

NATO Parliamentarians Association

EIGHTH ANNUAL CONFERENCE, PARIS

THE EIGHTH annual conference of the NATO Parliamentarians Association was held at NATO headquarters in Paris from November 12 to 17, 1962. This organization, which was set up in 1955, has as its main objective the providing of an informal link between the various NATO organizations and the national parliaments of the 15 member nations, which would serve to build up a sense of solidarity among members and allow the elected representatives to inform themselves more fully. By reviewing what has been accomplished in the previous year, by receiving reports on existing problems, through the study and evaluation of present difficulties and by putting forward ideas about how to overcome them, the Parliamentarians provide the Alliance with the co-operation that it needs if it is to achieve its military, political, economic and cultural purposes.

The conference this year met in the immediate aftermath of the Cuban crisis, which had threatened to trigger a nuclear war. Moreover, open warfare had broken out in the Himalayas over the Sino-Indian border dispute, and the East-West confrontation in Berlin could potentially degenerate into conflict. The Parliamentarians expressed their concern over these situations and in three resolutions gave their wholehearted support to the United States for its resolute action in the face of potential nuclear aggression, urged the three Western powers to stand firm in Berlin, and recommended that all possible aid be given to India.

Moreover, it was realized that the Alliance itself was confronted with serious problems. The Parliamentarians agreed that European integration and the expected entry of Britain into the European Economic Community would have such an impact on NATO that, instead of working out immediate solutions for existing differences, it was imperative to ventilate new ideas on which a new and stronger Alliance could be based.

Political Questions

The search for comprehensive solutions inevitably led the Parliamentarians to recall and elaborate on the Declaration of Paris adopted by the Atlantic Convention of NATO nations on January 19, 1962. They recommended the creation of a special sub-committee of the conference to work on a charter for a consultative Atlantic Assembly. They noted the recommendation contained in the Paris Declaration that the NATO Parliamentarians conference be developed into such an Assembly. They also proposed that suitable means be found to allow this consultative Assembly, in association with the OECD, to serve as a single consultative parliamentary body for both NATO and the OECD, taking into account the fact that some nations are not members of both organizations. Other recom-