

NATO Stalled by Disunity, And by 'Waiting for Ike'

By J. M. ROBERTS Jr.
Associated Press News Analyst

The United Nations is not the only area where the free nations are working in an atmosphere of disunity and failure, even though the latter be only momentary.

For one thing, military preparedness within the North Atlantic Treaty Organization goes forward much more slowly than had been hoped, and politically the program is virtually stalled.

Part of this is due to the "pending" position of the American administrative situation, part is due to uncertainty among the European because of economic problems, and it seems very likely that part is due to psychological factors involving wishful thinking about Russian war intentions.

French and German hesitation over political and military agreements, whose ratification are required if the program is to go forward, are a factor.

So is Britain's hesitation to do anything which might even seem to put European commitments ahead of commonwealth traditions and obligations.

Washington has already been told that France is unable to carry her share of NATO preparations without greater economic aid, at a time when the American Congress is growing more and more critical of the long-extended aid program.

And in the wings is the fear that France may soon be asking for American manpower as well as arms in Indochina.

The feeling of hopelessness about accomplishing anything at the moment has been emphasized by suggestions that the NATO meeting scheduled for December be postponed.

Apparently it will be held anyway, but participants realize they can hardly do more than mark time until the Eisenhower administration gets its feet on the ground.

Ambassador Frederick L. Anderson, deputy U. S. special representative in Europe under William L. Draper, sounded a pessimistic note just the other day.

"The danger that our political, moral and economic defense will be reached is increasing," he said.

He seemed to feel there was danger of the very thing that Russia has been hoping for, that the world market disruption caused by the East-West split will produce a serious economic condition preventing the Western powers from carrying out their defense program.

One of the chief problems the Eisenhower administration will face will be the European demand that the United States open its markets by lifting duties and other restrictions.

The Truman administration has favored some of this, but Congressional action, though taken in very limited fields so far, has been in directly the opposite spirit.

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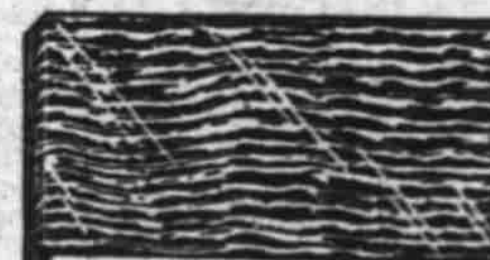
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