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# The United States and the Founding of NATO

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How the United States Administration envisioned the  
North Atlantic Treaty Organization

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## **1. Introduction**

Again the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) is subject of discussion in the United States (US). Donald Trump, the billionaire and current Republican presidential candidate, called NATO “old and obsolete”. He claims that the organization is not up to the tasks of this time. NATO was designed to combat the Soviet Union not to counter terrorism. Also the burden sharing in NATO is unfair, he says, since some European countries do not spend on defence what they should, thereby forcing the US to spend extra. Trump concludes: “Either they pay up, including for past deficiencies, or they have to get out. And if it breaks up NATO, it breaks up NATO”<sup>1</sup>

Discussions about the North Atlantic Alliance and its organization already took place sixty-eight years ago, but these discussions ended with the foundation of the alliance. On the 4th of April 1949 several Western European states, Canada and the United States signed the North Atlantic Treaty. The new allies agreed that “an armed attack against one or more of them... shall be considered an attack against them all”.<sup>2</sup> To help the allies, a new organisation based on the North Atlantic Treaty was formed: the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation. The alliance and the supporting organization together became known as NATO. These events took place some years after the end of the Second World War. The European continent had suffered from the effects of war and the Soviet Union, which was enlarging its sphere of influence wherever it could, was seen by the US and Western Europe as a new threat. The North Atlantic Treaty Organisation itself explains its founding on their website by referring to three main reasons. The first was to oppose the threat of the Soviet Union and to create a secure environment in which the European economy could recover. The other two reasons for founding NATO were to prevent the revival of nationalist militarism in Europe, specifically Germany, through a strong North American presence in Europe and to encourage European political integration.<sup>3</sup> However, every member country had their own specific reasons to join the alliance. The US is of course no exception. The reasons that led President Harry S. Truman to sign the treaty have been researched quite extensively in the past few decades. NATO’s purpose in the eyes of the Truman administration was to institutionalize, from a military point of view, the strategy of containment set forth in the Truman Doctrine. It was supposed to secure US hegemony in Western Europe and prevent the further expansion of the

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<sup>1</sup> New York Times, <http://www.nytimes.com/politics/first-draft/2016/04/02/donald-trump-tells-crowd-hed-be-fine-if-nato-broke-up/> (accessed on May 2<sup>nd</sup> 2016).

<sup>2</sup> Article 5, North Atlantic Treaty, April 4<sup>th</sup> 1949, see annex IV.

<sup>3</sup> NATO, <http://www.nato.int/history/nato-history.html>, (accessed on November 11<sup>th</sup> 2014).

Communist influence sphere. The question should be asked what kind of alliance and appropriate organization the US administration wanted and envisioned during the founding phase of the alliance. It seems that between the US and the Western European countries there were differences of opinion on this subject. For example, there were differences of opinion on the goals and tasks of the future alliance, which countries should join, what form the organization should take and how the burden of defence should be shared. Contrary to what is often said and understood there was also no consensus within the Truman administration on these questions. So what kind of NATO did the different policy makers within the US administration envision during the founding phase of the alliance? This question leads to other questions like: why did the US administration choose for a certain kind of NATO and did the eventual embodiment of NATO correspond to the wishes of the Americans? These interesting questions are almost entirely left unanswered in the literature on NATO and the beginning of the Cold War.

Therefore the main research question is: what kind of NATO did the US administration envision during the founding phase of the organization? This founding phase is the period between the commencement of talks on the North Atlantic Alliance during the end of 1947 and the founding of NATO itself during 1949. The main research question is divided in three sub-questions: (1) how did the relevant officials within the US administration envision NATO during its founding phase, (2) why did they chose those views (3) and did the eventual embodiment of NATO correspond with the US administrations views?

## Methodology

This work has the form of a traditional historical research project. The focus will be on the US administrations view on the working and organisational framework of NATO. Therefore this thesis will look at the views produced in regard to the specific goals and tasks of NATO, the member states of the alliance, how the North Atlantic Treaty and thus NATO worked, the structure of the civil and military branch and finally the form of burden-sharing between the allies. Relevant views were produced by the parts of the US administration which were most involved in the decision-making around NATO. These relevant parts are the US military establishment, the US Department of State, and the US President and his advisory councils.

This thesis covers the time-period between 1945 and December 1949. This time-span is chosen because the US containment policy, which formed one of the basic arguments for US involvement in NATO, finds its origins in 1945. Around the end of 1947 discussions about a Western military alliance, and its possible organisational framework, within Western

Europe and the US began. The US at first was sceptical about an Atlantic Alliance, but this view subsequently changed over time and eventually the North Atlantic Treaty was signed in April 1949. However, discussions about NATO's organisational framework continued till the end of 1949.

This work is divided in eight chapters. Relevant academic literature concerning the subject of research will be discussed in chapter two. Chapter three will focus on the US foreign and defence policy between the end of 1945 and the beginning of 1948. Chapter three will form the background for this research since the knowledge put forward in this chapter is needed to understand why the US joined the North Atlantic Alliance and what NATO the US administration envisioned. It helps to put the research into context.

In chapters four to seven the research questions will be discussed. In chapters four, five and six the first two sub-questions will be answered: how did the US administration envision NATO during its founding phase and why did they chose those views. Each of these three chapters cover a certain time period. Chapter four will cover the period between the first initiatives for an Atlantic Alliance in December 1947 and the end of the Pentagon talks in April 1948. In chapter five the period between the Pentagon talks and January 1949 will be discussed. Finally in chapter six the focus will be on the period between January 1949 and the creation of NATO between April and December 1949. Chapter seven will look at the question how NATO was structured/organized around December 1949 and whether this embodiment was in line with US administrations expectations. To be able to answer this question the answers to the first two research questions will be summarized and annex IV, V and VI will provide extra information on how NATO worked and was structured/organized around December 1949. In chapter eight concluding remarks will be made with regard to all the research questions.

This thesis contains qualitative research. Qualitative research is needed to be able to obtain specific information about the opinions, behaviours and social contexts of, in this case, certain parts of the US administration. The sources used for this qualitative research are all written documents like internal reports, notifications, speeches and memo's. They consist primarily out of internal and external communication from the Truman administration and they relate to US foreign affairs policy and the US involvement in the founding of NATO. The chosen sources give insight into the different opinions and the decision making process within the US administration. To avoid the danger of getting lost in a maze of individual opinions and statements, it is important to stick to the larger lines of reasoning within each part of the US administration.

The primary sources used in this thesis derive for the largest part from the website of the Harry S. Truman Library, the website of the Office of the Historian of the US State Department, the website of the Defence Technical Information Center and the Roosevelt Study Center in Middelburg.<sup>4</sup> The Harry S. Truman Library gives access to oral histories transcripts of important State Department officials and the website of the Office of the Historian gives access to the complete '*Foreign Relations of the United States*' series. The Roosevelt Study Centre in Middelburg has a large collection of internal reports, notifications, speeches and memo's from different parts of the Truman administration and finally the website of the Defence Technical Information Center stores the important '*History of the Joint Chiefs of Staff*' series.

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<sup>4</sup> Harry S. Truman Library: <http://www.trumanlibrary.org/>; Department of State, Office of the Historian: <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments>; Roosevelt Study Center: <https://www.roosevelt.nl/>; Defence Technical Information Center: <http://www.dtic.mil/dtic/>.

## **2. Historiography**

In this chapter the relevant academic literature will be discussed. Articles and books on the formation of NATO are not specifically rare. Scholarly work on American foreign policy or the beginnings of the Cold War also regularly cover the formation of the organization. However the question what kind of NATO the Truman administration envisioned seems to be a black spot in academic literature. Therefore this question cannot be covered in this historiography. Instead the reasons why the US joined NATO will be discussed. To get a better understanding of the circumstances under which NATO was formed, the first part of this chapter will look at the main academic literature on the reasons for the breakout of the Cold War.

### **The Beginning of the Cold War**

What were the reasons for the outbreak of the Cold War and who were responsible? Almost since the start of the Cold War itself, these questions have been the subject of debate. The questions triggered a lot of scholarly publications and subsequent opinions. There are three main schools of opinion: traditionalists, revisionists and postrevisionists. Around the 1950's the first school, that of the traditionalists (also known as the school of orthodoxy), came into existence. Traditionalists like George Kennan and Herbert Feis blame the Soviets for the start of the Cold War.<sup>5</sup> In their opinion the Soviets employed an aggressive and expansive foreign policy, while the US pursued a peaceful post- Second World War world based on moral and legal principles.<sup>6</sup> The Soviet Union for example left large armies in Eastern Europe, did not allow free elections in Poland and blockaded Berlin. While at the same time Communists supported by the Soviets took over government in Czechoslovakia and threatened to overtake Turkey, Greece and the Middle East. The US therefore had to react against the aggressive Soviet Union to protect the world against the dangers from Communism.<sup>7</sup> The US eventually reacted against Soviet aggression with the Truman Doctrine, Marshall Plan and by establishing NATO. By joining NATO the US thus hoped to combat the threat created and posed by the Soviets. Cold War realists like Hans J. Morgenthau are often grouped with the

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<sup>5</sup> Kennan, George F., 'American Diplomacy. 1900-1950' (Chicago 1951); Feis, Herbert, 'Churchill Roosevelt Stalin. The war they waged and the peace they sought' (Princeton 1957); Feis, Herbert, 'From Trust to Terror: The Onset of the Cold War, 1945-1950' (New York 1970).

<sup>6</sup> Hurst, Steven, 'Cold War US Foreign Policy: Key Perspectives' (Edinburg 2005), pp. 22-23.

<sup>7</sup> Nye, Joseph S. Jr., 'Understanding International Conflicts. An introduction to theory and history' (New York 2007), p.117.

traditionalists.<sup>8</sup> They agree with the traditionalists on many fronts. Most importantly they also see the Soviet Union as the aggressor. However they differ on one point: the realists evaluate the US foreign policy differently.<sup>9</sup> In the realist view the US foreign policy pursuing a peaceful post- Second World War world based on moral and legal principles was naïve, not praiseworthy as the traditionalists say.<sup>10</sup> Realists claim that power politics and the pursuit of state interests are the rationale behind international affairs, not moral and legal principles. The US containment policy and other policy's against an aggressive Soviet Union were thus just a return to the realities of power.<sup>11</sup>

Revisionists like Gabriel Kolko, Gar Alperovitz and William A. Williams believed that the US was more or less responsible for the start of the Cold War.<sup>12</sup> They argued that around the final stage of the Second World War, the US was occupied with the implementation of democracy, the expansion of the free market system and its sphere of influence. These were ways to promote peace but also to ensure the world was open to American exports and raw materials exploitation.<sup>13</sup> On the other hand these policies formed a direct threat to the Soviet Union. The US additionally stopped the lend-lease program to the Soviet Union early in 1945 and refused reparation payments from Western-Germany and a Soviet occupation zone in East Asia.<sup>14</sup> Gar Alperovitz even claims that the use of the atomic bomb by the US was not to defeat the already defeated Japanese, but to intimidate the Soviets.<sup>15</sup> On the other hand the Soviet Union was extremely weakened by the war and did not pose any real military danger to the US. Moreover the US had a monopoly on the nuclear bomb. The Soviet Union acted moderately and non-expansionistic allowing for example non-communist governments to exist in several Eastern European countries.<sup>16</sup> However the Soviet Union, in response to US policy, had to take "an aggressive stand to defend its way of life from Western expansion".<sup>17</sup> The moderate revisionists agree with the these views, but did not blame the US for the full 100%. More radical revisionists, also called New Left revisionists,

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<sup>8</sup> Morgenthau, Hans J., 'Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace' (New York 1948); Morgenthau, Hans J., 'In Defence of the National Interest' (New York 1951); Morgenthau, Hans J., 'The Purpose of American Politics' (New York 1960).

<sup>9</sup> Hurst, Steven, op.cit., p. 21.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., p. 21.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., p. 22.

<sup>12</sup> Kolko, Gabriel, 'The Politics of War: The World and United States Foreign Policy, 1943-1945' (New York 1968); Kolko, Gabriel and Joyce, 'The limits of power: The World and United States Foreign Policy, 1945-1954' (New York 1972); Alperovitz, Gar, 'Atomic Diplomacy: Hiroshima and Potsdam' (New York 1965); Williams, William A., 'The tragedy of American Diplomacy' (Cleveland 1959).

<sup>13</sup> Hurst. Steven, op.cit., 31, 42-45.

<sup>14</sup> Nye, Joseph S. Jr., op.cit., p. 122.

<sup>15</sup> Alperovitz, Gar, op.cit.

<sup>16</sup> Nye, Joseph S. Jr., op.cit., p. 118.

saw the capitalist/imperialist desire to restore, expand and claim new markets as the main rational behind US foreign policy. They hold the US fully responsible for the outbreak of the Cold War. Gabriel Kolko and William A. Williams are often seen as the most important scholars in this group of radicals. The US economy needed to expand its markets, thus the US enlarged its sphere of influence in the first place for capitalism and in the second place for peace, freedom and democracy.<sup>18</sup> They could not tolerate the Soviet Union having an autonomous economic area segregated from the American one.<sup>19</sup> Thus the US, by political and military means, tried to counter any challenge to the capitalist economy and not necessarily Soviet influence itself. Anti-communism, the Containment Policy and Marshall Plan could be seen as a way to restore or gain and protect markets for the American economy, nothing else.<sup>20</sup> The formation of NATO itself could also be seen in this light. NATO was not founded out of military necessity but to promote US economic needs.<sup>21</sup> In order to counter these initiatives, the Soviet Union created a defensive buffer in Eastern Europe. The US was the aggressor in the eyes of the New Left Revisionists and the Soviet Union was right to resist and to protect itself from Western expansion.<sup>22</sup>

Critical of both traditional and revisionist theories is the school of post-revisionism. Post-revisionists have another explanation for the start of the Cold War. Contrary to the traditionalists and the revisionists, post-revisionists don't specifically blame either the US or the Soviet Union.<sup>23</sup> An important post-revisionist work that builds on the Neorealist framework of Kenneth Waltz is John Lewis Gaddis's, '*The United States and the Origins of the Cold War, 1941–1947*'.<sup>24</sup> He claims that the Cold War was almost inevitable because of the bipolar balance of power and the conflicting world views which existed between the US and the Soviet Union.<sup>25</sup> After the end of the Second World War only two superpowers remained: the Soviet Union and the United States. Europe and the rest of the World formed a big power vacuum into which both superpowers were drawn. The US and the Soviet Union were bound to expand their spheres of influence and eventually oppose each other in this power vacuum because of the security dilemma.<sup>26</sup> Both superpowers wanted to enhance their security and the

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<sup>17</sup> Bogle, Lory Lyn, op.cit., p. viii.

<sup>18</sup> Hurst, Steven, op.cit., 42-45.

<sup>19</sup> Nye, Joseph S. Jr., op.cit., p. 118.

<sup>20</sup> Hurst, Steven, op.cit., pp. 44-45.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., pp. 44-45.

<sup>22</sup> Bogle, Lory Lyn, op.cit., p. viii.

<sup>23</sup> Hurst, Steven, op.cit., pp. 62-66.

<sup>24</sup> Gaddis, John Lewis, '*The United States and the Origins of the Cold War, 1941–1947*' (New York 1972).

<sup>25</sup> Nye, Joseph S. Jr., op.cit., pp. 118-119.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., 118-119.

way to do this was to expand their spheres of influence. When the Soviet Union intended to heighten its security, by bringing an Eastern European country into its sphere of influence, it led to some kind of similar response from the US.<sup>27</sup> These tensions between the superpowers eventually created the Cold War, while no side really desired it. In seeking to promote their country's security interests, both Superpowers caused the Cold War. The two superpowers were thus bound to come into conflict.<sup>28</sup> In, 'A Preponderance of Power. National Security, the Truman Administration, and the Cold War', Melvyn P. Leffler uses the concept of "national security" to explain the beginning of the Cold War.<sup>29</sup> In Leffler's view national security policy, "encompasses the decisions and actions deemed imperative to protect domestic core values from external threats".<sup>30</sup> Leffler stresses the importance of people's ideas and perceptions (human agency) in constructing domestic core values and claims that external threats are measured in relation to their perceived impact on those core values.<sup>31</sup> Leffler also stated that the Soviet Union did not pose a military threat and that Moscow's policies were both aggressive and conciliatory.<sup>32</sup> The US administration however feared that more countries would align to the Soviet Union. This would expand the influence sphere of the Soviet Union and it would pose a high external threat to US core values, like the system of liberal capitalism, economic prosperity and security in general. Protecting core values "requires the exercise of power".<sup>33</sup> And indeed, the US subsequently reacted by implementing a strategy of "preponderance". They tried to integrate as many territories as possible into the American orbit. This policy of course appeared threatening and aggressive to the Soviet Union, generating the already mentioned security dilemma.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Hurst, Steven, op.cit., pp. 67-68.

<sup>28</sup> Nye, Joseph S. Jr., op.cit., pp. 118-119.

<sup>29</sup> Leffler, Melvyn P., 'A Preponderance of Power National Security, the Truman Administration, and the Cold War' (Stanford 1992).

<sup>30</sup> Hogan, Michael J. and Paterson, Thomas G. (Eds.), 'Explaining the History of American Foreign Relations' (Cambridge 2004) Article, Melvyn P. Leffler, 'National Security', p. 123.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., pp. 123 – 126.

<sup>32</sup> Leffler, Melvyn, P. 'A Preponderance of Power, op.cit.

<sup>33</sup> Leffler, Melvyn P., 'National Security', op.cit., p. 128.

<sup>34</sup> Leffler, Melvyn P., 'A Preponderance of Power', op.cit.

## Why the US joined NATO

Literature on how the US administration envisioned NATO during the founding phase of the organization is almost non-existent. However scholarly books and articles which answer the question why the US joined NATO are quite abundant. It is therefore possible to formulate an historiography based on that question. Van der Beugel covers the founding of NATO in his book '*From Marshall aid to Atlantic partnership. European integration as a concern of American foreign policy*'.<sup>35</sup> He argues that at the end of the war the US realised that its economy and security as a superpower were tied to the rest of the world. Isolationism was simply no longer an alternative.<sup>36</sup> The US administration assumed that they would be able to form a peaceful post-war order together with the Soviet Union.<sup>37</sup> This view changed between 1945 and 1947. The Soviets occupied Eastern Europe and were threatening to overtake Turkey, Greece and the Middle East. They were also threatening Western Europe.<sup>38</sup> To halt the communist advance the Truman administration developed a policy of containment. Both the Marshall Plan and the Truman Doctrine are seen by Van der Beugel as aspects of this policy.<sup>39</sup> Both the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan were implemented to combat "the fatal weakening of Europe, its impending economic, political and social collapse with its consequences for American security together with the German problem".<sup>40</sup> The Truman Doctrine was used to prevent open communist aggression against states which were not in the Soviet sphere of influence and the Marshall Plan was a policy aimed at the reconstruction of Europe thereby removing the internal threat to the stability of Europe.<sup>41</sup> The Western European states however also felt a military threat coming from the Soviet Union. As a reaction they formed the Western Union by signing the Brussels Treaty in March 1948. Truman was enthusiastic about this development and promised to support the Europeans.<sup>42</sup> Eventually the US even allied itself to the Western Union by signing the North Atlantic Treaty. However, in US foreign policy the Marshall Plan still had priority.

Van der Beugel argues that the US administration did not believe in open Soviet aggression. The US believed that the Soviet Union would use the economic and political instability in Europe to increase its influence. This could be countered by the Marshall Plan

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<sup>35</sup> Van der Beugel, Ernst H., '*From Marshall aid to Atlantic partnership : European integration as a concern of American foreign policy*' (Amsterdam 1969), p. 17.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., p. 17.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., p. 18.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., p. 20.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., p. 28.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., p. 20.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., p. 28.

not by expending the military.<sup>43</sup> So why did the US then join NATO and not just stick to the Marshall Plan? Van der Beugel explains this decision by a combination of two notions. The first was that the US joined the NATO ‘in the hope that this would be a clear indication of where the United States would stand in the event of any further Russian expansion in Europe’.<sup>44</sup> The second was the feeling in both Europe and the US that complete economic recovery in Europe was only possible with a “political addition to the large-scale economic aid”. Only by becoming a formal ally of NATO could the US take away the sense of insecurity in Europe.<sup>45</sup> Although it deviated from the policy of the Marshall Plan, joining NATO thus contributed to its original objective of stabilizing Europe. Out of all this it can be concluded that Van der Beugel is of the opinion that the US joined NATO to support its earlier foreign policies of communist containment. Why the US joined NATO can thus only be explained by looking at the earlier US foreign policy and its original Soviet containment objectives.

Escott Reid agrees for the greater part with Van der Beugel. However Ried places more attention to the role of the Europeans. In Europe the fear for a Soviet military invasion grew after the end of the Second World War.<sup>46</sup> The US administration did not believe the Soviet Union would use armed force to achieve dominance over the European continent. The Soviet Union could more easily use political means, supported by the threat of its military force, to bring the weakened Europe under its sphere of influence.<sup>47</sup> So there was a communist peril that threatened the West, however, this was not a direct military threat.<sup>48</sup> To counter the continuing expansion of Soviet influence in Western Europe, the US proposed to strengthen the European economy and to promote European cooperation.<sup>49</sup> Even after the Communist coup in Czechoslovakia the US administration, contrary to the European governments, still did not believe in an all-out war threat. To combat the fifth-column aggression, which was supported by the threat of a large Soviet army, a friendly force of equal strength was deemed necessary.<sup>50</sup> Reid argues that the US administration was of the opinion that such a force could be created by pressing for further unity among the European nations.

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<sup>42</sup> Van der Beugel, Ernst H., op.cit., p. 251.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid., p. 256.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid., p. 256.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid., p. 256.

<sup>46</sup> Reid, Escott M., ‘*Time of fear and hope : the making of the North Atlantic Treaty’, 1947-1949*’ (Toronto 1977), pp. 13 – 15.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., pp. 13 – 15.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid., p. 19.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid., p. 18.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., p. 19.

Europe needed a strong alliance with a capable organisation.<sup>51</sup> When Britain's foreign minister Bevin proposed such an alliance, the US administration believed such an alliance should be strictly European and the US would confine itself to a supportive role.<sup>52</sup> Without the US, Britain, France and the Benelux countries formed the Western Union by signing the Brussels Treaty in March 1948. The US however promised, for the time being, to support and associate itself to the Brussels Pact.<sup>53</sup> Reid states that at the beginning of 1949 the US administration's opinion on participating in a Western alliance was already turning.<sup>54</sup> Under pressure of the Europeans the US administration began to understand that the Europeans needed more than just support. Only real US military commitments could strengthen European confidence. The US subsequently agreed to start talks with the Western Union member states to join a defence alliance.<sup>55</sup> These talks ended with the signing of the North Atlantic Treaty. So although the US deemed a Western military alliance with US support necessary, only after pressure from the Europeans were they convinced enough to join it themselves. Joining NATO was thus primarily to make the Europeans feel at ease and secure, thus promoting stability and economic growth and thereby containing the Soviet Union.

Van der Beugel argued that the US administration did not believe in open Soviet aggression and there was thus no need for an urgent build-up of military forces. The US believed that the Soviet Union would use the economic and political instability in Europe to increase its influence, and this could be countered by the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan. The US still joined NATO because it would create a clear indication of where the United States would stand in the event of any further Russian expansion in Europe and because a complete economic recovery in Europe was only possible with a political addition to the economic aid to take away the sense of insecurity in Europe. The US thus primarily joined NATO to support its earlier foreign policies of communist containment. Reid places more focus on the role of the Europeans. He argues that the US administration believed that the best way to contain the Soviet threat, which was considered non-military, was by sending financial assistance and by creating a European alliance in which the US should have a supporting role. It was under pressure from European countries who feared the Soviet war machine that the US considered joining NATO. The Europeans convinced the US that they needed a political and military commitment of the US, only then could the Europeans feel

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<sup>51</sup> Reid, Escott M., op.cit., pp. 25-28.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid., p. 37.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid., p. 43.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid., pp. 40 - 42

<sup>55</sup> Ibid., pp. 40 – 44.

secure and was the continent stable enough to withstand the Soviet threat. Joining NATO was thus primarily to give the Europeans a secure feeling and thereby promoting the strategy of containment set forth in the Truman Doctrine. Both writers thus agree in the end that the US joined NATO to support its earlier policies of containment and to help prevent the further expansion of the Communist influence sphere and secure US security.

Stephen E. Ambrose has another opinion on the Soviet threat as perceived by the US administration and the role of the Europeans. Ambrose states, just as the previous authors, that in 1946 there was no fear of a large-scale war, but that the Soviet Union would advance its aims through “internal subversion”.<sup>56</sup> Within the US administration there was general agreement that the way to respond to the Soviets threat was to promote stability and prosperity because Communism thrived on chaos and poverty.<sup>57</sup> The reaction of the government was the Truman Doctrine and Marshall Plan. By supporting governments that were threatened with political, economic and military aid the US hoped to contain the Communist threat.<sup>58</sup> So far Ambrose does not deviate from the opinion of Reid and Van der Beugel. However Ambrose believes that the Communist coup in Czechoslovakia in 1948 created a war scare not only in Europe but also in the US.<sup>59</sup> Ambrose argues that from this point forward the US saw the Communist threat not as a threat of internal subversion but as a full military threat against the US and Europe. The Truman administration believed that without support of the US free Europe would be split apart.<sup>60</sup> To contain this new threat the US and its allies needed to increase their military strength. Political and economic support via the Truman Doctrine and Marshall Plan was not enough anymore.<sup>61</sup> The American Joined Chiefs of Staff proposed to join the Western Union military alliance, however this proposition still met some opposition within the US administration.<sup>62</sup> Ambrose states that this opposition vanished after the Berlin Blockade. The war scare increased after this event and a “closer military connection with Western Europe had been emphasized”.<sup>63</sup> The Marshall Plan was put on a side-line and the containment policy took a ‘narrow military look’.<sup>64</sup> The US increased its military force and wanted to be included into the Brussels Treaty military alliance.

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<sup>56</sup> Ambrose, Stephen E., ‘*Rise to globalism: American foreign policy since 1938*’, (Harmondsworth 1988 5th revised edition), p. 80.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid., p. 80.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid., p. 85.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid., pp. 94 – 96.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid., p. 104.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid., p. 98.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid., p. 98.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid., p. 101.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid., p. 101.

Both Van der Beugel and Reid state that the US administration did not believe that the Soviet Union would use armed force to achieve dominance over the European continent. They state that the US administration thought that the Soviet Union would resort to political means to dominate Europa. Ambrose, however, is of the opinion that the US administration did see the Soviet threat as a military one. In his view both the Czechoslovakian coup and the Berlin Blockade led to a war scare and to the belief that the Soviets posed a true military danger. To contain this new threat the US and its allies needed to increase their military strength. Therefore Ambrose is of the opinion that the main reason for the US to join NATO was to protect Europa and the US itself against a real military threat. In Ambrose's view NATO was not just there to support the objectives of earlier US containment policy's like the Marshall Plan, it had a function on its own.

The most important scholar on early NATO is Lawrence S. Kaplan. He has written a multitude of books and articles on the early years of NATO. Some of his work also looks at the role of the US in the organization's founding.<sup>65</sup> Around the end of 1946 the Soviet Union was seen more and more as a threat by the US government.<sup>66</sup> Kaplan claims, just as Reid and Van der Beugel, that the US administration did not believe that the Soviet Union would use armed force to achieve dominance over the European continent since the Soviet Union could more easily use political means, supported by the threat of its military force, to bring the weakened Europe under its sphere of influence.<sup>67</sup> If the situation endured unopposed Soviet penetration of other continents and even Western Europe would become possible, while the survival of the Western democracies was deemed vital for the security of the United States.<sup>68</sup> Within the Truman administration the belief grew that the only way to manage the Soviet threat was by "patient but firm containment".<sup>69</sup> What followed was the birth of the Truman Doctrine which purpose was to contain communism by providing economic, financial and military assistance to peoples under threat. The Marshall Plan was an extension of the purposes of the Truman Doctrine, aimed at the reconstruction of Europe thereby removing the internal threat to the stability of Europe.<sup>70</sup> A prosperous Europe would be able to resist the

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<sup>65</sup> Kaplan, Lawrence S., 'The United States and NATO: the formative years' (Lexington 1984); Kaplan, Lawrence S., 'The long entanglement: NATO's first fifty years' (Westport 1999); Lawrence S. Kaplan, 'NATO and the United States: The Enduring Alliance' (Boston 1988); Kaplan, Lawrence S., 'NATO 1948: The Birth of the Transatlantic Alliance' (Lanham 2007); Kaplan, Lawrence S., 'NATO before the Korean War: April 1949-June 1950' (Kent 2013).

<sup>66</sup> Kaplan, Lawrence S., 'The United States and NATO' op.cit., pp. 32 – 33.

<sup>67</sup> Kaplan, Lawrence S., 'NATO 1948' op.cit., p. 24.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid., p. 5.

<sup>69</sup> Kaplan, Lawrence S., 'The United States and NATO' op.cit., pp. 32 – 33.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid., pp. 37– 38.

Soviet Union and would contribute to the economic growth of the US.<sup>71</sup> Contrary to the opinion of the US administration the Europeans came to the conclusion that a binding US military commitment was needed if the aims of the Truman Doctrine and Marshall Plan were to be fulfilled.<sup>72</sup> Western Europe lacked a strong military and consequently a sense of security. Economic aid was thus not enough to build their confidence. Kaplan states that the Europeans ‘believed that US power was the only deterrent that would inhibit Soviet aggression, and this required a much deeper change in the involvement of the United States with Europe than either the Truman Doctrine or the Marshall Plan’.<sup>73</sup> As early as December 1947 the French and British foreign ministers asked secretary of foreign affairs Marshall about a US contribution to European security. The US administration initially refused this proposition, and wanted the Europeans to make the first move.<sup>74</sup> As Kaplan states: ‘only after the United States knew exactly what Europeans were prepared to do for themselves would the administration take any action’.<sup>75</sup> The signing of the Brussels Treaty was thus in Kaplan’s view a way to bring in military support of the US. And indeed Truman informed Congress after the signing of the Brussels Treaty that the US would help protect Western Europe.<sup>76</sup> For the Europeans US aid was not enough, they wanted the US as a full partner. Several events at the beginning of 1948, like the Communist coup in Czechoslovakia and the Berlin Blockade, combined with European political pressure lead in the US to the idea that only US acceptance of a military alliance could bring sufficient confidence in Europe to restore the European economic and political stability.<sup>77</sup> Finally the Truman administration realised that meagre military support and economic assistance was not enough to support the Europeans.

Kaplan’s opinion thus seems to be in great conformity to that of Escott Reid. The survival of the Western democracies was deemed vital for the security of the United States. The situation in Europe together with pressure from European politicians convinced US officials that Europe needed a political and military commitment of the United States and not just economic support. Only with such a commitment could the Europeans feel secure and was the continent stable enough to withstand the Soviet threat. Joining NATO was thus primarily to give the Europeans a secure feeling thereby promoting the strategy of containment set forth in the Truman Doctrine. The US joined NATO to support its earlier

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<sup>71</sup> Kaplan, Lawrence S., ‘NATO 1948’ op.cit., p. 7.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid., p. 7.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid., p. 7.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid., pp. 13-14.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid., p. 31.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid., p. 62.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid., pp. 50-71.

policies of containment and thus to help prevent the further expansion of the Communist influence sphere and secure US security.

Another prominent writer on NATO is Klaus Schwabe. Schwabe, who agrees with Reid and especially Kaplan, states that a Soviet dominated Europe was perceived by the US government as a direct threat to America's own security. Just as most of the before mentioned scholars Schwabe also claims that the US government believed that the Soviets would not resort to military force.<sup>78</sup> Thus to combat this threat economic support from the US was needed to help rebuild the European economies and end the "desperation of the European masses".<sup>79</sup> But why then did the US government deviate from its policy of economic support by joining NATO? Schwabe claims that it were the events in 1948 and pressure from European governments which led to US involvement in NATO. The US administration came to believe that the Europeans needed a stiffening of their self-confidence to be able to withstand the Soviet Union. The US realised that only a military alliance could rebuild the confidence in Europe and restore economic and political stability.<sup>80</sup>

Revisionists, who did not write much about NATO, perceived NATO as a means by which the US tried to get economic control over Europe. Gabriel and Joyce Kolko are of the opinion that anti-communism, the containment policy and Marshall Plan could be seen as a way to restore or gain and protect markets for the American economy.<sup>81</sup> After the war the main objective of the US government was to restore liberal capitalism in Europe. Anti-communism was just a way to convince congress and the American people of the need for economic assistance. Anti-communist policies like the containment policy and the Marshall Plan and the formation of NATO itself could be seen in this light. Joining NATO was another form of subsidy for Europe. NATO was thus primarily founded to promote the US economical need instead of military need.<sup>82</sup>

There also seem to be a few accounts by outspoken post-revisionists on the formation of NATO. Leffler for example continues on the concept of national security to explain the founding of NATO. He claims that the Soviet Union posed a threat to the core values of the United States and the rest of the West. This was however not directly a military threat.<sup>83</sup> The

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<sup>78</sup> Heller, Francis H. and Gillingham, John R. (Eds.), 'NATO : The founding of the Atlantic Alliance and the integration of Europe' (New York, 1992), Article, Schwabe, Klaus 'The Origins of the United States Engagement in Europe, 1946 – 1952', p. 169.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid., p. 165.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid., pp. 171 – 173.

<sup>81</sup> Kolko, Gabriel and Joyce, op.cit.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid.

<sup>83</sup> Leffler, Melvyn P., 'A Preponderance of Power' op.cit.

US government feared that more countries would align to the Soviet Union by political subversion. This would expand the influence sphere of the Soviet Union and it would pose a high external threat to US core values concerning domestic economy and internal affairs. The United States reacted by mobilizing power in unprecedented ways, implementing a policy of “preponderance”. In the eyes of Leffler, the US joining NATO is a good example of this policy.<sup>84</sup> John English on the other hand sees personal and cultural factors as important when explaining the origins of US involvement in NATO. He explains that North Americans during the late 1940s “constructed a narrative that included a sense of fraternity” with respect to Western Europe.<sup>85</sup> Americans believed that Europe itself was of fundamental importance to their own identity and future. The European identity was thus deemed fundamental to American national identity. Because of this sense of fraternity and this link between the US and Europe, the willingness to defend Europe against Soviet encroachment was high.<sup>86</sup> English believes that this explains why the US government wanted to protect Europe from the Soviet threat and why they joined NATO.

What is missing in this debate about US foreign policy and the formation of NATO is the kind of NATO that the US administration envisioned. In contrast to the literature that has been written on US foreign policy, the start of the Cold War and why the US joined NATO, there is almost no literature to be found on the US perspective on the organisational framework of NATO and if the eventual embodiment of NATO was in line with US views. There has also almost nothing been written about the interdepartmental divergence of views within the Truman administration on this subject. Since little has been written on these above mentioned aspects of the formation of NATO it will be highly possible to create new insights. By researching the views of US government officials, a better insight can be created into the perspectives and decision-making processes within the Truman administration in regard of the formation of NATO.

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<sup>84</sup> Leffler, Melvyn P., ‘*National Security*’, op cit., p. 130.

<sup>85</sup> Schmidt, Gustav (Ed.) ‘*A History of NATO: The first fifty years Vol. 2*’ (New York 2001), Article, English, John ‘North American Perspectives on NATO’s Origins’, p. 312.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid., pp. 310 – 311, 318 – 319.

### **3. A Policy of Containment**

#### **(1945 – December 1948)**

This chapter will look at the period between the end of the Second World War and the founding of the Brussels Treaty (1945-1948). The focus will be on the US foreign and defence policy between 1945 and 1948. This chapter will form the background for this research since the knowledge put forward here is needed to understand why the US wanted to become part of the North Atlantic Alliance, what NATO the different parts of the US administration envisioned and why the US administration eventually chose for a certain organizational framework. It helps to put the rest of this research project into context.

#### **A Policy of Containment**

The Second World War taught the Americans that the price of Isolationism had been too high. The Americans realized that their economy and security were tied to the rest of the world and that to prevent future bloodshed they had to embrace the principles of collective security.<sup>87</sup> In the 1940s the United Nations (UN) therefore became an important part of US foreign policy. In the eyes of the Americans an UN under American auspices would be able to promote peace and prevent a new world war by using America's traditional international affairs practises like conciliation, mediation and use of international law.<sup>88</sup> The Truman administration also had put great trust in the use of US economic power for promoting peace and US security. By promoting free-trade, international economic relations and the development of the world economy the Truman administration hoped to reduce the incentives to military aggression and provide a basis for peace.<sup>89</sup> Truman wrote in October 1946: "Sound and healthy trade, conducted on equitable and non-discriminatory principles, is a keystone in the structure of world peace and security".<sup>90</sup> In line with this the US quickly demobilized its armed forces. The US armed forces shrank from 10 million troops in 1945 to 1,6 million troops in 1947.<sup>91</sup>

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<sup>87</sup> Kaplan, Lawrence S., 'The United States and NATO' op.cit., p. 30.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid., pp. 30-31.

<sup>89</sup> Bogle, Lory Lyn, 'The Cold War. Vol. 1 Origins of the Cold War. The Great Historical Debate', (New York 2001), Article, Pollard, Robert A., 'Economic Security and the Origins of the Cold War: Bretton Woods, the Marshall Plan, and American Rearmament, 1944-50', pp. 271 – 273.

<sup>90</sup> Quotation from Truman to Eugene P. Thomas, October 1, 1946, cited in Pollard, Robert A., op.cit., p. 271.

<sup>91</sup> Condit, Kenneth W., 'History of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The Joint Chiefs of Staff and National Policy Vol. 2 1947 – 1949' Office of Joint History, Office of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (Washington, DC, 1996), From: Defence Technical Information Centre, [www.dtic.mil/doctrine/history/jcs\\_nationalp2.pdf](http://www.dtic.mil/doctrine/history/jcs_nationalp2.pdf) (accessed May 24, 2016), p. 11.

As Kaplan put it: “America had embraced the world without embracing the destructive power politics of the past”.<sup>92</sup>

In 1945 the Truman administration assumed that the US would be able to form a peaceful post war order together with the Soviet Union.<sup>93</sup> The Soviet Union was not seen as a threat, and a Soviet attack was deemed highly unlikely. Secretary of State James F. Byrnes and other prominent officials of the State Department promoted cooperation with the Soviet Union as long as major US interests and ideals were not at stake.<sup>94</sup> Truman himself, while focussing his attention to domestic affairs, was quite ambivalent about the matter and supported Byrnes. Although some military planners and foreign office officials stationed in the Soviet Union already abandoned hope for cooperation, the State Department continued with Soviet-US cooperation.<sup>95</sup>

Around the end of 1945 the US government began to see the Soviet Union more and more as a threat. Nonetheless top officials of the Department of State and the military did not expect the Soviets to engage in conflict any time soon. They agreed that the Soviet Union was demobilizing and “too backward economically, too badly hurt by the Nazi’s, and too demoralized to contemplate war for a long time”.<sup>96</sup> The only way the Soviet threat could become serious was if they supported European Communist parties, exploited unrest and thereby gained more influence in Europe.<sup>97</sup> The Soviet Union than would have access to more resources, industrial capacity and military basis, thus enlarging their war making capabilities. And this is exactly what seemed to happen. The Soviets influence in Eastern Europe was growing and Communists seemed to win ground in France, Italy and Greece.<sup>98</sup> The Soviet Union was also trying to enhance their position in the Middle East, especially in Turkey and Iran.<sup>99</sup> The US in the meantime strived for a favourable configuration of power for its own security in Europe and Asia. The growing Soviet sphere of influence and the advancement of Communism threatened the existence of such a favourable configuration.<sup>100</sup> President Truman became embittered by the expansionistic policy of the Soviet Union and he desired a tougher

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<sup>92</sup> Kaplan, Lawrence S., ‘*The United States and NATO*’ op.cit., p. 30.

<sup>93</sup> Van der Beugel, Ernst H., op.cit., p. 18.

<sup>94</sup> Leffler, Melvyn P., ‘*A preponderance of power*’ op.cit., pp. 44-47.

<sup>95</sup> Leffler, Melvyn P. and Westad, Odd Arne, ‘*The Cambridge history of the Cold War Vol I Origins*’ (Cambridge 2010), Article, Leffler, Melvyn p., ‘The Emergence of an American Grand Strategy 1945-1952’, pp. 69 – 70.

<sup>96</sup> Leffler, Melvyn P., ‘*A preponderance of power*’ op.cit., p. 96.

<sup>97</sup> Leffler, Melvyn P., ‘*The Emergence of an American Grand Strategy 1945-1952*’, op.cit., p. 68.

<sup>98</sup> Leffler, Melvyn p., ‘*A preponderance of power*’ op.cit., pp. 71 – 81.

<sup>99</sup> Offner, Arnold A., ‘*Another such victory, President Truman and the Cold War 1945 – 1953*’ (Stanford 2002), pp. 112 – 116.

<sup>100</sup> Leffler, Melvyn P., ‘*A preponderance of power*’ op.cit., pp. 60 – 61.

policy towards the Kremlin.<sup>101</sup> However until the end of 1946 the US offered no coherent foreign policy against the Soviet Union. This changed after George F. Kennan's observations became the basis for US foreign policy.<sup>102</sup>

George F. Kennan, the US chargé d'affaires in Moscow, claimed in his famous long telegram of February 22, 1946, that Stalin and his Soviet Union were after world domination. The Soviet Union sought to expand where they could, taking advantage of the weakness and vulnerability of the West. Kennan claimed that negotiation with Soviet rulers would be without effect, however they would be responsive to "manifestations of force".<sup>103</sup> Since Russia was weakened by the last war, they would not risk war and they would therefore retreat when faced with determination. Kennan was of the opinion that only "patient but firm containment would manage the dynamic ideology of the Soviet system".<sup>104</sup> In 1947 this new mode of thinking was welcomed by the State Department, the military and by president Truman.<sup>105</sup> The Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS), including General Eisenhower, agreed that a military confrontation with the Soviet Union was not to be expected for years to come. The economic state of the Soviet Union was just too appalling and they lacked long-range or any other effective weapons to fight the US.<sup>106</sup> The State-War-Navy Coordinating Committee (SWNCC), the coordinating organ between the Department of State and the military, formally adopted Kennan's views and clearly concluded that the Soviet Union wanted to expand but did not want war and that containment was the way forward.<sup>107</sup> Truman was anxious to declare the beginning of the new American policy based on Kennan's views. All that he needed was a new crisis.<sup>108</sup> Such a crisis took form when the British withdrew from Greece, Turkey and the rest of the Eastern Mediterranean leaving behind a power vacuum.<sup>109</sup> At the moment Greece was suffering from an internal struggle with Communists, while Turkey was under direct political pressure from the Soviet Union.<sup>110</sup> Within the Truman administration believe was widely shared that without US support both Greece and Turkey were to fall into the Soviet sphere of influence. Officials of the State Department, especially the new secretary of State George C. Marshall and undersecretary of State Dean G. Acheson, feared such a

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<sup>101</sup> Leffler, Melvyn P., 'The Emergence of an American Grand Strategy 1945-1952', op.cit., p. 72.

<sup>102</sup> Lawrence S. Kaplan, 'The United States and NATO', op.cit., pp. 32-33.

<sup>103</sup> Leffler, Melvyn P., 'A preponderance of power' op.cit., p. 108.

<sup>104</sup> Kaplan, Lawrence S., 'The United States and NATO', op.cit., pp. 32-33.

<sup>105</sup> Leffler, Melvyn P., 'A preponderance of power' op.cit., pp. 100, 111.

<sup>106</sup> Arnold A. Offner, op.cit., p. 193.

<sup>107</sup> Leffler, Melvyn P., 'A preponderance of power' op.cit., p.111.

<sup>108</sup> Offner, Arnold A., op.cit., p. 193.

<sup>109</sup> Nye, Joseph S. Jr., op.cit., p. 123.

<sup>110</sup> Leffler, Melvyn P., 'A preponderance of power' op.cit., pp. 123-125;



Figure 2: Painting of President Harry S. Truman

Soviet domination over either one of these countries since the loss of one would lead to the loss of the entire Eastern Mediterranean, the Middle East and perhaps even Italy, France and the rest of Europe.<sup>111</sup> Believe in this so called Domino Theory was thus not just something that developed during the Vietnam conflict in the sixties and seventies. The JCS shared the fears of the State Department but they also feared a Soviet presence in the Eastern Mediterranean because it would jeopardize their plans to assault the Soviet homeland from this region in the event of an accidental war.<sup>112</sup> The British decision to withdraw from the Eastern Mediterranean and to stop military and economic assistance to Greece and Turkey thus provided the crisis Truman and his administration were looking for.<sup>113</sup> On the 12th of March 1947, in an address before a joint session of Congress, Truman said that if the US did not help the free peoples and resist totalitarianism, America's long term peace and security goals could not be met. The duty of the US was clear: "It must be the policy of the United States to support free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressures".<sup>114</sup> Truman claimed that from now on the United States had to provide political, military and economic assistance to all democratic nations under threat from

<sup>111</sup> Offner, Arnold A., op.cit., pp. 195-198.

<sup>112</sup> Leffler, Melvyn P., 'A preponderance of power' op.cit., pp. 122-126.

<sup>113</sup> Offner, Arnold A., op.cit., p. 193.

<sup>114</sup> Quote from Truman's speech before the joint session of Congress, March 12, 1947, cited in Offner, Arnold A., op.cit., pp. 201-202.

external or internal authoritarian forces.<sup>115</sup> Truman requested 400 million dollar worth of aid for the nations under direct threat, Greece and Turkey, and the right to dispatch personnel and equipment to the region.<sup>116</sup> The US thus stepped into the power vacuum created by the United Kingdom. This policy to aid all free nations under threat from external or internal authoritarian forces became known as the Truman Doctrine. This Truman Doctrine in turn introduced a new American foreign policy, that of communist containment.

### From Truman Doctrine to Marshall Plan

During the spring of 1947 the officials of the Department of State witnessed a deterioration of the economic situation in Western Europe.<sup>117</sup> They considered the lack of funds in Europe, the so called dollar gap, as especially alarming.<sup>118</sup> This lack of funds came into existence because the Europeans imported goods amounting to \$ 4.4 billion from the US, while exports to the US equalled only \$ 900 million, thus creating a deficit of almost \$ 3.5 billion.<sup>119</sup> Under Secretary of State for Economic Affairs William L. Clayton wrote the following to Acheson after his trip to Europe in May 1947: "Europe is steadily deteriorating... Millions of peoples in the cities are slowly starving... Without further and substantial aid from the United States, economic, social and political disintegration will overwhelm Europe".<sup>120</sup> Policymakers feared that the economic situation in Western Europe would lead to political instability. Such political instability might in turn allow European Communist parties to seize power and align their nations with the Soviet Union.<sup>121</sup> Secretary of State Marshall believed that the Soviet Union was even actively trying to delay European recovery in the hope that after the collapse of the European economy they could use the domestic turmoil to help Communist parties to power.<sup>122</sup> American fears were confirmed when at the beginning of 1947, the Communist parties in France and Italy could count on more than a third of the votes.<sup>123</sup>

George Kennan, now the new head of the Policy Planning Staff of the State Department, believed that the greatest threat to the US was the prospect that Western Europe

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<sup>115</sup> US Department of State, Office of the Historian, <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1945-1952> (accessed on 22<sup>nd</sup> of May 2016).

<sup>116</sup> Offner, Arnold A., op.cit., pp. 201-202.

<sup>117</sup> Leffler, Melvyn P., 'The Emergence of an American Grand Strategy 1945-1952' op.cit., pp. 74 – 75.

<sup>118</sup> Offner, Arnold A., op.cit., p. 215.

<sup>119</sup> Leffler, Melvyn P., 'A preponderance of power' op.cit., p. 159.

<sup>120</sup> 'Foreign Relations of the United States (FRUS)', 1947 Vol. III', Memorandum by the Under Secretary of State for Economic Affairs (Clayton), May 27, 1947, Doc. 136, From US Department of State, Office of the Historian, <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1947v03> (accessed on 10<sup>th</sup> of June 2016),

<sup>121</sup> Pollard, Robert A., op.cit., p. 280.

<sup>122</sup> Schwabe, Klaus, op.cit., p. 165.

<sup>123</sup> Leffler, Melvyn P., 'The Emergence of an American Grand Strategy 1945-1952' op.cit., pp. 75.

would fall into the hands of the Soviet Union. The Soviets would then possess more resources, skilled labour and industrial capacity thereby enlarging their war making capabilities.<sup>124</sup> In the meantime other officials of the State Department, the SWNCC and the JCS also concluded that Western Europe was the area most vital to US national security. But these State Department and military officials not only agreed on the importance of Western Europe, they also agreed that Western Europe was under a direct threat from economic dislocation and social upheaval.<sup>125</sup> Military planners in the meantime still ensured the government that the Soviet Union lacked economic power and the military capacity to wage war against a Western Europe backed by the US. Since the threat in Western Europe was not of a military nature but consisted of economic dislocation and social upheaval, American officials believed that economic aid would prove more effective.<sup>126</sup> Military assistance was only recommended for countries like Greece, who were dealing with an armed threat, to restore internal order.

On the 5<sup>th</sup> of June 1947, during an address at Harvard, Secretary Marshall proposed a long term effort to let the Europeans rebuild their economy with the help of American financial assistance. The notion of self-help was central to Marshall's plan. Thus Marshall invited the Europeans to take the initiative. He promised that if the Europeans would take the initiative and set up a decent plan for the reconstruction of their economy, the US would support that plan with financial means. This promise of the Secretary of State became known as the Marshall Plan.<sup>127</sup> Central in this plan was the revival of Western Germany. Marshall was of the opinion that "Without the revival of German production, there can be no revival of Europe's economy".<sup>128</sup> Western Germany thus had to participate in the recovery program. But reviving Germany's power was not without risk, since renewed aggression from the former German enemy was not unthinkable. Therefore Marshall insisted that Germany had to be integrated into some sort of a Western alliance. In that way Germany could recover but would not pose any danger to world peace.<sup>129</sup> In December Congress already approved a 600 million dollar emergency package and in the same month the main part of the so called Marshall Plan,

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<sup>124</sup> 'FRUS 1947 Vol. III', The Director of the Policy Planning Staff (Kennan) to the Under Secretary of State (Acheson), May 23, 1947, Doc. 135; John Lewis Gaddis, 'Strategies of Containment. A Critical Appraisal of American National Security Policy during the Cold War' (New York 2005), pp. 28 – 29, 58 – 61.

<sup>125</sup> Offner, Arnold A., op.cit., pp. 220 – 221; Leffler, Melvyn P., 'A preponderance of power' op.cit., pp. 148 - 149.

<sup>126</sup> Offner, Arnold A., op.cit., pp. 220 – 221; Leffler, Melvyn P., 'A preponderance of power' op.cit., pp. 148 - 149.

<sup>127</sup> Offner, Arnold A., op.cit., pp. 215-219.

<sup>128</sup> Ibid., pp. 215-219.

<sup>129</sup> Yergin, Daniel, 'Shattered Peace: The Origins of the Cold War and the National Security State' (Boston 1977), pp. 330 – 331.

the European Recovery Program (ERP), was submitted to congress by President Truman.<sup>130</sup> Although there are some differences between them, both the Marshall Plan and the Truman Doctrine can be seen as two “aspects of the same policy”.<sup>131</sup> Both were aimed at the same objective: promoting US security through containment of the Soviets by the use of US economic power.

Certain officials within the military establishment considered military support as invaluable for the policy of containment. Although they did not expect war, they believed that military support could help support the policy of containment. In the end the military establishment agreed that they lacked the capabilities and that economic aid would be the best option to help Western Europe and to contain the Soviet Union.<sup>132</sup> But even if the military wanted to provide military assistance, the military was simply not able to give the containment policy effective military support. Military cutbacks had led to a military establishment which was in a poor state. As already mentioned the manpower of the armed forces had decreased between 1945 and 1947 from 10 million to 1,6 million. The combat effectiveness of these forces had also decreased significantly since 1945. Of the ninety-seven ground divisions on full combat effectiveness in 1945 only twelve understrength divisions remained. The Air Force only had eleven operationally effective air groups left of the original 218. The air groups designated to carry out nuclear strikes were undermanned and non-operational. The Navy had lost twenty-six of its original forty aircraft carriers. And worse still, the military budget for Fiscal year 1948 “offered little or no prospect of improvement in either the quantity or quality of the US armed forces”.<sup>133</sup> The former extremely powerful military force “had almost ceased to exist” while on the other hand the Soviets still possessed a strong conventional military force.<sup>134</sup> Marshall and Truman were however not willing to increase the military budget. They realised that it was not necessary to maintain a large number of troops stationed all over the world, particularly in Europe, since America would win a war in the long run anyway because of their monopoly on the nuclear bomb.<sup>135</sup> Downside of this plan was that in case of a war large territories, among which Western

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<sup>130</sup> Leffler, Melvyn P., ‘A preponderance of power’ op.cit., pp. 197 – 198.

<sup>131</sup> Ibid., p. 28.

<sup>132</sup> Trachtenberg, Marc, ‘A Constructed Peace. The making of the European Settlement 1945 – 1963’ (Princeton 1999), pp. 87 – 89; ‘FRUS 1948 Vol. IV’, op.cit., Memorandum by the Director of the Office of Near Eastern and African Affairs (Henderson) to the Secretary of State, January 9, 1948, Doc. 5.

<sup>133</sup> *History of the Joint Chiefs of Staff* op.cit., pp. 11 - 12.

<sup>134</sup> Ibid., pp. 11 - 12.

<sup>135</sup> ‘FRUS 1948, Vol. I Part 2’, op.cit., The Secretary of State in Paris to the Acting Secretary of State, November 8, 1948, Doc. 58; ‘FRUS 1948, Vol. I Part 2’, op.cit., The Secretary of State in Paris to the Acting Secretary of State, November 8, 1948, Doc. 59.

Europe, would be lost to the Soviets before the Americans could gain the upper hand. American leaders were sensitive to this problem, and Marshall himself especially feared the loss of Western Europe if a war would break out. However Marshall still remained of the opinion that the US “could not, and would not, support a budget based on preparation for war”.<sup>136</sup> But not maintaining a decent military force also resulted in the fact that the Truman administration could not fully support its containment policy. Truman and Marshall understood this problem and they concluded that American military capabilities did not allow them to “commit American power to a full-fledged policy of containment”.<sup>137</sup>

Since American military forces were inadequate to support the policy of containment the JCS in 1947 continuously argued for a policy of military disengagement. They were of the opinion that military support to Greece should not include American troops and the troops already stationed in South-Korea needed to withdraw as soon as possible.<sup>138</sup> The US military, just like the rest of the Truman administration, also did not want to commit itself militarily to Western Europe. Although the Truman administration and the military did not expect war, plans were made between 1946 and 1947 by the JCS to counter an accidental war. From these military plans it became apparent that although the US wanted to counter the expansion of the Soviet influence sphere they were not prepared to defend Europe against an direct military attack. Military planners concluded that US forces in Western Europe were in no position to defend themselves and were too far away from Soviet industrial hubs to be of any strategical importance. Thus US troops were to withdraw from Western Europe as soon as possible, since the defence of this part of Europe was impossible and had no strategic military advantages.<sup>139</sup>

Thus in 1947 it was highly unlikely that the US would engage in a military alliance with the Europeans. To help the Europeans and contain the Soviet Union, economic aid was simply deemed more effective. On the other hand the military establishment was not able nor willing to give military support and to make large military commitments to the Europeans.

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<sup>136</sup> ‘FRUS 1948 Vol. I Part 2’, op.cit., The Secretary of State in Paris to the Acting Secretary of State, November 8, 1948, Doc. 58.

<sup>137</sup> Trachtenberg, Marc, op.cit., pp. 88.

<sup>138</sup> ‘History of the Joint Chiefs of Staff’ op.cit., p. 24; ‘FRUS 1947, Vol. VI’, op.cit., Memorandum by the Director of the Office of Far Eastern Affairs (Butterworth) to the Under Secretary of State (Lovett), October 1, 1947, Doc. 626.



Figure 3: Russian troops marching in formation on Moscow's Red Square

### A different sense of threat

The Western European states did not share the opinion of most US government officials that the Soviet threat was solely of a political nature and that economic aid was enough to halt that threat. The Europeans also felt a military threat coming from the Soviet Union. Around the end of 1947 fear of war was taking hold of the Western European States.<sup>140</sup> After the Second World War the armed forces of these states were weak and the few good troops they had were sent overseas to the colonies.<sup>141</sup> Also the US had quickly demobilized its armed forces after the end of the last World War leaving a ground force of only one and a half division in Western Europe.<sup>142</sup> The Soviet Union on the other hand, though weakened militarily and economically by the great destruction of the last war, still possessed a relatively well equipped and large army.<sup>143</sup> This army was for the largest part positioned in Eastern Europe. Western European governments disregarded the Soviet Union's weaknesses and just focussed on its seemingly immense military power positioned in their back garden.<sup>144</sup> The Western Europeans realized in 1947 that they were militarily completely inferior to the Soviets.<sup>145</sup> It

<sup>139</sup> 'History of the Joint Chiefs of Staff' pp. 153 – 155.

<sup>140</sup> Reid, Escott, op.cit., pp. 13-19.

<sup>141</sup> Wiggershaus, Norbert and Foerster, Roland G. (Eds.), 'The Western Security Community, 1948 - 1950.

*Common Problems and Conflicting National Interests during the Founding Phase of the North Atlantic Alliance*', (Oxford 1993), Article Pikart, Eberhard, 'The Military Situation and the Idea of Threat', pp. 275 – 276.

<sup>142</sup> Ibid., pp. 273 – 275.

<sup>143</sup> Ibid., p. 274.

<sup>144</sup> Ibid., p. 274.

<sup>145</sup> Ibid., p. 275.

was this sense of military inferiority combined with the future events in 1948 like the Czech coup and the fact that the Soviet Union showed itself as uncompromising ideologically, politically and diplomatically that created the sense of a military threat in Western Europe.<sup>146</sup> The separate European governments realised that they could not take on the military threat of the Soviets on their own, even not when they would work together. They realised that the only country strong enough to help resist this threat was the United States.<sup>147</sup> The Europeans believed that “US power was the only deterrent that would inhibit Soviet aggression” and that “a much deeper change in the involvement of the United States with Europe then either the Truman Doctrine or the Marshall Plan” was required.<sup>148</sup>

Already in June 1947 the foreign ministers of France and Britain, Georges Bidault and Ernest Bevin discussed a possible European defensive pact to respond to the Soviet military threat. It was however after the breakdown of the London Conference on the future of Germany in December 1947 that the two ministers fully realised that there could not be an European economic recovery without political and military security. They also realised that an American involvement in such an alliance would be necessary since the Europeans were not powerful enough by themselves.<sup>149</sup> On December 17<sup>th</sup> Bevin introduced the idea to Secretary Marshall.<sup>150</sup> Before this point a military alliance with the Europeans was never considered within the Truman administration. Only from this point on did the discussion on American involvement in an Atlantic alliance start within the Truman administration. A discussion which immediately also focussed on the working and organizational framework of the future alliance.

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<sup>146</sup> Pikart, Eberhard , op.cit., pp. 274 – 275.

<sup>147</sup> Ibid., p. 276.

<sup>148</sup> Kaplan, Lawrence S., ‘NATO 1948’, op.cit., p. 7.

<sup>149</sup> Ibid., pp. 11 – 14.

<sup>150</sup> Ibid., p. 50.

## 4. The Early Beginning

### (December 1947 - April 1948)

In the next three chapters the first two research questions will be answered: (1) how did the US administration envision NATO during its founding phase and (2) why did they chose those views? Each of the following three chapters cover a certain time period. This chapter, chapter four, will cover the period between the first initiatives for an Atlantic Alliance in December 1947 and the Pentagon talks which ended in April 1948. While examining the US administration's view on NATO, five parts of NATO's organizational framework will be covered: how the North Atlantic Treaty and NATO worked, the specific goals and tasks of NATO, the member states of the organization, the structure of the civil and military branch and finally the form of burden-sharing between states.

#### Bevin Takes the Lead

On December the 17<sup>th</sup> 1947 the British minister of foreign affairs Ernest Bevin proposed the formation of a Western defence system to Secretary of State Marshall. He envisioned a system together with the US, the Western European countries and the British Dominions. This Western Union "would not be a formal alliance, but an understanding backed by power, money and resolute action. It would be a sort of spiritual federation of the West".<sup>151</sup> The essential task for this new federation of the West was to create a feeling of security and to "create confidence in Western Europe that further Communist inroads would be stopped".<sup>152</sup> Bevin believed that only with such confidence could Europe resist the Soviet threat. Marshall was of the opinion that the union proposed by Bevin should be purely European, with the US just supplying material assistance.<sup>153</sup> He concluded that at that point in time he did not want to approve any particular course of action and he did not want to make any promises or public statements.<sup>154</sup> Nonetheless Marshall agreed with the general idea and he considered it of great importance to reach an understanding as soon as possible on the immediate objectives of Bevin's proposal. In a formal paper sent to Marshall in January, Bevin continued on his

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<sup>151</sup> 'FRUS 1948, Vol. III', op.cit., The Chargé in London (Gallman) to the Secretary of State, December 22, 1947, Doc. 1.

<sup>152</sup> Ibid., Doc 1.

<sup>153</sup> 'Oral History Interview with Theodore Achilles' Richard D. McKinzie, November 13, 1972, From Harry S. Truman Library, <http://www.trumanlibrary.org/oralhist/achilles.htm#oh1> (accessed on May 23, 2016), 11.

<sup>154</sup> 'FRUS 1948, Vol. III', op.cit., The Chargé in London (Gallman) to the Secretary of State, December 22, 1947, Doc. 1.

proposals for what he called a Western Union. Bevin stressed that to halt the Soviet threat some form of union in Western Europe of a formal or informal character needed to be created. Bevin wanted this union to be backed by the US and to include “Scandinavia, the Low Countries, France, Italy, Greece and possibly Portugal” and when circumstances would permit also “Spain and Germany without whom no Western system can be complete”.<sup>155</sup> As a first step towards this project Bevin wanted to conclude a treaty with the Low Countries and France based on the Dunkirk Treaty. From this solid core in Western Europe the alliance could then be expended into a true Western Union.<sup>156</sup> This Dunkirk Treaty which Bevin mentioned was a unilateral treaty concluded between France and the United Kingdom, creating a military union between the two countries against future German aggression. The Soviet Union or the Communist peril were not mentioned even once in the text of this treaty.<sup>157</sup> The proposals by Bevin in December 1947 and January 1948 were way ahead of anything the American's were contemplating. Before this moment a military alliance with the Europeans was never even considered by Marshall or any other official within the Truman administration.<sup>158</sup>

George Kennan, while opposing direct US military commitments to the defence of Europe, welcomed Bevin's idea of a union among Western European nations under combined French-British auspices.<sup>159</sup> In a memo to Marshall he even remarked that “only such a union holds out any hope of restoring the balance of power in Europe”.<sup>160</sup> But Kennan did not believe that a treaty between the UK, France and the Benelux countries based on the Dunkirk Treaty would be the best first move. He was of the opinion that a military union should flow from a political and economic union not vice versa and that a pact based on defence against Germany was “a poor way to prepare ground for the eventual entry of the Germans into this concept”.<sup>161</sup> Kennan concluded that although the US should not commit itself directly to the new alliance, the US should support the Europeans in their new endeavour. He also made

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<sup>155</sup> ‘FRUS 1948 Vol. III’, op.cit., The British Ambassador (Inverchapel) to the Secretary of State, January 13, 1948, Doc. 3.

<sup>156</sup> Ibid., Doc. 3.

<sup>157</sup> Treaty of Alliance and Mutual Assistance (Dunkirk Treaty), March 4, 1947.

<sup>158</sup> Leffler, Melvyn P. and Westad, Odd Arne (Eds.), ‘*The Cambridge history of the Cold War Vol. 1: Origins*’ (Cambridge 2010), Article, Hitchcock, William I., ‘The Marshall Plan and the creation of the West’, pp. 169 – 170.

<sup>159</sup> ‘FRUS 1948 Vol. III’, op.cit., Memorandum by the Director of the Policy Planning Staff (Kennan) to the Secretary of State, January 20, 1948, Doc. 5; Gaddis, John Lewis, ‘*Strategies of Containment*’, op.cit., pp. 69 – 71.

<sup>160</sup> ‘FRUS 1948 Vol. III’, op.cit., Memorandum by the Director of the Policy Planning Staff (Kennan) to the Secretary of State, January 20, 1948, Doc. 5.

clear to Marshall that the initiative just as with the ERP had to come from Europe. The project had to be worked out over there.<sup>162</sup>

John D. Hickerson, the director of the Office of European Affairs, also welcomed Bevin's idea of a union among western European nations and he also was of the opinion that the basis for the union should not be the Dunkirk Treaty. Hickerson proposed that a European Pact should be modelled after the Inter-American Defence Treaty (the so called Rio-Treaty)<sup>163</sup> and linked up with the UN Charter.<sup>164</sup> Contrary to Kennan, Hickerson believed that a defence pact could only be really effective if the US supported it directly.<sup>165</sup> He concluded that a defensive alliance was needed which included the US with the goal of strengthening "the determination of the free nations to resist the aggression of Soviet-directed world Communism, to increase their confidence that they can successfully do so, and to confront the Soviet Union with sufficient organized force to deter it from attempting further (political) aggression".<sup>166</sup> It should strengthen moral, and restore stability, so the Europeans could resist further fifth-column Soviet aggression supported by the threat of an external force.<sup>167</sup> Theodore Achilles, the director of the Office of Western European Affairs and a supporter of Hickerson's views, mentioned that Hickerson "was convinced that a European union backed by US material assistance would not be enough, that only a moral commitment by the United States to do whatever was necessary, including to fight if necessary, to restore and maintain a free and solvent Europe could create that 'confidence and energy within and respect elsewhere'".<sup>168</sup> Therefore Hickerson concluded that the US could and should adhere and eventually join such a pact if it was modelled after the Rio Treaty and if it was clearly linked up with the UN.<sup>169</sup> He envisioned a true Atlantic security pact between on the one hand the

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<sup>161</sup> 'FRUS 1948 Vol. III', op.cit., Memorandum by the Director of the Policy Planning Staff (Kennan) to the Secretary of State, January 20, 1948, Doc. 5.

<sup>162</sup> Ibid., Doc. 5.

<sup>163</sup> Hickerson meant by this that a European Pact should be multilateral like the Rio Treaty and not unilateral like the Dunkirk Treaty. He also meant that the promise of mutual aid should be directed against every foreign aggressor and not just Germany like in the Dunkirk Treaty. Finally Hickerson thought that the obligation to provide aid, in the Dunkirk Treaty, was too specific. In case war would break out, the Dunkirk Treaty would force all members to combat the aggressor with military means. The Rio Treaty on the other hand lets the member states decide whether an armed attack has occurred and what response is the most appropriate.

<sup>164</sup> Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance (Rio-Treaty), September 2 1947.

<sup>165</sup> 'FRUS 1948 Vol. III', op.cit., Memorandum by the Director of the Office of European Affairs (Hickerson) to the Secretary of State, January 19, 1948, Doc. 4.

<sup>166</sup> 'FRUS 1948 Vol. III', op.cit., Memorandum by the Director of the Office of European Affairs (Hickerson) to the Secretary of State, March 8, 1948, Doc. 31.

<sup>167</sup> Ibid., Doc. 31.

<sup>168</sup> 'Oral History Interview with Theodore Achilles' op.cit., 12.

<sup>169</sup> 'FRUS 1948 Vol. III', op.cit., Memorandum by the Director of the Office of European Affairs (Hickerson) to the Secretary of State, January 19, 1948, Doc. 4; 'Oral History Interview with Theodore Achilles' op.cit., 10 – 15; 'Oral History Interview with John D. Hickerson' Richard D. McKinzie, November 10, 1972, From Harry S. Truman Library, <http://www.trumanlibrary.org/oralhist/hickrson.htm#oh1> (accessed on May 23, 2016).



Figure 4: President Harry S. Truman (right) is greeted by Secretary of State George C. Marshall (left)

Western European nations, including Scandinavia, Italy, Portugal and Germany, and on the other the US and Canada<sup>170</sup>. Thus two camps developed within the State Department, those who were sceptic about direct US involvement in a Western security system like Marshall, Kennan and Under Secretary of State Lovett on one side and those who envisioned an Atlantic security system, like Hickerson and Achilles, on the other.<sup>171</sup>

On the 20<sup>th</sup> of January 1948 Secretary Marshall wrote to British ambassador Inverchapel that the US government welcomed Bevin's initiative. Marshall wished to see the US to do everything to assist the Europeans in making the project work but he did not want the US to be a part of it.<sup>172</sup> State Department officials thereafter continued to make it clear to the British that they supported Bevin's idea of closer corporation between the European countries and that the US would support the project to the fullest. They supported Bevin's view that closer corporation between the Europeans could strengthen European resistance against the Soviet threat by increasing the feeling of security and confidence in Western Europe.<sup>173</sup> At the same time the British were told that direct US participation in a Western security system was not an option. Thus Hickerson and Achilles were effectively

<sup>170</sup> Schwabe, Klaus, op.cit., pp. 171-172.

<sup>171</sup> Ibid., 171-172; Kaplan, Lawrence S., 'NATO 1948' op.cit., pp. 31, 77.

<sup>172</sup> 'FRUS 1948 Vol. III', op.cit., The Secretary of State to the British Ambassador (Inverchapel), January 20, 1948, Doc. 6.

<sup>173</sup> 'FRUS 1948 Vol. III', op.cit., *Memorandum of Conversation, by the Director of the Office of European Affairs (Hickerson)*, January 21, 1948, Doc. 7; 'FRUS 1948 Vol. III', op.cit., *Memorandum of Conversation, by the Under Secretary of State (Lovett)*, January 27, 1948, Doc. 9.

marginalized by the rest of the State Department.<sup>174</sup> Still the possibility for US participation was not entirely out of the question. Hickerson remarked, and Marshall and Lovett accepted, that if the question of US membership in a Western Union would be brought up, the US would be prepared to consider that question very carefully. But they would only do so if the proposed alliance would be based on the Rio Treaty and if it would be in full harmony with the UN Charter. State Department officials also made clear that the initiative for a direct US involvement in any Western defence pact should come from Europe. The Europeans needed to create the organization themselves, make it work and then invite the US to join.<sup>175</sup> Marshall himself insisted that the nations of Western Europe first had to show what they were prepared to do for themselves and each other. Only then could the US consider what they might do to help.<sup>176</sup>

### Opposition within the US

It was not strange that Marshall, Lovett and Kennan opposed US participation in the Western Union. A Soviet military attack was still conceived as highly unlikely and the main security threat remained the economic and political instability in Europe. A Policy Planning Staff Paper of 6 November 1947 explained that the Soviet Union was not ready for war and that the Soviet Union could more easily expand their sphere of influence by resorting to political means. The Russians enjoyed multiple political opportunities like destabilizing Greece, Italy and France. Since the Soviet threat was thus a political one, the paper recommended that it should be countered by restoring the balance of power in Europe. This revival of the balance of power could be achieved by “strengthening local forces of independence against Communism and to halt the Communist advance in the free world by helping in the reconstruction of its economy”.<sup>177</sup> Thus many within the Truman administration continued to support the opinion that financial assistance should be the chief instrument for US security. Also Marshall, Lovett and Kennan feared that if Congress learned about new extensive military and political commitments to be made by the US while they were still considering the

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<sup>174</sup> Kaplan, Lawrence S., ‘NATO 1948’ op.cit., p. 31.

<sup>175</sup> ‘FRUS 1948 Vol. III’, op.cit., Memorandum of Conversation, by the Director of the Office of European Affairs (Hickerson), January 21, 1948, Doc. 7; ‘FRUS 1948 Vol. III’, op.cit., Memorandum of Conversation, by the Under Secretary of State (Lovett), January 27, 1948, Doc. 9; ‘Oral History Interview with Theodore Achilles’ op.cit., 14 – 15.

<sup>176</sup> Kaplan, Larence S., ‘NATO 1948’ op.cit., p. 31; ‘FRUS 1948 Vol. III’, op.cit., The Under Secretary of State (Lovett) to the British Ambassador (Inverchapel), February 2, 1948, Doc. 12; ‘Oral History Interview with Theodore Achilles’ op.cit., 15.

<sup>177</sup> ‘FRUS 1947 Vol. I’, op.cit., Policy planning staff, Résumé of the World Situation, November 6, 1947, Doc. 394; Schwabe, Klaus, op.cit., pp. 169 – 170.

economic commitments involved with the ERP it might have adverse effects on the prospects of the ERP's approval.<sup>178</sup>

The main reason why these State Department officials refused a military alliance was that they expected that there would be a lot of opposition from Congress, especially the Senate, and the military establishment.<sup>179</sup> Three main groups of resistance against joining a military alliance with the Europeans within Congress and the Truman administration can be recognised. In the first place there were the traditional Isolationists. They would never accept a defence pact that would compromise and limit US freedom of action. A defence pact however does exactly that, it limits the member states freedom of action with regard to declaring war and the means with which to fight a war. Secondly the Isolationists feared that the Europeans would drain US military resources.<sup>180</sup>

The second source of resistance were the internationalists who had put their hope in the UN. In their eyes the forming of an alliance with Western European would mean the end of the UN and a return to the former balance of power politics that were seen as responsible for the misery in the early twentieth century.<sup>181</sup> These internationalists were also supportive of European unification, and they considered a US military commitment with Europe as a disturbance to the unification process.<sup>182</sup>

The military establishment did not want the US to engage in an alliance with Western Europe either. Such an alliance could mean an additional strain on the already very meagre US defence budget. The JCS especially feared that European countries might raid the already very meagre US military stocks.<sup>183</sup> Military planners were also uncomfortable with the military commitments such an alliance with Europe would require.<sup>184</sup> They concluded, that because of the cutbacks, US forces in Western Europe were in no position to defend themselves. On the other hand US forces in Europe were also too far away from Soviet industrial hubs to be of any strategical importance. Thus US troops were to withdraw from Western Europe as soon as possible, since the defence of this part of Europe was impossible

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<sup>178</sup> 'FRUS 1948 Vol. III', op.cit., Memorandum of Conversation, by the Under Secretary of State (Lovett), January 27, 1948, Doc. 9; 'FRUS 1948 Vol. III', op.cit., Memorandum of Conversation, by the Director of the Office of European Affairs (Hickerson), February 7, 1948, Doc. 16.

<sup>179</sup> Kaplan, Lawrence S., 'The Long Entanglement' (Westport 1999), p. 3.

<sup>180</sup> Ibid., p. 3

<sup>181</sup> Kaplan, Lawrence S., 'The Long Entanglement' op.cit., p. 4.

<sup>182</sup> Kaplan, Lawrence S., 'NATO 1948' op.cit., p. 81.

<sup>183</sup> Kaplan, Lawrence S., 'The Long Entanglement' op.cit., p. 10.

<sup>184</sup> 'History of the Joint Chiefs of Staff' op.cit., pp. 153 – 155; Kaplan, Lawrence S., 'The Long Entanglement' op.cit., pp. 3-4.

and had no direct strategic military advantages.<sup>185</sup> Secretary of Defence James V. Forrestal agreed with the before mentioned views and warned about the “extreme importance to our national security of keeping our military capabilities abreast of our military commitments”.<sup>186</sup> Because of the small military budget at the time, concluding an alliance with Western Europe could have easily led to military commitments out of line with US military capabilities.

Marshall and some prominent State Department officials already understood that economic recovery based on the Marshall Plan could only succeed when there also was a sense of security in Europe.<sup>187</sup> However since there was a lot of opposition in Congress and the administration itself, Marshall refrained from making a military commitment. The Europeans needed to make the first move and then at a later moment in time the US would decide how to support the Europeans.

### From Brussels to Washington

Bevin was disappointed. He and the French foreign minister Georges Bidault still considered an alliance with the US as the only possibility by which Western European security against the Soviets could be guaranteed.<sup>188</sup> Bevin concluded that Europe indeed needed to take the first step into forming a military alliance. On the 22<sup>nd</sup> of January 1948, Bevin proposed a military union of European states. He and other European foreign ministers hoped that by creating such an alliance they would be able to lure the US into the new alliance.<sup>189</sup> On the 17<sup>th</sup> of March Britain, Belgium, France, Luxemburg and the Netherlands signed the Brussels Treaty thereby forming the Western Union.<sup>190</sup> But already before that treaty was signed the opinion on direct US involvement within the Truman administration was shifting. This shift was set in motion by the more aggressive and confrontational Soviet foreign policy in early 1948. In February local Communists supported by the Soviets took over power in Czechoslovakia, while around the same time the Soviets were offering a defence treaty to Finland and approached Norway for a nonalignment accord. Also there were the “increasingly vigorous and violent threats of the Communist parties in Western European countries”.<sup>191</sup> General Clay, the US military commander in Germany, had detected a change in Soviet

<sup>185</sup> *History of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.* ‘, op.cit., pp. 153 – 155; Leffler, Melvyn P., ‘A preponderance of power’ op.cit., pp. 111 – 114.

<sup>186</sup> Kaplan, Lawrence S., ‘The Long Entanglement’ op.cit., p. 10.

<sup>187</sup> Kaplan, Lawrence S., ‘The United States and NATO’ op.cit., pp. 40-41.

<sup>188</sup> Kaplan, Lawrence S. ‘The Long Entanglement.’ op.cit., pp. 2-3.

<sup>189</sup> Ibid., p. 3.

<sup>190</sup> Kaplan, Lawrence S., ‘NATO 1948’ op.cit., pp. 43-44.

<sup>191</sup> Offner, Arnold A., op.cit., pp. 248 – 249; ‘Oral History Interview with Theodore Achilles’ op.cit., 15; *Oral History Interview with John D. Hickerson*‘ op.cit.



Figure 5: Czech Communists staged a rally in Prague after their party took to power in a Soviet supported coup

behaviour. It led him to feel that war with the Soviets might come with dramatic suddenness.<sup>192</sup> As a consequence a war-scare was ignited in Washington. Hickerson later remarked in 1972: “all of those things scared the living daylights out of people”.<sup>193</sup>

It was this increased instability in Europe and the momentary war-scare that helped remove some of the American resistance against a US military commitment. The increasing tension that followed in 1948, specifically during the Berlin Blockade in June, even accelerated this process.<sup>194</sup> On March the 11<sup>th</sup> Bevin send a message inviting the US to start talks on a North Atlantic Treaty.<sup>195</sup> Marshall decided that now was the time to act. The situation in Europe together with pressure from European politicians convinced Marshall and president Truman that economic assistance was not enough to stiffen the moral of the Europeans. Although they still did not believe war would erupt they did expect that the Soviet Union would make use of the instability in Europe. Only with the help of US military aid and a US military/political commitment could the Europeans feel secure and was the continent stable enough to withstand the Soviet threat.<sup>196</sup> What form this military commitment should take was still unclear to them. On March the 12<sup>th</sup> Marshall communicated to the UK that the US government was now “prepared to proceed at once in the joint

<sup>192</sup> Leffler, Melvyn P., ‘*A Proponderence of Power*’ op.cit., p. 210.

<sup>193</sup> Offner, Arnold A., op.cit., pp. 248; ‘*Oral History Interview with John D. Hickerson*’ op.cit.

<sup>194</sup> Schwabe, Klaus., op.cit., p. 171.

<sup>195</sup> ‘*FRUS 1948 Vol. III*’, op.cit., The British Embassy to the Department of State, March 11, 1948, Doc. 37.

<sup>196</sup> Leffler, Melvyn P., ‘*A Proponderence of Power*’ op.cit., p. 208.

discussions on the establishment of an Atlantic security system".<sup>197</sup>

During a speech on the 17<sup>th</sup> of March to a joint session of Congress, Truman took a firm stance. While promoting the ERP he blamed the Russians for causing the present tensions between the Soviet Union and the West and asked for active US support to the Brussels Treaty powers.<sup>198</sup> Truman remarked about the Brussels Treaty that "This development deserves our full support. I am confident that the United States will, by appropriate means, extend to the free nations the support that the situation requires. I am sure that the determination of the free countries of Europe to protect themselves will be matched by an equal determination on our part to help them protect themselves".<sup>199</sup> The National Security Council (NSC), an advisory organ of the President, even proposed a world-wide counter-offensive against the Soviet Union. In NSC 7 the NSC recommended that assistance should be provided to the Western Union and that a formula needed to be developed which would provide for US military action in case of an attack of the Western Union or any other non-communist nation.<sup>200</sup> The President, the NSC, Marshal and other State Department officials still were not sure which form an US military commitment should take. Should the US commitment just be an unilateral military assurance or should it encompass full US membership in the Western Union?

A Policy Planning Staff report claimed that it was the objective of the US "to strengthen the determination of the free nations to resist the aggression of Soviet-directed world Communism, to increase their confidence that they can successfully do so, and to confront the Soviet Union with sufficient organized force to deter it from attempting further aggression".<sup>201</sup> The way to accomplish this was not by joining the Western Union but by giving it assurance of armed support, by expending it to include Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Iceland, Portugal, Italy, Ireland, Switzerland, Germany, Spain and Austria and to "deepen its cooperation in all of the aspects foreseen in its Charter, economic and cultural, as well as military".<sup>202</sup> This Western Union would serve as a core in which the US might find it agreeable to participate as a member in the future. But the Policy Planning Staff claimed in

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<sup>197</sup> 'FRUS 1948 Vol. III', op.cit., Memorandum by the Secretary of State to President Truman , March 12, 1948, Doc. 40; 'FRUS 1948 Vol. III', op.cit., The Secretary of State to the British Ambassador (Inverchapel), March 12, 1948, Doc 38; Leffler, Mevlyn P., 'A preponderance of power' op.cit., pp. 210-211.

<sup>198</sup> Offner, Arnold A., op.cit., pp. 248

<sup>199</sup> 'FRUS 1948 Vol. III', op.cit., Address by the President of the US to Congress, March 17, 1948, Doc. 48.

<sup>200</sup> 'FRUS 1948 Vol. I Part 2', op.cit., Report by the National Security Council on the Position of the United States with Respect to Soviet-Directed World Communism, March 30, 1948, Doc. 12.

<sup>201</sup> 'FRUS 1948 Vol. III', op.cit., Report Prepared by the Policy Planning Staff Concerning Western Union and Related Problems, March 23, 1948, Doc. 55.

<sup>202</sup> Ibid., Doc., 55.

their report that it was enough to give the Western Union members support and to give them the assurance, through diplomatic channels, that the US would consider an armed attack against them as an armed attack against the US itself. This report was thus in line with George Kennan's views.<sup>203</sup>

As Marshall promised on the 12<sup>th</sup> of March, the British and Canadians were invited to the Pentagon to discuss a possible US military commitment to Europe.<sup>204</sup> The goal of this military commitment would be to enhance American security by stiffening the moral of the Europeans so they could rebuild their economy effectively and withstand the political Communist/Soviet threat. Thus the further expansion of the Communist influence sphere would be prevented and US hegemony in Western Europe would be ensured. The US commitment would at least encompass US military aid and an US promise to come to Europe's aid in case of an attack. But the military commitment should not be too all encompassing since the US policymakers were still of the opinion that the Soviet Union did not pose a real military threat. The danger purely consisted out of economic and political instability.<sup>205</sup> Thus economic policies still were to have the preference over any military commitment. This view would remain dominant until the outbreak of the Korean War.<sup>206</sup> Any US military commitment thus needed to stay as small as possible.

### The Pentagon Talks

The discussions held at the Pentagon were top secret and only those governments involved (those of the US, UK and Canada) knew of their existence. The meetings took place between March 22<sup>nd</sup> and April 1<sup>st</sup>, 1948. Hickerson, Achilles and Butler, the acting director of the Policy Planning Staff, were the US officials that played the leading role in formulating the American position during the Pentagon meetings. Especially Hickersons views prevailed.<sup>207</sup> None the less, it is noticeable throughout the conversations that the US delegation took into account the reservations of the internationalists, the isolationists and the US military. The views accepted in these meetings became the foundation for the official US governments view on the North Atlantic Alliance.

The first question that was discussed was what form the US commitment should take.

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<sup>203</sup> *FRUS 1948 Vol. III*', op.cit., Report Prepared by the Policy Planning Staff Concerning Western Union and Related Problems, March 23, 1948, Doc. 55.

<sup>204</sup> Leffler, Melvyn P., 'A preponderance of power' op.cit., p. 211.

<sup>205</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 205.

<sup>206</sup> Klaus Schwabe, op.cit., p. 172.

<sup>207</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 211; Kaplan, Lawrence S., 'NATO 1948' op.cit., pp. 47 – 48.

There were four different options under discussion: direct US membership in the Western Union, US membership in an Atlantic pact, a world-wide defence alliance, and the final option an unilateral assurance by the US to the nations in the Western Union that the US would come to their aid if the Soviet Union would attack them.<sup>208</sup> Hickerson, Achilles and Butler agreed that US participation in a multilateral defensive alliance was needed, to strengthen European confidence and determination to resist fifth-column Soviet aggression. Therefore the US delegation agreed that the final option, which was recommended by the NSC staff, was not the best solution to the problem. It was agreed that only a true mutual defence pact, one with reciprocal guarantees, would be the best way forward.<sup>209</sup> This would mean a bigger and more trustworthy US commitment towards the Europeans and the US could then also count on the aid of the other member countries in case of an emergency. US participation in the Western Union was not an option since the US would like to see the eventual development of a United States of Europe and the Western Union seemed to offer the beginnings of such development. The US could thus not join the Western Union without endangering the unification process. The Internationalists in the US government would never accept a treaty that would bring European integration in jeopardy. The Brussels Treaty, as a regional arrangement, also did not offer a place for countries outside Europe, like the US and Canada. The treaty had to be redrawn if it were to include countries outside of Europe.<sup>210</sup> A world-wide pact based on article 51 of the UN Charter was also no option since it would be unwieldy, “to cumbersome and too long in implementation”.<sup>211</sup> It was therefore not considered an adequate solution to the urgent present situation. The Atlantic pact option was thus considered the best way forward.<sup>212</sup>

During the discussions it became clear that an Atlantic pact should also include an extended Western Union. This expanded Western Union should at first include, the original five members, Norway, Sweden, Denmark and Iceland, and also Italy. Next to an expanded Western Union the Atlantic Pact should include the US, Canada, Portugal, Ireland, and when circumstances would permit possibly even Germany, Austria and Spain. Italy, a country not

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<sup>208</sup> ‘FRUS 1948 Vol. III’, op.cit., Memorandum by Mr. George H. Butler of the Policy Planning Staff, March 19, 1948, Doc. 53; Minutes of the First Meeting of the United States–United Kingdom–Canada Security Conversations, Held at Washington, March 22, 1948, Doc. 54.

<sup>209</sup> Ibid., Doc. 54.

<sup>210</sup> Ibid., Doc. 54.

<sup>211</sup> Ibid., Doc. 54; ‘FRUS 1948 Vol. III’, op.cit., Second Meeting of the United States–United Kingdom–Canada Security Conversations, Held at Washington, March 22, 1948, Doc. 55.

<sup>212</sup> ‘FRUS 1948 Vol. III’, op.cit., First Meeting of the United States–United Kingdom–Canada Security Conversations, Held at Washington, Doc. 54; Second Meeting of the United States–United Kingdom–Canada Security Conversations, Held at Washington, Doc. 55.



Figure 6: Theodore C. Achilles and John D. Hickerson (left to right) discussing the North Atlantic Treaty in 1949

bordering the Atlantic Ocean, was deemed as a vital partner for an Atlantic pact.<sup>213</sup> Italy was still under threat from a communist political takeover and the Americans considered it of the greatest importance to include it into a defence pact in order to stabilize the country. It was also needed to include the Scandinavian countries since Soviet control over Scandinavia would give the Soviet Union a direct all year access to the Atlantic Ocean. Norway was already under severe Soviet pressure and therefore needed military and political support. The Scandinavian countries were also needed, together with Portugal and Ireland, for their possessions in the Atlantic Ocean. The properties these countries controlled, like Greenland and the Azores, were ideal for stationing US long distance aircraft and to set up naval bases for the Atlantic supply routes.<sup>214</sup> They were considered as necessary stepping stones to get military assistance to the partners in Western Europe. Germany too was important, because it was seen as vital to the economic recovery of Europe and thus should receive extra support to resist the Soviet threat. Germany also could play a vital role in the defence of Western Europe because of its geographical position, between Western Europe and the Soviet influence sphere, and its industrial and manpower potential.

The objective of the new Defence agreement would be “to preserve western

<sup>213</sup> *FRUS 1948 Vol. III*, op.cit., Sixth Meeting of the United States–United Kingdom–Canada Security Conversations, Held at Washington, April 1, 1948, Doc. 63.

<sup>214</sup> Kaplan, Lawrence S., ‘*The Long Entanglement*’ op.cit., p. 5.

civilization in the geographical area covered by the agreement".<sup>215</sup> The main provisions in the future agreement would be for any member State to regard any action in the area covered by the agreement, which it considers an armed attack against any other member State, as an attack against itself and that each member State accordingly needs to assist in meeting the attack.<sup>216</sup> What constituted an armed attack was not to be defined in the agreement thus member States retained the right to decide for themselves if an armed attack had occurred. The kind of assistance to be provided in case of an attack would also not be defined in the agreement. Thus it would not be obligatory to send military assistance since each party would be free to provide assistance of an unspecified nature.<sup>217</sup> The member states themselves could determine what assistance they would offer. US Congress could at all times decide for itself whether an armed attack had occurred and what assistance would be given to those countries under attack. The provision was taken directly from the Rio Treaty, and behind the provision isolationist influence can be detected. A defence pact based on the above mentioned principles would reassure the isolationists since it would not greatly compromise and limit US sovereignty and freedom of action. The military establishment would also be satisfied by this arrangement since the military did not have to make large military contributions (contributions which they could not deliver) automatically if war would break out.

To satisfy the internationalists the negotiators agreed that the new Atlantic Pact would be made in accordance with the UN Charter.<sup>218</sup> The focus would be on article 51 which describes that States possess the right of individual and collective self-defence.

1. The new Atlantic alliance would take the form of a regional organization as mentioned in article 51 and Chapter VIII of the UN Charter.<sup>219</sup>
2. The preamble of the future agreement should refer to article 51. Specifically the preamble should refer to "the desirability of the conclusion of further defence agreements under Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations to the end that all free nations should eventually be covered by such agreements".<sup>220</sup>

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<sup>215</sup> 'FRUS 1948 Vol. III', op.cit., Sixth Meeting of the United States–United Kingdom–Canada Security Conversations, Held at Washington, April 1, 1948, Doc. 63.

<sup>216</sup> Ibid., Doc. 63.

<sup>217</sup> Ibid., Doc. 63.

<sup>218</sup> Ibid., Doc. 63; Kaplan, Lawrence S., 'NATO 1948' op.cit., p. 81;

<sup>219</sup> For relevant UN Charter Articles see annex 1; Kaplan, Lawrence S., 'The Long Entanglement' op.cit., p. 4.

<sup>220</sup> 'FRUS 1948 Vol. III', op.cit., Sixth Meeting of the United States–United Kingdom–Canada Security Conversations, Held at Washington, April 1, 1948, Doc. 63.

3. The main provision, to regard an attack on a member State as an attack on oneself and to assist a member State in meeting an attack, needed to be based on the inherent right of individual or collective self-defence recognized by article 51.<sup>221</sup>
4. A provision needed to be added in the agreement that action taken under the agreement shall, as provided in article 51 of the Charter, “be promptly reported to the Security Council and cease when the Security Council shall have taken the necessary steps to maintain or restore peace and security”.<sup>222</sup>

The other articles on collective defence in the UN Charter were deliberately ignored. Especially Article 53 was ignored since this article states that “no enforcement action shall be taken under regional arrangements or by regional agencies without the authorization of the Security Council”.<sup>223</sup> The Soviet Union possessed a permanent seat and veto in the Security Council. If an Atlantic alliance was based on Article 53, the Soviet Union could use their veto to withhold Security Council authorization for defence measures taken by the alliance.

During the Pentagon talks it was also agreed that the area covered by the agreement would include the continental territory in Europe and North America of any member State together with the territories in the Northern Atlantic. Thus for example also Spitsbergen, Greenland, Iceland, Newfoundland, the Azores and Alaska would be covered by the agreement. If the territorial integrity or political independence of a member State was to be under threat outside the area covered by the agreement consultation between the member States would follow.<sup>224</sup> In this way the military commitment could be kept in check.

The future agreement would also include provisions for the establishment of “such agencies as may be necessary for effective implementation of the agreement including the working out of plans for prompt and effective action”.<sup>225</sup> Thus an organization was needed which was capable to conduct deliberations on the distribution of military aid evaluation, the evaluation of future political situations, war planning, and military assistance in case of an armed attack. However what form these agencies should take was not considered during the Pentagon talks. The military and civil organization of NATO and the form of burden sharing were not discussed. Hickerson later remarked: “..we were talking, really, about a

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<sup>221</sup> ‘FRUS 1948 Vol. III’, op.cit., Sixth Meeting of the United States–United Kingdom–Canada Security Conversations, Held at Washington, April 1, 1948, Doc. 63.

<sup>222</sup> Ibid., 63.

<sup>223</sup> Articles 52, 53 and 54 of the UN Charter, see annex I.

<sup>224</sup> ‘FRUS 1948 Vol. III’, op.cit., Sixth Meeting of the United States–United Kingdom–Canada Security Conversations, Held at Washington, April 1, 1948, Doc. 63.

<sup>225</sup> Ibid., Doc. 63.

commitment, a political commitment, of what we would do in the event of an attack, without considering anything beyond the political commitment to do that. And frankly in the back of our minds was the hope that that commitment itself would be enough to restrain any aggression... So, we didn't get into the subject of military preparations at all".<sup>226</sup> During the six meetings at the Pentagon, a working paper was produced containing concepts of the desired arrangements. Hickerson cautioned the British and Canadians that although much had been discussed and decided, it had only been so on a working level. The NSC, the president, the secretaries of state and defence and Congress still had to give their approval.<sup>227</sup> However the working paper did become the basis for the Truman administration's views on the North Atlantic Alliance.<sup>228</sup>

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<sup>226</sup> 'Oral History Interview with John D. Hickerson' op.cit.

<sup>227</sup> 'FRUS 1948, Vol. III', op.cit., Sixth Meeting of the United States–United Kingdom–Canada Security Conversations, Held at Washington, April 1, 1948, Doc. 63.

<sup>228</sup> 'Oral History Interview with John D. Hickerson' op.cit.

## **5. Towards a North Atlantic Alliance**

### **(April 1948 – October 1948)**

In April 1948 the basis for the US administration's opinion on the future North Atlantic Alliance, NATO and its organizational framework were present on State Department working level. During the Pentagon talks it had been secretly agreed that there would be a mutual defence treaty. A draft of such a treaty, again on State Department working level, was already produced and was stored in Theodore Achilles safe. He later remarked about this draft that it "drew heavily on the Rio Treaty, and a bit of the Brussels Treaty... The eventual North Atlantic Treaty had the general form, and a good bit of the language of my first draft...".<sup>229</sup> The working level views agreed upon during the Pentagon talks were not officially endorsed by President Truman or Secretaries Marshall and Forrestal and were subject to change in the following period. Between April 1948 and October 1948 most of the official administration's views on the North Atlantic Alliance took shape. This chapter will discuss this development.

#### **NSC Number Nine**

Despite the outcome of the Pentagon talks, leading officials within the State Department like Marshall, Lovett and Kennan still opposed in some degree any binding multilateral commitments that would limit the nations freedom of action.<sup>230</sup> The official State Department line was that the extend of US military involvement in Europe depended on what Europeans were prepared to do for themselves and each other.<sup>231</sup> The military establishment still feared that a military alliance with the Europeans would mean a bigger commitment then they could handle. For example the JCS strategic plans still proposed direct withdrawal from Europe if the Soviet Union would attack, since the US and the Europeans lacked the military capacity to defend the continent. Committing US forces to the defence of Europe in case of war would just mean the loss of US troop and equipment. Also the military establishment was afraid that the Europeans would pillage their already meagre military stocks.<sup>232</sup> The Isolationists still feared that the US would be entangled in European power politics and that US would lose its sovereignty. Finally there were the Internationalists which were opposed to anything that would undermine the workings of the UN and the formation of an United States of Europe. It

<sup>229</sup> 'Oral History Interview with Theodore Achilles' op.cit., 19.

<sup>230</sup> Kaplan, Lawrence S., 'NATO 1948' op.cit., p. 77.

<sup>231</sup> 'Oral History Interview with Theodore Achilles' op.cit. 17.

<sup>232</sup> 'History of the Joint Chiefs of Staff' op.cit., pp. 153 – 155.

was therefore not strange that Hickerson and Achilles were pessimistic about the future of a multilateral North Atlantic Alliance.<sup>233</sup> The Europeans were also pessimistic. Only Britain and Canada had participated in the secret Pentagon talks and knew of the working level US State Department agreements. The rest of Western Europe only knew of the assurance of President Truman made on the 17<sup>th</sup> of March which was not followed by any American action. Thus they feared the worst: that Europe was on its own.

On April the 13<sup>th</sup>, the National Security Council came with a new report: NSC 9, “The Position of the United States With Respect to Support for Western Union and Other Related Free Countries”.<sup>234</sup> The principal conclusion in NSC 9 was that Western Europe could only resist the Soviet threat effectively if the US took part in a multilateral defence agreement and delivered military as well as economic support.<sup>235</sup> The recommendations regarding a collective defence agreement put forward by the NSC in this report are almost exactly those put forward by Hickerson and those mentioned in the working paper produced during the Pentagon talks. The NSC recommended that the US should not join the Brussels Pact. However the Brussels Pact should be expanded by adding the Scandinavian countries and Italy. Thereafter President Truman should declare that “any action in the North Atlantic Area which the United States considers an armed attack against a signatory of the Five-Power Treaty (Brussels Treaty) as an armed attack against the United States to be dealt with by the United States on the basis of Article 51 of the United Nations Charter”.<sup>236</sup> The NSC continued that the above named countries together with Ireland, Canada and Portugal should then be invited to negotiate the conclusion of a “Collective Defence Agreement for the North Atlantic Area”.<sup>237</sup> In the future other countries, like Spain, Germany and Austria “which logically might belong in the Five-Power Treaty Group or in the North Atlantic Area”, should be invited to join the Brussels Treaty and the North Atlantic Defence Agreement. Just as in the Pentagon talks paper Greece, Turkey and Iran were not mentioned in NSC 9 as possible members of both the Brussels Treaty and the North Atlantic agreement. Secretary Marshall himself explained why in April 1948: “In the first place it seems to us that a regional arrangement which includes the US is rather difficult to justify in this area. Second, it tends to spread our sphere of activity over far too widespread an area. In other words, to involve the

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<sup>233</sup> Kaplan, Lawrence S., ‘NATO 1948’ op.cit., p. 69.

<sup>234</sup> ‘FRUS 1948 Vol. III’, op.cit., Report by the Executive Secretary of the National Security Council (Souers) to the Council, April 13 1948, Doc., 71.

<sup>235</sup> Ibid, doc 71; ‘History of the Joint Chiefs of Staff’ op.cit., p. 193.

<sup>236</sup> ‘FRUS 1948 Vol. III’, op.cit., Report by the Executive Secretary of the National Security Council (Souers) to the Council, April 13 1948, Doc. 71.

<sup>237</sup> Ibid., Doc.,71.



Figure 7: Truman and the National Security Council in August 1948

danger and the invitation for a dispersal of our forces when concentration appears to be the wisest cause especially in view of our present limitations. Thirdly, we are already doing a great deal in a military way for these countries...”<sup>238</sup>

The NSC recommendations with regard to the provisions and content of the future Atlantic agreement were an almost exact copy of those put forward in the paper produced during the Pentagon talks. The main difference was that the NSC concluded that the area covered by the Agreement should also include the waters of the Northern Atlantic and the air above them.<sup>239</sup> Again the main provision proposed was that “each party shall regard any action in the area covered by the agreement which it considers an armed attack against any other party as an armed attack against itself. And that each party accordingly assists in meeting the attack”.<sup>240</sup> And if an armed attack should take place member states themselves could determine what assistance they would offer.<sup>241</sup> The NSC agreed that the future Atlantic agreement needed to be in conformance with the UN charter and that after the conclusion of the treaty “such agencies as may be necessary for effective implementation of the agreement”

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<sup>238</sup> ‘FRUS 1948 Vol. III’, op.cit., The Secretary of State to the Acting Secretary of State (Lovett), April 23 1948, Doc. 81.

<sup>239</sup> ‘FRUS 1948 Vol. III’, op.cit., Report by the Executive Secretary of the National Security Council (Souers) to the Council, April 13 1948, Doc., 71.

<sup>240</sup> Ibid., Doc. 71.

<sup>241</sup> Ibid., Doc. 71.

needed to be established.<sup>242</sup> Thus the organizational structure of the new organization was also not discussed by the NSC.

George Kennan and the military establishment reacted negatively against this NSC report. Although they agreed that US political and military aid was needed to encourage the Europeans to stand up against the indigenous and external Communist threat, they still opposed the idea of a full US participation in a multilateral military alliance. George Kennan, supported by Charles Bohlen, a key advisor to Secretary of State Marshall, replied that formal commitments of US military support would be superfluous. The presence of US troops in Europe already acted as a deterrent force and guaranteed the Europeans of American support in any future conflict.<sup>243</sup> Kennan argued that what was needed was a clear American statement that if a war was triggered US troops would support the Europeans and fight instead of evacuate the continent.<sup>244</sup> He thus favoured an unilateral declaration by the US to the Western Union powers that the US will come to their aid if the Soviet Union would attack them. This declaration had to be supported by military staff talks between the European and US military.<sup>245</sup>

The JCS and Secretary of Defence Forrestal were beginning to think in the same way. The JCS and leading military planners like General Wedemeyer, director of the Army's Plans and Operations Division, called for an alteration of the strategic military plans. At first American strategic plans called for the retreat of American armed forces from Europe in case war would break out. Wedemeyer however argued that the US could not permit itself to loose Western Europe to the Soviets in case of a conflict as it would lead to the fall of the US itself.<sup>246</sup> Retreating from Europe and focussing on long range bombing would lead to the loss of Europe and thus in the massive loss of territory, manpower, resources and industry but also strategic positions to the Soviets. Instead of an immediate withdrawal a defence on the European continent had to be contemplated.<sup>247</sup> The JCS realised that the establishment of a defence organization together with the Europeans might just give them the opportunity to coordinate such a defence on the European continent. Already after the Czech coup the JCS

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<sup>242</sup> 'FRUS 1948 Vol. III', op.cit., Report by the Executive Secretary of the National Security Council (Souers) to the Council, April 13 1948, Doc., 71.

<sup>243</sup> 'FRUS 1948 Vol. III', op.cit., Memorandum by the Director of the Policy Planning Staff (Kennan) to the Secretary and Under Secretary of State (Lovett), 29 April 1948, Doc. 84.

<sup>244</sup> 'FRUS 1948 Vol. III', op.cit., Report by the Executive Secretary of the National Security Council (Souers) to the Council, April 13 1948, Doc. 71; Lawrence S. Kaplan, 'The United States and NATO' op.cit., p. 74.

<sup>245</sup> 'FRUS 1948 Vol. III', op.cit., Memorandum by the Director of the Policy Planning Staff (Kennan) to the Secretary and Under Secretary of State (Lovett), 29 April 1948, Doc., 84.

<sup>246</sup> Leffler, Melvyn P., 'A preponderance of power' op.cit., pp. 212 – 213.

<sup>247</sup> 'History of the Joint Chiefs of Staff' op.cit., p. 155.

advised to create a “Committee of Commanders-in-Chief”, a war planning committee between the Europeans and US with the goal of setting up a collective defence.<sup>248</sup> This war planning committee however should not take away the initiative from American war planners. The Americans should retain the right to produce their own war plans at all times.<sup>249</sup> Although the JCS did support the idea of collective defence, the military establishment still disliked the idea to engage in military commitments before increasing the military budget.<sup>250</sup> They still feared that the US would engage in military commitments which would transcend military capabilities. In reaction to NSC 9 the JCS reacted that preparatory measures needed to be made before more commitments in regard to the defence of Europe could be made.<sup>251</sup> But the JCS had more objections. Although they agreed that European armed forces needed military arms and equipment, the Joint Chiefs stressed that US arms requirements should not be endangered. They also objected against the territory covered by the future North Atlantic agreement as defined by NSC 9. By including the islands in the North Atlantic not belonging to any member State and the inclusion of the waters of the North Atlantic and the air above them would lead to an increase in the possibility of war.<sup>252</sup> The Joint Chiefs thus had a preference for the coverage of the territory described in the Pentagon talks paper. Also the provision calling for consultation in case the territorial integrity or political independence of a member State was considered under threat met opposition of the Joint Chiefs. In their opinion the provision might lead to “requests for military actions for which the United States was not prepared”.<sup>253</sup>

### The Vandenberg Resolution

In early April 1948 Marshall was attending the International Conference of American States in Bogota, Columbia. At the same time Lovett began to adopt the views of Hickerson and Achilles. He finally realized that a direct US membership in a multilateral Atlantic military alliance was needed.<sup>254</sup> The Senate was the key congressional player in forming foreign relations policy. Therefore Lovett, together with other high ranking State Department

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<sup>248</sup> Wiggershaus, Norbert and Foerster, Roland G., ‘*The Western Security Community. Common Problems and Conflicting National Interests during the Foundation Phase of the North Atlantic Alliance*’, (Oxford 1993), Article Woyke, Wichard, ‘Foundation and History of NATO 1948 – 1950’, pp 251 – 271, pp. 256 – 257.

<sup>249</sup> Ibid., p. 256.

<sup>250</sup> ‘*History of the Joint Chiefs of Staff*’ op.cit., p. 194; Leffler, Melvyn P., ‘A preponderance of power’ op.cit., p. 212; Kaplan, Lawrence S., ‘*The Long Entanglement*’ op.cit., p. 10.

<sup>251</sup> Ibid., p. 10.

<sup>252</sup> ‘*History of the Joint Chiefs of Staff*’ op.cit., p. 194.

<sup>253</sup> Ibid., p. 194.

<sup>254</sup> Kaplan, Lawrence S., ‘*NATO 1948*’ op.cit., p. 90.

officials, realised that the policy set forth in NSC 9 and the Pentagon talks paper needed approval or even endorsement of the Senate. Thus Lovett began discussions with the internationalist Republican Senator Vandenberg, the Senate's leader in matters of foreign relations.<sup>255</sup> Vandenberg himself, afraid that president Truman would get all the credits for the new alliance, immediately proposed to Lovett that the Senate should be involved in the preparation of the Atlantic Alliance.<sup>256</sup> He made clear that he and the Senate would support a formal commitment of military support to Europe. Vandenberg agreed that the US should give military assistance and should make the assurance that the US would come to Europe's aid in case of an attack. However the US should at all times retain the right to decide for itself whether support should be given and what form this support should take.<sup>257</sup> On the 12<sup>th</sup> of April the Republican Congressional leaders stated that the Senate would never ratify a treaty which would obligate the US to go to war to protect Europe.<sup>258</sup> Because of this Vandenberg remarked in relation to the future agreement that: "It should generally follow the basic lines of the treaty of Rio".<sup>259</sup> Thus in case of an attack on Europe the US would retain the right to declare war, and the right to decide what assistance would be sent to Europe.<sup>260</sup> Vandenberg also made clear that a potential military alliance should be based on the principles of mutual aid and self-help and should conform and give prominence to the UN Charter. He and the Senate would not support any resolution or US obligation to Europe that would not conform to the above mentioned notions and which would violate the UN Charter.<sup>261</sup> After the discussions with Lovett, Vandenberg asked the State Department to produce a draft of "his" resolution.<sup>262</sup>

It seems that Hickerson and Achilles in advance did a good job estimating what the Senate's internationalists (like Vandenberg) and isolationists wanted. The proposed provisions during the Pentagon talks were almost completely in line with that Vandenberg wanted in his resolution. Theodore Achilles was the one tasked with producing the final draft of the resolution. Achilles had great influence over the formulation of paragraphs two, three

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<sup>255</sup> 'FRUS 1948 Vol. III', op.cit., Memorandum of Conversation, by the Acting Secretary of State, April 11 1948, Doc., 69.

<sup>256</sup> 'Oral History Interview with Theodore Achilles' op.cit., 21.

<sup>257</sup> 'FRUS 1948 Vol. III', op.cit., Memorandum of Conversation, by the Acting Secretary of State, April 11 1948, Doc., 69.

<sup>258</sup> New York Times, April 13, 1948.

<sup>259</sup> 'FRUS 1948 Vol. III', op.cit., Lovett Memorandum of Conversation, April 18, 1948, Doc. 75.

<sup>260</sup> 'FRUS 1948 Vol. III', op.cit., Lovett Memorandum of Conversation, April 11, 1948, Doc. 69 ; Kaplan, Lawrence S., 'NATO 1948' op.cit., p. 90.

<sup>261</sup> 'FRUS 1948 Vol. III', op.cit., Lovett Memorandum of Conversation, April 11, 1948, Doc. 69; 'FRUS 1948 Vol. III', op.cit., Lovett Memorandum of Conversation, April 18, 1948, Doc. 75.

<sup>262</sup> 'Oral History Interview with John D. Hickerson' op.cit.

and four, the paragraphs covering a possible regional defence agreement.<sup>263</sup> Although Achilles wrote articles two, three and four, Vandenberg added to paragraph three that an US association to an alliance should go “by constitutional process”.<sup>264</sup> Through this addition Vandenberg assured that when the US would join an alliance with the Europeans and war in Europe would break out, Congress would retain the right to decide for itself if the US would go to war. The resolution itself did not call for the establishment of an military alliance. The resolution did however open the way for the Truman administration to conclude an alliance as long as it would conform to four basic criteria: the arrangements had to be within the framework of the UN Charter, the association to the alliance had to follow US constitutional procedures, the arrangement had to be based upon continuous and effective self-help and mutual aid and the arrangement had to affect (i.e. increase) the national security of the US.<sup>265</sup>

To accommodate the resolution a few revisions of NSC 9 were produced. The first revision, NSC 1/9 issued on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of April, only knew two mayor changes. In the first place it confirmed Lovett’s opinion that Senate approval was needed before the administration could take any further steps toward concluding an Atlantic defence agreement. Secondly NSC 1/9 recommended that the future defence agreement should be based on self-help and mutual aid.<sup>266</sup> This addition was clearly based on Vandenberg’s remarks to Lovett. A second revision of NSC 9 followed on the 20<sup>th</sup> of May. Before NSC 2/9 was accepted Kennan, supported by Bohlen and the militairy, again stressed that what was really necessary was not an alliance but a unilateral assurance of US support and real military staff talks between the US and Western Europe.<sup>267</sup> Pressure from Kennan and the military establishment lead to the recommendation in NSC 2/9 that after acceptance of the Vandenberg resolution the US should not engage in exploratory talks for the establishment of a military alliance right away. The US should first contain itself to combined military planning and the delivery of arms aid.<sup>268</sup> Following ERP precedent the Europeans, before requesting aid, first had to “plan their coordinated defence with the means presently available...” and they had to determine how their collective military

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<sup>263</sup> ‘Oral History Interview with John D. Hickerson’ op.cit.; ‘Oral History Interview with Theodore Achilles’ op.cit., 22 - 23; See annex II ;US Senate Resolution 239 (‘The Vandenberg Resolution’), Washington D.C. - June 11 1948.

<sup>264</sup> See Annex II; US Senate Resolution 239 (‘The Vandenberg Resolution’), Washington D.C. - June 11 1948.

<sup>265</sup> ‘FRUS 1948 Vol. III’, op.cit., Memorandum of the Sixth Meeting of the Working Group Participating in the Washington Exploratory Talks on Security, July 26, 1948, Doc. 130.

<sup>266</sup> ‘FRUS 1948 Vol. III’, op.cit., The Director of the Policy Planning Staff (Kennan) to the Executive Secretary of the National Security Council (Souers), April 23, 1948, Doc. 80.

<sup>267</sup> ‘FRUS 1948 Vol. III’, op.cit., Memorandum by the Director of the Policy Planning Staff (Kennan) to the Secretary and Under Secretary of State (Lovett), April 29, 1948, Doc. 84.

<sup>268</sup> *History of the Joint Chiefs of Staff* ‘ op.cit., p. 195.

potential could be increased by a coordinated effort.<sup>269</sup> The National Security Council concluded in NSC 2/9 that if these before mentioned efforts were not enough to bolster European confidence than discussions for a defensive association with Europe and Canada should commence.<sup>270</sup>

The JCS agreed with the recommendation in NSC 2/9 that military staff talks should commence with the Europeans. They also stated in reaction to NSC 2/9 that they no longer opposed the formal association of the US with the Brussels Pact powers. However any military commitment or military aid program should be preceded by a decent degree of military strengthening.<sup>271</sup> They also agreed with arms aid to Europe, however this aid should not interfere with US arms requirements.<sup>272</sup> The acceptance of a bigger commitment to Europe made a shift in strategic military thinking possible.<sup>273</sup> As mentioned before, officials within the military establishment already understood that the defence of Europe was vital for US security. No longer would US troops immediately evacuate the European continent in case of war. New strategic plans called for US troops to fight alongside the French and British at the Rhine. To make this possible the JCS recommended that combined war planning should commence as soon as possible.<sup>274</sup> However no extra troops were to be sent to Europe, also in case of war. The focus of the US military remained on the strategic bombing of the Soviet Union.<sup>275</sup> The Europeans could only count on a US guarantee of support together with those few US forces already stationed in Europe, combined war planning and most importantly, US arms aid.<sup>276</sup> Thus in the end the Europeans for the largest part remained responsible for their own defence.

Although the JCS recommended the creation of a combined war planning committee and the creation of combined war plans, the Joint Chiefs stressed that the US not had to be drawn into “any command arrangement that could be expended prematurely into an allied military council for global strategy”.<sup>277</sup> They wanted to keep their initiative and did not want to be trapped in an automatism. The Joint Chiefs were concerned that if the US would be

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<sup>269</sup> ‘History of the Joint Chiefs of Staff’ op.cit., p. 195.

<sup>270</sup> Ibid., p. 195.

<sup>271</sup> Ibid., p. 196.

<sup>272</sup> Ibid., p. 196.

<sup>273</sup> Ibid., p. 196.

<sup>274</sup> Ibid., pp. 156 – 159; Leffler, Melvyn P., ‘A proponderence of Power’ op.cit., p. 216.

<sup>275</sup> ‘FRUS 1948 Vol. III’, op.cit., Memorandum by the Director of the Joint Staff (Gruenthaler) to Hickerson, July 16, 1948, Doc. 123.

<sup>276</sup> ‘History of the Joint Chiefs of Staff’ op.cit., pp. 156 – 159; Leffler, Melvyn P., ‘A Proponderence of Power’ op.cit., p. 216

<sup>277</sup> ‘History of the Joint Chiefs of Staff’ op.cit., p. 196; ‘FRUS 1948 Vol. III’, op.cit., Memorandum by the Director of the Joint Staff (Gruenthaler) to Hickerson, July 16, 1948, Doc. 123.

drawn into such a command arrangement they would lose their freedom of action in determining their own global military strategy.<sup>278</sup> General Gruenthal of the JCS remarked that “it must be made quite clear that a commitment to come to the aid of a state under attack should not be taken to mean that the assistance must be rendered locally. We must be free to conduct operations against an aggressor according to (our) strategic conception”.<sup>279</sup>

The aspect of burden sharing within the possible future defence agreement was not mentioned directly by either the Joint Chiefs, State Department officials or senator Vandenberg. However indirectly something can be said about it. By stating that the future alliance should be based on mutual aid and self-help, Vandenberg and the State Department meant that the Europeans for the largest part should take care of their defence themselves. The Americans would limit themselves to sending military aid, conducting coordinated war planning and granting strategic guarantees.<sup>280</sup> No extra American troops were to be sent to Europe, and in the case of war the US would confine itself to strategic bombing.<sup>281</sup> Although not specifically mentioned the new JCS strategic plans mentioned in the previous paragraphs seem to point to the fact that the military establishment, just like Vandenberg and the State Department, believed that military burden sharing between Europe and the US should be based on mutual aid and self-help. They agreed with military aid, strategic planning and formal defence guarantees and that no extra troops should be sent to Europe, even in case of war. These views were confirmed by the low military budget in fiscal years 1948, 1949 and 1950 and the official acceptance of the above mentioned US military strategic plans. Although the US would supply military aid, keep their occupation forces in Europe and support a war effort by strategic bombing, the Europeans themselves should hold the line at the Rhine. This was all in accordance with American tradition, since the notions of mutual aid and self-help were already the basis for the Economic Recovery Program and were based on the old American isolationist thinking.

The Vandenberg Resolution was finally passed by the Senate as Resolution 239 on the 11<sup>th</sup> of June 1948. President Truman approved the resolution on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of July.<sup>282</sup> The resolution opened the path for the Truman administration to officially associate itself to an

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<sup>278</sup> *History of the Joint Chiefs of Staff* op.cit., pp. 194, 196.

<sup>279</sup> Citation from Wiggershaus, Norbert and Foerster, Roeland, ‘The Western security community, 1948-1950: common problems and conflicting National interests during the Foundation Phase of the North Atlantic Alliance’, op.cit., p. 256.

<sup>280</sup> Leffler, Melvyn P., ‘A proponderence of Power’ op.cit., pp. 219.

<sup>281</sup> ‘FRUS 1948 Vol. III’, op.cit., Memorandum by the Director of the Joint Staff (Gruenthal) to Hickerson, July 16, 1948, Doc. 123.

<sup>282</sup> Woyke, Wichard, op.cit., p. 257.

Atlantic alliance.<sup>283</sup> A third revision of NSC 9 was approved on the 28<sup>th</sup> of June. NSC 3/9 acknowledged the Senate's recommendations by stating that the Vandenberg Resolution should be "implemented to the fullest".<sup>284</sup> NSC 3/9 called for the commencement of conversations on collective security between the US, Canada, France, Britain and the Benelux. The NSC advised that if it became apparent from these conversations that the US had to join a defence agreement to bolster public confidence in Western Europe then the US should join such an agreement.<sup>285</sup> The debate within the Truman administration on the question whether the US should start negotiations on a military defence agreement with the Europeans, had ended. The adherents of a multilateral North Atlantic Treaty, like Hickerson, Achilles and Lovett, had triumphed. The views put forward in the Pentagon talks paper and NSC 9 were now accepted as the official US government's views. Even Kennan gave in when he stated that an multilateral Atlantic security pact might indeed help stiffening the self-confidence of the Europeans.<sup>286</sup>

### The Exploratory Talks

In June 1948 the Soviets began to interdict freight and passenger traffic to and from the Western sector of Berlin. The Americans responded by setting up an airlift to get the much needed supplies to the citizens of western Berlin. Tensions between the West and the Soviet Union increased because of this Berlin Blockade. Truman administration officials, still convinced that the Soviet Union was not ready nor preparing for military hostilities, were nonetheless alarmed and acted immediately.<sup>287</sup> Marshall informed the Brussels Pact powers that exploratory talks on security and a possible defence agreement should proceed immediately.<sup>288</sup> Furthermore an American military representative was to be sent to London to attend the military deliberations of the Western Union and a comprehensive military assistance program for Europe had to be developed.<sup>289</sup> In June 1948 military aid was already being sent to France, and the commander of American forces in Germany, general Clay, began coordinating a defence at the river Rhine together with the French and British.<sup>290</sup>

On the 6<sup>th</sup> of July, as recommended in NSC 9, negotiations in Washington began

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<sup>283</sup> Kaplan, Lawrence S., 'The United States and NATO' op.cit., p. 75.

<sup>284</sup> 'FRUS 1948 Vol. III', op.cit., Report by the National Security Council, June 28, 1948, Doc., 109.

<sup>285</sup> Ibid., Doc. 109.

<sup>286</sup> Schwabe, Klaus, op.cit., p. 172.

<sup>287</sup> Leffler, Melvyn P., 'A proponderence of Power' op.cit., p. 220.

<sup>288</sup> 'FRUS 1948 Vol. III', op.cit., The Secretary of State to the Embassy in France, 23 June, 1948, Doc. 108.

<sup>289</sup> Leffler, Melvyn P., 'A proponderence of Power' op.cit., pp. 217 - 218.

<sup>290</sup> Ibid., p. 234.



Figure 8: U.S. military aircraft unload at Tempelhof Airport during the Berlin Airlift.

between Acting Secretary Lovett and the Ambassadors of Canada, the United Kingdom, France, Belgium, Holland, and the Luxembourg Minister of Foreign Affairs. The representatives were going to discuss problems connected with the defence of the Atlantic area, including the possibility of a treaty of alliance.<sup>291</sup> The negotiations were to take place until December that same year. Those present agreed that “the Soviet Union was a threat and that the efforts to meet it should be directed to the ideological as well as the military threat. The respective countries should be strengthened to resist internal as well as external threats”.<sup>292</sup> To combat this threat they agreed that a defensive pact should be concluded including the Brussels Pact Powers, Canada the US and possibly other nations in Europe. The defence pact should be based on the notions of self-help and mutual aid, the UN Charter and the Rio Pact.<sup>293</sup> Those present thus agreed with the American governments views. However the representative of the Canadian government also made an extra contribution to the proposed nature of such an defence association. He proposed that the connection to the UN Charter, should not only be based on Article 51, but also on Article 56, which concerned

<sup>291</sup> ‘Oral History Interview with Theodore Achilles’ op.cit., 27.

<sup>292</sup> ‘FRUS 1948 Vol. III’, op.cit., Minutes of the Second Meeting of the Washington Exploratory Talks on Security, July 6, 1948, Doc. 113.

<sup>293</sup> ‘FRUS 1948 Vol. III’, op.cit., Minutes of the Fifth Meeting of the Washington Exploratory Talks on Security, July 9, 1948, Doc. 117.

cooperation for economic, cultural and spiritual purposes.<sup>294</sup> Acting Secretary Lovett agreed with this point since it was in accordance with the State Department view that “the political, military, economic and spiritual forces of Western Europe must be integrated into some form of union, formal or informal, backed by the United States”.<sup>295</sup> Those present finally decided to set up a working group to further negotiate a defence agreement.<sup>296</sup>

The working group was presided by Hickerson and was further composed of Kennan, Bohlen, Achilles and foreign affairs officials of Canada and the different Brussels Pact countries. On the 9<sup>th</sup> of September the conclusions of the working group discussions were included in a memorandum known as the Washington Paper. The views defended by Hickerson and Achilles and mentioned in the Pentagon talks paper and NSC 9 were to prevail most of the time. Nonetheless there were some intense discussions among the working group members. These discussions focussed on the questions of membership, territorial applicability of the Atlantic agreement and the shape of the mutual-assistance guarantee.

An important part of the discussions focussed on which European countries were considered to be possible logical, natural candidates for inclusion. The Americans wanted to include as many free-European nations as possible in a future agreement. State Department councillor Bohlen mentioned the following while in discussion with mr. Bérard, the French Chargé d’Affaires: “it was important that our relationship to Europe for defence purposes would not be piecemeal and with a whole series of individual countries or separate groups thereof; ... to form some association only with the Brussels countries would leave outside of any such arrangement the majority of the Marshall Plan countries, many of whom were more exposed than the Brussels countries themselves to Soviet attack; that the problem, as we saw it, was to endeavour to work out a formula that would in effect cover as much of the free nations of Europe as would be militarily and politically and geographically possible”.<sup>297</sup> Hickerson agreed with this view and added that not including certain free Western European countries directly into an Atlantic agreement might lead to that country falling under the Soviet influence sphere. On the other hand Hickerson also realised that the association should

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<sup>294</sup> ‘FRUS 1948 Vol. III’, op.cit., Minutes of the Fifth Meeting of the Washington Exploratory Talks on Security, July 9, 1948, Doc. 117.

<sup>295</sup> ‘FRUS 1948 Vol. III’, op.cit., Minutes of the First Meeting of the Washington Exploratory Talks on Security, July 6, 1948, Doc. 112.

<sup>296</sup> ‘FRUS 1948 Vol. III’, op.cit., Minutes of the Fifth Meeting of the Washington Exploratory Talks on Security, July 9, 1948, Doc. 117; ‘Oral History Interview with John D. Hickerson’ op.cit.

<sup>297</sup> ‘FRUS 1948 Vol. III’, op.cit., Memorandum of Conversation, by Mr. Charles E. Bohlen, Counsellor of the Department of State, to the Secretary of State, August 6, 1948, Doc. 133.

have geographical limits.<sup>298</sup> This was in line with the official American view (especially of the military establishment) that the US lacked the will and the military power to engage in too much and to large foreign security commitments. The representatives of the Brussels Pact powers did not really want more than seven members in the Atlantic Pact since more partners would mean a decrease in the size of each members share of US military assistance and it would make matters more complicated.<sup>299</sup> Thus a discussion followed, which ended with the conclusion that a North Atlantic defence pact composed of just the original seven negotiating parties would not be fully effective.<sup>300</sup>

The Americans proposed as possible members the USA, Canada, and an extended Brussels Pact which should include next to the original members, Italy, Spain, Portugal, the Scandinavian Countries, Austria and Germany. To begin with the Americans saw Italy, although not bordering the Atlantic Ocean, as a vital future member. Italy possessed a strategic geographic position in the Mediterranean, on the flank of France thus being important for the defence of Europe.<sup>301</sup> Additionally Italy was under threat from a communist takeover and the Americans considered it of the greatest importance to include it into a defence pact to stabilize the country. France agreed with the Americans that Italy should be a member of the alliance.<sup>302</sup> The rest of the working group however refused Italian membership because it was not a North Atlantic country and because it was subject to military limitations imposed by the peace treaty concluded after Italy's defeat in 1944.<sup>303</sup> Even George Kennan objected against Italian membership since he wanted the agreement to be confined to the Northern Atlantic area.<sup>304</sup> The question of Italy was not solved and was referred back to the ambassadors.

The British suggested that Spain should also be included because of "its vital relationship to the sea-lane through the Mediterranean".<sup>305</sup> Hickerson agreed with this view, but the rest of the working group refused Spain because of its Fascist political system.<sup>306</sup> In

<sup>298</sup> 'FRUS 1948 Vol. III', op.cit., Memorandum of the Sixth Meeting of the Working Group Participating in the Washington Exploratory Talks on Security, July 26, 1948, Doc. 130.

<sup>299</sup> Kaplan, Lawrence S., 'NATO 1948' op.cit., p. 175.

<sup>300</sup> 'FRUS 1948, Vol. III', op.cit., Memorandum by the Participants in the Washington Security Talks, July 6 to September 9, Submitted to Their Respective Governments for Study and Comment, 9 September 1948, Doc. 150.

<sup>301</sup> Kaplan, Lawrence S., 'NATO 1948' op.cit., pp. 178 - 179.

<sup>302</sup> 'Oral History Interview with Theodore Achilles' op.cit., 58; 'FRUS 1948 Vol. III', op.cit., Memorandum of the Sixth Meeting of the Working Group Participating in the Washington Exploratory Talks on Security, July 26, 1948, Doc. 130.

<sup>303</sup> 'FRUS 1948, Vol. III', op.cit., Memorandum by the Participants in the Washington Security Talks, July 6 to September 9, Submitted to Their Respective Governments for Study and Comment, 9 September 1948, Doc. 150.

<sup>304</sup> 'FRUS 1948, Vol. III', op.cit., Memorandum by the Director of the Policy Planning Staff (Kennan) to the Under Secretary of State (Lovett), 31 August, 1948, Doc. 143.

<sup>305</sup> 'FRUS 1948 Vol. III', op.cit., Memorandum of the Sixth Meeting of the Working Group Participating in the Washington Exploratory Talks on Security, July 26, 1948, Doc. 130.

<sup>306</sup> Kaplan, Lawrence S., 'NATO 1948' op.cit., p. 123.

regard to Austria and Germany Hickerson remarked the following: “the question of inclusion of Germany and Austria would pose some very great problems for a long time to come, since treaties have not been signed with these countries, and since both were under military occupation, but ultimately, as a long term proposition, it is only natural to expect that they would be included”.<sup>307</sup> Germany was considered important, because Germany was seen as vital to the economic recovery of Europe. Germany should thus receive all the support it could get to resist the Soviets. Germany also could play a vital role in the defence of Western Europe because of its position, between Western Europe and the Soviet influence sphere, and its industrial and manpower potential. However Germany and also Austria were still occupied by foreign military forces at the time. Therefore the working group decided that it was too premature to decide on Austria and Germany at that point in time.<sup>308</sup>

More agreement between the working group members could be found while discussing the Scandinavian countries, Ireland and Portugal.<sup>309</sup> Denmark, Norway, Iceland and Sweden were seen by the Americans and the rest of the working group as welcome and useful partners.<sup>310</sup> The Scandinavian countries were seen as vital since Soviet control over Scandinavia would give the Soviet Union direct all year access to the Atlantic Ocean. Norway was already under Soviet pressure and therefore needed military and political support. Also Denmark and Iceland were seen as vital “stepping stone” countries because of their possessions in the North Atlantic like Greenland, the Faroe islands and Iceland itself which were vital for trans-Atlantic supply lines. These islands were also needed for their air bases which could house long distance aircraft needed to secure the Atlantic and perform strategic bombing campaigns in case of war.<sup>311</sup> The Americans also considered the Azores islands, belonging to Portugal, as a vital stepping stone in the Atlantic. Together with the fact that Portugal had a favourable strategic position on the Atlantic the Americans pressed to have Portugal included.<sup>312</sup> Ireland was also considered of some importance as a stepping stone

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<sup>307</sup> ‘FRUS 1948 Vol. III’, op.cit., Memorandum of the Sixth Meeting of the Working Group Participating in the Washington Exploratory Talks on Security, July 26, 1948, Doc. 130.

<sup>308</sup> ‘FRUS 1948, Vol. III’, op.cit., Memorandum by the Participants in the Washington Security Talks, July 6 to September 9, Submitted to Their Respective Governments for Study and Comment, 9 September 1948, Doc. 150.

<sup>309</sup> Ibid., Doc. 150.

<sup>310</sup> ‘FRUS 1948 Vol. III’, op.cit., Memorandum of the Sixth Meeting of the Working Group Participating in the Washington Exploratory Talks on Security, July 26, 1948, Doc. 130.

<sup>311</sup> Ibid., Doc. 130; Wichard Woyke pp. 259 – 260; ‘Oral History Interview with Theodore Achilles’, op.cit., 58 – 62.

<sup>312</sup> Ibid., 58 - 62; , ‘FRUS 1948 Vol. III’, op.cit., Memorandum of the Sixth Meeting of the Working Group Participating in the Washington Exploratory Talks on Security, July 26, 1948, Doc. 130; Woyke, Wichard, op.cit., pp. 259 – 260.

especially since it could bring in naval-bases to facilitate anti-submarine warfare.<sup>313</sup> The possible inclusion of Greece and Turkey was also discussed, but the working group members soon agreed with the Americans that it would be very difficult to include them in a regional North Atlantic pact. Hickerson suggested that these two countries did not satisfy the criteria for membership of true a North Atlantic association.<sup>314</sup> But there were also other reasons why the Americans refused these countries into an Atlantic association. It would have led to the spread of the American sphere of activity over a too large area. In other words, it would have involved the danger of a dispersal of American forces when concentration appeared to be the wisest military strategic option, especially in view of American (military) limitations.<sup>315</sup>

Hickerson wanted all member states to be equal members, each having identical responsibilities and obligations. George Kennan again saw things differently. Kennan wanted three categories of membership: full membership, membership on an associate basis with lesser obligations for the stepping stone nations like Denmark, Ireland and Portugal and a third category for nations outside Europe around the Atlantic with even fewer obligations and responsibilities.<sup>316</sup> This view was taken over by most of the representatives and was even eventually accepted by the entire working group. The explanations put forward were that "The circumstances and capabilities of the North Atlantic and Western European countries vary widely. Taking these variations into account rather than attempting to fit each nation into a uniform rigid pattern may provide the solution".<sup>317</sup> Although this proposal by Kennan made it into the Washington Paper, it was never brought up during further negotiations. The proposal died a silent death, and all possible members were consequently considered equal.

Concerning the question of territorial applicability of the Atlantic agreement the

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<sup>313</sup> 'Oral History Interview with Theodore Achilles', op.cit., 58 – 62; 'FRUS 1948 Vol. III', op.cit., Memorandum of the Sixth Meeting of the Working Group Participating in the Washington Exploratory Talks on Security, July 26, 1948, Doc. 130.

<sup>314</sup> 'FRUS 1948 Vol. III', op.cit., Memorandum of the Sixth Meeting of the Working Group Participating in the Washington Exploratory Talks on Security, July 26, 1948, Doc. 130.

<sup>315</sup> 'FRUS 1948 Vol. III', op.cit., The Secretary of State to the Acting Secretary of State (Lovett), April 23 1948, Doc. 81.

<sup>316</sup> 'FRUS 1948 Vol. III', op.cit., Memorandum of the Thirteenth Meeting of the Working Group Participating in the Washington Exploratory Talks on Security, September 2, 1948, Doc. 144.

<sup>317</sup> The following concept was put forward by the working group in the Wasington Paper: "the concept should include different categories of nations: (1) those whose membership of a North Atlantic Pact would involve maximum commitments for reciprocal assistance (with due regard for the resources of each party), and participation in the development of coordinated military potential; (2) those whose membership in the Pact would only involve limited commitments as, for example, to provide facilities for the common defense in return for commitments by the full members to defend their territories; and (3) other nations, not members of the Pact, a threat to whose political or territorial integrity would require action by the full members. The division of nations between these categories need not be rigidly fixed but should permit flexibility". 'FRUS 1948, Vol. III', op.cit., Memorandum by the Participants in the Washington Security Talks, July 6 to September 9, Submitted to Their Respective Governments for Study and Comment, 9 september 1948, Doc. 150.

Americans pressed for a treaty area strictly limited to the European continent, the North American continent, the North Atlantic islands and vessels and aircraft in the North Atlantic area. The colonies and overseas territories of the European countries were not to be included.<sup>318</sup> U.S. negotiators had good reasons to exclude these territories. Although many within the State Department, military establishment and US Congress wanted to support the free western European nations they did not want to help uphold and protect colonialism.<sup>319</sup> Also including colonies and overseas territories outside the North Atlantic area would lead to a bigger military commitment and an increase in the possibility of war.<sup>320</sup> Such a commitment could simply lead to more requests for military actions for which the United States was not prepared. On the other hand the European colonial powers wanted to include their colonies and other overseas territories.<sup>321</sup> Especially the French were keen to include their entire colonial empire. The Americans agreed to a compromise: the colonies outside the Northern Atlantic would fall outside the scope of the alliance but consultations would be allowed to take place “whenever, in the opinion of any of them, the territorial integrity, political independence, or security of any of the Parties is threatened”.<sup>322</sup> The British, Belgians and Dutch considered this enough of a substitute, the French however were not satisfied yet. They still wanted their colonial territories included, especially northern Africa. The question of territorial applicability was thus eventually not solved by the working group.

Discussions then focussed on the agreement itself. The Americans made again clear that the agreement should preferably be based on the Rio Treaty, that it needed to adhere to the UN charter, that it should recognize the right of Congress to declare war and that the arrangement must be based upon continuous and effective self-help and mutual aid.<sup>323</sup> The most important discussion was of course about the mutual-assistance clause, the future infamous Article five.<sup>324</sup> The Americans tried to achieve the greatest possible degree of political and military freedom.<sup>325</sup> In that way Congress could retain its constitutional right to

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<sup>318</sup> Woyke, Wichard, op.cit., p. 260.

<sup>319</sup> ‘Oral History Interview with Theodore Achilles’ op.cit., 43. ‘History of the Joint Chiefs of Staff’ op.cit., p. 202.

<sup>320</sup> Woyke, Wichard, op.cit., p. 260.

<sup>321</sup> Kaplan, Lawrence S., ‘NATO 1948’ op.cit., p. 121; ‘Oral History Interview with Theodore Achilles’ op.cit., 43 – 44.

<sup>322</sup> Future article four of the North Atlantic Treaty see annex IV; ‘Oral History Interview with Theodore Achilles’ op.cit., 45 – 46.

<sup>323</sup> ‘FRUS 1948, Vol. III’, op.cit., Memorandum of the Ninth Meeting of the Working Group Participating in the Washington Exploratory Talks on Security, August 9, 1948, Doc. 135.

<sup>324</sup> For Article five of the North Atlantic Treaty see Annex IV.

<sup>325</sup> Woyke, Wichard, op.cit., p. 258.



Figure 9: The Working Group in Action

decide if and how the US would go to war.<sup>326</sup> Thus the Americans pressed for a mutual assistance clause based on the Rio-Treaty.<sup>327</sup> This meant that the Americans would avoid an automatic commitment to go to war and that they retained the right to decide if and what assistance they might give to those attacked. The Benelux countries and France however wanted a bigger US commitment. They pressed for a clause like the one in the Brussels Treaty, which called for automatic war declarations and an obligation to send all military and other support needed in case of an attack.<sup>328</sup> Eventually three versions of the future article five were mentioned in the Washington Paper, a version based on the Brussels Pact<sup>329</sup>, a version based on the Rio Pact<sup>330</sup> and a version put forward by the Canadians covering the middle ground.<sup>331</sup>

<sup>326</sup> 'FRUS 1948, Vol. III', op.cit., Memorandum of the Ninth Meeting of the Working Group Participating in the Washington Exploratory Talks on Security, August 9, 1948, Doc. 135.

<sup>327</sup> 'Oral History Interview with Theodore Achilles' op.cit., 39 – 41; Woyke, Wichard, o.cit., p. 260.

<sup>328</sup> Kaplan, Lawrence S., 'NATO 1948' op.cit., p. 123.

<sup>329</sup> The Europeans proposed: If any Party should be the object of an armed attack in the area covered by the Treaty, the other Parties will, in accordance with the provisions of Article 51 of the Charter, afford the Party so attacked all the military and other aid and assistance in their power; 'FRUS 1948, Vol. III', op.cit., Memorandum by the Participants in the Washington Security Talks, July 6 to September 9, Submitted to Their Respective Governments for Study and Comment, 9 September 1948, Doc. 150.

<sup>330</sup> The US proposed: An armed attack by any State against a Party shall be considered as an attack against all the Parties and, consequently, each Party undertakes to assist in meeting the attack in the exercise of the inherent right of individual or collective self-defense recognized by Article 51 of the Charter. Memorandum by the Participants in the Washington Security Talks, July 6 to September 9, Submitted to Their Respective Governments for Study and Comment, 9 September 1948, FRUS 1948, Vol. III, doc. 150.

<sup>331</sup> Kaplan, Lawrence S., 'NATO 1948' op.cit., p. 124; 'FRUS 1948, Vol. III', op.cit., Memorandum by the Participants in the Washington Security Talks, July 6 to September 9, Submitted to Their Respective Governments for Study and Comment, 9 September 1948, Doc. 150.

More agreement could be found on the other parts of the future agreement. The Americans pressed constantly that the Europeans had to show what they can do for themselves and each other. This was reflected in their proposal to add an article calling for effective self-help and mutual aid, the future Article 3 of the North Atlantic Treaty.<sup>332</sup> Such an article was agreeable for the Europeans, especially since it would provide the basis for the contemplated US military assistance program.<sup>333</sup> It was the mutual aid part which ensured that the Europeans would help each other but also that the US would send aid to the Europeans. It would “provide the basis for the reciprocal extension of material assistance, and for coordinating arrangements for production and strategy”.<sup>334</sup> There was no real difficulty in getting agreement on adding an article calling for agencies necessary for the effective implementation of the treaty.<sup>335</sup> The military organization of NATO was not really under consideration, all the working group discussed was just a general outline of the political organization.<sup>336</sup> The members of the working group called for the establishment of a council, which would consider matters concerning the implementation of the Treaty and which would be able to meet “promptly at any time” and a defence committee which had to recommend measures for the implementation of Articles three and five but which was not supposed to draw up military plans.<sup>337</sup> This was of course in line with what the Americans wanted. In the first place the Americans considered the political commitment more important than the military one and they consequently did not care much for the military organization of the alliance. Secondly the American negotiators knew that the JCS did not want a military organization which would interfere with American strategic planning. Thus they considered it wise to let the set-up of the military organization to the military establishment.<sup>338</sup>

That the North Atlantic agreement should be in accord with the UN Charter could also find the agreement of the working group members. The Pentagon Paper already called for an alliance made in accordance with article 51, but the term “regional organization” and Chapter VIII were deliberately ignored. Applying Chapter VIII would have lead to increased influence

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<sup>332</sup> ‘Oral History Interview with Theodore Achilles’ op.cit., 46; See annex IV Article 3 of the North Atlantic Treaty.

<sup>333</sup> ‘Oral History Interview with Theodore Achilles’ op.cit., 47.

<sup>334</sup> ‘FRUS 1948, Vol. III’, op.cit., Memorandum by the Participants in the Washington Security Talks, July 6 to September 9, Submitted to Their Respective Governments for Study and Comment, 9 September 1948, Doc. 150.

<sup>335</sup> The future Article 9, see Annex IV; ‘Oral History Interview with Theodore Achilles’ op.cit., 52.

<sup>336</sup> Woyke, Wichard, op.cit., p. 263.

<sup>337</sup> ‘Oral History Interview with Theodore Achilles’ op.cit., 52; ‘FRUS 1948, Vol. III’, op.cit., Memorandum by the Participants in the Washington Security Talks, July 6 to September 9, Submitted to Their Respective Governments for Study and Comment, 9 September 1948, Doc. 150; Articles 9, 3, 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty, see Annex IV.

of the UN Security Council on the alliance. The negotiators of the Pentagon Paper desired minimum influence of the UN Security Council on the alliance because of Soviet membership in that council.<sup>339</sup> The working group agreed with this and focussed explicitly on article 51 of the UN Charter.<sup>340</sup> The agreement should refer to the right of collective self-defence as mentioned in Article 51 of the UN Charter. In accordance with Article 51 a provision was proposed that called for a duty to inform the Security Council in case of an armed attack and that any action taken must cease when the Security Council has taken the steps to maintain or restore the peace.<sup>341</sup> Finally an article had to be added containing the statement that none of the provisions of the treaty would impair the rights and obligations of the parties under the Charter.<sup>342</sup>

The Canadians again called for something more than a true military alliance. They wanted to create a true Atlantic community, which also included closer ties on the social and economic fronts. The Canadians pushed hard to include some provision to provide a basis for such a Atlantic community.<sup>343</sup> Lovet, Hickerson and Achilles agreed with the Canadian proposal and supported a provision calling on countries to promote general welfare through collaboration in the economic, social and cultural fields.<sup>344</sup>

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<sup>338</sup> 'FRUS 1949, Vol. IV', op.cit., The Special Assistant to the Secretary of Defense (Ohly) to the Secretary of State, 6 January, 1949, Doc. 9; 'History of the Joint Chiefs of Staff' pp. 204 - 205.

<sup>339</sup> Kaplan, Lawrence S., 'NATO 1948' op.cit., p. 218.

<sup>340</sup> Chapter VIII articles 52, 53 and 54 deal with regional defence agreements, see annex I.

<sup>341</sup> 'FRUS 1948, Vol. III', op.cit., Memorandum by the Participants in the Washington Security Talks, July 6 to September 9, Submitted to Their Respective Governments for Study and Comment, 9 September 1948, Doc. 150.

<sup>342</sup> Ibid., Doc. 150.

<sup>343</sup> 'Oral History Interview with Theodore Achilles' op.cit., 47; Kaplan, Lawrence S., 'NATO 1948' op.cit., p. 121.

<sup>344</sup> 'Oral History Interview with Theodore Achilles' op.cit., 47; 'FRUS 1948, Vol. III', op.cit., Memorandum by the Participants in the Washington Security Talks, July 6 to September 9, Submitted to Their Respective Governments for Study and Comment, 9 September 1948, Doc. 150.

## **6. The Founding of the Alliance and its Organization**

### **(October 1948 – September 1949)**

In the autumn of 1948 the Truman administration already had accepted official views regarding an Atlantic defence agreement. They concerned the goal, tasks, working, member states and burden sharing of the alliance. These views had already been communicated to the Brussels Powers and talks based on these views between the Brussels Powers and the US had already taken place. In September agreement was reached on most points and the working group subsequently produced the Washington Paper. All that was needed were some finishing touches and a conference during which the treaty could be officially accepted. However what had not been considered by the Truman administration was the civil and military structure of the future North Atlantic Treaty Organization. This chapter will focus on the final changes to the North Atlantic Treaty and the development of the US administration's view on the civil and military organizational structure of NATO.

#### **The Winter Hiatus**

The Washington Paper was sent to the governments of the participating nations. Although not all questions were solved there was still one important conclusion: "no alternative to a treaty appears to meet the essential requirements" and the US should be a signatory to that treaty.<sup>345</sup> Thereafter the Exploratory Talks came to a temporary stop because of the US presidential elections. The negotiations continued in November after the American Presidential elections and they would continue until the North Atlantic Treaty was signed in April.<sup>346</sup>

Some policy makers within the State Department grabbed the opportunity of the slowed negotiations in October and November to again express the goal of the North Atlantic Alliance from an American point of view. Acting Secretary of State Lovett expressed that the North Atlantic Treaty would be an essential supplement to the Marshall Plan and that it was designed to "contribute to restoring a sense of security, development of defensive power, and act as a deterrent to outside aggressive forces. It should support economic recovery by giving the Europeans greater confidence to proceed with their efforts in this direction".<sup>347</sup> Kennan and the Policy Planning Staff came to the same conclusion. In their opinion the danger of

<sup>345</sup> 'FRUS 1948, Vol. III', op.cit., Memorandum by the Participants in the Washington Security Talks, July 6 to September 9, Submitted to Their Respective Governments for Study and Comment, 9 September 1948, Doc. 150.

<sup>346</sup> Kaplan, Lawrence S., 'NATO 1948' op.cit., pp. 131 - 132.

<sup>347</sup> 'FRUS 1948, Vol. III', op.cit., Lovett to the United States Special Representative in Europe (Harriman), December 3, 1948, Doc 190.

Soviet political pressure was still greater than the military danger. To combat this threat stiffening of the self-confidence of the western Europeans in the face of Soviet pressures was needed. The North Atlantic Treaty was now considered the way to go forward by the Policy Planning Staff, however they still warned for the danger of a “general preoccupation with military affairs, to the detriment of economic recovery and of the necessity for seeking a peaceful solution to Europe’s difficulties”.<sup>348</sup> The Policy Planning Staff concluded that the need for military alliances and rearmament on the part of the western Europeans was primarily a subjective one. One that was a result of a failure by the Europeans to understand correctly the situation they faced. The best and most hopeful course of action, in the eyes of the Policy Planning Staff, remained “the struggle for economic recovery and for internal political stability”.<sup>349</sup>

After the Presidential elections, which president Truman won, Truman approved the work undertaken by the ambassadors and working group during the summer.<sup>350</sup> Acting Secretary Lovett moved quickly to resume the Exploratory Talks. The discussions that followed primarily focussed on the questions which were not (fully) solved by the working group in September. These were: the membership question, the composition of article 5, and the question of the territorial applicability of the treaty. Concerning the membership question the negotiators could agree on the membership of the Scandinavian countries, Portugal and Ireland. It was decided that Spain was to be excluded for the time being.<sup>351</sup> The US representatives understood the strategic importance of the country however they agreed with the arguments of the Western Europeans that they could not allow a fascist country into an alliance of free democratic states.<sup>352</sup> It was concluded that the invitation of Austria and Germany to join the Atlantic Pact was to be postponed to a later more suitable moment in time.<sup>353</sup> Concerning the Italian question, again no agreement could be reached as to whether Italy should join the Atlantic Pact as an original signatory.<sup>354</sup>

The Washington Paper presented three options for the mutual assistance clause, the future Article five. One based on the Brussels Treaty, one on the Rio Treaty and a third intermediate option. The US policy makers preferred the clause based on the Rio-Treaty, this

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<sup>348</sup> ‘FRUS 1948, Vol. III’, op.cit., Memorandum by Kennan, November 24, 1948, Doc 182.

<sup>349</sup> Ibid., Doc. 182.

<sup>350</sup> ‘FRUS 1948, Vol. III’, op.cit., The Acting Secretary of State to the Embassy in France, November 9, 1948, Doc 171.

<sup>351</sup> Kaplan, Lawrence S., ‘NATO 1948’ op.cit., pp. 176 – 177.

<sup>352</sup> Ibid., pp. 176 – 177.

<sup>353</sup> ‘FRUS 1948, Vol. III’, op.cit., Minutes of the Tenth Meeting of the Washington Exploratory Talks, December 22, 1948, Doc. 197.

<sup>354</sup> Ibid., Doc. 197.

meant that the Americans would avoid an automatic commitment to go to war and that they retained the right to decide if and what assistance they might give to those attacked. The US representatives held on to their views and threatened that there would be no US commitment of any kind unless the Senate accepted the treaty, and that the Senate would only accept a clause based on the Rio-Treaty.<sup>355</sup> Eventually the Europeans had to give in and consequently the famous Article five did not provide the hard US military commitment the Europeans were hoping for.<sup>356</sup> To satisfy the Europeans the US negotiators did however add to the proposed Article 5 that parties should preform actions as they deem necessary “forthwith”, and that these actions could include “the use of armed force”.<sup>357</sup>

The problem of territorial applicability was also brought up. Lovett again put forward the American position. He told the representatives “it would be better to avoid trying to include too wide an area in the pact in the interest of getting the main project approved by the Congress” he continued that “The Vandenberg Resolution had contemplated a tight regional pact and the State Department did not now want to be undertaking a larger obligation”.<sup>358</sup> On the other hand the Europeans wanted a large territorial applicability and the French still tried to get their Northern African departments included. Since there was no agreement on the matter it was concluded to discuss this matter again at a later moment in time.<sup>359</sup>

Only a few small matters were still unsolved. The most important issues which needed further negotiation were the issues of the territorial applicability of the treaty, and the membership of Italy. Nonetheless on the 24th of December a report was produced which included the latest recommendations. Although there were still a few unresolved matters, the report already contained a preliminary draft of the North Atlantic Treaty.<sup>360</sup> A draft which was almost identical to the North Atlantic Treaty itself.

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<sup>355</sup> ‘Oral History Interview with Theodore Achilles’ op.cit., 41; ‘FRUS 1948, Vol. III’, op.cit., Memorandum of Conversation, by Mr. Charles E. Bohlen, Counselor of the Department of State, to the Secretary of State, August 6, 1948, Doc. 133.

<sup>356</sup> ‘Oral History Interview with Theodore Achilles’ op.cit., 41; See annex IV, Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty for the final result.

<sup>357</sup> See Annex IV Article 5; ‘Oral History Interview with Theodore Achilles’ op.cit., 41 – 42.

<sup>358</sup> ‘FRUS 1948, Vol. III’, op.cit., Minutes of the Tenth Meeting of the Washington Exploratory Talks, December 22, 1948, Doc. 197.

<sup>359</sup> Ibid., Doc. 197.

<sup>360</sup> ‘FRUS 1948, Vol. III’, op.cit., Report of the International Working Group to the Ambassadors’ Committee, December 24, 1948, Doc. 199; See Annex III for the Preliminary Draft of the North Atlantic Treaty.

## Final Opposition in the United States

Sometime after the presidential election of 1948 the two most prominent members of the State Department were replaced. Secretary Marshall was simply too ill to continue and Lovett wanted to return to the private sector. Marshall was replaced by the former number two of the State Department, Dean Acheson. In the meantime relations between the US and the Soviet Union were normalising in 1949. The internal Communist pressures in Italy and France were decreasing, and Yugoslavia broke free from the hitherto seamless Communist uniformity in Eastern Europe. The Soviet Union itself seemed to be gradually eliminating the Berlin Blockade.<sup>361</sup> The Soviet threat had so much lessened that even Defence Secretary Forrestal dared to ask for a smaller defence budget than the year before.<sup>362</sup> Thus times began to improve but it was non the less around this time that Acheson pushed the North Atlantic Treaty to completion.

In January all parties involved believed that the pact could become reality within the next month. Agreement had been reached on most points and a draft of the treaty had already been produced. Non the less the signing of the treaty was pushed back to April because there were still some points of concern coming from the military establishment, the US Senate, and the Brussels Pact countries.

Secretary of Defence Forrestal was asked to react on the draft treaty of December 24<sup>th</sup>. Forrestal in turn decided that the JCS should react on behalf of the military establishment. In a report submitted to the Secretary of Defence on the 5<sup>th</sup> of January the Joint Chiefs agreed with most of the articles in the draft treaty. They confirmed that “The idea of collective defence embodied in the proposed North Atlantic Pact is an essential feature of a United States policy directed toward preservation of our national security”.<sup>363</sup> They began to value the pact because on the one hand if war would erupt in the near future air bases would become available to start the strategic air campaigns and the alliance could help bring about the military capabilities (by promoting combined strategic planning and military aid) needed for a successful defence of the Rhine. On the other hand the pact could also be used as a deterrent for Soviet aggression.<sup>364</sup> The decision of the State Department to give the JCS the right to set-

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<sup>361</sup> Kaplan, Lawrence S., ‘*The United States and NATO*’ op.cit., pp. 93 – 94.

<sup>362</sup> Kaplan, Lawrence S., ‘*NATO 1948*’ op.cit., p. 195.

<sup>363</sup> ‘*FRUS 1949, Vol. IV*’, op.cit., The Special Assistant to the Secretary of Defense (Ohly) to the Secretary of State, 6 January, 1949, Doc. 9.

<sup>364</sup> Ibid., Doc. 9.; ‘*FRUS 1949, Vol. IV*’, op.cit., Memorandum by the Director of the Office of European Affairs (Hickerson) to the Secretary of State, 17 February, 1949, Doc. 73.

up the military organization of the alliance could find the JCS their approval.<sup>365</sup> The Joint Chiefs also supported the invitation to Iceland, Norway, Denmark, Ireland, Portugal and Italy to join the pact. In their opinion not including Italy “might be harmful from a military point of view” and it might lead to the loss of Italy to internal Communist pressures.<sup>366</sup> They also concurred that inviting Spain, although strategically sound, would not be very politically expedient.<sup>367</sup>

The JCS however also had some critical remarks. They were of the opinion that commitments needed to be kept within US military capabilities at all times. Therefore the Joint Chiefs suggested a reconsideration of the wording of future Articles 4 and 5, calling for consultations and for mutual assistance in case of armed attack. They considered the scope of these articles as to wide and that they could lead to military commitments larger than the US could muster.<sup>368</sup> Article 4, called for consultation in case “the territorial integrity, political independence or security of any of the Parties is threatened; or there exists any situation which constitutes a threat to or breach of the peace”.<sup>369</sup> The JCS maintained that the call for consultation was not limited and therefore could apply in case of aggression anywhere. To make things even worse the term territorial, could be interpreted to include colonies and overseas territories of the Western European countries. In their opinion the scope of Article four should be “no broader than it is at present and, preferably,... should be restricted”.<sup>370</sup> Although the Joint Chiefs agreed with the general wording of article five. Nonetheless they were of the opinion that the term “armed attack”, in Article five, might be interpreted as meaning internal and external assaults as well as including an armed attack by one of the parties themselves.<sup>371</sup> Regarding the territorial applicability of the treaty the JCS again affirmed that they wanted the provision covering the subject formulated as narrow as possible. Including more territory under the treaty then truly necessary would unnecessarily and dangerously broaden US commitments. Therefore the JCS recommended against including

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<sup>365</sup> ‘History of the Joint Chiefs of Staff’ op.cit., pp. 201 – 202; ‘FRUS 1949, Vol. IV’, op.cit., The Special Assistant to the Secretary of Defense (Ohly) to the Secretary of State, 6 January, 1949, Doc. 9.

<sup>366</sup> Ibid., Doc. 9.

<sup>367</sup> Ibid., Doc. 9; ‘History of the Joint Chiefs of Staff’ op.cit., pp. 201 – 202.

<sup>368</sup> Ibid., cit., pp. 201 – 202.

<sup>369</sup> Ibid., pp. 201 – 202; ‘FRUS 1949, Vol. IV’, op.cit., The Special Assistant to the Secretary of Defense (Ohly) to the Secretary of State, 6 January, 1949, Doc. 9.

<sup>370</sup> Ibid., Doc. 9; ‘History of the Joint Chiefs of Staff’ op.cit., pp. 201 – 202.

<sup>371</sup> ‘FRUS 1949, Vol. IV’, op.cit., The Special Assistant to the Secretary of Defense (Ohly) to the Secretary of State, 6 January, 1949, Doc. 9; ‘History of the Joint Chiefs of Staff’ op.cit., pp. 201 – 202.



Figure 10: Dean Acheson sworn in as Secretary of State on January 21, 1949

North Africa in the treaty area.<sup>372</sup>

In February, the new chairman of the Senate's Foreign Relations Committee Tom Connely and Senator Vandenberg made some critical remarks in regard to Article 5 as put forward in the draft treaty of the 24<sup>th</sup> of December. They said that the language used in the provision could be seen as evidence of an automatic military action in the event of an attack on one of the members.<sup>373</sup> Connely and Vandenberg therefore wanted to remove key words from the article as "forthwith", "military and other action" and even "as may be necessary".<sup>374</sup> Connely also wanted to replace the statement that "an armed attack against one or more of them... be considered an attack against them all" with "an attack against one would be regarded as a threat to peace of all".<sup>375</sup> Acheson shared the senators concerns that the language of Article 5 could lead to an automatic American military commitment in case of war.<sup>376</sup> He also realised the fact that the Europeans would not accept a watered down Article 5. Acheson also knew that downgrading Article 5 would lead to a decrease in the pact's deterrent value and would raze European doubts about US reliability. A weaker Article 5

<sup>372</sup> 'FRUS 1949, Vol. IV', op.cit., The Special Assistant to the Secretary of Defense (Ohly) to the Secretary of State, 6 January, 1949, Doc. 9.

<sup>373</sup> Reid, Escott, op.cit., p. 148.

<sup>374</sup> Ibid., p. 148.

<sup>375</sup> 'FRUS 1949, Vol. IV', op.cit., Memorandum of Conversation by Secretary of State, February 14, 1949, Doc. 67.

<sup>376</sup> Kaplan, Lawrence S., 'NATO 1948' op.cit., p. 200.

might jeopardize the stiffening of European confidence.<sup>377</sup> Therefore Acheson defended the wording of Article 5 and eventually the senators agreed that a minor cosmetic change would suffice. The only change made to the wording of Article 5 was that “.. such action as it deems necessary, including the use of force” would be replaced by “such military or other action ... as may be necessary”.<sup>378</sup> Senators Vandenberg and Connely also opposed the Canadian proposal for the inclusion of an article focussing on the further development social and economic relations.<sup>379</sup> Connely remarked “that ‘the general welfare’ provision of the US Constitution had caused more litigation than any other provision in it”. In his opinion Article 2 could therefore not be included in any treaty while he was in the Senate.<sup>380</sup> The Europeans agreed with Connely and Vandenberg since they just desired a US guarantee to fight if Europe was attacked.<sup>381</sup> Acheson himself, sensitive to the Senate’s resentment to the phrase “promotion of the general welfare” saw the article as a vague generality without practical application and consequently ordered the weakening of Article 2 so that it could be approved by the Senate.<sup>382</sup> A compromise was made replacing the promotion of “general welfare” by the promotion of “conditions of stability and well-being”. This compromise resulted in the very weak Article 2.<sup>383</sup>

### Sharing the Burden of Defence

In the meantime the JCS, now presided by general Dwight D. Eisenhower, affirmed their earlier strategic war plans calling for the defence of Europe. They again concluded that retreating from Europe and focussing on long range bombing would lead to the loss of Europe and thus in the massive loss of territory, manpower, resources and industry but also strategic positions to the Soviets. Retreating from Europe in case of a war would thus mean a serious US national security problem. The Joint Chiefs therefore called for the “holding of a line containing the Western Europe complex preferably no farther to the West than the Rhine”.<sup>384</sup> When this was not possible the Joint Chiefs insisted that in that case at least a substantial bridgehead in Europe should be maintained.<sup>385</sup> If war would break out, strategic air offensives would still be an important part of the US war plan, but now also US ground forces had to be

<sup>377</sup> Leffler, Melvyn p., ‘A Preponderance of Power’ op.cit., p. 281.

<sup>378</sup> Kaplan, Lawrence S., ‘NATO 1948’ op.cit., p. 201.

<sup>379</sup> ‘Oral History Interview with Theodore Achilles’ op.cit., 48.

<sup>380</sup> Ibid., 48.

<sup>381</sup> Kaplan, Lawrence S. ‘The United States and NATO’ op.cit., p. 117.

<sup>382</sup> Ibid., p. 117.

<sup>383</sup> Article 2 of the North Atlantic Treaty, see annex IV

<sup>384</sup> ‘History of the Joint Chiefs of Staff’ op.cit., pp. 159 - 160.

<sup>385</sup> Ibid., p. 160.

sent to Europe as soon as possible.<sup>386</sup> These troops could not be sent before the breakout of a war since the military budget for fiscal year 1950 was still gravely insufficient.

Concerning the sharing of the defence burden this new plan had little consequences. The Joint Chiefs and the rest of the Truman administration were still simply unwilling to send troops to Europe in peace time. Even Acheson and Truman assured the US Senate that no extra troops were to be sent to Europe.<sup>387</sup> Truman even literally stated that the US would confine itself to defence of the Atlantic sea lanes and American territory strategic bombing and the delivery of military aid.<sup>388</sup> The defence of Europe, he stated, would primarily be the responsibility of the Europeans themselves.<sup>389</sup> The Europeans were supposed to provide the land forces, the ground support and the air defence needed for the defence of Europe. The promised American military aid was supposed to enable the Europeans to mobilize such an armed force.<sup>390</sup>

The Americans thus tried to minimize their military commitments. Article 3 of the future North Atlantic Treaty also gave them the opportunity to minimize military commitments. This article states that the sharing of the defence burden needs to be based on the notions of self-help and mutual aid. Because of the notion of self-help the Europeans themselves could be made responsible for their own defence. On the other hand the notion of mutual aid could be equated with American military aid.<sup>391</sup> Truman, in his inaugural speech, linked the North Atlantic Alliance to a program for military aid when he said that “military advice and equipment” needed to be provided to the “free nations which will cooperate in maintenance of peace and security”.<sup>392</sup> Acheson remarked on the 27<sup>th</sup> of April 1949 that although Article 3 did not force the US to send military aid to Europe it did however “...bind the United States to the principles of self-help and mutual aid. Within this Principle, each Party to the Pact must exercise its own honest judgement as to what it can and should do to develop and maintain its own capacity to resist and to help others. The judgement of the executive branch of this Government is that the United States can and should provide military assistance to assist other countries in the Pact to maintain their collective security”.<sup>393</sup> Acheson as well as Truman made clear that the delivery of aid would become the main

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<sup>386</sup> *History of the Joint Chiefs of Staff* op.cit., p. 160.

<sup>387</sup> Offner, Arnold A., op.cit., p. 425.

<sup>388</sup> Woyke, Wichard, op.cit., pp. 266 – 267.

<sup>389</sup> Ibid., pp. 266 – 267.

<sup>390</sup> Ibid., p. 266 – 267.

<sup>391</sup> Kaplan, Lawrence S., ‘NATO 1948’ op.cit., p. 213.

<sup>392</sup> Citation from: Kaplan, Lawrence S., ‘NATO 1948’ op.cit., p. 213.

<sup>393</sup> Citation from: Lord Ismay, ‘NATO. The First Five Years 1949 – 1954’, (Utrecht, 1954), p. 23.

American effort in peace time.<sup>394</sup> To provide military aid to the European allies, the Military Assistance Program (MAP) was introduced. The MAP was intended to become the military equivalent of the Economic Recovery Program.<sup>395</sup> Although the MAP was only accepted after The Mutual Defence Assistance Act had been signed by Truman on the 6<sup>th</sup> of October 1949, planning for its implementation had already begun in January. Formal European requests for military aid followed one day after the signing of the North Atlantic Treaty on April 4.<sup>396</sup>

The administration followed this policy of minimal military commitments because they simply did not believe that war would break out with the Soviet Union. Defensive measures were not considered necessary since there was no real war threat. Why send expensive troops abroad when there is no war to be fought? The danger at the moment was that of economic distress, European weakness and Soviet political pressure.<sup>397</sup> For the Americans the stiffening of European moral was the main task of the alliance. The defensive value of the alliance was simply of a secondary importance. Acheson confirmed that the North Atlantic Treaty was a way to strengthen European confidence so the Europeans could rebuild their economy and resist Communist aggression.<sup>398</sup> This was most cost-effectively achieved by sending military aid and assuring the Europeans of American assistance in case of war.

### The Home Stretch

Although the negotiators present at the Exploratory Talks agreed on most points and already had produced a draft treaty, there were still a few points of contestation. The most important questions which still needed answering were those of the territorial applicability of the treaty, and the membership of Italy. During the eleventh until the sixteenth meeting of the Exploratory Talks, between January and April, these issues were dealt with and some final changes were made to the draft treaty of the 24<sup>th</sup> of December.

In the first place the Italian question was finally solved. The Americans, especially Hickerson supported by the Joint Chiefs and the French persisted that Italy had to be included. Tensions mounted and eventually the French threatened that if Italy would not be included

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<sup>394</sup> Kaplan, Lawrence S., 'NATO 1948' op.cit., p. 213.

<sup>395</sup> Leffler, Melvyn P. 'A Proponderence of Power' op.cit., 285.

<sup>396</sup> 'FRUS 1949, Vol. IV', op.cit., Brussels Treaty Powers to the US Government for Military Assistance, April 5, 1949, Doc. 145.

<sup>397</sup> 'FRUS 1948, Vol. III', op.cit., The Acting Secretary of State to the United States Special Representative in Europe (Harriman), December 3, 1948, Doc. 190; 'FRUS 1948, Vol. III', op.cit., Memorandum by the Director of the Policy Planning Staff (Kennan), November 24, 1948, Doc. 182.

<sup>398</sup> Leffler, Melvyn P. 'A Proponderence of Power' op.cit., 282.

they would refuse Norway in the alliance or even reconsider their own participation. The negotiators from the Benelux countries and Great Britain eventually backed down and agreed to Italy as a founding member of the alliance.<sup>399</sup> The stubbornness of the French helped the Americans in getting Italy in. But French stubbornness also lead to an American concession in regard to the territorial applicability of the treaty. American policy makers from the State Department and especially of the military establishment wanted the territorial scope of the treaty to be as small as possible. The Americans supported a territorial scope which excluded the overseas territories of the Western Europeans. In that way the American military commitment and the probability of war would be kept as small as possible and the Americans did not have to help uphold colonialism. Most Western European countries eventually agreed, however the French did not back down in regard of their Departments in Northern Africa. When the French threatened to withdraw membership from the pact the US had to give in.<sup>400</sup> Since France was seen as the nucleus in European defence the American negotiators could not allow them to withdraw from the alliance.<sup>401</sup> Thus the territory now covered by the treaty would consist of: “the territory of any of the Parties in Europe or North America, on the Algerian Departments of France, on the occupation forces of any Party in Europe, on the islands under the jurisdiction of any Party of the North Atlantic area north of the Tropic of Cancer or on the vessels or aircraft in this area of any of the Parties”.<sup>402</sup> Since islands, ships and aircraft in the North Atlantic area, rather than the North Atlantic Ocean, were covered by the Treaty the Western Mediterranean and Malta (considered by the JSC as vital to European defence) were also included.<sup>403</sup> At the final moment the US representatives wanted to add an extra article, to ensure Congress that the alliance would conform to US constitutional law. This article should contain the statement that the Treaty “shall be ratified in accordance with the constitutional processes of each signatory”.<sup>404</sup> The Europeans couldn't properly object and the article was added.<sup>405</sup>

Eventually not all parties involved in the negotiations achieved full satisfaction, but

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<sup>399</sup> ‘FRUS 1949, Vol. IV’, op.cit., Minutes of the Fourteenth Meeting of the Washington Exploratory Talks, March 1, 1949, Doc. 79; ‘FRUS 1949, Vol. IV’, op.cit., Minutes of the Fifteenth Meeting of the Washington Exploratory Talks on Security, March 4, 1949, Doc. 87; ‘FRUS 1949, Vol. IV’, op.cit., Minutes of the Sixteenth Meeting of the Washington Exploratory Talks on Security, March 7, 1949, Doc. 92.

<sup>400</sup> ‘Oral History Interview with Theodore Achilles’ op.cit., 45 – 46; Woyke, Wichard, op.cit., p. 260.

<sup>401</sup> Kaplan, Lawrence S. ‘The United States and NATO’ op.cit., p. 118.

<sup>402</sup> The future Article 6 of the North Atlantic Treaty: see annex IV.

<sup>403</sup> ‘Oral History Interview with Theodore Achilles’ op.cit., 43.

<sup>404</sup> Ibid., 54; ‘FRUS 1948, Vol. III’, op.cit., Memorandum by the Participants in the Washington Security Talks, July 6 to September 9, Submitted to Their Respective Governments for Study and Comment, 9 September 1948, Doc. 150; See annex IV for the future Article 11 of the North Atlantic Treaty.

<sup>405</sup> ‘Oral History Interview with Theodore Achilles’ op.cit., 54.



Figure 11: Acheson signs the North Atlantic Treaty on the 4<sup>th</sup> of April 1949

the compromises seemed acceptable to all. The treaty was finalized and the official signing took place in Washington on the 4<sup>th</sup> of April. Together with the representatives of Belgium, Britain, Canada, Denmark, Iceland, Norway, the Netherlands, Portugal, Luxemburg, France and Italy president Truman and Secretary of State Acheson signed the treaty. They signed while the Marine Corps Band was playing songs like “I’ve Got Plenty of Nothing” and “It Ain’t Necessarily So”....<sup>406</sup> Acheson rightly asked himself later on if the band maybe had caught the real spirit of the occasion.<sup>407</sup>

### Setting up the Organization

The North Atlantic Treaty itself arranges the basic structure of the NATO. Article 9 calls for the establishment of a council on which all parties shall be represented to “consider matters concerning the implementation of this Treaty”.<sup>408</sup> This council also had the right to set up other bodies as may be necessary and “in particular it shall establish immediately a defence committee which shall recommend measures for the implementation of Articles 3 and 5”.<sup>409</sup> This Defence Committee would consist of the defence ministers of the member countries and

<sup>406</sup> Kaplan, Lawrence S., ‘NATO 1948’ op.cit., pp. 222 – 223.

<sup>407</sup> Ibid., pp. 222 – 223.

<sup>408</sup> Article 9 of the North Atlantic Treaty, see Annex IV.

<sup>409</sup> Ibid., see Annex IV.

its task would be to produce coordinated defence plans for the alliance.<sup>410</sup> Except for these two organizational body's the North Atlantic Treaty does not mention anything further about the civil or military structure of NATO.

Already in January 1949 general Omar N. Bradley, at the time the Chief of Staff of the US Army, recommended that the Joint Chiefs should study the organization of NATO.<sup>411</sup> Consequently the JCS were the first to form an opinion on the organization of NATO. Their general opinion was that the US were not to be drawn into "any command arrangement that could be expended prematurely into an allied military council for global strategy".<sup>412</sup> They thus effectively opposed a separate military command under NATO's control. The JCS were of the opinion that the US administration should retain its initiative and that it should not be trapped in an automatism. The Joint Chiefs were concerned that if the US would be drawn into such a command arrangement they would lose their freedom of action in determining their own global military strategy.<sup>413</sup> Thus to secure national interests the Joint Chiefs suggested that the US should reserve for itself the "choice of its strategic course and maximum freedom of action in its execution".<sup>414</sup> On the other hand the Joint Chiefs recognized that effective military planning would require strong guidance from a group of limited membership. Especially the US, as the principal contributor, should have a commanding military role. Only then could the treaty be made effective.<sup>415</sup>

To give effect to these principles, the JCS proposed an organization which would consist of eight echelons. The first two echelons were those provided by Article 9 of the treaty: the North Atlantic Council (1) and the Defence Committee (2). The Joint Chiefs considered these organizational body's "generally satisfactory".<sup>416</sup> However they considered the authority delegated to the Defence Committee as "to sweeping" and they proposed that this committee should be empowered to just recommend general, rather than detailed, defence plans.<sup>417</sup> The Joint Chiefs proposed that a Defence Committee Executive and Steering Group (3) would form the third echelon. This organ would consist of representatives of the US, the UK, and France, whose duties would be to "supervise the implementation of Defence

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<sup>410</sup> Woyke, Wichard, op.cit., p. 264.

<sup>411</sup> 'History of the Joint Chiefs of Staff' op.cit., p. 204.

<sup>412</sup> Ibid., p. 196; 'FRUS 1948 Vol. III', op.cit., Memorandum by the Director of the Joint Staff (Gruenthaler) to Hickerson, July 16, 1948, Doc. 123.

<sup>413</sup> 'History of the Joint Chiefs of Staff' op.cit., pp. 194, 196.

<sup>414</sup> 'President Harry S. Truman Office Files, 1945-1953, Subject File', Position of the Military Establishment on the military Organization under the Atlantic Treaty, June, 1949, Reel 12, From Roosevelt Study Centre.

<sup>415</sup> Ibid., Reel 12; Woyke, Wichard, op.cit, pp. 265 – 266; 'History of the Joint Chiefs of Staff' op.cit., p. 206.

<sup>416</sup> Ibid., p. 202.

<sup>417</sup> Ibid., p. 202.

Committee policies and to submit broad questions of security policy to the Committee for approval".<sup>418</sup> Both the Defence Committee and the Defence Committee Executive and Steering Group would be advised by the North Atlantic Military Advisory Council (4), consisting of military representatives of all member nations. The Military Advisory Council Steering and Executive Group (5), consisting of representatives of the US, the UK, and France would be responsible for the coordinated war planning and when necessary would take executive action in the name of the Council. To support these body's a North Atlantic Military Staff (6) and a North Atlantic Military Supply Board (7) would be created.<sup>419</sup> Finally the lowest echelon would be made up of five Regional Planning Groups (8). The Regional Planning Groups would be responsible for the creation of detailed defence plans of the territory under their command. Each of these groups would consists of the Chiefs of Staff of the countries having a "direct interest in a particular region".<sup>420</sup> The five regional groups proposed by the Joint Chiefs were: Canada-US Group, the Western European Group (composed of the Brussels Treaty powers); the Northern European Group, (Norway and Denmark); the Western Mediterranean Group, (Italy, France, the UK, and the US); and the North Atlantic Ocean Regional Planning Group, (the US, the UK, and Canada as full-time members and France, Iceland, Norway, Denmark, and Portugal would participate in special cases).<sup>421</sup> The US would be represented in all regional groups either as a full member or as an observant, because of their importance in the alliance.<sup>422</sup>

These proposals meant that there would be no central command and that no central strategic defence planning would take place within NATO. Defence plans would be made only on the regional level by the Regional Planning Groups, the Military Advisory Council Steering and Executive Group consisting of the representatives of the US, the UK, and France would be responsible to coordinate these plans. Since war plans were made only regionally the US would retain their freedom of action in determining their global military strategy. On the other hand, because of US membership in coordinating bodies like the Defence Committee Executive and Steering Group, the Military Advisory Council Steering and Executive Group and their presence in all regional groups, the US would gain a commanding military role in the alliance.

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<sup>418</sup> Woyke, Wighard, op.cit, pp. 265 – 266; *History of the Joint Chiefs of Staff* op.cit., p. 206.

<sup>419</sup> 'President Harry S. Truman Office Files, 1945-1953, Subject File', op.cit., Position of the Military Establishment on the military Organization under the Atlantic Treaty, June, 1949, Reel 12; 'History of the Joint Chiefs of Staff' op.cit., p. 206.

<sup>420</sup> Ibid., p. 207.

<sup>421</sup> 'President Harry S. Truman Office Files, 1945-1953, Subject File', op.cit., Position of the Military Establishment on the military Organization under the Atlantic Treaty, June, 1949, Reel 12.

General Joseph T. McNarney reacted on these proposals of the Joint Chiefs. He believed that the defence organization as proposed by the Joint Chiefs would indeed provide the US with maximum freedom to develop and follow its own strategic plans.<sup>423</sup> However the proposed organization would also be time consuming and unwieldy. He continued that “in an international body it would be hopeless. It would, in my opinion, effectively prevent decisive action and the attainment of the desired end results”.<sup>424</sup> In McNarney’s opinion there were simply too many echelons and some should be combined.

These views of the JCS were forwarded by the Secretary of Defence to Secretary of State Acheson on the 29<sup>th</sup> of June. Although Acheson responded favourably to the JCS recommendations, he thought there was still room for improvement.<sup>425</sup> He agreed with McNarney that the organization as proposed by the JSC consisted of too many echelons. Acheson considered the Defence Committee Steering and Executive Group as unnecessary and that it should be deleted.<sup>426</sup> Also Acheson wanted to enlarge the Military Advisory Council Steering and Executive Group, for political reasons, by the inclusion of Canada.<sup>427</sup> The Joint Chiefs agreed to delete the Defence Committee Steering and Executive Group but opposed adding Canada to the coordinating Military Advisory Council Steering and Executive Group. In their opinion adding Canada would make decision making more troublesome and it would thus obstruct the capacity of this body to make clear and effective decisions.<sup>428</sup>

The Chiefs of Staff of the other NATO countries accepted the JCS plan in general. However most of them also expressed some degree of disagreement over the composition of a Military Council Steering and Executive Group, the desirability of a military staff and the compositions of the regional groups.<sup>429</sup> In regard to the composition of a Military Council Steering and Executive Group, France desired the addition of Canada, Norway preferred Canada instead of France and the Benelux countries wanted the inclusion of a Benelux and a Scandinavian representative. Finally Italy insisted on the acceptance of their own Chief of Staff into the body.<sup>430</sup> Concerning the military staff, the British found themselves at odds with

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<sup>422</sup> Ibid., Reel 12; ‘*History of the Joint Chiefs of Staff*’ op.cit., p. 207.

<sup>423</sup> ‘*President Harry S. Truman Office Files, 1945-1953, Subject File*’, op.cit., Joseph T. McNarny to the Secretary of Defence, July 6, 1949, Reel 12.

<sup>424</sup> Ibid., Reel 12.

<sup>425</sup> ‘*History of the Joint Chiefs of Staff*’ op.cit., p. 207.

<sup>426</sup> Ibid., p. 207.

<sup>427</sup> Ibid., p. 207.

<sup>428</sup> Ibid., p. 207.

<sup>429</sup> Ibid., p. 208.

<sup>430</sup> Ibid., p. 208.

the other NATO members. The British Chiefs of Staff preferred that most of the staff work would be done on a national level and thus they favoured a small NATO military staff. The rest of the Europeans favoured a “full-fledged military staff”.<sup>431</sup> The composition of the regional groups was also under discussion. The US Joint Chiefs had proposed that the US would not become a full member in the Western European and Northern European regional groups. The US would just have an observer status. British and French Chiefs of Staff realised that military planning in the Western European Group “would never be realistic until the United States participated directly”.<sup>432</sup> Therefore they were adamant that the US should participate fully in all regional groups.<sup>433</sup>

In a report to the Secretary of Defence on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of August the JCS agreed to some changes in their plans on the organization of NATO. In the first place they proposed some modifications to the Regional Planning Groups. In the case of the Western Mediterranean Group the Joint Chiefs dropped Portugal as a member and they proposed that the US and the United Kingdom, instead of being full members, would just participate “as appropriate”.<sup>434</sup> France should be added as a full member of the North Atlantic Group and Belgium and the Netherlands should participate as appropriate.<sup>435</sup> Finally, after hearing the arguments of the British and French Chiefs of Staff, the Joint Chiefs agreed to increase the status of the US in the Western European Group. They proposed to increase the US role from observant to “participation as appropriate”.<sup>436</sup> In this way the US would be able to exercise the much needed leadership in military planning for Western Europe and in the meantime their leadership would not be so all encompassing that the European powers would relax their own defence efforts.<sup>437</sup> Secondly the Joint Chiefs endorsed the British proposal to keep the military staff as small as possible. The military staff in their opinion “should be kept small in size and limited in function”.<sup>438</sup> There was one subject the Joint Chiefs did not want to reconsider. In their opinion the Military Council Steering and Executive Group should not be extended by including any other representatives. Membership should remain limited to three members for reasons of efficiency. Though they did agree to allow representatives of other nations on a temporary basis when special consultation would be necessary.<sup>439</sup>

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<sup>431</sup> ‘*History of the Joint Chiefs of Staff*’ op.cit., p. 207.

<sup>432</sup> Ibid., p. 208.

<sup>433</sup> Ibid., p. 208.

<sup>434</sup> Ibid., p. 209.

<sup>435</sup> Ibid., p. 209.

<sup>436</sup> Ibid., p. 209.

<sup>437</sup> Ibid., p. 209.

<sup>438</sup> Ibid., p. 209.

<sup>439</sup> Ibid., p. 208.



Figure 12: The Joint Chiefs of Staff ca. 1949

The North Atlantic Treaty members agreed that a working group should be created to draw up recommendations for the organization of NATO. This working group started working in late August and their recommendations were to be discussed during the first North Atlantic Council meeting, scheduled on the 17<sup>th</sup> of August 1949.<sup>440</sup> The US delegation in this working group advocated the recommendations put forward by the Joint Chiefs in June and August.<sup>441</sup> During working group discussions most US views were taken over by the rest of the negotiators. But still some points of contestation developed. The most important point of contestation was the part to be played by the US in the Western European regional group. “Participation as appropriate” was simply not considered enough for the Europeans.<sup>442</sup> The British Chiefs of Staff even informed the US that they thought it best if the US were to participate as a full member in the Western European regional group and thereby carry a full share in the defence planning of the region. The British warned the US that if they would not participate fully, the Western European regional group could be seriously undermined.<sup>443</sup> Consequently the US working group delegation proposed to replace the phrase “participation as appropriate” with the statement that the US was “ready to participate fully in the planning”.<sup>444</sup> The meaning of this language was unclear to the Europeans, and they asked for

<sup>440</sup> *History of the Joint Chiefs of Staff* op.cit., p. 209.

<sup>441</sup> Ibid., pp. 209-210.

<sup>442</sup> Ibid., pp. 209-210.

<sup>443</sup> Ibid., pp. 209 - 210.

<sup>444</sup> Ibid., p. 210.

clarification. The US delegation replied by replacing it with the equally ambiguous sentence that “The United States has been requested and has agreed to participate actively in the defense planning as appropriate”.<sup>445</sup> Most of the European representatives refused to accept such language.

The working group agreed to just two small changes to the US proposals. In the first place the Military Advisory Council became the Military Committee, and its Steering and Executive Group became the Standing Group. Secondly the composition of two regional groups were changed. The UK was added as a full member to the Northern European Group and all alliance members, except for Luxembourg and Italy, became full members of the North Atlantic Group. The matter of US participation in the regional groups was only resolved after the working group report had been finished. During direct negotiations between Secretary of State Acheson and the British Foreign Secretary, the two agreed to the following: “The United States will appoint representatives to play an active role in the work of the three European Regional Planning Groups within the limits of the policy of the United States Chiefs of Staff, and it is hoped that their work will lead to the further development of policy by the JCS as may be necessary”<sup>446</sup>

The JCS informed the Secretary of Defence that the outcome of the working group negotiations was acceptable to them as a basis for establishing NATO’s organization. On the 17<sup>th</sup> of December, with the divergences solved, the North Atlantic Council agreed to a slightly amended working group report.<sup>447</sup> During the rest of 1949 the organization of NATO was set up.

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<sup>445</sup> *History of the Joint Chiefs of Staff* op.cit., p. 210.

<sup>446</sup> ‘FRUS, 1949 Vol. IV’, op.cit., Memorandum of Conversation, by the Secretary of State, September 14, 1949, Doc. 184.

<sup>447</sup> *History of the Joint Chiefs of Staff* op.cit., p. 210.

## **7. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization in December 1949**

In April 1949 the North Atlantic Treaty was signed. During the rest of 1949 NATO's organization was put in place. In this chapter the working and organizational framework of NATO in December 1949 will be discussed. This will be done with one central question in mind: did the embodiment of NATO in December 1949 correspond to the views and wishes of the US administration? To be able to answer this question the views of the US administration, discussed in the previous chapters, will be summarized. Annex IV, V and VI will provide extra background information on how the alliance worked and what it looked like in December 1949. Again we will look at the five different parts of NATO's working and organisational framework: its specific goals and tasks, the working of the North Atlantic Treaty (and NATO), its member states, the form of the military and civilian organization and the burden-sharing between the member states.

### **NATO's Goal and Tasks**

Speaking in the terms of the North Atlantic Treaty the goal of the founding of NATO was to set up a defensive alliance and subsequent organization to help preserve peace and security in light of a Soviet military threat. It was set up to safeguard the freedom, common heritage and civilisation of the peoples of Western Europe and Northern America. The alliance would promote stability and well-being in the North Atlantic area.<sup>448</sup>

Especially from an European perspective this was indeed the true goal of the alliance. Around the end of 1947 fear of an armed Soviet assault was taking hold of the Western European States.<sup>449</sup> Western European governments disregarded the Soviet Union's weaknesses and just focussed on its seemingly immense military power positioned in their back garden.<sup>450</sup> It was a sense of military inferiority combined with the events in 1948 like the Czech coup and the fact that the Soviet Union showed itself as uncompromising ideologically, politically and diplomatically that created a sense of a military threat in Western Europe.<sup>451</sup>

This defensive character was however not the goal of NATO from an American perspective. Truman administration officials simply did not believe that the Soviet Union would risk war. They believed that the Soviet Union could more easily expand their sphere of

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<sup>448</sup> The preamble of the North Atlantic Treaty states the purpose of the alliance, see Annex IV.

<sup>449</sup> Reid, Escott, op.cit., pp. 13-19.

<sup>450</sup> Pikart, Eberhard, op.cit., p. 274.

<sup>451</sup> Ibid., pp. 274 – 275.

influence by resorting to political means, for example by exploiting the economic upheaval in Europe.<sup>452</sup> Since the Soviet threat was thus a political/economic one, the Truman administration wanted to counter the threat by restoring the balance of power in Europe. The revival of the balance of power in Europe could be achieved by the reconstruction of the European economy by the use of the Economic Recovery Program (Marshall Plan).<sup>453</sup> A defensive alliance was unnecessary, would lead to high military costs, a raid of US military stocks, a return to pre-war power politics, limit US freedom of action and jeopardise the UN system.<sup>454</sup> Therefore many within the US government opposed a military alliance with the Europeans. However in 1948 officials within the Truman administration, Hickerson as one of the first, began to realize that economic support was not enough.<sup>455</sup> The European fear of an Soviet military attack, although unfounded, was simply real and something had to be done about it. The NSC but also Marshall and some prominent State Department officials began to realize that economic recovery based on the Marshall Plan could only succeed when there also was a sense of security in Europe.<sup>456</sup> NATO needed to stiffen European moral so the Europeans could rebuild their economy effectively and withstand the Soviet political threat.<sup>457</sup> From the American point of view, the primary goal of the alliance was to enhance American security by enforcing the ability of the Europeans to resist the Soviet political threat. NATO can thus be seen as another step in the original US Containment Policy and a follow up of the Economic Recovery Program.

There seems to be a difference between the goal of founding NATO from a US point of view and the goal as mentioned in the North Atlantic Treaty. However this is not the case. The Americans realised that NATO needed to have the shape of a defensive alliance since if it would not have such a shape the Europeans would simply not feel secure enough.<sup>458</sup> But while the Americans agreed to join a real defensive alliance, they tried to construct the

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<sup>452</sup> Leffler, Melvyn P., 'The Emergence of an American Grand Strategy 1945-1952', op.cit., p. 68;

<sup>453</sup> 'FRUS 1947 Vol. I', op.cit., Policy planning staff, Résumé of the world Situation, November 6, 1947, Doc. 394; Schwabe, Klaus, op.cit., pp. 169 – 170.

<sup>454</sup> Kaplan, Lawrence S., 'The Long Entanglement' op.cit., p. 2-3, 10; 'History of the Joint Chiefs of Staff' op.cit., pp. 153 – 155.

<sup>455</sup> 'FRUS 1948 Vol. III', op.cit., Hickerson to Marshall, March 8, 1948, Doc. 31.

<sup>456</sup> 'FRUS 1948 Vol. III', op.cit., Report by the Executive Secretary of the National Security Council (Souers) to the Council, April 13, 1948, Doc. 71; Kaplan, Lawrence S., 'The United States and NATO', op.cit., pp. 40-41.

<sup>457</sup> Leffler, Melvyn P., 'A Proponderence of Power' op.cit., p. 208.; 'FRUS 1948 Vol. III', op.cit., George H. Butler of the Policy Planning Staff, March 19, 1948, Doc. 53; 'FRUS 1948 Vol. III', op.cit., Minutes of the First Meeting of the United States–United Kingdom–Canada Security Conversations, Held at Washington, March 22, 1948, Doc. 54.

<sup>458</sup> Ibid., Doc. 54; 'FRUS 1948 Vol. III', op.cit., George H. Butler of the Policy Planning Staff, March 19, 1948, Doc. 53; 'FRUS 1948 Vol. III', op.cit., Sixth Meeting of the United States–United Kingdom–Canada Security Conversations, Held at Washington, April 1, 1948, Doc. 63.

alliance in such a fashion that the US would retain the largest possible freedom to decide for itself what policy they would follow (and what goals they wanted to achieve) within the alliance. In that way the US would retain the right to make and peruse their own policy's and goals, also in regard of defence matters. This was vital for the Americans since the US administration did not expect war and they wanted to keep military costs as low as possible. Also the military establishment wanted to keep military commitments in line with their capabilities.<sup>459</sup> By retaining the right to decide on policy the US subsequently could refrain from making large military contributions to European defence. In this way they were able to confine their commitment to those things that were needed for the stiffening of European confidence like military aid, a promise to come to Europe's aid in case of war and combined war planning. It also enabled the US to carry on with the most important containment policy: the economic recovery of Europe. The Truman administration could do all of this without making full blown military commitments like sending large amounts of troops to Europe. So although NATO's goal as mentioned in the North Atlantic Treaty preamble differed from NATO's goal as perceived by the US, they could coexist because of the way NATO was shaped.

## Member States

In December 1949 NATO had twelve member states. In alphabetical order the member states were: Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, the UK and the US.<sup>460</sup> Ireland and Sweden decided not to join the Atlantic Alliance. Sweden thought that its security could best be guaranteed by absolute neutrality and Ireland refused to join as long as Northern Ireland remained a part of the UK.<sup>461</sup>

The idea behind the US Containment Policy in Europe was to stop the expansion of the Soviet influence sphere there. At first this policy encompassed economic aid, but this was deemed not enough. The goal of NATO, from an American perspective, was the stiffening of European confidence to support the Containment Policy. Therefore the Americans wanted to include as many free Western European countries as possible. Officials within the Truman administration, like Hickerson, thought that not including a certain free Western European country directly into an Atlantic agreement might lead to the loss of that country to the

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<sup>459</sup> Kaplan, Lawrence S., 'The Long Entanglement' op.cit., p. 10; 'History of the Joint Chiefs of Staff' op.cit., pp. 153 – 155, 194.

<sup>460</sup> See annex V.

<sup>461</sup> Kaplan, Lawrence S., 'NATO 1948' op.cit., pp. 207 – 207.

Soviets.<sup>462</sup> But there were also other considerations that helped shape the administration's view on who should receive NATO's membership.

To begin with the Americans saw Italy as a vital member. Italy possessed a strategic position, in the Mediterranean on the flank of France, which made it important for the defence of Europe. Additionally Italy was under threat from a political communist takeover and the Americans considered it of the greatest importance to include it into a defence pact to stabilize the country.<sup>463</sup> The Scandinavian countries were seen as vital since Soviet control over Scandinavia would give the Soviet Union a direct all year access to the Atlantic sea. Norway was already under Soviet pressure and they therefore needed military and political support. Denmark and Iceland were seen as vital "stepping stone" countries because of their possessions in the North Atlantic which were vital for trans-Atlantic supply lines and their air bases which could house American strategic bombers.<sup>464</sup> Portugal fell into the same category as Denmark and Iceland because of the Azores islands and the favourable strategic position on the Atlantic of the Portuguese mainland.<sup>465</sup> Ireland was also considered of some importance as a stepping stone especially as it could bring in naval-bases to facilitate anti-submarine warfare.<sup>466</sup> Germany and Austria were also seen as vital for European security the US. However the US wanted the admittance of Germany and Austria into NATO to be postponed.<sup>467</sup>

The Americans wanted to exclude Greece and Turkey since these two countries did not satisfy the criteria for membership of true a North Atlantic association.<sup>468</sup> But there were also other reasons why the Americans refused these countries into an Atlantic association. It would have led to the spread of the American sphere of activity over a too large area. In other words, it would have involved the danger of a dispersal of American forces when concentration appeared to be the wisest cause especially in view of American (military)

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<sup>462</sup> 'FRUS 1948 Vol. III', op.cit., Memorandum of Conversation, by Mr. Charles E. Bohlen, Counselor of the Department of State, to the Secretary of State, August 6, 1948, Doc. 133; 'FRUS 1948 Vol. III', op.cit., Memorandum of the Sixth Meeting of the Working Group Participating in the Washington Exploratory Talks on Security, July 26, 1948, Doc. 130.

<sup>463</sup> Kaplan, Lawrence S., 'NATO 1948.' op.cit., pp. 178 - 179.

<sup>464</sup> 'Oral History Interview with Theodore Achilles' op.cit., 58 - 62; 'FRUS 1948 Vol. III', op.cit., Memorandum of the Sixth Meeting of the Working Group Participating in the Washington Exploratory Talks on Security, July 26, 1948, Doc. 130; Wichard Woyke pp. 259 – 260.

<sup>465</sup> Ibid., Doc. 130; Woyke, Wichard, op.cit., pp. 259 – 260; 'Oral History Interview with Theodore Achilles' op.cit., 58 – 62.

<sup>466</sup> 'Oral History Interview with Theodore Achilles' op.cit., 58 – 62; 'FRUS 1948 Vol. III', op.cit., Memorandum of the Sixth Meeting of the Working Group Participating in the Washington Exploratory Talks on Security, July 26, 1948, Doc. 130.

<sup>467</sup> Ibid., Doc. 130.

<sup>468</sup> Ibid., Doc. 130.

limitations.<sup>469</sup> Although the Americans considered Spain as a country of strategic importance they nonetheless wanted to exclude it from NATO. The administration was convinced by the Europeans that it was allowing a fascist country into an alliance of free democratic states would be unwise.<sup>470</sup>

The Truman administration thus wanted the USA, Canada, the Brussels Pact countries, Italy, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Iceland, Denmark and Ireland as original founding members of NATO. Spain, Austria and Germany were seen as possible future members. Except for Sweden and Ireland all countries the US administration wanted to include in NATO were included.

### The Working of the North Atlantic Treaty and NATO

Concerning the working of NATO the Truman administration had three main demands. US association with the alliance must be in accordance with US constitutional process, the arrangements had to be within the framework of the UN Charter and they had to be based upon the notions of continuous and effective self-help and mutual aid.<sup>471</sup> The most important of these American demands was the first one; that the alliance had to be in accordance with US constitutional law. This meant that the alliance could not be based on a provision that called for an automatic war declaration and the obligation to send military aid in case of war. Decisions on these matters were the exclusive right of US Congress. The US government, and specifically the US Senate (Senator Vandenberg and the isolationists), wanted to retain the right to decide for themselves if they should go to war and what aid should be sent.<sup>472</sup> Therefore the American negotiators tried to achieve the greatest possible degree of freedom in regard to these questions. The US thus simply wanted an agreement based on the Rio-Treaty. The wording of the present Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty seems to be in line with these American desires. Article 5 states that “an armed attack against one or more of them... shall be considered an attack against them all .... if such an armed attack occurs, each of

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<sup>469</sup> ‘FRUS 1948 Vol. III’, op.cit., Marshall to Lovett, April 23 1948, Doc. 81.

<sup>470</sup> Kaplan, Lawrence S. ‘NATO 1948’ op.cit., pp. 176 – 177.

<sup>471</sup> ‘FRUS 1948 Vol. III’, op.cit., Memorandum of the Sixth Meeting of the Working Group Participating in the Washington Exploratory Talks on Security, July 26, 1948, Doc. 130.

<sup>472</sup> Kaplan, Lawrence S., ‘The Long Entanglement’ op.cit., p. 3; US Senate Resolution 239 (‘The Vandenberg Resolution’), Washington D.C. – June 11, 1948, see Annex II; ‘FRUS 1948 Vol. III’, op.cit., Hickerson to Marshall, January 19, 1948, Doc. 4; ‘FRUS 1948 Vol. III’, op.cit., Sixth Meeting of the United States-United Kingdom-Canada Security Conversations, Held at Washington, April 1, 1948, Doc. 63; ‘FRUS 1948 Vol. III’, op.cit., Report by the Executive Secretary of the National Security Council (Souers) to the Council, April 13, 1948, Doc. 71; Wichard, Woyke, op.cit., p. 258-260; ‘FRUS 1948, Vol. III’, op.cit., Memorandum of the Ninth Meeting of the Working Group Participating in the Washington Exploratory Talks on Security, August 9, 1948, Doc. 135; ‘Oral History Interview with Theodore Achilles’ op.cit., 39-41.

them... will assist the Party or Parties so attacked by taking forthwith... such action as it deems necessary, including the use of armed force...”<sup>473</sup> Because “armed attack” is not defined in the North Atlantic Treaty US Congress had retained the right to conclude if an “armed attack” had occurred and thus if the US has to go to war. By the phrase “such action as it deems necessary, including the use of armed force” the US also retained the right to decide itself what aid needed to be sent in case of war.

The second main demand of the Americans was that the alliance should adhere to the UN Charter.<sup>474</sup> The Americans had put their trust in the UN and they saw it as a valuable instrument in international politics. The general opinion within the Truman administration and US Senate (especially Senator Vandenberg and the internationalists) was that an alliance that would not adhere to the Charter would mean the end of the UN. It would mean a return to balance of power politics that were seen as responsible for the misery in the early twentieth century.<sup>475</sup> However Articles 52, 53 and 54 (Chapter VIII of the UN Charter), which deal with regional defence alliances, call for regional organizations to report in advance to the UN Security Council where their activities could be checked. The Soviet Union was a permanent veto holding member of that council. It was unacceptable for the US negotiators that NATO would be subject to a Soviet veto.<sup>476</sup> US negotiators therefore proposed that the North Atlantic Treaty should not refer to the alliance as a regional organization in the sense of Chapter VIII of the UN Charter. The treaty should just assert conformity with the Charter by referring in various ways to Article 51 which allowed for states to work together in case of aggression and report to the UN Security Council afterwards.<sup>477</sup> The North Atlantic Treaty itself does indeed adhere to Article 51 of the UN Charter just as the Americans desired. In the preamble the parties to the treaty reaffirm “their faith in the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations”.<sup>478</sup> Article 1 calls for parties to settle disputes in the way the UN Charter describes and to refrain from “the threat or use of force in any manner

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<sup>473</sup> North Atlantic Treaty, Article 5, see Annex IV.

<sup>474</sup> ‘FRUS 1948 Vol. III’, op.cit., Report by the Executive Secretary of the National Security Council (Souers) to the Council, April 13, 1948, Doc. 71; US Senate Resolution 239 (‘The Vandenberg Resolution’), Washington D.C. – June 11, 1948, see Annex II.

<sup>475</sup> Kaplan, Lawrence S., ‘*The Long Entanglement*’ op.cit., p. 4.

<sup>476</sup> ‘FRUS 1949, Vol. IV’, op.cit., Minutes of the Sixteenth Meeting of the Washington Exploratory Talks, March 7, 1949, Doc. 92; ‘FRUS 1949, Vol. IV’, op.cit., Minutes of the Eighteenth Meeting of the Washington Exploratory Talks, March 15, 1949, Doc. 112.

<sup>477</sup> ‘FRUS 1949, Vol. IV’, op.cit., Minutes of the Sixteenth Meeting of the Washington Exploratory Talks, March 7, 1949, Doc. 92; ‘FRUS 1949, Vol. IV’, op.cit., Minutes of the Eighteenth Meeting of the Washington Exploratory Talks, March 15, 1949, Doc. 112; Kaplan, Lawrence S., ‘*NATO 1948*’ op.cit., p. 218.

<sup>478</sup> Preamble, North Atlantic Treaty, see Annex IV.

inconsistent with the purposes of the United Nations".<sup>479</sup> Even in Article 5, the nucleus of the North Atlantic Treaty, the right to collective self-defence and assistance in case any party to the treaty is attacked is based on the right of self-defence recognised by Article 51 UN Charter.<sup>480</sup> Article 5 even states that "Any such armed attack and all measures taken as a result thereof shall immediately be reported to the Security Council. Such measures shall be terminated when the Security Council has taken the measures necessary to restore and maintain international peace and security".<sup>481</sup> Finally Article 7 reaffirms the "primary responsibility of the Security Council for the maintenance of international peace and security" and that the treaty itself does not affect the obligations the member states have under the UN Charter.<sup>482</sup>

Although the goal of NATO from a US point of view was to strengthen European confidence, the US did not want to make to large military commitments. Therefore Senator Vandenberg and the Truman administration introduced the notions of self-help and mutual aid to the treaty.<sup>483</sup> The notion of self-help would reduce the US commitment making countries responsible for their own defence. However at the same time the notion of mutual aid made countries support other members in their defence by giving aid as far as they were capable and willing.<sup>484</sup> This was ideal for the Americans. They could focus on policies that would stiffen European confidence without making large military commitments. The Europeans agreed with the notions of self-help and mutual aid, because they were anxious to receive American military aid.<sup>485</sup> Thus the formulation of Article 3 was in line with American desires when it called for continuous and effective self-help and mutual aid to resist an armed attack.<sup>486</sup>

Within the Truman administration there was also the desire to keep the territorial applicability of the treaty as small as possible. The military establishment and especially the JCS resisted against a to large territorial applicability. In their opinion this would lead to an increase in the possibility of war and to a military commitment for which the US military

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<sup>479</sup> Article 1, North Atlantic Treaty, see Annex IV.

<sup>480</sup> Article 5, North Atlantic Treaty, see Annex IV.

<sup>481</sup> Article 5, North Atlantic Treaty, see Annex IV.

<sup>482</sup> Article 7, North Atlantic Treaty, see Annex IV.

<sup>483</sup> US Senate Resolution 239 ('The Vandenberg Resolution'), Washington D.C. – June 11, 1948, see Annex II.

<sup>484</sup> 'FRUS 1948, Vol. III', op.cit., Memorandum by the Participants in the Washington Security Talks, July 6 to September 9, Submitted to Their Respective Governments for Study and Comment, 9 September 1948, Doc. 150; 'Oral History Interview with Theodore Achilles' op.cit., 46 – 47.

<sup>485</sup> Ibid., 46 – 47.

<sup>486</sup> Article 3, North Atlantic Treaty, see Annex IV.

lacked the capabilities.<sup>487</sup> The JSC also refused to risk war to uphold colonialism.<sup>488</sup> Therefore the applicability of the treaty should be limited to the territories of the member states in Europe and Northern America and should not include overseas territories beyond the Northern Atlantic. The JCS also refused the wording of Article 4, calling for consultation in case of aggression to any of the members anywhere, because it could apply in cases of aggression anywhere.<sup>489</sup> The isolationists in the US Senate, but also many within the State Department agreed for the largest part with the JCS.<sup>490</sup> State Department officials like Hickerson, Achilles and Lovett realised that not including Article 4 would have resulted in such a small US commitment that it would be unacceptable for the Western Europeans. They considered Article 4 as necessary and subsequently it was adopted into the North Atlantic Treaty.<sup>491</sup>

Article 6 of the North Atlantic Treaty covers the subject of territorial applicability of the Charter.<sup>492</sup> Article 6 describes the territory under the treaty as the territory of any of the members in Europe, North America or Northern Atlantic and the Algerian Departments of France. But also the forces, vessels, or aircraft of the members, present in any of the above mentioned territories or the Northern Atlantic Ocean are covered. Until now the Americans got there way with all their demands. However concerning the territorial applicability of the North Atlantic Treaty they had to give in. They had to accept Article 4 and the expansion of the territorial applicability in Article 6 so that it would encompass the French Algerian departments. The workings and organizational framework of the organization is discussed in the next paragraph.

### The Organisation of NATO's Civil and Military Structure

The American negotiators tried to construct the alliance in such a fashion that the US government would retain the largest possible freedom to decide for itself what policy it would follow within the alliance. They also tried to construct an organizational framework for NATO which would allow them to do so. Especially the military establishment wanted to

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<sup>487</sup> *History of the Joint Chiefs of Staff* op.cit., p. 194, 201 – 202.; ‘FRUS 1949, Vol. IV’, op.cit., The Special Assistant to the Secretary of Defence (Ohly) to the Secretary of State, 6 January, 1949, Doc. 9.

<sup>488</sup> *History of the Joint Chiefs of Staff* op.cit., p. 202.

<sup>489</sup> Article 4, North Atlantic Treaty, see Annex IV; ‘FRUS 1949, Vol. IV’, op.cit., The Special Assistant to the Secretary of Defence (Ohly) to the Secretary of State, 6 January, 1949, Doc. 9; ‘History of the Joint Chiefs of Staff’ op.cit., pp. 201 – 202.

<sup>490</sup> Woyke, Wichard, op.cit., 260; ‘Oral History Interview with Theodore Achilles’ op.cit., 43; ‘FRUS 1948, Vol. III’, op.cit., Minutes of the Tenth Meeting of the Washington Exploratory Talks, December 22, 1948, Doc. 197.

<sup>491</sup> Article 4, North Atlantic Treaty, see Annex IV.

<sup>492</sup> Article 6, North Atlantic Treaty, see Annex IV.



Figure 13: The First Session of the North Atlantic Council,  
September 17, 1949

retain the right to make and pursue their own policy's and goals, also in regard of strategic defence matters. In their opinion the US should not be drawn into a command arrangement that would result in the loss of their right to determine their own global military strategy.<sup>493</sup> Americans should keep the right to produce their own strategic war plans.<sup>494</sup> The JCS also recognized that effective military planning would require strong guidance from a group of limited membership. The US, as the principal contributor, should have a commanding military role, only then could the North Atlantic Treaty be made effective.<sup>495</sup>

As a consequence the US proposed an organizational structure which lacked an effective combined strategic command, in which the US could nonetheless have a leading role. The North Atlantic Council, established by Article 9, would be the main political body of NATO, empowered to consider matters concerning the implementation of the North Atlantic Treaty.<sup>496</sup> It was supposed to only consider general political NATO matters. The real defence planning would take place in Regional Planning Groups. These groups were responsible for the creation of defence plans for the territory under their command.<sup>497</sup> To make US leadership possible it was proposed that the US needed to be represented in all

<sup>493</sup> 'History of the Joint Chiefs of Staff' op.cit., pp. 194 – 196; 'FRUS 1948 Vol. III', op.cit., Memorandum by the Director of the Joint Staff (Gruenther) to Hickerson, July 16, 1948, Doc. 123.

<sup>494</sup> Woyke, Wichard, op.cit., p. 256.

<sup>495</sup> Ibid., p. 206; Woyke, Wichard, op.cit., pp. 265 – 266.

<sup>496</sup> Article 9, North Atlantic Treaty, see Annex IV.

<sup>497</sup> 'History of the Joint Chiefs of Staff' op.cit., 206.

regional groups.<sup>498</sup> The Military Advisory Council Steering and Executive Group (Standing Group) would be made responsible for the coordination of the plans made by the regional groups.<sup>499</sup> Most of the other superior bodies only had the right to recommend general, rather than detailed, defence plans<sup>500</sup>. Since the defence plans were made on the regional level, there would be no central planning and no central command and subsequently NATO defence planning would not interfere with the right of the US to plan their own global strategies.<sup>501</sup> However because the US were to participate in all supervisory and coordinating bodies and because of their presence in all regional groups, the US would gain a commanding military role within the alliance.

As can be seen in Annex V and VI the proposals by the Americans were almost literally taken over by the North Atlantic Council when they decided about NATO's organization. Five Regional Planning Groups would produce local defence plans, the Standing Group would be responsible for the coordination of these defence plans, the Defence Committee would produce general defence plans and the Military Committee would get an advisory role. The US were to participate in all supervisory and coordinating bodies and would be present in all regional groups.<sup>502</sup>

## Burden Sharing

The JCS concluded that in case of war retreating from Europe and focussing just on long range bombing would lead to the loss of Europe and thus in the massive loss of territory, manpower, resources and industry but also strategic positions to the Soviets.<sup>503</sup> Retreating from Europe in case of a war would thus mean a serious US national security problem. The Joint Chiefs therefore called for the "holding of a line containing the Western Europe complex preferably no farther to the West than the Rhine".<sup>504</sup> However the Joint Chiefs and the rest of the Truman administration were still simply unwilling to make large military commitments and to send troops to Europe in peace time.<sup>505</sup> The defence of Europe, Truman stated, would primarily be the responsibility of the Europeans themselves.<sup>506</sup> The Europeans were supposed to provide the land forces, the ground support and the air defence for the

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<sup>498</sup> *History of the Joint Chiefs of Staff* op.cit., 207.

<sup>499</sup> Ibid., p. 202 – 207.

<sup>500</sup> Ibid., p. 202 – 207.

<sup>501</sup> Woyke, wichard, op.cit., pp. 265 – 266.

<sup>502</sup> Lord Ismay, op.cit., pp. 23 – 29; *'History of the Joint Chiefs of Staff'* op.cit., pp. 210 – 212.

<sup>503</sup> *'History of the Joint Chiefs of Staff'* op.cit., pp. 159 – 160.

<sup>504</sup> Ibid., pp. 159 - 160.

<sup>505</sup> Offner, Arnold A., op.cit., p. 425.

<sup>506</sup> Woyke, Wichard, op.cit., 266 – 267.

defence of Europe. The promised American military aid was supposed to enable the Europeans to mobilize such an armed force.<sup>507</sup> The Americans thus tried to minimize their military commitments. As mentioned before this was based on the fact that the Truman administration still did not believe that the Soviet Union posed a military threat.<sup>508</sup> They would only agree to such commitments that would help strengthen European confidence so the Europeans could rebuild their economy and resist Communist aggression.<sup>509</sup> This was most cost-effectively done by letting the Europeans take care of their defence themselves and limit US military commitments to sending military aid, assist in war planning and assuring the Europeans of American assistance in case of war.<sup>510</sup> Thus US negotiators wanted that the defence burden sharing within NATO should be based on the notions of self-help and mutual aid. This view was widely shared within the military establishment, the US Senate and the State Department.

The notions of self-help and mutual aid were eventually accepted in Article 3 of the North Atlantic Treaty.<sup>511</sup> The Europeans agreed with the limits to US military commitments and agreed with the primacy of military aid through the MAP. Although no real war plans were produced before December 1949 by NATO, the Defence committee did around that time agree on a strategic plan for the “integrated defence production and supply of arms and equipment”.<sup>512</sup> This plan agreed with the division of roles as contemplated by the Americans. The Europeans would be responsible for the defence of Europe and the US would deliver support in the form of military aid and, in case of war, strategic bombing and naval security.<sup>513</sup> Thus the US government got their visions realised, also in regard of defence burden sharing within NATO.

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<sup>507</sup> Woyke, Wighard, op.cit., pp. 266 – 267.

<sup>508</sup> ‘FRUS 1948, Vol. III’, op.cit., The Acting Secretary of State to the United States Special Representative in Europe (Harriman), December 3, 1948, Doc. 190; ‘FRUS 1948, Vol. III’, op.cit., Memorandum by the Director of the Policy Planning Staff (Kennan), November 24, 1948, Doc. 182.

<sup>509</sup> Roosevelt study center n. 1; Leffler, Melvyn P. ‘A Proponderence of Power’ op.cit., 282.

<sup>510</sup> Ibid., pp. 219.

<sup>511</sup> Article 3, North Atlantic Treaty, see Annex IV.

<sup>512</sup> Woyke, Wighard, op.cit., p. 267.

<sup>513</sup> Ibid., p. 267.

## **8. Conclusion**

The central question in this thesis was: what kind of NATO did the US administration envision during the founding phase of the organization? In turn the main research question was divided in three sub-questions: (1) how did the relevant officials within the US administration envision NATO during its founding phase, (2) why did they chose those views (3) and did the eventual embodiment of NATO correspond with the US administrations views? Five different parts of NATO's working and organizational framework were covered: the specific goals and tasks, the working of the North Atlantic Treaty (and NATO), member states, the form of the military and civilian organization and the burden-sharing between the member states. In this chapter some concluding remarks will be made in regard of the research questions.

In 1948/1949 Truman administration officials did not believe that the Soviet Union would risk war. They believed that the Soviet Union could more easily expand their sphere of influence by resorting to political means, for example by exploiting the economic upheaval in Europe. The Truman administration wanted to counter this threat by restoring the balance of power in Europe. In their opinion this could be achieved by the reconstruction of the European economy by the use of the Economic Recovery Program (Marshall Plan). A defensive alliance was simply unnecessary and would lead to high military costs, a raid of US military stocks, a return to pre-war power politics, limit US freedom of action and jeopardise the UN system. However around 1948 officials within the Truman administration, began to realize that economic recovery based on the Marshall Plan could only succeed when there also was a sense of security in Europe. NATO needed to stiffen European moral so the Europeans could rebuild their economy effectively and withstand the Soviet political threat. From the American point of view, the primary goal of the alliance was to enhance American security by strengthening the ability of the Europeans to resist the Soviet political threat. Therefore NATO can be seen as a follow up of the Economic Recovery Program and another step in the original US Containment Policy.

However since the administration did not fear a Soviet attack, and since military commitments needed to stay in line with US capabilities, they wanted to keep the military commitment to Europe as small as possible. Also the US government did not want to lose the right to make their own decisions and to make and peruse their own policy's and goals, also in regard of defence matters. For example the Senate wanted to retain their right to declare war and to decide on what help to send to those nations under attack, and the JCS wanted to retain

the right to produce their own strategic war plans. Finally the US government, especially the Senate did not want to support an alliance which would endanger the existence of the UN. US negotiators thus had to perform a balancing act between the objective of the stiffening of European moral and the American governments wishes to keep military commitments to a minimum, support the UN and to retain the largest possible freedom of action.

The Americans therefore pressed for an alliance based on a provision which would call for mutual assistance in case an allied member would be attacked. But at the same time the Americans proposed that the US government should retain the right to conclude if an attack had occurred and to decide what aid needed to be sent in case of war. Also the US administration wanted the alliance to have an organizational structure which would make it possible for the US to make and peruse their own policy's in regard of strategic defence matters. The US administration envisioned an organizational structure in which the US, at the same time, could also perform a leading commanding role. A great advantage of retaining the right to decide on policy was that the US could not be forced by the alliance to make large military contributions to European defence.

To be able to support as many European countries as possible in their opposition to the Soviet Union, the Americans wanted to include all countries belonging to the non-Communist Western-Europe. But since the US administration did not want to engage in military commitments to large for US capabilities, US negotiators excluded Turkey and Greece and tried to limit the territorial applicability of the North Atlantic Treaty so that it would not include any territory outside the North Atlantic area. State Department officials however then realised that to ensure the Europeans they had to agree to an article calling for consultation in case any of the member states would be attacked anywhere outside the alliance territory.

The US government continuously called for the adoption of the notion of self-help into the North Atlantic Treaty. The US administration simply did not want to expend their defence apparatus and send troops to Europe while there was no military threat. The notion of self-help would make European countries responsible for their own defence thereby reducing the US defence commitment to NATO. Thus the Europeans were supposed to provide for their own security. On the other hand the Americans introduced the adoption of the notion of mutual aid to support the European defence efforts and enhance their moral. This notion made it possible for countries to support other members in their defence by giving aid as far as they were capable and willing. This was ideal for the Americans. They could focus on policies that would stiffen European confidence, like sending military aid, assist in war planning and assuring the Europeans of American assistance in case of war, without making large military

commitments. Finally to make the alliance in accordance with the UN Charter the US administration proposed to make the alliance adhere to Article 51 of the UN Charter. They proposed to ignore Articles 52, 53 and 54 of the UN Charter, dealing with regional defence organizations, because these Articles provided for Security Council interference with such defence organizations.

Around the end of 1949 the North Atlantic Alliance and NATO were created and in place. When we look at the North Atlantic Treaty and NATO as they were in December 1949 it is safe to say that the US administration got there way on almost all fronts. Although the US negotiators had to give in on some minor points, like the admittance of the French Algerian Departments under the Treaty or the wording of Article 4, the US government got almost all of their demands realised.

In 1951, after the North Korean invasion of South Korea, the US began to fear a true military attack on the West. Instead of just boosting European moral NATO now was needed to combat a Communist military attack. One would say that NATO subsequently had to be changed into a full blown military alliance. Did the US view in regard of NATO's working and organizational framework really change, and if so, in what way did it change? Did NATO transform at all in the subsequent period? These questions are interesting for further research but they unfortunately fall outside the scope of this thesis.

## **Annex I**

### **United Nations Charter Articles 51, 52, 53 and 54**

#### **Article 51**

Nothing in the present Charter shall impair the inherent right of individual or collective self-defence if an armed attack occurs against a Member of the United Nations, until the Security Council has taken measures necessary to maintain international peace and security. Measures taken by Members in the exercise of this right of self-defence shall be immediately reported to the Security Council and shall not in any way affect the authority and responsibility of the Security Council under the present Charter to take at any time such action as it deems necessary in order to maintain or restore international peace and security.

#### **Article 52**

1. Nothing in the present Charter precludes the existence of regional arrangements or agencies for dealing with such matters relating to the maintenance of international peace and security as are appropriate for regional action provided that such arrangements or agencies and their activities are consistent with the Purposes and Principles of the United Nations.
2. The Members of the United Nations entering into such arrangements or constituting such agencies shall make every effort to achieve pacific settlement of local disputes through such regional arrangements or by such regional agencies before referring them to the Security Council.
3. The Security Council shall encourage the development of pacific settlement of local disputes through such regional arrangements or by such regional agencies either on the initiative of the states concerned or by reference from the Security Council.
4. This Article in no way impairs the application of Articles 34 and 35.

#### **Article 53**

- I. The Security Council shall, where appropriate, utilize such regional arrangements or agencies for enforcement action under its authority. But no enforcement action shall be taken under regional arrangements or by regional agencies without the authorization of the Security Council, with the exception of measures against any enemy state, as defined in paragraph 2 of this Article, provided for pursuant to Article 107 or in regional arrangements directed against renewal of aggressive policy on the part of any such state, until such time as the Organization may, on request of the Governments concerned, be charged with the responsibility for preventing further aggression by such a state.
- II. The term enemy state as used in paragraph 1 of this Article applies to any state which during the Second World War has been an enemy of any signatory of the present Charter.

#### **Article 54**

The Security Council shall at all times be kept fully informed of activities undertaken or in contemplation under regional arrangements or by regional agencies for the maintenance of international peace and security.

## **Annex II**

### **US Senate Resolution 239 ('The Vandenberg Resolution')**

**Washington D.C. - June 11 1948**

Whereas peace with justice and the defence of human rights and fundamental freedoms require international co-operation through more effective use of the United Nations: Therefore be it Resolved, That the Senate reaffirm the policy of the United States to achieve international peace and security through the United Nations so that armed force shall not be used except in the common interest, and that the President be advised of the sense of The Senate that this Government, by constitutional process, should particularly pursue the following objectives within the United Nations Charter:

1. Voluntary agreement to remove the veto from all questions involving pacific settlements of international disputes and situations, and from the admission of new members.
2. Progressive development of regional and other collective arrangements for individual and collective self-defence in accordance with the purposes, principles, and provisions of the Charter.
3. Association of the United States, by constitutional process, with such regional and other collective arrangements as are based on continuous and effective self-help and mutual aid, and as affect its national security.
4. Contributing to the maintenance of peace by making clear its determination to exercise the right of individual or collective self-defence under Article 51 should any armed attack occur affecting its national security.
5. Maximum efforts to obtain agreements to provide the United Nations with armed forces as provided by the Charter, and to obtain agreement among member nations upon universal regulation and reduction of armaments under adequate and dependable guaranty against violation.
6. If necessary, after adequate effort towards strengthening the United Nations, review of the Charter at an appropriate time by a General Conference called under Article 109 or by the General Assembly.

**Annex III**

**International Working Group**

**Draft Treaty of December 24**

**Article 1 (Peaceful Settlement)**

The Parties undertake, as set forth in Article 2 of the Charter of the United Nations, to settle their international disputes in such a manner that peace, security and justice are not endangered, and to refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force in any manner inconsistent with the purposes of the United Nations.

**Article 2 (General Welfare)**

The Parties will encourage cooperative efforts between any or all of them to promote the general welfare through collaboration in the cultural, economic and social fields. Such efforts shall, to the greatest possible extent, be undertaken through and assist the work of existing international organizations.

**Article 3 (Mutual Aid)**

In order better to assure the security of the North Atlantic area, the Parties will use every endeavor, severally and jointly, by means of continuous and effective self-help and mutual aid, to strengthen their individual and collective capacity to resist aggression.

**Article 4 (Consultation)**

The Parties will consult together whenever, in the opinion of any of them,

- (a) the territorial integrity, political independence or security of any of the Parties is threatened; or
- (b) there exists any situation which constitutes a threat to or breach of the peace.

**Article 5, Paragraph 1 (Mutual Assistance)**

(1) The Parties agree that an armed attack against one or more of them occurring within the area defined below shall be considered an attack against them all; and consequently that, if such an armed attack occurs, each of them, in exercise of the right of individual or collective self-defense recognized by Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations, will assist the party or parties so attacked by taking forthwith such military or other action, individually and in concert with the other Parties, as may be necessary to restore and assure the security of the North Atlantic area.

## **Article 5, Paragraph 2 (Definition of Area)**

(2) The provisions of the foregoing paragraph shall be applicable in the event of any armed attack directed against the territory, the population or the armed forces of any of the Parties in:

alternative a

(a) Europe or North America; (b) the sea and air space of the North Atlantic area north of the Tropic of Cancer.

alternative b

(a) Europe or North America; Africa north of Latitude 30° North and West of Longitude 12° East; (b) the sea and air space of the North Atlantic area north of the Tropic of Cancer; and (c) the sea and air space of the western Mediterranean, West of Longitude 12° East [or, if Italy comes in, Longitude 20° East].

## **Article 6 (United Nations)**

**1.** This Treaty does not prejudice in any way the obligations of the Parties under the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations. It shall not be interpreted as affecting in any way the authority and responsibility of the Security Council under the Charter to take at any time such action as it deems necessary to maintain or restore international peace and security.

**2.** Any fact or situation constituting a threat to or breach of the peace and deemed to require consultation under Article 4, or any armed attack requiring action under Article 5, shall be immediately reported to the Security Council.

**3.** All measures taken as a result of Article 5 shall be immediately reported to the Security Council. They shall be terminated as soon as the Security Council has taken the measures necessary to restore international peace and security.

## **Article 7 (Other International Engagements)**

The Parties declare, each so far as he is concerned, that none of the international engagements now in force between him and any other of the Parties or any third State is in conflict with or affected by the provisions of this Treaty.

## **Article 8 (Organization)**

The Parties hereby establish a Council, on which each of them shall be represented, to deal with matters concerning the implementation of this Treaty. The Council shall be so organized as to be able to meet promptly at any time. The Council shall set up such subsidiary bodies as may be necessary; in particular it shall establish immediately a defense committee which shall recommend measures for the implementation of Articles 3 and 5.

### **Article 9 (Accession)**

The Parties may, by agreement, invite any other country in the North Atlantic or Western European regions to accede to this Treaty. Any State so invited may become a party to the Treaty by depositing its instrument of accession with the Government of \_\_\_\_\_. The Government of \_\_\_\_\_ will inform each of the Parties of the deposit of each such instrument of accession.

### **Article 10 (Ratification and Duration)**

This Treaty shall be ratified by the signatory states and the instruments of ratification shall be deposited as soon as possible with the \_\_\_\_\_ Government. It shall enter into force between the states which have ratified it as soon as the ratifications of the majority of the signatories have been deposited and shall remain in effect for \_\_\_\_\_ years from that date. It shall come into effect with respect to the other signatory States on the date of the deposit of their ratifications.

After this Treaty has been in force for \_\_\_\_\_ years, each of the Parties may cease to be a Party one year after its notice of denunciation has been given to the \_\_\_\_\_ Government.

The \_\_\_\_\_ Government shall inform the Governments of the other Parties of the deposit of each instrument of ratification and each notice of denunciation.

## **Annex IV**

### **The North Atlantic Treaty**

### **Washington D.C. - 4 April 1949**

The Parties to this Treaty reaffirm their faith in the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and their desire to live in peace with all peoples and all governments. They are determined to safeguard the freedom, common heritage and civilisation of their peoples, founded on the principles of democracy, individual liberty and the rule of law. They seek to promote stability and well-being in the North Atlantic area. They are resolved to unite their efforts for collective defence and for the preservation of peace and security. They therefore agree to this North Atlantic Treaty :

#### **Article 1**

The Parties undertake, as set forth in the Charter of the United Nations, to settle any international dispute in which they may be involved by peaceful means in such a manner that international peace and security and justice are not endangered, and to refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force in any manner inconsistent with the purposes of the United Nations.

#### **Article 2**

The Parties will contribute toward the further development of peaceful and friendly international relations by strengthening their free institutions, by bringing about a better understanding of the principles upon which these institutions are founded, and by promoting conditions of stability and well-being. They will seek to eliminate conflict in their international economic policies and will encourage economic collaboration between any or all of them.

#### **Article 3**

In order more effectively to achieve the objectives of this Treaty, the Parties, separately and jointly, by means of continuous and effective self-help and mutual aid, will maintain and develop their individual and collective capacity to resist armed attack.

#### **Article 4**

The Parties will consult together whenever, in the opinion of any of them, the territorial integrity, political independence or security of any of the Parties is threatened.

## **Article 5**

The Parties agree that an armed attack against one or more of them in Europe or North America shall be considered an attack against them all and consequently they agree that, if such an armed attack occurs, each of them, in exercise of the right of individual or collective self-defence recognised by Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations, will assist the Party or Parties so attacked by taking forthwith, individually and in concert with the other Parties, such action as it deems necessary, including the use of armed force, to restore and maintain the security of the North Atlantic area.

Any such armed attack and all measures taken as a result thereof shall immediately be reported to the Security Council. Such measures shall be terminated when the Security Council has taken the measures necessary to restore and maintain international peace and security.

## **Article 6<sup>514</sup>**

For the purpose of Article 5, an armed attack on one or more of the Parties is deemed to include an armed attack:

on the territory of any of the Parties in Europe or North America, on the Algerian Departments of France 2, on the territory of or on the Islands under the jurisdiction of any of the Parties in the North Atlantic area north of the Tropic of Cancer;

on the forces, vessels, or aircraft of any of the Parties, when in or over these territories or any other area in Europe in which occupation forces of any of the Parties were stationed on the date when the Treaty entered into force or the Mediterranean Sea or the North Atlantic area north of the Tropic of Cancer.

## **Article 7**

This Treaty does not affect, and shall not be interpreted as affecting in any way the rights and obligations under the Charter of the Parties which are members of the United Nations, or the primary responsibility of the Security Council for the maintenance of international peace and security.

## **Article 8**

Each Party declares that none of the international engagements now in force between it and any other of the Parties or any third State is in conflict with the provisions of this Treaty, and undertakes not to enter into any international engagement in conflict with this Treaty.

## **Article 9**

The Parties hereby establish a Council, on which each of them shall be represented, to consider matters concerning the implementation of this Treaty. The Council shall be so organised as to be able to meet promptly at any time. The Council shall set up such subsidiary bodies as may be necessary; in particular it shall establish immediately a defence committee which shall recommend measures for the implementation of Articles 3 and 5.

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<sup>514</sup> This article was modified by the Greece-Turkey Protocol of October 22, 1951.

## **Article 10**

The Parties may, by unanimous agreement, invite any other European State in a position to further the principles of this Treaty and to contribute to the security of the North Atlantic area to accede to this Treaty. Any State so invited may become a Party to the Treaty by depositing its instrument of accession with the Government of the United States of America. The Government of the United States of America will inform each of the Parties of the deposit of each such instrument of accession.

## **Article 11**

This Treaty shall be ratified and its provisions carried out by the Parties in accordance with their respective constitutional processes. The instruments of ratification shall be deposited as soon as possible with the Government of the United States of America, which will notify all the other signatories of each deposit. The Treaty shall enter into force between the States which have ratified it as soon as the ratifications of the majority of the signatories, including the ratifications of Belgium, Canada, France, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and the United States, have been deposited and shall come into effect with respect to other States on the date of the deposit of their ratifications.

## **Article 12**

After the Treaty has been in force for ten years, or at any time thereafter, the Parties shall, if any of them so requests, consult together for the purpose of reviewing the Treaty, having regard for the factors then affecting peace and security in the North Atlantic area, including the development of universal as well as regional arrangements under the Charter of the United Nations for the maintenance of international peace and security.

## **Article 13**

After the Treaty has been in force for twenty years, any Party may cease to be a Party one year after its notice of denunciation has been given to the Government of the United States of America, which will inform the Governments of the other Parties of the deposit of each notice of denunciation.

## **Article 14**

This Treaty, of which the English and French texts are equally authentic, shall be deposited in the archives of the Government of the United States of America. Duly certified copies will be transmitted by that Government to the Governments of other signatories.

## Annex V

### NATO Membership in December 1949



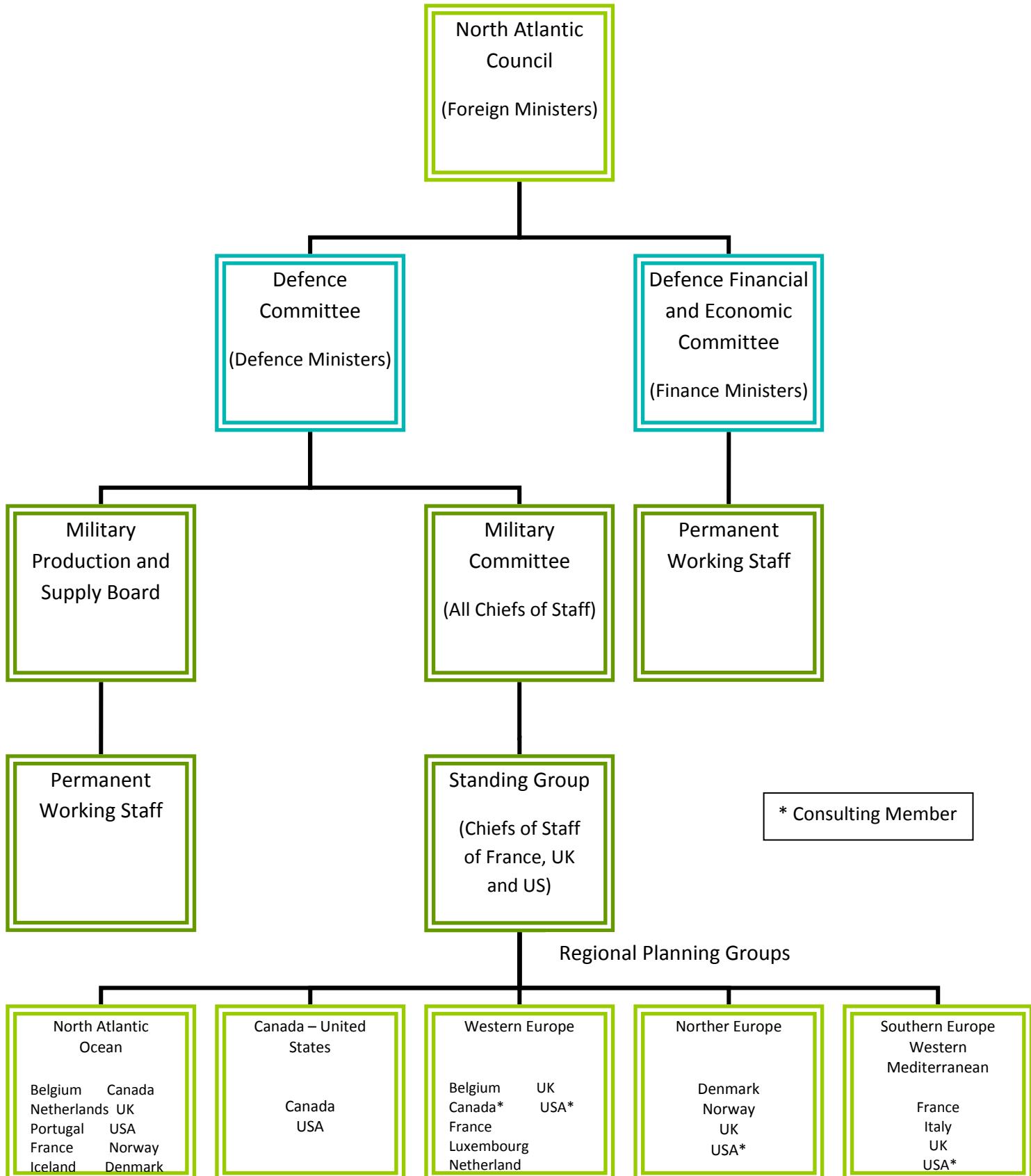
The following European countries held NATO Membership in December 1949: Belgium, Denmark, France, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal and the United Kingdom.



In Northern America NATO membership in December 1949 was confined to Canada and the United States.

## Annex VI

### NATO's Organization in December 1949



1. The Defense Committee, composed of one representative of defense minister rank from each party and charged with recommending measures to implement Articles 3 and 5 of the Treaty.
2. The Military Committee, to be established by the Defense Committee and consisting of one representative at Chiefs of Staff level from each party. It would provide general guidance to its Standing Group and would recommend to the Defense Committee military measures for the unified defense of the North Atlantic Area. (Iceland, which had no military establishment, might, if it so desired, be represented by a civilian official.)
3. The Standing Group, composed of one representative each from France, the United Kingdom, and the United States. It was to act as an executive for the Military Committee and as such would give specific guidance to the Regional Planning Groups and coordinate and integrate regional defense plans.
4. Five Regional Planning Groups, responsible for developing plans for individual areas. The titles of these groups (which indicated their area of responsibility) and the members of each were as follows:
  - a. Northern Europe: Denmark, Norway, and the United Kingdom;
  - b. Western Europe: Belgium, France, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom;
  - c. Southern Europe-Western Mediterranean: France, Italy, and the United Kingdom;
  - d. Canada-United States;
  - e. North Atlantic: all parties, except Italy and Luxembourg. The United States agreed to "participate actively in the defense planning as appropriate" of all regional groups of which it was not a full member.

Canada accepted a similar status on the Western European Group. To give proper representation to the views of parties not members of the Standing Group, the North Atlantic Council established the right of any party whose forces, facilities or resources were involved in a regional plan to participate in its review by the Standing Group. Moreover, regional plans might be presented for review by any member of the responsible planning group (not necessarily one who was also on the Standing Group). Similar authority for all parties was also made applicable to the work of the Regional Planning Groups.<sup>515</sup>

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<sup>515</sup> Taken over from: Condit, Kenneth W., *'History of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The Joint Chiefs of Staff and National Policy Vol. 2 1947 – 1949'*, Office of Joint History, Office of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (Washington, DC, 1996), From: Defence Technical Information Centre, [www.dtic.mil/doctrine/history/jcs\\_nationalp2.pdf](http://www.dtic.mil/doctrine/history/jcs_nationalp2.pdf) (accessed May 24, 2016), pp. 211 – 212.

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