

## Report by the Chiefs of Staff on the defence policy of Western Union (London, 25 August 1948)

**Caption:** In a report dated 25 August 1948, the Chiefs of Staff of Western Union outline the defence policy to be pursued by the five powers signatory to the Brussels Treaty.

**Source:** Military Committee of the Five Powers. Western Union - Defence Organisation. Report by the Chiefs of Staff, F.P. (48) 27. London: 25.08.1948. 2 p.

National Archives of the United Kingdom, Kew. <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk>, Records of international organizations, DG. Copies of records of the Brussels Treaty Organisation and Western European Union. Brussels Treaty Organisations and Western European Union: Microfilm copies of files, DG 1.

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[http://www.cvce.eu/obj/report\\_by\\_the\\_chiefs\\_of\\_staff\\_on\\_the\\_defence\\_policy\\_of\\_western\\_union\\_london\\_25\\_august\\_1948-en-cdede0f6-f7db-4c32-8342-e30addca69fa.html](http://www.cvce.eu/obj/report_by_the_chiefs_of_staff_on_the_defence_policy_of_western_union_london_25_august_1948-en-cdede0f6-f7db-4c32-8342-e30addca69fa.html)

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25TH AUGUST, 1948.

MILITARY COMMITTEE OF THE FIVE POWERS

WESTERN UNION - DEFENCE POLICY

Report by the Chiefs of Staff

At our Meeting on 24th August we had a full discussion on the Defence Policy which should be followed by the Five Powers of the Brussels Treaty.

Seeing that the principal threat is directed against Western Europe we agreed on the following principles of policy :-

- (a) We should hold the enemy as far east as possible in Germany with the resources available at any given time.
  - (b) We should set up a command organisation so that we may be in a position to take action whenever an emergency occurs.
  - (c) We should concentrate on allocating all possible resources to meet the threats considered to be most immediate and most likely in Western Europe and to keep to a minimum the allocation of forces to meet less immediate dangers.
  - (d) We should strive to increase our preparedness by the development of our resources as soon as possible, insofar as essential economic and other considerations allow.
  - (e) A broad financial agreement covering the military needs of the Five Powers should be made forthwith in order that we can put into practice the principle of mutual assistance agreed by the Brussels Treaty.
  - (f) We should initiate and take positive action to combat the ideological attacks of the enemy. This will involve both political and economic action and must essentially be closely co-ordinated between all the Powers.
2. We have accordingly instructed the Military Committee to prepare a combined appreciation of the Defence Policy of the Western Union based upon the above principles.

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This appreciation will include a definition of Russian strategic aims, the type of threat which Russia may be expected to make in all parts of the world and an estimate of the form which hostilities might take.

3. We also propose that instructions should be sent to the Commanders-in-Chief in Europe, whose establishment we have recommended, to prepare :-

- (a) As an immediate step - a plan to meet the immediate situation with the forces at present available and at the same time to estimate the total forces required to meet Russian attacks on Western Europe.
- (b) In addition - a long term outline plan for the defence of Western Europe including a detailed estimate of the scale and direction of Russian attacks and a detailed assessment of the total forces required to defeat Russian attacks against Western Europe.

4. After consideration of the above reports we will determine the type and extent of the effort to be provided by each of the Five Powers, and also what additional aid would be required from elsewhere.

5. As a first step, we recommend that Ministers of Defence should :-

- (a) Endorse the principles of Defence Policy laid down in paragraph 1.
- (b) Initiate the measures necessary to secure a broad financial agreement covering military needs.
- (c) Initiate the measures necessary to obtain a combined plan to meet the ideological attacks of the enemy.
- (d) Endorse the instructions proposed for the Military Committee and for the Commanders-in-Chief in Western Europe.

(Signed) TEDDER

C. LECHERES

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25TH AUGUST, 1948.