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**SECRET**

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C.M. (49)

14th Conclusions

**CABINET 14 (49)**

*CONCLUSIONS of a Meeting of the Cabinet held in the Prime Minister's Room, House of Commons, S.W. 1, on Tuesday, 22nd February, 1949, at 3.30 p.m.*

**Present :**

The Right Hon. C. R. ATTLEE, M.P., Prime Minister (*in the Chair*).

The Right Hon. HERBERT MORRISON, M.P., Lord President of the Council.

The Right Hon. ERNEST BEVIN, M.P., Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

The Right Hon. Sir STAFFORD CRIPPS, K.C., M.P., Chancellor of the Exchequer.

The Right Hon. A. V. ALEXANDER, M.P., Minister of Defence.

The Right Hon. HUGH DALTON, M.P., Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster.

The Right Hon. VISCOUNT ADDISON, Lord Privy Seal.

The Right Hon. VISCOUNT JOWITT, Lord Chancellor.

The Right Hon. J. CHUTER EDE, M.P., Secretary of State for the Home Department.

The Right Hon. P. J. NOEL-BAKER, M.P., Secretary of State for Commonwealth Relations.

The Right Hon. A. WOODBURN, M.P., Secretary of State for Scotland.

The Right Hon. ANEURIN BEVAN, M.P., Minister of Health.

The Right Hon. T. WILLIAMS, M.P., Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries.

The Right Hon. GEORGE TOMLINSON, M.P., Minister of Education.

The Right Hon. J. H. WILSON, M.P., President of the Board of Trade.

*Secretariat :*

Sir NORMAN BROOK

Mr. A. JOHNSTON

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**North  
Atlantic  
Security  
Pact.**

(Previous  
Reference:  
C.M. (48) 68th  
Conclusions,  
Minute 3.)  
Text of Pact.

The Cabinet had before them two memoranda by the Foreign Secretary (C.P. (49) 34 and 37) on a number of outstanding points regarding the North Atlantic Security Pact.

*The Foreign Secretary* said that, since he circulated C.P. (49) 34, the United States Secretary of State had held informal discussions with the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, and there was every reason to believe that the committee would accept a version of Article 5 of the Pact, dealing with mutual assistance, which would be acceptable to the Brussels Treaty Powers. The latest draft made it clear, as the United Kingdom Government had always wished, that this was a matter of mutual assistance and not merely of United States support of Europe. It substituted the words "action, including the use of armed force" for the phrase "military or other action"; and another amendment recognised the right of each party to determine what action was necessary in any given circumstances. The Senate Committee wished to see a separate Article added to the Pact to the effect that the fulfilment by a signatory of obligations under the Pact should be "in accordance with established constitutional processes." The Committee were doubtful about Article 2, which dealt with cultural links, but the Canadian Government still attached importance to this Article.

In discussion the following points were made:—

(a) The revised version of Article 5, which the United States Secretary of State had provisionally agreed with the Foreign Relations Committee of the Senate, was satisfactory from the United Kingdom point of view and in some ways was an improvement on the original draft. It was much stronger than the draft, on which it seemed possible at one time the Senate might insist.

(b) The Canadian Government were anxious that the Pact should not appear to be confined entirely to military matters, and it was desirable that the United Kingdom Government should support them in their claim that Article 2 should be retained. It was recognised, however, that this Article was unlikely to have any practical effect.

(c) The additional Article dealing with constitutional processes might give rise to difficulties at some later date, for it might be invoked by unfriendly elements in the United States with a view to stressing the freedom of action of the parties in time of emergency. It was, however, preferable that this reference to constitutional processes should be embodied in a separate Article, rather than included as a further qualification to Article 5, and it would be expedient to accept the Article, if it were pressed, rather than run the risk of controversy in Congress.

Procedure  
for Signing.

*The Foreign Secretary* pointed out that, at present, the Brussels Treaty Powers were being consulted on Article 5; and the United Kingdom Government would not be committed to the Pact until they had seen and approved it in final form. Thereafter, the Pact might either await further negotiation and agreement with all interested countries, or it could be signed by the United States, Canada and the Brussels Treaty Powers, leaving any other States to adhere to it later. He favoured early signature by the smaller number of Powers in the first instance, since otherwise there would be long delays while negotiations were conducted with other Powers who might wish to insert in the Pact further provisions affecting their particular interests.

There was general agreement with the Foreign Secretary's views.

Mediterranean  
Countries.

*The Foreign Secretary* drew attention to the proposed declaration by the signatories of the North Atlantic Pact designed to afford some protection to Italy, Greece, Turkey and Persia. While there might be two views about this, his general impression was that the declaration would appear to weaken the obligations of this country to Turkey under the Anglo-Turkish Treaty of 1939, and President Truman's declaration of interest in Turkey and Greece.

There was general agreement with the Foreign Secretary's point of view. It might well be that the North Atlantic Pact would be followed by Mediterranean and Pacific Pacts; and, meanwhile, it would be better not to make the rather vague declaration now proposed. If some declaration had to be made, it would be preferable to link it more clearly with existing commitments.

The Cabinet—

- (1) Authorised the Foreign Secretary to give general approval to the revised version of Article 5 of the draft Pact, which the United States Secretary of State had informally agreed with the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.
- (2) Agreed that the Foreign Secretary should continue to support the request of the Canadian Government for the inclusion of Article 2, dealing with cultural links.
- (3) Agreed that the additional Article dealing with constitutional processes should not be included unless its inclusion was necessary to meet political difficulties in the United States.
- (4) Agreed that the Pact should be signed in the first instance by the United States, Canada and the Brussels Treaty Powers, and that other States should be left to adhere to it subsequently.
- (5) Agreed that every effort should be made to avoid adding the proposed declaration relating to Italy, Greece, Turkey and Persia.

*Cabinet Office, S.W. 1,  
22nd February, 1949.*

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