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PROPOSED RUMANIAN INITIATIVE ON EUROPE IN THE  
UNITED NATIONS

Report by the Chairman of the Political Committee

At its meeting on 3rd June, 1969, the Political Committee received information from several delegations concerning recent démarches made by Rumanian diplomatic representatives with regard to a Rumanian initiative designed to promote peace and co-operation in Europe under the form of a resolution which would be presented to the Twenty-Fourth General Assembly of the United Nations. The Committee continued its exchange of views on this subject during three subsequent meetings and agreed that its Chairman, on his own responsibility, should submit a report of these discussions to the Council. The Committee felt that the Council might wish to give early consideration to this matter because of the relationship between this possible Rumanian initiative and other current activities related to European security.

2. The Rumanian proposal would be a resolution following on the United Nations Resolution No. 2129 of 1965 on improving good neighbourly relations. At least at the outset, it has been Rumania's intention to suggest in this Resolution that the Twenty-Fifth Anniversary of the end of the war in Europe and also of the founding of the United Nations be marked by having 1970 proclaimed as a "year of peace, action, security and co-operation in Europe".

Rumanian Motivation

3. Preliminary analyses of the Rumanian initiative suggest Rumania may believe that action by the United Nations General Assembly could:

- (a) help legitimize Rumania's independent stance in foreign policy;
- (b) seek through United Nations action, even if anodyne, to erect a breakwater against the Brezhnev Doctrine along the lines of the 1965 Resolution's stress on "equal rights" and "principles of peaceful relations"; and

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- (c) help stake out a more independent rôle by Rumania and other Eastern European countries in the event a European Security Conference should take place.

#### Approaches

4. Approaches were probably made initially to Rumania's partners in the Group of Ten (Belgium, Denmark, The Netherlands, Austria, Finland, Sweden, Bulgaria, Hungary and Yugoslavia). As stated, the three NATO Governments were polled first to learn their reaction before approaches were made to other European countries and the United States and Canada. Evidence suggests that most of the continental governments were contacted, except probably Switzerland and possibly Spain. Of the NATO states, only Iceland had, as of 3rd July, not yet received a call on this subject. While it is likely that the Soviet Zone of Germany was also approached, there is no information on this. It is interesting to note that the operation has been conducted entirely within diplomatic channels and has not yet been reported upon by the Press.

#### Sponsorship

5. Statements made by Rumanian representatives suggested that:

- (a) Rumania wished to have its proposal presented as an all-European proposal by many European governments, but also
- (b) that the Group of Ten should co-sponsor it.

Only Sweden is reported as being ready, in principle, to co-sponsor a new resolution updating the resolution of the 20th UNGA, but it would prefer that Rumania initially table the proposal itself, as it did in 1965. Sweden also feels that the proposal to mark 1970 as a special year for Europe is unrealistic and has so informed Rumania.

#### Responses

6. Responses to the proposal have ranged from studied reserve to cool, unfriendly and negative reactions. The Warsaw Pact countries, Bulgaria, Hungary, Poland and the USSR, are reported to have received the démarches with an evident lack of warmth and to have taken a negative attitude toward their ally's suggestion. While Hungary is said to have at first been favourable to action by the Group of Ten, its position cooled noticeably following the unfavourable response of the Soviet Union. One Eastern European diplomat was reported to have said that the Eastern European governments are displeased with the Rumanian initiative because it was "typically" disruptive and detracted from the Budapest Appeal. A Rumanian diplomat at the United

Nations confirmed these reports by stating that the proposal had not gotten a good response from the Eastern European countries. A report on Yugoslav reaction indicates that the Foreign Ministry at Belgrade believes the proposal is unclear, wonders whether Rumania does really expect any success in its efforts and that it is therefore reserved toward the operation. Eastern European countries also observed that the United Nations is not the proper body to debate European security. In this regard, the Czechoslovak Foreign Minister is said to be prepared to explain to the Rumanian Foreign Minister during a July visit why Czechoslovakia opposes the proposal.

Of the neutral states, Austria has taken a wary and cautious view about the possible involvement of the United Nations in discussions on European issues. Finland is reported to have responded with distinct coolness toward the proposal which was said to be too vague. The position of Sweden is noted above.

NATO countries indicated some concern over the Rumanian proposal and a tendency to adopt a reserved and generally sceptical attitude toward it. Most stressed the inappropriateness of the United Nations as a forum to discuss European matters since the non-European governments generally are not qualified to discuss the subject and their intervention could complicate further what is already a complex matter.

#### Assessment

7. One assessment held that in view of Rumanian motivations noted in paragraph 3 above, it is doubtful that the Rumanian Government would be persuaded to withdraw its initiative on the grounds that it might provoke an acrimonious East-West debate. It was also held that it is questionable whether the Soviet Union would necessarily oppose a mild resolution along the lines of the 1965 document since it would:

- (a) further ease post-Czechoslovakia feelings;
- (b) complement Soviet efforts to set the stage for a European Security Conference; and
- (c) lend weight to further Warsaw Pact protestations of peaceful purposes.

Unless the NATO Allies were subsequently forced to engage in a General Assembly debate as the result of possible inclusion by Warsaw Pact countries of language related to Germany and Berlin and other possible controversial issues, the resolution proposed might be adopted with a minimum of discord.

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On the other hand, concern was expressed in the Committee that it would be against NATO's interest to have the subject reach the floor of the General Assembly. There was some apprehension that discussion could degenerate into a propaganda diatribe against the Federal Republic of Germany and could end by unrealistically portraying the Federal Republic as the major impediment to improved relations. It was pointed out in this connection during the Committee's discussion that the solution of the German problem in any case remains for the Big Four to resolve in a forum appropriate to the questions of European security involved and not in one such as is provided by the United Nations.

Possible Alternatives

8. Alternative approaches to this question were suggested in the Committee. One view was that the Allies should neither oppose nor support the Rumanian proposal publicly or privately in discussions with either the Rumanians or other countries, because the proposal is doubtful of attainment in view of the reservations already expressed by a number of countries and because the consequences of United Nations discussion need not in any event be approached with apprehension of discord.

An alternative suggestion made early in the exchange was that it might be desirable nevertheless to attempt through quiet dissuasion to discourage the Rumanian Government from its proposed action, using the argument that perhaps the debate this might engender would risk a return to the "cold war" type of exchanges.

One delegation pointed out that a third possible approach would be to take no action and to reserve judgment in this matter until the text of a resolution were presented by the Rumanians which could then be the subject of a close examination.

Whatever alternative on balance commends itself, several delegations emphasised the importance of keeping the Rumanian initiative under continuing review to permit the eventual adoption of appropriate tactics to deal with it.

(Signed) Jörg KASTL

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Brussels, 29.