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NSC BRIEFING

18 August 1959

DE GAULLE'S FOREIGN POLICY INTENTIONS

I. While De Gaulle supports fully a firm Western stand vis-a-vis the USSR, he envisages France as the eventual leader of a Eurafrikan grouping strong enough to face up to three other major power blocs: US-UK, Soviet, Chinese.

A. De Gaulle is convinced that Chinese expansion will force an "Americanized" Russia to cooperate with the West.

1. He considers Communism a transient phenomenon, and the Soviet drive for power just another form of Russian nationalism.

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2.

3. Because of resentment lest the US be considered sole spokesman for the West, Information Minister Frey has stated De Gaulle and Eisenhower would discuss purely French-US problems, and he assumed Eisenhower and Khrushchev would limit their exchange of views to US-USSR issues.

II. Meanwhile, Premier Debre is pressing more insistently in public De Gaulle's demand for an equal voice with the US and the UK in determining Western policy anywhere on the globe.

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- A. In a speech on 16 August Debre stated that France is reacting against alliances that were leading it into "bondage."
 - 1. He insisted France must have a larger role in world affairs, and be heard in order "to avoid being crushed by agreements between very great powers."

III. Pressure for tripartite global policy determination will probably intensify as the time approaches for the detonation of France's first nuclear device (probably spring 1960).

- A. Paris now seems to see prestige and bargaining advantages in developing its first bomb without foreign assistance.
- B. France apparently expects to have immediate access to nuclear-weapon knowledge once a French device is exploded.
 - 1. Pressure for a prior understanding on the scope of aid may precede tests.

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- C. Disappointment of French hopes in this respect will spark a violent French reaction.
 - 1. France's NATO commitments (forces and arms program) may be further curtailed.
 - 2. Paris might formally demand a reorganization of NATO, with a greater voice for Europe.
 - 3. Extremist nationalist elements in De Gaulle's entourage will feel increasingly free to take steps inimical to US interests.

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- IV. As UNGA consideration of the Algerian problem draws near, pressure on the US for more direct support of French policy in North Africa will increase.
- A. Paris maintains that a complete military victory in Algeria could be quickly achieved if the rebels were sealed off from foreign aid.
 - B. The disappointing results of the current highly publicized large-scale mop-up operations in the mountains east of Algiers will probably strengthen France's diplomatic offensive.
 - C. Nevertheless, De Gaulle is unlikely to make any additional cease-fire appeal which would imply recognition of the Algerian Provisional Government as sole representatives of the Algerian people.
 - 1. The rebels' hope for strong support in the UN will probably make them reluctant to accept anything less.
- V. Debre's 16 August speech stressed the importance of Algeria in France's dream of economic independence.
- A. De Gaulle probably hopes to see the Sahara solidifying French hegemony over the contiguous African areas.
 - B. The French see Saharan oil freeing them from the dollar-trade-gap problem.
 - C. They look to the Sahara to assure France's pre-eminence in a European "Third Force" capable of mediating between the Soviet Bloc and the "Anglo Saxons."

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VI. Meanwhile, De Gaulle is still groping for a more specific definition of his vague proposal for a joint international aid program to underdeveloped areas.

- A. He will probably push this proposal with increasing insistence as the only realistic substitute for the cold war.
- B. He seems sincere in presenting this idea as a means of achieving a detente, but he also has referred to it as a clever tactical move which would "embarrass" the Russians because they would have to reject it.
- C. He may present it in a way, however, the USSR can readily turn to Soviet propaganda ends.

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