) Special security procedures shall be observed for the handling of all documentation of the NATO Nuclear Committee in accordance with rules established by the Permanent Council.

(5) As regards the possible recourse by NATO to nuclear weapons in its self-defence:

(a) in the event of an unmistakable Soviet attack with nuclear weapons in the NATO area, the forces of the Alliance should respond with nuclear weapons on the scale appropriate to the circumstances. The possibilities for consultation in this context are extremely limited.

(b) In the event of a full-scale attack by the Soviet Union with conventional forces, indicating the opening of general hostilities on any sector of the NATO area, the forces of the Alliance should, if necessary, respond with nuclear weapons on the scale appropriate to the circumstances. It is anticipated that time will in this case permit consultation.

(c) In the event of a Soviet attack not fulfilling those conditions described in (a) and (b) above but which threatened the integrity of the forces and the territory attacked and which could not be successfully held with the existing conventional forces, the decision to use nuclear weapons would be subject to prior consultation in the Council.

(6) That the Council notes with deep satisfaction the intention of the United States and United Kingdom Governments to consult with the North Atlantic Council, if time permits, concerning the use of nuclear weapons, anywhere in the world.

(7) That the Council notes with approval the progress made since the Oslo Ministerial Meeting with the development of NATO Defence Policy and urges the Permanent Council to press forward with the examination of the outstanding problems in this field.

(Signed) D. U. STIKKER

CFAN/NATO,
Paris, XVIc.

NATO NUCLEAR COMMITTEEDraft Council Decision

In the light of its discussion in the course of restricted sessions on NATO defence policy, the Council agreed:

- (a) To establish a NATO Nuclear Committee to receive and study on a permanent and systematic basis nuclear information relating to NATO defence. The scope and nature of such information would be defined more precisely in due course as the Committee gains experience.
- (b) That the Committee should operate under special security procedures regarding the handling of information as laid down in C-M(62)50.
- (c) That the Committee should consist of the Permanent Representatives meeting under the chairmanship of the Secretary General assisted as necessary by such members of their respective staffs as provided in the special security procedures referred to in (b).
- (d) That the NATO Nuclear Committee should give further consideration in the light of experience to the desirability of establishing:
 - (i) sub-committees on a geographical or other basis for the handling of special categories of information;
 - (ii) arrangements for the bilateral transmission of detailed information whose wider dissemination would be contrary to the interests of security.
- (e) That the NATO Nuclear Committee should determine, also in the light of experience, to what extent it could usefully assume a consultative rôle as regards the general organization of NATO nuclear defence without prejudice to the responsibilities vested in the North Atlantic Council.