

Presidential Position Paper

Christopher Wetherell¹

The University of Warwick, Politics and International Studies

Introduction

1. Following the successful conclusion of the National Security Council meeting, the following memorandum was produced by the President of the United States of America. The memorandum outlines key actions to be undertaken on behalf of the President's wishes in response to a subversion of Latvian sovereignty by Russian covert operations.

Initial Presidential Aims

2. The following presidential goals were outlined at the beginning of the scenario:
 - Prevent a Russian takeover of Latvia or other NATO allies.
 - If conflict escalates and NATO forces are pushed from Latvia by Russian forces, the United States will strive to retake Latvia from hostile forces as soon as is feasible. (Paragraph 7)
 - Prevent the destabilisation of global markets caused by the emergence of political instability (Paragraph 12)
 - Safeguard the integrity of NATO, which was at risk of fracture from both American inaction and overaction (Paragraph 6)

Scenario Decisions

3. As President, it fell upon my National Security Council to produce relevant evidence and arguments for tackling this crisis. After analysis of this information, the following decisions were chosen:

Increase in military preparedness

4. **Raised DEFCON Level:** The president authorised all United States military forces in Europe to prepare for a potential escalation of the crisis into a wider conflict. As such, the decision was made to move to Defense Readiness Condition (DEFCON) 3 to place American forces on a heightened state of alert. A subsequent choice to move towards DEFCON 2 was postponed until further military information on the nature of Russian incursions could be established.
5. **Supporting NATO:** The president chose to offer a verbal and written statement of military support to Latvia, France and the United Kingdom following their calls for an American position, as well as provide a statement of condemnation to the Russian Federation for their involvement in supporting anti-Latvian activities. An agenda was ordered to be drafted with the United Kingdom and France in the United Nations Security Council that would form a united NATO front against continued Russian aggression. Due to the volatile situation the

¹ Christopher Wetherell, BA (Hons) History – University of Central Lancashire, Double Degree Masters Student in Politics and International Service – University of Warwick and American University

council found itself in, the United States decided against moving US troops into Latvia until confirmation had been received that Latvia has invoked Article V of the NATO treaty. Instead, the United States encouraged Latvia to begin moving their own troops to secure their border with Russia in a slow and methodical manner to cut off any Russian supplies being shipped to separatist forces, without quickly inflaming an already delicate situation.

6. Additionally, the president expressed concern that the NATO alliance itself was vulnerable to internal disagreements brought about by the emergence of a major crisis. Should insufficient protection be given to Latvia, there was risk that the Baltic States and neighbouring Poland- the nations most threatened by Russia- would lose faith in American military guarantees. Conversely, an overzealous military response to Russian subversion could also result in nations such as Germany expressing concern with providing aid. It was for this reason that a middle ground policy was established following the NSC meeting.
7. Preparation of War Plans: Should the situation escalate into open warfare, the President planned to work with congress and NATO allies to present Russia with a formal declaration of war. Full-scale movement of American troops stationed in the Continental United States and Middle Eastern theatre would be reassigned to Central Europe akin to the REFORGER movements of the Cold War. Following advice from the Vice President, the president decided that if war should occur, it was unwise to order full scale troop movements to the Baltic States proper, due to a belief that such territory could not be defended adequately without substantial time to mobilize allied forces. Short term projections were believed to heavily favour Russia over NATO. Instead forces would defend the more defensible areas of Eastern Germany and Poland to buy time for defensive measures, and eventual counter-attack. The primary objective during this war would be the reconquest of Latvia and any occupied NATO territory, rather than an outright invasion of Russia proper.
8. Covert Operations: The president authorised the implementation of covert operations aimed at infiltrating Russian separatist groups, gathering intelligence on Russian troop movements, and setting up counter-terrorist operations in the Baltic states. The Director of Central Intelligence was ordered to set up an intelligence centre in Riga to work more closely with their Latvian counterparts, more specifically determine the nature of Russian involvement, as well as infiltrate Rodina itself and produce counter-terrorist strategies. Likewise, the United States offered the use of US special forces to both Latvia and neighbouring Estonia to secure sites of extreme security importance. US special forces and intelligence operations provided advisory roles to the Latvian military and assisted in strengthening Latvian cyber defences against Russian attack through the creation of a joint intelligence and security division.

Diplomatic measures

9. Messages of Solidarity: In response to calls from the United Kingdom and France, the president announced solidarity with NATO allies and vowed to provide any support to ensure the territorial integrity of Latvia was maintained. It was requested that the US Permanent Representative to the UN convene an emergency summit of the United Nations Security Council and attempt to bring Chinese political pressure to bear upon Russia, given the economically important nature of the Baltic states to the PRC.
10. Acknowledgement of Russo-Latvian Grievances: Despite forming a strong and united diplomatic front against Russian aggression, the council sought to acknowledge the grievances

of Russian speaking peoples within Latvia by working with legitimate Russian speaking political parties in any future negotiations. In doing so the United States and allies sought to delegitimize support for radical, militant separatist groups and limit reasons for Russia to escalate the political situation. The intelligence department was asked to partner with the state department to foster civil society in Latvia. Such efforts included diverting additional funding to institutions such as the Voice of America; providing conciliatory information aimed at aggrieved Russian minorities.

11. The United States also respectfully pressed Latvia in private negotiations to begin providing citizenship to Russian speakers to allow a de-escalation of tensions. Such efforts sought to diplomatically isolate Russia and delegitimize the main purpose of insurgency in Latvia, while simultaneously allowing the United States to stand up for individual liberties and the rules-based system of global governance.

Economic stabilisation

12. Regarding scenario updates of shocks to the global economy and rises in oil prices, the president ordered that measures be taken to stabilise the global economic situation as quickly as possible. As such the Secretary of Energy was requested to write a statement to be given to European allies that the United States would safeguard oil and natural gas supplies should Russia limit exportation. Efforts were made to diversify the European economy away from Russian energy over the long term through economic negotiations via the European Union and the OECD. Economic resources were also to be offered to Latvia to help the nation with safeguarding strategic sectors of their economy during this period of internal upheaval. It was also the hope of the president that such measures would also assist in the stabilisation of the Eurozone, that would be inevitably affected by the emergence of conflict in one of its member states.

Conclusions

13. In summary, the President concluded that while a serious threat to the stability of NATO and the European Union, the best course of action was to limit overtly aggressive responses to Russian threats in the Baltic states. The inherent military and economic strength of the NATO alliance allowed the organisation to prosecute far more options in responding to Russia than was possible for Ukraine during the Crimean Crisis of 2014. This is not to say that the decision would be solely pacifistic in nature; troops deployments were encouraged by the Latvian military and the United States was willing to offer troops if requested by Latvia. Likewise, covert operations were deemed to be of great usefulness to rebuffing Russian influence in the region.
14. In doing so, these decisions sought to protect the sovereignty and interests of the core Latvian population, while keeping Russian efforts on the Russian speaking border areas mired by counterinsurgency strategies. Meanwhile, the United States would bring to bear its considerable diplomatic and economic weight to place severe pressure on the Russian state to seek an internationally accepted compromise that maintained Latvian sovereignty over its territory but granted legitimately demanded rights to aggrieved Russians within its border. As such, Russia would be deterred from a further escalation of military conflict and compelled by

diplomatic means to take what would hopefully be interpreted in the Kremlin as a palatable method of winding down the conflict in a controlled manner.