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To: Permanent Representatives

From: Secretary General

CONSIDERATIONS INVOLVED IN POSSIBLE DEVELOPMENTS  
OF SOVIET POLICY IN EASTERN EUROPE  
AND RELATED AREAS

Attached at Annex is the Report which I have prepared at the Council's request and on my own responsibility in order to inform Ministers of the substance of the Council's exchanges of views on this subject at the meetings on 23rd and 29th October and 5th November.

(Signed) Manlio BROSIO

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REPORT BY THE CHAIRMANCONSIDERATIONS INVOLVED IN POSSIBLE DEVELOPMENTS OF  
SOVIET POLICY IN EASTERN EUROPE AND RELATED AREAS

1. The Council had recognised the desirability of an exchange of views among the Allies on the attitude to be adopted in the event of increased Soviet pressure on Rumania, Yugoslavia, Albania or Austria (see Political Assessment - document C-M(68)43(Final)). At the suggestion of some delegations, Finland, which was not included in this list, was also taken into consideration. The Council undertook an extensive exchange of views on this subject at its meetings on 23rd and 29th October and on 5th November.

2. I have prepared, at the request of the Council and on my own responsibility, the present report, in which I have attempted to summarize, as faithfully and exactly as possible, the opinions expressed by Permanent Representatives during the above-mentioned discussions.

3. For reference purposes, I have attached at Appendix a document (PO/68/558) which I circulated to members of the Council prior to their second exchange of views held on this subject on 29th October in order to sum up their previous discussions and to provide a possible framework for the subsequent debate on this issue.

4. I thought that the substance of these talks could be summarized under three headings: analysis of the situation and of the repercussions of a possible Soviet threat directed against each of the countries in question, preventive dissuasion designed to forestall the development of such a threat, and possible reactions in the face of a specific threat.

I. ANALYSIS OF THE SITUATION AND OF ITS REPERCUSSIONS

5. This analysis is largely derived from the general political assessment contained in document C-M(68)43(Final), which remains unchanged. Most delegations stressed the fluid, uncertain and unpredictable nature of the situation. Some of these delegations, it is true, interpreted in a favourable sense certain aspects of this situation which seemed to point to a reduction of tension. Nevertheless, the general feeling was that Soviet intentions in both the ideological and strategic fields remained obscure.

In this connection, special attention was directed by several delegations to the uncertainties regarding the "Socialist Community" doctrine, which has been the subject of recent Soviet pronouncements: what use does the USSR intend to

make of this theory; to which ends and by what means; and how far will its zone of application extend? More than one delegation found all these questions disturbing when they were considered in conjunction with the advanced position of the Soviet troops following the invasion of Czechoslovakia, and the presence of the Soviet fleet in the Mediterranean.

6. In this connection, more than one delegation attempted to determine the implications of a possible threat against each of the countries in question. These implications are of two types. On the one hand, any threat against the countries in this peripheral area would undoubtedly have repercussions on the Alliance; on the other hand, it would also affect the vulnerability of the other states exposed to a potential threat and the degree of probability of an attack on them. However, several delegations were anxious not to establish a list of inverse priorities or a comparative scale of values measuring the gravity of the threat for each country involved for fear this could be revealing to the USSR.

#### ALBANIA

7. Aggression against this country, which enjoys at least the moral support of China and which, moreover, is relatively inaccessible, is considered unlikely by certain delegations, except in the event of an action undertaken against Yugoslavia. After cold-shouldering the USSR for a long time, Albania has now officially withdrawn from the Warsaw Pact. However, some delegations pointed out that, the geographical location of Albania on the Adriatic, makes it an important factor in the Mediterranean situation.

#### YUGOSLAVIA

8. The alarm sounded by this country and its firm resolution to resist any aggression may have been caused, some feel, by a real threat while others see it as a desire to conjure up the prospect of such a threat. Some delegations take the view that the USSR is concerned about Yugoslavia whose unorthodox brand of Communism is a source of irritation, while its geographical position makes it a strategically important element for Soviet defence. However, according to several delegations, it would seem that for the present, pressure is rather being applied in the economic field, in which Yugoslavia is largely dependent on Eastern Europe, and in the psychological field.

9. Many delegations stressed the destructive effect which any Soviet intervention in Yugoslavia would have on the strategic balance in Europe and, more particularly, in the

Mediterranean. In this connection, a few delegations pointed out that an attack on Yugoslàvia would be as serious with respect to the Alliance as any action against Austria. In addition, some delegations expressed the view that the occupation of Albania or Rumania would make Yugoslavia's position very difficult, indeed nearly untenable.

RUMANIA

10. A number of delegations recalled that this country was being subjected to heavy pressure which, moreover, seemed to have had the desired effect, having forced Rumania to adopt a cautious and reserved attitude. While some delegations drew the conclusion that the Soviet Authorities would not be tempted to consolidate their hold on this country by military means, others maintained that, as a member of the Warsaw Pact, Rumania would probably be the first victim of any further extension of Soviet control in Eastern Europe.

11. Some delegations expressed the opinion that an invasion of Rumania by Soviet troops or the subjection of that country would not be likely to affect the military balance in Europe. Others, however, did not share this view because of the possible repercussions of such a situation on neighbouring states, such as Bulgaria, on the one hand, and Yugoslavia, on the other.

AUSTRIA

12. The general feeling was that, owing to its recognised state of neutrality, Austria did not appear to be a likely target for Soviet intervention. Some delegations, however, referred to the Soviet Union's press campaign against this country which had been prompted by the latter's hostile reactions to the invasion of Czechoslovakia. Certain delegations expressed the view that if such pressure degenerated into aggression, the resulting situation would be intolerable for the Alliance and there would be a real danger of conflict between the Warsaw Pact and NATO.

FINLAND

13. While the recent contacts between the USSR and Finland seemed ominous to one or two delegations, others take the view that these are normal consultations which need give no cause for anxiety. Consequently, a number of delegations feel that Finland should not be included in the framework of measures adopted in face of a Soviet threat. In the view of some delegations, such a threat would not gravely affect the Alliance from a strategic standpoint, but its political implications would be serious since it would demonstrate the Soviet Union's aggressive designs on its neighbours, even when the latter's attitude is one of well-disposed neutrality.

14. Various delegations stressed the need to bear in mind certain considerations which, although not directly related to the areas under review, are likely to have a bearing on developments in these areas. In this connection, reference was made to such aspects as the rôle of China, the situation in the Mediterranean, and Bulgarian policy in the Balkans.

15. Several delegations recommended that this analysis of the situation and its implications should be backed up by a series of studies. Thus, it was suggested by some delegations that consideration be given to the legal basis of the relations between the Soviet Union and each of these countries, the guarantees accorded to some of them in formal agreements (Finland, Yugoslavia, Austria) and the basis for such relations as they may maintain with certain NATO countries.

16. Several delegations also pointed out that the countries in question are not always faced with a Soviet threat as such but are subjected rather to a fairly wide range of pressures exercised under the cloak of legality. These delegations recommended that a thorough and detailed examination should be made of these various forms of pressure. Some of them laid special stress on the need to assess the vulnerability of the above-mentioned countries to Soviet economic domination.

17. Finally, most delegations agreed that, as suggested in paragraph 7(a) of the attached document PO/68/558, it would be useful to invite the Military Authorities to analyse, in respect of each of the countries mentioned in this paragraph, what, in terms of the possible threat to NATO security, would be the military implications of an invasion or a significant increase in Soviet military presence. Some delegations also felt that, as proposed in paragraph 7(b) of the above-mentioned PO, the Military Authorities should likewise consider what precautionary military measures it would seem prudent for NATO to take on its own territory in the event of such developments.

## II. REACTIONS

18. It was agreed that, generally speaking, reactions could be divided into two phases. The first might be described as one of preventive action designed to avert a possible threat. The second would be devoted to contingency studies designed to counter a specific threat. However, a number of delegations suggested that this distinction should not be too strictly interpreted and that, in actual fact, the transition from one phase to another might be fairly imperceptible in view of the wide variety of intermediate reactions.

A. Preventive dissuasion

19. It was generally agreed that the essential objective of such action is to continue and, where appropriate, expand the current policy of providing moral support for countries subjected to pressure and likely to be threatened by the Soviet Union; this would be done by means of statements of intention and visits such as Mr. Katzenbach's recent visit to Marshal Tito.

20. Some delegations pointed out, however, that such a policy could cause difficulties for the countries concerned, or for some of them at least, and that care should be taken to avoid any untimely display of interest which might prove harmful to them. Furthermore, a number of delegations feared that, by showing concern for the fate of certain countries, the Alliance might appear to be losing interest in the others and abandoning them to Soviet expansionism.

21. Some delegations wondered whether such preventive action, which in reality implied a warning, should go so far as to take the form of a more or less clear signal to the Soviet Union. It was agreed that the discussions which arose on this point would not affect the wording of the communiqué to be issued after the forthcoming Ministerial Meeting of the Council. Some delegations questioned the wisdom of issuing a warning as part of preventive dissuasion since this might prove not only ineffective but also dangerous. In particular, one delegation suggested that it would be better to force the Soviet Union to face its responsibilities by making it clear that it would have to bear the consequence of any further decline in the détente arising out of further Soviet expansion.

✓ B. Contingency studies

22. At a later stage the question arises of how the Alliance should react in the event of a mounting threat against any of the countries concerned. Some delegations, which recommend a pragmatic approach to this problem, are reluctant to draw a distinction between this stage and the first, or suggest that, at the very least, there should be a very smooth transition from one to the other. Several delegations also warned against unduly rigid planning which might be invalidated or upset by the course of events.

23. To this must be added the danger, as seen by some delegations, of supplying the USSR with possibly misleading information regarding the reactions contemplated which might result in miscalculation. In addition certain delegations were unwilling to run the risk of seeing NATO undertake new commitments because of developments which do not directly affect the Atlantic area.

24. While a specific plan of action or even a list of approved measures did not emerge from the discussions, certain options were defined with regard to possible reactions in the event of a concrete threat. A number of delegations were of the opinion that it would be useful to prepare, on the basis of future studies, a set of political, economic and military measures which might be envisaged to meet the various possible contingencies. Reference may be made in this connection to the preliminary and by no means exhaustive list of measures given in paragraph 6 of PO/68/558 attached at Appendix. These measures range from protest démarches to military aid, and include such intermediate steps as diplomatic action and economic sanctions.

25. In the view of most delegations, however, any decision on these measures must still depend on the prevailing circumstances and be subject to prior consultation with the threatened countries. Some delegations, however, refuse at this stage to consider any NATO reaction to a specific threat of which they see no sign at the present time and to which, they therefore feel, an adequate response is difficult to envisage.

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APPENDIX to  
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CONSIDERATIONS INVOLVED IN POSSIBLE DEVELOPMENTS  
OF SOVIET POLICY IN EASTERN EUROPE AND RELATED AREAS

1. As agreed at the end of the meeting of the Council on 23rd October, we are to pursue on 29th October the discussion of the consequences of the possible developments of Soviet policy in Eastern Europe and in related areas. In preparing for this, I thought I might indicate a few main points which emerged from our previous discussion and some questions which may assist our further exchange of views.

2. It was suggested that the task of the Council was to outline contingency studies rather than contingency planning. Contingency planning would, perhaps, be more appropriate for the military authorities to develop. Our discussion last time had focused on the three points made by Ambassador Cleveland:

- (a) analysis of the situation, including the possibility of new Soviet actions in Eastern Europe;
- (b) possible preventive action of a diplomatic, political, economic or other nature, in order to dissuade the Soviet Union and her allies from such actions;
- (c) possible reactions in case dissuasion failed and firm evidence of further action developed or actual aggression occurred.

Several Permanent Representatives pointed out the need to concentrate on the second and third points, while some emphasised the importance of the first.

3. On the first point, there was agreement not to modify the general political assessment of the situation contained in document C-M(68)43(Revised). A situation of uncertainty justifying vigilance remains at the heart of that assessment. Lately there have been assurances by Soviet authorities about their intentions and some withdrawal of forces from Czechoslovakia, facts which have been commented upon favourably by some delegations. Others have stressed the disturbing implications of the renewed Soviet doctrine of the "Socialist Community". The special status of Finland, the recognised neutrality of Austria, the exposure of Rumania, the independence repeatedly proclaimed by Yugoslavia, and the isolation of Albania are interesting elements of the picture and the evaluation of the consequences of possible Soviet pressures on each of them may be different.

4. On the second point, the need for preventive action has been generally accepted. It was recognised that such action, as it relates to the bolstering of the position of the affected countries, is already underway. Preventive action should be intensified in the most effective way possible and in close consultation among Alliance members. In this context, we could consider the formulation of a clear signal as to the gravity of the consequences such aggressive action would imply. Other specific problems may be raised as events develop and should be given prompt and careful consideration in the Council.

5. The third point was less extensively discussed in the last meeting and may merit more attention in our next discussion. In considering the attitude that NATO should adopt in the event of new Soviet pressures, threats, or actions against the above-mentioned countries, contingency studies may be required contemplating possible actions in the political/economic and military fields. In the political/economic field, I think it is necessary to distinguish between individual action by Allied countries, supported by timely consultation in the Council, and a more co-ordinated or even collective action. A second distinction may be considered in the light of the different consequences which could result from Soviet actions in the various countries we have mentioned. In the military field, a further distinction may be desirable regarding the extent of resistance put up by an attacked country and whether or not it requests assistance from the Alliance.

6. The kind of political/economic actions to be considered may be:

- (a) statements, appeals, messages by government leaders, political leaders and parliaments;
- (b) diplomatic action in the Security Council and the United Nations General Assembly;
- (c) possible withdrawal of ambassadors, break in diplomatic relations, bilateral protests and other specific diplomatic moves;
- (d) economic measures, such as rupture of trade relations, cancellation of credits and other steps up to full economic sanctions;
- (e) suspension of disarmament talks and other negotiations designed to improve East-West relations;
- (f) economic assistance to the affected country; and
- (g) military assistance (delivery of weapons, equipment and supplies).

7. Finally, it would obviously be wise to think about the possible implications for NATO security of an extension of the Soviet Union's military activities into any of the countries I have mentioned. In this context, the Military Committee has asked for political guidance. Without prejudice to any actions that the Alliance or any of its members might take in such circumstances, I do not think that, for the present, we should ask our Military Authorities to plan on the assumption that the Alliance would respond with armed intervention to Soviet military action against any of these countries. At the same time, however, I suggest that it would be most desirable to ask the Military Committee to report, as soon as possible, its views upon each of the following three questions:

- (a) in respect of each of Rumania, Yugoslavia, Albania, Austria, and Finland, what, in terms of the possible threat to NATO security, would be the military implications of a Russian invasion or a significant increase in the Russian military presence?
- (b) in the event of such developments, what precautionary military measures would it seem prudent for NATO to take in its own territory?
- (c) what types of military weapons, equipment and supplies would be most appropriate, if an attacked country resisted with arms and requested such aid.

8. Finally, I would like to say a word on how we shall convey to Ministers the results of our discussion. In this context, may I underline that a Chairman's Report would, to my mind, be a factual document, reporting the Council's discussions and pointing out the questions which the Ministers would have to consider - all this, I repeat, in a strictly factual and objective way. It would have no direct bearing on the wording of the communiqué.