

THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
WASHINGTON

13 January 1950

MEMORANDUM FOR SECRETARY OF THE ARMY
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY
SECRETARY OF THE AIR FORCE
CHAIRMAN, JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF
CHIEF OF STAFF, UNITED STATES ARMY
CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS
CHIEF OF STAFF, UNITED STATES AIR FORCE
CHAIRMAN, MUNITIONS BOARD
CHAIRMAN, RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT BOARD
CHAIRMAN, PERSONNEL POLICY BOARD
DIRECTORS OF OFFICES, OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
OF DEFENSE

Subject: Functions and Procedures of the Armed Forces
Policy Council.

I. THE ARMED FORCES POLICY COUNCIL

A. Membership of the Armed Forces Policy Council

The Armed Forces Policy Council, established pursuant to Section 210 of the National Security Act of 1947 as amended, shall be composed of the Secretary of Defense as Chairman, who shall have power of decision; the Deputy Secretary of Defense; the Secretary of the Army; the Secretary of the Navy; the Secretary of the Air Force; the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; the Chief of Staff, United States Army; the Chief of Naval Operations; and the Chief of Staff, United States Air Force. The Chairman of the Munitions Board, the Chairman of the Research and Development Board, and the Chairman of the Personnel Policy Board shall meet regularly with the Armed Forces Policy Council. In addition, such other officials of the Department of Defense and of other departments and agencies in the Executive Branch as may be designated by the Secretary of Defense shall be invited to attend meetings of the Armed Forces Policy Council when matters of interest to these agencies and officials are to be considered.

B. Functions of the Armed Forces Policy Council

The Armed Forces Policy Council shall advise the Secretary of Defense on matters of broad policy relating to the Armed Forces

WNRC:

RG: 330

ACCESSION# 63A-1478

BOX# 1

FILE NAME:

AFPC, Organization, Function & Procedures

and shall consider and report on such other matters as the Secretary of Defense may direct. The members of the Armed Forces Policy Council and the Chairman of the Munitions Board, the Chairman of the Research and Development Board, and the Chairman of the Personnel Policy Board shall report regularly to the Armed Forces Policy Council on important matters of interest to the Department of Defense.

C. Procedures of the Armed Forces Policy Council

1. Meetings

The Armed Forces Policy Council shall meet normally on Tuesday of each week and, in addition, shall hold such special meetings as the Secretary of Defense may call from time to time.

2. Agenda

An agenda of matters to come before the Armed Forces Policy Council, together with supporting papers, shall normally be furnished to the membership of the Council no later than the noon of the Thursday preceding the Council's regular Tuesday meeting. In considering the questions to be presented to the Armed Forces Policy Council, the Council Secretary is directed to include only those questions which are of sufficient importance to require Armed Forces Policy Council consideration and, to the extent practicable, only those which have been adequately developed to the point of readiness for decision.

D. Functions of the Secretary of the Armed Forces Policy Council

1. The Secretary of the Armed Forces Policy Council shall be responsible:

a. For developing the agenda and the supporting documentation for the Council;

b. For assuring that each issue is adequately developed by the staff of the department or agency concerned and is properly presented to the Council;

c. For establishing and monitoring ad hoc committees to conduct studies or discharge other functions as may be determined by the Council;

d. For disseminating authoritative statements of the conclusions and decisions reached by the Council;

e. For initiating such other action as is required to implement decisions taken in the Council, including preparation of directives where necessary;

f. For appropriate follow-up to assure that decisions reached in the Council are properly implemented;

g. For preparing permanent minutes of each meeting of the Council;

h. For safeguarding the transcripts, minutes and other records of the Council;

i. For being continuously and adequately informed of those matters under consideration by the three military departments, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Munitions Board, the Research and Development Board, the Personnel Policy Board, and other staff agencies which may deserve the attention of the Council, and for assuring that such matters are properly and promptly considered therein.

E. Armed Forces Policy Council Liaison Representatives

The Departments of the Army, Navy, and Air Force, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Munitions Board, the Research and Development Board, the Personnel Policy Board, and such other staff agencies as are determined by the Council Secretary to require representation, shall each appoint a liaison representative to assist the Council Secretary in the efficient discharge of his responsibilities.

This memorandum supersedes the memorandum of 6 April 1949 on the same subject.

Louis Johnson

THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
WASHINGTON

4 May 1950

MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARIES OF THE MILITARY DEPARTMENTS
THE ASSISTANT SECRETARIES OF DEFENSE
THE CHAIRMEN OF BOARDS, STAFFS AND COMMITTEES,
OSD
THE DIRECTORS OF OFFICES, OSD

SUBJECT: Attendance at meetings of the Armed Forces Policy
Council

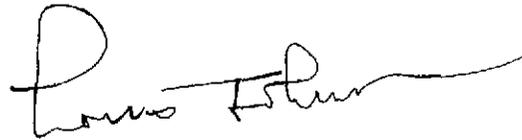
I consider that recent meetings of the Armed Forces Policy Council have been attended by unnecessarily large numbers of persons whose official position gives to them a reasonable, but neither a direct nor compelling, warrant for attending, and whose presence has tended to inhibit the full discussion of highly confidential matters. In order to correct this situation which could, if allowed to continue, impair the effectiveness of the Council, I hereby direct that

- (1) Except as otherwise prescribed in paragraph (2) below, attendance at future meetings of the Armed Forces Policy Council will be strictly limited to the following persons:

The Secretary of Defense
The Deputy Secretary
The three departmental Secretaries
(or their designated alternates)
The three Assistant Secretaries of Defense
The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff
The three Military Chiefs
(or their designated alternates)
The three Board Chairmen
(or their designated alternates)
The Executive Secretary, National Security Council, and Mr. Souers
The Assistant to the Secretary of Defense for Foreign Military Affairs and Military Assistance (or the Director, Office of Foreign Military Affairs)
The Chairman, Military Liaison Committee
The Chairman, Management Committee
The Executive Secretary, Office of the Secretary of Defense
The Director of the Joint Staff

- (2) Persons other than those included in the above list will attend meetings only when their participation in the consideration of a given subject is required. Members of the Council, or their designated representatives, should arrange for the attendance of such persons in each case by consultation with the Secretary of the Armed Forces Policy Council.

This memorandum shall take effect immediately.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Louis Johnson". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned to the right of the main text block.

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
Washington

16 October 1950

MEMORANDUM FOR THE MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES POLICY COUNCIL

SUBJECT: Attendance at meetings of the Armed
Forces Policy Council.

Beginning with the meeting of the Armed Forces Policy Council tomorrow at 10:00 a.m. (October 17), the following policy with regard to attendance will be in effect:

As long as the present international situation exists, the Secretary of Defense will meet at least weekly with the statutory members of the Armed Forces Policy Council. It will be the general practice on alternate Tuesdays to have in the meeting the Chairmen of the Munitions Board, Research and Development Board and Personnel Policy Board, and the other staff personnel who have been attending as observers, as well as Mr. Harriman, Mr. Souers and the Executive Secretary, National Security Council. The meetings of the smaller group (the statutory members) will be regular. The meetings of the larger group will be on the basis of notification from the Secretary of the Council. The meeting tomorrow at 10:00 a.m. will be the first meeting of the statutory members only.

/s/ Ralph N. Stohl
Secretary of the Armed Forces Policy Council

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

Washington

1 March 1949

THE WAR COUNCIL

The War Council was established under the National Security Act of 1947 to "advise the Secretary of Defense on matters of broad policy relating to the Armed Forces". The Secretary of Defense was designated Chairman of the Council and given the power of decision over questions coming before it. The Act provided that the other members of the Council were the Secretaries of the Army, Navy and Air Force and their Chiefs of Staff.

The Congress recognized that the problems inherent in integrating the three Armed Services into a single, adequate, defense establishment which would assume its proper place in the pattern of our national security, required a high-level body within the Establishment to which the Secretary of Defense could turn for advice on the many complex questions which affect the Establishment as a whole. The Congress expressly made the Council "advisory" in character and thus presumably expected this body to be in relation to the Secretary of Defense in the same manner as the Cabinet is in relation to the President. The soundness of this concept has been borne out in the first eighteen months of operation under the National Security Act. During this period the advice of the War Council has been sought and has proved most helpful in connection with important questions covering every significant aspect of our national security.

The matters which come before the War Council fall into two classes. In the first are those questions which concern the National Military Establishment's external relationship with other elements of the national security structure (the National Security Council or the National Security Resources Board), or with the Congress and the country at large. In the second class are problems which affect the internal administration of the Establishment in terms of its development into an integrated whole. The character of the action taken by the War Council varies with the nature of these questions. In some cases the Council renders advice on substantive issues for decision by the Secretary of Defense as directed by the National Security Act. Other problems require the coordination and adjustment among the Departments and Staff Agencies of existing policies and programs of joint interest.

The problems which fall into the first class include some of the most difficult and important questions which now face this country. Many aspects of the proposed program to furnish military assistance to Western Union countries have been discussed in the War Council for the purpose of advising the Secretary of Defense as to the position which he should take in discussing these matters with the President, the

Secretary of State, and the Congress. Questions affecting the Berlin Airlift and the policies underlying our occupation of Germany, Austria and Japan have been considered. Many other highly classified matters of a similar nature, concerning which the Secretary of Defense must present the position of the Military Establishment as a whole, are brought to the War Council in order that the Secretary will have the benefit of its advice in taking his position.

The problem in the second category -- the internal administration of the Establishment -- arise partly as a result of the transition from the two separate Departments of War and Navy to an integrated Military Establishment composed of the three co-equal Departments of Army, Navy and Air Force. Many of these problems are new. Others existed before but were made more complex by the establishment of a third Department. The War Council has been used extensively not only to furnish the Secretary of Defense with advice as to how these problems can best be solved, but also as a medium through which the three services can coordinate and adjust their important problems of common interest. Examples are many. Thus, the budget estimates for fiscal year 1940, which recommend to the Congress the size of the peacetime military forces, were discussed at length in the War Council prior to the Secretary's decision and recommendations to the Bureau of the Budget. The necessity for strengthening all the elements of the reserve components of the Armed Services was considered by the Council and, as a result, the "Committee on Civilian Components", under the chairmanship of Assistant Secretary of the Army Gray, was organized. This committee submitted a penetrating report on this subject, which, after further War Council consideration, was transmitted to the President on December 14. Again, as a result of War Council discussion, a detailed study by an independent committee, under the direction of Mr. Charles R. Hook, covered every significant phase of a sound system of compensation for military personnel. War Council action has resulted in similar studies in many other fields, among them civil defense planning, the consolidation of military air transport services, hospital and medical services, and the basic education of career officers, the last of which is now being inaugurated.

These examples of the matters which come before the War Council will indicate the scope of its interest and the purposes which it serves. Since it is the only formal mechanism existing in the National Military Establishment through which the heads of the military departments and agencies can exchange views and furnish the Secretary of Defense with their collective advice, it plays an essential part in the strengthening of our national security. It represents a device through which the Secretary of Defense can achieve a balanced and informed judgment as to the increasingly important and complex problems which arise in the field of military security and which require his attention.

/s/
John Sherman
Secretary of the War Council