

NATO UNCLASSIFIED
NORTH ATLANTIC MILITARY COMMITTEE
COMITE MILITAIRE DE L'ATLANTIQUE NORD

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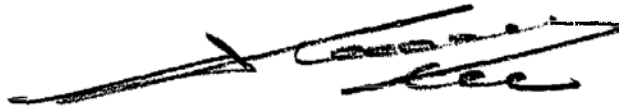
MEMORANDUM FOR THE SUPREME ALLIED COMMANDER, EUROPE
THE SUPREME ALLIED COMMANDER, ATLANTIC
THE ALLIED COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF, CHANNEL

SUBJECT: Overt and Covert Implementation of Measures of the
NATO Alert System

References: a. MILCOM 145, 13 Nov 68
b. SHAPE 0010.1/20, 31 Dec 68
c. DPC/D(69)3, 14 Jan 69

1. In response to reference a, SHAPE has, by reference b, submitted a study on the above subject. In order to comply with the requirements established by reference c, paragraph 30, the draft MCM at Enclosure 1 has been prepared. This draft contains in paragraph 3 the assumption that the other Major NATO Commanders concur in SHAPE's views.

2. Major NATO Commanders are requested either to confirm their concurrence in the draft MCM or to suggest amendments, if deemed necessary, not later than 11 July 1969.



N. G. PALAIOLOGOPOULOS
Lieutenant General, Hellenic Army
Director, International Military Staff

1 ENCLOSURE
Draft MCM

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Per Authority **IMSM-0462-02**
By Houfka/AI Date 16.1.2003

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This document consists of
1 page and an Enclosure
of 2 pages

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ENCLOSURE

Draft MCM-

June 1969

MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY GENERAL,
NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANIZATION

SUBJECT: Overt or Covert Implementation of Measures
of the NATO Alert System

Reference: DPC/D(69)3, 14 January 1969

1. The Defence Planning Committee, by reference, invited the NATO Military Authorities "to analyse the measures of the NATO Alert System in order to determine which of these could, if necessary, be implemented overtly as distinct from covertly".

2. It will be recalled that this question arose in the context of SACEUR's declaration of certain measures of Military Vigilance during the CSSR crisis, when it was felt that the possibility of undesirable effects would require special consideration.

3. Upon examination of the problem by SHAPE from an operational point of view and concurrence by the other Major NATO Commanders, the Military Committee reached the following conclusions:

a. An attempt to classify measures on the lower scale of the NATO Alert System into two such simplified categories is facing problems of considerable complexity.

b. An analysis of measures which may be placed in either the "overt" or the "covert" category shows that regional influences, the national manner of implementation and possible effects from cumulation will largely determine such allocation.

c. The command regions are so dissimilar as to preclude a uniform statement for many measures. For example, depending on the state of tension and degree of enemy surveillance, some measures might be implemented and kept covert for a considerable time in AFNORTH, which would be observable and therefore become overt quickly in AFCENT.

d. The manner in which NATO Alert measures will be interpreted and implemented by national authorities in their national alert systems may result in overt action in one country, while another country could perhaps keep the same measure covert.

e. Although under some conditions certain individual measures could be implemented covertly, the cumulation of such measures and related activities might become visible.

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Enclosure

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f. In addition, measures which under relatively normal circumstances would not attract special attention, might do so in times of tension with or without any increase in enemy surveillance.

4. In his analysis, SACEUR emphasizes that "since the MNCs Alert System is intended to improve readiness, increase preparedness, provide for effective transition from peace to war, and to insure survival of NATO forces in event of attack, the principal factor governing the implementation of alert measures must be military advisability and necessity. Seen in this light, whether or not the Alert Measures are overt or covert must be a secondary consideration. Therefore, the primary purpose of implementing these measures must be to insure that the essentially military objectives are achieved, and any non-military benefits which accrue should be considered solely as a bonus effect. Under actual conditions of tension, the existing circumstances must be subjected to careful evaluation, and the need for timely implementation of appropriate measures is likely to result in the majority becoming overt".

5. The Military Committee feels that this is a necessary and justified statement. However, it is realized that the attainment of a certain readiness posture, overtly or covertly, serves a multiple purpose in the framework of crisis management. The demonstration of readiness measures may be needed to support political objectives by adding to their weight and credibility. On the other hand, the preservation of peace may be better achieved by carefully observing adequate restraints, as long as negotiating positions are not adversely affected by insufficient military readiness. The acceptability of the risks in any specific situation constitutes a political judgement.

6. The Military Committee is prepared to provide advice on the military aspects of readiness requirements. The development of political, economic and other non-military measures which would also be deterrent and responsive to pressure or threat against NATO is considered to be an essential complementary action. Their development and use in a concerted, well-balanced and flexible manner would minimize the need for consideration of using militarily desirable measures for essentially political purposes.

7. The Military Committee recommends that:

a. NAC/DPC considerations on approval of alert declarations should be governed by the requirement to attain the necessary readiness;

b. methods and extent of implementation of alert measures should be left to the decision of individual governments.

FOR THE MILITARY COMMITTEE

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Enclosure

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