

U S - DEFENCE OFFICIAL CRITICIZED

(EMBARGOED FOR AUTOMATIC RELEASE AT 2330 MT FRIDAY)

WASHINGTON, SEPT 6, REUTER - A CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEE TODAY CRITICIZED A DEFENCE DEPARTMENT ANALYSIS FOR SUGGESTING THERE WAS NO REAL DISPARITY BETWEEN THE STRENGTH OF NATO AND WARSAW PACT FORCES.

A HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES ARMED SERVICES SUB-COMMITTEE SAID THE ANALYSIS PRESENTED LAST FEBRUARY BY DR. ALAIN ENTHOVEN, ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENCE FOR SYSTEMS ANALYSIS, HAD A "DISRUPTIVE EFFECT ON THE EFFORTS OF OUR NATO REPRESENTATIVES WHO WERE AT THAT TIME STRUGGLING TO CONVINCE NATO MEMBERS TO FULFILL TROOP COMMITMENT OBLIGATIONS UNDER THE ALLIANCE."

THE SUB-COMMITTEE DISPUTED DR. ENTHOVENS ASSERTION THAT, BECAUSE NATO HAS ABOUT 30 PER CENT MORE MEN IN ITS ARMED FORCES THAN WARSAW PACT NATIONS ARE KNOWN TO HAVE UNDER ARMS, "NATO SHOULD NOT BE SO BADLY OUTNUMBERED IN EUROPE."

THE SUBCOMMITTEE NOTED THAT "NATO CAN NO LONGER RELY ON FRENCH FORCES," MORE THAN HALF A MILLION AMERICAN TROOPS ARE IN VIETNAM, AND BRITAIN STILL HAS CONSIDERABLE FORCES EAST OF SUEZ.

THE SUB-COMMITTEE ALSO TOOK ISSUE WITH OTHER ASPECTS OF THE PENTAGON OFFICIALS ANALYSIS OF RELATIVE STRENGTH, INCLUDING HIS STATEMENT THAT "THERE IS NO INDICATION THAT WARSAW PACT SOLDIER, ON THE AVERAGE, ARE BETTER THAN NATOS."

THE CONGRESSMEN RECALLED THAT NATO COMMANDERS HAVE ACKNOWLEDGED THAT "NATO TRAINING IS PLAGUED BY THE SHORT LENGTH OF CONSCRIPTIVE SERVICE IN MOST MEMBER COUNTRIES AS COMPARED TO PACT NATIONS PERIODS OF SERVICE."

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