

CONSEIL DE L'ATLANTIQUE NORD
NORTH ATLANTIC COUNCIL

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~~NATO SECRET~~
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C-M(52)80

SWISS MERCHANT MARINE

Note by the Secretary General
and Vice-Chairman of the Council

Previous reference: C-M(52)70

I attach hereto a draft Aide Memoire on the reply to the Swiss Government on the subject of the treatment of Swiss shipping in case of war. In this draft account has been taken of the observations made at the Council meeting on 10th September, 1952. ✕

2. This draft Aide Memoire will be placed on the agenda for the Council meeting on 1st October, 1952.

(Signed) ISMAY

Palais de Chaillot,
Paris, XVIIe.

✕ C-R(52)20, para.14.

AIDE MEMOIRE FOR USE BY THE ITALIAN GOVERNMENT
IN ITS ORAL AND INFORMAL REPLY TO THE SWISS GOVERNMENT

The Swiss Government have sought through the Italian Delegation to the North Atlantic Council Deputies to obtain two assurances from the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO):

first, that ships under the Swiss flag be allowed, in case of war, to continue to re-fuel in the harbours of the NATO member countries on the same conditions as the ships of these countries;

and, secondly, that ships under the Swiss flag be not requisitioned or subjected to any restrictive measure, both in prevision of a war and in case of war, by NATO or NATO member countries.

2. The North Atlantic Council have discussed this matter and are able to state that in the event of a general war involving North Atlantic Treaty powers and subject to overriding requirements of North Atlantic Treaty countries and their allies, due regard would be given to such requirements of Swiss shipping as might, in that event, be agreed to be necessary, provided that such shipping complies with whatever measures may be introduced in order to avoid,

- (a) the use of such shipping in a manner contrary to the general purposes and objectives of NATO countries and their allies; and
- (b) the use of such shipping as channels of supply to the enemy.

3. The Governments parties to the North Atlantic Treaty regret that they cannot guarantee that Swiss shipping would receive the same shore facilities and services as the shipping of the NATO and its allies in the event of a war.

4. The Governments parties to the North Atlantic Treaty are willing to inform the Swiss Government that requisitioning Swiss ships in time of war is not at present contemplated. However, owing to the difficulty of foreseeing all contingencies which might arise in the event of war, Governments parties to the North Atlantic Treaty are unable to give assurances that Swiss ships would, under all circumstances, remain immune from requisition.