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OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF THE ARMY  
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MEMORANDUM FOR MG WICKHAM, MILITARY ASSISTANT  
TO THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

Per our discussion, the Army Staff has reviewed the attached paper pertaining to ways for increasing U.S. tanks in Europe. We have consolidated these comments and I have made pen and ink changes for your consideration. In general, the Staff feels that the paper is well written and addresses the key issues in good detail.

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Inclosure

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to provide for the new estimate of war reserve stock (WRS) requirements. OSD and OMB plan to review the Army's WRS requirements, and the Army has agreed to study the secondary implications of the higher WRS requirements on such things as storage facilities and sealift requirements. Depending

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INCREASING U.S. TANKS IN EUROPE

(e) The U.S. position on MBFR equipment limits has been constrained by the apparent need to preserve flexibility to increase the number of US tanks in the NGA. This paper considers whether the U.S. should increase tanks now to free the MBFR position from this constraint.

The Problem with Tank Levels

2484 (Sep 73)

(e) Prior to the 1973 Middle East War, the U.S. had over ~~2,700~~ tanks in the NATO Guidelines Area (NGA), split about evenly between tanks in active units and tanks in storage. About ~~600~~<sup>768</sup> of these tanks were shipped to Israel in 1973<sup>-74</sup> to replace her combat losses and build up her war reserves. <sup>AND 22 WERE SHIPPED TO ETHIOPIA.</sup> Because of these shipments to Israel, U.S. tanks in the NGA are now considerably below their authorized levels. Under current Army plans, U.S. tank levels in the NGA will not be restored to their current authorized levels until ~~September~~<sup>DECEMBER</sup> 1977.

(c) There is also reason to believe that the current authorization levels are too low. A recent Army study and the experience of the 1973 Middle Eastern war both indicate that the U.S. should plan for significantly greater wartime attrition rates than it has in the past. The FY 77-81 Army POM increased these attrition rates, and the Secretary of Defense has tentatively directed that tank procurement be increased to provide for the new estimate of war reserve stock (WRS) requirements. OSD and OMB plan to review the Army's WRS requirements, and the Army has agreed to study the secondary implications of the higher WRS requirements on such things as storage facilities and sealift requirements. Depending

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on the results of the OSD/OMB review and the Army study (both of which are to be completed by about January 1976), the U.S. tank authorization numbers in the NGA could be increased to more than 4,700. Of course, current tanks numbers are even further below this possible new authorization than they are below the current authorization.

U.S. TANKS IN THE NGA

	Assets* on Hand (all M60 Series)	Current Authorizations	FY 77-81 POM Program	Shortages	
				Current	POM
In Units	1,382	1,436	1,516	-	.90 -
POMCUS, WRS, MAINT. Float	<u>619</u>	<u>1,396</u>	<sup>200</sup> <u>3,198</u>	<u>831</u>	<u>2,579</u> <sup>5</sup>
Total	2,001	<del>2,832</del> ** <u>2,778</u>	4,712 <sub>6</sub>	<del>831</del> <u>777</u>	2,711 <sup>5</sup>

The Problem from Option III

(8) The U.S. has proposed that the Option III nuclear package (consisting of 54 U.S. nuclear capable aircraft, 36 U.S. surface to surface missiles, and [redacted]) be offered to the East in MBFR in return for Eastern agreement to NATO's Phase I objectives (including the withdrawal of 1,700 Soviet main battle tanks). For these equipment reductions to be meaningful, the U.S. would not be allowed to increase the number of its nuclear elements above their post-reduction levels. However, if the post-reduction nuclear balance were not to be upset, then Soviet nuclear elements would also need to be constrained in some way; and if the U.S. asked the Soviets for these reciprocal constraints, they would be likely to demand similar limits on U.S. tanks.

\* PROTECTED AS OF SEP 75 - THIS IS IN THE MBT DISTRIBUTION PLAN PREPARED BY TACOM.

\*\* ONE BN OF M60 A2 ~~DECLASSIFIED~~

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(S) Thus, Option III will most likely lead to some constraint on U.S. tanks, and a major problem has been to decide at what level the U.S. tank limit should be set. Because U.S. tanks are considerably below current authorized levels, the conclusion of the USG was that enough flexibility should be provided to allow a return to full authorization or perhaps to increase that authorization. The disadvantage to allowing the U.S. this room to increase tanks is that the Soviets would probably also receive similar room to increase nuclear elements. This problem was recognized in the U.S. position paper on Option III.

"The dilemma we face is that the more severe the constraint on Soviet nuclear elements, the more severe would be the probable constraint on U.S. tanks. Moreover, if we attempt to limit Soviet systems other than those analogous to the U.S. Option III elements, we risk corresponding Soviet demands for limits on U.S. equipment other than tanks. But the limitations on Soviet nuclear systems need not be broad or particularly stringent. It is more important to avoid a tight limit on U.S. tanks and extension of limits to other U.S. equipment. We need a limitation which would permit the U.S. to make modest increases in its tank forces, while restricting the Soviets to only modest increases in their nuclear forces.

This could be accomplished by requiring that the Soviets agree not to increase their nuclear elements analogous to those withdrawn by the U.S. in such a manner as to undermine the basis of the agreement. Before accepting any Soviet demands for a similar restriction on U.S. tanks, we would assure that the agreement allows restoration of U.S. tank stocks to earlier levels. Any reciprocal constraints would be based on definitions similar to those applying to reduced elements."\*

Since the U.S. failure to restore tanks to their authorized level is driving the U.S. to allow the Soviets some flexibility to increase their nuclear systems, we should consider whether the U.S. could restore its tank authorization before MBFR is concluded and thereby avoid having

\* "U.S. Views on Next Steps in MBFR", 29 May 1975.

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to give the Soviets that nuclear flexibility. Moreover, we should also consider whether tanks levels should be increased above the current authorization number before an MBFR ceiling is imposed.

#### The DPQ Problem

(S) Another problem caused by the shortage of U.S. tanks in Europe is that the U.S. may have to change its DPQ commitments. Since some of the heavy divisions that are now scheduled for early deployment do not have enough tanks in POMCUS, they cannot arrive as quickly as was previously planned, and we are now having to decide whether their new commitments should be at later times than at present. If we slowed the DPQ commitments, the Allied reaction might be that this action decreases the chance of having an effective conventional defense in Europe.

#### Possible Solutions

(S) There appear to be two general ways to increase tanks in Europe -- to send newly produced tanks to Europe or to send tanks to Europe from either units or storage in the CONUS. The first of these methods is similar to, but somewhat faster than the present Army plan. It is not an adequate solution to the problem, because tank production rates are so low (about 64 tanks produced per month) that almost a year would be required to produce the 830 new tanks for Europe that are needed to meet the current authorization, and more time would be needed to go beyond that level. This would be too late to remove the constraints on the U.S. MBFR position.

(S) Therefore, the issue is whether to send tanks to Europe from active units, from reserve units, and/or from storage in the U.S.