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Ten-Year Planning Discussion of Atomic Matters

Spaak opened by drawing attention to indiscretions in press on U.S. proposals on atomic arms. Noted Norstad at Conventry had made illusion to "some ideas." Position of Secretary General not easy, and he had not talked of his trip to United States to PermReps, but had to say there was something of truth in press stories. U.S. is preparing some proposition on atomic matters, but difficult for U.S. to put it forward quickly since matter so complex. Requested confidence and patience of others. Expected U.S. proposal before December meeting that would lead to discussion at December meeting. U.S. Rep said matter complex and required talks with Congress, but we were considering proposals we think will be helpful. Spaak emphasized Bowie Report not accepted or approved by State Department as such. New theory on tactical atomic arms and shield does not seem to be official U.S. line. However, U.S. does seem to be in course of modifying its classical position on nuclear arms. U.S. Rep drew attention to Radio Bulletin printing of State Department spokesman's comment on Bowie Report. Explained Bowie given free hand and had proposed a number of things which would not necessarily be accepted. Press reports out of context and somewhat exaggerated. Bowie Report was very far from being position of U.S. Government. Germans asked

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who military members of Bowe Committee were, and U.S. clarified that there was no committee and that Bowe alone was responsible, calling in various experts.

Denmark raised question as to whether December Ministerial Meeting good time to have detailed discussion of sensitive problem. U.S. said hoped to have proposals by mid-November.

Spaak agreed with Stikker that discussion of ten-year military planning should await U.S. proposals and said the trend seemed to be along line of being responsive to fact that there was sole reliance on U.S. in atomic matters.

Spaak then referred to Debro and Courvoisier testimony on "force de frappe" reported in today's Figaro. Spaak agreed with Debro's ~~statement~~ statement that the Alliance is not perfect. He also agreed with Debro's statement that the Alliance should not function as a regional pact but should be conscious of developments in Asia, Far East and Africa. But it was up to the French to suggest ways to change the present way of NATO operation.

As to Debro's point of "the inequality of the political and strategic organization of NATO", Spaak asked what the French wanted. They seemed to ask for "an adequate place in the elaboration of military strategy", but questions should not just be posed, and France should in this area say precisely what it desires.

De Lousse responded that it was difficult to answer what reforms of NATO should take place. He doubted that all members were willing to take military responsibility outside of Europe. Solidarity of the Alliance outside of Europe does not exist. But he had no proposal to offer. On the second point of inequality within the Alliance, he said the matter was essentially atomic. The atomic defense of Europe will occur under decisions taken solely by the U.S. and, to a lesser degree, the UK. The Europeans have nothing to say. Spaak responded that as to the limitations on the Alliance, his proposal for consultation without geographical limitation was the answer. De Lousse emphasized that there was a difference between consultation and responsibility. Spaak said the question of military responsibility involved revising the Treaty and this seemed impossible. Indeed, Debro in Bonn had said the French were not asking for a revision of the Treaty. How could one change obligations without seeking to change the Treaty?

As to the French answer on inequality in the atomic field, he admitted there was a problem. But it had never been discussed in

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NATO, and we must do so now. The ~~top~~-year planning process provided the means to go at the problem fundamentally. He then pointed out that Couvo justifies the force de frappe in order that France associate itself with the development of global strategy. This too requires discussion within the Alliance. Stikker expressed full agreement. The problem of the limitation on responsibility should be viewed under the doctrine that under certain important circumstances NATO members can appeal to the Organization for complete solidarity on points of vital interest to them. This is what Stikker had done as Foreign Minister at the time of Indonesia. If such an appeal is made, there should be discussion, and moreover, there should be the willingness to take the advice of others, which Stikker had shown in the Indonesian matter. In order to take the advice of others there must be full discussion. These matters can be put before NATO without any change in the Treaty. If we are willing to say that the discussion would attempt to reach conclusions, there is no need to change the Treaty.

Belgium supported Stikker. Turkey asked whether the time had not come to take governmental positions on such basic questions as to whether revision of the Treaty was desirable. Spaak responded that so far the discussions had been on a personal level, but the time has now come to move forward and get governmental advice, but not yet move to rigid governmental positions, since Spaak planned to have a paper for the Ministers in December which would in effect, when approved, be a governmental directive to the Permanent Council to propose a final report for the May meeting.

Denmark said that an attempt to extend military obligations would probably draw a negative reaction, and ~~Spaak said~~ that there was no need to amend the Treaty in any other respect.

Spaak said that even if you put aside Algeria and the Congo, there were other problems in Africa and the French Community which would arise in the future. The French could not, as would Debre, ask for solidarity unless their policy was disclosed and discussed.

Greece then said that there were overtones to the French Government's testimony in the Parliament of fear that the United States would use the atomic bomb without consultation with the allies. This played into the hands of Communist propaganda as it is used in Greece. The French replied that the problem is not one of fear that the U.S. would use the atomic bomb, or what would happen if Russia used the atomic bomb first. It is rather a question as to whether, if there is Communist ~~aggression~~ aggression in Europe or in the conventional

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Fernosa Straits which cannot be stopped by conventional forces, atomic weapons would be available. ~~Would the U.S. decide to use the A-bomb or not?~~ Would the U.S. decide to use the A-bomb or not?

Spaak said that if there was an atomic attack by the Russians, there would be no problem, and France agreed. Spaak said that if there is conventional attack, under the Treaty the question arises as to who takes the responsibility to start atomic war, either tactically or strategically. This has never been clearly discussed. In 1954 the military authorities said that conventional attack in the NATO area required tactical atomic weapons. Spaak believes this is still right. At that time NATO said that the decision to use atomic weapons would be taken by the civil authorities, but never defined civil authorities, because of the problem that arises from the fact that NATO acts by unanimity and must avoid the veto.

De Lousse said that the civil authorities really meant the President of the United States and the Prime Minister of the UK. Belgium said this would not be the case if there was a NATO atomic force. De Staercke then quoted from paragraph 6 of the Political Directive, stressing its continuing value and wisdom.

Canada said that if we went into this theory we would need the advice of a senior NATO ^{official}. But speaking personally, he thought the question was simply that of the proper application of force. He doubted that the USSR would attack in force conventionally, as this would give us the initiative in the use of nuclear weapons. But it was important that governments explain to publics that an atomic capacity in NATO does not mean that SAC will be used in every case. Problem was the same for conventional as atomic arms, and could be resolved in area of using only such force as is agreed to be necessary, as he assumed was what present doctrine meant. Denmark responded that a small atomic weapons would quickly lead to full-scale atomic war, and Canada responded that there was plenty of room for use of conventional weapons in defense if attack not full-scale.

Spaak said that we had to examine the question of the authority to use weapons. There is no NATO doctrine now on the use of strategic weapons, and at the moment these depend upon decisions between U.S. and UK.

He then pointed out that de Lousse, like de Gaulle in his Grenoble speech, also wanted some control on the use of atomic weapons outside of NATO area. It seemed that French wanted to be consulted if U.S. decided to use atomic weapons in Fernosa crisis. While this

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is question outside strict scope of Treaty, it is true such use of weapons by U.S. could result in Russian counterattack on U.S. Could Treaty then be ~~violated~~? This is another matter that has never really been discussed in NATO.

U.S. said that it was ~~misleading~~ ^{misleading} to take position that U.S. alone has ~~sole~~ ^{atomic} authority. Pointed out that plans and deployments are worked out in SHAPE, where an international staff works on these problems. SACEUR is not just Horstad, but officers of various nationalities contribute to his recommendations and thoughts. Plans are discussed by the MAC on the basis of the annual reviews and the reports of the Military Committee, and MAC knows where atomic delivery systems exist. Delivery system weapons are in hands of many countries, and in many cases decisions of U.S., host country and SACEUR are all required, even though there is U.S. custody.

U.S. then effectively stressed that most important aspect is political consultation in NATO before a crisis. U.S. plans to follow practice of discussing here every situation that might conceivably lead to the use of atomic weapons. We had reported fully on Quonoy-Mateu situation and Lebanon-Jordan crisis. Real participation in NATO begins with consultation on political, economic, military situation well before crisis occurs, or there is need to use atomic weapons. If there is a surprise attack, the situation is clear as crystal. There are some marginal cases, but full consultation in advance in NATO affords the basis for common action. Spaak said this was an excellent answer to many questions. Readiness to consult on developments of policy is the maximum that reasonably can be asked. He warned French that if they wanted a veto over U.S., U.S. would want a veto over them.

Germany drew distinction between use of tactical and strategic weapons. Noting that Soviet divisions in GDR could move with ~~only~~ ^{only} six hours warning, he agreed that decision to use atomic weapons came from civilian authorities, but it was not clear who civilian authorities were. He asked whether President had delegated to SACEUR in advance authority to release atomic weapons, or whether Presidential decision necessary.

U.S. said that under present law Presidential decision was necessary. Then asked whether authority for German troops to use atomic weapons once they were released would not depend from German civilian authorities. Two decisions were involved, involving the top civilian authorities of both governments on a basis of parity.

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Spaak stressed that question of who civilian authorities were had been left vague because of the veto problem in NATO. A simple answer to publics and parliaments would be that the NAC decides. This is of course theoretical, since time may not permit such action, and question of veto has to be avoided.

Belgium pointed out that weeks had been spent on the Political Directive, and he doubted whether decisions could go any further at present than at that time. The Political Directive was intended to have NATO military authorities make plans for all possibilities and to finesse the question of the authority to use atomic weapons. If new ideas are floated, such as NATO atomic force, we may need to modify or clarify Paragraph 6 of the Political Directive. Spaak cautioned that we should not discourage the United States before it tables its proposal to the NAC.

Jurgensen (de Lousse being summoned to Foreign Office) agreed that U.S. consulted in NATO on very wide basis. But if time were short, there would be no consultation. He was not certain that France wanted a veto. He said that Couve had spoken more frankly than Debro since his testimony was before committee, and not full Parliament, and Couve had said that if France has force de frappe, it would put France in a position to discuss the possibilities of atomic weapons. This equilibrium of power in the Alliance would increase the chance for agreement being reached as to whether weapons would be used or not.

Spaak disagreed bluntly. Couve was wrong in saying that the United States alone had the authority to use atomic weapons. The U.S. could not force other NATO members to use them. The possibility of each was resolved. Spaak could not understand how Couve associated a separate force de frappe with a atomic strategy. We clearly had to re-elaborate the Political Directive as to the use of atomic arms, since clearly there was no agreement. Belgium said that discussion should be postponed until guidance could be obtained on the basis of the present Political Directive, which unfortunately too few people now recall in detail.

Stikker supported U.S., Belgium and Spaak, and stressed that there was no difference between tactical and strategic weapons. A short range weapon could be used on strategic target. Question was one of tactical/strategic targets and not weapons. Spaak agreed with Stikker saying that he ~~had~~ also refused to accept a difference between offensive and defensive weapons.

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France said that the French would not fear the U.S. using atomic weapons, but feared that the U.S. might not react. At the present time U.S. approval needed for use of atomic weapons. A French capability to launch atomic weapons would be pressure on the U.S. to do so. Although the situation was not probable, the Europeans in such event would be able to use atomic weapons if the U.S. was reluctant to.

Spaak then said that Couve seemed to draw a line between strategic and tactical weapons. Couve noted that strategic and tactical weapons were under U.S. and UK control, and to feel that tactical weapons were property of U.S. and subject only to U.S. decision. This was not fully true. In Spaak's view, tactical weapons could be used only if there was a decision of the NAC. (Spaak repeated this, but second time said that tactical weapons could only be used if the NAC gave its advice.) If the U.S. should refuse ---. Belgium interjected that that ~~this~~ was a totally false hypothesis.

^{pointedly} Stikker/intervened to say that the question was whether France, in the event the United States really said it would not use atomic weapons, would in fact really use atomic weapons alone. Jurgensen's response was a typically Gallic combination of pout, shrug and giggle.

Spaak pointed out that French logic can lead to a chain reaction. Italy could well say that they needed a force de frappe in the event that France would not use their own force de frappe, and so every European country would need its own. Spaak thought the question was whether anyone could fire atomic weapons without the approval of the others.

Grocco said that the only solution was to have a good SACMUR and to give him authority to fire ~~when~~ necessary. Everything else was nonsense. Spaak responded that this was a position that could not be taken before parliaments.

Spaak said that this had been an unprepared discussion which had taken off from his comments on press stories, but highlighted interest of Alliance in this question and the need to explore it fundamentally. Some decisions would have to be taken in December, and much thinking should be done before then. Governments should be allowed to this. Further discussion on these military matters should await the U.S. response.

U.S. cautioned that this ~~had been a most~~ sensitive discussion, and that special care should be taken with regard to handling reports thereof.

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