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NORTH ATLANTIC MILITARY COMMITTEE

COMITE MILITAIRE DE L'ATLANTIQUE NORD

MCM-98-62

20 August 1962

1997

MEMORANDUM FOR THE MEMBERS OF THE MILITARY COMMITTEE
IN PERMANENT SESSION

SUBJECT: Berlin Contingency Planning

- References:
- a. C-M(61)104 dtd 9 Nov 61
 - b. SACLANT Serial 3011/C-191 dtd 15 Feb 62
 - c. SHAPE/70/62 dtd 24 Mar 62
 - d. CINCHAN ltr CH.001107/8 dtd 2 Apr 62
 - e. MCM-94-62 dtd 3 Aug 62
 - f. SHAPTO 2554 dtd 14 Aug 62
 - g. SACLANT Serial 3011/C-982 dtd 15 Aug 62

1. In response to the directive of the North Atlantic Council (reference a), the Berlin Contingency Plans of SACLANT (reference b) and SACEUR (reference c) have been submitted to the Standing Group. Copies have been furnished to your Ministries of Defense and to you. In accordance with paragraph 7 of the directive, the Standing Group prepared reference e, an appraisal of these plans as a basis for consultation with the Military Committee prior to forwarding it to the Council. In preparing this appraisal, account was taken of the first step in consultation, the comments received from all national authorities

2. Since the issue of reference e, additional information has been received from SACEUR and SACLANT (references f and g) in clarification and amplification of their plans. Moreover, consultations have taken place between the Standing Group and the Turkish and German Military Representatives in accordance with paragraph 3 of reference e.

3. After consideration of this additional information, the Standing Group has prepared draft revisions of reference e, which are shown in the enclosure hereto, for your consideration.

4. Specific draft changes in paragraphs, where made, either as the result of the additional information received or the consultations described above, have been made for clarity or amplification. While it will be apparent that the order of paragraphs between those of reference e and this present draft has been altered to improve the structure of the paper, it is emphasized that no alteration of substance has been caused thereby. The source of information or suggestions which led to changes is shown against those changes, in the margin of the draft revisions.

1 ENCLOSURE
Revised Draft SGM to SEGEN

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5. Reference e and the draft revisions will be considered at your meeting on Thursday, 23 August 1962, when it is hoped that the consultation with the MC/PS will be completed in order that the Standing Group may finish and send to the North Atlantic Council its appraisal, in the light of the draft changes enclosed herewith and the views expressed in the MC/PS.



N.S. GRANT
Captain, Royal Navy
Deputy Secretary

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1 references b and c. By reference d, CINCHAN has indicated
 2 that he is prepared to adopt the SACLANT plans and con-
 3 siders it unnecessary to submit separate plans from his
 4 command. The Standing Group, taking into consideration
 5 national comments, has made the following appraisal of
 6 these plans in consultation with the Military Committee in
 7 accordance with the Council's instructions.

8 BASIC CONSIDERATIONS

9 3. The purpose of Allied actions should be to make
 10 the Soviet Government change those policies or actions
 11 which would be inimical to the basic NATO objectives set
 12 Turk forth in paragraph 2, reference a, without having to
 13 MilRep overpower the Soviet Union or ~~threaten-Soviet-vital~~
 14 ~~interests-in~~ disintegrate the Satellite area."

15 4. Implementation of any of these plans must not pre-
 16 judice the overall capability of defending the NATO area.

17 5. The success of any of the plans depends on whether
 18 or not the Soviet Union correctly interprets and responds
 19 to the message which the actions are meant to convey.

20 6. No NATO ~~operations~~ operations undertaken would appear
 21 convincing to the Soviets unless preceded or accompanied by
 22 NATO action in implementing alert measures leading to full
 23 readiness for general war. Indeed, the placing of NATO on
 24 SGN a war footing is an important aspect of NATO action which
 25 amend would be one of the best means to convey to the Soviets
 26 NATO determination. Constitutional and legal complications
 27 which now restrict implementation of simple and reinforced
 28 alert measures in several nations might significantly
 29 restrict the ability of the Alliance to carry out the
 30 plans successfully.

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ENCLOSURE 1

MEMORANDUM FOR: Secretary General, North Atlantic Treaty Organization

SUBJECT: Appraisal of Berlin Contingency Plans

SACLANTReferences: a. C-M(61)104, 9 November 1961
→ b. SACLANT Ser.3011/C-982, 15 August 1962
c. SHAPE/70/62, 24 March 1962
d. CINCHAN Ch.001107/8, 2 April 1962INTRODUCTION

1. In reference a, the North Atlantic Council instructed the Major NATO Commanders to prepare military plans covering broad land, air and naval measures to supplement the Tripartite Berlin Contingency Plans and to insure full coordination between LIVE OAK and NATO planning. Plans were to include appropriate alert measures for NATO forces prior to initiation of any Tripartite military measures, expanded non-nuclear air and/or naval operations, expanded non-nuclear ground operations with necessary air support and selective use of nuclear weapons to demonstrate the will and ability of the Alliance to use them. In each plan, the expected advantages and estimated risks were to be set out. The plans were to be sent to the Standing Group for appraisal in consultation with the Military Committee and forwarded to the North Atlantic Council for approval by governments.

2. In accordance with these instructions, SACEUR and SACLANT have submitted their outline Berlin Contingency Plans and their assessments of advantages and risks in

1 APPENDIX

A. Detailed Military Appraisal

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1 7. Military operations conducted on territory controll-
 2 ed by the Soviet Union could pose the problem of handling
 3 the population in the affected areas and would be likely
 4 to create major refugee movements, local uprisings and,
 5 Turk. possibly, general revolt. As such developments could
 6 MilRep become largely uncontrollable and thus markedly change the
 7 situation, ~~Care must be taken to avoid them as far as~~
 8 possible] ^{due consideration of this possibility should be taken}
 9 SACEUR implications are being further examined by SACEUR who,
 10 upon completion, intends to request appropriate political
 11 guidance.

12 8. The national composition of NATO forces committed
 13 to these plans could have a significant political and
 14 possibly psychological effect on the Soviet Union, on the
 15 members of the Alliance and on the population of the
 16 affected areas.

17 German 9. The choice of the appropriate time for implementing
 18 MilRep any particular plan could be very important.

19 10. No military measures, in themselves, are likely
 20 to succeed in reopening Western access to Berlin by force
 21 should the Soviets choose **adequatel** to oppose them.

22 Recrg 11. Implementation of the **different plans** decided in response to or
 23 by SG reprisal for Soviet action might have legal implications, for instance in
 24 Old para the case of Marconi 4, 5 and 6, in relation to international maritime law.

25 Germa These implications have not been examined.
 26 MilRep

27 engagement and disengagement. Additionally they do
 28 not involve seizure of Soviet Bloc territory and the
 direct force engagement and difficulty of disengagement

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1 entailed therein. They involve far less risk of
2 unintentionally provoking an uprising.

3 b. Large scale air operations could give NATO
4 initial advantages but in their execution there could be
5 difficulty in clearly conveying their limited intent
6 and scope and preventing the launching of the poised
7 nuclear strike forces by miscalculation.

8 Old → ~~12~~¹³ Ground Plans.
9 para 16

10 a. Certain of the ground operations have the ad-
11 vantage of being directly related to Berlin access and
12 some, if militarily successful, could improve the over-
13 all defense posture in Central Europe; however, some
14 might be interpreted by the Soviets as an attack on the
15 stability of the Soviet Satellite system. Further, they
16 might generate major and uncontrollable population
17 problems in areas occupied by the Soviets. With the
18 unlikelihood of gaining tactical surprise, they might
19 also be easily countered by the Soviets. Extensive air
20 support would be required for these operations involving
21 a considerable risk of degradation of the general war
22 posture of Allied Command Europe.

23 b. Military defeat of these operations by larger
24 Soviet forces would significantly degrade the general
25 war posture of NATO forces in the sector involved. There
26 is also the risk of aggressive acts elsewhere such as
27 attacks designed to seize Hamburg or Munich. These risks
28 would be materially lessened by the adoption of a true
29 forward defense posture.

29 Old → ~~13~~¹⁴ Maritime Plans.
30 para 17

a. Maritime plans are essentially measures to exert

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1 indirect pressures on the Soviets. Their immediate
2 military advantages are limited.

3 b. These measures would engage the enemy in a
4 field where there could be certain advantages to NATO,
5 and where possibilities exist to assert the determina-
6 tion of the Alliance in a flexible and, if desired,
7 progressive manner.

8 c. However, if the Soviets respond to the more
9 severe measures by submarine attacks on shipping, the
10 implications are assessed as follows: sporadic submarine
11 warfare would not be crippling but could be a severe
12 strain militarily and economically, but Soviet submarines
13 would suffer substantial attrition over a period of time.
14 All-out submarine attack would probably cause heavy
15 shipping losses which could result in the military need
16 to use nuclear weapons at sea and possibly to launch
17 attacks on Soviet submarine bases. In either case, some
18 of the wartime organizations of shipping should be
19 instituted.

20 d. Escalation toward general war through operation:
21 at sea would probably be slower than in some other forms
22 of operations.

23 Old →
para 18

¹⁵
14. Nuclear Plans.

24 a. Selective use of nuclear weapons for demonstra-
25 tion of will to use ~~them~~ would be primarily political
26 and psychological in nature intended to persuade the
27 Soviets of NATO determination in order to obtain a
28 political decision. These demonstration plans are not
29 currently designed to have significant military value.

30 { However, selective use of nuclear weapons in connection

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1 old | with a particular plan, for both demonstration purposes
 2 para 18c | and direct military value, could be an optional course
 3 | of action.

4 b. Under certain circumstances, it might be
 5 advisable to adopt a very graduated sequence from no
 6 targets to limited military targets or possibly to
 7 execute a demonstration in support of a ground operation.
 8 In the case of a "no target" demonstration, NATO
 9 intentions should be clearly made manifest to the Soviet
 10 authorities, including the fact that this is a deliberate
 11 use and not an error.

12 c. Beyond the nuclear demonstration plan (BERCON
 13 BRAVO) limited use of nuclear weapons has been provided
 14 for in the plans when circumstances so warrant and
 15 SGN | authorization therefor is obtained. SACEUR has indicated
 16 amend | that the circumstances under which he would consider
 17 | recommending such use would include the military need
 18 SACEUR | to extricate BERCON forces faced with annihilation or
 19 | to insure the achievement of the aims of a specific
 20 | operation which clearly would not be achieved without
 21 | the use of nuclear weapons.

22 old | 1/2 Add the following: "(It should be noted by
 23 para | the political authorities that use of nuclear weapons under
 24 | some of these circumstances would go beyond those envisaged
 25 | in paragraph 6(d) of reference a for planned recourse to

25 old | - nuclear weapons.)" cessity arise, the plans would, of
 26 para 19 | course, be implemented from present ons and with
 27 SGN, | existing forces. However, the present force posture is
 28 & German | not fully adequate. This posture will basically be best
 29 & Turk | improved by implementing MC 26/4 requirements and correc-
 30 MilRep | ting the major equipment deficiencies. Further, the

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Following Further improvements should be initiated immediately

1 17. Should the necessity ~~arise, the plans~~ ^{arise, the plans} would of course be implemented
 2 from present positions and with ~~existing~~ ^{existing} forces, even though the foundation
 3 offered by the present force posture is not strong enough to support these
 4 plans satisfactorily. Therefore it is important to improve this posture so
 5 as materially to reduce some of the risks associated with the implementation
 6 of the plans. These improvements would basically be best made by implementing
 7 MC 26/4 requirements and correcting the major equipment deficiencies.
 8 Moreover, since the only sound foundation for implementation of the BERCON
 9 plans is a true forward strategy, the

11 Old para 20 ¹⁸ → 17. NATO and national efforts should be intensified to
 12 resolve the problems which now restrict adequate imple-
 13 mentation of the alert measures which are the essential
 14 basis for the execution of these plans.

Old para 10 OVERALL APPRAISAL

16 ¹⁹ → 18. From a military viewpoint, the BERCON and MARCON
 17 plans appear to be responsive to the instructions of the
 18 North Atlantic Council and to the needs which these instruc-
 19 tions sought to fill. These plans have been developed to
 20 provide a choice of possible action or actions, as deemed
 21 appropriate under the circumstances.

22 Old para 11 ²⁰ → 19. All plans have advantages and risks in varying
 23 degrees and must be appraised in the light of their
 24 likelihood of achieving the object set out in paragraph
 25 3 without ultimate involvement in general war. Further,
 26 the affect on the posture of NATO for general war must
 27 be judged.

28 Old para 12 ²¹ → 20. For this appraisal, the advantages and risks of
 29 the plans have been assessed in relation to one another

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1 and to the catalogue as a whole, with particular reference
 2 to their potential affect on the NATO general war posture.
 3 The advantages include broadly their feasibility ~~and costs,~~
 4 their direct or indirect relation to the basic aim, and
 5 the improvement which might be brought about to the NATO
 6 military posture by their successful implementation. The
 7 risks include the implications of military failure of
 8 individual plans which would present these NATO courses of
 9 action: to disengage from the particular action, to increase
 10 conventionally the scope of the action, to add another
 11 action, or to use nuclear weapons in support of the action.
 12 The second, ~~and~~ third, ^{AND FOURTH IN SOME CIRCUMSTANCES} ~~accuses,~~ could involve degradation of
 13 the posture of the NATO forces for general war in the area
 14 concerned.

15 Old → ^{2d} 21. It is recognized that the military risks must be
 16 para 13 weighed against the political and psychological background
 17 and there is little doubt that if the NATO objectives are
 18 to be achieved certain calculated risks will have to be
 19 taken. The military part of the game should not be played
 20 without continuous political action, both diplomatic and
 21 psychological, in order to be able at any suitable time
 22 to negotiate or to raise the scale of military pressure.

23 SACLANT Further, the timeliness of political decisions in circum-
 24 stances which might arise could be of crucial importance
 25 from the military, as well as political and psychological,
 26 aspects of these operations.

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APPENDIX ADETAILED MILITARY APPRAISALAIR PLANS1. BERCON ALPHA ONE

a. Description. This plan envisages employing maximum scale fighter escort for the protection of Allied transport aircraft within the Berlin air corridors, the fighters being free to attack any Soviet planes or SAM batteries which take offensive action against the transport aircraft.

b. Advantages. This operation would be directly related to Berlin access and would not involve seizure or occupation of Satellite territory. This is a comparatively limited operation involving small forces and their loss would have little effect on the general war posture.

c. Risks. This operation could be opposed by superior Soviet forces very soon after initiation and would take place in airspace essentially controlled by the Soviets. Therefore, this operation could lead to engagements at considerable tactical disadvantage and could involve NATO in much wider air operations.

2. BERCON ALPHA TWO

a. Description. This plan consists of a major air battle, initiated with conventional weapons, to gain, and maintain during a critical period, local air superiority over East Germany. It includes

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1 the attack of Soviet and East German airfields and
2 SAM sites in East Germany and selected Communist
3 airfields and SAM sites in the Satellite countries.

4 b. Advantages. This operation appears to have
5 an excellent probability of achieving local air
6 superiority for a limited period. It would have the
7 added advantage of reducing significantly the capa-
8 bility of Soviet forces to initiate an offensive
9 against Western Europe with either nuclear or con-
10 ventional forces.

11 c. Risks. The magnitude of the forces involved
12 in this operation might result in Soviet misunder-
13 standing of its scope, perhaps thus precipitating
14 major Soviet reaction, beyond an attempt at equivalent
15 response, even up to general war. Further, unless
16 its scope and intent is correctly assessed by the
17 Soviets, such a large air strike could create a
18 tense and delicate situation in the poised nuclear
19 ~~strike~~ forces on both sides, at least for a transitory
20 period. Also, if this operation should set off a
21 series of like exchanges on both sides, the capa-
22 bility of the NATO air forces to implement their
23 nuclear strike plans would be severely degraded since
24 NATO air forces are not now primarily equipped or
25 deployed to fight a protracted conventional air
26 battle.

27 SACEUR | (SACEUR is considering additional plans for non-nuclear
28 | air operations of lesser intensity than ALPHA TWO.)

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GROUND PLANS3. BERCON CHARLIE ONE

a. Description. This plan is an attack by a reinforced division on the axis Helmstedt/Berlin to seize and hold a salient into East Germany in the vicinity of Rottmersleben. NATO air units, operating in a close support role, would support this attack in the first 24 hours with an estimated 240 close air support sorties and an estimated 180 reconnaissance sorties. Subsequent air support requirements depend on further developments.

SACEUR

b. Advantages. This operation has the advantage of being directly related to ground access to Berlin. Furthermore, relatively fewer forces are involved and the possibility of affecting adversely the general war posture in the area is less likely.

c. Risks. Until forward deployments can be realized, this operation would require initiating ground combat forward of defensive positions with the consequent difficulties in providing logistical support and reinforcement. A more limited military objective on the Autobahn which might demonstrate the determination of NATO with less risk to the flanks of the force is currently under study by SACEUR.

SACEUR

4. BERCON CHARLIE TWO

a. Description. This is a two-division attack to pinch off and hold the salient east of Kassel up to the line Duderstadt-Worbis-Wanfried. The attack would be supported in the first 24 hours ~~(with one)~~

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1 with an estimated 450 close air support sorties and
2 and estimated 200 reconnaissance sorties. Subsequent
3 air support requirements depend on further develop-
4 ments.

5 b. Advantages. This operation is comparatively
6 simple to execute and, if a forward strategy were
7 implemented, reinforcements would be readily avail-
8 able. The probability of initial success is high
9 and should it succeed by conventional means, it would
10 improve the overall defensive position of Allied
11 Command Europe.

12 c. Risks. This operation has the risk of
13 possibly being interpreted by the Soviets as the
14 start of an offensive on East Germany. The loss of
15 these forces would seriously degrade the general war
16 posture in the area concerned.

17 5. BERCON CHARLIE THREE

SACEUR

18 a. Description. This is a corps attack by up
19 to four divisions along the Berlin-Hemlstedt Autobahn
20 to seize and hold a salient up to line Mittelland
21 Kanal-Elbe River. The scope and magnitude of this
22 plan requires maximum air support available in Central
23 European Command in order to insure success.

24 b. Advantages. This operation has the advantage
25 of being directly related to ground access to Berlin.
26 In addition, the size of the force provides a greater
27 capability to penetrate toward Berlin and to deal
28 with substantial opposition.

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1 c. Risks. This operation would involve holding
2 a salient in enemy territory which could result in the
3 loss of a sizeable force and which would thereby
4 seriously degrade the general war posture in that
5 area. Moreover, the above scale of conventional air
6 support would absorb forces earmarked to support the
7 nuclear strike plan which would, therefore, in varying
8 degrees, be adversely affected if required to be
9 implemented at short notice.

SACEUR

6. BERCON CHARLIE FOUR

11 a. Description. This is a corps attack of up
12 to four divisions to seize and hold the high ground
13 areas of the Thuringer Wald. The scope and magnitude
14 of this plan requires maximum air support available
15 in Central European Command in order to insure success.

SACEUR

16 b. Advantages. Accomplishment of the military
17 objective of this plan would result in gaining an
18 area of strategic importance and which would signifi-
19 cantly strengthen a forward defense in this sector.

20 c. Risks. This operation, even more than
21 BERCON CHARLIE TWO, risks being interpreted by the
22 Soviets as the start of large scale operations
23 against East Germany. This could result in the loss
24 of a sizeable force which would affect the general
25 war posture in Central Europe. Moreover, the above
26 scale of conventional air support would absorb forces
27 earmarked to support the nuclear strike plan which
28 would, therefore, in varying degrees, be adversely
29 affected if required to be implemented at short notice.

SACEUR

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MARITIME PLANS7. GENERAL

a. When any one, or a combination, of the maritime military measures are ordered, a politico/military decision will be required specifying the following:

- (1) The area limits of the task;
- (2) The duration of the task;
- (3) The type and nationality of Soviet Bloc ships, e.g. destroyers, ELINT trawlers, tankers;
- (4) The applicable rule of conduct, e.g. use of armament, boarding parties, communications and movements.

b. Although the amount of force would be the minimum to achieve the desired aims, the Force Commander must be authorized to ~~take such actions as necessary to~~ defend his command against enemy attack. In this regard, specific political authority to use tactical nuclear weapons at sea, for immediate self-defense, should be considered ~~concurrently~~ with political decisions in those maritime measures containing a high risk of reprisal, since the Major NATO Commanders have expressed a need for this authority.

c. Add the following: "(It should be noted by the political authorities that some circumstances of use of tactical nuclear weapons at sea for immediate self-defense would go beyond those envisaged in paragraph 6(d) of reference a for planned recourse to nuclear weapons.)"

merchant ships in specific areas, this being the least severe of maritime measures.

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1 b. Advantages ~~X~~ It would have the advantage
2 of determining to some extent the pattern of move-
3 ment of Soviet merchant shipping in specific areas.

4 c. Risks. The risk is considered to be very
5 slight except in waters contiguous to the Soviet Bloc.

6 9. MARCON TWO

7 a. Description. Track Soviet Bloc warships
8 (ELINT trawlers or other suspicious ships included)
9 in specified areas.

10 b. Advantages ~~X~~ This operation would provide
11 knowledge of the positions of these ships thus lessen-
12 ing the threat to the sea lines of communications.

13 c. Risks. A maximum, continuous effort over a
14 long period could reduce the general war readiness of
15 the maritime forces. However, the risks are considered
16 slight.

17 10. MARCON THREE

18 a. Description. Hinder and directly annoy
19 designated Soviet Bloc ships in the conduct of their
20 activities.

21 b. Advantages ~~X~~ Little military advantage
22 can be foreseen in conducting these operations.

23 c. Risks. It is possible that the Soviet
24 ships would respond by firing on our ships and
25 aircraft.

26 GER
27 MILREP

~~* A potential advantage of MARCONs ONE, TWO and THREE is that these operations can be conducted on the high seas without valid claims of violation of International Maritime law.~~

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11. MARCON FOUR

a. Description. To board and search designated Soviet Bloc merchant ships

b. Advantages. A military advantage would be to determine if special nuclear devices and other war materials were on board.

c. Risks. Counteraction in some form is highly likely with a consequent risk of some degree of escalation.

12. MARCON FIVE

a. Description. Seize designated Soviet Bloc merchant ships.

b. Advantages. A military advantage could be to stop delivery of war materials to certain countries, and to reduce Soviet Bloc gross shipping capability.

c. Risks. Counteraction in some form is highly likely, with a consequent risk of escalation.

13. MARCON SIX

a. Description. Blockade or enforce diversion and exclusion of Soviet Bloc ships from specified areas.

b. Advantages. It would reduce Soviet sea-borne traffic and result in some economic deterioration within the Soviet Bloc. Being a denial of access, it could have more psychological relationship to Berlin than the other MARCON measures.

c. Risks. Counteraction in some form is highly probable with an even greater risk of

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1 escalation.

2 14. BERCON DELTA. These measures, planned for
3 execution in SACEUR's area, are comparable to the above
4 MARCON plans of SACLANT's area and the same appraisals
5 apply. BERCON DELTA plans would be executed at shipping
6 focal points in the sea areas of Allied Command Europe
7 SACEUR by NATO maritime forces assigned those areas. (Specific
8 political consideration would be needed in the
9 authorization for execution of BERCON DELTA measures
10 in the waters governed by international treaties, i.e.
11 Turkish and Baltic Straits.)

12 PLAN FOR SELECTIVE USE OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS

13 15. BERCON BRAVO

14 a. Description. This plan is designed to
15 implement the concept of selective use of nuclear
16 weapons on land, sea or in the air for psycho-
17 logical purposes, to demonstrate the will and
18 ability of the Alliance to use nuclear weapons. It
19 includes the use of approximately five low-yield
20 air bursts on strictly military targets away from
21 built-up areas.

22 (SACEUR has been asked to include a "no target"
23 plan: e.g., over Soviet territorial waters in the
24 neighborhood of military targets.)

25 b. Advantages. This plan would be relatively
26 simple to execute and should entail a lesser risk
27 of escalation to general war than the nuclear
28 versions of other plans which would be directly
29 related to purposeful combat.

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1 c. Risks. This could set off a series of
2 selective nuclear exchanges which might be diffi-
3 cult to terminate.