

DISARMAMENT COMMISSION

Working Paper Setting Forth Proposals
for Fixing Numerical Limitation of All Armed Forces

Statement of the Representatives of
France, the United Kingdom, and the
United States.

The Delegations of France, the United Kingdom and the United States which sponsored the Resolution of the General Assembly establishing the Disarmament Commission are today submitting the attached working proposals for the determination of overall numerical limitations on all armed forces.

In fixing numerical limitations on the armed forces of states a number of factors, demographic, geographic, political and economic, have to be considered. The Charter responsibilities of states and the need of balanced power-relationships among states must also be taken into account. There is no one automatic formula which can inflexibly be applied in all cases. The objective must be to reduce the possibility and the fear of successful aggression and to avoid a disequilibrium of power dangerous to international peace and security.

The proposals suggest that there should be fixed numerical ceilings for China, France, the U.S.S.R, the United Kingdom and the United States. A ceiling between 1,000,000 and 1,500,000 is suggested for the U.S.S.R, the United States and China, while a ceiling between 700,000 and 800,000 is suggested for the United Kingdom and France.

The proposals call for agreed maximum ceilings for all other states having substantial armed forces to be fixed in relation to the ceilings agreed upon for the Five Powers. Such ceilings should be fixed with a view to avoiding a disequilibrium of power dangerous to international peace and security in any area of the world, thus reducing the danger of war. The ceilings would normally be less than one percent of the population and should be less than current levels, except in very special circumstances.

The proposals envisage substantial and balanced reductions in armed forces. Agreement on such reductions should greatly lessen the likelihood and the fear of successful aggression and should facilitate agreement on other essential parts of a comprehensive disarmament program including the elimination of all major weapons adaptable to mass destruction and the effective international control of atomic energy to insure the prohibition of atomic weapons and the use of atomic energy for peaceful purposes only.

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State Dept. review completed

WORKING PAPER SETTING FORTH PROPOSALS FOR
FIXING NUMERICAL LIMITATION OF ALL ARMED FORCES,
SUBMITTED BY THE REPRESENTATIVES OF FRANCE, THE
UNITED KINGDOM AND THE UNITED STATES

A. Introduction

1. Paragraph 3 of the General Assembly Resolution of January 11, 1952

"Directs the Disarmament Commission to prepare proposals to be embodied in a draft treaty (or treaties) for the regulation, limitation and balanced reduction of all armed forces and all armaments, for the elimination of all major weapons adaptable to mass destruction, and for the effective international control of atomic energy to ensure the prohibition of atomic weapons and the use of atomic energy for peaceful purposes only."

2. Paragraph 6 of the Resolution

"Directs the Commission, in working out plans for the regulation, limitation and balanced reduction of all armed forces and all armaments;

(a) To determine how overall limits and restrictions on all armed forces and all armaments can be calculated and fixed;

(b) To consider methods according to which States can agree by negotiation among themselves, under the auspices of the Commission, concerning the determination of the overall limits and restrictions referred to in sub-paragraph (a) above and the allocation within their respective national military establishments of the permitted national armed forces and armaments."

3. The present working paper presents a plan for the determination of overall numerical limitations on the size of the armed forces of states. Obviously some overall limitations on the size of the armed forces of states are an essential part of any comprehensive plan for the regulation, limitation and balanced reduction of armed forces and armaments. The working paper is not intended to exclude, but to facilitate the development of other essential components which must be included in what the preamble of the General Assembly Resolution refers to as "comprehensive and co-ordinated plans, under international control, for the regulation, limitation and balanced reduction of all armed forces and armaments, for the elimination of all major weapons adaptable to mass destruction, and for the effective control of atomic energy to ensure the prohibition of atomic weapons and the use of atomic energy for peaceful purposes" including "safeguards that will ensure the compliance of all ... nations whose military resources are such that their failure to accept would endanger the system". Proposals have already been submitted on certain other essential components, i.e., the control of atomic energy and disclosure and verification of all armed forces and armaments. By submitting this working paper and focusing attention on another component we hope to facilitate progress toward an agreed comprehensive program.

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B. Standards for Determining Numerical Limitations of All Armed Forces

4. In fixing numerical limitations on the armed forces of states a number of factors, demographic, geographic, political and economic, have to be considered. The Charter responsibilities of states and the need of balanced power-relationships among states must also be taken into account. There is no one automatic formula which can inflexibly be applied in all cases. The objective must be to reduce the possibility and the fear of successful aggression and to avoid a disequilibrium of power dangerous to international peace and security.

5. The following working formula is suggested as a basis of discussion.

a. There should be fixed numerical ceilings for China, France, the USSR, the UK, and the U.S. which should be worked out with a view to avoiding a disequilibrium of power dangerous to international peace and security among themselves or with other states and thus reducing the danger of war. It is tentatively suggested that the maximum ceilings for the USSR, the US and China should be the same and fixed at, say, between 1,000,000 and 1,500,000 and the maximum ceilings for the United Kingdom and France should be the same and fixed at, say, between 700,000 and 800,000.

b. For all other states having substantial armed forces there should be agreed maximum ceilings fixed in relation to the ceilings agreed upon for the Five Powers. Such ceilings should be fixed with a view to avoiding a disequilibrium of power dangerous to international peace and security in any area of the world and thus reducing the danger of war. The ceilings would normally be less than one percent of the population. Moreover, they should be less than current levels except in very special circumstances.

C. Significance of Overall Numerical Limitations

6. While a nation's armed forces are not the only measure of its armed strength, and other elements of armed strength will have to be considered in any comprehensive program for the balanced reduction of armed forces and armaments, nevertheless a numerical limitation on armed forces is a major element in any such program for the following reasons:

a. All armaments programs depend upon manpower and therefore must to a greater or less degree be affected by limitations on permitted armed forces.

b. A substantial reduction of armed forces as here suggested in itself would tend to reduce the likelihood of successful aggression.

c. Agreement on a substantial and balanced reduction of armed forces minimizing the likelihood and fear of successful aggression should greatly facilitate agreement reducing and restricting the armaments supporting these armed forces.

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D. Implementation of Proposals for Numerical Limitations of All Armed Forces

7. In determining the numbers in the armed forces, all kinds of armed forces, including para-military and security forces must be included.

8. Adequate provision must be made to insure that the maximum limitation on armed forces is not circumvented through building up large forces of trained reserves or militarily trained police.

9. This system must be accepted by all states, whether or not Members of the United Nations, whose military resources are such that their failure to accept would endanger the system.

10. There should be adequate safeguards throughout the process of reduction to ensure that limitations are put into effect and observed as agreed and that violations can be promptly detected.

11. The implementation of the reductions should be closely related to progress in connection with other phases of the program for regulation, limitation and balanced reduction of armed forces and armaments, such as the control of atomic energy and the system of progressive and continuing disclosure and verification.

12. The reduction should be carried through in a manner and in accordance with a time schedule prescribed by the international control organ and should be completed within the shortest feasible time after its commencement.

13. In the future, further numerical limitation of permitted armed forces would be contemplated as substantial progress is achieved toward the easing of international tensions, and the agreed ceilings would be subject to review at stated intervals.

14. The proposed limitations -- including their relationship to other components of the program for regulation, limitation and balanced reduction of armed forces and armaments and the elimination of weapons adaptable to mass destruction -- should be comprehended within the treaty or treaties required under Paragraph 3 of the General Assembly Resolution of January 11, 1952.