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**NORTH ATLANTIC MILITARY COMMITTEE
COMITE MILITAIRE DE L'ATLANTIQUE NORD**

09

PERSONAL & CONFIDENTIAL

IMMEDIATE

Record - MC-CBX-43-80 (Restricted Session)

5 January 1981

S U M M A R Y R E C O R D

43RD MEETING OF THE MILITARY COMMITTEE IN 1980

Held on Wednesday, 3 December 1980 at 0930 hours
in the Situation Centre, (Presentation Room),
NATO Headquarters, Brussels, Belgium

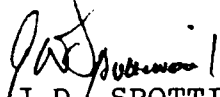
PRESENT

Chairman:	Lieutenant General Lincoln D Faurer
Belgium:	Lieutenant General Y. Dedeurwaerder
Canada:	Lieutenant General R. Gutknecht
Denmark:	Lieutenant General P.O.W. Thorsen
Germany:	Lieutenant General E.D. Bernhard
Greece:	Lieutenant General E. Papaefstathiou
Italy:	Vice Admiral G. Fantoni
Luxembourg:	Colonel P. Bergem
Netherlands:	Captain O. den Boeft
Norway:	Major General Ole Miøen
Portugal:	Lieutenant General J. Ferreira Valente
Turkey:	Vice Admiral S. Ergin
United Kingdom:	Admiral Sir Anthony Morton
United States:	General R.L. Lawson

Director, IMS: Air Marshal Sir Alan Davies

ALSO PRESENT

French Military Mission: Général de Corps d'Armée P. Crousillac


J.D. SPOTTISWOOD
Air Commodore, RAF
Secretary, IMS

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SECRETARY'S NOTE: This is not a summary record, nor is chronological sequence always followed. It is intended as a record of the broad trend of the Committee's discussion and all statements have not necessarily been attributed unless germane to the main thrust of the discussion. Military Representatives made it clear that the views expressed were uninstructed.

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Item 1 PREPARATION OF MILITARY ADVICE ON THE
SITUATION IN POLAND (NS)

The Chairman referred to the previous discussion on the situation in Eastern Europe and reported that SACEUR had called on the Secretary General to obtain political guidance on a list of proposed measures which he wished to initiate in the event of an invasion of Poland. The Chairman distributed copies of SACEUR's proposed measures to the Military Representatives and asked that they should respect SACEUR's wish that they should not receive wide distribution. Continuing, he said that as a result of SACEUR's visit, the Military Committee had been asked to provide an intelligence briefing for a meeting of the North Atlantic Council on 4 December 1980 which would form an authoritative basis for decision making. He thought it implicit that military advice emanating from the intelligence assessment would also be acceptable. In effect the IMS was required to produce a paper providing an intelligence briefing and giving military advice, which the Chairman would present to the Council.

The Chairman said that he had informed a meeting of the Permanent Representatives that it was the intention to disperse the ships of STANAVFORLANT on 3 December; he had consequently been instructed to order STANAVFORLANT not to disperse the ships and SACLANFREPEUR had already reported that the necessary orders had been issued. In reply to a question, SACLANFREPEUR confirmed that the ships of STANAVFORLANT would remain in European waters until further notice and the Chairman said it followed that the Council would now require advice both on when to disperse the ships of STANAVFORLANT as well as the forces of STANAVFORCHAN, the dispersal date for which was currently planned for 18 December.

Moving on to discuss the intelligence briefing which was being prepared, the Chairman said it would follow the format of the one presented to the Committee on 2 December and would list the events that had taken place chronologically. It would argue that at first the Soviet Union had been taking a series of preparatory military measures made necessary by the possibility of having to invade Poland. It would then go on to assess an approximate timeframe during which the strategic decision had been taken that Poland would be invaded if necessary. Subject to the Committee's concurrence, the paper would avoid giving a positive assessment about whether or not the Soviet Union had already decided to invade Poland. He said he thought most Members would support the view that the Soviet Union had not yet decided to invade Poland but it had made the strategic decision to make the necessary preparations so that if the tactical decision to invade was made, it could be implemented immediately.

He continued that the paper should also contain discussion on post-invasion problems such as those discussed in paragraph 8 of the document(1) which referred to the Baltic,

(1) IMSM-EKD-526-80, 2 Dec 80 (NS)

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Polish warships, merchant shipping and asylum. He concluded by inviting nations to contribute new additions to the current intelligence situation as quickly as possible.

The United States Member, provided an intelligence update on the USSR/Polish situation.

The Chairman said that he had one further item of intelligence that, from a military point of view, the most probable date for an invasion, if it were to occur, would be around 15 December, with the earliest date about 7 December. This timeframe had been based upon two assumptions, firstly that the ground would have become sufficiently frozen by then to facilitate the movement of Soviet armour and secondly that a sufficient period of time had elapsed to assimilate the replacements which had arrived during the recent annual autumn roulement.

The Chairman then said that using the paper(1) which had been handed out the day before as a basis for discussion, it was necessary to reach agreement on certain points to assist the IMS to structure the military advice part of the paper being prepared for the Council. Firstly, to consider the matter of intelligence, the Action Officer would elaborate on the document(2) and the Alert Measure(3) which were relevant.

After the Action Officer had finished, the Chairman drew attention to paragraph 2 of the paper(1) and said that it was necessary to focus attention firstly on sub-paragraph 2a, particularly the development of politico-military assessments, based on political and military intelligence. Then he recommended discussion should concentrate on sub-paragraph 2c by defining military measures which might be taken after an invasion.

The United States Member said that whether or not the tactical decision to intervene had already been made was not at issue as it was quite clear that the strategic decision to make the preparations necessary to intervene had already been taken by the Soviet Union. In his view, it was vital to recommend the intelligence gathering measures outlined in sub-paragraphs 11c and d as the intelligence which would be produced by adopting these two measures would be needed for subsequent decision-making.

The German Member said he supported the United States Member's statement and the provisions of sub-paragraph 11c.

The United Kingdom Member, supporting his United States and German colleagues, stressed the importance of obtaining intelligence from every possible source. He pointed out that the political leadership might be reluctant to initiate an alert measure merely because it was an alert measure. He cautioned against the possibility of having it said that the Alliance had been taken by surprise by the present situation which appeared to be likely to lead to fighting. Thus this crisis was in a different class to those which had faced the Alliance in recent decades.

(1) IMSM-EKD-526-80, 2 Dec 80 (NS)

(2) C-M(71)1(Revised), 20 Jan 71

(3) Alert Measure VIA

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The Italian Member gave general support to the German and United Kingdom positions. He said he did not think it wise to take the measures stipulated in sub-paragraph 11d as this created a formal alert status which, in his view, would not be politically acceptable at present.

The Chairman then turned the discussion towards what he thought was the most important issue before them, that of advising on the appropriateness of taking visible measures either immediately or as the build-up of Soviet forces increased. As the Italian Member had said, the Council had made it abundantly clear that at present it did not favour taking visible measures. However, the Committee was under an obligation to advise otherwise if it thought it was appropriate to do so and he believed it was necessary to look from a military perspective at the arguments in favour of taking visible measures resulting from the Soviet build-up even if these should offer some propaganda value to the Soviet Union. In his view, it was important that the Committee should consider the philosophy of recommending such measures prior to an invasion.

After this it would be necessary to consider which visible measures should be taken and the degree of visibility which should be recommended but it was important to decide immediately whether or not the time had come when it was appropriate for NATO to institute visible preparatory measures regardless of what action was finally decided upon.

The Greek Member said that he personally agreed with what the Chairman had just said. Although he believed that better intelligence would be forthcoming, in his view the time had come for some visible measures to be taken and to increase intelligence collection as the latter could not be interpreted as offensive in nature nor could it be used for propaganda purposes.

The Chairman said that it now appeared there was a consensus to recommend measures to increase intelligence gathering and he asked Members to consider next whether the Committee should be advising the adoption of other visible measures which went beyond intelligence gathering.

The Danish Member, agreeing that intelligence gathering measures should be taken, said that he could see no justification for taking other visible measures at present as there was no threat to NATO Member countries. Intervening, the Chairman asked if he would not agree that if the increased preparations being made by the Soviet Union and certain other Warsaw Pact countries could not have been explained by the situation in Poland, the Alliance would be considering what responsive measures it should be taking. The Danish Member agreed that in that case the Committee would rightly be considering what measures should be taken, but in this case there were clear indications that the build-up of forces was due to the situation in Poland.

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However, the Chairman pointed out that there was a danger that the Soviet Union would interpret a failure to react now as indicative that NATO would not be prepared to react if the scenario were different and Poland was not the country being threatened.

The United States Member then mentioned some of the consequences of failing to take visible measures. He also forecast that an invasion of Poland would eventually lead to an increase in the Warsaw Pact's capabilities which would require an increase in the West's spending on defence to counter. After cautioning that it would be unwise to neglect that a strike against NATO might be one of the possible options to solve the Polish problem being considered by the Soviet Union, he drew attention to the advantages of adopting SACEUR's recommendation that AWACS aircraft should be deployed to monitor the airspace.

The United Kingdom Member agreed with the spirit of the United States Member's views but said he felt that the practical problems were even more important because he did not consider that the struggle within Poland could be contained within the boundaries of the Warsaw Pact. There would be aircraft trying to escape and being pursued, and vessels possibly pursued by Warsaw Pact aircraft and fighting ships endeavouring to stop them reaching friendly harbours. Thus he believed that the train of events would lead to nothing short of war and although the war would be in Poland, it would extend beyond its boundaries and NATO had an obligation to be ready to react to such peripheral hot pursuit activities as he had described.

The Norwegian Member said he supported the views of the United Kingdom and United States Members. He thought that the measures in sub-paragraphs 6a and b(1) were particularly pertinent and Members should be prepared to recommend the measures in sub-paragraphs 8a and d as well as some of those proposed by SACEUR of which AWACS was one. Some measures might not be overt but might become known to Russian intelligence, indicating to the Soviet Union that NATO had started to take responsive measures.

The German Member drew attention to some of the overt Soviet moves which had occurred close to NATO territory during the Afghanistan invasion which might be repeated in the event of an intervention into Poland. In his opinion there was no doubt that events in Poland would affect NATO nations and he therefore supported the adoption of measures to increase intelligence gathering, pointing out the advantages of making known to the public that such measures were being taken, but he did not advocate taking any other visible measures at present.

(1) IMSM-EKD-526-80, 2 Dec 80 (NS)

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The Turkish Member anticipated his Authorities would agree all the proposed measures and he would provide confirmation of this as soon as possible. As intelligence gathering measures had already been agreed, he was already able to confirm that the measures in sub-paragraph 11c were acceptable.

The Belgian Member gave his personal support for measures to be taken both to increase the acquisition of intelligence and to improve readiness. He considered that the Committee should recommend that strong military measures should be adopted to obviate criticism that NATO had not reacted firmly enough to similar crises.

The Chairman acknowledged that there was a consensus to recommend measures to improve NATO's readiness. He considered that the short discussion had been particularly useful in permitting the IMS to understand the Committee's views. He asked Members to reconvene later that afternoon to consider the paper which the IMS would be restructuring during the day to take notice of their observations.

Intervening, the United Kingdom Member said that he felt it was important that the Committee should also give its views on SACEUR's proposals which he himself supported.

The Chairman agreed that advice must be offered on those proposals as well. He felt most Members would probably be prepared to give general support to the proposals but the matter should be discussed at the next meeting.

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The 43rd Meeting of the Military Committee in Permanent Session reconvened at 1730 hours on 3 December 1980 to reconsider the draft paper(1) offering Military Committee advice on SACEUR's proposed measures and further advice on the situation in Eastern Europe which the Military Committee wished to offer to the North Atlantic Council.

The Chairman informed the Military Committee that the North Atlantic Council Meeting had been brought forward to 1015 hours the following day and proposed that as a result of this change, the Military Committee might wish to cancel the scheduled weekly meeting and hold instead a Military Committee in Restricted Session at 1415 hours that day.

THE COMMITTEE AGREED.

The Chairman suggested that the Meeting might wish to consider the paper(1) in general terms, to examine closely the conclusions and recommendations of the paper and then to deal with the substance of the main body of the paper.

Members were agreed that the IMS had produced a most useful working document in a very short space of time and that the paper before them, although requiring amendment, nevertheless provided a most useful foundation for the advice which they wished to offer to the Political Authorities.

With regard to the conclusions of the paper(1), the Committee accepted the conclusions as a sound expression of military advice to the Political Authorities in the present situation. Some of the conclusions were re-drafted for purposes of clarity and to strengthen their intent; it was also pointed out that where the conclusions referred to one MNC, the reference more properly should include all MNCs.

The body of the paper was discussed in some detail. One Member pointed out the political difficulty in formally implementing certain measures of the Alert System and it was decided that where such measures were deemed to be necessary, they should be extracted from the framework of the formal Alert System and be utilised independently of that System for the purpose required.

The Turkish Member emphasised that he was unable, on behalf of this Authorities, to accept any of the conclusions in the paper other than those relating to covert intelligence gathering, neither could he accept the wording of certain parts of the main body of the paper without instructions from his Capital.

(1) IMSWM-EKD-280-80, 3 Dec 80(NS)

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The Chairman, in summing up, said that the paper, with the incorporation of the amendments proposed by the Committee, would be forwarded, as an expression of preliminary Military Committee advice, to the Secretary General with a view to subsequent consideration by the Political Authorities. The Chairman emphasised that the views contained within the paper had been put forward largely on an uninstructed basis as an expression of Military Committee advice.

THE COMMITTEE TOOK NOTE.

SECRETARY'S NOTE: Subsequent to the Meeting and prior to the forwarding of the amended paper(1), the Turkish Member withdrew his reservation.

(1) MCM-EKD-84-80, 4 Dec 80 (NS)

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