

**SECRET**

DRAFT FOR THE CONSIDERATION OF THE  
STATE-WAR-NAVY COORDINATING COMMITTEE

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

**Subject: American policy toward France**

The State, War and Navy Departments, acting through the State-War-Navy Coordinating Committee, are presently engaged in studying a number of proposals involving our relations with France. These studies have suggested the desirability of restating briefly the basis of this Government's policy toward France, to serve as a guide for the consideration of present and future problems and to insure that decisions by the various agencies of this Government are consistent with our national aims.

The following statement, which is in harmony with the policy presently pursued with regard to France, has been approved by the Secretary of War and the Secretary of the Navy. Subject to your approval, it will serve as our joint guide in the consideration of French problems.

The best interests of the United States require that every effort be made by this Government to assist France, morally as well as physically, to regain her strength and her influence, not only with a view toward increasing the French contribution to the war effort, but also with a view toward enabling the French to assume larger responsibilities in connection with the maintenance of peace.

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The vital interest of France in the solution of the German problem and the importance of the part she should and will inevitably play in maintaining the future peace in Europe were publicly acknowledged by this Government on November 11, 1944 when France was invited to accept full membership in the European Advisory Commission.

It is recognized that the French Provisional Government and the French people are at present unduly pre-occupied, as a result of the military defeat of 1940 and the subsequent occupation of their country by the enemy, with questions of national prestige. They have consequently from time to time put forward requests which are out of all proportion to their present strength. It is believed that it is in the interest of the United States to take full account of this psychological factor in the French mind and to treat France in all respects on the basis of her potential power and influence rather than on the basis of her present strength.

The following paragraphs list the major French problems which have recently been, or are now, before this Government for decision:

(1) Early in January 1945 the French representative on the European Advisory Commission, acting on instructions from the Provisional Government of the French Republic, advanced five proposals, the purposes of which were to place France on a footing of equality with the United States, the United Kingdom and the Soviet Union with regard to German affairs. These proposals,

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involving French participation in the supreme authority for Germany, French participation in signing the German instrument of surrender, the allocation to the French army of a zone of occupation in Germany and the setting up of quadripartite instead of tripartite agencies in the agreement on control machinery, have already been approved in principle by you. When received, the specific proposals will be given sympathetic consideration in the light of that approval.

(2) The French Provisional Government recently requested that the United States furnish arms and equipment for a substantial number of French combat and supply troops. On the recommendation of the Supreme Allied Commander, you have already approved this request.

(3) On January 2, 1945, General de Gaulle wrote to you regarding the possibility of obtaining a commitment for the furnishing of arms and equipment over and above the quantities already provided or promised. This material, in the normal course of events, would be primarily for use after the termination of hostilities in Europe. This request was in line with a proposal previously put forward by the British Government that the United States assume responsibility for the postwar arming of French land forces. You have already approved this proposal and immediate study will be given to the means of putting it into effect.

(4) M. Jean Kennet is presently in this country on a special mission for the French Provisional Government to seek the conclusion of a lend-lease agreement and to obtain this Government's approval to a large program of

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present and future supplies for France. It is believed that, subject to the working out of technical problems and satisfactory means of payment, every effort should be made by this Government to meet French needs and to work out the details of a lend-lease agreement. This is a matter of great urgency in view of the heavy damage to French transportation facilities and the scarcity of supplies for industrial and civil consumption resulting from the German occupation and military operations on French soil. Our Ambassador at Paris has repeatedly emphasized the importance of obtaining adequate supplies if political and social instability are to be averted. This is necessary from the military as well as from the long range point of view.

(5) It is recognized that the most serious difficulty in the way of furnishing material assistance to France at this time arises from the dearth of shipping. The French Minister of Transportation and Public Works, M. René Mayer, is proceeding to the United States to discuss, in particular, three aspects of the French transportation problem. It is understood that he will present proposals designed to increase the number of ships manned by French nationals; that he will request that France be accorded a seat on the Executive Committee of the United Nations Maritime Board; and that he will discuss the possibility of getting additional quantities of railway rolling stock to Europe. It is believed that this Government should give the most sympathetic consideration to any proposals which M. Mayer may put forward with a view to easing the critical transportation situation in France.

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(6) The Dumbarton Oaks proposals envisaged that "in due course" France should obtain a permanent seat on the Security Council in the proposed International Organization. No effort was made to define the meaning of "in due course". It is strongly recommended that this Government take the initiative in obtaining the concurrence of the British, Soviet and Chinese Governments to the immediate association of France, on a basis of full equality with the United States and the other Governments named above, in the Dumbarton Oaks discussions and proposals.

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