

SECRET



*Rennie Amster*  
*Amster* (2) 11  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office

*ms*  
London SW1A 2AH

*ts Amster*  
9 December 1980

*Dear Michael,*

Poland: Measures for which SACUER has requested Pre-Delegated Authority

You told me on the telephone that the Prime Minister had asked for a list of the five specific measures for which SACEUR had requested pre-delegated authority. The measures are:-

- (a) activation of SHAPE War Headquarters with 24 hour skeleton manning to maintain a close watch on developments;
- (b) order to major subordinate commanders to man situation centres on a 24 hour basis;
- (c) review of contingency plans and testing of ACE communications;
- (d) advice to major subordinate commanders to take all possible covert action short of formal state of military vigilance to ensure that ACE forces are fully up to peacetime state of operational readiness;
- (e) depending on air threat situation, consider increasing readiness of ACE air defence by doubling aircraft on stand-by to four per squadron and doubling number of SAM site missiles ready for use within 20 minutes.

There is an inherent ambiguity about what is proposed under measure (d). SACEUR's request refers to covert action. On the other hand, steps to bring NATO forces to full peacetime readiness could involve the cancellation of leave. This would, of course, be highly overt. It is for this reason that the draft reply to President Carter's message submitted yesterday speaks of taking only covert action at this stage, thereby excluding from the steps currently envisaged the cancellation of leave or the recall of personnel already on leave.

Measure (e) will have to be interpreted in its spirit rather than the letter since not all nations have the same arrangements for aircraft or SAM site missiles on immediate standby.

It is clear from discussions in NATO so far that there is general agreement on measures (a), (b) and (c). Some Allies

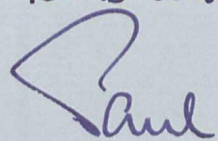
SECRET

/particularly

SECRET



particularly the Germans, have shown signs of hesitation about measures (d) and (e). For our part we see no objection giving authority for all the measures, providing that no obtrusive steps are taken at this juncture which could offer the Soviet Union a pretext for claiming that NATO is interfering in the Polish crisis.

Yours etc  


(P Lever)  
Private Secretary

SECRET