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TENTATIVE

SUBJECT NUMBER

USCIB: 29.1/14      Item A considered at the 99th (Special) Meeting of USCIB, held on 11 January 1954.

Subject:            Improvement of French Communications Security During the Berlin Conference.

The CHAIRMAN recalled that Mr. Armstrong had been asked, at the last meeting of the Board, to assess the risks to the success of the Berlin Conference and to the security of the U.S. which may be expected to arise from the insecurity of French communications. He informed the members that this meeting had been called to permit consideration of Mr. Armstrong's recommendations.

CAPTAIN TAYLOR stated that time had not permitted a formal distribution of papers in advance of the meeting, and asked that the following papers, now before the members, be returned at the close of the meeting to permit regular distribution to be made from his office.

1. Mr. Armstrong's report on "Improvement of Communications Security During the Berlin Conference", dated 11 January 1954.
2. The Ad Hoc Committee report to Mr. Armstrong on the same subject, dated 8 January 1954 (an enclosure with Item 1, above).
3. Message number O81850Z/1/54 from Director, GCHQ, which contains U.K. answers to questions raised at the last special meeting of the Board on the subject of lending ROCKEX equipment to the West Germans for the Berlin Conference.
4. Tentative Minutes of the last (98th) Special Meeting of the Board.

(NOTE: The above items were distributed subsequent to the meeting with the following file designations: Items 1 and 2 - USCIB 29.1/12; Item 3 - USCIB 29.1/13; Item 4 - USCIB 5.2/22.)

CAPTAIN TAYLOR went on to explain that he had acted as Chairman pro tem of the Ad Hoc Committee, at the request of Mr. Polyzoides, for the discussions reported in Item 2, above, to permit Mr. Polyzoides to represent STATE's views as a member of the Committee.

The CHAIRMAN asked Mr. Armstrong if he wished to comment upon his report.

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MR. ARMSTRONG began by complimenting the Ad Hoc Committee for doing such an excellent job in such a short time. Regarding his report he said that he felt there was less to be gained than might well be lost by acting to improve French security for the Conference at this late date, and recommended that no initiative be taken at this time. He recommended, instead, that the Board proceed with the long range plan now under consideration. On the one hand, he said, it was doubtful that French insecurity would result in a great loss of U.S. and U.K. security during the Conference, and, on the other hand, it was felt that the French, even with our help, would be unable to improve their security sufficiently in the short time available to make our assistance worth-while.

The CHAIRMAN stated that this appeared to be largely a matter under STATE's cognizance and he recommended adoption of the paper if there was no strenuous objection to it.

The members approved the paper presented by Mr. Armstrong.

The CHAIRMAN then informed the members that a reply to questions raised at the last meeting on the subject of providing the West Germans with ROCKEX had been received from U.K. authorities. He asked if there were any objections to the proposed offer by the British in light of their comments.

The members considered the U.K. explanation adequate and agreed that a change in the Board's previous position was warranted, i.e., the members now perceived no objection to the U.K. offer of ROCKEX to the West Germans for the period of the coming Berlin Conference.

It was agreed, therefore, that Brigadier Tiltman would be notified accordingly.

GENERAL ACKERMAN suggested that notification of the USCIB action in this matter and the Board's decision on the improvement of French communications security for the Berlin Conference be included in a single reply to Brigadier Tiltman.

The question of how best to inform the British of these decisions was discussed, and agreement was reached on Captain Taylor's suggestion that he notify Brigadier Tiltman orally, and follow up this notification with a confirming memorandum to be approved by the STATE and NSA members before transmittal.

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DECISION: (11 January 1954) USCIB approved the report and recommendations made by Mr. Armstrong re improvement of French communications security, and also agreed to raise no objection to proposed U.K. action toward provision of ROCKEX to the West Germans. It was agreed that the Executive Secretary would notify the Senior U.K. Liaison Officer accordingly, both orally, and by confirming memorandum to be approved by the STATE and NSA members before transmittal. As a result of these decisions the following memorandum was sent:

"1. Further to my CIB #00010 of 7 January 1954 and in consideration of GCHQ DTG 081850Z of January 1954 in reply thereto, USCIB again discussed this matter at a Special Meeting on Monday, 11 January 1954.

"2. The Board are most grateful for the full and prompt reply to the above-mentioned CIB #00010 and desire that you be informed that USCIB perceives no objection to the course of action proposed.

"3. In addition, the Board asked that you be informed that USCIB contemplates no action at this time with regard to the problem of the security of French communications for the Berlin conference."

The meeting adjourned at 1447.

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