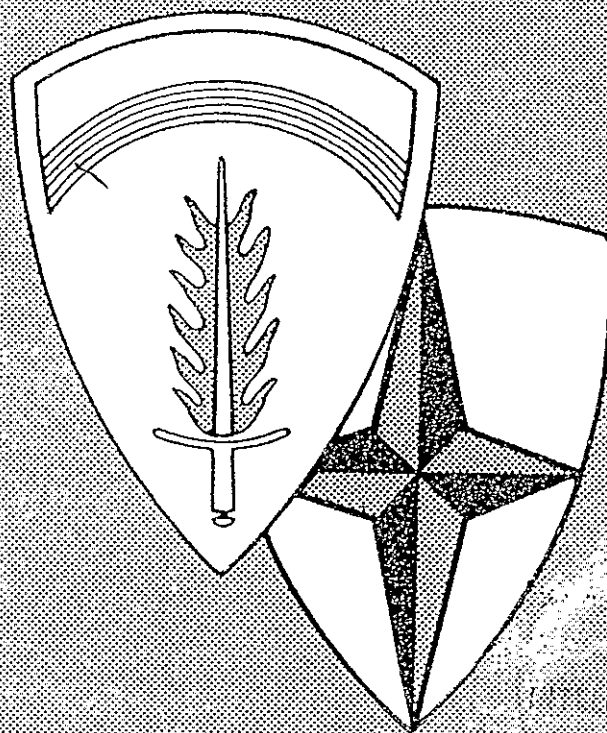


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# USAREUR / CENTAG INTELLIGENCE ESTIMATE - 1960 (U)



HEADQUARTERS  
UNITED STATES ARMY, EUROPE  
OFFICE OF A. C. OF S., G-2

1 JANUARY 1960

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BY AUTHORITY OF ACofS, G2, 01 January 1960



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UNITED STATES ARMY, EUROPE  
OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT CHIEF OF STAFF, G2  
USAREUR/CENTAG INTELLIGENCE ESTIMATE -1960  
01 JANUARY 1960  
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1 JANUARY 1960

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1. (S) Mission of the Commander in Chief, United States Army, Europe:

a. As Commander, US Army Forces, Europe:

(1) The following missions reflect the peacetime status of the United States Army, Europe, as a component of the United States European Command and the wartime status of the United States Army, Europe, as a component of the United States European Command with or without the operational control of its tactical elements vested in a NATO command.

(a) Command US Army Forces allocated to US CINCEUR.

(b) Provide for the security and combat readiness of forces assigned and in the event of an emergency, be prepared to defend the sector(s) assigned.

(c) Support SACEUR's and Allied commanders' tactical operations.

(d) Support CINCEUR's tactical operations.

(e) Coordinate and direct intelligence.

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(f) Discharge US responsibilities relating to all Germany, including Berlin.

(g) Coordinate and conduct civil affairs activities.

(h) Provide for the administrative and logistical support of forces assigned to USAREUR and other unassigned forces and agencies.

(i) Provide communications service.

(2) The subsidiary tasks and responsibilities which contribute to the fulfillment of each mission are indicated in the inclosure to letter, AEAGC-PR 250 17, 28 September 1959, subject: "USAREUR Mission Register (U)".

b. As Commander, Central Army Group Forces:

(1) In peacetime, prepare wartime operational and logistical plans for the Central Army Group in conjunction with associated air and naval forces and in liaison with adjacent forces in accordance with instructions and directives of COMLANDCENT.

(2) In wartime, plan and direct operations in the zone of responsibility in compliance with directives of COMLANDCENT in conjunction with commanders of associated air and naval forces and in liaison with adjacent forces.

2. (S) Characteristics of the Area of Operations

a. (U) Weather: The climate within the central European area is temperate despite its location in the northern latitude. The area is sufficiently near the influence of the Gulf Stream so that the winters are mild even though the topography includes mountain chains, plateaus and low lying plains. The difference in range of temperature and rainfall is not great. Summer temperatures are not unpleasantly hot, averaging about 70 degrees Fahrenheit. Winter temperatures seldom fall below zero degrees Fahrenheit. The frost free season is approximately 190 days. The annual rainfall, averaging 20 inches, is well distributed with 9 to 13 inches falling from May to September. Slow rains and drizzles are common. Winter is the cloudiest season

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with December the cloudiest month. Winds are predominantly westerly the entire year. Good visibility exceeding six miles may be expected on more than half the days in summer. Fog averages 30 to 40 days each year, increasing in the area of industrial towns. Fogs predominate during autumn, occurring most frequently in November.

Within the area consisting of northwestern Yugoslavia and northern Italy and Austria the best seasons for military operations are summer and early fall (June through September). September and early October are usually the months of minimum cloud coverage and moderate temperatures. Less rain falls during this period than in the months of summer or late fall. The "Highland and Alpine" climate encompassing northern Italy and northwestern Yugoslavia and Austria is characterized by variability and changeability. In this mountainous area the weather change within a 24 hour period is likely to be greater than in the adjacent lowlands. This mountain mass may experience sudden gusts of rain or snow immediately followed by intense sunlight.

In the Alpine areas the severe snowstorms of the winter months together with the closing of the minor passes and the temporary blocking of the major passes restrict mobility and visibility. This factor combined with the low temperatures and high winds of the area lowers the efficiency of personnel and equipment and would generally limit, and temporarily block, enemy movement through the major avenues of approach and attack.




In the Alpine areas during the two transitional periods of spring and autumn the mist, clouds and rain restrict visibility and streams overflow, blocking the mountain valleys and converting the valley floors to bogs. Since the main routes of approach follow these river valleys these conditions would adversely influence the Soviet ability to move rapidly. However, the clear and warm summer months normally do not present climatic conditions which would interfere with a Soviet attack against Italy. (For effect of climate on specific military operations see Annex 3)

b. (C) Terrain: From the Soviet point of view the outstanding critical terrain feature in Europe is the ground dominating the west bank of the Rhine River. The Rhine is the most formidable natural obstacle in the entire area. This feature must be secured in order to ensure further westward advance along the axis towards Paris and the Channel. If not seized, a potential threat to the flank of any Soviet advance across the North German Plain would exist.



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In general there are three major favorable axes of movement for a force attacking toward and across the Rhine from the East.



Logistic approach routes: Three major concentrations of transportation routes lead westward from the Soviet Zone boundary. These on the whole coincide with the best tactical routes of advance.

(1) Routes in the North German Plain. This concentration of routes is the densest and the highest capacity network of transportation lines on the European continent. These lines, following the southern edge of the North German Plain near the base of the highlands, cross the Rhine between Koln and Wesel.

(2) The Central German routes. These routes leading from Czechoslovakia and Thuringia pass through Hesse and Franconia and converge on the Upper Rhine Plain between Mainz and Karlsruhe. These routes are somewhat less concentrated and of somewhat lower capacity than those in the North German Plain; nevertheless, they have a very high capacity. The routes leading to the key crossing of Mainz, through Frankfurt, have a capacity equal to or exceeding that of the routes leading to any other individual Rhine bridge area.

(3) The South German routes. These routes lead north-westward out of Austria across Bavaria and the Kraichgau to the same crossings as the Central German routes. In this case, however, the heaviest concentration of routes leads to Karlsruhe whereas the heaviest route concentration in the central group focuses on the Frankfurt-Mainz area.

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Exit routes: The concentrations of logistic exit routes in general correspond to the concentrations in the approaches. However, these factors should be noted:

(1) In the north the exit routes have generally lower capacities than the approach routes.

(2) Those in the Mainz-Karlsruhe sector are likewise of lower capacity than the approach routes but the disparity is not so great.

(3) Exit routes from the southern part of the Upper Rhine Plain via Strasbourg and Mulhouse have a higher capacity than the approach routes. These exit routes might be exploited by the Soviets through diversion of traffic from the northern part of the Plain via the excellent lateral communications of the Rhine Valley itself.

Thus from the logistical point of view crossings from Wesel to Köln and from Mainz to Karlsruhe would have the greatest value to the Soviets and would merit seizure by an airborne operation.

The mountainous terrain along the northern and northeastern boundaries of Italy is not favorable for a force attacking to the south. Approaches through this area are canalized into river valleys which are dominated by high terrain and easily defended. There is little room for dispersion and approaching columns would be roadbound.

[REDACTED]

The level terrain of the Po Valley and the Italian Friullian Plain would be favorable for a Soviet advance. However, even here the canals, intense cultivation, numerous towns and stone boundary walls would tend to restrict rapid cross country movement.

[REDACTED]

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Numerous trails and one lane all weather roads exist throughout the Alpine Mountains which could be used by mountain troops. The plains area of northeast Italy is the most extensive region within the zone of interest which is suitable for Soviet armored and airborne operations. (For a complete terrain appreciation see Annex 4,)

c. (S) National Policies: The conduct of Soviet national policy in 1959 and its projection for 1960 indicate a continued desire to avoid risks of war, not only because the USSR does not appear to want war at this time, but also because it wants nothing to disturb the atmosphere of relaxed international tensions which Khrushchev is promoting through his personal diplomacy and through Soviet foreign policy in general. The ultimate purposes of these relaxed international tensions may be neither favorable to the West nor especially peaceful in their application toward the non-Communist world, but it is probable that Khrushchev intends this period of relaxation to extend not only through 1960, but perhaps for as long as the next decade. This basic course of Soviet policy could be temporarily disturbed by Summit Conference developments which Moscow considers unduly adverse to Soviet interests, or by Soviet initiated actions to resolve situations such as Berlin which the Kremlin would like to consider local. Nevertheless, the drive to relax tensions and to lull the non-Communist world in general into a false sense of security can be expected to continue through the period of this estimate, and to be the basic instrument of Soviet policy as now constituted. Specific secondary objectives are to weaken Western political unity and to lower Western military defenses.

Soviet policy is based on a conviction that Communism inevitably will prevail throughout the world but that in the interim, time is on the side of the USSR. The Soviets may believe that the passage of time will bring about deteriorations in the Western political scene. They may perhaps be especially looking forward to the post-Adenauer period in West Germany.

For the time being the Soviets also see the period as one in which they can continue to consolidate their political and economic position, and to enhance further what they believe to be their growing military superiority through scientific and technical advances.

Within the Communist world Moscow has two policy problems, both of which are of a practical and an ideological nature. One is the divergency of views between Moscow and Peiping, which became

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increasingly apparent during 1959, particularly after Khrushchev's return from the United States. The other is the unique condition of the Polish experiment in Communism, which is quite out of step with the "great leaps forward" allegedly being made in the other Satellites. In late 1959 shifts were made in the Polish Party and government. They were most probably intended to alleviate immediate economic problems. However, they may also begin to bridge the gulf between Polish Communism and Communism elsewhere in the Bloc. As for Communist China, the close of 1959 found Moscow taking an unusually neutral view toward China's border disputes with India, and the Chinese Communists giving considerably less than enthusiastic support to Khrushchev's efforts to reduce tensions. Neither the Polish nor the Chinese problem is likely to disappear during the period of this estimate, and the Soviets will have to exercise caution in dealing with both the Poles and Chinese.

In the Satellites other than Poland national policies can be expected to reflect faithfully Soviet policy directives and requirements. However, it is possible that Sino-Soviet divergencies may be reflected in Moscow's relations with certain of the Satellite leaderships which see the stringencies of Chinese Communist policies as being potentially applicable and useful in dealing with their own internal problems. (See Annex 5)

d. (C) War Production: In order to further industrialization throughout the Communist Bloc, economic plans have continued to lay greatest stress on the development of capital goods industries. This development has at the same time facilitated the continuing war production effort. During 1959 numerous conferences were held throughout the Satellites by the various special committees of the Council for Economic Mutual Aid (CEMA), in order to coordinate production plans and eventually arrive at a complete division of labor within the Communist Bloc, and hence more efficient, specialized production. Although food shortages, made serious by the dry summer of 1959, have been reported, especially in Poland and East Germany, there is little doubt that they eventually will be overcome and that generally the standard of living of Satellite populations will continue to rise. We anticipate that the economic efforts outlined above will be pursued further during the coming year and that limited successes will be achieved.

We expect continued, if not expanded, emphasis on the most-efficient-producer concept in the allocation of war production targets among the Eastern European Satellites. We believe that Bloc military production will remain short of full wartime capacity, but nevertheless will continue to be more than adequate to support any type of attack which might be mounted against NATO forces in Europe. (See Annex 6)

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