Memorandum from V. Semyonov to Comrade V.M. Molotov for the forthcoming session of the Council of Foreign Ministers, 22 November 1947

Addressee only.

To Comrade V.M. MOLOTOV

It should be taken into account that the political organisation of Germany will be one of the main issues raised by the US and Britain at the Council of Foreign Ministers session, and new British-American proposals will be brought forward, which will significantly alter their position in comparison with the one at the Moscow Council of Foreign Ministers session. This issue is central in the correspondence between Strang[[1]](#footnote-1) and Inverchapel[[2]](#footnote-2) with the British Foreign Office. Of special importance is Inverchapel’s communication to London dated 23 October.

1. To bring forward to the Council of Foreign Ministers a proposal on the immediate establishment of a the federal Provisional German Government, bypassing the preliminary stage of setting up the central departments, which is said to already be an elapsed step in the merged zone where there are is Economic Council and other bizonal economic bodies.

2. This Government should be organised by a special Control Council directive, which should contain only the main clauses of the Provisional Constitution, namely, on the two-chamber system, on the broad division of powers, and on the legislative bodies’ elections procedure. The development of the permanent German Constitution should be assigned to the Provisional Government, and will take about two years. Thus, setting up the Consultative Council to develop Constitution will become unnecessary.

3. The lower chamber should be set up before the elections on the principle of territorial representation. The Parliamentary elections should be carried out as soon as possible, and territories should be given the right to determine their own procedure for electing deputies (in line with the number of population). This way, the contradictions among the Allies on the issue of the proportionate elections system which would be the same for entire Germany shall be avoided. They hope to achieve, through quick elections, an overwhelming bourgeouis voting majority in the Parliament (Robertson believes that the Socialist Unity Party of Germany – Communist Party of Germany will have no more than 23% of the votes in the Parliament).

4. The legislative actions of the Provisional Government should be subject to the veto of the Control Council majority.

5. The basis of the Provisional Government, according to the Americans, might be the Economic Council in Frankfurt.

6. The US Department of State takes into account the possibility that this plan might be applied, due to disagreement of the USSR, not to entire Germany, but to two or three zones only. In this case the Economic Council should first act as the Provisional Government for two or three zones.

7. There is certain opposition to the plans of merging the French zone with the bizonal union among the influential circles in France (e.g. General Staff).

8. The economic issues are considered to be closely related with ...

Political issues, and all of the above-mnentioned plan ... Appointed to unmask the Soviet policy of supporting... Germany and to create a base for the West German... lands union.

9. We should note the above circumstances while working on the issue of implementing directives brought forward by the Soviet delegation.

I will provide my proposals under a separate cover.

[signed] (V. Semyonov)

22 November 1947.

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1. William Strang, 1st Baron Strang (1893–1978), British diplomat and politician. Permanent Under-Secretary of State for the German Question (1947–1949) and Permanent Under-Secretary of State for International Affairs (1949–1953). [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Archibald Clark Kerr, 1st Baron Inverchapel (1882 - 1951), British diplomat. British Ambassador to Moscow (1942 - 1946), British Ambassador to Washington (1946 - 1948). [↑](#footnote-ref-2)