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NORTH ATLANTIC COUNCIL

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Summary Record of a meeting of the Council held at
the Palais de Chaillot, Paris, XVIe., on Tuesday,
11th December, 1956 at 11 a.m.

PRESENT

Chairman : H.E. Mr. Gaetano Martino (Italy)

Vice-Chairman and
Secretary General : The Lord Ismay

BELGIUM

H.E. Mr. P.H. Spaak (Minister for Foreign Affairs)
H.E. Mr. A. de Staercke (Permanent Representative)

CANADA

The Hon. L.B. Pearson (Secretary of State for External
Affairs)
H.E. Mr. L.D. Wilgress (Permanent Representative)

DENMARK

H.E. Mr. H.C. Hansen (Prime Minister and Minister for
Foreign Affairs)
H.E. Mr. M.A. Wassard (Permanent Representative)

FRANCE

H.E. Mr. C. Pineau (Minister for Foreign Affairs)
H.E. Mr. A. Parodi (Permanent Representative)

GERMANY

H.E. Mr. H. von Brentano (Federal Minister for Foreign
Affairs)
H.E. Mr. H. Blankenhorn (Permanent Representative)

GREECE

H.E. Mr. Ev. Averof-Tossitsas (Minister for Foreign Affairs)
H.E. Mr. M. Melas (Permanent Representative)

ICELAND

H.E. Mr. G.J. Gudmundsson (Minister for Foreign Affairs)
Mr. H. Helgason (Permanent Representative)

ITALY

H.E. Mr. P.E. Taviani (Minister of Defence)
H.E. Mr. A. Alessandrini (Permanent Representative)

~~NATO SECRET~~

LUXEMBOURG

H.E. Mr. J. Bech (Prime Minister, Minister for Foreign Affairs)
H.E. Mr. N. Hommel (Permanent Representative)

NETHERLANDS

H.E. Mr. J.M.A.H. Luns (Minister for Foreign Affairs)
H.E. Mr. E.N. van Kleffens (Permanent Representative)

NORWAY

H.E. Mr. H. Lange (Minister for Foreign Affairs)
H.E. Mr. J. Boyesen (Permanent Representative)

PORTUGAL

H.E. Prof. Dr. P. Cunha (Minister for Foreign Affairs)
H.E. The Count de Tovar (Permanent Representative)

TURKEY

H.E. Mr. A. Menderes (Prime Minister)
H.E. Mr. M. Nuri Birgi (Secretary General, Ministry of Foreign Affairs)
Mr. M.A. Tiney (Permanent Representative)

UNITED KINGDOM

The Rt.Hon. Selwyn Lloyd (Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs)
Sir Christopher Steel (Permanent Representative)

UNITED STATES

H.E. Mr. J. Foster Dulles (Secretary of State)
H.E. Mr. G.W. Perkins (Permanent Representative)

INTERNATIONAL STAFF

Baron A. Bentinck (Deputy Secretary General)
Mr. A. Casardi (Assistant Secretary General for Political Affairs)
Mr. F.D. Gregh (Assistant Secretary General for Economics and Finance)
Mr. J. Murray Mitchell (Assistant Secretary General for Production and Logistics)
The Lord Coleridge (Executive Secretary)

ALSO PRESENT

General G. de Chassey (Standing Group Representative)

DECLASSIFIED - PUBLIC DISCLOSURE / DÉCLASSIFIÉ - MISE EN LECTURE PUBLIQUE

CONTENTS

<u>Item</u>	<u>Subject</u>	<u>Page No.</u>
I.	Review by Foreign Ministers of the international situation	4

DECLASSIFIED - PUBLIC DISCLOSURE / DÉCLASSIFIÉ - MISE EN LECTURE PUBLIQUE

I. REVIEW BY FOREIGN MINISTERS OF THE INTERNATIONAL SITUATION

Documents: C-M(56)133
C-M(56)131
C-M(56)139

The CHAIRMAN suggested that the best method of handling this discussion might be for any Minister who wished to make a general statement covering the whole world situation to do so straight away. After these statements the Council might discuss specific topics. He thought that these might be first, the Middle East situation and secondly, the situation in Eastern Europe, which was related to the problem of the reunification of Germany.

2. There was general agreement with the procedure suggested by the Chairman.

General Statements

3. Mr. LANGE (NORWAY) said that the purpose of this meeting of the North Atlantic Council was to reinforce the unity and strength of the Alliance. The members of the Council all agreed that there was no task more necessary than this, particularly under present circumstances. Events in Hungary had demonstrated that if the USSR felt itself threatened, it was as ruthless as ever and remained impervious to the pressure of world opinion. Recent events had shattered all illusions of a lessening of world tension. They had convinced the hesitant of the necessity of maintaining the defence effort, of restoring mutual confidence within NATO and of strengthening the unity of the Alliance.

4. Did these events and Soviet action in the Middle East necessarily mean a reversion by the USSR to the methods of Stalin's time? The Norwegian Government believed that the short-term answer was 'yes', with varying degrees of certainty according to the area to which Soviet policy had directed its attention. But the long-term answer might well be "no". It was not certain that such a reversion to Stalin's methods was occurring in the USSR itself or in Poland; the case of Czechoslovakia was very difficult to judge. In the case of the USSR the changes in Soviet society, particularly industrialisation and urbanisation, had forced Stalin's successors to abandon mass terror as a weapon and it was probably impossible to reverse this trend. If and when the Soviets had overcome the present crisis in Hungary, it was not unlikely that they would return to the policy they had followed during the last year or two and which was defined at the 20th Congress of the Communist Party.

5. The view had often been expressed recently that the Soviet economy had grown so strong that the USSR was confident of being able to achieve its ends without resort to war and moreover that the USSR considered the risk of all-out war to be too great. The free world was faced with a continuing Soviet offensive in the economic and political fields but the

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paper prepared by the International Staff on a comparison of economic trends in the Soviet bloc and NATO countries (C-M(56)131) seemed to him to over-estimate the rate of future economic growth in the USSR. In the opinion of the Norwegian Government, the considerations set out in this document did not take sufficiently into account the gap between the level of consumption in the Western countries and in the USSR, Neither did it take sufficiently into account the mounting need for amortisation and for the renewal of industrial equipment in Soviet industry, a need which would tend to slow down the rate of economic growth. In this connection, Mr. Lange also warned against over-estimating the danger of Soviet economic assistance to under-developed areas. If the results obtained by the action of the Western countries in this field in the post-war years could be summed up, the comparison would show that Soviet assistance had been provided on an extremely small scale.

6. This point having been made, the Soviet challenge facing the Western countries in the political and economic fields was very serious. To meet this challenge, the NATO countries, in their internal policies, had to maintain, and if possible accelerate, the rate of **their economic growth**; to achieve this, economic co-operation should be extended. He laid stress, in this connection, on the importance of arriving rapidly at results in the work directed towards the establishment of a Scandinavian common market, a European common market and a free trade area in Europe. A temporary economic setback was probably to be expected in Europe as a result of the developments in the Middle East, but with the assistance of the United States, it should be possible to overcome this crisis without too much difficulty.

7. As regards the external relations of the NATO countries, in other words, the efforts which they were called upon to make to check Soviet penetration in the uncommitted parts of the world, the real issue would be who succeeded in winning the confidence and in enlisting the co-operation of the uncommitted countries, most of which were at the same time economically underdeveloped.

8. In this context, attention should be given both to the effects of recent events in the Middle East on the struggle between the Soviet Union and NATO to gain influence in that area, and on the relations between NATO member countries. In regard to the latter point, it could not be denied that the absence of consultation, and even of the exchange of information, had been a blow to mutual confidence within the Alliance. Norway had been surprised to see that there were two interpretations of the obligations under Article 1 of the North Atlantic Treaty and, in particular, of the phrase "to refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force in any manner inconsistent with the purposes of the United Nations." Considerable concern was felt in Norway over the long-term effects of the British/French intervention on the ability of the West to counter Soviet moves, to win the confidence of the Arab states, and to further the economic growth of the free world. This intervention also had an effect on the possibilities offered to the Alliance of establishing ties with the Middle East and gaining a decisive influence in that area.

9. It would be more opportune to discuss the nature of member countries' obligations to consult one another under Item III of the Agenda - the Report of the Committee of Three Ministers on Non-military Co-operation in NATO, but it was right at this stage to consider member countries' obligations under the United Nations Charter and the North Atlantic Treaty. By subscribing to the United Nations Charter, nations relinquished the right to use force unilaterally, except against armed aggression. Though the three countries which had intervened in the Middle East had doubtless suffered serious provocation, they had not been subject to armed aggression of a nature to justify the use of force before having fully exhausted the possibilities of redress through procedures of the United Nations. He added that his view on this point was corroborated by the Standing Group document SG 255.

10. The members of the Council were well aware of the weaknesses of the United Nations; nevertheless it was on the United Nations that the Atlantic peoples had founded their hopes for an international future based on the rule of law, and that was why obligations under the United Nations Charter must be considered paramount. It was obvious that peace without justice was not enough, but a just solution could not be achieved by the use of armed force; the only means of arriving at just solutions was through diplomatic negotiation.

11. The Alliance now had to aim at bringing out the real community of interests existing among its members, the oil producing Arab States and the countries which used the Suez Canal. Only by bringing out this community of interest would it be possible to bring sufficient pressure to bear on Egypt to make the Egyptian Government accept a just solution of the Suez Canal problem. It was also important to convince the Asian and South American countries of the constructive intentions of the West and persuade them to guarantee the existence of the state of Israel, to which end it was essential to win the confidence of these countries. To win their confidence the Alliance would have to destroy the myth that NATO was a coalition in defence of the colonial interest of certain Western countries. This myth, which was one of the main obstacles to understanding between the Alliance and the "uncommitted" countries, could only be destroyed by the policies of the member countries. These policies should replace the myth by the conviction that NATO stood for peaceful relations with former colonies and with territories still under the sovereignty of Western Powers.

12. Mr. DULLES (UNITED STATES) said that the United States believed that nations and groups of nations needed a faith and a philosophy to live by, and that this was particularly true in times of crisis. He therefore hoped it would not be regarded as irrelevant if he discussed the basic philosophy which he thought should underlie the conduct and action of the Alliance at a time when it faced what was generally accepted as a critical period in its life.

13. This second post-war decade on the one hand held out great promise, but on the other was fraught with very great danger. Looking at the status of the Soviet Communist world, he thought one could not but be struck by the very great degree of disintegration which had begun to make itself manifest. The position today was in very striking contrast to the

situation as it existed, at least in appearance, two or three years ago. At that time, within the Soviet Union itself, there was an apparent acceptance of iron discipline to secure complete conformity of action and thought. The satellite world seemed to be completely under control and to afford the Soviet Union dependable bases and military forces. In every country of the world there was a Communist Party which obeyed without question a party line which was put out from Moscow and these parties were able to exert a very considerable influence at critical points and at critical moments.

14. Now the Communist Parties of the world were disintegrating; there was no cohesion, they were going in different directions and they had been weakened by defection of important elements from their ranks. The position in satellite countries was reversed and there was good reason to assume that in the event of conflict their armed forces would turn against the Soviet Union. In the Soviet Union itself there was a growing demand for more freedom of thought, for greater personal security and for greater enjoyment of the fruits of labour. This was an astounding change, of which there had been numerous manifestations within the last couple of years. What had seemed to be an impregnable position had been stormed by forces which, in the long run, would probably prove irresistible.

15. In the opinion of the United States Government, that very state of affairs brought with it certain dangers. The Soviet Union was faced with difficult and indeed risky decisions. There was a risk that these decisions might be taken in the field of foreign relations. History had shown that despots, when threatened at home, sought to gain successes abroad. This danger was heightened by the rapid development of the military power of the Soviet Union.

16. There were two conclusions to be drawn from these considerations. The first was that the alliance must maintain the moral pressures which were helping to bring about the deterioration of the rule of the Soviet Union over so many peoples. Moral force was the only offensive weapon of the alliance in this field. On the other hand, for defensive purposes the alliance must maintain its military effort to meet the risk of any aggression which the Soviets might use as a gamble.

17. From the moral aspect, it was extremely important for the NATO countries to conform to the high ideals which were expressed in the Charter of the United Nations and which were reaffirmed in Article 1 of the North Atlantic Treaty. In other words, member countries must renounce the use of force for purposes other than those envisaged under Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations. The United States Government was quite aware of the inter-connection between peace and justice and of the great difficulty of preserving peace in the face of flagrant injustices.

18. He recalled that he had constantly stressed that the inter-connection between peace and justice only increased the need for greater efforts to seek justice. There were numerous cases of serious injustices in the world, as it seemed to the countries which suffered from them. He cited the cases of Korea, China, Viet-nam, Kashmir and finally Germany. In the Middle East there was the case of Israel and the risk that the production and transportation of oil might pass into hostile hands. There was a very strong temptation to resort to force to remedy

those injustices. But it was impossible to accept the concept that each nation that considered itself subject to injustices had the right to re-establish the position by resort to force. Application of such a principle would set loose forces which almost surely would lead to World War III.

19. Continuing, Mr. Dulles said that there had existed in the past, and still continued to exist, the deeply-rooted concept of a just war. But the conditions of modern war were such that except for the purpose of self-defence, no war was justifiable. Indeed a modern war was apt to produce greater injustices than those which it might seek to cure. Among the Western countries, both morality and expediency tended to reject war as an instrument of national policy; this was, moreover, a solemn engagement undertaken by the members of the United Nations and of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. The restraint which had been exercised in recent years by many nations, in the face of great provocation, was a proof not of their irresolution or unwillingness to fight, but of their moral strength. Such restraint was helping to create a world climate in which stimulus would be given to the forces working for the disintegration of the Soviet Communist empire, which was built on the use of force, and the denial of the moral law. A notable example of this restraint was the recent acceptance by the United Kingdom and France of the recommendations of the General Assembly of the United Nations with regard to the situation in Egypt. While it was useless to deny that the United States had been opposed to the initial action taken by the United Kingdom and France, he was convinced that in accepting the United Nations' recommendations, these countries had given a demonstration of their respect for the "opinions of mankind", which would in future be a considerable moral asset to the West. The action of the United Kingdom and France brought out all the more clearly the immorality of the Soviet repression in Hungary. The contrasting response of the United Kingdom and France on the one hand, and the Soviet Union on the other, with regard to the recommendations of the United Nations, emphasised that there existed a double standard of morality in the world which raised many difficulties and, in particular, bore more heavily on some countries than on others. The United States believed that Western standards were right, and that if the Western countries continued to adhere to them, they could look forward confidently to the day when they would prevail. As the West continued to adhere to these standards, so their impact on the Soviet and Chinese Communist world would gradually accelerate the disintegration of the Communist régimes. Many of the difficulties arising from this double standard of morality could be solved, particularly in those areas of the world where the free nations could use their influence to promote justice and international co-operation. The free nations should recognise that this double standard placed unequal burdens on different countries. The United States had, in the past, acted in accordance with this principle and would, he hoped, continue to do so.

20. The United States was aware that the United Nations was an imperfect organization whose procedures, both in the Security Council and the General Assembly, were not the best adapted for achieving an effective world order. He hoped that it might be possible to change this one day. In recent weeks, however, the United Nations had gained considerable prestige through the acceptance of its recommendations by the United Kingdom and France. It had also at short notice organized

a military emergency force, the creation of which was due in large part to the efforts of Mr. Pearson. Although its recommendations had been disregarded concerning Hungary, the United Nations had provided a forum in which world opinion had expressed its condemnation of the Soviet suppression of freedom. He believed firmly that any attempt to undermine the United Nations or to discard the principles on which it was based would be disastrous, since it would open the way to actions in many parts of the world which might result in global war. It would be all the more inexcusable since it was now possible to envisage a gradual long-term evolution of international affairs for the better.

21. While the Western reply to the Communist threat must be conceived in terms of moral influences rather than of military effort, the necessity for military strength still existed. Any illusion that the Soviet rulers did not intend, in certain circumstances, to make use of the military capacity which they had built up at considerable sacrifice to their own people, had been dispelled by events in Hungary. It should be assumed from these events that if the Soviet rulers thought that there no longer existed the will or the capacity to defend Western Europe, Soviet tanks would not stop their advance at the Iron Curtain. The United States felt that it was essential that the military strength of the free nations, and particularly that of NATO, should be maintained, and that there should be no doubt of the Western will to use this strength if necessary. Recent actions by the United States should not be interpreted as meaning that the United States no longer intended to defend its allies; these actions had been taken because of precise commitments binding the United States, among them the commitments accepted under Article I of the North Atlantic Treaty. As the United States had lived up to Article I of the Treaty, so its allies could be confident that it had every intention of living up to the other articles of the Treaty.

22. It was extremely difficult for the Western countries to maintain a balance between their military and their economic expenditures. In contrast to the Communist world, the free nations could not treat their peoples as slave labour, and must continually strive to improve living standards. If they failed in this task, they would be exposed to other dangers, such as subversion; accordingly, their military policies should not lead to economic collapse. He strongly supported the proposal made by Mr. Lange for the development of economic co-operation, in particular the establishment of common markets to build up economic strength in areas which were at present weak. He believed that it was possible to find an acceptable balance between military expenditure and economic strength, and to maintain an expanding economy concurrently with the capacity to deter and, if necessary, to repel aggression. The advantage of collective security was that no single country was alone in defending itself, and the defence burden could be shared by all. One of the chief elements at present deterring aggression was the power of retaliation with atomic weapons; this power at present resided mainly in the United States, but was contributed to by all the member countries who provided

bases for inter-communication. It could not be assumed that this power solved all military problems. Since the character of any future war was uncertain, it was essential to have diversity and flexibility in the defence capability of the West. The United States believed that through collective defence, it was possible to create a situation such that the Soviet rulers, notwithstanding the pressure of problems within the Soviet Union which might tempt them to hazardous decisions, would be effectively deterred from aggression in the North Atlantic Treaty area.

23. Finally, he emphasised that the NATO alliance must look at its own organization, and create a closer understanding between member countries as regards their foreign policies. For example, reference had been made by NATO ministers at their last two meetings to the problems of oil supplies and the Middle East, but no common policy had been evolved either on this or on a number of other vital questions affecting the alliance. He hoped that the present stage in the history of the alliance would give emphasis to the recommendations in the Report by the Committee of Three Ministers, and would lead to positive results in the sphere of political co-operation.

24. Mr. SELWYN LLOYD (UNITED KINGDOM) spoke for all his colleagues in expressing pleasure that Mr. Foster Dulles had been able to be present at this meeting, and satisfaction at his recovery from his recent illness.

25. The two recent crises in world affairs, the first in Eastern Europe representing a threat to Soviet interests, and the second in the Middle East representing a threat to Western interests, both helped to throw light on Soviet policy, and in particular on the long-term elements determining that policy. In this connection, he welcomed the two documents under reference on long-term Soviet trends, prepared by the International Staff. Document C-M(56)133 indicated the political factors underlying Soviet policy, in the light of which the draft directive from the Council to the NATO military authorities had been drawn up. He thought that one factor should be given particular attention: the extent to which Soviet planning, like Western planning, was overwhelmingly influenced by the existence of thermonuclear weapons and the threat of total destruction. In the visit which they had paid to London, Mr. Bulganin and Mr. Khrushchev had made it clear that they were anxious to avoid a world war. He thought that the starting point of Western policy should be the realisation of the fact that, barring the possibility of a wild gamble, which seemed unlikely, the Soviets would do all in their power to avoid war. They still remained hostile, but limits were set to the action they were prepared to undertake, and they had so far been careful to avoid definite commitments which might lead to global war. The threat, therefore, was not one of immediate early aggression, but of a long-term building-up of Communist power through economic development and the penetration from without, by subversion and other means, of the Western countries. As regards the comparison of economic growth of the Sino-Soviet bloc and in NATO countries (document C-M(56)131), while some of the dangers to the West might be exaggerated it was certain

that the rate of growth in the Communist bloc was considerable, and that in fifteen or twenty years' time the West would be faced with serious competition in world markets. This problem should be considered by the NATO alliance now.

26. As regards the policy of the West towards countries of Eastern Europe, it was obvious that in Poland and in Hungary there was strong resentment against Soviet domination. The declaration made by the Soviet rulers on the 30th October on the subject of relations between the USSR and the satellite countries showed that they were aware that their past policy had given rise to hatred, and that they were now ready to make limited concessions. It was clear, however, that they intended to maintain Communist regimes in satellite countries, if necessary by force, and would tolerate no secession from the Soviet bloc; while they were prepared to discuss the status of Soviet troops in satellite countries, they were not prepared to withdraw them. It could thus be assumed at present that the Soviets were prepared to use force to prevent any defection. Two stages marked the recent Soviet intervention in Hungary. Beginning on 23rd October, they had moved considerable forces into Hungary, but were still prepared to tolerate a semi-independent regime as in Poland. On the 2nd November, however, when Mr. Nagy had denounced the Warsaw Pact and asked for free elections and a neutral status for Hungary, the Soviets had taken strong repressive action. It was probable that the brutality they had shown would increase the hatred felt for them in satellite countries, and should similar uprisings take place elsewhere, there would be great pressure on Western countries to intervene militarily. This was a danger which must be borne in mind. Mr. Khrushchev had made it clear in London that any intervention in any of the Warsaw Pact countries would involve the risk of a direct clash with the USSR. The West must accordingly show the greatest possible care not to incite the people of the satellite countries to military risings against the Soviet regime, which it was not prepared itself to back by military help. He believed that the policy which the West should follow should be to encourage a gradual movement in the satellite countries against USSR domination on the lines of that which had taken place in Poland. From this point of view, while avoiding inflammatory appeals, increasing contacts between Western countries and the satellites might be encouraged. The Council should recognise that the problem before it involved a question of principle: should NATO attempt to bring matters to a head and to provoke a crisis, or aim at gradual revulsion from Soviet domination on the part of the satellites. This was a question which the Council might discuss further.

27. With regard to Hungary, his Government felt that the Kadar Government should in no way be encouraged, and that NATO should back the efforts of the Secretary General of UNO to go to Hungary as an observer. However, he believed that NATO countries should keep open their missions in Budapest and therefore the United Kingdom had deprecated any refusal to recognise the Kadar Government. He thought that to withdraw our missions would be to remove the last link of the Hungarian people with the West. He did not think that any change was called for in their policy towards Roumania, Bulgaria and

Czechoslovakia. At the same time, he thought that the intelligentsia in those countries, and possibly the workers, were becoming increasingly discontented. Links with these countries should therefore be maintained, and the "gradual" line followed. Czechoslovakia was probably the country which would give the best response to approaches on these lines.

28. The rapprochement between Yugoslavia and the USSR, which had obviously been becoming weaker before the Hungarian episode, had now clearly come to a complete end. For the time being Tito had probably little influence in the USSR or in the satellite countries. But the position might change after some months.

29. The United Kingdom was reappraising its policy so far as relations with the USSR were concerned in the light of the hostility recently expressed towards the Soviet leaders. There was no doubt that the Soviet leaders were faced with great difficulties, and it was for the West to exploit those difficulties. In the USSR there had been reports of discontent among students and workers, while in Hungary there had been reports of defections by Soviet troops. It would be obviously unwise to over-estimate these reports through wishful thinking, but they might mark the beginning of important changes. He therefore believed it desirable to try to develop a critical spirit among the people of the USSR, through propaganda. What had happened in Eastern Europe had a considerable propaganda value and might go a long way to destroy the dangerous myth that time was on the Soviet side. Recent events had made it clear that after years of indoctrination the youth of the satellite countries had not been won over to communism. Propaganda use should certainly be made of this.

30. British public opinion had been revolted by what had happened in Hungary. For that reason cultural exchanges had been suspended for the time being and the visits of scientists, economists, etc. from the United Kingdom to the USSR and vice-versa would be approved only on a case by case basis. If visitors from the USSR did come to the United Kingdom, every effort would be made to encourage them to develop a spirit of criticism of communist institutions and the communist way of life to which he had already referred.

31. Turning to the Middle East crisis, he had welcomed the frank speaking of Mr. Lange and Mr. Dulles. He thought it more important to consider the policy for the future rather than to indulge in recriminations over what had been done in the past. At the same time, he wished to make the following points to explain briefly the action taken by the United Kingdom and France.

- (a) It had been suggested that France and the United Kingdom had broken in to what was an orderly, peaceful area. That was far from being the case. To quote only one example, between 10th September and 11th October, one hundred and sixty men, women and children had been killed on the Jordan-Israel frontier alone. The United Nations had not been able to take any effective action in this connection.

- (b) The United Kingdom and France realised that Soviet penetration by way of technicians and arms deliveries was going on. After the action taken by the two countries, they had discovered that the penetration was on a far larger scale than they had originally believed.
- (c) Nasser's ambitions to create a vast, nationalist Arab state were very real. His planning and plotting in neighbouring Arab states, some of which had been known before the action taken by the two countries and some of which was only known afterwards, fully bore this out.

32. Such was the position on 29th October. There had been suggestions that France, the United Kingdom and Israel had taken part in a "collusive" attack. The Opposition in his own House of Commons had now dropped reference to "collusion" and were talking of "fore-knowledge". It was, of course, true that the British Government knew the facts which he had referred to above, in particular that £150 million Russian arms had been supplied to Egypt, that a common command had been worked out for the forces of Egypt, Syria, Jordan and so on. But that was the only kind of foreknowledge they had. He would conclude this part of his argument simply by saying that the United Kingdom and France had acted in good faith to prevent an extension of war. They had succeeded in stopping war that had already broken out.

33. Having said that, he asked the Council to consider the situation that now faced it. He believed that the action taken would do no harm to the West provided advantage were taken of the new position. The United Nations had an opportunity in the Middle East which might not recur. If the old position with regard to the United Nations returned, with its frustrating discussions and ineffective resolutions, people would regard that Organization as futile. The presence of a United Nations force in the Middle East was very significant. There had been a discussion as to its functions and as to the duration of its stay there. There were some countries, for obvious reasons, which hoped that the United Nations forces would leave the area as soon as possible. He hoped that NATO would support the United Nations forces in the area to the best of its power, and try to have its functions extended. He believed that this was the only way to keep the peace between Israel and the Arab world.

34. He also believed that the recent action meant a physical setback for the USSR. It might be true that the USSR would obtain temporary propaganda advantages from that action, but they had suffered a considerable defeat from the point of view of military prestige. Their military protégé supplied with Soviet arms, had suffered a striking reverse.

35. He then went on to say that he was not cynical about the power of moral force. At the same time, it must be recognised that the forces of evil aimed at making progress by physical means. In the past, powers like the United Kingdom, with certain moral standards, had policed

many parts of the world. In many parts of the world there was now a vacuum where there was no international police force and no Great Power, with standards of right and wrong, to act as a police force. Finally, he thought that in future discussions the Council should consider seriously the threat to its flanks. It was very desirable to have a solid front, but a solid front was of no value if it could be turned on its flanks. That was the danger that threatened in the Middle East. The action taken by the United Kingdom and France had brought a number of problems to a head. Whether that action had been right or wrong it was now for the NATO Council to work out a common policy for the future.

36. Mr. PINEAU (FRANCE) said that he would first like to reply to the criticism that the action taken by the United Kingdom and France had weakened the solidarity of the Alliance. The two countries had never intended to harm that solidarity. But any discussion of what solidarity meant should cover the question of the limits, geographical or political, which should be imposed on the solidarity of an Alliance. The Middle East was not a NATO area. In acting as they had done in the Middle East, should the question of NATO solidarity have been considered by the two countries? He did not himself believe that solidarity could be restricted to any particular area. What happened in countries outside the NATO area affected NATO countries. Therefore, as he saw it, there could be no limit to the solidarity of a true Alliance. He further urged that consultation, to achieve solidarity, should not take place after a problem had become urgent and called for immediate solution, but as soon as any problem affecting the whole Alliance arose. He thought, from this point of view, that the Israel-Arab problem should have been discussed immediately after the nationalisation of the Suez Canal had made clear the rising tempo in the Middle East.

37. Turning to what had recently happened in the Middle East, he pointed out that, since the creation of the State of Israel, UNO had passed a vast number of resolutions and had sent observers to try to solve the difficulties between Israel and the Arab world. There had been no result. Little by little Israel became convinced that the Arab world, with the backing of other Powers, would launch an attack, backed by massive air raids, which would be capable of destroying the State in a few days. A complex had therefore grown up, in which the idea of a preventive war was predominant. Israel was convinced that she must strike first to avoid being destroyed.

38. With regard to Egypt, he pointed out that the UK and France on many occasions had shown good will despite Egyptian threats. The UK, for example, had quitted the Canal area, and France had been mild in face of Nasser's policy in North Africa, though the opponents of the Government had called that mildness "cowardice". When the Canal had been nationalised, France had still hoped that a peaceful solution might be reached. It had been hopeful after the first London Conference, though its hopes had been dashed by the second London Conference. Even then it had not been completely discouraged and had continued to aim at a peaceful settlement. The 63rd use of the veto by the USSR in the Security Council had finally dashed those hopes.

39. Thus, at the end of October Israel was convinced that it was to be the next victim of Nasser and that a preventive war was its only reply. The UK and France felt bound to intervene if Israel took action, since there was no doubt that if Israel acted alone the Canal would certainly be blocked. France and the UK had acted to try to limit the damage: that is, to limit the war geographically and protect the Canal area. Looking back, he regretted that their respect for the UN Resolution had led the two countries to interrupt their action two days too soon. If the action had been continued for a further two days, he thought it possible that ships might now be passing through the Canal, and the economic shortages from which they were suffering might have been avoided.

40. With regard to the moral issues referred to by Mr. Lange and Mr. Dulles, he gave this warning. The letter of the United Nations Charter could not always be observed strictly. Suppose, at the outbreak of the Korean trouble, that the USSR had been present in the Security Council. There was no doubt that there would have been a Soviet veto. In that case, United Nations action in Korea could only have been illegal. Owing to Soviet absence, the action taken had been within the letter of the law. In the same way, suppose there was aggression in Europe tomorrow, a Soviet veto in the Security Council would be certain, and United Nations intervention would be difficult. In other words, there were cases where it was necessary to act in accordance with the spirit rather than with the letter of the Charter. Further he thought that the Council should try to decide when an aggression started. It was easy to say that it was when military forces started to move: but in fact, there was political and military preparation of an aggression which could sometimes be halted. It was clear that Russia had been preparing a potential aggression by supplying Egypt with arms and technicians. Again, suppose what had happened recently in Hungary had happened in East Germany. Would it have been possible for the West Germans to see the East Germans massacred without taking any action? To sum up, aggression would have to be considered in broader terms than those laid down in the United Nations Charter.

41.. Ministers had no doubt been profoundly struck by the different attitude taken in UNO towards different problems and the respect paid by certain countries to UN decisions. In recent UN discussions, why had there been more time spent in considering Suez than in considering Hungary? The question could easily be answered: UNO believed that the United Kingdom and France would obey any resolution it passed and that the USSR would not do so. It was therefore only too anxious to spend time discussing a problem on which positive results could be expected, than a problem where there was little chance of such results. This was distinctly discouraging so far as democratic countries, prepared to accept UN resolutions, were concerned. To sum up on this point, NATO must fight against unilateral morality: it was unilateral morality which demanded and expected that democracies should obey UN resolutions and that dictatorships should ignore them.

42. Finally, reference had been made to the word "colonialism". He agreed with Mr. Lange that there was a dangerous myth, used for propaganda purposes, in this word.

The word was often a pretext for criticism of genuine democracies. Further, some countries used the word to justify failure to keep their international commitments. He reminded the Council that at their last meeting he had put forward a plan to help underdeveloped countries. In this plan there were two essential elements:

- (a) that there should be a respect for commitments undertaken by any country vis-à-vis another country or group of countries;
- (b) that there should be law and order in the country to be aided, without which the investment of capital and the help of technicians could never be achieved.

43. There were, of course, real problems involved in "colonialism". He quoted a recent French example. France had made a great effort to give Morocco and Tunisia independence. France had not expected any great political gratitude and had not received it. He would, however, point out that a few days after Mr. Bourguiba and the Moroccan Foreign Minister had made biting criticisms of French policy, the French Parliament had voted 48 milliard francs to help the economies of those two countries, a decision which implied a very real sacrifice for France in present conditions. Facts like those were more eloquent than words. He would refer to the position in Algeria later, but what France wanted above all to avoid in a solution of the Algerian problem was giving rise to the kind of anarchy which prevailed in some countries which were the most vital critics of "colonialists".

44. In conclusion, he assured Mr. Lange and Mr. Dulles that France was as concerned with moral issues as any member of the Organization but asked them to try to understand the practical reasons which had motivated the recent French and British action.

45. The COUNCIL:

agreed to continue its discussion of this item at 3.30 p.m.

Palais de Chaillot,
Paris, XVIIe.