

U.S. Bases Abroad Stir a New Debate

By BENJAMIN WELLES

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, April 8—The Nixon Administration has agreed to furnish Congress with a secret 1,200-page study describing alternative United States defense strategies for the coming decade and the overseas military bases that each strategy would require.

The survey, completed by a team of 30 senior civilian and military experts just before the Nixon Administration took office, finds that almost a quarter of a century after World War II the United States maintains 429 major and 2,972 minor overseas military bases, staffed by a million men, scattered around the globe.

These bases, according to the study, cover 4,000 square miles in 30 foreign countries as well as Hawaii and Alaska.

Stationed on them in addition to the servicemen are 500,000 dependents and 250,000 foreign employees. The annual cost of keeping the bases functioning is \$4-billion to \$5-billion.

Whether, in the missile age, the Defense Department still requires overseas bases, and if so for how long and for what specific commitments, is a question coming under increasing scrutiny—and producing mounting debate—in Congress and among the public.

There is no indication at this point that the Administration is prepared to use the survey as a basis for policy, and it has begun its own, possibly duplicative, review of the whole question.

The original survey, which took 10 months and 85,000 miles of travel to prepare, concludes that there can be

no radical reduction in base requirements without a comparable reduction in defense commitments to allies.

Critics of the overseas bases point out that they are focal points of anti-American agitation among people normally pleased to have United States protection but not eager to hear screaming jets or have their homes shaken by rumbling tanks or their daughters eyed by exuberant G.I.'s.

At home, there is mounting debate over the yearly costs of keeping troops and bases overseas, over the personnel tied up in manning them and, most of all, over the risks that United States responsibility for defending bases in an emergency may involve a new "Vietnam-type" adventure. Recent senatorial ques-

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mer Ambassador to Argentina and Lebanon. Their team consisted of Defense and State Department civilians and military officers, assisted by Central Intelligence Agency specialists.

Those who have had access to the study describe its broad conclusions as follows:

There is little likelihood of early or substantial cutbacks in overseas bases as long as the United States intends to honor its treaty commitments.

Even such developments in military technology as the huge C-5A air-cargo plane and nuclear-powered warships do not eliminate the need for substantial numbers of overseas bases and skilled personnel.

To relinquish distant bases and concentrate forces nearer—or even within—the continental United States might cost more than keeping them where they are, on bases long since paid for.

The fate of the survey—the first of its kind in 11 years—is a matter of conjecture in Administration circles. Some officials suggest privately that even its 52-page summary may disappear unread into the archives while the Administration awaits the review President Nixon has ordered the Deputy Secretary of Defense, David Packard, to prepare by August.

Inescapable Conclusion

Whatever its fate, those who have read the report say that one conclusion is inescapable: The costs of any United States pullback—particularly in the Pacific—would be high if the United States insisted also on retaining the same military capability in relation to the Communist powers.

Of the annual operating costs of bases and personnel overseas, \$660-million is for "mechanical maintenance." Approximately half the over-all cost, or \$2.5-billion, represents a drain on the United States position in international payments.

To maintain military and civilian forces for the North Atlantic Treaty Organization in Western Europe, for instance, costs \$1.5-billion annually in 1978. That figure takes account of the annual payment to the West German Govern-

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tioning of Secretary of State William P. Rogers and other high Administration figures on possible commitments in renegotiation of United States base rights in Spain is one illustration of the growing concern and controversy here.

A Foreign Relations subcommittee headed by Senator Stuart Symington, Democrat of Missouri, is preparing for hearings on the origins and extensions of United States military commitments overseas. After protracted argument the Senator persuaded Defense Secretary Melvin R. Laird to furnish a copy of the survey despite efforts to downgrade it by the stall of Henry A. Kissinger, national security adviser to the President, and by Nixon appointees in the Pentagon.

Defense experts, noting that the survey had been completed a month before the Nixon Administration took office, stressed not only that it was

the most thorough examination of its kind in 11 years but also that it had been prepared by career experts with no political ties.

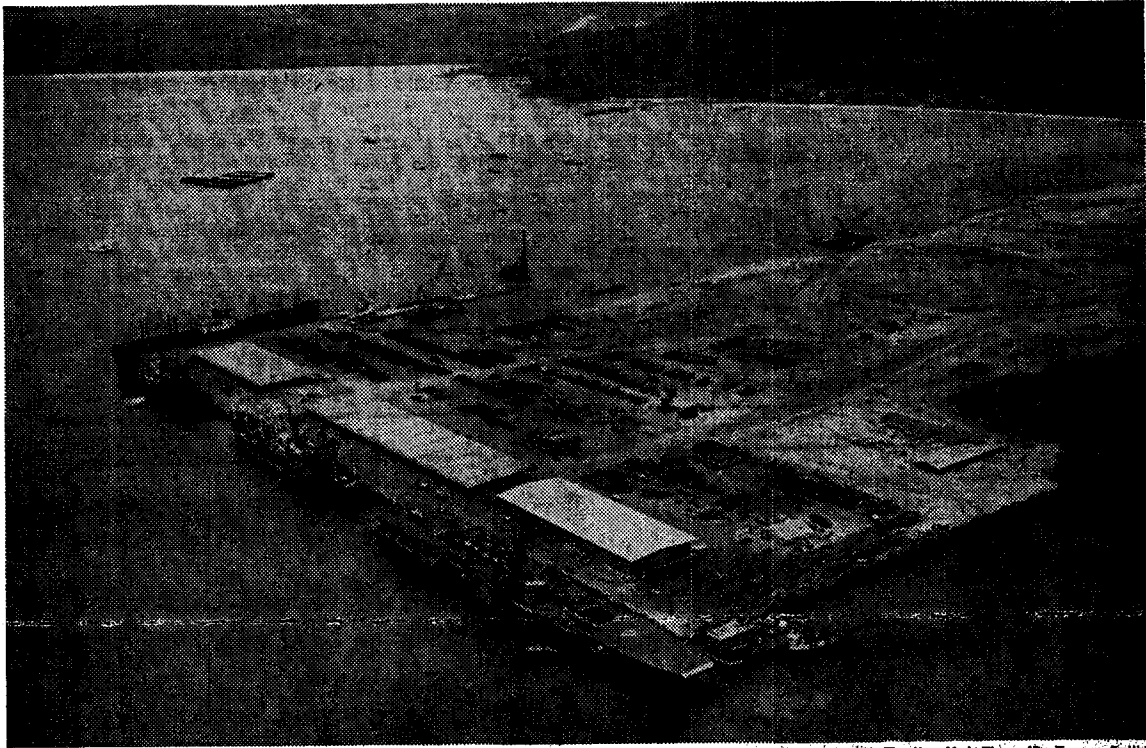
In addition, Senator Edmund S. Muskie, Democrat of Maine, and others have called recently for the abandonment of United States control over Okinawa and for its reversion to Japan. How this would affect the undisputed right of the United States to store nuclear and other weapons on Okinawa for protection of the Western Pacific is unclear.

Alternative Strategies

The study already completed sets forth alternative strategies for the decade ending in 1978 and specifies the bases that would be needed—or "tailored"—to fit each strategy.

The study, still classified secret, was prepared at the direction of the Johnson Administration by Gen. Robert J. Wood, United States Army (retired), a former chief of the military-aid program, and Robert M. McClintock, a senior Foreign Service officer and for-

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The New York Times (By Terence Smith)

This deep-water facility, built in Thailand by the U.S., is part of the U Tapao-Sattahip bomber base-logistics complex

ment to help offset the dollar drain. The rest of the drain is incurred mainly in the Pacific, largely owing to the Vietnam war.

One of the most striking calculations to emerge from the Wood-McClintock study is reported to be the estimated costs of withdrawing military matériel and manpower from forward bases while, at the same time, maintaining full combat strength against potential enemies.

The study is said to have found that over 10 years the cost of shifting an Army division from the Western Pacific to Hawaii, where modern facilities exist, would cost approximately \$400-million. To shift the same division to the United States-administered Pacific trust territories (the Marshals or Carolines), where facilities would have to be built, might cost \$800-million or more over the same period.

To relinquish all United States facilities in Japan and Okinawa and replace them in say, Guam, Wake, Hawaii or

the continental United States would cost approximately \$10-billion over 10 years. Of this, the informants say, \$7-billion would be needed to add aircraft carriers and other ships to keep United States naval power in the Pacific unimpaired.

In the European zone the estimate is that to relinquish the Polaris submarine base at Rota, Spain—the only other one in Europe is at Holy Loch, Scotland—would cost \$450-million over 10 years. Unless the United States were willing to risk lowering its nuclear deterrent in the Mediterranean, the loss of Rota would require adding two or more Polaris submarines to the patrols now moving constantly between East Coast ports and the Mediterranean.

In preparing the study, the Wood-McClintock team analyzed military capabilities required to support each of several alternative strategies, which strategies required which bases, and where; the likelihood of enemy destruction and of the political "retainability"

of bases, plus the likely costs or savings resulting from the several options.

"The team offered the Government a sort of strategy blue-plate special—so much for steak, less for frankfurters, more bases if you wanted caviar, etc.," an informant said.

Others explained that the several strategies examined ranged from all-out involvement to help allies at the outset of any crisis to almost but not quite an isolationist, "Fortress America" posture. No single strategy was recommended; workable options were put forward.

"You Still Need Some Bases"

"Even taking the most restrictive view of United States responsibilities toward our allies," said an informant, "you would still need some overseas bases like the Azores or Greenland or Iceland to give early warning."

During the nineteen-fifties, officials recalled, as the Air Force shifted from B-52 bomb-

ers to intercontinental ballistic missiles, the Pentagon began yielding overseas real estate; the Strategic Air Command, for instance, cut its foreign bases by two-thirds.

The process was accelerated after President Johnson discovered that the Pentagon still controlled 6,700 bases of varying size, 2,200 of them overseas. By early 1965, Defense Secretary Robert McNamara, at the insistence of Presidents Kennedy and Johnson, had closed at least 1,000 foreign bases at an annual savings of at least \$140 million. United States servicemen overseas then numbered 500,000.

President Johnson's decision in July, 1965, to build up in Vietnam reversed the trend.

When the war in Vietnam resolved, remaining bases will be cut to 100,000. McNamara said that the number of bases is being reduced by 100,000 a year. The big base complex in Guam and in the Pacific has to be major treaty commitments. If we pull out we diminish the credibility of our deterrent.

The second type, he said, is the special purpose base. For many years, the United States has had a number of special purpose bases in the Pacific and in the Atlantic.

Large bases in the Pacific and Atlantic were built in the 1950s when the United States was engaged in the Korean War and the Vietnam War. Bombers were stationed at these bases and other aircraft were based there. Many of these bases are now being closed.

Nonetheless, according to some who have seen the Wolfowitz study, it concluded that the United States must continue for the foreseeable future to have a number of major base complexes and attached personnel, as follows:

U.S. Urged Not to Cut Forces In NATO for at Least 3 Years

By WILLIAM BEECHER
Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, April 8—A panel of former diplomats, scholars and businessmen has warned that substantial American troop withdrawals from Western Europe could lead to a new European-developed nuclear force or a move by some allies to "accommodate" with the Soviet Union.

In a report published by the Center for Strategic and International Studies at Georgetown University, the panel urged that the Administration retain "essentially the present levels" of American forces within the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and hold to that level for at least three years.

There are 320,000 American military men in Europe, the bulk of them committed to NATO.

The report also called for a reaffirmation of America's promise to defend Europe with nuclear weapons, if necessary, and for a decision to maintain the present level of 7,000 tactical nuclear weapons in Europe.

The recommendations were based on two weeks of conversations held in major European capitals earlier this spring with "more than 100" of the alliance's political and military leaders.

In a foreword, Livingston T. Merchant, former Under Secretary of State, who was chairman of the 18-man panel, declared:

"The panel found that serious deficiencies exist in the defense forces of the alliance, deficiencies in quality as well as in quantity."

While the resources exist to correct this situation, he said, "complacency, preoccupation with domestic concerns, and growing insular thinking characterize the prevailing mood in Western Europe."

The 24th anniversary meeting of NATO's foreign and defense ministers opens here Thursday, and the report appeared timed to influence Administration thinking.

"In the defense ministries of Western Europe," the study said, "the panel found the prevailing judgment to be that the NATO forces on the central front (West Germany) and the southern flank (Greece and Turkey) are insufficient in numbers and inadequate in quality, whether measured against the

Fourth, to prepare to see West Germany drift away from the alliance and either "accommodate" with the Soviet Union or, less likely, provide for its own self-defense.

"Clearly, the fourth alternative, if pursued by the West Germans in either variation, would mark the greatest failure of American foreign policy in Europe since World War II," the panel declared.

While the majority favored the first option, the panel said, "at the very least, we should put to rest public speculation concerning sizable American troop reductions in Europe as well as the West's reluctance to employ nuclear weapons for the defense of Europe."

The members of the panel, in addition to Mr. Merchant, were: Frederick E. Nolting Jr., vice president of the Morgan Guaranty Trust Company and former deputy chief of the American NATO delegation; Nicholas J. Campbell Jr., president of Esso Europe, Inc.; Henry C. Wallich, professor of economics of Yale; Theodore C. Achilles, vice chairman of the Atlantic Council; Isaac L. Auerbach, president of the Auerbach Corporation for Information Services; Frank R. Barnett, president of the National Strategy Information Center; Gene E. Barley, author of "Building the American-European Market: Planning for the 1970's" and Irving Brown, international representative of the merged labor movement.

threat of opposing Warsaw Pact forces or against the requirements of NATO strategy."

The panel concluded that the Administration had four choices:

First, to keep American forces at roughly the present levels.

Second, after thorough consultation, to reduce American forces while reaffirming the United States nuclear guarantee and gaining agreement for a "qualitative" improvement in European ground forces.

Third, to seek a semi-inde-