



THE FOREIGN SERVICE
OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

SECRET

American Embassy, Paris
12 August 1957

*France weapons
S/AE FILE COPY*

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① WE / [unclear]

Dear Bob:

Mr. Statesman, USKO, has prepared the enclosed report on the Franco-German agreement on advanced weapons, which you requested in your letter of July 23. *② RB*

As Bill Trueheart's memorandum to me, also enclosed, suggests, I asked John Emmerson, head of the Political Division, whether their estimate of March 1 had been revised. John was not aware of any developments that would lead to a different conclusion. He thought that Charlie Yost and Russ Fessenden should be asked for their views, which I shall do when they get back to Paris (reporting anything additional they may have to you), and suggested that you get in touch with Bob McBride, now in Washington. *③ S/AE Foster*

With best wishes,

Sincerely,

Max

Max Isenbergh
Special Assistant
for Atomic Energy

SPECIAL ASSISTANT TO THE SECRETARY
8/15
100-1-100

Encls: Franco-German Coordination of Advanced Weapons Research, Development and Production
Franco-German Agreement of Co-Operation in the Field of Armaments
Memorandum from Mr. Trueheart

Mr. J. Robert Schaetzel
Office of the Special Assistant to the Secretary
Department of State
Washington 25, D. C.

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Authority

MND949670

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August 8, 1957

MEMORANDUM

TO: Max Isenbergh, Embassy/SA

SUBJ: French-German Cooperation on Advanced Weapons

Attached is a memorandum on this subject which you may wish to send to Bob Schaetzel or otherwise use in replying to his letter of July 23. I would suggest also that you check with the Political Section of the Embassy to see whether they still adhere to their estimate of March 1 that it was improbable that the French would contemplate assisting the Germans in the production of atomic weapons.

Most of the documents referred to in the attached memorandum are State Department communications. The others are NATO papers, copies of which Schaetzel can obtain through EUR/RA.

(Signed) Bill
William C. Trueheart

Enclosures:

Memorandum on Franco-German Coordination of Advanced Weapons Research, Development, and Production, dated August 8, 1957.

Letter from Schaetzel to Isenbergh, dated July 23, 1957.

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CONSEIL DE L'ATLANTIQUE NORD
NORTH ATLANTIC COUNCIL

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ORIGINAL: FRANCE/ENGLISH
20th February, 1957

EXEMPLAIRE No. 124

NATO SECRET
DOCUMENT
AC/74-D/170

DEFENCE PRODUCTION COMMITTEE

FRANCO-GERMAN AGREEMENT ON CO-OPERATION IN THE
FIELD OF ARMAMENTS

Note by the Secretary

At the request of the French and German Delegations I am circulating herewith the text of an agreement reached in January, 1957 between the Ministers of Defence of France and the Federal Republic of Germany on close co-operation between their two countries in the field of armaments.

(Signed) J. C. STONE

Palais de Chaillot,
Paris XVIIe.

NATO SECRET

NATO SECRET
AC/74-D/170

CO-OPERATION BETWEEN FRANCE AND
THE GERMAN FEDERAL REPUBLIC

On 16th and 17th January, 1957, during a tour of France and a visit to Colomb-Béchon, the Defence Ministers of France and the German Federal Republic discussed how close co-operation between their two countries could be achieved with respect to armaments.

To bring this about, they agreed:

- (a) to set up a small committee, consisting of not more than fifteen officers and technicians, to identify the fields in which co-operation in the form of joint research and experimental work could be considered or undertaken;
- (b) to keep the NATO Defence Production Committee informed of any special arrangements entered into in this connection;
- (c) to invite all NATO member countries wishing to do so to associate themselves with these special arrangements.

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August 8, 1957

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FRANCO-GERMAN COORDINATION OFADVANCED WEAPONS RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT AND PRODUCTION

The first report that we find regarding Franco-German cooperation in the field of military production and supply is in Bonn's 1784 to Washington concerning the Adenauer-Mollet meeting on November 6, 1956, in Paris. According to this report, the French proposed "strengthening cooperation of military production and supply." The Germans suggested in reply that measures for further collaboration in this field should be jointly prepared and presented to other WEU members.

PoltoA-346, February 4, 1957, forwarded to Washington a copy of the half-yearly report (June 15-December 15, 1956) on developments in the WEU Standing Armaments Committee. The report placed particular stress on the fact that the Committee had given its activities "new orientation" in attempting to promote greater cooperation among the WEU countries in research and development projects. In the initial stage, these exchanges would take place by direct contact between countries having the interest and the scientific resources which would enable them to make an effective contribution. Germany proposed that the Committee should examine the conditions under which member countries of WEU might be able to put at the disposal of one another their own research and experimental establishments. Reportedly, the initial reaction of the other countries to this proposal was negative.

On January 15/17, 1957, the German Minister of Defense (Straus), accompanied by senior German staff officers, visited French research and development installations in Western France and in North Africa. According to the German General Heusinger, "the object of our trip was to visit research and development facilities of the French with a view to working out possible joint utilization of these facilities by the French and Germans and to determine mutual areas of interest in this general field." (MAAG Germany telegram 204, Jan. 26, 1957). The projects of particular interest to Germany reportedly were ground-to-air rockets and missiles, a new type of tank, and new anti-tank weapons. It was stated that NATO would be kept informed of the progress in this program.

An immediate result of this trip was a Franco-German agreement on close cooperation between their two countries in the field of armaments, which the French and German Delegations reported to the Defense Production Committee on February 20, 1957. The official record of this report is attached (AC/74-D/170).

London's 4372 to Washington, February 19, 1957, reported that the UK Foreign Office had inquired of the French concerning

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alleged Franco-German arms discussions. The French Minister of Defense (now Premier Bourges-Maunoury) stated that a small Franco-German committee had been set up to consider projects for coordinated research development and production of such items as "guided weapons and light tanks." The UK Foreign Office official who gave our Embassy this information asked US Embassy officers for US views on such Franco-German collaboration. He frankly expressed some apprehension regarding future German activities in the production field.

Embassy Paris reported on February 20 a conversation with a French defense official on the subject of "recent French initiatives toward Franco-German cooperation in military research and production, particularly in missiles." The French reportedly felt that "best means for getting progress under way in this area is for pairs of individual countries, each of which has something to offer the other, to work out mutually beneficial exchanges of information and joint uses of facilities."

A further report from Embassy London (London's 4494 to Washington, February 26, 1957) described the UK Foreign Office as troubled by three major aspects of this problem:

1. Germany would probably play the most influential role as Franco-German cooperation for new weapons continues. The real danger for NATO would arise in another ten years when the Germans would have weapons resulting from Franco-German research and development, thus getting around the WEU prohibition to Germany of developing its own ABC weapons. Thus, the UK felt it would be advisable to have a more general WEU or NATO cooperation in the field of research, development and production which would tie in both French and Germans with their other partners.

2. However, if the UK joined in such a scheme, problems would be immediately raised regarding the particularly close Anglo-American alliance, since the US has well-founded concerns about making available extremely sensitive information to other European allies on the same basis as to the UK.

3. There is a good chance that Franco-German action might galvanize the USSR to estimate that its security may be in danger when West Germany is being placed in a position to obtain nuclear weapons outside the more general European defense effort.

This is the first time in our records that we find a reference to the possibility of Franco-German research and development including nuclear projects. Embassy Paris immediately picked up this point (Paris telegram 4462 to Washington, March 1), and

stated that it seemed "unjustifiable" to link Franco-German weapons development with the "Fourth Country" nuclear weapons problem. The Embassy flatly stated that they had no indications that the French had or would contemplate assisting the Germans to produce atomic weapons.

The Embassy called for US support of the Franco-German weapons production program as having military, economic and political advantages. However, it is pertinent to note that on the same day Embassy Paris reported (Paris telegram 4458 to Department March 1) that the French Defense Minister had said, "there is no bar to restricted items being manufactured in France under Franco-German auspices tested jointly in Algeria and stocked in both France and Germany." He did add that atomic materials were "outside the scope of the Franco-German development program."

One week later, Polto A-410 of March 8 reported that the UK had undertaken bilateral conversations with the French and the Germans, respectively, to explore in detail the possibilities for cooperation. Although the UK hoped that these bilateral exchanges would eventually develop into a trilateral French-UK-German arrangement, thus far only bilateral cooperation has been achieved. (See AC/74-D/195 of July 27, 1957, for a report of activities of the Anglo-German Joint Steering Committee on defense research and development).

CONCLUSIONS

1. There is a Franco-German agreement for joint research and perhaps production of advanced weapons.
2. The French Defense Ministry has stated (Feb. 26, 1957) that atomic materials were "outside the scope of the Franco-German development program."
3. US policy, as we understand it, holds that:
 - a. we should not oppose Franco-German collaboration in the new weapons field;
 - b. "exchange of atomic data among WEU countries would obviously present serious problems." (Topol 1961, 4/16/57).
4. Important prohibitions on German production of certain weapons are defined in the Paris agreements, but it might be possible for the Germans to evade these restrictions with the connivance of the French. However, Embassy Paris has indicated (Embtel 4462 March 1, 1957) that it sees little likelihood of such a development.



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