

Published Papers

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House of Commons Paper 93
House of Commons
First Report from the Defence Committee
Session 1981-82
Allied Forces in Germany
Published by HMSO

Signed



Date

4/2/2017

PREM Records Team

MANAGEMENT IN CONFIDENCE



10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

23 August 1991

BAOR BARRACK PLAN - ANNOUNCEMENT

Thank you for your letter of 20 August. This is just to confirm what I have already told Jane Binstead on the telephone, namely that the Prime Minister is content for the announcement to go ahead. He understands that it will be made in Germany only.

I am sending a copy of this letter to Richard Gozney (Foreign and Commonwealth Office).

(J. S. WALL)

B.H. Wells, Esq.,
Ministry of Defence.

MANAGEMENT IN CONFIDENCE

SECRETARY OF STATE
MO 3/95MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
WHITEHALL LONDON SW1A 2HB
Telephone 071-21 82111/3

Contest / 238

Prime Minister

I have consulted our embassy in
Bonn. They would like to make this announcement from Bonn at the
latest - or we will get backlash in
Germany. Now that the Soviet camp is over I think
it's OK. The announcement
will be made in
Germany
only
Steph
-48

20th August 1991

BAOR BARRACK PLAN-ANNOUNCEMENT

The Defence Secretary wrote to Dr Stoltenberg on 23 July to advise that HQ BAOR and the British Embassy Bonn would shortly initiate consultation with the Federal Ministry of Defence - and through them with the Laender - about the future stationing of British Army units in Germany.

There had already been informal soundings which enabled BAOR and the Embassy to identify the likely nature of Laender wishes: it was clear that in some areas there would be local pressures to vacate a number of barracks whose sites would be of significant economic value. In other areas the major concern would be the loss of local employment if the Army withdrew. Fortunately, the local concerns generally pointed to the vacation of barracks which the Army would prefer to leave because they would require very costly investment if retained.

The plans were presented to the FMOD and the Laender in July and proposed that the Army should concentrate in three areas (Osnabruck, Paderborn and Fallingbomel) and withdraw from most of the barracks in Hannover, Verden, Celle, Dusseldorf, Monchengladbach, Dortmund, Munster, Minden and a number of other smaller sites.

These plans were generally well received by the German authorities. Some proposals were made by the Laender for further barracks to be given up and for some to continue in use on employment grounds. It would make neither operational nor financial sense to make those changes, and this was explained to the German authorities. Both the Embassy and BAOR believe that the plans are now broadly acceptable to the German Government and the Laender, and that we should now make an announcement. The Defence Secretary agrees with this. If we do not, we run the risk of generating individual local pressures (since the Laender might be tempted to make fresh demands which they would not otherwise press) which could undermine the agreed plans. An immediate announcement would also be helpful in paving the way for soldiers and their families to be briefed: present uncertainties add to the worries

J S Wall LVO CMG
10 Downing Street

MANAGEMENT IN CONFIDENCE





SECRETARY OF STATE

that many of them have about the future of their units and their own personal futures.

The statement would be issued only in Germany and would be low key. Questions about the possible impact of developments in the Soviet Union will be answered by reference to the statements made by the Defence Secretary and other Government Ministers.

The Defence Secretary believes that a statement now would be entirely consistent with the line which he has taken publicly on the defence programme. An announcement is expected by the press, and to hold back now could cast doubt on our commitment to this programme: it is known that the media in Germany are planning articles on these lines. Of course, should there be any further untoward developments affecting European security over the next six months, there is time to revise dates for redeployments and amalgamations in Germany: on current plans the first major changes of that kind would not take place there until the summer of 1992.

I am copying this letter to Richard Gozney (FCO).

Yours,

Bryan Wells

(B H WELLS)

Private Secretary



PRESS RELEASE

BRITISH ARMY OF THE RHINE ANNOUNCES ITS BARRACK PLAN.

The Commander in Chief British Army of the Rhine announced today that consultations with the Federal Government about the future of British Army garrisons and barracks have been completed. Over the next four years, one or more barracks or installations are to be released in the following places:

Lower Saxony: Hildesheim, Wolfenbutel, Hameln, Hannover, Verden, Celle, Soltau, Munster-Ortze.

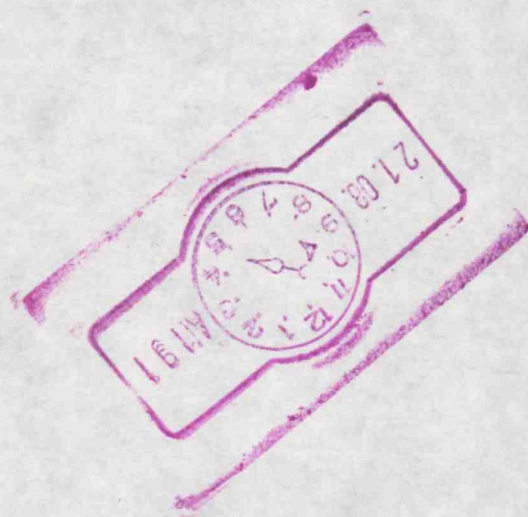
Nordrhein Westfalen: Monchengladbach, Dusseldorf, Krefeld, Duisberg, Mulheim, Dortmund, Hemer, Iserlohn, Menden, Hamm, Werl, Soest, Paderborn, Munster, Detmold, Lemgo, Bielefeld, Herford, Bunde, Luebbecke, Minden.

A wide variety of factors has been taken into account in reaching these decisions. The wishes of the local population, security and ease of access to training areas were all carefully considered.

It is regretted that an unavoidable consequence of these changes is a reduction of around 10,000 civilian posts in Nordrhein Westfalen and 1,300 in Lower Saxony. These losses will be spread over a four year period up till 1995 and throughout the 2 Laender in which the British Army is stationed. Many of the

employees affected are part-time. The impact of reductions will be lessened by natural wastage but everything possible will be done to help those who have to be made redundant. Compensation payments and assistance provided to find other employment will go well beyond the current provisions of the collective tariff agreement.

Employees of the United States Government will be furnished by the Department of the Interior with a copy of this order. It is the policy of the Department to keep the public informed of the activities of the Department and will to the extent possible, make available to the public the information of the Department.





File 116

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

1 June 1982

Thank you for your letter of 28 May enclosing the text of the Government's observations on the First Report from the House of Commons Defence Committee on Allied Forces in Germany. The Prime Minister is content that these should be published.

I am copying this letter to David Heyhoe (Lord President's Office) and Bernard Ingham.

A. J. COLES

N. H. R. Evans, Esq.,
Ministry of Defence.

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MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

MAIN BUILDING WHITEHALL LONDON SW1A 2HB

Telephone 01-218 ^{2111/3} (Direct Dialling)

01-218 9000 (Switchboard)

MO 21/8/16

28th May 1982

Prime Minister

Yes, This looks uncontroversial.
Dear John, no content?
MA 287.

/

The House of Commons Defence Committee's First Report 1981-82 on Allied Forces in Germany was published on 18th March. My Secretary of State proposes to publish the Government Observations as a Command Paper on 9th June. The text of the Observations, which are not controversial, is enclosed.

I am copying this letter to David Heyhoe and to Bernard Ingham.

Yours ever
Nick Evans

(N H R EVANS)

A J Coles Esq

ALLIED FORCES IN GERMANYObservations presented by the Secretary of State for Defence

1. The first Report from the Defence Committee Session 1981-82 was published on 18 March 1982. The Government welcomes the Committee's favourable comments on the training and morale of British Forces in Germany. The Government presents the following observations on particular aspects of the Committee's Report.

BAOR Re-organisation

2. The Ministry of Defence considers that the restructuring of 1(BR)Corps in accordance with Cmnd 8288 into three strong in-station divisions will greatly improve its balance and effectiveness. The provision of a proper reserve will improve the Corps' ability to meet a short warning attack and command and control arrangements for the defence of the Corps rear area will be improved. When the Ministry of Defence gave evidence to the Committee, 500 of the posts which were to be removed from BAOR had not been finally identified. We expect final decisions on them to be taken and announced shortly. Re-locations will be helpful in creating headroom for the key operational enhancements outlined in Cmnd 8288. The Ministry of Defence appreciates the importance of proper manning of the new establishments; these will be kept under review and adjusted as necessary.

Common Medical and Dental Facilities at Rheindahlen

3. The Ministry of Defence agrees with the Committee's view that medical and dental services for the Army and the RAF at Rheindahlen should, if possible, be provided from one centre. However, no suitable building is at present available and the cost of providing one could not be offset within a reasonable period by the comparatively small savings in staff which would be achieved. The Ministry of Defence will, however, keep

medical services in Rheindahlen under review and will take any opportunity to make effective savings.

BAOR Activity Levels

4. Savings measures taken since 1980/81 have resulted in restrictions on track mileage in BAOR. While the current allocations are below the 1979/80 or pre-moratorium levels which are taken as the norm they are, as the Committee notes, not seriously out of line with what has been achieved in previous years or with practice in other NATO armies whose tank crews are likely to be less experienced. Readiness for war has not been impaired by these restrictions. Nevertheless, the Ministry of Defence recognises the importance of restoring 1979/80 levels of activity in full as soon as practicable and accords this a high priority. A number of steps have been taken in the current financial year which will enable moves to be made in that direction, including increased fuel allocations and provision for spares.

RAF Germany Activity Levels

5. The Ministry of Defence shares the view of the Committee that it is important to restore RAF activity as soon as possible to the levels considered necessary to maintain full operational efficiency. As was suggested when oral evidence was given to the Committee, the opportunity has been taken to build up fuel stocks at a time of relatively favourable prices. Since the beginning of April, there has been a considerable increase in flying by aircraft based in the UK; careful attention is also being given to the need to increase the amount of flying done by the fast jet force based in Germany.

ECM

6. The Ministry of Defence agrees with the Committee on the importance of ECM equipment. As the Committee has noted, a number of improvements are in train. The 1981 standards were introduced at short notice by SACEUR in April 1981 and it is not

possible to react immediately to such changes in criteria: nevertheless, as the Committee was informed, it will be possible on present plans to modify our Phantom aircraft by 1983. ECM pods for the Jaguar have now been delivered and are undergoing acceptance testing and servicing before being delivered to RAF Germany this summer.

Rapier

7. The Committee expressed its concern about the operational penalties imposed by the noise of the Rapier generator. The matter is under investigation and is being treated with urgency. Potential solutions include the use of sound absorbent pads or screens and the use of an alternative engine.

8. The Committee also recommended that no changes should be made which would inhibit common training of Rapier operators and common provision of spares. The RAF uses the towed Rapier system in an essentially static role to protect airfields, whereas the Army equipment has a mobile field role to provide air defence cover for 1(BR) Corps. The Ministry of Defence intends that future versions of towed Rapier will be capable of operation by both Services with commonality of spares and other support. Training will also be similar for both Services but for reasons of space more than one training establishment may be required.

Training Areas

9. The Ministry of Defence welcomes the support which the Committee gives for the need for continued access to training areas in Germany. It shares the Committee's view on the importance of training in situ in Germany.

Works Programme

10. The Ministry of Defence notes the views of the Committee on this subject, particularly their support for NATO Infrastructure Funding for ammunition storage. The question of single accommodation for the RAF in the Gutersloh area is being urgently studied.

Anti-Helicopter Weapons

11. The Ministry of Defence shares the Committee's view that BAOR's existing anti-helicopter capability should be enhanced; and a number of improvements to existing anti-air weapons are planned in order to effect this. Consideration is also being given to the possibility of introducing new equipments into service to meet the developing threat.

Enfranchisement of Servicemen's Dependents

12. The Government accepts that there is a case for extending the franchise to those of our citizens who cannot benefit from the existing arrangements for Service voters. Options are being explored both in the review of electoral law and procedures, which the Committee mentions, and in the context of the European Parliament's proposals for a uniform electoral procedure. It is too soon to say when the Government will be able to come forward with detailed proposals.

32nd Panzer Grenadier Brigade - Equipment Serviceability

13. The Committee commented on the ease with which a Leopard tank could be repaired, and suggested the same degree of serviceability for British equipment. Standards of reliability, availability, maintainability and durability are specified for all British equipments before project definition can begin. During equipment trials, ease of maintenance assessments are conducted and the results evaluated before an equipment can be considered for acceptance into Service use. The selection of assemblies which are to be replaceable as single modules is a complex process and many design constraints such as the armour integrity of main battletanks must be taken into account.

14. Whilst a Leopard tank's engine and transmission can be changed more quickly than a Chieftain's, the comparison is somewhat misleading as Leopard was designed some 8 years later than Chieftain. A similar task on the Chieftain takes longer, partly because engine and transmission have to be uncoupled and removed separately. In

Challenger, they can be disconnected and lifted out as a single unit and this will significantly reduce the maintenance time required. Other equipments soon to enter service have also been designed on the removable single module principle, but the extra cost of achieving this must always be a relevant factor.

Language Training and Familiarisation Courses

15. The Ministry of Defence fully accepts the importance of German language training and familiarisation. Senior officers in British Forces Germany are expected to have a knowledge of colloquial German; suitable training is given to personnel occupying Service posts which require a knowledge of German; and there are courses provided, as the Committee observes, to ensure a minimum quota of German speaking officers and soldiers. In addition to this, the Ministry provides a range of courses and briefings which are widely available to British Service personnel and their dependants. Cassettes and booklets containing useful German phrases and information on German customs and law are available at unit level; the Services Sound and Vision Corporation (SSVC) broadcasts a daily 'Say it in German' programme and a number of other programmes which provide useful phrases and information for day-to-day living in Germany; and German courses for military personnel and their families are conducted in every division of the Command. The Ministry believes that the opportunities available for language training and familiarisation represent a sensible level of provision.

16. The general content of US Forces' provision in this field is similar to our own; indeed the USAF also take up a small number of places on RAF colloquial German courses. Some introductory US courses are longer than their British counterparts, thus allowing time for programmed visits by wives to useful places such as German shops. This is something which would be arranged by unit Family and Welfare Officers and Wives Clubs for those British wives who wish it. A great deal is done

by all concerned to help families, especially those arriving in Germany for the first time, to settle in with the minimum of stress. Attendance by US personnel on appropriate courses is generally compulsory because for most American Servicemen their posting to Germany will be their first, and only, visit to Europe. By contrast the majority of British Service personnel and families will have more than one tour in Germany, with less consequent need for further familiarisation and language tuition. There has, however, been a considerable increase in recent years in the number of British Service people and their dependants using these facilities, and units are expected to - and do - encourage them. It is hoped that this expansion will continue; but it must be within the constraints of available financial and instructional resources, and the ability of units to release men from other duty commitments.

Conclusion

17. To sum up, the Government is grateful for the Committee's support in maintaining the highest possible standards of operational efficiency in the contribution which we make to the Allied Forces on the Continent. The British Forces in Germany are highly valued by the Alliance because of their professionalism; to keep this reputation and this capability is bound to be costly, and cash limits and the system of annual accounting have made it necessary to make some reductions in activity levels. The Government intends to take every opportunity to restore and maintain the 1979/80 levels of activity and, therefore, to sustain the full effectiveness of our forces.

CONFIDENTIAL



MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

MAIN BUILDING WHITEHALL LONDON SW1

Telephone 01-~~830 7822~~ 218 2111/3

MO 3/9/1

27th June 1980

*I have spoken to the
German Ambassador: he
took the point.*

Prime Minister.

*for. Phil - 14/7
Dear Sir,*

*Chancellor Schmidt is plainly
misinformed. I doubt, however, whether
it is worth going out of our way to correct
him directly. But I could mention the
point to Rufus quite informally. Shall
I do that?*

You asked for our comments on the remarks made
to the Prime Minister at the Venice summit meeting
by Chancellor Schmidt to the effect that there
were only 38,000 soldiers present in BAOR. The facts
are as follows:

27th

BAOR's establishment is 58,000 male soldiers.
Owing to the general level of undermanning in the
Army only 53,500 men are actually in post at present.
Of these, 2,400 are temporarily detached to Northern
Ireland. Naturally at any one time a number of men
will be temporarily away on training or leave: on
average this is assessed as about 5,000 men, though
at peak holiday periods it could be higher and at
times a whole unit will be on block leave following
a tour in Northern Ireland. The average strength
of BAOR is therefore over 45,000.

*Yes - when
you see him.*

mb.

BAOR's manning levels have for some time been
a source of criticism within the Alliance, not only
from the Germans. The Defence Secretary accepts that
this is legitimate insofar as the Northern Ireland
commitment and undermanning is concerned, though our
Allies have been notably understanding over Northern
Ireland and have accepted our assurance that the units
concerned can be returned within 72 hours. His objective
as far as force levels in Northern Ireland are concerned
is to reduce and eventually to eliminate the contribution
made by BAOR. In the case of undermanning the position
is now rapidly improving through buoyant recruiting

C A Whitmore Esq

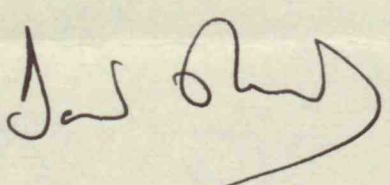
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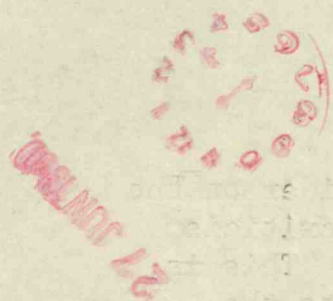
and better retention. Mr Pym does not consider on the other hand that it is reasonable to base a criticism on the number absent, on leave or training. This is, after all, not a phenomenon that is unique to the British Army! But even if these are taken into account the average strength of BAOR is over 45,000 and, because of the limitations which are placed on the number who may take leave at any one time, could not even at peak holiday periods be as low as 38,000.

Chancellor Schmidt's claim cannot therefore be substantiated in relation to BAOR as a whole. It could be that this was based on an assessment of the numbers present in 1(BR)Corps - the combat element of BAOR and its integral support - which are some 6,000 less than the BAOR total. In this case at peak holiday periods the numbers could fall to 38,000, but have not done so recently. But 1(BR)Corps numbers are not separately identified in information provided to our Allies, so that there would be no basis on which the Germans could make this assessment, nor indeed make it the basis for legitimate criticism.

I am copying this letter to Paul Lever (FCO) and to David Wright (Cabinet Office)

Yours ever,


(D B OMAND)



Grey Scale #13



A

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M

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12

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14

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B

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Inches

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Centimetres

Colour Chart #13

Blue

Cyan

Green

Yellow

