

9. Guidance to the NATO Military Authorities from the Defence Planning Committee 1967

GUIDANCE TO THE NATO MILITARY AUTHORITIES

In the preparation of force proposals as directed by Ministers, the NATO Military Authorities should be guided by the propositions set out below, which are grouped under the headings of Soviet Policy and the Threat, Strategy and NATO Forces, and Resources.

A.SOVIENT POLICY AND THE THREAT

General Soviet Policy

1. The fundamental issues underlying the tension between East and West have not been resolved.
2. The policies by which the Soviets seek to realise their ends show signs of evolving in response both to political changes in the world and to the continuing existence of a credible Western deterrent (including the continued presence of effective Canadian, United Kingdom, and United States forces within Allied Command Europe), although the Soviet leaders have not renounced as an ultimate aim the extension of Soviet Communist influence throughout the world.
3. Within Europe the Soviet leaders appear in recent years to have followed a more cautious line.
4. Outside Europe, wherever they can do so without military risk to the Soviet Union, the Soviet leaders actively exploit every opportunity to build up positions from which to threaten NATO in the event of hostilities; this is especially true in Africa, Latin America, and the Middle East.
5. The Soviet Union is supported to a greater or lesser extent by the Eastern European countries on a number of questions in which they share with it a community of interest.
6. The military capabilities of the Warsaw Pact constitute a formidable element in the threat, and the Pact countries continue to spend large sums on improving them.

7. The means that the Soviets may choose in order to realise their aims are likely to be influenced both by NATO's military capabilities (particularly in terms of forces immediately available) and by their conclusions regarding the cohesion of NATO and its determination to use its military power if necessary.

8. So long as the forces committed to NATO and the external nuclear forces supporting the Alliance are able to inflict catastrophic damage on Soviet society even after a surprise nuclear attack, it is unlikely that the Soviet Union will deliberately initiate either a general war or, provided that the risk of escalation to nuclear war continues to be made clear to it, a limited war in the NATO area.

9. Nevertheless, the risk of a deliberate attack cannot be discounted; for example, if the potential enemy, either from political evidence or by deduction from the state of our military preparedness, doubts our cohesion, our determination, or our capability to resist.

10. Military planning must therefore take account of the risk of deliberate attack, which may vary between regions; the military weaknesses of the flanks makes them particularly vulnerable.

11. In addition, the possibility of hostilities arising by accident or from miscalculation, which could escalate to greater intensity, cannot be ruled out.

Warning Time

12. The potential enemy has the capability to mount a surprise attack on a considerable scale and the concept of surprise remains a fundamental principle of war; one of the bases for NATO's military planning should therefore be the hypothesis of an attack with little or no strategic warning by some or all of the forces immediately available to the Warsaw Pact.

13. For an attack directed exclusively or initially against a flank region NATO's local military weaknesses would be particularly likely to influence an aggressor's choice of action in favour of surprise.

14. If the Warsaw Pact was prepared to forgo strategic surprise in order to increase the weight of its attack, we should expect some military indications of the build-up - we have not attempted to make precise assumptions regarding the warning time that might be available, but we have noted estimates covering a range from 4 to 15 days in the context of an 80-division attack on the central front.

15. Although there can be no certainty that the Soviet Union or one of its Allies would not undertake a sudden onslaught, it is probable in the present political climate that a period of increasing political tension (possibly of weeks, if not months) would precede aggression. The early stages of such a period of increasing tension might be marked by indications (e.g. changes in Soviet policy) which, if interpreted correctly and in time, would give NATO a measure of forewarning. While reliance on this probability as a basis for military force planning for the Alliance as a whole would involve considerable risk, it should also be taken into account in the planning of political measures and military actions, such as making ready and deploying reinforcements, thus enabling the maximum use to be made of any period of forewarning to demonstrate the cohesion and determination of the Alliance and enhance the credibility of its deterrent posture.

B. STRATEGY AND NATO FORCES

16. The basis of NATO's military planning must be to ensure security through credible deterrence; secondly, should aggression occur, to preserve or restore the integrity and security of the North Atlantic Treaty area by employing such forces as may be necessary within the concept of forward defence.

17. In order to deter, and if necessary counter, aggression, the Alliance needs a full spectrum of military capabilities including:

- (a) The strategic nuclear forces of the Alliance. These are adequate to inflict catastrophic damage on Soviet society even after a surprise nuclear attack and constitute the backbone of NATO's military capabilities. Although there appears to be no way to prevent similar damage to the West from an all-out nuclear attack, risks are a necessary corollary of a policy founded on deterrence.
- (b) The tactical nuclear forces available to the Major NATO Commanders. These constitute an essential component of the deterrent. Their primary purposes are to add to the deterrence of conventional attacks of any magnitude, and counter them if necessary, by confronting the enemy with the prospect of consequent escalation of the conflict; and to deter, and if necessary respond to, the use of tactical nuclear weapons by posing the threat of escalation to all-out nuclear war.
- (c) The conventional forces of the Alliance, land, sea, and air, many of which are organically supported by tactical nuclear weapons, are a further essential component of the deterrent. They should be designed to deter and successfully counter to the greatest extent possible a limited non-nuclear attack and to deter any larger non-nuclear attack by confronting the aggressor with the prospect of non-nuclear hostilities on a scale that could involve a grave risk of escalation to nuclear war.

18. NATO should not plan to reserve forces for hostilities following a general nuclear exchange.

19. Direct defence requires effective forces in being capable of defending as far forward as possible on land, and at sea wherever aggression occurs.

20. The tactical nuclear weapons available to the major NATO Commanders are sufficient in quantity to meet the likely requirements although it may be desirable to improve the mix of various types of weapon and the plans and procedures for their use and to enhance their survivability.

21. The present level of NATO conventional forces for the central region (if improved as described below) would appear in present circumstances to be acceptable within the strategic concept of flexibility now being discussed. NATO's local defensive capabilities on the flanks are limited; the local forces of member countries on the flanks are numerically smaller than those which the Warsaw Pact countries can rapidly bring to bear. The overall assessment of ACLANT and ACCHAN forces is also "limited".

22. In order to meet the need for direct defence, NATO forces must be of a high quality, adequately supported, and capable of rapid augmentation as described below. Certain imbalances, deficiencies, vulnerabilities, and maldeployments need to be corrected.

23. To take account of the probability of a period of political tension preceding a possible aggression or to take advantage of forewarning provided by any other indications, NATO requires a capability for rapid augmentation of its forward posture. This calls for realistic plans:

- (a) For the timely deployment of any active forces not located near their emergency defence positions.
- (b) For supplementing effective local forces in being on the flanks through an improved NATO capability for rapid reinforcement without impairment of M-Day defensive capabilities elsewhere.
- (c) For the provision of trained, equipped, and readily mobilisable reserve forces which might be committed to NATO.

The plans at (c) above, which should take full account of the mobilisation and force expansion capabilities of NATO countries, should provide a base for longer term force increases in a prolonged test of political determination.

24. Account should be taken of the possibility that neither French forces nor French territory, air space, or facilities would be available to NATO in crisis or war.

25. The overall strategic concept for NATO should be revised to allow NATO a greater flexibility and to provide for the employment as appropriate of one or more of direct defence, deliberate escalation, and general nuclear response, thus confronting the enemy with a credible threat of escalation in response to any type of aggression below the level of a major nuclear attack.

C. RESOURCES

Economic and Financial

26. Barring unexpected and substantial changes in the world political situation, the share of Gross National Product (GNP) to be devoted to defence up to 1975 is as a whole unlikely to exceed that of 1965 and may be below this; the trend may, of course, vary in detail from country to country and, while the economies of certain member countries are subject to special pressures¹, some may even be prepared to increase the proportion of GNP that they devote to defence.

27. In view of the tendency of some military costs to rise (in some cases dramatically) and the rapid trend towards greater sophistication in weapons systems, the constraint on resources likely to be available, even under the most optimistic hypothesis, requires increased emphasis in the design and maintenance of forces on maximum costeffectiveness.

28. In view of the evaluation in paragraph 26 of the resources likely to be available, it should be assumed, at least in the first instance, that it should be possible to maintain through 1975 approximately the military capability presently planned for 1970, although there may be difficulties in respect of the more sophisticated items of equipment; even so, it will be necessary to make choices regarding the allocation of the available financial means taking account of the increased effectiveness likely to result from more sophisticate equipment or more specialised personnel. The possibilities of realizing the proposed force levels should be studied during the next phases of the defence planning review, in particular the discussions concerning the individual country contributions, against the background of the additional information then available.

¹See paragraph 33 of DPC/D(67)15(Revised)

Technological

29. In respect of foreseeable technological advances, the following conclusions should be noted:

- (a) Whereas the latest Von Karman long-term studies cover foreseeable technological advances for the 1975-1980 period, defence planning is limited in time to the five-year period ahead and, whilst long-term developments should certainly not be ignored, they will have a less immediate impact on developments concerning weapon and equipment systems likely to be available for introduction into the armed forces of the Alliance in the 1970-1975 timeframe. In consequence, efforts should be concentrated on obtaining information on projects which are already in the development stage; the information available concerning the United States C-5A aircraft and Fast Deployment Logistic Ship affords an example.
 - (b) A valuable contribution can be made by systems analysis carried out at an early stage to facilitate broad quantitative comparisons of the effectiveness of forces comprising different weapon "mixes", due consideration being given to such factors as overall costs, logistics, maintenance, and manpower requirements.
 - (c) The trends followed by potential enemies in the planned introduction of new weapon and equipment systems into their armed forces should be taken into account when recommending and/or selecting new weapon and equipment systems for the Alliance.
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