03890/ODGS-1950.

Top secret!
Extremely important!

Not to be discarded!

Proposal.
For the construction of fortifications on the country's southern border.

In order to increase the defence of our country's southern border, it is necessary to construct fortifications still in peacetime, bearing in mind the country's material capacity.

The issue of border fortification is closely connected with the operational plan of the armed forces. The bases of the operational plan are currently being devised, and in this respect a final decision has not yet been made and approval given.

The foreign policy situation demands that the issue of border fortification should be decided in parallel with the preparatory work on the final operational plan, so that fortified positions can be built in the expected main directions of attack for our type "A" rifle corps at our disposal this year, through the use of which defensive action could ensure that other parts of the armed forces can be brought up to full strength, mobilised and deployed.

In issues of realizing the fortification in principle and in practice, the Operations Directorate of the General Staff has devised a proposal with the aid of the Engineers HQ and the Materiel Planning Directorate of the General Staff as well as the comrade advisers working there, which sets out the following:

I.
System of fortifications

1.1 We propose the construction of field fortifications /earth/wood firing positions/ along the southern border in the probable main directions of attack. In the most important directions and most important sections of terrain these should be built of reinforced concrete with machine gun and gun emplacements for side fire. The ratio of reinforced concrete to earth/wood fortifications would be 1 reinforced concrete to 3 earth/wood.

2./ In addition to building fortified elements, we propose that corps and divisional HQ observation and command posts and message centres be built.

3./ We propose the construction of this fortification system in the "A" battle alert be built to the depth of the corps in the line given for the 3rd Corps. Taking into consideration the main attack directions, 2 corps and 6 divisional observation and command posts and message centres should be built with the aim of ensuring that options for command are in place in advance also for the Main HQs of the type "B" corps to be brought up to strength.

4./ Simultaneously, our proposals for the sections of terrain and lines which should be defended in the depth of the army in southern and western directions are marked on the enclosed map. These would be built as field fortifications involving the civilian population in case of necessity.

5./ Both the fortification areas and lines for the 3rd Corps and the depth of the army have been marked on the basis of the map. Their on-site inspection involving experts is an immediate task, on the basis of which the position and number of fortification elements must be defined exactly.

6./ According to preliminary calculations based on the map, we propose 3 variations regarding the density of the reinforced concrete and earth/wood fortifications, bearing in mind that the total width of the front line of the main directions marked on the map is 230 km and its depth is 10-12 km.

a./ 2 fortification elements per front line km:
Total number of elements to be built: 462
If we take the ratio of reinforced concrete to earth/wood elements as 1:3, 154 reinforced concrete elements and 308 earth/wood fortifications /gun emplacements/ should be built.
In the 462 fortification elements the machine guns of a rifle corps with the exception of thirty guns can be placed /this amount corresponds to the machine guns of about one and a half battalions/. This variation would ensure that the most important routes and crossings in the first line are closed, but affords no due opportunity to fortify interlying important sections of terrain in depth which may be important from the point-of-view of defence.

b./ 4 fortification elements per front line km:
Total number of elements to be built: 924.
If we take the ratio of reinforced concrete to earth/wood elements as 1:3, 308 reinforced concrete elements and 616 earth/wood fortifications /gun emplacements/ should be built.
In the 924 fortification elements the machine guns of two rifle corps with the exception of sixty guns can be placed /the 60 machine guns correspond to the number of machine guns in one rifle regiment/. This variation would satisfactorily ensure closure to corps depth in the marked areas even if type “B" divisions must be deployed along the border.

c./ 5 fortification elements per front line km:
Total number of elements to be built: 1,155
If we take the ratio of reinforced concrete to earth/wood elements as 1:3, 385 reinforced concrete elements and 770 earth/wood fortifications /gun emplacements/ should be built. In the 1,155 fortification elements the machine guns of two rifle corps and one rifle division can be placed.

This variation would ensure that the fortification elements would have the necessary density even in depth and that our peace divisions at our disposal this year could, after being brought up to full strength, occupy a fully prepared and constructed defensive zone with all their machine guns.

II.
The fortification system’s material requirements

1./ As regards costs:

To approximately estimate the costs of the planned defensive system, the following calculations have been made:
The costs for construction of one reinforced concrete element /materials+wages/ 35,000 Ft.
The costs for construction of one open earth/wood gun emplacements /materials+wages/ 3,500 Ft.

The costs for construction of one corps or divisional command post /materials + wages/ Approx.126,000 forint.

The costs for construction of one corps or divisional message centre /materials + wages/ Approx. 75,000 Ft.

Ad: a./ 2 fortification elements per front line km:

The total cost for the construction of 154 reinforced concrete elements: 5, 390,000 Ft.
The total cost for the construction of 308 earth/wood fortifications: 1,078,000 Ft.

The total costs for the construction of 2 corps observation and command posts and message centres and 6 divisional observation and command posts and message centres: 1,608,000 Ft.

The total costs for the construction of fortification elements, command posts and message centres: 8,076,000 Ft.

Ad: b./4 fortification elements per front line km:

The total cost for the construction of 308 reinforced concrete elements: 10, 780,000 Ft.
The total cost for the construction of 616 earth/wood fortifications: 2, 156,000 Ft.
The total costs for the construction of command posts and message centres /as in version 1/: 1,608,000 Ft.

The total costs for the construction of fortification elements, command posts and message centres: 14,544,000 Ft.

Ad: c./ 5 fortification elements per front line km:

The total cost for the construction of 385 reinforced concrete elements: 13,475,000 Ft.
The total cost for the construction of 770 earth/wood fortifications: 2,695,000 Ft.

The total costs for the construction of command posts and message centres /as in version 1/:
1,608,000 Ft.

The total costs for the construction of fortification elements, command posts and message centres: 17,778,000 Ft.

2./ The cost of the materials:

With variation a/:

Roundwood 20-25 Ø : 3.596 cubic metres
5 cm planks: 358.5 cubic metres
Round iron: 267.2 tons
Iron girders: 77 tons
Boilerplate: 23 tons
Cramp irons and nails: 22.5 tons

Cement: 1,577 tons
Poles: 87,472 linear metres

With variation b/:

Roundwood 20-25 Ø : 5.986 cubic metres
5 cm planks: 685 cubic metres
Round iron: 495.2 tons
Iron girders: 154 tons
Boilerplate: 46 tons
Cramp irons and nails: 41 tons
Cement: 2,994 tons
Poles: 174,944 linear metres

With variation c/:

Roundwood 20-25 Ø : 7154 cubic metres
5 cm planks: 8483 cubic metres
Round iron: 609,2 tons
Iron girder: 269,5 tons
Boilerplate: 57,5 tons
Cramp irons and nails: 51.25 tons
Cement: 3,612.5 tons
Poles: 218,680 linear metres

According to the Material Planning Directorate of the General Staff, these materials can be provided.

III.
Proposals

1./ On the basis of the above we propose the construction of a fortification system as described in b./ above by 1st April 1951 so that it could be further developed according to c during the remainder of 1951 based on detailed plans.

2./ The divisions of the 3rd Corps would build the field fortification elements /earth/wood fortifications/ led by the engineering corps.

3./ To construct the reinforced concrete elements, two special battalions need to be formed for the duration of the construction within the engineering corps, which would be manned partly by calling up skilled individuals from the construction industry, and partly by conscripting unskilled individuals. As regards the completion time for the work, the following should be noted: A reinforced concrete fortification is made by 17 people /8 skilled and 9 unskilled labourers/ in four days if the materials and machinery are on site. Thus two battalions of 900 men each could make 100 fortifications in four days. If the transport and preparation of the material is also done by the special battalions, the work according to variation b could be completed within a month, with the exception of the HQ observation and command posts, and message centres, whose construction would likewise require another one month.

4./ The construction costs of the fortification elements and command posts, and message centres include wages. If the fortifications are constructed by army units, an amount of about:
1,000,000 forints with variation a/
2,000,000 forints with variation b/
2,500,000 forints with variation c/ could be saved.

5./ The fortification system established would only be occupied by the troops in case of battle alert "A" /no separate fortification troops would be organised/. The maintenance of the field fortification elements would be performed by units of the nearest border guards.

6./ We do not suggest the construction of wire and other obstacles within the planned fortification system – mainly due to considerations of national economy – in peacetime. However, we consider it necessary to store an appropriate amount of mines and explosives as well as barbed wire based on the detailed fortification plan in storage facilities to be established near installations.

7./ According to information received from the Army's Engineering Corps HQ, plans have been made to construct canals to connect the rivers Danube and Tisza in the course of implementing the country's irrigation plan. We propose that when establishing the location, width and depth of the canals to be constructed in the central region of the country, the potentially great importance of these canals from the aspect of military operations and defending the middle of the country should be taken into consideration.

8./ In order to elaborate the details of the above plan, we propose that the Operations Directorate of the General Staff together with the Branch HQs inspect the potential directions for fortification and defensive lines marked on the map in detail, and on the basis of their inspection devise a detailed fortification plan. We propose that the inspection takes place in November/December.

Proposal for the approval of the Minister of Defence Comrade.

Lt. Col. Szűcs,
Lt. Gen. Bata.,
Maj. Gen. Mátékovíts

8 November 1950

The Operations Directorate Comrade has informed me that the Minister of Defence Comrade has decided not to establish permanent fortifications. Field fortifications are to be prepared by the 3rd Corps in relation to the "A" alert.
Enc.: one item construction calculations

Lt. Col. Szűcs

[Translated by László Ritter, Budapest]