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Annex No. IV

Document No. 20

Norwegian Note to USSR, May 27

The Norwegian Government has closely examined the contents of the note from the Government of the Soviet Union of May 13 and would like to communicate the following:

In its note the Government of the Soviet Union draws the attention of the Norwegian Government to the violation of the frontiers of the Soviet Union by an American aircraft, which flew over parts of the territory of the Soviet Union. Based upon the information that the pilot of the aircraft was equipped with a map indicating Bodo airfield as his destination, the Soviet Government protests against foreign aircraft being given the opportunity of using Norwegian territory in order to prepare and to carry out penetrations into the Soviet Union.

In this connection the Norwegian Government would like to make the following observations:

In its declarations to the "Storting" on May 9 and May 13, the Norwegian Government made it clear that no Norwegian civil or military authority had cooperated in any way in the execution of the flight in question. In these declarations the Government stated its reaction to this incident and explained the steps taken in the matter. Reference is made in this respect to the Foreign Ministers press release of May 19. The government has thus in the "Storting" openly presented the available information regarding this matter. The contents of the two declarations have also been brought to the knowledge of the Soviet Government on the understanding that the relations between our two countries must be based on frankness and sincerity.

In its note of May 13 the Soviet Government assert that the aircraft incident on May 1 diminishes the value of the Norwegian assurances regarding the stationing of foreign armed forces in Norway. This assumption is made on the grounds that Norwegian territory "already now is put at the disposal of aircraft of the United States Air Force penetrating into the Soviet Union for aggressive purposes". As is evident from the statements made by the Norwegian Government, there is no basis for such assumptions.

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It has been and still is the policy of the Norwegian Government never to permit the use of Norwegian territory for acts violating the territory of another country.

The Norwegian Government fully recognizes the need of the Soviet Union to safeguard its interests and its national security. Norway for its part has the same needs which the Norwegian Government endeavours to satisfy in the most appropriate way. The Government is fully conscious of the considerations which in this connection must be given to all legitimate interests of Norway's neighboring countries. It is thus essential to ensure that the good and confident neighborly relations with the Soviet Union are not endangered by the fact that Norway has safeguarded its security by participating in a regional defense alliance. It will always be a major aim of Norwegian foreign policy to maintain and strengthen these neighborly relations.

Against this background the Government of the Soviet Union will no doubt understand that the Norwegian Government must regret the warnings of measures against Norwegian territory contained in the Soviet note of May 13. The Norwegian Government cannot see that any steps have been taken by Norway in connection with this incident which can in any way be interpreted as unfriendly acts towards the Soviet Union, or which in any other way justify such warnings.

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