

TACWAR # 252
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**“COMBAT II ANALYSIS REPORT”
- COMMENTS ON -**

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1. The report contains: 1) A compilation of data regarding NATO and Warsaw Pact (WP) forces in, and reinforcements to, Central Europe; 2) An explanation of the war-gaming methodology used to produce; 3) A prediction based on the war-game of the progress of a surprise WP attack on NATO in West Germany.

2. The compilation of data appears authentic and reasonably complete. Some of it will probably be useful in future efforts, though it may tend to age quite rapidly as the NATO situation changes.

A Table presents a comparison between a U.S. Armored Division and a USSR Tank Division. It can be readily seen that the Russian organization has substantially more fire power per man assigned. If this is true, and the fire power translates into sustained combat effectiveness, perhaps we should copy the Russian organization. I have always suspected that our intelligence sources understate the manpower of the Russian Formations. I would suggest some inquiry into the authenticity of the figures presented.

The following factors seem irreconcilable:

- a) As noted, the Russians are alleged to use fewer men per piece of fighting equipment.
- b) We spend about 75% more per active-duty member of the armed forces than do the Russians. Presumably this should mean more equipment per man or much better equipment.
- c) If our equipment is in fact better, that qualitative superiority is never reflected in war games.

3. The methodology section is inadequate to explain what was really done. It is therefore quite difficult to critique, however. the following comments are furnished.

a) The WUV/WES system¹ for assessing combat strength appears to be only a small modification of the much-used fire power scores. It does not appear to take any account of varying terrain and tactics. Further, it appears to weight tanks very heavily and anti-tank weapons very lightly. This of course favors WP formations.

Fire power scores have been used for umpiring field exercises for 50 years or more. Originally they were fairly reasonable (e.g., a tank counted as 20 riflemen, a 105mm howitzer as 8 riflemen). Then people (ORO, CSC) started "improving" them and went to ridiculous extremes. I remember one set where a tank counted as 945 riflemen. It is probably impossible to trace the genealogy of the fire power scores used in this report.

If one is to conduct these mathematical simulations of battle one must depend on some mechanism such as fire power scores. Since they really pre-determine the outcome of the game, however, they should be scrutinized very closely. We need a very full explanation of the WES/WUV methodology. It is recommended we get a copy of the report..

b) There is no adequate explanation of the methods for assessment of casualties (these may be buried in the computer routines of Combat II). The indicated ratio of NATO casualties to WP casualties is absolutely astounding.

Up to the point where an orderly withdrawal becomes a rout, the attacker normally suffers more casualties than the defender. Rapid advance often entails greater casualties. This does not appear to be the case in this exercise.

c) Movement was apparently assessed according to a Table, modified by the judgment of the individuals conducting the game. The movement rates established by the table are very high compared to older war-game umpiring rules as to compiled historical data. Further, there seems to be no correlation between casualty rates and movement rates.

We should face up to the fact that no one knows how to predict the rate of advance. Historical data gives evidence which is so scattered that no credible curve can be drawn; it

¹ "Weapons Effectiveness Indices/Weighted Unit Values Final Report", U.S. Army Concepts Analysis Agency, April 1974.

does tend to indicate that rates are more a function of leadership, tactics, and combat experience than of fire power ratios.

d) The game apparently takes no account of logistics. There is a statement that the WP carries 5 to 8 days supply on organic transport. This is flatly impossible for a tank-heavy force employing large amounts of artillery. We should request documentation on the Combat II model.

4. Because the methodology is so questionable, the results of the war-game should be disregarded. Unless NATO troops fail to fight, WP cannot conceivably sweep through all of West Germany within one week, using the tactics shown.

However, the tactics assumed for WP are quite faulty. They make their main effort against area of NATO strength, ignoring the recognized weakness on the northern end of the line. A war-game with suitable WP concentration, conducted under more realistic umpiring rules, might reveal genuine NATO problems.

5. There are numerous inconsistencies in the report, which should be cleared up. For example:

a) In an early page it is assumed France will participate as a member of NATO, yet neither their two divisions actually in Germany nor their three reinforcing divisions enter the war game. In addition, French territory and French airfields are strategically important.

b) No scales were included on maps, making it very difficult to follow progress.

c) In Vol. II there is a list of "other factors" allegedly considered in the game. it would be nice to see some illustrations and discussion of these. For instance, did "LOC bottlenecks" ever slow the WP advance?

d) Vol. II also alludes to "NATO's qualitative advantage" (in equipment). Is this advantage real, and did it affect the game results in any way?

e) According to Vol. I, WP air is considerably more effective against ground forces than was NATO air. There is no presentation of the effectiveness of NATO air defense. It would be useful to see the comparative performance characteristics of SAM, AAA, and aircraft used in arriving at this conclusion.

6. IN SUMMARY:

- a) The force composition, location, and capability data presented appears authentic, although some discrepancies exist.
- b) The methodology is insufficiently explained, and appears loaded in favor of the WP.
- c) The game results are highly questionable; there should be introduced more sensible strategies for both WP and NATO.