Memorandum by Field Marshal Montgomery Regarding the Strategy for the defence of Western Europe, dated 28 October 1948

STRATEGY FOR THE DEFENCE OF WESTERN EUROPE WHICH WILL FORM A BASIS FOR PLANING THE C’s-in-C COMMITTEE UNTIL FURTHER ORDERS

Memorandum by Field Marshal Montgomery

The Background

1. If the present differences between Russia and the West should lead to a clash, then the forces of the Western Union will defend their homelands.

A great struggle would develop.

For the next few years Russia will have a great initial superiority in armed strength.

But during this phase it will be vital that we hold the line of the Rhine in order that we prevent the homelands of the West from being overrun, and that we keen the Russians away from Africa.

So long as we do these two things, then we can, with American aid, fight back and recover any territory that we may temporarily lose in the initial battles. This doctrine must from the background to our planning in Western Europe.

2. In the Middle East, it will be the task of the armed forces of the British Empire, assisted by American to hold the Bridge between Asia and Africa and thus deny to the Russians this approach to the African Continent.

3. In the battles that would follow a clash, every officer and man in the forces of the Western Union must be imbued with one ruling idea: that he is trained to fight and kill, and the he himself will not be killed without taking at least two Russians with him to the next world.

The need for a Western Plan or Grand Design

7. It is unsound to try and treat any one part of the front from the Baltic to Trieste as an isolated problem. It is all part of one connected whole.

8. We must have a “Grand Design” for the employment of the Allied Forces now deployed from the Baltic to Trieste. Within such a framework it will then be possible to place each constituent part into its proper perspective; only when this has been done will it be possible to produce the right answer to the mane individual problems which face us in the different parts of our front.

9. It is, furthermore, absolutely essential that this “Grand Design” or master plan should be worked out on an Allied bases. We cannot afford to have uncoordinated and individual planning. We must be so concerted in our plans that the forces we maintain could swing into action without delay.

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