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Operational Plan for the Dislocation of the 1st and 2nd Polish Armies in Case of War Operations in 1951

I. The general concept

1. Evaluation of the operational-strategic situation of Poland

The operational-strategic situation of Poland, taking into consideration the general [geographic] position on the West-European theater, distinguishes itself with the following most important features:

- a) existence of the German Democratic Republic in the West;
- b) presence of the Soviet forces in the German Democratic Republic as far as the Elbe river;
- c) a border with the People's Republic of Czechoslovakia to the South.

Conclusion

Direct operations of the land forces of potential adversaries from the West and South on the Polish territory in the first days of war are excluded.

The only border at which forces of potential adversaries can directly operate is Poland's sea border along the Baltic coast.

2. Assessment of the possibilities of operations of potential adversaries

The states neighboring directly with us in the Baltic – Sweden, Norway and Denmark have relatively small quantities of forces for starting operation right on the day of a war breakout. But after initiating mobilization (M-2 – M-4) they may be ready for operations, creating a threat to Poland's seacoast.

The real threat to Poland's sea border can have the Anglo-American forces, dislocated now in West Germany and in the West-European countries of the Atlantic bloc (England, France, Belgium, Holland) and also the German army being now created in West Germany, part of which can be transferred to the Scandinavian states to initiate direct operations along the seacoast of Poland.

The possibility of transferring substantial quantities of forces and their subsequent operations on the Polish seacoast through air and sea lifts can be confirmed by:

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- presence of the Anglo-American fleet in the Baltic waters;
 - failure of the Anglo-Americans to withdraw landing equipment used for the operations in Normandy;
 - numerically large commercial and fishing fleets of the Scandinavian states and the remaining West-European states of the Atlantic bloc.

A large number of airports in the Scandinavian countries (Sweden, Norway, Denmark), as well as the ongoing works in the construction and expansion of airports designed for heavy bombers and jet planes testify about the possibility of concentration of large quantities of air force (including the airlifting units) for operations in the Baltic sea basin.

Conclusions

- A) One should assume that in the initial stage of war potential adversaries may create a threat from the Baltic seashore, which they can use for conducting tactical or operational sea landings with simultaneous air lifts.
- B) Sea landings of potential adversaries may be supported with air landings and depending on the general situation made for the following purposes:
 - a) small tactical landings of a diversionary character (sea and air) with the task of capturing, slowing down of activities or destroying bases of the Navy or particular ports; the main purpose of this kind of operations would be disruption and hindering the Navy from stationing along the seashore.
 - b) stronger operational landings (sea and air), whose task may be:
 - an attempt to tie up possibly the largest Polish forces on the Baltic seashore, to pull them off from the main direction of operations;
 - an attempt to cut off especially important East-West communications;
 - an attempt to hinder an orderly concentration of forces along the North-Western stretch of the Western-European theater;
 - an attempt in developing supporting activities aimed at reaching the rear of operational groupings of forces operating north of Berlin, in case of developing by potential adversaries main operations in the direction of Berlin–Warsaw.
- C) Assessing the possibilities of potential adversaries in terms of time, we can say that:
 - a) in the first day of war one can expect only air operations of the enemy in the regions of military dislocations, mobilization transfers, regions of concentrations, particularly in the north-western part of Poland and along the seacoast, and also at the base of the Navy and industrial centers and important state facilities.
 - b) on the third-fourth day of war one can expect activities of small sea and air raiding units with tactical targets.

- c) stronger landing operations, by sea and air – may be conducted not earlier than on the sixth day of war.
- D) All of this leads to the conclusion about the necessity of organizing right after the outbreak of war an anti-raid defense along the whole seacoast of Poland and grouping of the main forces of the Polish military in the north-western part of Poland.

3. Assessment of the seacoast and the north-western part of Poland

- A) The seashore of Poland is a creased area, intersected by small rivers flowing from the south to the north, covered with woods, and having a network of sufficiently developed highways and railroads. This allows for concealment of groupings of troops and their fast movement toward desired locations.

A line, 10 m deep, extending along 1-1,5 km from the seashore, essentially does not make it impossible to unload the troops along the whole seashore.

From the point of view of the possibility of making a maneuver and troops landing, easiness for creating beachheads, connections and importance of ports and sea bases and the possibilities of launching effective operations from such beachheads – the seacoast may be divided into six segments:

First – the seashore of the Gdańsk Bay with the main base of Gdańsk–Gdynia 100 km long.

The delta of the Vistula river, the cities of Gdańsk, Sopot and Gdynia, which can easily be turned into points of resistance, are making direct landing difficult on the distance of 40 km. The remaining stretch, surrounded by the Hel peninsula, taking into consideration the handiness of defense of entrance to the bay, doesn't create convenient conditions for making the landing, which would require the use of considerable forces.

Second – Różawie–Rowy 85 km long. This segment, with numerous lakes, intersected by rivers, partly muddy, is not suitable for a beachhead; it does not, however, make landing difficult.

However, it is not out of question to disembark troops in the stretch between the Żarnowieckie and Sarleskie lakes, which in terms of terrain conditions makes possible to launch operations aimed at the possible capture of the main base from the rear.

Third – from Rowy to Lake Wicko, with the secondary port of Ustka, 30 km long.

This section does not make it difficult to deplane troops, operationally it is connected with the Kołobrzeg region. Because of the lack of wider perspectives of operationally meaningful exploitation, that section could be the object of auxiliary operations.

Fourth – from Lake Wicko to Lake Jamno 50 km long. Because of a great number of lakes and rivers, swamps along the coast line this segment is not suitable for unloading troops.

Fifth – from Jamno to Dziwnów, with the port at Kołobrzeg, 85 km long.

This is the most suitable segment for troops landing and developing activities deep into the area. Only in the Niechórz and Przęsacz region (about 14 km) unloading of troops is less likely due to a steep coast. The most suitable area for unloading troops is the region east and west of Kołobrzeg (between the lakes Jamno and Resko), about 40 km long.

Sixth – Dziwnów–Świnoujście with the port at Świnoujście, 40 km long. This area is not suitable for unloading troops. It is possible to unload commandos to capture the Świnoujście base.

- B) The terrain farther from the coast is more crisscrossed and wooded (50-50%) in the eastern part, which facilitates hidden dislocation of troops, but makes their movement more difficult. The western part of the terrain is open, without substantial physical obstacles, which creates good conditions for movement. Rivers flowing into the Baltic do not present serious obstacles because of the direction of their course.

The belt of lakes from the northeast to the west along the line of Bytów, Szczecinek, Drawski, Pyrzyce allows for the organization of an adequate zone of defense.

Farther deep into the area the rivers of Warta and Noteć create a more serious water barrier.

The network of roads in the coast area is developed (on the average for 100 square km there is 50 km of roads, of which 50% are highways; for 1 km of roads – 5 m of bridges). The road network is suitable for conducting maneuvers along the front and deeper.

Conclusion

1. The main section suitable for unloading troops is the region east and west of Kołobrzeg, (between the lakes Jamno and Resko), 40 km long.

To defend this region it is necessary to group one corps of infantry and prepare in advance a strong counter-attack aimed at destroying the possibility of troop landing by potential adversaries.

2. It is not unlikely that activities of potential adversaries aimed at conquering the Gdańsk–Gdynia base may come from the land, after establishing a beachhead in the region of the Żawrowieckie and Sarbskie lakes.

For the defense of the region of the main base, it is necessary to have at our disposal no less than two infantry divisions.

3. The secondary sections of Świnoujście–Dziwnów and Gdańsk–Braniewo can be manned by the Coast Guard Brigades.

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4. The section Rowy–lake Janno, 85 km long, which might be used by potential adversaries as a terrain for support services, should be defended by an Infantry Division, with particular attention to the port of Ustka region.
 5. According to the assessment of a terrain, particular elements of defense should proceed as follows:
 - a) the front fringe of the front line – along the seacoast;
 - b) the second zone of defense on the Wrzeszcz, Wejherowo, Lębork, Słupsk, Sławno, Koszalin, Marzyno, Gościno, Gryfice, Wolin line;
 - c) the third defense zone along the line of: Tczew, Kartuzy, Kamienica Król., Czarna Dąbrówka, Osiek, Polanów, Białogard, Płoty, Nowogard, Stepnica, Ostrów;
 - d) the front belts of defense along the line of:
 - first: Starogard, Kościerzyna, Złocieniec, Stargard, Szczecin;
 - second: along the south bank of the Noteć and Warta rivers.
 - e) From the point of view of a hidden dislocation and securing suitable conditions for maneuver, it is operationally advisable to relocate troops in the region of Chojnice, Szczecinek, Człuchów.

4. The assessment of our own capabilities

For securing the proper organization of defense against troop landings along Poland's seashore and the grouping of military forces in the north-western part of Poland, the Polish Army should have in the initial stage of war the following forces:

- 1st Army – dislocated in the Second Military District (OW) of Bydgoszcz;
- 2nd Army – dislocated in the Fourth Military District (OW) of Wrocław;
- three brigades of the coast defense, converted from three brigades of the border guards;
- a unit of the Supreme Command, (composition of units 1 and 2A and of ND see enclosure No.....)

Together it constitutes as follows:

- four corps of Infantry – 12 divisions of Infantry;
- two armored corps – four mechanized divisions;
- three brigades of border guards;
- four air force divisions: two fighter divisions, one bomber division, and one strategic air division.

Conclusions

- 1) For the defense against troop landings along the coast it is necessary to use 1 Army composed of two corps of Infantry (six divisions of Infantry) and one armored corps (two mechanized divisions).
 - 2) The 2nd Army could be grouped in the north-western part of Poland.
 - 3) The Brigades of the Coast Guard can be used for the protection of mobilization and deployment of the 1st Army, while leaving two brigades for the protection of the coast and one withdraw and use for fighting against air landings.
5. Estimate of time needed for preparation of defense
- a) Demobilization of infantry units of cadre divisions should be ready on M-2;
 - mechanized divisions on M-4;
 - territorial division on M-6 [2?];
 - brigades of the Coast Guard on M-1.
 - b) Taking into consideration time needed for dislocation, one can set the following readiness of units for operations in their regions:

1st Army:
 - 12th, 14th and 15th Infantry Divisions – M-3;
 - 8th and 16th Mechanized Division, 1st Armored Division – M-6;
 - 3rd Corps of Infantry – M-10;
 - 2nd Army – M-7.
 - c) It follows from the above that the readiness of defense preparations can be set:
 - in the first place for M-12 [15?];
 - full readiness (with the use of local population) for M-30.

II. Preliminary decision

Organize anti-landing defense of Poland's seacoast from Braniewo to Świnoujście with the forces of the 1st Army and three Brigades of the Coast Guard, directing main effort for the repulsion and destruction of enemy sea and air landings, directed at the Kołobrzeg area, the main base of the Navy, Gdańsk–Gdynia and the Świnoujście base. The 2nd Army group in the region of Piła, Choszczno, Sulęcín, Poznań for its potential use in operations on the Coast, as well as in the direction north of Berlin.

Protection for mobilization and dislocations of the 1st Army units from the seacoast entrusted to the three brigades of the Coast Guards with readiness for M-1.

Concentration of the 2nd Army in the region indicated complete for M-7.

Readiness of the anti-landing defense of the coast:

- works of first readiness M-12;
- full readiness for defense M-30.

Tasks

1. The 1st Army, composed of 1st and 3rd corps of Infantry, 1st Armored corps and army units with three brigades of the Coast Guard, 13 battalions of heavy artillery and one battalion of flame-throwers will organize the defense of the coast against landings on the section from Braniewo to Świnoujście, having in the first stage two divisions of Infantry and two Coast Guard battalions and in the second stage an armored corps.
2. For M-2 it completes demobilization of the 1st corps of Infantry units and takes defense position on the Coast:
 - Battalion of the Coast Guard on the section Świnoujście–Dziwnów;
 - 12th Infantry Division on the section of Dziwnów–Kołobrzeg;
 - 14th Infantry Division on the section Kołobrzeg – (excl.) Jamno lake;
 - Battalion of the Coast Guard on the section of the Jamno–Łeba lakes;
 - 15th Infantry Division on the section (excl.) Łeba–Gdańsk;
 - Battalion of the Coast Guard (excl.) On the section of Gdańsk–Broniewo.

For M-4 it will complete demobilization and will start regrouping the 1st Armored Corps, and on M-6 will concentrate it in the region of Chojnice, Szczecinek, Człuchów in readiness to counter-attack in the following directions:

- a) Chojnice, Kościerzyna, Kartuzy, Gdynia;
- b) Człuchów, Miastko, Sławno, Słupsk, Darłowo;
- c) Szczecinek, Białogard, Kołobrzeg.

For M-10 the 2nd Army will complete demobilization of the 3rd Armored Corps, will regroup forces and take defensive position in the following line:

- Brigade of Coast Guard on the section of Świnoujście–Dziwnów;

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- 1st Infantry Corps on the section (excl.) Dziwnów–Jamno lake;
 - 3rd Infantry Corps on the section the Jamno lake–Miroszewo, with one regiment at the Sarbskie lake, Żarnowieckie lake and two divisions for the defense of the main Gdańsk–Gdynia base, including one battalion on the Hel peninsula;
 - Brigade of Coast Guard on the section of Miroszewo–Braniewo;
 - 1st Armored Corps in the previously mentioned region;
 - Battalion of Coast Guards withdraws from the section Żarłowo–Łeba to be used for fight against air landings of potential adversaries.
2. The 2nd Army composed of the 2nd and 4th Corps of Infantry and 2nd Armored Corps, with 12 battalions of heavy artillery on M-7 will complete concentration in the region of Piła, Choszczno, Poznań, Sulęcín.

The 2nd Armored Corps will take positions in the region of Tuczo, Drawno, Choszczno in readiness to take part in the defense of the coast and counterattack in the directions of:

- a) Gryfice–Kołobrzeg
 - b) Koszalin–Darłowo
3. Navy
- a) cooperates with the forces of the 1st Army in defending the coast against landings;
 - b) organizes defense of the naval bases;
 - c) secures the relevant ports necessary for the deployment of naval vessels.
4. Air Force
- a) supports and covers the forces of the 1st Army, the Navy, and the Coast Guard;
 - b) covers the naval bases;
 - c) covers the concentration and deployment of the 2nd Army in the region indicated.
5. engineering protection of anti-landing defense

The front line of the main defense line will go along the seashore.

The second line of defense on the line Wrzeszcz, Wejherowo, Lisbork, Słupsk, Sławno, Koszalin, Murzyno, Gościno, Gryfice, Wolin.

The third army line of defense on the line of Tczew, Kartuzy, Kamienica Król., Czarna Dąbrówka, Osiek, Polanów, Białogard, Płoty, Nowogard, Stepnica, Ostrów.

The defense line of the front on the line: Starogard, Kościerzyna, Bytów, Szczecinek, Czaplinek, Złocieniec, Stargard, Szczecin.

Before the front line of the first line of defense both in the water and on land, as well as in front of the next line of defense, will be constructed barriers, particularly strong along the following sections:

- entrance into the Gulf of Gdańsk and the area of the main base of Gdynia;
- the Żarnowieckie and Sarbskie lakes;
- lakes Jamno and Rasko with the port of Kołobrzeg;
- entrance into the Gulf of Szczecin and the base of Świnoujście.

The naval bases of Gdańsk–Gdynia, Ustka, Kołobrzeg and Świnoujście, as well as the towns of Lisbork, Słupsk, Sławno, Koszalin, Białogard, Gryfice and Nowogard will be prepared to a circular defense.

[Signed:]
Drzewiecki, colonel

[Translated from the original Polish by Jan Chowaniec, with support from the Cold War International History Project.]