

Therefore, we cannot count on native Korean forces to help us hold the line against Soviet expansion. Since the territory is not of decisive strategic importance to us, our main task is to extricate ourselves without too great a loss of prestige. In doing so, however, we should remember that it makes no sense to yield in Korea and then to try to insist on the elimination of Soviet influence behind Korea, in northern Manchuria.

VIII

As to the over-all international situation, the extreme anxiety felt in many quarters about the danger of war rests on an incorrect appraisal of Soviet intentions. The Kremlin does not wish to have another major war and does not expect to have one. Their warmongering campaign in the United Nations is a smoke-screen, designed to scare off our friends and to discredit us.

If aid to Europe gets favorable reaction in the coming Special Session of Congress,¹² Moscow will probably order the French and Italian communists, as a last resort, to proceed to civil war, in the hopes that this will bring chaos in Europe and dissuade us from proceeding with the aid program. Such tactics will probably not be implemented until after mid-December, when our right to have forces in Italy will have expired. That is also the time when we may expect the culmination of communist-satellite pressure in Greece.

The Russians do not expect these actions to lead to war with us. They will try to keep their own hand carefully disguised and to leave us in the frustrated position of having no one to oppose but local communists, or possibly the satellites.

They are aware that civil war in France and Italy may lead to serious reverses for the communist parties of those countries. This does not bother them very much. If United States aid is successful, these parties will not be much immediate use to them, anyway. And the hard cores of the parties are prepared to go underground again, if need be.

In playing this sort of a game they are admittedly operating very close to the line: closer than they themselves probably realize. They normally work with a disciplined movement; and they are accustomed to feeling that they can always withdraw if they see that they have reached the limits of the other fellow's patience. The greatest danger in this case is that they may

12. Special session of the 80th Congress, called to consider interim aid to Europe under the European Recovery Program, which met from November 17, 1947, to December 19, 1947. [Ed. note]

overestimate the discipline of their satellites in the Balkans, and that the latter may get out of hand, once violence begins, and go so far as to engage our interests directly.

Our best answer to all of this will be to stiffen local forces of resistance, wherever we can, and to see first whether they cannot do the work. There is a good chance that they can, particularly in France and Italy. Only if they show signs of failing, do we have to consider more direct action.

But even then, we should be free to call the play and to determine whether that action is to be directed against Russia or only against Russian stooge forces. The latter would be strongly preferable, in principle—and would *not* necessarily lead to war with Russia.

All in all, there is no reason to expect that we will be forced suddenly and violently into a major military clash with Soviet forces.



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TOP SECRET

Review of Current Trends: U.S. Foreign Policy

PPS 23

February 24, 1948

[Source: *Foreign Relations of the United States: 1948*, I (part 2), 526-28]

Like PPS 13 (Document 7) PPS 23 was a review by Kennan of the overall world situation. Excerpts from it dealing with the implementation of containment in specific areas are printed elsewhere in this collection (see Documents 11, 19, and 25). In the portion printed here, Kennan endeavored to set the policy of containment in perspective by distinguishing between "universalist" and "particularist" traditions in American foreign policy. Kennan's analysis foreshadowed the distinction between the "realist" and "legalistic-moralistic" approaches to diplomacy which he later stressed in his published writings. It also reflected the dilemma faced by American policy makers as they sought to integrate a foreign policy based on balance-of-power considerations with principles of collective security underlying the United Nations Charter.

VII. International Organization

A broad conflict runs through U.S. policy today between what may be called the universalistic and the particularized approaches to the solution of international problems.

The *universalistic* approach looks to the solution of international problems by providing a universalistic pattern of rules and procedures which would be applicable to all countries, or at least all countries prepared to join, in an

identical way. This approach has the tendency to rule out *political* solutions (that is, solutions related to the peculiarities in the positions and attitudes of the individual peoples). It favors legalistic and mechanical solutions, applicable to all countries alike. It has already been embodied in the United Nations, in the proposed ITO Charter, in UNESCO, in the PICAQ, and in similar efforts at universal world collaboration in given spheres of foreign policy.

This universalistic approach has a strong appeal to U.S. public opinion; for it appears to obviate the necessity of dealing with the national peculiarities and diverging political philosophies of foreign peoples; which many of our people find confusing and irritating. In this sense, it contains a strong vein of escapism. To the extent that it could be made to apply, it would relieve us of the necessity of dealing with the world as it is. It assumes that if all countries could be induced to subscribe to certain standard rules of behavior, the ugly realities—the power aspirations, the national prejudices, the irrational hatreds and jealousies—would be forced to recede behind the protecting curtain of accepted legal restraint, and that the problems of our foreign policy could thus be reduced to the familiar terms of parliamentary procedure and majority decision. The outward form established for international dealings would then cover and conceal the inner content. And instead of being compelled to make the sordid and involved political choices inherent in traditional diplomacy, we could make decisions on the lofty but simple plane of moral principle and under the protecting cover of majority decision.

The *particularized* approach is one which is skeptical of any scheme for compressing international affairs into legalistic concepts. It holds that the content is more important than the form, and will force its way through any formal structure which is placed upon it. It considers that the thirst for power is still dominant among so many peoples that it cannot be assuaged or controlled by anything but counter-force. It does not reject entirely the idea of alliance as a suitable form of counter-force; but it considers that if alliance is to be effective it must be based upon real community of interest and outlook, which is to be found only among limited groups of governments, and not upon the abstract formalism of universal international law or international organization. It places no credence in the readiness of most peoples to wage war or to make national sacrifices in the interests of an abstraction called "peace". On the contrary, it sees in universal undertakings a series of obligations which might, in view of the shortsightedness and timidity of other governments, prevent this country from taking vigorous and incisive

measures for its own defense and for the defense of concepts of international relations which might be of vital importance to world stability as a whole. It sees effective and determined U.S. policy being caught, at decisive moments, in the meshes of a sterile and cumbersome international parliamentarianism, if the universalistic concepts are applied.

Finally, the particularized approach to foreign policy problems distrusts the theory of national sovereignty as it expresses itself today in international organization. The modern techniques of aggressive expansion lend themselves too well to the pouring of new wine into old vessels—to the infusion of a foreign political will into the personality of an ostensibly independent nation. In these circumstances, the parliamentary principle in world affairs can easily become distorted and abused as it has been in the case of White Russia, the Ukraine and the Russian satellites.¹³ This is not to mention the problem of the distinction between large and small states, and the voice that they should have, respectively, in world affairs.

This Government is now conducting a dual policy, which combines elements of both of these approaches. This finds its reflection in the Department of State, where the functional (or universalistic) concept vies with the geographic (or particularized) in the framing and conduct of policy, as well as in the principles of Departmental organization.

This duality is something to which we are now deeply committed. I do not mean to recommend that we should make any sudden changes. We cannot today abruptly renounce aspirations which have become for many people here and abroad a symbol of our belief in the possibility of a peaceful world.

But it is my own belief that in our pursuance of a workable world order we have started from the wrong end. Instead of beginning at the center, which is our own immediate neighborhood—the area of our own political and economic tradition—and working outward, we have started on the periphery of the entire circle, i.e., on the universalistic principle of the UN, and have attempted to work inward. This has meant a great dispersal of our effort, and has brought perilously close to discredit those very concepts of a universal world order to which we were so attached. If we wish to preserve those concepts for the future we must hasten to remove some of the strain we have placed upon them and to build a solid structure, proceeding from a central foundation, which can be thrust up to meet them before they collapse of their own weight.

13. White Russia (Byelorussia) and the Ukraine, constituent republics of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, were given individual representation in the United Nations General Assembly in an agreement made at Yalta. [Ed. note]

This is the significance of the ERP, the idea of European union, and the cultivation of a closer association with the U.K. and Canada. For a truly stable world order can proceed, within our lifetime, only from the older, mellowed and more advanced nations of the world—nations for which the concept of order, as opposed to power, has value and meaning. If these nations do not have the strength to seize and hold real leadership in world affairs today, through that combination of political greatness and wise restraint which goes only with a ripe and settled civilization, then, as Plato once remarked: “. . . cities will never have rest from their evils,—no, nor the human race, as I believe.”



IMPLEMENTATION: EUROPE, 1947–49

AS APPLIED in Europe between 1947 and 1949, the policy of “containment” linked the problem of recovery from World War II with that of maintaining political equilibrium in the face of expanding Soviet influence. Kennan had suggested in the “X” article that in the end a self-confident Europe would provide the best possible bulwark against Soviet aggressive tendencies; by 1947 he and other influential policy makers had become convinced that without American help in rebuilding Europe’s war-shattered economies such self-confidence would never develop. In PPS 1, 4, and 23 (Documents 9, 10, and 11), Kennan and the Policy Planning Staff worked out in detail the rationale behind this approach.

The events of early 1948, however—the Soviet coup in Czechoslovakia in February, the brief but sharp “war scare” in March, and the imposition of the Berlin blockade in June—made it clear that economic assistance alone would not restore the equilibrium the United States sought. Accordingly, three additional approaches to the problem of European instability were set in motion in the spring and summer of 1948. One was the institutionalization of covert-action capabilities for the Central Intelligence Agency, a measure endorsed by the National Security Council at Kennan’s request (Document 12). The second approach, about which Kennan had considerable reservations, involved the formation of an independent West German state (Documents 14, 15). The third and most ambitious approach, about which Kennan also had doubts, envisaged furnishing military assistance to the nations of Western Europe through the framework of a multilateral security organization (Documents 13, 16, 17, and 18).

The reservations entertained by Kennan and the Policy Planning Staff regarding these last two initiatives stemmed from the fear that they would impair prospects for a political settlement with the Russians in Europe. But in these cases Kennan’s advice was not heeded; the year 1949 saw the formation of both NATO and the Federal Republic of Germany.

tion or suspension of efforts to find ways of relieving the problem of the dollar exchange shortage elsewhere. It would merely mean that this Government had agreed to join others in tackling the core of this problem in an organized and intensive manner.

If the considerations outlined in this report have implications for U.S. policy in areas other than Europe, these implications do not lie, for the most part, in parallels between action in Europe and action elsewhere, but rather in the importance of Europe itself to the regeneration of confidence everywhere in the possibility of progress and peaceful development in international life. The older cultural centers of Europe are the meteorological centers in which much of the climate of international life is produced and from which it proceeds. Until hope has been restored in Europe, there can be no real revival of confidence and security in the affairs of the world at large.

X. Conclusion

[I]t is none too soon to begin the charting of a course of U.S. policy with relation to European recovery which would do justice both to the immediate national interests of this country and to the abiding concern which the people of the United States feel for the continued vitality and prosperity of the European community.

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TOP SECRET

Review of Current Trends: U.S. Foreign Policy

PPS 23

February 24, 1948

[Source: *Foreign Relations of the United States: 1948*, I (part 2), 510-12, 515-21]

By early 1948, it had become evident that the prospect of U.S. economic aid had contributed significantly to a restoration of self-confidence in Europe. Kennan now addressed himself, in the excerpts from PPS 23 printed below (other excerpts are printed as Documents 8, 19, and 25), to the question of what American political objectives in Western Europe and the Mediterranean should be. The ultimate goal, he argued, should be a reconstitution of political authority in Europe independent of domination by either the United States or the Soviet Union. To this end, he strongly endorsed the concept of European union, and stressed the need to associate Britain with that enterprise, even at the expense of some loosening of ties with Canada and

the United States. That part of Germany not under Soviet control would also have to be integrated into this system, Kennan argued; the alternatives of a divided but perpetually intransigent Germany on the one hand, and a unified but potentially aggressive Germany on the other, risked to an unacceptable degree such stability as had been attained in postwar Europe. Kennan also concerned himself with the dangers of instability in the Mediterranean, where in both Greece and Italy there existed large and active communist parties eager to seize power. His recommendation for dealing with this problem involved the use of United States military forces as a political instrument with which to encourage conflicts of interest between the Soviet Union and the indigenous communists in that part of the world. These excerpts conclude with Kennan's recommendations on the delicate Palestine question, another issue involving the need to balance strategic considerations against those of international (and, in this case, domestic) politics.

I. United States, Britain, and Europe

On the assumption that Western Europe will be rescued from communist control, the relationships between Great Britain and the continental countries, on the one hand, and between Great Britain and the United States and Canada on the other, will become for us a long-term policy problem of major significance. The scope of this problem is so immense and its complexities so numerous that there can be no simple and easy answer. The solutions will have to be evolved step by step over a long period of time. But it is not too early today for us to begin to think out the broad outlines of the pattern which would best suit our national interests.

In my opinion, the following facts are basic to a consideration of this problem.

1. Some form of political, military, and economic union in Western Europe will be necessary if the free nations of Europe are to hold their own against the people of the east united under Moscow rule.
2. It is questionable whether this union could be strong enough to serve its designed purpose unless it had the participation and support of Great Britain.
3. Britain's long term economic problem, on the other hand, can scarcely be solved just by closer association with the other Western European countries, since these countries do not have, by and large, the food and raw material surpluses she needs; this problem could be far better met by closer association with Canada and the United States.
4. The only way in which a European union, embracing Britain but excluding eastern Europe, could become economically healthy would

be to develop the closest sort of trading relationships either with this hemisphere or with Africa.

It will be seen from the above that we stand before something of a dilemma. If we were to take Britain into our own U.S.-Canadian orbit, according to some formula of "Union now", this would probably solve Britain's long term economic problem and create a natural political entity of great strength. But this would tend to cut Britain off from the close political association she is seeking with continental nations and might therefore have the ultimate effect of rendering the continental nations more vulnerable to Russian pressure. If, on the other hand, the British are encouraged to seek salvation only in closer association with their continental neighbors, then there is no visible solution of the long term economic problem of either Britain or Germany, and we would be faced, at the termination of ERP, with another crises of demand on this country for European aid.

To me, there seem only two lines of emergence from this dilemma. They are not mutually exclusive and might, in fact, supplement each other very well.

In the first place, Britain could be encouraged to proceed vigorously with her plans for participation in a European union, and we could try to bring that entire union, rather than just Britain alone, into a closer economic association with this country and Canada. We must remember, however, that if this is to be really effective, the economic association must be so intimate as to bring about a substantial degree of currency and customs union, plus relative freedom of migration of individuals as between Europe and this continent. Only in this way can the free movement of private capital and labor be achieved which will be necessary if we are to find a real cure for the abnormal dependence of these areas on governmental aid from this country. But we should also note carefully the possible implications of such a program from the standpoint of the ITO Charter. As I see it, the draft charter, as well as the whole theory behind our trade agreements program, would make it difficult for us to extend to the countries of western Europe special facilities which we did not extend in like measure to all other ITO members and trade agreement partners.

A second possible solution would lie in arrangements whereby a union of Western European nations would undertake jointly the economic development and exploitation of the colonial and dependent areas of the African Continent. The realization of such a program admittedly presents demands which are probably well above the vision and strengths and leadership capacity of present governments in Western Europe. It would take consider-

able prodding from outside and much patience. But the idea itself has much to recommend it. The African Continent, is relatively little exposed to communist pressures; and most of it is not today a subject of great power rivalries. It lies easily accessible to the maritime nations of Western Europe, and politically they control or influence most of it. Its resources are still relatively undeveloped. It could absorb great numbers of people and a great deal of Europe's surplus technical and administrative energy. Finally, it would lend to the idea of Western European union that tangible objective for which everyone has been rather unsuccessfully groping in recent months.

However this may be, one thing is clear: if we wish to carry through with the main purpose of the ERP we must cordially and loyally support the British effort toward a Western European union. And this support should consist not only of occasional public expressions of approval. The matter should be carefully and sympathetically discussed with the British themselves and with the other governments of Western Europe. Much could be accomplished in such discussions, both from the standpoint of the clarification of our own policy and in the way of the exertion of a healthy and helpful influence on the Europeans themselves. In particular, we will have accomplished an immense amount if we can help to persuade the Western Europeans of the necessity of treating the Germans as citizens of Europe.

With this in mind, I think it might be well to ask each of our missions in Western Europe to make a special study of the problem of Western European union, both in general and with particular reference to the particular country concerned, and to take occasion, in the course of preparation of this study, to consult the views of the wisest and most experienced people they know in their respective capitals. These studies should be accompanied by their own recommendations as to how the basic problem could best be approached. A digest of such studies in this Department should yield a pretty sound cross-section of informed and balanced opinion on the problem in question.

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III. Germany

The coming changes with respect to the responsibility for military government in Germany provide a suitable occasion for us to evolve new long-term concepts of our objectives with respect to that country. We cannot rely on the concepts of the existing policy directives. Not only were these designed

to meet another situation, but it is questionable, in many instances, whether they were sound in themselves.

The planning to be done in this connection will necessarily have to be many-sided and voluminous. But it is possible to see today the main outlines of the problem we will face and, I think, of the solutions we must seek.

In the long run there can be only three possibilities for the future of western and central Europe. One is German domination. Another is Russian domination. The third is a federated Europe, into which the parts of Germany are absorbed but in which the influence of the other countries is sufficient to hold Germany in her place.

If there is no real European federation and if Germany is restored as a strong and independent country, we must expect another attempt at German domination. If there is no real European federation and if Germany is *not* restored as a strong and independent country, we invite Russian domination, for an unorganized Western Europe cannot indefinitely oppose an organized Eastern Europe. The only reasonably hopeful possibility for avoiding one of these two evils is some form of federation in western and central Europe.

Our dilemma today lies in the fact that whereas a European federation would be by all odds the best solution from the standpoint of U.S. interests, the Germans are poorly prepared for it. To achieve such a federation would be much easier if Germany were partitioned, or drastically decentralized, and if the component parts could be brought separately into the European union. To bring a unified Germany, or even a unified western Germany, into such a union would be much more difficult; for it would still over-weigh the other components, in many respects.

Now a partition of the Reich might have been possible if it had been carried out resolutely and promptly in the immediate aftermath of defeat. But that moment is now past, and we have today another situation to deal with. As things stand today, the Germans are psychologically not only unprepared for any breakup of the Reich but in a frame of mind which is distinctly unfavorable thereto.

In any planning we now do for the future of Germany we will have to take account of the unpleasant fact that our occupation up to this time has been unfortunate from the standpoint of the psychology of the German people. They are emerging from this phase of the post-hostilities period in a state of mind which can only be described as sullen, bitter, unregenerate, and pathologically attached to the old chimera of German unity. Our moral and political influence over them has not made headway since the surrender. They have been impressed neither by our precepts nor by our example. They

are not going to look to us for leadership. Their political life is probably going to proceed along the lines of a polarization into extreme right and extreme left, both of which elements will be, from our standpoint, unfriendly, ugly to deal with, and contemptuous of the things we value.

We cannot rely on any such Germany to fit constructively into a pattern of European union of its own volition. Yet without the Germans, no real European federation is thinkable. And without federation, the other countries of Europe can have no protection against a new attempt at foreign domination.

If we did not have the Russians and the German communists prepared to take advantage politically of any movement on our part toward partition we could proceed to partition Germany regardless of the will of the inhabitants, and to force the respective segments to take their place in a federated Europe. But in the circumstances prevailing today, we cannot do this without throwing the German people politically into the arms of the communists. And if that happens, the fruits of our victory in Europe will have been substantially destroyed.

Our possibilities are therefore reduced, by the process of exclusion, to a policy which, without pressing the question of partition in Germany, would attempt to bring Germany, or western Germany, into a European federation, but do it in such a way as not to permit her to dominate that federation or jeopardize the security interests of the other western European countries. And this would have to be accomplished in the face of the fact that we cannot rely on the German people to exercise any self-restraint of their own volition, to feel any adequate sense of responsibility vis-à-vis the other western nations, or to concern themselves for the preservation of western values in their own country and elsewhere in Europe.

I have no confidence in any of the old-fashioned concepts of collective security as a means of meeting this problem. European history has shown only too clearly the weakness of multilateral defensive alliances between complete sovereign nations as a means of opposing desperate and determined bids for domination of the European scene. Some mutual defense arrangements will no doubt be necessary as a concession to the prejudices of the other Western European peoples, whose thinking is still old fashioned and unrealistic on this subject. But we can place no reliance on them as a deterrent to renewed troublemaking on the part of the Germans.

This being the case, it is evident that the relationship of Germany to the other countries of western Europe must be so arranged as to provide mechanical and automatic safeguards against any unscrupulous exploitation of Germany's preeminence in population and in military-industrial potential.

The first task of our planning will be to find such safeguards.

In this connection, primary consideration must be given to the problem of the Ruhr. Some form of international ownership or control of the Ruhr industries would indeed be one of the best means of automatic protection against the future misuse of Germany's industrial resources for aggressive purposes. There may be other devices which would also be worth exploring.

A second line of our planning will have to be in the direction of the maximum interweaving of German economy with that of the remainder of Europe. This may mean that we will have to reverse our present policies, in certain respects. One of the most grievous mistakes, in my opinion, of our post-hostilities policy was the renewed extreme segregation of the Germans and their compression into an even smaller territory than before, in virtual isolation from the remaining peoples of Europe. This sort of segregation and compression invariably arouses precisely the worst reaction in the German character. What the Germans need is not to be thrust violently in upon themselves, which only heightens their congenital irrationalism and self-pity and defiant nationalism, but to be led out of their collective egocentrism and encouraged to see things in larger terms, to have interests elsewhere in Europe and elsewhere in the world, and to learn to think of themselves as world citizens and not just as Germans.

Next, we must recognize the bankruptcy of our moral influence on the Germans, and we must make plans for the earliest possible termination of those actions and policies on our part which have been psychologically unfortunate. First of all, we must reduce as far as possible our establishment in Germany; for the residence of large numbers of representatives of a victor nation in a devastated conquered area is never a helpful factor, particularly when their living habits and standards are as conspicuously different as are those of Americans in Germany. Secondly, we must terminate as rapidly as possible those forms of activity (denazification, re-education, and above all the Nuremberg Trials) which tend to set [us] up as mentors and judges over internal German problems. Thirdly, we must have the courage to dispense with military government as soon as possible and to force the Germans to accept responsibility once more for their own affairs. They will never begin to do this as long as we will accept that responsibility for them.

The military *occupation* of western Germany may have to go on for a long time. We may even have to be prepared to see it become a quasi-permanent feature of the European scene. But military *government* is a different thing. Until it is removed, we cannot really make progress in the direction of a more stable Europe.

Finally, we must do everything possible from now on to coordinate our

policy toward Germany with the views of Germany's immediate western neighbors. This applies particularly to the Benelux countries, who could probably easily be induced to render valuable collaboration in the implementation of our own views. It is these neighboring countries who in the long run must live with any solutions we may evolve; and it is absolutely essential to any successful ordering of western Europe that they make their full contribution and bear their full measure of responsibility. It would be better for us in many instances to temper our own policies in order to win their support than to try to act unilaterally in defiance of their feelings.

With these tasks and problems before us it is important that we should do nothing in this intervening period which would prejudice our later policies. The appropriate offices of the Department of State should be instructed to bear this in mind in their own work. We should also see to it that it is borne in mind by our military authorities in the prosecution of their policies in Germany. These considerations should be observed in any discussions we hold with representatives of other governments. This applies particularly to the forthcoming discussions with the French and the British.

IV. Mediterranean

As the situation has developed in the past year, the Soviet chances for disrupting the unity of western Europe and forcing a political entry into that area have been *deteriorating in northern Europe*, where the greater political maturity of the peoples is gradually asserting itself, but *holding their own*, if not actually increasing, *in the south* along the shores of the Mediterranean. Here the Russians have as assets not only the violent chauvinism of their Balkan satellites but also the desperate weakness and weariness of the Greek and Italian peoples. Conditions in Greece and Italy today are peculiarly favorable to the use of fear as a weapon for political action, and hence to the tactics which are basic and familiar to the communist movement.

It cannot be too often reiterated that this Government does not possess the weapons which would be needed to enable it to meet head-on the threat to national independence presented by the communist elements in foreign countries. This poses an extremely difficult problem as to the measures which our Government can take to prevent the communists from achieving success in the countries where resistance is lowest.

The Planning Staff has given more attention to this than to any single problem which has come under its examination. Its conclusions may be summed up as follows:

1. The use of U.S. regular armed force to oppose the efforts of indige-

nous communist elements within foreign countries must generally be considered as a risky and profitless undertaking, apt to do more harm than good.

2. If, however, it can be shown that the continuation of communist activities has a tendency to attract U.S. armed power to the vicinity of the affected areas, and if these areas are ones from which the Kremlin would definitely wish U.S. power excluded, there is a possibility that this may bring into play the defensive security interests of the Soviet Union and cause the Russians to exert a restraining influence on local communist forces.

The Staff has therefore felt that the wisest policy for us to follow would be to make it evident to the Russians by our actions that the further the communists go in Greece and Italy the more surely will this Government be forced to extend the deployment of its peacetime military establishment in the Mediterranean area.

There is no doubt in our minds but that if the Russians knew that the establishment of a communist government in Greece would mean the establishment of U.S. air bases in Libya and Crete, or that a communist uprising in northern Italy would lead to the renewed occupation by this country of the Foggia field, a conflict would be produced in the Kremlin councils between the interests of the Third Internationale, on the one hand, and those of the sheer military security of the Soviet Union, on the other. In conflicts of this sort, the interests of narrow Soviet nationalism usually win. If they were to win in this instance, a restraining hand would certainly be placed on the Greek and Italian communists.

This has already been, to some extent, the case. I think there is little doubt that the activity of our naval forces in the Mediterranean (including the stationing of further Marines with those forces), plus the talk of the possibility of our sending U.S. forces to Greece, has had something to do with the failure of the satellites, up to this time, to recognize the Markos Government, and possibly also with the Kremlin's reprimand to Dimitrov.⁵ Similarly, I think the statement we made at the time of the final departure of our troops from Italy was probably the decisive factor in bringing about the abandonment of the plans which evidently existed for a communist uprising in Italy prior to the spring elections.

5. Markos Vafiades was President and Minister of War in the "First Provisional Democratic Government of Free Greece," the Soviet puppet government established there late in 1947. Georgi Dimitrov was Prime Minister of Bulgaria and Secretary-General of the Bulgarian Communist Party. [Ed. note]

For this reason, I think that our policy with respect to Greece and Italy, and the Mediterranean area in general, should be based upon the objective of demonstration to the Russians that:

- a. the reduction of the communist threat will lead to our military withdrawal from the area; but that
- b. further communist pressure will only have the effect of involving us more deeply in a military sense.

V. Palestine and the Middle East

The Staff views on Palestine have been made known in a separate paper.⁶ I do not intend to recapitulate them here. But there are two background considerations of determining importance, both for the Palestine question and for our whole position in the Middle East, which I should like to emphasize at this time.

1. THE BRITISH STRATEGIC POSITION IN THE MIDDLE EAST

We have decided in this Government that the security of the Middle East is vital to our own security. We have also decided that it would not be desirable or advantageous for us to attempt to duplicate or to take over the strategic facilities now held by the British in that area. We have recognized that these facilities would be at our effective disposal anyway, in the event of war, and that to attempt to get them transferred, in the formal sense, from the British to ourselves would only raise a host of new and unnecessary problems, and would probably be generally unsuccessful.

This means that we must do what we can to support the maintenance of the British of their strategic position in that area. This does *not mean* that we must support them in every individual instance. It does *not mean* that we must back them up in cases where they have got themselves into a false position or where we would thereby be undertaking extravagant political commitments. It *does mean* that any policy on our part which tends to strain British relations with the Arab world and to whittle down the British position in the Arab countries is only a policy directed against ourselves and against the immediate strategic interests of our country.

6. The reference here is to PPS 19 of January 20, 1948, entitled "Position of the United States with Respect to Palestine" (not printed); and to PPS 21 of February 11, 1948, entitled "The Problem of Palestine" (not printed). [Ed. note]

2. THE DIRECTION OF OUR OWN POLICY

The pressures to which this Government is now subjected are ones which impel us toward a position where we would shoulder major responsibility for the maintenance, and even the expansion, of a Jewish state in Palestine. To the extent that we move in this direction, we will be operating directly counter to our major security interests in that area. For this reason, our policy in the Palestine issue should be dominated by the determination to avoid being impelled along this path.

We are now heavily and unfortunately involved in this Palestine question. We will apparently have to make certain further concessions to our past commitments and to domestic pressures.

These concessions will be dangerous ones; but they will not necessarily be catastrophic if we are thoroughly conscious of what we are doing, and if we lay our general course toward the avoidance of the possibility of the responsibility I have referred to. If we do not lay our course in that direction but drift along the lines of least resistance in the existing vortex of cross currents, our entire policy in the Middle Eastern area will unquestionably be carried in the direction of confusion, ineffectiveness, and grievous involvement in a situation to which there cannot be—from our standpoint—any happy ending.

I think it should be stated that if this Government is carried to a point in the Palestine controversy where it is required to send U.S. forces to Palestine in any manner whatsoever, or to agree either to the international recruitment of volunteers or the sending of small nation forces which would include those of Soviet satellites, then in my opinion, the whole structure of strategic and political planning which we have been building up for the Mediterranean and Middle Eastern areas would have to be re-examined and probably modified or replaced by something else. For this would then mean that we had consented to be guided, in a highly important question affecting those areas, not by national interest but by other considerations. If we tried, in the face of this fact, to continue with policy in adjacent areas motivated solely by national interest, we would be faced with a duality of purpose which would surely lead in the end to a dissipation and confusion of effort. We cannot operate with one objective in one area, and with a conflicting one next door.

If, therefore, we decide that we are obliged by past commitments or UN decision or any other consideration to take a leading part in the enforcement in Palestine of any arrangement opposed by the great majority of the inhabi-

tants of the Middle Eastern area, we must be prepared to face the implications of this act by revising our general policy in that part of the world. And since the Middle East is vital to the present security concepts on which this Government is basing itself in its worldwide military and political planning, this would further mean a review of our entire military and political policy.

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National Security Council Directive on Office of Special Projects

NSC 10/2

June 18, 1948

[Source: Records of the National Security Council held at the Secretariat, Executive Office Building, Washington, D.C.]

An additional dimension of U.S. containment policy involved the development of covert-action capabilities. In NSC 4/A of December 14, 1947 (not printed), the National Security Council authorized the newly organized Central Intelligence Agency to conduct clandestine psychological operations—primarily activities involving the use of unattributed, forged, and/or subsidized publications.⁷ But in May 1948, in the wake of the Czech coup and the growing Berlin crisis, Kennan recommended broadening this authority to include covert political action as well. The National Security Council approved Kennan's suggestion, and in NSC 10/2 established the Office of Special Projects (soon to be renamed the Office of Policy Coordination) within the CIA. The document also defined the term "covert operations" to include a wide variety of activities ranging from propaganda and economic pressure to sabotage, subversion, and unconventional warfare.

NSC 10/2 emphasized the need to conduct covert operations in a manner consistent with the political and military objectives of the United States, and therefore specified close consultation between the Chief of the Office of Special Projects, the Director of Central Intelligence, the Departments of State and Defense, and the National Security Council. In furtherance of this injunction to cooperation, the directive made the Secretary of State, and not the Director of the CIA, responsible for nominating the Chief of the Office of Special Projects. "It did not work out at all the way I had conceived it," Kennan admitted in 1975. "We had thought that this would be a facility which could be used when and if an occasion arose when it might be needed. There might be years when we wouldn't have to do anything like this. But if the occasion arose we wanted somebody in the Government who would have the funds, the experience, the expertise to do these things and to do them in a proper way."⁸

7. Anne Karalekas, "History of the Central Intelligence Agency," in U.S. Congress, Senate (94th Cong., 2nd sess.), Select Committee to Study Government Operations with respect to Intelligence Activities, *Final Report: Supplementary Detailed Staff Reports on Foreign and Military Intelligence: Book IV* (Washington: 1976), p. 26n.

8. Quoted *ibid.*, p. 31.

At some point, he believed, it would be necessary to resume substantive negotiations with the Russians with a view to resolving outstanding differences. Behind this assumption was Kennan's conviction that neither the United States nor the Soviet Union could indefinitely maintain the advanced positions they had occupied since the end of World War II; sooner or later, he thought, a reciprocal withdrawal of forces would have to take place. As indicated in these excerpts from PPS 23, Kennan regarded negotiations as feasible even with Stalin if conducted realistically by professional diplomats on topics where there might be mutual interest in reaching agreements. In the relative importance he attached to negotiations Kennan parted company with other top Washington policy makers, most of whom harbored greater skepticism than he about what diplomatic contacts with Moscow could accomplish, and tended to emphasize instead the need to build up alliances against Soviet power.

VI. U.S.S.R

If the Russians have further success in the coming months in their efforts at penetration and seizure of political control of the key countries outside the iron curtain (Germany, France, Italy, and Greece), they will continue, in my opinion, to be impossible to deal with at the council table. For they will see no reason to settle with us at this time over Germany when they hope that their bargaining position will soon be improved.

If, on the other hand, their situation outside the iron curtain does not improve—if the ERP aid arrives in time and in a form to do some good and if there is a general revival of confidence in western Europe, than a new situation will arise and the Russians will be prepared, for the first time since the surrender, to do business seriously with us about Germany and about Europe in general. They are conscious of this and are making allowance for this possibility in their plans. I think, in fact, that they regard it as the more probable of the two contingencies.

When that day comes, i.e. when the Russians will be prepared to talk realistically with us, we will be faced with a great test of American statesmanship, and it will not be easy to find the right solution. For what the Russians will want us to do will be to conclude with them a sphere-of-influence agreement similar to the one they concluded with the Germans in 1939. It will be our job to explain to them that we cannot do this and why. But we must also be able to demonstrate to them that it will still be worth their while:

- a. to reduce communist pressures elsewhere in Europe and the Middle East to a point where we can afford to withdraw all our armed forces from the continent and the Mediterranean; and

- b. to acquiesce thereafter in a prolonged period of stability in Europe.

I doubt that this task will be successfully accomplished if we try to tackle it head-on in the CFM or at any other public meeting. Our public dealings with the Russians can hardly lead to any clear and satisfactory results unless they are preceded by preparatory discussions of the most secret and delicate nature with Stalin. I think that those discussions can be successfully conducted only by someone who:

- a. has absolutely no personal axe to grind in the discussions, even along the lines of getting public credit for their success, and is prepared to observe strictest silence about the whole proceeding; and
- b. is thoroughly acquainted not only with the background of our policies but with Soviet philosophy and strategy and with the dialectics used by Soviet statesmen in such discussions.

(It would be highly desirable that this person be able to conduct conversations in the Russians' language. In my opinion, this is important with Stalin.)

These discussions should not be directed toward arriving at any sort of secret protocol or any other written understanding. They should be designed to clarify the background of any written understanding that we may hope to reach at the CFM table or elsewhere. For we know now that the words of international agreements mean different things to the Russians than they do to us; and it is desirable that in this instance we should thresh out some common understanding of what would really be meant by any further written agreements we might arrive at.

The Russians will probably not be prepared to "talk turkey" with us until after the elections. But it would be much easier to talk to them at that time if the discussions did not have to be inaugurated too abruptly and if the ground had been prepared beforehand.

. . . But we must bear in mind that this understanding would necessarily have to be limited and coldly realistic, could not be reduced to paper, and could not be expected to outlast the general international situation which had given rise to it.

I may add that I think such an understanding would have to be restricted pretty much to the European and western Mediterranean areas. I doubt that it could be extended to apply to the Middle East and Far East. The situation in these latter areas is too unsettled, the prospects for the future too confusing, the possibilities of one sort or another too vast and unforeseeable, to admit of such discussions. The only exception to this might be with respect to

Japan. It might conceivably be possible for us to achieve some arrangement whereby the economic exchanges between Japan and Manchuria might be revived in a guarded and modified form, by some sort of barter arrangement. This is an objective well worth holding in mind, from our standpoint. But we should meanwhile have to frame our policies in Japan with a view to creating better bargaining power for such discussions than we now possess.

We are still faced with an extremely serious threat to our whole security, in the form of the men in the Kremlin. These men are an able, shrewd and utterly ruthless group, absolutely devoid of respect for us or our institutions. They wish for nothing more than the destruction of our national strength. They operate through a political organization of unparalleled flexibility, discipline, cynicism and toughness. They command the resources of one of the world's greatest industrial and agricultural nations. Natural force, independent of our policies, may go far to absorb and eventually defeat the efforts of this group. But we cannot depend upon this. Our own diplomacy has a decisive part to play in this connection. The problems involved are new to us, and we are only beginning to adjust ourselves to them. We have made some progress; but we are not yet nearly far enough advanced. Our operations in foreign affairs must attain a far higher degree of purposefulness, of economy of effort, and of disciplined coordination if we are to be sure of accomplishing our purposes.

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The Position of the United States with Respect to Soviet-Directed World Communism

NSC 7

March 30, 1948

[Source: *Foreign Relations of the United States: 1948*, I (part 2), 546-50]

In addition to the problems of dealing with the Soviet Union itself, Washington officials had to consider the relationship of that country to the international communist movement. NSC 7, prepared by the staff of the National Security Council in consultation with representatives from the Army, Navy, Air Force, State Department, National Security Resources Board, and the Central Intelligence Agency, represented one of the first comprehensive efforts within the government to do this. The document is significant first in its assumption of congruent interests among the Soviet

Union and members of the international communist movement, a position events in Yugoslavia soon called into question; second, in its failure to include Chinese Communist activities within the scope of "Soviet-directed world communism"; and third, in its insistence that the internal communist threat in the United States approached the external threat in importance.

The Problem

1. To assess and appraise the position of the United States with respect to Soviet-directed world communism, taking into account the security interests of the United States.

Analysis

2. The ultimate objective of Soviet-directed world communism is the domination of the world. To this end, Soviet-directed world communism employs against its victims in opportunistic coordination the complementary instruments of Soviet aggressive pressure from without and militant revolutionary subversion from within. Both instruments are supported by the formidable material power of the USSR and their use is facilitated by the chaotic aftermath of the war.

3. The defeat of the Axis left the world with only two great centers of national power, the United States and the USSR. The Soviet Union is the source of power from which international communism chiefly derives its capability to threaten the existence of free nations. The United States is the only source of power capable of mobilizing successful opposition to the communist goal of world conquest. Between the United States and the USSR there are in Europe and Asia areas of great potential power which if added to the existing strength of the Soviet world would enable the latter to become so superior in manpower, resources and territory that the prospect for the survival of the United States as a free nation would be slight. In these circumstances the USSR has engaged the United States in a struggle for power, or "cold war," in which our national security is at stake and from which we cannot withdraw short of eventual national suicide.

4. Already Soviet-directed world communism has achieved alarming success in its drive toward world conquest. It has established satellite police states in Poland, Yugoslavia, Albania, Hungary, Bulgaria, Rumania, and Czechoslovakia; it poses an immediate threat to Italy, Greece, Finland, Korea, the Scandanavian countries, and others. The USSR has prevented the conclusion of peace treaties with Germany, Austria, and Japan; and has

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Review of Current Trends: U.S. Foreign Policy

PPS 23

February 24, 1948

[Source: *Foreign Relations of the United States: 1948*, I (part 2), 523-26]

This excerpt from PPS 23 provides a clear exposition of Kennan's general views on the application of containment in Asia. (For other excerpts from PPS 23, see Documents 8, 11, and 19). As he had in his earlier "Review of the World Situation" (Document 7), Kennan stressed the limited ability of the United States to affect events in the Far East, and the danger of overextension unless distinctions between vital and peripheral interests were kept firmly in mind. Calling for the abandonment of pretensions to moral or ideological leadership in that part of the world, Kennan advocated an American policy based on economic and military assistance in selected areas—notably the island bastions of Japan and the Philippines, which he viewed as the cornerstones of a future security system in the Pacific.

VII. Far East

My main impression with regard to the position of this Government with regard to the Far East is that we are greatly over-extended in our whole thinking about what we can accomplish, and should try to accomplish, in that area. This applies, unfortunately, to the public in our country as well as to the Government.

It is urgently necessary that we recognize our own limitations as a moral and ideological force among the Asiatic peoples.

Our political philosophy and our patterns for living have very little applicability to masses of people in Asia. They may be all right for us, with our highly developed political traditions running back into the centuries and with our peculiarly favorable geographic position; but they are simply not practical or helpful, today, for most of the people in Asia.

This being the case, we must be very careful when we speak of exercising "leadership" in Asia. We are deceiving ourselves and others when we pretend to have the answers to the problems which agitate many of these Asiatic peoples.

Furthermore, we have about 50% of the world's wealth but only 6.3% of its population. This disparity is particularly great as between ourselves and the peoples of Asia. In this situation, we cannot fail to be the object of envy and resentment. Our real task in the coming period is to devise a pattern of

relationships which will permit us to maintain this position of disparity without positive detriment to our national security. To do so, we will have to dispense with all sentimentality and day-dreaming; and our attention will have to be concentrated everywhere on our immediate national objectives. We need not deceive ourselves that we can afford today the luxury of altruism and world-benefaction.

For these reasons, we must observe great restraint in our attitude toward the Far Eastern areas. The peoples of Asia and of the Pacific area are going to go ahead, whatever we do, with the development of their political forms and mutual interrelationships in their own way. This process cannot be a liberal or peaceful one. The greatest of the Asiatic peoples—the Chinese and the Indians—have not yet even made a beginning at the solution of the basic demographic problem involved in the relationship between their food supply and their birth rate. Until they find some solution to this problem, further hunger, distress and violence are inevitable. All of the Asiatic peoples are faced with the necessity for evolving new forms of life to conform to the impact of modern technology. This process of adaptation will also be long and violent. It is not only possible, but probable, that in the course of this process many peoples will fall, for varying periods, under the influence of Moscow, whose ideology has a greater lure for such peoples, and probably greater reality, than anything we could oppose to it. All this, too, is probably unavoidable; and we could not hope to combat it without the diversion of a far greater portion of our national effort than our people would ever willingly concede to such a purpose.

In the face of this situation we would be better off to dispense now with a number of the concepts which have underlined our thinking with regard to the Far East. We should dispense with the aspiration to "be liked" or to be regarded as the repository of a high-minded international altruism. We should stop putting ourselves in the position of being our brothers' keeper and refrain from offering moral and ideological advice. We should cease to talk about vague and—for the Far East—unreal objectives such as human rights, the raising of the living standards, and democratization. The day is not far off when we are going to have to deal in straight power concepts. The less we are then hampered by idealistic slogans, the better.

We should recognize that our influence in the Far Eastern area in the coming period is going to be primarily military and economic. We should make a careful study to see what parts of the Pacific and Far Eastern world are absolutely vital to our security, and we should concentrate our policy on seeing to it that those areas remain in hands which we can control or rely on. It is

my own guess, on the basis of such study as we have given the problem so far, that Japan and the Philippines will be found to be the corner-stones of such a Pacific security system and that if we can contrive to retain effective control over these areas there can be no serious threat to our security from the East within our time.

Only when we have assured this first objective, can we allow ourselves the luxury of going farther afield in our thinking and our planning.

If these basic concepts are accepted, then our objectives for the immediate coming period should be:

- a. to liquidate as rapidly as possible our unsound commitments in China and to recover, vis-à-vis that country, a position of detachment and freedom of action;
- b. to devise policies with respect to Japan which assure the security of those islands from communist penetration and domination as well as from Soviet military attack, and which will permit the economic potential of that country to become again an important force in the Far East, responsive to the interests of peace and stability in the Pacific area; and
- c. to shape our relationship to the Philippines in such a way as to permit to the Philippine Government a continued independence in all internal affairs but to preserve the archipelago as a bulwark of U.S. security in that area.

Of these three objectives, the one relating to Japan is the one where there is the greatest need for immediate attention on the part of our Government and the greatest possibility for immediate action. It should therefore be made the focal point of our policy for the Far East in the coming period.

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Conversation between General of the Army MacArthur and Mr. George F. Kennan

PPS 28/2

March 5, 1948

[Source: *Foreign Relations of the United States: 1948*, VI, 700-702]

Early in 1948 Kennan traveled to Japan for consultations with General Douglas MacArthur, Supreme Commander of Allied Powers Japan (SCAP). During these conversations MacArthur outlined his strategic concept for the Far East, a plan which, like Kennan's, involved holding island air and naval bases to enable the

United States to prevent anti-American offensive operations from the Asian mainland. MacArthur's formulation would appear as official policy almost two years later in Secretary of State Dean Acheson's "defensive perimeter" speech to the National Press Club, January 12, 1950.

Excerpts from Kennan's record of his conversation with MacArthur on March 5, 1948, as included in PPS 28/2 of May 26, 1948, are printed below.

Turning to the question of security, the General outlined his views on the position of the Pacific area in the pattern of our national defense. He said that the strategic boundaries of the United States were no longer along the western shores of North and South America; they lay along the eastern shores of the Asiatic continent. Accordingly, our fundamental strategic task was to make sure that no serious amphibious force could ever be assembled and dispatched from an Asiatic port. In the past the center of our defense problem had lain farther south, in the neighborhood of the Philippines. It had now shifted to the north, since it was now only toward the north that a threat of the development of amphibious power could mature.

The General then described the area of the Pacific in which, in his opinion, it was necessary for us to have striking force. This was a U-shaped area embracing the Aleutians, Midway, the former Japanese mandated islands, Clark Field in the Philippines, and above all Okinawa. Okinawa was the most advanced and vital point in this structure. From Okinawa he could easily control every one of the ports of northern Asia from which an amphibious operation could conceivably be launched. This was what was really essential. Naval facilities were important; but the air striking power was vital for the purpose in question. With adequate force at Okinawa, we would not require the Japanese home islands for the purpose of preventing the projection of amphibious power from the Asiatic mainland. That did not mean, of course, that it was not important to us to see that the strategic facilities of the Japanese islands remained denied to any other power. All the islands of the Western Pacific were of vital importance to us.

For these reasons, he attached great importance to Okinawa, and felt it absolutely necessary that we retain unilateral and complete control of the Ryukyu chain south of Latitude 29. . . .

As for the Japanese islands, he did not believe that it would be feasible for us to retain bases anywhere in Japan after the conclusion of a treaty of peace. For us to do so would be to admit the equally legitimate claim of