

SECRET

The attached memorandum is
● for consideration at the meeting of
the Cabinet arranged for tomorrow,
Tuesday, 22nd February, at 3.30 p.m.

21st February, 1949

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S E C R E T

C. P. (49) 37

COPY NO. 31

21ST FEBRUARY, 1949

CABINET

NORTH ATLANTIC PACT

Note by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs

It has been proposed in the Committee of representatives of the seven Governments in Washington that at the time of the signature of the North Atlantic Pact a declaration should be issued by as many as possible of the signatories emphasising the importance they attach to the security of certain countries, notably Italy (if she does not sign the Pact), Greece, Turkey and possibly Iran. I have recently discussed with the Turkish Foreign Minister an important question which has arisen in this connection, namely, whether such a declaration, unless very carefully drafted, might not weaken rather than strengthen the position of Turkey.

2. Turkey already enjoys the advantages of a firm commitment on the part of the United Kingdom (and theoretically of France also) to go to her aid in the case of aggression under the Treaty of Mutual Assistance of 19th October, 1939. She also enjoys at present the practical advantages of the Truman declaration of 12th March, 1947, in which the President proclaimed the interest of the United States in Turkish and Greek security. It is clear that in certain circumstances a somewhat weak and indefinite declaration on the part of the signatories of the Atlantic Pact, unless accompanied by some reaffirmation of the existing commitments, might appear to qualify the force of these commitments.

3. The draft for the declaration which we have proposed to the Ambassadorial Committee in Washington will be found in the Annex. This is probably as far as any of the signatory powers would be prepared to go in regard to Turkey and Greece, and there is some unwillingness on the part of the French and the Canadians to sign it even in its present form. Its main advantages from the point of view of the Turks and Greeks would be:-

- (a) that, whereas the Truman declaration was merely an expression of the President's opinion and binding on him only, this would form part of the North Atlantic Pact and would have the approval of Congress;
- (b) that it would (we hope) be signed by Canada and other signatories of the Atlantic Pact and would thus widen the sphere of interest in Turkish and Greek security.

4. There remains, of course, the need to avoid weakening the force of the Anglo-French-Turkish Treaty of 1939. It is suggested that this difficulty could be met by His Majesty's Government making some public statement at the time of the signature of the Pact to the effect that the 1939 Treaty remains, so far as they are concerned, fully in force.

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5. It is not likely that the French would be willing to make a similar declaration since they are known to be reluctant to admit that their commitments to Turkey of 1939 are still binding, and they would almost certainly be unwilling to reaffirm them.

6. I therefore recommend:-

- (a) that we should stick to the draft declaration in the Annex;
- (b) that we should inform the United States Government that we would be willing, at the time of signature of the Pact, to reaffirm British obligations under the Anglo-Turkish Treaty of 1939;
- (c) that we should also suggest to the United States Government that it would be helpful to Turkish and Greek opinion if they could find some means of making it clear that the declaration, far from weakening or qualifying President Truman's declaration of interest in Turkey and Greece, in fact places this on a firmer and more formal basis as part of a Treaty approved by Congress;
- (d) that in the light of the above we should do our best to persuade the French and Canadian (and other participating) Governments to sign the declaration as it stands.

E. B.

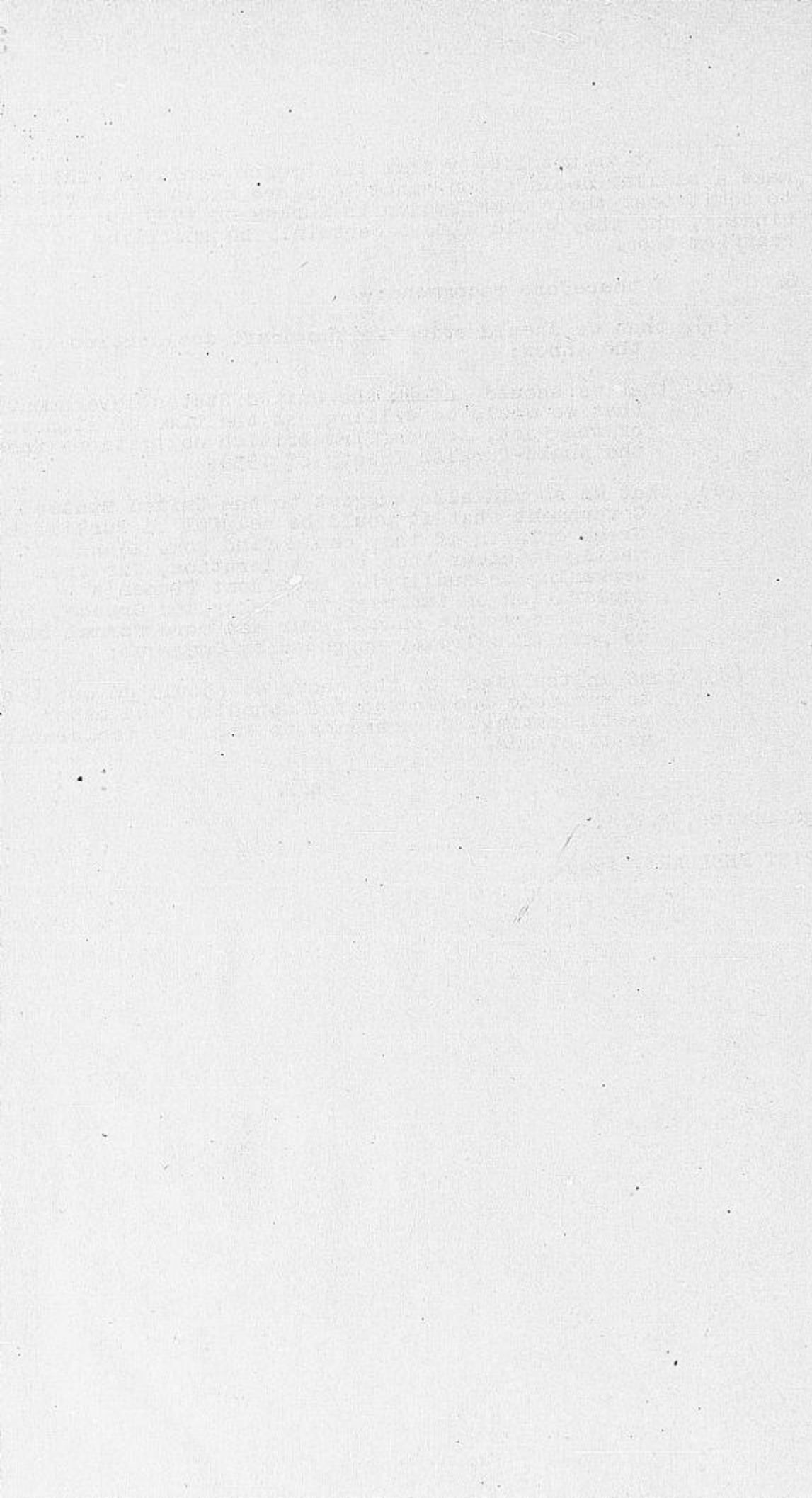
Foreign Office, S.W.1.

21ST FEBRUARY, 1949.

At the moment of signature of the Treaty for the Defence of the North Atlantic Area the Governments parties to this declaration hereby solemnly declare that any armed attack on or threat to the integrity or independence of certain countries, the security of which is of direct importance to the countries in the North Atlantic Area, and notably on Italy, Greece, Turkey and Iran, would be a matter of grave concern to them necessitating immediate consultation with a view to deciding what action should be taken in the event of the Security Council not immediately taking adequate measures to repel the armed attack on or threat to any of the countries indicated.

The above-mentioned Governments further declare that any threat to the integrity or independence of Italy, Greece, Turkey (or Iran) would necessitate consultations as provided for in Article 4 of the Treaty for the Defence of the North Atlantic Area.

This declaration shall take effect for each of the Governments on whose behalf it is signed at the same time as that Government becomes bound by the Treaty for the Defence of the North Atlantic Area.



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ANNEX

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