



VERONA – Major Project for the NATO Base West Star

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The recovery of the former NATO base **West Star** in Affi (Verona) is an important step for the **memory of the Cold War** in Italy. The museum project, included in the conversion law of the Pnrr decree-law and promoted by the deputy of [Fdl Alessia Ambrosi](#), deserves appreciation because it returns public value to a structure that remained hidden for a long time. At the same time, as with [Monte Soratte near Rome](#), the nature of the site requires **reflection on its possible future role** in a highly unstable international context.

A necessary museum

The allocation of **7 million euros** for the reclamation and initial recovery of the former NATO base **West Star** allows the transformation of the bunker of **Monte Moscal** into a **museum dedicated to the Cold War**.

It is a positive initiative. **West Star** is not just any building, but a military structure **carved into the rock**, designed to withstand extreme scenarios and ensure **operational continuity** in

case of crisis. Recovering it means saving a significant piece of Italian, European, and Atlantic history.

The museum will be able to tell new generations that post-war peace was not only the result of diplomacy but also of **deterrence, alliances, planning, and defense capabilities**. In this sense, memory is not sterile celebration: it is education to reality.



The FTASE NATO command

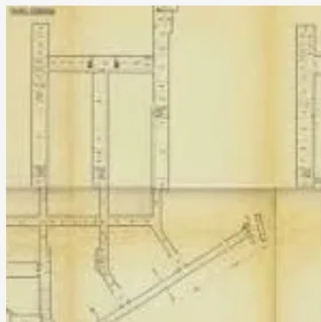
To understand the value of **West Star**, one must remember what the **FTASE Command** was, namely the **Allied Land Forces Southern Europe Command**, known in NATO as **LANDSOUTH**.

Based in **Verona**, the command was responsible for coordinating the **land defense** of the southern flank of the Atlantic Alliance, with particular attention to **Northern Italy** and the possible threat from the east during the Cold War. It was an integrated command structure, in which the Italian national dimension was inserted into the military system of **NATO**.

West Star was its **protected command post**. It was designed between **1958 and 1960** and built between **1960 and 1966**, carved into the rock of **Monte Moscal**. The structure extended over about **13,000 square meters**, with about **280 rooms**, three internal levels, multiple entrances, and a connecting tunnel about **one kilometer** long. It was designed to accommodate, in case of crisis, about **500 people** including military and civilian personnel.

The base was not a passive shelter. It had to ensure **command, control, and communications** even in extreme conditions, including scenarios of **nuclear, chemical, or bacteriological** attack. It was equipped with autonomous systems, ventilation systems, and protections for communication security, including shielding against **electromagnetic pulses**.

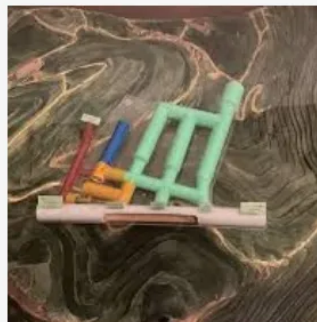
Its main function was to ensure what becomes essential in war: **decision-making continuity, secure connections, and operational coordination**. For this reason, **West Star** should be seen not only as an engineering work but as an expression of a precise **defense culture**.



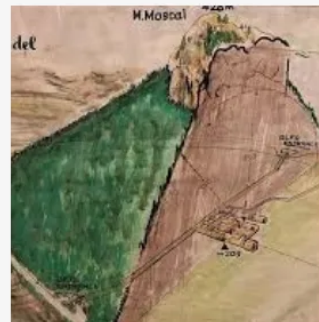
Planimetria di WS



Immagine di come è posizionato il bunker WS



Mappa 3d WS



Spaccato monte Moscal con bunker WS

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A resource not to be considered only as the past

The museum recovery is right and should be supported. However, a structure like **West Star** should not be considered only a relic of the Cold War.

Recent crises in the **Gulf**, attacks with **drones** and **missiles**, the vulnerability of ports, energy networks, digital infrastructures, and decision-making centers show that **territorial protection** has become central again. Contemporary warfare does not only hit the front: it also targets the systems that allow a state to function.

For this reason, Italy should carefully evaluate whether **West Star** can maintain, alongside its museum function, a possible **dual utility**. It is not about militarizing the site or giving up its public opening. It is about not wasting a rare, protected, and strategically located structure.

West Star can become a Cold War museum, but also a reminder for the present. Italy needs a **more mature defensive mentality**, capable of combining **historical memory, civil protection, national security, and technological preparedness**. Peace is not defended with lethargy, but with **awareness** and **foresight**.

<https://youtu.be/V5WaqVobtng>