Internal note from the British Foreign Office on seven 'sins' committed by the French against WEU (London, 12 April 1966)

Caption: On 12 April 1966, Sir E. John W. Barnes, Head of the Western Organisations and Coordination Department in the British Foreign Office, sends a note to Lord Hood, Deputy Under-Secretary of State at the Foreign Office and Permanent Representative to WEU, on the seven 'sins' committed by the French against Western European Union. The Foreign Office lists the ways in which it believes the French have either contravened specific articles of certain WEU protocols, such as not submitting levels of nuclear weapons to WEU controls, or have opposed certain agreements relating to WEU, such as proposals for setting a more detailed agenda prior to meetings of the Permanent Council.

Source: The National Archives of the UK (TNA). Foreign Office, Western Organisations and Co-ordination Department and Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Western Organisations Department: Registered Files (W and WD Series). WESTERN EUROPEAN UNION (WEU). Relations with NATO. 01/01/1967-31/12/1968, FCO 41/267 (Former Reference Dep: WU 4/3/1 PART B).

URL:
http://www.cvce.eu/obj/internal_note_from_the_british_foreign_office_on_seven_sins_committed_by_the_french_against_weu_london_12_april_1966-en-1871697c-5368-43c0-8c34-2b8cf480fdc5.html

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Reference

Western European Union

Lord Hood asked for a list of French sins in WEU.

2. I attach details of seven such transgressions.

D. M. Day
12 April, 1966.

Mr. Barnes.

13/4

Ed (1626)

French Sins in W.E.U.

1. Control of Atomic Stock Piles

Article III of Protocol No. III of the revised Brussels Treaty stated that when effective production of atomic weapons had started in territory on the mainland of Europe of any W.E.U. member, the level of stocks the State concerned would be allowed to hold on the mainland of Europe would be decided by a majority vote of the W.E.U. Council. TheFrench Government informed the W.E.U. Council in 1961 that they were not prepared to submit to this control; they have also blocked the appointment of a nuclear expert to the Armaments Control Agency.

2. Control of aircraft under national command

Under Article XVI of Protocol IV, and Article 4 of the Agreement of 14 December, 1957, each W.E.U. member is bound to notify the Armaments Control Agency of the total quantities of armaments possessed by any of its forces retained under national command (i.e. not assigned to NATO) on the mainland of Europe. In order to "dontrol" the level of such stocks of armaments, the Agency is authorised by Article VII of Protocol IV to undertake visits and inspections to depots and forces. During 1965, the French Government refused to allow the Armaments Control Agency to inspect the strategic bomber aircraft (Mirage IVs) of the force de frappe or provide any information about them.

3. Non-ratification of the Convention on Due Process of Law

The French Government, in common with the other W.E.U. Governments, signed a convention of 14 December, 1957 concerning measures to be taken by W.E.U. member states to enable the Armaments Control Agency to carry out its control effectively, and making provision for due process of law. It enters into force when ratified by all signatories. All W.E.U. members have now ratified except Italy and France, and Italy has commenced the ratification procedure. France has given no indication of any intention to ratify the convention; until she does, the Agency will be unable to carry out effective control of biological and chemical (and ultimately atomic) weapons.

4. The Luns Proposal

Proposals put forward by Dr. Luns in January 1964 for "making more use of the Permanent Council for regular discussions on matters considered of interest by one or more of the seven Governments," were discussed in W.E.U. for many months. Various suggestions were made including more detailed agenda, better preparation of items, and exchanges of views on political questions in the Permanent Council. The French consistently opposed these proposals on the ground that the discussion should be spontaneous and untrammeled by set procedures. Consequently nothing came of the Luns Proposal.

/5. Latin America

5. Latin America

Proposals put forward by the U.K. in 1964 for co-ordination of policies towards Latin America resulted in some useful exchanges. On the basis of these exchanges and information provided by member governments, a report was prepared by the Secretariat which contained a useful analysis of the current political and economic problems of Latin America. French intransigence prevented the Permanent Council from agreeing to include in the report any recommendations for action by W.E.U. Governments to co-ordinate their policies towards Latin America.

6. Joint Meetings

The French have repeatedly frustrated attempts to hold fruitful joint meetings between Committees of the Assembly and the Ministerial Council. In particular they have opposed holding these meetings at the most useful time from the Assembly's point of view, i.e. immediately after the meetings of the Ministerial Council. The French have also insisted that these meetings should be between the Assembly Committee and the Chairman only.

Replies to Assembly recommendations

7. The general effect of French intervention on draft replies to recommendations by the Assembly has been either to make it impossible for any agreed reply to be given, or to make the answers far more cryptic and less informative than they would otherwise have been, particularly on European economic questions and NATO.

(D. M. Day)
12 April, 1966