

~~TOP SECRET~~

THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF  
Washington 25, D. C.

C O P Y

2 April 1954

MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

Subject: NSC 5411/1 - U.S. Policy  
Toward Italy

1. The Joint Chiefs of Staff submit herewith their comments and recommendations concerning the draft statement of policy in NSC 5411/1, titled: "U.S. Policy Toward Italy", which was prepared by the National Security Council Planning Board, pursuant to NSC Action No. 1078-b, for consideration by the National Security Council in lieu of the draft statement of policy contained in NSC 5411.

2. In their memorandum for you dated 23 March 1954, on the above subject\* the Joint Chiefs of Staff submitted their views concerning NSC 5411 and suggested changes to that draft statement of policy which would bring it into consonance with those views. The amended draft statement in NSC 5411/1 incorporates only in part the changes suggested by the Joint Chiefs of Staff and does not fully reflect their views as to (a) the strategic importance of Italy and the impact upon NATO strategy which would attend the loss of Italy to Communist control, nor, (b) adequate courses of action to prevent the conversion of the military potential of Italy to the use of the Soviet Bloc in the event of the "cold war" loss of Italy to Communist control. Accordingly, the Joint Chiefs of Staff suggest the following changes to the draft statement of policy in NSC 5411/1:

a. That the bracketed phrases in subparagraphs b, e, and f of paragraph 1 be included.

REASON: To reflect accurately and adequately the political, psychological, and military damage to the Free World which would attend the loss of Italy to Communist control.

b. Change the first part of the lead sentence of paragraph 30 as follows (changes indicated in the usual manner):

\*See Memo for NSC from Executive Secretary, same subject, dated March 24, 1954.

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| Authority    | NLE 2009-74 *1         |
| By           | MUK NLDDE Date 12/1/10 |

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"30. In the event (1) that the Communists, or groups or parties allied with them, gain participation in the Italian Government ~~by-legal-means~~ through constitutional processes and threaten to achieve control . . ."

REASON: In order to avoid giving, in a statement of United States policy, an aura of legality to the political machinations of the Communist Party in Italy.

c. Change paragraph 31 as follows (changes indicated in the usual manner):

"31. In the event the Communists achieve control of the Italian Government ~~by-legal-means~~ through constitutional processes, the United States, preferably in concert with its principal NATO allies, should ~~be-prepared-to~~ take appropriate action, . . ."

REASON: (1) For consistency with the change recommended in subparagraph b above.

(2) In order to indicate that this contingency would call for positive action, as appropriate.

3. Subject to the incorporation of the foregoing changes, the Joint Chiefs of Staff recommend that you concur in the adoption of NSC 5411/1.

For the Joint Chiefs of Staff:

/s/ ARTHUR RADFORD,

Arthur Radford,  
Chairman,  
Joint Chiefs of Staff: