

**December 16, 1985**

**East German Ministry of State Security, 'Assessment  
of Adversary's Intelligence on Development of  
Warsaw Pact Forces, 1983-1985' (excerpt)**

**Citation:**

"East German Ministry of State Security, 'Assessment of Adversary's Intelligence on Development of Warsaw Pact Forces, 1983-1985' (excerpt)", December 16, 1985, Wilson Center Digital Archive, BStU Archives, Berlin, ZA, HVA, 30, pp. 182-186. Translated from German by Bernd Schaefer; available in original language at the Parallel History Project. <https://wilson-center.drivingcreative.com/document/112682>

**Summary:**

The Stasi preface on NATO intelligence assessment (demonstrating how much both sides knew about each other).

**Original Language:**

German

**Contents:**

Translation - English

Intelligence services and military intelligence of NATO countries relentlessly continue their activities for a comprehensive exploration and assessment of military policy and doctrine, armed forces and armaments of the Warsaw Pact. [...]

For these purposes, they constantly use all sources of information (human intelligence, technical intelligence, official channels). Intelligence collection is realized through a comprehensive and intensive evaluation which is increasingly based on the use of electronical data. NATO countries conduct this business on a national level and synchronize the results by an intensive informational exchange within NATO structures. These data are being constantly updated in NATO's operational headquarters. [...] These assessments also serve as justification for NATO forces' requirements and as guidelines for developing weapons technology.

Main actors of intelligence activities, in qualitative as well as in quantitative terms, are continuously the United States, Great Britain and the FRG. France is also very active in this respect and integrated in joint NATO actions by informational exchange.

Other NATO countries make their contributions according to agreed divisions of labor (e.g. the Netherlands against Poland) and to their specific potential. Intelligence information also comes from other capitalist countries. Cooperation between the U.S. and the FRG concerning intelligence services and military intelligence has been increased. Besides mutual support to complete the actual state of knowledge on a worldwide scale, they [NATO] primarily undertake efforts to clarify unresolved questions. [...] It is evident that not all intelligence obtained flows into NATO channels.

All in all, the adversary believes to possess an appropriate, and in details mostly accurate and reliable, state of knowledge about the Warsaw Pact. Two major conclusions have been drawn from this gathered intelligence:

1. The Warsaw Pact constantly increases its military potential especially in quantitative terms. Concerning the technological state of armaments, the Warsaw Pact does not lag behind NATO in most areas (with the exception of electronics). This tendency will continue.
2. The Warsaw Pact's war preparations have reached an high level and and will be pushed further.

The adversary goes public with its knowledge in a targeted and planned manner. That activity is cleared within NATO as well. There are limits, however. In particular in the U.S. they are restrictive with certain parts of intelligence. For instance, this results in the publication of drawings instead of obtained picture documentations as the 1985 issue of "Soviet Military Power" demonstrated. Demands by NATO's Supreme Commander, U.S. General Rogers, "not to protect the secrets of the enemy", were not accepted. Especially the U.S. goes at length to avoid that the Warsaw Pact is obtaining clues about the real internal state of NATO knowledge. In general the other NATO countries follow the same principle. Thus there exists a contradiction between increasing requirements for classifying information, and the intention to influence its own people and the public worldwide with the "Warsaw Pact Threat" by means of externally correct facts.

27 May 1986

Comment of GDR Defense Ministry on "FRG Assessment of Military Importance of the GDR in Warsaw Pact"

In general it has to be said that the adversary apparently conducts very targeted intelligence activities and an intensive evaluation of obtained information. The facts in this assessment are partly confirmed by reality, or come at least close. Major deviations concern troops' strength and numbers of military technology.

From this information we have to draw mainly these conclusions:

- The adversary has obtained an approximately realistic assessment of the GDR's military relevance.

- We have to devote even more attention to questions of vigilance and secrecy, in particular with regard to publications by the GDR itself.

[There follows a detailed assessment and, if necessary, correction of certain information and numbers obtained by Western intelligence.]