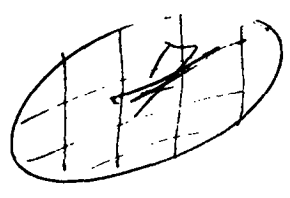


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NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANISATION

1962

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Headquarters of the
Allied Commander-in-Chief Channel,
H.M. Dockyard,
Portsmouth,
Hampshire,
England.

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2nd April, 1962.

THE STANDING GROUP NATO.

(Copies to: The Supreme Allied Commander Europe.
The Supreme Allied Commander Atlantic.
The Commander Allied Maritime Air Force Channel.)

NATO MARITIME CONTINGENCY PLANS

References: (a) SACLANT letter Ser. 3011/C-191 dated 15th February 1962.
(b) SACLANT letter Ser. 3011/C-192 dated 15th February 1962.

Enclosure: Appraisal of Risks and Advantages (CINCHAN).

CINCHAN agrees in principle with the text of the NATO Maritime Contingency Plans enclosed with the references. Consequently CINCHAN is prepared to adopt these plans and considers it unnecessary to submit separate plans to the Standing Group NATO.

2. The enclosure contains CINCHAN's appraisal of the risks and advantages inherent in the NATO Maritime Contingency Plans.

Nigel Bailey

for ADMIRAL

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APPRAISAL OF RISKS AND ADVANTAGES (CINCHAN)

GENERAL

1. The execution of any of the measures will indicate to the Soviet/GDR that NATO is, in fact, willing to act with significant military means to regain access to West Berlin. In this sense the political objective will be attained. Whether or not the attainment of the political objective will result in re-opening access to Berlin is difficult to determine.

2. The following are risks of a general nature more or less common to the execution of any of the measures:-

a. The Soviet reaction will probably be one of the following:-

(1) General War.

(2) Indicate a willingness to negotiate.

(3) Contain and frustrate the limited NATO military/naval actions; otherwise do nothing on their part to escalate the military situation, but continue to deny access to Berlin.

If the second reaction occurs the NATO mission will have been accomplished. However, either of the other two reactions constitute a definite risk to NATO.

b. A special risk lies in the possibility that in response to any NATO action on land, at sea, or in the air, Soviet forces may seize West Berlin.

c. A risk exists that the Communists may initiate aggressive military/naval action in an area other than Central Europe.

MARITIME PLAN

3. The execution of these measures has the disadvantage of not being particularly related to access to West Berlin. They should be executed only in conjunction with one or more of the land/air measures of the SACEUR series, and, in addition, with corresponding naval measures of Major NATO Commanders. They may precipitate a large scale Soviet submarine attack against Allied shipping world-wide. The danger of escalation by execution of any of the Maritime Measures is relatively low in comparison with that of the large scale land or air measures in Europe. However, the measures of seizure and blockade or forced diversion are more serious measures. These are normally taken only in, or just prior to war. These measures, therefore, do contain a very definite degree of danger of escalation.

4. The main disadvantage, however, in the case of ACCHAN is that the execution of any of these plans will divert ships and aircraft from their planned deployment on the outbreak of war and

/reduce

(Page 2 of Enclosure to CINCHAN letter Ch.001107/8 dated
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reduce their readiness and availability for the evacuation of shipping - the main task of Allied Command Channel at that stage. The execution of the plans, in short, carries the risk of precipitating a general war and at the same time prejudices the capability of ACCCHAN to deal with it. CINCHAN therefore considers that his forces would be able to take part in the contingency operations only in very exceptional circumstances.

APPRAISAL OF INDIVIDUAL MEASURES

5. The following comments apply to individual Maritime Measures:-

- a. MARCON ONE - Track designated Soviet Bloc merchant ships in specific areas.

Advantages. It would determine to some extent, the pattern of movement of Soviet merchant shipping in specific areas. Advantages are considered to be marginal.

Risk of war considered to be very slight. However, a sustained effort would use up useful flying hours which could more profitably be used on reconnaissance operations in sensitive areas and thus reduce the overall effectiveness of our intelligence plot.

- b. MARCON TWO - Track Soviet Bloc warships in specified areas.

Advantages. Considered to be a worthwhile measure as knowledge of the positions of these ships could be used to reduce the risk to the SACLANF sea lines of communications.

Risk of war is considered slight. A maximum, continuous effort over a long period could reduce existing war stocks and exhaust the M/P air force.

- c. MARCON THREE - Hinder and annoy designated Soviet Bloc ships in the conduct of their activities, by actions directed selectively from the Rules of Conduct.

Advantages. No advantages can be foreseen. It is probable that such action by M/P aircraft would be misunderstood and result in a hostile act on the part of the Soviets.

Risk of war is considerable. Aggressive action during a period of tension would probably be interpreted as a hostile act, and the ship would react accordingly. Signal charges dropped in close proximity to submarines could easily be interpreted as an act of aggression. In both situations, it is likely that the unit "under attack" by aircraft would send a message that they were being attacked by western aircraft, resulting in embarrassment to NATO.

/d.

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2nd April, 1962.)

- d. MARCON FOUR - To board and search designated Soviet Bloc merchant ships.

Advantages. An open act of aggression. The only advantage would be to determine if special nuclear devices and other war materials were on board and for whom this material was intended.

Risk of war is great. In order to board a vessel it would have to be stopped. This in itself might entail warning shots which could result in a local action between the units involved.

- e. MARCON FIVE - Seize designated Soviet Bloc merchant ships.

Advantages. An overt act of war. The only advantage gained would be to stop delivery of war materials and to impress upon the Soviets the serious intention of NATO to oppose further war preparations.

Risk. War is practically assured.

- f. MARCON SIX - Blockade or enforce diversion and exclusion of Soviet Bloc ships from specified areas.

Advantages. It would reduce Soviet seaborne traffic and result in limited economic deterioration within the Soviet Bloc.

Risk. War is practically assured.

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