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S.G. 13/13

3 January 1950

MEMORANDUM BY THE STANDING GROUP

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to the

Military Committee and Regional Planning Groups

on

STRATEGIC GUIDANCE FOR NORTH ATLANTIC REGIONAL PLANNING

1. The enclosed paper, which has been prepared by the Standing Group in accordance with instructions of the Military Committee at its second meeting on 29 November 1949, provides strategic guidance for Regional planning. It incorporates, to the greatest extent possible, the comments forwarded on the initial draft thereof by member nations through their Accredited Representatives. Attached to the Guidance, as Appendix "A", is a very broad estimate of enemy capabilities. It is provided in conjunction with the strategic guidance as a basis for initiating and coordinating the development of detailed intelligence by the Regional Planning Groups.

2. The Standing Group intentionally kept the strategic guidance and intelligence estimates in the broadest possible terms and has included only the minimum necessary for the initiation of coordinated plans. It is not the intent of the Enclosure to provide either detailed planning information, detailed intelligence information, or to establish any arbitrary limits to the scope of regional planning. It is intended, however, to furnish a uniform basis for such regional planning in order to assure that these plans, when received by the Standing Group, will possess sufficient similarity to permit their ready integration into over-all NATO defense plans for the North Atlantic Treaty area.

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By LATHY Date 12 Jan 59

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3. The Standing Group feel it desirable to emphasize that the North Atlantic Treaty nations should not be misled into planning in the frame of mind prevailing at the end of World War II, which was largely based on the enormous military power available to the Allies at that time. Similar forces could not be raised by the North Atlantic Treaty nations until many years of war had passed. On the other hand, the USSR has maintained, if not increased, her technical, military and economic capabilities. Planning must therefore be on a realistic basis so that the force required whilst not disproportionate to the probable threat yet remain within the capabilities of the North Atlantic Treaty nation. It follows therefore that special emphasis must be laid on the necessity for developing methods to compensate for numerical inferiority.

4. The Standing Group recognizes that the schedule of planning set forth in the Enclosure is ambitious. In view of the threat, however, it is vital to expedite the development of a defense plan and the initiation of positive steps to build up our defense capabilities.

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