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26 June 1951

STATE, JCS, OSD reviews completed

**NIE-34: SPAIN'S POTENTIALITIES IN WESTERN DEFENSE**

It is considered that the following facts and views should be reflected in subject estimate:

Geographic Potentialities

1. The Iberian Peninsula, including Spain and Portugal and their island possessions--the Azores, the Canaries, and the Balearic--could function in Western defense as a major base area, supporting and supplementing the UK and North African base areas. At the apex of the European Continent, the Peninsula is one of the crossroads of the world airways, the Western maritime gateway to the Orient at the Strait of Gibraltar, and guardpost of the sea approaches to Europe from the Western Hemisphere and of the sea lanes for movement of commerce between Europe and West and South Africa.
2. From the standpoint of US security interests alone, the employment of Spain as a major base area would provide the US Navy with a secure position on the European Continent.
3. In a war against Soviet aggression, the Iberian Peninsula could be employed as a principal base area for the conduct of strategic and tactical air operations; for the conduct of naval operations related to logistic support, anti-submarine warfare, and over-water movement of forces; for build-up, staging and training of ground and air forces from the Western Hemisphere; and as an evacuation area, a depot, supply, and naval repair area for ground, naval and air forces.
4. Because of its location, the Iberian Peninsula could be effectively employed as a control point for the international movement of strategic materials and armaments by sea and by air, and for intercepting enemy agents moving through that area.

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5. The Iberian Peninsula could be developed into a fairly secure base area. It has terrain features which offer strong defensive capabilities, and its geographic location and shape make it possible for the Western Allies to employ to the maximum advantage their superior capabilities in naval and air forces, and thereby make use of the Peninsula while denying it to the Soviets.

Possible Military Contributions: Bases.

6. Spain could contribute to Western defense its air facilities system which is now in existence and available. This system, including the Balearic and Canary Islands, comprises 53 airfields and 8 seaplane stations. Two airfields are particularly valuable, Madrid/Barajas and Valencia-Manises, because they are capable right now of supporting sustained heavy bomber, medium bomber and jet light bomber operations. Four other airfields are capable of supporting limited heavy bomber and medium bomber operations: Barcelona/Muntadas, Cartagena/San Javier, Salamanca/Matagan, and Sevilla/San Pablo. Four airfields now under construction, and eleven natural surface fields, are potential sites for both medium bomber and jet fighter bases.

7. Spain could also contribute its three major naval bases located at El Ferrol (north coast), Cartagena (Mediterranean coast), and Cadix (Atlantic coast). Shipyards and good base facilities are located at these three points. If expanded and improved, these three major bases could furnish important logistical aid to Western fleets operating in the Mediterranean and Eastern Atlantic. In addition, new naval bases could be constructed at some of Spain's ports and harbors, if required to support operations of Western fleets.

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8. Also important to the West are four strategically located Spanish airplane bases, which could be employed for antisubmarine operations: Pollensa Bay in the Balearic Islands, San Javier in the Mar Menor near Cartagena, the Presidio of Melilla on the Spanish Moroccan coast, and at Gando in the Canary Islands. By use of these bases, long-range ASW airplanes, properly equipped electronically, could effectively patrol the western end of the Mediterranean and its Atlantic approaches against hostile submarines.

9. The Spanish Army could contribute a number of supply bases in Peninsular Spain, Spanish Morocco, the Balearic and the Canary Islands. All principal bases on the Peninsula are located on major lines of communication, but some of them would be more accessible to the US through the Portuguese ports of Oporto and Lisbon. The facilities at most of these bases would require improvement and expansion for employment in large-scale Western defense operations.

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Possible Military Contributions: Ground Forces

10. From the Spanish Army, consisting of 335,000 men, Spain could readily contribute 10 infantry divisions and one armored division for operations outside Spain. When the T/S's are augmented by the necessary US materiel, the infantry divisions could be trained with the new weapons and achieve combat readiness in three months, and one armored division in six months. The over-all morale of the Spanish Army is regarded as satisfactory, and personnel are generally physically fit.

11. Spain has about two million men who have had military training or combat experience, and it is estimated that within W/30 days she could mobilize 19 divisions comprising 600,000 men, and within W/180 days, 30 divisions with 1,000,000 men.

12. The Spanish Army could be strengthened by the development of heavy artillery, antitank and antiaircraft units with modern equipment and corresponding ammunition. Additional equipment that could be employed to advantage includes: signal and engineer equipment, motor carriers, tanks, and other combat vehicles.

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Possible Military Contributions: Naval Forces

13. Spain could contribute to Western defense a small naval force consisting of 1 heavy cruiser, 4 light cruisers, 15, destroyers (12 additional under construction or authorized), 3 submarines (2 additional building), 8 patrol craft, 6 minelayers, and 7 minesweepers. The morale is excellent and officers and men (23,500 including 5,000 marines) are competent in the operation of the equipment which the Spanish Navy possesses.

14. The efficiency of the Spanish Navy in modern war operations could be increased by installing modern equipment on its ships and shore establishments: radar, sonar, antiaircraft weapons, and communication equipment.

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Possible Military Contribution: Air Forces

15. Besides air bases and air depots, Spain's principal contribution to Western air defense would be the personnel of its Air Force, totalling 35,234 officers and men, including some 750 qualified pilots. Some of this personnel could be trained in modern aircraft.

16. With regard to combat air units, Spain would be unable at present to make a significant contribution because practically all of its 994 military aircraft are of World War II and other obsolete types.

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Possible Logistic Contributions:

17. In order to determine the specific economic problems involved in developing the potentialities of the Iberian Peninsula to offer logistic support for a major base area, it would be necessary to make an economic survey of Spain similar to the surveys made by the Economic Cooperation Administration in countries receiving Marshall Plan aid.

18. To obtain the maximum logistic contributions from Spain's own resources, the Spanish economy will need strengthening in its basic sectors in which it is presently deficient.

19. With appropriate development and integration of its economy with other European economies, Spain could make significant contributions to logistical support in the following sectors: hydroelectric power, base construction materials, textiles, coastal shipping, shipbuilding facilities, bunkering facilities and ships' stores, petroleum refining, steel, cork, foodstuffs, and the following minerals: coal, iron ore, iron pyrites, wolfram, mercury, zinc, copper, lead, and potash.

20. Spain possesses moderate munitions and small aircraft industries that could be expanded for employment in Western defense.

21. The Spanish telecommunications system would be a valuable asset in base area and general Western defense operations.

22. The Spanish land transport system, including highways and railroads, would require substantial reconstruction and reequipment in order to utilize its maximum potentialities. Some of these requirements could be obviated by selecting defense base sites that can be supplied by sea or by short haul from

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23. The Spanish labor force, some of it with mechanical skills, could be employed to advantage in the development of the Iberian Peninsula as a major base area for Western defense.

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Political Factors Involved in Negotiating for Spain's Contributions  
to Western Defense

1. The Franco Administration is in effective control of the Spanish nation.
2. We believe that, with the continued support of the preponderant instruments of power within Spain — the Army, the Catholic Church, and the leading commercial and industrial enterprises—the Franco Administration or its successor will continue in effective control of the Spanish nation for an indefinite number of years.
3. The Franco Administration, because of the effective control it exercises over the Spanish nation, is in position to carry out whatever commitments it may make, within its capabilities, in collective Western defense.
4. The Franco Administration is desirous of becoming allied with the US and other Western nations in the conflict between the Western Allies and the Soviet Union.
5. Current unfavorable conditions in some sectors of the Spanish economy, as well as the lack of modern equipment in Spain's armed forces, place the US in an advantageous position in negotiating with the Franco Administration for Spain's contributions to Western defense.

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The entry of US economic and military elements into Spain will provide a means and a channel for exerting US influence in the formulation and implementation of policy by the Franco Administration.

We believe that any Soviet or Communist propaganda consequent upon Spain's inclusion in Western defense will have no significant effect in interfering with US objectives.

The inclusion of Spain in Western defense arrangements will be a gain in the movement toward the political, economic, and military unification of Europe as a bulwark against Soviet expansion.

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Trend toward the Inclusion of Spain in Western Defense Preparations

During the past 6 years Spanish relations with the NATO powers have improved considerably, particularly in commerce and diplomacy. The revocation of the UN ban on dispatch of high diplomatic representatives and the approval of Spain's inclusion in certain specialized UN agencies have been among the most recent steps taken to further this favorable trend. This trend toward improved relations in the political and economic fields has been a cumulative one and may be logically expected to broaden into the field of Western defense association. Realization of the potentialities of Soviet aggression, and the disposition of Western European Governments, particularly France and Italy, to control or eliminate the internal Communist menace in these areas, are additional contributory factors in even closer Spanish-NATO collaboration in the field of a unified Western defense.

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