

Report of the fourth meeting of the Interim Commission (London, 2 December 1954)

Caption: At its meeting on 2 December 1954 in London, the Interim Commission continues to examine the question of relations between Western European Union (WEU) and the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO). Following the debates at the third meeting, Secretary-General Lord Ismay is invited to attend the session to address two main subjects: the admission of a permanent observer to WEU and the nature of relations to be established between the two Secretariats-General. According to Lord Ismay, although the principle of close cooperation is generally accepted, a permanent of observer may not be able to deal with every question that might arise. French Ambassador René Massigli, chairman of the meeting, suggests using ad hoc observers, and notes that it would be up to the Council to decide when this would be necessary. Lord Harold Caccia confirms the United Kingdom's agreement.

Source: Interim Commission. Report of the fourth meeting of the Interim Commission held on Tuesday, 2 December 1954, . Londres: 06.12.1954. IWG/10. Copy No 27. 5 p. Archives nationales de Luxembourg (ANLux). <http://www.anlux.lu>. Western European Union Archives. Secretariat-General/Council's Archives. 1954-1987. Interim Commission - London. Year: 1954, 01/10/1954-31/05/1954. File IP-009. Volume 1/1.

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REPORT OF THE FOURTH MEETING OF THE INTERIM COMMISSION
HELD AT 2 ETON PLACE. ON THURSDAY 2ND DECEMBER 1954. AT 10.30. a.m.

<u>BELGIUM</u>	S.E. M. le Marquis du PARC LOCMERIA, C.V.O.	Ambassadeur Extraordinaire et Ministre Plénipoten- tiaire
	M. CHAMPENOIS	Conseiller
	M. J. de BASSOMPIERRE	Premier Secrétaire
<u>FRANCE</u>	S.E. M. R. MASSIGLI, G.C.V.O., K.B.E.	Ambassadeur Extraordinaire et Ministre Plénipoten- tiaire.
	M. G. ANDRE, C.V.O.	Premier Secrétaire.
<u>FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY</u>	Mr. O. SCHLITTER	First Counsellor, German Diplomatic Mission.
	Mr. H.W. FORSTER	Second Secretary.
<u>ITALY</u>	H.E. Mr. M. BROSIO	Ambassador Extraordinary and Minister Pleni- potentiary.
	Mr. L. THEODOLI	Minister Counsellor
	Mr. G.G. di THIENE	First Secretary
<u>LUXEMBOURG</u>	S.E. M.A. CLASEN	Envoyé Extraordinaire et Ministre Plénipotentiaire
	M. C.W. DUMONT	Secrétaire
<u>NETHERLANDS</u>	H.E. Mr. D.U. STIKKER, G.B.E.	Ambassador Extraordinary and Minister Pleni- potentiary.
	Mr. A.H. HASSELMAN	Counsellor
	Mr. J.L.R. HUYDECOPER	First Secretary

UNITED KINGDOM../

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UNITED KINGDOMSir Harold CACCIA
K.C.M.G.Deputy Under-Secretary
of State, Foreign Office.

The Viscount HOOD C.M.G. Foreign Office.

N.A.T.O.General the Right Hon.
Lord ISMAY, P.C., G.C.B.,
C.H., D.S.O.

Secretary-General

Captain the Hon. R.D.
COLERIDGE

Executive Secretary

SECRETARIAT-
GENERALBaron M.F. de SELYS
LONGCHAMPS

Secretary-General

Mr. P.B. FRASER

Deputy Secretary-General

M. M.F. KENEC'H DU

The Meeting was held under the Chairmanship of H.E. M. MASSIGLI, French Ambassador.

The CHAIRMAN welcomed Lord ISMAY, Secretary-General of NATO, who had been invited by the Interim Commission, on learning of his presence in London, to attend the session. The Commission would thus be able, in accordance with its own wish, to have the benefit of his opinion on the relationship to be established between the Council of Western European Union and N.A.T.O.

I. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN WESTERN EUROPEAN UNION AND N.A.T.O.

The CHAIRMAN reviewed the stage reached in the Commission's discussion of this matter. Since all were agreed that there should be no military body within the Union apart from the Agency, the following questions had to be settled:

- a) Should a permanent observer be delegated, or should his presence be requested only where the need arose?
- b) What should be the form of liaison to be established between the two Secretariats-General?

In this connection the CHAIRMAN had just received a new Belgian proposal.

It had already been agreed that liaison would be established between N.A.T.O. and the Agency, according to a procedure which would have to be examined in relation to the structure of the latter organisation.

The CHAIRMAN.../

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The CHAIRMAN asked Lord ISMAY if he could inform the Interim Commission of his views on these questions.

Lord ISMAY thought it would be difficult for him to suggest any solutions before the precise nature of the tasks assigned to the Union were known. Referring to the statements made in the course of the Nine-Power Conference in Paris and during the meeting of Ministers at the North Atlantic Council,⁽¹⁾ he considered that since the principle of close cooperation between the two organisations had been accepted, all that remained to do was to work out the best method of putting it into practice, not only from the moment the Agreements came into force but also during the interim period.

It was unlikely that any useful purpose would be served by the presence of a permanent observer in London, who might not in any case be qualified to express an opinion on every subject which came up for discussion.

The CHAIRMAN remarked that the idea of Ad Hoc observers was perhaps the solution.

The Marquis du PARC explained the Belgian proposal to which the Chairman had already alluded; it was a flexible scheme designed to enable the most suitable form of close liaison to be worked out between the two organisations. The general idea was that the Secretary-General of Western European Union should be empowered, under the authority of the Council, to take all necessary measures to ensure close collaboration with the Secretary-General of N.A.T.O. by means of informal exchange of view (consultations, correspondence, documentation etc.) as well as through the presence, by way of exception, of an observer at meetings of the Council. These proposals came in fact very close to the views of Lord ISMAY.

Lord ISMAY.../

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- (1) a. North Atlantic Council - Resolution concerning the results of the Four-Power Meetings and of the Nine-Power Meetings (adopted by the North Atlantic Council on 22nd October, 1954).

The North Atlantic Council

"...Welcome the extension of the Brussels Treaty as an important step toward the achievement of European unity; and express confidence that there will be the closest co-operation between the Western European Union and the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation which remains the foundation of the security and progress of the Atlantic community".

- b. Agreement of 3rd November, 1954.

"The North Atlantic Council agreed that the Secretary-General should arrange, in the light of the subjects being discussed by the Seven-Power Organisation in London, for the views and advice of N.A.T.O. to be made available through the presence of appropriate members of his staff; and invited him to keep the Council informed of developments.

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Lord ISMAY stressed the importance of giving sufficient warning to enable the observer to express a considered opinion.

At all events, agreement having been reached on basic principles, experience alone would show, as had been the case with N.A.T.O., how they could best be adapted to the needs of the moment.

The CHAIRMAN noted that the views put forward were very similar. It was evident that the Secretaries-General, even with the numerous forms of contact between them suggested by the Belgian Ambassador, were not authorised to interpret in advance the views of the political bodies to which they belonged, and arrangements should be made for the presence of representatives who, in the interests of speed and efficiency, could be asked for an opinion during the actual discussion.

This would appear to indicate that each case should be treated on its merits.

Mr. STIKKER thought that the position taken up did not differ substantially, and any slight variation of opinion which might still remain would no doubt be easily resolved in the light of experience.

The Marquis du PARC wished to stress that the views he had put forward did not exclude, a priori, any practical formula which would ensure close liaison with N.A.T.O., including the presence of observers, so long as this was the exception and not the rule.

Lord ISMAY thought that in actual fact there was no problem; N.A.T.O. intended in no way to interfere in the affairs of the Union. Would it not, therefore, suffice for the Secretary-General of Western European Union to communicate the agendas of Council meetings to the Secretary-General of N.A.T.O., who would then be in a position to judge whether this or that question called for the presence of an observer and, where this was so, what his particular qualifications should be.

Mr. SCHLITZER stated that his Government wished to see Western European Union apply a policy of close collaboration with N.A.T.O.; the best way of achieving this aim would appear to be to call upon observers each time their presence was needed. Did this mean that the Secretary-General of N.A.T.O. should decide on each case in point?

Fr. : The CHAIRMAN pointed out that it would be for the Council
Amend. : to decide in which cases the presence of N.A.T.O. observers would
be necessary, and that it was only in these cases that the agenda would
be communicated to the Secretary-General of N.A.T.O.

Lord ISMAY added that, in his opinion also, all that was required was to carry out as thoroughly and efficiently as possible the express wishes of the Council.

Mr. BROSIO stated that complete collaboration with N.A.T.O. was an essential element of the policy of the Italian Government. A practical solution to the question should be easy to find.

Sir Harold CACCIA.../

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Sir Harold CACCIA said that the United Kingdom Government were in agreement with the views expressed.

The CHAIRMAN concluded that the general view would have to be put into proper form; experience would reveal the best way of implementing the close collaboration which all parties desired.

II. PREPARATIONS FOR THE MEETING OF THE WORKING GROUP ON 17TH JANUARY, 1955, IN PARIS.

Sir Harold CACCIA asked whether the Secretary-General of N.A.T.O. could inform the Commission of the extent to which his services would be able to provide material assistance for the meeting due to begin on the 17th January.

Lord ISMAY considered that, since the annual report was to be submitted to the Ministers at their meeting of the 17th and 18th December, his Secretariat staff would be available in January. He would like to know as soon as possible the requirements of the Interim Commission at that time.

The CHAIRMAN thanked Lord ISMAY for this statement which would be greatly appreciated when the Interim Commission came to study this question in the near future.

Before the Secretary-General of N.A.T.O. left the meeting, the Chairman expressed the thanks of the Commission for his having kindly consented to take part in its discussions.

III. PROGRAMME OF WORK OF THE INTERIM COMMISSION.

In reply to the Chairman, the SECRETARY-GENERAL stressed that since Mr. FRASER would have to represent him at the forthcoming session of the Council of Europe Consultative Assembly, it would be useful if the Sub-Committee responsible for clarifying the various points of view regarding the seven-Power Assembly could meet before his departure.

At the suggestion of the CHAIRMAN, it was agreed that the Sub-Committee should meet on Friday, 3rd December, at 10.30 a.m.

The CHAIRMAN thought that Mr. FRASER, whilst in Paris, might make enquiries as to the provision of the necessary material facilities for the meeting of the Working Group on 17th January.

It was agreed that the Interim Commission would meet on Monday, 13th December, at 11 a.m. to discuss this question.

In the meantime, the Interim Commission would be meeting on Wednesday, 8th December, at 11 a.m. to study those items on the Questionnaire which were still outstanding.

2 Eaton Place,
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