

SECRET

DECLASSIFIED

THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20301

9 MAR 1976

The Honorable Henry A. Kissinger
Secretary of State
Department of State
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Henry,

Congress, in its committee actions on the FY 1976 budget, has expressed serious reservations regarding the conduct of future REFORGER and CRESTED CAP strategic mobility exercises.

The Joint Chiefs of Staff have determined that the requirement for strategic mobility exercises to demonstrate procedures for rapid reinforcement of Europe remains valid today. I support their finding and agree that the continuation of these exercises is essential. While the origin of these exercises lies in the 1967 Trilateral Agreement, the requirement for these exercises is even greater due to the following considerations:

- a. Strategic nuclear parity with the Soviets requires an increased emphasis on US capability to reinforce NATO with conventional forces.
- b. NATO defense planning and capability are predicated on the ability of US forces to reinforce Europe rapidly.
- c. The United States must continue to demonstrate its resolve to support NATO. Strategic mobility exercises are militarily and politically convincing demonstrations to both US Allies and the Warsaw Pact of that resolve.
- d. Obligations inherent in any mutual and balanced force reductions will require the ability to reinforce (augment) NATO and US in-place forces rapidly.
- e. The testing of deployment plans and procedures by the United States and NATO during the AUTUMN FORGE exercise series, of which REFORGER and CRESTED CAP are a part, is necessary to maintain force readiness. These exercises provide a unique opportunity for US forces to work with Allied units, thus improving combat effectiveness.

We intend to modify REFORGER 1976 by deploying the 101st Airborne Division (minus one brigade) to Europe by sea and air. Exercising the capability to deploy a different type of force by sea and air, as opposed to past practice of deploying units by air to their prepositioned equipment stocks in Europe, will be profitable in two ways, over and over its unit training value. First, it will contribute to the understanding of the problems inherent in sending reinforcements to Europe by surface transportation. Second, it will underscore our capability and



Classified by Director, European Region/ISA
SUBJECT TO GENERAL DECLASSIFICATION SCHEDULE OF
EXECUTIVE ORDER 11652. AUTOMATICALLY DOWNGRADED
AT TWO YEAR INTERVALS, DECLASSIFIED ON 12-31-84

SECRET

resolve to perform this vital operation. The need for annual strategic mobility exercises will remain valid in the future.

The United States should continue to exercise and to improve procedures to augment forces rapidly if NATO forces are to remain a credible deterrent in the face of increasing Soviet capabilities. Mobility exercises are a necessary component of both the US deterrent and defensive posture, thus assisting in precluding miscalculation by potential adversaries and concern among friends.

I solicit your support to stress the continuing need for strategic mobility exercises in your presentations before the Congress.

SIGNED
DONALD RUMSFELD

DISTRIBUTION:

- Orig-addee S (1)
- SecDef (1) E (1)
- DepSecDef (2) ED Chron (1)
- OSD Files (1) ED NATO (Comeback) (1)
- Spec Ass't (1) ED NATO (Chron) (1)
- XO (1) ED NATO (Drafter) (1) R+C (2) ✓

Prepared by: COL G. Freimark/dj/2-20-76
OASD/ISA/ED/NATO/4D762

