

M.C.3
19 October 1949
Pages 1-7, incl.

MEMORANDUM BY THE STANDING GROUP

to the
NORTH ATLANTIC MILITARY COMMITTEE
transmitting

THE STRATEGIC CONCEPT FOR THE DEFENSE
OF THE NORTH ATLANTIC AREA

1. In accordance with the directive from the Military Committee to the Standing Group (M.C. 2/1, 6 October 1949), an over-all defensive concept for the North Atlantic Treaty area has been prepared (Enclosure). This concept has been reviewed and approved by the Standing Group and is herewith transmitted to the members of the Military Committee for consideration and comment.

2. The aim of this concept is to ensure unity of thought and purpose insofar as the objectives of the defense of the North Atlantic Treaty area are concerned. It has been drawn up in broad terms which take into account both political and strategic considerations. Based on this broad concept and in accordance with the terms of reference of the Standing Group, more detailed strategic guidance of a purely military nature will be issued by the Standing Group to fulfill the needs of the Regional Planning Groups.

3. In order that regional plans will reflect from the onset unity of thought and purpose, it is desirable that an overall defensive concept be accepted and approved by the Military Committee at its next meeting. It is therefore requested that the addressees send their comments in time to reach the Standing Group not later than 15 November 1949 in order that these comments may be consolidated and final drafts prepared for the Military Committee at its next meeting, which must take place prior to 1 December 1949. The Standing Group personnel will be available to the representatives of the addressees for informal discussions on any aspects of the concept.

4. In view of the fact that the Atlantic Treaty Organization has not as yet had time to analyse and establish its ultimate security system, the Standing Group considers that the security of the concept makes it advisable that it be transmitted to the home governments by the most secure diplomatic means. It is, therefore, requested that this document be handled in toto by courier and on no account by any electronic means.

GENERAL BRADLEY

GENERAL MORGAN

GENERAL ELY

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ENCLOSURESTRATEGIC CONCEPT FOR THE DEFENSE
OF THE NORTH ATLANTIC AREA

I

PREAMBLE

1. The attainment of the objectives of the North Atlantic Treaty requires the integration by the parties to the Treaty of those political, economic, and psychological, as well as purely military means, which are essential to the defense of the North Atlantic area. Of particular significance is the requirement that the objectives of the North Atlantic Treaty be accomplished in accordance with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. The parties to the Atlantic Treaty have declared:

"They are determined to safeguard the freedom, common heritage, and civilization of their peoples, founded on the principles of democracy, individual liberty, and the rule of law."

"They seek to promote stability and well-being in the North Atlantic area."

"They are resolved to united their efforts for collective defense and for the preservation of peace and security".

2. For the purpose of, first, preventing war, and, second, insuring in the event of war the effective application of the military and industrial strength of the Treaty nations in a common defense, the military means available to the nations of the North Atlantic Treaty must be effectively coordinated. As a basis for such coordination a common strategic concept for the defense of the North Atlantic area must serve as the keystone

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Enclosure

for the plans of the Military Committee and the Regional Planning Groups. It is the purpose of this document to outline a broad concept for the overall defense of the North Atlantic area.

3. This broad concept is built on considerations of geographical position, industrial capacity, population, and the military capabilities of the Treaty nations. The objective is adequate military strength accompanied by economy of effort, resources and manpower. It is desirable that each nation be capable of providing for its own defense to the maximum extent possible consistent with a collective strategic plan.

4. This concept is the initial step in the initiation of realistic, vital and productive defense planning aimed at securing peace and lessening the possibility of aggression. It is aimed at providing the basic strategic guidance needed by the regional planning groups in order to assure coordinated planning in consonance with the principles set forth in Title II below. The measures required to implement this concept will require constant review.

II

NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY DEFENSE PRINCIPLES

5. Certain general principles are recognized as underlying the North Atlantic Treaty defensive organizations. These principles are accepted as fundamental to the successful functioning of the organization and the development of a common defense program. As such, those applicable to defense planning are set out in the following paragraphs as an integral part of the basic guidance for regional planning groups.

- a. The main principle is common action in defense against armed attack through self-help and mutual aid. The immediate objective is the achievement of arrangements for collective self-defense among the Atlantic Treaty nations.
- b. In accordance with the general objective of Article 3 of the North Atlantic Treaty, each nation will contribute in the most effective form, consistent with its situation, responsibilities and resources, such aid as can reasonably be expected of it.
- c. The military strength of the participating nations should be developed without endangering economic recovery and the attainment of economic stability, which constitute an essential element of their security.
- d. The armed forces of those nations so located as to permit mutual support in the event of aggression should be developed on a coordinated basis in order that they can operate most economically and efficiently in accordance with a common strategic plan.
- e. A successful defense of the North Atlantic Treaty nations through maximum efficiency of their armed forces, with the minimum necessary expenditures of manpower, money and materials, is the goal of defense planning.
- f. A basic principle of North Atlantic Treaty planning should be that each nation should undertake the task, or tasks, for which it is best suited. Certain nations, because of their geographic location or because of their capabilities, will emphasize appropriate specific missions.

III

OBJECTIVES OF THE NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY DEFENSIVE CONCEPT

6. The purpose of the North Atlantic Treaty defensive organization is to unite the strength of the North Atlantic

Treaty nations in order to promote the preservation of peace and to provide for the security of the North Atlantic area. The general objectives of the defensive concept are:

- a. To coordinate, in time of peace, our military and economic strength with a view to creating a powerful deterrent to any nation or group of nations threatening the peace, independence and stability of the North Atlantic family of nations.
- b. To develop plans, for use in the event of war, which will provide for the combined employment of military forces available to the North Atlantic nations to counter enemy threats, to defend and maintain the peoples and home territories of the North Atlantic Treaty nations and the security of the North Atlantic Treaty area.

IV

MILITARY MEASURES TO IMPLEMENT DEFENSE CONCEPT

Basic undertakings

7. Overall defense plans must provide in advance of war emergency, specifically for the following basic undertakings in furtherance of the common objective to defend the North Atlantic area.
 - a. Insure the ability to deliver the atomic bomb promptly. This is primarily a US responsibility assisted as practicable by other nations.
 - b. Arrest and counter as soon as practicable the enemy offensives against North Atlantic Treaty powers by all means available, including air, naval, land and psychological operations. The hard core of ground power in being will come from the European nations aided by other nations as they can mobilize.

- c. Neutralize as soon as practicable enemy air operations against North Atlantic Treaty powers. In this undertaking the European nations should provide the bulk of the tactical air support and air defense in being, other nations aiding as they can mobilize.
- d. Secure and control sea and air lines of communication, and ports and harbors, essential to the implementation of common defense plans. It is recognized that this will be primarily a responsibility of the United States and United Kingdom. Other nations will secure and maintain their own harbor defense and coastal sea lines and will assist in the maintenance of other lines of communications as their means permit.
- e. Secure, maintain and defend such main support areas, air bases, naval bases and other facilities as are essential to the successful accomplishment of the basic undertaking. These undertakings will be a responsibility of the nations having sovereignty over these essential bases, areas and facilities, aided as necessary and to the extent set forth in collective defense plans.
- f. Mobilize and expand the overall power of the Allied nations in accordance with their planned contribution to later offensive operations designed to maintain security of the North Atlantic Treaty area.

Cooperative measures

8. The essence of our overall concept is to develop a maximum of strength through collective defense planning. As a

prerequisite to the successful implementation of common plans, it is recognized that certain cooperative measures must be undertaken in advance. These measures are:

- a. Standardization, insofar as practicable, of military doctrines and procedures.
- b. Conduct of combined training exercises, when deemed desirable.
- c. Compilation and exchange of intelligence information and data peculiar to the conduct of contemplated Atlantic Treaty organization defense planning and operations resulting therefrom.
- d. Cooperation in the construction, maintenance, and operation of military installations of mutual concern.
- e. Standardization of maintenance, repair, and service facilities which will be of mutual concern in the event contemplated defense plans have to be implemented.
- f. Standardization, insofar as practicable, of military material and equipment for use in operations as developed by common defense plans.
- g. Collective cooperation in arranging for military operating rights, in peacetime, in furtherance of common defense requirements.
- h. Cooperation, insofar as practicable and within the legal limitations and administrative restrictions of each country, in research and development of new weapons and in the development of new methods of warfare.