

The Institute for Strategic Studies, European Study Commission. Parigi, 5-6 I 65.

- 1) - Programma.
- 2) - Discussion on the international situation. Discussion on the Chinese bomb.
Discussion on recent developments in the Communist Bloc.

EUROPEAN STUDY COMMISSION

Minutes of the Sixth Meeting, held at
the Centre d'Etudes de Politique Etrangère,
54, rue de Varenne, Paris VIIe on
5th and 6th January, 1965

Present: Général d'Armée Beaufre (In the Chair)

Signor A. Albonetti	Professor Michael Howard
Mr. Leonard Beaton	Dr. L.G.M. Jaquet
Dr. Karl Birnbaum	M. Jean Laloy
Mr. Alastair Buchan	Herr Uwe Nerlich
Baron General del Marmol	Signor A. Spinelli
Dr. Curt Gasteyger	M. Jacques Vernant
Mr. Niels Haagerup	

Apologies for absence:

Herr Wilhelm Cornides
Dr. Nils Ørvik
Mr. Erik Seidenfaden
Dr. Klaus Ritter
Dr. Theo Sommer

General Beaufre welcomed Monsieur Laloy to membership of the Study Commission in succession to Monsieur de Rose, and welcomed the presence of Dr. Birnbaum as an observer.

1. PROGRAMMES OF THE NATIONAL INSTITUTES

It was AGREED to defer an exchange of views on the programmes adopted for 1965 in the national Institutes until a subsequent meeting when Herr Cornides and Dr. Ritter could be present, since the initiative for this exchange had come from the German side.

2. EUROPEAN-AMERICAN CONFERENCE, DITCHLEY

Mr. Buchan circulated a preliminary list of proposed participants for the European-American Conference which it had been agreed to hold at Ditchley, near Oxford, from 30th April - 2nd May, 1965. After discussion it was AGREED to leave the final selection of participants in Mr. Buchan's hands. With regard to the theme of the Conference, while no decision was taken on the precise subject there was general agreement that it should deal with the general problem of relations between nuclear and non-nuclear powers, including the nuclear problem within the Alliance the problem of nuclear dissemination and the feasibility of any form of guarantee to non-nuclear powers.

General Beaufre reported on the provisional arrangements for the Conference of his own Institute on May 13th-14th, to which members of the Study Commission were invited. It was noted that General Beaufre's Conference would be primarily concerned with strategic theory, whereas the Ditchley Conference would be concerned with policy.

3. NEXT MEETING

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Summary of Discussion
at the Sixth Meeting,
held in Paris on
5th-6th January, 1965

TUESDAY MORNING, 5th JANUARY.

DISCUSSION ON THE INTERNATIONAL SITUATION

1. Developments in British Policy

Professor Howard opened the discussion. He recalled that at the previous meeting he had made three predictions about British policy: (1) that the Labour Government would be more alliance-minded and would make less fuss about Britain's status as a great power; (2) that they would seek some kind of alliance policy for Britain's nuclear forces; (3) that they would abandon the MLF project. In a sense these predictions had come true, but not in the way anyone would have expected.

He did not feel competent to discuss the Government's economic policy. The dimensions of the economic crisis which faced the new Government and the responsibility for that crisis was a very complex and controversial business. However, Labour had faced a considerable balance of payments problem which had to be solved by drastic means. He thought Labour's reaction to this crisis was largely explained by two factors: (a) straightforward inexperience, combined with the intellectual insularity of a large proportion of the Labour Party, and (b) a determination not to allow Ministers to be told what to do by the professional civil servants. He suspected that (b) accounted for many of the bêtises committed by Labour during its first fortnight in office.

Regarding purely defence issues, although many problems were still unresolved Labour's actions had been very predictable. Harold Wilson had effectively blocked the MLF proposal; he had made very clear in Washington Britain's fundamental opposition to the original proposal and had persuaded President Johnson to put it on ice. The ANF proposal was an attempt to meet everyone's requirements: to put Britain's strategic nuclear forces under some kind of alliance umbrella; to make it possible for the French to do the same if they wished; to satisfy the German requirement for some kind of equality; to persuade the Russians that nuclear proliferation would not be involved; to persuade the left wing of the Labour Party that this would not prevent disarmament, and so on. Essentially, Professor Howard thought, it was meant only as a framework for continuing discussion about the problem of nuclear control within NATO, which was the crux of the problem; he wondered however whether other members of the Commission thought the ANF proposal constituted a basis for negotiation.

Inevitably in the world situation, the Government has been almost obsessed with problems East of Suez arising first from the development of Chinese nuclear capability and secondly from the stepping up of Indonesian aggression. The defence of Malaysia at the moment enjoys overriding priority in the Ministry of Defence. With regard to the Chinese problem and Britain's obligations towards India, although the Government's explicit reservation of a proportion of Britain's strategic bomber capability for operations East of Suez was undoubtedly damaging to their European policy Professor Howard did not see what else the Government could have done. Were

Britain's entire nuclear capability to be placed under NATO control, so that it could not be used East of Suez without the consent of a European consensus, this would be seen in Britain as a direct encouragement to the Indians to develop their own capability. To have something to offer the Indians, and to have some form of nuclear back-up for Britain's definite military strength in that area, did preserve a certain balance, did discourage proliferation, and also satisfied the considerable domestic pressure of an emotional kind in Britain that she should remain a power in the Far East.

Professor Howard felt that one area where this emphasis on Far Eastern commitments would be felt in Britain was in the field of weapons development. Hitherto Britain had maintained two different kinds of army, for highly sophisticated warfare in Europe and for jungle patrols in Borneo. But some members of the new Government for economic reasons favoured concentrating on simple weapons which might or might not prove suitable for use in Europe, rather than concentrating on sophisticated weapons and using them as dual purpose.

Mr. Buchan emphasised Professor Howard's point that the ANF proposal was essentially a negotiating position. The whole discussion on an MLF/ANF might well take a completely new turn in the course of 1965 and it might prove necessary and desirable to set it in a much broader context. The ANF proposal, unlike the MLF proposal, was specifically linked to a non-dissemination agreement in that the powers which participate in the multilateral element of the ANF would, as a condition of this multilateral element coming into being, adhere to something like the Irish UN resolution - a declaration on non-dissemination for the nuclear powers and a declaration on non-acquisition for the non-nuclear powers. He expected these discussions to take the form not of a blueprint to try and make the ANF into a workable operational concept but of the beginnings of a much broader discussion about the problem of non-dissemination; and if it transpired that the right course was a non-dissemination agreement by the nuclear powers (which would obviously eventually have to include France, although China would presumably not be a party to it) this might contain within it some form of guarantee of any non-nuclear power, whether in alliance systems or not, that was under any form of nuclear threat. This was still an embryo idea, but many people in the Labour Government hoped for these broader discussions rather than for detailed negotiations on the ANF.

Personally he thought the Labour Government had made a serious psychological mistake in laying so much emphasis on Britain's rôle East of Suez; it would be harder to get a sympathetic hearing for their ideas by proposing a plan which starts by withdrawing a large part of the British force for action East of Suez. It would have been much sounder to regard the whole force as subject to the planning framework of NATO, subject to a certain British right of withdrawal.

General Beaufre commented on this last point that Britain had reacted very much as France had reacted in regard to NATO at the time of her own crisis in Algeria; this reaction was very human. With regard to Professor Howard's observations, (leaving aside the MLF, which he suggested taking under the heading of American policy) he felt that they reflected the adjustment of a new government faced with two new problems - an economic crisis and Indonesian aggression - rather than fundamental changes of position. These two problems had provoked strong reactions, but essentially national reactions. The Government was still settling itself in.

M. Laloy had no general comments on what Professor Howard or Mr. Buchan had said. But he was much concerned with the idea of a guarantee to non-nuclear powers which are not in any alliance; this was an extremely complex question and raised formidable problems.

This point aroused general interest and it was felt that since issues of fundamental importance involving the whole relationship between nuclear and non-nuclear powers were involved there might be a case for devoting a subsequent meeting of the Commission to this question. It was agreed to give some preliminary consideration to the problems involved during the discussion on the Chinese bomb.]

Mr. Beaton thought it might be helpful to say something about the ANF. First of all this did not yet amount to even a negotiating position: it was a series of propositions. Therefore it was not yet a substitute for the MLF proposal.

As he understood it, Labour had returned to the proposition in the Nassau communique that Britain should put her Polaris submarines into NATO, that the US should put in an equivalent number, and that a high proportion of the British V-bomber force should be committed to NATO; Labour has added the proposition to combine with this a multilateral element in which others would enter (they have said it should not be a sea-borne force); the nations making up this grouping of explicitly strategic forces to the alliance should jointly own the entire force, which would be committed to NATO by the countries concerned and be commanded in the NATO chain of command.

Mr. Buchan had already mentioned that participating countries would be required to adhere to the Irish resolution. Britain and the United States and any participating country which wanted it would have a veto over the use of the entire force. Labour had suggested that they did not wish to participate in the mixed-manned element (which was the original Conservative position). Therefore they expected to have a veto over the mixed-manned element in which they were not participating, and over the American submarines, and everyone else would have the same! Labour had suggested that the veto of the mixed-manned powers should be exercised collectively, but this had not been spelt out. Mr. Beaton did not rate the chances of success very high for this series of propositions.

He believed that the Government had decided to retain a proportion of V-bombers as a means of retaining a reasonably independent element within the confines of their own doctrine. But the emphasis should not have been put on a nuclear rôle East of Suez; there could be quite a backlash in the East about this. Britain had a considerable stockpile of nuclear bombs and a substantial force with nuclear capability (the naval bombers and light bombers) apart from the V-bombers, and no-one has suggested that this should be part of NATO. Also the Polaris submarines would be under full British control with a full British communications system in the Atlantic (although a communications system would not be created for them in the Pacific).

On the question of ownership, the formula was that if the alliance came to an end these weapons would be under full British control and could be withdrawn. Labour's view was that the alliance would not end, of course; but this "point in small print in the insurance policy" did leave open a possible eventual return to national ownership and control.

"Re-negotiation of the Nassau agreement" which had formerly been the declared intention of Harold Wilson, was very difficult to detect in the statement after the Washington talks. The Prime Minister had been surprisingly successful in this vis-a-vis his own party. Mr. Beaton thought the reason was that the Labour left and anti-nuclear opinion in Britain has become much less concerned with the British independent deterrent than with the MLF and the problem of proliferation within the alliance. Harold Wilson had realised this and had concentrated on taking a strong anti-MLF line. But Mr. Beaton felt that despite the strength of his opposition, Mr. Wilson had only succeeded in persuading President Johnson to drop the pressure for the MLF because of the trouble the MLF had already run into in so many other quarters.

Mr. Buchan, replying to a question from M. Laloy about planning in the ANF, said this would take place in a control group (as proposed for the old MLF), to which the participating nations would belong. This control group would be "in NATO" but not identical with the NATO Council. There was some equivocation about the relationship of the ANF control group to NATO and Signor Brosio had not yet succeeded in obtaining clarification. The commander of the force would be "in the NATO chain of command". Mr. Buchan thought that the British Defence Minister really meant that SACEUR had too large an area of command, without actually spelling out that he wanted the appointment of a second Supreme Commander for nuclears.

Asked by General del Marmol who would actually fire the weapons, Mr. Buchan said it was clear that the basic idea was the same as for the MLF: at a certain point of a crisis the control group would decide to release the weapons to the force commander and it would lie within his absolute judgement whether to fire them. He added that as with the MLF, the control group would have to work on the basis of unanimity. None of the proposals for majority voting had any real chance of acceptance.

General Beaufre and M. Laloy commented that this left outside the problems of the allied concept of planning and the relationship of the force to the American force.

Mr. Beaton added that while all the movement had been on the ownership and control side (because of the position which Labour had taken up), crisis management, which was the real problem, was now being talked about more, and he felt sure that things would start to move in the right direction.

Herr Nerlich said there was a lot of confusion on the German side about the ANF proposal. Personally he shared Mr. Beaton's view that at present it was no more than an attempt to build a negotiating position. But it was felt that whatever may come out of the ANF proposition, it could not give the Germans the same satisfaction as the MLF. Therefore he anticipated strong opposition on the German side.

On the MLF itself, the German position was reasonably familiar. There were however three new aspects which had a bearing on this issue: (1) The likelihood of a non-proliferation agreement coming up again; Germany faced a dilemma because her position was that she could join such an agreement only if the MLF were in existence. (2) There was some feeling that a degree of nuclear thinning-out might occur in Central Europe over the next few years; one of the arguments in favour of the MLF was to have a fall-back position in case this happened. (3) Greater emphasis was being laid on the MLF not as an end in itself but as an option for determining the final German position. It was felt that essentially the Soviet Union and France viewed the MLF in such a context, and this added to the political importance of the MLF.

Dr. Gasteyger found it hard to determine the German Government's attitude towards the British proposition, although he was not aware of any real opposition. He thought Bonn would require some guarantee that the minimum they would have obtained from the MLF would be obtainable from whatever came out of the ANF discussions, and that mainly concerned command and control. He wondered about the British Government's view on a German veto, since it seemed under the new arrangements that the German contribution would be considerably less important.

Mr. Beaton replied that since the British Government saw the ANF mainly as an anti-proliferation device they were not worried about the number of vetoes.

General Beaufre saw as the main point of the British proposition that they wanted to be a larger element in the ANF than they would have been in the MLF, and they wanted to reduce the sea-borne element. Therefore Germany's contribution would be correspondingly less important. He imagined the principal German objection to the ANF would be precisely that the balance of advantage from the force had now been shifted in favour of Britain.

M. Laloy said the French Government was as opposed to the ANF proposal as it was to the MLF.

With regard to public opinion, the ANF was in a sense helpful to the Government. During the debate in December for the first time a split in opinion between supporters and opponents of the new policy had become apparent. Unfortunately the opponents did not have a solution. There was a certain opposition to the national force which has become more coherent and has got a certain amount of support in the country, and a number of ideas were beginning to circulate although not in any precise form. The British proposals however made it more difficult for those who do not see a European solution.

M. Vernant added that as long as there seemed to be any chance of eventual participation in some form in the MLF they did not oppose the British proposition in the sense that it consisted of a certain number of ideas in principle. Previously the British proposition could be considered by the French Government not only as an instrument working against the MLF but also as a means for arriving at a formula for some coordination along lines developed by some people. Personally he had thought that the British proposition was very vague and contained certain elements which could allow it to be shifted away from the concept of a closely integrated Atlantic force. However, it seemed from what had been said that there were uncertainties in the British position and no possibility of fitting the two Governments' policies together.

Professor Howard asked how seriously French opinion took the argument that it was necessary to give some satisfaction to German aspirations for nuclear responsibility.

M. Vernant asked in return what were the German aspirations? He was anxious to dispel any misunderstandings as to whether France had any intention of allowing or encouraging active German participation in the building or control of a French nuclear force. This was quite false and out of the question. But the question of what Germany wanted precisely had never been treated in a practical fashion.

Mr. Haagerup, thinking back on the fate of the European Defence Community, was concerned about the long-term German reaction if negotiations just dragged on inconclusively. It seemed a decision would be postponed until after the German elections, possibly even until after the French Presidential election. He thought it possible that more nationalistic tendencies might develop, particularly within the Free Democratic Party which might be in a decisive position after the elections. The Germans had been fooled over the EDC, and now it seemed they would not get anything out of the ANF either. He wondered if he was alone in worrying about the long-term reaction when this state of affairs was fully realised in Germany.

Herr Nerlich agreed that the Free Democrats were much more nationalistic than the other parties, although they were opposed to the MLF. He very much doubted, however, whether they would be in a strong position after the elections.

Mr. Buchan said it was clear that in Washington Mr. Wilson had been told that if he could sell his plan to the Germans without a multilateral element he was welcome to try and the Americans would go along with it; but if he could not, the Americans were committed to a multilateral element in the force with German participation and Mr. Wilson would have to live with that. The danger of German disappointment and of its effects within Germany was at the front of everyone's mind - perhaps not so near the front of Harold Wilson's as it ought to be, but certainly at the front of American minds.

2. Developments in United States Policy

General Beaufre, taking up a question of M. Laloy about the real intentions of the United States, particularly in regard to the MLF, considered that American methods had changed rather than intentions. In contrast to the "grand design" of the Kennedy era and the persistent assertion of American domination, the aggressive diplomacy in support of the MLF, etc., there was now a new way of dealing with allies, with more subtlety and less apparent dictatorship. Certainly so far as France was concerned the new method would be more successful. The compromise reached at Brussels would not have been possible earlier.

M. Laloy commented that French opposition to the MLF had only mounted between August and December; previously she had been indifferent towards it.

General Beaufre did not see that this affected his argument. For a time the officials had been running Washington while Lyndon Johnson concentrated on his internal position. But now the President had taken charge again and had initiated a new policy of consultation. This did not mean that American policy had changed; but the means had changed and this was important.

Mr. Beaton pointed to President Johnson's fundamental belief in his own ability to square anybody which he had demonstrated with Congress and intended to demonstrate with President de Gaulle, the Soviet leaders, and everybody else. All policies had become subject to his determination to establish what would amount to a series of special relationships from which compromise policies can be derived.

Mr. Buchan was very doubtful whether this would in fact lead to compromises: the same people were in office and the same issues as had created difficulties before remained in evidence. There was a limit to the extent to which President Johnson could square all these circles.

Mr. Beaton made the further point that at the moment, both President Johnson and McNamara were completely preoccupied with Vietnam; European issues to them were terribly secondary and unimportant.

General Beaufre referred to reports of NATO studies on a proposal for a nuclear minebelt along Germany's eastern frontier and the possible use of nuclear mines or tactical atomic weapons. Reports after the last NATO Council meeting indicated that the Far East would have priority in American thinking, and he thought this was true; but the fact of their being prepared to give consideration to a matter of great preoccupation to Germany indicated a more subtle and sensitive treatment of allies.

Signor Spinelli wondered whether the new Administration was preparing any fresh initiative on disarmament.

General Beaufre considered that the two aspects of particular interest to the United States were the supply of fissile material (in which the United States had a considerable economic interest) and efforts to prevent proliferation; there had been some discussions on these two points.

Mr. Beaton said that if the MLF proposal were formally abandoned, then the Russians and the Americans were fully committed to a non-proliferation agreement. With regard to fissile material, the Americans had a proposal to give over 60,000 kg (sufficient for up to 20,000 bombs) to international control if the Russians would give 40,000 kg. He did not know where the Russians would find 40,000 kg but if the Americans were talking about that kind of level they must have that much material to spare.

Mr. Buchan expected some initiative during 1965 on an extension of the test ban to cover underground testing. Techniques for detecting underground tests from a distance have now been considerably improved, and the US was reported from Washington to be very interested in this question. Negotiations would turn on some degree of on-site inspection. The Americans were also showing interest in the earlier Johnson proposal for a freeze on existing delivery systems. They were very anxious to find some way of agreement with the Russians not to go into anti-missile systems, on which they believed the Russians were working very actively.

Mr. Beaton foresaw the problem that the only way for the United States and the Soviet Union to establish their superior status over the next round of nuclear powers would be by means of anti-missile missiles so as to be able to stop small nuclear forces.

Mr. Buchan pointed to an imbalance of Soviet and American interest on this issue: no problem would arise for the US unless Mexico or Canada became nuclear powers; whereas the Russians could be threatened by the French or British or Indians or Chinese. The impression was held that the Soviet interest in anti-missile systems was directed not so much against the US as against the smaller nuclear powers.

Mr. Buchan took up a remark of Herr Nerlich's earlier in the discussion that some thinning-out in Central Europe was likely. Had he any evidence?

Herr Nerlich mentioned evidence that the Americans were cutting down their tactical aircraft.

Mr. Buchan replied that this was being done for economic reasons, not as part of a bargaining process.

Herr Nerlich countered that this was not clear to many defence people in Germany. The feeling was growing that the present deployment in Central Europe was no longer stable and that a vacuum may develop. The Germans were looking in two directions: towards short-range battlefield weapons for local defence, coupled with various demolition means, and towards longer-range weapons for use outside the Central European area, weapons which could destroy the Soviet Union but which would not destroy Eastern Europe. There was great interest in the Pershing and some pressure on the Americans to supply it, either as an additional element in the MLF or perhaps under a double-key system. Therefore to a certain extent Germany was interested in thinning-out to the extent of intermediate interdiction forces previously deployed on targets in Eastern Europe. He made it clear that there was no intention to link these ideas with the Rapacki Plan. And of course these ideas would depend upon American support.

Mr. Buchan said he had been surprised to learn of the atomic mine proposal, because previously the German objection to any proposal for a fixed fortification type of defence along the eastern border was that this would tend to freeze the division of Germany.

Herr Nerlich said there had been much confusion about this proposal, mainly in the press; only Der Spiegel had put it correctly. Nothing had been said about a minebelt or anything which was likely to harden the division of Germany; what was under consideration was merely a selective deployment of these mines, and this was being studied in the context of the ideas he had just referred to. The objective was to have a certain automacity, to have the break not between nuclear and conventional weapons but between certain nuclear weapons, the atomic mines being the first step. But again, the Americans would take the final decision.

General Beaufre objected that this proposal would increase the danger of escalation. Moreover another serious problem was involved: meteorology. He referred to an exercise held a few months previously in the south-east of the Alps with a small number of mines to evaluate their possible use. The wind was from the East and the whole of the fall-out came down on the division which believed itself protected by the mines. The prevailing wind blew from East to West, and a westerly wind could not be sufficiently relied on for such an operation not to create a greater hazard to the Western than to the Eastern troops. Thus these mines would prove a double-edged weapon.

Dr. Jaquet raised an issue which he thought might be discussed further under the heading of the Far East but which he wanted to put in the context of general policy: if Britain was putting great emphasis on the situation in Malaysia and the Americans were completely preoccupied with Vietnam, was there any disposition in Washington to see a grand design, with China accorded top priority in the two countries' policies?

Mr. Buchan did not see an element of grand design. Both countries regarded their current Far Eastern operations as an unfortunate necessity hoped to be of short duration. Britain was spending something like £80 million a year in foreign exchange in the Malaysia operation, at a time of severe balance of payments crisis; the US was reported to have four divisions' worth of officers tied down in Vietnam. But it would be false to deduce that the problem of China had replaced the problem of Russia.

Dr. Jaquet felt strongly that if there were no grand design, there ought to be. A major problem could arise in international politics if the two biggest powers of the West, spending so much of their economic and military power in distant countries, did not concert their policies; quite apart from the merits of the case, Vietnam or Malaysia could become issues of Western policy.

Mr. Beaton felt that Malaysia and Vietnam ought not to be compared. At the moment Malaysia did not raise a great power issue or impose major policy questions on Britain; she was dealing with a clear-cut case of aggression, and the situation was manageable militarily. Vietnam was a much more subtle question, raising profound issues for American policy, and much harder to handle.

Mr. Buchan saw the force of Dr. Jaquet's argument. But he was troubled by thinking in Britain, which had become more evident recently, which assumed that Europe had stabilised itself and that Britain's real commitment lay in the Indian Ocean and in being number two policeman to the Americans. Personally he believed Britain should consider her commitments outside Europe in specific rather

than in general terms. A lot of this British thinking was affected by nostalgia. At the moment the Americans did feel Vietnam to be more important than anything going on in Europe; but he did not believe there had been any profound decision to shift priorities from one theatre to another.

Professor Howard commented that the fire brigade has to go where the fire happens to be. A great difference between the US and Britain was that if the Vietnam situation really quietened and there was no need for military intervention there, no-one would be happier than the Americans, whereas the British service people would be horrified to find there was no need to maintain a base in Aden or Singapore. The British services are orientated towards action overseas.

3. The Italian political scene

Signor Spinelli said that after the long crisis over the Presidential election a general realignment of all the political forces was in process. The Christian Democratic Party was particularly affected: the lamentable lack of party discipline displayed during the presidential crisis had had wide repercussions. The two Socialist parties had emerged from the crisis closer together; this was a much quicker rapprochement than anyone would have thought possible and a regrouping of the Socialist forces was now within the range of short-term possibilities. The crisis within the Communist Party was deepening. Its electoral success had been as a social democratic type of force rather than as a revolutionary force. The party was rethinking its programme and its future. A strong element within the Communist Party favoured the construction of a united social democratic and communist party; on the other hand a minority of the Communist Party had voted for Fanfani because the majority said vote for Saragat. At the same time the Liberal Party had gained ground and was moving in the direction of a conservative party of the Right, but not extremist. Thus the prospect of a political realignment rather of the Belgian type could be envisaged, with a moderate Liberal Right, a Social Democratic sector and the Communists, but not on the lines of a popular front, and a stronger discipline among the Catholics.

But the long drawn-out crisis showed how weak the Government was. Fortunately the new President was a strong personality, able to take an active part in affairs and with a keen interest in foreign policy. He was firmly committed to a moderate centre-left policy and would use his influence in that direction. Signor Saragat's interest in foreign affairs would help to correct the Government's weakness in this field: Signor Moro had never been interested in foreign affairs and was very much a party personality. On European policy, he thought Italy would be able to maintain something of the Saragat initiative towards democratisation of the Community. With regard to the MLF, however, he expected Italy to adopt a policy of wait and see. Signor Saragat had great sympathy for Britain, especially for the Labour Party, and would wait to see if the MLF would take a form that Britain could join. If Britain did not join eventually, he doubted whether Italy would either.

With regard to the economy, the danger of inflation had been overcome more or less by classic methods. However, a difficult situation persisted in so far as investment had still not been resumed, showing that capital was still holding to a policy of reserve.

Signor Albonetti endorsed Signor Spinelli's general line of argument. He entirely agreed with his observations on Signor Saragat and the strengthening effect his presidency would have on the political scene. The London Times had been quite right in its comment that the best man had been elected by the worst method.

He thought the Italian political scene was entering on a highly interesting period which would be full of surprises. A major factor, which overseas opinion must keep particularly in mind, was that a centre-left government in Italy was something completely unknown. Personally he welcomed the centre-left experiment and believed good would come from it, but it was essential to understand the tremendous strain which this experiment imposed on the fabric of Italian democracy at a time when a difficult economic situation and the existence of a strong Communist Party also created problems. However, he saw this as a crisis of development rather than weakness.

He was not sure about a realignment of political forces. The Communist Party was not in a real state of crisis: this was a dream of certain intellectuals, of Left and Right. Certainly it was in the throes of an internal argument, and there were two tendencies, but no more so than the Socialist Party for example. He expected party discipline to prevail, and any effects would be felt in the very long term. The Communist Party had a different position in Italian public life from the other parties and it was illusory to imagine one could play the party game with them.

Signor Spinelli had spoken of a serious crisis in the Christian Democratic Party; he was not too worried about their situation. The Christian Democratic Party was the one major party that had never had a split; its great strength was its ability to accommodate minority tendencies. He would like to see a rapprochement of the Socialist forces, but he was sceptical about this happening. The whole history of the Italian socialist movement was one of splits which weakened their position; at the moment there were more divisions within each socialist party than between them.

Signor Spinelli, asked by General del Marmol about the means available to Signor Saragat to exercise an influence on affairs, said that when Parliament was functioning properly the President had nothing to do; but if Parliament were paralysed the President had constitutional powers. He nominated the Prime Minister who, although he must present himself for endorsement by Parliament, has power at once to govern. The President had the right to dissolve the Chamber if there was no majority for a government. Furthermore he exercised an unwritten authority in so far as from the time of Signor Gronchi onwards the tradition had become established for the President to follow closely the work of Parliament and to take a particular interest in foreign policy. While he had no formal power, he had come to have a great influence on the orientation of policy. Thus the personality of the President was of considerable importance.

In reply to M. Laloy, who wondered how encouraging the prospects were of the Communist Party evolving in the direction of other political parties, Signor Spinelli said that if there were a major international crisis, or an economic crisis, then the Communists would gain in their present mould; but if detente abroad and an affluent society at home were maintained, then the evolution would continue. Essentially communism in Italy was in the same position as socialism in Europe at the end of the last century. The Communists had to come to terms with a social situation which was not revolutionary. But obviously there were different trends within the Communist Party. He mentioned a document of Togliatti's which on the subject of international communism in the world of today had spoken of the need for strong international solidarity but proposed different roads in different regions; Togliatti had stressed the need for a policy for the Western world, but was attempting not to have this tied to the Soviet communists. Signor Spinelli thought it a point of weakness that the Italian and French parties were not in agreement; their combined influence would be so much greater.

TUESDAY AFTERNOON, 5th JANUARY

DISCUSSION ON THE INTERNATIONAL SITUATION (CONT.)

4. The Far East

General Beaufre opened the discussion by outlining his personal impression of the situation in Vietnam following his recent visit.

The situation in Vietnam was well known and over-publicised. Regrettably, by according maximum publicity to what were no more than local incidents (he had arrived the day after the famous destruction of American aircraft by the Vietcong) the Western press was playing the enemy's game, because the psychological warfare was even more important than the military campaign in that situation. The Vietcong wanted psychological results much more than military successes, and they were seeking these results by sure and well-tried methods.

At the same time the Vietcong were waging a political and a military campaign. Their plan was political agitation in the towns, and guerrilla action for military objectives in the countryside, subverting and enlisting the support of the local population when they can. There was no need for alarm about the military situation. In so large and densely wooded a country incidents on the local level could not be avoided; but these incidents did not affect the over-all military position which was relatively stable.

The political situation was another matter. The present state of affairs fundamentally resulted from the fact that Vietnam found independence before finding her true national personality. The country rested on Diem's dictatorship and he held it together but, like all dictators, he was a bad one, his rule became increasingly oppressive and corrupt, and eventually the Americans had to get rid of him. But since his fall the country has been in a state of disaster. No-one was ready to take over: there was no ruling class; the Vietnamese bourgeoisie had no sense of national loyalty. Among the political elements, the Catholics suffered heavily as a result of Diem's excesses. The Buddhists and the students, which became increasingly important, were heavily infiltrated by the Vietcong; they were not all for the Vietcong, but they were manoeuvred by them. Unfortunately the Americans, having supported a dictator, tried to atone for their guilt by supporting a democratic regime; they played up what they thought was the opposing party, the Buddhist movement, with the idea of opening a basis for popular support.

It was important to understand the extent to which the Buddhist movement was political rather than religious. The Buddhists were divided into two streams, the "petits véhicules" which could properly be considered a religious movement in that it did have a clergy, a hierarchy and a philosophy, and the "grands véhicules" which was the Chinese tradition, in reality a mixture of confucianism, taoism and ancestor-worship which was very far from the true Buddhism. This stream did not have a proper clergy or hierarchy or permanent institutions. The famous bonzes who set fire to themselves were not monks in the Catholic sense of the word but volunteers for death; the bonzes were entirely political figures. The Buddhist claim to be the majority religion in Vietnam was not true; nearly one-third of the population was "grand véhicule" Buddhist and thus not truly Buddhist at all, there were other sects (such as Cao Dai and Hoa Hao), as well as the Catholics and other Christians and the agnostics. But they presented themselves as a political movement representing the majority opinion in the country oppressed by the Catholics under Diem and were backed by the Americans who imagined them genuinely to represent the opposition. With their continuous campaign of militant agitation they increase the political instability which plays into the hands of the Vietcong, and the situation has been steadily deteriorating.

General Beaufre had personal links with the South Vietnam army. The army did not enjoy a good reputation, it was said to be unwilling to fight and infiltrated by the Communists. So far as he could judge, this reputation was unjustified. It was a significant force of some 200,000 regulars organised in nine well-equipped divisions with modern weapons, led mainly by career officers. It had been fighting for the past ten years, mostly without relief, and this increased its sense of cohesion. The army had no use for romantic battles, it understood the uselessness of certain operations. Incidents such as the ambush at Binh Gia the previous week did not mean that the army fought badly; such incidents were unavoidable in this endemic war in which there were no set battles. The problem of the Vietnamese army was not the army in itself, it was the problem of the leadership. If the leadership took a coherent form and was united, then it would be a considerable factor for political stability and indeed would be the only one in that unhappy country.

To sum up, the political situation was sliding towards disintegration while the military situation was not too bad and could lead to some stability if the army stayed united and did not divide into factions and did not meddle too much with internal politics. General Beaufre had talked with General Khanh, whom he knew, and other military leaders, and if the political situation got beyond a certain point General Khanh was ready to intervene. This was a very young army - all the generals were less than 40 years old. They were Young Turks and not ready to show great wisdom or restraint. That was on the debit side. On the credit side, since a year ago when General Khanh was dictator, he did not believe the Generals were tempted to take power directly, although they had just recently dissolved the High National Council. But the difficulty remained of supporting a civil power which is weak and inefficient.

There remained the question of the Americans. General Beaufre had talked to General Taylor and others. Although nothing had been said officially, it was clear the Americans were seeking possibilities for disengagement with Asian support. The Americans were preoccupied by the question of loss of face; to avoid this they were attracted by the idea of bombing Tonkin or targets in North Vietnam with the aim of creating an international incident sufficiently violent to bring about negotiations which they would enter in a position of strength, to avoid entering negotiations as a piece of capitulation. He was convinced there could be no possible solution other than by negotiation, and obviously this must involve China, which in turn involved the question of US-China relations. Thus the problem of Vietnam impinged on the world scene.

Asked by Signor Albonetti if he were less pessimistic than the Western press seemed to be, General Beaufre repeated that militarily things were not too bad. The situation could hold for a long time so long as the army held together and the Americans were determined. American war-weariness was the key, like the French war-weariness in Algeria. But in the end, of course, the outcome could only be the loss of South-East Asia. The question was whether it would be lost completely or whether there was any possibility of its neutralisation, with South-East Asia not necessarily tied to the Chinese position.

Signor Spinelli commented that in this type of war, with both a military and a civil aspect, the communist aim was both to win territory and to establish a certain kind of organisation of society. Therefore political organisation as well as military capability was needed to resist the Vietcong. Did the South Vietnamese have any means of protecting the population, and in particular did they have any organisation of cells not just for military resistance but for civil organisation which could administer any territory won back from the Vietcong?

General Beaufre replied that Diem had made a start at building up a local security organisation, but when he fell everything collapsed with him. But since the Vietnamese army has been rebuilt by the Americans a policy has been adopted for "pacification" which involves building up the real Vietnamese society, that of the rural areas. This did not apply to the towns, because while the Vietcong foment political agitation they do not constitute a physical threat to the towns. He had visited settlements which were functioning with a hospital and key administrative services and officials. The plan for pacification involves giving priority to economic reconstruction, since when they re-occupy a former Vietcong zone they find nothing there and have to build from scratch. In the rural areas he found a very serious and determined attitude towards this problem. Unfortunately this did not apply to Saigon: the capital has become no more than a background for political manoeuvre. Mr. Buchan mentioned the activities of the Head of the British Advisory Mission, Mr. Thompson, in organising strategic hamlets in Vietnam on the pattern he had so successfully developed in Malaya. General Beaufre did not think Mr. Thompson's methods had been successful in Vietnam because the problem was different; in Malaya the enemy came from outside and was easily identifiable; the Vietcong merged with the local population.

General Beaufre criticised the American policy in regard to their "advisers". They sent a large number of officers, few of them well qualified, for a very short period. They should have done the opposite. The period of service was 12 months - while the Vietnamese army has been fighting for ten years. Basic misunderstandings were inevitable between these "advisers" who had nothing to say and the Vietnamese veterans.

Asked by General del Marmol about the possibilities of any solution of neutralisation, General Beaufre said he really meant agreement on non-intervention. There were certain possibilities of an American agreement with North Vietnam on a stand-still. A factor favouring some kind of agreement was that the North would certainly welcome an armistice in the present campaign. Against this was the serious problem of what to do with the Vietcong at present in the South: would an arrangement for a cease-fire lead to the withdrawal northward of the revolutionary troops, or would they remain in the South, and what would their status be? The 1954 agreements were not an encouraging precedent. The Vietcong were a minority among the people of South Vietnam, but they were highly skilled in the technique of creating cells and exerting an influence far beyond their numerical strength.

M. Laloy questioned General Beaufre's point that negotiations must involve China. He was not sure about this. If some agreement could be reached with Hanoi, surely Peking would accept it? Much more significant, however, was the reported American readiness to disengage. If this was true, all kinds of possibilities for movement would open up provided there were no precipitate action.

General Beaufre said that certainly some agreement could be reached with Hanoi for a standstill. But a settlement could only be reached in the framework of American negotiations, and if negotiations came about as a result of a bombing incident it must bring in the Chinese. The Chinese base at Tonkin was very important politically. This would put the Russians in a difficult position.

M. Laloy returned to his point. Undoubtedly Peking, as the major power, would be a signatory as well as the two Vietnams to any settlement. But if an agreement could be negotiated directly with the Vietnamese, why should Peking not put her seal on it?

General Beaufre replied that the difficulty was that Hanoi is not officially a party to the dispute. Also there was the question of the status of the Vietnamese National Liberation Front - the problem was to avoid bringing the Front into the Government at Saigon, what General Khanh called the "apertura a sinistra".

M. Vernant said clearly the question of withdrawal of the various armed forces was a major problem involved in a cease-fire agreement. But equally clearly Hanoi had a major interest in an armistice, even though she was not officially involved. Therefore why did not Hanoi try to sound out American opinion to see if some formula could be reached whereby if an armistice could be arranged Hanoi would undertake not to take advantage of it by infiltrating communists into the South etc.? Given the desire of North Vietnam to free herself from Chinese influence, he could not understand her failure to make a move of this sort.

He felt strongly that the way to get negotiations was not for the Americans to precipitate an incident, because the Chinese and the Russians would become involved and all sorts of political difficulties would arise.

Mr. Buchan was reminded of the argument that the Americans should not either fight or negotiate, but should step up the fighting and start to talk as they did so. This would conform more to the normal rules.

General Beaufre observed that President Johnson's refusal to accept General Taylor's recommendation to bomb the North showed that he favoured this solution.

M. Laloy asked whether the young Vietnamese generals were in a position to make contact with the North Vietnamese. If contacts were made, would the Americans intervene?

General Beaufre judged from indications in Saigon that they would be favourable to an arrangement.

General del Marmol came back to the question of any United States bombing of the North, to which he personally was much opposed.

General Beaufre said the serious American objective was not to bomb the supply lines from the North, because military victory could not be assured, but to bomb economic targets. By destroying the North Vietnamese industry one could destroy many years of collective effort. The Americans would not try to kill the North Vietnamese but to make life much harder for them, and this kind of pressure could be applied selectively and gradually. The aim was to create a favourable climate for negotiations. This policy had not been adopted, because President Johnson would not have it; but this is what General Taylor would like to do.

Signor Albonetti wondered if there were different appreciations of the situation in different organs of the US Government - the CIA were much more pessimistic than General Beaufre seemed to be. Did not President Johnson's refusal to allow this policy reveal his own pessimism?

General Beaufre replied that the CIA were right if they said the situation would be lost in 1969; but it was not lost in 1965. President Johnson was not necessarily so pessimistic - he was adopting a policy of moderation and keeping to the safe centre of the spectrum of opinion.

Signor Albonetti asked General Beaufre whether he thought the revolutionary war in Indochina was considered by the communist powers as a trial run for revolutionary wars in other countries.

General Beaufre replied that as a revolutionary war it was only of local interest. It had strategic importance because of the pressure on the United States. His fear was that the Chinese would not be satisfied with placing the Americans in a difficult position. He did not think that if the Americans withdrew the Chinese would do the same; they would play the same game in Indo-China as they have played in India - temporisation.

General Beaufre made two further points: (1) The Americans were now preparing to make Thailand the centre of gravity for their presence in South-East Asia. (2) He returned home via Singapore and was there at a time when a group of Indonesian guerrillas had been captured. He had the impression of seeing in Malaysia the first symptoms of the same illness. The essential difference between the two situations was that Malaysia was being attacked by foreign invaders, whereas the Vietcong were the same people as the South Vietnamese. Britain had been right to intervene at the outset, because once the Indonesians established themselves it would be too late. As long as Malaysia stood firm, the situation could be kept under control.

Unfortunately the situation in Vietnam was bound to have an effect on Malaysia, although the repercussions were mostly psychological. General Taylor had said to General Beaufre that America was holding Malaysia and the Philippines along with Vietnam. There was a risk of the whole area becoming infected. General Taylor felt that so great a responsibility justified taking great risks. On the other hand, General Beaufre believed that serious though it was, the situation in South-East Asia was not desperate, because there was no likelihood of the Americans suffering a major military defeat. There would not be another Dien Bien Phu. Therefore there was a certain time available.

Mr. Buchan brought the discussion on to Malaysia. He thought the main fear in Malaysia was that there was so much latent Malay-Chinese tension that if Indonesia could keep up sufficient external pressure emergency police measures, etc. might become necessary and this may produce a new outbreak of Malay-Chinese hostility. Very bad communal riots had occurred in Singapore in September; the Prime Minister of Singapore had made it clear to Mr. Buchan that he feared Sukarno's tactic was not really to invade Malaysia but to induce a new civil war.

Mr. Beaton held that this kind of challenge, if it were met successfully, might do more for Malaysian unity than anything else.

Professor Howard said one point made by British officers was that the real problem lay in Borneo and Sarawak. These provinces had been tacked on to Malaya and Singapore, partly because they had been under British rule and partly to balance the Chinese on the mainland; unfortunately there was little natural connection between them and the Malay states. A considerable part of the British military effort has been of the same kind as the French army

put into Algeria - operation "hearts and minds". But the British found it extremely difficult to get the Malays to take any interest in these people and in particular to assume any of the burden of increasing social services. There were many complaints from the native inhabitants that if it were not for the British, there would be little to choose between the Malays and the Indonesians. Obviously it was as much a problem of fostering a sense of national community as a military problem.

Mr. Beaton suggested that Indonesia had an even greater problem than Malaysia, because of the rivalry between Java and Sumatra. He believed Malaysia's best long-term card to play was detachment of Sumatra from Java.

General Beaufre did not see any defensive solution, a counter-offensive policy was essential. With Indonesia's withdrawal from the United Nations this problem was bound up with the wider international problem. If the Chinese did set up a second United Nations this would create a very difficult situation.

Mr. Buchan wondered how seriously the idea of a second United Nations should be taken.

M. Laloy did not see any pressure for it. India has taken up a position favourable to Malaysia, and India was a very important country in terms of Asia. He did not think the Indonesian withdrawal would have a disruptive effect on the United Nations.

General Beaufre maintained his view on this point. However, Sukarno was free to do as he liked. The problem for Malaysia and the West was how to regain the initiative in a revolutionary situation.

Mr. Beaton returned to his argument and maintained that a barrage of radio propaganda aimed at breaking up Indonesia, which was very disunited, was well worth trying. Sukarno must fear a campaign to stimulate Sumatran nationalism, and a powerful radio transmitter in Malaysian hands could be quite a useful form of initiative.

Mr. Buchan saw a difference of opinion in the West between those who might want to break up Indonesia in the interests of a quiet life and those (Australia, for example) who would want to encourage Indonesia to keep together and reform itself because a strong power was needed in that area as a counter-balance to China.

Dr. Gasteyer suggested that this depended on Sukarno himself. Would the prospects be brighter if Sukarno fell from power? He did not see Sukarno's dismissal as in itself opening up a solution to the problem of Indonesia.

Mr. Buchan agreed; there would probably be a degree of civil war. The question was, would the West stand by and see this civil war go on, or would it take action to try and pull the country together again? The Americans, by training the Indonesian army, were gambling on the army's influence in the post-Sukarno situation; but personally he was not sure what would happen.

M. Vernant feared that Indonesia would go the way of South Vietnam.

Dr. Jaguet wondered how far any policy could be pursued at any time. It was not true that the Dutch tried to break up Indonesia; they tried to form a federal state and failed, and were blamed by world opinion for trying to leave a divided empire behind them. At that time the US was playing the extreme nationalist card and backing Sukarno. A policy aimed fifteen years ahead could not just be reversed in different circumstances.

Dr. Jaquet warned Mr. Beaton that Sukarno's grip should not be under-estimated. At the time of the conflict on New Guinea in 1958-9 there was a very strong independence movement on Sumatra led by very capable Indonesian nationalists, and this movement failed. He did not see much chance of success for any move at present to bring Sumatra into Malaysia.

Dr. Jaquet was interested in Professor Howard's emphasis on the importance of building up social services in Borneo. He thought however that this would only provoke more violent opposition from Indonesia, since one motive for Sukarno's campaign was his fear of a neighbouring state offering an alternative to his own people.

Professor Howard said all Britain could hope was that the United States would not embarrass her efforts by too much support for Indonesia. The attempt to build up the good society extended to Malaya as well as to Borneo and Sarawak, that is why Sukarno wanted to crush it. It had become a conflict from which neither could withdraw.

Mr. Buchan found it interesting from the strategic point of view that this was the only confrontation in recent years with a direct and an indirect element. Indonesia was a strong military power and had a capacity for subversion. A much higher effort from Britain had become necessary than either a pure subversion campaign or a full military confrontation would require.

M. Laloy wondered, since the situation in Malaysia seemed relatively good, whether ^{Indonesia} was likely to pose a serious military threat.

Professor Howard considered Sukarno unwise in making any overt confrontation, because so long as the threat was overt Britain could, and must, bring in superior weapons. Sukarno stood to gain much more from maintaining pressure and fomenting Malay-Chinese differences.

Mr. Beaton was interested in what the Russians would do, particularly from the standpoint of Indonesia's standard of armament. A withdrawal of Soviet support must lead to a run-down in the Soviet equipment.

Mr. Buchan thought this was tied up with Russia's bid for support in her conflict with China.

Dr. Birnbaum raised the question of a British desire to set up some kind of Far East nuclear force in cooperation with the Americans, which he believed followed from the difficulties involved for Britain in renouncing her independent nuclear status.

Mr. Buchan said this idea had been mooted in two ways: first, the Americans have said that as the nuclear confrontation with China becomes more serious, the same kind of problem would arise with the Australians and the Japanese as with the Germans and other Europeans, and that it would be necessary to think in terms of some Far East multilateral effort. Secondly, from tentative consideration whether the ANF should not have some role to play in the Indian Ocean in certain situations, perhaps if India were threatened, the idea has come about whether there might not need to be some Western form of deterrent power exercised on behalf of the countries of Southern Asia which should be more than just American and British.

In reply to Signor Albonetti Mr. Buchan explained that all Harold Wilson had said in the House of Commons was that Britain proposed to keep some of the V-bombers out of the ANF. When Peter Thorneycroft asked did this mean that the Government was contemplating nuclear strategy there, the Prime Minister replied that he (Thorneycroft) would never make any statement about nuclear weapons East of Suez and he did not intend to clarify this either.

Professor Howard added that the point was, British aircraft always did carry nuclear weapons East of Suez, the Buccaneers and Canberras could deliver them, but Britain made as little song and dance about this as possible. There seemed to be neither good reason nor the means of simply destroying this nuclear capability or throwing it away.

Mr. Buchan saw two aspects to this problem: first, organising all the British and American nuclear stuff lying about in Southern Asia into a coherent nuclear force. The second was whether, if this became the most threatened area over the next ten years, France would be prepared to take part in some share of the nuclear effort to assist deterrence in Southern Asia.

General Beaufre considered that for some time to come it would be necessary to have a European nuclear capability in the Far East, apart from the American one, as part of the nuclear balance. Europe was less threatened than the Far East precisely because of the balance which existed there. For the next few years the Far East would consist of a nuclear China surrounded by non-nuclear countries. Something other than the American nuclear guarantee was needed to cover every incident. But whether it would take the form of a Far East Nuclear Force or a multinational force one could not say.

M. Laloy objected that this guarantee did not have to be nuclear. And what would the force be used for?

General Beaufre maintained that there must be a nuclear capability in the area to neutralise the Chinese nuclear capability. The purpose of this force would be to resist any pressure by the Chinese without automatically engaging the Americans. Really this amounted to projecting France's strategic theory to the Far East.

Signor Spinelli favoured a simple guarantee to India by Britain or the United States or the USSR that they would retaliate in the event of a nuclear attack against her, in preference to creating a nuclear force in the area.

General Beaufre observed that this brought us up against the problem of a guarantee to non-nuclear powers. If we had such a guarantee we would have arrived at the concert of nuclear powers acting as the world's nuclear policemen. But if the policemen did not agree among themselves, what then? Independently of any guarantee, it was necessary to have a force.

Discussion under this heading was then brought to a close.

TUESDAY AFTERNOON, 5th JANUARY (CONT.)

DISCUSSION ON THE CHINESE BOMB

General Beaufre drew attention to Mr. Beaton's paper. At his suggestion it was agreed to discuss first the technical question of the actual test, and then the implications.

General del Marmol was still not clear how the Chinese had managed to make a uranium bomb. Did Mr. Beaton think the Chinese had successfully concealed works for making U-235, or had they found some other means of making a uranium bomb?

Mr. Beaton said official opinion considered gaseous diffusion far and away the most likely method; the other process talked about, gas centrifuge, had not yet been developed to the point at which it will enrich uranium to weapons grade. The Americans had talked about a gaseous diffusion plant being under construction with a power plant next to it (gaseous diffusion consumed enormous quantities of power). However, there was no certainty about this, and Mr. Beaton had detected in some circles a distinct air of secrecy on this matter.

General del Marmol pressed his point. There was some talk from the American side of a new means of producing nuclear weapons more simply and cheaply. Could the Chinese have used this means, or was this only a future possibility?

Mr. Beaton replied that this could only be a matter of presumption, because China was a backward country with a much smaller general technology than anyone else in the business. Taking France as a yardstick, as the most recent nuclear power: a lot of decisions were taken in France in 1959-60 in relation to uranium enrichment in favour of gaseous diffusion; if some means has become available since 1962, the latest time when the French programme could have been revised, then this has been evolved by a country at a much lower level of industrial sophistication than France. The USSR or United States were far more likely than China to be technological pioneers.

M. Laloy commented that we could not gauge the extent to which the Soviet Union helped China.

Mr. Beaton said he had heard a report that some Russians defected to China, individuals who had been involved with the Russian gaseous diffusion programme but who were no longer important in the USSR when that programme was completed in 1956-7; but this report had been dismissed by someone who should know. Mr. Beaton thought it quite possible that the Soviet Union gave the Chinese more of the key information than Khrushchev realised during the 1957-9 period.

General Beaufre was not too sure about gaseous diffusion. A gaseous diffusion plant was reported to be under construction, but we did not know that it was in operation. What about the spectrograph method?

Mr. Beaton replied that this method took a very long time indeed and was a very expensive way to get fissile material; but it did produce uranium 100 percent enriched.

Mr. Beaton added that since writing his paper he had come across one new point: in "New World", the official history of the Atomic Energy Commission, it was revealed that there had been great discussions as to whether the first uranium bomb could be exploded with an implosion process, the argument being that implosion would require little more than half of the fissile material needed for an

explosion technique. (In the event implosion was used for the first plutonium bomb but not for the first uranium bomb.) For the Chinese to have gone to all the effort to design an implosion system for their bomb suggests that they might have done this on the basis of a minimum amount of fissile material and did not anticipate any substantial source of supply for some time. Therefore it was possible that instead of being more advanced than the West would have supposed, the Chinese fissile production capacity is very limited.

Signor Albonetti remarked that the nuclear powers, and especially the United States, have always over-emphasised the difficulties involved in a country attaining nuclear status. We really should not be so surprised that after seven or eight years of effort China has succeeded in testing a uranium bomb. China has good physicists, and being a dictatorship she does not have to worry about public opinion or answer to Parliament for expenditure, etc. The truth was that the effort involved in becoming a nuclear power was much less than the official American declaration indicated, and the effort would become even less great in the future. The emphasis on the difficulties was part of the psychological war which went on within the West and the East as well as between East and West.

General Beaufre replied that the point was whether China used a classic method to produce uranium or had developed a new method.

Signor Albonetti said the Americans had prepared the ground by saying that a gaseous diffusion plant was already working.

Mr. Buchan commented that from a hundred miles up, a gaseous diffusion plant must look like any other plant.

General Beaufre suggested moving on to consideration of the consequences. He drew attention to a sentence in the last paragraph of Mr. Beaton's paper, that "Militarily and diplomatically, a nuclear weapons industry in its present state of development may have the opposite effect to what is generally anticipated and make China exceedingly docile in her relations with the United States."

Mr. Buchan agreed with this conclusion. There had been quite serious discussion in Washington about taking out this gaseous diffusion plant with a conventional attack. This was unlikely to happen, but it did demonstrate the liabilities which China must expect for a large number of years. The Chinese must be conscious of this, because the first real evidence the Americans had that something was going on in the test area was a large movement of fighter aircraft to that region.

Mr. Beaton added that the reason for the British decision to move the whole atomic programme across the Atlantic in 1941 was the sensitivity of the gaseous diffusion plant to any kind of bombing.

Signor Albonetti recalled the tremendous emphasis placed on French vulnerability when she began her own nuclear programme. He expected to see a more political policy from China.

M. Laloy thought "exceedingly docile" was going rather far; but the problem did exist and there was something in Mr. Beaton's argument.

M. Vernant thought Mr. Beaton was right, especially in the present international situation. Going back to General Beaufre's reference to a possible American bombing of Tonkin to open the way for negotiations on Indo-China, such attacks need not be limited to Tonkin but could possibly be directed against the mainland. The existence of so vulnerable a target as a gaseous diffusion plant must place China in a position of extreme vulnerability for some time.

M. Laloy called to mind Stalin's policy at the time when Russia was developing her atomic bomb, the Russian inferiority complex which showed itself in an expansionist policy although at the same time she avoided any direct conflict with the United States.

M. Vernant, pursuing M. Laloy's line of argument, said that in the short term, therefore, the Chinese would have an interest in avoiding hostilities, even of a conventional nature, with India, for instance, in the sense that an undertaking by Britain to come to India's aid, even with purely conventional means, could constitute such a grave threat to China's nuclear development.

Dr. Gasteyger had two points in mind. First, the Chinese evaluation of how the Americans would react. He was convinced that the Chinese do believe the Americans are in the midst of a great strategic debate and that they should be cautious; but in the long run the Chinese believe their kind of revolutionary action will pay off and the Americans will not have any effective counter-measures against it.

Secondly, taking up M. Laloy's argument, he thought there was a parallel to be drawn between Soviet policy at that time and Chinese policy now. So long as China feels too weak to negotiate on an equal basis she will continue with a fairly aggressive policy.

Mr. Buchan thought this was probably right. But the possibility must be taken into account, with China pursuing an aggressive policy and building up an embryo nuclear capability, of the American inhibitions against using the bomb against China decreasing, particularly since countries which would have come to China's support (such as India) would during this period be more and more alarmed.

Dr. Gasteyger objected that this had not happened vis-a-vis the USSR. He did not think the American inhibition against using nuclear weapons would grow weaker. And he expected the Chinese to be cautious enough not to provoke America.

Professor Howard suggested that an "aggressive" policy could cover a number of very different things. An increasingly political policy on the part of China in all the Asian states (as Signor Albonetti envisaged) - the use of influence and subversion and nuclear blackmail - would be something different from an American aggressive policy, especially if that involved an initial strike against the Chinese heartland. He added that he found the idea that a sovereign state could be prevented from developing a weapons system by force very odd indeed.

Mr. Buchan said it was a question of one act of piracy knocking the Chinese back for twenty years.

M. Laloy commented that such an act could well reconcile China and the USSR for all time.

He suggested a distinction should be drawn between the effects of China's nuclear capability on the world level and on the local level, the Asian states, where she could use this capability as an instrument of policy. On the world level the problem was not urgent because China did not yet constitute a nuclear threat to Britain and France, let alone the United States; it was hard to conceive of a Chinese deterrent before 1970. But on the local level, which included India, we came up against the problem mentioned earlier of how to give assurance to non-nuclear countries threatened by China's nuclear capability and to what extent an alignment of these states can be expected.

This second aspect, the local level, involved two kinds of problem: first, the Chinese revolutionary doctrine, the pursuit of an aggressive policy under the umbrella of the bomb, the subversive policy as pursued in Vietnam, the Philippines, Indonesia etc. The second kind of problem was less clear: the problem of a conventional Chinese attack in a position of relative strength such as she mounted against India. It was here that the argument in Mr. Beaton's paper applied most clearly. For subversion China would be in a favourable position, because she was able to create a state of internal revolution in the weak Asian states without being directly involved, and her nuclear capability would strengthen her position. But it would not be so easy for her to mount a conventional attack against a relatively stable country like India; thus her capacity for direct action would not be enhanced.

General Beaufre supported M. Laloy.

Signor Albonetti felt that the fact of the Chinese bomb not being a white bomb was of tremendous significance, particularly in relation to the third world. Consider the outcry which would have been raised from that quarter if Italy, say, had tested a bomb, compared to the virtually negative reaction to the Chinese test. The inferiority complex of the third world had been lifted simply because a power which was neither rich nor white had achieved nuclear status.

M. Vernant raised what he considered the fundamental question: would other Asian countries, notably India or Japan, now decide to produce nuclear weapons?

Mr. Buchan said the situations of India and Japan were very different. Everyone who has studied the situation in Japan agrees that the question of her developing her own bomb could not even be raised at the present stage without precipitating a civil war. The feeling against nuclear weapons was growing, not diminishing. In India there was quite a vocal school of thought advocating an Indian bomb, and India had built herself the kind of nuclear power programme that made it very easy to go for a plutonium bomb relatively cheaply and in a relatively short time. But the whole of the establishment in India appeared to be against contemplating the idea. Moreover considering the Indian economic and financial situation, and the relative costs of the French programme, the strain of acquiring even a fairly short-range means of delivery, apart from the investment in ancillary programmes, would be enormous. No doubt there would be a great debate in India; but Mr. Buchan felt that the pressure was for some great power arrangement with her rather than for an indigenous programme.

However, one factor affecting the Indian decision would be the means of delivery chosen by China. Mr. Beaton had argued in his paper that China was more likely to go for a family of missiles than aircraft. If this happened, a Chinese delay until she had a 2,000 mile missile would complicate things for India and neighbouring countries, and would put the costs of their becoming a nuclear power higher than if China would base her delivery capability on aircraft.

General Beaufre commented that so far as the means of delivery was concerned there was no need for anything complicated. Obviously the Chinese did not have much of a bomb - an ordinary aircraft would suffice to make an atomic demonstration. If they did decide to go for missiles, they would face the very difficult technological problem of miniaturising the warhead, as well as of developing the rocket.

Mr. Beaton agreed about the problem involved: they would either have to decide how much success they would have with miniaturisation before starting to develop rockets, which was very much a gamble, or they would have to go for a missile to carry a very large warhead which would be obsolete after they have achieved miniaturisation.

Mr. Buchan suggested it must be of assistance to the Chinese to know that four countries have miniaturised atomic devices down to warhead size over a certain space of time.

Mr. Beaton agreed, if the size and weight of the warhead were known. He supposed the Chinese did have this information.

M. Vernant brought the discussion back to the political aspect. Suppose neither Japan nor India decided to become nuclear powers. This would leave a nuclear power vacuum in Asia. Everyone seemed agreed that this vacuum must be filled by some system of guarantee by the great powers. The question was, which powers would give this guarantee, and in what form? He took it for granted that the United States would not wish to act as the sole guarantor; she would want to include Britain, and M. Vernant assumed this was one reason for Britain retaining part of her nuclear capability. He did not believe France would participate, and he was doubtful about the Soviet Union. Thus it looked like an Anglo-American guarantee: something might ^{about} come through the United Nations, but this was a very long-term possibility.

He wondered what effect such a guarantee would have upon Britain's interest in European questions.

Professor Howard said Britain had always been conscious of her dual responsibilities. The responsibility in the Far East was different, but it did not make Britain less conscious of her responsibility in Europe. The real problem was the deployment of forces, which she has always faced but which might become intensified.

General del Marmol wondered whether the long-term threat to Australia ought not to be considered.

M. Vernant replied that Australia was protected by the United States, and to a certain extent by Britain.

He resumed the thread of his argument. The only countries involved were Japan, India and possibly Indonesia. Everyone agreed about the aversion in Japan to nuclear power and military power in general. If this aversion continued after China developed a nuclear capability, Japan would be faced with two alternatives: to accept an American or a Western guarantee for ever, or to come to terms with China. He was uncertain on two counts: first there was an extreme nationalist reactionary movement in Japan which was growing increasingly important, especially among the youth. This movement might reconsider the strategic position and perhaps come to the conclusion that the military tradition was not alien to Japan. Thus it was conceivable that in the long run there might be a majority opinion in Japan in favour of producing nuclear weapons. Secondly, if the Japanese political situation developed in the opposite direction, then in the long run coming to terms with China might seem less distasteful than accepting a permanent Western guarantee. In regard to India, too, he was not too sure that in the long run a nuclear guarantee, at least from the Western powers only, would prove politically acceptable. And of course the concept of a guarantee on the part of all nuclear powers raised the problem of Russian participation.

M. Laloy said that if the Soviet Union joined in a guarantee it would be meaningless. When any support had to be given it would come down to a Western guarantee.

Dr. Jaquet held that politically it made a difference in Asia whether it was a Western guarantee or a guarantee from all nuclear powers. A purely Western guarantee would in the long run be highly unpopular politically. He believed India would be slightly more in favour of accepting a Western guarantee, but this was not certain.

Mr. Buchan pointed out that a guarantee as such could not exist. It would be a question of either joint contingency planning, or some form of alliance (even if it were not so called), or some declaration of intent such as the Eisenhower doctrine for the Middle East.

Mr. Beaton opined that while the word guarantee would not be honest, it would be useful. Strictly speaking there was no American guarantee to Western Europe, but everyone believed there was and this has been a central political fact for Europe over the past fifteen years.

However, the importance of neutralism as an ideology must be recognised today, and we should not allow any irritation with this doctrine to impede building some "guarantee", whatever we like to call it. One enormous advantage of a guarantee was that it would avoid the local arms races (Egypt-Israel, for instance) which could become terribly dangerous if one party gained nuclear weapons. But a great deal of contingency planning would be required, the kind of intimate planning and discussion pioneered within NATO, lasting over a period of years, to define this guarantee and decide on the response to, say, a nuclear attack on India.

Mr. Beaton wondered if there was any prospect of making use of the United Nations machinery, which was totally acceptable to everybody. If there was no possibility of some form of guarantee being worked out with the Russians, perhaps reserving the right of the individual countries to fulfil the obligation even if the collective machinery refused to act, perhaps through the United Nations machinery we could conceive a structure of international guarantees against any use of nuclear weapons which would become acceptable to all countries, which they would be prepared to discuss, through which the existing useless and unexploited military arrangements in the United Nations might be brought into life.

Dr. Birnbaum reported that confidential information reaching his Institute from Indian sources substantiated the views expressed this afternoon. The Indians were very interested in developing some kind of Russian-American nuclear guarantee, but some people, like Khrishna Menon, considered such an idea too great a strain on the present Soviet leadership in terms of the rapprochement with the United States. The next step for India was the more limited idea of a nuclear guarantee limited to the Western powers but combined not just with a non-proliferation agreement but with some peace-keeping functions of a non-nuclear club or neutral nations.

M. Laloy found some contradictions in Mr. Beaton's idea of using United Nations machinery. This would seem to be quite outside the limit of what we understood by Soviet-American cooperation. Planning would be needed. Any use of a guarantee was in itself an idea which raised great problems, because any state making an attack against a non-nuclear country would by choice make it by conventional means. If you come to the aid of a country that has been attacked, you form an alliance. Could Mr. Beaton really imagine Soviet and American troops cooperating in a combined operation? The concept of a guarantee was not very plausible. Perhaps a possible solution would be to multiply the organisations for crisis management; there could be many intermediate stages between a full nuclear guarantee and the present situation.

Mr. Beaton said the urgent problem was to give a nation a solid substitute for what it might have had when it has signed the Irish resolution.

Signor Spinelli agreed that if a guarantee were to be something negotiated between the United States and the USSR, then of course the difficulties were obvious and probably insurmountable. But he did not see the difficulty in the United States making a unilateral declaration that if an atomic attack were launched against India she would retaliate. This would be more credible because of the inability of China to offer a nuclear threat to the United States. If India were attacked with conventional means, the United States could aid her with conventional means if she wished; that was another question. It was the guarantee of nuclear retaliation which was important.

M. Laloy pointed to the basic objection that this would make India much more dependent politically on the United States.

General Beaufre stressed that the difficulty about a nuclear guarantee was that it could only be valid to the extent that the Russians were prepared to accept it.

Mr. Buchan pointed to a second problem, from which Europe had suffered - making the guarantee credible. The Americans have had to maintain six divisions in Europe solely to preserve the credibility of their guarantee to Europe; the Americans would never give a guarantee that meant keeping another four divisions in the Himalayas.

General Beaufre drew the discussion to a close.

WEDNESDAY MORNING, 6th JANUARY

DISCUSSION ON RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN THE COMMUNIST BLOC

At General Beaufre's suggestion, it was agreed to divide the discussion under the headings set out in Dr. Gasteyger's paper.

(1) Khrushchev's Fall

There was no disposition to challenge Dr. Gasteyger's general line of argument. Mr. Haagerup however put the point whether there was any proof that the unpublished document referred to in the paper actually existed.

Signor Spinelli mentioned a document quoted in the Italian press giving Cuba as the main cause. Herr Nerlich quoted Dr. Ritter's office as being extremely doubtful. M. Laloy said Moscow had denied the existence of a document of 22 points; but he thought something would exist as a basis for discussion.

Dr. Gasteyger had no proof of its existence, but he was sure that some kind of circular letter must have been put round the Soviet party organisation. Because of Khrushchev's strong position in the party, some explanation would have been necessary. Whether the explanation would be correct or not was another matter.

M. Laloy agreed. The question was, what were the details? Obviously this document would have pointed to Khrushchev's defects of personality, his bad behaviour abroad, etc. But the interesting thing was whether the real cause of his dismissal was his conduct of foreign policy, and that we did not know, and we could not rely on statements published in the Italian press about Cuba being the basic cause. Therefore we could only talk to the point of the personal accusations made against Khrushchev that we knew of from the Soviet press.

Signor Albonetti considered Khrushchev's fall as one more proof of the continuing Soviet cult of secrecy. People must have been plotting his downfall for months, yet no-one outside Russia had any inkling that his downfall was imminent. And it was significant that there had been no apparent repercussions. Therefore the cult of secrecy was still a factor to be reckoned with and proved the difficulty of trying to evaluate Soviet policy and motives.

M. Laloy remarked that everyone knew that discussions had been held in the Soviet Union in the summer of 1964, but in knowing that one did not know anything. Khrushchev had been in an exceedingly difficult position after the Hungary crisis of 1956-7 and again after the Cuba crisis of 1962-3; each time his fall was considered likely, and each time he recovered. That his position should have been called in question again was not surprising. But of course, it was absolutely impossible to foretell that he would fall on a given date.

Mr. Beaton thought it fair to ask whether it was in the normal line of speculation for people in the West that a man in Khrushchev's position, with all the elements of power in his hand, could be removed. Whether the circumstances had arisen was open to argument, but how could it have happened?

M. Laloy said that in 1957, and again in 1963, a number of people who had been arch-enemies of Khrushchev returned to power. It was generally supposed that his enemies were organising themselves into key positions around him and that when the time was ripe they would try to get rid of him. But Mr. Beaton's point, how did it happen, was the point nobody was able to clear up. We did not know anything about the Central Committee meeting. The complete dearth of information from any source on this point was the most extraordinary feature. It meant that despite the degree of democratisation in communist procedure a quite extraordinary degree of discipline has been maintained. It was precisely because people did not believe that a man in his position could be removed that so many thought the army or the secret police had been involved. Personally he did not believe so. But the whole affair remained extremely mysterious.

Signor Spinelli agreed about the secrecy. However, we could deduce that he had been defeated by a compromise between his friends and his enemies rather than by his enemies alone. Khrushchev's policy has essentially been maintained and his friends have not been removed from office; therefore it was reasonable to suppose that Khrushchev's staunchest supporters sacrificed him in a compromise agreement with his opponents.

M. Laloy agreed with Signor Spinelli, although we still could not say how it was done.

From the point of view of the consequences of his fall, how should we judge Khrushchev's policy? The point was well made in the paper, that he was courageous enough to initiate new methods but was incapable of achieving effective results because of a basic tendency always to put purely Party considerations first. In the field of foreign policy, he expected the new leadership to continue in the same direction, although with more intelligence and less impetuosity and irrationality.

General del Marmol wondered whether Khrushchev's policy had been such a bad thing from the West's point of view. If his successors were more effective, would we like it?

M. Laloy replied that it depended in which direction Soviet policy evolved - towards a more consistent opposition to the West or towards concentration on greater efficiency at home. If the new leaders became more rational in their foreign policy it would be a good thing. But he took General del Marmol's point.

Signor Spinelli said his reactions to Khrushchev's fall were a bit mixed. In the short term, we might be worse off because the new leaders were not so sure of themselves as Khrushchev had been and we could not tell in which direction they would move; but in the long term he thought the prospects for improved East-West relations were brighter and that the peoples in the communist countries would benefit from the efforts which would have to be made for reconciliation within the communist camp.

Professor Howard wondered whether the new leaders were likely to have a better understanding of the nature of the non-communist world than their predecessors. In general, foreign policy was conducted best by established ruling classes who are used to dealing with foreigners. A broadening of the basis of the Soviet Government and a greater degree of democratic sanction could result in a greater tension through a more clumsy conduct of foreign policy.

Dr. Gasteyger thought to some extent it was a question of generations. Khrushchev had travelled quite a lot and one could have expected a better understanding of the non-communist world on his part. Of the new men, Brezhnev was more travelled than Kosygin. But the new leadership was very largely composed of the same men who were in power under Khrushchev. Shelepin was an unknown quantity in this respect. He did not see anyone among the new names who was likely to have a better grasp of the non-communist world.

M. Laloy remarked that in British terms we had different Conservatives in power, not Mr. Wilson replacing Sir Alec. All we could say was that within the Praesidium there are two more or less balanced trends, some people who are relatively realistic and some (like Ilychev) who are dogmatic. We could expect this balance to continue and to be reflected in their conduct of policy, the difference being that the new leaders were less impulsive than Khrushchev and Adzubej was no longer able to interfere with the functioning of their machine the Soviet Government had an enormous staff working on general foreign policy problems in a way that no Western country did.

Mr. Beaton said his personal reaction to the fall was better the devil you know than the devil you don't. But no doubt the change had to come.

He wondered whether Khrushchev had not through the Cuba affair to some extent upset the stable balance of terror by having shown himself totally unprepared to bargain any further in the face of a nuclear threat. Arguably this was a good thing for the West. But it could also be argued that in another crisis the Soviet Union would find itself believing that the Americans believe they can get anything by making a nuclear threat, and to stop this happening the Russians would feel obliged to do something to restore the credibility of their own deterrent. Perhaps Khrushchev's backdown in Cuba had forced the Soviet Union to get rid of him to restore the bargaining basis for the balance of terror.

M. Laloy was sure that Cuba was the origin of his fall.

Dr. Gasteyger thought Cuba was undoubtedly a major cause, but he did not see how it could have been the only one. It took two years to get him out, and Khrushchev was in a very strong position, so there must have been other reasons.

(2) The New Soviet Leadership

General Beaufre asked what had happened to Kozlov.

Dr. Gasteyger and M. Laloy put his disappearance down to ill-health.

General del Marmol came back to Signor Spinelli's point about Khrushchev having been defeated by a compromise between his friends and his enemies. Who were his friends and who were his enemies?

M. Laloy suggested that "friends" and "enemies" was a misnomer. Khrushchev's real enemies were the Stalinists. There were two tendencies in the person of Khrushchev which worked against each other, a tendency to be more realistic and less hidebound by doctrine, and at the same time a tendency to keep emphasising the need to remain loyal to party tenets or to uphold ideology. Now these two tendencies are balanced in the new leadership. The new team bore out the argument in the paper that we should see an improved form of Khrushchevism, not a reversal of Soviet policy. The fact that his fall has not impeded the move towards a greater degree of flexibility within the government and party structure was a sign that his critics were representative of different interests, or different tendencies, rather than "enemies".

Signor Albonetti said that among the uncertainties and secrecy there were some indications of people's relative status; a very reliable indication was the position of photographs in a parade. Using this yardstick, the change in Shelepin's status was the most striking. It was rare to see someone so young increase his power so strikingly. He had stepped right up into the Secretariat, Praesidium and Council of Ministers. He had made the significant visit to Nasser soon after Khrushchev's fall. Signor Albonetti thought Shelepin's position as chief of the secret police had been important: he must have had at least a hand in getting rid of Khrushchev because the support of the secret police would have been essential.

Dr. Gasteyger agreed about the importance of Shelepin: not so much because of his connection with the secret police, however, but because he was still Chairman of the Committee for State and Party Control, a body whose control went right to the top of the party and government hierarchy.

Dr. Gasteyger emphasised as a fundamental point that apart from Khrushchev and Kozlov, and with the addition of Shelepin, the inner group had remained the same.

Dr. Jaquet wondered therefore just how stable the position of the new leadership was.

He raised the question of how far relations with China had contributed to Khrushchev's fall. He thought Togliatti's memorandum was important in that it proved that Khrushchev, not perhaps in his policy towards China but in his handling of the conflict, did not have the support of one of the European parties; perhaps this was the final thing which led to his downfall. Dr. Jaquet would have expected a completely new man to come to the fore, but this has not happened. He wondered what effect the new leaders' failure to establish a modus vivendi with China would have on the Russian position in the communist world. He thought Shelepin's visit to Cairo was important, because he went rather further there than Khrushchev did on relations with the third world. Was this significant from the point of view of the balance of power at the top? And was there any indication of instability or disagreement among Brezhnev, Kosygin and Shelepin?

Dr. Gasteyger thought it too early to say. To a certain extent we should be able to judge their relative positions better when we knew the distribution of duties in the Party secretariat. He felt, however, that one essential condition for stability was to keep separate the posts of leader of the Party and head of the Government.

M. Laloy took up Dr. Jaquet's point. The conflict with China was an issue (although he personally thought Khrushchev's projected visit to West Germany was a more important factor), but it was more from the point of view of the general situation in the communist movement. The Togliatti memorandum did indicate the anarchy in the communist camp. Personally he had expected the plan for a Communist Party conference to be dropped. But after the new leaders failed in a bid for reconciliation with the Chinese they had to try to find a new balance of relations within the camp, not just with the Chinese, and this was their main worry. If the new leadership could establish more equal relations with the other Communist Parties they would have less difficulty in their relations with the Chinese. Khrushchev had been most autocratic and difficult to deal with and had undoubtedly contributed to the worsening of relations between the USSR and the European Communist Parties, and his successors would undoubtedly try to mend matters. However, M. Laloy considered this aspect to be a contributing factor rather than a prime cause of Khrushchev's fall.

Signor Albonetti was convinced that foreign policy issues played a much smaller part in the struggle for power in the USSR than internal policy. Issues such as Cuba and relations with the satellite parties were important, but they were not decisive. Foreign policy in the USSR was much more a matter of edict than of discussion. He was convinced that the real clues to Khrushchev's fall were to be found in the economic crisis, agricultural organisation, and internal policy.

(3) Consequences in Eastern Europe

M. Laloy underlined the position of the Rumanians, which was very interesting and very contradictory. Internally they pursued a very hard Stalinist policy, maintaining rigorous control; but they opposed the Soviet Union on the question of economic integration. They affirmed their autonomy, but were in agreement with the general line of detente. They supported the Chinese against Soviet hegemony. The interesting thing was that they maintained their position even more strongly now; they did not conceal their dislike of Khrushchev, but now he is gone they continue to hold a position mid-way between the Soviet Union and China. M. Laloy thought their main interest was in keeping the dispute between Russia and China going for their own advantage. If a final break did come, he expected them to try to come to terms with the USSR. What they would like most would be a greater degree of polycentrism, in the line of Togliatti. They were waiting to see what happened between China and the USSR, and continuing to put pressure on the USSR to avoid a final break.

This illustrated the fundamental problem of relations between the Soviet Union, China and the satellites which has not been fundamentally changed by Khrushchev's fall. They wanted to see some reconciliation between China and the USSR, but as soon as there were a rapprochement their bargaining position would be affected. Looking at their relationship in terms of a triangle, the bargaining position of the East Europeans depended on keeping the other two sides apart, but not separate. If the Chinese factor were eliminated, they would be dominated by the USSR.

General Beaufre suggested that from the strategic aspect, Sino-Soviet opposition gave freedom of action to the East Europeans in the same way as American-Soviet opposition gave freedom of action to the West Europeans. The neutralisation of the very powerful liberated the less powerful.

M. Laloy dissented from General Beaufre's argument. The two things were entirely different. The East Europeans wanted to maintain two communist dictatorships; Western Europe did not want to support the Soviet Union in the same way. The US-Soviet relationship could not possibly be compared with the Sino-Soviet relationship. He would like to see a rapprochement between the United States and the USSR, not a condominium, because of the fundamental difference in their basic policy, but a type of rapprochement which would improve the prospects for peace.

Signor Spinelli added that a type of rapprochement between the United States and the USSR which had an effect on Western Europe would have the same effect on Eastern Europe, because the real opposition was between the US and the USSR, not between the USSR and China.

M. Laloy pointed out that France made war in Indochina in a period of maximum tension in Europe when she was dependent on the United States. Military dependence did not inhibit her freedom of action then. The situations of Western and Eastern Europe were not comparable.

General Beaufre objected that he was putting forward an idea, not specific cases. However, he maintained that the present system where there were three powers, two nuclear powers which were neutralised and two ideological powers which were relatively neutralised, did confer a certain freedom of action on the other powers.

Mr. Buchan posed the question whether developments like the MLF or ANF were likely to draw East Europe and the USSR closer together, despite the tendency to greater freedom of action.

General del Marmol suggested that the only real cause for alarm in Eastern Europe would be if Germany obtained real authority over nuclear forces in an MLF or ANF; that could present a threat to them - but did anyone seriously believe that Germany would be given such authority? He did not think so.

Professor Howard believed the Poles were unshakably convinced, despite every effort to disabuse them of this notion, that the West did nourish the revanchism and cunning of the Germans who, once they had a foot in the door, would manipulate the force for their own revanchist policies.

Mr. Haagerup referred to the recent Polish proposal at the United Nations for a European security conference; the deputy Foreign Minister had raised the same idea in Copenhagen. The same fears had been expressed about the MLF and German revanchism as had been voiced two years previously. But there had been no suggestion that the effect of the MLF or ANF would be to put East Europe under stronger Soviet domination. Mr. Haagerup believed this supposition was entirely speculative.

M. Laloy quoted a Soviet journalist who had given him three possible Soviet reactions to the formation of an MLF: (1) a diplomatic initiative; (2) collective measures in the Warsaw Pact; (3) an international crisis. This journalist had developed the first possibility only, saying that if a new nuclear organisation in the Atlantic system were launched the Russians would propose holding a big security conference; those who refused to attend would be accused of wanting to make trouble, those who came would be subjected to steady Soviet pressure on this aspect. Soviet policy towards Germany had developed a little in that they no longer believed in the possibility of a war, but the tactic was to play on fears of stronger German influence.

Mr. Buchan wondered how far a MLF would create pressures in East Europe for a similar arrangement.

Professor Howard doubted whether any such pressure would make any difference.

M. Laloy pointed out that it was only the Poles who have this great fear of Germany, not the Hungarians or Rumanians.

General del Marmol did not think the West would have too much to fear if the USSR made some nuclear arrangement with the East Europeans to strengthen their sense of security; dissemination was another matter, of course.

(4) The Sino-Soviet Conflict

Signor Albonetti pointed to the tendency in the communist camp to hide a power struggle under the guise of an ideological struggle. He believed this power struggle would continue, because the fall of Khrushchev did not change the basic situation. China was an expansionist power; she had already demonstrated this against India, and indeed all her international activities proclaimed it. She had many points of conflict with the USSR - frontier disputes, conflict in the third world, etc. Logically, with her economic backwardness, China should have waited twenty years before doing what she has done in Africa. Her effort to become a nuclear power was further proof of her determination to become a great power at no matter what cost. It was very difficult to see why a country in such an exposed position should demonstrate such a will towards expansion, nevertheless China did so.

M. Laloy opposed this idea of an irrational will to expand on the part of China. Between 1953 and 1958 China's policy towards the Soviet Union was one of co-existence. At the moment in terms of language relations were hostile. Yet in terms of actual deeds, although there was the present problem of Vietnam, China had not been expansionist; she had not tried to take Formosa, for instance, nor did she push things too far in Korea.

Mr. Buchan entirely agreed. China was ideologically expansionist; but there was no evidence that she was territorially expansionist. This picture of China as expansionist was derived almost entirely from Soviet literature.

Professor Howard added that there was a highly local expansionism in Asia which was easy to define and discount. From China's point of view, the annexation of Tibet was a reassertion of sovereignty, the idea of re-establishing authority over the old territories which she dominated in the past. Both Russia and China believed that communism should extend to the limits of their empire.

Mr. Buchan and M. Laloy concurred.

Dr. Gasteyger saw two Chinese aims: (1) to become a great power in her own right, which mainly affected the United States; and (2) to become a great communist power and if possible the leading communist power, and that mainly affected the Soviet Union.

Signor Albonetti argued that these aims could not be separated. His point was that in every field the Chinese have taken enormous risks in order to expand their power because in the past the USSR was an expansionist power and China did not want to become a satellite like all the other communist countries. But this was not a question of ideology, this was a power conflict that was quite mysterious.

General Beaufre saw a difference between Soviet strategy and Chinese strategy; the aim was the same, but the methods were different. One was the method developed by the USSR for winning over the United States, the other was the development of action in the third world to neutralise or deter the United States. The two methods were divorced because they were based on different premises; conflict arose from the fact that Mao considered himself as Pope. There was another element, the fact that China poses a long-term threat to the Soviet Union; the USSR showed awareness of this by cutting off aid.

M. Laloy commented on the triangular relationship of the United States, the USSR and China. What struck him was that the Sino-Soviet crisis has not so far affected relations between the United States and the USSR. And although there have been crises in US-Soviet relations during the period of the Sino-Soviet crisis - Berlin, for example, there has been no improvement in Chinese relations with the United States nor any progress on the Formosa question. There have been many contacts between China and the US, but never the slightest move from the Chinese side to moderate their opposition.

General Beaufre believed this followed from the different strategic concepts held by the two countries: China favoured a risky strategy served by a prudent policy, while the USSR was more cautious on strategy but belligerent on policy. But this was entirely a question of method, based on differing appreciations of the situation.

General del Marmol came back to the concrete problem in the Sino-Soviet conflict. It seemed that one cause of Khrushchev's fall was his call for a Communist Party conference, yet the new leaders were apparently going ahead with this conference. Did this mean that the Russians believed they would achieve a measure of reconciliation with the Chinese, or that relations would deteriorate further?

Dr. Gasteyger thought the prospects for reconciliation very dim. He did not understand why they had called this conference for 15th March, because there was no chance of China participating. The conference was bound to be decisive: if the Russians wanted to clarify the position in the communist world they would go through with it, and that would mean a split; if they wanted to avoid a split they would look for an excuse to put off the conference.

Signor Spinelli could only conclude that the Soviet leaders wanted a final break. Casting about for a reason, he thought the explanation lay in the Soviet realisation that Marxist doctrine could not prescribe for the nuclear age; they did not need a revolutionary perspective but to avoid their own destruction, and they saw the central problem as the maintenance of peaceful coexistence with the United States. The Soviet Communists were seeking to free themselves from their revolutionary past, to play the democratic and political and diplomatic game with other countries. The Chinese, on the other hand, believed that in this stability the chance for revolution was greater, and therefore they adopted an aggressive attitude towards the United States although they wanted to avoid a direct conflict. But the Russians feared that any conflict may lead to major war. Thus they wanted a conference and wanted a split.

Signor Albonetti said it was clear the two countries were at a different stage of development, had different interests, and appreciated the dangers of nuclear war in a different sense. The USSR was beginning to face the problems of a country with a certain political and economic maturity; she knew what she stood to lose and was trying to change her method. But this was a matter of tactics, it has nothing to do with ideology.

M. Laloy did not believe the USSR wanted a split with China, he thought she wanted a modus vivendi. It was very difficult to explain, but he did not share Signor Spinelli's view.

General Beaufre wondered in this context why the Russians accepted the Chinese proposal for a conference on the control of nuclear weapons.

Mr. Haagerup raised the question how far it was possible for the USSR to continue to support these Chinese suggestions for world discussions and at the same time to promote pragmatic arms control measures in Central Europe.

M. Laloy commented that the USSR supported the Chinese call for a conference after the United States had refused - so she knew it would never be held. Thus there was no real contradiction.

Dr. Gasteyger agreed; the USSR would not really want such a conference. He found more interesting, however, the fact that immediately afterwards the Chinese put out a lengthy statement on disarmament which on many points, such as the test ban, atom-free zones and nuclear proliferation and major issues of arms control, was different from the Soviet view.

M. Laloy remarked on the fact that there was a great deal of support for China in her conflict with the Soviet Union which did not extend to many aspects of China's policy. The idea of gradual disarmament, for instance, was now accepted by many Africans and Asians. In this sense he found some difficulty in accepting Dr. Gasteyger's point on page 12 of his paper that the Chinese "see themselves on the winning side". What did they win by the extremist position which they have taken in the foreign policy and disarmament fields, and by the subversion and guerrilla activities they have supported which were not popular anywhere except in South Vietnam? The Chinese could have taken an anti-Soviet line without adopting these extremist positions which were opposed by many people in the communist movement and hardly helped China's cause.

Dr. Gasteyger explained that the Chinese were winning in the sense of strengthening their influence within the communist movement. If the USSR had convened the Communist Party conference two years ago they would have won a great majority against China, but since then support for the Soviet Union has dwindled steadily. The Soviet decision to press on with this conference was at least partly due to this loss of support. Already the Chinese have succeeded in splitting some parties that do not support them outright.

M. Laloy fully agreed that the Chinese were more than maintaining their position in their challenge to Soviet domination of the communist movement. However, he maintained his view that by adopting such extremist policies China was denying herself even greater success in her bid for communist leadership.

Professor Howard asked about the Soviet attitude towards the apparent Chinese success in Africa. Did the various communist groups cooperate among themselves unofficially like the missionaries from different Christian churches used to do, regardless of their leaders' doctrinal differences, or had the Sino-Soviet split gone so far that the USSR was uninterested in Chinese success?

M. Laloy found it very hard to say; the whole picture in the third world was very confused. In Algeria, for instance, they were pro-Soviet and pro-Chinese at the same time. The only area where a clear difference between China and the USSR was apparent was Asia. But in Africa, were there even any native communists?

Dr. Jaquet saw Zanzibar as one place where the Russians and Chinese were cooperating, even at the moment. But the conflict generally in Africa was very open.

Mr. Buchan saw it as something of a conflict between the real and the ideal. If a country was denied a piece of equipment, say, by the USSR it tended to approach the Chinese who promised to supply it. Nothing much happened - the evidence of actual physical aid was small - but he guessed this was how the game was played.

Signor Albonetti, taking up M. Laloy's point, asked whether in Asia Russia would automatically side with the enemies of China, since she may see danger in the increasing influence of China in that area.

M. Laloy said not automatically. This did not apply to Indonesia. India was different, because India has been attacked by China; but one could not say that in Laos, for instance, the USSR was automatically against China.

Signor Albonetti agreed "automatically" was too strong. But he thought India presented a major challenge to the USSR, in the sense that she could not afford to see Chinese domination of India to an extent which would increase the expansionist power of China at her own borders.

He recalled that when Russia launched her campaign against Tito, one of the main causes was said to be that Tito was trying to form a federation of Balkan states, and this was considered a danger to Soviet security. This was wrapped up in a conflict of ideologies, although it was really a conflict of power. He did not want to deny the power of ideology, however: there was certainly an inter-relation.

M. Laloy held that the power element and the ideological element could not be separated; they reacted on one another so strongly that they must be taken together.

Signor Albonetti accepted this. However, he maintained his point that the Russians tend to stress the ideological conflict in order to avoid that conflicts of power could exist among Socialist countries.

(5) The Soviet Union and the West

Professor Howard wondered whether the actual policy of the Communist Parties within the Western countries was a factor left out of the paper. To what extent was Soviet policy towards the West in general ideological terms determined by the need to preserve a degree of support from the native Communist Parties?

Signor Spinelli did not believe that Soviet policy took account to any significant extent of the West European Communist Parties. An individual Communist such as Togliatti, who had lived in the USSR for 15 years, might exercise a personal influence, but that was all.

Dr. Gasteyer believed that if the Western Communist Parties could develop political criteria and show some independence from Moscow, their policies would become more realistic and flexible and they would become more significant in their respective countries.

Signor Spinelli replied that this was much more a matter of difficulties within the Parties than differences in relations with Moscow. In the Italian Party today most of the Stalinists were to be found in the rank and file of the party, because adherence to the old doctrine gave a sense of security. This was a major problem for the Communists.

M. Laloy said that in terms of the West, it was only the French and Italian Parties which really interested the Soviet Union. He believed that Moscow did give some weight to their position in determining her policy. He agreed about the problem within the Communist Parties' own ranks. This in turn affected their policy towards the detente, for example.

General del Marmol recalled Signor Spinelli's point that the Russians wanted a break with the Chinese. What would the effect of this be on the Italian Party, for instance? Would it weaken their support?

Signor Spinelli said that at the time of the Khrushchev crisis the campaign was in process for the local elections, in which the Communists made heavy gains. The link between the Communists and the voters was therefore different. A split in world communism would undoubtedly have very serious consequences within the Italian Party, although it would involve the leadership rather than the rank and file. He believed it was for this reason that Togliatti had spoken of the need for a radical communist regrouping so that if there were a split the party would not be so identified with what had happened before.

Dr. Birnbaum wondered to what extent recent developments in the communist bloc had changed the internal pattern of action of the West European Communist Parties. In Sweden it had tended to make the Party more respectable, because it gave them an opportunity of displaying a degree of independence of Moscow (by criticising the conflict with the Chinese and the fall of Khrushchev), thereby trying to present the image of a general left-wing socialist party rather than a Moscow-directed party.

Signor Spinelli said this search for respectability was the reason why the Italian Party had recently proposed dissolving the Socialist and Communist Parties and forming a new party.

M. Laloy said the French Communist Party had held discussions with the Socialists; they wanted some understanding, especially for the coming elections, but he did not see a popular front in prospect. The French Communist Party was so firmly entrenched it had not been shaken. The Party Secretary had expressed gratification at Khrushchev's departure, and immediately afterwards the Party intellectuals sent to Moscow for an explanation. It seemed the line was a little critical.

Dr. Gasteyger observed that most Communist Parties in West Europe seem to have become more respectable, partly through being more national parties and partly through saying that they now want power by peaceful means and not by revolution.

Signor Albonetti did not accept that because Communist Parties talked of adopting a national way to communism they were independent. This was the classic Communist tactic to gain power.

General Beaufre brought the discussion back to Soviet relations with the West, particularly in regard to Germany and the MLF.

M. Laloy said that before October, it was possible to envisage a Soviet tactic of attempting to divide the West by means of a rapprochement with Germany. But he thought the new leadership were looking more for rapprochement with the United States and Britain and eventually with France. For the moment they were more orientated towards countries outside Germany. He anticipated diplomatic activity in the Western capitals, but Soviet policy was still in the phase of maintaining the division of Germany and he did not expect any modification of this policy for the present.

Mr. Buchan did not see any new British initiatives in prospect. Harold Wilson had made it very clear that he would put the NATO alliance first and not try to imitate Harold Macmillan's initiative of 1959. He was very proud of his contacts with the new Soviet leaders, and might be under some pressure from his own Party to hold talks (witness the invitation to Kosygin); but he did not see himself in the role of honest broker.

Professor Howard supported Mr. Buchan.

Mr. Beaton thought that Harold Wilson may not feel any conflict between initiatives in Moscow and loyalty to the alliance, and, being very clever and experienced, he might even be able to spy a way forward that did not appear to President Johnson. Mr. Beaton could imagine Harold Wilson in the role of a pace-setter, although he did not think he would establish a separate British influence. However, it must be recognised that Harold Wilson had made his reputation in the Labour Party as an opponent of German rearmament; while modified, his suspicion of Germany was still there. This would create the temptation to talk about thinning-out in Central Europe, for example, which could lead to worse relations within the alliance and especially with the Germans.

Mr. Buchan was not so sure: he thought Harold Wilson was a man cast by history for a major volte-face in policy or doctrine.

M. Laloy saw signs of a strong stimulus from the Soviet side to find new ways and means, particularly in the form of stimulating European leaders into making initiatives, which must be taken into account.

Asked by Dr. Gasteyger about the French Government's position, M. Laloy said he had no knowledge of any initiative on relations with the USSR. With regard to the People's Democracies, quite a different line of contacts was being pursued; these were of the normal type, with the emphasis on trade. He had noticed some activity from the Soviet side, but Paris was still referring to the USSR as a totalitarian state. The two Government's policies did meet on certain issues, such as the MLF and Vietnam and the general propositions of the French Government towards the Atlantic system, but on these issues the French position was established and not related to any understanding with the USSR. Of course if there were any progress in the Soviet-American dialogue and Harold Wilson joined in, that might be a different question.

General Beaufre said this raised the question of Soviet-American relations. He invited comments on the implications of President Johnson's invitation to the Soviet leaders.

Signor Albonetti thought the intention was to acquaint the new Soviet leadership with the realities of the American way of life.

M. Vernant thought it had to do with Vietnam.

M. Laloy thought a desire to know the personal characteristics of the man on the other side was one aspect. Another was to pursue their permanent ideas of discussions on disarmament, non-dissemination and problems of arms control. In regard to Vietnam, he thought the Americans now judged it very difficult to see what the USSR will do.

M. Vernant maintained that there might be some intermediary role for the USSR, or perhaps the Americans wanted to make clear to the Russians their intention to stand firm on Vietnam and their hope that the Russians will not make things worse.

Mr. Buchan saw a great need for some direct United States-China contact. It was highly unnatural for two powers of their size not to be in some sort of dialogue. He saw this as likely. The Warsaw link was very weak - perhaps that would be strengthened, or some new procedure would be found.

M. Laloy observed that it depended on the Chinese; contrary to the general impression, the Americans were ready to do something.

General Beaufre drew the discussion to a close, expressing the general appreciation of Dr. Gasteyger's workmanlike paper.

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