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This document was considered at COS(57)86K Meeting Min. 2
CIRCULATED FOR THE CONSIDERATION OF THE CHIEFS OF STAFF

JP(57)124(Final)

6th November, 1957.

U.K. EYES ONLY

CHIEFS OF STAFF COMMITTEE

JOINT PLANNING STAFF

ALLIED COMMAND ATLANTIC
MINIMUM FORCES STUDY, 1958-1962

Report by the Joint Planning Staff

In accordance with Standing Group instructions[&] SACLANT's study "Allied Command Atlantic Minimum Forces Study 1958-1962"[§] has been forwarded to all NATO countries for information and examination by national authorities.

2. Our representative in Washington has requested⁺ preliminary guidance from the Chiefs of Staff Committee on how SACLANT's paper should be handled during the process of writing MC 70.

3. In accordance with instructions[‡] we have examined SACLANT's study and our report is at Annex. We have consulted the Foreign Office and the Joint Intelligence Committee.

Recommendation

4. We recommend that, if the Chiefs of Staff approve our report, it should be forwarded to the United Kingdom representative in Washington as guidance during the processing of SACLANT's study.

(Signed) E.D.G. LEWIN
 D.H. FITZGERALD
 J.C. DAVIS.

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE, S.W.1.

& STAND 2088
 § SER 1070
 + COS(57)72nd Mtg., Min.2.
 ‡ COS(57)77th Mtg., Min.3.

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TOP SECRETUK EYES ONLYAnnex to JP(57)124(Final)ALLIED COMMAND ATLANTIC
MINIMUM FORCES STUDY, 1958-1962INTRODUCTION

1. Arising from the adoption of the new "Overall Strategic Concept"⁺ and "Measures to Implement the Overall Strategic Concept,"[@] major NATO Commanders were each instructed[&] to prepare a Minimum Essential Forces Study for the period 1958-1962. The next stage is the combining of the three studies by the Standing Group into one document "Minimum Essential Force Requirements."[%]

2. In order to give Nations the opportunity to examine the problems involved before they are invited to comment on MC 70 officially, the Standing Group decided[&] that Supreme Commanders' studies should be forwarded to all Ministries of Defence for information and examination.

3. Our representative in Washington has requested[/] preliminary guidance from the Chiefs of Staff on each of the three studies, in order that he may endeavour to inject their views into MC 70 during its initial production.

AIM

4. The aim of this report is to examine SACLANT's study for the purpose of providing guidance to the United Kingdom representative in Washington on the handling of the study by the Standing Group during the preparation of MC 70.

SCOPE OF OUR REPORT

5. In the following paragraphs, we examine SACLANT's study to determine whether:-

- (a) It departs from the agreed NATO Strategic Concept.⁺
- (b) It is in accord with United Kingdom defence policy and current thought.

NATO Strategic Concept

6. The Overall Strategic Concept for the defence of the NATO Area⁺ states that:-

- + MC 14/2
- @ MC 48/2
- £ SGM-105-57
- % MC 70
- & STAND 2088
- / COS(57)72nd Mtg., Min.2.

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TOP SECRETUK EYES ONLYAnnex (Continued)

"... the objective is to prevent war by maintaining adequate military strength in being, consistent with economy of effort, resources and manpower, which will demonstrate to a potential aggressor that fatal risks would be involved if he launched or supported an armed attack against NATO, and, should war be forced upon us, to have the capability to bring it to a successful conclusion."

7. It defines the strategic objectives in the North Atlantic Ocean as:-

"... to establish and maintain control of the area and its sea and air communications, to defend the NATO home territories and essential base areas in and bordering it, and to employ available forces both offensively and defensively in support of the overall strategy. In furtherance of these objectives it will be essential to have a timely projection of Allied sea-borne nuclear offensive power against enemy naval and other agreed targets; and also to engage the enemy as soon and as far forward as possible so as to reduce to the minimum the number of his units which can penetrate to the broader reaches of the Atlantic and threaten the vital Allied sea lines of communication."

SACLANT'S AIM

8. SACLANT states his aim as "To determine the minimum forces required to enable the Allied Command Atlantic to carry out its mission in the event of war between NATO and the Soviet Bloc during the period 1958 to 1962."

Our Views

9. We consider that this is in accordance with the Strategic Concept and with the United Kingdom White Paper on Defence².

ECONOMIC CONSIDERATIONS

10. SACLANT examines economic considerations and concludes that any significant numerical increase in present force levels is improbable. At the same time he implies that the size and effectiveness of his forces are unlikely to decrease because he considers nations will continue to devote the same proportion of their gross national income to defence and that the rise in gross national income will offset the increased cost of modern weapons.

Our Views

11. We consider this doubtful when applied to NATO nations in general, and it is certainly not true of the United Kingdom, who is trying to relieve the strain on her economy by reducing her defence budget. We cannot, therefore, agree this basic assumption regarding force availabilities for ACLANT.

² Cmd 124

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Annex (Continued)

THE THREAT

12. SACLANT's appreciation of the Soviet threat is based on the latest NATO Intelligence.⁺ He expects that a limited number of submarines will have a missile with a nuclear war-head, capable of ranges up to 500 miles and that, by 1959, a very few submarines will have a capability up to 1600 miles. He considers that attacks by such submarines will be directed against targets not readily accessible by air, such as bases for Allied strategic bombers, from which it is clear that he has the American eastern seaboard in mind. He considers the U.S.S.R. capable of carrying out a full-scale submarine campaign to prevent the reinforcement and re-supply of Europe.

"13. In considering possible types of war or hostile action, SACLANT states "..... the danger of preparing for all-out nuclear war may lie in the failure or refusal of the Allies to provide forces adequate to counter limited aggression without resort to nuclear weapons....."

.....
have a missile of the V.I. type, i.e. sub-sonic, with a maximum range of 500 miles, but the linking of the 1600 mile missile with submarines is not specifically stated in SG 161/10 nor is it supported by evidence. Although SACLANT only postulates a limited GW submarine threat to the North American continent, his concern over this new threat which is in any case as yet unconfirmed by intelligence appears to have led him to adjust his initial deployment to meet it at the expense of the protection of shipping. This is a fundamental aspect of SACLANT's concept of operations which we discuss later.

SACLANT'S MISSION AND TASKS

14. SACLANT states that his basic mission, derived from MC 14/2 and MC 48/2, will be to gain and maintain control of vital sea areas, and he interprets his tasks as to:-

- (a) Destroy Soviet naval and air bases and other sources of Soviet sea power threatening ACLANT.
- (b) Establish a forward defence at sea against incursion of Soviet air, surface or submarine forces.
- (c) Seek out and destroy Soviet naval forces operating in the ACLANT region.
- (d) Provide protection for shipping at sea in the ACLANT region.
- (e) Participate in the general nuclear offensive by use of sea-based delivery systems.
- (f) Defend ACLANT territories and island bases against sea-borne attack.
- (g) Conduct amphibious operations to secure or recapture strategic positions in the North Atlantic - Norwegian Sea Area.

+ SG 161/10

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- (h) Support NATO land and air campaigns.
- (i) Provide a cohesive residual force to assist in establishing control over the enemy at the conclusion of hostilities.

15. The strategic concept recognises a requirement to deal instantly and in appropriate strength with infiltrations, incursions and hostile actions. We believe that SACLANT is considering situations which would amount to limited war with the Soviets, the possibility of which is not recognised by NATO or the United Kingdom".

vious operations, other than the necessity for NATO military forces as a whole to be capable of action "to restore and maintain the security of the NATO area."

17. The value and need for naval forces to act after global hostilities have ceased are given considerable emphasis by SACLANT. This commitment is outside the scope of his directive and should not be taken into account when calculating his force requirements.

SACLANT'S CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

18. SACLANT divides this into three broad headings:-

- (a) Operations to prevent enemy incursions into the SACLANT region.
- (b) Defensive Operations.
- (c) Offensive Operations.

OPERATIONS TO PREVENT ENEMY INCURSIONS INTO THE SACLANT REGION

19. The various means of entry into the North Atlantic by Soviet submarines are, primarily, through the Greenland-Iceland-Faroes-Scotland-Norway area and, secondarily, through the Spitzbergen-North Cape area. SACLANT proposes to set up "Detection Zones" in these two areas.

20. He considers that towards the end of the 1958-62 period, it should be possible to provide in the western area peacetime patrols consisting of submarines working in co-operation with maritime patrol aircraft. He realises that it would be politically unacceptable to man the eastern area in peace.

21. Upon a "General Alert" being declared, SACLANT plans to create a barrier by reinforcing the Greenland-Iceland area and to establish patrols in the Spitzbergen-North Cape area. By creating a barrier at the outbreak of war he plans to contain the enemy naval forces within the Barents and Norwegian Seas. He considers that this forward defence plan gives the best hope of neutralising the Soviet submarine threat with the forces likely to be at his disposal.

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