

Foreign Minister Lange informed Molotov (ca. February 17) that, since circumstances have changed, Norway does not wish to open discussions of a military character with a single foreign power concerning a region under Norwegian sovereignty. However, because of Russia's economic position in the Archipelago, Norway expressed willingness to discuss with the USSR economic aspects of the Spitsbergen Treaty with a view to proposing certain non-military changes.

[WASHINGTON,] February 27, 1947.

811.20/2-747¹

Memorandum by the Secretary of State to the President

CONFIDENTIAL

WASHINGTON, February 7, 1947.

Subject: Comments of the Secretary of State on Draft of Bill To Promote the National Security (Fourth Draft, dated January 28, 1947)²

The provisions of the draft bill which are of primary concern to the Secretary of State are contained in Title III - "Coordination for National Security—National Security Council" (Sec. 301), "Central Intelligence Agency" (Sec. 302), and "National Security Resources Board" (Sec. 303).

Sec. 301 - *National Security Council*. The draft bill would establish a National Security Council. The powers and functions which the bill would vest in this Council appear to be extraneous to the purpose of the bill—unification of the military departments, and would evidently by statute dissipate the constitutional responsibility of the President for the conduct of foreign affairs.

The Council would be composed of the Secretary of State, the Secretary of the Armed Forces, the Secretary of the Army, the Secretary of the Navy, the Secretary of the Air Forces, the Chairman of the National Security Resources Board, and such other members as

¹The source text—an unindexed photocopy from the papers of Clark M. Clifford at the Harry S. Truman Library, Independence, Missouri—became available after this volume had been set in pages. No copy was found in the files of the Department of State.

²For a summary of the final version, adopted as the National Security Act of July 26, 1947, see the editorial note, p. 760.

the President might designate from time to time. The draft provides that "the function of the Council shall be to integrate our foreign and military policy and to enable the military services and other agencies of the government to cooperate more effectively in matters involving our national security." It is made the duty of the Council, subject to the direction of the President, "to consider and establish policies on matters of common interest to the Department of State, the Armed Forces Establishment, the three Military Departments, and the National Resources Board; and to reconcile and coordinate action to be taken in connection therewith." Further, subject to the authority of the President, it is provided that decisions of the Council "shall establish the approved policy of the departments and agencies represented in the Council". The head of each department shall then take action to implement Council decisions in the name of the head of the department.

Under the foregoing provisions, apart from those which have to do with unification of the armed forces, there would be inaugurated a critical departure from the traditional method of formulating and conducting foreign policy. The procedure under Sec. 301 would give predominance in the field of foreign relations to a body composed of not less than six, of which at least four would be the civilian heads of military establishments. I think it would be unwise to vest such a Council by statute with broad and detailed powers and responsibilities in this field. Under the proposed statute it would be the duty of the Council in carrying out the specific obligations imposed upon it and in exercising the authority granted to limit, in effect, this vital responsibility of the President in the first instance and at the same time markedly to diminish the responsibility of the Secretary of State. Coordination is highly desirable, and the lack of it has been a weakness in the past, but Sec. 301 introduces fundamental changes in the entire question of foreign relations.

The constitutional and traditional control of the President in the conduct of foreign affairs, principally throughout our history with the aid of the Secretary of State, is deeply rooted, I believe, in the sentiments of the people. There is also the strong feeling that the direction of policy, foreign or domestic, should be dominated by the non-military branches of the Government. The President should not

be made subject to the statutory persuasions for which the bill provides.

The foregoing comment might be enlarged upon, for example, by emphasizing the implications of the provision that action taken in any department to implement decisions of the Council shall nevertheless be taken in the name of the head of the department. Under this provision the Secretary of State would become the automaton of the Council.

On the basis of the general analysis and considerations stated, it seems to me that the provisions for the Council should be eliminated from the bill, confining its purpose to the unification of the armed services and such reorganization as that might require, without introducing critical matters concerned with the conduct of foreign relations. This original purpose was evidently the reason that the Department of State was not asked to participate in previous studies or in drafting. I am aware that in the discussion of these developments reference has been made publicly to a Council having to do with the integration of foreign and military policies; but this has been in very general terms.

Sec. 302. - Central Intelligence Agency. Sec. 303. - National Security Resources Board. The elimination of provisions for the Council would require reconsideration of the provisions for the Central Intelligence Agency and the National Security Resources Board, both of which are related to the Council. Creation of these two bodies now is not essential to the main purpose of the bill. I believe there should be, as now, a central intelligence agency and a resources planning board. But legislative provisions for them need further and more detailed study.

The Secretary of State is at present Chairman of the National Intelligence Agency composed of four members. The new agency would be responsible to the National Security Council which itself is subject to the objections already set forth and on which the Secretary of State is numerically subordinated to the heads of the military establishments. The Foreign Service of the Department of State is the only collection agency of the government which covers the whole world, and we should be very slow to subject the collection and evaluation of this foreign intelligence to other establishments, especially during times of peace. The powers of the proposed agency seem almost unlimited and need clarification.

As to the National Security Resources Board, I feel that there should be a board functioning in this field during times of peace; but its powers should be considered in relation to the peacetime execution of programs and policies involving foreign trade. If it is intended that the policies laid down by the Board would require action in peacetime, conflict might arise with foreign trade policies which are quite important to the maintenance of peace and economic security. These matters should not be left under the control of the military. The subject, important as it is, also needs further clarification from the standpoint of the State Department.

I suggest that these two problems of centralization of intelligence and a resources planning board be deferred and that in the meantime the several departments concerned be requested to give joint consideration to them and report to you.

G. C. MARSHALL

761.00/2-1747

Memorandum by the Deputy Director of the Office of European Affairs (Hickerson) to the Director of the Office of European Affairs (Matthews)

TOP SECRET

[WASHINGTON,] February 17, 1947.

Actions of the Soviet Government in the field of Foreign Affairs leave us no alternative other than to assume that the USSR has aggressive intentions.

The Soviet Government nearly always has alternative courses of action for its objectives. It can openly use force, or threaten to use force, to influence foreign countries or it can try the inside job method, using the local communist party and boring from within as they are now doing in France.¹ They can shift from one method to the other readily, depending upon the needs and circumstances of the moment.

If the right of free men to live out their lives under institutions of their free choice is to be preserved, there must be a vigilant determination on the part of peoples and governments of the U.S.A. and the U.K. to resist Soviet aggression, by force of arms if necessary. It seems clear that there can be no question of "deals or arrangements" with the

¹ For documentation on United States interest in the preservation of democratic government in France, see vol. III, pp. 688 ff.