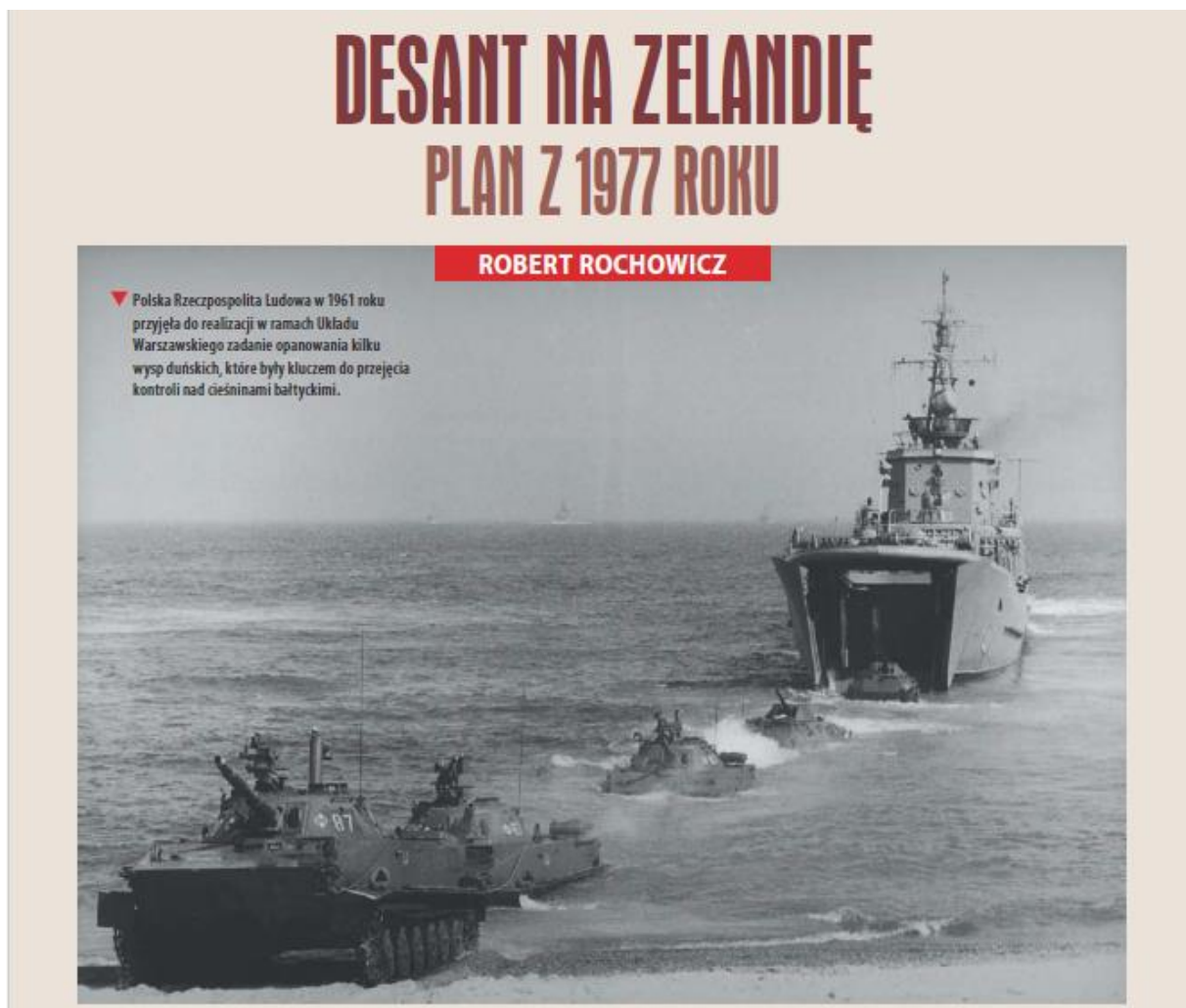




(Cover of the study by R. Rochowicz, Nowa Technika Wojskowa, 6/2025)

SCENARIO BRIEFING/DESIGNER'S NOTES

This scenario is based on historical Warsaw Pact operational concepts for the seizure of Denmark during a general war with NATO.

Archival material released after the Cold War indicates that Polish forces assigned to the Coastal Front were expected to play a central role in amphibious operations against the Danish islands.



While many Warsaw Pact plans assumed the use of tactical nuclear weapons to break NATO defences, this scenario explores the outcome of a purely conventional battle for the island of Zealand.

GENERAL CONCEPT OF THE SCENARIO

This is a difficult amphibious scenario. The Warsaw Pact player must first create conditions for the landing; attempting a direct crossing against intact NATO naval and air forces is likely to end in disaster.

Due to TOAW IV AI limitations in handling complex amphibious operations the Warsaw Pact side is intended primarily for human play. NATO AI is supported. A simplified Warsaw Pact AI variant may be provided separately.

The operation is deliberately multi-layered. Success depends on the coordination of airborne, naval, air and ground forces. A direct amphibious approach without first reducing key NATO strongpoints and air/naval threats may prove extremely costly.

The current (base) version of the scenario assumes Sweden's complete neutrality. In reality, however, there have been indications that Sweden might enter the conflict in the event of a threat, out of fear that it would become the next target following Denmark's fall. The entry of Sweden, which possesses significant air and naval forces, would significantly affect the balance of the game. An expansion of the scenario to include a "Swedish variant" is planned for the future.

ORDER OF BATTLE - WARSAW PACT

1. Fleets

The Warsaw Pact fleet consists of several Task Forces from the USSR, Poland, and East Germany. Amphibious landing craft have also been assigned to the fleet TFs (although the TOAW IV mechanics do not account for them, they can provide additional air cover here).

The ships vary in terms of their anti-air and anti-ship firepower and range, just as they did in the historical task forces. The Soviet Baltic Fleet plays a leading role here. It is worth noting that only some classes of Soviet vessels have a range and firepower comparable to those of NATO forces, especially Danish ones.

As for amphibious forces, the Warsaw Pact forces had several dozen different amphibious ships in total, which allowed them to transport the equivalent of one division in a single landing wave.

2. Air forces

At that time, the Warsaw Pact Air Force outnumbered NATO's AIRBALTAP forces. Although its fighter jets were of an older generation (MiG-21/23), its bomber fleet was large and also included modern aircraft (Su-24). The Soviet Navy also had a regiment of Tu-16 bombers. In addition, two regiments of Tu-22M strategic bombers could be used on a one-time basis (Theater Option).

3. Ground forces

Originally, according to Warsaw Pact plans, the invasion of Zealand was to be carried out by Polish forces consisting of:

6th Airborne Division

7th Sea Landing Division

15th Mechanized Division (2nd wave)

Supporting participation by GDR units (the 28th and 29th Motorized Regiments of the 8th Division) was also planned.

Among the GDR's ground units, the Warsaw Pact player also has the KRR-18 (Coastal Missile Regiment-18) at his disposal.

This unit was designed to defend the coast with Rubezh anti-ship missiles with a range of 90 km. In the game, it has Garrison status, but it activates if NATO attacks the GDR coast.

The Soviet forces consist of the 336th Marine Infantry Brigade (originally tasked with capturing Bornholm) and, in the strategic reserve, the 7th Guards Airborne Division (available in the scenario as a Theater Option).

Fun fact: It should be noted here that as for the differences in the Soviet strategic reserve's OOB, intelligence data released in the late 1970s indicated that the 3rd Guards Motorized Rifle Division was to take part in the attack on Zealand. However, later data from the 1980s points to the 7th Guards Airborne Division

ORDER OF BATTLE – NATO

1. Fleets

The main force capable of threatening Warsaw Pact maritime transport was the Danish Navy, organized into two main task forces. Ships with long-range firepower (Harpoon missiles) could easily engage amphibious assault ships while remaining out of range of most Warsaw Pact vessels. As part of NAVBALTAP, the West German Navy primarily consisted of fast missile boats and a single destroyer squadron, of which only one was equipped with Harpoons in 1985.

2. Air forces

NATO forces under AIRBALTAP relied primarily on the Danish Air Force and, while outnumbered by Warsaw Pact forces, were superior in quality (equipped with F-16s and Saab F-35 Drakens). A strong point, however, was the West German naval aviation equipped with Tornado IDS aircraft (with AS.34 Kormoran missiles, Marineflieger Geschwader 1 and 2). In 1985, MFG-2 had not yet been fully re-equipped and was still partially using the old F-104 Starfighters.

During the campaign, there were plans to systematically strengthen NATO's air forces.

3. Ground forces

The main forces in Zealand were the two regular Zealand Brigades (1st and 2nd), which were mechanized formations equipped with Centurion tanks. These were supplemented by four reserve Battle Groups (these units have significantly lower proficiency than regular brigades and require time to fully mobilize), each consisting of two light infantry battalions and a tank company, as well as numerous HJV (Home Guard) irregular units serving as territorial forces. As part of REFORGER, a US Marines brigade from Norway was planned to be deployed to reinforce Zealand, but this mission could not be carried out within the first week of fighting. The only reinforcement (contingent on a threat to Copenhagen) is the deployment of an improvised AMF (Allied Mobile Force) brigade under NATO's Allied Command Europe.

Under the 7-day combat scenario, NATO must mainly rely on the forces it has on the island.

The Bornholm garrison was treated by the Danish command as a separate operational region. The island was home to a three-battalion combat group supported by an artillery subunit and two squadrons of M41 light tanks. Additional support was provided by HJV companies and the radar station crew.

EXCLUSION ZONES ON THE MAP

The exclusion zones include minefields laid by NATO forces in key straits (the Belts) and approaches to beaches, as well as Swedish territorial waters and the island of Funen/Fyn (which is not part of this scenario).

Capturing Stevnsfort and the adjacent hexes will clear the way to the port of Koge and clear Faxø Bay of mines (which will remove the restricted zone).

The bridges connecting Zealand with the islands of Falster and Møn have been designated as an Excluded Zone for a simple reason—in reality, the Danes would blow them up in the event of an attempted landing from the south; therefore, a landing on Falster (even though the port of Gedser is close to Rostock) is more of a secondary option and holds little promise from an operational standpoint.

GAMEPLAY TIPS – WARSAW PACT

1. Win at sea first.

Victory at sea involves the annihilation or significant suppression of NATO naval forces before air reinforcements arrive to close the Warsaw Pact's operational window. Without resolving the naval engagement, troop transports could be decimated.

The main asset for this purpose is naval aviation, including Tu-16/Tu-22 heavy bombers (historically equipped with heavy anti-ship missiles, such as KSR-5 or Kh-22).

However, the Tu-16 can be used only once per turn, after which the unit is withdrawn and returns once per day, reflecting the entire logistics involved in its complex operation (refueling missiles, aircraft inspections).

The Tu-22 regiments are strategic units available as a Theater Option and cost 50 VP. **They can be used only once and are permanently withdrawn.** In reality, these aircraft would be more likely to target large NATO naval task forces, such as aircraft carriers.

The Su-24 is also suitable for maritime operations, however they are based in the eastern Baltic (Kaliningrad region) and can strike Bornholm, but effective operations against NATO naval forces west of Bornholm may require forward basing in East Germany.

2. Use paratroopers

Paratroopers can be helpful in taking out NATO strongpoints and capturing key facilities before the arrival of the marine landing force. However, it is important to remember that they are

light infantry with minimal artillery and anti-tank support of their own, so they will not hold out for long if Danish Centurions engage them.

At your disposal are 4 battalions of the Polish 6th Airborne Division and the elite 40th Fallschirmjäger Battalion “Wili Sanger” of the GDR.

A completely different unit is the Soviet 7th Guards Airborne Division, equipped with BMD-1 infantry fighting vehicles capable of parachuting. This division served as a strategic reserve for the Soviet command. Its use should be treated as a “panic button” because it is available only as a Theater Option (starting from Turn 9) and costs as much as 100 VP. The player must be prepared for the fact that they may lose the chance for an Overwhelming Victory, but this unit can save the operation and should be treated as such.

It’s also important to remember that, at that time, the transport capacity for paratroopers was quite limited; in a single flight, an Il-76 (one air regiment based in Lithuania) could carry a maximum of one regiment of paratroopers from the Soviet 7th Division per turn, OR the entire Polish and East German forces.

Parachute battalions/regiments now include their divisional artillery/anti-tank units.

3. Use operational-tactical missiles (SCUD-B)

Operational missiles can be used to attack HQs, artillery concentrations, and airfields. The scenario features the 5th Missile Brigade of the GDR. **It must be used on Turn 1.** After that, it is withdrawn (in reality, the launch of SCUDs was quickly detected by NATO, which carried the risk of retaliation). Reuse of the SCUDs is possible as a Theater Option starting in turn 9 (arrival of the Polish 2nd BROTH) and costs 50 VP.

4. Logistics is the key.

The Warsaw Pact must capture a large, operational port in order to maintain a foothold on the island. From the perspective of the landing operation and proximity to Copenhagen, the port of Koge is the most important. Only after capturing the port will it be possible to deploy the Polish 15th Mechanized Division in the second wave of the landing (before capturing the port, the division has Garrison status). There are also other ports on the island—some even more important and efficient, such as Korsør or Kalundborg—but the distance to them and the difficulty of crossing the mined Belts may be a significant factor.

A Warsaw Pact player can also land troops near Faxe (as in the planned historical version of the operation), but the approach must first be cleared of mines. Landing there will, however, allow for minimal resupply of troops, and it will be necessary to quickly capture the port of Koge.

Which port is captured is entirely up to the player.

After capturing and holding a port (Koge/ Korsør/Kalundborg/Copenhagen), a Supply Point is established, which gradually increases its capacity with each subsequent turn (this reflects the port's preparation for operation and the minesweeping of the approaches).

Capturing the airport on the island (Roskilde, Vaerlose, Copenhagen) also allows for the establishment of a Supply Point, though its capacity is minimal.

For a NATO player, the loss of Korsør, Kalundborg, and Copenhagen results in a gradual loss of logistical capabilities (stockpile), as these were the island's main supply bases

5. Convoy routes

When forming convoys with troops, it is better to sail under the cover of Polish/GDR air defense. Furthermore, capturing Bornholm and the radar station there reduces NATO's Theater Recon and lowers the chances of the convoys being detected as early as the eastern Baltic Sea.

6. The Bornholm question – to attack or not to attack?

It is up to the player to decide whether to focus on Zealand or to divide their forces. An operation on Bornholm requires at least one brigade to be committed. The only real benefit will be a reduction in NATO's intelligence capabilities. Of course, troops deployed on Bornholm could then be redeployed to Zealand, but that would take time and is risky.

7. Time is a significant factor

After approximately 48 hours, i.e. from Turn 9 onwards, the Warsaw Pact player must take into account the fact that NATO will receive increasing numbers of air reinforcements, including F-15 fighters. It is advisable to have completed any operations requiring airdrops and sea transports by this point.

GAMEPLAY TIPS – NATO

1. Avoid destroying your fleet

NATO has better theater reconnaissance than the Warsaw Pact. Hit-and-run tactics can prevent ships from being constantly detected and prevent air attacks.

2. Warsaw Pact troop transports are far more important than the fleet

Preventing an amphibious landing is NATO's top priority. Make full use of naval aviation capabilities in the area and use the fleet for counterattacks.

Coastal batteries are a highly effective means of destroying naval targets at close range. Do not let them be destroyed or captured.

3. If the landing is successful

Counterattack immediately—both Danish brigades will be combat-ready on Turn 2. The amphibious landing can only be eliminated if you have local superiority. Reserve Battle Groups are available starting on Turn 5. Even if paratroopers or marines land, they'll be in a bad situation without a functioning port. The establishment of a permanent foothold must be prevented at all costs.

4. If the Warsaw Pact establishes a permanent local foothold

If the counterattacks prove ineffective and the Warsaw Pact establishes a permanent foothold, you should consider whether it is possible to hold the front line or whether it would be better to shorten the front and withdraw to the area of the most important ports (Korsør/Copenhagen/Kalundborg) and defend there until reinforcements arrive.

Remember—there are no replacements in this scenario, so every battle permanently exhausts units.