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CABINET

EUROPEAN DEFENCE COMMUNITY

Memorandum by the Secretary of State
for Foreign Affairs.

Proposed Tripartite Declaration

On February 14th the Cabinet approved in principle a suggestion that Her Majesty's Government might make a declaration of support for the European Defence Community (E.D.C.) (C.C.(52) 17th Conclusions, minute 6) and I later informed my colleagues that a draft had been prepared during the meeting of Foreign Ministers held in London on February 17th - 19th (C.C.(52) 18th Conclusions, minute 3). The draft of this declaration, which will be tripartite, is still being discussed with the United States and French Governments. Its present form is given in the text attached at Annex A. Some changes of wording may be necessary in this text to bring it into line with the proposed tripartite security guarantee towards Germany, the text of which forms Annex III of my memorandum C.(52) 31 of 8th February. I do not, however, expect any changes of substance. The idea is that the United Kingdom and the United States Governments should mark their interest in the E.D.C. by declaring their intention to maintain armed forces in Europe and to take a hand through the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation if any member of the Community threatens to break away.

Proposed British Guarantee

2. It was also suggested that Her Majesty's Government should make a separate declaration on their own, and a text was in fact agreed in Lisbon between M.Schuman and myself. We are now, however, being pressed to go further than this. We have been warned by the French Ministers that, before the final debate in the French Assembly, we shall once more be strongly pressed to join the E.D.C. This I have declined to do. In the meantime we have been asked to enter into a Treaty relationship with the E.D.C. by extending to Germany, Italy and the European Defence Forces the undertakings we have given to France, Belgium, Luxembourg and the Netherlands, under the Brussels Treaty, to afford automatic military assistance if they are attacked. In return we should receive from the Community reciprocal undertakings.

3. The arguments for agreeing to this proposal are:-

- (a) we shall reassure our European neighbours and encourage them to complete the negotiations for the E.D.C. which at present are flagging-

- (b) we shall establish a formal and special relationship between the United Kingdom and the E.D.C., thus demonstrating to the Europeans and Americans that, though not a part of the Continent, we are linked with its fortunes;
 - (c) we shall avoid the unsatisfactory position under the Brussels Treaty which will otherwise apply once the E.D.C. is established, for, whilst British obligations would remain unchanged, the other parties to the Treaty, having merged their forces in the E.D.C. would be the less able to help us;
 - (d) whilst technically there is a difference between the Brussels Treaty, which provides for automatic military assistance, and the North Atlantic Treaty, which leaves discretion to each party to take "such action as it deems necessary, including the use of armed force, to restore and maintain the security of the North Atlantic area", the two Treaties will work out the same in practice. It seems certain that an attack on an E.D.C. country would in practice bring N.A.T.O. into play.
4. The objections are:-
- (a) we shall be undertaking commitments to two countries, Germany and Italy, which are liable to get involved in trouble;
 - (b) the United States Government will not have exactly matching commitments. Whilst the difference may be technical rather than real, an isolationist-minded United States administration might, say, in five or ten years' time, seize upon this loophole;
 - (c) whilst the Brussels Treaty and the E.D.C. will run for fifty years, the North Atlantic Treaty can be denounced after twenty years from 1949. If the United States Government were to denounce the Treaty from 1969 onwards we should be left with heavy commitments in Europe without any assurance of American support in fulfilling them.

Recommendations

5. My recent conversations in Paris have left me with the clear impression that the E.D.C. is not likely to be established unless we respond to this latest proposal. I believe that without running too great a risk we can give the desired undertaking provided that it is limited to the period during which the United Kingdom is a party to the North Atlantic Treaty. Our commitment under the tripartite declaration referred to in paragraph 1 above would also be limited to the same period. We should be left then only with the risk, referred to in paragraph 4(b) above, that an isolationist-minded United States administration might refuse to act in the spirit of the North Atlantic Treaty and be unwilling to go to war in defence of one of the E.D.C. countries. This, I think is a risk we can accept, especially as the United States Government will be publicly committing themselves towards Germany and the E.D.C. in three ways: (i) under the tripartite declaration referred to in paragraph 1 above; (ii) under the proposed security guarantee towards Germany and Berlin which formed Annex III of my memorandum circulated as C. (52) 31 of the 8th February; and (iii) under the relationship which it is proposed to establish between the E.D.C. and N.A.T.O. which I mentioned in my memorandum C. (52) 41 of the 15th February and described fully in my statement to the House on the 28th February.

6. M. Schuman did not dispute my contention that any undertaking on our part must be limited to the period during which the United Kingdom is a party to the North Atlantic Treaty. He even said that a British declaration in place of a treaty would be sufficient. But it seems to me that if we are willing to enter into this commitment it should be given in a formal document, and this applies equally to the reciprocal commitment from the E.D.C. upon which we must of course insist. I propose therefore that these commitments should be embodied in an appropriate treaty instrument concluded between the E.D.C. and the United Kingdom, the substantive clauses of which should be on the lines of those set out in Annex B.

7. When making this communication I would propose to repeat with all possible emphasis that this is the limit to which the United Kingdom can go in the way of association with the E.D.C.; that we cannot accept membership and that we shall be unable to respond to any future pleas that we must take yet further steps and actually join the E.D.C. in order to save the whole project from failure.

8. I accordingly seek the approval of my colleagues to:

- (a) our joining in a tripartite declaration on the lines set out in Annex A;
- (b) our giving an undertaking to the E.D.C., in return for a reciprocal undertaking by the E.D.C. in the terms set out in Annex B;
- (c) my explaining our attitude as suggested in paragraph 7 above to the French and other Governments parties to the E.D.C., and to the United States Government.

A.E.

Foreign Office, S.W.1.

28th MARCH, 1952.

ANNEX A

Revised Draft of the Declaration to be issued
by the British, French and United States
Governments on the occasion of the Signature
of the Contractual Agreements with Germany.

The Governments of the United States of America, the United Kingdom and France have today marked the establishment of a new relationship between themselves and the Federal Republic of Germany through the signature of the Convention on General Relations and the related Conventions. These Conventions and the Treaties, to which France but not the United States or the United Kingdom are party, for a European Defence Community and a European Coal and Steel Authority provide a new basis for uniting Europe and for associating Germany with the West, whilst ensuring against any future revival of German militarism. They make possible the removal of special restraints hitherto imposed on Germany and permit the participation of the Federal Republic as an equal partner in Western defence.

These Conventions and Treaties respond to the desire to provide by united efforts for the prosperity and security of Western Europe. The United States and United Kingdom Governments share that desire and wish to assist in establishing and maintaining measures necessary to fulfil it. They will support and cooperate with the European institutions established by these Treaties.

Western defence is a common enterprise in which the United States and United Kingdom Governments are already partners through their membership in N.A.T.O. They have each expressed their resolve to station such forces in Europe as may be necessary and appropriate to contribute their fair share to the Joint Defence of the North Atlantic area. Thus they have each an abiding interest in the effectiveness of the Treaty creating the European Defence Community and in the strength and continuing integrity of the Community. Accordingly if any action from whatever quarter threatens the continuing integrity and unity of the Community the two Governments would consider it a matter of the gravest concern to them calling for consultation under Article IV of the North Atlantic Treaty in order to agree the measures to meet the situation thus created.

ANNEX BSUBSTANTIVE CLAUSES OF PROPOSED
AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE EUROPEAN
DEFENCE COMMUNITY AND THE UNITED
KINGDOM.

1. If at any time, while the United Kingdom is a party to the North Atlantic Treaty, one of the parties to the European Defence Community Treaty signed or the European Defence Forces established under that Treaty, should be the object of an armed attack in Europe, the United Kingdom will, in accordance with Article 51 of the United Nations Charter, afford the party or the Defence Forces so attacked, all the military and other aid and assistance in its power.

2. So long as Article I remains in force, the Parties to the E.D.C. Treaty are agreed that if the United Kingdom or its armed forces should be the object of an armed attack in Europe, they and the European Defence Forces will afford all the military and other aid and assistance in their power.