



Director of
Central
Intelligence

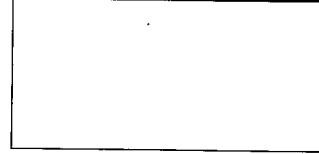
(M)

TUB SG

~~Top Secret~~



EO 13526 3.3(b)(1)>25Yrs



3.5(c)

NFB

NIE 4-1-84

Warning of War in Europe

National Intelligence Estimate

~~Top Secret~~

NIE 4-1-84

27 June 1984

Copy 388

98

3.5(c)

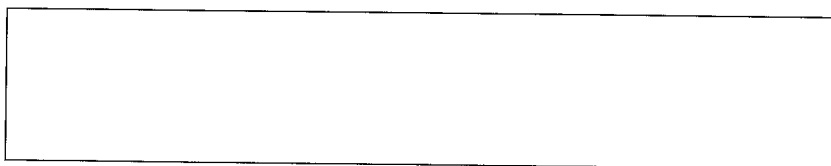
Warning Notice
Sensitive Intelligence Sources and Methods Involved
(WNINTEL)

NATIONAL SECURITY INFORMATION
Unauthorized Disclosure Subject to Criminal Sanctions

DISSEMINATION CONTROL ABBREVIATIONS

- NOFORN- Not Releasable to Foreign Nationals
- NOCONTRACT- Not Releasable to Contractors or Contractor/Consultants
- PROPIN- Caution—Proprietary Information Involved
- NFIBONLY- NFIB Departments Only
- ORCON- Dissemination and Extraction of Information Controlled by Originator
- REL...- This Information Has Been Authorized for Release to ...
- FGI- Foreign Government Information

DERIVATIVE CL BY	4277303
REVIEW ON	OADR
DERIVED FROM	Multiple



3.5(c)

~~Top Secret~~

3.5(c)

NIE 4-1-84

WARNING OF WAR IN EUROPE

Information available as of 31 May 1984
was used in the preparation of this Estimate.

3.5(c)

~~Top Secret~~

~~Top Secret~~ [redacted]

3.5(c)

THIS ESTIMATE IS ISSUED BY THE DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE.

THE NATIONAL FOREIGN INTELLIGENCE BOARD CONCURS.

The following intelligence organizations participated in the preparation of the Estimate:

The Central Intelligence Agency, the Defense Intelligence Agency, the National Security Agency, and the intelligence organization of the Department of State.

Also Participating:

The Assistant Chief of Staff for Intelligence, Department of the Army

The Director of Naval Intelligence, Department of the Navy

The Assistant Chief of Staff, Intelligence, Department of the Air Force

The Director of Intelligence, Headquarters, Marine Corps

[redacted]

~~Top Secret~~

3.5(c)

~~Top Secret~~

3.5(c)

CONTENTS

	<i>Page</i>
PREFACE.....	1
SIGNIFICANT CHANGES FROM NIE 4-1-78.....	3
SUMMARY AND KEY JUDGMENTS.....	5
DISCUSSION.....	23
I. BACKGROUND.....	23
A. Scope of the Estimate.....	23
B. Definition: Warning of War.....	23
C. The Warning Process.....	23
D. Recent Intelligence Community Studies.....	25
E. Significant Events and Developments.....	25
II. CONTEXT OF A NATO-WARSAW PACT WAR.....	29
A. Warsaw Pact Perceptions of NATO's Military Capabilities.....	29
NATO Mobilization, Reinforcement, and Deployment	
Capabilities.....	29
Capability of NATO's Air Forces.....	29
NATO Nuclear Capabilities.....	30
Risks Involved in a War With NATO.....	30
B. Military Reliability of Non-Soviet Warsaw Pact Forces.....	31
C. Warsaw Pact Military Objectives in a War With NATO....	32
Warsaw Pact Military Objectives on NATO's Flanks.....	33
D. Likelihood of a NATO-Warsaw Pact War.....	34
Chances of War Under Present Circumstances.....	34
Likelihood of War Under Near-Term Circumstances.....	34
E. Warning Implications for NATO: A US-Soviet	
Confrontation in the Persian Gulf.....	35
III. WARSAW PACT DOCTRINE AND READINESS.....	37
A. Doctrinal Precepts.....	37
B. Readiness Philosophy.....	38
C. Readiness Control Systems.....	41

~~Top Secret~~

3.5(c)

~~Top Secret~~

3.5(c)

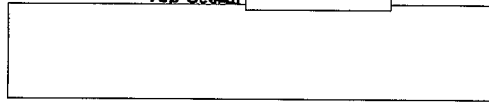
	<i>Page</i>
National Readiness Control System.....	41
Military Readiness Control System.....	42
Critique	43
IV. HOW THE WARSAW PACT WOULD GO TO WAR.....	45
A. Political Preparations.....	45
The Decisionmaking Process.....	45
Warsaw Pact Consultations.....	45
Psychological Preparation of the Population.....	46
International Propaganda and Diplomatic Initiatives	46
B. Economic Preparations.....	47
C. Civil Defense Preparations	48
D. Military Preparations	48
Employment of Warsaw Pact Forces.....	48
Warsaw Pact Wartime Military Control Structure.....	49
Warsaw Pact Wartime Command Statute	49
Warsaw Pact High Commands of Forces.....	50
Command and Control Enhancements.....	53
Warsaw Pact Fronts	53
Warsaw Pact Force Generation.....	53
E. Attack Options	55
Option I—Attack From a Peacetime Posture	56
Option II—Attack With Two Fronts	57
Option III—Attack With Three Fronts	60
Option IV—Attack With Five Fronts.....	60
F. Variations in Attack Options.....	62
Forward Deployment of Forces in the Western USSR	62
Gradual Buildup	63
V. WARNING OF WAR	65
A. Indicators of War Preparations.....	65
The Decision To Go to War	65
Civil and Economic Preparations.....	66
Indicators of Military Preparations	67
B. Security, Concealment, and Deception.....	68
C. Detection Capability	69
Option I—Attack From a Peacetime Posture	70
Option II—Attack With Two Fronts	71

3.5(c)

iv

~~Top Secret~~

~~Top Secret~~



3.5(c)

	<i>Page</i>
Option III—Attack With Three Fronts	71
Option IV—Attack With Five Fronts.....	72
D. A Gradual Buildup.....	73
E. Warsaw Pact Exercises and Training Patterns.....	73
VI. LOOKING AHEAD.....	75
ANNEX: BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	77



~~Top Secret~~

3.5(c)

~~Top Secret~~ [redacted]

[redacted]

3.5(c)

PREFACE

This Estimate takes into account a number of significant international events and military force developments that have occurred since the Intelligence Community's last European warning Estimate was published in 1978.¹ It draws heavily from recent interagency and departmental studies that have sharpened our understanding of the Warsaw Pact's preparedness for war. [redacted]

3.5(c)

The Estimate summarizes the Intelligence Community's view of how the Warsaw Pact would prepare for war, including political, economic, civil defense, and military preparedness measures that are likely to be implemented as the Pact moved to a wartime posture. It also describes Pact doctrine and readiness for war, the range of force options available to the Pact, and our ability to detect and interpret Pact war preparations. Finally, the Estimate describes a warning process that would probably be characterized by ambiguity, continuing reassessment, and incremental warnings to policymakers. The critical role played by policymakers in the warning process is addressed. [redacted]

3.5(c)

The Estimate was produced under the auspices of the National Intelligence Officer for General Purpose Forces. Principal drafting was done by [redacted] the Directorate for Research, Defense Intelligence Agency. [redacted]

3.5(c)

3.5(c)

¹ NIE 4-1-78, Warsaw Pact Concepts and Capabilities for Going to War in Europe: Implications for NATO Warning of War, 10 April 1978. [redacted]

3.5(c)

[redacted]

~~Top Secret~~

3.5(c)

Blank pg

~~Top Secret~~ [redacted]

3.5(c)

SIGNIFICANT CHANGES FROM NIE 4-1-78

The central conclusions of the Intelligence Community's last European warning Estimate have generally remained valid. Nonetheless, since its publication in April 1978, a number of significant international events and Warsaw Pact military force developments have occurred which have potential impact on warning of war in Europe. Moreover, a number of national and departmental studies have increased our knowledge of the readiness posture and capabilities of Warsaw Pact forces. [redacted]

3.5(c)

Unlike the earlier document, this Estimate discusses the warning implications for NATO of potential US-Soviet conflict in the Persian Gulf region. It also contains a discussion of the warning process and the key role played by policymakers, and places estimates of "warning times" for various Warsaw Pact attack options in better context with likely developments during a period of increasing tension and crisis leading to war. [redacted]

3.5(c)

The Estimate describes the warning function as a continuous process rather than an event. The process would probably be characterized by some initial ambiguity, but thereafter by a continuous flow of reassessments and incremental warnings to policymakers. The Intelligence Community has a greater capacity for assessing potential enemy capabilities than hostile intent; it therefore may be relied upon to keep policymakers informed on developing crises, but it may not speak with unanimity on the likelihood of war at the moment when prudent actions by policymakers might be particularly appropriate. Policy decisions can affect the course of events, and only policymakers can determine what actions should (or should not) be taken in a crisis, and when. In essence the capstone of the warning process is a policy decision, not an intelligence one. It is not possible for the Intelligence Community to foretell when policymakers will consider that they have been adequately warned of war. Should war ever occur in Europe, it is likely that there will be many warnings issued by the Intelligence Community in many forms, but only policymakers can decide when the evidence is sufficient in their own minds to react [redacted]

3.5(c)

With regard to the traditional expression of "warning times" for various Warsaw Pact attack options, we have had a troubling inconsistency in past estimates. We believe it unlikely that the Warsaw Pact

3.5(c)

3

~~Top Secret~~

~~Top Secret~~ [redacted]

3.5(c)

would decide to go to war without severe deterioration of East-West relations and probably a crisis giving rise to fears of war. We also believe that the Soviets would probably raise the readiness of their forces during such a period. However, we have traditionally estimated the amount of time required for Pact forces to prepare to execute specific attack options on a "crash" basis from a normal peacetime readiness posture. This artificial construct resulted in a "worst case" analysis for NATO in terms of warning time. These judgments have been considered the "bottom line" of our warning estimates, even though we considered them to have little relevance in a crisis. We consider a "crash" effort by the Warsaw Pact unlikely under any of the attack options discussed in the Estimate, except possibly in regard to the final preparations necessary to achieve full readiness for war. [redacted]

3.5(c)

[redacted]
~~Top Secret~~

3.5(c)

~~Top Secret~~ [redacted]

3.5(c)

SUMMARY AND KEY JUDGMENTS

The Warning Process

The primacy of Europe to the national security interests of the United States and the presence of large Warsaw Pact military forces in Eastern Europe place a premium on warning of Warsaw Pact war preparations and intent to attack NATO. The US warning system seeks to provide early notice of events that might presage Pact offensive operations, however ambiguous such notice might be. As additional events transpire and tensions increase, the system is designed to indicate greater likelihood that war is in the offing. *However, there is no finite point at which the warning system can foretell with certainty that war is imminent.* It can assess potential enemy capabilities; it is less reliable for forecasting hostile intent, which might become apparent only in the act of war itself. This is due partially to the nature of the system, which must rely upon human judgment, and partially to the dynamics of crises in which the reactions of US policymakers to early warnings may affect the development of the course of events. [redacted]

3.5(c)

There are frequently differing interpretations of the causes or reasons for observable activities which tend to delay the development of a consensus within the Intelligence Community regarding the likelihood of war. As early and ambiguous warnings are received—most likely without consensus as to the imminence of war—policymakers may or may not be inclined to take prudent actions, either from skepticism of the more pessimistic interpretations of events, or for concern that their actions might intensify the crisis and perhaps precipitate hostilities. Such warnings will continue past any point or points of policy decisionmaking to the actual outbreak of hostilities or other resolution of the crisis. *Accordingly, warning of war should be viewed not as a single event, but as a process of communicating warnings of increased threat.* The warnings may be expected to develop from various sources and with various interpretations before a Community consensus is achieved. *We are confident that the Intelligence Community is capable of detecting and correctly assessing Warsaw Pact capabilities and readiness for war; hence we believe that consensus on these matters would be a continuing strength throughout any period of international tension or crisis. However, Community consensus regarding Pact hostile intent could be a late development.* [redacted]

3.5(c)

3.5(c)

5

~~Top Secret~~

~~Top Secret~~ [redacted]

3.5(c)

It is within the foregoing context that we define "warning of war" as *the communication of intelligence judgments to national policy-makers that a state or alliance intends war, or is on a course that substantially increases the risks of war and is taking steps to prepare for war.* While concern for attack by a hostile power is the ultimate purpose of the warning process, this Estimate does not focus upon the specifics of "warning of attack": *the communication of an intelligence judgment to national policymakers that an adversary is not only preparing its armed forces for war but also intends to launch an attack in the near future.* [redacted]

3.5(c)

The strength of the warning system for discerning increased capabilities of the Warsaw Pact to initiate hostilities should not be construed as a capacity to foretell with confidence the course of subsequent events. Nor should recipients of warning expect that definitive thresholds at which decisions should be made will necessarily be identified. While the process of information gathering and assessment is continuous, policy decisions to react or not react to the flow of advisories are the principal determinants of the success or failure of the warning process. [redacted]

3.5(c)

The Intelligence Community has never observed the Soviet Union or Warsaw Pact making preparations of the magnitude and duration necessary to go to war with NATO. However, we have observed Warsaw Pact exercises and Soviet preparations for military intervention in neighboring countries—most recently Afghanistan and Poland. Our observations give us confidence that, while we might not recognize war preparations in their earliest phases, we would soon detect many indicators that such preparations were under way. Military preparations are the least equivocal events leading to war readiness, and would constitute the principal events upon which our warnings would be based. From these, we believe that we could provide timely notification that the Soviets and their allies were converting to a wartime posture and were risking war by their behavior. [redacted]

3.5(c)

We cannot be absolutely certain that we would be able in every instance to distinguish between preparations for an exercise and similar activities, and preparations for war. However, we believe that the context of Soviet actions and their scope and intensity would provide reasonable insight into the likelihood of war. [redacted]

3.5(c)

Warsaw Pact Perceptions of NATO's Military Capabilities

Pact planners see a serious threat in NATO's ability to rapidly expand its standing forces by mobilization in Europe and by reinforcement from outside Europe. The Pact believes that the United States could reinforce Europe with six divisions and 60 squadrons of combat

3.5(c)

6
~~Top Secret~~

~~Top Secret~~ [redacted]

3.5(c)

aircraft within 10 days. Additionally, Pact planners believe that within 30 days NATO is capable of increasing the number of aircraft in Europe by 900, and increasing its ground forces by about 50 divisions.

3.5(c)

The NATO theater nuclear capability is perceived as a profound threat and dominates Pact strategic planning for war in Europe. *Pact planners are convinced that NATO would be likely to employ nuclear weapons in a NATO-Warsaw Pact conflict.* Accumulated evidence reveals considerable Pact anxiety over the formidable difficulties inherent in locating and destroying NATO nuclear warheads and delivery systems. Moscow also recognizes that NATO's planning and capability to implement limited nuclear options could initiate an uncontrollable chain of escalation [redacted]

3.5(c)

Risks Involved in a War With NATO

NATO has a large, diversified array of tactical nuclear-capable weapons which the Pact believes would probably be employed against it. *The existence of the separately controlled US, British, and French strategic nuclear strike systems increases Moscow's uncertainty about nuclear escalation. The Soviet leadership sees war in Europe, particularly nuclear war, as holding its territory at risk from strategic nuclear strikes.* NATO's nuclear deterrent capability would seem to make nonnuclear war the most rational option for the Pact. The Soviets' dilemma is that successful Pact nonnuclear operations would probably lead to the use of nuclear weapons by NATO. [redacted]

3.5(c)

The Military Reliability of Non-Soviet Warsaw Pact Forces

Soviet dependence on its allies, especially in Central Europe, is so great as to make their participation crucial to prospects for success on the battlefield. *We believe the Soviets would be unlikely to initiate hostilities against NATO unless they had reasonable expectation of participation by most Pact forces.* [redacted]

3.5(c)

Soviet control over the East European forces—and Soviet confidence in such control—would be at its highest during preparations for hostilities as Pact forces were being alerted, mobilized, and deployed for combat, and during the initial stages of war as Pact forces were advancing. *We believe that military discipline and established control mechanisms are likely to assure the initial reliable response of most Pact forces.* The military reliability of NSWP forces, however, could be degraded as hostilities progressed; this would be especially likely in the case of a stalemate or significant Pact failures on the battlefield. [redacted]

3.5(c)

7
~~Top Secret~~

3.5(c)

~~Top Secret~~ [redacted]

3.5(c)

Warsaw Pact Military Objectives in a War With NATO

A Warsaw Pact strategy for military victory in Europe almost certainly would have to meet three requirements. First, it would have to result in the destruction or seizure of key military, political, and economic objectives, the loss of which would virtually eliminate the utility of continued resistance by NATO. Second, these objectives would have to be destroyed or seized quickly, before major NATO reinforcement could occur, and certainly before NATO could divert its considerable productive capacity to wartime purposes. Third, and perhaps most important, these objectives must be accomplished in a way that would minimize damage to the Soviet homeland. [redacted]

3.5(c)

Likelihood of a NATO-Warsaw Pact War

We believe it highly unlikely that the Pact would attack NATO under present circumstances. And despite shrill rhetoric about Washington's militaristic ambitions and US efforts to achieve military superiority, and a general erosion in East-West relations since the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, it is unlikely that Pact leaders believe that NATO wants war or would seek it as a deliberate policy. We believe war in Europe would become likely only as a result of profound political, military, economic, or social changes—or a serious miscalculation—and would be preceded by a period of growing tension resulting in a crisis of great severity. [redacted]

3.5(c)

The Soviets see a costly and—to some extent—more perilous strategic and political struggle over the rest of the decade. *Nevertheless, we do not now foresee in the near term (the next three to five years) development of a trend that would make a NATO-Warsaw Pact war likely. Differences of view exist in the Politburo and Pact ruling elites with respect to policies toward the West, but these differences are not likely to center around the advisability of war with NATO unless extraordinary changes occur that would threaten the vital interests of the Soviet Union. Changes in the NATO-Pact military balance and alterations in the Pact's perceptions of NATO's strengths and weaknesses could, of course, influence the Pact's assessment of potential gains versus risks in a crisis situation. A perception that NATO's military capability or its unity or resolve to resist had deteriorated would probably encourage Moscow and its allies to try to exercise more influence in Western Europe and would probably result in threats and pressure tactics being applied. We do not believe, however, that changes in the NATO-Pact military balance in themselves would lead to war as long as Moscow perceived that its losses would be heavy and*

8

~~Top Secret~~

3.5(c)

~~Top Secret~~ [redacted]

3.5(c)

that the risk to the Soviet homeland would be high. Despite the potentially catastrophic consequences of a NATO-Soviet war, the Soviets would consider initiating hostilities if they perceived a situation which threatened the integrity of their security system or other vital interests. [redacted]

3.5(c)

A scenario for war in Europe might involve an attack to destroy a NATO Alliance which the Soviets sensed had become demoralized and seriously weakened internally. Such an attack might be designed to take advantage of internal dissent, economic stagnation, or social upheaval in the NATO countries. A possible catalyst for war in Europe could also be the development of a crisis in one or more Pact countries or Yugoslavia. This might take the form of an internal upheaval or some chain of events which threatened a political disintegration of the Pact. An additional possibility is that a future Soviet leadership—faced with an increasingly adverse international environment and grave internal problems—might lash out at the West in a desperate attempt to prevent an eventual collapse of the Soviet regime and the Pact alliance due to extreme international and internal pressures. In this scenario, future Soviet leaders could perceive that time was working against them and they might opt to set a timetable to launch a sudden attack against NATO and/or the United States. We have high confidence, however, that these scenarios have little chance of occurring during the period of this Estimate. We do not foresee NATO becoming seriously weakened as a result of social upheaval in Western Europe or any internal Soviet problems that could develop to the point of threatening the collapse of the Soviet regime. Moreover, even if such events did occur, we do not believe that the Soviet leadership would deliberately initiate a NATO-Warsaw Pact war in response to these events. [redacted]

3.5(c)

Warning Implications for NATO:

A US-Soviet Confrontation in the Persian Gulf

The warning implications for NATO of a US-Soviet military confrontation in the Persian Gulf area are centered around three key considerations:

- The diversion of attention and resources from Europe such a conflict could cause.
- The possibility that a Soviet move into the Gulf area could be designed as a strategic feint to draw US forces to the region as a prelude to a Warsaw Pact military initiative in Europe.
- The possibility of a spillover into Europe of a US-Soviet confrontation in the Gulf. [redacted]

3.5(c)

~~Top Secret~~

3.5(c)

~~Top Secret~~

3.5(c)

We believe it unlikely that the Soviets would deliberately commit their forces in the Gulf region—for example, in Iran or Pakistan—as a strategic feint designed to draw US forces to the region as a prelude to an attack against NATO. Nevertheless, the possibility of a conflict in the Persian Gulf area as a precursor and catalyst for war in Europe cannot be dismissed. A US-Soviet confrontation in the Gulf region would not necessarily provide Moscow and its allies with increased opportunities for masking preparations for war in Europe. It is more likely that a conflict in the Gulf would heighten NATO vigilance in general and could result in an increased readiness posture being ordered for at least some NATO units. [redacted]

3.5(c)

The principal problem for US intelligence with regard to the security of Europe in the event of a Persian Gulf conflict would stem from probable increases in the readiness posture of at least selected elements of Pact forces facing NATO to guard against a possible NATO reaction. Manifestations of heightened readiness could include expanded command and control activity; limited mobilization; increased alert posture and logistic preparations; and changes in the disposition of air, air defense, naval, and ground forces. Such variations from normal peacetime posture would probably be pronounced in the event of a direct US-Soviet confrontation. Depending on its scale, increased Pact readiness opposite NATO as a result of a crisis in the Persian Gulf could shorten the amount of time required to make final preparations for war and in any case would introduce additional ambiguity, complicating the problem of assessment of some military warning indicators and Moscow's intentions in Europe. [redacted]

3.5(c)

Warsaw Pact Doctrine and Readiness

Decisive offensive action is the hallmark of Soviet military doctrine. It provides the impetus behind Soviet emphasis on combat readiness, early seizure of the initiative, preemption and surprise, a combined-arms approach to warfare, and the requirement for force superiority in the main battle areas—backed up by strong reserves to assure the momentum of the attack. Soviet and Pact operational and force developments reflect a systematic effort to meet these doctrinal requirements. [redacted]

3.5(c)

The Warsaw Pact's war-fighting concepts are bold and aggressive, but the execution of these concepts presents several problems. The preparations, coordination, and maneuvers dictated by doctrinal concepts are extremely ambitious and complicated, and would severely test the abilities of both commanders and troops. Likewise, Pact planners realize that there is usually a trade-off between increasing force readiness or superiority and the likelihood of achieving surprise. [redacted]

3.5(c)

10

~~Top Secret~~

3.5(c)

~~Top Secret~~

3.5(c)

Emphasis on combat readiness is a constant theme which supports the Pact's war-fighting doctrine. In particular, Soviet military thinking is still heavily influenced by World War II experience, when the lack of preparedness and initiative resulted in devastating losses. The Soviets intend to fight any future European war on the territory of their enemies. This requires that large, combat-ready forces must be in place at the beginning of hostilities. [redacted]

3.5(c)

Pact planners believe that full military readiness in peacetime is not necessary or realistically feasible. Their perception of the threat includes an assessment that NATO's military forces are not maintained at full readiness for war. They expect that war probably would occur only after a period of heightened tension; the peacetime posture of Pact forces reflects the belief that this period would provide warning, thereby enabling the Pact to increase the readiness of its forces prior to hostilities. *The Pact's overall readiness philosophy is to maintain sufficient forces in readiness to deter attack; to protect perceived national interests, including the containment of nations in the Soviet sphere of influence; and to defend home territories.* [redacted]

3.5(c)

The Pact national and military readiness systems together provide for the control and coordination necessary to take a country (or the Pact) and its armed forces from routine peacetime readiness conditions to readiness for war. The two systems are extremely flexible and are designed to interact and complement one another, but they are not necessarily intended to be totally consistent. The military readiness system is Pact-wide, while the national readiness system is not. Neither system has been fully tested on a national or Pact-wide basis. *We believe, however, that these systems provide the Pact with the necessary mechanisms to move their nations and military forces to a wartime posture.* [redacted]

3.5(c)

How the Warsaw Pact Would Go to War

Political Preparations and Warsaw Pact Consultations. The decision to prepare for or to initiate war with NATO would be made by the Politburo of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, probably on the recommendation of the USSR Defense Council. *The decision process probably would involve scores of supporting high-level party, government, and military officials, although the security measures surrounding these deliberations would be extraordinary. The decision process would be difficult, contentious, and probably prolonged.* The reliability of Moscow's allies would almost certainly be among the matters discussed by the Politburo at this time. The initial Politburo/

11

~~Top Secret~~

3.5(c)

~~Top Secret~~ [redacted]

3.5(c)

Defense Council decision probably would establish the intent to prepare for war and the degree of urgency required, but it probably would not establish the specific date and time of a Pact attack or irrevocably commit the leadership to war. *We believe the final decision to attack and the timing of the attack might not be made until hours before its execution. Whatever the circumstances of war initiation, the Soviets' military dependence on their allies would be a critical factor.* [redacted]

3.5(c)

Although the Soviets undoubtedly would withhold from their allies certain aspects of their own deliberations and perceptions of the crisis, actions and decisions affecting the preparation of the Pact's Combined Armed Forces could not be withheld without seriously risking Moscow's war plans. The Warsaw Pact Wartime Command Statute provides legal and technical means that would allow for a virtual automatic response by non-Soviet Warsaw Pact (NSWP) military units to orders initiated in Moscow without further consultations with East European national authorities. In short, during periods of crisis, Soviet legal authority would essentially abrogate the sovereign rights of the East European states by assuming control over at least some of their armed forces. The Statute does not reveal the nature or extent of political consultations prior to implementation of the statutory mechanisms. [redacted]

3.5(c)

Military Preparations. The manner in which the Pact prepared its forces for war would depend largely on the speed, urgency, and intensity with which a war-threatening crisis developed. Pact planners have identified two approaches to achieving full combat readiness. *In a slowly developing crisis, we believe the Pact nations would probably take a deliberate, time-phased approach, initiating "increased combat readiness" for portions of their armed forces.* This would accomplish a number of precautionary measures, but would fall far short of placing the Pact's military forces on a full wartime posture. This approach would permit the achievement of full readiness in an orderly and systematic manner, while allowing opportunities to avoid hostilities. If a crisis deepened, the Pact could move to "threat-of-war readiness." *The Pact's final military preparations would be initiated by a decision to implement "full combat readiness."* With this decision, preparations for war would move rapidly and continuously. The "full combat readiness" condition, however, is not a declaration of war and it does not order the commitment of units to combat. [redacted]

3.5(c)

Another approach to achieving full readiness—the compressed approach—would be employed after the unanticipated outbreak of hostilities, or when the Pact believed war was unavoidable and

12

~~Top Secret~~

3.5(c)

Top Secret [redacted]

3.5(c)

[redacted]

imminent and there was no time for deliberate, time-phased preparations. Under this option, military forces would be readied simultaneously and as rapidly as possible. Under extreme circumstances, units could be ordered to move directly to "full combat readiness" from their normal peacetime posture [redacted]

3.5(c)

Other Preparations. Assuming a decision to prepare for war, an immediate concern for the Soviets and the Pact would be to maximize internal security and assure the support and stability of the population of the USSR and the East European nations. It is virtually certain that the Soviets and the Pact would develop in their domestic propaganda the theme of a heightened threat from the West and would seek to justify an appropriate military response. Prior to the initiation of hostilities against NATO, the Pact—and the USSR in particular—would seek to exploit to the fullest the potential of public statements and diplomacy as an instrument of policy. Moscow and its allies could not be certain whether such a war would be short or long, nuclear or nonnuclear. As a matter of prudence, the Pact would have to consider a full range of economic preparations. Changes would occur across all economic sectors, and would be pronounced in manufacturing, labor, agriculture, construction, trade and finance, and transportation systems. If these measures were initiated, they would suggest serious concern over an increasing danger of hostilities. The Soviet Union clearly has the most extensive civil defense program among the Pact nations. The primary purpose of this program is to protect essential enterprises, leaders, and institutions, and, to a lesser degree, the population in general. The USSR's civil defense program is designed to assure the survival of a functioning wartime management system. [redacted]

3.5(c)

Attack Options and Warning

Any Pact decision bearing on when to attack would be influenced by a set of sometimes contradictory military factors, including its own preparedness in relation to its perception of the status of NATO preparations, and the desire to achieve surprise as well as to maximize force superiority. The final decision on an attack option, however, almost certainly would not be based on purely military factors, but rather on a combination of military and political considerations. *The major dilemma facing Pact leaders would be the degree to which they would care to trade off Pact preparedness and the full combat potential stipulated by their doctrine, for a greater degree of surprise which might be achieved by a smaller but quicker attack designed to preempt mobilization, reinforcement, and the establishment of an organized defense by NATO.* In the following evaluation of the risks

13

Top Secret [redacted]

3.5(c)

~~Top Secret~~

3.5(c)

and benefits of alternative options for the initial attack, we have defined four basic options for the Central Region as well as possible variations. It should be emphasized, however, that these options only represent certain "phase points" during the Pact's force generation process at which Pact planners could choose to launch an attack; variations and other attack options are possible. [redacted]

3.5(c)

Our assessments of the time required for the Pact to complete the military preparations required to execute various attack options, beginning from a peacetime posture, include a minimum time and a more realistic time. The minimum time reflects our assessment of the Pact's ability to accomplish complex preparations under the most time-constrained conditions, with no major problems. The difficulties inherent in coordinating, controlling, and executing these Pact-wide preparations would be enormous, however, with many opportunities for major mishaps, confusion, delays, and even chaos. The more realistic time estimates allow for the human, mechanical, and climatic difficulties which would probably characterize such an undertaking. Neither the minimum time nor the more realistic time includes specific time allocated for the training of freshly mobilized units. Such training would enhance the combat potential of the mobilized units as well as assure a greater degree of preparedness in other important respects, but at the risk of lessening surprise. Those Pact divisions opposite the Central Region that would benefit the most from postmobilization training would include three Czechoslovak and five Polish low-strength divisions, and almost 30 Soviet divisions in the three western military districts of the USSR. The availability and performance of the Soviet "not ready" divisions would be most critical to the Pact's ability to sustain offensive operations against strong or prolonged NATO resistance. Moreover, many Pact nondivisional units are maintained at low strength in peacetime and would be much better prepared to perform their missions after conducting a period of postmobilization training. *Our assessment of the time required for these low-strength units to train up to a standard we judge to be the minimum proficiency necessary to conduct effective offensive operations in Central Europe would extend their preparation times to about 30 days, plus the time required for movement. In any event, we consider it likely that Warsaw Pact forces would undergo some mobilization before a decision was made to move to a condition of full combat readiness. This would in all likelihood occur during a period of increasing international tension extending over a number of weeks or months before the Pact decided to initiate hostilities.* [redacted]

3.5(c)

14

~~Top Secret~~

3.5(c)

~~Top Secret~~ [redacted]

3.5(c)

Option I—Attack From a Peacetime Posture

There is no evidence that would indicate that the Pact might launch an attack on NATO from a peacetime readiness posture. In fact, Soviet military strategists have explicitly stated that a European war would be improbable without some political warning and a degree of prehostilities mobilization by both sides. The Pact, however, does have some capability to attack NATO on short notice using ground and air units garrisoned near the East-West German border and the West German-Czechoslovak border. [redacted]

3.5(c)

A few divisions might be capable of initiating an attack—possibly directly from their garrisons—within about 24 hours after their commanders received an attack order, depending on specific conditions within individual units. An attack mounted on such short notice, however, could easily result in chaos as unit commanders, their staffs, and troops would have had no forewarning of an attack order and—by definition—made no preparations for an attack. Under normal peacetime conditions, units usually take days, weeks, or even months to prepare for scheduled major exercises (division level and higher). Pact divisional units in East Germany and Czechoslovakia are not fully manned in peacetime, and their higher level communications structure and logistic support systems are not postured to support a standing-start attack. Given 48 hours' notice, Pact divisional units could only marginally increase their ability to mount a coordinated attack, and would still lack a command, control, and communications, and logistic structure that could effectively support their attacks. [redacted]

3.5(c)

As a means of initiating a large-scale war with NATO, an attack from a peacetime posture would probably give the advantages of operational and tactical surprise to the Pact. By dint of surprise and perhaps local force superiority, Pact planners would expect—and might get—some early ground and air victories. These initial successes would probably be the only advantage that would accrue to such an attack. There are many considerations that would weigh against the Pact opting to initiate a war with NATO from a peacetime posture: loss of mobilization advantage; insufficient time to establish a front-level command, control, and communications structure; insufficient time to mobilize and move forward rear service units; lack of time to permit preparation of the Pact's populace or national economies for war; risk of escalation to nuclear war when Pact forces and installations would be especially vulnerable to nuclear attack; and the risks of unpreparedness and surprising their own troops and commanders. *These arguments lead us to conclude that there is little chance that the Pact would initiate war against NATO from a peacetime posture.* [redacted]

3.5(c)

15

~~Top Secret~~

3.5(c)

~~Top Secret~~ [redacted]

3.5(c)

Accordingly, in the extremely unlikely case of a sudden attack on NATO from a peacetime posture, we judge that US and NATO intelligence could detect and would report [redacted] increased activity by units, and dispersion and/or movement within a few hours after the initiation of this activity. Such reported activity would provide sufficient information for Allied commanders and policymakers to take precautionary steps. Because of the extremely unlikely eventuality of such an attack, however, interpretation of the purpose of this activity could be ambiguous and contentious, and a final judgment that an attack was imminent might not be reached before hostilities began. [redacted]

3.3(b)(1)

3.5(c)

Option II—Attack With Two Fronts

Analysis of Pact exercises and doctrinal concepts leads us to conclude that the smallest force the Pact might use to initiate offensive operations in Central Europe would consist of two fronts. This force would consist of Soviet and NSWP ground and tactical air force units in East Germany and Czechoslovakia and possibly Soviet units in Poland—a total of some 40 ground divisions, plus support units. [redacted]

3.5(c)

In the most urgent circumstances, the Pact would need at least five to six days to prepare and position a two-front force—assuming that this force had been maintained in its normal peacetime readiness posture. Initiation of a two-front attack in slightly less time (four to five days) might be possible, but without several less ready and/or more distant divisions in eastern Czechoslovakia. The complexity and magnitude of the required preparations and the risks involved in insufficient preparation would probably cause or require the Pact to take longer than five to six days to prepare this force, with seven to 10 days being a more realistic time frame. The Pact might elect to rapidly launch a two-front attack in order to minimize warning time to the West, but it is more likely that the Pact would gradually raise the readiness of its forces during a period of tension. [redacted]

3.5(c)

The initiation of hostilities after only five to six days of preparation with a two-front force would entail serious risks for the Pact. The attacking force might lack some front-level elements and its initial combat potential would be less than could be achieved with additional preparation time. Moreover, forward deployed Soviet and East German forces would have to assume responsibility for initial operations in northern West Germany and along the Baltic coast because of the unavailability of forces—primarily Polish—that would normally constitute the Pact's Northern Front. Command and control structures,

3.5(c)

16

~~Top Secret~~

~~Top Secret~~

3.5(c)

particularly at the theater and national levels, would remain incomplete. More important, the mobilization and forward deployment of Soviet forces in the western USSR could not be accomplished; these units, therefore, would not be immediately available to reinforce or sustain an attacking two-front force. Furthermore, effective participation in the war by major forces in other areas would be limited, particularly in regard to coordinated naval actions and ground and air offensives on the flanks—due in part to the lower peacetime readiness posture of these Pact forces. *We believe that the Pact would be unlikely to attempt to initiate war from a two-front posture after only five to six days' preparation in other than extraordinarily urgent circumstances.* []

3.5(c)

However, if the Pact did select this option, indicators of such preparations would be observed, assessed, and reported to policymakers within 24 hours after activity had been initiated. We have assessed that the Pact would require a minimum of five to six days to prepare for a two-front attack; US and NATO military commanders and policymakers could expect to have four or more days to make decisions and counterpreparations. These times do not take into account the likelihood that the forces would be raised to higher levels of readiness during any period of tension or crisis that would probably precede a Warsaw Pact decision to move to a full war readiness posture. Assuming that the readiness of the forces had been so raised, the amount of time required to reach full combat readiness could be greatly reduced. In this case, some warnings, however ambiguous, would already have been given. The Intelligence Community would continue to assess the Pact's war preparations and issue additional judgments regarding the nature and extent of these preparations. []

3.5(c)

Option III—Attack With Three Fronts

Under this option, Pact planners could elect to prepare for war via a more phased approach and attack when they had prepared a three-front force. *We believe that the Pact would require, at a minimum, about eight to nine days to prepare and position a three-front force for an attack—assuming that this force had been maintained in its normal peacetime readiness posture. A more realistic time frame for these preparations might be 10 to 12 days from a "cold start." However, follow-on forces from the western USSR consisting primarily of "not ready" divisions would not be able to effectively support and sustain such an attack.* []

3.5(c)

The more complete national and military preparations permitted under the three-front option would assure the availability of a larger

17

~~Top Secret~~

3.5(c)

~~Top Secret~~

3.5(c)

and better prepared force and provide for more efficient joint action by all forces. In this option, those ground maneuver units readied for offensive operations would include all forces in the two-front option described above plus Polish forces and possibly a Soviet army (four divisions) from the Baltic or Belorussian Military District: a total of about 60 divisions. [redacted]

3.5(c)

There is evidence that Pact planners would want at least three fronts available for initial operations in Central Europe, with assurance that at least one additional front would be available for reinforcement soon after the initiation of hostilities. This option also is more consistent than shorter preparation options in regard to Pact doctrinal preferences for force superiority, national and Pact-wide preparations, combined-arms operations, and the Pact's appreciable respect for NATO's war-fighting capabilities. Moreover, it would offer better prospects for sustaining Pact forces and allow additional preparations to guard against nuclear escalation. *Accordingly, we judge that except under extraordinarily urgent circumstances the Pact would prefer to prepare at least a three-front force before initiating hostilities.* [redacted]

3.5(c)

We estimate that we could provide warning to national policy-makers within 24 hours after such preparations were initiated. The United States and NATO would have seven or more days of decision and preparation time if there had been no previous effort on the part of the Warsaw Pact to raise the readiness of its forces. If the Pact had already gradually raised the level of readiness of its forces during a period of tension as we would expect, the time required for final preparations would be shorter. In this case, some warnings, however ambiguous, would already have been given. In any case, the Intelligence Community would continue to assess the steps being taken by the Pact to prepare for war and would issue additional judgments regarding the nature and scope of the preparations. [redacted]

3.5(c)

Option IV—Attack With Five Fronts

Circumstances permitting, the Pact could build up even larger forces before initiating hostilities against NATO. A *five-front attack posture would largely fulfill the Pact's conservative doctrinal preferences in regard to force superiority and would take at least 15 days to achieve, including the forward movement of Soviet forces in the western USSR if the Pact were to attempt to achieve it from a "cold start."* The difficulties involved in rapidly developing a fully mobilized and deployed force from a peacetime posture are such that these preparations realistically might take up to three weeks. In this option,

18

~~Top Secret~~

3.5(c)

~~Top Secret~~ [redacted]

3.5(c)

Soviet ground forces in the three western military districts of the USSR would be available for early reinforcement of Pact forces in Central Europe. As discussed in Option III—the three-front attack—the Soviets could choose to move limited forces from the western USSR to join Polish forces in forming a Polish-Soviet Front. At least some of the remaining forces in the western military districts—some 30 divisions—would probably be organized into at least two additional fronts—the Belorussian and Carpathian Fronts—and forward deployed in Poland and Czechoslovakia before the attack, thereby substantially adding to the momentum and sustainability of a Pact attack. With these forces, Pact ground forces available for operations against Central Europe would total 85 to 90 active divisions plus support units. [redacted]

3.5(c)

This attack option would reduce the Pact's chances of achieving surprise while maximizing the weight of the attack. This option also would increase the ratio of Soviet to non-Soviet Pact forces. It would offer much better prospects for sustainability; the most complete command, control, and communications network; and would allow for additional measures to prepare the Pact's populace, economies, and transportation systems for war. However, due to insufficient training time, "not ready" divisions would have only a marginal capability to conduct effective offensive operations. [redacted]

3.5(c)

Should the Pact opt for a full five-front attack from a "cold start," we judge that we would be able to provide warning within 24 to 48 hours after preparations began. US and NATO military commanders and policymakers would have at least 13 days of decision and preparation time, provided that they reacted expeditiously to the initial warnings. If, as we would expect, final preparations were made after Pact forces had already gradually increased their readiness during a period of increasing tension, the large-scale mobilization of Soviet forces in the western USSR and their forward deployment would still provide timely notice that the Soviets were taking steps that would enable them to execute this attack option. During this period the Intelligence Community would continue to assess the steps being taken by the Pact to prepare for war and would issue additional judgments regarding the nature and scope of these preparations. [redacted]

3.5(c)

Variations in Attack Options

Forward Deployment of Forces in the Western USSR. The Soviets could choose to mobilize and forward-deploy selected "ready" units from the western USSR prior to the complete preparation of the remainder of these forces, most of which are maintained in a peacetime

19

~~Top Secret~~

3.5(c)

~~Top Secret~~

3.5(c)

"not ready" posture. The Soviets notionally practiced the forward deployment of some forces in the western USSR prior to D-day during several major exercises in 1982 and 1983. While such a forward deployment would provide the Pact with additional early firepower and better prospects for sustaining its attacks, it has the significant disadvantage of possibly providing clear and highly detectable warning indicators to NATO. [redacted]

3.5(c)

Soviet air forces are not maintained at full wartime strength or readiness in peacetime. *We believe offensive forces would require about 48 hours to prepare a command and control structure for front-level operations. Strategic aviation forces probably would require an additional 24 hours to complete more extensive command and control arrangements. Thus, within 72 hours the Pact could mount a large-scale air attack throughout NATO's Central Region. However, we believe it highly unlikely that the Soviets would mount such an air attack against NATO independent of a combined-arms offensive.* Rather, the Soviets would prefer—and generally plan on—first completing logistic preparations and expanding their rear services, as well as completing mobilization of air combat units. *Such preparations would require seven to 12 days, at which time Soviet air forces would be fully combat ready.* [redacted]

3.5(c)

Gradual Buildup. The Pact could initiate gradual war preparations—implemented over a period of many weeks or months—either in response to a prolonged crisis or as a result of a deliberate decision to secretly prepare for war and launch a sudden attack. *We judge that the gradual approach to achieving full readiness in reaction to a developing crisis would be the most likely course of events if the Pact were to prepare for war against NATO.* Steps to increase the readiness of elements of the Pact's military forces could be taken selectively over a period of many weeks or months—such as the mobilization of certain low-strength units, that is, gradually converting them from a "not ready" to a "ready" posture. Many preparations, which in time-sensitive circumstances might be initiated by a declaration of a combat alert (an order requiring immediate departure from garrisons) or the declaration of "threat-of-war" or "full" readiness, could be accomplished incrementally without the declaration of an alert or the formal implementation of an increased readiness posture. Such deviations from normal peacetime patterns, however, would be detected by US and NATO intelligence, particularly if implemented on a large scale, and would be interpreted as a modification of the Pact's military posture. Such activity would certainly intensify US and NATO intelligence collection efforts and might also initiate similar preparatory actions by

3.5(c)

20

~~Top Secret~~

~~Top Secret~~ [redacted]

3.5(c)

NATO. Although the Pact's efforts to gradually increase preparations for war might reduce the time necessary to make final preparations for war discussed in Options II, III, and IV, they would be taken at the risk of exposure and NATO counterpreparations. [redacted]

3.5(c)

We judge that we could recognize large-scale nonroutine activities such as the following:

- *Shortened or intensified training cycles.*
- *Large-scale mobilization of reservists in Eastern Europe or the western military districts of the USSR.*
- *Widespread or unusual military training on weekends or holidays.*
- *Major changes in training schedules or procedures.*
- *Major increases or decreases in manning or readiness posture.*

3.5(c)

Because of the high risks and costs involved—including NATO counterpreparations and the risk of miscalculation—the Pact would probably defer overt and large-scale mobilization, major force deployments, and other highly visible and provocative measures until the final transition to full readiness for war. *We judge that, even after some weeks or months of gradual preparations, there would still be a discernible difference in the nature, scope, and pace of preparedness measures that would enable us to provide warnings that the Pact was initiating the final steps that would enable it to go to war.* Pact deception measures and conditioning, however, could shorten the time available to defuse a crisis or to take countermeasures, particularly if policymakers delayed action while awaiting unambiguous proof of Pact intentions. *Nevertheless, we are confident that we could inform policymakers that the Pact was initiating the final steps that would enable it to go to war within 24 hours after the beginning of the activities associated with the transition to a "full readiness" condition. We would already have issued warnings—probably repeatedly—of the military measures being taken by the Pact, and of a growing danger of hostilities.* [redacted]

3.5(c)

21

~~Top Secret~~

3.5(c)

Blankps

~~Top Secret~~ [redacted]

[redacted]

3.5(c)

DISCUSSION

I. BACKGROUND

A. Scope of the Estimate

1. This Estimate examines how a NATO-Warsaw Pact war in Europe might begin, focusing on the preparations the Pact would make under various attack options, and when US intelligence would probably detect and report such preparations for war. Warsaw Pact perceptions, doctrine, readiness, and objectives during a war with NATO, as well as the likelihood of war under present and near-term circumstances (the next three to five years), are also addressed. Judgments focus on Europe, but certain events—namely the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and developments in Iran—have increased the potential for a confrontation between US and Soviet forces in the Persian Gulf region. For this reason, the Estimate discusses the warning implications for NATO of a conflict in the Persian Gulf involving US and Soviet forces. [redacted]

intends to launch an attack in the near future. The information conveyed in warning of attack would be more precise than that communicated in warning of war, including—to the extent possible—when, where, and in what strength the adversary will attack. Under most circumstances, these specifics could be provided only late in a crisis. [redacted]

3.5(c)

C. The Warning Process

3. Warning is the communication of dangers implicit in a wide spectrum of activities by potential opponents, ranging from apparently routine defense measures, to substantial increases in readiness and force preparedness, to acts of political, economic, terrorist, or military aggression. A political or economic crisis is often a precursor of military events. Such a crisis would be reported as it developed, thereby providing the earliest warning that military events may occur. [redacted]

3.5(c)

B. Definition: Warning of War

2. For purposes of this Estimate, we define "warning of war" as *the communication of intelligence judgments to national policymakers that a state or alliance intends war, or is on a course that substantially increases the risks of war and is taking steps to prepare for war.* Our initial warnings may not fulfill all of the elements of this definition, particularly specific judgments regarding enemy intent, but these warnings could be provided to policymakers relatively early and would provide a basis for decisions concerning options and appropriate countermeasures. We would be unlikely in our initial warnings to be able to foretell when or where the enemy will attack, or if an attack will occur at all. The warning process, however, is continuous. The early warnings would be followed by further assessments and warnings as necessary until the outbreak of hostilities, or the end of the crisis. While concern for attack by a hostile power is the ultimate purpose of the warning process, this Estimate does not focus upon the specifics of "warning of attack": *the communication of an intelligence judgment to national policymakers that an adversary is not only preparing its armed forces for war but also*

4. The primacy of Europe to the national security interests of the United States causes the US Intelligence Community to strive for a warning process that trades certainty for time. The US warning system seeks to provide early notice of events that might presage Pact offensive operations. While tentative and ambiguous, early warning would provide time for developing and executing courses of action by policymakers which are low in costs and high in impact on crisis deterrence. As additional events transpire and tensions increase, the US warning system is designed to indicate greater likelihood that war is in the offing. As warning assessments become more certain, policymakers may continue to focus on crisis avoidance or containment, but costs increase and opportunities are lost. However, there is no finite point at which the warning system can foretell with certainty that war is imminent. It can assess potential enemy capabilities, but it is less reliable for forecasting hostile intent, which might become apparent only in the act of war itself. This is due partially to the nature of the system, which must rely upon human judgment, and partially to the dynamics of crises in which the reactions of US policymakers to early warnings may affect the development of the course of events. In the most unambiguous warning—an attack is being executed—decisions

23

~~Top Secret~~

3.5(c)

~~Top Secret~~

3.5(c)

3.5(c)

are limited to a reactive set, and the consequences of mistakes may be extreme. [redacted]

5. The policymaker is the critical focus of the warning process. This process is oriented toward advising the policymaker that a situation is developing that might require prudent actions to balance the chances that the opposition is on a course that may culminate in an attack on the United States or its Allies. The policymaker must be aware that action—or inaction—on his part may affect the likelihood of war, that is, the adversary may key his resolve for war in part on actions taken—or not taken—by the United States. [redacted]

3.5(c)

Intelligence Community Warning Vehicles

Within the Intelligence Community, each analyst is responsible for providing warning through the chain of command of individual agencies via current intelligence reporting and briefings, as well as various departmental intelligence products. At the national intelligence level, there are a number of products and mechanisms for disseminating warning judgments. Products include National Intelligence Estimates (NIEs), Special NIEs, and Watch Committee Reports. In addition, monthly warning and forecast meetings are hosted by National Intelligence Officers responsible for regional areas. Their reports are forwarded to the National Intelligence Officer for Warning, who provides warning advisories to the Director of Central Intelligence (DCI), as appropriate. Formal Alert Memorandums (or Warning Memorandums) have not been used since the early 1980s. Instead, informal typescript memorandums to the DCI—both coordinated and uncoordinated—have become more common due to their unstructured, less restrictive nature. Moreover, an informal, multilevel "old boy network" operates to provide warning or to present alternative views. The essential point is that there is no single recognized document or method through which the Intelligence Community would be expected to convey its consensus that war was likely with the Soviet Union. Warning of war would probably develop in many ways, through many channels, with various shades of opinion indicating different interpretations of the observable facts and indicators as they became known.

~~Confidential~~

6. War preparations could affect the civilian domain before military forces were fully prepared and deployed for war. These early preparations would be reported incrementally, along with any military activity. Intelligence Community judgments regarding the

significance of these developments would be tentative, and uncertainties would be relatively high. Community agreement might be slow to develop regarding the purpose of the early preparations. While representatives of the various intelligence agencies would inform their principals regarding the developing situation, it is quite likely that the warning aspects would be delivered with varying interpretations of cogency. Accordingly, warning of war should not be viewed as a single event, but as a process of communicating warnings of increased threat. Only when the predominantly military phases of preparation were well under way would the climate for coordinated warning communications be established. [redacted]

3.5(c)

7. When issued, the initial warnings would provide evidence on the nature of the decisions taken, the extent of measures under way, an estimate of when preparations would be largely completed, and a judgment about when the Pact would be ready for hostilities. The Intelligence Community, however, could not be certain that the Pact would attack as soon as it had taken the requisite steps to do so. The strength of the warning system for discerning increased capabilities of the Warsaw Pact to initiate hostilities should not be construed as a capacity to foretell with confidence the course of subsequent events. Nor should recipients of warning expect that definitive thresholds at which decisions should be made will necessarily be identified. The provision of warning cannot be based on instantaneous assessments. Warning must be grounded in trends, military growth over time, and developments that could possibly forecast intent to act. Even with relatively specific and quantitative force judgments, warning of war would still be an ambiguous, iterative process (see inset on page 25). [redacted]

3.5(c)

8. The Intelligence Community has never observed the Soviet Union or Warsaw Pact making preparations of the magnitude and duration necessary to go to war with NATO. Nonetheless, activity which we have observed—Hungary (1955), Czechoslovakia (1968), Afghanistan (1979), and Poland (1980-81), plus analysis of exercises over the years—has given us confidence that, while we might not recognize war preparations in their earliest phases, we could provide timely warnings that the Soviets and the Pact member states were converting to a wartime posture and were risking war by their behavior. [redacted]

3.5(c)

9. A warning that does not approximate the expectations of the recipient would meet with resistance, and pressures to disregard the early and tentative evidence of the possibility or likelihood of war would

3.5(c)

~~Top Secret~~



3.5(c)

**Community Warning Performance
in Two Recent Crises**

During the Polish crisis in 1980 four separate Alert Memorandums were issued. The last Memorandum in 1980 (issued on 2 December) stated that "the Soviets are readying their forces for military intervention in Poland. We do not know, however, whether they have made the decision to intervene, or are still attempting to find a political solution." A final Alert Memorandum on the Polish crisis was issued on 2 April 1981. It stated that "Soviet leaders have been convinced by the evident impotence of the Polish party and government that military intervention is necessary." The Memorandum added, however, that "We do not know if the decision to intervene in Poland has been made, but... the Soviets now are capable of intervention... with little further warning." The crisis ended without Soviet military intervention. Three Alert Memorandums were issued during the crisis in Afghanistan. The first two Memorandums (issued on 14 September and 19 December 1979) suggested that the Soviets might be willing to intervene militarily. The third Memorandum, issued on 25 December, reported that the invasion had probably begun, and it had. In these two crises, the Intelligence Community did not make unequivocal judgments concerning the likelihood of Soviet military intervention.

3.5(c)

~~Secret~~

be great. First, there is the genuine risk of setting in motion precautionary measures that might be misinterpreted as hostile acts and further aggravate the situation or even precipitate the conflict. Second and third are the economic and political costs of ordering the mobilization of military forces and national resources for an event that might not occur or could be long delayed.

3.5(c)

10. Acceptance of the warnings that are given is the final step in the process which draws upon the information-gathering machinery of government to develop coherent evidence of the likelihood of an event of great concern to national policymakers. Early warning judgments, while tentative and ambiguous, would become more specific and alarming as a crisis deepened. The process culminates in the mind of the policymaker when he is persuaded that the likelihood of the event is so high that considerations to the contrary should be set aside and action taken to counter or to mitigate its consequences.

3.5(c)

D. Recent Intelligence Community Studies

11. In recent years a number of national intelligence and departmental studies have increased our knowledge and understanding of the readiness posture of Soviet and Warsaw Pact forces, their force generation capabilities, alert procedures and systems, operational and employment concepts, command structure, the reliability of non-Soviet Warsaw Pact (NSWP) forces for coalition warfare, and Soviet capabilities and contingency planning for fighting a war in the Persian Gulf. This Estimate draws heavily from these and other studies cited throughout this document and in the Bibliography.

3.5(c)

E. Significant Events and Developments

12. Significant events and developments occurring since the last European warning Estimate was published in 1978 are discussed in the inset on pages 26-28; some are discussed in more detail in the Estimate, and others are addressed elsewhere in Intelligence Community studies (refer to the Bibliography). (u)

3.5(c)

~~Top Secret~~

3.5(c)

Recent Significant Events and Developments Pertinent to Warning of War in Europe

<u>Event/Development</u>	<u>Significance</u>
<i>Instability in the Persian Gulf region.</i>	Increased US and Soviet interest and planning emphasis on the Persian Gulf region; increased potential for US-Soviet military confrontation in the region, with potential for spillover into Europe or for diversion of attention and resources from Europe. Soviet General Staff exercises in the southern USSR since 1980 have provided insight into how the Soviets might prepare for and execute a major campaign in the region.
<i>Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.</i>	Provided insight into the deliberate and time-phased approach (with discontinuities) the Soviets took in reaction to a simmering crisis on their border; contingency plans and preparations for possible military intervention began months before the invasion; early preparations were unobtrusive or ambiguous, while final preparations in December 1979 were more obvious and threatening. The Soviet presence in Afghanistan has increased the potential for future military operations in the Persian Gulf area, particularly against southeast Iran and Pakistan, with possibilities for conflict with the US.
<i>The Polish crisis, 1980-81.</i>	Provided insight into the deliberate and time-phased approach the Soviets took in reaction to events in Poland; featured selective mobilization and exercising of a potential intervention force.
<i>Manpower shortages in Soviet maneuver divisions in Eastern Europe. A growing body of evidence indicates that a significant disparity between peacetime and war-authorized manning has existed since the mid-1970s and has increased since 1979, principally due to the reorganization and expansion of motorized rifle and tank divisions. Soviet motorized rifle divisions are now assessed to be manned between 80 and 85 percent of war-authorized strength; some motorized rifle battalions are manned at about 70 percent of war-authorized strength. Tank divisions are assessed to be manned between 85 and 90 percent of wartime authorizations. Previous assessments had estimated that peacetime manning authorizations in these divisions were 95 percent or more of war authorizations.</i>	Manning is one of the most important determinants of unit readiness. These units would depend, to a greater extent than previously estimated, on augmentation to achieve war-authorized strength. Their readiness posture can be assumed to be within Moscow's perception of acceptable risk under present circumstances. Although the proficiency of these divisions would be increased if committed at war-authorized strength, we assess that they are capable of initiating and conducting offensive operations against NATO at their peace-authorized strength. Accumulated evidence, however, indicates that the Soviets plan to augment manning in these units prior to hostilities by several methods: mobilizing civilian reservists employed by the Soviets in Eastern Europe; cross-leveling within units in Eastern Europe, that is, transferring troops from less critical peacetime jobs; and bringing significant numbers of troops from the USSR.
<i>Warsaw Pact Statute for Wartime Command and the implementation of the "Monument" communication procedure. Formally ratified in early 1980 by all Pact nations except Romania.</i>	The Statute and subsequent protocols, in effect, give the Soviet General Staff a legal basis for alerting, mobilizing, and organizing for combat NSWP forces (except Romania); the "Monument" communication procedure provides a more rapid and reliable command and control dissemination procedure for alerting Pact forces.

23

~~Top Secret~~

3.5(c)

~~Top Secret~~

3.5(c)

Recent Significant Events and Developments Pertinent to Warning of War in Europe (Continued)

Event/Development	Significance
<i>Exercising of Warsaw Pact high commands of forces opposite NATO's central and southern regions. The temporary activation of these headquarters has been featured in exercises since the late 1970s, and the Warsaw Pact Wartime Command Statute provides for their establishment in a crisis.</i>	These wartime commands would facilitate centralized, continuous, and reliable command and control of Pact forces opposite NATO through the Soviet General Staff, thereby improving Moscow's ability to direct integrated Pact operations. Peacetime exercises reduce the time required to achieve high levels of operational efficiency.
<i>Reorganization of Soviet Air and Air Defense Forces.</i>	Facilitates rapid transition to wartime organization; provides greater operational flexibility through centralized control at military district/front and theater of military operations levels; enhances offensive air operations in support of theater operations in Europe and Asia.
<i>Reorganization of Soviet motorized rifle and tank divisions and the reemergence of "army aviation" as a type of aviation in the Soviet Air Forces. This has entailed the augmentation of divisions with additional artillery, tanks, infantry fighting vehicles, and helicopters. Army aviation consists primarily of helicopters at MD/front, army, and division levels that perform tactical missions for combined-arms commanders.</i>	Increased firepower, mobility, tactical flexibility, and overall enhancement of combined-arms capability. Improved prospects for executing doctrinal requirement for high-speed offensive and operations in depth by combined-arms formations. Increases the threat posed by forward deployed forces.
<i>Concept of employing a tailored, high-speed, deep exploitation force at army and front level (Operational Maneuver Group—OMG), and the creation of a new army corps structure. At least two Soviet divisions—including one in the western USSR—have been reorganized into a new type army corps, each consisting of four to five mechanized and armored brigades and support units.</i>	Designed to increase battlefield tempo by early and deep commitment into enemy rear areas to seize or destroy key facilities and objectives, disrupt lateral movement and reinforcement, and, in general, destroy the integrity of enemy defenses. The new army corps structure appears well-suited for the OMG role and was probably tailored for this purpose; it features more firepower, flexibility, and a better combined-arms mix.
<i>Exercise theme. Forward deployment and incorporation of some Soviet forces from the western USSR into first operational echelon fronts prior to D-day (observed in a few exercises in 1982 and 1983).</i>	Should Soviet preparations for war in Europe include the forward deployment of forces from the western USSR prior to D-day, this movement could provide NATO with clear and highly detectable warning indicators.
<i>Introduction of nuclear-capable artillery in the forward area. The SS 152-mm self-propelled (SP) gun (March 1981), the M-1976 152-mm field gun (December 1982), and the M-1975 203-mm SP howitzer (December 1982). (Based on a reassessment of Soviet artillery capabilities, older 152-mm artillery pieces in the forward area may also have a nuclear capability.)</i>	These artillery systems provide greater accuracy and lower yields than existing rocket and missile systems, and therefore give commanders a more flexible forward deployed nuclear delivery option. Degrades warning indicator that such weapons might be forward deployed only during a crisis.
<i>Forward deployment of SU-24 Fencer bombers. Deployed in East Germany, Poland, and Hungary since 1981. Assessed to have an all-weather interdiction capability.</i>	Provides enhanced reaction posture during a crisis as well as degrading an important warning indicator; also provides greater radius of action and a more versatile load-carrying capacity.
<i>Forward deployment of short-range ballistic missiles (SRBMs). The SS-20 was deployed in the Group of Soviet Forces in Germany (GSFG) and probably Czechoslovakia in early 1984.</i>	Threatens, among other things, NATO airfields and US intermediate-range nuclear missiles. Degrades an important warning indicator.

27
~~Top Secret~~

3.5(c)

~~Top Secret~~

3.5(c)

Recent Significant Events and Developments Pertinent to Warning of War in Europe (Continued)

<u>Event/Development</u>	<u>Significance</u>
<i>Formation and deployment of air assault brigades and battalions at the front and army level, respectively. Nine air assault brigades have been formed since 1980, including one in GSFG. All GSFG armies have had air assault battalions assigned since the early 1980s.</i>	Provides theater, front, and army commanders with a flexible, well-armed force which could be employed early in a conflict against targets in NATO's tactical depths. Likely targets for seizure, disruption, or destruction are nuclear weapons and delivery systems; command, control, communications, and logistic facilities; and key terrain features. Air assault operations are designed to facilitate rapid penetration of first-echelon formations through NATO's forward defensive zone as well as directly support the high-speed maneuver of large exploitation forces such as OMGs.
<i>Soviet logistic capabilities in East Germany are much greater than earlier estimates have indicated. Currently available rear services equipment and depot stocks of ammunition and fuel are adequate to support at least twice as many Soviet forces than are currently located in East Germany. The extent of logistic capabilities in other groups of forces is less clear.</i>	This stockpile is adequate to support a 90-day war reserve requirement for about two fronts. Forward deployment of logistic elements as a warning indicator has been degraded.
<i>Deployment of SA-5/Cannon strategic long-range SAMs in Eastern Europe. At least six sites are under construction in East Germany, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and Bulgaria; construction of additional sites—including some in Poland—is expected. The SA-5 has a range of 275 kilometers and operates to an altitude of 30,500 meters. Most of the sites in Eastern Europe are likely to be manned and controlled by national forces.</i>	Will extend Pact air defense capabilities over the forward area. Degrades an important warning indicator.
<i>Soviet naval exercise in spring 1984. This large-scale mobility exercise of the Western Fleets featured deployment of strategic and general purpose naval units to dispersal and operating areas, followed by notional conventional and nuclear combat operations.</i>	In the absence of a gradual force buildup through a period of increasing tension, the sudden deployment complicated the warning problem for naval forces.
<i>Curtailment of Soviet military harvest support. Recent information suggests that the use of military trucks and personnel for harvest support will be sharply curtailed, if not terminated.</i>	This move is probably designed to assure the more efficient use of resources in the civil sector, as well as to improve military training and readiness. Degrades the utility of a seasonal warning indicator of normalcy.

~~Top Secret~~

3.5(c)

28

~~Top Secret~~

3.5(c)

~~Top Secret~~ [redacted]

3.5(c)

II. CONTEXT OF A NATO-WARSAW PACT WAR

A. Warsaw Pact Perceptions of NATO's Military Capabilities

13. Warsaw Pact perceptions of NATO's capability to wage war undoubtedly play a major role in shaping the Pact's strategy for war with NATO. Significant aspects of the Pact's view of NATO's capabilities have been gleaned from a variety of sources. This material indicates that the Pact has substantial and generally accurate knowledge of NATO's organization, force structure, alert procedures and reaction times, equipment, tactics and strategy, and mobilization and reinforcement capabilities. [redacted]

3.5(c)

remaining nuclear-armed aircraft are judged capable of taking off with six to 12 hours' notice. Fifty percent of NATO's tactical aircraft armed with conventional weapons are judged ready for takeoff with six hours' notice. In regard to ground forces, Pact planners believe that some NATO tactical units garrisoned near the East German and Czechoslovak borders—particularly reconnaissance and covering troops and missile and air defense units—could occupy their operational deployment areas within six to 12 hours. [redacted] opined that the readiness of NATO forces had reached the highest level in history—particularly in regard to US and West German forces—and that the morale and discipline of NATO troops were much improved. [redacted]

3.3(b)(1)

3.5(c)

14. Available evidence indicates that Pact assessments tend to maximize or even exaggerate NATO capabilities. This tendency toward "worst case" analysis may be indicative of uncertainty and/or respect for NATO, but in any case is generally consistent with the prudent manner in which Pact planners assess the military capabilities of potential adversaries and the risks involved in war. Three perceptions in particular illustrate the Pact's respect for NATO's military capabilities and have significant implications for Pact strategic planning. [redacted]

3.5(c)

Capability of NATO's Air Forces

17. The Pact recognizes that it would have to use its air and air defense forces to attempt to achieve air superiority early in a war or face the prospect of NATO's use of airpower to offset the Pact's quantitative advantage in ground forces. The Soviets consider NATO's air forces a major military threat to Pact forces in Central Europe, and project a 150-percent increase in the capabilities of these forces during 1980-85. This growth results from the deployment of the F-15, F-16, F-18, and Tornado—aircraft that the Soviets judge to have significantly higher combat capabilities than the aircraft they are replacing. The Soviets are also concerned about the enhanced command and control capabilities offered by such aircraft as the E-3A AWACS and the expanding NATO ability to conduct airborne radioelectronic warfare. [redacted]

3.5(c)

NATO Mobilization, Reinforcement, and Deployment Capabilities

15. Pact planners see a serious threat in NATO's ability to rapidly expand its standing forces by mobilization in Europe and by reinforcement from outside Europe. [redacted] during the early 1980s credit NATO with about 80 ground divisions (including French forces) plus more than 100 separate infantry, armor, and airborne brigades and regiments. These assessments indicate that the Pact believes that the United States could reinforce Europe with six divisions and 60 squadrons of combat aircraft within 10 days. Additionally, Pact planners believe that within 30 days NATO is capable of increasing the number of aircraft in Europe by 900, and increasing its ground forces by about 50 divisions, including reinforcing units from the United States and the mobilization of units within Europe. [redacted]

3.3(b)(1)

18. The Soviets expect the new-generation NATO aircraft to degrade the effectiveness of Pact air defenses. One estimate, for example, concluded that the capabilities of Warsaw Pact radars to detect and track targets would drop by 50 percent or more, the probabilities of kill for surface-to-air missiles (SAMs) and aircraft would decline precipitously, and the capabilities of fire-control radars aboard aircraft would be cut in half. [redacted]

3.5(c)

16. NATO ground and air reaction and deployment times have received excellent grades [redacted] NATO nuclear-armed tactical aircraft maintained on alert status are believed capable of taking off within 15 minutes, and over one-half of the

3.5(c)

3.3(b)(1)

19. Perceptions by the Soviets of the major problems facing their air defense forces are clear. In the tactical arena, the greatest concern is about aircraft such as the US A-10 and helicopters operating at low altitude under cover of intense electronic countermeasures. The deployment by the United States of long-range cruise missiles and the prospect of advanced penetrating bombers such as the B-1 cause the Soviets

3.5(c)

~~Top Secret~~

~~Top Secret~~

3.5(c)

3.5(c) much concern as these weapons would be difficult to defend against because of their low flight profiles and small radar cross sections.

NATO Nuclear Capabilities

20. The NATO theater nuclear capability is perceived as a profound threat and dominates Pact strategic planning for war in Europe.

3.3(b)(1) credited NATO with 8,000 tactical nuclear warheads and 3,000 aircraft, artillery pieces, and missiles capable of delivering nuclear munitions. Moreover, Pact planners are convinced that NATO would probably employ nuclear weapons in a NATO-Warsaw Pact war. Accumulated evidence reveals considerable Pact anxiety over the formidable difficulties inherent in locating and destroying NATO nuclear warheads and delivery systems.

3.5(c) 21. Moscow also recognizes that NATO's planning and capability to implement limited nuclear options could initiate an uncontrollable chain of escalation. Should NATO initiate the limited use of tactical nuclear weapons, Moscow sees itself faced with several sobering choices: continue fighting with conventional weapons only, respond in kind, or escalate to massive, theaterwide or even strategic nuclear strikes. The Soviets have described in their literature the concept of "limited" or "selective" use of nuclear weapons, and have played such options in some exercises. However, both doctrine and exercises suggest that the Soviets remain highly skeptical of the chances for controlling escalation at this level. Furthermore, once the nuclear threshold is crossed, the Pact's conventional force superiority would lose much of its significance. From Moscow's standpoint, the NATO deployment of Pershing II ballistic missiles and ground-launched cruise missiles (GLCMs) makes it even more difficult to control escalation of nuclear war in Europe. NATO deployment of these long-range theater nuclear systems is seen as increasing the risk of strikes on the USSR during theater nuclear exchanges, thus obfuscating the threshold between theater nuclear and strategic (intercontinental) nuclear war. These systems reduce warning time, present new problems and uncertainties for Moscow in assessing the scale and objectives of a NATO nuclear attack, and tend to reinforce the Soviet bias for large-scale nuclear attack planning.

Risks Involved in a War With NATO

22. Pact assessments clearly show a concern for NATO's ability to quickly mobilize and deploy its in-

theater forces as well as to bring substantial reinforcements from outside the theater within 30 days. The obvious strategic implication for the Pact is that, even in the short run, NATO could field large and powerful forces. These forces might offer sufficient resistance to prevent the Pact from gaining a quick victory, thereby providing NATO time to bring its larger population, greater industrial base, and superior technology to bear. Emerging Western doctrine and technology for placing Pact follow-on forces at risk might disrupt the momentum of a Pact conventional offensive. Furthermore, NATO has a large, diversified array of tactical nuclear-capable weapons which the Pact believes would probably be employed against it. The existence of the separately controlled US, British, and French strategic nuclear strike systems increases Moscow's uncertainty about nuclear escalation. The Soviet leadership sees war in Europe, particularly nuclear war, as holding its territory at risk from strategic nuclear strikes. NATO's nuclear deterrent capability would seem to make nonnuclear war, in which NATO's theater nuclear capability would be attacked with conventional armaments, the most rational option for the Pact. The Soviets' dilemma is that successful Pact nonnuclear offensive operations would probably lead to the use of nuclear weapons by NATO. In sum, the size and flexibility of use of NATO's nuclear weapons pose extraordinary threats to the Pact's war-fighting capabilities, home territories, and viability.

23. Other factors that Soviet and Pact planners would take into account in assessing the risks of war with NATO include:

- Prospects for external assistance for NATO.
- Possibility that China might attack in the Soviet Far East.
- Confidence by the Soviets in the reliability and war-fighting effectiveness of their Pact allies.

The Pact, while noting NATO's own impressive potential for fighting a protracted war, believes that NATO would probably receive assistance from other European countries—particularly Sweden. The Pact probably sees many non-European nations as favoring NATO and believes that some of these countries would support or join NATO in a prolonged war. Moreover, the Soviets fear that a protracted conflict with NATO could encourage China to attack along the USSR's eastern borders, and some Soviet exercises have featured simultaneous conflicts in Europe and Asia. Finally, any doubts about its allies' willingness or ability to fight NATO would certainly constrain any enthusiasm Moscow might have for war. An attack against

3.5(c)

~~Top Secret~~

3.5(c)

Top Secret

3.5(c)

NATO must be mounted from East European territory and the lines of communication to support such an attack transit through Eastern Europe. The non-Soviet Warsaw Pact countries are largely responsible for operating and maintaining the ground transportation systems linking the USSR and Eastern Europe and for providing critical rear area defenses and security. Moreover, more than half the Pact divisions and aircraft now in Central Europe are East European, and they have been assigned important combat roles in the initial stages of war. The military reliability of the Soviets' Pact allies is summarized below

3.5(c)

B. Military Reliability of Non-Soviet Warsaw Pact Forces²

24. The Soviet Union is concerned about the military reliability of its Warsaw Pact allies in the event of war with NATO and is apprehensive regarding initiatives NATO might undertake in a crisis or war to decouple Moscow from them. Soviet dependence on its allies, especially in Central Europe, is so great as to make their participation crucial to prospects for success on the battlefield. In fact, we believe that the Soviets would be unlikely to initiate hostilities against NATO unless they had reasonable expectation of participation by most Pact forces. Although the Soviets have taken a number of political and military actions to try to assure their allies' cooperation, the wartime reliability of the non-Soviet members of the Pact would depend in part on developments which the Soviets could not entirely control. These include the circumstances of the outbreak of hostilities; possible NATO actions to try to induce disaffection, nonparticipation, or defections by Pact members; and the outcome of initial battlefield engagements

3.5(c)

25. Prior to a final decision to go to war, East European leaders, whose countries have the most to lose in a war with NATO, are likely to use whatever influence they may have to attempt to moderate Soviet decisions. Moscow's willingness, however, to do whatever is necessary to ensure compliance with its decisions is an accepted fact by its allies, and, once the Soviets decide to go to war, East European leaders are likely to tailor their actions with this in mind. The general outlook of NSWP leadership groups and their political dependency on the Soviets would probably result in most members of these elites assessing their interests during a crisis as congruent with those of the Soviets in most respects. This would not necessarily be

3.5(c)

² A detailed discussion of this subject is found in NIE 12/11-63, *Military Reliability of the Soviet Union's Warsaw Pact Allies*, 28 June 1963

true of all members of the various NSWP leadership groups, and the behavior of lower level military officials and populaces in general would be less predictable.

3.5(c)

26. Soviet control over the East European forces—and Soviet confidence in such control—would be at its highest during preparations for hostilities as Pact forces were being alerted, mobilized, and deployed for combat, and during the initial stages of war as Pact forces were advancing. We believe that military discipline and established control mechanisms are likely to assure the reliable response of most Pact forces to initial alert, mobilization, and commitment orders. The military reliability of NSWP forces, however, could be degraded as hostilities progressed; this would be especially likely in the case of a stalemate or significant Pact failures on the battlefield.

3.5(c)

27. The Soviets have continued to effect more extensive control measures such as the recently introduced Warsaw Pact Wartime Command Statute, which legally centralizes command and control of Pact forces in Soviet hands. Although not all senior NSWP political and military authorities would necessarily comply with a Soviet order to take their forces to war, Soviet control measures would limit the ability of the NSWP political or military leadership to ignore or countermand alert, mobilization, and deployment orders. We believe the following four factors would affect NSWP reliability:

- Circumstances surrounding initiation of hostilities; from the Soviet perspective, the war would be portrayed as defensive in nature for the Pact.
- Personal motivations and opportunities of NSWP leadership elites; possibilities and inclinations for shirking responsibility, procrastination, or avoidance would vary greatly.
- NATO initiatives, such as declarations of support for abstaining East European countries, targeting policies, and battlefield tactics aimed at inducing neutrality or assistance for NATO.
- Most important, early successes or defeats on the battlefield would probably be the most critical factor for the Pact once hostilities began.

3.5(c)

28. The Soviets probably perceive that the military forces of the NSWP countries would be reliable during initial hostilities, albeit in differing degrees and circumstances, in the following order (highest to lowest reliability): Bulgaria, East Germany, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland, and Romania. In regard to Poland,

3.5(c)

~~Top Secret~~

3.5(c)

Soviet confidence in the near-term reliability of the Polish armed forces had been eroded in 1980-81 because of widespread social unrest, disorganization of the Polish Communist Party, and severe economic problems. While the extent of current Soviet confidence in Poland's military forces is in question, the majority view within the Intelligence Community holds that Moscow believes that the Polish armed forces would obey Pact wartime orders. Romania is undoubtedly perceived by the Soviets as their least reliable ally in part because of its limited participation in Pact exercises and its refusal to integrate its forces formally into Pact command and control systems.

3.5(c)

Such an attack could be a first step in going to war with NATO or an attempt to settle a crisis on Pact terms while avoiding large-scale war with NATO.

3.5(c)

C. Warsaw Pact Military Objectives in a War With NATO³

29. A Warsaw Pact strategy for military victory in Europe almost certainly would have to meet three requirements. First, it would have to result in the destruction or seizure of key military, political, and economic objectives, the loss of which would virtually eliminate the utility of continued resistance by NATO. Second, these objectives would have to be destroyed or seized quickly before major NATO reinforcement could occur, and certainly before NATO could divert its considerable productive capacity to wartime purposes. Third, and perhaps most important, these objectives must be accomplished in a way that minimizes damage to the Soviet homeland.

3.5(c)

32. We see no advantage for the Pact in beginning a large-scale war with a limited-objective attack. By definition, such an attack would have little or no military value in destroying NATO's short-term war-fighting capability or seriously interrupting the development of its long-term combat potential. In fact, it would sacrifice strategic surprise and ensure that NATO mobilization would not lag far behind the Pact.

3.5(c)

30. **Criticality of the NATO Central Region.** Western Europe's greatest military, manpower, industrial, and technological resources lie in the Central Region. The rapid and decisive defeat of NATO forces in the Central Region would prevent NATO from realizing its long-term potential for war. Warsaw Pact military literature and exercises clearly indicate that the primary objective of Pact military operations against NATO would be a rapid and total victory in Central Europe.

3.5(c)

33. As a stratagem to secure an important political objective—such as control of West Berlin or Hamburg—while attempting to avoid a wider war with NATO, a limited-objective attack would have serious flaws from the Pact perspective. Theoretically, such an attack would attempt to present the United States, West Germany, or NATO with a military fait accompli by seizing the objective quickly with minimum resistance while less ready elements of the Pact force structure mobilized. The Pact could then seek a negotiated settlement while deterring further NATO military action by threatening to unleash a fully prepared force. The Pact's perception of NATO's military capabilities and Moscow's overall assessment of the "correlation of forces," however, indicate that the risks of limited-objective attack far outweigh any potential short-term gains. The most serious risk for the Pact would be the expansion of armed resistance and its escalation to large-scale war. In short, the Pact could not be confident that a limited-objective attack would succeed quickly without expansion of the conflict, including the use of tactical nuclear weapons by NATO. The grave consequences of miscalculation and first use of NATO nuclear weapons in response to such an attack, however slight the chances, would seem to far outweigh any potential gains. Moreover, even in the absence of an initial forceful NATO military response, such an attack would inevitably cause NATO to begin serious preparations for war. Pact planners, given their respect for NATO's short-term mobilization and war-fighting capabilities and the prospect of activating NATO's much greater industrial, manpower, and economic potential in the longer run, could foresee an increasingly adverse balance of forces. The risks perceived by Moscow of beginning a war with NATO without accomplishing the military preparations it deems necessary to sustain the attack, achieve theater objectives, and guard against nuclear escalation all make a Pact attack to gain limited objectives very unlikely.

3.5(c)

31. **Limited Operations for Limited Objectives.** Pact military literature and exercises ignore planning for limited operations, and we consider it extremely unlikely that the Pact would attack NATO with limited forces to achieve limited objectives. Nevertheless, the Pact has the capability to initiate military operations in Europe on a limited scale to attempt to quickly seize a strategically important territory or city.

3.5(c)

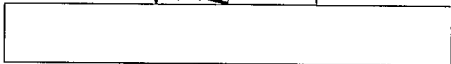
³ For more detail on Pact wartime objectives, refer to NIE 11-14-81, *Warsaw Pact Forces Opposite NATO*, 7 July 1981, and Interagency Intelligence Memorandum, NI HM 83-10068, *Employment of Warsaw Pact Forces Against NATO*, July 1983.

3.5(c)

~~Top Secret~~

3.5(c)

~~Top Secret~~



3.5(c)

34. *The Key: Decisive Defeat of NATO Forces in the Central Region.* If the Pact decides to go to war with NATO, for whatever reason, its principal military objective would be the rapid and decisive defeat of all NATO forces in Central Europe. Whether or to what extent Pact military operations would be directed against France, Spain, and Portugal would be determined largely by the role these countries played in the conflict. The requirement to rapidly engage and destroy all NATO military forces in Central Europe and to occupy NATO territory is driven by the Pact's high regard for NATO's great long-term war potential. The Pact clearly expects Central Europe to be the decisive arena in a war with NATO: Pact military writings and exercises focus on operations designed to achieve a rapid, total victory over NATO forces in this area, and the Pact assigns the highest priority to the allocation of resources to its military forces opposite Central Europe.

into southern Finland in strength, they could then move north to support attacks into northern Norway.

3.5(c)

37. The Soviets probably would not attempt major ground offensives into central or southern Norway during the initial stages of war due to restrictions that terrain places on the employment of forces, the potentially strong NATO resistance south of Finnmark, and extended lines of communication. Moreover, the better defended—and more defensible—Norwegian territory south of Finnmark is at the extreme limits of Soviet home-based tactical aircraft.

3.5(c)

38. *The Southern Flank.* Pact contingency plans provide for military operations against Austria, northern Italy, Turkey, and Greece. Initial Pact military operations would probably focus on the Turkish Straits, Austria, and possibly eastern Turkey. In addition, air and naval attacks almost certainly would be mounted against NATO forces in these areas and against carrier battle groups in the Mediterranean.

3.5(c)

Warsaw Pact Military Objectives on NATO's Flanks *

35. Pact writings and exercises indicate that military operations are likely on NATO's northern and southern flanks. Although Pact military initiatives on NATO's flanks would have significant strategic and operational implications, the success or failure of such operations would not be immediately critical to the outcome of hostilities in the Central Region. We judge, however, that the Pact would be unlikely to go to war in Central Europe without also conducting operations on the flanks.

39. It is likely that Hungarian and Soviet forces in Hungary (organized into a Soviet-Hungarian Front) would attack through Austria into southern West Germany or northern Italy. Any move into northern Italy would be designed to prevent Italian forces from putting pressure on the Pact's flanks in Austria. This operation, however, would not be essential to the success of the initial campaign in Central Europe.

3.5(c)

40. The Soviets view the early seizure of the Turkish Straits and securing the northern Aegean Sea as very important to the success of their maritime strategy in this region. Control of the area would be vital in order to block access to the Black Sea by NATO forces and to allow for the passage of Black Sea Fleet elements to and from the Mediterranean. Before initiating an assault on the Straits, the Soviets would probably move ground and air forces from the Odessa Military District through Romania into Bulgaria. These forces could be augmented by some Bulgarian forces to form a front. The front's objectives would be to defeat NATO forces in eastern Thrace, break through the fortifications protecting the land approaches to the Straits, and seize the strategic waterway. Amphibious and airborne operations would be conducted to support a forced crossing or lateral attack at the Bosphorus. Soviet forces in the Kiev Military

36. *The Northern Flank.* The most important military operations in Scandinavia would be Soviet naval and air actions to gain control over the Barents and northern Norwegian Seas in order to protect their ballistic missile submarines and prevent NATO from using the area to conduct attacks against the USSR. Any Soviet ground, amphibious, airborne, and air actions would be mounted from the Leningrad Military District to seize or neutralize NATO installations in northern Norway that could threaten Soviet naval and air defense operations. Soviet military actions directed against northern Norway would probably involve ground operations through northern Finnish territory. Attacks into southern Finland toward Helsinki might also be undertaken to prevent NATO from attacking the Leningrad area. If Soviet forces moved

* Warsaw Pact exercises depict Yugoslavia as a neutral nation in a NATO-Warsaw Pact war. Pact forces, however, could attempt to pass through shorter lines of communication in Yugoslavia to reach northern Italy. We judge it unlikely that Yugoslavia would grant permission for a Pact transit of its territory or that the Pact would attempt to force its advance through Yugoslavia.

3.5(c)

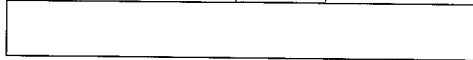
* For an in-depth discussion of Pact objectives and planning factors for operations on NATO's flanks, refer to NI HM 83-10002, *Employment of Warsaw Pact Forces Against NATO*, July 1963.



~~Top Secret~~

3.5(c)

~~Top Secret~~



3.5(c)

District could have a contingency role as second-echelon forces or they could be committed to operations against the Central Region

3.5(c)

view of the dangers of a war with NATO, Moscow would pursue alternate solutions to a crisis which threatened war.

3.5(c)

41. Bulgarian forces—perhaps with some Romanian participation—would form a Bulgarian Front for operations against Greece. The mission of this front would be to engage Greek and Turkish forces in Thrace, secure the western flank of the Odessa Front, and advance to the Aegean Sea and into the Greek heartland. Elements of this front would probably also assist in efforts to capture the Dardanelles. However, considering the relatively small size of the force structure likely to be committed, the difficult terrain in Greece, and the questionable commitment of Romanian forces to the offensive, it seems likely that the front might confine its actual operations to engaging Greek and Turkish forces in Thrace and, by seeking to reach the Aegean, secure the western flank of the Odessa Front.

3.5(c)

45. During a period of extreme tension when neither side wanted war, there would probably be moves and countermoves in which cause and effect became ambiguous, with each side believing that time and developments were working against it. Under such circumstances there would be considerable uncertainty in predicting Soviet behavior. We believe it unlikely, however, that Moscow would allow minor hostilities to evolve into large-scale war. We judge that any Soviet decision to go to war would probably be preceded by some sequence of events including military preparations and possibly miscalculations in crisis management by both sides.

3.5(c)

Likelihood of War Under Near-Term Circumstances

42. The Soviets could opt to conduct limited operations into eastern Turkey from the Caucasus region in conjunction with the military initiatives described above. The primary objective of such operations probably would be to tie down sizable Turkish forces to prevent them from being used in western Turkey; this objective might be accomplished, however, by merely mobilizing Soviet maneuver formations in the Transcaucasus Military District.

3.5(c)

46. The Soviets see a costly and—to some extent—more perilous strategic and political struggle over the rest of the decade. Nevertheless, we do not now foresee in the near term (the next three to five years) development of a trend that would make a NATO-Warsaw Pact war likely. Differences of view exist in the Politburo and Pact ruling elites with respect to policies toward the West, but these differences are not likely to center around the advisability of war with NATO unless extraordinary changes occur that would threaten the vital interests of the Soviet Union. Changes in the NATO-Pact military balance and alterations in the Pact's perceptions of NATO's strengths and weaknesses could, of course, influence the Pact's assessment of potential gains versus risks in a crisis situation. A perception that NATO's military capability or its unity or resolve to resist had deteriorated would probably encourage Moscow and its allies to try to exercise more influence in Western Europe and would probably result in threats and pressure tactics being applied. We do not believe, however, that changes in the NATO-Pact military balance in themselves would lead to war as long as Moscow perceived that its losses would be heavy and that the risk to the Soviet homeland would be high. Despite the potentially catastrophic consequences of a NATO-Pact war, the Soviets would consider initiating hostilities if they perceived a situation which threatened the integrity of their security system or other vital interests.

3.5(c)

D. Likelihood of a NATO-Warsaw Pact War

Chances of War Under Present Circumstances

43. In light of Warsaw Pact assessments of the risks involved in a NATO-Warsaw Pact war (see paragraphs 22-23), we believe it highly unlikely that the Pact would deliberately decide to attack NATO under present circumstances. And, despite shrill rhetoric about Washington's militaristic ambitions and US efforts to achieve military superiority, and a general erosion in East-West relations since the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in late 1979, it is unlikely that Pact leaders believe that NATO wants war or would seek it as a deliberate policy. War in Europe would become likely only as a result of profound political, military, economic, or social changes—or a serious miscalculation during a crisis.

3.5(c)

44. We believe that a war in Europe would be preceded by a period of growing tension resulting in a crisis of great severity. Soviet writings and exercises indicate that Moscow and its allies also anticipate a period of increasing tension prior to war in Europe. In

47. A scenario for war in Europe might involve an attack to destroy a NATO Alliance which the Soviets sensed had become demoralized and seriously weakened internally. Such an attack might be designed to

~~Top Secret~~



3.5(c)

~~Top Secret~~

3.5(c)

take advantage of internal dissent, economic stagnation, or social upheaval in the NATO countries. A possible catalyst for war in Europe could also be the development of a crisis in one or more Pact countries or Yugoslavia. This might take the form of an internal upheaval or some chain of events which threatened a political disintegration of the Pact. An additional possibility is that a future Soviet leadership—faced with an increasingly adverse international environment and grave internal problems—might lash out at the West in a desperate attempt to prevent an eventual collapse of the Soviet regime and the Pact alliance due to extreme international and internal pressures. In this scenario, future Soviet leaders could perceive that time was working against them, and they might opt to set a timetable to launch a sudden attack against NATO and/or the United States. We have high confidence, however, that these scenarios have little chance of occurring during the period of this Estimate. We do not foresee NATO becoming seriously weakened as a result of social upheaval in Western Europe or any internal Soviet problems that could develop to the point of threatening the collapse of the Soviet regime. Moreover, even if such events did occur, we do not believe that the Soviet leadership would deliberately initiate a NATO-Warsaw Pact war in response to these events.

3.5(c)

E. Warning Implications for NATO: A US-Soviet Confrontation in the Persian Gulf *

48. The warning implications for NATO of a US-Soviet military confrontation in the Persian Gulf area center around three key considerations:

- The diversion of attention and resources from Europe such a conflict could cause.
- The possibility that a Soviet move into the Gulf area could be designed as a strategic feint to draw US forces to the region as a prelude to a Warsaw Pact military initiative in Europe.
- The possibility of a spillover into Europe of a US-Soviet confrontation in the Gulf.

3.5(c)

49. A US-Soviet confrontation in the Gulf region, while certainly focusing the world's attention on that area, would not necessarily provide Moscow and its allies with increased opportunities for masking prepara-

* For a fuller discussion of issues surrounding possible Soviet military operations in this area, refer to NIE 11/39-53, *Soviet Forces and Capabilities in the Southern Theater of Military Operations*, 1 November 1983.

3.5(c)

rations for war in Europe. It is more likely that a conflict in the Gulf would heighten NATO vigilance in general and could result in an increased readiness posture being ordered for at least some NATO units; the Pact would also probably place at least some of its own units in an increased readiness posture. Both NATO and Pact intelligence collection efforts in Europe would intensify, with each side trying to determine the other's intentions. In short, a US-Soviet conflict in the Gulf would probably result in an increase rather than a decrease in NATO readiness in Europe and an increase in tension, ambiguity, and opportunity for miscalculation. The serious problem for NATO would arise from the dispatch of US units and strategic lift assets, earmarked for NATO reinforcement, to the Gulf region to counter a Soviet military initiative there.

3.5(c)

50. We believe it unlikely that the Soviets would deliberately commit their forces in the Gulf region—for example, in Iran or Pakistan—as a strategic feint designed to draw US forces to the area, as a prelude to an attack against NATO, even though they might achieve a favorable trade-off of forces from such a move.⁷ Such an attack would mean that Moscow considered war with NATO as desirable or inevitable and could be counterproductive or ill conceived—depending on what actions NATO or the United States might take. Moreover, the Soviets have always been fearful of the possibility that they might be forced to fight major wars in widely separated geographic regions. Soviet exercise scenarios do not appear to project operations in this region in isolation from a major worldwide confrontation. The exercises give no indication that Moscow expects a conflict with the United States to begin in the Gulf region, or that the Soviets would view their own military operations in the area as a feint designed to divert US forces from Europe. The possibility of a conflict in the Persian Gulf area as a precursor and catalyst for war in Europe, however, cannot be dismissed.

3.5(c)

51. We believe the Soviets are conservative and thorough planners who would appreciate the risks involved in mounting military operations in the Gulf region—particularly full-scale operations against Iran or Pakistan. Should they consider military operations

⁷ Soviet ground maneuver formations in the Caucasus region are among the less well equipped and trained in the USSR, and they have only peripheral or contingent wartime missions against NATO. However, should these forces be committed in the Southern Theater, the US forces that might be deployed to oppose them would be among the best the US has to offer, thereby giving the Soviets a favorable trade-off of second-rate forces for first-rate NATO-earmarked units. (S)

~~Top Secret~~

3.5(c)

~~Top Secret~~



3.5(c)

in the region in isolation from other areas, their planning considerations would allow not only for the possibility of a confrontation with US forces, but also the possibility that such a confrontation could spread to other areas—particularly Europe. They have taken, and we expect they would take other, prudent measures to assure that their military forces were prepared to deal with contingencies opposite NATO and China.

3.5(c)



52. The bulk of the Soviet ground and air forces required for operations against Iran would be drawn from the Transcaucasus, North Caucasus, and Turkestan Military Districts and possibly Afghanistan, but some augmentation of air units from elsewhere in the USSR could be required for major operations. A full-scale campaign into Pakistan would primarily draw upon Soviet forces in Turkestan, Afghanistan, and the Central Asian Military District. None of these ground forces would be critical to a campaign against NATO. Some units in the Caucasus region are earmarked for possible wartime use against NATO's southern flank, that is, eastern Turkey, but the Soviets could choose to initiate no more than a holding action by several divisions in this area during a NATO-Pact conflict. Warsaw Pact forces earmarked for operations against NATO are located in Eastern Europe and the western military districts of the USSR. Consequently, the military warning indicators for a Persian Gulf versus a

European campaign would be largely exclusive in terms of geography and ground forces. However, Soviet air forces in the southern USSR might require reinforcement, drawing upon assets of VVK-controlled air armies and military transport aviation divisions. Such allocations could draw off combat aircraft and strategic lift forces that would potentially be used in a European campaign.

3.5(c)

53. The principal problem for US intelligence with regard to the security of Europe in the event of a Persian Gulf conflict would stem from probable increases in the readiness posture of at least selected elements of Pact forces facing NATO to guard against a possible NATO reaction. Manifestations of heightened readiness could include expanded command and control activity; limited mobilization; increased alert posture and logistic preparations; and changes in the disposition of air, air defense, naval, and ground forces. Such variations from normal peacetime posture would probably be pronounced in the event of a direct US-Soviet confrontation. Depending on its scale, increased force readiness opposite NATO as a result of a crisis in the Persian Gulf could shorten the amount of time required to prepare these forces for war and in any case would introduce additional ambiguity, complicating the problem of assessment of some military warning indicators and Moscow's intentions in Europe.



3.5(c)



38
~~Top Secret~~

3.5(c)

~~Top Secret~~



3.5(c)

III. WARSAW PACT DOCTRINE AND READINESS

A. Doctrinal Precepts^a

54. Decisive offensive action is the hallmark of Soviet military doctrine. The Soviet war-fighting strategy that supports this doctrine dictates that the East European countries provide a buffer to protect the Soviet homeland so that an offensive or counteroffensive could be successfully mounted and prosecuted. This philosophy provides the impetus behind Soviet emphasis on combat readiness, early seizure of the initiative, preemption and surprise, a combined-arms approach to warfare, and the requirement for force superiority in the main battle areas—backed up by strong reserves to assure the momentum of the attack. Soviet and Warsaw Pact operational concepts and force developments reflect a systematic effort to meet these doctrinal requirements. The reorganizations of Soviet air, air defense, and ground forces since the late 1970s are indicative of continuing efforts to achieve doctrinal goals. (See inset.)

3.5(c)

55. Apart from the purely military aspects of doctrine, the Soviets have long emphasized the importance of "moral-political" preparation or "stability of the rear" during a war. The Soviets view such preparation—not only of troops but the population as a whole—as very important, if not essential, to the conduct of war, and they put equal emphasis on the effective functioning of political and economic institutions. They believe that weapons of modern warfare would blur any distinction between front and rear in a future war. Although the Soviets do not profess to have the ability to guarantee high morale, particularly during nuclear attack, they do recognize the need to attempt to increase the psychological preparedness of the general population and their military forces. In particular, they believe the effectiveness of their civil defense system in a nuclear war would depend heavily on the courage, determination, and stamina of the Soviet population. In regard to their economy, they believe that production facilities may be subjected to large-scale destruction at the beginning of hostilities. This means that it may not be possible to rely on the mobilization of economic resources as the war progresses; for this reason, supplies of weapons, ammunition, equipment, and food must be stockpiled before war begins. The Soviets have in place the required mechanisms to transform the economy from a peacetime to a wartime posture. These mechanisms include

^a For a detailed treatment of this subject, refer to DIA Defense Intelligence Document, DDB-2245-3-22, Soviet Military Doctrine and Strategy, April 1962.

Warsaw Pact Doctrinal Concepts

Seizing the Initiative and the Offense: The Only Way To Win a War. The predominant tenet of Soviet doctrine is that decisive defeat of the enemy can only be achieved by seizing and maintaining the initiative through offensive operations.

Preparedness To Fight Nuclear War. The Soviets believe that nuclear weapons will have a decisive impact in any future war. This attitude is based on the notion that the existence of nuclear weapons shapes how a war must be fought regardless of whether such weapons would actually be used.

Force Superiority and Massed Firepower. For the Pact, this translates into selecting the principal enemy objectives to be seized or destroyed, determining the most critical direction(s) along which to attack these objectives, and making a decisive concentration of essential forces at the critical time on the direction(s) selected. The Soviets stress the need to mass fires (nonnuclear and nuclear) rather than troops and equipment.

Combined Arms. The Soviets believe that successful military operations require closely coordinated joint action by all components of their armed forces.

Surprise. The Soviet concept of the offensive is based on the attainment of at least tactical surprise. The Soviets believe that technology has increased the importance of surprise in modern warfare and that under present conditions the achievement of surprise may greatly influence not only the outcome of initial engagements, but also the course of military operations in the initial phase of a war.

~~Confidential~~

provisions for the withdrawal of manpower and equipment (especially vehicles) from the economy to support the military and conversion to military control of large elements of the USSR's transportation and communications systems.

3.5(c)

56. The Warsaw Pact's war-fighting concepts are bold and aggressive, but the execution of these concepts presents several problems. The preparations, coordination, and maneuvers dictated by doctrinal concepts are extremely ambitious and complicated, and would severely test the abilities of both commanders and troops. The complexities and uncertainties involved in executing these concepts on the battlefield would leave many opportunities for miscalculation, indecisiveness, errors in judgment, delays, and confusion. Moreover, the Pact's doctrinal concepts are not totally compatible. If Pact planners, for example,

3.5(c)

~~Top Secret~~

Top Secret

3.5(c)

adopt an attack plan which puts top priority on speed in mobilizing, deploying, and committing their forces to seize the initiative and achieve tactical and operational force superiority, they presumably could accomplish this only at the expense of failing to achieve full readiness of their forces, populations, and economies for war. Likewise, Pact planners seem to realize that the readiness or size of their military forces could only be increased at the risk of lessening or losing some degree of surprise. Force superiority is tangible, can be measured quantitatively, and affords advantages that are more certain than those offered by surprise, which could be compromised or lost at any time. The Soviets accept the likelihood that under modern conditions strategic surprise may not always be attainable. However, they believe that extensive camouflage, concealment, and deception can enhance tactical or operational surprise under most circumstances, even while striving for force superiority.

3.5(c)

B. Readiness Philosophy

57. Emphasis on combat readiness is a constant theme which supports the Pact's war-fighting doctrine. It is a logical result of Russian and Soviet historical experience characterized by numerous invasions and defeats by hostile neighbors. In particular, Soviet military thinking is still heavily influenced by World War II experience, when the lack of preparedness and initiative resulted in devastating territorial, human, equipment, and economic losses. The Soviets intend to fight any future European war on the territory of their enemies. This requires that large, combat-ready forces must be in place at the outset of hostilities. Each component of the armed forces is considered to have a role—if only a peripheral or contingent one—in any major operation. An increase in readiness by ground and tactical air units, for example, might be paralleled by naval and strategic attack and defense forces, even if the direct participation of these forces was not anticipated.* From the Soviet perspective, forcewide or regional readiness could be extremely important since any conflict has the potential for expanding unexpectedly, particularly in regard to the use of nuclear weapons.

3.5(c)

58. In the Soviet view, readiness is measured in two parameters. First, there is a need for powerful military forces in being: a large, well-equipped and well-trained military establishment backed up by strong

3.5(c)

* The Soviets and the Pact nations, however, would not necessarily raise the readiness of all of their forces to the same level during a crisis. Pact leaders have the means to control the tempo and scope of force readiness by selectively instituting readiness conditions locally, regionally, nationally, or Pact-wide.

reserves. Second, the armed forces must be prepared to accomplish their missions regardless of the conditions under which war begins or is conducted. Theoretically, full military combat readiness in peacetime requires all units to be completely manned, equipped, and thoroughly trained. Pact planners, however, believe that this degree of readiness is not necessary or realistically feasible. They expect that war probably would occur after a period of heightened tension called the "period of threat." The peacetime readiness posture of Pact forces reflects the belief that this period would provide warning, thereby enabling the Pact to increase the readiness of its forces before hostilities begin.¹⁰ Moreover, Pact leaders recognize that the economic cost of maintaining their military forces on a war footing is prohibitively high. The Soviets' overall readiness philosophy, therefore, is to maintain forces in sufficient readiness to deter aggression; to protect perceived national interests, including the containment of nations in the Soviet sphere of influence; and to defend home territories.

3.5(c)

59. In general, Pact units opposite perceived high-threat areas (such as Central Europe), as well as highly technical or critical forces (such as certain missile and signal units), are kept relatively highly manned, equipped, and trained in peacetime, but they are usually not manned at full strength. Most Soviet forces in the USSR, however, are maintained at lower levels of manning, equipment, and training. These units are the peacetime nucleus of large wartime forces that would be mobilized in an emergency. The Soviets maintain most of their strategic nuclear forces in a high state of readiness in peacetime, while only a small part of their national air defense forces are constantly maintained in a high readiness posture. Provided below is a brief description of the readiness posture of Soviet strategic forces and Pact general purpose forces.

3.5(c)

60. *Soviet Strategic Attack Forces.*¹¹ Most Soviet intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) forces are maintained at a high state of alert by rotating alert status in individual units to allow for maintenance, crew rest or change, and other needs. Those missiles

¹⁰ Although some warning time is expected, Pact planners are uncertain about how much time would be available to make war preparations. They recognize that an enemy could conceivably launch an attack with little warning. Their perception of the threat, however, includes an assessment that NATO's military forces are not maintained at full readiness for war.

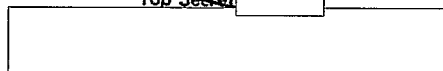
3.5(c)

¹¹ For additional information on the readiness of Soviet strategic forces, refer to NIE 11-3/8-83, *Soviet Capabilities for Strategic Nuclear Conflict, 1983-83*, 6 March 1984.

3.5(c)

3.5(c)

Top Secret



3.5(c)

maintained in a high alert posture could probably be launched within five to 15 minutes following initiation of launch command transmission. Online ICBMs are technically capable of being launched within one to three minutes after launch commands are received and authenticated. SS-20 intermediate-range ballistic missiles (IRBMs) on alert (possibly up to 90 percent of the force) could probably be launched within seven to 15 minutes following initiation of launch command transmission. Those SS-20s not on alert status—either in-garrison or at [redacted] launch areas in the field—could launch their missiles between 30 minutes and two and a half hours, depending on missile accuracy desired. The Soviets do not maintain their strategic bombers on runway alert. We believe that, from a normal peacetime readiness posture, 50 percent of these aircraft could be armed and launched in about 12 hours. Twenty to 24 nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarines (SSBNs) typically are maintained at high readiness while in port or at sea. Of these, eight to 12 SSBNs are normally on patrol or in transit to patrol areas. SSBNs on patrol and some in port are capable of attacking targets in North America within 12 hours or less during normal peacetime readiness conditions, and in considerably less time if they are monitoring communications more frequently than the normal twice daily, as would be expected during a crisis. [redacted]

3.3(b)(1)

3.5(c)

61. *Soviet Strategic Defense Forces.* The Moscow antiballistic missile (ABM) system operates continuously, and its radars are calibrated frequently by means of radar support satellites. We believe that the ABM weapons complexes and supporting units are manned at nearly full strength using rotating shifts. About 75 to 80 percent of the operational launchers have interceptor missiles mounted. A small portion of the national air defense forces is maintained in a high state of readiness. Air defense command posts and early warning and ground-controlled intercept sites are manned continuously. Each aviation regiment usually has several aircraft on strip alert that can be airborne within a few minutes after receipt of an order to launch. Surface-to-air missile (SAM) regiments and brigades rotate alert responsibilities among their battalions and, within battalions, among launch crews. We do not know the specific readiness status of the orbital antisatellite system (ASAT) interceptors at the Tyuratam Missile Test Center or of the other systems that have the potential to interfere with US satellites. Launch-ready interceptors, however, could be moved to a launcher and fired within one to two hours. We believe the Soviets probably could launch three to five orbital ASAT interceptors from each of the two pads at

Tyuratam during the first 24 hours of ASAT operations. [redacted]

3.5(c)

62. *Warsaw Pact Ground Maneuver Formations.* The Soviets make a clear distinction between "ready" and "not ready" portions of their ground maneuver forces. "Ready" units are the most highly manned and the best equipped and trained, and are at least minimally prepared for combat with little or no mobilization. The most combat-ready Soviet forces are airborne divisions and units in Eastern Europe where Soviet interests are critical and a large Soviet population base is unavailable for mobilization.¹² "Not ready" units require extensive mobilization and probably would not be available for immediate combat operations.¹³ These units are found exclusively within the USSR. In the western USSR, a mixed readiness posture is maintained around a small nucleus of "ready" units and a far larger number of cadre or "not ready" units. In general, Soviet divisions in the western USSR are equipped with older models of equipment and may lack major items of equipment such as trucks and armored personnel carriers. Further, they are unable in peacetime to maintain a high level of combat capability due to their lower level of peacetime manning and training. Overall, more than one-half of all Soviet divisions as well as many nondivisional support units are maintained in a "not ready" posture in peacetime. This large, skeletal element of the force would require substantial preparation to overcome deficiencies in peacetime manning, equipment, and training.¹⁴ Non-Soviet Warsaw Pact (NSWP) military planners use their own national classification schemes that differ in terminology and detail, though not in

¹² Recent Intelligence Community assessments indicate that Soviet maneuver divisions in Eastern Europe are manned at lower levels than previously estimated. Soviet motorized rifle divisions are now assessed to be manned between 80 and 85 percent of war-authorized strength, while tank divisions are assessed to be manned between 85 and 90 percent of wartime authorizations. These divisions are still assessed to be capable of initiating and conducting offensive operations against NATO. Refer to the Interagency Intelligence Memorandum, NI HM 84-10001, *Assessed Manpower of Warsaw Pact Forces in the NATO Guidelines Area, 1983, January 1984*, [redacted] and CIA Research Paper, SOV 84-10068CX, *Manning Levels of Soviet Ground Forces in Central Europe, June 1984*, [redacted]

3.5(c)

3.5(c)

¹³ For a detailed discussion of manning practices in Soviet ground units, refer to the CIA Research Paper, SOV 83-10143JX, *Manning Practices and Patterns in Soviet Ground Force Units*, August 1983, [redacted]

3.5(c)

¹⁴ For a detailed accounting of the readiness of Soviet Ground Forces, refer to the Interagency Intelligence Memorandum, NI HM 82-10012, *The Readiness of Soviet Ground Forces*, November 1982, [redacted]

3.5(c)

3.5(c)



~~Top Secret~~



3.5(c)

principle, from that of the Soviet Union.¹⁵ The NSWP ground forces would constitute important elements of the Pact's first-echelon forces earmarked for early commitment against NATO. For this reason, the NSWP nations maintain the bulk of their maneuver forces as "ready" units comparable to Soviet forward-deployed forces.¹⁶

3.5(c)

63. *Warsaw Pact Air Forces.* Pact military planners expect their air forces to be ready to launch a massive, coordinated air campaign at the beginning of hostilities. Soviet air defense interceptor units are maintained at a high level of readiness and could mount air defense operations within a few minutes of alert. Soviet offensive air forces would require about 48 hours to prepare a command and control structure for front-level operations and 72 hours for theater-level operations.¹⁷ We estimate that Soviet air forces, including their logistic systems, could be fully combat ready within seven to 12 days after a decision to mobilize. Although some coordinated combat operations would be possible before completion of mobilization, the Soviets would prefer not to begin major air operations without full preparations. We judge that the NSWP air forces are maintained in a somewhat lower readiness posture than Soviet air forces. Aircraft and crews drawn from the Soviet and NSWP training establishments would need at least 30 days to mobilize and might still have limited combat effectiveness without additional refresher training.

3.5(c)

64. *Warsaw Pact Naval Forces.*¹⁸ Generally speaking, the Soviet naval readiness philosophy stresses readiness to deploy for combat on relatively short notice rather than routine deployment of large forces. To achieve a maximum force generation capability in times of crisis, the Soviet Navy emphasizes maintenance and in-port/in-area training rather than extend-

3.5(c)

¹⁵ For additional details, refer to the DIA draft Defense Intelligence Document, DDB-1100-430-84, *The Readiness of the Non-Soviet Warsaw Pact Ground Forces*.

¹⁶ Refer to the following studies for greater detail on the readiness of Warsaw Pact ground forces: CIA Research Paper, *Managing and Monitoring Readiness in the Warsaw Pact Ground Forces*, SOV 83-10204CX, December 1982, SC 00453/82, *TS CW NF NC OC G*; and CIA Intelligence Assessment, SOV 83-10051CX, *Warsaw Pact Ground Forces Reserve Systems*, March 1983.

3.5(c)

¹⁷ Refer to the following study for more detail on Soviet air readiness: Interagency Intelligence Memorandum, NI IIM 82-10001X, *The Readiness of Soviet Air Forces*, April 1982.

3.5(c)

¹⁸ The Baltic Fleet in wartime would become a combined Warsaw Pact fleet consisting of Soviet, Polish, and East German forces. The Black Sea Fleet would become a wartime combined fleet consisting of Soviet, Bulgarian, and possibly Romanian forces.

3.5(c)

ed at-sea operations. Even Soviet naval units deployed out of area spend much of their time at anchor or in port. From the Soviet perspective, it is apparently more important to be ready to go to sea than to be at sea. Under this system, operational experience and some degree of crew proficiency are sacrificed to achieve high materiel availability. As a result of this readiness philosophy, the Soviets probably would have more than half of their submarines and major surface combatants available for combat within a few days and some 70 percent within two weeks. In a recent exercise, a high percentage of surface combatants and submarines from the Baltic and Northern Fleets deployed within 48 hours. Given several days' warning, we estimate that Soviet Naval Aviation would have more than 90 percent of its aircraft available, although this percentage could be sustained for only a short time.¹⁹

3.5(c)

65. *Warsaw Pact Rear Services.* Soviet logistics doctrine generally requires that rear service elements must be as combat ready as the forces they support, and that logistic preparations for war be accomplished prior to or soon after the beginning of hostilities. During the past decade the Soviets have methodically improved their capability to support forces in East Germany. A buildup of logistic stocks, which once might have been a key indicator of impending military operations, now probably has little potential to provide such warning. Many rear service units are manned at reduced strength in peacetime, however, and would require mobilization. Some rear service units do not exist in the military peacetime force structure. Certain elements of the rear services structure, such as medical and transport units, would be mobilized from the Pact's civil economies. The Pact nations have stockpiled large quantities of ammunition, POL, spare parts, and other supplies that could be used by existing rear service units in the initial period of war until the rear services structure was fully mobilized. The Pact nations would also institute military control over key transportation lines in order to have responsive transportation systems and assure that supplies from rear areas could be moved when and where needed. Though GSFG elements have substantial nondivisional motor transport capability, other fronts would require a large influx of national transportation assets to meet wartime requirements. Final-

¹⁹ For additional data on the readiness of Soviet naval forces, refer to the following documents: NIE 11-15-82, *Soviet Naval Strategy and Programs Through the 1990s*, 28 October 1982; and Interagency Intelligence Memorandum, NI IIM 80-10010X, *The Readiness of Soviet Naval Forces*, June 1980.

3.5(c)

3.5(c)

3.5(c)

~~Top Secret~~

3.5(c)

ly, the Soviet and Pact practice of limiting the use of most equipment in peacetime means that they would enter combat with a relatively "new" and reliable fleet of combat and support vehicles.⁶⁶

3.5(c)

66. *Warsaw Pact Command, Control, Communications, and Intelligence.* The transition of the Pact's command, control, and communications structure from a peacetime to a wartime posture would involve the formation of national- and theater-level commands and the activation of additional command, control, and communications facilities that do not exist on a permanent basis in peacetime. Moreover, this conversion process would be accompanied by intensified intelligence collection to determine the activity, location, and status of enemy forces and installations. Among the measures required to bring the Pact's command, control, and communications structure to a wartime posture are:

- The suspension of normal constitutional rights of citizens.
- Compulsory military or civil defense service for adults.
- Requisition of privately owned property (especially vehicles).
- Suspension of normal rights of workers and enforced labor.
- Resubordination of paramilitary forces to the armed forces.
- Restriction of travel, closure of public institutions, banning of public meetings, censorship, banning the use of radios, restriction on all forms of communication, confiscation of firearms, evacuation of specified danger zones.
- The granting of extraordinary powers to National Defense Councils.

- Assumption of direct operational command and control of Pact military forces by the Soviet Supreme High Command.
- Establishment of extensive communications and data transmission networks.
- Exchange of operations groups and liaison personnel between major Soviet and NSWP commands.
- Review and update of war plans and issuance of combat orders.

3.5(c)

The actual time required for the transition from a peacetime to a wartime Pact command, control, communications, and intelligence system is not known. During peacetime, however, command and control preparations are usually under way about 10 days before major exercises begin.

3.5(c)

C. Readiness Control Systems

67. All Pact nations have national defense laws which define the powers of the state in an emergency and the legal procedures for conversion to a wartime posture. Among the measures which these laws empower the state to accomplish are:

- Proclamation of a state of emergency or "special period" in the event of a threatened attack or in fulfillment of Pact treaty obligations.

⁶⁶ This practice, called "conservation" (*konservatsiya*), is designed to permit the fielding of the maximum quantity of combat-ready equipment and reduce replacement and repair parts requirements and POL consumption in peacetime. For details, refer to DIA Defense Intelligence Document, DDB-1150-281, *Soviet Ground Force Maintenance*, June 1961, a w.

3.5(c)

68. The Pact nations have established dual national and military readiness control systems to facilitate the implementation of their defense laws and to manage the transition from peacetime to wartime readiness. These control systems are designed to assure appropriate reaction to international or other situations while minimizing, to the extent possible, disruption of normal activity. The Pact countries have defined several stages characterizing the international environment: normal peacetime conditions; a "period of threat" involving two phases (increased tension or threat, and increased tension with immediate threat of war); and war. Pact leaders believe a period of increased tension or threat could last for several weeks or months, while a period of increased tension with immediate threat of war would probably be a much shorter period—perhaps several hours to several days. Specific readiness measures and procedures have been established generally corresponding to these stages for military and security forces, the economy, and civil defense.

3.5(c)

National Readiness Control System

69. The national control system is called the "National Defense Readiness Plan (or System)." It provides for the mobilization readiness of each nation's population, economy, and government institutions, including the mobilization of reservists and equipment required for military purposes (see inset on page 42). Unlike the military counterpart system, which is frequently partially tested in exercises, there has been little testing of

3.5(c)

~~Top Secret~~

3.5(c)

Warsaw Pact National Defense Readiness Plan (or System)

Peacetime

The economy satisfies routine requirements for the armed forces and creates the necessary stockpiles of supplies required during mobilization and the initial stages of war. Party and government officials perform normal duties. The nation is maintained in "constant national defense readiness," while the equivalent military readiness condition is "constant combat readiness."

Period of Threat

Increased international tension would initiate an evaluation of the situation. If it is determined that a significant threat exists, measures would be taken to increase readiness to rapidly convert to a war posture. These measures could range from a limited callup of men and equipment to a full mobilization of the population, economy, armed forces, and civil defense establishment. These measures would be designed to assure the mobilization and availability of required resources prior to the outbreak of hostilities. During a period of gradually increasing or fluctuating tension, preparations could be divided into a number of phases to appropriately respond with each stage of the developing situation, while avoiding unnecessary disruption. Although the actual number of phases would probably vary with particular circumstances, preparations generally would fall into three subdivisions:

- *Increased National Defense Readiness:* Characterized by measures intended to assure the ability of various components to mobilize rapidly if required and to increase the likely efficiency of the components once mobilized. These measures would not result in major changes in the national economy. Equipment and supplies held in nation-

al reserves, together with limited numbers of reservists, might be called up. Movement restrictions would be placed on vehicles in use in the economy that have mobilization assignments. The duration of the period of "increased readiness" would be determined more by the nature of the crisis than by the time necessary to complete preparatory measures. Measures associated with this readiness condition could be implemented nationwide or selectively, immediately or on a gradual basis. The counterpart military readiness condition is "increased combat readiness."

- *Threat-of-War National Defense Readiness:* Includes measures leading to a definite transition of the population, economy, and civil defense organs to a war posture. Government ministries and state administrative organs begin to assume their full wartime organizations and provide additional mobilization support to the armed forces. More intense, but still selective mobilization occurs. The corresponding military readiness condition is "threat-of-war combat readiness."
- *Full National Defense Readiness:* Final and full-scale preparations for war, including large-scale (or national) mobilization, conversion of industry to wartime production schedules, and assumption of a full wartime posture by government agencies and administrative organs. Ideally, measures associated with this readiness condition would be implemented prior to hostilities. The counterpart military readiness condition is "full combat readiness."

~~Secret~~

civil economic/administrative readiness procedures and comparatively little is known about them. They apparently parallel military readiness procedures and conditions, although there is some variation in terminology among the Pact countries. The procedures and preparations cited in national readiness plans would ultimately culminate in a nation achieving a wartime posture with production, manpower, materiel, and transport resources organized to support the armed forces. Preparatory measures associated with the various national readiness conditions could be initiated immediately on a large or national scale, or gradually and selectively as the situation may dictate. Some precautionary measures—particularly those initiated during "increased national defense readiness"—could be accomplished covertly, especially if initiated gradually. Preparatory measures associated with "threat-of-

war national defense readiness" and "full national defense readiness" would be highly disruptive, difficult to conceal, and would be a strong indication that the Pact nations believed war was likely or imminent, respectively.

Military Readiness Control System

70. The military control system is the Pact-wide "System of Combat Readiness" which stipulates readiness, alert, and mobilization requirements and procedures for the armed forces (see inset on page 43). The four readiness conditions provide for an orderly, manageable transition from a normal peacetime posture to full mobilization and preparation for war. Commanders have detailed instructions outlining the steps and procedures that must be accomplished to move through the four levels, and these measures are fre-

42

~~Top Secret~~

3.5(c)

3.5(c)

~~Top Secret~~ [redacted]

3.5(c)

Warsaw Pact Armed Forces Readiness System ^a

Constant Combat Readiness: Lowest level of readiness, signifying routine planned training and activity. It is not prescribed by special order, but is a standard term designating normal peacetime posture. Leaves and passes may be granted at commanders' discretion, but weapons, vehicles, and equipment are required to be maintained in such condition that they can be used on short notice.

Increased Combat Readiness: Unit personnel are recalled from leave or temporary duty and units conducting field training return to garrison. Preparations would normally be largely confined to garrison locations. Officers and troops may be confined in garrison. Mobilization and contingency plans are reviewed and updated by staffs. Unit personnel remove equipment from storage and understrength units prepare reception points for reservists. Field command posts are deployed and partially manned. Security measures are increased and selected reservists with special skills may be called up. Reservists already on active duty are retained and scheduled demobilization of conscripts may be postponed. Repairs on equipment are accelerated and completed. Air defense missiles are transferred to launchers. Selected strategic and general purpose naval forces deploy to dispersal/operating areas. Fixed and rotary wing aircraft are armed and prepared for take-off, and dispersal airfields are prepared to receive aircraft. In certain cases, units may engage in training in or near their garrisons after all preparatory measures have been taken. Such a readiness condition could be in effect for hours, days, or weeks.

^a Measures cited are illustrative rather than exhaustive. In addition to these conditions cited, the Soviets apparently are introducing a new readiness condition to alert forces that a surprise enemy attack using weapons of mass destruction is in progress.

Threat-of-War Readiness: ^b Combat alerts initiate movement of ground and air units to dispersal areas/airfields. Naval units continue to disperse. Selective mobilization continues. Some specialized units (signal, electronic, security, reconnaissance) may be mobilized to wartime strength. Control of ground maneuver divisions is transferred from the garrison command center to a field command post. Communication systems in command posts are set up for full-scale operation and additional communication channels are requisitioned from the state-controlled network. Operations groups with communication facilities are dispatched to allied nations. Reconnaissance of the enemy is intensified without violating national borders. Personnel are equipped according to wartime authorizations. Missile units move to siting areas. Air defense units are deployed to cover troops during movement from garrison. Some air defense forces are dispersed and brought to higher levels of crew and missile readiness.

Full Combat Readiness: Full mobilization takes place, with understrength or newly activated units receiving full wartime authorizations of personnel and equipment. Ground maneuver units move to their primary ("secret") dispersal areas, if this has not already occurred. A wartime command structure is activated. Reconnaissance of routes and deployment lines is conducted and traffic control units are augmented. By special order, units covering state borders could be reinforced. Air defense forces are in readiness to repel attacks and aircraft are in readiness for takeoff.

^b The Pact nations formally adopted this level of readiness in 1978. The purpose of this relatively new level of readiness apparently is to permit a heightened but sustainable level of command, staff, and force readiness to accommodate a prolonged period of uncertain yet critical threat.

~~Top Secret~~ [redacted]

3.5(c)

quently practiced by staffs and units in peacetime. Additionally, the Pact Wartime Command Statute and subsequent protocols provide the Soviet General Staff with a legal basis and a communications procedure for alerting NSWF forces and dictating their readiness posture. The system is extremely flexible. Should international tension rise or regional disturbances occur, the readiness posture of an appropriate portion of the Pact's armed forces could be selectively altered without initiating disruptive and expensive forcewide measures. Depending on the political and military situation, the various readiness conditions could be applied to all military forces in a single country or all Pact nations, one branch of service, one or more

military districts, or even one tactical formation. Based on the threat, various measures associated with readiness conditions could be initiated rapidly or gradually. The readiness conditions are designed to provide a deliberate and sequential approach to achieving full readiness for war. Under extreme circumstances, however, one or both intermediate levels of readiness could be skipped, that is, forces could move to full combat readiness directly from their normal peacetime posture or "increased combat readiness." [redacted]

3.5(c)

Critique

71. The Pact national and military readiness systems together provide for the control and coordination

3.5(c)

43

~~Top Secret~~ [redacted]

~~Top Secret~~ [redacted]

[redacted]

3.5(c)

necessary to take a country (or the Pact) and its armed forces from routine peacetime readiness conditions to readiness for war. The two systems are extremely flexible and are designed to interact and complement one another, but they are not necessarily intended to be totally consistent; for example, the readiness posture of the armed forces of a nation may be higher

than the readiness of the nation (or the Pact nations) as a whole. Moreover, the military readiness system is Pact-wide, while the national readiness system is not. Neither system has been fully tested on a national or Pact-wide basis, but we believe these systems provide Pact leaders with the necessary mechanisms to move their nations and military forces to a wartime posture. [redacted]

3.5(c)

[redacted]

~~Top Secret~~

3.5(c)

~~Top Secret~~



3.5(c)

IV. HOW THE WARSAW PACT WOULD GO TO WAR

72. We believe hostilities in Europe would more likely result from an escalating political crisis than from a sudden decision to go to war. Understanding the great risks involved in a war with NATO, Moscow probably would make a major effort to resolve such a crisis peacefully, and might exercise some care to attempt to assure that its actions were not mistaken for hostile intent. On the other hand, Moscow would actively pursue almost any means short of war to secure an advantage in a crisis, including diplomacy, pressure tactics, and threats involving genuine military preparations.

3.5(c)

government, and military officials, although the security measures surrounding these deliberations would be extraordinary. The decision process would be difficult, contentious, and probably prolonged. The reliability of Moscow's Warsaw Pact allies would almost certainly be among the matters discussed by the Politburo/Defense Council at this time. The decision probably would establish the intent to prepare for war with NATO and the degree of urgency required, but it probably would not establish the specific date and time of an attack or irrevocably commit the leadership to war. The final decision to attack and the timing of the attack might not be made until hours before its execution.

3.5(c)

73. Under all foreseeable circumstances, the Soviets and the Pact would recognize that war with NATO in Central Europe would require an enormous coalition effort that entailed great risks, both of uncontrolled escalation and destruction, as well as serious adverse repercussions elsewhere. The following discussion describes how the Warsaw Pact might prepare for war with NATO from its current political, economic, and military posture. If over a period of months or years relations between Western and Pact nations deteriorated badly, the political, economic, and military posture of both alliances would probably change. If this were to occur, the judgments in this Estimate might no longer be valid. Nevertheless, the contingencies described in this chapter could possibly result from a severe crisis developing from an extraordinary event, such as a confrontation over Berlin, Yugoslavia, the Middle East, Persian Gulf oil, or a nuclear accident. Pact war preparations—although interrelated—have been categorized into four separate processes for discussion purposes: political, economic, civil defense, and military.

Warsaw Pact Consultations

75. The point in the decisionmaking process at which the Soviets would begin discussions with their Pact allies might depend largely on the circumstances of war initiation. In their military exercises and propaganda, the Pact generally assumes a NATO attack and that a "period of threat" would precede hostilities. Intra-Pact consultations would have to occur during this period, given the degree to which Soviet planning depends on a coalition approach to fighting a war with NATO.

3.5(c)

76. In their military literature, the Soviets express concern about the possibility of a "bolt from the blue" attack by NATO. They believe, however, that the escalation of some regional crisis would be the most likely circumstance for war initiation following a period of political warning, heightened tension, and prewar mobilization. In any event, the standard Pact exercise scenario, which generally involves reaction to a NATO attack, is intended by commanders to test their organizations under less than ideal conditions, and does not necessarily reflect actual Soviet or Pact perceptions of war initiation.

3.3(b)(1)

A. Political Preparations

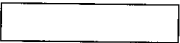
The Decisionmaking Process

74. The decision to prepare for or initiate war with NATO would be made by the Politburo of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, probably on the recommendation of the USSR Defense Council. The Soviet Defense Minister and other Soviet military leaders, including at least the Chief of the General Staff and the Commander in Chief of the Warsaw Pact Combined Armed Forces, probably would participate in the deliberations that would precede the Politburo's decision. The decision process probably would involve scores of supporting high-level party,

NSWP officers do not believe that NATO intends to initiate an attack. We believe the Soviet political leadership generally shares this view, although we have little information on the perceptions of the Soviet leadership in this regard. Whatever the circumstances of war initiation, however, the Soviets' military dependence on their allies would be a critical factor. Although the Soviets undoubtedly would withhold from their allies certain aspects of their own deliberations and perceptions of the crisis, actions and decisions affecting the preparation of the Pact's Combined Armed Forces could not be withheld without seriously risking Moscow's war

3.5(c)

~~Top Secret~~



~~Top Secret~~

3.5(c)

plans. The Soviets, however, would certainly seek to ensure the tactical surprise and integrity of their attack plans by maintaining tight security over certain operational aspects of their planning. []

3.5(c)

77. Recently acquired information on the Warsaw Pact Statute for Wartime Command indicates that it provides mechanisms which would allow for a virtual automatic response by NSWP military units to orders initiated in Moscow, without further consultations with East European national authorities. In short, during periods of crisis, Soviet legal authority would essentially abrogate the sovereign rights of the East European states by assuming control over at least some portion of their armed forces. The Statute does not reveal the nature or extent of political consultations prior to the implementation of the statutory mechanisms, although the Pact has a central policymaking body—the Political Consultative Committee (PCC). The peacetime process of decisionmaking and implementation in the Pact is closely controlled by the Soviet Union through ostensibly multinational bodies such as the Staff of the Combined Armed Forces. East Europeans assigned to the Staff do not hold positions of real authority and are denied knowledge of any forces other than their own. The personal intervention of the Commander in Chief of the Combined Armed Forces is often decisive in the pursuit of Soviet objectives during peacetime, and we believe the Soviet political and military leadership would likewise dominate decisionmaking during a crisis with NATO. In sum, although we cannot judge to what extent the counsel of East European leaders would be sought in the process of making the initial decision to prepare for or initiate war, the anticipated reactions of the principal Pact political leaders would almost certainly weigh heavily in the decision. Sooner or later, the commitment or at least acquiescence of the principal East European leaders would be required for the Soviets to effectively execute their war plans against NATO. []

3.5(c)

Psychological Preparation of the Population

78. Assuming a decision to prepare for war, an immediate concern for the Soviets would be to maximize internal security and assure the support and stability of the populations of the USSR and the East European nations. If the Soviet leadership seriously contemplated war with NATO, it is virtually certain that the Soviets would develop in their domestic propaganda the theme of a heightened threat from the West and would seek to justify an appropriate military

response. The East European leaders, should they believe that war was likely to occur, would begin to take steps on their own to prepare their populations for war. Measures to suppress and control potential dissident elements would almost certainly be taken in most or all Pact nations. Circumstances permitting, Soviet and Pact leaders might take weeks or months to orchestrate a massive propaganda campaign to motivate the Pact populace to support a decision to go to war. In the event of a decision to go to war only after a short period of preparation, the Soviets would have to accept the risks of uncertain support for their action, particularly from the NSWP nations. They might, however, be able to gain cooperation initially through information control and portraying the Pact as the threatened party. []

3.5(c)

International Propaganda and Diplomatic Initiatives

79. Prior to initiation of hostilities against NATO, the Warsaw Pact—and the USSR in particular—would seek to exploit to the fullest extent the potential of public statements and diplomacy as an instrument of policy. The Pact would avoid conveying specific information regarding an attack, but presenting a public rationale for it would be essential to the Pact's efforts to convey to NATO its concerns, to seek a solution short of war if possible, and to prepare its population for the possibility of major hostilities. Depending on their own perceptions of the situation and the threat, some East European leaders might well make public statements independent of the Soviets to clarify NATO intentions, verify the nature of the threat, and seek assurances from the Soviets and other Pact leaders that a decision to prepare for or initiate hostilities was a proper and necessary response. Pact public and private pronouncements and diplomatic initiatives would be designed to accomplish the following:

- Inform the NATO governments of the nature and extent of Pact concern and exert pressure for a suitable solution short of war.
- Exploit any differences among NATO member states.
- Isolate the United States from China and Japan.
- Attempt to keep neutral nations out of a war (particularly Sweden, Finland, Austria, Switzerland, and Yugoslavia).
- If possible, gain active or passive assistance of neutral nations.

3.5(c)

46

~~Top Secret~~

~~Top Secret~~

3.5(c)

- Inform and convince the Pact leadership elites and populace of the threat and prepare them for possible hostilities.
- Convince the world community of the validity of Pact concerns, justify Pact military measures, and warn of the dangers of support for NATO.
- Secure support from non-European Communist countries and the Third World.

The Pact's propaganda campaign would probably intensify over time as Moscow grew impatient for a satisfactory solution short of war or saw the situation worsening. This media blitz, however, would not necessarily show a steady progression in form or substance. Temporary lulls in militant statements are possible, perhaps related to new diplomatic efforts, but would not necessarily indicate any fundamental change in the Pact's contemplation of a military solution.

3.5(c)

B. Economic Preparations

80. All Pact nations have plans that provide for the conversion of their economies to a wartime posture (refer to paragraphs 68 and 69 and inset referenced therein). In preparing for war with NATO, Moscow and its allies could not be certain whether such a war would be short or long, nuclear or nonnuclear. As a matter of prudence, Pact leaders would have to consider a full range of economic preparations. They have already stockpiled large quantities of critical commodities and would consider additional stockpiling. The process of converting transportation, industrial, and agricultural systems to a full wartime posture would be disruptive, time-consuming, and observable. Changes would occur across all economic sectors, and would be observable in manufacturing, labor, agriculture, construction, trade and finance, and distribution systems. Such a process would require months to complete in its entirety, though it need not be completed prior to war initiation. At some point, the Soviets would probably halt the flow of their oil and gas resources to West European countries. Some measures would require early implementation, such as military control over transportation systems. The readying of transportation facilities to support Pact military operations would be one of the most essential, as well as disruptive and observable Pact war preparations. The priority availability of these systems—railroads, civil aviation, merchant fleets, highways, inland waterway transport—is an integral part of Pact

military logistic plans, and military control would be implemented at least selectively prior to, during, or soon after the initiation of military mobilization. Considerable time (probably weeks) would be required to reorganize transportation systems to meet both military requirements and changed economic priorities. Provisions also have been made for civil enterprises to rapidly deliver vehicles to the military during an emergency. The drivers of these vehicles are reservists who, along with their vehicles, are organized into quasi-military units called *avtokolonna*. In peacetime these units are periodically called up to support military exercises, and they would be mobilized on a much larger scale to support wartime military requirements.

3.5(c)

81. The Soviets have made provisions for virtually all segments of their industry to support wartime military operations. Comprehensive planning, detailed mobilization plans, the maintenance of excess production capacity, and reserve stocks of raw materials and components are among the extensive preparations and measures designed to accomplish the conversion of industrial facilities from peacetime to wartime production. In peacetime, most defense plants produce both civilian and military goods. Mobilization plans for these plants call for increasing military production by curtailing civilian production, consolidating military production lines, relaxing quality standards for certain products, increasing work shift schedules, exploiting excess production capacity, and using machinery more intensively. Many plants are scheduled to convert to military production in wartime, for example, civil producers of precision instruments, electronics, aircraft, and ships. At least some of these plants maintain mobilization stockpiles—equipment and tooling, raw materials, and other supplies necessary to convert to production of military goods. Most NSWP defense plants and many civilian enterprises appear to have wartime conversion plans that are similar in scope and content to Soviet plans.

3.5(c)

82. The Soviets apparently expect to accomplish essential conversion to wartime production over a period of three to six months. Surge production in existing defense plants could be accomplished within a few days to several weeks. Conversion of civilian plants to military production could be accomplished within several weeks if the necessary equipment is stored or installed at the plants. Modest retooling, if required, could take up to several months. Major retooling and construction to extend production of military goods to new plants could take from several

3.5(c)

47
~~Top Secret~~

~~Top Secret~~



3.5(c)

months to well over a year for complex products. Relocation of selected plants required by civil defense plans could extend the conversion process by several weeks to several months.

3.5(c)

83. The Soviets have made considerable preparation for converting economic sectors to a wartime posture. Despite these preparations, however, conversion would require extensive and expensive changes in priorities, resource allocation, production, and foreign trade and therefore could not readily be fully accomplished in the short term. If these conversions were initiated, however, they would suggest serious concern over an increasing danger of hostilities over the long run, or perhaps deliberate planning to initiate war at some time in the future.

3.5(c)

C. Civil Defense Preparations ²¹

84. The Soviet Union clearly has the most extensive and effective civil defense program among the Pact nations. The Soviets believe that a future war with NATO would place extreme demands on their homeland. Civil defense measures are designed to counter the destruction and disruption associated with the worst eventuality—general nuclear war. Civil defense measures could be initiated in the early stages of a crisis and integrated with political, economic, and military preparations. The primary purpose of these measures would be to protect key party, government, military, and economic leaders; institutions; and, to a lesser degree, the population in general. Soviet civil defense measures, however, encompass far more than humanitarian considerations; they are designed to provide for the survival of a functioning wartime management system. Specifically, these measures are intended to provide:

- Continuity of party, government, economic, and military leadership at all levels.
- Mobilization of human and material resources.
- Support of military operations.
- Continuity of essential economic activity.
- Conduct of postattack recovery operations.

3.5(c)

²¹ For a detailed treatment of this subject, refer to the Interagency Intelligence Memorandum, NI IIM 83-10003IX, *Soviet Wartime Management: The Role of Civil Defense in Leadership Continuity*, December 1963.

For a discussion of the transition of a military district and its civil defense structure to a wartime posture, refer to DIA Defense Intelligence Document, DDB-8250-G-83-SAO, *USSR: The Transition From Peace to War at the Military District/Oblast Level—Study of Civil Defense Command Entities*, May 1982.

3.5(c)

3.5(c)

85. With adequate warning time, the USSR's top military and civilian leadership would be relocated in hardened, exurban fixed facilities or mobile command posts (CPs). Most party and government agencies and many industrial enterprises have one or more exurban CPs and/or relocation facilities. Military district commanders would assume direct control of local civil defense activities through their deputies for civil defense. The Soviets plan to employ a combination of sheltering and evacuation to protect the general population of cities they consider likely targets during a nuclear attack.

3.5(c)

86. Civil defense measures would be initiated according to military and national readiness conditions, as the situation may dictate. During a period of "increased readiness," evacuation plans would be updated; maintenance performed on equipment designated for use during evacuation and postattack recovery; shelters prepared for occupation; and preparations made to distribute supplies of food, medical equipment, and protective clothing. During "threat-of-war readiness," exurban CPs would be activated and at least partially staffed, dispersal or evacuation of selected officials and enterprises probably would occur, and officials would begin functioning in their wartime management roles. During the "full readiness" condition, dispersal and evacuation could be implemented on a large or national scale if nuclear attacks on the homeland were anticipated. We are uncertain when the Soviets would declare a "special period" or whether this condition is essential for implementation of the more disruptive civil defense measures.²²

3.5(c)

D. Military Preparations

Employment of Warsaw Pact Forces ²³

87. The Warsaw Pact has developed contingency plans for military operations on all of its land and maritime frontiers. Pact planners clearly expect Central Europe to be the decisive arena in a war with NATO, but they also have plans for offensive action on the NATO regions flanking Central Europe. We have little direct evidence on the Pact's view of the timing of attacks on NATO's flanks in relation to an offensive in Central Europe. The need for unhindered naval operations from their Northern Fleet bases would almost certainly cause the Soviets to strike

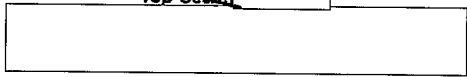
3.5(c)

3.5(c)

3.5(c)

~~Top Secret~~

~~Top Secret~~



3.5(c)

NATO facilities in northern Norway and probably attempt to occupy territory there. The urgency of this need would probably lead them to take action concurrently with an attack in Central Europe. We would also expect attacks on NATO naval forces in the Mediterranean to occur concurrently with operations in Central Europe. None of the other potential flank offensives would appear to have this degree of urgency, although the Pact would probably move against the Turkish Straits early in a war. We judge that the Pact would be unlikely to initiate war by mounting major ground offensives against all NATO sectors simultaneously, but the Pact almost certainly would conduct secondary offensives or holding actions to keep NATO from shifting forces from the flanks to Central Europe, to compel commitment of NATO reserves, and to weaken NATO forces on the flanks in anticipation of further operations.

3.5(c)

88. The Soviets believe one of the critical factors in a war with NATO is the attainment of air superiority and the early neutralization of NATO's theater nuclear forces. The Pact would probably attempt to achieve these objectives in a nonnuclear offensive by means of a massive air operation. Aircraft involved in the air operation would attempt to establish three or more corridors through NATO's forward air defenses by saturating and destroying the air defenses in and around the air corridors. The primary targets of attack would be NATO's Pershing II and ground-launched cruise missile (GLCM) bases; airbases where nuclear-capable aircraft are located; nuclear weapons depots; other tactical nuclear weapons delivery systems; and key command, control, and communications and logistics facilities and interceptor bases.

3.5(c)

Warsaw Pact Wartime Military Control Structure

89. Moscow's success in achieving its wartime objectives would depend largely on the Soviets' ability to control and coordinate multinational, combined-arms operations of great scope and complexity. A headquarters of the Warsaw Pact Combined Armed Forces operates in Moscow in peacetime but does not control the armed forces of member states. Each country exercises such control through its national command authority. Overall defense planning is coordinated among the Pact nations, but the process is driven by Soviet decisionmakers. The Commander in Chief and Chief of Staff of the Pact's Combined Armed Forces have always been Soviet general officers. The ultimate authority for the direction of the Soviet military rests with the Politburo, but the wartime role of the

Politburo would probably be limited to only the most crucial military decisions. The Defense Council, a group made up of selected members of the Politburo, establishes military policy and provides broad guidelines for the employment of military forces. In wartime, we believe the Defense Council would form the nucleus of the national defense command organization (see figure 1 on page 50).

3.5(c)

90. The General Secretary of the Communist Party would be designated Supreme Commander in Chief (CINC) in wartime and would head the Supreme High Command (*Verkhovnoye Glavokomandovaniye*—V GK) of the Armed Forces of the USSR. The VGK may be controlled, as it was in World War II, by a senior internal command group called the *Stavka*. In addition to the party General Secretary, VGK membership probably would include the Minister of Defense (as the Deputy Supreme CINC), the three first deputy ministers of defense (the Chief of the General Staff, the First Deputy Minister for General Affairs, the CINC of the Combined Armed Forces of the Warsaw Pact), and the CINCs of the five services of the Soviet armed forces—who also are deputy ministers of defense. The Soviets make no allowance for East European participation in the VGK.

3.5(c)

Warsaw Pact Wartime Command Statute

91. The Soviets increased their control measures over the Pact's military forces in 1980 when the Pact nations (except Romania) formally ratified the Statute for the Wartime Command of the Combined Armed Forces of the Warsaw Pact.⁴⁹ The Statute and subsequent protocols in effect give the Soviet General Staff, functioning as the executive arm of the Supreme High Command of the Pact's Combined Armed Forces, a legal basis to exercise total operational control over the armed forces and national resources of the Pact member states (except Romania). Implementation of the "Monument" communications procedure provides the Soviet General Staff with a more rapid and reliable system to control the readiness posture of Pact forces, including alerting, mobilizing, and organizing units for combat. At present, these alert messages would be transmitted by the Soviet General Staff to the NSWP General Staffs (except Romania) and then be immediately retransmitted, without the requirement for fur-

⁴⁹ The Pact Wartime Statute is addressed in detail in NIE 12/11-83, *Military Reliability of the Soviet Union's Warsaw Pact Allies*, 23 June 1983, [redacted] and CIA Intelligence Assessment, SOV 85-10175CX, *The Soviet Union's Control of the Warsaw Pact Forces*, October 1983, [redacted]

3.5(c)

3.5(c)

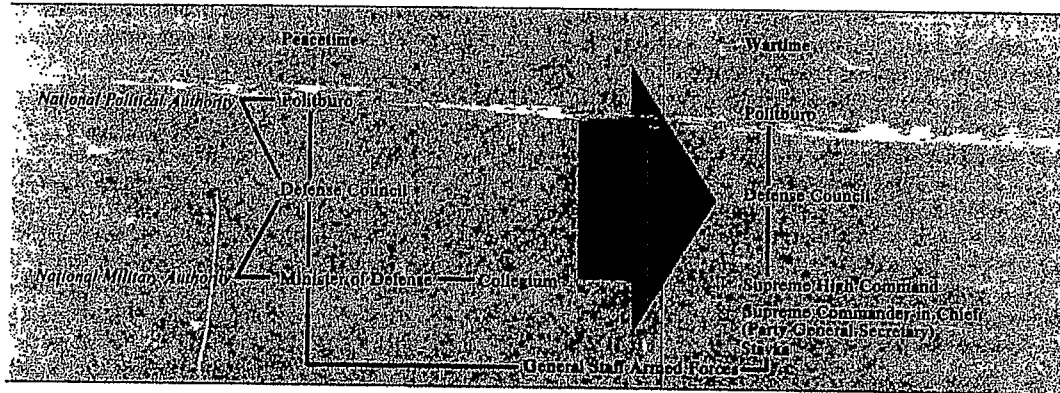
~~Top Secret~~

3.5(c)

~~Top Secret~~

3.5(c)

Figure 1
Soviet Command Authorities: Transition to Wartime



Unclassified
302932 6-84

ther approval by NSWP authorities, down to regimental and independent battalion level. These alert messages constitute a legal order to take stipulated readiness-related actions without further instruction or approval from NSWP authorities. Moreover, the Soviets plan in the near future to link all of the national automated alert systems into one Warsaw Pact-wide automated alert system in which alert signals initiated by the Soviet General Staff would be transmitted directly to the regimental level throughout the Combined Armed Forces without the necessity of retransmission at the national level. The Statute also provides that on a signal from the Supreme High Command (the Soviet General Staff) the staff of the Combined Armed Forces would be dissolved and replaced with two Soviet-commanded theater-level commands. East European forces, including fleets and homeland air defenses, would operate under the direct control of these commands.

92. The Soviet-inspired Statute is clearly designed to provide Moscow with the necessary legal and technical means to gain centralized control of the Pact's armed forces and implement Soviet-directed war plans. According to the provisions of the Wartime Statute, the Soviet Supreme High Command would assume control of the Combined Armed Forces well in

advance of hostilities; these provisions do not specify the time or manner in which this assumption of control would occur. There are three basic ways in which the provisions of the Statute could be activated:

- By a collective decision of the Pact member states.
- By request of a single member state to the (Soviet) Commander in Chief of the Combined Armed Forces, who would then notify the Supreme High Command and the member states that provisions of the Statute were being implemented.
- By the (Soviet) Supreme High Command notifying the member states.

Although the provisions of the Statute would not necessarily assure full Pact cooperation, the approval and ratification of the Statute by all but one Pact nation reflects limits in the ability of NSWP political and military leaders to ignore or countermand its provisions.

Warsaw Pact High Commands of Forces

93. Should war between the Warsaw Pact and NATO appear likely, intermediate commands would

3.5(c)

3.5(c)

~~Top Secret~~

3.5(c)

~~Top Secret~~

3.5(c)

probably be established between the Soviet General Staff in Moscow and field forces earmarked for commitment against NATO. These commands would exercise direct operational control over Soviet and NSWP general purpose forces and at least coordinate the operations of those strategic forces allocated to support a European campaign against NATO. The Soviets refer to these commands as High Commands of Forces. In late 1978 or early 1979, a permanent headquarters of this type—designated the High Command of (Soviet) Forces in the Far East—was established in the eastern USSR.²⁵

3.5(c)

94. The High Command of Forces in the Far East is the only permanently established high command in peacetime, but two similar commands have been temporarily activated opposite NATO's central and southern regions during peacetime exercises: the High Commands of Forces in the Western and Southwestern Theaters of Military Operation (TVDs)—(see inset for a description of Soviet theater warfare concepts). Furthermore, since 1980 a third temporary command—designated the High Command of Forces in the Southern TVD—has been activated opposite Iran and neighboring countries during exercises.²⁶

3.5(c)

Soviet Theater Concepts

The Soviets define a theater of war (*teatr voyny*—TV) as the territory of any one continent, together with the sea areas adjoining it and the airspace above it, on which hostilities may develop—for example, the European Theater of War. The Soviets have not established any TV-level command authorities.

3.5(c)

A TV usually includes several theaters of military operations (*teatr voyennykh deystviy*—TVD). A TVD is defined as a particular territory, together with the associated airspace and sea areas, including islands (archipelagos), within whose limits the armed forces of the country (or coalition) operate in wartime as a military organization engaged in strategic missions which ensue from national or Pact war plans. A TVD may be ground, maritime, or intercontinental. According to their military-political and economic importance, TVDs are classified as main or secondary.

3.5(c)

3.5(c)

3.5(c)

3.5(c)

²⁵ For further discussion of the Soviet Far East High Command, refer to NIE 11-14/40-81X, *Soviet Military Forces in the Far East*, 1 September 1981, and CIA USSR Monthly Review, "The Role of the High Command of Forces in the Far East," September 1983, SOV UR 83-0091K.

²⁶ For further discussion of this High Command, refer to NIE 11/89-83, *Soviet Forces and Capabilities in the Southern Theater of Military Operations*, 1 November 1983.

95. Pact strategists apparently envision the need for at least five TVDs to control operations against NATO (see inset and figure 2). Although commands would almost certainly be established in these theaters in the event of a NATO-Warsaw Pact war, they could also be activated in other circumstances such as during exercises or in a period of extreme international tension. Soviet officers assigned to the peacetime headquarters of Warsaw Pact military forces, along with officers from the Main Operations Directorate of the Soviet General Staff, would be reassigned to staff positions in the high commands. NSWP officers assigned to the Pact's peacetime military headquarters would be reassigned to high commands in TVDs and possibly to positions in their national forces. Soviet General Staff elements operating from hardened, fixed communications centers and mobile command posts would support the high commands of TVDs. We

Potential European Theaters of Military Operation

The Western TVD. This TVD would include Soviet and NSWP forces in East Germany, Poland, and Czechoslovakia and Soviet forces in the western USSR. Pact forces, including the Combined Baltic Fleet, would be under the direct control of the High Command of Forces in the Western TVD.

The Southwestern TVD. This TVD would include Soviet forces in Hungary and in the southwestern USSR, plus Bulgarian, Romanian, and Hungarian forces. It would also include forces of the Combined Black Sea Fleet in the Black and Mediterranean Seas. Forces in the TVD would be under the direct control of the High Command of Forces in the Southwestern TVD.

The Northwestern TVD. In wartime the forces of the Leningrad Front and elements of the Northern Fleet, under the direct control of the Soviet General Staff, would operate in this TVD. A high command for this TVD has never been detected in exercises. The TVD would encompass Finland and the Scandinavian Peninsula and its immediately adjacent waters.

The Atlantic and Arctic TVDs. The Soviets also expect major naval operations against NATO in the North Atlantic, particularly in the Norwegian Sea, to occur in conjunction with a conflict in Europe. Maritime TVDs for the Arctic—all sea areas north of the Greenland-Iceland-United Kingdom (G-I-UK) gap—and the Atlantic would constitute the operating areas of forces of the Soviet Northern Fleet. We believe the Northern Fleet Commander, under the direction of the Soviet General Staff, would control all general purpose military operations in the Atlantic and Arctic TVDs.

~~Top Secret~~

3.5(c)

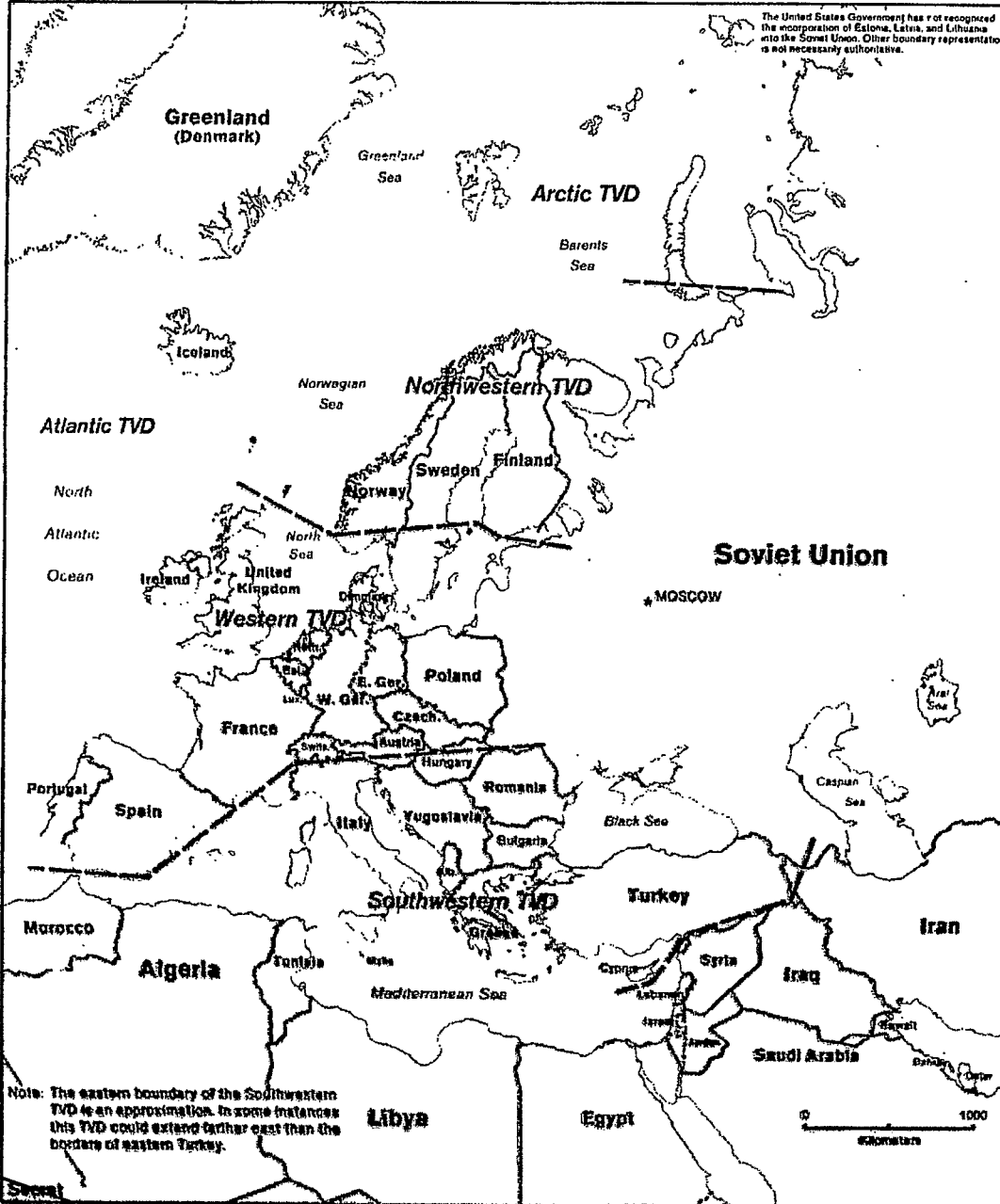
~~Top Secret~~

3.5(c)

~~Top Secret~~

3.5(c)

**Figure 2
Possible Warsaw Pact Theaters of Military Operations (TVDs) in Europe**



702278 5-64

~~Top Secret~~

3.5(c)

~~Top Secret~~ [redacted]

3.5(c)

anticipate that the CINC of the Combined Warsaw Pact Armed Forces would command the High Command in the Western TVD and that his deputy would assume command of the High Command in the Southwestern TVD. These two commands would actually become high commands of the Combined Armed Forces of the Pact, since they would include non-Soviet as well as Soviet forces. [redacted]

3.5(c)

Command and Control Enhancements

96. Since the late 1970s, the Soviets have been implementing extensive command and control changes that are designed to provide in peacetime the infrastructure for the wartime formation and control of high commands in TVDs. One such measure has been the creation of separate "West" and "Southwest" staff elements in the Pact's peacetime headquarters in Moscow to facilitate the formation of High Commands of Forces in the Western and Southwestern TVDs. In addition, the Pact has been developing an integrated communications system that by the mid-1980s would enhance the interoperability and communications capacity needed to support Pact military operations in the TVDs. Other changes have increased the day-to-day responsibility and authority of Soviet military district commanders. The establishment of the positions of Commanding General, Air Forces of the Military District; Commanding General, Air Defense of the Military District; and Commanding General, Rocket Troops and Artillery of the Military District—as well as their appointments as Deputy Military District Commanders—have streamlined command relationships and eliminated unnecessary staff functions. Tactical air armies of Frontal Aviation have been disestablished, with most of these assets being integrated into "Air Forces of the Military District (or Group of Forces)," along with interceptor regiments which were previously subordinated to the National Air Defense Forces (PVO Strany). Some aircraft formerly in Frontal Aviation—primarily Fencer—have been integrated into "Air Armies of the Supreme High Command" (VVK), along with strategic bombers which were formerly organized in a separate command—Long Range Aviation. Similarly, a new command structure called "Air Defense of the Military District (or Group of Forces)" has been created, encompassing strategic surface-to-air missiles (SAMs) and associated radars as well as the SAMs, antiaircraft artillery (AAA), and radars subordinate to ground maneuver formations. These changes, resulting in the merger of strategic and tactical air and air defense

assets, provide greater operational flexibility to commanders through centralized control at both the military district/front and TVD levels while facilitating a rapid transition to a wartime organization. [redacted]

3.5(c)

Warsaw Pact Fronts

97. A front would be the largest field force within a land TVD. Although not directly comparable to any Western military organization, a front would be similar to a NATO army group and its associated allied tactical air force in size, level of command, and function. A front is a wartime structure for which there is no standard organization. It usually would be composed of three to five tank or combined-arms armies, each consisting of three to five tank or motorized rifle divisions, and air forces with as many as several hundred tactical aircraft. The forces of a front would also include numerous separate combat elements such as artillery, missile, helicopter, and air defense units. A front could also have an airborne division resubordinated from VVK control. Most fronts would have an air assault brigade capable of conducting airborne, airmobile, and airlanding operations. Combat support and combat service elements would be attached to a front as necessary and provide transport, maintenance, engineer, supply, and medical support. A front operating in a maritime sector might also include naval elements. The size of a front would depend on the mission assigned, but could range between 300,000 to 400,000 men. The Soviet-East German Front, which would be formed opposite the NATO Central Region, however, could total some 700,000 men after full mobilization. [redacted]

3.5(c)

Warsaw Pact Force Generation

98. The manner in which the Warsaw Pact prepared its forces for war would depend largely on the speed, urgency, and intensity with which a war-threatening crisis developed. Pact planners have identified two basic approaches to achieving "full combat readiness." In a slowly developing crisis, the Pact nations would probably take a deliberate, time-phased approach, initiating "increased combat readiness" for portions of their armed forces (see inset mentioned in paragraph 70). This would permit the accomplishment of a number of precautionary measures, but would fall far short of placing the Pact's military forces on a full wartime posture. This approach would permit the achievement of full readiness in an orderly and systematic manner, bringing various force elements to

3.5(c)

53

~~Top Secret~~

~~Top Secret~~ [redacted]

3.5(c)

full readiness sequentially, while allowing opportunities to avoid hostilities.²⁷ If a crisis deepened, the Pact could move to "threat-of-war readiness." The Pact's final military preparations would be initiated by a decision to implement "full combat readiness." With this decision, preparations for war would move rapidly and continuously. The "full combat readiness" condition, however, is not a declaration of war, and it does not order the commitment of units to combat. [redacted]

3.5(c)

99. The gradual conversion from a peacetime to a wartime posture need not be continuous or sequential. The process could be interrupted at any time depending on the Pact's perception of the threat or other factors. The Pact's four-tiered readiness control system allows for a deliberate approach to increasing readiness and war preparations as well as the holding of units at interim levels of readiness short of "full readiness." Moreover, readiness conditions could be relaxed or returned to normal at any time. [redacted]

3.5(c)

100. Another approach to achieving full readiness—the compressed approach—would be employed after the unanticipated outbreak of hostilities, or when the Pact believed war was unavoidable and imminent and there was no time for deliberate, time-phased preparations. Under this option, military forces would be readied simultaneously and as rapidly as possible. Under extreme circumstances, units could be ordered to move directly to "full combat readiness" from their normal peacetime posture. [redacted]

3.5(c)

101. The process of mobilizing and deploying Pact ground formations consists of six basic steps, as described below:

- Alert and dispersal: the alerting of units and personnel, recalling personnel, returning units to garrison from training sites, making preparations within garrison, and moving to dispersal areas. Activities include removing equipment from storage; loading of supplies; preparing for calling up and receiving reservists and mobilized transport vehicles (if required); receiving, reviewing, and/or updating operational and movement plans; and, in some cases, selective small-scale mobilization of reservists with specialized skills.
- Mobilization: the process of calling up, receiving, and integrating reservists and equipment to achieve wartime manning and equipment authorizations. In an emergency, this process

3.5(c)

²⁷ Refer to DIA DDB-1100-352-63, *The Soviet Force Generation Process*, (two volumes), November 1982, [redacted] (v)

could be accomplished rapidly and overtly after units had vacated their garrisons and moved to field dispersal locations. In a situation in which the Pact had some control of events, however, incremental or phased mobilization could occur within garrison over a period of weeks or months. Reservists called up for training and subsequently released would be subject to immediate recall. Mobilization might or might not be readily discernible, depending in part on its scale, location, and whether it was accomplished rapidly or incrementally. The Pact would probably attempt to accomplish large-scale mobilization covertly in the guise of routine reservist training and exercises.

- Training and preparation: the process of training mobilized personnel and preparing units to conduct combat operations. Time allocated for this process would depend on circumstances. If deemed necessary, some units would be committed immediately, while other units might have weeks or months to prepare for combat.
- Movement: the process of moving units from alert dispersal areas to concentration or assembly areas in a theater of operations, including the loading and unloading of units as well as transit time.
- Final preparation for combat: includes replenishment of ammunition and fuel consumed during movement; replacement of equipment and personnel losses suffered during movement; maintenance; and the integration of units into the command structure of the theater, front, and army in which they are to serve.
- Deployment to combat: includes movement of units from concentration or assembly areas to attack positions. [redacted]

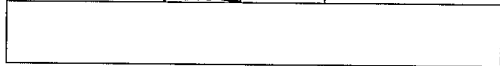
3.5(c)

102. The principal discretionary activity for Warsaw Pact planners and commanders would be training, particularly postmobilization training. The Pact has two basic options in preparing its forces for combat. Between these lie a range of potential trade-offs between combat proficiency and force availability:

- The Pact could choose to commit forces as soon as they have completed the alert and mobilization process. Should it opt for this approach, a number of units would not have received a level of training equivalent to that of the "ready" units, and the Pact would have to accept a

3.5(c)

~~Top Secret~~



3.5(c)

degradation in the combat potential of the mobilized force.

- Alternatively, the Pact could take a more deliberate, phased approach, allowing time to more fully prepare and train its forces, thus increasing their combat potential.
- Although circumstances would determine which option the Pact would choose, we believe it would opt for the more deliberate process when the Pact had some control over time and events.

based on purely military factors, but rather on a combination of military and political considerations.

3.5(c)

106. In the following evaluation of the risks and benefits of alternative Pact options for the initial attack, we have defined four basic options as well as possible variations. The first—attack from a peacetime posture—is not reflected in Pact doctrine or exercises but is included to present a more complete range of Pact capabilities. The other options have been selected on the basis of evidence from Soviet and Pact military writings, exercise scenarios, and reporting.

3.3(b)(1)

It should be emphasized, however, that these options only represent certain "phase points" during the Pact's force generation process at which Pact planners could choose to launch an attack; variations and other attack options are possible. Pact contingency plans for war in Europe appear to envision the establishment of a first echelon consisting of three fronts in the Central Region with at least two additional fronts moved forward from the western USSR to form a second echelon. This general concept is reflected in Pact exercises, doctrinal literature, and other documentary evidence. The Pact probably would begin to organize at least five fronts for use in Central Europe regardless of what forces would be committed in the initial attack. Three fronts would be formed from Soviet and NSWP forces already in Central Europe and two or more fronts would be formed from forces garrisoned in the Baltic, Belorussian, Carpathian, and possibly Kiev Military Districts. Forces in the western military districts of the USSR are primarily intended for commitment to combat at various time intervals after the initiation of hostilities, but some may be assigned to first-echelon fronts prior to commitment.

3.5(c)

103. Training, however, would extend the time required for the buildup process and could provide additional warning indicators to NATO, thereby jeopardizing the Pact's ability to maximize surprise. Pact leaders would vary the scope and duration of any training in accordance with the situation, their plans and perceptions, and the peacetime readiness posture of individual units and formations. If Pact planners chose this option, they would probably sequence their preparation activities and almost certainly implement deception measures designed to confuse NATO intelligence organizations as to the scope, duration, and purpose of the activity.

3.5(c)

E. Attack Options

104. As Pact leaders considered the preparation of their forces for war, they would be faced with deciding the location, timing, and size of the initial attack on NATO. This decision would be made against the background of those factors addressed in chapters II and III of the Estimate: Pact perceptions of NATO's military capabilities; an assessment of the risks involved in a war with NATO; the reliability of the NSWP military forces; and the Pact's military objectives and concepts for employment of forces, doctrinal concepts, and peacetime readiness posture. The major dilemma facing Pact leaders would be the degree to which they would care to trade off Pact preparedness and the full combat potential stipulated by their doctrine, for a greater degree of surprise which might be achieved by a smaller, but quicker attack designed to preempt mobilization, reinforcement, and the establishment of an organized defense by NATO.

3.5(c)

105. Any Pact decision bearing on when to attack would be influenced by a set of sometimes contradictory military factors, including its own preparedness in relation to its perception of the status of NATO preparations, and the desire to achieve surprise as well as to maximize force superiority. The final decision on an attack option, however, almost certainly would not be

107. **Preparation Time.**²⁰ Our assessments of the time required for the Pact to complete the military

3.5(c)

²⁰ See Defense Intelligence Document, DDB-1100-401-63-51, *Second Operational Echelon Frontal Forces in the Western Theater of Military Operations*, March 1983.

3.5(c)

²¹ NI HM 83-10012, *The Readiness of Soviet Ground Forces*, November 1982, provides the basis for the Intelligence Community's estimates on the time required for Soviet ground units to complete the alert, dispersal, and mobilization process. This document also quantifies the range of potential trade-offs between combat proficiency (developed by training) and force availability. Defense Intelligence Document DDB-1100-430-84, *The Readiness of the Non-Soviet Warsaw Pact Ground Forces*, (draft), provides a similar analysis for NSWP ground units.

3.5(c)

The preparation times cited under each attack option in this Estimate include time allocated for the movement of units to preattack positions. Movement times were determined by employing the "Summits" automated movement model developed by the General Research Corporation under contract for the Office of the Secretary of Defense. The movement times provided by the movement model are based on ideal conditions.

3.5(c)

3.5(c)

~~Top Secret~~



3.5(c)

~~Top Secret~~

3.5(c)

preparations required to execute each attack option, beginning from a peacetime posture, include a minimum time and a more realistic time. The minimum time reflects our assessment of the Pact's ability to accomplish the preparations under the most time-constrained conditions with no major problems in planning and execution. The difficulties inherent in coordinating, controlling, and executing these complex and Pact-wide preparations would be enormous, however, with many opportunities for major mishaps, confusion, delays, and even chaos. The realistic time estimates allow for human, mechanical, and climatic difficulties that would be likely to characterize such an undertaking. Neither the minimum time nor the more realistic time includes specific time allocated for the training of freshly mobilized units. Such training would enhance the combat potential of the mobilized units as well as assure a greater degree of preparedness in other important respects, even at the risk of lessening surprise and allowing NATO additional time for counterpreparations. Those Pact divisions that would benefit most from postmobilization training are "not ready" forces including three Czechoslovak and five Polish low-strength divisions, and almost 30 Soviet divisions in the three western military districts of the USSR. The availability and performance of the Soviet "not ready" divisions would be most critical to the Pact's ability to sustain offensive operations against strong or prolonged NATO resistance. Most of the Soviet "not ready" forces are probably planned for commitment at various time intervals after D-day as follow-on forces to maintain the momentum of the attack. As a result, some postmobilization training could be accomplished after initiation of hostilities. In addition, many Pact nondivisional units are maintained at low strength in peacetime and would be much better prepared to perform their missions after conducting a period of postmobilization training. Our assessment of the time required for these low-strength units to train up to a standard we judge to be the minimum necessary to conduct proficient offensive operations in Central Europe could extend their preparation times to about 90 days, plus the time required for movement.

3.5(c)

108. We assess that within 72 hours the Pact could mount a large-scale air attack throughout NATO's Central Region. However, we believe it highly unlikely that the Pact would mount such an air attack against NATO independent of a combined-arms offensive. Rather, the Soviets would prefer—and generally plan on—first completing logistic preparations and expanding their rear services, as well as completing mobilization of air combat units. Such preparations

would require seven to 12 days, at which time Soviet air forces would be fully combat ready.

3.5(c)

Option I—Attack From a Peacetime Posture

109. There is no evidence from Soviet or Pact military literature, doctrine, or exercises that would indicate that the Pact might launch an attack on NATO from a peacetime readiness posture. In fact, Soviet military strategists have explicitly stated that a European war would be improbable without some political warning and a degree of prehostilities mobilization by both sides. The Pact, however, does have some capability to attack NATO on short notice using ground and air units garrisoned near the East-West German border and the West German-Czechoslovak border, as well as short-range ballistic missiles (SRBMs). Less than a dozen Soviet and East German divisions in East Germany (within 50 to 60 kilometers of the West German border)—plus several hundred tactical aircraft—as well as a few Czechoslovak divisions near the West German border could mount a largely uncoordinated and fragmented attack on short notice. A few divisions might be capable of initiating an attack—possibly directly from their garrisons—within about 24 hours after their commanders received an attack order, depending on specific conditions within individual units (time of day, weather conditions, and a host of factors determined primarily by the cyclic nature of the six-month training cycle). An attack mounted on such short notice, however, could easily result in chaos as unit commanders, their staffs, and troops would have had no forewarning of an attack order and—by definition—made no preparations for an attack. Under normal peacetime conditions, units usually take days, weeks, or even months to prepare for scheduled major exercises (division level and higher). Pact divisional units in East Germany and Czechoslovakia are not fully manned in peacetime, and their higher level communications structure and logistic support systems are not postured to support a standing-start attack. Given 48 hours' notice, Pact divisional units could only marginally increase their ability to mount a coordinated attack, and would still lack a command, control, and communications, and logistic structure which could effectively command, control, and support their attacks.

3.5(c)

110. As a means of initiating a large-scale war with NATO, an attack from a peacetime posture would probably give the advantages of operational and tactical surprise to the Pact. By dint of surprise and perhaps local force superiority, the Pact might gain some early ground and air victories. These initial

56

~~Top Secret~~

3.5(c)

~~Top Secret~~

3.5(c)

successes would probably be the only advantage which would accrue to such an attack. Many considerations would weigh against the Pact opting to initiate a war with NATO from a peacetime readiness posture:

- **Loss of Mobilization Advantage.** The Pact would have to anticipate that an attack from a peacetime readiness posture would cause NATO to initiate rapid and large-scale mobilization almost simultaneously with the Pact. The possible local force superiority gained by such an attack might not be maintained if NATO forces responded effectively. Pact planners, considering their great appreciation of NATO's rapid deployment and mobilization capability, might well conclude that their attacking forces could face an adverse force ratio before substantial Pact reinforcements could be committed.
- **Command, Control, and Communications.** The Pact would not have time to establish a front-level command, control, and communications structure before hostilities commenced. The Soviets consider a functioning and effective command, control, and communications system a critical factor in successfully controlling their armed forces on the battlefield and managing the use of nuclear weapons.
- **Rear Service Support.** Forward-deployed divisions have three to five days of supplies on hand; however, many nondivisional rear service support units are manned at reduced strength or do not exist in the military peacetime force structure. An attack from peacetime posture would not allow time to mobilize and move rear service units forward. Moreover, the military would not have time to gain full control over critical lines of communication—especially highways in the forward area—as well as railroads for the movement of reinforcements forward.
- **Political, Economic, and Civil Defense Preparations.** An attack from peacetime posture would not permit the preparation of the Pact's populace, national economies, and civil defense organizations for war, as stipulated by doctrine. Moscow would be forced into heavier initial reliance on NSWP forces, and would be denied sufficient time to psychologically condition its troops for war.
- **Vulnerability and Risk of Escalation.** An attack from peacetime posture would leave other Pact

forces unprepared for hostilities. In particular, the Pact would have to accept the risk of NATO escalation to nuclear war at a time when Pact depots, transportation facilities, industrial enterprises, and uncommitted forces would be especially vulnerable to nuclear attack.

- **Surprise: A Two-Edged Sword.** Soviet planners and commanders have been conditioned to leave little to chance in preparing for military operations. By temperament, inclination, and doctrine, the Soviets are conservative in assessing force requirements and thorough in planning. Although an attack from peacetime posture might offer the advantage of operational and tactical surprise to the Pact, other options requiring longer preparation times would almost certainly offer a measure of tactical surprise as long as the Pact had the initiative. In ordering an attack from a peacetime posture, Pact leaders would have to accept the risks of unpreparedness and surprising their own commanders and troops.

These arguments lead us to conclude that there is little chance that the Pact would initiate war against NATO from a peacetime readiness posture.

3.5(c)

Option II—Attack With Two Fronts

111. Analysis of Pact exercises and doctrinal concepts leads us to conclude that the smallest force the Pact might use to initiate offensive operations in Central Europe would consist of two fronts. This force would consist of Soviet and NSWP ground and tactical air force units in East Germany and Czechoslovakia and possibly Soviet units in Poland—a total of some 40 active ground divisions, plus support units (see figure 3). While organizing the initial two-front force, the Pact would probably begin the preparation of other general purpose and strategic forces, as well as the Pact's populace and national economies for general war and the risks of nuclear escalation.

3.5(c)

112. Our estimates of Pact preparation times are based on extensive study of Pact contingency plans and exercises, along with analysis of the Pact's theoretical capability to prepare, organize, and deploy forces for war in Europe. Key to our judgments is our assessment of the peacetime readiness posture of the Pact's armed forces. We believe that, in the most urgent circumstances, the Pact would need at least five to six days to prepare and position a full two-front force—assuming that this force had been maintained in its normal peacetime readiness posture. Units comprising this force would require some personnel aug-

3.5(c)

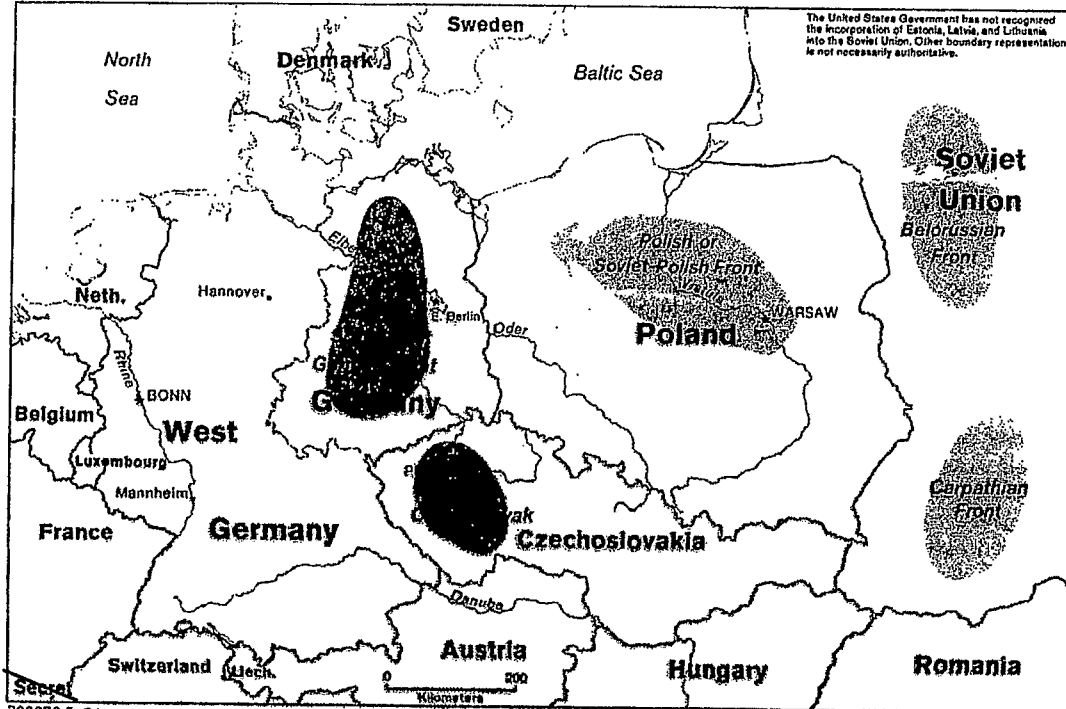
57

~~Top Secret~~

Top Secret

3.5(c)

Figure 3
Warsaw Pact Options for Initial Attack Force in the Central Region
(Attack With Two Fronts)



702279 5-84

3.5(c) The smallest force the Pact might use to initiate theater offensive operations probably would consist of two fronts—a total of some 40 divisions plus support and tactical air units

mentation to achieve war-authorized strength. Initiation of a two-front attack in slightly less time (four to five days) might be possible, but without several less ready and/or more distant divisions in eastern Czechoslovakia. The complexity and magnitude of the required preparations and the risks involved in insufficient preparation would probably cause or require the Pact to take longer than five to six days to prepare this force, with seven to 10 days being a more realistic time frame if the Pact attempted to rapidly launch a two-front attack from a normal peacetime readiness posture. Preparations for a two-front attack within five to six days would require employing a compressed time schedule which would exacerbate the confusion and disruption inherent in a rapid transition to a wartime posture and the requirement to move some large military formations several hundred kilometers on short notice. Preparations would occur simultaneously rather than in a phased or sequential pattern. This

compressed approach to force generation would yield units, especially nondivisional units, which—at least initially—would lack their full potential to undertake or sustain combat operations. Before attacking, the Pact would probably take the following actions:

- Declare a state of “full national defense readiness” for the Pact nations, possibly without the declaration of intermediate levels of readiness. (Such a declaration could be overt or secret, but the war preparations which it would initiate could not be concealed.)
- Declare a state of “full combat readiness” for Pact forces, with or without the declaration of intermediate levels of readiness. (This could be open or secret, but the preparations could not be concealed.)
- Mobilize, assemble, and prepare for combat the attacking force—a multinational force of almost

58

Top Secret

3.5(c)

~~Top Secret~~

3.5(c)

1 million men, about 40 divisions, and several hundred thousand major items of equipment. Some units would have to move several hundred kilometers to their initial combat positions.

- Begin to mobilize and prepare other general purpose forces in the theater for commitment as second-echelon or follow-on forces.
- Establish control over key transportation systems and transport means required to move units.
- Establish at least minimal national systems of logistics, particularly supply lines, that could provide some reinforcements and resupply the attacking forces.
- Deploy and establish a theater-level command and control structure that would enable Moscow to adequately control a two-front offensive. This structure would include at least some links to supporting strategic forces and to forces in other areas.
- Prepare the Pact's tactical aviation units to execute large-scale offensive operations at the beginning of hostilities.
- Prepare air armies of the VVK to conduct theaterwide operations.
- Prepare and deploy strategic offensive and defensive forces to support the attack, defend home territories, and guard against the possibility of rapid escalation to nuclear war, including strategic nuclear exchanges.
- Prepare and disperse as many submarines and naval surface vessels as possible to prevent them from being destroyed in port and enable them to perform their assigned missions.
- Begin civil defense preparations and the process of converting national economies from a peacetime to a wartime posture.
- Psychologically prepare the Pact's populace and armed forces for war.

3.5(c)

113. By waiting to establish a two-front attacking force, the Pact would diminish many of the critical deficiencies inherent in mounting an attack from a peacetime readiness posture. The Pact's war-fighting capability would be improved in all respects, but particularly in regard to naval capabilities and the establishment of at least the essentials of a functioning front-level command and control system. Moreover, even with no preliminary preparations, this attack

option might give NATO only a few days to prepare for war. Although we assess that Pact planners would expect to achieve more advantageous force ratios by building up a larger force, the suddenness of a two-front attack could reasonably be expected to provide advantages by creating confusion and limiting NATO's preparation time. The Pact's supply system could support at least early successes.

3.5(c)

114. Notwithstanding the provision of some advantages, the initiation of hostilities after only five to six days of preparation with a two-front force would still entail serious risks for the Pact. The attacking force might lack some front-level elements, and its initial combat potential would be less than could be achieved with additional preparation time. Moreover, forward deployed Soviet and East German forces would have to assume responsibility for initial operations in northern West Germany and along the Baltic coast because of the unavailability of forces—primarily Polish—that would normally constitute the Pact's Northern Front. Command and control structures, particularly at the theater and national levels, would remain incomplete. More important, the mobilization and forward deployment of Soviet forces in the western USSR could not be accomplished; these units, therefore, would not be immediately available to reinforce or sustain an attacking two-front force. Furthermore, effective participation in the war by major forces in other areas would be limited, particularly in regard to coordinated naval actions and ground and air offensives on the flanks—due in part to the lower peacetime readiness posture of these Pact forces.

3.5(c)

115. We believe that the Pact would not be likely to attempt to engage in hostilities from a two-front posture after only five to six days' preparation in other than extraordinary time-urgent circumstances. One possible reason for the Pact opting to engage in hostilities under these circumstances could be a perception that a NATO attack was imminent. Although NATO mobilization would be viewed as a serious threat and almost certainly would cause the Pact to make counterpreparations, the Pact would not conduct hostilities with a force not fully prepared against NATO forces that enjoyed some advantages of prior preparation or mobilization *unless* the threat of imminent NATO attack were clear. Another urgent contingency could occur during a serious East-West political dispute, when the NATO countries—particularly the United States and West Germany—might undertake a degree of mobilization and other military preparations to improve their defensive posture and to demonstrate resolve in support of diplomatic negotiations. Moscow

3.5(c)

59

~~Top Secret~~

~~Top Secret~~

3.5(c)

might see this as weakening its own bargaining position, especially by threatening to upset the political advantage afforded the Pact by superiority in forces-in-being in Central Europe. In such a contingency, and, if it perceived truly vital interests at risk, Moscow might set in motion the rapid buildup and early attack option offered by the two-front force. Such an attack action would be designed to preempt NATO defensive and diplomatic preparations rather than an immediate threat of NATO attack.

3.5(c)

Option III—Attack With Three Fronts

116. Under this option, Pact planners could elect to prepare for war via a more phased approach and attack when they had prepared a three-front or larger force. Analysis of Pact exercises and contingency planning, as well as our assessment of the Pact's ability to prepare its forces, leads us to believe that the Pact would require, at a minimum, about eight to nine days to prepare and position a three-front force for an attack—assuming that this force had been maintained in its normal peacetime readiness posture. A more realistic time frame for these preparations might be 10 to 12 days, assuming a "cold start." However, follow-on forces from the western USSR consisting primarily of "not ready" divisions would not be able to effectively support and sustain such an attack.

3.5(c)

117. The more complete national and military preparations permitted under this option would assure the availability of a larger and better prepared force, provide for more efficient joint action by all forces, enhance command and control capabilities, provide a better ability to sustain the attack, and permit additional measures to guard against escalation to nuclear war. In this option:

- Those ground units readied for offensive operations would include all forces in the two-front option described above plus Polish forces and possibly a Soviet army (four divisions) from the Baltic or Belorussian Military District: a total of about 60 divisions (see figure 4).
- Additional tactical aircraft could be prepared, perhaps including deployment of some aircraft from the western USSR, and the overall capability to mount and sustain large-scale offensive air operations would be improved.

- A more extensive Pact command and control system would be established at the front, theater, and national levels. Communications capacity would be increased and redundant channels developed to guard against disruption.
- The ability of Pact civil and military defenses to withstand NATO counterattacks would be improved, as would the transition of the economy to a war posture.
- Additional Soviet ballistic missile submarines could be readied and deployed, thus enhancing preparations for nuclear war.
- Naval forces could reach wartime operating areas in much greater numbers for operations on the flanks, support of strategic missions, and support of the offensive in Central Europe.
- Preparation of ground forces would continue throughout the Pact, thereby facilitating a capability to undertake early action on the flanks, while Pact tactical air capabilities to support flank operations also would substantially increase.

118. A preference for an attack with more than two fronts is well supported in Pact writings and exercises. There is evidence that Pact planners would want at least three fronts available for initial operations in Central Europe, with assurance that at least one additional front would be available for reinforcement soon after the initiation of hostilities. This option is more consistent than shorter preparation options in regard to Pact doctrinal preferences for force superiority, national and Pact-wide preparations, combined-arms operations, and the Pact's appreciable respect for NATO's war-fighting capabilities. Moreover, it would offer better prospects for sustaining Pact forces and allow additional preparations to guard against nuclear escalation. Accordingly, we judge that, except under extraordinarily urgent circumstances (as described in paragraph 115), the Pact would prefer to prepare at least a three-front force before initiating hostilities.

3.5(c)

Option IV—Attack With Five Fronts

119. Circumstances permitting, the Pact could build up even larger forces before initiating hostilities against NATO. A five-front attack posture would largely fulfill the Pact's conservative doctrinal preferences in regard to force superiority and would take at least 15 days to prepare, including the forward movement of Soviet forces in the western USSR—assuming

3.5(c)

60

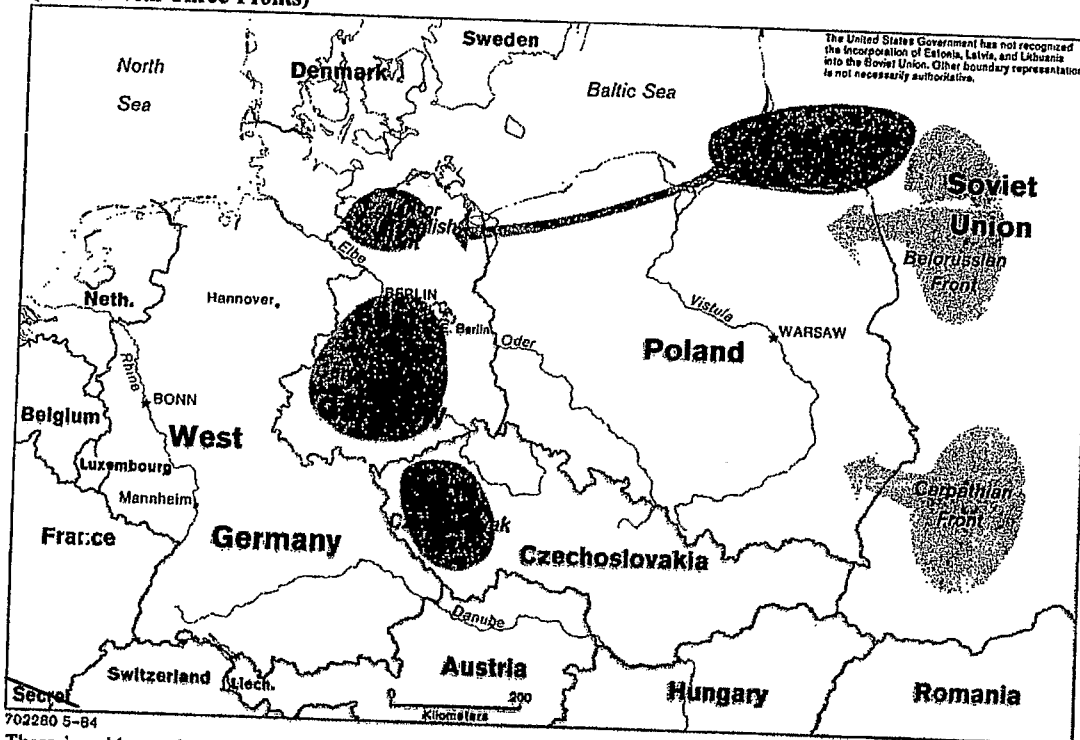
~~Top Secret~~

3.5(c)

Top Secret

3.5(c)

Figure 4
Warsaw Pact Options for Initial Attack Force in the Central Region
(Attack With Three Fronts)



There is evidence that Pact planners would want at least three fronts available for initial operations in Central Europe, with assurance that at least one additional front would be available for reinforcement soon after the initiation of hostilities.

that all of these forces had been maintained in their normal peacetime readiness posture. More realistically, these preparations might take up to three weeks if initiated from a "cold start." In either case, due to insufficient training time, "not ready" divisions would still have only a marginal capability to conduct effective offensive operations. In this option:

— Soviet ground forces in the three western military districts of the USSR would be available for early reinforcement of Pact forces in Central Europe. As discussed in Option III (the three-front attack), the Soviets could choose to move limited forces from the western USSR to join Polish forces in forming a Polish-Soviet Front. At least some of the remaining forces in the western military districts (some 30 divisions) would probably be organized into at least two additional fronts (the Belorussian and Carpathian Fronts)

and forward deployed in Poland and Czechoslovakia before the attack, thereby substantially adding to the momentum and sustainability of a Pact attack (see figure 5 on page 62). With these forces, Pact ground forces available for operations against Central Europe would total 85 to 90 active divisions plus support units.

— Additional general purpose naval, strategic, and national defense preparations could be undertaken prior to a Pact attack. The increase in Pact strength would be continuous, and the Pact would maintain its capability to attack at any time. (s)

120. This attack option would reduce the Pact's chances of achieving surprise while maximizing the weight of the attack. This option also would increase the ratio of Soviet to non-Soviet Pact forces in the

61

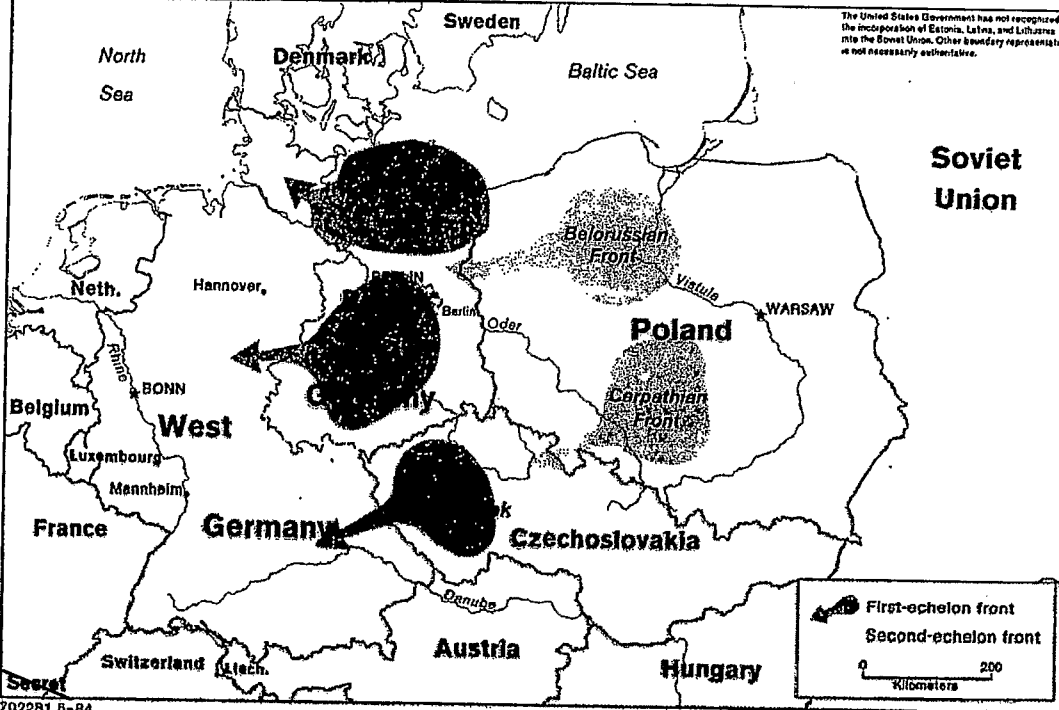
Top Secret

3.5(c)

Top Secret

3.5(c)

Figure 5
Warsaw Pact Five-Front Attack Force in the Central Region



702281 8-84

A five-front attack—including some 85 to 90 divisions and support units—would largely fulfill the Pact's conservative doctrinal preferences in regard to force superiority.

Western Theater of Military Operations. It would offer much better prospects for sustainability; the most complete command, control, and communications network; and allow for additional measures to prepare the Pact's populace, economies, and transportation systems for war.

F. Variations in Attack Options

121. A number of variations in the attack options discussed above are possible, particularly in regard to the possible forward deployment of some forces in the western USSR prior to the initiation of hostilities, as well as the amount of time the Pact might require or allow for war preparations. Several of these variations are discussed below.

Forward Deployment of Forces in the Western USSR

122. It is not clear to what extent, if any, the Soviets might forward deploy selected ground maneuver for-

mations from the western USSR prior to the initiation of hostilities, such as an army from the Baltic or Belorussian Military District, as described under Option III. The Soviets in fact notionally practiced the forward deployment of some western military district forces prior to D-day during several major exercises in 1982 and 1983.

123. The Soviets could choose to mobilize and forward deploy the six "ready" motorized rifle and tank divisions and the new type army corps from the western USSR prior to the complete preparation of the remainder of these forces, most of which are maintained in a peacetime "not ready" posture. The principal maneuver units of the new type army corps are four (possibly five) tank and mechanized brigades. This corps probably would be used as an operational maneuver group to execute rapid exploitation deep in the enemy's rear very early in an offensive. This would probably require that this force mobilize and begin moving forward prior to the initiation of hostil-

Top Secret

3.5(c)

3.5(c)

~~Top Secret~~

3.5(c)

ities and well in advance of the forward deployment of the bulk of the Belorussian MD forces. While such an action would provide the Pact with additional early firepower and better prospects for sustaining its attacks, it has the significant disadvantage of possibly providing clear and highly detectable warning indicators to NATO.

and might also initiate similar preparatory actions by NATO. Although the Pact's efforts to gradually increase preparations for war might reduce the time necessary to make final preparations for war discussed in Options II, III, and IV, they would be taken at the risk of detection and NATO counterpreparations.

3.5(c)

3.5(c)

Gradual Buildup

124. As a modification to the options previously discussed, the Pact could make gradual preparations for war over an extended period. The estimated preparation times associated with each of the attack options discussed above assumes that the preparations commence from a normal peacetime readiness posture, that is, from a "cold start." There are many changes that the Pact countries could make in their political, economic, civil defense, and military posture that could be accomplished gradually or piecemeal. The changes might occur in response to a crisis, a series of crises, or as a result of a deliberate decision to prepare for war for whatever reason. Steps could be taken selectively over a period of many weeks or months (such as the mobilization of certain low-strength units) to increase the readiness of elements of the Pact's military forces, that is, gradually converting them from a "not ready" to a "ready" posture as was done with two Soviet cadre divisions prior to the invasion of Afghanistan. Many preparations, which in time-sensitive circumstances might be initiated by a declaration of a combat alert (an order requiring immediate departure from garrisons) or the declaration of "threat-of-war" or "full" readiness, could be accomplished incrementally without the declaration of an alert or the formal implementation of an increased readiness posture. Certain units could be brought to readiness for war over an extended period without movement from garrison normally required during a combat alert or the "threat-of-war" readiness condition. Such deviations from normal peacetime patterns, however, would be detected by US and NATO intelligence, particularly if implemented on a large scale, and would be interpreted as a modification of the Pact's military posture. Such activity would certainly intensify US and NATO intelligence collection efforts

125. Some measures which the USSR alone or possibly in concert with its allies might gradually undertake could include less provocative civil and military measures such as the following:

- Staffing of wartime headquarters.
- Intensified planning and rehearsal of mobilization plans.
- Partial takeover, or preparation for takeover, of transportation facilities by the military.
- Increased civil defense planning, construction, and training.
- Increased production of military equipment; cut-back of production of goods for the civil economy.
- Increased recalls of reservists for training.
- Increased intelligence collection.
- Significant increases in the military portion of the national budget.
- Buildup of strategic reserves of essential commodities.

These types of measures would only marginally improve the ability of the USSR or the Pact to move quickly to a "full readiness" posture. The Pact would probably defer large-scale mobilization, major force deployments, and other highly visible and provocative measures until the final transition to full readiness for war. A particular problem for the Soviets, should they desire similar gradual preparations by their Pact allies, would be to convince them that such measures were necessary, especially in the absence of some expression of hostile intent by NATO. Moreover, once a multinational dialogue began, it would be more difficult for the Soviets to preserve the secrecy of their plans and preparations.

3.5(c)

63

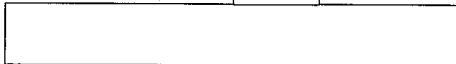
~~Top Secret~~

3.5(c)

BANK Pcs

Bank pos

Top Secret



3.5(c)

V. WARNING OF WAR

126. A warning should communicate an enemy's intention to go to war, the enemy's capabilities and resolve, and opportunities for the application of the enemy's capabilities—all in sufficient time to avert war or at least frustrate the enemy's intentions. It should also define the nature of the conflict the enemy is planning, the size and mix of enemy forces, the probability of attack, and the direction and timing of the attack.

were willing to accept would be based primarily on inferences from the observed actions resulting from these decisions.

3.5(c)

130. We judge it extremely unlikely that the Soviets would initiate an attack against NATO without the cooperation of their allies, whether volunteered, elicited, or forced. Evidence that critical decisions were being made or approved, including an agreement on the conditions for going to war, could be suggested by anomalous activities such as:

- An increase in high-level meetings or unusual timing of meetings between Pact leaders, among the leaders within a Pact country, and between Soviet and East European political and military leaders.
- Cancellation of announced schedules for senior party and government functionaries.
- Changes in Soviet and Pact intelligence collection.

In the context of a developing crisis, intelligence analysts might not recognize or interpret accurately such activity as evidence of deliberations for war. Past crises, including some which did not result in military action, have featured such activities, but their significance to the crisis at hand was often misunderstood or became clear only long after the occurrence. Nevertheless, anomalous behavior by the Pact leadership at multiple echelons would certainly result in increased watchfulness and intensified efforts to find less ambiguous evidence of Pact intentions.

3.5(c)

131. Persuasive reports or deliberate "signals" that the USSR and the Pact were considering war preparations or war itself would almost certainly be channeled to the United States or one of the NATO diplomatic or intelligence services. Even with the firsthand reporting of important Pact decisions, the content of the information would be difficult to evaluate. Such accounts would probably describe a contingent decision or agreement, possibly accompanied by biased or self-serving commentary. The value of such reporting would be further attenuated by suspicions that it was deliberately compromised as a pressure tactic or deception ploy. Such information by itself would probably not support a firm judgment or nurture a consensus within the Intelligence Community that the Pact had decided to go to war.

3.5(c)

132. Considering the major disruption occasioned by a full conversion to a wartime posture, Pact leaders

3.5(c)

3.5(c)

A. Indicators of War Preparations³⁰

127. Soviet and East European behavior in peacetime serves as the reference point for detecting and recognizing deviations from established patterns that might signal the Pact's assumption of a warlike posture. In its progression to war the Pact would almost certainly make major changes in its pattern of political deliberations, in industrial and other economic activities, in internal security and disaster control procedures, and in the tempo and scale of military activity. Although improvements in national abilities to prepare for and sustain war would be detected, recognized, and reported quite early, the perceptions which prompted the decisions to prepare for war and the ultimate intentions of Pact leaders would remain elusive and most likely controversial within the Intelligence Community.

3.5(c)

The Decision To Go to War

128. Before issuing the final order to go to war, Soviet and Pact leaders probably would have completed a large number of incremental decisions to prepare their nations and armed forces. These decisions would constitute the determinations and actions enabling the final decision to begin hostilities. These decisions could and probably would remain contingent and thus reversible until very late, even after military preparations had become alarming.

3.5(c)

129. Although we know the general structure of Pact decisionmaking for war, the content and timing of the deliberations would probably be secure from timely detection. Consequently, our assessments of the nature of decisions reached and the risks Pact leaders

³⁰ For detailed listings and descriptions of indicators for war preparations, refer to the following documents: Strategic Warning Staff, USSR/Warsaw Pact General Indicator List, February 1979, and DIA DJS-2620-SA-83-SI, Worldwide Warning Indicator Monitoring System (WWIDS)/General Indicator Directory, September 1983.

3.5(c)

3.5(c)

Top Secret



~~Top Secret~~

3.5(c)

would not take such decisions lightly, nor—under most foreseeable circumstances—without elaborate conditioning of their populace for the possibility of war. A coordinated, intensive Pact-wide campaign would probably be designed to inculcate the need for greater sacrifice, vigilance against spies, intensified loyalty, and increased output at the workplace. The similarity of content and tone throughout the Pact media would signal that such a campaign had been directed. While these indicators might be of dubious value in predicting the ultimate course of events, they would remain an important sign that at least early war preparations were under way. Apart from specific military preparations discussed in paragraphs 139-142, we would also expect to observe and report other activities such as the following:

- An increase in internal population controls and surveillance of dissidents and foreigners.
- A media campaign which forecasts a final showdown with imperialism and raises war expectations.
- Planning and coordination meetings throughout the Pact involving leaders from a wide range of sectors, often in unusual mixes.
- Fluctuations in diplomatic behavior and activities abroad without apparent explanation.

3.5(c)

Civil and Economic Preparations

133. Virtually every sector of national life would be affected by the transition to a wartime posture. Some early preparations might not be detected or recognized as war-related, but generally those civil and economic activities observed first would occur in industry and labor, trade and other relations with the West, and transportation and civil defense. Industrial plants would convert to weapons, munitions, and spare parts production for the armed forces. This conversion might be hindered by a shortage of specialists—industrial construction and design engineers, technicians, and mechanics—needed for military duties. Work hours would be modified to support increased levels of output. Soviet and East European behavior in international markets such as precious metals and grain would fluctuate; contract negotiations could terminate abruptly or include unusual features; and the Pact nations would try to move assets from Western financial institutions. Many changes would occur in transportation systems and the huge civil defense machinery would require activation before military preparations were well advanced.

3.5(c)

134. The foregoing examples are representative and outline a framework of actions that would be without precedent in postwar Europe. Possibly the most diagnostic indication that war preparations had begun would be the sheer magnitude of the undertaking. These measures would be so costly to the economic and social fabric of the Pact nations that only the most serious conditions would warrant their implementation and full execution.

3.5(c)

135. At some point in Pact preparations for war, civil defense measures could provide particularly salient indicators of the likelihood of hostilities. These measures most likely would be phased to minimize internal disruption until additional measures became essential. These measures might include:

- Extensive domestic media treatment of civil defense preparations.
- Activation of civil defense leadership authorities, followed by indoctrination sessions and administrative preparations for mobilization of civil defense cadres.
- Withholding of critical commodities such as food and fuel from distribution, and stockpiling in unusual quantities.
- Stockpiling of medical supplies.
- Changes in transportation schedules and activity.
- Increased shortages of all types of materials in both the military and civil industrial sectors.

3.5(c)

136. The declaration of a state of "increased national defense readiness" would be a critical step in preparing the Pact's populace and national economies for war. This declaration, even if not published, would be widely communicated and would, in itself, be a firm indication that the Soviets and their allies were preparing for war. Actions associated with this state of national readiness would probably include:

- Anomalies in the civil defense staff communications network.
- Increased activity at civil defense headquarters.
- Military control of critical commodities.
- Closure of some public institutions.
- Significant changes in normal transportation activity or scheduling.
- Requisitioning of equipment, supplies, and vehicles.

3.5(c)

66

~~Top Secret~~

~~Top Secret~~

3.5(c)

- Restrictions on civil gatherings and travel.
- Civil defense shelters readied for use.
- Partial mobilization of military civil defense units.

137. Similarly, the declaration of a state of "threat-of-war national defense readiness," even if not published, would be widely communicated and would, in itself, clearly signal that the Soviets and their allies saw the situation deteriorating and were more serious in their efforts to prepare for war. Measures initiated under this readiness condition would be more difficult to conceal and could include the following:

- Establishment of at least partial military control over some key transportation systems.
- Closure of additional public institutions.
- Issuance of mobilization orders to large numbers of reservists and selective callups of reservists.
- Dispersion and evacuation of at least selected officials and enterprises.
- Exurban command posts activated and at least partially staffed. (s)

138. The declaration of "full national defense readiness" would indicate that Moscow believed that war was likely and perhaps imminent. Measures implemented under this readiness condition could not be concealed and would include the following:

- Closure of many public institutions.
- Full mobilization of military civil defense units.
- Marked curtailment of normal civilian activities.
- Large-scale mobilization of civil transportation assets, particularly trucks.
- Initiation of full military control over key transportation systems.
- Large-scale or national callups of reservists.
- Dispersion and evacuation of key leadership elites.
- Large-scale evacuation of the population from selected large cities (if nuclear strikes on the homeland were anticipated).

3.5(c)

Indicators of Military Preparation

139. As discussed in chapter III of this Estimate, in peacetime the USSR and its allies maintain only

selected military forces at comparatively high levels of manning and preparedness while many units are maintained at low strength and would require large-scale mobilization prior to undertaking major offensive operations. The normal peacetime posture of Pact forces is referred to as "constant combat readiness." A key step in beginning the process of preparing military forces for war would be the declaration of "increased combat readiness." Preparatory measures that would be associated with this level of readiness, only some of which may be detected, include:

- A communication to military units ordering them to increased readiness.
- Recall of personnel from temporary duty, leave, or nonessential duties.
- At least a temporary termination of normal training and other routine activities.
- Return of units to garrison.
- Restriction of officers and troops to garrison.
- Review and update of mobilization and contingency plans.
- Removal of equipment from storage and preparation for use; accelerated repair of equipment.
- Increased security measures and intensified reconnaissance.
- Possible limited callups of reservists with special skills.
- Field deployment of divisional command posts.
- Scheduled release of reservists or conscripts held in abeyance.
- Increased activity in military installations, railroad yards, and depots.
- Marked increase in weather reporting.
- Activation of high-level military command posts.
- Alerting of railroad troops.
- Unusual high-level command activities or movements.
- Abnormal activity by submarines, surface ships, or merchant shipping.

3.5(c)

140. Based on their perception of the threat and the likelihood of war, Pact leaders might choose to declare "threat-of-war readiness" for some or all of their armed forces. Some measures initiated and imple-

3.5(c)

67

~~Top Secret~~

~~Top Secret~~

3.5(c)

mented during this readiness condition would be highly visible if undertaken on a large scale, including the following:

- Communication of the necessary command to military units.
- Movement of ground units from garrison locations to field dispersal areas.
- Selective mobilization of reservists.
- Increased reconnaissance.
- Mobilization of some specialized units to full wartime strength.
- Possible activation of some wartime command, control, and communications structures at front and theater level.
- Transfer of control of divisional units from garrison command centers to field command posts.
- Movement of command staffs to field command posts.
- Equipping of personnel according to wartime requirements.
- Dispatch of operations groups to allied countries.
- Movement of aircraft/helicopters from airfields without shelters to dispersal airfields.
- Movement of missile units to siting areas.

3.5(c)

141. If a crisis deepened and war seemed more likely or imminent, Pact leaders would declare "full combat readiness" to initiate final preparations for some or all of their armed forces. Measures implemented would include the following:

- Communication of the command to military units.
- Initiation of large-scale or general mobilization.
- Full establishment of an active wartime command, control, and communications network at the front, theater, and national level.
- Extensive and abnormal efforts to restrict, deceive, or interfere with US and NATO intelligence collection efforts.
- Extraordinary levels of intelligence collection against the United States and NATO.

- Extraordinary levels of air defense preparedness.
- Activation of, or preparations to activate, sabotage and special operations teams in NATO countries.
- Preparation and expansion of military medical facilities.
- Preparation for employment of electronic countermeasures units against NATO forces.
- Additional dispersal or deployment of submarines, naval ships, and merchant vessels.
- Movement of ground units to primary ("secret") dispersal areas (if not previously ordered).

3.5(c)

142. The initiation and implementation of measures associated with "increased readiness," "threat-of-war readiness," and "full readiness" would not necessarily signal that a decision to go to war had been made or that war was inevitable. The implementation of these conditions, however, would indicate that the Soviets and their allies saw a growing likelihood of war and were preparing for it; the declaration of "full combat readiness" could indicate that war was believed likely or imminent. Various measures could be initiated either immediately on a large scale or gradually and selectively, affecting only portions of the armed forces and national economies.

3.5(c)

B. Security, Concealment, and Deception

143. The Warsaw Pact countries—particularly the Soviet Union—have the experience, doctrine, capability, and intent to employ many techniques to interfere with our ability to collect intelligence information and to manipulate our perception of the meaning or purpose of detected activities. Their experience has convinced them of the value of deception as an essential force multiplier and condition for achieving surprise. We would expect them to use the full range of deception techniques to guard their intentions by shaping Western perceptions. Although we judge that the Pact would be unable to prevent us from making timely interpretations of the sum of detected activities as war preparations, we are less confident about our ability to interpret Pact actions as aggressive/offensive or reactive/defensive, and still less certain as to how persuasive any warning might be on the vital issue of intent.

3.5(c)

144. **Security.** The Pact would enforce rigid security measures to assure the secrecy of its war plans. Control measures would include the following: restrict-

3.5(c)

68

~~Top Secret~~

~~Top Secret~~

3.5(c)

tion of planning and access to plans to a minimum number of people; total control of the media; strict counterintelligence and political control over the populace and members of the armed forces; denial of travel by foreigners (as well as most citizens); the conduct of military activity and troop movements at night; and strict communications security.

3.5(c)

145. *Concealment and Deception.* The Soviets and their allies are aware that the United States and NATO possess sophisticated intelligence collection means which would prevent the Pact from concealing all of its preparations for war. The primary purpose of Pact concealment and deception measures would be to mislead and confuse NATO as to the timing, scope, and purpose of the preparations and reduce NATO's warning time. The Pact could institute some or all of the following political and military deception, propaganda, and disinformation tactics:

- Increased emphasis on the espousal of peaceful intentions while citing the need to make additional defensive military preparations.
- Increased efforts to induce tension and disagreement among NATO countries by feeding contradictory information to individual governments.
- Creation of a diversion in another part of the world.
- Attempts to mobilize some military forces covertly.
- Attempts to conceal or delay as long as possible the final preparations and deployments for attack.
- The use of exercises as a cover to mask military preparations. (The Soviets believe this is the most feasible way of rationalizing extensive military activity.)
- The use of darkness and adverse weather conditions to conceal preparations and movement.
- The exploitation of terrain to take advantage of its concealing features.
- The use of camouflage materials to disguise, conceal, or distort.
- The use of dummy/decoy equipment and radar reflectors.
- Activation of dummy communication nets.
- The use of light and sound masking.

- Electronic emission control.
- The manipulation of true, distorted, or false information to mislead.

3.5(c)

146. Deception measures must be carefully and extensively planned and tailored to a specific situation if they are to be effective. This would weigh against the elaborate use of deception in a hastily prepared attack, while an attack prepared with more deliberation would offer greater opportunities for employing an integrated deception plan.

3.5(c)

147. The primary target of Pact deception measures would be senior US and NATO decisionmakers, whom the Pact would hope to condition, mislead, and confuse until insufficient time remained for an effective response to Pact military moves. The fundamental objective of these Pact efforts would be to convince US and NATO decisionmakers that the Pact's intentions were peaceful. Conditioning and confusion would be the key methods in achieving this strategic goal. An important part of the conditioning process would be the feedback link—the use of the Western press, "leaks" from controlled sources, plus in-place agents to provide the necessary feedback which would enable fine-tuning, further conditioning, and maximum persistence and dissemination of erroneous beliefs. Pact planners believe that these techniques could be successful even if US and NATO intelligence agencies properly identified and interpreted Pact activities as war preparations.

3.5(c)

148. Once the Pact had made a decision that war was inevitable or even highly likely, it would sanction at least selective interference with US and NATO intelligence collection efforts, including space-based systems. The Soviet Union has a variety of capabilities to hinder Western intelligence collection efforts, such as selective jamming of military communications links and radars, to destruction or blinding of intelligence collection satellites. While such interference would degrade US and NATO intelligence collection efforts, it would, in itself, provide a strong warning indicator, and might well be considered an act of war.

3.5(c)

C. Detection Capability

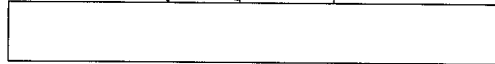
149. We are confident of the ability of US and NATO intelligence organizations to detect a large number of indicators if the Warsaw Pact prepared for a large-scale war with NATO. While we believe that the scale of such indicators would be such as to clearly indicate an intent on the Soviets' part to enhance their

3.5(c)

89

~~Top Secret~~

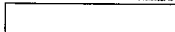
~~Top Secret~~




3.5(c)

readiness for war, we cannot be confident that we would have a consensus within the Intelligence Community regarding Soviet intentions to initiate hostilities. It is likely that many indicators might be attributable to the precautionary actions of the Soviet leadership in time of great international stress or crisis. To the extent that such precautionary actions engendered counterprecautionary actions on the NATO side, the Soviets might feel driven to take further preparatory measures which would be detected and possibly construed as additional evidence of hostile intent toward NATO. Nevertheless, confidence in our ability to detect the indicators of Soviet preparations is strong. This confidence is based on:

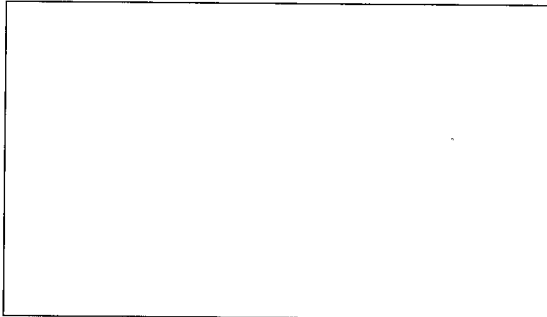
3.3(b)(1)

- Our ability to provide reliable and timely information derived from  intelligence on a broad spectrum of Soviet and East European political, military, and economic activities.


precautions as they saw fit. As Warsaw Pact capabilities grew, the potential remaining warning and decisionmaking time would diminish. The times indicated below are the minimums that might be expected for US and NATO commanders and policymakers under the unlikely circumstances of a Soviet decision to go to war from a "cold start," having taken no special military preparations prior to the initiation of mobilization plans. These times would be operative only if timely decisions were made by US policymakers to react appropriately to the rapidly developing or imminent threat. If decisions were postponed and Warsaw Pact preparations were to continue, the preparation time available to NATO would be reduced. Recipients of warning should understand that while it is the principal function of the warning system to keep policymakers informed of potentially explosive situations and changes in the capabilities of hostile forces, the system is not designed, and should not be expected, to notify recipients when prudent measures should be initiated. The timing of such decisions, like the decisions themselves, are policy matters, not intelligence responsibilities. 

3.5(c)

3.3(b)(1)




3.5(c)

- Our ability in a crisis to augment and shift collection capabilities and shorten processing time. 

3.5(c)

150. Discussed below are assessments of our ability to detect and interpret the preparations necessary for the Pact to initiate the various attack options discussed in chapter IV. The warning assessments for a standing-start attack as well as the two-, three-, and five-front attacks are keyed to the minimum time we assess would be required for the Pact to complete the necessary preparations in a time-constrained (that is, "crash") effort. It should be recognized that such a "crash" effort is unlikely under any of the options discussed below, except possibly in regard to the final preparations necessary to achieve full readiness for war. It is more likely that the Pact would gradually increase its readiness and capabilities for war as it perceived the development of a crisis. These increases in readiness and capabilities would be duly reported, affording US and NATO policymakers time to take

151. Warning recipients should also be aware that, if possible, the Warsaw Pact would probably take more time to prepare to execute an attack option than indicated below—anywhere from one or more days up to many weeks. If this were to be the case, the potential for additional US and NATO decision and counterpreparation time would exist, provided policymakers reacted expeditiously to the initial and continuing warnings provided by the Intelligence Community. 

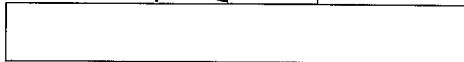
Option I—Attack From a Peacetime Posture

152. As a theoretical construct, a Pact attack on NATO from a peacetime readiness posture would be planned to provide as little warning to NATO as possible. In initiating such an attack, the Pact would forgo lengthy political and economic as well as extensive military preparations for war which would warn NATO. Nonetheless, the Pact could not prepare for this attack without at least alerting the forces to be initially committed and bringing them to the "full combat readiness" condition. This readiness condition would probably be initiated directly from the normal "constant combat readiness" condition which signifies a routine readiness posture in peacetime. Its declaration could be overt or secret. The USSR and other Pact nations would also probably declare "full national

3.5(c)



~~Top Secret~~



3.5(c)

defense readiness" simultaneously with or soon after the declaration of "full readiness" for military forces. In addition, the Soviets would not attack without first alerting their strategic forces and initiating the mobilization of at least some other general purpose forces. Minimum preparation and movement time for some of the dozen or so Pact divisions garrisoned near the East-West German border and the West German-Czechoslovak border would probably be about 24 hours. [redacted]

153. It is quite possible that we would detect the order to go to "full readiness." If not, [redacted]

[redacted] the passing of the orders and the activities required to move to "full combat readiness" could be the first indicator of military preparations. Some efforts would be made to recall personnel from local leave or temporary duty and nonessential duties, and some local mobilization might be evident. Activity levels within garrisons would be abnormally high, and the dispersal and/or forward movement of the attacking forces would be unprecedented and impossible to completely conceal. [redacted]

154. Accordingly, in the extremely unlikely case of a sudden attack on NATO from a peacetime posture, we judge that US and NATO intelligence could detect and would report unusual and [redacted]

[redacted] increased activity by units, and dispersion and/or movement within a few hours after the initiation of this activity. Such reported activity would provide sufficient information for Allied commanders and decisionmakers to take precautionary steps. Because of the extremely unlikely eventuality of such an attack, however, interpretation of the purpose of this activity could be ambiguous and contentious, and a final judgment that an attack was imminent might not be reached before hostilities began. [redacted]

Option II—Attack With Two Fronts

155. It is not likely that the Pact would prepare a two-front attack force on a "crash" basis from a peacetime readiness posture. It is more likely that during a period of tension it would gradually raise the readiness of its forces through the implementation of the "increased" and "threat-of-war" readiness conditions. If, in the process, regional or global conditions escalated to the crisis level, the Soviets would probably bring the Warsaw Pact forces to "full combat readiness" rapidly. "Full national defense readiness" would probably also be declared. There is a good chance that

we would detect the widespread dissemination of these commands, although their significance might not be immediately understood. Even if the commands to convert to "full readiness" were disseminated without our direct knowledge, a host of indicators that a full readiness posture was being assumed would be available. Pact political leaders and military commanders would then begin a wide range of actions—taken on a compressed time schedule—to complete preparations of the populace and military forces for war (refer to paragraph 112, chapter IV). If initiated from a "cold start," these preparations would be observed, assessed, and reported to decisionmakers within 24 hours after activity had been initiated. We have assessed that the Pact would require a minimum of five to six days to prepare for a two-front attack from a "cold start" and, more realistically, seven to 10 days if it had not taken any previous preparations during a period of tension. If the Soviets began their preparations from a peacetime posture, US and NATO military commanders and decisionmakers could expect to have four or more days to make decisions and counterpreparations, provided that they reacted expeditiously to the warnings issued. These times do not take into account the likelihood that the forces would be raised to higher levels of readiness during any period of tension or crisis, which probably would precede a Warsaw Pact decision to move to a full war readiness posture. Assuming that the readiness of the forces had been so raised, the amount of time required to reach full combat readiness could be greatly reduced. In this case, some warnings, however ambiguous, would already have been given. The Intelligence Community would continue to assess the Pact's war preparations and issue additional judgments regarding the nature and extent of these preparations. [redacted]

Option III—Attack With Three Fronts

156. If the Warsaw Pact had taken no previous measures in time of crisis to improve its readiness over normal peacetime conditions, we assess that it would require a minimum of eight to nine days, and more realistically 10 to 12 days, to make preparations for a three-front attack. These preparations could be initiated by a sequential declaration of the various readiness conditions, or one or both of the intermediate levels of readiness for the armed forces and the Pact nations could be skipped. Preparations would have to be accomplished using a compressed-buildup approach, and a prodigious effort would be required to complete these preparations within eight to nine days. This

3.5(c)

3.3(b)(1)

3.5(c)

3.3(b)(1)

3.5(c)

3.5(c)



~~Top Secret~~

3.5(c)

~~Top Secret~~

3.5(c)

would include the mobilization of over 300,000 reservists in East Germany, Poland, and Czechoslovakia to bring understrength divisions and nondivisional units to war-authorized strength; the forward movement of forces; the activation of wartime command, control, and communication networks; the psychological preparation of the Pact populace by domestic propaganda broadcasts; and the establishment of logistic lines of communication. Moreover, the Pact would of necessity begin the simultaneous preparation of other forces—both strategic and general purpose—to allow for nuclear escalation and timely reinforcement of first-echelon attacking forces. The mobilization of well over 400,000 troops would be required, for example, to bring Soviet ground formations in the Baltic, Belorussian, and Carpathian Military Districts to war-authorized manning levels.

3.5(c)

157. As in the case of Option II, the chances are good that we would detect some of the widespread commands to move to higher levels of military and national readiness, including "full readiness," and this alone would provide a strong indicator that the Pact was preparing for war. If not, the urgent and widespread activities that would occur as a result of these commands would certainly be detected and reported and would alert US and NATO intelligence organizations that the Pact was vigorously taking steps to go to war. A judgment that these activities signaled war preparations could be provided to national policymakers within 24 hours after they were initiated, thereby providing US and NATO policymakers with seven or more days of decision and preparation time, provided that they acted expeditiously. If, on the other hand, the Pact had already gradually raised the level of readiness of its forces during a period of tension, as we would expect it to do, the time required for final preparations would be shorter. In this case, some warnings, however ambiguous, would already have been given. Following its initial warnings, the Intelligence Community would continue to assess the steps being taken by the Pact to prepare for war and would issue additional judgments regarding the nature and scope of the preparations.

3.5(c)

Option IV—Attack With Five Fronts

158. The pattern of urgent and widespread activity involved in preparing a full five-front Pact attacking force would be similar to that of a three-front force, but the scope and complexity of the preparations would be much greater. While we do not believe that the Warsaw Pact would be likely to seek to achieve a

five-front attack posture without gradually implementing some readiness measures during a period of tension, we assess that a minimum of about 15 days would be required to alert, mobilize, move, and otherwise prepare the forces—assuming the transition to full readiness was initiated from a normal peacetime readiness posture. More realistically, such an effort might require up to three weeks if initiated from a normal peacetime readiness posture.

3.5(c)

159. The Pact could initiate military preparations by sequentially declaring "increased combat readiness," "threat-of-war readiness," and finally, "full combat readiness"; or, it could skip one or both intermediate readiness conditions. We would have a good chance of detecting some of these commands. The USSR and other Pact nations at some point would declare "full national defense readiness," with or without declaration of the intermediate levels of national defense readiness. With 15 days or more to prepare for war, the Pact would have greater opportunities to attempt to mask its intentions in the earliest stages of preparation, for example, by delaying some preparations in the forward area. An enormous effort, however, would be required to make the preparations necessary to execute this option within 15 days. US and NATO intelligence would be able to detect many changes in the overall posture of Pact forces—even without direct evidence that Pact forces had been alerted and brought to increased levels of readiness. This would be especially true in regard to the mobilization of understrength units in Poland and Czechoslovakia, as well as almost 30 low-strength divisions in the three western military districts of the USSR, the forward movement of forces—particularly from the western USSR—and the command, control, and communications structure necessary to coordinate and control these activities.

3.5(c)

160. Should the Pact opt to prepare a full five-front attack from a peacetime readiness posture, we judge that we would be able to provide warning within 24 to 48 hours after preparations began. If these forces were already at a high level of readiness, the time to achieve full readiness might be quite short. In this case, some warnings, however ambiguous, would already have been given. In the unlikely event that the Soviets were to attempt to quickly bring their forces to full wartime readiness from a peacetime posture, US and NATO military commanders and policymakers would have at least 13 days of decision and preparation time, provided that they reacted expeditiously to the initial warnings. During this period the Intelligence Community

~~Top Secret~~

3.5(c)

~~Top Secret~~

3.5(c)

3.5(c)

would continue to assess the steps being taken by the Pact to prepare for war and would issue additional judgments regarding the nature and scope of these preparations.

associated with the "full" readiness condition—including the large-scale deployment of combat forces—had not yet been completed.

3.5(c)

D. A Gradual Buildup

161. The Pact could initiate gradual war preparations—implemented over a period of many weeks or months—either in response to a prolonged crisis or as a result of a deliberate decision to secretly prepare for war and launch a sudden attack. We judge that the gradual approach to achieving full readiness in reaction to a developing crisis would be the most likely course of events if the Warsaw Pact were to prepare for war against NATO. Such an incremental and slow-paced approach in preparing for war would present more difficult analytical problems for US and NATO intelligence than would the rapid, urgent, and widespread implementation of war preparations. A gradual implementation of war preparations would provide more time to detect these preparations, interpret them, corroborate our information, and issue warnings. The early preparations, however, would probably be difficult to distinguish from routine force improvements or exercises. The incremental approach to preparing for war would also provide the Pact with greater opportunities for implementing deception measures, but their effectiveness would depend on the timing and scope of the preparations as well as the resourcefulness and innovativeness of the measures taken.

163. If a crisis continued and both sides took a number of preparedness measures in an action-reaction situation, the danger of war as a result of escalation or miscalculation would certainly increase. It would be particularly difficult under those circumstances to judge whether Pact preparations were essentially defensive in nature or were being made for possible offensive operations. Regardless of the Pact's motives for initiating these preparations, however, we would be able to judge that preparations for war were under way. We would be especially alert to efforts by the Pact to disguise major military preparations as an "exercise."

3.5(c)

3.5(c)

162. In a crisis period we would expect the Soviets and their allies to take at least some prudent measures to protect their interests, including activities to improve their military readiness and war-fighting capability, for example, the mobilization and preparation of less ready elements of their force structure. Both the collection and analytic elements of the US and NATO intelligence communities would be alert to recognize and promptly report any unusual activity. Under crisis conditions the Pact might well refrain from attempting to conceal some preparations in order to signal its resolve and to intimidate Western governments. It might, for example, initiate some overt alerting and mobilization of units, direct an overt propaganda campaign aimed at both domestic and international audiences, and implement some obvious civil defense measures. In this case—involving a crisis of some weeks or months—we would issue warnings that the Pact was taking steps to enable it to go to war. We would also be able to judge that final war preparations

164. Because of the high risks and costs involved—including NATO counterpreparations and the risk of miscalculation—the Pact would probably defer overt and large-scale mobilization, major force deployments, and other highly visible and provocative measures until the final transition to full readiness for war. We judge that even after some weeks or months of gradual preparations, there would still be a discernible difference in the nature, scope, and pace of preparedness measures which would enable us to provide warnings that the Pact was initiating the final steps which would enable it to go to war. Pact deception measures and conditioning, however, could shorten the time available to defuse a crisis or to take countermeasures, particularly if policymakers delayed action while awaiting unambiguous proof of Pact intentions. Nevertheless, we are confident that we could inform decisionmakers that the Pact was initiating the final steps that would enable it to go to war within 24 hours after the beginning of the activities associated with the transition to a "full readiness" condition. We would already have issued warnings—probably repeatedly—of the military measures being taken by the Pact, and of a growing danger of hostilities.

3.5(c)

E. Warsaw Pact Exercises and Training Patterns

165. Pact military activity, whether initiated during a crisis or period of calm, would be subject to scrutiny by the Intelligence Community on a 24-hour basis. This continuous surveillance of the USSR and the Pact nations would provide the first basis for determining if these countries were engaging in abnormal activity or moving toward an increased capability for military action. Any apparent high or rising level of activity

3.5(c)

~~Top Secret~~

3.5(c)

3.5(c)

would be checked to determine whether it was routine or abnormal [redacted]

166. Over a period of years the Intelligence Community has compiled detailed knowledge of major Soviet and Warsaw Pact exercises. This knowledge generally indicates that military activity takes place at approximately the same scenario time relative to the initiation of hostilities. Although there are certainly variations, depending on the type of exercise, data recovery, and other factors, there is enough consistency to categorize actions by expected phases, such as the threat assessment phase (increased intelligence collection and reporting), the activation and augmentation of command and control systems, and the combat preparation and deployment phase. This type of analysis would provide reasonable expectations of determining at least some of the following:

- Whether the activity was expected or unusual.
- The focus of the exercise and its scope.
- What portion of the command, control, and communications system was activated.
- The general level of readiness in effect.
- Similarities/dissimilarities to previous exercises.
- General extent of military activities completed.
- Military actions remaining to be completed.
- The extent of "live" play versus staff exercising [redacted]

3.5(c)

167. While we could not be absolutely certain of our ability to distinguish between preparations for a routine exercise and preparations for a possible hostile act, certain exercise-related activity does give us considerable confidence that we could recognize unusual activity. Soviet and Pact exercises, for example, are routinely limited in scale and scope and rarely involve the mobilization of large numbers of reservists, especially in more than a few units; the large-scale mobilization of reservists, however, is commonly simulated in exercises. During the past several years there has been a tendency to decrease the number of troops deployed in the field while increasing the emphasis on large, coordinated command staff exercises which feature multifront and multi-TVD operations. Even when such deployments do occur, it is standard practice—with some exceptions—to field only elements of divisional units, for example, one or two regiments and perhaps some support units rather than entire divisions. Consequently, any exercise characterized by the fielding or preparation of an unusually larger number of troops—especially entire multidivisional units—would dictate close monitoring. [redacted]

3.5(c)

168. In addition to participating in occasional major exercises, Soviet and Warsaw Pact units conduct rou-

tine training and other activities that are fairly predictable based on the cyclic nature of their training programs. The annual Soviet training program is divided into two distinct six-month cycles. These cycles are separated by the occurrence of troop rotation, that is, the departure of conscripts who have completed their service and the arrival of new conscripts. Training is conducted according to a common set of regulations that specifies the type of training, the number of lessons and hours, and the number of field training exercises. The type and intensity of training depends on the time of year, the day of the week, and manning levels within individual units and subunits. In the past, many units—including those in the forward area—have provided troops and transport vehicles, usually beginning in mid-April, to assist civil authorities in harvesting and transporting agricultural products; this activity continued throughout the summer. However, recent information suggests that the use of Soviet military trucks and personnel for harvest support will be sharply curtailed, if not terminated. [redacted]

3.5(c)

169. Our knowledge is not without limitations, but we judge that we could recognize large-scale nonroutine activities such as the following:

- Shortened or intensified training cycles.
- The large-scale mobilization of reservists in Eastern Europe or the western military districts of the USSR.
- Widespread or unusual military training on weekends or holidays.
- Major changes in training schedules or procedures.
- Major increases or decreases in manning or readiness posture.

We believe that our ability to anticipate the nature and extent of Soviet and Pact military activity, and to detect and properly interpret unusual or abnormal activity, has increased in recent years.²¹ While our ability to detect and interpret unusual activity would not necessarily enable us to determine conclusively that hostile military actions were imminent, we believe that we would be able to provide relatively early warning that the Pact was assuming a warlike posture.

3.5(c)

²¹ Refer to [redacted]

[redacted]

3.3(b)(1)
3.5(c)

the Interagency Intelligence Memorandum, NI HM 80-10017JK, *The Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan: Implications for Warning, October 1980*, [redacted]

3.5(c)

~~Top Secret~~

3.5(c)

~~Top Secret~~

3.5(c)

VI. LOOKING AHEAD

170. The evolution of technology and its application to military activities will result in continuing improvements in Soviet and Warsaw Pact military capabilities and command and control systems. One of the major consequences of this trend is that some traditional military indicators of war preparations are becoming more ambiguous (see the inset on pages 26-28). Increased Soviet application of computer technologies and more rapid and capable communications and transportation systems will also make the warning process more complex.

3.5(c)

171. At the same time, US collection capabilities are continuing to improve and in the next few years will produce an explosion of data as well as significant improvements

3.3(b)(1)

Improvements in interactive tasking and other aspects of collection will significantly enhance the flexibility and responsiveness of collectors in a wide variety of situations. The implications of this trend are that there will be much more data available on the USSR and the Pact.

3.5(c)

172. Cumulatively, these trends will place greater pressure than ever on the analytical components of the warning system, compelling accelerated efforts to develop new methods and tools, especially new warning indicators. Additionally, there is a need for more expeditious means of conveying and displaying warnings to policymakers. Some of these methods and tools are already beginning to be available, and they demonstrate that the context of decisionmaking in its widest and most integrated sense is an essential ingredient in assessing intent and the meaning of acts that carry it into effect. Even with technological advances in collection, we believe that some of the most significant improvements in our warning posture will come in the analytical sphere during the period of this Estimate.

3.5(c)

173. In addition to the above, a number of developments in the USSR and the Pact could influence our ability to warn (see inset for some examples). While none of these developments would alter the warning judgments of this Estimate, they could influence the context in which warning judgments might be made in the future.

3.5(c)

**Potential Developments Affecting Warning
(illustrative)**

Event

Significance

Change in Soviet leadership.

The advent of a more confrontational leadership could increase the number of potential triggering points for a war in Europe.

Establishment of permanent high commands of forces opposite NATO's central and southern regions.

This would reduce the time required to convert the Pact's command and control structure from a peacetime to a wartime posture.

Crisis in Eastern Europe or the USSR.

Although the Pact has weathered many crises, the cumulative effect has been to increase the expectation that new ones will occur and may affect Warsaw Pact plans and capabilities for war and thus the warning problem.

Military manpower constraints in the Pact.

The consequences of this might be seen in a number of areas wherein compensatory measures to overcome the constraints should provide warning indicators.

~~Secret~~

~~Top Secret~~

3.5(c)

BLANK Pgs

~~Top Secret~~



3.5(c)

ANNEX BIBLIOGRAPHY

National Intelligence Council

NIE 4-1-78, *Warsaw Pact Concepts and Capabilities for Going to War in Europe: Implications for NATO Warning of War*, 10 April 1978,

3.5(c)

NIE 11-14-81, *Warsaw Pact Forces Opposite NATO*, 7 July 1981,

3.5(c)

NIE 11-3/8-83, *Soviet Capabilities for Strategic Nuclear Conflict, 1983-93*, 6 March 1984,

3.5(c)

NIE 11-15-82, *Soviet Naval Strategy and Programs Through the 1990s*, 26 October 1982,

3.5(c)

NIE 12/11-83, *Military Reliability of the Soviet Union's Warsaw Pact Allies*, 28 June 1983,

3.5(c)

NIE 11/39-83, *Soviet Forces and Capabilities in the Southern Theater of Military Operations*, 1 November 1983,

3.5(c)

NIE 11-14/40-81X, *Soviet Military Forces in the Far East*, 1 September 1981,

3.5(c)

NIE 11-9-83, *Andropov's Approach to Key US-Soviet Issues*, 9 August 1983,

3.5(c)

SNIE 11-10-84/JX, *Implications of Recent Soviet Military-Political Activities*, 18 May 1984,

3.5(c)

NI IIM 80-10010IX, *The Readiness of Soviet Naval Forces*, June 1980,

3.5(c)

NI IIM 80-10017IX, *The Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan: Implications for Warning*, October 1980,

3.5(c)

NI IIM 82-10001IX, *The Readiness of Soviet Air Forces*, April 1982,

3.5(c)

NI IIM 82-10012, *The Readiness of Soviet Ground Forces*, November 1982,

3.5(c)

NI IIM 83-10002, *Employment of Warsaw Pact Forces Against NATO*, July 1983,

3.5(c)

NI IIM 83-10005IX, *Soviet Wartime Management: The Role of Civil Defense in Leadership Continuity*, December 1983,

3.5(c)

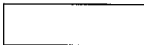
NI IIM 84-10001, *Assessed Manpower of Warsaw Pact Forces in the NATO Guidelines Area*, 1983, January 1984,

3.5(c)

Central Intelligence Agency



3.3(b)(1)
3.5(c)



~~77
Top Secret~~

3.5(c)

~~Top Secret~~

[Redacted]

3.5(c)

Strategic Warning Staff, *USSR/Warsaw Pact General Indicator List*, February 1979, [Redacted]

3.5(c)

Strategic Warning Staff, Research Report, *USSR-Iran: Critique of the Warning Process*, 5 September 1980, [Redacted]

3.5(c)

[Redacted]

3.3(b)(1)
3.5(c)

Intelligence Assessment, SOV 83-10034, *The Soviet Operational Maneuver Group*, February 1983, [Redacted]

3.5(c)

Intelligence Assessment, SR 81-10082JX, *Soviet Contingency Plans for Military Operations Against Pakistan*, July 1981, [Redacted]

3.5(c)

Intelligence Assessment, SOV 83-10175CX, *The Soviet Union's Control of the Warsaw Pact Forces*, October 1983, [Redacted]

3.5(c)

Intelligence Assessment, SR 81-10055CX, *Soviet Capabilities for Invading the Persian Gulf Region*, June 1981, [Redacted]

3.5(c)

Intelligence Assessment, SOV 83-10051CX, *Warsaw Pact Ground Forces Reserve Systems*, March 1983, [Redacted]

3.5(c)

Research Paper, SOV 84-1006JX, IA 84-100012JX, *Soviet Military Rear Services in East Germany*, February 1984, [Redacted]

3.5(c)

Research Paper, SOV 83-10143JX, *Manning Practices and Patterns in Soviet Ground Force Units*, August 1983, [Redacted]

3.5(c)

Research Paper, SOV 82-10204CX, *Managing and Monitoring Readiness in the Warsaw Pact Ground Forces*, December 1982, [Redacted]

3.5(c)

Research Paper, SOV 83-10132CX, *Soviet Techniques for Assessing Air Defense Effectiveness*, July 1983, [Redacted]

3.5(c)

[Redacted]

3.3(b)(1)
3.5(c)

Research Paper, SOV 84-10088CX, *Manning Levels of Soviet Ground Forces in Central Europe*, June 1984, [Redacted]

3.5(c)

[Redacted]

3.3(b)(1)
3.5(c)

USSR Monthly Review, SOV UR 83-009JX, "The Role of the High Command of Forces in the Far East," September 1983, [Redacted]

3.5(c)

Intelligence Memorandum, SR 80-10111JX, *Soviet Military Exercises Opposite Iran, July-August 1980*, August 1980, [Redacted]

3.5(c)

Defense Intelligence Agency

DNA-H-81-89, DDB-2680-161-82, *Soviet Front and Army Operations*, 16 July 1982, [Redacted]

3.5(c)

[Redacted]

78
~~Top Secret~~

3.5(c)

~~Top Secret~~

[Redacted]

3.5(c)

Defense Intelligence Document, DDB-2245-3-83, *Soviet Military Doctrine and Strategy*, April 1983, [Redacted]

3.5(c)

Defense Intelligence Document, DDB-1340-20-83, *USSR: Employment of Helicopter Units in Combined Arms Operations*, April 1983, [Redacted]

3.5(c)

Defense Intelligence Document, DDB-1100-226-79, *Echelonment in Soviet Military Planning*, July 1979, [Redacted]

3.5(c)

Defense Intelligence Document, DDB-1100-132-82-SI, *The Operational Maneuver Group in Soviet Front Operations*, July 1982, [Redacted]

3.5(c)

Defense Intelligence Document, DDB-2600-3152-83-SAO, *War in the Northwestern TVD*, June 1983, [Redacted]

3.5(c)

Defense Intelligence Document, DDB-2610-36-81, *The Soviet Conceptual Framework for the Development and Application of Military Power*, June 1981, [Redacted]

3.5(c)

Defense Intelligence Document, DDB-1350-114-82, *Soviet/Warsaw Pact Deployment/Dispersion Airfields*, November 1982, [Redacted]

3.5(c)

Defense Intelligence Document, DDB-1100-401-83-SI, *Second Operational Echelon Forces in the Western Theater of Military Operations*, March 1983, [Redacted]

3.5(c)

Defense Intelligence Document, DDB-2610-45-81, *The Soviet Nonnuclear Option in the Western Theater of Military Operations*, October 1981, [Redacted]

3.5(c)

Defense Intelligence Document, DDB-2622-2-83, *Soviet Strategic Conventional Offensive in the Western Theater of Military Operations*, March 1983, [Redacted]

3.5(c)

Defense Intelligence Document, DDB-1150-1-83, *Soviet/Warsaw Pact Sustainability Planning Factors for Frontal Operations*, August 1983, [Redacted]

3.5(c)

Defense Intelligence Document, DDB-2680-142-82, *Soviet Strategic Mobility: The Role of Heavy Equipment Transporters*, December 1982, [Redacted]

3.5(c)

Defense Intelligence Document, DDB-1300-222-82-SAO, *Central Logistic Support to the Soviet Air Arms*, December 1982, [Redacted]

3.5(c)

Defense Intelligence Report, DDB-1100-297-81, *Ground Forces Logistic Support Under the Warsaw Pact Attack Options*, April 1981, [Redacted]

3.5(c)

Defense Intelligence Document, DDB-2680-118-81-SI, *Soviet Theater Logistic Bases*, September 1981, [Redacted]

3.5(c)

Defense Intelligence Report, DDB-1100-274-81, *An Evaluation of Soviet Front and Army Level Rear Service Organizations*, January 1981, [Redacted]

3.5(c)

Defense Intelligence Document, DDB-2680-119-81-SI, *Warsaw Pact Logistic Support in Theater Operations: The Role of Central Rear Services*, September 1981, [Redacted]

3.5(c)

Defense Intelligence Document, DDB-1100-352-82, *The Soviet Force Generation Process*, (2 volumes), November 1982, [Redacted]

3.5(c)

Defense Intelligence Document, DDB-1100-282-81-SAO, *Soviet Special Purpose Forces*, August 1981, [Redacted]

3.5(c)

Defense Intelligence Document, DDB-2280-6-82-SAO, *USSR: The Transition From Peace to War at the Military District/Oblast Level—Study of Civil Defense Command Entities*, May 1982, [Redacted]

3.5(c)

~~Top Secret~~

3.5(c)

~~Top Secret~~ [redacted]

[redacted]

3.5(c)

Defense Intelligence Document, DDB-1100-353-82-SAO, *Collection Signatures of Dispersed Soviet/NSWP General Purpose Forces*, November 1982, [redacted]

3.5(c)

Defense Intelligence Document, DDB-1100-430-84, *The Readiness of the Non-Soviet Warsaw Pact Ground Forces*, (draft), [redacted]

3.5(c)

Defense Intelligence Document, DDB-2680-129-82, *Mobilization of Manpower and Materiel in the Non-Soviet Warsaw Pact Countries*, September 1982, [redacted]

3.5(c)

Defense Intelligence Document, DDB-2680-127-82-SAO, *Soviet Military Commissariats: Organization and Capabilities*, February 1982, [redacted]

3.5(c)

Defense Intelligence Document, DDB-2680-112-81, *Soviet Weapon System Replacement Operations*, September 1981, [redacted]

3.5(c)

Defense Intelligence Document, DDB-1150-2-81, *Soviet Ground Force Maintenance*, June 1981, [redacted]

3.5(c)

Defense Intelligence Report, DDB-1170-3-80, *Warsaw Pact Forces Command, Control, and Communications*, August 1980, [redacted]

3.5(c)

Defense Intelligence Document, DDB-1170-7-82-SI, *Soviet/Warsaw Pact Front Command, Control, and Communications Model*, March 1982, [redacted]

3.5(c)

Defense Intelligence Document, DST-1170S-113-82, *Soviet and Warsaw Pact Command, Control, and Communications*, 29 October 1982, [redacted]

3.5(c)

Defense Intelligence Document, DDB-2600-3150-82, *War in the Southeastern TVD*, September 1983, [redacted]

3.5(c)

Defense Intelligence Document, DDB-1100-437-83, *Materiel Support Operations in a Soviet/Warsaw Pact Front*, November 1983, [redacted]

3.5(c)

Intelligence Appraisal 103-80, *USSR: Military Activity Opposite Iran*, 24 June 1980, [redacted]

3.5(c)

Intelligence Appraisal 152-81, *Poland: Soviet Intervention Threat to NATO*, 30 September 1981, [redacted]

3.5(c)

Intelligence Appraisal 10-81, *USSR: Scenario for Invading Poland*, 2 February 1981, [redacted]

3.5(c)

Intelligence Appraisal 44-81, *USSR: Military Reactions to Czechoslovak and Polish Crises*, 24 March 1981, [redacted]

3.5(c)

Intelligence Appraisal 119-81, *USSR: War Alert Radio Communications System*, 7 August 1981, [redacted]

3.5(c)

Intelligence Appraisal 141-82, *USSR: TVD Command Posts*, 17 December 1982, [redacted]

3.5(c)

Intelligence Appraisal 38-82, *USSR: Striving for a More Flexible Strategy*, 16 March 1982, [redacted]

3.5(c)

Intelligence Appraisal 97-82, *USSR: Military Options in the Persian Gulf*, 22 September 1982, [redacted]

3.5(c)

Intelligence Appraisal 49-83, *USSR: Army Aviation and Combined Arms Formations*, 13 May 1983, [redacted]

3.5(c)

[redacted]

3.5(c)

~~Top Secret~~ [redacted]

[redacted]

3.5(c)

Intelligence Appraisal 51G-83, USSR: Army Corps Structure, 18 May 1983, [redacted]

3.5(c)

Intelligence Appraisal 59-83, USSR: Mobile Signal Units, 7 June 1983, [redacted]

3.5(c)

Intelligence Appraisal 66-83, USSR: Groups of Forces Nuclear-Capable Artillery, 28 June 1983, [redacted]

3.5(c)

Defense Intelligence Estimate, DDE-2200-73-80, Implications of Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan, January 1980, [redacted]

3.5(c)

Defense Intelligence Estimate, DDE-2200-106-81, Soviet Military Presence in Afghanistan: Implications for Afghanistan, Pakistan, and India, April 1981, [redacted]

3.5(c)

Counterintelligence Memorandum, DIACIM 1-82-SAO, MDCI Study: Soviet Strategic and Tactical OPSEC, March 1982, [redacted]

3.5(c)

DoD DJS-2620-8A-83-SI, Worldwide Warning Indicator Monitoring System (WWIMS)/Generic Indicator Directory, September 1983, [redacted]

3.5(c)

[redacted]

81

~~Top Secret~~

3.5(c)

~~Top Secret~~

3.5(c)

DISSEMINATION NOTICE

1. This document was disseminated by the Directorate of Intelligence. Because of the sensitive nature of some source material reflected herein, this copy is for the exclusive information and use of the recipient only.
2. This document may be retained, or destroyed by burning in accordance with applicable security regulations, or returned to the Directorate of Intelligence.
3. When this document is disseminated overseas, the overseas recipients may retain it for a period not in excess of one year. At the end of this period, the document should be destroyed or returned to the forwarding agency, or permission should be requested of the forwarding agency to retain it in accordance with IAC-D-69/2, 22 June 1953.
4. The title of this document when used separately from the text is unclassified.

~~Top Secret~~



Director of
Central
Intelligence

Addenda
~~Secret~~

[Redacted]

3.5(c)

NFB

NIE 4-1-84

m

Warning of War in Europe: Changing Warsaw Pact Planning and Forces

[Redacted]

3.5(c)

National Intelligence Estimate
Memorandum to Holders

*This Memorandum to Holders represents
the views of the Director of Central Intelligence
with the advice and assistance of the
US Intelligence Community.*

~~Secret~~

NIE 4-1-84
September 1989
Copy 532

24
05

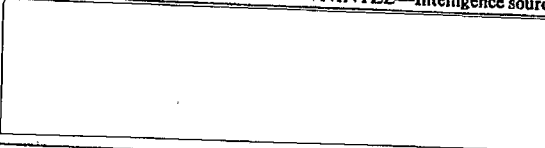
Warning Notice

**Intelligence Sources
or Methods Involved
(WNINTEL)**

**National Security
Information**

**Unauthorized Disclosure
Subject to Criminal Sanctions**

Dissemination Control Abbreviations	NOFORN (NF)	Not releasable to foreign nationals
	NOCONTRACT (NC)	Not releasable to contractors or contractor/consultants
	PROPIN (PR)	Caution—proprietary information involved
	ORCON (OC)	Dissemination and extraction of information controlled by originator
	REL...	This information has been authorized for release to...
	WN	WNINTEL—Intelligence sources or methods involved



3.5(c)

All material on this page
is Unclassified.



Director of
Central
Intelligence

~~Secret~~

3.5(c)

NIE 4-1-84

Warning of War in Europe: Changing Warsaw Pact Planning and Forces

3.5(c)

*Information available as of 28 September 1989 was used
in the preparation of this Memorandum to Holders.*

*The following intelligence organizations participated
in the preparation of this Memorandum:*

The Central Intelligence Agency
The Defense Intelligence Agency
The National Security Agency
Bureau of Intelligence and Research, Department of State

also participating:

The Deputy Chief of Staff for Intelligence,
Department of the Army
The Director of Naval Intelligence,
Department of the Navy
The Assistant Chief of Staff, Intelligence,
Department of the Air Force
The Director of Intelligence, Headquarters,
Marine Corps

*This Memorandum was approved for publication by the
National Foreign Intelligence Board.*

~~Secret~~
September 1989

~~Secret~~

3.5(c)

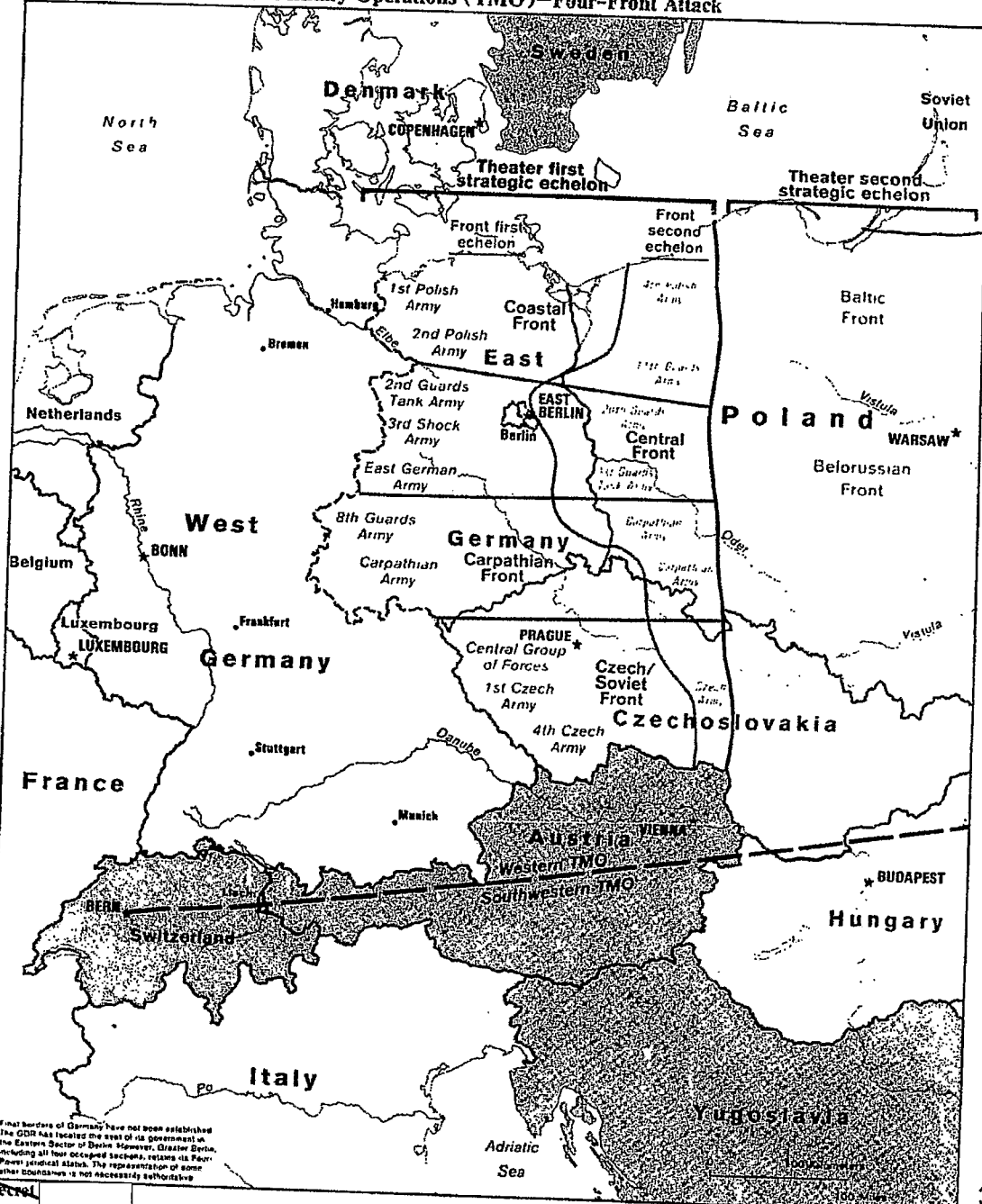
Warning of War in Europe: Changing Warsaw Pact Planning and Forces (u)

- *The warning times we associate with possible Warsaw Pact preparations for war with NATO in Central Europe have increased significantly from those set forth in 1984.* 3.5(c)
- *Pact military planners would prefer and are most likely to attempt to conduct a well-prepared attack involving five to six fronts with four fronts in the first strategic echelon. We should be able to provide about four to five weeks of warning of such an attack.* 3.5(c)
- *We recognize that circumstances could cause the Pact to commit its forces to an attack after the completion of mobilization and movement, but before completing the postmobilization training necessary for minimum offensive proficiency. The warning times would be shorter, but the Soviets would judge such an attack as highly risky.* 3.5(c)
- *Announced Soviet and non-Soviet Warsaw Pact unilateral reductions, if completed, and given no reduction in NATO capabilities, should significantly extend preparation time because of the greater need in the first echelon for currently low-strength divisions from the western USSR.* 3.5(c)

~~Secret~~

3.5(c)

Figure 1
Projected Warsaw Pact Echelons
in the Western Theater of Military Operations (TMO)—Four-Front Attack



~~Secret~~

717282 (B00786) 9-89

3.5(c)

~~Secret~~

~~Secret~~

3.5(c)

Key Judgments

The warning times we associate with possible Warsaw Pact preparations for war with NATO in Central Europe have increased significantly from those set forth in NIE 4-1-84. These changes are a direct consequence of Soviet assessments of improved NATO military capability, our improved understanding of the Soviet process of transitioning to war, and changes in Soviet peacetime readiness. Accordingly, before unilateral force reductions, we assess that:

- Pact military planners would prefer and are most likely to attempt to conduct a well-prepared attack involving five to six fronts with four fronts in the first strategic echelon. We should be able to provide about four to five weeks of warning of such an attack. The increased time needed to prepare this attack option results from increased reliance in the first echelon on "not ready" divisions from the western USSR.
- An attack with three fronts in the first echelon remains a possibility in some circumstances. We should be able to provide about two to three weeks of warning of such an attack. Our assessment of the increased time needed to prepare these fronts for sustained offensive operations results from new judgments about the time required to prepare Soviet forces based in Eastern Europe.
- We recognize that circumstances could cause the Pact to commit its forces to an attack after the completion of mobilization and movement but before completing postmobilization training necessary for minimum proficiency for offensive operations. If so, we could provide at least two weeks of warning of a four-front attack or at least one week warning of a less likely three-front attack. We believe, however, the Soviets would judge attacks before completion of postmobilization training as highly risky because of the reliance on reserves lacking such training.

v

~~Secret~~

~~Secret~~

3.5(c)

Figure 2
Announced Warsaw Pact Unilateral Force Reductions
in the Western Theater of Military Operations



1. All borders of Germany have not been delineated. The GDR has received the east of its government in the Eastern Sector of Bonn, Potsdam, Cottbus, Berlin, including all four occupied sectors, stands up four police units of states. The representation of some other boundaries is not necessarily authoritative.

~~Secret~~

717283 (B00886) 0-89

3.5(c)

~~Secret~~

~~Secret~~

3.5(c)

Announced Soviet and non-Soviet Warsaw Pact unilateral force reductions, if completed, should significantly extend preparation time because of the greater need in the first echelon for currently low-strength divisions from the western USSR. Warning of our assessed most likely attack option—four fronts in the first echelon—would increase by about two weeks. If the Soviets elected to attack after only mobilization and movement, warning times would increase by almost a week.

These preparation and warning times after unilateral reductions assume that NATO capabilities remain at current levels. Unilateral NATO reductions could diminish Pact perception of their requirements for success and, therefore, reduce warning time.

The ongoing Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) Talks are likely to result in an agreement establishing numerical parity between NATO and Warsaw Pact forces below current NATO levels within the Atlantic-to-the-Urals zone. From peacetime parity, the Soviets would have to reestablish major forces in order to generate the capability to attack successfully and sustain the offensive to the depth of the theater. This requirement would increase preparation time considerably over what we have assessed in this Memorandum. Alternatively, the Soviets could increase the readiness and combat power of residual forces through higher manning levels and acquisition of modern equipment. This would require reinvesting the savings achieved by reducing their forces under CFE into defense and restructuring their forces and redistributing their equipment. These smaller forces would be capable of launching attacks for limited objectives with warning times more like we are accustomed to today. We do not believe such attacks for limited objectives would be attractive to Pact planners because the risks, to include escalation to nuclear war, would far outweigh any potential short-term gains.

We are confident that for the period of this Estimate we will be able to detect and report significant disruptions or a reversal of present political, social, and economic trends in the Warsaw Pact countries. Although these indicators will remain ambiguous with regard to actual national war preparations, they will continue to signal that the potential for a crisis had increased.

This information is ~~Secret~~

3.5(c)

~~Secret~~

~~Secret~~

3.5(c)

Contents

	<i>Page</i>
Key Judgments	v
Discussion	1
Reasons for the Reassessment	1
Definition: Warning of War	2
Warsaw Pact Perceptions of NATO	2
Warsaw Pact Views on the Outbreak of War in Europe	3
Warsaw Pact Plans for War in Europe	3
Warning of Attack in the Southwest, Northwest, and Oceanic TMOs	4
The Peacetime Readiness Status of Soviet Forces	4
Transition to War	4
Warsaw Pact Attack Options	5
A Five-to-Six Front Attack With Four Fronts in First Echelon	6
An Attack With Two to Three Fronts in the First Echelon	7
Unreinforced Attack	7
Warning of War	7
Warning of an Unreinforced Attack	8
Warning of An Attack With Two to Three Fronts in First Echelon	8
Warning of a Five- to Six-Front Attack With Four Fronts in First Echelon	9
Warning Implications of Warsaw Pact Unilateral Force Reductions	10
Political and Economic Developments and Implications for Warning	11
Outlook	12
Warning Implications of Conventional Force Reductions Talks	12
Economic and Political Changes	13
Annex: Warning Thresholds	15 3.3(b)(1)

~~Secret~~

~~Secret~~

3.5(c)

Discussion¹

Reasons for the Reassessment

Warsaw Pact plans and forces for war against NATO in Central Europe changed greatly between 1982 and 1989, resulting in the Pact's perceived need to reinforce its first strategic echelon in Eastern Europe with forces stationed in the western USSR before the outbreak of hostilities. Further, our understanding of the Pact's process of transition to war has improved. These two factors have led us to reevaluate US capability to provide warning of war in Europe. In addition, changes are under way that affect the future of Pact nations and forces and that affect the warning equation for the near and long-term future:

- Unilateral force reductions in both Soviet and non-Soviet Warsaw Pact forces are reducing the peace-

time air and ground forces available in Eastern Europe and selected areas in the western USSR.

- The prospect of an arms control agreement that would result in mutual reductions to quantitative parity raises questions of fundamental changes in Pact military capabilities and strategy in Europe.
- Political, social, and economic changes in the Warsaw Pact countries have improved our confidence in our ability to detect deliberate preparations to shift these nations from peace to war footing. The further establishment of arms control inspection regimes reinforces our confidence.

3.5(c)

3.5(c)

¹ This Memorandum to Holders updates our estimates of warning presented in NIE 4-1-84 (Top Secret [redacted] June 1984, *Warning of War in Europe*.)

3.5(c)

In 1988 the Intelligence Community approved an estimate (Memorandum to Holders 83-10002) that judged that, as a direct consequence of the assessments of improved NATO conventional defense capabilities, during the 1980s the Warsaw Pact changed its preferred and most likely option for a sustained theater offensive against NATO to an attack involving five to six fronts with four fronts in the first strategic echelon. This Memorandum examines the US capability to warn of war in Europe over the next two to three years in light of that judgment together with reassessments of peacetime readiness and transition to war reflected in NIE 11-14-89. It also considers the warning implications of two other changes currently under way: (1) the ongoing unilateral reductions in Pact conventional forces; and (2) our improved capability to discern warning indicators from political, social, and economic changes in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe.

3.5(c)

This Memorandum's main focus—assessing the warning of war implications of the Warsaw Pact's preferred four-front-attack plan and our improved understanding of the Pact process of transition to war—concerns developments that occurred before Gorbachev's conventional arms control initiatives. These developments by themselves call for the issuance of a new assessment. The warning implications of both the Warsaw Pact unilateral reductions and the period after a possible conventional force reduction treaty also necessitate assessment, but our judgments of these warning implications must be more tentative because of the major changes under

way in the Soviet Bloc. We intend to reassess all of our conclusions about potential warning of war in Europe within the next two years.

This Memorandum presents the warning of war implications of the judgments contained primarily in National Intelligence Estimate 11-14-89 (Top Secret [redacted] February 1989, *Trends and Developments in Warsaw Pact Theater Forces and Doctrine in the 1990s*) and the Memorandum to Holders of Interagency Intelligence Memorandum 83-10002, (Top Secret [redacted] March 1988, *Employment of Warsaw Pact Forces Against NATO: A Four Front Attack*). Readers are referred to these documents for the detailed supporting evidence behind the judgments on Warsaw Pact transition to war, preparation times, and plans for attacking NATO. Information on Soviet readiness, which directly affects warning time, is contained in Interagency Intelligence Memorandum 82-10012 (Secret), March 1983, *The Readiness of Soviet Ground Forces*. For recent views on warning of nuclear war, see *Soviet Strategic Nuclear Attack Opinions: Selected Issues for Warning and Policy*, due to be issued in October 1989.

3.5(c)

3.5(c)

3.5(c)

This Memorandum does not address previous warning considerations about Pact developments on NATO's flanks, recent changes in Eastern Europe and the relationship of activities in the Persian Gulf to a European war. The predeployment preparations and dispersal of the Pact navies prior to war would provide significant warning indicators. A detailed assessment of the Soviet naval threat can be found in NIE 11-15-89, *Soviet Naval Strategy and Programs Toward the 21st Century*.

3.5(c)

3.5(c)

~~Secret~~

~~Secret~~**Definition: Warning of War**

The Intelligence Community attempts to give early warning that an enemy has begun preparations for war or is on a course of action that poses a serious risk of war: we define this as *warning of war*. Because it is unlikely that we will have definitive intelligence of a Warsaw Pact decision to prepare for war, the Intelligence Community monitors and analyzes the total process in which the Pact countries prepare for war, including changes in diplomacy, propaganda, political life, the economy, and the posture and readiness of the armed forces (see inset). This Memorandum does not focus on *warning of attack*, the communication that an adversary is not only preparing its armed forces for war but also intends to launch an attack in the near future. Under most circumstances, these specifics could be provided only late in a crisis. (For further details on warning thresholds, see the annex.)

3.5(c)

Warsaw Pact Perceptions of NATO

Warsaw Pact military threat assessments starting in the mid-1970s have come to regard NATO's defensive capabilities as increasingly more robust. Pact military writings indicate that Pact planners tend to overestimate NATO's modernization efforts and the battlefield capabilities of its new weapons systems, but these assessments have influenced Pact estimates of the size of the forces required to ensure battlefield success. Threat assessments by the Pact have focused on the following changes in NATO:

- NATO's tactical defenses are thicker and denser and are saturated with antiarmor weapons.
- NATO's defenses have become more responsive, can shift forces from one sector to another, and can mass tactical or operational reserves against threatened breakthrough. Pact planners fear that NATO can now probably detect Pact concentrations and shift forces to reverse unfavorable force balances in selected sectors of the front.
- Ground-based and airborne air defenses are being modernized and expanded.

Warning as a Process

Warning of war is not a single event but a process by which warnings of increased threat are communicated. The Intelligence Community strives for a warning process that trades certainty of the intention to attack for time to allow policymakers to pursue options designed to deter or otherwise act on an impending confrontation. The warning system cannot foretell with certainty at a definite point that war will occur. Instead, a series of warnings of increased enemy capability would be issued that would become less ambiguous over time. For example, the Alert Memorandum issued by the Director of Central Intelligence in April 1981 during the Polish crisis concluded that the Soviets believed military intervention in Poland was necessary and that this intervention could take place with little further warning, but it was unknown whether the decision to intervene had been made.

3.5(c)

- NATO's ability to augment defenses through rapid reinforcement from outside continental Europe and the mobilization of reserve forces from within Europe has increased. Pact planners now believe NATO can prepare its forces for large-scale war in 10 days.
- NATO's doctrine remains committed to a forward defense, but it has acquired significant strategic depth with the near-certain involvement of French territory and forces in a NATO-Warsaw Pact conflict.

3.5(c)

Pact judgments that NATO is capable of a deeper and stronger defense argue for narrower Pact attack sectors, a denser configuration of forces in the first strategic echelon, and a greater preponderance of forces on line in the attack. These points are reflected in current Pact military writings and exercises.

3.5(c)

~~Secret~~

~~Secret~~

Warsaw Pact Views on the Outbreak of War in Europe

3.5(c) The possibility of war with NATO dominates Pact military planning. In assessing the threat posed by NATO, Warsaw Pact military authorities assume for planning purposes that NATO's intentions are "aggressive," although some senior Pact officers view this assumption skeptically. The Pact's basic peacetime planning assumption—upon which the Pact structures and prepares its armed forces—envisages a war in Europe arising from military actions taken by the West. []

3.5(c) On the other hand, public statements by senior Soviet leaders and recent arms control proposals indicate that they regard the likelihood of NATO aggression as low. A major change, in their view, probably would follow a series of international crises that would clearly signal an increased NATO threat. In the absence of such crisis, we assess that the Soviet leadership currently sees the possibility of war in Europe as low. []

3.5(c) The Pact's concept of a period of threat—a severe deterioration in international relations resulting from intense East-West crises in third areas, Western exploitation of serious instabilities in Eastern Europe, and possibly an internal crisis in the West that leads to Western adventurism—is fundamental to their thinking about the outbreak of war. Pact military planners generally dismiss the notion of an accidental outbreak of a major war. They also believe that a massive Western attack launched without a major crisis is a very remote possibility. Such a "bolt-from-the-blue" attack is judged so unlikely that it can be largely ignored in military planning except for prudent measures to keep essential portions of Pact forces at a high state of readiness. Finally, although conflict with the West could begin outside Europe—for example, in the Middle East—the Pact judges that escalation of the war to the European theater by either side would require a separate, major decision. []

Warsaw Pact Plans for War in Europe

Pact military writings have traditionally stated that a war with NATO could be won only by a sustained

theater-level offensive. These sources indicate that Pact planning includes both offensive and defensive contingencies. Traditionally, Soviet planners have preferred to seize the initiative at the beginning of a war by launching what they describe as a preemptive attack against NATO after at least some mobilization of Pact forces. Their current assessment is that a preemptive attack has become increasingly difficult to execute. If the Pact is unable to carry out a preemptive attack because of either military or political constraints, it would assume an initial defensive operation posture. Ongoing force generation would increase the Pact capability for a theater-level counter-offensive. []

3.5(c) On the other hand, Pact public statements and other recent evidence indicate a preemptive attack may no longer be a component of Soviet military doctrine. These statements suggest that the Soviet political leadership has rejected traditional military preferences for preemption and will rely on a doctrine of strategic defense. According to these statements, Pact forces would establish defensive positions and conduct counterattacks only to recover lost Pact territory; a continued offensive into NATO territory would be conducted only after prolonged attempts to end the war had failed. []

3.5(c) The most dangerous scenario, in the Pact view, would be a NATO attack after rapid NATO preparations. Pact officers have noted that NATO has greatly accelerated its mobilization capabilities over the last 10 years and can prepare its first strategic echelon for operations in 10 days. This speed, combined with the advantages offered by high-technology weapons, results in NATO's capability to mount a determined attack. []

3.5(c) Soviet writings, nevertheless, indicate that they believe they could detect NATO preparations early enough to keep NATO from achieving a decisive advantage. The Soviets envision rapidly prepared NATO assaults against Pact forces that were neither fully ready nor fully deployed. In their view, however, Pact forces would contain NATO after gains of about 100 kilometers, with subsequent plans to counter-attack. []

~~Secret~~

~~Secret~~

Warning of Attack in the Southwest, Northwest, and Oceanic TMOs

Soviet military planners have traditionally viewed the Western Theater of Military Operations (TMO) (opposite NATO's central region) as the single most important theater of operations in a future war against NATO. Within their theater strategy, the Soviets also plan for combat operations against US and NATO forces in the Northwest and Southwest TMOs, as well as the Atlantic and Pacific TMOs. Announced and ongoing force reductions in ground and air forces in the Northwest and Southwest TMOs, as well as naval force reductions, will lengthen the Soviets' preparation time for operations in these theaters. Though the Soviets may not undertake full combat operations in all theaters simultaneously, they will probably be able to generate and mobilize forces in these other theaters within the timelines of their mobilization of forces within the Western TMO.

3.5(c) [redacted]

The Peacetime Readiness Status of Soviet Forces

The Pact's force posture opposite NATO in the Western TMO reflects Pact beliefs about the most likely scenario for war initiation in Europe—after an extended crisis—and operational planning for initial combat actions. The crisis period would allow sufficient time to mobilize Pact forces. The ability to mobilize large theater forces rapidly instead of maintaining immediate combat readiness of the entire force is the goal of Pact military planners.

3.5(c) [redacted]

Of the 103 ground forces divisions in the Pact's order of battle in the Western TMO in 1989, just over half are considered "ready" and the remainder "not ready" (see table 1). Ready divisions, however, are not fully manned in peacetime. The most ready Soviet motorized rifle and tank divisions—those stationed in Central Europe—are manned at 80 to 85 percent of authorized wartime levels. Almost all the Soviet divisions stationed in the Western USSR are not ready. Soviet aircrews and missile units are manned at close to wartime levels as a safeguard against an unexpected attack. Support units are manned at levels of 15 and 30 percent of intended wartime strength.

Table 1
Readiness Status of Warsaw Pact
Ground Forces in the Western TMO,
1 January 1989

	Ready ^b	Not Ready ^c	Total
Total	54	49	103
Soviet	33	30	63
Non-Soviet Warsaw Pact	21	19	40

^a Figures represent motorized rifle, tank, and airborne divisions.

^b Soviet ready divisions are manned between 50 and 100 percent and possess full sets of recent equipment. These divisions correspond to US category A and B divisions.

^c Soviet not-ready divisions are manned up to 50 percent, generally have older equipment, and often do not have full equipment sets. These divisions correspond to US category C and D divisions.

3.5(c)

This table is [redacted]

3.5(c)

Many support units intended for wartime do not exist in peacetime and would be formed only after mobilization. These judgments of undermanning were relatively new when NIE 4-1-84 was written. Since then we have reached assessments of their implications—reflected in NIE 11-14-89—for the time required to fully prepare Soviet forces in Central Europe for sustained offensive operations at authorized wartime strength.

3.5(c)

Transition to War

Pact planners have developed a flexible system of four stages that allows the Pact to mobilize its forces either rapidly or incrementally (see inset). If time permitted, Pact forces could be mobilized on a gradual basis through each stage until full combat readiness was achieved. Until this last stage is reached, Pact forces could be held at an intermediate level or the process could even be reversed. Ordering "threat of war" readiness or especially "full combat readiness," given the extensive disruption of the economy, would indicate the Soviets probably judged war to be likely but not necessarily inevitable. In an emergency, the stages could be compressed, and peacetime forces would move directly to full combat readiness.

3.5(c)

~~Secret~~

~~Secret~~**Soviet Alert Stages**

3.5(c)

Constant Combat Readiness. *The normal peacetime readiness status of the Soviet armed forces. Routine training and activity take place. Leaves and passes may be granted at commander's discretion.*

3.5(c)

Increased Combat Readiness. *Unit personnel are recalled from leave or temporary duty, and division subunits conducting field training return to garrison. Mobilization and contingency planning are reviewed and updated by staffs. Unit personnel remove equipment from storage and begin to prepare reception points for reservists. The division's field command post (CP) is partially manned and deployed to a dispersal area. Staffing at garrison command center is increased.*

3.5(c)

Threat-of-War Combat Readiness. *Units deploy from garrison to dispersal or assembly areas. The control of the division is transferred from the garrison command center to the field CP. Selected reservists with specialized skills may join the unit.*

3.5(c)

Full Combat Readiness. *Full mobilization takes place and reservists join their units. If required, equipment mobilized for the units also arrives. Units establish their wartime command, control, and communications structure. At this point, the alert, dispersal, and mobilization process is complete. Subsequent steps such as training, final preparations, and deployment would take place after this stage in the alert process is complete.*

Both ready and not-ready forces require mobilization and training to achieve full combat readiness. Before the initiation of the unilateral reductions in 1989, we estimated that Soviet forces based in East Germany, Czechoslovakia, and Poland would need at least two to three weeks to prepare for sustained offensive operations at authorized wartime strength: one to two weeks to mobilize and transport reservists from the

USSR to Eastern Europe to fill out Soviet units, and an additional week to integrate the reservists into units and to train them. This is a significantly longer time than presented in NIE 4-1-84, where we estimated this same force could be prepared in 10 to 12 days, and results from our improved understanding of Pact peacetime readiness.

3.5(c)

We estimate that not-ready divisions in the western USSR would require about 45 days to fully prepare for sustained offensive operations. Our assessment of Soviet military planning and training practices indicate that on average five days are required to alert, disperse, and mobilize these divisions. Thereafter, the reservists would engage in individual and then tactical training. By about the 30th day, the average division is minimally capable of offensive action, and by about the 45th day, the average not-ready division is capable of conducting sustained offensive combat. These times do not include movement time.

3.5(c)

We recognize that circumstances could cause the Pact to commit its forces to an attack after completion of mobilization and movement but before completing postmobilization training. Before unilateral reductions, we assessed that the Pact could bring Soviet forces in Central Europe to authorized wartime strength in one to two weeks. Within the same time period, the Soviets could also deploy forward from the western USSR lead elements of a fourth front. As Pact military writings indicate, use of not-ready forces without postmobilization training entails a very significant degradation in combat proficiency (we have assessed this could be as much as 70 percent for a low-strength cadre division). Consequently, we believe the Soviets would judge attacks after completion of only mobilization and movement as highly risky because of the reliance on reserves lacking the minimum necessary postmobilization training to consummate offensive success.

3.5(c)

Warsaw Pact Attack Options

Pact leaders face a major dilemma in deciding to attack NATO. Preparedness, and the combat potential, sustainability, and resilience that preparations

~~Secret~~

~~Secret~~

would generate, has to be balanced against the advantage of attacking quickly to preempt NATO's mobilization, reinforcement, and establishment of an organized defense. Overall, we conclude that Pact military planners would prefer and are most likely to attempt to conduct a fully prepared attack involving five to six fronts with four fronts² on the first strategic echelon. We have continued to note indications of this preference through early 1989.

3.5(c)

We cannot rule out the possibility, nevertheless, that during a crisis the Soviets might choose to launch a preemptive attack on NATO without taking the time to fully prepare their forces. We have no evidence to indicate what series of events would persuade the Soviets to diverge from their preferred option and launch combat operations from a posture of less than full preparedness. The most important determinant perhaps would be the Soviets' estimation of the degree of control they possessed over the immediate crisis. They could believe, for example, that a NATO attack was imminent and they must rapidly react or that incremental mobilization of both sides had shifted the correlation of forces against the Pact and that the Pact could not afford to delay until mobilization was complete. Pact intelligence collection focuses on monitoring NATO's readiness status, and significant changes in that status during a crisis would be key decision points for Pact planners. In such circumstances, the Pact could commence operations after only mobilization and movement. Soviet military planners clearly recognize that it would be a political decision whether to make further preparations while attempting to defuse a crisis or to conduct a preemptive attack with available forces.

3.5(c)

A Five-to-Six-Front Attack With Four Fronts in First Echelon

The Soviets, in our view, adopted this option during the 1980s because:

- They believe that a European war would probably have a protracted conventional phase lasting weeks

² Although not directly comparable to any Western organization, a *front* is similar to a NATO army group and its associated air forces in size, level of command, and function. There is no standard organization for a *front*. It usually is composed of three to five combined arms armies, each including three to five tank or motorized rifle divisions and air forces with as many as several hundred tactical aircraft. The overall size of a typical *front* would depend on the mission assigned and would probably range from 300,000 to 400,000 men.

3.5(c)

~~Secret~~

if not months, or that nuclear use may not occur at all.

- They estimate that NATO's conventional defense capabilities have improved and that more Pact forces will be required on line to overwhelm NATO's rapidly generated and more robust forces.
- They think that a preemptive attack against NATO has become more difficult and that they must prepare for a defensive phase at the beginning of a war.
- They expect severe losses in the conventional phase of a major war.

3.5(c)

The introduction of a fourth front on line in the first strategic echelon allows Pact planners to narrow the attack sector in which each front would operate, thus increasing the density and depth of attacking forces. The first strategic echelon would comprise about 65 Warsaw Pact divisions. Evidence indicates that the fourth front would concentrate against the V US Corps and VII US Corps, while a front made up of the combined Western Group of Forces (formerly the Group of Soviet Forces, Germany) and East German Army would operate on the theater's main axis of attack against Belgian and British forces of NATO's Northern Army Group.

3.5(c)

Not all of the component armies of a fourth front would need to be forward deployed before offensive operations began, nor would its force structure necessarily correspond to the peacetime force structure of a Soviet military district. Evidence before unilateral reductions indicated that one army from the Western Group of Forces (already stationed in Germany) could be subordinated to the fourth front and act as its first operational echelon. Two to three armies from the western USSR probably would complete the fourth front's organization (see figure 1 on page iv). The forward deployment of one of these armies from the western USSR to East Germany before hostilities probably would provide sufficient forces for the fourth front to commence operations.

3.5(c)

We judge that the Soviets would require four to five weeks of preparation for a fully prepared four-front attack. This judgment assumes that the lead army of the fourth front to be moved forward from the western

~~Secret~~

USSR has at least one ready division and that its not-ready divisions are given the opportunity to conduct some of the necessary postmobilization training before the initiation of combat. Because of the importance the Soviets ascribe to the contribution of the fourth front, we believe the Soviets would perceive significant risk to the overall success of their offensive if they committed these forces with little or no postmobilization training. We cannot rule out the possibility that the Soviets might judge circumstances as compelling them to commit their forces with little or no training. In that case, preparation time could be as little as two to three weeks. On the other hand, the Soviets might delay their attack beyond four to five weeks to allow the not-ready divisions needed in the first echelon and others whose follow-on contribution would also be important to fully prepare for sustained offensive combat.

3.5(c)

An Attack With Two to Three Fronts in First Echelon

A three-front attack would involve initially only those Soviet and non-Soviet units already in place in Central Europe—about 50 divisions. This is the same three-front attack option from NIE 4-1-84. Before unilateral reductions, we judged that under this approach the Soviets would be prepared to conduct sustained offensive operations with two to three weeks of preparation. This period would enable the Soviets to bring their forces deployed in Central Europe up to full strength and conduct some training. We cannot rule out the possibility that the Soviets might judge circumstances as compelling them to commit these forces without any postmobilization training, in as little as seven to 14 days. Shorter preparation times would seriously compromise sustainability because it would permit the logistics structure, which is routinely maintained at very low manning levels, to be only incompletely mobilized. Pact writings indicate that their planners believe such an attack would be risky owing to limited postmobilization training for the lower readiness units, damage and delay to key forces still in transit from the western USSR due to NATO air attacks, and the vulnerability to an attack of a poorly dispersed logistics infrastructure. For these reasons, we assess that a three-front attack is far less likely than the preferred four-front option with its lengthier preparation time, which promises less risk and more certainty of success in a sustained theater-level offensive.

3.5(c)

Before unilateral reductions, Pact sources indicated that the smallest force the Pact might use to initiate offensive operations against NATO would consist of two fronts in first echelon made up of Soviet forces in Eastern Europe together with East German and Czechoslovak national forces, or about 37 divisions. The Soviets and their allies, however, do not practice this option. Pact planners probably believe that NATO's improved defense and mobilization capabilities would quickly offset the early advantages achieved by a two-front attack. Moreover, if early success were achieved by the Pact forces it probably could not be exploited and sustained due to a shortage of adequately manned divisions and limited logistic support capability. The risks and complexities inherent in such an option lead us to conclude that a two-front Pact attack is highly unlikely.

3.5(c)

Unreinforced Attack

We continue to assess that there is little chance that the Pact would initiate war against NATO from a peacetime readiness posture. The Pact does have some capability to attack NATO on short notice using ground and air units garrisoned near the West German border, perhaps 15 divisions and several hundred tactical aircraft (with no front organization). We assess these forces could initiate operations within 24 hours of receiving an attack order. Pact military writings indicate an expectation that such an attack would, at best, enjoy marginal success because of NATO's rapid ability to react and reverse force balances; an attack could be neither well supported nor sustained, and the entire Pact infrastructure for war would be unprepared and, therefore, vulnerable.

3.5(c)

Warning of War

We are very confident that the US and NATO intelligence organizations will detect many military, political, and economic indicators of Warsaw Pact preparations for a war with NATO. Although we believe that the unprecedented scale of the activities would clearly indicate the Soviets' intention to enhance their readiness for war, we cannot be confident

~~Secret~~

~~Secret~~

that we would have a consensus within the Intelligence Community regarding Soviet intentions to initiate hostilities. Nevertheless, confidence in our ability to detect the indicators of Soviet preparations is strong.

3.5(c)

A Pact decision to *prepare for war* with NATO would undoubtedly set in motion multitudinous activities and lay out a timetable for these preparations, but it would more than likely not specify the exact date and time of attack or irrevocably commit the Soviet leadership to war. The Soviets would most likely increase their readiness gradually as a crisis developed. We believe that the entire process from the first sign of mobilization to the initiation of hostilities could take many days or weeks longer than the "reasonable minimum" times discussed below. The political and economic indicators significant to the early stages of a developing crisis are addressed on page 11.

3.5(c)

The warning assessments presented below, however, are keyed to the time we think the Pact would need to complete the preparations necessary to achieve our assessed minimum proficiency for offensive operations. We assume in these cases that the Soviet leadership has called for immediate full-scale preparation for war at the maximum pace possible. We recognize that circumstances could cause the Pact to commit its forces after the completion of mobilization and movement but without the minimum necessary postmobilization training. We believe, however, that the Pact would view such an attack as highly risky because of the reliance on reserves lacking postmobilization training. For these times, see table 3 on page 10. The actual *decision to attack* would come later depending on Soviet judgments made during the developing crisis that would be keyed to their evaluations of NATO's actions.

3.5(c)

These warning times also assume that US and NATO policymakers make timely decisions to react to the rapidly developing crisis and the growing Pact threat. If decisions were postponed and if Pact preparations continued, the preparation time available to NATO would be reduced. During a crisis, the Pact would closely monitor NATO preparations. Its assessment of NATO military capability would strongly influence

the amount of preparation time the Pact leaders believed was necessary for their own forces. Although we have no direct evidence, we believe serious delays in NATO mobilization, for example, could cause Soviet military planners to abandon their preferred four-front option and attack with less complete preparations. Alternatively, Soviet decisionmakers could conclude that lagging NATO mobilization would enable them to relax the pace of their own preparations in an effort to avert hostilities.

3.5(c)

Warning of an Unreinforced Attack

As a theoretical construct, a Pact attack on NATO from a peacetime posture would be planned to provide as little warning to NATO as possible. A Pact attack from garrison could be prepared in as little as 24 hours. It is possible that we might detect the order to move to full combat readiness, but it is more likely we would detect abnormal activity levels in garrisons within a few hours of initiation. Such reported activity would provide the opportunity for Allied commanders to take precautionary steps. Because of the extremely unlikely eventuality of such an attack, however, interpretation of the purpose of this activity could be ambiguous and contentious, and a final judgment that an attack was imminent might not be reached before hostilities began.

3.5(c)

Warning of An Attack With Two to Three Fronts in First Echelon

If the Pact had taken no previous measures to improve its readiness, we estimate that an attack with two or three fronts in first echelon would require two to three weeks of preparations. Upward of 1 million reservists would have to be mobilized in the western Soviet Union, Poland, Czechoslovakia, and East Germany to bring understrength divisions and nondivisional units to the authorized strength for war. Preparing the lines of communication through Eastern Europe would also require substantial effort. Moreover, the Pact would begin the simultaneous preparation of other forces—both strategic and general purpose—to prepare for nuclear escalation and the timely reinforcement of forces in Eastern Europe.

3.5(c)

~~Secret~~

~~Secret~~

We have a good chance of detecting some of the communications that accompany rising levels of military readiness. Moreover, we would detect the urgent and widespread activity that occurred as a result of extensive mobilization and the preparation of lines of communication. We would detect and report these indicators to policymakers within 24 hours after the initiation of these activities, thereby providing two to three weeks of warning. On the other hand, if the Pact had already gradually raised the level of readiness of its forces during a period of tension—as we would expect it to do—the time required for final preparations would be shorter. In this case, some initial warnings probably would have already been given. Following these warnings, the Intelligence Community would continue to assess the Pact's preparations for war and would issue additional judgments about the nature and scope of these steps. []

3.5(c)

Warning of a Five- to Six-Front Attack With Four Fronts in First Echelon

The pattern of urgent and widespread activity associated with a fully prepared four-front attack would be similar to that of a three-front force, but the scope and complexity of the preparations would be much greater. If the Pact had taken no previous measures to improve its readiness, we assess that it would require about four to five weeks of preparation to alert, mobilize, move, and most important—provide some basic training for these forces. []

3.5(c)

As in the previous cases, if the Pact began preparations from peacetime readiness levels, we would detect and report the preparations within 24 to 48 hours of their initiation, allowing about four weeks of warning before the outbreak of hostilities. It is more likely, however, that the Pact would gradually raise force readiness during a prolonged period of tension. Such measures could decrease somewhat the overall preparation requirements once the decision for full-scale mobilization and possibly war was made, but they would almost certainly cause the Intelligence Community to issue warnings regarding the increased readiness of Pact forces. Partial measures to increase Pact readiness would not eliminate the requirement for the Pact to take a highly visible series of steps over a substantial period of time to prepare to execute this

attack option. Enormous and unprecedented mobilization of Pact forces would still be required. We believe, therefore, that even after widespread prewar partial measures had been taken, Pact forces still would need two to three weeks of preparation. []

3.5(c)

Warning Implications of Warsaw Pact Unilateral Force Reductions

The announced reductions of Soviet forces in Eastern Europe and East European national forces, if fully implemented, will significantly lower Pact force levels in the forward area (see table 2 and figure 2 on page vi). Six Soviet tank divisions, plus critical combat support units such as bridging, and substantial amounts of additional equipment are scheduled to be withdrawn. Scheduled tank reductions amount to about half of Soviet tanks in Eastern Europe. Non-Soviet Warsaw Pact forces, which currently comprise a large proportion of the forces in Eastern Europe, are also to be reduced. Moreover, forces inside the Soviet Union are to be restructured and are to lose tanks and possible artillery from their structure. Equipment modernization and restructuring of remaining Soviet forces in Eastern Europe may offset to some extent the loss of combat capability, but non-Soviet Warsaw Pact forces are not taking similar steps. []

3.5(c)

These reductions—which are well under way—probably will render an unreinforced Pact attack practically impossible and will require the Pact to rely more heavily on currently not-ready divisions to support either a two-, three-, or four-front attack. Pact planners will likely conclude that—without reinforcements from the western USSR roughly equal to two fronts—their forces remaining in Eastern Europe after the unilateral cuts would not possess the advantage over current NATO forces needed to initiate and sustain offensive operations to the depth of the theater. The Soviets probably would believe that to attain sufficient combat power in the theater they would have to generate enough not-ready divisions to replace the withdrawn Soviet divisions, as well as the disbanded East European formations. Such greater reliance

~~Secret~~

~~Secret~~

Table 2
Announced Warsaw Pact Unilateral Reductions in
Central Europe To Take Place During 1989-90

	Ground Forces	Aircraft	Tanks
Total	13 divisions, 6 regiments	441	7,600
Soviet	6 tank divisions	260	5,300
East Germany	6 tank regiments	50	600
Poland	4 motorized rifle divisions	80	850
Czechoslovakia	3 motorized rifle divisions	51	850

* The equipment from these divisions is to be stored in unit sets.

This table is ~~Unclassified~~.

Table 3
Estimated Preparation Times for Soviet Attack Options

	NIE 4-1-84	Before Warsaw Pact Unilateral Reductions		After Warsaw Pact Unilateral Reductions	
		Mobilization and Movement	Minimum Preparation for Offensive Combat ^a	Mobilization and Movement	Minimum Preparation for Offensive Combat
Three fronts in first echelon	10 to 12 days	7 to 14 days	14 to 21 days	9 to 16 days	35 to 43 days
Five to six front attack with four fronts in first echelon	Not addressed	14 to 21 days	28 to 35 days	18 to 25 days	40 to 50 days

^a Minimum time required to mobilize and move necessary combat forces. The Soviets could decide to commit forces at this point but would consider such use highly risky.

^b Includes mobilization and movement times as well as additional time required to bring divisions to the equivalent of battalion-level training, which is the Community assessed standard for "minimum proficiency, to initiate offensive operations" defined in Interagency Intelligence Memorandum 82-10012 (Secret), March 1983, *The Readiness of Soviet Ground Forces*.

^c Greater reliance on "not-ready" forces from the western USSR will increase both movement and preparation times. Postunilateral reduction figures include an average of 25 days of postmobilization training because of the heavy reliance on low-strength cadre divisions from the western USSR. This training is required to bring divisions to equivalent of battalion-level training, which is the standard for "minimum proficiency to initiate offensive operations" defined in IIM 82-10012.

This table is ~~Secret~~

3.5(c)

~~Secret~~

~~Secret~~

on the early commitment of currently not-ready divisions from the Soviet Union for sustained offensive operations would stretch out Pact preparations to 40 to 50 days. We cannot rule out the possibility that the Soviets might judge circumstances as compelling them to commit their forces without the minimum postmobilization training necessary for offensive operations, in as little as 18 to 25 days.

3.5(c)

Our assessment of preparation and warning times after the Pact's unilateral reductions are complete assumes that NATO remains at current force levels. The extent of Pact preparations—reinforcement of forces in Eastern Europe, and training—required to conduct a potentially successful offensive campaign is driven in large measure by Pact assessments of NATO military capability. As a result, unilateral NATO reductions outside the context of a conventional force reductions agreement could diminish the Pact's assessment of its force requirements for success and thus reduce the preparation time needed for the Pact and the warning time available to NATO.

3.5(c)

Political and Economic Developments and Implications for Warning

The dramatic political, social, and economic changes in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe in the last few years—stemming principally from President Gorbachev's policies of *glasnost* and reform—have increased the visibility of the likely preparations that would have to be undertaken for a general war with NATO. The West has obtained unprecedented, if still limited, access to the Pact countries including the Soviet Union. In addition, arms control agreements enable US inspectors to monitor the status of some critical Soviet forces and military activities, increasing the difficulty of the Soviets' conducting covert military preparations, to some extent. Such improved access would allow the Intelligence Community to more rapidly assess major changes associated with national war preparations. Conversely, a widespread curtailment of such access would itself be an indicator of a change in the strategic environment.

3.5(c)

At the same time, some indicators of economic mobilization have become even more ambiguous, making it difficult to determine whether specific changes are

Warning of Industrial Mobilization

US and Allied intelligence for many years have considered Warsaw Pact measures to prepare the general populace for the rigors of a major war to be important warning indicators but had difficulty in detecting or properly evaluating them. Beginning in 1984, the US Intelligence Community began a special collection and analytical program to develop data bases on Pact economic activity in peacetime in order to warn of changes that might indicate the start of industrial mobilization. Research on critical industrial sectors has produced a sample of nondefense industries which have characteristics important for warning. First, Western technicians have access to them; second, the plants are important in satisfying civilian needs in peacetime; third, they have plans to change production during industrial mobilization. Any significant production changes at these plants would be important early warning indicators. Increased contacts with the West and Gorbachev's policy of *glasnost* have improved our ability to collect data and our confidence in interpreting them to determine the status of these facilities.

3.5(c)

associated with national war preparations. The usefulness of industrial indicators, in particular, has been degraded by the implementation of reforms, which have disrupted normal operations. For example, changes such as in the composition of the work force or the size of stockpiles might signify the introduction of new product lines or more efficient plant operations. Likewise, denial of access to individual Soviet industrial plants previously open to Western visitors might not arise from a concern with concealing mobilization, but rather from a desire to protect new technologies or to disguise sensitive production activities. Until the economic environment stabilizes somewhat, industrial indicators will remain less useful than in the past in warning of Pact national war preparations.

3.5(c)

~~Secret~~

~~Secret~~**Warsaw Pact National Defense Readiness Plan****Peacetime**

The economy satisfies routine requirements for the armed forces and creates the necessary stockpiles required during mobilization and the initial stages of war.

Period of Threat

Preparatory measures are taken to increase national readiness to convert rapidly to a war posture. These measures could range from a limited callup of men and equipment to a full mobilization of the population, economy, armed forces, the territorial and border forces, and the civil defense establishment. To guard against precipitate economic disruption during a period of gradually increasing or fluctuating tension, the period of threat is subdivided into two phases:

Increased National Defense Readiness. Produces few changes in the national economy, but measures would be designed to assure that mobilization could be accomplished rapidly and efficiently if ordered. Limited organizational changes in the government and Communist Party occur. Equip-

ment and supplies held in national reserves, together with limited numbers of reservists, vehicles, and equipment, may be called up from the national economy. Movement restrictions are placed on transport equipment with mobilization assignments. Measures could be implemented nationwide or selectively, immediately or gradually.

State of Immediate Threat to the Nation. Includes measures which lead to a definite transition of the population, economy and civil defense apparatus to a wartime posture. Government and state organizations begin to assume full wartime missions and provide additional mobilization support to the armed forces. Industry is converted to the production of war materials under wartime plans.

Wartime

Full National Defense Readiness. The nation is on a war footing and production is organized in the manner best suited to support the armed forces. These measures would be implemented, if possible, before the war.

~~Secret~~

3.5(c)

Restructuring and modernization have not degraded the overall ability of the Pact countries to support preparations for a war. In addition, Pact governments have not dismantled the institutions responsible for managing the process. Given the activities likely to take place in this process (see inset), we believe that we will detect and report significant disruptions to or a reversal of present trends that could signal a change in the Soviet assessment of the likelihood of war. The changes would indicate that the risk had increased for a crisis that could lead to war.

3.5(c)

Outlook**Warning Implications of Mutual Conventional Force Reductions**

The ongoing CFE Talks are likely to result in an agreement establishing numerical parity between NATO and Warsaw Pact forces below current NATO levels within the Atlantic-to-the-Urals zone. Within the context of this treaty, an intrusive monitoring and verification regime will be implemented to

~~Secret~~

~~Secret~~

3.5(c)

ascertain treaty compliance, which will be substantially accomplished by the regular presence of foreign inspection teams. Although the reductions themselves will affect warning, the intrusive monitoring inherent in a CFE-type agreement would reduce the Soviet's ability to generate forces without detection.

that the risks of limited-objective attacks far outweigh any potential short-term gains, and that foremost among these risks would be the expansion to large-scale war, including the ultimate risk of triggering nuclear war.

3.5(c)

Regardless of the ultimate level of parity, we believe that, once Pact forces reduce to the same level as NATO, the Soviets would no longer be confident that they could achieve offensive (or counteroffensive) goals to the depth of the theater with these forces. Soviet military planning factors would indicate that only the possession of substantial military superiority can ensure success to the attacking side. From peacetime parity, the Soviets would have to reestablish major forces in order to generate the capability to attack successfully and sustain the offensive to the depth of the theater. The requirement to reestablish forces capable of large-scale offensive operations to achieve traditional theater-strategic goals in Europe would increase preparation times considerably over what we have assessed in this Memorandum. Specific times would depend on several factors not yet known—including the readiness at which post-CFE forces were maintained, the disposition of withdrawn equipment, the possibility of limits on forces east of the Urals, the state of the defense industries, the necessity to produce additional equipment, and Soviet willingness to risk shifting forces from other regions.

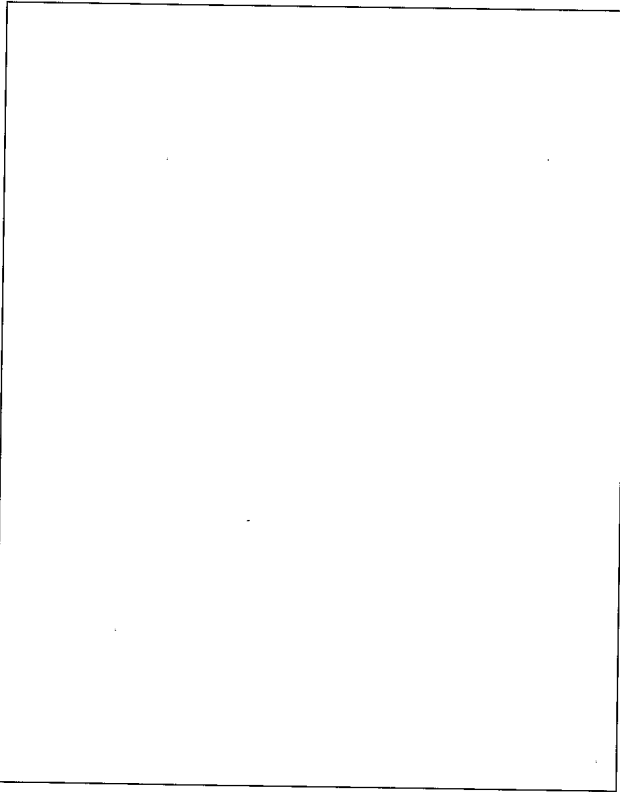
Economic and Political Changes

We are confident that for the period of this Memorandum we will be able to detect and report significant disruptions or a reversal of present political, social, and economic trends in the Warsaw Pact countries. Although these indicators will remain ambiguous with regard to actual national war preparations, they will continue to signal that the potential for a crisis had increased and warrant a change in the vigilance of the US and NATO.

3.5(c)

3.5(c)

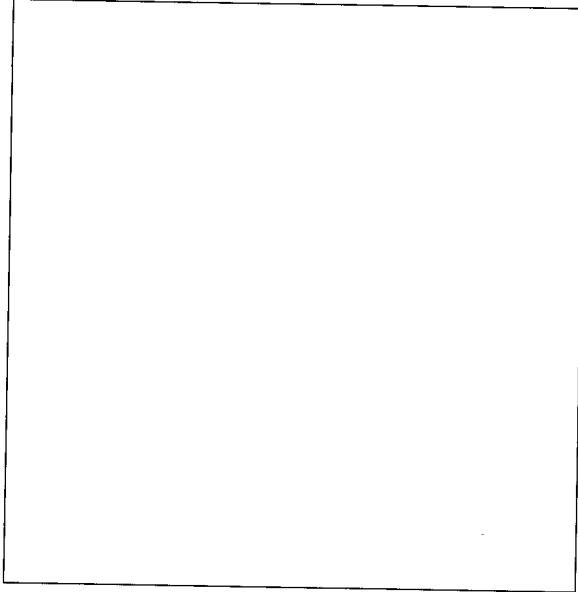
If the Soviets were willing to reinvest potential savings from reducing their forces back into defense, and restructure their forces and redistribute their equipment, they could increase the readiness and combat power of residual forces through higher manning levels and procuring modern equipment. These smaller, but on average more ready, forces still would not be capable of launching theater-strategic offensive operations without the substantial effort to reestablish additional forces described above. These smaller forces would be capable of launching smaller attacks for more limited objectives, however, with warning times more like we are accustomed to today. We do not believe such attacks for limited objectives would be attractive to Pact planners for the same reasons we discount them today, and which were outlined in NIE 4-1-84. These reasons center around the conclusion



3.3(b)(1)

~~Secret~~

~~Secret~~



3.3(b)(1)

~~Secret~~

~~Secret~~

Annex

Warning Thresholds

In assessing the likelihood of war, the Intelligence Community sees a number of important thresholds for warning:

- First is the development of a crisis or rise in tension that might provide the context for war. Whether such a crisis developed gradually or suddenly, early indicators would include changes in diplomatic style or tactics, an increase in hostile propaganda, changes in foreign access, and travel restrictions in Pact countries. Warning at this early stage would be more confident if the Soviets also began unusual military activities.
- Second, if the Soviets decided that the crisis contained a serious possibility of war, they would also begin making changes to civil and economic life. The pace and extent of disruptions would depend on how fast the crisis developed. In some extreme situations, the Soviets might not be able to take many measures before the outset of hostilities. Long-term developments of warning significance could include measures to tighten internal controls, stop some industrial production, shift more to military products, and reorganize national finances, labor and natural resources. In a more rapidly developing crisis, such measures might be restricted to the recall of reservists with critical skills and the mobilization of civil transportation resources needed to support military mobilization.
- Third, the clearest warning threshold would be the start of mobilization of conventional military forces, including activation of wartime command and control communications, diversion of civil manpower and other resources to improve military logistics and transportation, and the recall of reservists. Although it would take 24 to 48 hours to confirm the scope and extent of the activity, warning that widespread mobilization activity had begun would be almost unambiguous.
- The final warning threshold would be detection of military movements that indicated the Pact armed forces were making final attack preparations. Warning of war might be issued hours to several days before an actual attack but we would have high confidence that war was imminent.

3.5(c)

~~Secret~~

**NATIONAL
SECURITY
ARCHIVE**

This document is from the holdings of:

The National Security Archive

Suite 701, Gelman Library, The George Washington University

2130 H Street, NW, Washington, D.C., 20037

Phone: 202/994-7000, Fax: 202/994-7005, nsarchiv@gwu.edu