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NORTH ATLANTIC MILITARY COMMITTEE
COMITE MILITAIRE DE L'ATLANTIQUE NORD

09

PERSONAL & CONFIDENTIAL

IMMEDIATE

Record - MC-CBX-42-80 (Restricted Session)

13 January 1981

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

42ND MEETING OF THE MILITARY COMMITTEE IN 1980

Held on Tuesday, 2 December 1980 at 1700 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 B. 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:	Commodore I. MacGillivray
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
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J.D. Spottiswood
J.D. SPOTTISWOOD
Air Commodore, RAF
Secretary, IMS

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

The Chairman recalled that the Military Committee had agreed to instruct the IMS to consider the military advice that might become appropriate should the situation in Poland continue to deteriorate. A draft in-house study paper(1) had therefore been prepared on a "close-hold" basis for the consideration of the Military Committee. Prior to discussion on that paper(1) he asked the Intelligence Division, IMS to update the Military Committee on the current situation concerning Poland.

Colonel Nohr, Intelligence Division, IMS, briefed the Committee.

The United States Member said that his Authorities would endeavour to keep the developing situation in Poland in front of the Military Committee and that they would do everything possible to ensure that information available would be provided as rapidly as possible because it was thought that this would be a crucial factor in the early days of any crisis situation. He said that his Authorities continued to believe that the Soviets would intervene in Poland only as a last resort, but that the Soviet military activity in the last few weeks indicated that the Soviets are preparing for that eventuality. It was not believed that a final decision had been made to use military force nor had the final preparations yet been made by the Soviet Union although their readiness had been improved very significantly and would enable them to move very quickly if such a decision was made by Moscow. Finally, his Authorities believed that the Soviets might use the cover of an exercise to insert additional forces into Poland.

The Chairman announced a further meeting to be held at short notice which he would have to attend. He gave an insight into the current thinking of the political authorities and said that at a Council meeting on 2 December, he had suggested that an aim of the Alliance in the Polish context might be to increase readiness and reduce the vulnerability of the Alliance in reaction to the significant upgrading of the Soviet/Warsaw Pact force posture facing NATO, irrespective of the apparent intent of the Soviets.

He thought that this was necessary in order to discourage any Soviet perception that a force build-up apparently in response to an internal Warsaw Pact situation, would preclude NATO reaction in the future. The Chairman added that the Secretary General and Permanent Representatives were concerned to ensure that no leakages occurred on the fact and the content of any NATO discussions on the current situation in Eastern Europe.

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

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Finally the Chairman said that arising from various discussions he drew three conclusions and thought that three principal questions remained to be answered; firstly he concluded that the Soviets had not yet made the decision to move into Poland, secondly, that it was becoming increasingly uncertain that the situation in Poland could be kept under control to the satisfaction of the Soviets and thirdly, that the Soviets were developing an increasing capability to move into Poland. The three questions he thought were

- what kind of military preventive measures, if any, should NATO be concerned with,
- should the Alliance take any kind of political action prior to an actual invasion,
- when and how should NATO decide what to do in the contingency of a Soviet invasion in Poland.

Finally the Chairman mentioned that he had seen SACEUR, who intended to inform the Secretary General that SHAPE had prepared military advice relating to certain preparatory actions which would not cause public exacerbations of the problem and that he intended to ask the Secretary General for political guidance pertinent to the current situation.

The Chairman then invited the first reactions of the Military Representatives to the IMS paper(1).

In a short discussion, the Military Representatives were agreed on the importance of swift and early contingency planning and thought the paper(1) provided a good basis for initiating discussion and evaluating certain prudent military measures to improve NATO's defence posture in response to the Warsaw Pact build-up in Eastern Europe.

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