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Authority <u>NLE 2013-232 #4</u>
By <u>MMK</u> NLDDE Date <u>11/19/14</u>

Mr. President:

I would like to describe the Naval command arrangements in the Mediterranean in peace and in war -- National and NATO. Nationally there is no problem -- in national command channels the 6th Fleet is under the full operational command of USCINCEUR.

This command is exercised through his Naval component commander who is CINCNELM. NATO Command arrangements in that area have always been complicated by the conflicting interests of many nations. The result is a compromise dictated by political expediency. As you know Sir, -- during the early days of NATO, wide divergencies between the basic objectives of the U.S. and the U.K. delayed the establishment of the Southern European Command for several months. The U.S. considered it essential that an over-all Naval Commander be provided within the Southern Command to support directly the land battle in Europe. On the other hand, the British were primarily interested in maintaining the line of sea communications from Gibraltar to Suez and the Middle East. Under the current arrangement the U.S. Sixth Fleet acquires a NATO wartime designation of Striking Force South, reporting to the Allied Commander Southern Europe, a U.S. Flag Officer. The Commander, Allied Forces Mediterranean, however is responsible directly to SACEUR primarily for the security of sea communications outside of national waters.

His area is divided into sub-areas, each under a Flag Officer of the nation having the greatest length of coastline within that area. Thus, sub areas have been assigned to the command of British, French, Italian, Greek and Turkish Flag Officers.

Now with respect to the recent action of the French Government in notifying NATO that it was changing the status of its naval forces in the Mediterranean.--

Initially the French government was of the opinion that the Sixth Fleet operated entirely free of any NATO restriction. This is indicated by the fact that on 23 January last, the French Ambassador informed our Secretary of State that his Government wanted their naval forces in the Mediterranean to be as free as are U.S. Mediterranean forces. This French statement is based on the fact that of the 5 countries which have committed naval forces to SACEUR in the Mediterranean - France, Italy and Greece must obtain the consent of SACEUR to redeploy their forces while the United States and the U.K. are exempted from this requirement.

Actually the Sixth Fleet is an integrated part of the command organization of both USCINCEUR and SACEUR. USCINCEUR has full operational command of the Sixth



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Fleet when it is operating nationally. Operational command shifts to SACEUR when the fleet is engaged in NATO exercises and it then becomes STRIKEFORSOUTH. During 1959, STRIKEFORSOUTH, in whole or in part, will participate in 11 NATO exercises. All nations employ their naval forces in the same manner.

To understand the different requirements placed on naval forces in the Mediterranean it is necessary to review briefly certain NATO documents.

At the time Germany was admitted into NATO, the North Atlantic Council took steps to strengthen the machinery of that alliance. This was done by restricting the deployment of forces without SACEUR consent. It was designed to reassure other NATO members that the forces of a resurgent Germany would be restricted in their operations.

These steps resulted in the promulgation of "Revised Terms of Reference" for the Supreme Allied Commander, Europe, in 1955. In that document are two statements which combine to form the basis of the French Ambassador's complaint. First, it is stated that combat forces assigned or committed to SACEUR would not be redeployed from his area or used operationally within that area, without the consent of SACEUR, subject to political guidance furnished by the North Atlantic Council.

At a later point in the document, this provision is qualified with the statement that nothing in these "Revised Terms of Reference would alter the present status of the British Commonwealth and United States forces in the Mediterranean.

Had it not been for the freedom of action permitted by this exclusion clause we would have been unable to redeploy our Sixth Fleet to Lebanon last summer without first notifying or obtaining permission from SACEUR.

As a practical matter, the restrictions on deployments and operational use of forces are not as stringent as would seem. Subsequent to the promulgation of SACEUR's "Terms of Reference", the North Atlantic Council adopted still another Resolution which provided that if a government feels compelled to withdraw units which are committed to NATO, in order to meet a national emergency "it shall at once inform the appropriate NATO military authorities and the North Atlantic Council, at the first possible opportunity."

The Lebanon operation would thus have been possible under this resolution but only by a U.S. statement that we were WITHDRAWING forces.

This provision puts all naval forces in the Mediterranean on a co-equal basis regarding emergency deployments since the U.S. and U.K. are included in the requirement to give NATO notification of deployments.



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Mr. Dulles has reported that he discussed this matter with President De Gaulle during his recent visit to Paris. He reported that he told General De Gaulle the matter of changing the status of the French naval forces was a highly technical one and, therefore, it should be carried out within NATO channels. He also told General De Gaulle that the United States was sympathetic towards the French position.

General Norstad stated to General Ely that he had no objections to the French Naval forces being put in the same status as U.S. and U.K. forces.

However - and this is the crux of the whole matter - the French Chief of Staff stated that putting the French naval forces on the same basis as the U.S. Sixth Fleet was not enough to satisfy the French government. Nor would they have been satisfied to have imposed a concurrent restriction on U.S. forces.

The French memorandum notifying NATO that that government had effected a change in the status of the French Mediterranean naval forces pointed out:

1. That French missions in the Mediterranean have no other character than that of national missions.
2. That the French naval forces in the Mediterranean must be assigned to these missions on a priority basis.
3. For these reasons the French Government was forced to resume control over its naval forces in the Mediterranean.

Psychologically this is a drastic move on the part of France. Actually - there are relatively few forces involved - in fact it is 17 ships and 22 maritime patrol aircraft.



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