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Joint Study

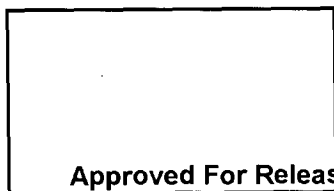
Soviet Capabilities to Reinforce in Central Europe

Initial Report

DIA review(s) completed.

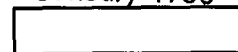
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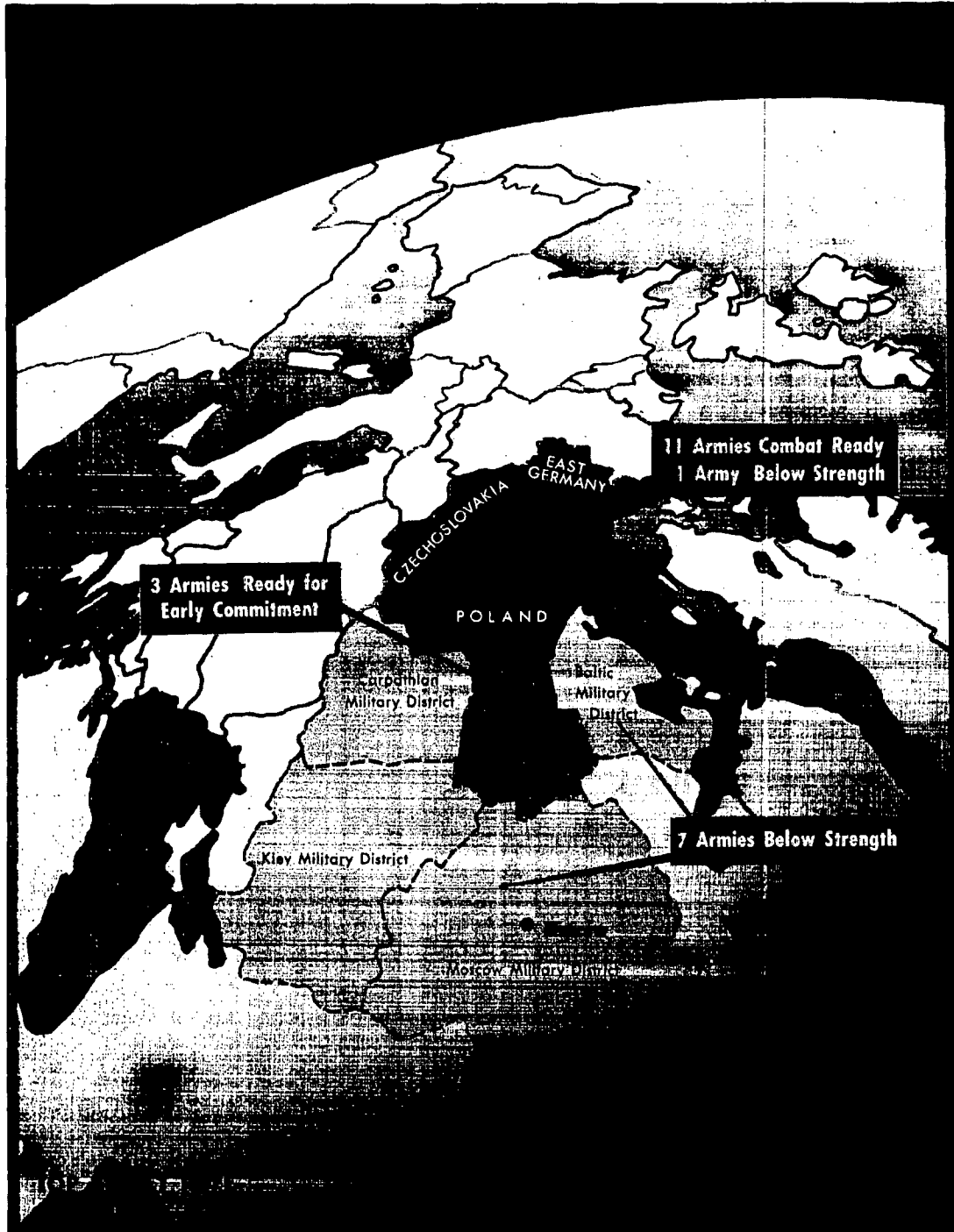
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Warsaw Pact Forces Facing the Central Region of NATO



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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
DEFENSE INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
January 1968

JOINT STUDY

Soviet Capabilities to Reinforce in Central Europe

Summary

This is the initial report stemming from an ongoing joint CIA-DIA review of Soviet capabilities to reinforce Warsaw Pact forces in Central Europe.

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Preliminary findings indicate that motorized rifle divisions and tank divisions are intended to function with substantially lower levels of equipment and personnel than was previously estimated. The bulk of this reduction appears to be in the general purpose vehicles which affect logistic and support capabilities rather than combat equipment such as tanks and artillery.

In general, Soviet divisions are about half the size of their US counterparts. The typical US division contains about 16,000 men and some 5,000 major items of equipment. By comparison, a Soviet motorized rifle division has an estimated 9,500 men with 2,600 major items of equipment, and a Soviet tank division has about 7,000-7,500 men with 2,000-2,400 items of equipment.

Note: This study was produced jointly by CIA and DIA. It was prepared by the Office of Strategic Research, CIA, and the Directorate of Intelligence Production, DIA.

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The divisions of three armies in Belorussia show a completeness and consistency in makeup and in equipment levels which suggest that they are at or near combat readiness. In contrast, divisions in the other military districts in the western USSR may be at substantially lower levels.

Preliminary analysis indicates that the Belorussian armies would be ready for commitment as part of a force of some 60 Soviet and East European divisions in about three weeks from the time of decision. The remaining armies in the western USSR would take considerably longer to attain a wartime posture.

The research to date has raised serious doubts concerning previous estimates of the tables of organization and equipment of major units, their actual manning and equipment levels, the extent of their capacity for support in sustained operations, and their ability to achieve early massive reinforcement with present forces. The future work of the joint CIA-DIA study group will concentrate on these and related questions.

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I. Introduction

On 18 May 1967, the Secretary of Defense requested the Director of Central Intelligence and the Director, Defense Intelligence Agency, jointly to undertake an evaluation of Soviet capabilities to reinforce ground forces in Central and Southern Europe. The Secretary asked that the operational problems inherent in large-scale deployment be considered and that US experience and analogs be applied. In addition, he requested treatment of nondivisional support requirements and estimates of individual unit training time and transport capacity, and finally, that the requirement for concurrent movement of supplies to units already deployed be considered.

The work of the Joint CIA-DIA Study Group is in progress. Analytical tasks are continuing as the mass of data essential to a review of these proportions is carefully examined. It is essential to note, therefore, that this is an initial report and that the statements and judgments of this paper may be modified as joint CIA-DIA research continues.

II. Definition of the Reinforcement Problem

Assessment of reinforcement capabilities rests on an accurate understanding of the current status of the forces concerned and a realistic evaluation of the reinforcement process applied in the context of the principal contingencies to be met. Previous estimates of Soviet capabilities to reinforce depended [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] This produced a fairly reliable identification of major military units but was inherently limited in assessing actual manning and equipment levels for the units. Major units were thought to be generally ready for immediate or early commitment so that the principal constraint on Soviet deployment of massive forces against NATO was judged to be the time required for their movement to the theater of operations.

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Our work to date has raised doubts as to whether a substantial portion of the ground forces in the western USSR is available for early commitment. Evaluation of Soviet reinforcement capabilities is thus revealed to be more complex than a simple matter of assessing movement and supply factors together with the need to call up trained reserves to top off units which are otherwise combat ready.

The assessment under way has so far identified only about a dozen divisions, all in the Belorussian Military District, which meet the general criteria of combat readiness--that is, ready for immediate deployment westward. In addition, it is likely that the four airborne divisions in the western USSR are combat ready. Many other western USSR divisions, however, appear to have serious deficiencies and would require a more complex mobilization including the provision of 1,000 or more additional vehicles per division. While such a process could take many weeks for completion, a confident judgment of the time required will depend on comprehensive and detailed analyses of the nature of present deficiencies.

Because analysis of the reinforcement process depends so heavily in the first place on an accurate understanding of the status of the forces in being, the assessment of the forces is still incomplete. It has not yet been possible to deal with problems involved in the movement phase of reinforcement or in the assembly and preparation for combat in the theater of operations.

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III. Preliminary Findings

A. The Size of the Soviet Division

As new information was examined and the equipment levels of units were assessed it became apparent that Soviet units are considerably smaller than described in current estimates [Redacted] The TO&E's hitherto thought to be valid were not consistent with the size and organization of the actual units and could not be used as a basis for assessing unit readiness. This applies both to the division and to the amount of combat and service support at army and front level.

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B. Special Status of Belorussia

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The assessment of the Belorussian MD has been completed and reveals an apparently unique status for its forces. The three armies in this district appear similar in terms of the size and readiness of their divisions, and are probably the main force intended for early reinforcement of the Central Region. This is in contrast to the remainder of the military districts in the western USSR, where the armies as a whole appear--at this stage of analysis--to be at a considerably lower level of readiness.

IV. Forces Available

A. Summary of Forces

The Warsaw Pact ground forces which are considered relevant in assessing the immediate threat to the Central Region of NATO are those in the forward area--that is, the northern tier of East European states--and those in the western military districts of the USSR. (In addition to these, some forces could become available over the long term from other districts in the USSR.) The distribution within these areas is as follows:

[Redacted]

Forces Facing NATO Central Region*

	<u>Army</u>	<u>MRD</u>	<u>TD</u>	<u>Abn</u>
<u>Forward</u>				
GSFG**	5	10	10	
East Germany	2	4	2	
NGF***			2	
Poland	3	8	5	1
Czechoslovakia	2	5	4	
<u>USSR</u>				
Belorussia	3	4	7	1
Carpathia	3	4	5	
Baltic	1	4	1	1
Moscow		2	2	1
Kiev	2	2	5	
Leningrad				1
Total	<u>21</u>	<u>43</u>	<u>43</u>	<u>5</u>

* Forces in Hungary are considered to be assigned a holding and security mission. It is possible that if an extended period of buildup or conflict developed, their duties could be assumed by other security forces and they would play a more active role vis-a-vis the Central Region. This table does not include Soviet cadre divisions or East European divisions of low strength.

** Group of Soviet Forces, Germany.

*** Northern Group of Forces (the Soviet units in Poland).

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The existing organization, the apparent variations in equipment status, and the geographic relationships among deployment areas suggest that the Soviets view the mission of their forces, and those of the three Northern Tier countries, along these lines:

<u>Forward</u>	<u>Primary Reinforcement</u>	<u>Secondary Reinforcement</u>	<u>Reserve</u>
GSFG NGF East Germany Poland Czechoslovakia	Belorussia	Baltic (11th Guards Army) Carpathia	Moscow Kiev

B. Assessment of Forces

1. TO&E

A re-examination of current published estimates of Soviet tables of organization and equipment in the light of new evidence reveals that the actual unit strengths are considerably lower than previously believed. The differences are primarily in wheeled vehicles, probably those of a general support nature although some elements of combat and engineer support also appear to be absent. Accordingly, a reduced table of equipment (TE) based on identified unit equipment and calculated minimum requirements has been developed for motorized rifle divisions (MRD's) and tank divisions (TD's) for use in this study. This new TE results in some revision downward in manning requirements and presumably in sustained combat capability, although no attempt is made in this report to assess the latter.

The following table shows the previous and the newly adjusted TO&E figures for personnel and for major items of equipment. These adjustments are undergoing continuing research, and further refinement is expected, particularly with regard to personnel requirements.

Size of Soviet Divisions
(Previous Estimate in Parentheses)

	MRD	TD	Abn
Men	9,500 (10,600)	7,000- 7,500 (8,300)	3,000-5,000 (7,300)
Equipment	2,600 (3,200)	2,000- 2,400 (2,900)	800-1,200 (1,700)

2. Current Status of Divisions

It appears that Soviet units in East Germany and Poland are generally manned and equipped at the level of the revised TO&E, and that 18 Polish and Czechoslovakian divisions are probably not far below. However, the divisions in the western USSR appear to have substantially lower equipment levels. A significant exception to this is in Belorussia, where three MRD's are clearly up to the levels of the new TE and the units in the forward area.

Detailed analysis of the Belorussian forces indicates that the seven tank divisions in this military district are generally similar in appearance. The apparent lack of some supporting units, notably artillery, results in a TO&E requirement of about 6,000 men and some 1,600 major items of equipment for these divisions (as compared with the 7,000 to 7,500 men and 2,000 to 2,400 items of equipment of a normal TD).

In terms of armies the westernmost of the three in Belorussia contains two of the high-strength MRD's and would be likely to have the third assigned in a reinforcement role. This army also

contains one TD of the type estimated to have 6,000 men and 1,600 items of equipment. The otherwise high state of readiness of this army suggests that the TD would be expected to move forward about as is, i.e. with little or no artillery. The similarity of the TD's in the remaining two armies suggests that they too are intended to move forward with a minimum of mobilization.

Armies in the Baltic, Carpathian, and Kiev military districts appear at a generally lower level of readiness than those in Belorussia. However, the apparent presence of portions of major supporting elements within the divisions suggests that these armies are intended to be brought up to wartime requirements before they are moved out in a reinforcement role. The analysis on these forces is at an early stage and work is continuing.

C. Disposition of Forces

The Soviet concept for reinforcement to be applied in a specific instance will depend on the relative emphasis to be given the conflicting requirements of rapid response versus maximum force. This decision in turn will rest in large part on where the initiative lies and on the urgency of the situation. Obviously many compromises between the attainment of speed and force are possible.

The nature of the development of forces in the western USSR suggests that the peacetime disposition of Soviet forces is designed to provide a rapid reinforcement by some units, along with a broader base for a larger, more time-consuming mobilization. As might be expected, the forces in East Germany and most of the Czechoslovakian and Polish forces are immediately available for all cases. In Belorussia the combined arms army and the two tank armies appear to be at high readiness levels though lacking some supporting

units. The high activity levels of their divisions and their generally similar appearance suggest that they can be moved forward with little mobilization. It should be noted, however, that these units are considerably smaller than previously estimated and that there are only 100,000 to 150,000 men in this immediate reinforcement force.

Armies in the Baltic and Carpathian MD's probably are generally lower in readiness with apparently greater variance among divisions. Their present structure is better suited to employment in the later phases of a buildup to permit the more extensive augmentation necessary to bring them to effective combat levels. Although present organization does not suggest such an intent, in an emergency it is possible that some of the more ready divisions and regiments could be regrouped to form one or two armies more quickly. This would delay the availability of additional armies later in the buildup period.

The forces in the Kiev and Moscow MD's appear comparable to the Carpathian and Baltic divisions in equipment levels although the Moscow units are not subordinate to an army and there is some indication that the Kiev units are low in personnel. It appears that these units are intended as a reserve.

D. Organization for Combat

The overall organization for combat postulated here is based on a theater force in the Central Region of Europe composed of the ready forces in the forward area organized into three fronts (north, central, and south); a reinforcement force from Poland and the western USSR; and a reserve.

In Phase I the principal units available for immediate reinforcement from the Soviet Union are the Belorussian armies and the western airborne divisions.

Phase II adds to the reinforcement force two of the three armies in Carpathia and the one in the Baltic MD totaling, when fully mobilized, some 100,000 to 150,000 men from the USSR. One Polish army of four divisions would also become ready for movement during this period. With the addition of the remaining army in Carpathia and the two in the Kiev MD, the force would be enlarged by approximately another 100,000 to 150,000 troops.

The organization for combat of these forces is postulated as follows:

Phase I

	<u>Forward Area</u>		<u>Belorussia</u>		<u>Total</u>	
	<u>Armies</u>	<u>Divs</u>	<u>Armies</u>	<u>Divs</u>	<u>Armies</u>	<u>Divs</u>
Northern Front	4	17	1	4	5	21
Central Front	5	20	2	7	7	27
Southern Front	2	9			2	9
Total	11	46	3	11	14	57

At the End of Phase II

	<u>Assembled in Phase I</u>		<u>Additional Reinforcement</u>		<u>Total</u>	
	<u>Armies</u>	<u>Divs</u>	<u>Armies</u>	<u>Divs</u>	<u>Armies</u>	<u>Divs</u>
Northern Front	5	21	2	9	7	30
Central Front	7	27	2	7	9	34
Southern Front	2	9	3	8	5	17
Total	14	57	7	24	21	81

The tables omit five airborne divisions, one in Poland and four in the western USSR, that are also considered available for immediate deployment. It should be noted, however, that these divisions are substantially smaller than the motorized rifle and tank divisions included above.

V. Movement

Reassessment of the movement aspects of reinforcement must take account of the changed view of the status of present forces which is emerging from current analysis. In addition, new information will permit a more detailed evaluation of loading and transloading facilities. In general, transportation does not appear to be a major constraining factor in the conduct of a Soviet buildup in the Central Region.

Rail transportation would probably be the principal means of movement used by the forces involved in a buildup in the Central Region. Of the available transportation systems, rail offers the most effective combination of capacity, speed, and control. Previous studies have indicated that the Soviet and East European rail systems are capable of moving about 300 trains per day into East Germany and western Czechoslovakia. The same studies have also suggested that utilization of road transport does not materially affect the reinforcement schedule and offers no clear advantage over rail.

Air and sea transportation would probably not be used appreciably for reinforcement. Sea transportation, as well as the oil pipeline system, would probably be used only for logistical problems relating to maintenance of forces in the forward area.

Further study of the transportation aspect of the reinforcement problem is planned.

VI. Buildup

From the point of view of the Soviets, two major considerations probably govern the planning for a buildup against NATO: timing, and the ratio of opposing forces. The Soviets would probably develop reinforcement plans for two basic contingencies: one requiring maximum speed to deal with a sudden or rapidly developing crisis, the other requiring the most advantageous balance of forces which could be achieved prior to the commencement of hostilities.

In the first case, where speed is the main criterion, the force goal would be limited to those combat-ready units already in the prospective theater of operations, plus any ready units which could be moved quickly to the theater after minimal preparation.

In the second case, the force goal would depend upon Soviet estimates of the rates at which NATO and the Warsaw Pact could accumulate combat-effective forces in the theater.

The assessment under way suggests that the current status of Soviet ground forces is consistent with these concepts. The uniform nature of the forces in the Belorussian MD and their strategic location suggest that these units are intended for early commitment. They could be deployed into the Central Region as part of a Warsaw Pact force of some 60 divisions in about three weeks from the time of decision. This would include a week to ten days of preparation.

Analysis of western USSR forces outside the Belorussian MD is incomplete but, thus far, it suggests that the divisions in the six Baltic, Carpathian, and Kiev MD armies are so short of equipment that they could not be made ready for commitment without substantial mobilization. The analysis is not far enough along to permit an estimate of the precise time required for

this mobilization but it appears that the process would be so substantial and complex as to require many weeks for its completion.

It is likely that further analysis of these forces will reveal differences in their levels of equipment and readiness. For example, it now appears that the divisions in the Kiev MD may have substantially lower manning levels than is the case in the Baltic and Carpathian MD's. These variations, if confirmed, would imply similar variations in the Soviet schedule of availability of units for reinforcement.

There are, of course, a number of possible variations on the two basic contingencies. Given a long-term objective, the Soviets might aim for a gradual increase of the readiness, or even the overall size, of their peacetime forces, thus increasing the size of the theater forces they could build up in the Central Region in a given time period.

Another option, at least theoretically open to the Soviets, would permit increasing the forces available for early commitment by cannibalization. This would mean a wholesale reorganization of a large number of partially equipped and manned units to produce a smaller number of combat-effective units. This alternative has not been examined in detail but it is clear that its selection by the Soviets would result in their getting a somewhat enlarged theater force for early commitment at the expense of serious degradation of their long-term mobilization capability.

VII. Other Tentative Judgments

A. Design for Nuclear War

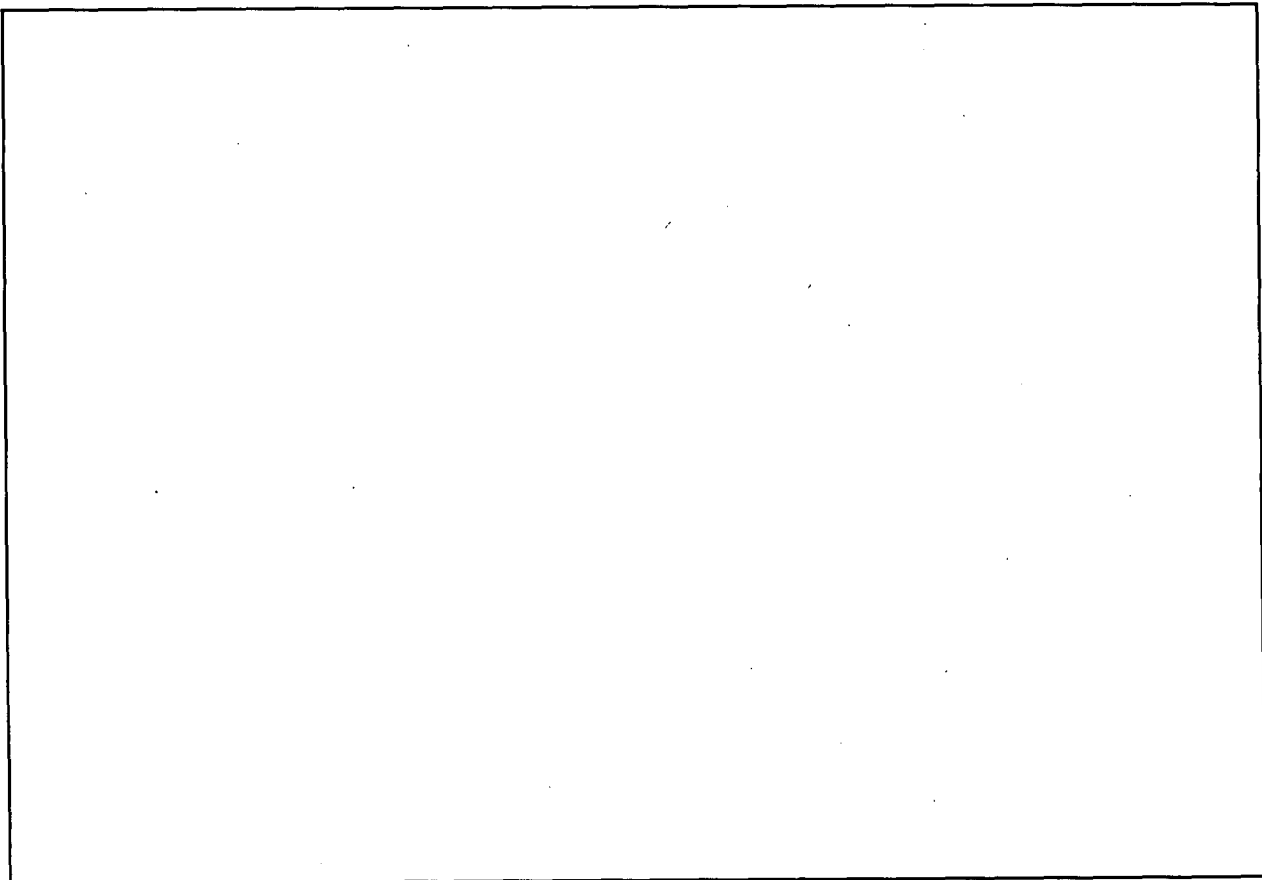
Appraisal of the characteristics of the units studied to date supports the view that Soviet emphasis on preparing ground forces for nuclear war has been dominant since the late 1950's. There is no evidence that the Soviets

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have changed the organization or equipment of their ground forces opposite NATO to produce a substantial improvement of capabilities for conventional war.

B. Slow Introduction of New Equipment

The analysis of Soviet ground forces performed to date indicates that the rate of introduction of new equipment has been rather slow. This has been reflected in particular in the types of armored personnel carriers observed.



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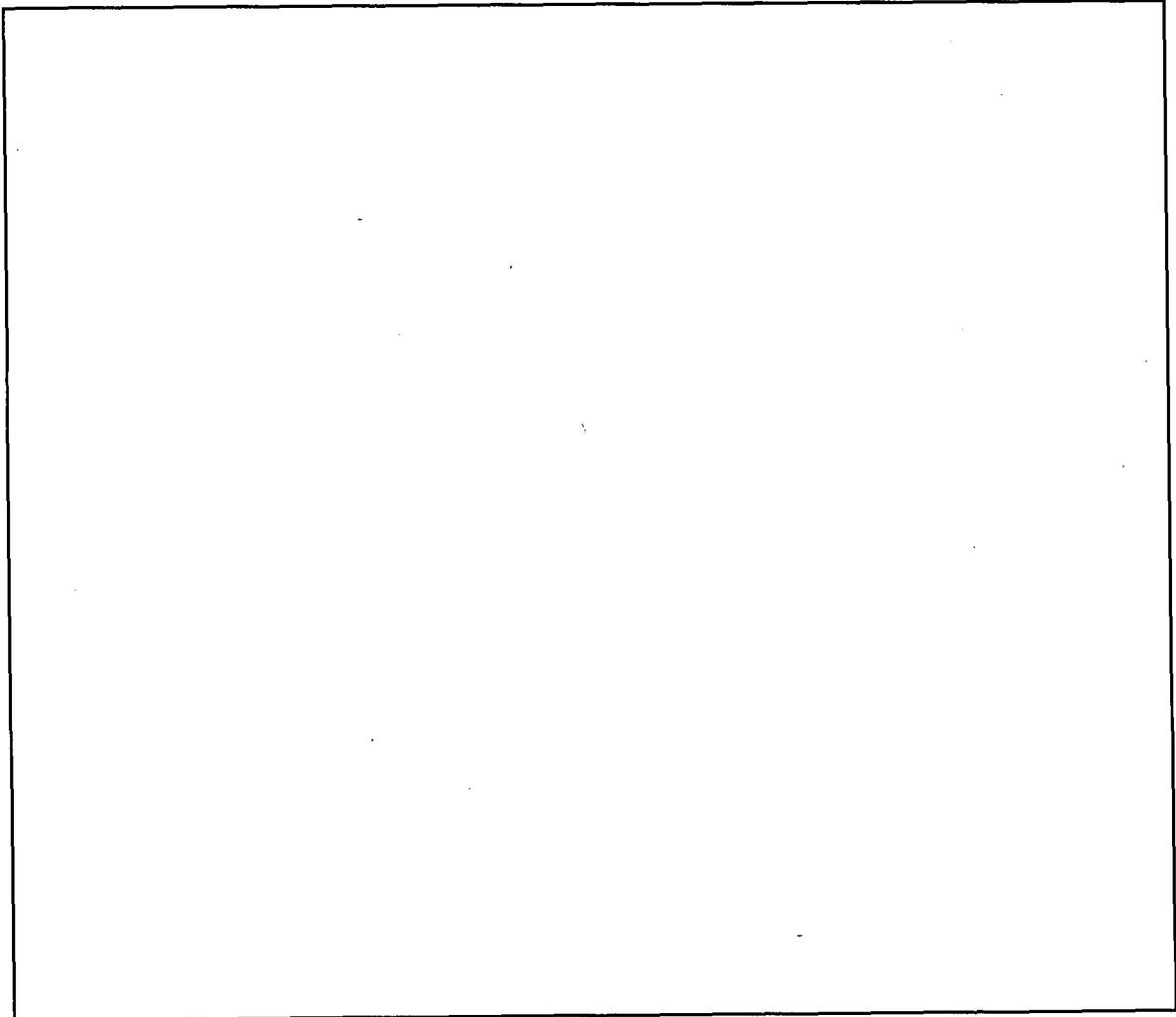
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ANNEX I

Evaluation of Order of Battle and
Unit Equipment Levels

An initial evaluation has been made of the order of battle (OB) of 12 divisions in the Belorussian MD and of ten additional divisions in the Carpathian and Kiev MD's. The equipment levels of each of these divisions have also been assessed. The results are summarized in the accompanying tables.

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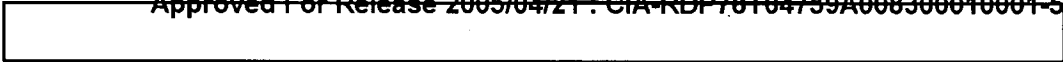
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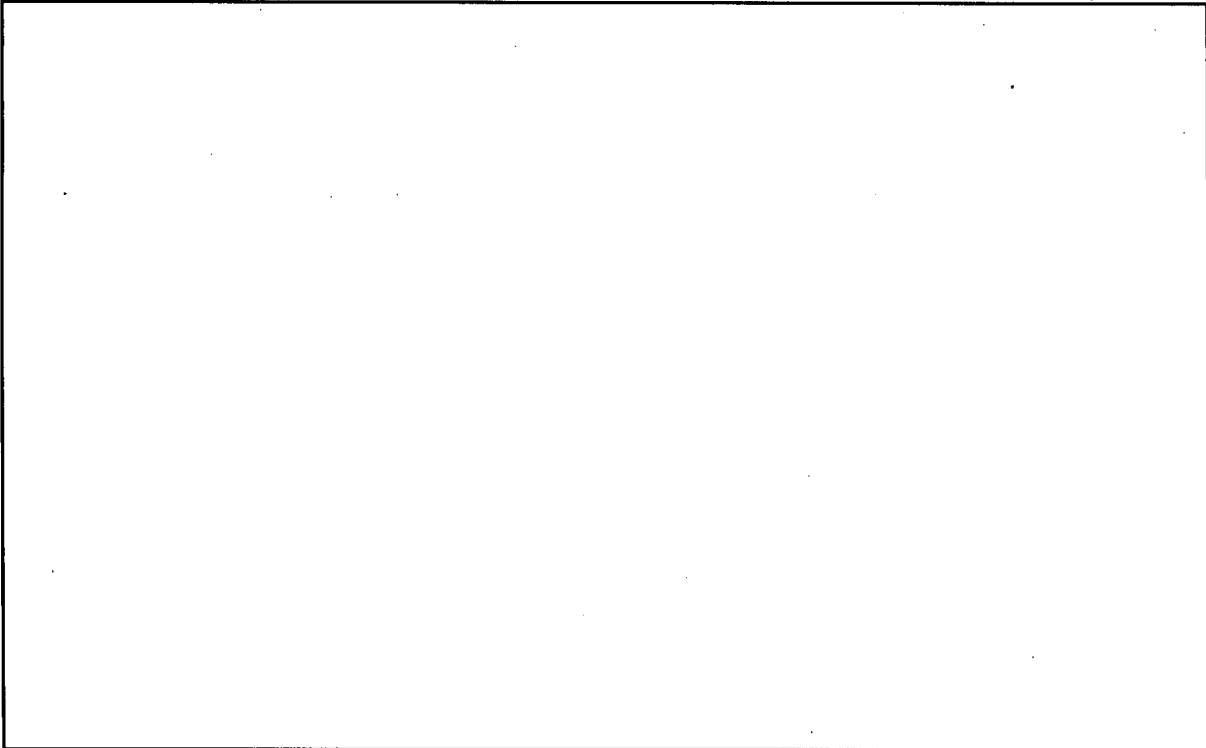
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ANNEX II

Soviet Ground Force Tables of Equipment

Equipment levels of the Soviet ground forces are considerably lower than had been previously estimated. The greater portion of the reduction is in the support equipment of both divisional elements and the support elements of the armies. Actual combat equipment, with the exception of armored personnel carriers, remains close to the level projected in current estimates. Tailoring of TO&Es for specific unit missions may reduce support equipment, as in the case of engineer ponton units.

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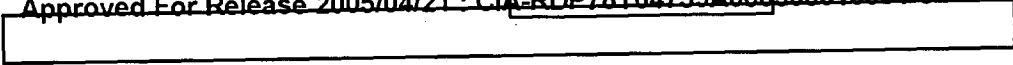


Specific CIA-DIA findings include a reduction in the number of armored personnel carriers assigned to a

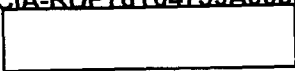
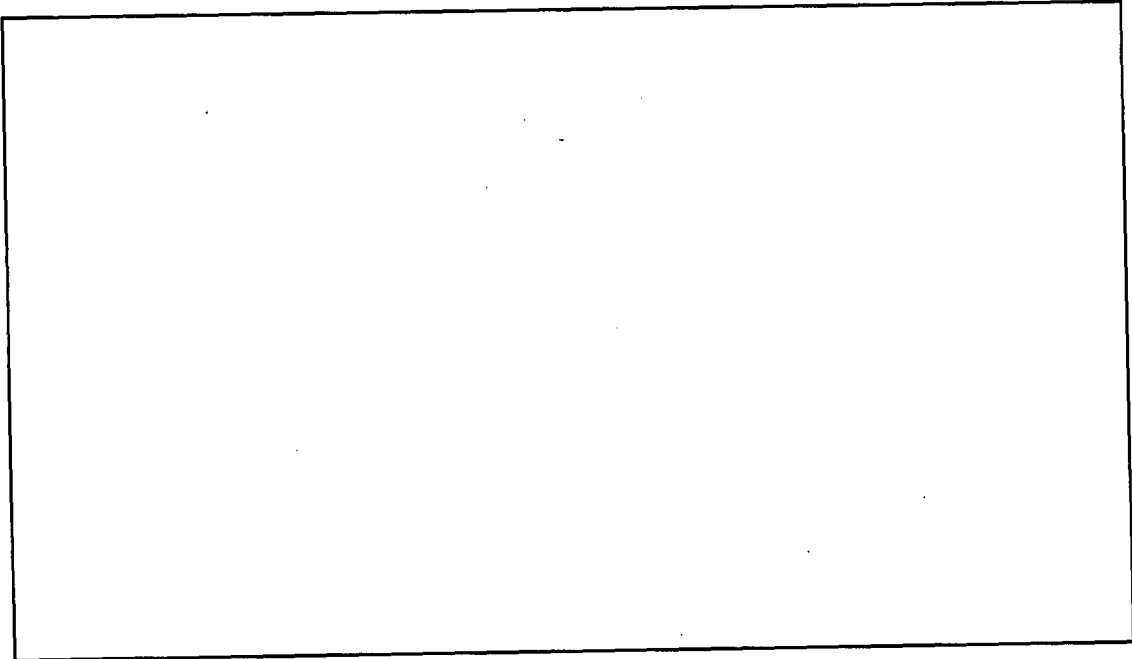
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Soviet combat unit. Personnel carriers used for reconnaissance and command functions may include UAZ-69's, BRDM's, BTR-40's, or other command model APC's. The BTR-152 remains the most frequently observed APC in use by the Soviet Army but is being replaced by the BTR-60. The BTR-50 tracked APC is believed to be a standard item only in a few forward-area tank divisions. In addition, the estimated number of UAZ-69 utility vehicles has been reduced by 50 percent from the previous levels. Considerable TE reduction occurs in the number of general purpose cargo trucks, trailers, and POL supply vehicles.



ADJUSTED TABLE OF EQUIPMENT
Motorized Rifle Division

	<u>Wheeled Vehicles</u>	<u>Tracked Vehicles</u>
Division Headquarters	52	
Reconnaissance Company	22	10
Motorized Rifle Regiments (3)	912 to 966	117
Tank Regiment	182	111
Division Artillery Headquarters Battery	16	
Artillery Regiment	217	
FROG Battalion	48	5
Antiaircraft Artillery Battalion	122	
Multiple Rocket Launcher Battalion	58	
Antitank Battalion	50	12
Artillery Instrumental Reconnaissance Battery	22	2
Engineer Battalion	124	44
Signal Battalion	45	
Medical Battalion	33	
Motor Transport Battalion	279	
Maintenance Battalion	63	5
Chemical Defense Company	31	
Field Bakery	12	
Traffic Control Company	11	
Air Flight Support Unit	10	
Total	2,309 to 2,363	306

ADJUSTED TABLE OF EQUIPMENT
Tank Division

	<u>Wheeled Vehicles</u>	<u>Tracked Vehicles</u>
Division Headquarters	52	
Reconnaissance Company	22	10
Motorized Rifle Regiment	304 to 322	39
Tank Regiments (3)	546	333
Division Artillery Headquarters Battery	16	
Artillery Regiment	167	
FROG Battalion	48	5
Antiaircraft Artillery Battalion	122	
Multiple Rocket Launcher Battalion	58	12
Artillery Instrumental Reconnaissance Battery	22	2
Engineer Battalion	124	46
Signal Battalion	45	2
Chemical Defense Company	31	
Motor Transport Battalion	307	
Medical Battalion	33	
Repair and Maintenance Battalion	75	5
Air Flight Support Unit	10	
Traffic Control Company	11	
Field Bakery	12	
Total	2,005 to 2,023	454