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My dear Mr. Secretaries:

Beginning on September 12, 1950, the Secretary of State will be meeting with the Foreign Ministers of the United Kingdom and France and, following that, with the Council of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

The most urgent problem coming before the Ministers will be that of moving forward rapidly to strengthen effectively the defense of Europe and to determine the nature of the contribution by Germany to this defense. The urgency of meeting this problem is increased by the growing military capability of East German forces. If the United States does not have a clear position prior to these meetings on the following points, there might well be disastrous consequences:

1. Are we prepared to commit additional United States forces to the defense of Europe;
2. Are we prepared to support, and in what manner, the concept of a European defense force, including German participation on other than a national basis;
3. Are we prepared to look forward to the eventuality of a Supreme Commander for the European defense forces;
4. Are we prepared to support the immediate creation of a Combined Staff for such an eventual Supreme Commander;

The Honorable
The Secretary of State

The Honorable
The Secretary of Defense

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5. Are we prepared to support supplementing the activities of the Military Production and Supply Board by a European War Production Board with centralized direction;

6. Are we prepared to consider full United States participation in European defense organs, i.e., would we be prepared to accept the responsibility of having an American Supreme Commander and an American Chairman of the European War Production Board;

7. Are we prepared to support the transformation of the Standing Group into a Combined Chiefs of Staff organization; and

8. Are there any other ways through which we should attempt to invigorate N.A.T.O. at this time?

In view of the interrelated political and military implications, I should like the Department of State and the Department of Defense to work together in developing recommendations on the above points for my decision. In order to permit preliminary conversation with the British and the French prior to the time the Ministers sail from Europe, I should like these recommendations prior to September 1.

Very truly yours,

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