



NATO and YOUTH

NATO INFORMATION SERVICE PARIS

N A T O

and

YOUTH

N A T O A N D Y O U T H

INITIATION OF NATO YOUTH PROGRAMME

When, in December 1956, the North Atlantic Council approved the Report of the Three Ministers on Non-Military Co-operation in NATO and in so doing opened the way ahead for NATO's work with youth, it was in fact endorsing proposals originally put forward by representatives of youth organizations themselves. Already, prior to the work of the Committee of Three, NATO had organized Youth Conferences at its headquarters and the one which took place in July 1956, and to which the Committee of Three referred in its report, produced a complete set of recommendations which were later taken as the blueprint for the programme that was to become one of NATO's most challenging information activities.

Paragraph 77 of the Report on Non-Military Co-operation reads as follows :

"Governments should actively promote closer relations between NATO and youth

organizations and a specialist should be added to the International Staff in this connection. Conferences under NATO auspices of representatives of youth organizations, such as that of July 1956, should be held from time to time."

It is no accident that representatives of the organizations directly interested in NATO action in the youth field should have seen their proposals so largely put into effect. It has been a characteristic of this programme since its inception that the initiative for specific activities as well as the responsibility for carrying them out lies with the youth organizations themselves. The role of the NATO International Secretariat is to assist the organizers in the execution of their projects, insofar as it lies within its means.

GETTING THE PROGRAMME UNDER WAY

After a minimum period of experiment, the programme very rapidly got under way. NATO's contacts in the preceding years with political and other youth organizations, as well as with students, had revealed a widespread desire to know more about NATO, and about what youth in other countries was thinking, saying and learning about the vital issues of the day. Thus NATO did not have to create interest in its youth programme; it already existed, as did the organizations willing and able to translate this interest into terms of practical activities.

While the principle of increasing and strengthening NATO's contacts with youth had



Getting a programme under way

been thoroughly endorsed by all authorities concerned, including Foreign Ministers, the funds made available to carry out such a programme were from the outset very limited. It was therefore obvious that NATO could not engage in wide-scale activities involving all categories of youth in all the member countries. Some selective criteria had to be applied in order to permit the best possible use of the means available. In this connection, it was considered that students and leaders of youth organizations, having a keen interest in international affairs, would make the best use of experience gained from contacts with NATO. This, in fact, was borne out by the speed with which the programme gained impetus, each activity sparking the initiative for several others.

INTERNATIONAL SEMINARS AND CONFERENCES

Broadly speaking, the NATO youth programme as it has developed consists of a series of regular - mostly annual - international events, backed up by an ever-increasing flow of national activities whose frequency varies from country to country. In 1964, both national and international activities increased by 30% over the total for the previous year. The advantages of international participation are obvious; but the opportunity for young people to exchange views with their counterparts of various nationalities while at the same time getting first-hand knowledge of the problems and interests of the country where the event takes place, have to be balanced against high costs

of participants' travel, simultaneous interpretation and so on. Host countries normally finance participants' living expenses during the meeting, while participating organizations subsidise their representatives' travel. NATO's role consists generally in helping out with interpretation and lectures. A pattern of international activities has emerged since the beginning of the youth programme : every two years there is an Atlantic Conference of Young Political Leaders; each year are held a student seminar and a conference of youth leaders; in addition, seminars for groups of young trade unionists and farmers as well as a study camp for students are organized.

The Atlantic Conference of Political Youth is the direct descendant of the 1956 meeting, whose recommendations were to have such far-reaching effects.. This event brings together some 100 young politicians from all member countries for a programme of lectures and discussions. Conferences have so far taken place in Paris (1958), Washington (1960), Bonn (1963) and in 1965 the Conference will be in Oxford. Among the achievements of the conferences can be noted the setting-up of Atlantic Youth Committees in 12 of the 15 NATO countries, which together form the Atlantic Political Youth Association. Some of the political youth leaders who have attended these conferences now hold ministerial posts in the governments of their respective countries.

Student Seminars have so far been conducted (under the auspices of the Ministries for Foreign Affairs of the countries concerned)

in Norway (1959), Turkey (1960), Greece (1961), the Netherlands (1962), the Federal Republic of Germany (1963), Italy (1964) and in 1965 the Seminar in Iceland.

Three to four students nearing the final stages of their studies at the Faculties of Political Sciences and International Relations, Economics and Law are normally invited from each member country to these student seminars. It is interesting also to note that some students, following participation in international seminars, have not only chosen aspects of NATO as subjects for their theses, but are now serving as diplomats in their respective national services. A programme of a typical seminar (held in the Netherlands) is given in Annex I.

Seminars for youth leaders have taken place in the following countries :

1959 - France (Institut National d'Education Populaire de France); 1960 - United Kingdom (National British Committee of the World Assembly of Youth); 1961 - Norway (NIU - Norwegian Committee for International Information and Youth Work); 1962 - Iceland (Vardberg); 1963 - Turkey (TMGT - National Organization of Turkish Youth); 1964 - Luxembourg (Cercle des Jeunesses Politiques). In 1965 again in Norway.

Two youth leaders from each member country take part in these seminars. A point worth mentioning is that the courses for youth leaders are designed for representatives of



Seminar for youth leaders

either political or non-political organizations; among the latter have figured a number of young members of their countries' Parliaments. Annex II shows the programme for a typical seminar for youth leaders (held in Iceland).

Other international seminars have been conducted. The Danish Youth Council and the Atlantic Youth Association of Iceland (Vardberg) have organized activities for young trade unionists. The Association Française pour la Communauté Atlantique (under the auspices of its subsidiary AFCA-Etudiant) holds a summer camp for students every year in the South of France. The Norwegian Committee for International Information and Youth Work has so far organized two seminars for groups of young farmers from various member countries. NATO is also investigating the possibilities of extending its youth programme to sections of youth, not already covered.

NATIONAL ACTIVITIES

Complementing the international meetings are the national courses which, starting modestly in 1959, have now reached a level where more activities are proposed than can be catered for in NATO's budget. Since the beginning of the youth programme, over one hundred week-end courses or national conferences have taken place in all member countries. Here the formula is very often that of a week-end course, for which NATO may provide a small financial contribution based on the number of participants

and, when requested, assists in finding lecturers. The courses are designed to show NATO in relation to European institutions and, in a more general context, to the Atlantic Community as a whole. Naturally, the particular position of the country concerned within NATO - its contribution to the Alliance and the advantages derived therefrom - form the central theme around which the discussion is conducted. National courses are the mainstay of the whole NATO youth programme; they are an essential first step in any attempt at fruitful international exchanges and provide invaluable experience for both organizers and participants.

EXCHANGE PROGRAMME

In addition, there is an exchange programme, under which groups of political and non-political youth leaders, as well as young trade unionists, students and young university lecturers, are invited to participate in study tours of one or more of the member countries. Youth groups taking part in exchange programmes are normally required to cover their own travel expenses, but NATO provides them with per diems to help cover costs of accommodation.

Study tours to Paris take the form of a series of briefings, both at NATO Headquarters and SHAPE, on the problems confronting the Atlantic Alliance and its member countries. Participants are encouraged to pass on the information acquired during their visit on their return to their own countries.

Since the programme began in 1961, more than thirty groups of young people have taken part in study tours.

HOW THE MEETINGS ARE CONDUCTED

NATO exists by virtue of the fact that fifteen free countries found themselves compelled to combine to defend their freedom and their democratic institutions; any enquiry into its nature and the need for its continued existence can only be carried out in the context of a wider - European and Atlantic - framework. Therefore participants are encouraged to study the problems confronting the Alliance, and also review the latest developments in the national field - member countries' attitudes, not only towards each other, but also to the outside world and the developing countries. This is the starting point for discussions that range over the whole field of the Alliance, and the democratic institutions that it was created to defend.

In addition to its purely NATO context, the agenda for a typical meeting may cover specialised European agencies in addition to the history and foreign policy of the host country and its role in the Alliance. But as important - or more important - as any lectures are the debates carried on in discussion groups, at table and in the evenings. This exchange of ideas between young people of different countries, different backgrounds, different political convictions, many of whom will soon find themselves in positions of

responsibility in their own countries, is the essence of what NATO is trying to do: create an opportunity for participants to thrash out problems for themselves and among themselves. It would be wrong to suppose that all participants in these meetings approve unreservedly of every aspect of the Alliance. Often the criticism of those who disagree radically with some action or principle of NATO provokes the most constructive discussion.

Since the Atlantic Community is still in the making, NATO attaches considerable importance to informing the youth of its countries, who may be the leaders of the future. In fact, a number of participants in NATO-sponsored activities already play active roles in the public life of their respective countries.

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ANNEX 1

PROGRAMME OF A TYPICAL STUDENT SEMINAR, HELD AT OOSTERBEEK, THE NETHERLAND*

Saturday

Arrival of participants

Sunday

Morning - free

Afternoon - excursion to Kröller-Müller Museum

Monday

10.00 hours : official opening of the seminar
by the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign
Affairs

11.30 : general introduction by the Chairman
of the seminar

14.30 : forming of discussion groups

16.00 : lecture on "The salient character-
istics of the Netherlands" (*)

20.00 : documentary films on the Netherlands

Tuesday

09.30 : lecture on "The foreign policy of the
USSR" by a former Ambassador of the Nether-
lands to Moscow

14.30 : meeting of discussion groups

Wednesday

09.30 : lecture on : "Atlantic political co-operation" by the Head of the combined Permanent Netherlands Delegation to the North Atlantic Council and the OECD

14.30 : discussion groups

20.00 : lecture on "Holland's struggle against the water"

Thursday

09.30 : lecture on "The Political aspects of Atlantic military co-operation", by the Secretary General of the Atlantic Treaty Association

13.30 : excursion to Gouda

Friday

09.30 : lecture on "Parliamentary control in intergovernmental Organizations" by a Member of Parliament (Belgium)

14.30 : discussion groups

20.00 : plenary session : debate on the conclusions reached in the discussion groups concerning the political part of the subject

Saturday

Excursion to the Zuyder Zee project

Sunday

Free

Monday

09.30 : lecture on Atlantic co-operation in the

economic field, by the Head of the European Integration Department in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

14.30 : discussion groups

18.00 : reception by the municipal authorities of Renkum

20.30 : films on Atlantic co-operation

Tuesday

09.30 : lecture on : "Underdeveloped countries as an economic problem"

14.30 : discussion groups

20.00 : plenary session : discussion of the conclusions regarding economic co-operation

Wednesday

09.30 : lecture on : "The spiritual values of the Western World", by the Principal of "Europa College" at Bruges

14.30 : discussion groups

20.00 : concert at the Kröller-Müller Museum (by the Gaudeamus Quartet)

Thursday

09.30 : lecture on : "Atlantic co-operation in the educational field" by the Minister Plenipotentiary for International Cultural Relations in the Royal Ministry of National Education and Culture (Belgium)

14.30 : discussion groups

Friday

09.30 : plenary session : discussion of the final conclusions

11.30 : the Chairman's conclusions

13.30 : excursion to Rotterdam

19.30 : farewell dinner at the "Euromast" restaurant in Rotterdam

Saturday

Excursion to Amsterdam

Sunday

Departure

* This seminar took place in August 1962. Each lecture was followed by a question and answer period and group discussions.

ANNEX II

PROGRAMME OF A TYPICAL INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR FOR YOUTH LEADERS HELD AT REYKJAVIK, ICELAND *

The theme of the Seminar was "The next Atlantic Decade".

Sunday

09.15 : Participants report to NATO Headquarters (Porte Dauphine, Paris XVIe.)

11.00 : Take-off for Keflavik, Iceland

17.00 : Arrival Keflavik

19.30 : Dinner at Keflavik Officers' Club
Explanation of programme

Monday

09.00 : Tour of NATO base at Keflavik
Briefing on the base

12.00 : Luncheon and discussion

13.00 : Departure for Reykjavik

15.00 : Formal opening of conference at the University of Iceland. Address by the Prime Minister of Iceland.

15.30 : Address by the Chairman of the Association for Western Co-operation.

16.00 : Departure for Bifrost Hotel (site of conference for three days)

Tuesday

09.00 : Lecture by Foreign Minister of Iceland on "Iceland's Foreign Policy"

10.30 : Lecture by a staff member of the NATO Information Service, Paris, on "Why NATO"

14.00 : Formation of Committees and discussion groups

16.00 : Lecture by the Chief of the Field Liaison Service, Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, Paris

20.30 : Group discussion

Wednesday

09.00 : Lecture on "Political aspects of NATO" by a Conservative Member of Parliament, Iceland

10.30 : Lecture on "Iceland and economic development in Western Europe" by the Secretary of the Progressive Party, Iceland

14.00 : Lecture on "The EEC and its future development" by the Deputy Chief, London Office, European Communities

16.00 : Lecture on "What the future holds for Atlantic countries" by the Delegate-General of the French Association for the Atlantic Community

20.30 : Group discussion

Thursday

09.00 : Plenary session - drafting of final communiqués, final debate, winding-up by the NATO Youth Officer

14.00 : Departure for Reykjavik via Thingvellir (site of first Icelandic Parliament in 930)

Evening free

Friday

18.30 : Reception given by the Foreign Minister of Iceland at Government House, Reykjavik

23.00 : Departure for Keflavik

Saturday

09.00 : Departure for Paris

(*) This seminar took place in 1962. It was organized by Vardberg (The Atlantic Youth Association of Iceland). Each lecture was followed by a question and answer period.

ANNEX III

YOUTH MOVEMENTS AND VOLUNTARY ORGANIZATIONS WHICH HAVE ARRANGED NATO ACTIVITIES

Belgium

Commission de contact des organisations de jeunesse politique, 86 rue Baron de Castro, Brussels 4.

Europresse, 51 avenue des Saisons, Brussels 5.

Service National de la Jeunesse, 171 rue de la Loi, Brussels 4.

Canada

Canadian Committee for the World Assembly of Youth, 45 Rideau, Ottawa 2.

Canadian Union of Students, 45 Rideau, Suite 406, Ottawa 2.

World University Service of Canada, 2 Bancroft Avenue, Toronto 5.

Young Progressive Conservatives of Canada
141 Laurier Avenue West, Ottawa.

Denmark

Dansk Ungdoms Fællesråd, 13 Valkendorfs-gade, Copenhagen K.

Frihed og Folkestyre, 3 Jaegersborgvej, Kgs. Lyngby.

France

AFCA-Etudiant, 166 boulevard St. Germain,
Paris 6e

Centre d'Etudes Européennes, 7 rue de Stras-
bourg, Grenoble (Isère)

Groupement Universitaire Français pour les
Nations Unies, 39 avenue Pierre Ier de Serbie,
Paris 8e

Institut National d'Education Populaire de
France, Marly-le-Roi (Seine-et-Oise)

Mouvement Fédéraliste Européen, 7 rue Saint-
Férréol, Marseille 1er.

Federal Republic of Germany

Fachverband Rechtswissenschaften im Ver-
band Deutscher Studentenschafter (VDS)
15 Universitätsstrasse, Erlangen.

Internationaler Studentenbund (ISSF), T.H.
Postfach, Aachen.

Ring Politischer Jugend, 27 Simrockstrasse,
53 Bonn.

Greece

National Association of Students, Pandios
School of Political Sciences, 146 Syngros
Avenue, Athens.

Iceland

Vardberg (Atlantic Youth Association of
Iceland) Reykjavik.

Italy

Comitato Italo-Atlantico della Gioventu,
69 Via Campo Marzio, Rome.

Societa Italiana per l'Organizzazione Inter-
nazionale, 3 Via S. Marco, Rome.

Centro Italiano Viaggi Istruzione Studenti,
Rome.

Luxembourg

Cercle des Jeunesses Politiques, 17a rue des
Bains, Luxembourg.

Commission de Jeunesse auprès du Ministère
de la Force Armée, Luxembourg.

Netherlands

Atlantische Commissie, 9 Nassau Zuilen-
steinstraat, The Hague.

Atlantisch Jeugd Comité Voor Nederland
30 Van Nieuwkoopstraat, IJmuiden.

European School Magazine Association, 3
Sparrenlaan, Epe.

Liberale Studenten Vereniging, 16 Wester-
markt, Amsterdam,
402 Nieuwe Binnenweg, Rotterdam 6.

Nederlands Studentenvereniging Voor Werel-
drechtsorde, 159 Nieuwe Gracht, Utrecht.

Nederlandse Politieke Jongeren Contact Raad
101 Akerstraat, Heerlen.

Norway

Norwegian Committee for International In-
formation and Youth Work (NIU), 22 Nordre gt.
Oslo 5.

Portugal

Comissão Portuguesa do Atlântico, 39 Rua Almeida Brandão, Lisbon 3.

Turkey

Middle-East Technical University, Ankara.
University of Ankara (Faculty of Political Sciences), Ankara.

National Organization of Turkish Youth (TMGT), Istiklâl Cad. 471/2, Tünel-Istanbul.

National Students Federation of Turkey (TMTF), Babiâli Cad.40, Cagaloglu, Istanbul.

United Kingdom

British Committee of the World Assembly of Youth, 3 Endsleigh Street, London W.C.1.

British Atlantic Group of Young Politicians
36 Craven Street, London W.C.2.

United States

Association of International Relations Clubs
345 East 46th Street, New York, N.Y.

United States Youth Council, 236 East 46th Street, New York, N.Y.

Young Democratic Clubs of America, 1730 K Street NW, Washington 6, D.C.

Young Republican National Federation, 1625 Eye Street NW, Washington 6, D.C.

ERRATUM

Annexe III

Pays-Bas

Politieke Jongeren Contact Raad,
18 Schiefbaanstraat, The Hague

Nederlandse Studentenvereniging
voor Wereldrechtsorde, Nieuwe
Gracht 159, Utrecht

Liberal Students of Rotterdam
(Liberale Studenten Vereniging),
Nieuwe Binnenweg 402B,
Rotterdam 6

