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DEFENCE AND OVERSEA POLICY COMMITTEE

INTERVENTION CAPABILITY OUTSIDE NATO

Note by the Secretaries

1. At their meeting on 22 January (OD(80) 1st Meeting, Item 1) Ministers noted that the Secretary of the Cabinet had set in hand an interdepartmental study of the political case for a United Kingdom military intervention capability outside the NATO area in the light of changes in the international situation. The results of that study are now available and are attached.
2. As will be seen, the report examines how far Britain and/or her allies might require a capability to intervene militarily in the third world in the 1980s; analyses the likely context of British intervention; describes the existing United Kingdom capability; and considers how this could be enhanced. Its broad conclusions are that the need is real; that some reorganisation and modest improvements are called for; but that there should be no major diversion of our resources from their NATO tasks.
3. Ministers are invited
 - i. to endorse these conclusions, which are set out more fully in paragraph 26;
 - ii. to agree that they should form the basis of the subsequent Ministry of Defence report envisaged by CD, on the feasibility and cost of providing a suitable enhancement of our intervention capability and its implications for defence policy.

Signed ROBERT ARMSTRONG
R L WADE-GERY
R M HASTIE-SMITH

Cabinet Office

14 March 1980

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REPORT OF THE OFFICIAL GROUP ON FUTURE DEFENCE POLICY OUTSIDE
THE NATO AREA

I INTRODUCTION

1. The group was established "to consider the political and economic case for a United Kingdom military intervention capability outside the NATO area in the light of changes in the international situation". It comprised representatives of the Treasury, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Ministry of Defence, Department of Trade and the Central Policy Review Staff under Cabinet Office chairmanship.

2. For the purposes of this study, a military intervention capability has been taken to mean the capacity to deploy units rapidly, and maintain them once deployed, in a combat role in support of British interests in third world countries.

II THE THIRD WORLD IN THE 1980s

3. Annex A describes the changes in the threat to Western interests outside the NATO area since the 1974 Defence Review, and the expected trends for the future. The picture that emerges is of an unstable third world, particularly in areas of crucial economic and political concern to the West, such as the Gulf and Southern Africa; and of a Soviet Union increasingly able and willing to exploit this instability. Western involvement in and dependence on those areas, as sources of essential raw materials (oil from the Gulf, minerals from Southern Africa), will not get less. These and other unstable parts of the third world contain large Western communities which are increasingly at risk. The main threat from the Soviet Union is at present subversion, creating options for more overt forms of intervention at a later stage. But Russian and proxy subversion can take many forms, from the support of insurgency to the exercise of political pressure through the mere possession of a decisive intervention capability and the threat - perhaps only implicit - of its use.

4. There will also continue to be many causes of instability in third world countries with which the Soviet Union has no connection. Libyan-backed insurgency in Tunisia is a current example; Somali-backed insurgency in Kenya could be

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another in the future. Tribalism remains a major African problem. The Russians will of course stand to gain if such dangers engulf regimes sympathetic to the West or genuinely non-aligned, or drive them through desperation to accept Soviet support.

5. Western counter-measures will need to be as varied as the threat. Those which are purely political or economic lie outside the scope of this report. But they will certainly be all that is called for in many cases. The political climate in the third world is generally more hostile than it was to outside military intervention of any kind. Foreign military bases are less acceptable. Recent advances in technology have made it easier to deploy Western forces rapidly without dependence on a large overseas base, but have also increased the capacity of an otherwise unsophisticated enemy to hamper even well-trained Western forces.

6. Where Western counter-measures need to have a military dimension, it will often be in both Western and third world interests that they should fall short of actual intervention. Help in the form of military training and loan service personnel will remain of great importance, as offering a low-profile and inexpensive means of helping friendly third world countries to help themselves. Ministers are considering separately the scale of our effort in this area. Defence sales can also be helpful, as well as mutually beneficial. At another level, Western military help can take the form of an over-the-horizon presence or the temporary deployment in a peaceful context of units from any of the three services. Britain already plays a part here too. Routine normal task group deployments to the Indian Ocean and Caribbean have taken place within the last four months, as have Army and RAF exercises in respectively Kenya and Oman.

7. Preventive Western military measures short of intervention, however, depend for much of their effectiveness on the West being seen to be ready to go further if they fail. As Annex A makes clear, there may be occasions when political, economic and peaceful military counter-measures will not by themselves be enough to protect Western interests. In a third world where the use of external force by the Russians (or their proxies or others) has become a recognised danger, much importance is bound to be attached to the West's ability to promise actual military intervention and if necessary carry it out. Possible contexts, so far as Britain is concerned, are examined below.

III THE CONTEXT OF INTERVENTION

8. Almost by definition, it is rarely possible to forecast the precise circumstances in which intervention might be needed. That is why intervention forces need flexibility to meet the unexpected. Three main categories of operation can however be distinguished: the reinforcement of dependent territories; the protection of British communities abroad; and the support of third world governments.

9. The Reinforcement of Dependent Territories. Anguilla, Bermuda and Hong Kong provide examples of such operations in the last 10 years. Our ability to reinforce dependent territories would benefit from any enhancement of our intervention capability, but would not in itself justify it. We already have plans and forces to meet requirements of this kind (within reasonable limits; we should never, for example, be able to hold Hong Kong by conventional means against a determined Chinese attack).

10. The Protection of British Communities. This includes the Services Protected Evacuation (SPE) of groups of British citizens whose lives are at risk in a crisis; as well as a less easily identified range of broadly similar contingencies, of which the Entebbe raid provides a (non-British) example. Threats to property which could call for military intervention are harder to envisage; but they might, for example, take the form of armed interference with British merchant shipping on the high seas. The requirement for SPE is unlikely to decrease. As instability in third world countries grows, so does the threat to British (and other Western) communities. Such communities have not, however, generally tended to get smaller; indeed the wealth of primary producer countries has led some of them to grow considerably (there were, for example, about 14,000 British subjects in Iran in September 1978). A list of the British overseas communities for which SPE plans have been commissioned is at Annex B.

11. We should be unlikely to face a contingency of this kind alone. Normally (as at Kolwezi) where the subjects of one Western country are at risk, so will the subjects of others be; while it may be appropriate for one country (Belgium on that occasion) to take the lead, that country would normally be able to count on support (eg airlift) from allies, including the United States. We already have some largely informal agreements on civilian evacuation with other countries (eg United States, France, Australia, Canada). But only the Americans and the French, apart from ourselves, have a significant SPE capability. The main need in SPE is for rapid and secure deployment. An opposed landing capability (eg to seize airfields for evacuation) would increase the range of operations that could be undertaken.

12. Support of Third World Governments. Despite the inhibitions noted in Section II above, there have been cases in the fairly recent past where a threatened third world country (Zaire, Oman, Chad) has seen direct Western military intervention as the only effective way to counter an external or externally-backed threat to its security. Pakistan provides the clearest current example of a country which is increasingly relying on the explicit possibility of Western intervention in an emergency. In the future, as in the past, the most obvious source of such intervention is the United States. But for domestic political reasons the willingness of the Americans to act as global policeman is clearly going to depend more and more on the willingness of their allies to offer support, particularly in areas like the Gulf where it is the material interests of those allies which are most at risk. The Americans accept that the primary responsibility for the defence of western interests world-wide is theirs, and they maintain forces for this purpose on a scale which no ally can match. They accept that most of their allies (notably Germany and Japan) can only contribute in the third world economically (and perhaps politically) and cannot be asked to do more militarily than make a greater contribution to their own

defence so as to free United States resources for use elsewhere. But there are indications that they see the United Kingdom (like France) as being in a rather different category. We have a tradition of military involvement in the third world, which to some extent still continues. We are capable of helping militarily; our presence alongside the Americans may be politically useful; and because of the dangers inherent in super-power military action, there may be cases where it would be in everyone's interest for the Americans to hang back.

13. It is of course only in a fairly narrow range of circumstances that military intervention by the United Kingdom on its own, to help a third world government, would be both effective and more appropriate than United States intervention. United Kingdom forces, however much enhanced, would only be able to counter a relatively low threat from insurgents or infiltrators; and that only in a relatively small, isolated or little-populated country. In practice, the only countries which would be likely to look to the United Kingdom for help against an enemy with whom British forces could deal effectively would probably be Gulf countries (particularly Oman) or Commonwealth states (eg in the Caribbean, or perhaps Kenya). We cannot be certain that a contingency of this kind would ever arise; much of the benefit to be gained from maintaining a capability to meet it would take the form of reassurance provided to our friends, and deterrence to their enemies. But for these to be effective, it will be important to make clear to relevant third world countries that we have not only the necessary forces but also the political will to use them.

14. In all other circumstances, we should only be likely to intervene as part of a wider Western effort, probably in support of the United States. Examples might be operations to secure Western oil supplies through the Straits of Hormuz; or assistance in South East Asia to a signatory of the Five Power Defence Agreement.

IV. THE EXISTING UNITED KINGDOM CAPABILITY

15. Annex C sets out what we at present possess. As a result of the 1974 Defence Review, commitments outside the NATO area were planned "for the most part to be met by forces whose primary tasks related to NATO". Though the United Kingdom can in theory draw on all such forces for intervention in third world countries, in practice we would normally look to the air portable and parachute battalions, and to the amphibious forces, based on the United Kingdom, as being most suitably trained and equipped for the task and most readily available. From these forces there is always a battalion group (about 1,000 men) and its airlift available at 72 hours' notice for service world-wide. If more were required, a two-battalion field force with supporting units (about 2,500 men) allotted to United Kingdom home defence duties could be made available. If, alternatively, we were prepared to use forces with a NATO reinforcement role, then it would normally be possible to provide a further field force or an amphibious force of two Royal Marine commandos (about 3,000 men) lifted in Service shipping. Two parachute battalions and elements of the Special Air Services Regiment (about 1,500 men) could also be included.

16. Annex C also makes clear our current limitations. We can deploy an intervention force rapidly only by disrupting (seriously, if large forces or lengthy interventions are involved) the RAF Air Transport Force's peace time tasks; and (normally) by obtaining overflying rights and transit facilities. We have no real capability for an opposed intervention, since our parachute battalions do not train for an assault role. We no longer have strike carriers and can at present therefore provide air cover for intervention only if it takes place within range of friendly airfields. We cannot commit an intervention force larger than a battalion group, or sustain one of any size for long periods without drawing on units and stocks required for NATO or for United Kingdom home defence tasks. Finally, we have no stockpile of the material to be used either for intervention in the first instance or for subsequent re-supply; any such requirement could only be met at the expense of our stocks for NATO. Though not commissioned primarily to strengthen our intervention capability, certain force improvements already in hand will over the next two to three years ease (but not eliminate) some of these limitations. They are summarised in Annex C.

V. THE CASE FOR ENHANCEMENT

17. There is no case for enhancing the United Kingdom's intervention capability at the cost of a major diversion of resources from our existing NATO commitments. That could only be justified, at home or to our allies, if we could show that the resources involved could be more effectively used to promote Western interests elsewhere than in Europe. Such an argument would not be plausible, given the serious conventional imbalance in the European theatre.

18. The intervention capabilities of our relevant allies are described in Annex D. The United States capability is of course very great, and will be enlarged over the next few years by the creation of a Rapid Deployment Force of over 100,000 men with complex logistic support. We are not in that league. A more natural comparison is with the French. They have displayed the clearest political determination to use military intervention in support of their interests. This determination is reflected in their planning and training. But their actual resources for intervention are not in practice much greater than ours. They maintain a nominal intervention force of two divisions (over 20,000 men). From what we know of their thinking, however, the thing they regard as really important is their ability to deploy a single demi-brigade (3,000 men) fast in a crisis. Their airlift capacity is at present no greater than ours, although improvements are planned. It was so stretched at the time of Kolwezi that American help was needed, even though no drop against real opposition was involved. No one else in NATO has any serious capability at all.

19. In operations of the kind envisaged in Section III above, the vital factors will be speed of deployment and the capacity to sustain and resupply an intervention force. Speed is perhaps the factor most relevant to operations by the United Kingdom alone to assist a small ally, for example in frustrating an attempted coup or containing an armed incursion. Endurance may be of more importance in operations conducted with allies, which are likely to be on a larger scale and to last longer. Because of the need for reinforcement and rotation of units, the longer the operations the more likely they are to involve us in using NATO-committed forces, as well as NATO-earmarked stocks. But where we operate with the Americans, they should normally be able to fill gaps in our capability from their own resources. They may sometimes even be willing to do so when not directly involved themselves; cf Rhodesia in December 1979.

20. To enhance our capability, therefore, what we need is more flexibility rather than more men. We need to be able to react rapidly with forces which are structured, trained and equipped for intervention, and have the logistic backing to sustain their operations.

21. A good deal could be achieved by relatively modest measures. The areas of improvement which, on this analysis, require further study include the reintroduction of an assault parachute capability, stockpiling of equipment and stores essential for intervention tasks, the possible strengthening of our airlift (though arrangements for the use of United States aircraft might provide a cheaper alternative where available), and the adaptation to intervention tasks of our arrangements for command and control. Attention would also have to be given to overflying rights and staging facilities. Double-earmarking (mentioned in paragraph 24 below) is also relevant.

22. These changes would widen the range of contingencies to which we could respond with least damage to our NATO commitments and without a significant diversion of resources from NATO-related tasks. Beyond that, substantial increases in the scale of our capability would be both more expensive and less useful. A reconstruction of the large-scale intervention forces we maintained in the early 1960s would not be justified by the results likely to be achieved.

VI. ALLIANCE PERSPECTIVES

23. For the reasons noted in Section III above, the Americans would certainly welcome a limited enhancement of our intervention capability on the lines described above. It should also make them readier to treat us as partners and take account of our interests world-wide. But they would not want us to allow the process of enhancement to weaken our commitment of forces for the defence of the Central Region in Europe. This was the clear implication of President Carter's message to the Prime Minister of 10 February.

24. Our other allies will not actively encourage us to do more outside Europe. They would oppose our doing so if this involved significant long term diversion of resources from NATO. But they would probably accept that it was in the general Western interest for us to be able to make more flexible use of some NATO-assigned

forces based in the United Kingdom, eg by double-earmarking them for out-of-area roles. Such double-earmarking should be easier to defend in the aftermath of Afghanistan. It could be presented as a contribution to burden-sharing within the Alliance, and as a sensible exploitation of the special skills of our forces involved. But our allies' agreement should not be taken for granted. Flank countries like Norway and Denmark look to our specialist forces for support. Unlike our temporary deployments to Northern Ireland, troops in use for intervention purposes could not be guaranteed to return in time to meet a NATO crisis. During a period of tension in Europe, therefore, the NATO tasks of double-earmarked forces would have to take priority over their intervention role.

25. If we do decide to put increased emphasis on our ability to act outside the NATO area, it will be important to keep closely in touch with what the Americans and French are doing. This will enable us to avoid wasteful duplication of effort (eg over airlift), and achieve the maximum effectiveness in those areas in which our own efforts are concentrated.

VII: CONCLUSIONS

26. a. Various levels of Western response will be required in the face of increasing instability in the third world and the growth of the Russians' ability to intervene, or threaten intervention, alone or through proxies. (Section II).
- b. In the military sphere preventive Western measures, short of armed intervention, are to be preferred where possible. But they may not be effective unless Western forces are capable of intervening as a last resort. (Section II)
- c. The Americans are increasingly unwilling to carry the whole burden. Allied support will be needed. Intervention is an area where many of the allies cannot help. But Britain can. (Section III)
- d. Britain may need to intervene to reinforce dependencies, protect British communities or support friendly third world governments. Our allies may not always be involved. (Section III)

e. We already have forces capable of intervention outside Europe. But they are not primarily structured, trained or equipped for this role. (Section IV)

f. We could significantly improve our capability by reorganisation and some relatively modest reallocation of resources. There is a strong case doing so. The means and cost will require further work. (Section V)

g. There is no case for a major diversion of our resources away from NATO. But some double-earmarking should be possible. (Section V)

h. We need to keep closely in touch with French and American plans for the use of intervention forces outside Europe. (Section VI)

10 March 1980

POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC BACKGROUND

THE THREAT

1. Chiefly as a result of Vietnam, the United States remained throughout the 1970s far less willing than before actively to resist Russian encroachment in the developing world. The Soviet Union has meanwhile built up forces which enable her to project military power by air, and to a limited extent by sea (with aircraft carriers, amphibious forces and afloat support), anywhere in Africa or Asia. Russian support made possible the Cuban interventions in Angola and Ethiopia and was a major factor in the Vietnamese takeover of Cambodia. In addition the Russians have established a strong presence in South Yemen. The weak Western reaction to those events, and to the installation of a Communist regime in Afghanistan in 1978, probably encouraged the Russians to underestimate the Western response to their intervention in Afghanistan - the first use of Russian combat forces outside Eastern Europe since 1945.

2. The Russians will persist in their drive to shift 'the correlation of forces' in their favour, but will assess each opportunity in the light of likely Western and third world reactions. They will have reasons for wishing in due course to return to reasonable relations with the West; they will want to control the risk of nuclear confrontation with the United States and to prevent Sino-American rapprochement. They will also need access to technology, grain etc. In the longer term, their need for oil and their increased scope for exerting political and military pressure in the Middle East following the occupation of Afghanistan might lead them into further adventures in that area, with serious implications for the West. But for the time being they are unlikely deliberately to court direct military confrontation with the West.

3. The attractions of third world military adventures to the Russians will have been heightened by the continued instability in areas of strategic importance to the West, whether in the wake of European decolonisation (Southern Africa) or following the collapse of long-established regimes (Ethiopia, Iran). They have had failures as well

as successful. Some parts of the third world (eg Malaysia and much of East and West Africa) have matured satisfactorily, and elsewhere military involvement (eg in Indonesia, Somalia, Egypt or even Mozambique) has not always produced pliant satellites. But Russian willingness to become military engaged seems likely to increase; so does their capability to do so, both in quality and in quantity. This could take the form of military intervention (eg in Iran or Pakistan) but this is more likely to represent the consolidation of gains already in part achieved by subversion than to come as a bolt from the blue: the preferred pattern of Russian aggression (Finland 1940, Czechoslovakia 1948, Afghanistan 1980) is 'assistance' to a Quisling regime. The most immediate and widespread threat is therefore likely to come from subversion and exploitation of existing local instability (eg the Gulf, Southern Africa). It will include the continued use of proxies, again both with direct force and through subversion. For instance, instability in the Caribbean will continue to be exploited and promoted by Cuba. Vietnam will continue to pose a threat to Thailand, and in due course communist-inspired subversion may again threaten other South East Asian countries. New proxies may emerge.

REGIONAL ATTITUDES TO WESTERN INTERVENTION

4. The climate in which Western military forces operate in the third world has changed markedly in the 1970s, to the point where few even of those African and Asian countries which opposed the withdrawal of Western stationed forces would openly welcome their return. The growth - and Russian manipulation - of the Non-Aligned Movement has been an important factor, as has the development of regional consciousness (ASEAN, OAU, Islamic Conference). Where they can, many countries now look to neighbours for military support (eg Moroccans in Zaire, Iranians under the Shah in Oman), and this trend towards greater regional self-help is generally in the West's interests. Even those countries most dependent on Western military support (such as the Gulf States) prefer it to remain over the horizon.

5. It is still not clear what effect events in Afghanistan will have on regional perceptions of the need for Western military help. The United Nations General Assembly vote, the Islamic summit and subsequent activity in the Islamic world, suggest an increased awareness of the threat posed by Russian expansionism. But many factors inhibit this. The thinking of certain third world countries, especially in the Arab world and South Africa, will continue to be dominated by regional confrontations, in which the interests of the West may not coincide with their own: these countries are likely to continue to look at the East as a source of military as well as political support.

6. Another factor which may inhibit the operational deployment of Western forces in the third world is the increased availability of sophisticated military equipment to regional states (eg in the Middle East), although few such states have a military capability to match their equipment. Moreover, even the smallest guerilla movements may have access to hand-held anti-tank and anti-aircraft missiles capable, even in unskilled hands, of inflicting casualties on a sophisticated opponent. This means that a direct Western military presence, whether through temporary deployment or permanently (as opposed to such indirect Western support as training assistance) may be seen as offering fewer advantages to regional governments than in the past. It also means that the risk of losses (eg of aircraft) when Western forces are deployed is greater. The size of some third world forces (eg Iraq, Iran) has also become an important factor in deciding whether Western intervention forces could deploy in opposition to local governments.

7. At the same time, improved technology (better airlift, RO-RO ships) increasingly enables the United States to respond to this changed political climate by maintaining a capability to intervene in a crisis without basing large forces overseas in peacetime. The deployment around the world of specially designed ships carrying equipment for the Rapid Deployment Force (Maritime Prepositioning) will be a further step in this direction, as will the availability of permanent or stand-by facilities in the Indian Ocean area capable of taking American forces at short notice.

8. It is likely that a number of Western-orientated third world governments will overcome any qualms they may feel about inviting Western military intervention when faced with a military threat, internal or external, which they cannot counter unaided. Where such a threat is purely indigenous in origin (as were, for example, the Tanzanian mutinies in 1964) Western governments may often feel inhibited from responding for fear of wider political repercussions (though this has not been true of the French, eg in Chad). But where important Western economic interests (eg oil) are at stake, and particularly if the threat is external or externally-backed, the West may see military intervention as potentially decisive in restoring stability. Even where no vital Western interests are immediately threatened, intervention may be justified by the need to prevent the Russians or their proxies establishing new bridgeheads in vulnerable areas such as the Caribbean.

OIL AND RAW MATERIALS

9. The events of 1973 and after have shown the severe effects of the world economy of shortage of oil and of the successive sharp rises in its price fixed by the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC). Oil prices have shown great sensitivity to imbalances of supply and demand and there may be an increased risk of supply as well as price manipulation by OPEC countries, especially by those whose oil earnings far outstrip their absorption capacity. Although the United Kingdom will be a net exporter of oil for some years after the end of 1980 (though relying on OPEC for certain grades), our interest in the health of the world economy gives us, like other Western countries a stake in the adequate flow of OPEC oil.

10. Most other primary commodities are fairly diverse in origin and overall supplies are not seriously vulnerable to developments in particular countries. But sources are limited, and concentrated in Southern Africa, for certain minerals important industrially to the Western economies: platinum (as a catalyst) and chromium, manganese, vanadium and cobalt (for high grade alloys); South Africa and Rhodesia have the great part of both supply and free world resources of the first three and Zaire is an important source of cobalt. Though uranium is more widespread in source, a high proportion of British supplies comes from the Rossing mine in Namibia. Continuity of supplies of these

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minerals could be threatened by political developments and disruption could present difficulties. Stockpiling is of course a non-military option for reducing the risk of short run disruption. In the longer run experience shows that substitutes can almost always be developed for materials in short supply, if at higher cost, but platinum would be particularly difficult to replace. However, some of the developing countries concerned have a strong economic incentive to continue to produce and to export whatever the complexion of their regimes, although South Africa is far less dependent on these mineral revenues.

Algeria	25,000
Angola	25,000
United Arab Emirates	15,000
Belgium	10,000
China	5,000
France	5,000
Germany	5,000
India	5,000
Italy	5,000
Japan	5,000
South Korea	5,000
Spain	5,000
Sweden	5,000
Switzerland	5,000
Taiwan	5,000
U.S.A.	5,000
U.K.	5,000
U.S.S.R.	5,000
Yugoslavia	5,000
Other	5,000
Total	150,000
U.S.S.R.	Not available

1. There are three categories of examples given:
 - a. civil emergency plans, involving evacuation by civil transport
 - b. Services Isolated Operations (SIO) in which all ships or aircraft are used when normal civil transport services have stopped
 - c. Services Protected Operations (SPO) which involves the deployment of military forces to protect the evacuation.
2. Planning for SPOs ceased after the 1974 Defense Review but was resumed following the invasion of Oman in May 1975. The countries listed above were

ANNEX B

COUNTRIES FOR WHICH SERVICES PROTECTED EVACUATION
(SPE) PLANS HAVE BEEN COMMISSIONED

<u>Country</u>	<u>Number of Potential Evacuees (to nearest 500)</u>
Zambia	29,500
Kenya	28,500
Nigeria	26,000
United Arab Emirates	11,500
Malawi	10,000
Libya	5,500
Lebanon	5,000
Jamaica	4,000
Botswana	2,500
Ghana	2,000
Sudan	2,000
Zaire	1,000
Ethiopia	1,000
Somalia	500
Uganda	Not available

Notes

1. There are three categories of evacuation plans -
 - a. civil contingency plans, involving evacuation by civil transport;
 - b. Services Assisted Evacuation (SAE) in which HM ships or aircraft are used when normal civil transport services have ceased;
 - c. Services Protected Evacuation (SPE) which involves the deployment of military forces to protect the evacuation.
2. Planning for SPEs ceased after the 1974 Defence Review but was revived following the invasion of Shaba in May 1978. The countries listed above were

identified as those where the British community was most at risk and where in certain circumstances (eg only light opposition) an SPE would be feasible. A separate plan (compiled before the Lancaster House Agreement) exists for an SPE from Rhodesia. SAE plans exist for all countries for which SPE plans are being compiled; and for a number of others as well.

3. Figures for potential evacuees include numbers of British citizens registered with Embassies, High Commissions or Consulates, plus estimates of numbers not registered, and in some cases Commonwealth citizens for whom the United Kingdom has accepted evacuation responsibility. Figures are rounded to nearest 500.

CURRENT UNITED KINGDOM INTERVENTION CAPABILITY

1. Since the 1974 Defence Review, the great bulk of our combat forces have been organised, equipped, trained and supported to fight a general war in support of the Atlantic Alliance, including the defence of the United Kingdom, and the balance are largely deployed overseas for the defence and internal security of our remaining dependent territories. Of the former we station an Army Corps and 11 squadrons of RAF combat aircraft in Germany under the terms of the Brussels Treaty. That treaty nevertheless does allow us to draw on these forces "in the event of an acute overseas emergency". Similarly, we can, having informed NATO, divert to other tasks the United Kingdom based ships, land and air forces which we also commit to the Alliance, in the event of "an emergency elsewhere". Thus in theory, it would be possible to assemble from all these forces an appropriate intervention capability to suit a wide variety of possible circumstances. In practice, it would normally be the forces stationed in or based on the United Kingdom which provided such a capability, rather than the forces in Germany and elsewhere overseas, since it is the former which are likely to be more readily available and suitably equipped and trained for intervention operations.

2. Combat troops stationed in this country are at seven days notice to move and within that general availability, a 'Spearhead' battalion group (about 1,000 men) and its airlift (seven VC10s and 37 Hercules) are always at 72 hours notice, with leading elements at 24 hours. The use of this force for operations outside Europe might be at the expense of NATO commitments, and the provision of its airlift, other than for the leading elements, would seriously disrupt the routine tasks on which the RAF Air Transport Force (ATF) is normally engaged.

3. Additionally, there are three formations stationed in the United Kingdom which could be used in whole or in part for intervention operations. Of these, one field force, under national control, and therefore not requiring NATO notification for its use, comprising two battalions and supporting units (approx 2,500 men), could be made available at the expense of its normal role of United Kingdom home defence: so could the necessary airlift for it, though at the expense of virtually all the ATF's normal peace-time tasks.

4. If we were prepared to use for intervention operations the forces stationed in the United Kingdom with specialist reinforcement roles in support of NATO, it would normally be possible to make available:
 - a. Two (out of four) Royal Marine commandos, together with a tactical brigade HQ, helicopters and supporting units (approx 3,000 men). This force could be lifted in Service ships without the need to resort to merchant shipping. It would normally take several days to assemble shipping and two more to load the entire force. Once deployed, the force has the ability to react rapidly or remain poised near its objective for considerable periods.
 - b. A further field force drawn from the United Kingdom Mobile Force. Its deployment simultaneously with the land forces already mentioned would require augmentation of the ATF by United States Air Force or other allied military airlift capacity (or civilian charter aircraft if available).
5. There are also three parachute battalions. Two of them (each about 650 men) are, in rotation, kept trained for parachute operations. These, together with elements of the Special Air Service Regiment (400 men), could be used separately or as part of the field forces referred to above.
6. Besides the shipping needed for amphibious operations, general purpose naval forces are available for intervention outside Europe, in the same readiness category as they are assigned to NATO, subject to transit time, and can provide a visible or over-the-horizon capability. Similarly, if temporary diversion from NATO and United Kingdom air defence tasks were to be accepted, it would be possible to deploy combat aircraft of the RAF from the United Kingdom order of battle.
7. United Kingdom-based units already undertake certain non-NATO overseas commitments (eg Belize, UNFICYP, and short-notice requirements such as the Rhodesia Monitoring Force). All three services thus have considerable experience of out-of-area tasks and furthermore conduct a varied programme of training outside Europe. But because of their NATO orientation, some of the most serious limitations in our intervention capability relate less to the number of units available (if temporary diversion from home defence or NATO tasks is

accepted) than to our present ability to transport them quickly, land them against opposition if necessary, and supply and support them in the field:

a. As regards deployment, transport by air is in all cases dependent on securing the necessary diplomatic clearance, overflying rights and staging facilities (including the local supply of aviation fuel). Moreover, our capability was reduced in the 1974 Review as was the number of our staging facilities. Resources are available for deployment by sea, which does not involve diplomatic clearance or reliance upon foreign ports but is of course appreciably slower.

b. We have only a limited capability for opposed intervention. We no longer have strike carriers; and therefore, unless shipborne VSTOL aircraft are available, we can provide air cover for intervention only if it takes place within range of friendly airfields. Helicopter deployment of amphibious forces only permits the simultaneous deployment of two companies within a range of 50 miles of the ships. Our parachute battalions are currently not trained in the assault role required for an opposed landing.

c. The vast majority of our stocks are earmarked for primary tasks related to NATO, and therefore any significant intervention outside the NATO area could only be conducted at their expense.

d. Any force conducting operations over a lengthy period would be dependent on reinforcement or replacement from other sources which would be likely to include NATO earmarked units, whether or not such units were deployed in the first instance.

8. We already have in hand certain measures which will in practice improve our intervention capability. The ASW Carrier, HMS INVINCIBLE, will come into service in 1980 and her embarked Sea Harriers will provide a measure of air support if required. By the end of 1983 the RAF will have significantly expanded the capacity of its air transport, tanker and helicopter forces. Certain other measures are being studied; eg the provision of a separate stockpile and command facilities to support a national limited deployment, and the reintroduction of a parachute assault capability.

INTERVENTION CAPABILITY OF ALLIES

UNITED STATES

1. By the standards of other countries, the United States have very large forces potentially available for intervention. But even they are constrained by the problems of rapid deployment.
2. To appreciate the scale of manpower available, the United States Marine Corps alone comprises 3 divisions, a total of 180,000 men, and the United States Army have one airborne and one air mobile division. The bulk of these forces are stationed in the United States; those deployed elsewhere include 2,000 Marines embarked in shipping for amphibious operations of the 6th Fleet in the Mediterranean and two Marine Amphibious Battalions associated with the 7th Fleet in the Pacific. Some of the Fleet units are being deployed to the Indian Ocean/Arabian Sea in response to recent events in Iran and Afghanistan.
3. The United States Navy have 12 aircraft carriers, each with an air wing of 70-95 aircraft. Two carriers are normally permanently deployed in the Mediterranean and two in the Western Pacific, the remainder being held on the East and West American coasts unless exercising. To escort them they are likely to provide about 40 surface to air missile-fitted cruisers or destroyers and 50 anti-submarine warfare ships. The active fleet also includes 65 amphibious warfare ships. All units are provided with very good logistic support. A large force containing two aircraft carriers, five cruisers and six frigates and destroyers is currently deployed in the Arabian Sea area.
4. The first source of offensive aircraft for intervention would be carrier-borne aircraft and air wings of the United States Marine Corps. The United States Air Force have no forces at present specifically earmarked for intervention operations. However, varying proportions of the total inventory of over 1,000 fighter ground attack and air defence aircraft, 200 tactical reconnaissance aircraft and over 500 strategic bombers could be made available.

The majority of these have an air-to-air refuelling capability and could be supported from an overall fleet of over 500 KC 135 tankers. The United States Air Force's military airlift capacity is vast; comprising over 230 C130 Hercules, a similar number of C141 Starlifters and 70 C5 Galaxies capable of carrying a main battle tank.

5. All these forces were acquired to provide capability in a general war. Their effective use for more limited intervention tasks is at present constrained by factors of readiness and reaction time (even on an optimistic Pentagon assessment it would take 16 days to get 24,000 men to South-West Asia); availability of airlift for forces in the United States; overflight, staging and support facilities; and problems of logistics and re-supply. The United States have announced a programme to counter these deficiencies and provide a capability tailored for long-range intervention, which could be used in South-West Asia and/or elsewhere. There will be contingency planning for its use in any circumstances requiring the rapid deployment of forces.

6. In particular, the Americans propose to set up a "Rapid Deployment" or "Surge" Force. This will be able to draw as appropriate on the bulk of the United States Marine Corps and substantial elements of the Army, Navy and Air Forces, without detriment to NATO commitments; the Army element might total 100,000 men. Forces could be selected from this range, and from amphibious units already deployed locally for specific tasks depending on the area and the requirement. Air-lift capability is to be improved and new staging and support facilities are being sought at various points in the Gulf and Indian Ocean. Equipment will be stockpiled locally, both on land and on special roll-on roll-off ships pre-positioned near likely intervention areas. The United States are seeking help of various kinds from their Allies in setting this framework in place.

FRANCE

7. Although centred on the Mediterranean the French Navy deploys and exercises in many other areas. The elements which are most suitable for intervention are two aircraft carriers with fixed wing aircraft, one support carrier capable of embarking 1,000 troops for short periods, five landing ships (Tank), two landing ships (Dock) and 14 smaller landing craft. In addition some 25-30 general purpose ships are normally on overseas deployments.

8. The main elements of the ground forces which might be used for intervention are two divisions assigned for intervention or reinforcement duties, one parachute division (12,600 men), one Marine Infantry Division (9,000 men) and one SAS-type unit. A further demi-brigade (3,000 men) is due to be formed in the middle of this year. It should be noted that these units contain a high proportion of conscripts who are not normally sent overseas in peacetime.
9. The main French Air Force (FAF) contribution to intervention forces consists of an air transportable tactical HQ, up to 30 JAGUAR fighter/ground attack aircraft, 11 C135 Tanker aircraft and 36 C160 TRANSALL transport aircraft. It is worth noting that only five TRANSALL aircraft were available for the Kolwezi operation. The FAF have plans to purchase 25 more.
10. There are garrisons in some 13 overseas countries mostly in Africa and the Pacific. These contain over 20,000 troops, small number of tanks and artillery and some 50 assorted aircraft. (For comparison, we have at present about 11,000 troops outside the United Kingdom and NATO's three regions, of which 5,500 are in Hong Kong and 3,000 in Cyprus.

NETHERLANDS

11. The Royal Netherlands Navy has a small but good general capability, but no shipping for amphibious operations. Their small air transport force is on loan to KLM and the aircraft are not equipped to carry paratroops. The Netherlands Marine Corps totals some 2,900 personnel, but the forces available for intervention operations are unlikely to exceed a battalion equivalent and a company plus support elements, (approx 1,000), which are assigned to NATO and co-operate with the RM Commando Forces.

BELGIUM

12. There are no Belgian Naval forces suitable for intervention operations. The Belgian Air Force have 12 C130 and 2 Boeing 727, some of which were used to deploy and deliver their paratroops to Kolwezi. In that operation the troops were air landed, but they could have been air dropped. Replenishment and

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resupply required United States Air Force support. Belgian intervention forces would probably be taken from their Para-Commando Regiment. This comprises 2 parachute and one Commando battalion with artillery and other support (approx 2,700). One parachute battalion is assigned permanently to the NATO Mobile Force and the remainder are assigned to NATO in wartime.

11 March 1980

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