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THURSDAY, 14TH JUNE, 1973, AT 11.00 a.m.

at

THE BELLA CENTRE

COPENHAGEN

COMPTE RENDU

de la

SEANCE DU CONSEIL

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CENTRE BELLA

COPENHAGUE

OTAN/NATO,
Copenhagen.

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N A T O S E C R E T

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

M. LUNS

M. van der STOEL, Président d'Honneur, Ministre des Affaires Etrangères des Pays-Bas.

Mr. van der STOEL

Mr. Secretary General, Gentlemen, it is my pleasant duty to say a few words of introduction at the opening of this fifty-fifth Ministerial Session of the North Atlantic Council.

Observing the courtesy customary at our meetings, I am glad to welcome a number of newcomers to this Council, their Excellencies Mr. van Elslande, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Belgium, M. Jobert, the French Foreign Minister.

As I can hardly welcome myself, I should just like to say that I feel privileged to chair this meeting. Although I am myself a newcomer as a Minister, I look forward to renewing existing friendships and hope to get to know better those of you I have not had the pleasure of meeting before.

To you probably as much as to me, the value of these meetings lies most in the debates here in the Council and in the informal exchanges outside the conference room. I hope to take full advantage of these opportunities.

When I take a look at the Agenda before us, I cannot help thinking that we shall have plenty of subjects to debate and that it will take us all the time we have to get through the Agenda. I do hope that collectively we shall be worthy of the occasion and that tomorrow night we shall be able to look back with some satisfaction on this meeting and regard it as a job well done.

Lastly, I should like to thank the Danish Government, on behalf of my colleagues, for the hospitality, for what they have done for us already and for what is in store for us.

Mr. Secretary General, I think it is time to get on with the business before us and I now invite you to take the Chair.

I. REVIEW OF THE INTERNATIONAL SITUATION

M. LUNS

Messieurs, je voudrais me joindre à notre Président d'Honneur en souhaitant la bienvenue à tous les Ministres, ainsi qu'aux ambassadeurs et aux hauts fonctionnaires qui les accompagnent à cette session de printemps de notre Conseil, et particulièrement aux Ministres qui assistent pour la première fois à cette Assemblée, c'est-à-dire à M. Jobert, Ministre des affaires étrangères de France, à M. van Elslande, Ministre des affaires étrangères du Royaume de Belgique, et enfin à M. van der Stoel, Ministre des affaires étrangères du Royaume des Pays-Bas qui, depuis de longues années, est d'ailleurs connu très favorablement de la Présidence.

Now Gentlemen, since our meeting in Brussels six months ago, the international situation has continued to evolve at a rapid pace with significant implications both for European security as well as for the Alliance, I have provided an assessment of the most salient aspects of the international situation in my Annual Political Appraisal. Our meeting takes place at a crucial juncture in two respects. Firstly, there is the fact that we are on the threshold of far-reaching negotiations with the East which, after arduous preparations, are now to take place, notably on CSCE and MBFR. These will not only involve the sensitive political and security interests of member countries of the Alliance but also will test the consultative procedures of the Alliance itself. These multilateral talks are taking place in parallel with a series of bilateral contacts with the East, such as Mr. Brezhnev's trips to Bonn and Washington, and SALT 2, to mention but a few.

Secondly, we have on our Agenda the important question of Atlantic relations. I have already been in touch individually with Ministers on this problem.

Both these subjects, the negotiations and contacts with the East and the Atlantic relationship are fundamental to the future course of events in Europe. Permanent Representatives have gone rather far towards resolving these issues, but we have now reached a point where Ministerial decisions are required.

Turning to CSCE, there are two aspects to be considered. Firstly, the result of the Multilateral Preparatory Talks themselves and secondly, the question of parallelism between CSCE and MBFR. I believe it is the view of the governments represented around this table that the Helsinki talks have been generally satisfactory in terms of meeting the criteria set forth in paragraph 9 of the Bonn Communiqué. At the same time, it is clear that the main effort still lies ahead of us. The first Ministerial phase of CSCE, and more particularly, the second, or the so-called commission stage, will involve a great deal of very difficult bargaining if Western interests are to be adequately safeguarded. I would personally think it useful to have both these thoughts reflected in some fashion in our Communiqué. Not only for our respective public opinions but also for the other participants at the CSCE.

Mr. LUNS (Contd)

As to the question of the parallelism between CSCE and MBFR, there is a serious problem reflected in my PO/73/82, namely the question of final agreement on a date for the beginning of CSCE, having regard to the Soviet position linking the opening of the MBFR discussions with the completion of the whole process of CSCE. This is something which I believe we should consider very carefully here. It is obviously something the Ministers must decide.

In the field of MBFR we also have important decisions to take. Negotiations will, I hope, begin this autumn and by then the Allies must have prepared some concrete negotiating proposals. During the past six weeks, the Permanent Representatives have discussed the MBFR guidelines for the development of Allied positions and the desired outcome of the negotiations. They have developed agreement on a number of important matters, as will be seen from the second revise of G-M(73)50. However, Allied decisions are still required on two key issues, to wit, first, treatment of stationed and indigenous forces, secondly, the area for constraints, very much related to the question of Hungary.

I invite Ministers to address themselves to these issues; to reconcile, wherever possible, the existing differences of views; and thus to enable the Allies to move expeditiously to the elaboration of agreed negotiating positions.

I sincerely hope that Ministers will come to an agreement on these MBFR guidelines.

Finally, there is the ministerial action required when you discuss Atlantic relations. This has been the subject of growing discussion and, in particular, there have been the important statements made recently by Secretary of State Rogers, and by President Nixon and also by his adviser, Dr. Kissinger. I think we all recognise that a positive response is expected. Our task is to decide exactly what shall be the role of the Alliance in these matters and how the Alliance can best play that role. I hope that we make practical progress here today in dealing with these questions. It is also of great importance that the Alliance should be seen to be responding actively and effectively to the challenges of the changing world, and with that in mind I would attach special interest to what we say in the Communique on this subject.

In view of the implications for the Alliance, both external and internal, of all these problems, I took the initiative to meet Dr. Kissinger in Paris last Saturday. Our talk was useful and encouraging and covered a broad area including East-West relations as well as possible approaches to the solution of Atlantic problems. I noted with satisfaction that Dr. Kissinger said he appreciated, and the American Government also appreciated, the importance of timely information and consultation. The Presidential adviser also said that he intends to come to Brussels to meet the Council in Permanent Session, if possible, this Summer, and if possible also, before the beginning of August.

Mr. LUNS (Contd)

Now, gentlemen, these are the main problems on the Agenda with which we have to deal. In addition, we have two other important reports on our Agenda which we should note: the situation in the Mediterranean and the report by the Conference of National Armaments Directors.

Last, but not least, I should like to make three announcements of a practical nature. First, with respect to press arrangements, the NATO spokesman will brief the press after each session and he will therefore be in contact with the press officers of delegations to ask for their assistance and advice. Secondly, the usual Communique Drafting Committee will meet in the Communique Drafting Room tonight at 9.30 p.m. Thirdly, the Council in Permanent Session agreed that it would be appropriate for Foreign Ministers to receive an intelligence briefing by Rear Admiral Poser of the Federal German Navy among the lines of the briefing given last week to their Defence colleagues.

Having said that I would like to give the floor to Admiral Poser.

/The Council then heard the briefing by Admiral Poser./

Summing up, Admiral POSER concluded:

Mr. Chairman, I would like to sum up the findings of the two new documents with a quotation from MC 161 approved by all NATO nations:

"The Warsaw Pact continue to maintain their force levels and a high state of military readiness. Soviet conventional capabilities continue to grow in areas facing ACE and China. Backed up by the Soviet's steadily increasing research and development effort, modernization of equipment goes on."

Admiral POSER (Contd)

In more detail, the following conclusions can be drawn:

The strategic military posture of the Soviet Union is further improving through the introduction of the new nuclear strategic submarine but the pace has slowed. The USSR still remains inferior to NATO countries in total numbers of strategic weaponry and technology.

General Purpose Forces capabilities are still growing:

reorganizational changes in Soviet ground and tactical air forces and introduction of additional major combat equipment have increased their combat capacity. Additional tank combat units have been formed in the Group of Soviet Forces, Germany, since 1968. Modernization of ground and air forces continues steadily through the introduction of new equipment and will eventually rectify still-existing weaknesses;

in the maritime field, growing emphasis is being placed on the deployment of Soviet Naval Forces in support of world-wide interests and on the capability to conduct anti-shipping operations. New types of large surface combatants will considerably strengthen Soviet global naval presence. However, the growing number of modern units with intricate weapon systems places a strain on repair facilities and the provision of highly-skilled crews.

The capabilities of other WP Forces stay abreast of, but are in general somewhat lower than their Soviet counterparts. However, despite different training standards and often poorer quality of equipment, these forces are sufficient and apparently reliable enough to augment the strength of Soviet military power. This conclusion can be inferred from Soviet willingness to provide these countries with some of their most modern equipment.

Finally, the growing conventional capabilities in areas facing ACE deserve special emphasis. The clear result of five years of these reinforcement measures is that Soviet capabilities are much higher than we have estimated before. The nature of the conventional reinforcements, especially indicated by those in tactical aviation, points to the fact that the main rationale is increased combat power.

For example, in the Group of Soviet Forces, Germany, the number of tanks in units and in store is about 30% higher than the figure of 5,000 on which NATO has based its force comparisons and planning. There is no evidence that these reinforcements are also designed to hedge possible reductions in context with MBFR, but it is quite obvious that they would provide the Soviets with a favourable bargaining position.

To conclude my presentation on trends in the WP, I would like to stress that these estimates are the result of a common effort by all NATO nations. This intelligence will form a solid basis for NATO's planning and, I hope, will help the Alliance to keep their powder dry and not be outwitted in East-West negotiations.

M. LUNS

Merci beaucoup, Amiral. Maintenant, est-ce que de la part des Ministres il y a des remarques à faire ou des questions à poser? Je donne la parole au Ministre des affaires étrangères de la Turquie.

MR. BAYULKEN

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Is it possible to have some information regarding the preparations of the Warsaw Pact countries in Bulgaria, because I did not hear much about it, and their reserves in the Caucasion area? If this information could be supplied, I would appreciate it very much.

M. LUNS

Merci beaucoup, Monsieur le Ministre.

ADMIRAL POSER

Mr. Chairman.

The Bulgarian forces are also improved in their material but at a slow pace. We have not seen Soviet stationed troops in Bulgaria so far, but they have participated in some manoeuvres, not only as far as ground and air forces but also as far as naval forces are concerned. In the Caucasion area we have no additional information beyond that we have presented during the last year. Some of the divisions in this area are of a high state of readiness.

M. LUNS

Maintenant, je me permets de rappeler au Ministre des affaires étrangères de la Turquie que l'année passée on a parlé assez longuement de la Bulgarie et je me rappelle moi-même qu'on a signalé que les forces bulgares avaient été équipées du dernier char russe et que leur armement en général était d'une nature telle que votre Chef d'état-major m'a fait part de ses inquiétudes au cas où la Turquie n'aurait même que la Bulgarie comme seul ennemi. Oui, Monsieur le Ministre?

M. BAYULKEN

Monsieur le Président, nos informations confirment que la Bulgarie maintient une force blindée largement supérieure à nos forces mécanisées.

M. LUNS

Oui, c'est exactement ce qu'on a signalé l'année passée et depuis lors il n'y a pas eu de changement comme l'a dit l'amiral Poser.

Y-a-t'il d'autres questions, d'autres remarques? Alors je remercie l'Amiral et je donne dans le débat général la parole à l'Honorable Mitchell Sharp, Ministre des affaires étrangères du Canada.

Mr. SHARP

Mr. Secretary General, my Delegation had asked that I might speak early in the debate. I had no idea until I arrived here that I would have the honour of speaking first, but I would like to say, on behalf of Canada, and of all of us, how much we are appreciating the hospitality of the Danish Government and I would also like to welcome our new colleagues. I find, now that the ranks of Foreign Ministers change so rapidly, that I am now the most senior Minister.

I should have indicated, Mr. Secretary General, that 1973 augurs well to become a year of historic new beginnings. This is the sense and purpose of the multilateral talks in Helsinki and Vienna that have been going on since we last met and the bilateral meetings that have complemented them. The communique that emerges from our deliberations here in Copenhagen should convey to our own public and to our partners in negotiations, East and West, neutrals and non-aligned, the strong desire of the NATO Alliance to maintain the momentum.

Neither of these multilateral negotiations in Helsinki or in Vienna has been easy. We have all had a foretaste of the difficulties that still lie ahead. The magnitude of East-West differences calls upon us to employ great patience and tact which is possible only if we are not constrained by artificial time limits. After the long, hard and patient work in Helsinki, a decisive point has now been reached in the development of the CSCE. In effect, we are in the process of drawing up what may become a sort of charter of East-West relations in Europe, influencing significantly the way in which those relations will develop over the coming years.

Will East-West relations follow the Communist concept of "peaceful co-existence" within which co-operation between ideologically hostile states is rigidly controlled? Or will they follow the Western concept of "detente" in which ideological differences become progressively less important as the people, as well as the states, on both sides of the division of Europe benefit from greater co-operation, freer movement and more open communications. This, it seems to me, is essentially the issue with which we are faced.

The MPT has done its job well, thanks to painstaking preparations, close co-ordination on the Western side and the constructive and helpful attitude of the neutral and non-aligned countries. The MPT could never have been so successful if it had been forced to work to unrealistic deadlines as the Communist side originally wanted. That is why the Canadian Representative in Helsinki, in indicating his support for the consensus reached on the preparation for the CSCE, stated that in the light of the relation of the proposed Conference to the general state of negotiations on European problems, the Canadian Government was deeply concerned to ensure that the progress of the CSCE would not be affected by artificial time limits and that we would therefore wish to give the question of the opening date of the CSCE further serious consideration in consultation with other participating states.

Mr. SHARP (Contd)

Mr. Secretary General, we must now ask ourselves this question: how can we maximize the chances of translating these preparations into concrete results at the Conference itself and minimize the risks that the Conference may still be used to serve Communist ends rather than the more open world that the West would like to see. Let us be under no illusions. The mandates prepared by the MPT are sufficient to give the Conference a good chance of achieving positive results but they are no guarantee that it will do so.

Hence the Conference must be in a position to continue the difficult and inevitably time-consuming task of hammering our compromises which represent a reasonable balance of advantages on both sides. Otherwise we run the risk that the only result will be a confirmation of the status quo by means of a solemn endorsement of the principle of the inviolability of frontiers while freer movement of people and ideas remains a dead letter for want of time to work out concrete measures.

That is why I believe that it is desirable to accompany our acceptance of the opening date for the first stage of the Conference with a reiteration of the qualifications already expressed at previous Ministerial meetings, namely: that constructive and specific results can be achieved in CSCE only through a process of detailed and serious negotiations without artificial time limits and that while it would be inappropriate to establish formal and specific links between MBFR and CSCE, progress in each set of negotiations should have a favourable effect on the other by moving ahead in the same general period of time.

In addition, it is the Canadian view that at the first stage of a CSCE, we should not decide on an opening date for the second stage unless we have reason to believe that the same general understanding is shared by the other side. We will of course need to agree amongst ourselves on a date for the opening of the second stage which satisfactorily meets our own preoccupations and then work together to obtain general acceptance of such a date. It might be wise tactically to put off that decision until we are in Helsinki, when we will be able to take account of the circumstances prevailing at the time. In the Canadian view, the opening date should in any event be no earlier than mid-September so that we will have a reasonable period during the summer to work towards common positions within the Alliance. It will also be very much in the interest of the Alliance, before we reach final decisions in our positions, to consult informally and bilaterally with those neutral and non-aligned participants who share our general outlook. My Government, as you know, has long been an advocate of MBFR negotiations with the Warsaw Pact. We have been of the view that an East-West dialogue on force reductions in Central Europe and collateral restraints would reduce the dangers of military confrontation and also test the Warsaw Pact's willingness to co-operate in a real detente.

Mr. SHARP (Contd)

An additional motive which, quite properly, has not been and cannot be highlighted in public statements is that a reduction of the Soviet military presence on the territories of its Warsaw Pact allies would serve our longer term political goals in Europe.

There seems to be general agreement that there should not be large reductions in NATO's conventional strength as a result of MBFR and that reductions should be cautiously designed so as not to affect adversely NATO strategy and should be implemented in phases. There is also an understandable concern by the European countries of NATO to avoid any outcome of MBFR which would inhibit the further development of European unity, including the future forms of defence co-operation amongst themselves. Canada accepts this rationale and the reasons for these concerns.

All of which leads my Government to the belief that the focus of negotiations in the first phase should be on reductions of United States and Soviet forces in Central Europe, along the lines proposed by the United States and endorsed by several other governments. If a consensus can be reached among ourselves on this basis, then negotiations with the other side will be simplified. In anticipation of this prospect, the Canadian Government is prepared to forego the inclusion of Canadian forces in the first phase of reductions. This is on the assumption, of course, that there will be further phases of reductions in due course and that the participation of Canadian forces at that time would not be precluded.

For the rest, Canada has no strong preferences concerning the alternatives in the MBFR guidelines. However, as in the CSCE context, I think we should be cautious both to avoid excessively optimistic objectives or to dilute in advance our own negotiating position. As to the area in which collateral restraints should be applied, we favour the concept that their geographical application should remain a matter for negotiation depending on the nature of the measures. This is preferable in our view to a more specific concept. In relation to the inclusion of Hungarian territory in a constraints area, I suggest we should avoid an assumption at this stage that our security interests cannot be met by a non-circumvention formula for Soviet forces in Hungary. I shall be listening attentively to the approach of other governments on all these difficult issues.

Last week, the Soviet Representative in Vienna proposed that the MBFR negotiations should not commence until one month after completion of all three stages of the CSCE. This week, he has proposed that they should commence not later than December 31st. Since both these formulae are unacceptable, how should we react? In the Canadian view, the first step is to make clear in our Communique that we cannot accept any date which does not fall within the framework of the previous understanding or which is designed to put an artificial time limit on the CSCE.

Mr. SHARP (Contd)

Secondly, we should instruct the Ad Hoc Group in Vienna to continue to press the Soviets vigorously for an acceptable date. We should supplement this effort in any bilateral contacts we may have in the period ahead with the Soviet authorities. One obvious occasion, of course, will be when Mr. Brezhnev visits Washington next week. Finally, we should plan to review the situation in all aspects when we come together in Helsinki next month.

Mr. Secretary General, as you have pointed out, the United States Government has recently and, in my view, rightly drawn attention to the need to re-examine our Atlantic partnership in the light of the opportunities and challenges of the 1970s. I look forward to hearing the views of my colleagues on how we might best set about this task, but in the meantime as a Canadian, I should like to emphasize that this partnership of which we are members is not solely between the United States and Europe. Atlantic links are particularly important to Canada. Canada is particularly concerned that decisions should not be arrived at bilaterally, between the Americans and the Europeans. The Norwegian Government's position as outlined to the Permanent Council on 30th May therefore struck us as being specially pertinent because such a trend towards bilateralism would have the effect of eroding not only the NATO consultative process, but also the very fabric which unites us. The Atlantic relationship is not simply, or mainly, a matter of the relationship between the larger members of the Alliance. It is a relationship among all the members. Although Canada is in North America it is in a rather special position because it regards its North American ties and its European ties as two complementary elements in a balanced Atlantic relationship.

It is easier to recognize the need to review the common problems of the Alliance than to agree on how to go about it. It strikes me that there is a requirement to proceed on a pragmatic basis, bearing in mind the series of important issues to which you, Mr. Chairman, drew our attention in your letter of 5th June. The discussion by our Permanent Representatives has underlined the view, which I share, that consultations and negotiations on the widely disparate and complex problems involved are best pursued in the appropriate specialized agencies. At the same time, I think we all recognize the inevitable interaction between political, economic and other developments. This was surely the intent of Article 2 of the North Atlantic Treaty and the concepts underlying it.

I say at once, Mr. Chairman, that economics cannot be bargained against security or vice versa; but economic differences, unless resolved, can seriously weaken the solidarity of NATO. Indeed, unless we achieve a revitalized sense of common purpose, it is difficult to see that we shall be able to strike a reasonable balance between our individual interests and the common interest. Neither will we be able to generate support and confidence in our respective publics and respond adequately to the challenge and opportunities of our times. Certainly, as far as Canada is concerned, we regard our forces in Europe as contributing to the security of Canada as well as to the security of Europe.

Mr. SHARP (Contd)

The collective strength and solidarity of the Alliance has allowed it to play, to its credit, a creative role in the development of greater East-West understanding and detente. At this juncture in the East-West negotiations, it is more important than ever to maintain our solidarity. We must also not forget that the strength of our position in these negotiations and the public support our Alliance receives depend in a very important way on our capacity to demonstrate, in our actions as well as in our words, that we remain pledged to, and I quote, "the principles of democracy, individual liberty and the rule of law", set out in the preamble to the North Atlantic Treaty. To Canadians, NATO is much more than a military Alliance, and in the long run, the degree of public support for it will be largely determined by the degree to which all the members individually and collectively contribute to its higher purposes.

Mr. LUNS

I now recognize distinguished Minister Secretary of State of the United States, Mr. Rogers.

Mr. ROGERS

Mr. Chairman, first, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the Government of Denmark for the very special and impressive arrangements which you have made for this meeting, and also for the strong support that your Prime Minister gave to the Alliance this morning in opening the meeting. I also want to compliment my colleague from Canada on his very impressive statement. It shows that he has become a senior statesman! But I am serious, Mr. Minister, when I compliment you and say that, in almost every particular, we agree with the sentiments that you expressed.

Mr. Chairman, this meeting of the Council of Ministers is particularly opportune for two reasons. First, we are embarked upon a period of intensive efforts to renew and strengthen the Atlantic relationship. Nothing is more important to the United States than to maintain our Atlantic ties, and I agree with Mr. Sharp when he says that Canada's interest in the first instance is self-interest. That is true of the United States. We consider this Alliance important to our security - and also, of course, to European security, but there can be no denying that our primary interest is self-interest and when we have meetings with our Congress we make that fact clearly known. As you know, President Nixon has been meeting with a number of leaders from NATO countries and this fall he will be coming to Europe. So it is opportune for that reason that we are engaged in intensive efforts to renew and strengthen the Alliance, and when I say "we" I mean all of us.

Secondly, we are also embarking upon an unprecedented period of negotiations in East-West relationships. This meeting will allow us to co-ordinate our approach to next month's Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe and to the talks on MBFR, which ought to begin not later than October 30th.

Mr. ROGERS (Contd)

Active bilateral discussions are also being held by many nations, Chancellor Brandt met last month with General Secretary Brezhnev. President Nixon will be meeting next week with Mr. Brezhnev. The President has asked me to discuss with you today our approach to these talks and to listen carefully to your thoughts so that we may take your views fully into account.

We expect that the talks in Washington will not have the dramatic ground-breaking character of the Moscow summit, but we expect them to be significant. Although the substance of the talks will differ, our approach will be the same as it was in 1972. We seek concrete results and not just grandiose generalities.

SALT will be one of the main items in our discussions of bilateral issues. It may be that the President and Brezhnev, in providing high-level focus on this subject, can make major new progress in reducing the burden of arms and the danger of war.

You are aware from the sessions the Council has had with Ambassador Johnson of the approach the United States is taking towards a permanent strategic offensive agreement. And we are aware from these consultations of your interests and concerns and we will take them fully into account.

As you know, the United States is prepared to move promptly to conclude a provisional agreement freezing multiple re-entry vehicle systems. We have not as yet had any Soviet reaction to our proposals, but we expect Mr. Brezhnev will provide some Soviet views during our discussions.

With respect to the issue of non-central systems, let me reaffirm what Ambassador Johnson has already affirmed to the Council on 10th May. The United States intends full and timely consultation in the Council when a Soviet response is received and as the dialogue develops. More precisely, we intend to discuss with the Council our non-circumvention formula and will want to receive Allied comments on it before presenting it to the Soviets.

We expect that there will be a series of bilateral co-operation agreements resulting from the meetings in Washington, similar in nature to the five signed in Moscow last May. The implementation of the Moscow agreements has proceeded in a generally satisfactory manner. In addition to renewal of our exchange agreement, we are now negotiating other possible agreements, for example, an oceanography agreement, transportation, peaceful uses of atomic energy and a tax treaty. Other agreements may be concluded in the course of the talks and if so we will keep you advised through our Permanent Representative. Certainly, as I am sure you know, there will be no decisions taken or agreements reached that will be detrimental to this Alliance, and we will keep you advised as actively and fully as possible.

MR. ROGERS (Contd)

In economic relations, we know that the Soviets will be anxious to secure most-favoured nation status, to seek assurances of additional financing commitments and to encourage our further participation in major development projects, notably the multi-billion dollar liquid natural gas proposal.

We ourselves desire to move our economic relations forward. However, as you know, we have encountered congressional problems on MFN because of the Soviet emigration policies. With regard to long-term development projects in energy and raw material resources, we hold to the principle that such projects must meet the test of economic feasibility and mutual advantage.

We will review with the Soviet side implementation of the twelve Basic Principles agreed to at the Moscow summit. We attach particular importance to the commitment to avoid military confrontations, to exercise restraint in our mutual relations and not to seek unilateral advantage at the expense of the other. We believe that the Soviets have substantially adhered to these Basic Principles since their signature. At the same time, President Nixon will be seeking in these talks to broaden and deepen the Soviet commitment to policies reflected in these principles.

In the Middle East and Indochina, we believe that the Soviets have a parallel interest in avoiding resumption of military hostilities, certainly full-scale hostilities.

We will seek Soviet co-operation in maintaining the cease fire in the Middle East and will try to impress upon Moscow the need to weigh in heavily in favour of Egyptian restraint. At the same time, we will continue to oppose the idea that a settlement can be designed and imposed by outsiders and will stress our view that only Arab-Israeli negotiations, direct or indirect, can lead to progress towards a lasting peace. We will point out that the most important contribution outside powers such as the US and the USSR can make at this time is to encourage a genuine negotiating process between the parties.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to emphasize that point. I think the members of the Council have heard it before, but I want to emphasize it because of its timeliness. We are convinced in the United States that the only possibility of progress in the Middle East is for negotiations to take place. And when we say "negotiations" we do not necessarily mean direct negotiations, but negotiations which will involve active exchange of ideas. The fact of the matter is that since 1967, there has been no active exchange of ideas among the nations concerned. Experience in recent years has taught us that that is the best way to resolve conflicts and we are convinced that if such negotiations could begin under some auspices genuine progress could be made.

Mr. ROGERS (Contd)

I would also like to say a word to the members of the Council about that area of the world in so far as the United States is concerned. Our relations with the Arab countries on the whole have continued to improve. We now have, as you know - I was interested in the briefing this morning - diplomatic relations with the Yemen Arab Republic - and very good relations. We have very good relations with Saudi Arabia and we recently made a decision to sell Phantoms to that country. I think conditions, and Sir Alec may address this, in Oman have improved and we have good relations with the Sudan. We have recently completed a commercial agreement with Algeria and our relations with Jordan and Lebanon are good.

So, generally speaking, aside from the fact that there has been no progress in the ultimate solution of the problem, I think the developments have not been discouraging. The cease-fire continues in place and we do not think ourselves that the Soviet Union will fail to exercise restraint and fail to urge Egypt to restrain. Also we are encouraged by the developments in the Persian Gulf area and Sir Alec and I have just returned from a meeting of CENTO and I think it was a very successful meeting and there seems to be a growing sense of regional co-operation which provides stability, I believe, in the area.

The situation, of course, in Indochina continues to be of concern to the United States. President Nixon remains determined to do everything within reason to develop a structure of peace in that part of the world. To this end we again undertook negotiations in Paris to seek fuller compliance with the basic agreement of 27th January which we believe offers a viable framework for peace if respected. These negotiations culminated, as you know, in a joint communique which was signed in Paris yesterday. This communique is an amplification and consolidation of the original agreement. It provides for implementation of that agreement in more specific terms. This should contribute to a genuine peace in Indochina.

Mr. Chairman, let me turn now to Europe, the area which most vitally concerns us. First let me stress that the preservation of a common allied position in this era of negotiation is of paramount importance to all of us and certainly to the United States. We reject the concept that two powers alone should resolve issues impinging on the vital interests of other nations, and we fully agree with what Mitchell Sharp said this morning - that this Alliance is not an Alliance of large powers. It is an Alliance of 15 nations of equal importance and it is in that spirit that we have supported the Alliance and in that spirit that we are here today and it is in that spirit that we will continue to view the Alliance in the future.

Mr. ROGERS (Contd)

We have just concluded, all of us, the preparatory talks in Helsinki on CSCE. As you know, the United States has approached the CSCE in the same spirit as the Moscow and Washington summits, with scepticism about the value of purely symbolic acts and with determination to press for progress on specific issues. As a result of Allied solidarity at the preparatory talks the Soviets have demonstrated greater flexibility on the issues than might have been the case; might have been the case when we talked about it last. And essential Allied positions have been maintained. Ground work has been laid for the achievement of concrete objectives in the freer movement area. A good basis has been laid for a declaration of principles which the East cannot portray as a surrogate peace treaty, or as preventing peaceful changes in European frontiers, and which the West can point to as limiting the Soviet doctrine of intervention. And the Soviets have recognized the general utility of confidence-building measures. What the Allies have gained, at the cost of much time and effort at the preparatory talks, must not be diluted in the first stage of CSCE.

I think we are all agreed that the meeting of Foreign Ministers should be brief - ideally no longer than a week - and that it is not the appropriate forum to carry out any extensive negotiations on points of substance. We also agree very much with Canada that we should not fix any artificial timetables. When we agreed to enter these talks we agreed on the basis that we wanted concrete results and that we would insist on them, and any artificial timetable would make it much more difficult to achieve such results.

We believe that the initial CSCE meeting of Ministers would not be the appropriate occasion to discuss drafts of any final CSCE documents which might be tabled by the East or to seek agreement on the level of representation in the final stage of the Conference.

Further, we believe that any document issued at the end of the initial Ministerial meeting of the CSCE should be straight-forward in style and unpretentious in content. This might best take the form of a press statement. Its text should be the subject of close Allied consultations. We have also made substantial progress towards talks on MBFR. Our negotiators in Vienna have done important and effective work, despite the difficulties involved in dealing with the status of Hungary and the problem of a date for opening negotiations. These exploratory talks prove that the Alliance can successfully prepare for negotiation on central issues of military security in a cohesive and co-operative manner.

Mr. ROGERS (Contd)

To develop an MBFR approach which all Allies can fully support, it is essential that we discuss together the major issues identified in the guidelines paper. Such issues as we can resolve through our discussions should be reflected in an appropriate revision of these guidelines. For those issues which remain the United States believes that Allies holding various views should soon put them forward in concrete proposals which the Council could address. This will enable us to avoid focusing on abstract formulas and allow us to seek early agreement on the specifics of our approach to MBFR.

I believe that two substantive issues are central in this endeavour. The first and most important concerns the forces to be reduced. We have expressed our view that MBFR initially should focus on stationed forces, and that indigenous force reductions, if any, should come in a subsequent phase. We have taken this position because of the substantial quantitative and qualitative superiority of NATO indigenous forces over those of the Warsaw Pact. We believe our initial goal, at least, should be a reduction of Soviet ground forces and that, to accomplish this goal, US forces will also need to be reduced.

We have noted with interest the fact that nearly all Allies favour the reduction of US and Soviet forces as an initial phase and that most believe the possibility of mixed package trades should be held open. We will take these views into account in developing our own preferences. But we are firmly of the view that the question of which forces are to be reduced must be resolved within the Alliance in the near future.

The second issue concerns non-circumvention and constraints. We have strongly supported the common resolve that the Soviets must not be permitted to circumvent an MBFR agreement by building up their forces in Hungary. We have also taken the view that constraints are an important part of MBFR and that there should be no reductions unless there is agreement on constraints as well. We do not exclude the possibility of seeking constraints in Hungary. However, including Hungary in a constraints agreement is not the only means of preventing circumvention. We firmly believe moreover that under no circumstances should we consider any measures which would affect deployments outside Central Europe.

Turning to another matter of significance, the United States believes that it is important for negotiations on MBFR to begin on or before October 30th. We have informed the Soviets that we have lived up to the timetable for MBFR and CSCE preparations, and that we would be willing to see the first stage of CSCE begin on schedule early in July. But we have also told them in the strongest possible terms that we expect them to uphold their end of the agreement to begin MBFR negotiations not later than October 30th.

Mr. ROGERS (Contd)

I really do not have any problem to speak of with what the Canadian Minister referred to. We want to do anything that would avoid a public confrontation with the Soviet Union at this time. On this subject, we think we will be able to see that they carry out their part of the agreement. We intend to proceed this way and we think it is important that we maintain Allied unity. And we think we will succeed in gaining Soviet agreement to begin MBFR by October 30th.

To this end we believe it would be desirable to develop a co-ordinated Allied position and we believe that we should notify the Finnish Government of our acceptance of the July 3rd date. But I agree with Mr. Sharp that we should not have any artificial timetables about phase two and we should make certain that the Soviet Union lives up to the agreement which was clearly made that MBFR would start not later than October 30th.

As we move toward negotiations on MBFR, it is more important than ever that NATO maintain its strength. Mr. Chairman, that fact was certainly confirmed by the thorough briefing we heard this morning from Admiral Poser. There can be no doubt that our defences - so long in building - must be maintained and fortified. We must not be misled by any euphoria about detente. Whatever the current atmosphere may be, specific military threats, - nuclear and non-nuclear, - continue to loom over us. Nothing is clearer than the obvious fact that we cannot negotiate about them from weakness. So the United States' position is to maintain the strength of the Alliance, to work together to maintain it, and I can assure you, Mr. Chairman and the members of this Alliance, that this is President Nixon's attitude and policy.

The proposals we have made for further force improvements will help mitigate pressures for unilateral reductions and would buttress our position in negotiations with the East. As the President reaffirmed in his foreign policy report of May 3rd, "given similar efforts by our Allies, the United States will not only maintain but improve our forces in Europe and will not reduce them unless there is reciprocal action by our adversaries".

While we fully intend to discharge our commitments to the common defence, these commitments confront us with a very serious balance of payments problem. The Alliance has recognized the desirability of alleviating "burdens arising from balance of payments deficits resulting from military expenditures for common defence". We welcome the willingness of the Alliance to examine the problem and to establish a broader base for its solution.

I would like to raise one other defence-related issue. The United States accepted with regret the verdict on the recent proposal for a port call in Spain by units of NATO's Naval On-Call Force in the Mediterranean. We continue to believe that NATO should improve its defence capability through co-operation with Spain.

Mr. ROGERS (Contd)

Mr. Chairman, let me conclude by discussing briefly an important opportunity facing us as Allies. President Nixon chose his first trip abroad as President to affirm the importance of the Atlantic Alliance. Addressing the NATO Council in 1969, President Nixon stated "I believe we must built an Alliance strong enough to deter those who might threaten war, realistic enough to deal with world as it is and flexible enough to explore new channels of constructive co-operation". That is still his strong view. Since that time, for reasons that are well known, the United States has been engaged in other activities in other parts of the world. But that fact has not changed our position. That is why the President, Mr. Chairman, has referred in his statements to a "Year of Europe". He wants to make clear once again his fundamental policy about the Alliance.

The strength of this Alliance has allowed to make remarkable progress toward a more stable and peaceful world. There can be no doubt about it that improved relations with the Soviet Union have come about because of the strength of the Alliance. And I might say parenthetically that our relations with the PRC have been helped because of the Alliance.

Today with the transformation of US relations with Moscow and Peking, and the Vietnam war coming to an end, we will devote much greater attention to the needs of the Alliance itself. It is clear to all of us that the Atlantic Alliance is entering a new era and that 1973 is a year of vital importance to the future of our relationship.

President Nixon believes that significant change in our own relationship and in East-West relations makes it imperative for us to build a new conceptual framework for US-European relations. He is convinced that we should articulate a positive statement of our general objectives within the Atlantic Community so that the difficulties we may face in resolving some of the technical problems that will arise in trade negotiations and monetary negotiations and in other fields do not themselves become the focus of attention.

I want to emphasize that the President is determined that this new dialogue on our Atlantic relationship not be hung up on procedural matters. The substance of our objectives is more important to us than the procedures involved. What matters, it seems to us, is to get on with the task.

So Europe will find the United States very flexible in matters of procedure and very willing to move to a common definition of our objectives.

In conclusion, President Nixon believes that it is vitally important for the Allies to join in a common effort to look at our relationship from a fresh and comprehensive perspective. By identifying and declaring our shared principles and goals, we can revitalize and strengthen the Atlantic Alliance and move forward together to confront the problems which are of such great moment to all of us. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Sir Alec DOUGLAS-HOME

I would first of all like to echo the gratitude expressed by my colleagues to the Danish Government for all the excellent arrangements that they have made for us.

I have listened with great attention to what Mr. Sharp and Mr. Rogers have had to say on the substance of our discussion, the information that Mr. Rogers has given us about strategic weapons in relation to United States/Soviet Union contacts I think is very helpful to us, as is his pledge of continuing consultation on these very important matters. Our Alliance was originally constructed, of course, and originally was almost a muscular reaction to a naked threat of expansion at the expense of Western Europe, but, because we are democracies, the germ of reconciliation was innate in our Alliance for collective security from the start. Strength, therefore, has always been a necessary basis, but let me put it this way - strength and reconciliation have been twins in our minds. For a long time there was no response from the Soviet Union or Eastern Europe, so our task as an Alliance was fairly straightforward; namely to do the best we could, first of all to deter by the nuclear arm, and then to gain some flexibility of response by deployment of our conventional forces on the ground.

I think it is legitimate to remind ourselves today, that we went through very testing times. I need only recall the time of the Berlin airlift. But, also, although we have been through these testing times, it is right to remind ourselves that our policy has been a success; as a NATO Alliance we have had to concede nothing over the years to the Soviet Union.

The question really is, I think, in changed circumstances, with detente in the air - and this policy of detente is obviously a conscious Russian policy directed at the next five or ten years - what we do in the context of the early negotiations which are beginning to take place in the CSCE and in the Conference on Mutual Balanced Force Reductions. I think we must ask ourselves in these circumstances: is change so great that we should uproot NATO in favour of some entirely different plant? I take it that our unanimous answer round this table would be no, and I say that because if we want security in Europe and the Atlantic, and Mr. Rogers has reminded us that these are inseparable looking at it as he does from what he described as the selfish point of view of the United States, then looking at it as we do from what I would describe as the selfish attitude and approach of Europe; we have the same interest. It must be an Atlantic Alliance and, therefore, even if we were to dig up NATO and try and start something entirely fresh we should end up with something very like the Alliance we have got today. And if, and I take it that no one dissents from this, we are to retain American strength in Western Europe then, although from time to time the political and the military emphasis may change or we may vary the shape of the command or Europe may take on more responsibilities, or whatever, essentially, the substance of the Alliance about which Mr. Rogers has been talking would look much the same, in other words, to put it in a sentence, collective security needs collective action.

Sir Alec DOUGLAS-HOME (Contd)

I don't see, and I don't imagine any others do, anything inconsistent in a political-military Alliance conducting part of the strategy of detente. Indeed in all these years our purpose has been, while relying on strength, to bring the other side to the conference table. That is the only way one can begin to bring confrontation to an end.

Now having said that, I do think that there is one thing that we must note and never forget, and it is this; that the Communist world, of course, sees nothing inconsistent between advocating detente and pressing ahead with armaments. Democracies cannot do that kind of thing, and this caution, therefore, I think is timely and we must observe it. And that being so, I suggest that there is one general rule which we should apply in the contacts which we are about to undertake with the Warsaw Pact. We should test every proposal for disarmament or arms control against the measure of whether it retains the relative balance of power. That seems to me to be of absolute importance, it cannot be an absolutely precise calculation but we can make sure that it is nearly as precise as we can make it, and everything, I think, which Admiral Poser said today, underlined the necessity of not in any circumstances upsetting, even though we reduce armaments, the relative balance of power. If we can all agree on that at least, it will be a good start and we shall not go far wrong.

Then I feel that we should reaffirm those policies and deployments which provide the Alliance with a flexible response to possible attack. I say this because when we are thinking in terms of reduction of forces, perhaps whether they are stationed or whether they are indigenous, we could easily get back to the trip-wire policy. The more we reduce conventional forces on the ground the greater the danger there is of that. And we should take, I think, great care, and especially enough time, to make sure that reductions in men and weapons, when they take place, do not lead to that retrograde step. It would be extremely dangerous. It will be a very difficult exercise in substance and timing to keep our poise. If I may use the analogy of the circus, it requires both horses that are ridden to be kept at a regulated and harmonized pace. If one or the other of them gets seriously out of line, nobody trying to ride, however agile, can stay in his seat.

The two forthcoming East-West Conferences will represent a major test of our abilities. I am not only thinking of what happens, Mr. Secretary General, at the conference table. It will be more important than ever that we take our public opinion along with us, tell our people the truth about the balance between security and detente. This is not always an easy thesis but there is no doubt we must attempt it, even at the risk of being unpopular.

Sir Alec DOUGLAS-HOME (Contd)

Then, if I may say a word about each of the Conferences. The preparatory talks in Helsinki worked out pretty well and I think it is worth just remembering why they have done so. The Council will remember that the idea of the Conference arose from a Soviet proposal, and the theme of that Soviet proposal was a general one of a declaration of vague intentions to live at peace with each other. In our response to it, we took great care to examine the Soviet aims and attitudes before determining our own attitude and we concluded that if the Conference was to have more than a negligible effect on the situation in Europe, declaratory statements of intent were not enough. We have had plenty of them and they lead nowhere. In other words, we would need to give to the Conference far more substance than the East European participants intended it should have, and this entailed a great deal of preparatory work which went very well. And it has been, in effect, the Soviet Union which has been under the time pressures if they wanted to get results. So I think that those preparatory talks have gone well and I think we all agree that the condition has been met that we can go to the Conference itself in a spirit of reasonable confidence that we may get results of advantage both to East and West although, of course, one has got to recognize that in dealing with the Russians you never get anything spectacular: you advance a millimetre at a time. But if you can advance that short amount, it is worth while.

I think we want more preparation. I have particularly in mind the three formidable volumes of NATO document C-M(72)24, corresponding to the broad areas of the Agenda, and these documents constitute a quarry from which we can draw specific proposals to put forward during the second stage of the Conference. I think it would be valuable if we were kept up to date on these, and perhaps the International Staff might be asked to undertake this matter as one of priority. It can't be done quickly, but still I think the work should be done before the Conference opens.

Now this reinforces our view that it would be unrealistic to think in terms of the Committees meeting much before mid-September. Thereafter, I think we will have to look forward to several months of hard labour - I hasten to say, by the Foreign Ministers' representatives and not by the Foreign Ministers themselves! If the results of the second stage warrant it, we can then proceed to the final phase of the Conference. If the Helsinki Conference is to produce the results we want, I agree with Mr. Sharp and with Mr. Rogers that we must have all the time that we need to arrive at them. The Conference should proceed under its own rhythm, and patience in this respect will pay.

Sir Alec DOUGLAS-HOME (Contd)

And as I come to say a short word on MBFR, I would like to state our attitude to the link between the two Conferences.

I do not think we should hold up the opening date. I think that would be wrong. But I think we should remember that we have control over the pace at which we conduct the second stage, and if the Russians will not set a date for MBFR then they will not find the co-operation that they would otherwise expect in the second stage of the Conference. And this seems to me a way in which we can keep control.

Now let me turn briefly to MBFR. I do not in the least want to make a post mortem of what happened at the exploratory talks in Vienna but I think there are certain lessons which can be drawn. We are not yet united entirely on our objectives. We did operate under time pressures which the other side were able to exploit. There were also some failures of secrecy. In the forthcoming negotiations, we must make sure that our preparations for the MBFR Conference are no less thorough and are as much agreed as those for the CSCE and time is short.

Now, what should our negotiating aims be? How are we to ensure that at no point in the forthcoming negotiations will the relative balance of power between the two sides be upset? I do not think this is the place to examine the various options set out in the United States paper on MBFR but I would like to thank Mr. Rogers for what was, I think, a masterly exposition of the possibilities. I doubt if any of us disagree with the philosophy deployed in that paper, but we must remember, as the Prime Minister of Denmark so emphatically underlined this morning, that any unilateral reduction in our forces during negotiations could prejudice, or even prevent, the achievement of the kind of agreement we want.

We were, and we remain, reassured by President Nixon's message to our last meeting to the effect that the United States would make no unilateral reductions of American forces in Europe provided that European forces were maintained and improved. We are already working to fulfil our part of that bargain. It is obvious, of course, that we cannot achieve Soviet reductions without some reductions on our side, and I recognize that domestic political pressures for reductions must be taken into account, and possibly some of them must be met sooner or later. The trouble is, of course, that we, or more accurately, our Finance Ministers, like the idea of reductions much more than do the members of the Warsaw Pact. All of us would like to reduce if we could. They might well prefer not to reduce at all. In these circumstances, I think we have to avoid looking too hard at what there might be in MBFR for each of us. We must keep our eyes on the East-West balance of forces and the continuing military threat to our common security.

Sir Alec DOUGLAS-HOME (Contd)

We have already explained why we think that any reductions on the Western side should be confined, at least in the first instance, to the forces of the United States and the Soviet Union. That is not to say that the prospect of reduction in European forces should be excluded or forgone, but we think that it is too early to say when reductions of European forces might safely take place. We should wait and see how the other side behaves in negotiations and what negotiations reveal of the Soviet intentions towards Western Europe.

So, Mr. Secretary General, we have a lot of work ahead of us. We have a lot, too, to consider on constraints and verification and how they should be carried out.

ii Finally, the Russians may say something about, of course, an international body to supervise the conclusions of one Conference, or perhaps of both Conferences. What, I think, we do not want to do here, in any case, and in any circumstances, is give the Russians a handle to interfere in defence arrangements in Western Europe. This applies perhaps even more to European forces on their own ground than it does to the Americans committed to the common effort.

I echo the request of those who have spoken so far that we can demonstrate our solidarity in this meeting of the Alliance. There was never a more important time, I think, than this to do so.

As far as European-American relations are concerned, if we have some anxieties about each other in the field of commerce, or wherever it may be, the important thing is to identify our anxieties, then to meet to talk about them so that we avoid a confrontation. That is the sensible way to proceed. Certainly we must not allow any anxieties we may have to erode our confidence in each other in this Alliance. And if we proceed carefully, holding on to what is good, improving what needs to be improved, adapting where necessary and acting in a spirit of respect for an institution which has successfully preserved our security for so long, I myself have no fears for the future of this Alliance and it can continue to serve our nations individually and collectively. Thank you.

Mr. LUNS

Thank you, Sir Alec. May I say that in your interesting address I detected symptoms of the United Kingdom having entered Europe because, if I may say so, you used the yardstick of the decimal system when commenting on progress in dealing with the Russians. I listened to you when you said that goes by millimetres. My compliments to you, Sir Alec.

M. LUNS (Suite)

Maintenant, ayant dit cela, je vais proposer d'écouter le Ministre des affaires étrangères de la France. Seulement, il n'y a pas trop de temps avant le déjeuner. Si le Ministre préfère parler le premier cet après-midi, je lui laisse évidemment le choix. Monsieur le Ministre, qu'est-ce que vous préférez ?

M. JOBERT (France)

Monsieur le Président, j'ai l'impression que je terminerai de toute façon avant 13 heures.

M. LUNS

Alors, Monsieur le Ministre, je vous donne la parole.

M. JOBERT (France)

Monsieur le Président, laissez-moi d'abord vous remercier avec grand plaisir des paroles d'accueil que vous avez eues pour moi et laissez-moi dire aussi au Gouvernement danois combien nous apprécions l'accueil qui nous est réservé ici et combien nous apprécions les efforts éphémères qu'il a faits notamment ici pour abriter nos pensées durables.

Monsieur le Président, mes chers collègues, ces derniers mois, bien des idées et des formules ont été lancées et elles ont suscité partout intérêt et discussion dans les milieux politiques et dans l'opinion publique de nos pays. Depuis, des rencontres ont eu lieu entre hommes d'Etat, comme la visite du Chancelier Brandt à Washington, celle du Premier ministre Andreotti et les entretiens que vient d'avoir à Reykjavik le Président de la République française avec le Président des Etats-Unis. Il y a eu aussi les entretiens de M. Pompidou avec M. Heath à Paris. Je voudrais saisir l'occasion que me donne la session du Conseil atlantique, à laquelle je participe pour la première fois et où j'ai le plaisir de vous voir, pour essayer de donner sur quelques points importants une image claire de la position française, qu'il s'agisse des relations entre l'Europe et les Etats-Unis ou des rapports entre l'Est et l'Ouest.

Notre Alliance existe depuis près d'un quart de siècle et, à ma connaissance, il n'est envisagé ni de supprimer le Traité qui nous unit ni d'en modifier les termes. Certes, la situation mondiale s'est considérablement transformée depuis vingt-cinq ans, et j'y viendrai tout à l'heure, mais aucun d'entre nous ne pense que notre Alliance n'est plus valable car, malgré tous les changements, ses buts et sa fonction dans l'équilibre mondial restent les mêmes.

M. JOBERT (Suite)

De quoi a-t-on parlé ces temps derniers ? D'une Charte atlantique ou d'une déclaration de principes, de nouveaux objectifs à définir, enfin d'une année de l'Europe. On a dit aussi que les problèmes monétaires, commerciaux et militaires qui se posent à nous pouvaient être interdépendants et pouvaient peut-être être traités à un niveau politique élevé.

Pourquoi l'année 1973 serait-elle celle de l'Europe, alors que de grands changements sont en cours ailleurs, qu'il s'agisse des rapports de Washington avec Moscou et avec Pékin par exemple ou de l'entrée du Japon sur la scène mondiale ? L'Europe qui est en gestation économique se cherche encore en tant qu'entité politique malgré les immenses progrès réalisés en un court espace de temps, court espace de temps au regard de l'histoire.

Puisque notre Traité d'alliance remplit la fonction qui lui est assignée, serait-il opportun d'y ajouter une déclaration de principes ? S'il s'agissait d'une affirmation de bonnes intentions mutuelles, une telle déclaration n'aurait sans doute que peu d'écho. S'il s'agissait du rappel de principes régissant déjà en fait comme en droit les relations entre nos Etats et nos peuples, qui appartiennent à bien des égards à une même civilisation, une déclaration de ce genre n'aurait pas grande signification non plus. Autant il peut être utile de se mettre d'accord sur les principes, par exemple, entre l'Union soviétique et les Etats-Unis, entre l'Allemagne et l'URSS, entre le Canada et l'URSS, entre la France et l'URSS, autant il est inutile de le faire entre nous, alors que notre Alliance reste satisfaisante et nécessaire. Quant à l'interdépendance des problèmes monétaires, commerciaux, militaires, c'est un principe qui a déjà été discuté. Il est bien évident que les phénomènes des divers ordres dans la vie des Etats et des sociétés ne sont pas sans rapport entre eux. Bien sûr aussi, quand des hommes d'Etat se rencontrent, ils font un tour d'horizon général et, par conséquent, ils parlent de tout. Mais ce n'est pas une raison pour mêler les ordres et les catégories quand il s'agit de résoudre ces différents problèmes et pour considérer qu'ils doivent être liés, traités et négociés ensemble. Je sais que plusieurs d'entre vous sont d'accord avec moi pour penser que l'établissement de tels liens aurait l'inconvénient de rendre les solutions plus difficiles, chacune dépendant de l'autre. Mieux vaut à ce sujet traiter chaque catégorie de problème dans l'enceinte appropriée où se trouvent les hommes compétents, au Fonds monétaire international, au GATT ou au Conseil atlantique, et les régler plutôt les uns après les autres.

M. JOBERT (Suite)

Enfin, comment résoudre efficacement à un niveau politique très élevé et de manière multilatérale les problèmes dont chacun connaît la complexité et dont les solutions doivent être préparées avec soin avant d'être soumises à la décision des hommes d'Etat ? Voilà mes réflexions sur ces idées, dont beaucoup ne sont pas nouvelles et dont on a tant parlé depuis quelques mois. Et voici ma première conclusion : nous avons une bonne Alliance, gardons-la. Bien sûr, la situation mondiale a beaucoup changé depuis 1949. Nous sommes passés de la guerre froide à la détente, qui a créé elle-même de nouveaux problèmes. La prédominance nucléaire des Etats-Unis par rapport à l'UPSS a fait place à une quasi-parité, d'où, entre les superpuissances, les négociations SALT ; d'où le début des négociations entre certains de nos Alliés et plusieurs pays de l'Est sur les réductions de forces en Europe centrale ; d'où le passage de l'OTAN, sans l'accord de la France d'ailleurs, d'une stratégie nucléaire de représailles massives à une stratégie flexible ; d'où aussi les problèmes que mentionne le Rapport au Congrès du Président Nixon sur l'emploi des armes nucléaires tactiques en Europe ; d'où, enfin, le désir exprimé une fois de plus par nos amis américains de voir élever le seuil nucléaire et de voir les Alliés développer leurs forces conventionnelles, ce qui d'ailleurs paraît peu probable. Deux aspects importants de la détente sont mentionnés dans l'ordre du jour : d'abord, la prochaine Conférence sur la sécurité et la coopération en Europe, dont les préliminaires viennent de s'achever à Helsinki. Il ne s'agit pas, en ce qui nous concerne, d'une sorte de conférence sur le désarmement, mais il s'agit d'établir un climat de confiance et de contacts entre l'Est et l'Ouest, autrement dit, d'offrir une nouvelle contribution à cette politique de détente, à laquelle mon pays s'honore d'avoir apporté sa contribution en s'efforçant le premier de surmonter la division de l'Europe. Cette politique est aujourd'hui acceptée par tous. Le Gouvernement français s'est félicité de la conclusion favorable des pourparlers multilatéraux préparatoires d'Helsinki, non seulement parce que l'achèvement de ces travaux permet la réunion d'une conférence que la France souhaitait, mais surtout parce qu'elle définit, pour le déroulement de cette conférence, des conditions conformes à celles que nous estimions nécessaires. Les résultats des préliminaires d'Helsinki nous donnent largement satisfaction. L'ordre du jour et les instructions des Commissions, sans, bien évidemment, garantir que les décisions finales de la Conférence seront conformes à tous nos souhaits, nous procurent l'assurance que nos propositions seront prises en considération et qu'elles seront examinées avec des chances raisonnables d'aboutir à un résultat satisfaisant. Les travaux préparatoires d'Helsinki ont montré la capacité des pays d'Europe occidentale à aborder de façon coordonnée, mais sans perdre leur individualité, dans le respect de leurs alliances et de leurs amitiés et dans le désir d'une coopération réelle avec les pays socialistes, un travail de négociations constructives au service de l'Europe tout entière.

M. JOBERT (Suite)

Les conversations d'Helsinki ont été également marquées - je crois nécessaire de le noter - par une attitude souple de la part de l'Union soviétique, qui a su consentir les concessions nécessaires et n'a pas insisté outre mesure pour que les décisions de la Conférence dans les domaines qui l'intéressent le plus soient prédéterminés par des recommandations adoptées au cours des travaux préparatoires. Où attendons-nous, pour notre part, de la Conférence ? Dans le domaine de la sécurité, elle sera marquée principalement par une discussion entre les pays participants sur les règles de conduite qui doivent régir les relations mutuelles conformément aux buts et aux principes des Nations Unies. On a souvent parlé, à ce propos, d'éviter, comme nous le souhaitons évidemment, que se constitue une zone particulière dans laquelle régnerait un droit international régional. Il devrait être dit, d'autre part, que la division qui a existé et qui existe encore entre les pays participants, en particulier les coalitions d'États, ne doit priver aucun d'entre eux du libre exercice de tous les droits qui s'attachent au respect, par tous les autres, des principes du Droit international. Si l'on ne dit pas cela, la Conférence ne se traduira pas, comme nous l'espérons, par l'apport aux pays participants d'un surcroît de sécurité. Aussi bien, nous ne pensons pas que c'est dans le domaine militaire que la Conférence pourra apporter un renforcement de la sécurité. Pour chacun de nous, la sécurité procède de la détente, qui dépend aussi de son effort national et de l'Alliance, qui garde toute son importance. Nous n'avons pas cru raisonnable de rechercher la sécurité dans des négociations - je fais allusion à ce qu'on appelle je crois aujourd'hui les Mutual Force Reductions - qui, croyons-nous, risquent davantage de l'affaiblir que de la consolider et qui peuvent en tout cas compromettre l'avenir. Aussi la France s'est-elle prononcée contre l'établissement d'un lien entre la Conférence européenne et les négociations que je viens de mentionner, au sujet desquelles vous connaissez nos réserves, exposées par M. Maurice Schumann au Conseil, le 7 décembre dernier, et sur lesquelles je ne reviendrai pas. Quant au lien qui s'établirait entre le déroulement de la Conférence d'Helsinki et le commencement d'une autre Conférence, il va de soi que ce lien, nous Français, nous ne pouvons l'imaginer. De la Conférence, nous attendons encore, dans le domaine de la coopération et des contacts, des progrès réels, par l'abaissement ou la disparition des obstacles qui existent encore. Cette évolution ne peut être que progressive, mais la Conférence ne remplirait pas son rôle si elle ne prenait pas ces problèmes en considération afin de définir des engagements généraux et des procédures qui permettraient des progrès concrets. Ce que nous recherchons, c'est la création progressive d'habitudes de coopération et de contacts et, au-delà de ces habitudes, le développement, de l'Est à l'Ouest, d'un sentiment d'appartenance à une Europe commune.

M. JOBERT (Suite)

Faut-il que cette appartenance se traduise, aussitôt après la Conférence, par la création d'institutions ou l'établissement de procédures de consultations entre tous les pays qui y auront participé ? C'est une question sur laquelle nous n'avons pas arrêté notre position et qu'il y a lieu, selon nous, de considérer avec attention et avec prudence. Pour terminer, je dirai que je partage les vues déjà exprimées par plusieurs de nos collègues sur la nécessité de ne pas relâcher notre effort de défense, qui n'est pas un obstacle à la détente, et qui seul peut garantir notre indépendance nationale, ainsi que la liberté collective des Etats membres. Ceci est particulièrement important pour l'Europe dont les conditions de défense et de sécurité prennent chaque jour davantage un caractère spécifique, la présence des troupes américaines qui y sont stationnées restant un élément fondamental. En tout cas, la France poursuit son effort persévérant et ne permettra aucun relâchement dangereux pour la paix. Ce n'est pas l'un des moindres mérites périodiques du Conseil atlantique au niveau ministériel que de nous rendre conscients les uns et les autres du caractère toujours actuel de cet impératif.

M. LUNS

Merci beaucoup, Monsieur le Ministre. Vous vous êtes fidèlement tenu à l'horaire que vous vous êtes volontairement imposé. Maintenant le premier orateur inscrit pour cet après-midi est le distingué Ministre des affaires étrangères d'Islande et je vous propose de nous réunir cet après-midi à 3 heures. At three o'clock this afternoon. No objection ? It is so decided.