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M. Luskhoff

Department of State

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FROM: Frankfort

TO: Secretary of State

NO: 962, August 3, 11 p.m.

PRIORITY.

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By [Signature] NARA, Date 3/14/92

Many factors have led me to conclude that the time is now ripe for a basic solution of the problem of defense of Western Europe. The steps in my thinking have been as follows:

1. As many have long recognized, the creating of Western European defense is basic for the existing world situation. The rate of achieving this has been far too slow. We must recognize that if Russia overruns Western Europe we will have no real chance to re-create its civilization by liberating it months or years later. Thus we must plan for effective defense to prevent invasion by the Soviets. I think there is no other alternative.

2. In my judgment this objective cannot be achieved merely by strengthening national armies of the Western European countries. My reasons for this conclusion are these:

A. There is every evidence that even France lacks the capacity, if not the will, to build a national army able to carry the brunt of defense of Western Europe. A similar feeling that the best they could do would be ineffective also pervades the thinking of the other European countries.

B. To defend Western Europe effectively will obviously require real contributions of German resources and men. I am absolutely opposed to re-creating any German national army now or in the foreseeable future. In my opinion, to do so would be a tragic mistake. It would undermine much that we have so far achieved in democratizing German society. Also I think it is an illusion to suppose that the Germans have a burning desire to create a national army or that they would enlist or could be conscripted into such an army in substantial numbers. Indeed I am convinced they are opposed to such a step. Moreover a separate German force under

German command

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German command would involve serious risk of their playing off east and west and ultimately joining the Soviets. With the powerful bait in their hands, the Soviets would try even harder to attract the Germans into their orbit, and a shift of a strong Germany would be disastrous. If France were forced to accept such rearmament, she might contribute much less herself to effective defense.

3. There is now a real chance to solve this difficulty by creating a genuine European army. If done quickly, this offers the best chance to convert our present weakness into real strength. The French appear eager for some such action giving them the hope of effective defense without the risk of a German national army. Moreover the German Cabinet and public opinion is believed to strongly favor such a course. Indeed the German people and especially German youth are deeply attracted by the idea of a European community in which, as an equal partner, they could join. I feel that this concept, if applied in the military field as well as in others, will produce more men and a greater contribution.

4. In addition to defense against Russia, this action would contribute to our own basic objectives in Western Europe. At one step it would fully integrate Germany into Western Europe and be the best possible insurance against further German aggression. This dramatic move toward European federation would also fulfill the deep urge in France, Germany and BENELUX for a real European community.

5. This step involves some risks but is the best available alternative:

A. It may be objected that the adoption of this course would complicate our problem and that time is not sufficient to carry it out. The short answer is that this is the only way to achieve effective defense and that any other course, even if vigorously followed, will not do so. Furthermore, I strongly believe that bold action now would give good prospects of rapid success. Admittedly any defense depends on some period before a showdown occurs. But with a year to eighteen months, I believe that a real Western European force could be created and be in effective operation. Such a course would evoke much more enthusiastic support and energetic action from the Europeans than reliance on national armies and thereby reduce the time necessary for results.

B. It may also be objected that this action would provoke Soviet aggression.

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Soviet aggression. But the Soviets will doubtless move in any case whenever it best suits their timetable, resources, and their judgment as to the defense power of west. This proposed program might affect that judgment but that risk is inherent in any effective effort to improve the West European defense position. Indeed, without claiming to be able to predict Soviet reactions, my own judgment would be that German participation in a European army is less likely to provoke the Soviets than would the creation of a German national army.

6. Inevitably this course would imply profound effects on the position of Germany. She could not be expected to furnish resources and men for a European army except as a substantial equal in Europe within a very limited time.

7. We do not know what attitude British might take to such a program, but would expect they could support it as extension of Western Union. US should contribute its share of components and resources toward such an army.

I consider this matter of greatest urgency. The proposed course seems to me the only possible way to develop the will and means for effective defense. Time is essential. Urge most strongly that US definitely back this course soonest.

Am sending this message only to Department. Advise if distribution to Bruce and Douglas desired.

MCCLOY

EHL:ERB

NOTE: Copy to Mr. Byroade (GER) 10:40 p.m., 8/3/JRL.

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