

DOS REVIEWED 18-Mar-2013: DECLASSIFIED FOR RELEASE IN FULL

Paris, 26 February, 1949

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Dear Bob:

I admit I was a little taken ^{back} when we spoke this morning by your apparent feeling that I have taken a position here opposed to your views on the matter of the communique about western boundary changes. I think perhaps there is a misunderstanding. I completely agree with the views you expressed in your 197 of Feb. 19 and your 286 of Feb. 23 concerning the political undesirability of having the United States join in issuing a communique or indeed being further involved in this question in any way. Nevertheless, I do not see how I could have acted other than I have, in the light of the Department's clear instructions to me (Deptel 200, Feb. 17) ^{attached} to press for the issuance of a communique in the immediate future - that is to say, immediately on the conclusion of our present meeting. The Department's position regarding our participation was confirmed by its telegram 535 of Feb. 21, and of course I did not even know you had reopened the question by your personal telegram to the Secretary until the day after agreement was reached here on the principle of an early communique. (Agreement was reached in the afternoon of the 23d, and your cable did not reach me until that evening.)

My instructions being what they are, I felt I had no

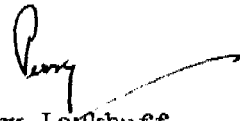
Ambassador Robert Murphy,

excuse for not presenting at the first meeting the arguments for an early communique, arguments which the British advanced with equal force and which the others accepted next day. As you doubtless know, Gen. Robertson told the press over a week ago that a communique is under preparation and will be published soon. The press both in and out of Germany continues its alarmist speculations. All these factors seem to me to sharply curtail the period within which further delay can be justified. I have felt therefore that an early communique would be wisest and the Department's mind has seemed made up that we must participate in its issuance. There is the further consideration that it would seem unwise to wait another four to six weeks and have a public announcement on this subject more or less coincide with news of the Occupation Statute and final decisions at Bonn.

The foregoing may help to clarify for you what I have done here. I do not believe in what I am doing but I must follow instructions. I would withdraw from these meetings with the greatest celerity and relief should the Secretary react favorably to your telegram.

With best regards, I am

Most sincerely,


Perry Latkhuff

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PERSONAL &
CONFIDENTIAL

Berlin, March 3, 1949.

Dear Perry:

I have just received your confidential letter of February 26. Please do not feel for a moment that I do not appreciate fully your position in Paris. I have not at all believed that you have taken a position opposed to my views. The only point I made to you on the telephone is that I did not understand your going along with the British on the immediate issuance of the communique. Apart from that I understand the situation entirely and hope you dismiss from your mind any idea that you and I are in disagreement. That is definitely not the case.

I have also taken philosophically the contents of the Department's 238, repeated to Paris as 640. Looking back on the matter, I am personally not without a degree of responsibility for having failed earlier in the day to agitate this question. I admit that it is late in the day to adopt a firmer line although I am convinced that we could, without damaging the position, avoid participation in the issuance of the communique. However, the Department's decision on that point now seems to be final.

I do not envy you your job in Paris and you have my full sympathy and support.

Yours ever,

Robert Murphy

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RM/vt

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