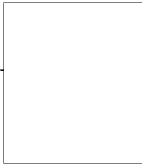


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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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INFORMATION REPORT

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Characteristics of the Bulgarian Black Sea Coast

- The western coast of the Black Sea is slightly irregular and forms several gulfs with low water depth. The coast differs both as to outline and as to vegetation.

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- 2 -

50X1-HUM

From the Rumanian-Bulgarian frontier to Cape Kaliakra (N 43-21, E 28-28) it is low and swampy with grassy, swamp-type vegetation, and with many lakes. The coast line offers long sandy beaches which often terminate to the interior in sand dunes, after which come grass lands. This portion of the coast presents a natural defense since a landing operation here by a theoretical enemy would be very difficult since heavy war materiel could not be used.

5. From Cape Kaliakra to the Gulf of Batovo, the coast is high and steep, and is formed by the rim of the Dobrudzha plateau. From Kaliakra to Kavarna (N 43-25, E 28-21) the coast is rocky with small sandy beaches, while between Kavarna and Batovo, in some places, there are woods and thickets. The coast of the Gulf of Batovo is wooded and to the north lies Batovo Lake, which is five kilometers wide. During Spring and Fall, after rains, the whole coastline of the Gulf of Batovo is transformed into a lake. The southern coast of the gulf is not planted and forms an immense beach. This portion is considered to be vulnerable and is thus very strongly fortified.
6. From Ekrene (N 43-21, E 28-03; now Kranevo) to Varna the coast is low, but immediately beyond are the slopes of the Varna plateau which are covered with woods. This section of the coast is formed by a continuous sandy beach some sections of which are known as Zlatnite Pesutsi (Golden Sands), Sveti Anton (Saint Anthony), and Sveti Konstantin (Saint Constantine).
7. In the Gulf of Varna there are small and large sandy beaches among which are "Asparukhovo Plazh," three kilometers in length, where bathing resorts are located, "Ofiterski Plazh," "Tsarski Plazh" (Royal Beach), and so forth.
8. From Cape Galata to the mouth of the Kamchiya River, the coast is steep and is formed by hills and by the slopes of the Stara Planina. This portion of the coast is wooded or covered with thickets and includes several smaller beaches; the main ones are Chatal Dere, Ada Bakhacha, and Pasha Dere.
9. The coast in the vicinity of the mouth of the Kamchiya River is low and is covered by semi-tropical vegetation; the coast line here is known as "Longosa" and is nearly inaccessible by sea (entry to the coast is had by means of small boats which travel over those areas where the current is light and the river is over 100 meters wide and not more than 1.5 meters deep).

Guarding of the Black Sea Coast in Peacetime

10. Guarding of the Black Sea coast is entrusted to the Black Sea frontier troops (Chernomorski Granichni voyski), to units of the permanent coastal defense (Postoyana Morska Otbrana), and to naval units (Voenna-Morski Flotski Sili).
11. The organization of the coastal defense troops (morski granichni voyski) is somewhat different than that of the land forces. Along the whole coastal area these troops are assigned to commands (komandaturi), posts (zastavi), and guard posts (postovi). These troops are directly subordinate to the Ministry of Interior, and cadres come from the Navy. The strength of a coastal defense command (shtat na morska granichna komandatura) amounts to 274 men in peacetime and 336 men in wartime. (In the land forces it is 262 men in peacetime and 325 in wartime; however, this figure is not adhered to universally so that in some places there are larger numbers of men.)
12. Guard posts (postove) are located between two and six kilometers apart and their normal composition is as follows:
 - a. A commandant, a sergeant or sergeant major (serzhant, or mladshi serzhant);
 - b. A pilot (navigator) from the Navy, experienced in navigation and in the various types of ships as well as in determining their position at sea (course, speed, and so forth);

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- 3 -

50X1-HUM

- c. An air observer (Vuzdushen Nablyudatel) who knows the various types of aircraft and is capable of determining their nationality, direction, speed, and so forth; and
- d. Three sailors.
13. The guards of the coast frontier are recruited among naval units of the Black Sea and among the newly constituted units of the coastal infantry (two units form a battalion in peacetime, that is 460 men).
14. Coast artillery units form the permanent coastal defense force and are composed of:
- Four units of fort artillery (krepostni ognestrelni artileriyski otdeleniya);
 - Two antiaircraft units (the former 3 Antiaircraft Regiment and the former 2 Antiaircraft Regiment);
 - Several independent small caliber batteries; and
 - An unidentified number of platoons equipped with antiaircraft machine guns.
15. The units listed in Para. 14 above are located along the entire Bulgarian Black Sea coast. A permanent coastal defense unit is also formed by the Naval Air Fleet, whose airport is located on Lake Varna, and which is composed of a regiment of hydroplane fighters, of Soviet manufacture.
16. Also employed in the defense of the coast are the armed forces of Balchik airfield which, as of December 1952, consisted of one squadron of "I-16" fighters and one of YAK fighters. At the Varna Chayka air base there were only training planes and work was in progress on improving and modernizing the base. No jet aircraft were observed at any of the above airfields in 1952.

Bulgarian Navy

17. It is not possible to speak of the Bulgarian Navy without irony, for it is rather a fiction than an actual military force. In view of the fact that the Soviet and the Turkish navies have line ships of over 15,000 tons, the importance of the Bulgarian Navy is reduced to zero. The majority of the units of the Bulgarian Navy are museum pieces and serve for training personnel (among these are four gunboats built in 1909). Toward the end of 1952, the number of Bulgarian ships suitable for modern warfare amounted to 28 [redacted] 50X1-HUM
- [redacted] Of these, 12 are subchasers with a speed of 43 miles per hour, equipped with four torpedoes, a 22 mm. antiaircraft gun, and a 7.86 mm. machine gun; these units were purchased during World War II and then turned over to the USSR which returned them to Bulgaria in 1948. Eight other fast ships were given to Bulgaria by the USSR and are armed with a 50 mm. cannon and a 7.86 mm. machine gun. The remaining ships consist in various types of boats for police patrol and vary in tonnage and in armament. 50X1-HUM
18. In 1952, the USSR turned over as a "homage" to Bulgaria the old 4,000-ton cruiser (sic) which had participated in two world wars and which had to be repaired in the "Georgi Dimitrov" shipyard in Varna, where it was later transformed into a training ship. Also in 1952, in the port of Varna there was a Soviet submarine which apparently was given to Bulgaria by the USSR.

Acoustical Aircraft Detectors

19. In 1943, the German army built, in the vicinity of Varna, the largest acoustical aircraft detector in the Balkans. In 1944, the Soviets took away part of the apparatus, and with the remainder the Bulgarians constructed a new radio listening post located northwest of Aladzha Monastir near Varna.

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- 4 -

50X1-HUM

The Problem of Defense of the Black Sea Coast

20. The problem of the defense of the Bulgarian Black Sea coast arose in 1943 when the Soviet armies started their decisive advance to the West. This same problem had been studied in 1942 at a session of general officers of the Bulgarian General Staff. Three proposals were made for the defense of the Bulgarian Black Sea coast, as follows:
- a. Create an efficient navy within a 10-year period (proposal of Admiral Varik-lechkov);
 - b. Construct fortifications along the coastline; and
 - c. Construct a fortified line in the interior, which, together with the fortified line being constructed along the Bulgarian-Turkish frontier, would constitute a system of fortifications (proposal of General Khristov).
21. The first two proposals were abandoned since their realization would have required enormous means which were not at the disposal of Bulgaria. This forced the Bulgarian General Staff to direct itself toward the proposals of General Khristov (the fortified line took his name), something which could be realized by using materiel already located in Bulgarian territory. For the construction of this line were necessary cement, iron, and wood--all products which Bulgaria had, even though later the reconstruction made necessary by bombings destruction limited the use of materials. Manpower was free: that of the army and of civilian forced labor. For light fortification works, newly called up troops were used. The construction of the line started on its entire length and continued until the arrival in Bulgaria of the Soviet army which, as war reparations, dismantled a large portion of the materiel of the line and construction was suspended.
22. The world situation following World War II and the militaristic ambitions of the Soviets, brought again to the forefront the question of defense of the Bulgarian Black Sea coast. In 1950, on orders from Moscow, construction work on the line was restarted, materiel which had been disassembled by the Soviets was returned together with other equipment of Soviet manufacture. The Communist builders are perfecting the line, echelonning the fortifications in depth. Some of the casemates are joined by underground galleries.
23. As in the past, so also today, the fortifications are concentrated in those areas where it is believed a theoretical enemy may attempt to land, taking advantage of the terrain situation. Since the beaches are the most suitable places for landings, fortification works have been concentrated in their vicinity, such as in the Balchik area, the Gulf of Batovo, and the Gulf of Varna.

Fortification Works

24. The main element in the fortification system is the reinforced concrete casemate. The individual casemates are located on the terrain in such a manner as to be able to defend themselves reciprocally with small caliber weapons; that is each one can fire on the nearby casemates in case one of these should be captured by the enemy (along the principle of the German "porcupine" positions). The terrain between casemates is freed of trees. There are casemates on the shoreline and others as much as 12 kilometers from the coast. The casemates are adapted to suit various types of armament, however, the main ones are always artillery pieces and machine guns.
25. The casemates are constructed in reinforced concrete (mortar mixed with cement in the ratio of three to one, and metal armature). The embrasures are closed from the inside by metal plates 12 mm. thick. Against each opening there is a wooden plank on which is placed the machine gun (in those casemates equipped with machine guns). The entrance to each casemate is closed by a heavy wooden door; only a few have a steel door 12 mm. thick. Some of the casemates equipped with machine guns and nearly all of those equipped with cannons have two floors, a ground floor

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- 5 -

50X1-HUM

and a basement, the lower floor being used for storing munitions or as a command post, or as a telephone center, or as quarters for personnel.

26. All the casemates are very well camouflaged and are given a different facade; the interior is filled with barbed wire to be used to surround the casemates when needed. Only at a few points, particularly where civilians circulate, the casemates are surrounded by barbed wire.
27. As of December 1952, the heavy cannons (tezhki krepostni orezhie) had not yet been mounted in the casemates to which they were destined, but were in the open and set on reinforced concrete foundations near the casemates. The 50 mm. and smaller guns were already installed in the casemates, but in case of necessity, these too are brought out into the open. In the casemates equipped with cannons, there are ventilators, part of which are operated by batteries and part by hand, which serve to eliminate smoke caused by the firing of the weapons. 50X1-HUM
28.
the casemates for machine guns, the walls of which are two meters thick, and the roof approximately the same thickness, can sustain the direct impact of a 1,000 kilogram bomb, while the casemates for cannons whose walls and roof are approximately four meters thick, can sustain the direct impact of a 2,000 kilogram bomb.
 50X1-HUM
29. Other fortification work on the line in question are the blindages, constructed in reinforced concrete, wood impregnated with heavy oil, bricks, stone, and boards. They are light-type casemates and composed the original fortification line.
30. The underground galleries to be used to protect personnel, as command posts, telephone centers and munitions depots, consist of separate galleries each with several ramifications. Each gallery has one safety exit and is joined to the other galleries by means of intercommunicating tunnels. For their construction, in general, use was made of the land under the slopes of hills located in the vicinity of the fortification works. The interior of the galleries is in reinforced concrete, stone, and brick in the shape of a cupola, with wooden shoring five centimeters thick. Air circulation is taken care of by ventilators and the entrances are closed by heavy wooden doors. In some of the galleries an entire battalion may be sheltered; one of these is located in the vicinity of "Chatal Chesme," situated in the vicinity of the village of General Kantrazhiev (N 43-22, E 28-00), Balchik Okoliya.
31. At those points where the terrain allows the passage of enemy tanks, antitank ditches have been excavated, their purpose being to obstruct the road to those who land in the Gulf of Varna.
32. At a short distance from the coast, and particularly near the beaches, numerous machine gun nests (kartechni gnezda), fortified with stones or reinforced concrete, or surrounded by tree branches. Also, a large number of reinforced concrete hardstands have been completed for use by antitank and antiaircraft artillery. The area around all the fortifications works includes trenches and galleries which communicate with each other, all reinforced with stones and armature at those points where the ground is friable.

Permanent Armament of the Fortification Line

33. The permanent armament of the fortified line of the Bulgarian Black Sea coast, as that of the Army, is very varied and differs in origin. In most cases, it consists of Bulgarian, German, and Soviet spoils from World War II (remnants from World War I are located in the vicinity of Galata, Varna Okoliya, and consist of a battery of four pieces of varying caliber and origin, one of which is coupled and is 120 mm., called "chifte," captured from the Rumanians in the vicinity of the bridge of Cherna Voda during World War I).

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- 6 -

50X1-HUM

34. Heavy caliber artillery is of French origin and consists of guns dismantled from the Maginot Line, after the defeat of France, and turned over to Bulgaria by the Germans. These guns are of 240, 220, 180, and 150 mm. caliber. Another portion of the artillery is of German origin, and consists of pieces of 150, 120, and 70 mm. caliber, as well as antitank weapons of 37 and 50 mm. caliber. During 1948, some Soviet artillery, constructed in the Aprilov factory was emplaced along this line; it consists of 150, 120, and 70 mm. caliber weapons.

35. Antiaircraft artillery is of German, French, American, and Swedish make (the airport of Varna is defended by a Bofors battery). This artillery is of 88, 75, 52, and 36 mm. caliber; for the most part the weapons of 88 mm. D-49 and 75 D-55 are of German origin. The guns are mounted on reinforced concrete emplacements.

36. Since the end of World War II, only two batteries have been removed and sent elsewhere. All the others have been kept at those positions they were at during the war.

37. The light armament to be used will be that belonging to the units destined to occupy the fortified line (the Bulgarian-Rumanian frontier zone at Obzor is defended by the 3 Bulgarian Army, while that which runs from Obzor to the Turkish frontier is defended by the Army).

38. In the summer of 1952, large-scale maneuvers took place in Bulgaria aimed at testing the problem of counterattacking a theoretical enemy which landed on the Black Sea coast. The troops which the Bulgarian Communist regime maintains permanently in the immediate vicinity of the Black Sea coast compose approximately two normal peacetime divisions.

50X1-HUM

39. In case of imminent danger, the coastal waters and the beaches will be mined. The possibility of mining the territorial waters is slight, because this portion of the fortified line is equipped with various types of underwater mines which can form a barrier 13 kilometers in length.

the mines are of Bulgarian, German, and Soviet origin and weigh between 50 and 360 kilograms.

50X1-HUM

40. The possibilities for mining the coast, and particularly the beaches, are greater because the available stock of antitank and antipersonnel mines is considerable. As of December 1952, seven depots located in the area described in this report contained 24,000 antitank mines, and 30,000 antipersonnel mines (all of Bulgarian, German, or Soviet origin). The majority of the antitank mines are of German make, weigh eight kilograms, and explode under a pressure of one ton. In one single depot, in the vicinity of Varna, at Karantinata (N 43-11, E 27-55), in an old school, there were 9,000 antitank mines and 3,000 antipersonnel mines. In the military depots of the Varna garrison south of Asparukhovo, there were an additional 4,000 antitank mines and 7,000 antipersonnel mines. The other depots are improvised and constructed of tree branches, covered with straw or "eternit," and located in the vicinity of the area where they would probably be used. The mine primers are disassembled and kept separately.

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