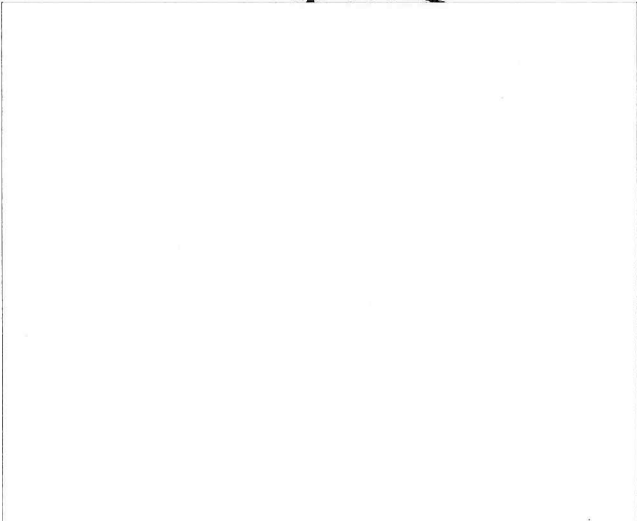


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Intelligence Report

Soviet Concepts for Initial Military Operations Against NATO in Central Europe

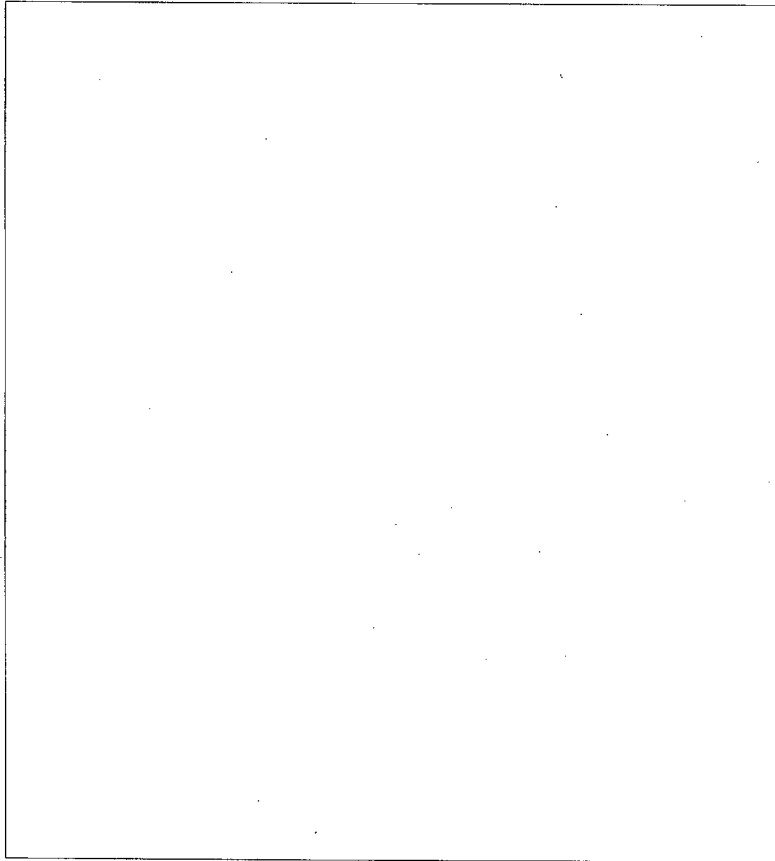


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February 1977

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Soviet Concepts for Initial Military Operations Against NATO in Central Europe

Key Findings

Soviet concepts for the prosecution of a war against NATO in Central Europe emphasize seizing the initiative by launching a general offensive as early as possible once hostilities start or are deemed inevitable. The Soviets no longer consider a prior buildup involving ground forces from the USSR essential for launching such an offensive so long as all or most of their allies' forces in Central Europe are available to participate. Nor would they necessarily carry out such a buildup even if time permitted. They now regard the 58 Warsaw Pact divisions garrisoned in East Germany, Poland, and Czechoslovakia as capable not only of containing a NATO attack but also of mounting a general offensive before any of the 28 additional divisions the Soviets intend to commit arrive from the western USSR. [redacted]

These new concepts do not represent a strategy for surprise attack. Their implementation would still entail preparations of a magnitude unprecedented in Europe since the end of World War II. These preparations would be susceptible to detection by NATO. [redacted]

Two notable developments that have changed Soviet requirements for the timing of reinforcement are the strengthening of Pact ground forces immediately opposite NATO and the adoption by both NATO and the Pact of strategies designed to avoid immediate recourse to nuclear weapons. Since the early sixties:

- The Soviets have stationed the equivalent of an additional army in Central Europe—the Central Group of Forces in Czechoslovakia.
- The USSR's East European allies have trained and equipped their armies to a point where they are now expected to play a major role in initial Pact operations against NATO.
- The Soviets have subscribed to the notion that a war in Europe would probably be fought initially without the use of nuclear weapons. As a consequence, they now believe the prospects for conducting a reinforcement after hostilities start are improved. [redacted]

Additionally, the Soviets probably consider that the Pact's chances for successfully seizing and maintaining the initiative would be seriously reduced if NATO were provoked as a result of a Soviet buildup into taking preemptive action or engaging in a corresponding buildup. [redacted]

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SR 77-10002CX
February 1977

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
Directorate of Intelligence
February 1977

INTELLIGENCE REPORT

Soviet Concepts for Initial Military Operations
Against NATO in Central Europe

Preface

This paper addresses in detail the basis for the judgment in National Intelligence Estimate 11-14-75 that a Warsaw Pact offensive in Central Europe would not necessarily be preceded by a large-scale reinforcement from the USSR. In offering this judgment, the NIE departed from earlier US intelligence assessments that identified a Warsaw Pact offensive, mounted by some 85-90 divisions after weeks of preparation, as the principal threat against which the US should plan in meeting its commitments to NATO. These earlier assessments, the origins of which are examined in Appendix A, have been overtaken by recent evidence that the more likely threat is a Warsaw Pact offensive involving the eventual commitment of a force the same size but requiring less than a week of preparation. [redacted]

The focus of this paper is on Soviet concepts for organizing and initially committing the Warsaw Pact's ground armies in a general offensive against NATO in Central Europe, with particular attention paid to the question of Soviet intentions regarding the timing of reinforcement from the USSR. The views presented are based on materials that reflect Soviet military planners' concepts for the prosecution of a war with NATO. Except for noting that they rationalize their planning by citing NATO's "aggressive intentions," the paper does not attempt--for want of evidence--

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to answer the question of whether the Soviets actually expect an attack or intend to launch one themselves.

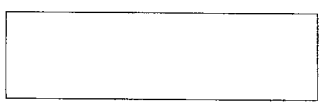
This study does not examine the role of Soviet naval forces that would be involved in hostilities on the seaward flanks. The readiness posture of Soviet naval ships and aircraft is sufficiently high that naval forces could take defensive positions within a period of time consistent with the early ground force operations described here.

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Soviet Military Objectives and Strategy

Soviet concepts for the conduct of a war against NATO are based on the assumption that hostilities would most likely follow a period of crisis of sufficient duration to allow Warsaw Pact forces to mobilize and convert to a wartime footing. This is reflected in the day-to-day posture of Pact forces, which for the most part are manned at varying levels below their intended wartime strengths, and in Pact exercises and classified documents. We have no evidence that the Soviets have plans for an unprovoked surprise attack. Soviet doctrine does, however, call for the Pact's forces to seize the initiative by launching a general offensive as early as possible once hostilities start or appear inevitable.

There is no evidence that Soviet military planners entertain wartime objectives in Central Europe short of a decisive defeat of NATO's forces there. Nowhere in their classified writings or in exercises do the Soviets manifest an intent to use Pact forces for limited attacks. The emphasis is on waging a theater-wide campaign aimed at rapidly destroying NATO's military potential and, by overrunning the Federal Republic of Germany, the Benelux countries, and Denmark, denying NATO the use of Central Europe and points of entry for reinforcement from abroad. Soviet intentions regarding France are less clear but are probably contingent upon the extent of French participation on the side of NATO.

Soviet doctrine for the conduct of this theater-wide offensive envisions a campaign lasting about two weeks. Military theorists do note the possibility of protracted warfare but offer no extensive discussion of the subject.

Changing Concepts for Launching an Offensive

Earlier Views

US intelligence studies and estimates in the sixties and the early seventies judged that the Soviets would attempt to undertake, as a matter of

preference if not necessity, a buildup of 85-90 ground force divisions before launching a general offensive in Central Europe.* A corollary of this judgment was that, because of the magnitude of the buildup and the weeks that would be required to accomplish it, the Pact's intentions would become known in time for the US to augment its forces in West Germany. (See Appendix A for a fuller discussion of earlier US views and their origins.)

Previous US judgments regarding the question of the timing of reinforcement were based on analyses of Soviet exercises and classified writings of the early sixties. These evidenced an intent, if time permitted, to move the ground armies in the western USSR into Central Europe before the outbreak of hostilities

In the early sixties, the Soviets foresaw a need to immediately replace the large losses expected to result from the massive nuclear exchanges they believed would occur at the outset of hostilities with NATO. At the same time, the combat potential of the USSR's East European allies was so limited and their expected contribution to a Pact offensive so small that a buildup of additional Soviet forces was deemed essential before the Pact could launch an offensive. Thus, the chief mission of Pact forces then stationed in Central Europe was to contain a NATO attack until the Pact could complete a buildup of forces sufficient for offensive operations.

Current Concepts

Mounting an Offensive Without Prior Buildup. In the past few years a considerable body of evidence has materialized which makes it clear that the Soviets now regard Warsaw Pact forces stationed in Central Europe as capable of mounting a general offensive without a prior reinforcement involving ground forces

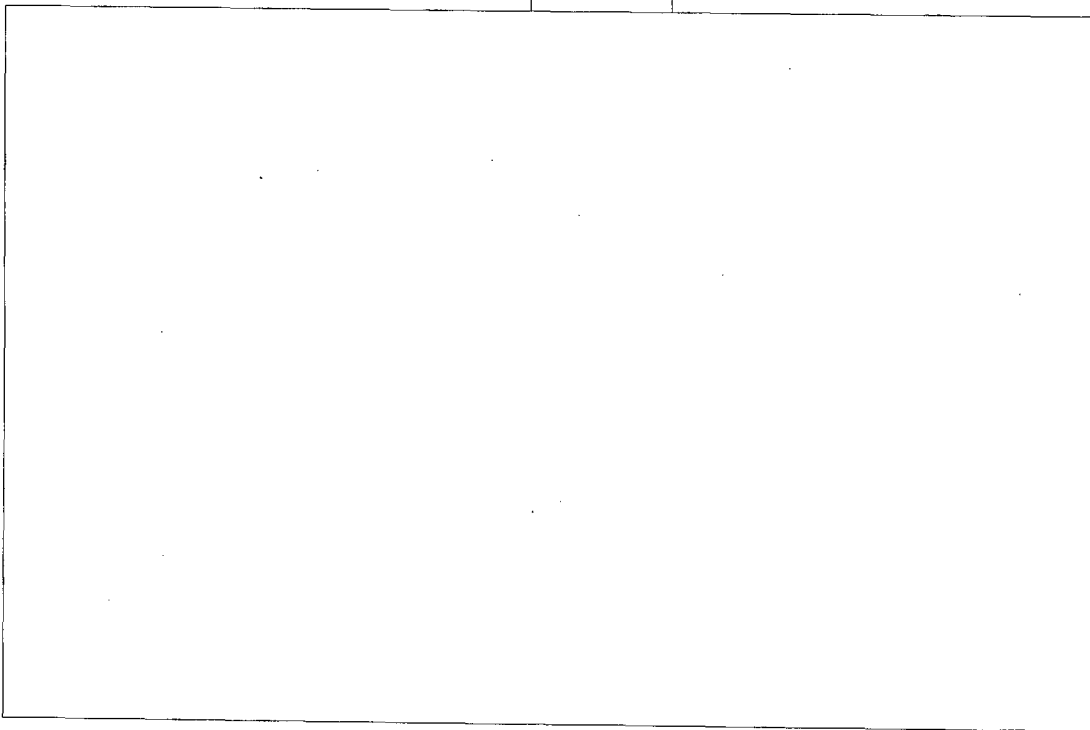
* NIE 11-14-75, *Warsaw Pact Forces Opposite NATO*, departs from these earlier assessments in a principal judgment that a Pact offensive in Central Europe would not necessarily be preceded by a large-scale reinforcement from the USSR.

from the USSR. In imputing this capability to the Pact in Central Europe, the Soviets are assuming that all or most of the forces of their East European allies would be available for such a venture. The East Europeans provide 31 of the 58 Pact divisions currently in Central Europe. The evidence furthermore indicates that if all or most of the East European divisions were available to participate, the Soviets might not send reinforcements prior to the start of an offensive even if time permitted.

Prior Reinforcement Probably Still an Option. The Soviets probably have alternate schemes for the employment of Pact forces, including prior reinforcement.

Not a Surprise Attack Strategy. Although intended for the rapid development of offensive power, Soviet concepts for launching a Pact general offensive without a prior buildup of forces from the USSR would entail preparations of a magnitude unprecedented since World War II. These preparations, which would include establishment of a theater-wide command, communications, and logistic support system and a general mobilization in Eastern Europe and the western USSR, would be susceptible to detection by NATO. Although they evidently expect that these preparations would be made in a situation of rising East-West tensions, with both sides proceeding to a war footing, the Soviets would nevertheless attempt to limit the amount of warning time NATO could derive from them.

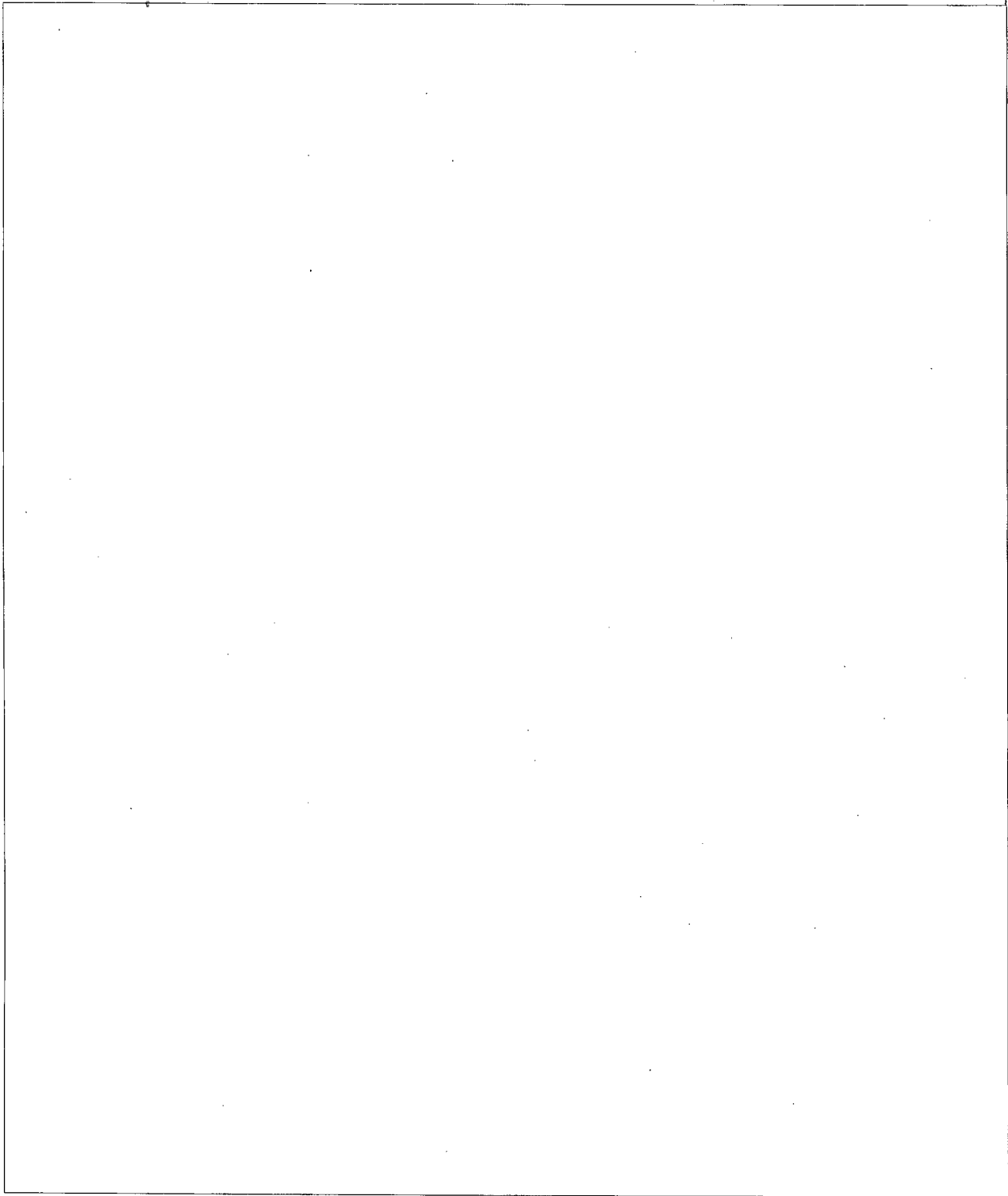
Of the preparations, the most difficult to conceal, or to rationalize because it is not practiced in peacetime, would be a general mobilization. Senior Soviet military commanders and military theorists have referred to plans for a "concealed mobilization" but have offered no details as to how it might be accomplished. A general mobilization would entail a massive call-up of reservists to fill out the East European divisions and front- and army-level supporting units.* Few if any of these divisions or units, which would make up more than half the force initiating the Pact offensive, are manned at their intended wartime operating strengths. Similarly, call-ups would be needed to ready the undermanned Soviet units in the western USSR whose role would be to reinforce the attacking forces after hostilities were under way. [redacted]

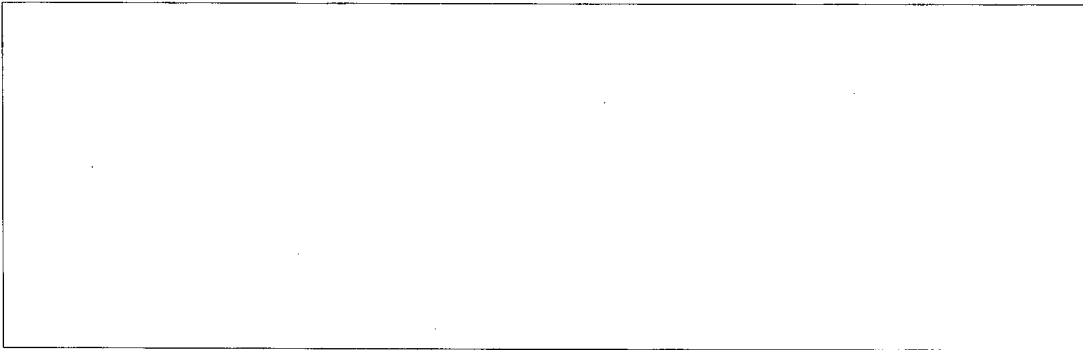


* A front is a Warsaw Pact field command for the operational control of general purpose forces whose primary mission is the conduct of offensive operations throughout the strategic depth of a sector of enemy territory. Pact fronts opposite NATO in Central Europe would consist of three to five ground armies, a tactical air army, and various combat and service support units. [redacted]



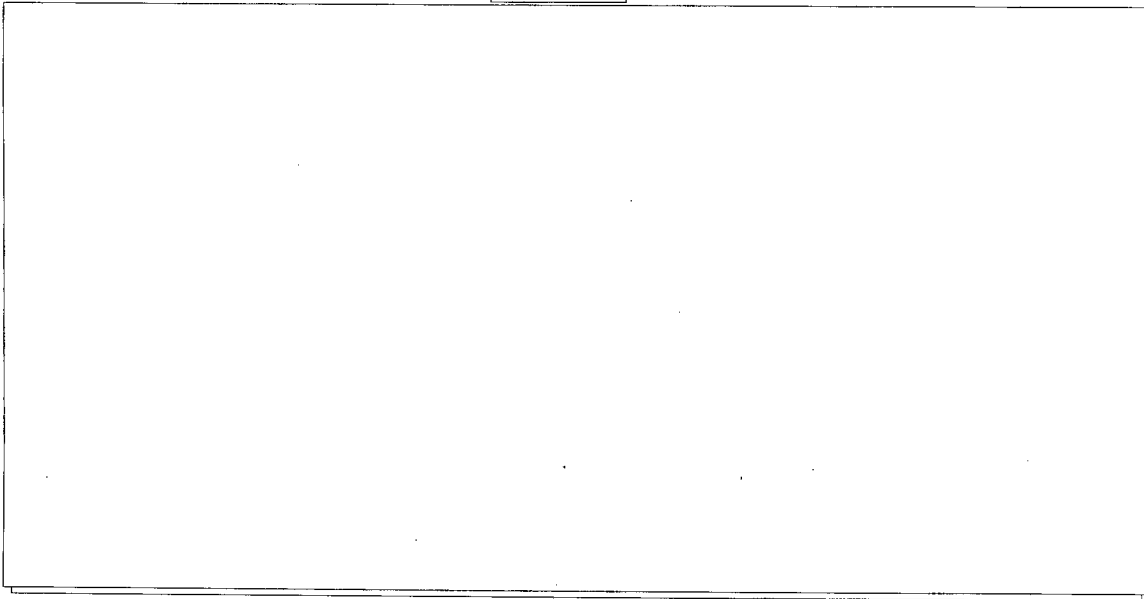
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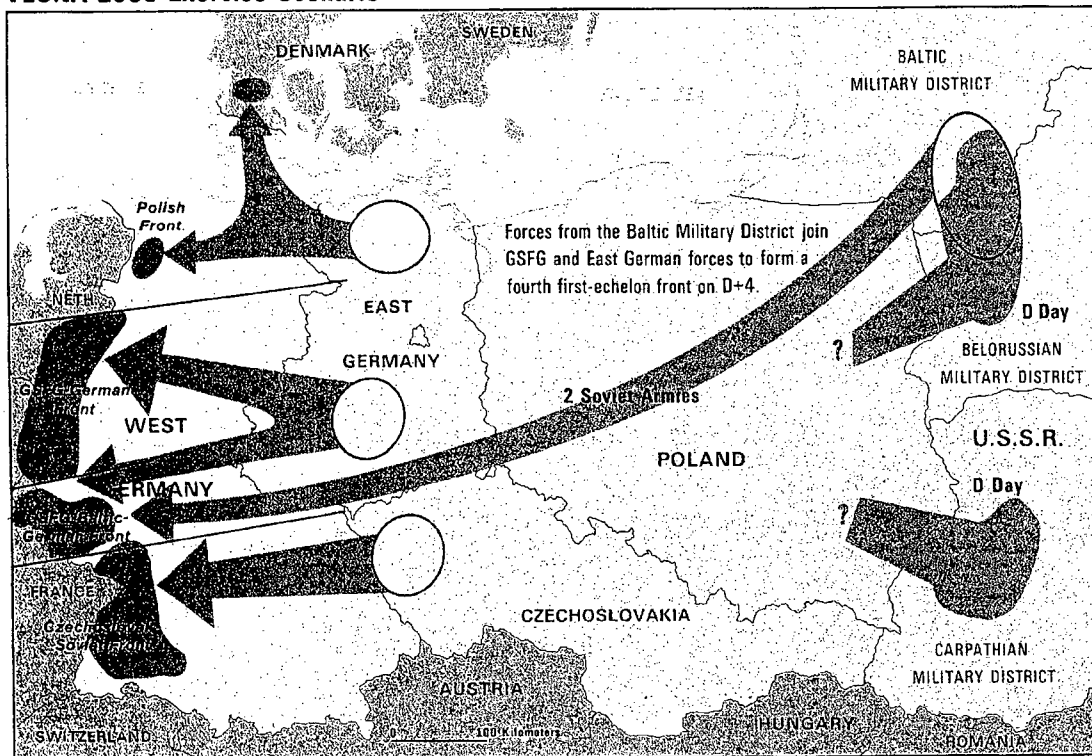


The Pact usually alerts and mobilizes its forces in several stages. [] The initial steps are transitional and are designed to facilitate the assimilation of reservists and the deployment of units out of garrison once a general mobilization is declared. They include a selective call-up of key personnel, cancellation of leaves, readiness checks of weapons and vehicles, and reconnoitering of mobilization assembly areas. Many of these measures are intended to be carried out covertly long before a general mobilization is ordered. []

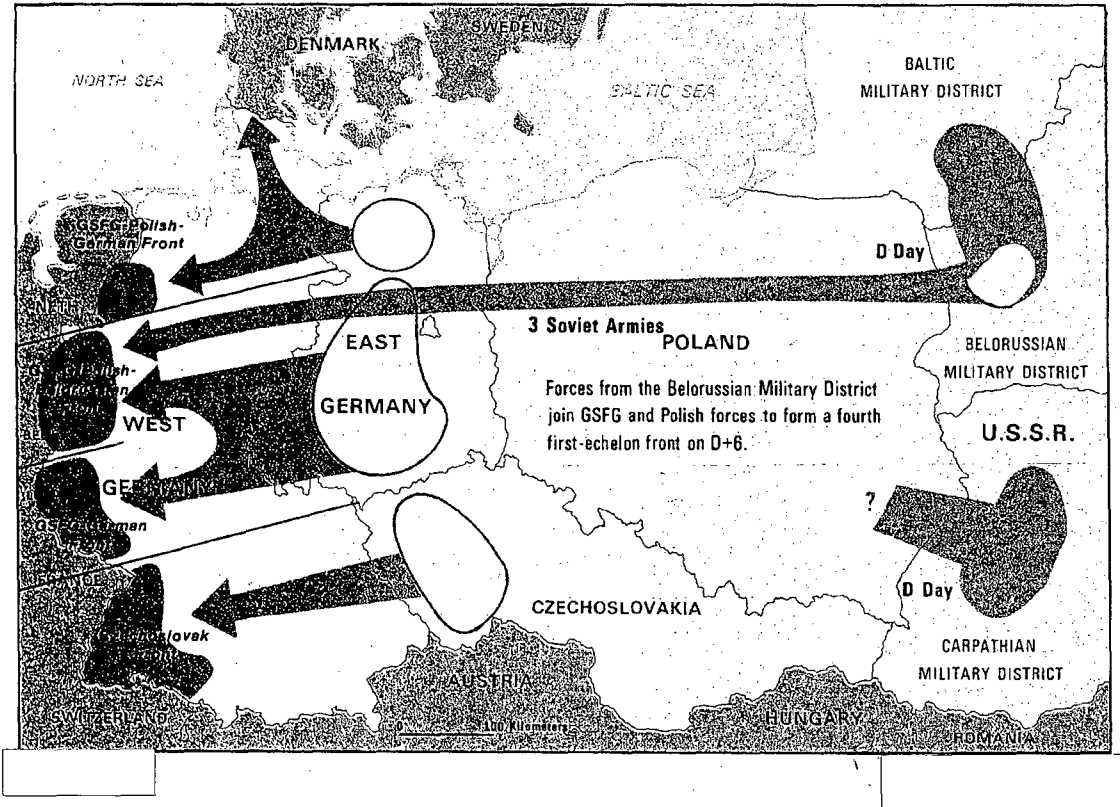
Pact [] classified writings indicate that the mobilization and deployment of Pact combat units, including those that are in the western USSR and intended for reinforcement, would be postponed until hostilities appeared highly probable or inevitable. The intent would be to defer for as long as possible what European nations traditionally have considered tantamount to a declaration of war. []

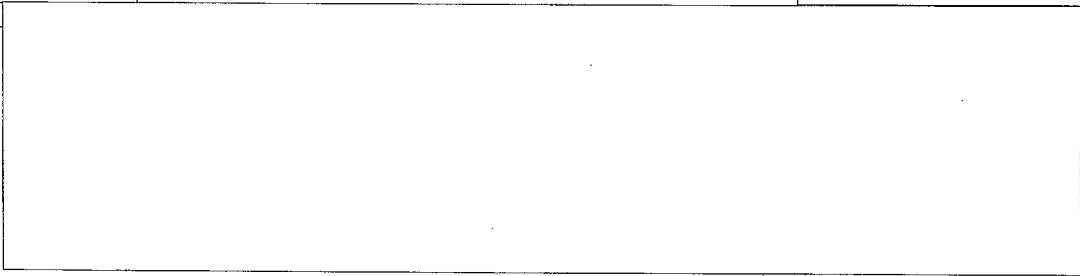
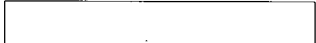
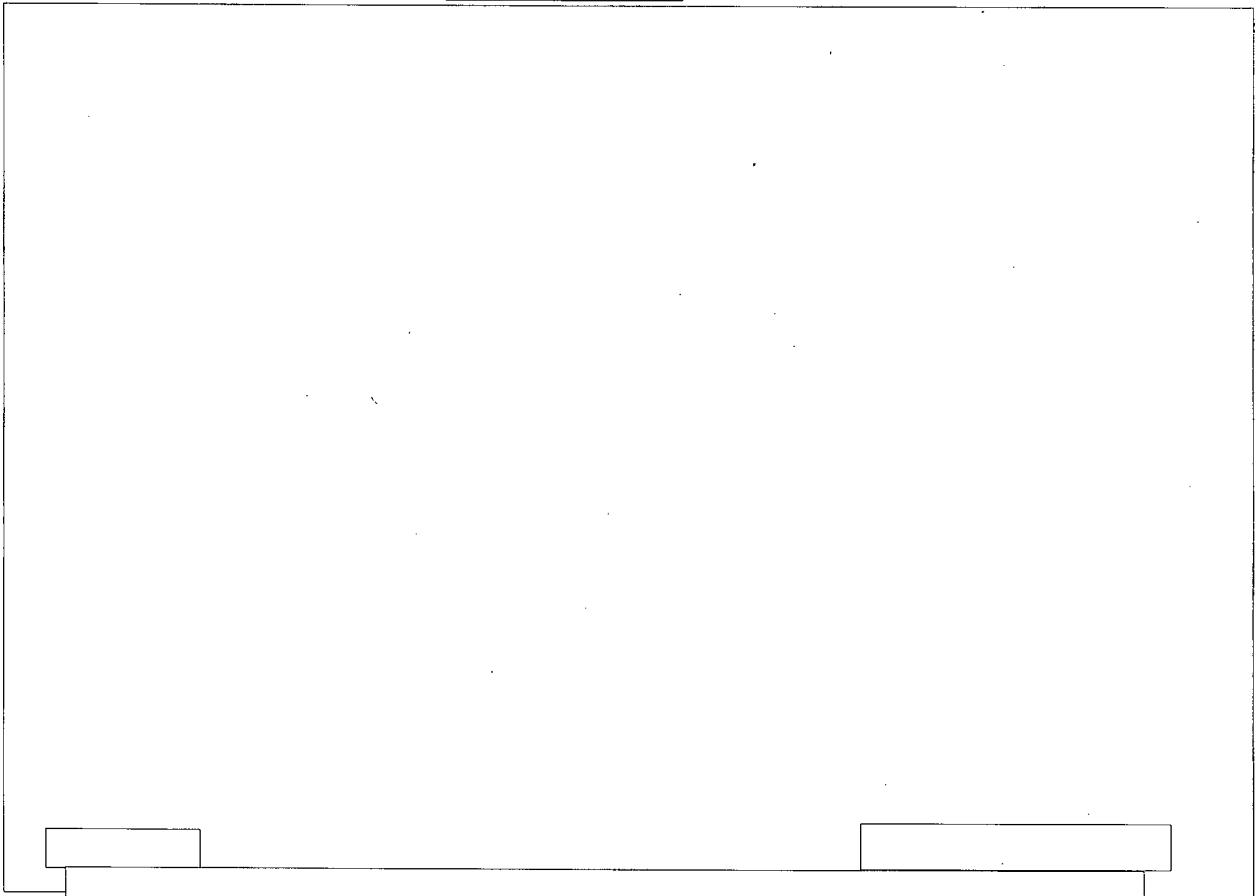


VESNA-1969 Exercise Scenario

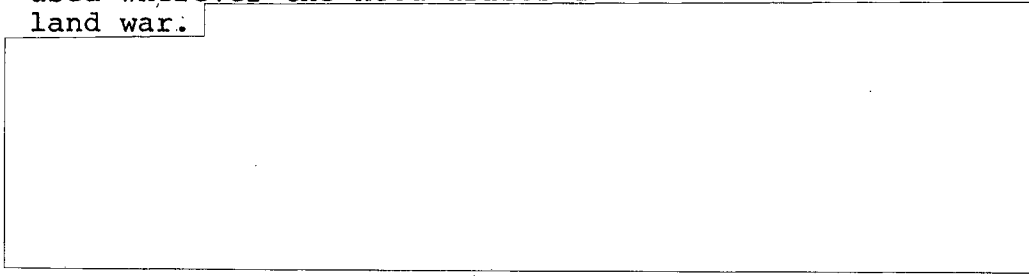


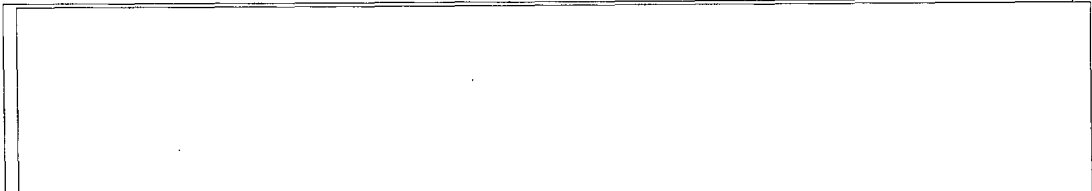
LATO-1971 Exercise Scenario





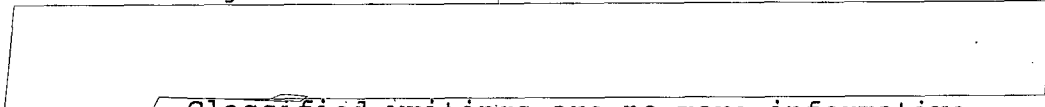
The Soviets regard the ground forces in the interior of the USSR--the Moscow, Ural, and Volga Military Districts--as part of a strategic reserve to be used wherever the need arises in a future Eurasian land war.





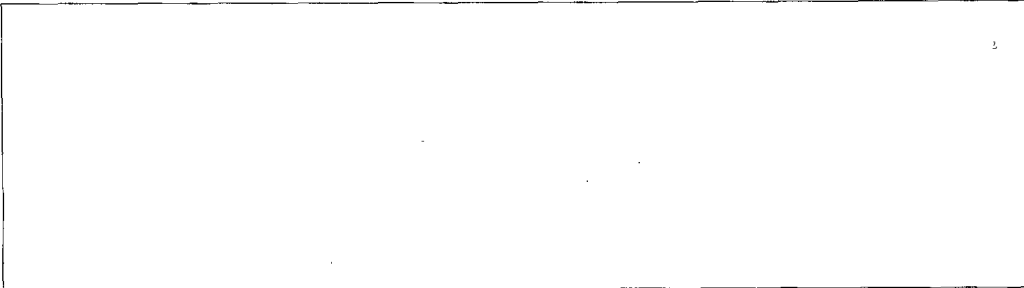
Tactical Air Reinforcement. Soviet planning with respect to the timing of forward deployments of tactical air forces from the western USSR also appears to have undergone significant change in recent years. Classified Pact documents and exercises since the late sixties indicate that the Soviets intend to launch a massive air assault to achieve air supremacy and destroy as much of NATO's nuclear potential as possible at the outset of conventional hostilities. [] Until the early seventies, Soviet concepts for executing such an assault envisioned augmenting the Pact's tactical air forces in Central Europe prior to combat with as many as 900 tactical aircraft from the USSR. Evidence dating from the mid-seventies, however, indicates the Soviets now contemplate mounting an initial air attack without prior massive reinforcement by tactical air units from the USSR. This is made possible in part by the introduction in Central Europe of modern aircraft capable of flying greater distances and delivering more ordnance than the aircraft that have been replaced []

Logistics Buildup. There is no direct evidence as to whether the Soviets believe additional supplies would have to be brought forward before the Pact could launch a major offensive. []



Classified writings are no more informative. Most articles on logistic movement concern the ability of the organic supporting units of armies and fronts to keep pace with the combat elements while deploying from the USSR into Central Europe, especially under threat of NATO interdiction. The question of logis-

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tic shipments for increasing or replenishing stocks already in the theater is not addressed. The articles indicate only that large formations coming forward as reinforcements would bring with them mobile stocks sufficient for several days of operations, and that serious obstacles impeding the movement of these supplies could arise if hostilities had already begun.

Evidence on the actual contents or levels of stocks in Pact storage depots in Central Europe offers little insight into the adequacy of the stocks they contain. If filled, the depots that have been identified could have some 20 to 40 days' supply of ammunition and POL for the 58 divisions that would be used to launch an offensive. There is considerable uncertainty about these figures, however, because a few of the depots are known to have been stocked far below their estimated capacities.

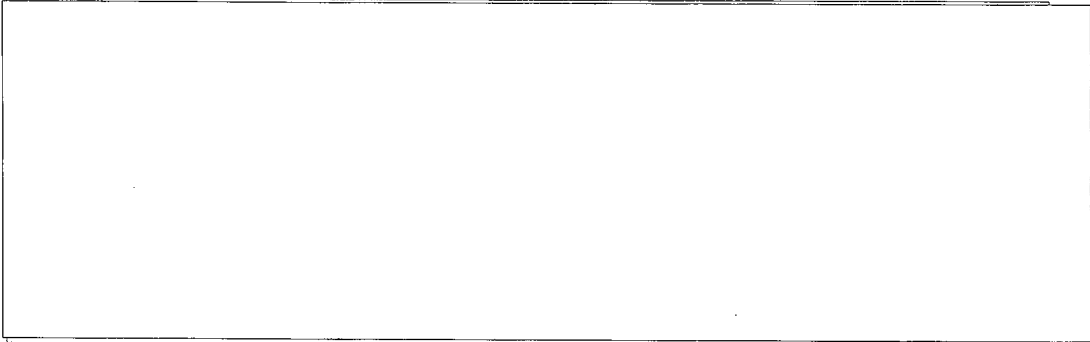
Factors Accounting for Change in Soviet Views

There are several plausible reasons why the Soviets no longer regard a major buildup as a prerequisite for launching an offensive in Central Europe as long as most or all of the forces of their Pact allies are available.

Desire To Seize Initiative. One key consideration is the importance they attach to seizing the initiative as early as possible if hostilities are judged inevitable. Soviet planners probably reason that a slow and ponderous buildup could invite NATO preemptive action or precipitate a NATO buildup that would offset the initial advantage the Soviets believe the Pact now has in ground forces in Central Europe.

Improved Force Posture. Pact chances for seizing the initiative without the benefit of a prior buildup have improved since the early sixties, thanks mainly to the increased military potential of the East Europeans and to the stationing in 1968 of an additional Soviet force of army size in Central Europe.

Soviet recognition of the improved status of East European forces is evident in the role they are expected to play in initial offensive operations against NATO.



The development of the East Europeans as a force capable of playing a major role in a NATO-Pact confrontation began in the early sixties. [redacted]

[redacted] the Soviets issued instructions at that time that Pact training thenceforth was to focus on offensive tactics. Previously, three-quarters of Pact training activity had been in defensive operations. By the mid-sixties, training in Poland and Czechoslovakia had progressed to the extent that both countries began to organize their forces for offensive operations under national front commands. More recently, additional indications of an enhanced East European role in Pact contingency planning have surfaced in the area of command and control, where the Soviets have been seeking to develop and implement a more uniform, integrated command structure. The extent to which these efforts will solve the complex problem of controlling large multinational forces in coordinated operations, however, is unclear. [redacted]

Prospects for seizing the initiative without a prior buildup were also enhanced with the establishment of the Central Group of Forces (CGF) in Czechoslovakia after the 1968 invasion. The CGF represents the equivalent of an additional five-division Soviet army in Central Europe [redacted]

Decreased Threat of Nuclear Use at the Outset. Another factor that apparently has influenced Soviet planning is that the reinforcement process is viewed as less threatened now than in the early sixties. Soviet strategists then expected that nuclear weapons would be used massively at the outset of hostilities, and



that a large part of NATO's nuclear arsenal would be employed for interdiction purposes. [redacted]

In the mid-sixties the Soviets began to incorporate into their doctrine the concept that war in Europe would most likely begin with a conventional phase. The impetus for this change in doctrine came in part from NATO's adoption of a more flexible strategy, which sought not only to delay the introduction of nuclear weapons but also to limit their use initially. The appeal of such a strategy to the Soviets, as expressed by Col. Gen. Povaliy, then chief of staff for operations, was that it would provide additional time for the completion of such essential military preparations as mobilization and reinforcement, even after hostilities started. The Soviets nevertheless continued during this period to espouse a policy of meeting any NATO use of nuclear weapons, regardless of how limited, with a massive, theater-wide nuclear strike. [redacted]

Since 1970, Soviet military planners have modified this long-held view regarding their response to the initial use of nuclear weapons by NATO. Exercise activity and classified writings have indicated that the Soviets are searching for and testing options for a variety of nuclear weapons employment concepts. Their purpose apparently is to limit the scope and intensity of nuclear warfare in the theater for as long as possible. [redacted]

Change in Mode of Transport. A growing reliance on road instead of rail transport for moving ground forces over long distances is another consideration affecting the vulnerability of reinforcement and Soviet views on its timing. Since the early sixties, classified writings on the problems of moving armies over distances up to 1,000 kilometers have advocated greater use of road transport. These writings have noted that rail transport requires lengthy loading times, is more vulnerable to interdiction, and is not directionally flexible. [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

The extent of the Soviets' ability to move large formations of ground forces by road is unclear. The Soviets claim to have successfully carried out such long-distance road movements within the USSR. They have evidently concluded on the basis of this experience that reduced vulnerability through road movement outweighs such disadvantages as the wear and tear on vehicles, especially tanks, and the fatigue that troops would experience from a march of some 1,000 kilometers.

Preparing and Launching an Offensive

Preliminary Measures

Major preparations would be required before the Pact could launch a coordinated offensive. These would include the activation of a wartime command, control, and communications system, a call-up of reservists, the requisitioning of civilian motor transport and the fielding of a logistics supply system, a review of battle plans, and the movement and concentration of units.

Activation of Command, Control, and Communications Systems. One of the earliest steps the Pact would take would be to establish a wartime system to ensure control of the entire preparatory process as well as of combat operations themselves. The activation of this system, which normally does not function in peacetime, would require extensive deployments of signal units and the staffing of main and reserve command posts to support the various echelons of authority. Staff personnel would also be exchanged in order to ensure that front, army, and in some instances division levels of command had appropriate liaison with the commands of senior, subordinate, and neighboring units.

Mobilization of Reservists. The most disruptive and conspicuous of the preparatory measures would be the mobilization of reservists to fill out understrength combat units and to field a wartime support structure. Well over a million reservists would be needed, because

few if any of the East European ground force units or Soviet units in the western USSR are manned at wartime operating levels. Also, tens of thousands of civilian trucks would be requisitioned from the economy to bring military transport organizations up to wartime strength [redacted]

Soviet units in Central Europe have long been credited with having all of the personnel they would require in wartime, but that judgment is now in question.

[redacted]

Of the 58 divisions that would make up the initial assault force, a third are located in Poland and eastern Czechoslovakia. The divisions closer to the borders with NATO countries, however, could begin operations while units in the east were still on the move. Pact armies, once mobilized, are expected to be capable of moving by road at an average speed of 30 kilometers an hour and attacking from the march. [redacted]

Reconnaissance. Final steps prior to launching an offensive would include assessing the numbers and dispositions of NATO forces, especially in areas where the Pact intended to breach NATO defenses. A concerted reconnaissance effort would also be made to locate and track NATO's mobile nuclear delivery units, since these would be targets of the highest priority at the outset of hostilities. [redacted]

Pact commanders also would have to assess whether they could achieve a sufficient measure of surprise to allow them to neglect defensive preparations. Classified Soviet writings have advised that if NATO forces are alerted, the Pact is to take specified defensive measures, some requiring days. Among them is the preparation of trenches and revetments. [redacted]

Time Required To Complete Preparations

There is little evidence for estimating how long the Pact would take to complete all of the preparations

required for a coordinated offensive. [redacted]

[redacted] Pact doctrine [redacted] indicate that the establishment of a communications and control structure would precede the mobilization and movement of Pact forces [redacted]

Estimates, however, are possible as to the time required for the completion of certain key actions. For example, once Pact forces were alerted:

- All 27 Soviet divisions in Central Europe and the six East German divisions probably could move from their garrisons to their areas of concentration in about 24 hours.
- The seven Czechoslovak divisions in western Czechoslovakia, currently manned at about 75 percent of wartime strength, could be filled out with reservists and moved to their attack locations in about two days.
- The 10 Polish divisions in the Pomeranian and Silesian Military Districts could be filled out and moved into northern East Germany in three or four days. These divisions are currently manned at about 80 percent of wartime strength. The Polish airborne and sea-landing divisions could be available within 24 hours but would require Soviet transportation.
- The remaining six Czechoslovak and Polish low-strength divisions could be filled out and ready to move in about three days.
- The 28 Soviet divisions in the western USSR could be expanded to their wartime manning levels and be ready to move in one to three days. [redacted]

Pact exercises and classified documents indicate that the Soviets expect a front comprising as many as three armies to be able to move from the western USSR into West Germany in as little as four days, once units are mobilized. The underlying assumption

of these projected movements is that the Pact would already be at war and that the early availability of reinforcements could be critical. How realistic these transit times are is not known. They apparently are based on norms which are derived from field training exercises involving long road marches by large armored and mechanized formations, and take account of the possible effects of hostile interdiction.

Probable Organization for Initial Operations

If given time, the Pact would probably organize its forces in Central Europe into three fronts for initial operations. The composition and internal organization of the forces in each of the fronts could vary, depending primarily on the time available for subordinate units to mobilize and move into position. (Maps on page 25 depict the location of Warsaw Pact forces in peacetime and their probable dispositions 48 and 96 hours after mobilization begins.) The zones of responsibility for each of the fronts, however, would generally remain unchanged.

-- Central Front. This front would be the largest in terms of forces and would be expected to carry out the main effort. It could be made up of as many as 28 divisions, including most of the Soviet forces in East Germany and Poland, and three or possibly all six of East Germany's ground force divisions. It would have the task of destroying NATO forces in West Germany roughly between Hannover in the north and Mannheim in the south. It could engage forces from as many as six of NATO's eight corps areas.

-- Northern Front. Pact forces here would be responsible for engaging NATO forces in Denmark as well as in the areas of the two northernmost corps of the NATO Center Region. Exercises indicate that this front would be manned primarily by Polish forces, but East German and Soviet units in northern East Germany would be expected to carry out the mission until Polish forces arrived. The front probably would include some 15 to 20 divisions.

- Southwestern Front. The majority of the forces comprising this front would be Czechoslovak, but they would include the five divisions in the CGF in Czechoslovakia. This front, with some 15 divisions overall, would have the responsibility of advancing as far as the Rhine in an area roughly between Mannheim and the Swiss border.

Considerations in Planning Surprise Attack

There is no direct evidence of a Soviet or Warsaw Pact contingency plan for launching an unprovoked attack against NATO. Soviet planning for the possible uses of Pact theater forces, insofar as such planning is reflected in available evidence, generally assumes a period of telltale military, and possibly economic and diplomatic, activities prior to hostilities.

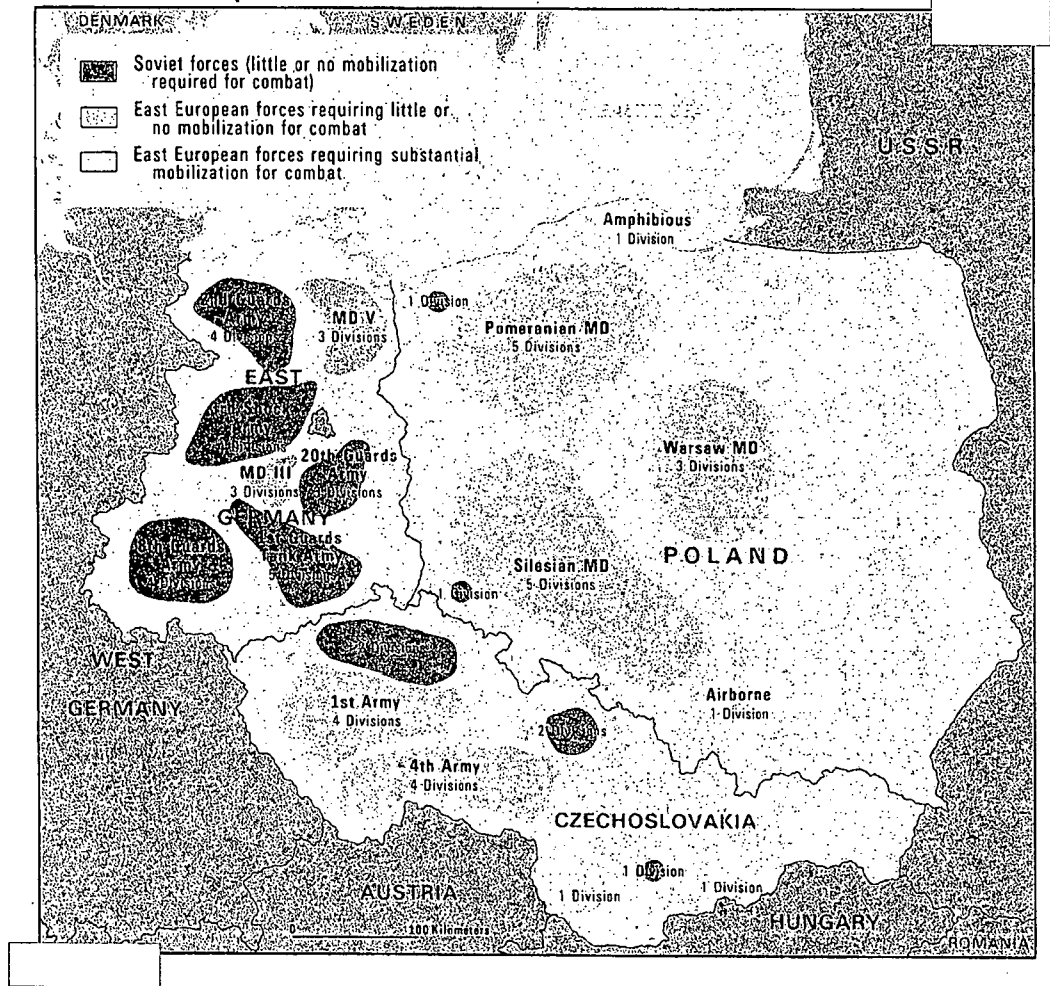
Once the Soviets decided to attack NATO, they could be expected to strive for surprise by attempting to mislead NATO as to their intent as well as to the timing, scope, and area of planned operations. The Soviets view surprise as a key element of success in military ventures and would attempt to use it at all levels in a conflict. What is not clear is how the Soviets would structure an attack so as to strike a balance between the degree of surprise desired and the size of the force that could be initially committed without tipping off the enemy.

Forces To Be Employed

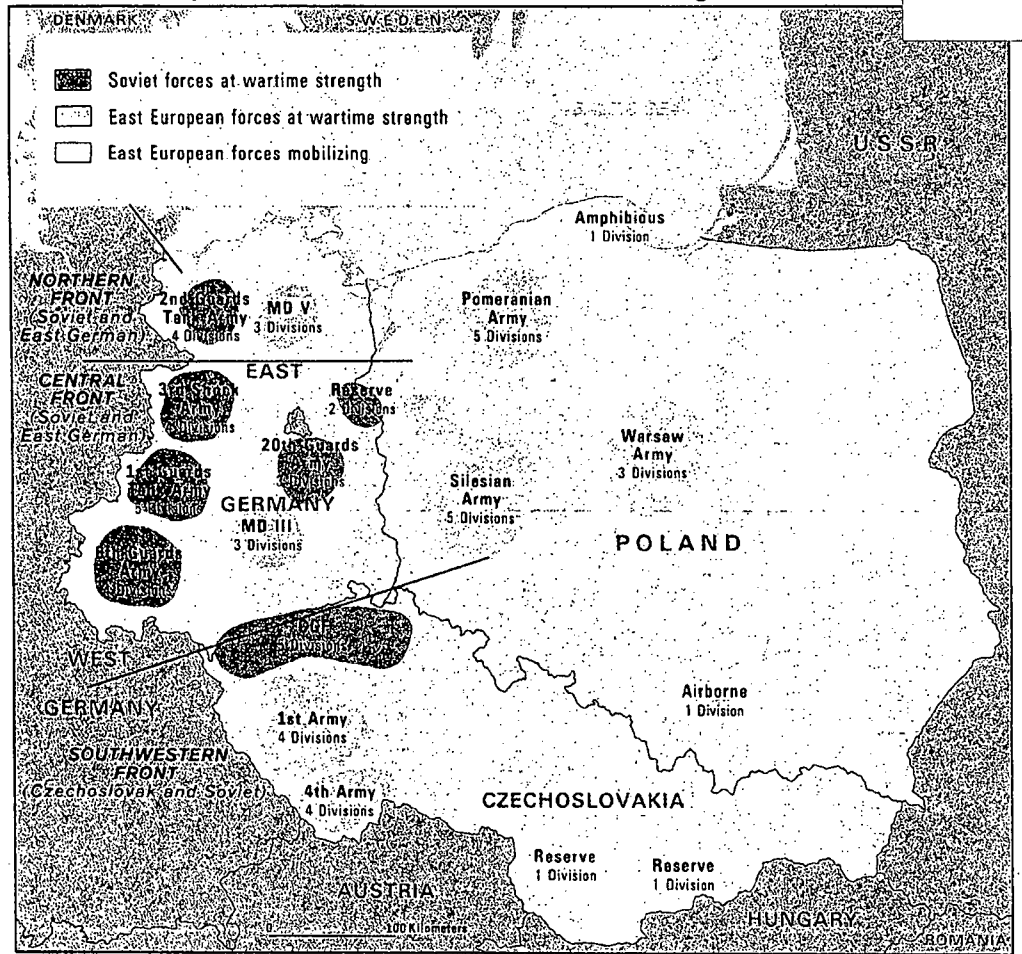
The attainability of surprise would depend largely on the types of forces employed. Pact forces capable of engaging in operations with a minimum of detectable preparations would include tactical air units normally deployed within range of NATO targets and the USSR's land-based strategic missile and bomber forces. These forces are generally maintained at or near wartime levels of personnel and equipment and probably could be readied for an attack within hours.

WARSAW PACT GROUND FORCES

Peacetime Disposition

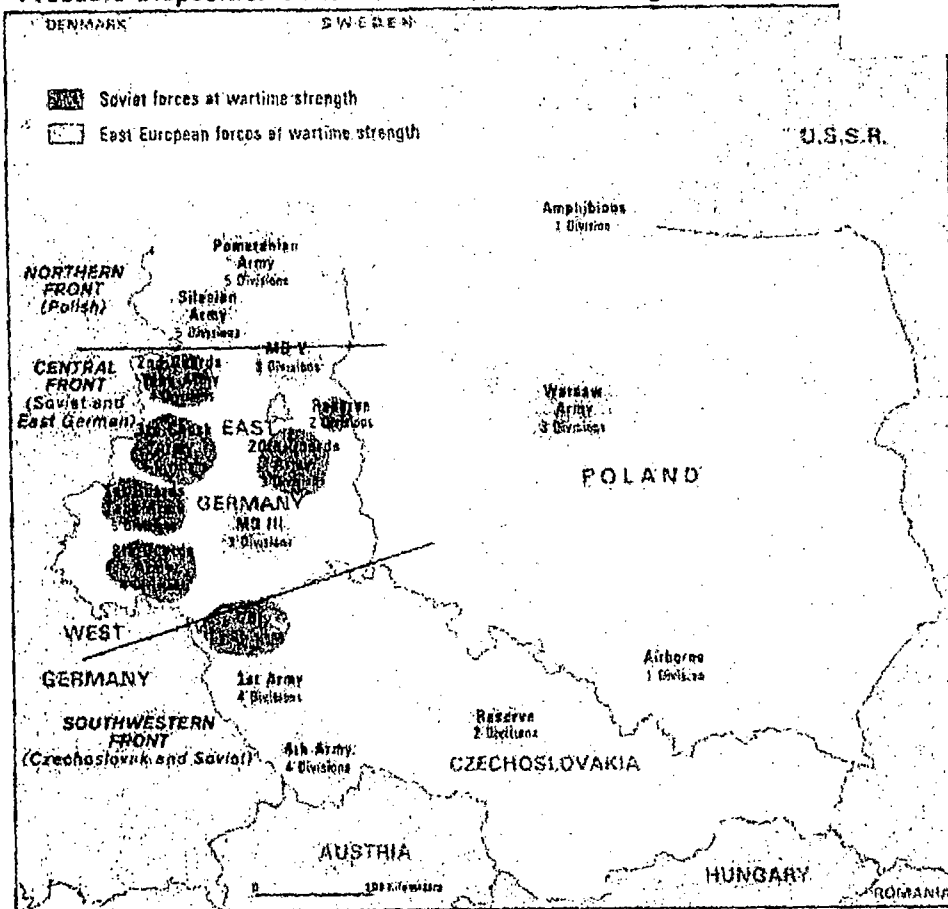


Probable Disposition 48 Hours After Mobilization Begins



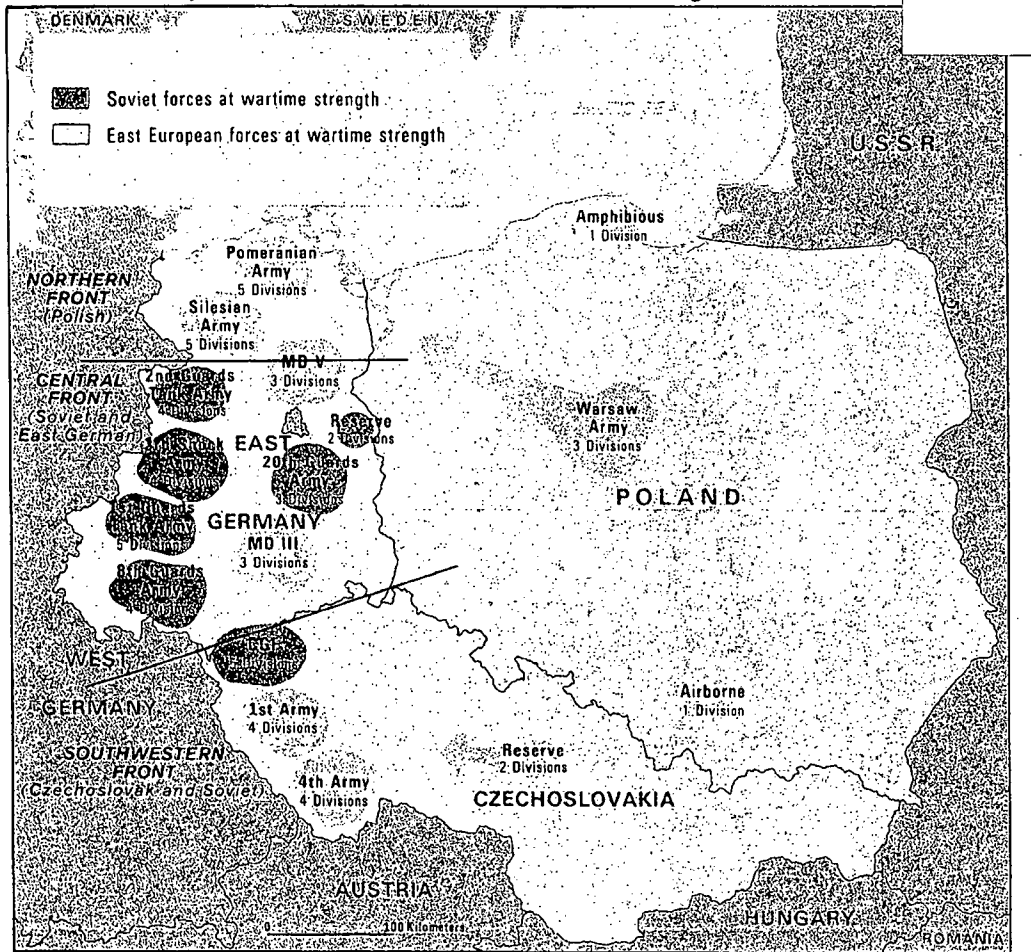
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Probable Disposition 96 Hours After Mobilization Begins



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Probable Disposition 96 Hours After Mobilization Begins



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The Pact's ground forces most able to attack with minimal preparation are the Soviet and East German units in East Germany. These are the only Pact ground forces deployed within 200 km of a NATO border that would require the least increase in personnel before being committed. These forces could probably be in position for an attack in about 24 hours, but it is not known whether the communications the Soviets would consider essential for such an attack could be established within that time. Assembling a larger force for purposes of expanding the attack to include NATO forces opposite Czechoslovakia or of ensuring the early availability of reserves would require several days of mobilization and movement and would considerably lessen the chance of surprise.

East European Cooperation. A Soviet decision to have East European countries participate in a surprise attack would probably be based on considerations additional to the readiness posture of the East European forces. The Soviets would have to persuade the leaders of those countries that the venture was worth the undertaking. This would be especially difficult in the absence of an imminent or clearly perceptible threat to survival. The Soviets would also have to be certain that none of their partners would divulge their scheme; it is questionable that they could be certain of this.

Alternatives for the Soviets would be to withhold notice to their allies until the last moment, or to present them with a fait accompli. The Soviets would then have to hope that the East Europeans would prepare their forces in time to join in if initial operations went well, or to defend against a NATO reaction if not

The Problem of Escalation

In devising their plan and calculating its chances for success, the Soviets would be confronted with the problem of escalation. They would probably consider it highly likely that NATO, faced with the defeat of its conventional forces, would make a precipitate nuclear response even if the Pact refrained from using nuclear weapons to support its assault. The possibility of seizing important objectives before NATO could pull itself together to authorize the use

of nuclear weapons would have to be weighed against the possibility that a sudden penetration of NATO territory by Pact forces would expedite the release process.

In deciding how to limit NATO's ability to escalate, the Soviets would have to consider whether conventional weapons could do the job. Because the Pact's strategic and tactical air forces would be the principal means of carrying out non-nuclear strikes against NATO's theater nuclear forces, the Soviets might question the potential effectiveness of such strikes against NATO's nuclear-capable aircraft, most of which are in concrete shelters. With surprise as an objective, they would also have to assess whether Pact aircraft already in Central Europe could carry out such strikes without prior reinforcement from the USSR. Such an assessment would depend on whether non-Soviet air units would participate and on what the expected attrition rate would be. The attrition rate would in turn hinge largely on the alert or reaction times of NATO air defenses.

An important final consideration would be the readiness of Soviet military commanders to launch an offensive without extensive preparations. The Soviet military traditionally have been extremely conservative in their approach to military planning. In view of the uncertainty of the NATO response, the Soviets would probably prefer that forces other than those initiating the attack be alerted, mobilized, and dispersed to cope with the possible consequences of rapid escalation and to ensure the availability of follow-on forces to exploit or support initial operations.

Appendix A

Earlier US Views of Pact Concepts
For Offensive Operations in Central Europe

US intelligence estimates since the early sixties have recognized that the Warsaw Pact could launch an offensive in Central Europe without prior reinforcement from the USSR. The judgment, however, was that such an operation would be intended to achieve surprise and that its objectives would be limited. It was believed that such an operation would be inconsistent with Soviet military concepts, which were viewed as emphasizing the concentration of a considerably larger force if circumstances permitted. This emphasis was reflected in military writings in the early sixties, notably the special series of the classified journal *Military Thought*, [redacted]

This view was reinforced in the mid-sixties when evidence began to accrue that the Soviets based their planning on the assumption that hostilities would probably be preceded by a period of tension. The Soviets, it was thought, intended to avail themselves of this warning time by bringing additional forces into the theater. [redacted]

Prior Buildup. In view of all this, a key tenet of planning for meeting the US commitment to NATO came to be that the Pact would attempt to assemble a force of some 85 to 90 divisions in Central Europe before launching an offensive. Some 25 to 30 of these divisions would come from the three westernmost military districts of the USSR. The tactical air armies in these districts, it was assumed, would operate in direct support of the ground armies coming forward. It was also judged that a massive effort would concurrently be made to move additional logistic supplies into the theater. The buildup of this force of some 85 to 90 divisions, including all of the preparations the Pact would make prior to attacking, was seen as taking up to 30 days. [redacted]

Five-Front Concept.

there has been a belief that the Pact would organize these forces into five fronts: Pact forces already in Central Europe would be organized into three fronts--one in western Czechoslovakia and one each in central and northern East Germany--while two fronts comprising forces from the Baltic, Belorussian, and Carpathian Military Districts would take up positions in western Poland and eastern Czechoslovakia.

The three fronts immediately opposite NATO were seen as constituting a first strategic echelon.* Its mission was presumed to be to carry the war deep into West Germany, whereupon the forces in the two remaining, or second-echelon, fronts would relieve them and complete the campaign to the North Sea and the borders of France.

Nuclear Considerations. The Soviets emphasized prior buildup not as a response to the threat posed by NATO's ground forces, but as a way to replace heavy losses from nuclear strikes in the early stages of a war. Soviet planners and military analysts assumed in the early sixties that a war with NATO would involve massive nuclear exchanges from the outset. The belief that, as a consequence, such a war would be decided in the very early stages led Soviet military strategists such as Col. V. V. Larionov to advocate a "concealed, advance buildup" of forces from the USSR as the "chief and most advisable way" of seizing and maintaining the strategic initiative from the onset of hostilities.

The alternative, as expressed by some of Larionov's colleagues, might be to suffer the loss or delay of these forces before they could be used. They argued

* "Echelon" has a special meaning in the Soviet view of military operations. Soviet doctrine envisions groupings of troops deployed behind the front line or first-echelon units, and not engaged in combat. These troops constitute a second echelon, which would be committed only after the first-echelon forces had substantially engaged the enemy. To some extent, the second echelon can be viewed as a reserve, but it is primarily a maneuvering force, often with predetermined objectives. The Soviet concept of echelons is applicable at all levels, including army, front, and even theater.

that these forces, even if not targeted directly, would encounter nuclear-created obstacles that would delay their advance or seriously diminish their effectiveness through exposure to debilitating levels of radiation. [redacted]

One event on which Soviet planners based their appreciation of the threat nuclear weapons posed to the reinforcement process was the NATO exercise Fallex-60. In a classified Soviet assessment of the exercise, Fallex was characterized as a demonstration of NATO's basic strategy--the delivery of coordinated nuclear strikes throughout the theater at the very outset of hostilities. The assessment, which was published in mid-1961, noted that the strikes in the exercise were intended both to destroy Pact forces immediately opposite NATO and to interdict advancing reinforcements by targeting them directly or by creating barriers to their advance with strikes aimed at transportation facilities, mountains, and forests. [redacted]

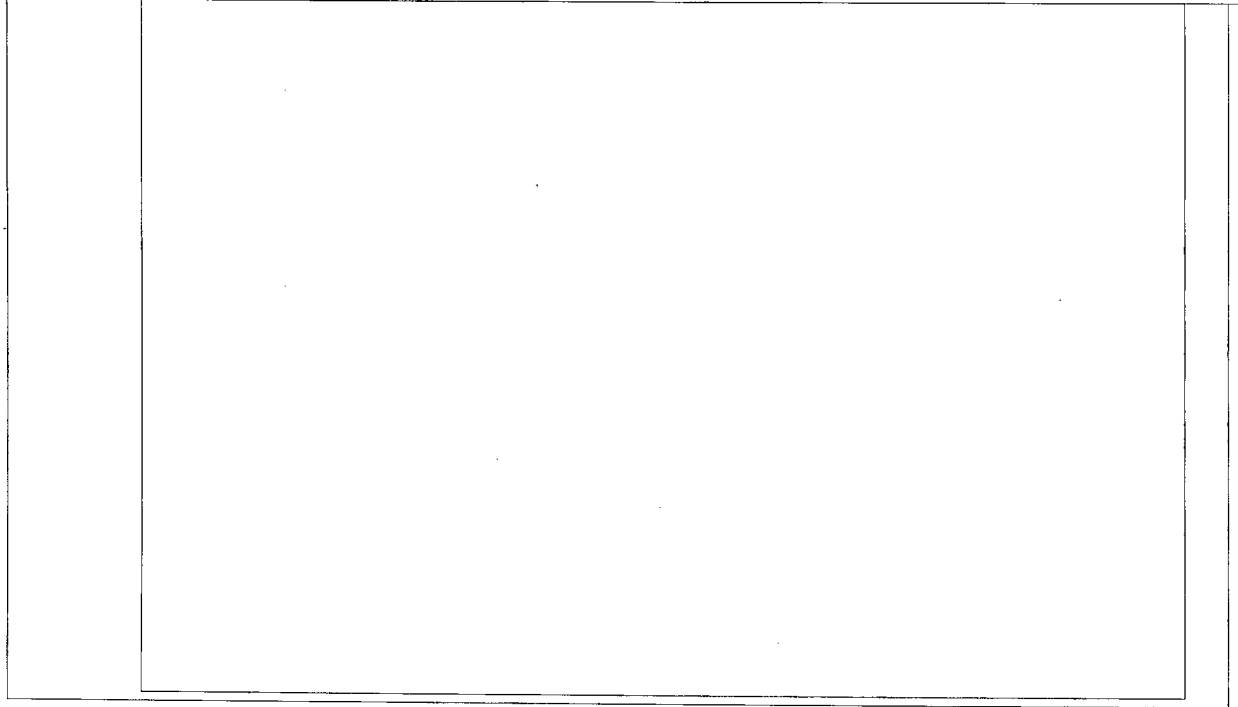
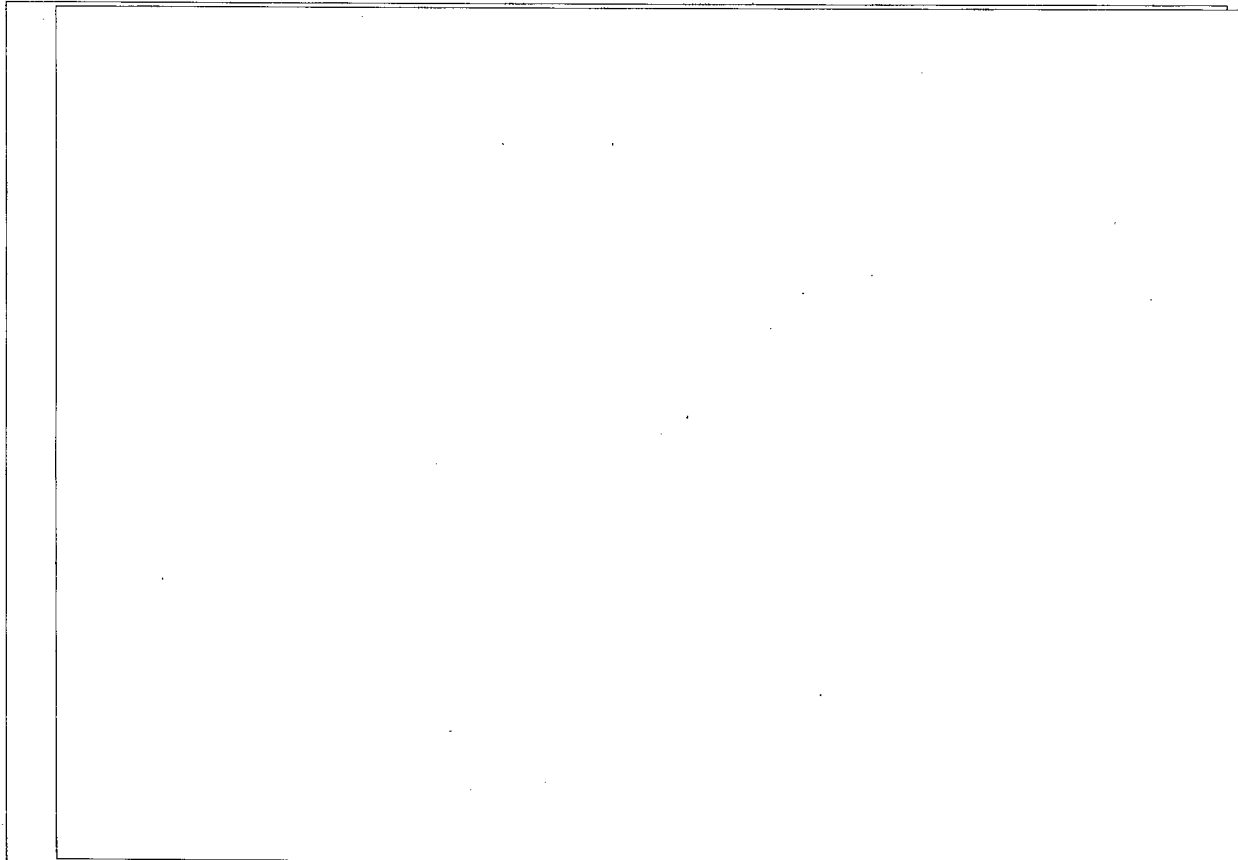
The Soviets' assessment of Fallex-60 makes it clear that their emphasis on reinforcement before hostilities was not driven by any perception that the balance of ground forces in Central Europe was unfavorable to them. The assessment both characterized NATO's nuclear strategy as an attempt to compensate for deficiencies in the alliance's ground forces and noted that the number of NATO divisions in the exercise and the manner in which they were deployed provided force densities inadequate for successful defense. [redacted]

October 1961 Exercise. Pact exercises in the early sixties also demonstrated a Soviet intent to reinforce before hostilities. According to the Soviet General Staff's training program for 1961, for example, exercises held that year were designed to test the feasibility of moving "forces from several military districts of the Soviet Union into those areas in which they may take up positions before the beginning of war." [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

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[Redacted]

Appendix B

Nature of the Evidence

The view presented in this paper of how the Warsaw Pact would organize for and prosecute a war in Central Europe is based largely on an analysis of [redacted]

[redacted] evidence

[redacted] from military sources, it relates to operational rather than political considerations governing the use of military forces. In recent years both the availability of such evidence and its quality in terms of authoritativeness, scope, and detail have increased significantly. [redacted]

[Large redacted area]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] a number of important questions regarding Pact military planning remain. One of these--and this is a problem that apparently has yet to be resolved within the Pact itself--concerns arrangements for the wartime command and control of multinational operations. In recent years the Warsaw Pact headquarters has grown and more senior East European officers have been assigned to it. The wartime function of this headquarters, however, is still unknown. It is generally assumed that the Soviet General Staff would control both Soviet and East European forces in the event of war

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

APPENDIX C

Scenarios for Six Recent Pact Exercises

VESNA-1969

This exercise was the first major test of the adequacy of the Pact's military communications systems and procedures for support of multinational operations.

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

4

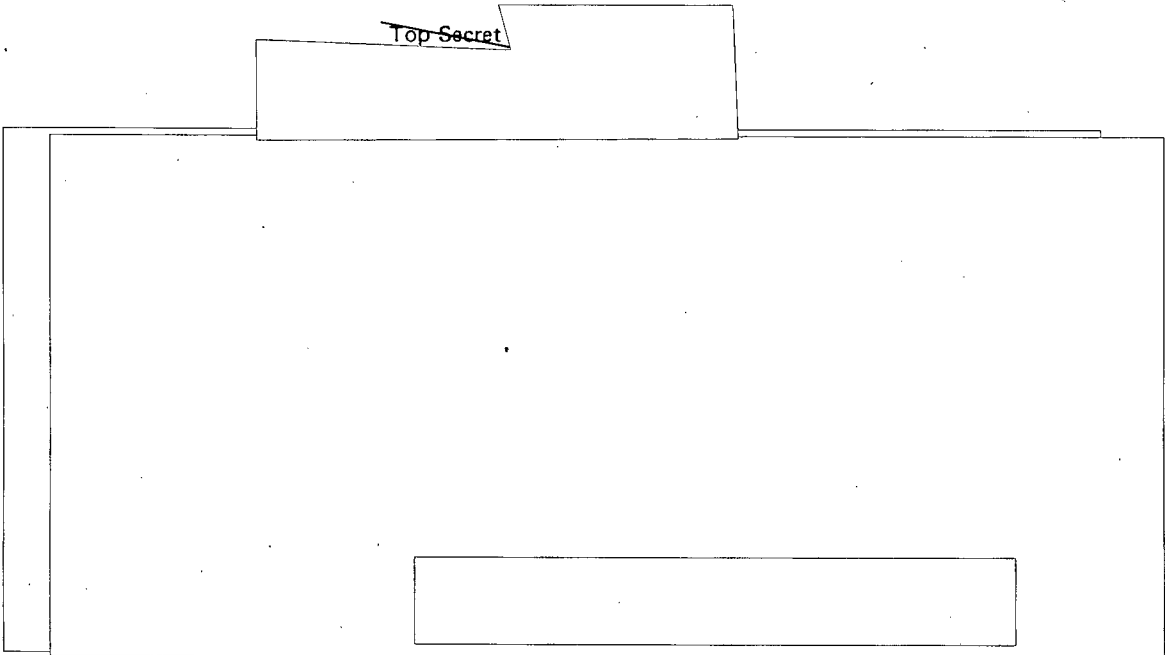
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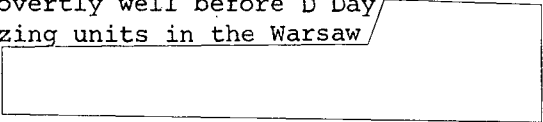


LATO-1971

The purpose of this CPX-FTX was to test the functioning of the Polish mobilization and command and control systems under conditions described as the "most difficult variant" for the outbreak of war--massive nuclear exchanges at the outset.



The Poles began taking measures to improve the readiness of their forces covertly well before D Day but were still in the process of mobilizing units in the Warsaw Military District when the war started.



Scenario Events

- | | |
|--------------|---|
| March | East-West relations deteriorate because of events in the Middle East and Southeast Asia. |
| | Late in the month the West decides to launch a preemptive nuclear attack against the Warsaw Pact. |
| April - June | West resorts to pressures to extract concessions from the Pact; claims Pact is a threat to world peace. |



[redacted]

East takes steps to strengthen its defensive posture; arrives at decision to preempt if NATO prepares to unleash a nuclear attack.

8 June West secretly institutes state of full readiness for its forces, especially nuclear delivery forces, and conducts a series of air defense exercises.

14 June Poles order state of increased readiness for their forces.

14-19 June Poles revise operations plans.

[redacted]

Covert mobilization begins in Warsaw Military District.

[redacted]

19 June [redacted] West institutes civil defense alerts.

[redacted] US Joint Chiefs of Staff ready strategic forces to launch massive nuclear attack.

[redacted] State of immediate threat to Poland declared; general mobilization ordered.

[redacted] West launches nuclear strikes against the Pact in Central Europe; East launches nuclear strikes simultaneously.

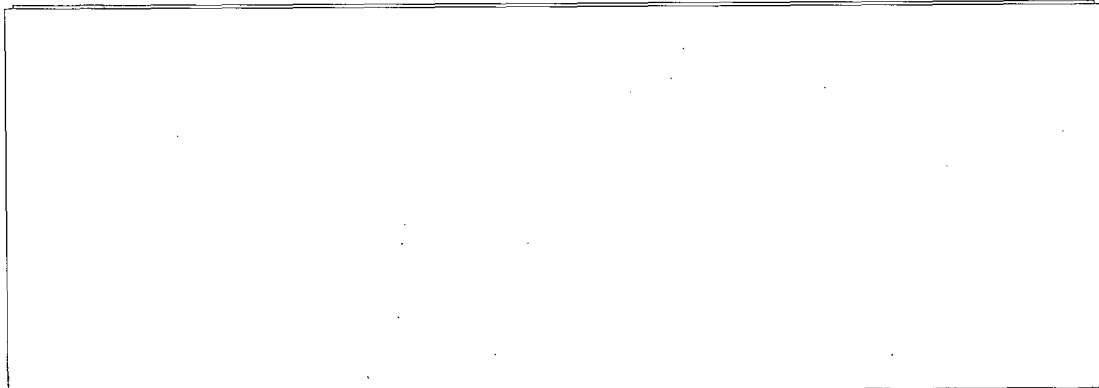
20 June [redacted] Forces of the Belorussian front cross into Poland.

25 June Belorussian forces are committed to combat in West Germany; additional Soviet armies begin crossing Polish-Soviet border.

[redacted]

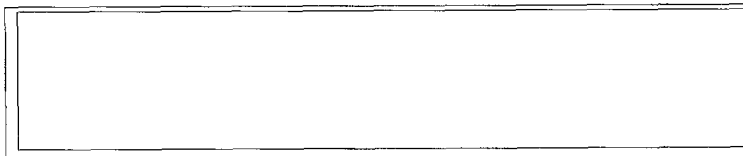
[redacted]

April 1973 CPX



Scenario Events

11 April. NATO completes preparations for hostilities. The preparations, which had been under way for an unspecified period, were monitored by the Warsaw Pact.



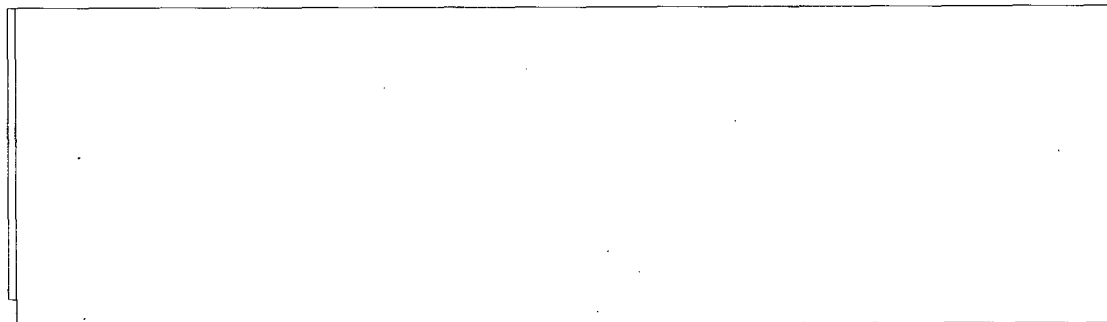
NATO forces move into attack positions.

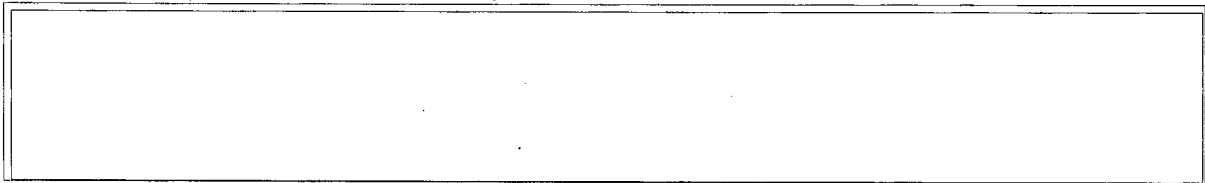
12 April. NATO attacks; the Pact contains the attack and launches a counteroffensive within an hour.

15 April. Three Soviet armies from the Carpathian MD enter combat in West Germany.



May 1973 CPX



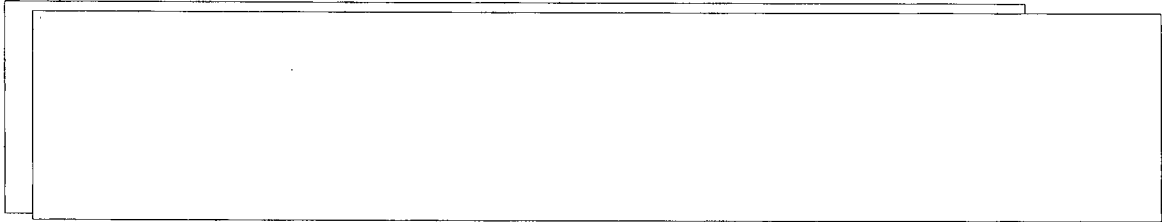


Scenario Events

7 May Soviet antisubmarine warfare forces deploy.

10 May NATO submarines and aircraft carriers deploy.

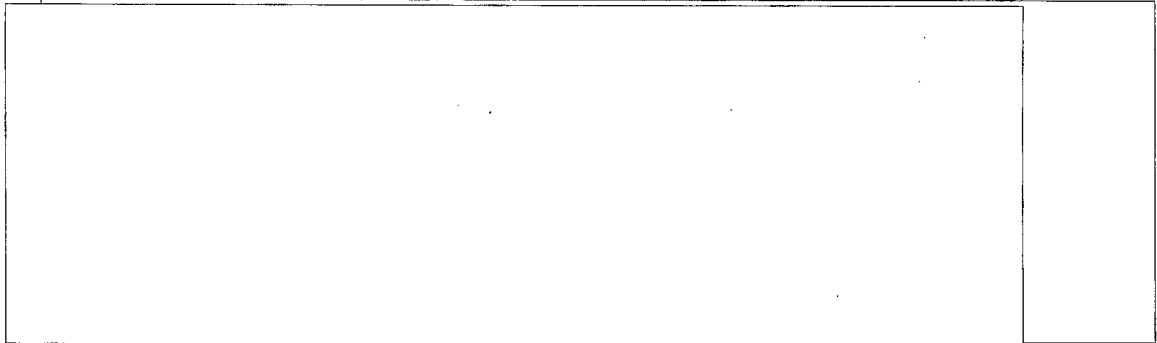
15 May Soviets conduct aerial reconnaissance over open oceans.



20 May Reconnaissance and sabotage teams subordinate to the Main Intelligence Directorate of the Soviet General Staff begin operations in NATO countries.



23 May NATO forces in West Germany mobilize; reinforcements arrive from the continental US.



24 May US air forces deploy to West Germany from the UK.



Soviets redeploy bombers within the USSR.



25 May Additional British reinforcements arrive from the UK.

[redacted] NATO declares full state of alert.

26 May Soviets anticipate NATO attack; instead, China attacks.

28 May NATO attacks Pact forces in East Germany.

February 1974 CPX

Scenario Events

1 February Soviets step up reconnaissance activities against NATO and in the Far East.

6 February China attacks USSR in Far East and possibly in Central Asia.

8 February NATO sends submarines into the Baltic Sea.

[Redacted]

9-10 February Soviet headquarters staffs review contingency plans for war in Europe.

11 February [Redacted] A state of increased readiness is ordered for Pact forces.

[Redacted] NATO increases communications security.

[Redacted]

12 February [Redacted] NATO forces in Germany begin deploying. During afternoon Pact forces in East Germany begin moving toward West German border.

[Redacted] NATO mobilizes additional reserves; reinforcements arrive from CONUS.

[Redacted] NATO saboteurs are active in East Germany.

12-13 February Late on 12th or early on 13th, NATO forces in Turkey invade Bulgaria and southern USSR.

13 February [Redacted] Pact initiates massive air and artillery strikes against NATO in Central Europe; NATO responds in kind within minutes.

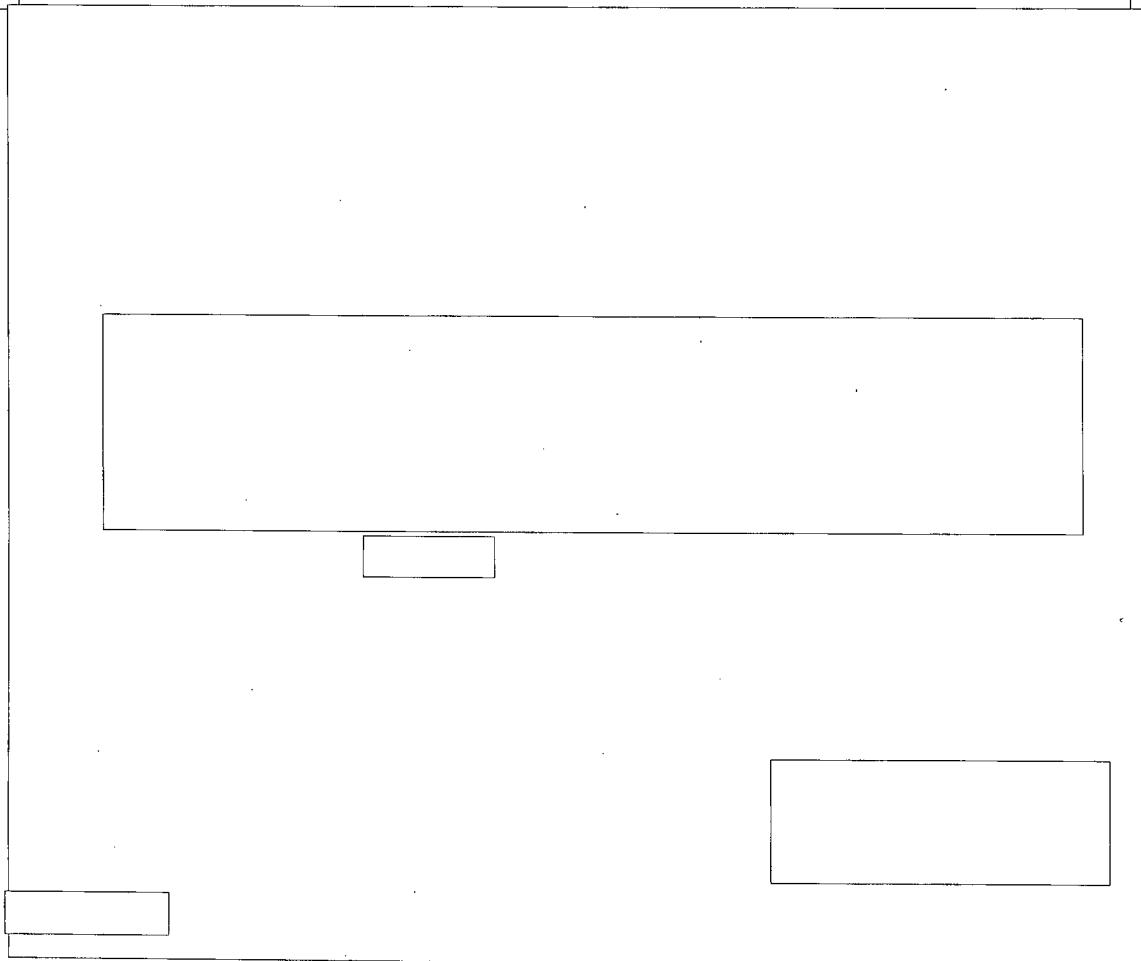
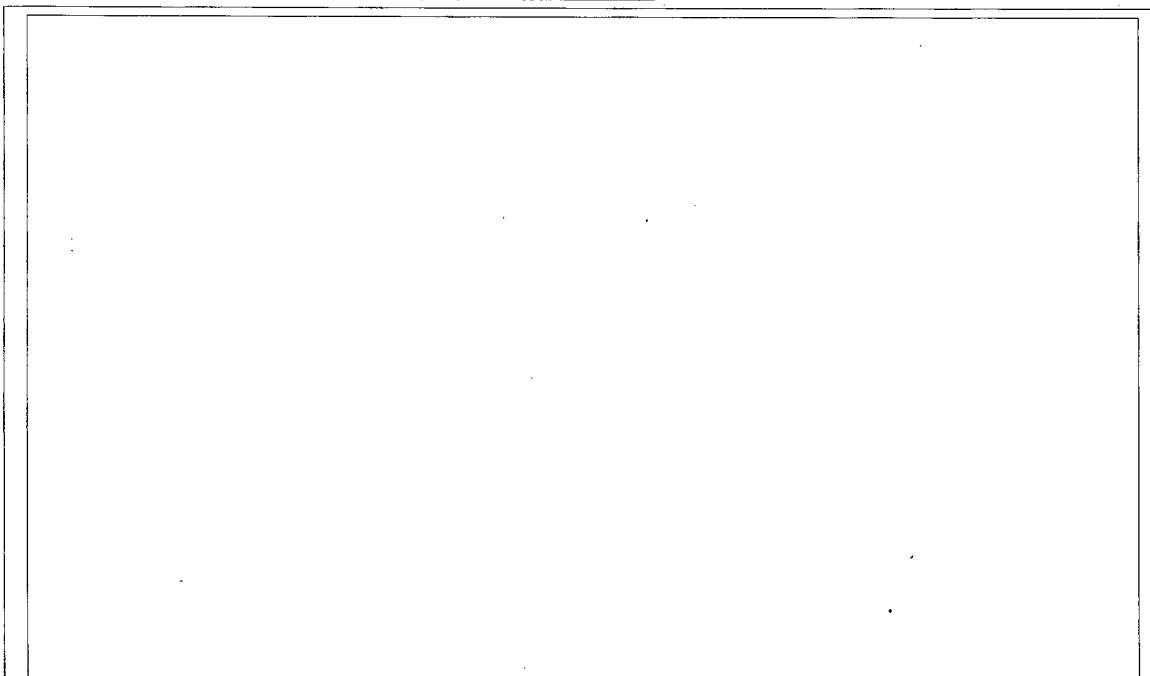
[Redacted] Soviet ground armies invade West Germany.

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

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February 1975 CPX



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