

CONSEIL DE L'ATLANTIQUE NORD
NORTH ATLANTIC COUNCIL

EXEMPLAIRE
COPY

№224

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH/FRENCH
24th June, 1968

NATO SECRET
VERBATIM RECORD
C-VR(68)30, PART II

VERBATIM RECORD

of the

MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

held on

MONDAY 24th JUNE, 1968, at 3.30 p.m.

at the

UNIVERSITY, REYKJAVIK

COMPTE RENDU

de la

SEANCE DU CONSEIL

tenue le

LUNDI 24 JUIN 1968 à 15h30

à

L'UNIVERSITE, REYKJAVIK

NATO SECRET

- I. REVIEW OF THE INTERNATIONAL SITUATION AND OF THE STATE OF THE ALLIANCE
and
II. FOLLOW-UP TO THE REPORT ON FUTURE TASKS OF THE ALLIANCE (contd)

Mr. BROSIO

Gentlemen, may we start again? The first speaker on the list is Mr. Marcel Cadieux.

Mr. CADIEUX

Mr. Chairman, gentlemen,

My Minister, Mr. Sharp, has asked me to convey personally his regrets at his inability to attend this meeting because of the general election which is being held in Canada tomorrow. Having very recently assumed the office of Secretary of State for External Affairs, he had been looking forward to the opportunity which these semi-annual meetings provide to gain understanding of the special concerns of our Allies and to meet the Ministers of the countries with which Canada is most closely associated.

I cannot allow this occasion to pass without a special word of gratitude to our Icelandic hosts for their welcome and their hospitality. I wish that Mr. Sharp were here to express these sentiments because he was born in Winnipeg, which is the centre of the large Icelandic settlement in Canada, and he grew up with close personal ties with our Icelandic community. On behalf of the Canadian Government, I wish to say how much we appreciate being here in Reykjavik.

Since Ministers met last, we have seen striking developments in Europe. They have been both encouraging and disturbing. Most important among them has been the upheaval in Czechoslovakia. Its impact has already been great. We have yet to see how much further the political and psychological shock-waves will spread and what additional effect they will have over the longer term throughout Eastern Europe. But we can certainly take encouragement from the Czechoslovak "democratization", not so much because of the direct benefits it may produce in East-West relations - which are, in any event, still unclear - but because it is a vivid demonstration that the policy of the Western Allies in seeking a relaxation of tensions and in pursuing détente in Europe is bearing fruit.

Without exploring all the elements which contributed to the movement for reform, we can fairly say that such extensive reform as had occurred in Czechoslovakia in 1968 would not have been possible had Western policy been less flexible and forthcoming. It is important to remember it

Mr. CADIEUX (Contd)

could not have been so flexible and forthcoming, or for that matter so sure, had it not been developed on the secure basis of strength provided by the Atlantic Alliance. This concerted approach has created the climate without which change in Czechoslovakia could not have occurred. Nor could it have occurred, in our view, without the new and imaginative German policy towards Eastern Europe.

Among ourselves, then, we can take some credit for a significant success for the cause of reason and normalisation in Europe. Nor should we be surprised by it. If we could not have foreseen exactly what would occur, when and where, an expectation of the sort of evolution in Eastern Europe now observable in Czechoslovakia was always a principal justification for the policies we have adopted.

Equally, we should not be surprised that other developments, which I have described as disturbing, have occurred. These are the negative corollary of progress. Developments as rapid as those of the last six months were bound to evoke a negative reaction.

I have in mind the distinct hardening of Soviet attitudes in recent months, which is attributable partly to the alarm over Czechoslovakia and, to a lesser extent, over events in Rumania and Poland, and perhaps Yugoslavia, partly to fear of their repercussions inside the USSR, and partly to the importunities of an even more apprehensive East German régime.

The Soviet understanding of détente and their approach to it has always, obviously, been very different from ours. They seem to have calculated that, applied selectively, it could be profitable enough for them to accept the attendant risks for their own established positions, domestically and elsewhere in Eastern Europe. However, the pace of events has for the moment out-stripped the ability of the Soviet Union to control them other than by recourse to overt intervention in their affairs. Moreover, the Eastern policy of the Federal Republic of Germany has done much to deprive the USSR of the initiative in Europe.

The general relaxation of tension has set forces free inside and outside the Communist world with which the Soviet leaders and their Allies have found it increasingly difficult to deal. Their reaction over the last eighteen months, as we know, has been largely defensive: to consolidate their alliances, to restore discipline where they could, and to isolate dissentient elements where they could not.

Mr. CADIEUX (Contd)

We may now have to anticipate a hardening of Soviet policy, in part at the instance of Ulbricht, since it has become clear that they were not able to prevent the serious setback which the Czechoslovak developments represent for them. The increasing pressure on access routes to Berlin in which the East German régime appears to enjoy considerable Soviet support, the measure for an even closer integration of the East German and Soviet economies announced after Ulbricht's visit to Moscow in early June and indications which lead us to suspect renewed efforts by the USSR to promote a wider recognition of Pankow all suggest the beginnings of a new turn in Soviet-European policy.

It is clearly too soon to be categorical on this score. It will nevertheless be consistent with the evidence if such a new turn had as an objective to contain more effectively the impact of détente, if not to arrest the process itself for the time being. I am not here concerned whether such a policy - if it exists - can succeed. But we should reckon with the possibility that the course on which we have embarked and which we have followed so successfully during the last few years will become more difficult to maintain in future. That is no reason to abandon it, indeed our success so far should, as I have said, lead us to expect obstacles to be placed in our way. It should also encourage us - and I note with satisfaction that this seems also to be Mr. Brandt's view - to persevere in this successful policy of collective defence, while continuing to search for ways of promoting and expanding the détente to bilateral and other channels. The Federal Government and the three Western Powers, in applying counter-measures in response to the latest East German restrictions on the movement of people and goods in the land and water corridors to Berlin, have been wise to choose limited measures which correspond to the provocation and to maintain a blend of firmness and overall restraint. We believe that about the right balance has been struck and we are ready to play our part in applying the counter-measures.

Against this background it would, I think, be appropriate to turn briefly to the second item on our Agenda and to comment on the studies regarding possible balanced force reductions which have been undertaken as a follow-up of the Harmel Report. Recent developments in Eastern Europe are likely to have made the USSR more negative about responding to an offer to discuss mutual force reductions. I do not think, however, that this turn of events should divert our present programme of studies, which is essentially preparatory. I trust that by December the studies will have progressed to the point where Ministers will find it possible to make decisions as between various possible approaches which are now being examined.

Mr. CADIEUX (Contd)

In the meantime, I believe that there is some value in indicating publicly - both to our peoples and to our adversaries - that our studies are being vigorously pursued and that our interest in the approach of mutual force reductions is genuine.

Accordingly, the Canadian Delegation is pleased to endorse the draft Ministerial Declaration on this subject.

As one of the active promoters of the draft Non-Proliferation Treaty, both in its negotiating phases in the eighteen-nation Disarmament Committee and in the recent debate in the resumed 22nd session of the United Nations General Assembly, Canada is particularly pleased that the Treaty will shortly be open for signature, and Canada intends to sign it at the earliest practicable date. We also welcome the associated Security Council Resolution in which three of the Nuclear Powers have undertaken to render immediate assistance, in accordance with the UN Charter, to non-nuclear signatories of the Treaty in the event that they are subject to nuclear aggression or threat thereof. Of course the right of members to resist armed attack, either individually or collectively in accordance with Article 51 of the Charter, is reaffirmed. We share the hope expressed in the UN Resolution that the Treaty will commend the widest possible adherence both within and without the North Atlantic Alliance.

We believe the Non-Proliferation Treaty could prove to be a useful instrument for the Alliance in pursuing and developing its policy of détente with Eastern Europe. It could point the way to further arms control measures between East and West and help to build mutual confidence among adversaries in a divided Europe. In wider terms we believe that the Treaty, if it commands general support, will come to represent an important element of stability in areas of existing and future tension, which can only redound to the advantage of the Alliance.

While therefore, we are convinced of the present and potential benefits of the Treaty, we appreciate that there is sufficient concern about it in the Alliance that it would be useful for the Council in the near future to examine matters of substance and interpretation of the Treaty. One purpose of such an examination would be to reaffirm that there would be no inconsistency between the obligations and interests of members under the North Atlantic Treaty on the one hand and the Non-Proliferation Treaty on the other. For our part we hope that when the Council turns its attention to this question in the near future, the Canadian Government will have signed the Non-Proliferation Treaty and will be in a position to elaborate its views on matters of substance and interpretation.

Mr. CADIEUX (Contd)

Turning to the situation in the Middle East, the Canadian Government continues to give its full support to the efforts being made by the United Nations special representative to achieve an agreed settlement. We are encouraged by the ability and patience with which Dr. Jarring has pursued his difficult task. We trust that his mission will continue to show progress because the future peace and stability of the Middle East may well rest on the outcome of his endeavours.

Members of the Alliance in a position to do so, will no doubt wish to consider assisting him by encouraging the disputants to co-operate with him in the search for a settlement, and to refrain from actions which endanger the progress of his mission.

The longer an accepted and peaceful settlement is delayed, the more serious is likely to become the threat to NATO's Southern flank represented by the continued augmentation of Soviet presence in the Mediterranean.

While this development has military implications for the future, which make it important that Soviet naval forces in the Mediterranean are kept under close surveillance, we are more concerned about the political gains which the Soviet Union has been able to make in certain countries in the Middle East, partly through the skilful exploitation and display of these forces.

This is a situation which cannot be countered by military means. A settlement in the Middle East would largely deprive the Soviet Union of the opportunities which it has so successfully exploited for improving its standing in certain already well-disposed countries in the Middle East. This is why we consider that the members of the Alliance should be seeking by every means open to them to promote a Middle Eastern settlement which could greatly enhance the ability of Western Governments to restore and improve their relations with all states in the region.

We regard the recommendations on the Mediterranean, now before us for approval, as acceptable on the whole, but would have some misgivings about publicizing them precisely in their present form. Communiqué language on this subject will have to be carefully chosen to ensure that it neither raises tensions in an already tense area nor is counter-productive in terms of real Western interest in and with the countries of the region.

Mr. CADIEUX (Contd)

Since this Council last met, there has been a significant advance in connection with the Vietnam problem. The decision of the USA to limit substantially the bombing of North Vietnam has been welcomed by the Canadian Government as a constructive, and indeed courageous, step towards resolving this problem. No less welcome has been the opening of discussions in Paris between Representatives of the United States and North Vietnamese Governments, thus providing, for the first time since the Laos Conference of '61/'62, a political forum in which it may prove possible to negotiate a solution to the political problems underlying the instability in Indo-China.

It remains to be seen whether Hanoi's decision to enter into talks in Paris is essentially tactical or whether it reflects a substantive political decision to seek a settlement to negotiations. If Hanoi is seriously interested in moving towards a settlement, it seems to us that the priority task in Paris will be to work out some means by which the remaining part of the bombing of the North can be stopped in a way which will make a concurrent, or - as is more likely - a subsequent, decision of comparable military significance on Hanoi's part unavoidable.

In the longer perspective, and assuming that the Paris meetings will lead to a mutually acceptable settlement in due course, it is reasonable to assume that the Vietnam problem will not recede quickly from the forefront of international concern. Clearly there will be an urgent need for economic and social rehabilitation measures and economic development programmes. In this endeavour, whether it is organized on a bilateral basis or in the context of a regional plan, or both, I am confident that the Canadian Government will assume its share of responsibility in a spirit of generosity. It may also prove to be the case that a new settlement in Vietnam will involve some kind of international control mechanism with more satisfactory terms of reference and support than the existing international machinery has had.

If an international presence is agreed to by the principal parties as an essential element of a negotiated settlement, and if it seems to have a reasonable chance of making an effective contribution to the settlement's success, the Canadian Government would, I am sure, within the limits of its possible alternative commitments in various parts of the world, give sympathetic consideration to participating in this endeavour if this were clearly the wish of all those concerned.

Thank you very much.

Mr. BROSIO

Thank you very much, Mr. Cadieux. Now, would Mr. Hartling for Denmark take the floor?

MR. HARTLING

Mr. Chairman, distinguished colleagues, first I should like to thank you for the kind words of welcome. I also want to join with my colleagues in thanking the Government of Iceland for their hospitality.

We have no election in my country just now, for there has recently been, five months ago, a general election and since this is the first NATO Ministerial Meeting which I have the pleasure of attending, I would like to say here that the basic principles of Danish foreign policy are unchanged. This was made clear in the statement made by our Prime Minister on behalf of the new Government at the opening of Parliament on February 6th. In particular, Denmark's foreign policy will continue to be based on our membership of NATO, in conformity with the existing Treaty.

The Prime Minister's declaration also contained a statement to the effect that within NATO the Government will advocate an active policy of détente. This is also very much in line with the conclusions of the Harmel Report. I think we all agree that while maintaining the necessary military set-up, the policy of détente should increasingly enter into NATO's political objectives and considerations.

In democracies, it is, of course, essential, that the policies pursued by national governments should be understood and supported by public opinion. In this context we are, in my own country, and, I believe, in many other member countries, faced with the problem that a new generation has emerged with no sense of personal involvement in the events of the cold war. I feel that this underlines the need for a convincing presentation of NATO policies, the importance of creating an "image" of NATO which, in the changed international conditions of today, can appeal to public opinion, particularly the younger generation. We have to make it clear that NATO is not an obstacle to, but, on the contrary, the necessary basis for continuation of present efforts to achieve détente, and that NATO stands for the ideals expressed in the preamble to the treaty: "the principles of democracy, individual liberty and the rule of law".

But if we are to preserve broad popular support for NATO, we must keep our own house in order. We must make it clear that NATO serves the cause of democracy - also within our own countries.

Mr. HARTLING (Contd)

That is why my Government feels disturbed about setbacks to the cause of democracy within our own circle. The principles of the Treaty and our basic convictions commit us to vigilance, not only with regard to dangers arising in the world around us, but just as much with regard to threats to democracy arising in our own midst. Violation of fundamental human rights constitute one of the most dangerous threats to democracy.

In the present situation it must be one of NATO's main tasks to contribute towards a continuation of the détente between East and West. That is the only way to a solution of the major European security problems including, not least, a just solution of the German question on the basis of self-determination.

Since the Harmel Report was adopted, the Organization has been doing useful work in analysing the possibilities of détente. I am thinking of the very valuable up-dating of the East-West Report of 1966, which is now before us. We are still in a very slow process of thaw between East and West, in which we on the Western side rarely will have much to lose even if we may be only a small step or two ahead of developments in Eastern Europe. This is true, not least, of questions affecting the promotion of personal contact with populations in Eastern Europe. It is, of course, important that we should not give these countries any impression that we are trying to play them off against each other.

From time to time it is unfortunately made clear to us that the road we are taking in our relations with Eastern Europe is a slow one, where we sometimes suffer regrettable setbacks most recently the action taken by the Pankow Régime. But notwithstanding this risk of setbacks, we in Denmark find it essential that a dialogue should be maintained with the countries of Eastern Europe.

The importance which the Danish Government attaches to NATO discussions on the policy of détente also makes us wish that the Alliance, in its long-term planning, bears in mind the possibility of holding a conference on European security problems. We have noted with satisfaction that continued discussions on this subject are envisaged as part of the follow-up of the Harmel study. No one expects such a conference to be realised in the near future, and the interest which the countries of Eastern Europe take in such a conference so appears to be flagging at the present time. The United States and Canada should, of course, take part in the conference. I also want to stress that a conference can be of real value only if it is sufficiently well prepared to give reasonable hopes of positive results.

Mr. HARTLING (Contd)

In the field of disarmament, we note with satisfaction that the adoption of the Harmel Report last year has already resulted in the initiation of intensive studies of the possibilities of carrying out balanced East-West force reductions.

The models suggested in the present phase of these studies to be referred to military experts affect primarily the central region which does not include Denmark. Even so, we take a keen interest in the study of the question of force reductions, not only because we would find it valuable if the existing balance of power could be established at a lower level, but also because a positive outcome of the studies would have bearings on the relaxation of tensions we are trying to achieve between East and West.

The Danish Government finds it important that this meeting should result in a statement intended for publication to the effect that we in the NATO Alliance are now endeavouring to bring about East-West discussions of balanced force reductions as soon as this may be possible. In this context we want to stress that the presentation of this Western initiative should be done in such a way that it will not - in the light of the present political situation in Eastern Europe - make the Soviet Union and the East European countries regard it as an attempt to exploit this situation for the purpose of sowing dissension between certain Eastern countries.

As far as the conflict in Vietnam is concerned, Denmark has warmly welcomed the initiative taken by President Johnson on March 31st, 1968 and we have witnessed with satisfaction how direct talks between the United States and North Vietnam have emerged as a first result of this initiative.

No one had expected, I am sure, that these negotiations would be easy or speedy. The past weeks have unfortunately borne out this assumption, and we have, at the same time, seen new intensive fighting in South Vietnam.

It will take both patience and flexibility to carry the negotiations to their goal: peace in Vietnam. It is our sincere hope that this goal may be reached.

The Danish Government's views on the conflict in Vietnam are well known. At this early stage of the talks it is hardly possible to visualise the South-East Asia that will emerge from the devastations of the war. We on our part want it to become an area where respect for self-determination, social justice and economic growth prevail.

Mr. HARTLING (Contd)

We have declared ourselves ready - if the parties want it - to contribute to the cause of peace by participating in an international peacekeeping force in Vietnam. We have also entered into co-operation with the other Nordic countries with the aim of helping to relieve human distress in Vietnam when hostilities have been brought to an end.

One bright point in the present international situation is the recommendation of the conclusion of a non-proliferation treaty by a substantial majority in the United Nations. The intensive consultations which have taken place in our Alliance throughout the preceding negotiations are a striking example of the value of NATO's consultation machinery. In our view, this Treaty is in itself an important international instrument, but we also hope that it may lead to further steps towards disarmament and relaxation of international tensions. My Government is ready to sign the Treaty as soon as it is open for signature.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Mr. BROSIO

Thank you very much, Mr. Hartling. Monsieur Le Ministre Harmel s'il vous plaît.

M. HARMEL

Monsieur le Président, je voudrais tout d'abord joindre ma voix à celle de bien d'autres orateurs et dire à M. le Ministre des Affaires étrangères d'Islande, notre collègue M. Emile Jonsson, combien nous sommes heureux, quant à nous, de vous trouver dans son pays et lui dire aussi à quel point nous sommes sensibles à l'amitié qu'il nous témoigne et combien nous apprécions le radieux soleil de l'été islandais dont nous bénéficions cet après-midi.

Ayant lu fort attentivement chacun des rapports et des documents qui étaient soumis à notre Assemblée, je ne puis non plus m'empêcher d'en retirer une impression stimulante : celle que tous les échelons permanents du Conseil, du Secrétariat, des Instances civiles et militaires de l'Alliance ont fourni, comme d'habitude, mais plus particulièrement pendant ces six derniers mois, un travail et un effort d'une qualité exceptionnelle, à laquelle mon pays tient tout d'abord à rendre hommage.

Les documents qui nous ont été soumis, nous les avons étudiés avec intérêt, parce qu'ils révèlent la qualité de l'information et la franchise du débat au sein des principaux organes permanents de l'Alliance. Ces documents nous les avons aussi étudiés avec satisfaction, parce qu'ils montrent une Alliance avançant résolument dans les voies que le Conseil lui a tracées il y a six mois.

M. HARMEL (Suite)

Nous avons dit en décembre dernier que l'exercice accompli tout au long de 1967 attendait la démonstration de son efficacité. Cette démonstration n'a pas tardé, car les travaux des six premiers mois de l'année 1968 correspondent, à nos yeux, aux promesses et aux espoirs que nous avons tous mis dans notre volonté commune "d'aggiornamento".

Voici, selon nous, les caractéristiques de ces nouveaux travaux. D'abord, ils ont progressé en six mois de façon sensible; ensuite, des propositions significatives et concrètes nous ont été soumises dans les domaines que nous avons fixés et enfin la réflexion sur les tâches futures de l'Alliance et la manière de les mener s'accomplit de façon pénétrante, avec une franchise presque brutale et une sincérité mutuelle que seuls des peuples vraiment alliés sont capables d'adopter entre eux. Ce ton qui va se refléter dans nos travaux, nous le devons, M. le Secrétaire général, à votre rapport introductif. L'hommage que la Belgique vous rend aujourd'hui est certes fondé sur la haute estime et l'amitié qui nous animent à votre égard, mais plus encore sur notre reconnaissance envers un politique inspiré qui se sentant responsable envers nos peuples, leur parle avec indépendance et avec hauteur de vues.

Impressionné par ce rapport, je vais, pour ma part, en suivre la trame au cours d'une brève intervention ou contribution liminaire de nos travaux.

On ne s'étonnera pas de ce que nous concentrons notre attention autour des thèmes auxquels chacun d'entre nous ne cesse de réfléchir, sans négliger les autres sujets. Je serais donc explicite sur trois thèmes qui sont liés entre eux et que le rapport de M. le Secrétaire général traite lui-même de la manière la plus approfondie : les tâches futures de l'Alliance, les relations avec l'URSS et les autres pays de l'Europe de l'Est, le problème du désarmement régional.

En ce qui concerne les tâches futures de l'Alliance, tout ce que l'Alliance a amorcé et accompli au cours de ce semestre est inspiré du double devoir qui a été bien mis en lumière dans le rapport de décembre 1967 : poursuivre, accomplir nos tâches militaires, mener nos tâches politiques.

M. HARMEL (Suite)

Au cours de la réunion tenue par les Ministres de la défense, les tâches militaires de vigilance et d'organisation défensive, plus exigeantes pour les quatorze pays qui maintiennent l'Organisation intégrée du temps de paix, ces tâches sont confirmées, poursuivies et adaptées à une stratégie nouvelle.

Quant à nos tâches politiques, elles ont pris une place accrue dans nos rapports réciproques et elles sont clairement définies dans le rapport de M. le Secrétaire général en son paragraphe 12.

D'abord et voilà la gradation : information réciproque et débats sur les questions d'intérêt général, puis recherches et efforts communs en vue d'un nouvel ordre de relations entre pays européens de régimes différents et enfin, dans une coopération plus intense, poursuite en commun de l'étude et de la réalisation pour l'Europe d'une réduction parallèle des armements régionaux.

Nous avons constaté cette gradation ascendante dans les formes de notre coopération; nous avons la volonté d'y participer pleinement. Nous nous réjouissons aussi de ce que nos travaux pratiques aient le rythme que les circonstances nouvelles permettent et imposent. Pour faire face aux questions qui nous seront posées en 1969 nous croyons qu'il faut avoir arrêté avant la fin de 1968, et sans doute pour notre réunion de la fin d'année, les termes de nos réponses. Le Secrétaire général et le Conseil en session permanente ont répondu à notre attente en nous fournissant des recommandations et en nous demandant de prendre des options pour leur permettre de poursuivre et de conclure leurs travaux. La densité du Rapport consacré aux relations avec l'URSS et les Etats européens de l'Est, prouve la réalité de ce que je viens de dire. Parlant des relations entre les pays européens de l'Est et de l'Ouest, c'est ce deuxième sujet que je veux maintenant aborder.

Nous sommes convaincus, comme M. le Président Brosio, que les modifications connues et les raisons d'agir de l'URSS et des pays d'Europe de l'Est sont bien celles que décrit, il y a douze ans déjà, le 20ème Congrès du parti communiste de l'URSS. Ce sont les mêmes raisons, et des objectifs inspirés de la même logique, qui ont dicté il y a un an, les résolutions du Congrès des partis communistes européens à Karlovy Vary. Et ce sont encore les mêmes vues, tendant à détruire notre solidarité atlantique ou européenne, qui sont diffusées à travers les articles les plus récents des Izvestiya. Nous ne l'oublions jamais, et cependant nous acceptons d'intensifier - nous le désirons même - nos relations de toutes natures avec ces Etats.

M. HARMEL (Suite)

Il ne s'agit dans l'esprit de personne autour de cette table, d'un défi; notre objectif est moins encore de chercher pour des raisons de propagande à embarrasser ces Etats par des propositions ou des questions auxquelles ils ne pourraient pas répondre. Pour nous, le dialogue difficile et les efforts persévérants de détente ont quatre justifications principales.

D'abord persuader, si possible, ces Etats et en tout cas leur expliquer clairement qu'un comportement cherchant à dissoudre nos solidarités et nos régimes est en contradiction avec leurs affirmations visant à stabiliser les relations entre Etats de régimes différents, et qu'il retarde, de ce fait, l'aboutissement de cet objectif.

Ensuite, notre deuxième raison d'agir, ou notre deuxième justification, est de répondre à l'aspiration de plusieurs Etats communistes qui recherchent avec nos pays la multiplication de contacts. En nous refusant à intervenir, de quelque façon que ce soit, dans les affaires intérieures de ces Etats, en rejetant la tentation de poursuivre une politique visant à les dresser les uns contre les autres, nous pensons que le rapprochement que permet la détente provoquera la libéralisation progressive des régimes communistes.

Notre troisième justification est de démontrer que nous ne craignons pas la contagion due à des relations accrues avec les pays communistes. Nos concitoyens peuvent aller y voir. Au fur et à mesure au contraire que nos réflexions se poursuivent au sujet des relations avec l'URSS et les Etats européens de l'Est, nous ressentons comme une nécessité plus évidente et plus actuelle encore, le maintien de la solidarité atlantique et européenne pourvu que celle-ci soit fondée sur les principes de liberté et de démocratie.

En ce qui concerne nos convictions à l'égard de l'Alliance et notre entente défensive particulièrement, la Belgique, pays exigu et sans frontière naturelle, ne peut pas, et ne veut pas, accepter l'alternative entre l'intégration militaire ou la neutralité armée. Pour des pays comme le nôtre, la vanité d'un effort militaire isolé limiterait le choix entre l'intégration et une neutralité désarmée. Mais nous savons que cette sorte de neutralité est coupable car elle consisterait à nous en remettre à d'autres du soin de notre propre protection.

La quatrième justification de nos efforts dans la détente, c'est le dialogue, surtout avec ceux qui aimeraient nous diviser et finalement nous assujettir, dialogue qui nous paraît indispensable pour tous les peuples qui répugnent à la solution militaire de leurs conflits.

M. HARMEL (suite)

Là non plus, il n'y a pas de choix : ou bien ce sera le renforcement constant des préparatifs de défense, ou bien ce sera la réussite dans la normalisation des relations entre Etats différents, c'est-à-dire la réduction de la tension, et enfin, la réduction des armements. C'est pourquoi les efforts tendant à multiplier les relations avec chacun des pays communistes dans les domaines économiques, sociaux, culturels, scientifiques, technologiques seront poursuivis par la Belgique. Nous n'avons plus à innover dans ces domaines, mais à persévérer et à développer chaque fois que cela paraîtra possible et raisonnable.

Je me félicite, enfin, d'avoir entendu ce matin Monsieur le Ministre BRANDT, qui agit avec courage sur une route difficile. Le Gouvernement de la République fédérale d'Allemagne sais que nous demeurons solidaires de ses efforts. Nous serons aussi solidaires des mesures qui devront être prises pour assurer le respect du statut de Berlin. Il est souhaitable que nous en fassions publiquement état, car, s'il s'agit là d'un problème pour lequel certains de nos alliés ont des responsabilités spéciales, c'est aussi une question qui nous intéresse tous, dans son principe comme dans ses conséquences.

Le troisième sujet qui retient tout particulièrement notre attention est, on le sait, celui des réductions parallèles des armements en Europe. Ce matin, j'ai noté l'un des propos de M. RUSK : être en avance sur l'Est dans le désir de détente, cela veut dire être prudent, mais imaginatif, et construire sans cesse. C'est sur ce terrain délicat de la réduction parallèle des armements que nous sommes sûrs qu'il faut non seulement réfléchir, mais agir maintenant de façon concertée. Mais, avant d'en parler, je voudrais dire que cette phase de la détente nous importe d'autant plus qu'à nos yeux, elle précède et prépare immédiatement une troisième phase, celle de la détente politique, qui doit être rendue plus aisée par des progrès significatifs dans les voies d'abord économiques, puis militaires.

Nous croyons donc que l'Alliance accomplira une oeuvre politique entièrement conforme à sa nature, à ses objectifs et aux possibilités du temps, en faisant ce qui nous est proposé dans le projet de déclaration que nous appuyons sans réserve.

D'abord, élaborer des projets de réductions parallèles des armements régionaux.

M. HARMEL (suite)

Ensuite, les soumettre, comme il a été fait, aux instances militaires et aux Experts de l'Alliance, afin de n'agir qu'à bon escient et avec réalisme.

Enfin, proposer aux autres peuples d'Europe, alignés, non alignés ou neutres, un ou plusieurs projets concrets et rechercher en même temps les meilleures méthodes de négociations et de contact.

Par les conversations exploratoires qu'elle a eues avec la Pologne, la Belgique a précisément voulu découvrir, à titre d'exemple, la mesure dans laquelle des propositions concrètes pouvaient trouver un écho. Notre sondage a donné un résultat intéressant. Je pense que des contacts bilatéraux croisés de ce genre, qui sont déjà en cours, se révèlent toujours utiles pour nous éclairer sur le fond et la forme que devra revêtir toute proposition de nature à éveiller l'intérêt de nos interlocuteurs.

Ayant ainsi esquissé quelques idées générales au sujet de l'évolution de l'Alliance, je voudrais maintenant soumettre à votre attention, Messieurs, une dernière considération sur un sujet qui a une influence directe et décisive pour notre avenir. Je crois d'ailleurs que je vais exprimer à la suite de M. HARPLING une idée qu'il a lui-même développée tout à l'heure.

Il me paraît évident que l'effort de réflexion que nous avons entrepris depuis un an et demi sur les raisons d'être et les tâches de notre Alliance doit être sans cesse complété par un effort d'imagination dans la présentation à l'opinion de nos buts et de nos activités. C'est parce que, trop souvent, elle ne comprend ni ce que nous sommes, ni ce que nous faisons, que l'opinion et, en particulier, notre jeunesse sont parfois indifférentes, parfois même hostiles. A un moment où toute une génération revendique le dialogue dans tous les domaines, il faut que notre Alliance soit prête à ce dialogue et qu'elle soit capable de s'expliquer.

Que pouvons-nous faire de concret ?

Il me semble d'abord que les véhicules naturels de cette action sont les services spécialisés de nos administrations nationales, parce qu'il connaissent chacun, mieux que quiconque, leur propre public. Mais nous avons tout à gagner à connaître et à comparer nos efforts et nos expériences, et je voudrais suggérer que le Secrétariat soit chargé de convoquer régulièrement des réunions d'experts nationaux dans ce domaine.

M. HARMEL (suite)

Par ailleurs, l'Institut Atlantique pourrait sans doute utilement être chargé de faire une étude sur l'opinion dans nos pays et un rapport sur les moyens d'améliorer notre action d'information.

Enfin, les services d'information de l'OTAN pourraient, parallèlement à ces travaux, et en s'inspirant de leurs résultats, réexaminer l'ensemble de ses activités afin de vérifier si elles répondent à l'orientation nouvelle de notre Alliance et aux préoccupations nouvelles de nos opinions.

Je crois que nous devrions charger nos représentants permanents de délibérer prochainement de cet ensemble de problèmes.

Monsieur le Président, dans cette intervention, je n'ai pas voulu aborder d'autres sujets importants qui sont à l'ordre du jour, parce que vous savez que nous souhaitons plus qu'une succession de déclarations. Nous espérons, sur le sujet le plus important, un débat et un court dialogue, et c'est peut-être à ce moment-là, et dans la suite de l'ordre du jour, que nous pourrions échanger nos points de vue sur les thèmes intéressant l'Alliance : le Traité sur la non-prolifération, les mesures de réductions parallèles des forces, la situation en Méditerranée, et aussi les sujets extérieurs, mais combien importants, de la situation en Asie du Sud-Est et au Moyen-Orient.

Mais je voudrais dire un mot à la suite des remarques faites ce matin par M. RUSK à propos du Vietnam. Nous n'avons pas cessé quant à nous, dans nos dernières conversations avec l'URSS, à tous les niveaux, de signaler l'importance du rôle que devrait jouer cet Etat, dans la recherche de la paix en Asie du Sud-Est.

Nous avons la conviction que le Traité sur la non-prolifération donne aux deux super-puissances un rôle prépondérant dans la garantie de la paix. Vous avez souligné cet aspect nouveau dans votre rapport, Monsieur le Secrétaire général, et nous l'avons, quant à nous, sans cesse présent à l'esprit. Au moment où ce Traité sur la non-prolifération est soumis à notre signature, ne convient-il pas que les deux plus grandes puissances redoublent d'efforts pour atteindre une solution honorable et stable ?

M. HARMEL (suite)

Nous n'avons pas besoin de le dire à notre collègue, M. RUSK, puisque c'est précisément le but des efforts du Président Johnson et que sa position est claire. Nous le disons, et nous l'avons dit, à des dirigeants communistes de l'URSS, en estimant que leur action est encore hésitante sur cette voie. Or, vous l'avez dit ce matin, M. RUSK, et nous voudrions le souligner, pour faire la paix, il faut être deux. Mon pays partage entièrement ce point de vue et, comme d'autres pays, il désire déclarer que pour le retour de la paix et pour la reconstruction du malheureux Vietnam, on pourra compter, au sein des institutions internationales, sur sa coopération. Je voudrais maintenant conclure. Si, comme nous l'avons indiqué plus haut, nos travaux ont progressé de façon sensible durant ces dernières années et ce dernier semestre, il importe cependant que nous ne nous reposions pas sur nos lauriers. Les efforts effectués jusqu'à présent perdraient leur valeur s'ils devaient s'arrêter, ou même se ralentir. Nous ne cessons, pour notre part, de penser à la date de 1969, puisque c'est celle du vingtième anniversaire et que chacun de nos pays sera alors amené à tenir des débats au sein de son Parlement. Il importe donc que pour cette date, notre Organisation apporte la preuve concrète de l'aggiornamento dont je parlais tout à l'heure. En pratique, cela signifie, selon nous, qu'à notre session de décembre prochain, il faudra que nous soyons en mesure d'adopter les propositions concrètes susceptibles d'être discutées par tous les Etats d'Europe intéressés par la recherche de la paix. C'est sur l'expression de ce ferme espoir que je voudrais terminer cette déclaration.

M. BROSIO

Merci beaucoup, M. le Ministre. Je pourrais ajouter à ce que vous avez dit en vous référant à une des positions prises par M. le Ministre Hartling à propos de la coordination de l'information, que je me propose précisément, au cours du mois de juillet, de convoquer le Conseil des Représentants permanents afin d'examiner l'effort d'information qui devrait être fait, car nous entrons maintenant dans la vingtième année de l'Alliance, ce qui exige une attention particulière. J'ai l'intention précisément de suggérer au Conseil des Représentants permanents de convoquer les Chefs des services d'information de tous les pays de l'Alliance pour les mois de septembre et d'octobre. Il s'agirait là d'une première initiative allant justement dans la direction que vous souhaitiez. Merci beaucoup, M. le Ministre.

M. ÇAGLAYANGIL

M. le Président, avant de passer à mon exposé sur la situation internationale, je voudrais dire que je m'associe de tout coeur à mes collègues pour exprimer au Gouvernement islandais les remerciements de ma Délégation pour l'excellente organisation de notre réunion et pour l'hospitalité et l'accueil qui nous ont été réservés.

M. le Président, la période que nous avons traversée depuis notre dernière réunion a été pleine d'événements dramatiques, de bouleversements profonds et de convulsions. Cette réunion vient à temps et j'espère que nos échanges de vues nous permettront de réfléchir ensemble sur l'évolution récente, qui nous laisse perplexes devant l'immensité des problèmes politiques, économiques et sociaux qu'il est impérieux de résoudre pour assurer la paix, la stabilité et le progrès dans un monde de plus en plus agité et de plus en plus enclin à la violence. Je suis persuadé que les derniers événements ont montré encore une fois combien il est dans l'intérêt des pays qui ont un même destin de maintenir leur cohésion et leur solidarité.

Les problèmes qui se posent à nous sont multiples et beaucoup plus complexes que lors de la création de l'OTAN. Il s'agit non seulement de maintenir notre système de défense collective, comme la seule garantie possible de notre sécurité dans un monde où la paix repose toujours sur l'équilibre des forces, mais aussi de diriger nos efforts politiques de façon à promouvoir la détente et à lui donner un contenu réel, tout en suivant de près les divers événements qui peuvent influencer le cours de l'évolution générale des relations Est-Ouest, que ce soit en Europe ou dans les autres parties du monde. Dans ce contexte, la question se pose de savoir si l'évolution dans le camp communiste pourrait être examinée de façon séparée ou si une corrélation existe entre ce qui se passe en Occident et en Europe orientale. Dans ce dernier cas, une évaluation d'ensemble pourrait se révéler plus appropriée.

En ce qui nous concerne, il s'agit également de préserver l'OTAN d'une propagande pernicieuse dont l'intensité va vraisemblablement s'accroître en 1969. Et il s'agit surtout de surmonter notre propre incertitude, de vaincre toute tendance au défaitisme, de trouver les moyens d'insuffler une nouvelle vigueur et une nouvelle vitalité à notre entreprise commune. En cette période critique que nous traversons, les objectifs que nous nous sommes assignés en tant que partenaires d'une même Alliance, et que nous avons réaffirmés l'année dernière à la lumière de la situation, revêtent une importance accrue.

M. ÇAGIAYANGIL (suite)

Nous sommes tous d'accord sur ces objectifs, mais peut-on dire que nos méthodes et notre degré de coopération sont suffisants pour les atteindre ? Cette question doit nous préoccuper tous, et nous devons faire un effort constant pour donner à nos travaux l'impulsion requise par l'évolution de la situation.

Les événements de Tchécoslovaquie sont extrêmement révélateurs des difficultés que les Partis communistes des pays de l'Europe orientale semblent devoir rencontrer à longue échéance quand l'économie de plus en plus développée du pays commencera à rejeter les structures rigides imposées par l'idéologie. Dans le cas particulier de la Tchécoslovaquie, un fait important entre en ligne de compte : c'est que, ce pays avait connu une période démocratique avant l'arrivée au pouvoir des communistes, il y a vingt ans. Il est trop tôt pour se prononcer sur le cours que suivront les événements et pour dire si la tentative faite par les dirigeants actuels tchécoslovaques pour concilier la démocratie et le marxisme sera couronnée, ou non, de succès. Ces dirigeants ont jusqu'à présent fait preuve de prudence, tant sur le plan intérieur que sur le plan international, ce qui leur a permis de contrôler et de diriger l'évolution de la situation à l'intérieur du pays, tout en évitant de provoquer indûment l'Union soviétique. Encore faut-il voir si les limites qu'ils veulent imposer au processus démocratique ne risquent pas de créer à plus longue échéance des déceptions pouvant entraîner de nouvelles secousses. Si tel était le cas, l'Union soviétique jugerait-elle bon de persévérer dans sa politique actuelle de modération et de souplesse. L'Union soviétique craint évidemment, d'autre part, la contagion de l'exemple tchécoslovaque, et il n'est pas exclu qu'elle raidisse considérablement sa politique à l'égard des autres pays de l'Europe orientale. Quant à la position de l'OTAN, je crois que notre attitude a été jusqu'à présent inspirée d'une profonde sagesse. Nous devons continuer d'éviter de donner l'impression que nous encourageons et soutenons les tendances centrifuges qui se manifestent dans les pays communistes dans l'espoir de voir s'écrouler le système communiste et le Pacte de Varsovie.

Ceci m'amène à dire quelques mots sur les relations Est-Ouest.

Aujourd'hui, à tous les niveaux, les contacts se développent avec tous les pays de l'Europe orientale et les échanges commerciaux marquent un accroissement considérable, à la satisfaction réciproque des pays intéressés. En outre, il ne serait pas erroné de dire que les pays de l'Est commencent à montrer beaucoup plus d'intérêt et à faire preuve de plus d'initiatives dans le domaine des relations internationales, ce qui est intéressant parce que de cette façon, ces pays pourront affirmer de plus en plus leur liberté d'action en matière de politique extérieure et contribuer plus efficacement au développement des relations Est-Ouest.

M. CAGLAYANGIL (suite)

Qu'il me suffise, sur ce point, de citer l'exemple de la Roumanie. On pourrait même dire que les contacts avec l'Occident deviennent parfois un sujet d'émulation entre ces pays. Il s'agit là, à mon avis, d'un fait encourageant. Une compréhension plus grande commence déjà à s'instaurer, même si les relations bilatérales entre les pays européens des deux côtés de l'ancien rideau de fer n'ont pas encore atteint le niveau auquel elles seraient normalement parvenues, si certains facteurs ne limitaient pas les aspirations des pays de l'Est dans ce domaine.

Après ces remarques d'ordre général, je voudrais dire quelques mots au sujet des effets qu'auront probablement ces événements sur l'attitude soviétique envers la détente en Europe. Nous savons tous que pour l'Union soviétique, la détente était surtout destinée à nous faire accepter le statu quo politique en Europe, tandis que nous autres, pays occidentaux, cherchons de notre côté à réduire les tensions afin de créer un climat politique propice à la solution des différents problèmes qui divisent actuellement notre continent. Nous ne devons pas perdre de vue le fait que le statu quo politique présente pour l'Union soviétique deux aspects d'une égale importance. Le premier de ces aspects est, pour reprendre les termes de notre Secrétaire Général, le maintien de l'Allemagne fédérale en état d'infériorité permanente, tant sur le plan militaire que sur le plan politique, et le second est le maintien des pays de l'Europe de l'Est dans la dépendance à l'égard de l'Union soviétique, bien qu'à des degrés divers d'un pays à l'autre.

Or, les récents événements de Tchécoslovaquie montrent combien la soumission des pays communistes peut être remise en question d'une façon soudaine à la suite de bouleversements de caractère purement interne, et cela même dans un pays dont l'alignement sur l'Union soviétique semblait tellement acquis. Les Soviétiques avaient, il y a quelques mois, réussi à redresser quelque peu leur position dans le camp communiste en convoquant la conférence consultative des Partis communistes, et renforcé malgré la dissidence de quelques pays, leur autorité chez leurs alliés européens. Ils se préparaient sans doute à redoubler d'efforts en vue d'une campagne vigoureuse destinée à saper la solidarité occidentale en une période cruciale pour la vitalité de l'Alliance Atlantique. Et voilà que brusquement, les Soviétiques sont contraints de tourner leurs regards vers ce qui se passe dans leur propre camp. Il est encore trop tôt pour porter un jugement définitif sur ce que sera d'une manière générale l'attitude soviétique envers la politique de détente. Mais il est permis de penser que l'Union soviétique est actuellement occupée à refaire ses calculs pour déterminer la part de la détente dans l'accélération des tendances centrifuges qui se manifestent déjà depuis un certain temps dans une région d'importance capitale pour ses intérêts.

M. ÇAGLAYANGIL (suite)

Bien qu'il soit prématuré d'émettre un jugement, on ne peut s'empêcher de déceler dans les dernières mesures prises en Allemagne de l'Est à l'encontre de Berlin, l'indice d'un raidissement probable de l'Union soviétique. A ce sujet je voudrais préciser que nous comprenons pleinement la sensibilité et les préoccupations de la République fédérale d'Allemagne. Nous estimons aussi que nos intérêts communs exigent une attitude à la fois énergique et ingénieuse contre toute tentative visant à isoler Berlin Ouest.

Au Moyen Orient, la situation continue à être extrêmement grave et sérieuse, avec toutes les conséquences qui en découlent. En effet, bien qu'une année se soit écoulée depuis le conflit armé, Israël continue à occuper les territoires arabes. Il persiste également dans les mesures unilatérales qu'il a prises sur ces territoires, y compris Jérusalem. Les conditions politiques d'après guerre, qui ont permis à l'Union soviétique de renforcer considérablement sa flotte en Méditerranée, continuent à être exploitées par ce pays pour raffermir son influence dans la région.

Cet état de choses ne saurait manquer d'avoir des répercussions directes sur la sécurité de la zone OTAN en général et sur celle de la région du Moyen Orient en particulier. Pour le moment, il est difficile d'espérer voir intervenir rapidement un assainissement de la situation et un règlement du conflit. Mais il est également difficile de dire combien de temps encore la présente situation précaire peut continuer dans les limites prévisibles et sans brusques bouleversements qui plongeraient cette partie du monde dans de nouvelles convulsions. Des manoeuvres destinées à faire traîner les choses en longueur, afin d'épuiser la résistance de l'autre partie pour la pousser à faire le plus de concessions possibles, risqueraient de produire l'effet contraire. A mon avis, on peut encore espérer faire aboutir progressivement les efforts en cours pour un règlement général du conflit, pourvu que rien ne soit épargné à cet effet. J'avais dit cela en décembre dernier et je le dis encore.

Certes, la course aux armements de part et d'autre fait craindre une recrudescence de la violence et les événements des dernières semaines semblent confirmer les pronostics les plus pessimistes. Mais les éléments positifs n'ont pas pour autant disparu. En effet, aucun des pays arabes directement intéressés n'a encore repris le thème qui leur était si cher avant la conférence au sommet de Khartoum, c'est-à-dire l'élimination de l'Etat juif de la carte du Moyen Orient. Au surplus, ils ont accepté d'engager des discussions indirectes avec Israël. Ceci constitue une nouvelle preuve de souplesse de la part des pays arabes, susceptible de promouvoir les perspectives d'un règlement définitif de ce conflit sur la base du respect de l'indépendance de tous les pays de la région.

M. ÇAGLAYANGIL (suite)

Mais la difficulté réside dans le fait que ce conflit puisse, dans plusieurs problèmes qui mettent aux prises Israël et les pays arabes et la crise de confiance qui caractérise les attitudes respectives des parties, empêcher l'amorce d'un processus pacifique comportant plusieurs opérations successives. Il est donc nécessaire de prendre certaines initiatives qui joueraient un rôle de catalyseur pour rétablir d'abord le calme relatif le long de la ligne de cessez le feu et ensuite faciliter l'accord sur une série de mesures tendant à trancher tous les aspects du conflit. Ce rôle de catalyseur ne pourrait être joué avec efficacité que par les grandes puissances qui sont seules capables de se porter garantes, ne fut-ce que moralement, de l'application de toute une série de mesures couvrant les divers aspects du conflit, en compensant l'effet nuisible du manque de confiance dont souffre la région.

A la lumière de ce que je viens de dire, l'application de la résolution du Conseil de Sécurité du 22 novembre dernier par l'intermédiaire du Représentant spécial du Secrétaire général des Nations-Unies, constitue un cadre raisonnable qui renferme tous les éléments nécessaires pour assurer l'élimination d'un foyer de conflit chronique dans le Moyen Orient, en sauvegardant les intérêts et droits légitimes de tous les pays de la région.

Je passe maintenant au conflit Vietnamien et je voudrais dire tout d'abord combien mon Gouvernement a apprécié l'initiative courageuse prise par le Gouvernement des Etats-Unis pour ouvrir la voie à un règlement pacifique de ce problème. Nous savons que les difficultés ne s'arrêtent pas là et que la paix ne peut venir qu'à l'issue de longues négociations ardues et laborieuses. Espérons que le Vietnam du Nord saura saisir l'occasion pour mettre fin à un conflit sanglant qui n'était pas sans avoir des répercussions fâcheuses sur le plan des relations internationales. Je voudrais répéter que nous formons des vœux pour un règlement qui assurerait une paix honorable en Asie tout en maintenant dans cette région un équilibre stable, capable de sauvegarder l'indépendance et l'intégrité territoriale des pays intéressés. A cet égard, nous avons pris connaissance avec intérêt des idées avancées par notre Secrétaire général dans son Examen politique annuel.

Monsieur le Président, vous vous êtes référé dans votre rapport sur l'Examen politique annuel aux derniers événements concernant les relations turquo-grecques. Nous sommes heureux de voir que les relations entre nos deux pays sont aujourd'hui empreintes d'un plus grand esprit de compréhension et je voudrais ici exprimer toute ma gratitude pour les efforts déployés dans ce sens par mon distingué collègue et ami M. Pipinellis.

M. ÇAGLAYANGIL (suite)

Après la grave crise que nous avons traversée à la fin de l'année 1967, le problème de Chypre est entré dans une phase nouvelle. C'est une phase dans laquelle, nous voulons l'espérer, toutes les parties sont, à la lumière des événements de novembre dernier, où nous avons évité de justesse une catastrophe, mûrement réfléchi sur les dangers que comportent la continuation du conflit et toute recrudescence de la tension. Mon Gouvernement, ainsi que la Communauté turque de Chypre, ont pleinement conscience de la nécessité d'une solution rapide. C'est dans cet esprit que la Communauté turque a accepté de procéder à un échange de vues avec la Communauté grecque sur les questions constitutionnelles et les arrangements pratiques concernant les relations intercommunautaires. Ces discussions, qui ont eu lieu tout d'abord à Beyrouth entre les représentants des deux parties, reprennent aujourd'hui même à Nicosie, et nous souhaitons vivement qu'elles se déroulent dans une atmosphère constructive et qu'elles puissent aboutir à un accord. Naturellement, si un accord se dégage, il sera nécessaire de procéder aux négociations à proprement parler dans une conférence plus large, avec la participation de toutes les parties intéressées, et d'aborder dans ce cadre les problèmes ayant trait au statut international de Chypre et à la garantie de ce statut.

Quel que soit le cours des pourparlers entre les deux Communautés, il importe surtout de préserver la paix et le calme dans l'île. Bien que l'évolution récente soit encourageante à cet égard, il ne faut pas perdre de vue qu'un renversement de la situation est toujours possible, d'autant plus qu'aucun progrès n'a été réalisé en vue d'abaisser le niveau des armements. Nous continuons à estimer que la présence des Forces des Nations Unies est une nécessité impérieuse et qu'une diminution de ses effectifs ne serait pas justifiée dans les conditions actuelles.

En ce qui concerne les autres aspects de nos relations avec la Grèce, je voudrais mentionner le fait que nous avons chargé, M. Pipinellis et moi-même, un représentant de chaque partie d'étudier les questions concernant les éléments minoritaires. Ces représentants nous ont soumis les conclusions qu'ils ont tirées de leurs conversations, et nous allons les examiner avec mon collègue grec dans les jours qui viennent.

La question de la présence soviétique en Méditerranée, avec ses incidences à court et à long termes, est d'une importance capitale pour l'OTAN. C'est une question qui continuera à nous préoccuper, et peut-être de plus en plus sérieusement, dans les années à venir.

Je me bornerai pour le moment à cette déclaration générale, car j'aurai à revenir sur la Méditerranée lors de nos discussions particulières à ce sujet, au point II de notre ordre du jour.

M. CAGLAYANGIL (suite)

Je voudrais maintenant présenter quelques observations au sujet de la réduction mutuelle et équilibrée des forces. Le texte qui nous vient du Conseil permanent est le fruit de longues et patientes discussions entre les diverses délégations. Nous avons tout lieu d'être satisfaits du résultat obtenu et de nous réjouir de ce que la France ait pu s'associer, bien qu'avec certaines réserves, à ce texte.

Je voudrais vous expliquer brièvement la façon dont nous le comprenons. Pour nous, l'important c'est de trouver la juste mesure entre la nécessité de prendre des initiatives courageuses et celle de ne pas s'écarter du réalisme qui veut que l'on ne désarme pas d'une manière qui affaiblirait le pouvoir de dissuasion et la force militaire proprement dite de notre Alliance. En d'autres termes, nous ne devons pas compromettre le degré de sécurité actuel de notre Alliance, et, ce qui est non moins important, nous ne devons pas non plus donner à nos opinions publiques l'impression qu'il s'agit là de choses faciles et pratiquement acquises.

De ce point de vue, le texte que nous avons sous les yeux offre de grandes sécurités. Tout d'abord, il y est précisé qu'on ne procèdera à des réductions que sur la base de modèles bien étudiés, et que ces études sont encore en cours. Il ressort des paragraphes 3 et 7, tels que nous les comprenons, que l'on ne prendra l'initiative de réductions définies que dans la mesure où les projets et les modèles en cours d'étude le permettront. Enfin, il apparaît également dans le texte que les études en cours, concernant particulièrement la partie centrale de l'Europe, pourraient à l'avenir s'étendre aux flancs. Surtout, peut-on envisager des réductions du moins en ce qui concerne le flanc Sud-Est, alors qu'il existe un déséquilibre flagrant des forces dans un sens défavorable à notre camp, déséquilibre que confirment tous les documents militaires ? Je ne le crois pas, mais j'ai tenu à signaler ce point.

Le deuxième plan de sécurité, pour assurer au texte un caractère réaliste et équilibré, est constitué par l'ensemble des conditions précisées au paragraphe 5 comme au paragraphe 4. Au paragraphe 5, on précise la nécessité de la réciprocité aussi bien que de l'équilibre dans les réductions éventuelles, et au paragraphe 4, cette notion de sécurité et d'équilibre est complétée par le postulat selon lequel les réductions mutuelles devraient s'effectuer d'une façon équilibrée en importance et dans le temps.

Nous avons, entre crochets, le texte d'une version allemande et celui d'une autre version sans indication d'origine. Je dois avouer que je préfère la version allemande, mais si l'on tient à choisir l'autre texte, je l'accepterais en l'interprétant en fonction de la version allemande. Au paragraphe 5, on précise également qu'il faut rendre ces réductions éventuelles compatibles avec l'instauration d'un climat de confiance en Europe.

M. CAGLAYANGIL (suite)

J'attache un prix particulier au fait qu'au paragraphe 5 (c), on indique que la notion de climat de confiance a un sens à la fois général et particulier pour chaque pays intéressé. Une autre précision importante dans la série des conditions énumérées au paragraphe 5 est la nécessité d'une application efficace des réductions éventuelles. Dans ce texte, le mot "efficace" est pour nous synonyme de contrôle sérieux et effectif. Avant d'en finir avec cette question de réductions mutuelles et équilibrées, je voudrais souligner deux points, très importants à nos yeux, au sujet des paragraphes 7 et 8 du texte. Je tiens à souligner particulièrement que pour les discussions avec l'Union soviétique et les autres pays d'Europe de l'Est, dont il est question au paragraphe 7, on ne doit jamais s'écarter d'une règle fondamentale, les contacts bilatéraux avec les pays de l'Est ne devraient se faire que selon les principes et les données essentielles, déterminées au préalable ici, au Conseil, et aucun engagement sur le fond ne devrait être pris autrement que par décision du Conseil. Cela ne veut pas dire qu'on doive négocier de bloc à bloc, mais il ne faut pas non plus s'engager dans l'autre extrême. Le deuxième point que je voudrais souligner concerne l'expression de "Représentants permanents" employée au paragraphe 8. Dire qu'on charge les Représentants permanents de la suite à donner à la présente déclaration ne peut et ne saurait signifier que ce travail serait mené à bien par telle ou telle Délégation en dehors du cadre du Conseil. Voilà comment je vois et j'interprète le projet de Résolution que nous avons devant nous. Je dois faire un voyage officiel à Moscou au cours de la deuxième semaine de juillet. Si l'on me pose des questions sur notre déclaration, c'est sur la base des idées que je viens de préciser que je la commenterai à nos interlocuteurs soviétiques. Et vous pouvez être sûrs que j'essaierai de mon mieux de présenter le texte avec tout ce qu'il contient de bonne volonté positive et constructive. Au sujet du Traité sur la non-prolifération, je voudrais exprimer notre satisfaction devant les résultats obtenus aux Nations-Unies. Comme la plupart de mes collègues, j'estime que la conclusion d'un tel Traité contribuera dans une large mesure, à renforcer la détente. Nous espérons qu'un nombre considérable de pays signeront le traité et qu'il sera ainsi possible d'enrayer effectivement la dissémination des armes nucléaires. Merci, Monsieur le Président.

M. BROSIO

Merci, Monsieur le Ministre.

Mr. BROSIO (Contd)

Now Mr. Luns will take the floor.

Mr. LUNS

Mr. Chairman, I wholeheartedly join my colleagues in congratulating and thanking the Icelandic Government for the perfect organisation of this meeting and the friendly hospitality bestowed upon us.

Some interesting events have happened since we last met in Brussels. The most significant developments relevant to our activities were those in Eastern Europe, and especially in Czechoslovakia. It is clear that the recent developments in the Warsaw Pact countries have further weakened the political cohesion in the area. The attempts to solve internal problems in a pragmatic and individualistic manner consonant with the national interest, instead of following roads dictated by ideology or by a powerful neighbour, understandably have given rise to great concern if not alarm in Moscow, Warsaw and Pankow, but it is really a possible snowball effect, or anxiety about an emergence of centrifugal forces in the Communist world, that worry its leaders. I suppose that they must also deplore the adverse effect of these developments on their constant endeavours to isolate Western Germany. It is, however, unlikely that Eastern Europe will continue to move more or less evenly towards further liberalization, independence and rapprochement with the West. First of all, there is the Soviet Union and its possible reactions to past events. Although they probably will not resort to armed intervention, they may be expected to exert mounting political pressure and economic measures upon the heretics - Czechoslovakia seeming particularly vulnerable to the latter, as our economic advisers have pointed out in their interesting study. Furthermore, we may expect some new harassment of the Western countries. Past experience has taught us that this often happens in or around Berlin. For this reason, too, we should not take lightly any measure against that city. It is quite possible that the latest measures of the Ulbricht Government against free access to Berlin have a wider significance than an attempt to enhance the status of his own regime. As to our response, we should not try directly to influence the events in Eastern Europe. It would, I think, be counter-productive and be a disservice to the Czech, Rumanian and other Governments but we should be receptive to any attempts at or suggestions for constructive co-operation with the countries concerned.

Mr. LUNS (Contd)

This readiness should be demonstrated on any appropriate occasion. Furthermore we think that, in addition to bilateral contacts, a habit of multilateral discussion should be developed. I am not thinking of highly-publicised and spectacular meetings, nor of a voluminous agenda nor of quick results. As you know, we believe that the so-called Group of Ten might play a useful part in our common policy of détente. This group of small and medium Eastern and Western European countries is, in our opinion, an appropriate forum for developing and stimulating the process I have just outlined. My Government has therefore embarked, since the beginning of 1967, on a round of meetings with the leaders of the Eastern European members of the Group, while keeping in close contact with its Western European members.

Especially during my visit to Budapest and Belgrade in February and March last, I received positive responses, in particular from President Tito and my Yugoslav colleague. Rumania too, has shown a very positive interest. As Ambassador Boon explained to the Council in Permanent Session, we aim firstly at having a meeting of experts from as many members of the Ten as possible. These experts could in a preliminary, exploratory and non-committal way exchange views on the future activities of the Group.

Since then, we have remained in close contact with the Yugoslav Government. There has also been a meeting of officials from Belgium, Denmark and the Netherlands, talks which will be continued shortly.

My Yugoslav colleague and I have agreed that we should follow a flexible approach on the less controversial questions in the field of co-operation and good neighbourly relations in Europe. In the first place, in order to stimulate East-West contacts, we envisage further moves in existing international organizations such as the EEC and UNESCO and perhaps another United Nations specialised agency, as well as in the Council of Europe. Furthermore, we may promote regular exchanges of information in the Group of Ten on the general economic situation, as well as on developments in European organizations like the Common Market, EFTA and COMECON. Recently, the Hungarian Government has made a suggestion to this effect to us. Attention could further be paid to various forms of economic, industrial, technical and scientific co-operation, both bilateral and within the EEC.

In the second stage, the Group of Ten might perhaps also be used as a sounding board for some aspects of arms control. This could take place, for instance, after progress has been made with NATO studies in this field.

Mr. LUNS (Contd)

Recent developments in Eastern Europe, and especially in Czechoslovakia, may, however, induce the Governments of the Eastern European countries belonging to the Group of Ten to be somewhat more cautious, but thus far I am happy to note that moves initiated on these matters from our side have continued to make some progress.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, I should like to repeat to you that we intend fully to inform our NATO Allies and consult with them concerning developments in this field. We should, however, not consider détente in the European context only. A lasting rapprochement can, by its very nature, not be limited to any given area.

At our previous Spring Meeting in Luxembourg, we concluded that activities deployed by the Soviet Union in the Middle East were not in keeping with the circumspection shown by it in recent years in Europe. This apparent contradiction underlines the Communist philosophy that détente is only a tactical means which does not affect ultimate aims. Our response should not confine itself to studies, but we should decide on common measures to assert our presence in that area. In doing so, we may give encouragement to those Arab Governments who want to maintain their political independence. At the same time, we should do our best to restore or intensify their relations with the West. A lasting improvement in the Middle East depends, however, on an early and equitable solution to the Israel-Arab conflict about which our Turkish colleague has just said some notable things. I did not fail to remind Foreign Minister Eban, when he paid a visit to The Hague in March of this year, of this important aspect of the situation.

I believe Mr. Chairman, that the member countries of NATO should do their utmost to mitigate, if not obviate, the polarisation of positions brought about by the events of last year. In other words, we should try to rid the present crisis as much as possible of its cold war aspect, whereby the Soviet Union supports the Arabs 100% and it is believed that the West is only in favour of Israel without taking account of legitimate Arab interests. Evidently there is not very much we can do to restore the dialogue and some degree of understanding between Israel and the Soviet Union. We should, however, from our side do all we can to bring about normal relations and a better relationship between Israel and the Arab countries and between the West and the Arab States. I therefore accepted with pleasure the invitation of my Egyptian colleague to visit Cairo early this month. It would take me too long to analyse in detail the series of long talks I had with President Nasser and members of the Government of the United Arab Republic. Understandably, on both sides there still is a deep well of mutual distrust which is a serious obstacle to constructive talks or an initial agreement between the parties to the conflict.

Mr. LUNS (Contd)

Nevertheless, there is a range of possibilities for reaching agreement between them. I arrived at certain conclusions in the course of my conversations in Cairo and Alexandria, which I forwarded to my Israeli colleague. At the end of this week, Mr. Eban again will visit The Hague and on the invitation of the Israeli Government, I hope to go to Israel during the second half of July.

Mr. Chairman, détente is a touchstone of Soviet intentions, as it also is of Western solidarity. Unilateral gestures made by the West will not necessarily be reciprocated by Moscow. This is particularly the case in military matters. There are no grounds for the belief that unilateral reductions of forces in Central Europe would be followed by similar action on the other side of the demarcation line. In addition, as we well know, only reductions carefully balanced in scope and time would not endanger our security.

Mr. Chairman, we now have before us a proposal to issue at the end of this Conference a declaration advocating mutual and balanced force reductions as a means of lessening tension, of initiating a process of building confidence between West and East and of freeing resources much needed for other purposes. Our express willingness to start negotiations to this end may, we hope, be conducive to a favourable reaction on the part of the Soviet Union. In any case, it may bring home to informed world opinion, and particularly to our own nations, that it is now up to the Soviet Union to indicate whether it is prepared to join the West on such a concerted policy of disarmament and arms control. In spite of its adherence to the concept of peaceful co-existence and its support for the Non-Proliferation Treaty, Moscow has as yet not evinced any positive interest for this line of action.

Meanwhile, Mr. Chairman, we need as much support as possible from public opinion for the future tasks of the Alliance, as they have been outlined and are being carried out. This is why my Government welcomes the wish of the NATO Parliamentarians for closer contact with the North Atlantic Council. Unfortunately, several of our Allies are not able to support the idea of a formal relationship between the Assembly and our Organization and therefore your suggestion, Mr. Chairman, for a provisional procedure acceptable to all deserves full support.

In conclusion, Mr. Chairman, let me stress again that our system of collective defence cannot be replaced by one-sided military disengagement but rather by an East-West arrangement on mutually balanced measures in the field of arms control and disarmament. Thank you.

Mr. BROSIO

Thank you very much Mr. Minister. Mr. Pipinelis please.

Mr. PIPINELIS

Mr. Chairman, may I first express to you my appreciation for your Annual Political Appraisal, which is a very important document indeed, and which will serve us as a steady guideline in our work here.

I would like first to deal very briefly with paragraphs 48 to 51 of your Report concerning relations between Greece and Turkey and Cyprus. In the past few months, we have tried with our friends and Allies, the Turks, to smooth out existing difficulties, and it is with satisfaction that I am able to report, as Mr. Caglayangil has just said, that owing to the goodwill of our two Governments, and more particularly to his personal wisdom and his imperturbable serenity, considerable progress in this direction has been made. Some progress was made towards direct contact in both the Greek and Turkish communities in Cyprus in the firm belief that this wish is shared by the Turkish Government and by the Turkish Cypriot leaders, who wish and work to have positive progress made in this direction. Positive progress had also already been registered by tentative agreement concerning some educational problems of the minorities in the two countries. By settling outstanding differences and promoting a better understanding between their two countries, both the Greek and the Turkish Governments are doing their best to reinforce our Atlantic Community in the part of the world which is more directly their own concern.

May I now turn to the major problem of East-West relations to which, Mr. Chairman, you have very rightly devoted the longest single part of your Report. It is a fact that the future of our Alliance is very largely dependent on what we do about these relations. There is no doubt in anybody's mind that these relations are both feasible and desirable, not just because they will improve what the Soviet Union calls peaceful co-existence and what we ourselves call détente, but mainly because Iron Curtains are as unnatural in the society of nations as they are in societies of individuals. But these relations should be conducted in such a way as to enhance, and serve our positions and interests and not lead to the disintegration of the Western world. In achieving this, we must be very careful to keep in mind: firstly, that the Soviet Union's principal political aim still remains to play each one of us against the other in order to achieve its world-wide ideological and political goal; and secondly, that in dealing with us the Warsaw Pact countries have never retreated, and they are not likely to retreat, an inch from the tenets of their basic and collective policies. This is certainly not our position, for the simple

Mr. PIPINELIS (Contd)

reason that our policies are far from collective or identical. They are in certain respects parallel, in that they are inspired by a common desire to defend ourselves and preserve our way of life. The least we should expect for ourselves when dealing with the Eastern European countries is to observe this simple but fundamental element; thirdly, the problem of a European Security Conference should be approached in the light of these facts. The idea is reproachless in principle, but those who originated it have, at its very inception, cast upon it the shadow of suspicion by refusing to admit clearly and plainly as participants to this conference our pact partners of the American continent, the United States and Canada. This leaves us with a plain and obvious propaganda attempt to disrupt the Alliance. It is therefore encouraging that the Report of the experts on East-West relations stresses the fact that no progress was made in the direction of such a conference. It is less encouraging that they fail to agree on the reason for this lack of progress.

All this being said, and understood, it remains that relations with the Eastern countries are possible and desirable. In the speech I made on 26th April to the Athens press, I referred to the possibility of agreeing on a code of good behaviour which would provide for a clear definition of non-interference in internal affairs and eventually for consultation on matters of common interest. Existing treaty responsibilities should be unequivocally reserved and the participation of Turkey should be fundamental.

This was not meant as a formal proposal, but just as a general view expressed for the purpose of presenting our policy in the Balkans and of probing our neighbours' real intentions and possibilities. This idea has met with a considerable degree of interest in several Balkan capitals, but no formal reply has been given so far. Of course, I shall keep the Council informed on further developments. In doing so, I believe that I am simply conforming to the true meaning of paragraph 7 of the Harmel Report. Indeed, détente with the East can have disastrous effects if consultation between Allies is not being conducted in the broadest possible sense and good faith.

I wish to stress the fact that we have achieved some positive progress in the way of détente. The improvement in United States/USSR relations is one among several achievements to be greeted with satisfaction on our side.

Another important achievement is that the Non-Proliferation Treaty has been opened for signature in three capitals. In this connection, I should like to point out that the confidence of each one of us in the collective security arrangements of the Alliance is a fundamental factor in our willingness to accede to this Treaty.

Mr. PIPINELIS (Contd)

On the other hand, we should take note of the fact that the USSR has not always seemed to respond with an unqualified willingness to meet our efforts. They have not, for example, responded in a positive way to the new German policy vis-à-vis the East, which included a proposal to negotiate an agreement over the renunciation of force. On the contrary, they met this initiative with new restrictions on persons and goods in and out of West Berlin. In another context, the presence of the Soviet fleet in the Mediterranean has obvious and wide strategic and political implications. These are very clearly pointed out in paragraph 38 of our document G-M(68)21. The unrest fomented and supported in a number of countries in the West by Communist agitation, to which paragraph 47 of your Report refers, also points in the same direction.

More particularly, the USSR's rigid attitude towards developments in Czechoslovakia clearly indicates that détente is only possible in Russian eyes at the best on the basis of the existing political status quo and at the worst after a new confrontation with rebelling partners.

The problem of a rapprochement between East and West is basically linked with the liberalisation process within the Soviet-dominated part of Europe and, in a broader sense, the process of domestication of Communism. It is my firm belief that no real détente could be achieved otherwise. I am equally convinced, however, that the Communist world is irresistibly and irreversibly moving in this direction. In that case our problem is to follow developments with no reticence and also with no undue haste. As our ancestors would say "hurry slowly".

In this context, the German problem remains the crux of the matter. As long as the USSR maintains its present negative attitude, no positive progress in this question can be achieved. This in no way means that we should relax our efforts to find ways of improving our relations with the East, but neither does it mean that we should be lured by Communist propaganda into accepting the more or less artificial interpretation of recent developments in Germany.

I fully support your statement, Mr. Chairman, that the German people deserve our trust and that it doesn't make sense to be alarmed by the limited electoral success of an extreme right wing party.

I would not say that history never repeats itself. It can repeat itself in more or less identical conditions, and nobody in his senses would suggest that present social, political and diplomatic conditions in Germany have anything to do with conditions in the thirties.

Mr. PIPINELIS (Contd)

In the same line of thought, I would say that Communist propaganda, in inciting violence and subversion in our countries, in exploiting the unrest of youth, has accomplished for the Soviet Union considerable successes in the last year. It is interesting to note that, even in countries where a policy of internal co-existence with Communism has been thought possible for many years, a complete reversal of this policy has recently occurred, and Communism, with all its political affiliations is again being proclaimed as a true national threat.

You very accurately referred to this, Mr. Chairman, in paragraph 47 of your Report, and I entirely subscribe to your appraisal that - "the Communists use every possible means, even movements which are even of an anarchical and nihilist inspiration and do not coincide with the Communist movement, in order to try and undermine the democratic régimes..."

"It is to be hoped", it is further stated in your Report, "that the firmness of the democratic governments will show that violence pays no dividends". I am afraid that in our well-intentioned and unrelenting desire to improve relations with the Communist East we have only too often neglected this part of the whole picture.

It is certainly not too early to ponder a little more on it. We have learnt from long and bitter experience that under present circumstances the danger threatening our democratic way of life very often comes from inside, through all sorts of political pressures and chaotic situations. The recent events in a number of democratic countries have given additional weight to this consideration. Only ignorance of facts could explain the view that situations of this sort can only be faced by opposing wishes to facts and dogmas to reality.

May I now turn to the other important problems on our Agenda, Mr. Chairman?. First, the question of our Draft Resolution which would proclaim our willingness to reduce our forces on condition that the opposite side agrees to negotiate with us a similar or balanced reduction of its forces. At the same time we prompt the other side to prepare its counter-proposals and to sit down and negotiate. I fully realize the reasons that many governments among us have to propose this. I will readily admit that my Government would hasten to inscribe itself at the top of the list of these governments. We are fully conscious in my country that every Drachma that is earmarked for defence is withdrawn from productive investments. But we have on our Northern border countries whose attitude towards us has ranged in recent years between outright hostility and just normal relations, while, in every case, maintaining an aggressive potential several times higher than our own defence forces.

Mr. PIPINELIS (Contd)

In such conditions we must think first about the very existence of our country and then of its prosperity. In such conditions we also approach the problem of disarmament with great caution and concern.

Notwithstanding these possibilities, we are, on the other hand, fully conscious of the need for more Allied solidarity and harmony in our troubled times and therefore we will subscribe hopefully to the Resolution.

May I draw the attention of the Council, however, to the fact that the various documents we have under consideration mention only in passing a very important factor of these studies. What provisions do we make about the geo-political meaning of the withdrawal of Soviet and Allied troops from this central area? Supposing that a contemplated agreement provided for the withdrawal of part of, or all, the Allied and Soviet forces now stationed in the central sector, a vital element in the case of a crisis or an emergency would be the time required for the redeployment of these forces in this sector. What would reasonably be this time element with regard to the Soviet forces, and what would it be with regard to the non-Continental forces, and what would be the increased risks during the unavoidable time gap between the redeployment of each of these forces? I believe that this is a factor that should be thoroughly studied in all its implications by our military authorities, and I wish this recommendation to be included, even at this late stage, in document C-M(68)24. I therefore suggest that the following question be added to the Chapter "Specific Questions for the NATO Military Authorities" in document C-M(68)24, pages 61-62, under the title "Balanced East West Force Reduction". This question should be numbered 2, and the following 18 questions should be re-numbered accordingly.

The question would be as follows:

"2. In order to clearly define the basis on which an eventual agreement on the mutual withdrawal of stationed foreign forces on both sides of the central sector can be reached, the time element arising from the geo-political differences involved in such withdrawals, as well as the time element involved in the case these stationed forces have to be brought back to the central sector in a crisis or an emergency, should be carefully studied and weighed." These geo-political differences are summarily described in paragraph A.4 of the Working Paper appearing as an attachment to Appendix II to Annex A to C-M(68)24.

Mr. PIPINELIS (Contd)

There is a final point, Mr. Chairman, which I would like to make clear in this connection. The situation on our Northern border being as I have very briefly described it a little while ago, we are not ready to negotiate any reduction of forces with these countries in the North until and unless we have ample proof that their basic policy towards Greece has really changed and that their overt or covert aggressive intentions have ceased to exist.

Finally, I would like to examine our last problem, the situation in the Mediterranean and what we should, or could or would do about it. What the situation in the Mediterranean is, we all know. As the Soviet squadron in question is cruising in our seas, is mooring regularly just off our territorial waters, is harassing our naval units and shipping in general, and as it poses an additional and serious threat to our defence position, and I believe to the whole South-Eastern flank, I will be allowed to take a less comfortable view of the situation.

The actual situation is that our whole defence system, not entirely developed until the appearance of Soviet cruisers and submarines - and helicopter carriers in the near future - should now be completely reviewed. Our Military Authorities have established the basis of this review and I note with satisfaction that some of this reviewing has been endorsed by the Military Authorities of the Alliance. It has been said in the Report and elsewhere that the present strength of the Soviet Mediterranean squadron does not present a serious threat to the Allied naval forces in case of general war, and that the Soviet naval presence has rather a political significance. It is, of course, an historical fact that naval units of some sort have been used in the past to underline the political will of this or that Power, but it is carrying the argument a little too far to assert that a combat-ready fleet equipped with the most modern weapons, and with a capability to land marine elements anywhere, is here to exert only some political influence.

In this connection, I wish to express my full agreement, Mr. Chairman, with your remarks concerning the situation in the Middle East, and more especially with paragraph 24 of your Report. In spite of the overwhelming difficulties confronting us, and attitude of passivity would not be in the Alliance's interest. All the Allied Powers concerned should approach the problem in a spirit of impartiality, and pressure should be brought to bear on both sides in order to find a workable and peaceful solution. There are already some signs that peace is not entirely an illusionary view; time is working not only for the trouble-makers but also for those inspired by common sense. On account of her position and general good relations with the countries of the area, Greece is exerting her influence to this effect.

MR. BROSIO

Thank you very much Mr. Minister. Would Mr. Jonsson of Iceland now take the floor please.

MR. JONSSON

Mr. President I have only a few general remarks.

First of all, I would like to extend our warm welcome to all of you who have come to Iceland for the NATO Ministerial Meeting. We Icelanders are participants in NATO in a sense somewhat different from the rest of the NATO nations, as we maintain no armed forces and do not intend to establish an army. We have also a rather special position in another respect, since Iceland has only 200,000 inhabitants - the smallest population of the NATO countries.

It is only in the most recent years that we have been able to organize a large international meeting like this, the reason being lack of technical facilities and accommodation. Our police force is also rather limited in number, but we will certainly do our best to ensure the smooth operation of the meeting and the security of the participants, in spite of the fact that, even in this country, we have some unruly elements who like nothing better than causing a good riot.

But, speaking in all earnest, such fringe groups are becoming a problem, not only in this country but in a number of nations. The aims of these groups of anarchists and defenders of violence are deliberately those of weakening the nations from within, and that manifestly can be no less dangerous than an external attack. That these actions follow a pre-determined pattern can hardly be doubted and they should therefore be looked upon with a measure of seriousness by all the members of the Alliance.

When the North Atlantic Alliance was founded nearly 20 years ago, its purpose was to counter a possible threat of attack on its member nations and indeed, as events had shown, this imminent threat was no groundless speculation.

Now, after a period of nearly two decades, this Alliance for peace and defence has, by its very existence, attained results which nobody, be he a member or not, can deny or belittle.

We have enjoyed a time of peace in the Treaty area and no nation has been compelled to adopt forms of government odious and alien to the majority of its people. The tension in Europe between East and West has been de-escalated so that an approach has been made possible, both bilaterally and multilaterally in the European area.

Mr. JONSSON (Contd)

This development has been valuable and useful, and this has also been one of the main aims of the Treaty, according to Article 2. In this same second Article of the Treaty it is also said that the Organization will encourage economic collaboration between any or all of the member countries. This collaboration, in our opinion in this country, is very essential, but I can add that we think it might have been better. Western Europe is still divided into two groups, the EEC group and the EFTA group, and some of the member countries of NATO are still outside both groups. It would be a worthy task for our Organization to take an initiative for a better solution of this problem.

Next year, each of the member nations of the Alliance has the right to terminate its membership, but I feel certain that such an eventuality is highly unlikely to take place. As regards the view of my own Government, it has not conducted any deliberations to this effect, and I feel free to add that the Icelandic Government does not envisage the termination of our membership. The final decision will be taken by our Parliament, the Althing. The two Government parties there, and the biggest Opposition party, have already stated that they don't want the Treaty terminated. These three parties have altogether 50 out of the 60 members in the Parliament. The possibility of a termination of the Treaty is therefore non-existent in our country, at all events for the time being.

Iceland, being a country without national defence, derives obvious advantages from her membership of the Alliance. A declaration of permanent neutrality is, in our view, completely worthless, as the course of history shows. On the other hand, it is also of some importance for the Alliance to count Iceland among its members, as the country's geographical position is of decisive importance for control and communications on the North Atlantic between Europe and the North American continent. One can even say that these links of communication played a major rôle in the outcome of World War II, facilitating the participation of both Canada and the United States in those great struggles.

The results of NATO's activities seem indeed to have been what was striven for at the outset in 1949. We realise that the young people of the developed and industrial countries, including the NATO countries, do not seem to recognise the inherent value and importance of NATO's aims, and are even hostile towards those objectives. This is indeed a matter for serious consideration, as I said at the beginning. Anti-NATO propaganda has become extensive and effective to a certain degree, especially among the youth of our countries. Our deliberations should, in other words, be concerned with the state of affairs in our own house, no less than external threats. These negative developments we in NATO must meet with increased vigilance in the field of information and public affairs, organizing new offensives in the battle for the minds of our young people, just as we are facing organized propaganda from the other side of the fence.

Mr. JONSSON (Contd)

Therefore, I consider this an issue of enormous importance with which the Alliance should concern itself, trying here to explore a pathway of greater understanding and build a bridge between the generations of this NATO world of ours. And I feel sure that the Organization will find ways and means to solve this problem, just as many problems have been solved for almost two decades gone by. Thank you, Mr. President.

Mr. BROSIO

Thank you very much, Mr. Minister. Now we have Mr. Michael Stewart for the United Kingdom.

Mr. STEWART

Mr. Chairman, colleagues, I think nearly all the speakers at this discussion have referred to events in Czechoslovakia. Those events are not isolated, but they serve as an example of a general ferment going on in Europe, and from that ferment we can draw certain conclusions affecting the policy of this Alliance. The events there brought into question the strength of the Soviet Union's hold over Eastern Europe, but the first result of that calling into question was to make the Soviet Union less approachable by the West, more difficult, more likely to rely on repressive policies. I do not think that there can be much doubt that one motive, at any rate, for the support given by the Soviet Union to the actions of the East German régime was this: that, looking round Eastern Europe, they found the number of reliable lieutenants that they had was shrinking and it was desirable, therefore, for them to give such help and encouragement to one of the reliable lieutenants who remained in East Germany. And, while mentioning Berlin, I would say that I listened with great interest to Herr Brandt's statement, and I fully agree with what he said. The East German measures are partly an effort to assert the claim to sovereign statehood of the East German régime. In part, they are a challenge to the efforts of the West, and of the Federal Government in particular, to bring about détente in Europe.

My Government, Mr. Chairman, remains determined to uphold its responsibilities in Berlin, and to play its share in ensuring that West Berlin's communications are not impaired and that its citizens are able to lead their lives as before. I am glad to note that traffic is so far continuing to flow smoothly to and from West Berlin. I am sure the Council has been right to endorse certain counter-measures which, although they are of a limited nature - perhaps even a token nature - do show that the Allies are determined to react to any continuation of provocation or pressure against Berlin, and I hope that all member governments will join in making these counter-measures effective.

Mr. STEWART (Contd)

But this outburst of hostility on the part of the Soviet Union, which has been the first response to the uncertainties it faces in Eastern Europe, has not been confined to Berlin. One notices it also in an increased rigidity in their home policy, in an increased tendency to persecute people who, even in intellectual fields separate from politics, appear to be deviating from orthodoxy, and some tendency also to rigidity abroad.

I noticed when I visited Moscow and spoke with Mr. Gromyko not very long ago that he made no reference to a conference on the security of Europe; he made no reference to the project previously discussed between us of a treaty of friendship between our countries. We have to remember, in addition to these particular manifestations of rigidity, that it is still the long-term purpose of Soviet policy to disrupt NATO, to promote revolution, and we have to notice, too, that their forces are growing in strength and that attempts on their part to outflank NATO are multiplying. We see those attempts to outflank in the Persian Gulf, in the Mediterranean and in the Middle East.

I was grateful, Mr. Chairman, for our Italian colleague's reference to the resumption of relations between my country and a number of Arab countries. This was a welcome development. It will enable us to play, I trust, an increasing part in the task, to which several speakers have referred, of seeing that the Middle East does not become a field for exclusive Soviet penetration.

From this situation then, of an apparent ferment in Eastern Europe on the one hand, and a rigid response to it by the Soviet Union on the other, what general conclusions can we draw as to the policy of our Alliance?

First, I think unquestionably, that we have to maintain the defensive and the deterrent power of the Alliance. The United Kingdom, as you know, has thought it both right and necessary to make a withdrawal from certain parts of the world, very far from our own country, where we were previously substantially and expensively engaged. I think that withdrawal was something that, in the process of history, was bound to come before very long, and our immediate economic problems only influenced to a limited degree the precise timing of it. But, side by side with that withdrawal, we have felt it right, remembering the principle I mentioned that we must maintain the defensive and deterrent power of the Atlantic Alliance, to make it clear that we are concentrating our defence effort in Europe and in the Atlantic, and that we have indeed made some increased commitment of forces to NATO, as was announced by my colleague, Mr. Healey, on 10th May.

Mr. STEWART (Contd)

However, I think we should be painting an incomplete picture if the only lesson we drew from the Czechoslovak and similar events was that we are faced for the present with an increasingly rigid and suspicious Soviet Union. That is indeed the fact for the present, but there is a longer-term lesson, I think, to be drawn from these Czechoslovak events, because, as I say, they were not isolated. Things of that kind, in greater or less degree, and coloured by the particular circumstances of each country, occurred in one Eastern European country after another, and we have noticed, of course, in Western Europe also, an increasing tendency, particularly of the younger generation, to question many of the assumptions about politics and defence which to many of us have become almost accepted truths. Herr Brandt referred to this in his speech at the formal opening of our Conference, and indeed, if I may put it this way, if somebody starts to look at the present world situation without any preconceived ideas, he will conclude, as our Greek colleague concluded, that Iron Curtains are an unnatural thing, that it is a monstrous fact that mankind is divided into these two large blocs, spending enormous sums of money, piling up weapons against each other, and if he thinks no further than that and continues to think on a superficial level, he will feel that this is so monstrous that he must protest against it in the most immediate manner possible, which will usually mean to protest against the part played in it by the Government of his own country. And, if he has the good fortune to live in a NATO country, he will, as a rule, be able to carry out that kind of protest with impunity. But the moral I draw from all this is that we have got to make clear, if we want our Alliance to survive for as long as it will need to survive - and none of us would like to say how long that may be - if we want it to survive as long as is necessary, we have two tasks here. One is to remember, as the exercise associated with the name of Mr. Harmel of course reminds us, that we have not only a defence and deterrent function but a function of promoting détente. But we have not only to do that; we have got to make it quite clear to the younger generation that that is what we are doing, because in fact to the critic, who looks at the world and who says that it is outrageous that mankind should be thus divided and is inclined to blame his own country for it, if he is a citizen of a NATO country, there is a good and valid answer we can make to him. We can show the whole history of the attempts to reach better understanding, and we shall, as we proceed with the work we are considering at this Conference, be increasingly in a position to show him what we are now doing in a genuine search for détente, but it will be necessary to make this clear to the younger generation.

Mr. STEWART (Contd)

If we were asked, what in fact is NATO for? Why are we fifteen countries in the Alliance at all? If we were asked to strip ourselves of an automatic assumption that the Alliance is necessary and to make the case afresh, it is a case that can be made convincingly. Its purpose is partly to preserve, in our own countries, the liberties which we believe to be essential to the proper life of human beings. We can always reply with complete validity and justice to the critic and to the demonstrator in our own country: "It is because NATO exists that you are in a position to demonstrate against it", and this is not a mere debating point. It contains, if you like, one of the major facts of world politics, that this is one of the things that NATO is for.

But I think it is also for another purpose. It is to assert, as an Alliance, in those parts of the world with which the Alliance is concerned, and individually, as members, for example, of the United Nations, in any field of dispute in the world, to assert the belief that changes must be brought about by agreement and by peaceful means.

Mr. Rusk put to us the question - what kind of South-East Asia do we want to see? Well, one thing we can say with complete certainty, that South-East Asia in five years' time will not be the same as it is now or as it was five years ago.

If we were asked, what is the position in Berlin or in Germany to be in ten years time, few of us would attempt to answer that. The one thing we know for certain is it will not be the same as it is today. And one of the things surely we, as an Alliance, are endeavouring to secure is that, since changes in all these fields must come in the world, they must be brought about peaceably and by agreement, and not unilaterally or imposed by force. It is, I think, one of the most tragic fallacies that has plagued mankind, the fallacy that if you bring about a change violently you bring it about more quickly. As a rule, attempts to change human affairs violently produce so much unforeseen disaster on the way that the real purpose which the violence was intended to effect is not achieved for a very long time. And this doctrine of peaceful change it is all the more necessary to assert in a world where the weapons of war are as dangerous as they are today. Now, I would have thought, the preservation of liberty in our own countries and the steady indoctrination of the whole world in the necessity of recognising that change must come, and that it must come peaceably, - these are surely valuable and worthwhile objectives.

Mr. STEWART (Contd)

I was making therefore the point, Mr. Chairman, that, as a first principle, the first conclusion we can draw from the events in Eastern Europe is that there is a need to maintain the defensive and deterrent function of the Alliance. But, as a second conclusion, even if the present attitude of the Soviet Union makes it immediately more difficult to speak of détente, the necessity to prepare for détente and to demonstrate to everyone that we are doing so, and that we are ready as soon as the other side is ready - that necessity is becoming more pressing. But our Italian colleague, I think, referred to any approaches to Eastern Europe, particularly in its present fermenting state, as a delicate process, as indeed it is. And I draw from that a third general principle which must govern our conduct and to which earlier speakers have referred, namely, that what we decide to do must be done as a result of common counsel among ourselves and not by isolated and hopeful, but ill-based initiatives.

Now, I mentioned three general principles. Let me try and apply that to the kind of current problem that is dealt with in the documents there are before us. We have the Report by the Permanent Council on the Follow-Up to the notable Report on the Future Tasks of the Alliance. And we have there a study of East-West relations, and I was glad, when reading that, to find that it confirmed what was my own belief, that although the present situation may be difficult, the long-term prospects for improved relations are favourable provided, of course, that the Alliance does continue to lay great weight and equal weight on its defensive and deterrent function on the one hand, and its pursuit of better understanding on the other.

The second application to immediate problems to make, is the importance and usefulness of bilateral contacts provided, as I say, that we all do our best to keep each other informed as to what degree of success we may, or may not, have achieved in bilateral approaches. At a time when, I think, we are all agreed - and the Soviet Union seems also to be of the opinion - that it would be inappropriate to think of calling some great conference on the future of Europe, it is all the more necessary to make use of bilateral contacts.

I was interested, therefore, in what Herr Brandt had to tell us of his visit to Yugoslavia. I myself made a visit to Yugoslavia, indeed only a few days before Herr Brandt arrived there, and I shall later in the year be visiting Bulgaria, Hungary and Rumania. I hope this may be helpful in the process in which many of us are engaged of trying both to loosen the general tension between East and West and to see that our Alliance as a whole, is better informed as to the possibilities of détente.

Mr. STEWART (Contd)

In Yugoslavia, I was struck particularly with the absence of ideological and dogmatic pronouncements in the statements on policy which the Yugoslav Foreign Minister made and his belief that intra-European relations ought to be allowed to develop on the basis of national interest. And I was interested too to find a similar freedom from dogma in the Yugoslav approach to the solution of their own internal economic problems.

Now, I think a further application of these general principles which one should make, is that the Permanent Council should continue its study on Germany and on European security. I think one speaker already in this debate, Mr. Chairman, has mentioned that we do not want the East to anticipate us in this. We have got to show that we have already done a great deal of the thinking that is necessary, and that we are never, even from a propagandist point of view, made to appear to the world as the one who is lagging behind in preparations. And it follows from that also, I think, that we must be ready to secure force reductions when they do come to be possible.

Now we have had one instance of progress in the field of arms, namely, the Non-Proliferation Treaty. It would be easy, of course, to point out the limitations of a treaty of that kind, but I do believe that it opens up great opportunities for the future. The value of the Treaty will lie not only in stopping the proliferation of nuclear weapons, with all the dangers that that presents - we ought not either to underestimate the positive and constructive effects that the Treaty may have on the international climate. An agreement, even of limited substance, does add something to the degree of mutual confidence which makes further progress possible. And I think again the process of negotiating this Treaty has shown once more the value of frank and timely consultation within the Alliance.

I would welcome on this question of arms and forces what is proposed; that there should be a production of schemes for force reductions. Some colleagues have pointed out particular risks and dangers that can lie in schemes for force reductions if they are not properly considered. As I understand it, Mr. Chairman, the schemes we now have should go to the Military Authorities for consideration and come before us in December. In this field, as Mr. Rusk said, there is much homework to be done. We have therefore, I think, steadily to get on and to do that homework. And everything one says about the importance of being ready for mutual force reductions and about having them properly planned is an argument, of course, against force reductions which are not mutual or which do not form part of a scheme properly thought out in advance.

Mr. STEWART (Contd)

Now, if I might refer to two particular theatres of conflict. Mr. Dean Rusk referred to the great conflict in which his country is engaged in Vietnam and pointed out, I thought, most graphically how the perils there do not affect Vietnam alone but how Laos, Cambodia and all the surrounding countries are in question and that the ultimate future of this part of the world is of concern to all of us. I would like to say just a word about my own country's position there.

It is true, as I pointed out earlier, that we have had to make a military withdrawal - or rather are in the process of making such a withdrawal - but we shall still maintain a general military capability in the 1970s which will be available for world-wide use. This will be enough to put a substantial force in the Far East if real necessity arose; and we shall be demonstrating that by a major Commonwealth exercise in Malaya in 1970. Meanwhile, we shall maintain and, indeed, try to increase our economic support and technical assistance for South-East Asia. When President Johnson, speaking at Baltimore in 1965, made that imaginative undertaking for rehabilitation in South-East Asia we welcomed that at the time, and we shall want to join in any multilateral aid for the Mekong Basin when it is possible to organize it. Now, similarly, we are offering large-scale economic assistance to Malaysia and Singapore to mitigate the economic consequences of our departure. We have offered £50 million to Singapore and £25 million to Malaysia for commitment over the next five years. In addition, we shall be handing over free of charge all defence lands and fixed assets that those two governments may require.

We are also joining in a co-operative aid effort for Indonesia and we are giving considerable technical assistance to Thailand.

Now the other area to which I wanted to refer, Mr. Chairman, was the Mediterranean, on which we have a report with whose recommendations I would express my agreement. In this connection, I think we must take account of the importance to the Alliance of developing close and friendly relations with the Government of Malta. We must agree with them satisfactory arrangements for consultation with us. It's useful that we shall shortly be sending them a NATO study on their security against external aggression. But we must show the Maltese that we are interested not only in their security but in their welfare and economic development.

Mr. STEWART (Contd)

In conclusion, Mr. Chairman, I would say this: that, remembering the great purposes for which this Alliance was formed, the great purposes for which it still exists and is still necessary, the things we have to do are to keep our defences intact, to seek détente, remembering that that involves the detailed homework to which Mr. Rusk referred; that individually we should, in whatever fields are appropriate, try to promote in the world the belief that it is essential that change is sought by peaceful means; that we should on all matters take common counsel with each other, remembering that while we have been successful, it is because we have taken common counsel, and, above all, that we should not only do these things but explain to the rest of the world that we are doing them and why they are not only our concern but mankind's.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. BROSIO

Thank you very much, Mr. Stewart. Mr. Lyng, please.

Mr. LYNG

Mr. Chairman, the Norwegian Parliament on June 14th voted for the continuation of Norwegian membership of NATO after the date when the Atlantic Treaty formally permits denunciation. This decision was taken after a broad and comprehensive public debate followed by thorough deliberation in our Parliament. Of 150 Members of Parliament only six, I repeat, Mr. Chairman, only six voted for withdrawal from the Alliance.

As far as I know, this is the first formal resolution of this kind from the National Assembly of any of the Alliance members. I therefore believe that it might be of interest for my colleagues to hear a few words about the debate and the arguments and considerations which formed the basis of this positive decision.

The main basis for the general debate and the parliamentary deliberations was two comprehensive reports to Parliament by the Government - one on Norway's relations with NATO and the other on the long-term defence plan for the five-year period 1969-73.

The general conclusion of these Reports is that NATO's military strength must be maintained as a guarantee for the member countries' right of self-determination but that on the basis of this position of strength systematic efforts towards détente must be made through contacts and negotiations with the countries of the Eastern bloc. This conclusion was generally accepted by the Norwegian Parliament.

Mr. LYNG (Contd)

It was quite remarkable, however, Mr. Chairman, how the debate came to concentrate on future perspectives and on the possibility of NATO contributing to further efforts towards détente.

The Harmel studies made a great impact on the development of the debate and helped to counter the anti-NATO propaganda that NATO is essentially an aggressive military alliance. This has also been the effect of the efforts made by the Norwegian Government itself to strengthen our contacts with the East.

My Government had never doubted that there would be a great majority in our Parliament for our continued membership of NATO. But we had not expected that the support would be as strong as it turned out to be, both in public opinion and within Parliament. In my view, it is quite clear that this strong support is due to the forward-looking nature of the debate on NATO, both within the Organization itself and in the various member countries.

I might add that the main aspects of the defence plan for 1969-73 were also accepted by Parliament with an overwhelming majority.

May I then, Mr. Chairman, briefly mention our relations with the Soviet Union and other East European countries. From our big neighbour in the North, the Soviet Union, we obtained a certain contribution to the debate on NATO in our Parliament, though whether this contribution was intended or not I cannot say. A few days before the debate, one of the routine inter-allied NATO Exercises took place in North Norway about 500 km. from the Soviet border. These exercises have always, almost as a matter of routine, led to attacks against Norway in the Soviet press. This time, these attacks were rather stronger than usual. In addition, we found that at the same time fairly comprehensive military exercises were started on the Soviet side of the border with forces of a motorized division with about 200 tanks a few hundred metres from our frontier. These forces were withdrawn after a few days, and if the purpose of this demonstration was to influence the Norwegian view of our relationship with NATO, the results would seem to have been rather contrary to expectations.

May I say, Mr. Chairman, that we have no reason to believe that there has been a change of any importance in the general relationship between the Soviet Union and Norway. Our contacts with the other countries of the Warsaw Pact group, apart from East Germany, have steadily been widening on the political level also, through personal contacts and visits by members of the Government and delegations. By a coincidence, we had as our guests a delegation from the Polish National Assembly under the leadership of their President just at the time when messages reached us about the anti-Semitic reactions in Poland. This gave us an opportunity to stress strongly that such tendencies would create great difficulties for all those in our country, as well as in other Western countries, who work for closer contacts with Poland and better understanding of Polish problems.

Mr. LYNG (Contd)

May I, in closing, say a few words about the important work done in connection with the follow-up to the Harmel Report. I think it is important to do our utmost to obtain results that could serve as a basis for the negotiations that will have to take place between East and West if we want to develop the present détente into something more substantial than a purely verbal one.

It seems that the studies of disarmament, and more particularly force reductions, have got off to a promising start. The many interesting models proposed demand and deserve thorough analysis. I do hope that every Permanent Representative will be able to present us with a more comprehensive report at our meeting in December. Mr. Chairman, Norway attaches the greatest importance to the fact that we have reached the point where the Non-Proliferation Treaty is ready for signature. We think that we should not waste the opportunity that is given to us to make further substantial progress in the disarmament field. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. BROSIO

Thank you very much, Mr. Minister. Minister Nogueira please.

Mr. NOGUEIRA

Mr. Chairman. Once again the Ministerial Council is meeting when the world is confronted with more than one serious crisis. We may say, sir, that this Council is used to meeting very grave situations and this is not new, nor is it a surprise to anyone. We have dealt with difficult crises before. This time, however, Mr. Chairman, there may be a difference. Some of us at least might have hoped that no grave crisis would arise for some time now. Some of us would like to believe that the world was beginning to proceed along a more reasonable path within the bounds of peaceful co-existence. What is happening once again therefore appears to be a disappointment for many hopes held by some, a frustration for many constructive purposes of others.

In reviewing the international situation, we see that the crisis over Berlin stands out as the most important point requiring our attention. Many speakers have already dealt with this problem and I wish to associate myself with most of what has been said here today, mainly the striking words spoken by Foreign Minister Brandt this morning. We, as an Alliance, have a clear-cut duty to express our firm solidarity and our full support to the Federal Republic of Germany and to let it be known in no uncertain terms that the Alliance approves the unlimited rights of the Federal Republic as well as the position of the three powers mainly concerned over this matter.

Mr. NOGUEIRA (Contd)

It might be interesting to investigate the reasons why the Soviet Union has selected this particular moment to stir up this crisis over Berlin. Whether it is a show of strength or a display of support for a hardline Socialist leader as Mr. Stewart suggested, or a diversion from other problems, or a warning to other Eastern European countries, or a test of Western solidarity, be it as it may, it is our obligation, and also our interest, not to leave the Soviet Union in any doubt as to the determination and the firmness with which the Alliance intends to deal with the problem of the freedom of Berlin. In this respect, Mr. Chairman, my Delegation will wholeheartedly support the draft communiqué on this problem which has been circulated by the German Delegation.

Elsewhere, other problems seem to aggravate the atmosphere of anxiety and the critical situation which undoubtedly prevail throughout the whole world.

The position in the Mediterranean, the problem of the Middle East, the penetration of the Soviet fleet in the Persian Gulf as a first step to assert itself in the Indian Ocean, all these are problems which, in the view of my Government, cannot and should not be overlooked. As to what is happening in the Indian Ocean, and in the Southern Atlantic, we, the Portuguese, are in a position, along with some others of our allies, of having some direct interest and knowledge, and I am, Mr. Chairman, merely stating a fact if I report to this Council that the Soviet fleet is freely manoeuvring in those areas not only with the purpose of showing its ships and its flag and training its crews, but with clear political purposes as well. And the Soviets are doing so with such strength as to enable them to exert strong pressure on the countries of the area. All this brings up the question of the security of the Southern route now that the Suez Canal is closed and is likely to be closed for quite a long time.

The Indian Ocean route around the Cape and through the Southern Atlantic takes on a new and vital importance, and not only while the Suez Canal is closed but, for the future as well, even if the canal is reopened, because the very large ships and tankers which are put in use nowadays cannot pass through the Suez Canal. So the supply of the Western world and its economy is in a very large measure tied up with the security of those areas.

Some in this Council, Mr. Chairman, may ascribe ulterior motives to what I am saying with regard to this point. I wish to assure you that it is not so. The Military Authorities of our Alliance and more especially our Naval Commanders do know, I am sure, what I have in mind, and they understand the grave dangers to which I am trying to invite the attention of the Council. I think, Mr. Chairman, that we should listen to them more than we seem to be doing at the moment.

Mr. NOGUEIRA (Contd)

I now turn, Mr. Secretary-General, to the problem of the Treaty on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. When the draft resolution approving the Treaty was put to the vote in the United Nations, my Delegation abstained, along with others, and the Portuguese Government has already indicated, on more than one occasion, the reasons why at this moment we do not see our way clear to signing the Treaty. However, Sir, throughout the world much is being said on that document, which is presented as a safe guarantee against nuclear attacks on non-nuclear countries and against the dissemination of nuclear weapons. While we understand the grave implications of the dissemination of nuclear weapons and have every sympathy for those countries which have special responsibilities in respect of nuclear power and its use or misuse, I must say that my Government has very strong reservations to the Treaty as it now stands. The Treaty does not seem to be the first step towards disarmament in accordance with a general plan to be pursued, and it seems to create a basic discrimination between nations, some of them being entitled to have, and to develop, nuclear weapons, others not being entitled to have them at all. It seems very doubtful that in practice the Treaty can be implemented and that such countries as the Federal Republic of Germany, of Japan, or Brazil, or India and some others might resign themselves to the status to which they would be relegated by the Treaty. On the other hand, the Treaty provides no guarantee for the defence of the non-nuclear powers if they are the victims of a nuclear attack. As a matter of fact, indeed, Mr. Chairman, we cannot consider as a guarantee the guarantees provided by the Charter of the United Nations, and the Treaty envisages no others.

Since the Permanent Members of the Security Council do not give up their veto rights, and since the nuclear powers only promise to act and to accept responsibility in accordance with the Charter and within its provisions, those guarantees are entirely useless and do not add anything to the present situation.

Further, one has to observe that the Treaty has in mind the possibility of aggression from Communist China, which seems to have acquired enough nuclear capability to become a menace. If that is so, Mr. Chairman, then there appears to be some contradiction for the United Nations in trying to work out a guarantee through the Security Council and the General Assembly and at the same time preventing China from becoming a member of the Organization and from taking its seat in the Security Council.

Mr. NOGUEIRA (Contd)

Finally, one has to agree that the Treaty does not ensure that there will be no discrimination against some countries for purely political reasons. If, tomorrow, the International Atomic Agency adopts a resolution preventing a given country from having access to nuclear information and from receiving international or national co-operation in nuclear methods for peaceful purposes, is there any guarantee that the Nuclear Powers would entirely disregard such a resolution and still co-operate in spite of it with the country which has been discriminated against? One is permitted to doubt, Sir; they do not dare to oppose majority resolutions on far more trivial matters. How could one expect that they should do so on very vital questions? Is there any reason, on the other hand, to believe that the legal order created by the Treaty and in regard to its implementation is in any way different or superior or more respected than the legal order created by the United Nations Charter and which, in the last years, has become an international disgrace.

And lastly, Mr. Chairman, if some suggest, as I have already seen in some papers, that NATO may provide for its Allies the required guarantees, then we should not forget that NATO only works within a limited geographical area, and there are many areas outside NATO which may be subject to nuclear aggression and in regard to which some NATO countries have national responsibilities. For all these reasons, Sir, my Government, pending further improvements in the Treaty and pending further clarification and interpretation, does not find it possible at the moment to vote for the United Nations Resolution and to sign the Treaty.

Turning to other questions, I would like to say one word on Africa. That continent continues to go through drama and tragedy and every day seems to bring about more misery, more difficulties, more unresolved and acute problems. The Chinese and the Soviet Union are making a new and determined effort in many areas in Africa. The Soviet Navy is very active in African waters, not only in the Mediterranean but in West and East Africa as well.

But if we brush aside the many problems of Africa at the moment, one problem stands out as deserving our attention. I wish to refer to the problem of Nigeria and the war which goes on in that country. Many, very many thousands of people have been and are being killed, probably far more than one hundred thousand already. But the whole world does not find a single second to worry about what amounts to be a case of sheer genocide. I raise this question, Mr. Chairman, not because we are directly interested in the Nigerian situation - and apart from its international implications and repercussions we take no sides in the Nigerian question whatsoever - I raise this problem because, as you may have seen in the international press and elsewhere, we, the Portuguese are accused of helping Biafra and supplying Biafra with everything that country will require for its all-out defence.

Mr. NOGUEIRA (Contd)

As I have now the opportunity, Mr. Chairman, to address this Council, I want categorically to state that it is not so: we are giving Biafra no aid, no financial assistance, no weapons, no supplies of a military nature or for warlike purposes. It is a fact which we admit and have always admitted that we allow a completely free transit through our harbours and airports. This is long-standing Portuguese policy, always applied everywhere. But the aid to Biafra comes from elsewhere, Mr. Chairman, and this Council would be surprised, indeed highly surprised, were I to disclose the many quarters from which help to Biafra is forthcoming. And were the Portuguese to aid Biafra, we would only be, after all, following the very same policy pursued by Tanzania, Zambia, Ivory Coast and other African countries. Or is it that a policy, when pursued by African countries, becomes automatically right and not subject to criticism?

The world, Mr. Chairman, is full of anxiety and perplexity, and confusion prevails almost everywhere. Peace and stability and orderly development seem to be very scarce commodities nowadays.

We in the Alliance are also affected and as the year of 1969 draws closer, the time has come for us to ponder and to ask some pertinent questions as to the future of our Alliance. Some basic issues seem to be vital and first of all we have to be very clear on what we want and on the nature and scope of the Atlantic Pact.

Many of us appear to be unsure as to whether the political sphere of the Alliance is confined to the military sphere of our Organization. If it is not, then we have to know how we should act politically in a sphere which may go beyond and has to be larger than the military scope of the Alliance.

On the other hand, we should ask whether we feel the need for an Alliance and whether we would negotiate and sign an Alliance if the present one did not exist and under what terms we would then do so.

In conclusion, Mr. Secretary General, I would say that the answers to these searching questions and to the other problems I have in mind which are raised in the Harmel Report may be very helpful in opening the way to a more effective and solid Alliance. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. BROSIO

Thank you very much, Mr. Minister.

M. SEYDOUX

La question qui a retenu aujourd'hui principalement l'attention du Conseil concerne la France à plus d'un titre. En tant que membre de l'Alliance ayant des responsabilités particulières à Berlin, comme voisin, allié et ami de la République fédérale, nous ne pouvons pas ne pas attacher une grande importance au problème de Berlin, qui a pris tout récemment un tour très préoccupant, avec la décision des autorités de l'Allemagne de l'Est d'imposer des visas et de majorer lourdement les taxes de transit aux ressortissants de la République fédérale et de Berlin-Ouest. Parmi les motifs qui ont inspiré cette décision, figure, nous semble-t-il, l'inquiétude provoquée par l'évolution de la situation en Tchécoslovaquie et par les résultats positifs de la politique de la RFA dans les pays d'Europe orientale.

Il est très difficile au demeurant, dans une affaire comme celle-ci, de délimiter les responsabilités des Allemands de l'Est et celles des Soviétiques. S'il y a tout lieu de penser que les Soviétiques ont été consultés avant que la décision soit arrêtée, nous ignorons la part qu'ils ont prise dans l'élaboration de la décision elle-même. Le jugement porté du côté français sur les mesures des autorités de la RDA est en tout cas parfaitement clair. Nous considérons que ces initiatives mettent en cause le statu-quo à Berlin, et surtout qu'elles sont contraires à la politique de détente en Europe et qu'elles risquent d'y provoquer une situation de tension. Nous l'avons fait savoir à l'Union soviétique, conformément à ce qui a été convenu avec les deux autres pays alliés exerçant des responsabilités particulières à Berlin. Est-il besoin d'ajouter, dans ces circonstances, combien nous partageons les préoccupations du Gouvernement de la République fédérale, auquel sont acquis notre amitié et notre soutien.

Cette crise nous paraît d'autant plus déplorable qu'il était possible, ces temps derniers, de constater dans les pays de l'Europe orientale un certain nombre de transformations politiques importantes relevant de l'aspiration de ces peuples à une vie publique plus libre et à une politique présentant des traits nationaux plus accentués. Ce sont, bien entendu, comme il l'a déjà été dit, les événements de Tchécoslovaquie qui revêtent une importance d'autant plus grande qu'à la différence des autres pays socialistes, le mouvement anti-stalinien de 1956 ne s'y était pas produit.

Les élites de la Tchécoslovaquie, et notamment certains dirigeants communistes eux-mêmes, ont pris conscience de l'impossibilité d'assurer l'évolution satisfaisante du pays dans un cadre politique, économique et social qui ne s'était pas modifié depuis vingt ans. Cette prise de conscience a entraîné un remaniement complet du personnel dirigeant du parti communiste et du Gouvernement, dans une atmosphère de libéralisation, qui s'est traduite par une réduction très sensible du contrôle sur la presse et les autres moyens d'expression.

M. SEYDOUX (suite)

A plus long terme, d'autres développements peuvent être attendus, tels qu'une évolution prudente vers une politique extérieure inspirée des affinités de la Tchécoslovaquie avec l'Europe occidentale et de son voisinage avec l'Allemagne, politique dont les répercussions se feront bien entendu sentir au-delà des frontières tchécoslovaques. Le destin même de cette expérience dépend de multiples facteurs ; en tout premier lieu, selon nous, de la réussite de la réforme économique en cours. Le Gouvernement de Prague n'a pas toute sa liberté d'action et dans les circonstances actuelles il paraît souhaitable de continuer, comme nous l'avons fait jusqu'ici les uns et les autres, à ne prendre aucune initiative qui serait de nature à le mettre dans l'embarras ou à provoquer une réaction soviétique. Pour ce qui est de la crise au Moyen-Orient, le Gouvernement français constate avec regret, et non sans quelque inquiétude, que l'on est dans une impasse. Les efforts dignes d'éloges de M. JARRING ne sont en effet pas encore parvenus à rapprocher les positions de ceux qui répugnent à abandonner ce gage que constitue pour eux l'occupation de territoires avant la conclusion d'accords bilatéraux entre eux et leurs voisins, et de ceux qui, tout en acceptant l'ensemble de la Résolution du 22 novembre, voient dans l'évacuation de ces territoires le premier pas indispensable vers une solution du conflit.

Etant donné la violence des passions, la faiblesse ou le manque d'homogénéité de la plupart des gouvernements directement intéressés, il nous apparaît **qu'une** évolution satisfaisante de la crise suppose une évolution des esprits qui ne peut être rapide. Peut-être, le retour à la paix dans d'autres régions du monde, par la vertu de l'exemple, et en ouvrant plus largement la voie à une coopération entre des puissances, dont l'influence sur les uns et les autres peut être décisive, donnera-t-il de meilleures chances à une telle évolution.

Pour le moment, et pour ce qui le concerne, le Gouvernement français entend poursuivre les efforts qu'il a déjà déployés dans le sens de la modération auprès des divers gouvernements intéressés. Mais, c'est bien évidemment **dans le cadre** des Nations Unies, et plus particulièrement au Conseil de Sécurité, que doivent à notre avis se préparer, se concerter et se décider les éléments d'une solution globale du conflit. Le fait que M. JARRING entende poursuivre sa tâche est accueilli avec grande satisfaction à Paris, où l'on a le ferme propos d'appuyer son action par tous les moyens opportuns.

La crise du Moyen-Orient ne nous fait pas oublier la situation préoccupante qui demeure au Vietnam. La France, qui, pour sa part, a toujours souhaité que la guerre se termine dans des conditions d'équité et de dignité, se félicite de l'évolution amorcée par l'ouverture à Paris des conversations américano-nord-vietnamiennes. Elle espère que la négociation mènera enfin à la paix, telle qu'elle avait été en 1954 conclue pour toute l'ancienne Indochine par les accords de Genève.

M. SEYDOUX (suite)

En ce qui concerne la question de la non-prolifération des armes nucléaires, la position de la France, récemment encore exposée devant l'Assemblée générale des Nations Unies, est bien connue. Je me contenterai de rappeler que si nous nous sommes abstenus de participer aux négociations qui ont abouti au texte de traité approuvé à New-York, ce n'est pas parce que nous serions moins conscients que d'autres du danger d'une dissémination des armes nucléaires, ni que nous aurions le dessein de partager avec quiconque les responsabilités qui résultent de leur possession. La France, qui ne signera pas le Traité, se comportera à l'avenir, dans ce domaine, exactement comme les Etats nucléaires qui décideraient d'y adhérer.

Avant de conclure, je voudrais rappeler que le rapport auquel on a donné le nom de son initiateur, à la fois pour en abrégier le titre et pour rendre un hommage justifié à M. HARMEL, a nécessité des échanges de vues minutieux et approfondis, fructueux aussi, puisqu'ils ont abouti à des compromis satisfaisants, les quinze alliés ayant pu déterminer d'un commun accord les futures tâches de l'Alliance, à la lumière de la situation internationale à la fin de 1967.

Depuis lors, d'importants travaux ont été menés à bien sur les thèmes indiqués dans le rapport : l'Allemagne et la sécurité européenne, le désarmement - notamment les réductions de forces équilibrées - la défense des régions exposées. Ils ont abouti à des rapports sur lesquels l'accord s'est fait au Conseil permanent et que la France est en mesure d'approuver lors de cette session ministérielle.

En revanche, nous ne pouvons pas nous associer aux recommandations qui servent de conclusion à certains de ces rapports. Il n'est peut-être pas vain de rappeler les raisons de cette attitude. Nous estimons d'abord que sur certaines de ces questions, les éléments nécessaires ne sont pas encore rassemblés, qu'il est trop tôt pour émettre des conclusions et que les travaux doivent se poursuivre. Dans certains domaines, nous approuvons l'analyse qui a été faite, avec d'ailleurs **notre participation, mais nous** n'en tirons pas les mêmes conclusions que d'autres, ou bien nous pensons qu'il n'y a pas lieu dans les circonstances actuelles d'en tirer une leçon. Au demeurant, nous pensons qu'une telle attitude reviendrait à définir et à mettre en pratique en ces matières une doctrine politique commune de l'Alliance, ce qui ne peut que perpétuer l'opposition entre blocs et ne nous paraît pas un gage d'efficacité.

La Délégation française, sans vouloir empêcher ses alliés de prendre des positions qui leur paraissent bonnes, s'est donc employée à chercher avec eux les formules lui permettant d'exposer ses vues propres. Cela ne signifie pas pour autant que le Gouvernement français se désintéresse de ces questions. En souscrivant au Plan Harmel, il se joignait au désir des alliés d'entreprendre ou d'approfondir des études sur certains sujets. La Délégation française a pris part à ces études et reste disposée à participer aux discussions qui pourraient se prolonger ou s'engager au lendemain de la session de Reykjavik.

M. SEYDOUX (suite)

Mes derniers mots, Monsieur le Président, seront pour remercier, au nom de la France, le Gouvernement et le peuple islandais de leur accueil et de leur hospitalité. Nous sommes reçus dans ce pays, aussi ancien que l'histoire du monde moderne, avec une amitié, une gentillesse et une simplicité qui nous touchent profondément. Nous en garderons longtemps le vivant et reconnaissant souvenir.

M. BROSIO

Merci beaucoup.

Monsieur l'Ambassadeur SCHAUS

M. SCHAUS

Monsieur le Président, la Délégation luxembourgeoise ne voudrait pas, surtout à cette heure déjà avancée, prolonger ce débat général. En tout état de cause, nous avons peu de choses concrètes à dire sur les grands problèmes qui font l'objet de cet échange de vues, et qui, dans une certaine mesure, dépassent un pays comme le Luxembourg, ne fut-ce qu'à cause du cadre géographique dans lequel il se place. Nous ne voudrions cependant pas que notre silence éventuel puisse être interprété comme un signe de désintéressement. Bien au contraire, nous marquons notre plein accord sur les grandes lignes qui s'en sont dégagées.

Dans le cadre Atlantique, Monsieur le Président, rien de ce qui est européen ne nous est étranger, qu'il s'agisse de Berlin ou de la Méditerranée. La politique étrangère du Luxembourg continue d'être fondée sur la fidélité au Traité de l'Atlantique Nord. Mon Gouvernement a d'ailleurs affirmé, en de nombreuses reprises, qu'il n'y a pas pour nous d'alternative à l'Alliance Atlantique. Nous désirons, comme nos partenaires de l'Alliance, la détente et la réduction équilibrée et mutuelle des forces.

Monsieur le Président, nous nous rallions spécialement aux idées qui ont été émises au sujet d'une action de propagande, surtout auprès des jeunes générations. Ces jeunes qui, heureusement, n'ont pas connu la dernière guerre mondiale, et pour qui la guerre froide est à peine encore un souvenir, devront être conscients du fait que l'Alliance Atlantique reste toujours nécessaire pour garantir à l'avenir leur liberté. Nous devons le leur faire comprendre: le Plan Harmel nous en fournit une excellente occasion.

Pour terminer, je voudrais à mon tour remercier très sincèrement le Gouvernement, toutes les instances politiques et le peuple islandais pour l'accueil qu'ils nous ont réservé. Tout à l'heure, le Président de la République, qui a bien voulu m'accueillir avec une amitié toute particulière, a déclaré que nous sommes les deux plus petits partenaires de l'Alliance. Eh bien, Monsieur le Président, je crois que ce sont surtout les petits pays, et les Islandais ne me contrediront pas, qui sont les plus sensibles à l'Alliance et qui sont conscients de sa valeur. Merci, Monsieur le Président.

Mr. BROSIO

Merci beaucoup, Monsieur l'Ambassadeur. Now, before adjourning, may I put a practical question to Ministers concerning tomorrow's work?

Before reaching the stage of the Communiqué, we may have to tidy up certain documents; there are still a few brackets in the Declaration on Balanced Force Reduction; there are a few footnotes in the internal Mediterranean document, some of which, at least, may be cleared up, and others of a more general, and probably permanent, character; there may also be some questions, such as that of Berlin, in connection with which Ministers might like to discuss the possible inclusion of a text in the Communiqué; there is the question of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, about which I did not clearly understand from the discussion whether or not Ministers intend to include a statement in the Communiqué. I suggest that there is little inclination to do that, but we might clarify that point, so I suggest that tomorrow we might start tidying up the documents and then go on to the Communiqué.

Mr. BIRGI

Mr. Chairman, referring to the Mediterranean text, you mentioned the footnotes. I would like to remind the Council that my Minister wants to make some comments on that document and propose some little changes which are not terrific, but I would like to make it known today.

Mr. BROSIO

All right, we shall also deal with this in the tidying up work tomorrow.

The meeting is adjourned till 10.30 tomorrow morning.