



**December 7, 1954**

**Department of State, Memorandum, 'Problems  
Involving the Satellites and Baltic Areas in  
Negotiations with the Soviet Union'**

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**Summary:**

Negotiation of a collective security or non-aggression pact with the Soviet Union would "arouse grave anxiety or cynical reserve" due to a number of problems.

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English

**Contents:**

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PROBLEMS INVOLVING THE SATELLITE AND BALTIC AREAS  
IN NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE SOVIET UNION

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I. Assumptions:

That any settlement with the Soviets of issues in Europe sufficient in scope to approximate a modus vivendi would include at least:

- a. Arrangements for the reunification of Germany;
- b. An Austrian treaty;
- c. Security arrangements probably including limitation of armaments.

II. Problems:

A. Collective Security Pact:

A collective security pact or a non-aggression pact of the kind hitherto concluded by the Soviet Union would only arouse grave anxiety or cynical reserve among many people in the Free World and among the anti-Communist majorities in the captive countries. A security pact of this nature would recall the unfortunate history of the USSR's open violation of a whole series of non-aggression treaties entered into by the Soviets during the inter-war period. For example, in the occupation and forced incorporation of the Baltic Republics, the Soviet Union openly violated at least sixteen bilateral and multilateral treaties of peace, non-aggression and mutual assistance. If, in the light of the historical record, a security pact now with the Soviet Union is to inspire confidence and continued faith in the resolution and realism of the Western States it must have teeth in it to curb the Soviet striking power such as disarmament provisions implemented by adequate control and inspection measures and to curb the hostile propaganda of the Soviet Union.

B. Status of the Orbit Peoples:

Apart from specific territorial issues, a major problem would be how to negotiate on basic differences in Europe without damage to our traditional position on the freedom of the captive peoples. The fact alone of negotiations on comprehensive issues could be expected to arouse concern among the captive populations, their exiled leaders and Americans of Eastern European descent that we might be preparing to sacrifice the interests of the peoples in the satellite areas. It may be anticipated that in such negotiations the Soviets would seek by every means, either expressly or implicitly, to obtain acceptance by the West of the validity

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of the satellite regimes. The danger to us would be enhanced if NATO or WEU, were to negotiate, not with the Soviet Union, but with a military and political organization of the Communist States, somewhat as Mendes-France suggested in his recent speech. That kind of negotiation would give the impression, or would likely to be so construed, that we accept the present Communist regime in the orbit area as full, equal and legitimate member States in the European community. The danger would be lessened if we insisted on negotiations only with the Soviet Union and not with an Eastern European "NATO".

The problem of the status of the orbit peoples could conceivably arise in terms difficult for us to handle so as to avoid the risk either of open differences with our Allies in Western Europe or of loss of faith in us among the captive peoples and their proponents. It does not seem possible for general negotiations to achieve much result unless the Soviets are prepared to accept substantially our terms for German reunification, that is, free elections and withdrawal of Soviet occupied forces from Eastern Germany, particularly the latter. If the Soviets will ever be prepared in the years immediately ahead to make this concession they might demand terms which would mean in effect the recognition by the West of the legitimacy of the satellite regimes, the Soviet incorporation of the Baltic States, the Oder-Weisse Line as the final Polish-German boundary and a "security" association of the Eastern European States. In such circumstances the difficulty of maintaining our position based on principle in support of the freedom and independence of the enslaved populations in Eastern Europe would be considerably increased.

The negative effects upon the captive peoples of even entering into general negotiations with the Soviets might be countered by our positively seeking agreement on measures for the holding in these areas of free elections under UN supervision. This solution is popular among both the captive people themselves and the exiles.

C. Status of the Baltic Republics:

Since the United States has taken so strong a position on principle for so long in opposition to the illegal incorporation of the Baltic Republics into the Soviet Union, we could not make a concession on this issue without suffering a loss of moral credit that would have widespread consequences in other areas, above all, in the satellites. For further discussion of this subject see the attached memorandum entitled, "Problems of Compatibility of Collective Security Negotiations with the USSR and Present US Policy Towards the Baltic States."

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D. Polish Boundaries: A Polish Government representative of the 1945-1947 period, in these circumstances, negotiation of a definitive boundary with Germany. Our public commitments on this subject may be summarized as follows:

At Yalta, in 1945, Roosevelt, Churchill and Stalin agreed that Poland should be compensated for the loss to the USSR of territory in the east. It was agreed that the final delimitation of the Western frontiers of Poland should await the Peace Conference. At Potsdam, in 1945, it was again agreed that the final Western boundary of Poland should be determined by the Peace Treaty, but that German territories east of the Oder-Weisse line, including the southern portion of East Prussia, should be placed under Polish administration pending such settlement.

We still regard these former German territories as being only under provisional Polish administration and, at the Council of Foreign Ministers meeting, in Moscow, in 1947, Secretary Marshall reiterated this position and stated that "the needs of the Polish and German peoples and of Europe as a whole" must be considered in determining the final Polish-German boundary. This position has not been changed by any subsequent official statement. However, the USSR and Polish Governments claim the Potsdam frontiers are final.

In the East, we consider the northern part of East Prussia as in the under Soviet administration and we have never recognized the incorporation of Lithuania into the USSR. Although the present Polish-Soviet boundary was the subject of a treaty between those two countries, in 1945, we regard it only a de facto boundary, and we refer to Poland's former eastern lands as "that former part of Poland which is now under the administration of the USSR."

Comprehensive negotiations might involve, directly or indirectly the following boundary issues: (1) the Oder-Weisse line; (2) the Polish claim to Danzig and the southern part of East Prussia; (3) the Polish boundary with Lithuania; and (4) the Polish boundary on the East with the Soviet Union.

If the Soviets should agree to a solution of the German reunification problem the question might face us of either explicit recognition in a written agreement or of implicit inference from a German settlement that the Oder-Weisse line is a final Polish-German boundary. If the Soviet Union and the Communist Polish regime should show a disposition to negotiate any changes in the Oder-Weisse boundary we would be dealing with a situation of vital interest to the entire Polish people but

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could not negotiate with a Polish Government representative of the people. In those circumstances, negotiation of a definitive boundary settlement could hardly be compatible with our previous public statement that the needs of the Polish people, along with the needs of the German people and of Europe as a whole, must be considered in the determination of the final Polish-German frontier. Negotiation with a Communist Polish regime on this subject of national interest to the Poles would probably be interpreted by them everywhere as an indication of acceptance of the legitimacy of the present government in Poland. A modification of the Oder-Weisse line would also, of course, encounter the mobilized opposition of all Poles in the Free World and their supporters. Our best position might well be that we are not prepared to discuss this question until a free and independent Polish Government fully representative of the Polish people exists to speak for them on this important subject. On the same grounds we might avoid any action or statement which could be considered as committing us to recognize de jure the other existing Polish boundaries mentioned above.

#### E. Sub-Carpathian Ruthenia:

As indicated in the attached paper on Czechoslovakia, the United States recognized in the Peace Treaties with Hungary and Rumania, the present Soviet-Hungarian boundary and the northern boundary of Rumania. These boundaries are fixed on the basis of the transfer of Sub-Carpathian Ruthenia from Czechoslovakia to the Soviet Union. These provisions in the Peace Treaties could consequently be interpreted to mean that by indirection we have recognized de jure the transfer of Sub-Carpathian Ruthenia to the Soviet Union, which was accomplished in fact through Soviet pressure and a bilateral treaty of cession signed on June 29, 1945. We have, however, not recognized this transfer in public statements or in administrative practices and treat Sub-Carpathian Ruthenia only as a de facto annexed territory. This too represents a matter where we should take no position inconsistent with the principle that final determination of the eastern border of Czechoslovakia cannot be made until a free and independent government can represent the Czechoslovak people as a party to any territorial settlement involving areas belonging to the Czechoslovakia of 1937.

### III. Conclusion:

From the foregoing considerations it appears that the fundamental question is whether at a time following the ratification of the London-Paris agreements any realistic basis exists for negotiating a general settlement with the Soviet Union while preserving the essential principles of our previous public commitments. If a specific issue such as the Austrian

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presentation. The character of the limited settlement should be emphasized so that the importance of the treaty is not distorted as signifying the resolution of basic differences with the Soviets or the acceptance by the West of the status quo in the Soviet orbit.

**Attachment:**

Memorandum entitled, "Problems of Compatibility of Collective Security Negotiations with the USSR and Present US Policy Towards the Baltic States".

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