



Record - MC-CBX-47-80 (Restricted Session)

6 January 1981

IMMEDIATES U M M A R Y R E C O R D47TH MEETING OF THE MILITARY COMMITTEE IN 1980

Held on Tuesday, 16 December 1980 at 1400 hours
in the Situation Centre, (Presentation Room),
NATO Headquarters, Brussels, Belgium

PRESENT

Chairman:	Admiral R.H. Falls
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:	Lieutenant General J.C. Zoutenbier
Norway:	Major General Ole Mißen
Portugal:	Lieutenant General J. Ferreira Valente
Turkey:	Vice Admiral S. Ergin
United Kingdom:	Admiral Sir Anthony Morton
United States:	General R.L. Lawson
Deputy Chairman:	Lieutenant General Lincoln D. Faurer
Director, IMS:	Air Marshal Sir Alan Davies

ALSO PRESENT

French Military Mission:	Général de Corps d'Armée P. Crousillac
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J.D. Spottiswood
J.D. SPOTTISWOOD
Air Commodore, RAF
Secretary, IMS

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Item 1 INTELLIGENCE UP-DATE BY THE
INTELLIGENCE DIVISION, IMS (NU)

The Assistant Director, IMS, Intelligence Division, gave an intelligence up-date in which he mentioned that the Soviet Union had three options for mounting an intervention in Poland; these were to hold exercises in Poland, to build-up gradually or to invade. He said that despite an apparent easing in political tension during the past two weeks, the situation in Poland was potentially explosive, not only due to the ceremonies due to take place in Gdansk. Although military readiness of Soviet and Warsaw Pact forces for an intervention in Polish affairs was being maintained, there were no reports of any special large scale preparations being made for events that day in Gdansk. Observed training and exercise activity by Soviet and Warsaw Pact forces indicated no appreciable change from the previously established pattern of activity. Nevertheless he concluded that the Warsaw Pact's military capabilities to mount an intervention continued to increase marginally.

The United States Member then provided an additional intelligence up-date on the Russian and Polish situation.

The Netherlands Member said that the Netherlands Ambassador in Prague had received unconfirmed information, which he had also submitted to the British and French Attaches in Prague, that Czechoslovakian soldiers wearing Polish uniforms had been sighted near the junction of the borders of Czechoslovakia, the GDR and Poland

The Chief, French Military Mission drew attention to the relief of various senior Soviet Commanders, three of whom were Members of the Central Committee of the Communist Party. In view of the unlikelihood of these recent simultaneous replacements being coincidental and unconnected, he recommended that the matter should be studied in order to determine whether those Commanders who had been relieved were being given more important posts connected with an intervention in Poland.

The United States Member commented that the changes noted by his French colleague had been observed by the United States and their implications were being studied.

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The Danish Member said that he too was able to confirm the facts given by his French colleague. He had further information that unusual air traffic between Soviet and Polish airfields had been observed, probably due to senior officials moving in and out of Poland. Commenting that attention had recently only been focused on the Central European front, he asked the Assistant Director, IMS, Intelligence Division, whether there had been any change in the build-up or state of readiness of Soviet forces in the Transcaucasus Area.

The Assistant Director, IMS, Intelligence Division, replied that as far as was known, there had been no change in the situation in that area but the question would be addressed more fully at the intelligence briefing to be given to the Military Committee on 18 December 1980.

The United Kingdom Member observed that his Authorities considered that the Soviet Union would be able to maintain its forces at a high state of readiness almost indefinitely. He asked whether, during the next intelligence briefing, the readiness affecting the position in Poland could be compared with the readiness in out-of area deployments, such as in the Transcaucasus, to see if this provided any indication of the Soviet Union's future intentions.

THE COMMITTEE TOOK NOTE.NATO SECRET

Item 2 ITEM TO BE RAISED ORALLY BY THE CHAIRMAN,
MILITARY COMMITTEE (NU)

Opening the discussion, the Chairman observed that the object of the meeting was to approve the revised draft of the paper(1) on options for military measures which might be considered when warning had been received of an imminent Soviet intervention in Poland, so that it could be transmitted to the Secretary General for distribution as he saw fit. He said the purpose of the paper was to outline the options which were available to meet various eventualities although it did not seek to identify possible scenarios nor had it been practicable to include measures to meet a spectrum of eventualities. It was to be a document which the Political Authorities would have available when considering what response might be appropriate should the circumstances in Poland change.

A lengthy discussion on the paper(1) followed, concerned both with its contents and handling.

(1) IMSWM-EKD-294-80, 16 Dec 80

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Initially most Members gave their support for the paper but the German Member expressed serious reservations and received some support for these, principally from the Netherlands Member.

The German Member contended that the paper did not make it sufficiently clear that the options it contained were a selection of possible measures which were available to meet a variety of eventualities and were entirely separate from the NATO Alert System. He was concerned that, if certain of the proposed options in it were adopted, they would unintentionally, but inevitably, be confused with certain of the NATO Alert Measures. He would not be able to agree to the paper unless it made it abundantly clear that the measures in it would only be adopted after discussion in the DPC and that the options available were entirely separate from the NATO Alert System.

There was general agreement that the paper would act as a useful reference document and be of assistance when either the Military Committee or the MNCs wanted to make recommendations to Ambassadors, should the situation in Poland change and it became necessary to advise the adoption of further measures. The rationale of having these measures separate from the NATO Alert System was necessary as the latter was designed to counter a direct threat to NATO whereas it was anticipated that an intervention in Poland would cause only an indirect threat. Certain Members felt that all the reservations mentioned were already adequately covered in the paper, but in order to meet the German Member's concerns, it was agreed to amend it.

The Greek Member proposed that the addition of a paragraph giving the aim of the paper would achieve that end.

The Netherlands Member expressed his preference for an in-house paper. He agreed the paper ad referendum under the strict condition that the final decision on the implementation is a national prerogative. He suggested that work should go on:

- developing a common policy on how to react,
- refining the recommended measures,
- examining national and international laws,
- developing criteria for implementation of the recommended measures.

There was a consensus that widening the scope of the paper in this way would impose unacceptable delays on its availability. The Rules of Engagement were stated as being of more concern to National Authorities than the Alliance although a study of the problems relating to International Law, particularly as it affected STANAVFORLANT, was being undertaken immediately by the IMS. A separate paper on this subject was being prepared; in the meantime it was agreed that a sentence should be included in the paper(1) that guidance was required on the action to be taken regarding defecting Polish ships and aircraft. A new paragraph to state the paper's aim was discussed in some detail and agreed.

(1) IMSWM-EKD-294-80, 16 Dec 80

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The Chairman and most Members expressed their interest in approving the paper with the minimum of delay to enable it to reach the Secretary General as soon as possible.

The Italian Member also questioned whether there was a need to actually transmit the document and it was suggested that it might suffice if the Secretary General and Permanent Representatives merely knew that it had been prepared and would be available if required. However, as one of the objects of transmitting the paper was to initiate consideration by Ambassadors of the types of military options which were available if required, it was subsequently agreed that the paper should be forwarded to the Secretary General as originally planned.

The Chairman asked what manning arrangements were being made for the Christmas period. SACEUREP and SACLANTREPEUR drew attention to some of the relevant rules and gave the Christmas leave arrangements which would apply and the degree of alertness which would be imposed at various headquarters. Certain of the Military Representatives announced the manning levels of their national forces over the Christmas period and confirmed that the rules concerning minimum manning figures laid down by the MNCs were being complied with. A minor change in the wording of the paper as it affected the Christmas leave period was discussed and agreed.

It was then agreed that the paper should be amended to incorporate changes which the Committee had discussed and that it should then be forwarded to the Secretary General.

The Chairman obtained the agreement of Members that a meeting of the Military Committee could be called throughout the holiday period if necessary at three hours notice.

THE COMMITTEE AGREED.

SECRETARY'S NOTE: After the amendments required by the Committee had been incorporated, the final document(1) was transmitted to the Secretary General on 17 December 1980.

(1) MCM-EKD-86-80, 17 Dec 80 (NS)