

CONSEIL DE L'ATLANTIQUE NORD
NORTH ATLANTIC COUNCIL

EXEMPLAIRE
COPY

N° 285

N A T O C O N F I D E N T I A L

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH
7th November, 1972

WORKING PAPER
AC/276-WP(72)21/6(Revised)

MUTUAL AND BALANCED FORCE REDUCTIONS WORKING GROUP

IMPLICATIONS OF MBFR IN CENTRAL EUROPE FOR THE
FLANKS OF NATO

Note by the Staff Group

Since mid-1971, the MBFR Working Group have been examining the implications of MBFR in Central Europe for the flanks of NATO. They have taken account of the views(1) expressed by the Military Committee - in the context of a review(1) of an assessment(2) by SHAPE of the risks involved in selected MBFR models designed for Central Europe - that certain military advantages afforded to the Warsaw Pact vis-à-vis ACE in the Central Region would be reduced, particularly in the aspects of reinforcement and initiative, if the MBFR areas could be extended to include at least the three Western Military Districts of the USSR. The Military Committee commented that "The local effect would be to slow down the Soviet build-up in the combat zone, and probably to provide more warning of imminent aggression. This would be at the cost of accepting a Soviet deployment which could pose an increased risk to NATO's flanks".

The "Risk Assessments"

2. The MBFR Working Group have concentrated, in their study, on analysis(3) carried out by SHAPE, within Terms of Reference(4) defined by the Working Group, of the effects of five possible Soviet redeployments post-MBFR for ground forces in Central Europe, i.e. in the NATO Guidelines Area (FRG, BE, LU, NL: GDR, Poland, Czechoslovakia). These reductions range from 10% to 30%, and redeployments towards the flanks from 1 tank division to three divisions (2 tank: 1 motorised to S. Region: 2 motorised 1 tank to N. Region).

3. The Working Group also had the benefit of a study by the Turkish Authorities which postulated a wider range of reductions, including air forces, in Central Europe (10%-50%)

-
- (1) MCM-43-71, 2nd July, 1971
(2) SHAPE 23/71, 28th February, 1971 (CTS)
(3) AC/276-WP(72)21, 19th May, 1972
(4) AC/276-WP(71)24(Final)

N A T O C O N F I D E N T I A L

AC/276-WP(72)21/6(Revised) -2-

and redeployment of larger Soviet forces towards the South-Eastern Flank. In the lower ranges of reduction, most or all of the withdrawn divisions are so redeployed as to be available for operations against the Southern flank; in the higher ranges of postulated reductions, up to some 80% of the withdrawn Soviet forces are assumed to be redeployed against the Southern Region.

4. The two studies (at Annexes A and B for ease of reference), based on different post-MBFR redeployment assumptions(1) both conclude that MBFR in the Central Region will have serious implications for the Southern Region in particular. The disparity in force strengths on the flanks is already great: for the smaller reductions (e.g. 10%) in Central Europe and on the assumption that only one-third of the withdrawn forces are redeployed against the flanks, the SHAPE study finds that there will be a marginal increase in the military threat to Greece and Turkey. For the higher range (30%), the increase in threat would be moderate: but these "marginal" and "moderate" assessments are related to the force superiority, already substantial, possessed by the Soviets. The Turkish findings are compatible, but postulating greater Soviet redeployments towards the Southern flank, show a correspondingly greater increase in force ratios in Soviet favour.

5. Both studies stress the point that even small increases in the Soviet military superiority in the flanks could have significant implications, since any increase in these Soviet forces would be cause for concern regarding Soviet intentions.

Conclusions

6. The Working Group view, after considerable study and discussion, is that both the SHAPE and Turkish studies are valid assessments, based on their different assumptions. They cover, in conjunction, such a wide range of reductions and redeployments towards the flanks, that, in the Working Group view, no further "risk assessment" of additional models is required.

7. The Working Group further conclude that:

- (a) The degree of the increase in risk to the flanks must be viewed in the perspective of the overall defence of NATO, not simply an isolated region of NATO. However, as things now stand, the Soviet superiority in conventional forces deployed to face the flanks is

(1) The Warsaw Pact figures used to compute pre-MBFR force ratios on the Southern flank in these studies included all Category I and II forces in the following locations: Bulgaria, Rumania, and the Soviet Military districts of Turkestan, Trans Caucasus, North Caucasus and Odessa. Forces in other locations and Category III forces were not included.

N A T O C O N F I D E N T I A L

-3- AC/276-WP(72)21/6(Revised)

very high. Any increase in that Soviet superiority could be an indication of intention and, equally, could be an intolerable threat for the countries in the flank region.

- (b) It is conceivable that measures to deal with this potential problem could be developed as part of Alliance negotiating positions, but until further study is devoted to the matter, little else can be said. The study of possible measures should take high priority in the Movement Constraints Sub-Group, for which the Working Group will prepare terms of reference.

NATO,
1110 Brussels.

N A T O C O N F I D E N T I A L

DECLASSIFIED/DECLASSIFIEE - PUBLIC DISCLOSED/MISE EN LECTURE PUBLIQUE