

subject to the understanding that an acute overseas emergency might oblige Her Majesty's Government to omit this procedure. If the maintenance of United Kingdom forces on the mainland of Europe throws at any time too heavy a strain on the external finances of the United Kingdom, the United Kingdom will invite the North Atlantic Council to review the financial conditions on which the formations are maintained.

My colleagues will realize that what I have announced is for us a very formidable step to take. You all know that ours is above all an island story. We are still an island people in thought and tradition, whatever the modern facts of weapons and strategy may compel. And it has been not without considerable reflection that the Government which I represent here has decided that this statement could be made to you this afternoon. I want only to add this: we are making it in just the same spirit as Mr. Dulles spoke just now, because we hope that by doing so we shall make a contribution to enable this conference to succeed, and recreate confidence on this European Continent and make it possible for us to show an example of unity to the world. Of course, you will understand that what we have just said, and the undertaking we are prepared to give, does depend on the outcome of our work. If we succeed here then this undertaking stands; if we do not, Her Majesty's Government could not regard itself as committed to what I have said this afternoon. That applies to the whole of our work, all the work that we are doing here. So I can only conclude by saying I hope the conference will consider that what we have said will be a contribution to bring us at least a stage nearer the successful conclusion of our labours.