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INTERNATIONAL SECURITY AFFAIRS

ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301

In Reply Refer to:
1-24362/75

8 SEP 1975

MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

SUBJECT: Release of the US Reply to the 1975 NATO Defense Planning Review Questionnaire (DPQ-75) (ACTION MEMORANDUM) (U)

(U) The US reply to the NATO Defense Planning Review Questionnaire, DPQ-75, must be transmitted to the President prior to release to NATO.

DPQ-75, when approved, will extend US force commitments through the calendar year of 1976 and display US force plans through 1980. It will show major improvements in US forces in Europe as a result of Nunn Amendment manpower conversions and weapon systems modernization efforts. However, it will also show reductions in US capabilities as indicated below:

Reduction of In-place Nuclear Capable Tactical Aircraft

DPQ-75 shows replacement of F-4s with F-15s and A-10s, with a consequent reduction from 474 to 258 US nuclear capable fighter aircraft in Europe by 1980. The deployment plan annex shows a possible reduction from 192 to 48 in the NATO Guidelines Area.

The US MBFR negotiating team feels that if this plan becomes known to the Soviets, it could undermine our MBFR negotiating position on withdrawal of nuclear capable aircraft. The British, and particularly the Germans, will be sensitive to such a draw-down and might believe it could go lower than the projected 48. To avoid these problems we have strengthened the rationale for planned deployments described in the DPQ memorandum and added the following footnote to the deployment plan: "The eventual number of nuclear capable aircraft in the NGA will depend upon MBFR and nuclear policy considerations." In the Air Force section we have further noted that the level of nuclear-capable aircraft "will be determined only in the context of full and frank consultations with our Allies."

Reduction of Overall Responsiveness of Committed Army Strategic Reserve Forces

Due to a shortage of pre-positioned equipment (mainly tanks), DPQ-75 informs our Allies that the availability of the 4th Infantry Division

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(Mechanized) will be downgraded from A-4 (available in 15-30 days) to A-5 (available subsequent to 30 days). In compensation the 9th Infantry Division (A-4) is offered as a substitute unit for SACEUR's strategic reserve. The reduced availability of the 4th Division is further compensated for by the planned CY 76 stationing of Brigade 76 from this same division. This year DPQ-75 again shows the 82nd Airborne Division (A-4) as a substitute for the 2nd Armored Division (A-5) in the strategic reserve. The reduced availability of two thirds plus of the 2nd Armored Division again is a function of insufficient prepositioned stocks but is compensated in some measure by the CY 75 deployment of Brigade 75 from the same division. The net effect of both of these temporary changes in the composition of the Strategic Reserve is to reduce the tempo at which SACEUR will receive mechanized/armored units and lighten the mix of forces available to him by M+30, until such time as prepositioned stocks in Europe are sufficiently reconstituted.

6) Navy Carrier Availability

One SACLANT- and one SACEUR-committed carrier each presently reported as available within 48 hours (A-1) will be reduced in availability to between 5 and 15 days (A-3). The significant effect of this change is to reduce the number of carriers continuously on duty in the Mediterranean from two to one. The second carrier would operate on a flexible schedule and actually be present in SACEUR's area for substantial periods during the year.

NATO was informed by DPQ-74 of this planned reduction in carrier availability and with the exception of SACEUR, there has been no adverse reaction. SACEUR can be expected to object to this change in DPQ-75. There have been at least two carrier task forces on station in the Mediterranean since 1950, but carrier force levels and dropping of carrier homeporting in the Med require changes in our forward deployment plans.

6) Reduced Availability of Navy Surface Combatants

Although the number of surface combatants allocated to NATO (SACLANT and SACEUR) will be maintained at or slightly above the DPQ-75 levels planned for CY 76, it is necessary to change the availability of eleven surface combatants (cruisers, destroyers and frigates) from A-1 (48 hours) to A-3 (within 5-15 days). This change is required by the termination of destroyer homeporting in Athens and resultant additional demands on the rotational base of U.S. Atlantic Fleet ships. NATO should not react strongly to these changes since the US has increased its 1976 numerical commitment by the addition of three destroyers (DD-963 class), one nuclear powered guided missile cruiser, and one new nuclear powered attack submarine, and plans through 1980 show a significantly improved program of new acquisitions for the Atlantic Fleet.

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(S) Overall, the proposed reply reflects a very impressive modernization program for US conventional forces committed to NATO.

(U) The State Department (Acting Secretary Ingersoll) concurs in releasing DPQ-75 to NATO and his comments are appended to the enclosed memorandum for the President.

(U) The Assistant Secretaries of Defense, Comptroller, Installations & Logistics, and Program Analysis and Evaluation concur in releasing DPQ-75.

(U) I recommend that you sign the memorandum to the President (Enclosure 1) transmitting the recommended response to DPQ-75 (Enclosure 2).


Robert Ellsworth
Assistant Secretary of Defense
International Security Affairs

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file*

(u)

Enclosures
a/s

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