

SUPREME ALLIED COMMANDER EUROPE
SHAPE, PARIS, FRANCE

JUL 18 1962

Dear Mr. President:

I appreciated very much the opportunity to talk with you last Monday. By means of this letter I would like to confirm the thoughts I expressed on one of the subjects we discussed at that meeting.

You will recall that when we talked last January, we mentioned the possibility of my leaving my present assignment some time this winter, if no particular crisis developed in the meantime. The reasons for any change of this kind are apt to be rather involved, but certainly foremost in my mind in this particular case is the simple fact that after twelve years with NATO, six of which I have served as Supreme Allied Commander Europe, I have stayed in one field of activity and in one position somewhat longer than is the normal practice in the military services.

We live in a time of continuing crisis, but for the moment, at least, there is no unusual pressure on my office. I request therefore that I be relieved of my assignment as Commander-in-Chief, United States European Command on or about 1 November 1962.

I have informed the Secretary-General of the North Atlantic Council of this request, and I assume that steps will now be taken by that body and by the United States Government, as appropriate, to release me from my position as Supreme Allied Commander Europe with effect on or about 1 November 1962. Through Department of Defense channels I will request that I be placed on the Retired List at the same time.

My retirement will conclude something more than 36 years of service in the uniform of the United States. To have served as an officer of my country in peace and in war during an interesting

and critical period has been the greatest pleasure, the highest honor. To this has been added the great privilege of also serving the fourteen other nations of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. I am indebted to the United States and to its NATO Allies for the great satisfaction that has come to me through this service.

I have enjoyed working with you, Mr. President. In the critical periods when we have been in the most direct contact, I have learned to respect your courage, your judgment and your capacity for leadership. I also appreciate the support that you have given to me during these times of stress. You have my best wishes and my continuing support as you face the great problems that are before you.

Faithfully,

Lauris Norstad

LAURIS NORSTAD
General USAF

The President
The White House
Washington, D. C.