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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20505

15 May 1975

MEMORANDUM FOR: The Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT : WARSAW PACT JOURNAL: The Experience of
Organizing Communications in a Combined
Operational-Tactical Exercise

1. The enclosed Intelligence Information Special Report is part of a series now in preparation based on articles from a SECRET Soviet publication called Information Collection of the Headquarters and the Technical Committee of the Combined Armed Forces. This article concerns the planning, organization and provision of communications in the SHIELD-72 exercise. The unified communications system evolved required the use of civilian facilities and personnel, but no exchange of military communications personnel among the armies. This journal is published by Warsaw Pact Headquarters in Moscow, and it consists of articles by Warsaw Pact officers. This article appeared in Issue No. 6, which was published in 1974.

2. Because the source of this report is extremely sensitive, this document should be handled on a strict need-to-know basis within recipient agencies. For ease of reference, reports from this publication have been assigned the [redacted] Codeword [redacted].

[redacted]

William E. Nelson
Deputy Director for Operations

[redacted]

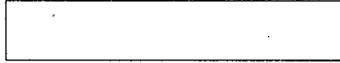
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Intelligence Information Special Report

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COUNTRY USSR/WARSAW PACT

DATE OF
INFO. 1972

DATE 15 May 1975

SUBJECT

WARSAW PACT JOURNAL: The Experience of Organizing Communications in a Combined Operational-Tactical Exercise

SOURCE Documentary

Summary:

The following report is a translation from Russian of an article from a SECRET Soviet publication called Information Collection of the Headquarters and the Technical Committee of the Combined Armed Forces. This journal is published by Warsaw Pact Headquarters in Moscow, and it consists of articles by Warsaw Pact officers. This article was written by General-Mayor L. Stakh. This article examines several aspects of the planning, organization and provision of communications in the combined operational-tactical exercise SHIELD-72. A unified communications system was used, which involved civilian facilities and personnel but did not require exchanging military communications personnel and equipment with participating allies. This article appeared in Issue No. 6, which was published in 1974.

End of Summary

Comment:

The names of authors are given in Russian transliteration. Ranks of one-star (general-mayor) and two-star (general-leytenant) general officers are given in Russian for nationals of countries following the Soviet system.

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The Experience of Organizing Communications
in a Combined Operational-Tactical Exercise

by
General-Mayor L. Stakh
Chief of Communications Troops
of the Czechoslovak People's Army

This article examines several aspects of the organization of communications in the multistage operational-tactical exercise SHIELD-72 (Shchit-72), conducted in 1972 with the participation of staffs and troops of the Hungarian People's Army, the National People's Army of the German Democratic Republic, the Polish Armed Forces, the Soviet Army, and the Czechoslovak People's Army.

The SHIELD-72 exercise had a number of features which had a substantial impact on the planning, organization and actual provision of communications.

First, the SHIELD-72 exercise was different in its broad scope, and was conducted in almost the entire territory of the Czechoslovak Soviet Socialist Republic, with the participation of all levels of control and a large amount of troops and equipment of the ground forces, aviation and the air defense of the country. Staffs and troops of five allied armies participated in it, which required planning and implementing close cooperation among them, and achieving mutual understanding among the specialists of the communications troops.

Another feature was the fact that the combat actions of the troops were played out realistically on the basis of an operational situation. Therefore the work of the commanders, staffs and communications units controlling the troops was in actuality a check.

Also a specific feature of this exercise was the fact that communications with the large units of armies of different national affiliation were organized without exchanging communications operations groups.

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A great deal of attention was given to the materiel-technical support of all the operating units, especially those effecting cooperation communications, and to the problems of standardizing communications equipment at the individual levels of control.

Mention also should be made of the need for a special selection of communications center call signs which can be pronounced easily in any language, and for a proper selection of words, since some of them have a different meaning in another language.

The experience of the exercise confirmed that the implementation of the above and other preparatory measures was fully justified. Therefore we think it necessary, before each exercise, to hold a combined consultation session of representatives of the communications troops of the allied armies participating in the exercise, in order to clarify all requirements of a technical and operational nature.

In the exercise being examined, the following tasks confronted the troops:

-- to improve skills in planning, organization and actual provision of communications during an offensive conducted by allied armies in close cooperation;

-- to continue improving the control of subordinate communications organs, regardless of their national affiliation, and also the control of units and subunits in order to provide uninterrupted and reliable communications;

-- to ensure uninterrupted and reliable operation of the communications systems of all levels of control, stable operation of equipment and its efficient use in a complex situation;

-- to provide reliable command and cooperation communications among the allied armies of the Warsaw Pact member states, paying special attention to the organization of communications with troops operating realistically;

-- to strengthen combat camaraderie among the communications personnel of the allied armies.

We will note that the communications system organized and provided with all types of means to carry out assigned tasks, required strictly centralized control on the part of the communications organs of the Czechoslovak People's Army. The main emphasis in ensuring security at all levels of control was placed on wire and radio-relay communications. Radio communications were completely ready to start operating in the event the communications of the above channels were disrupted.

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Channels leased temporarily from the Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications of the Czechoslovak Soviet Socialist Republic were used to a great extent for wire communications. In all more than 700 two-wire and four-wire channels were activated. The reserving of the wire communications channels was implemented and organized centrally. This ensured good utilization of the capabilities of the unified communications network of the Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications for the needs of the entire communications system of the exercise.

Because of the large number of leased communications channels, officials of the Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications of the Czechoslovak Soviet Socialist Republic were permanently on the directing staff of the exercise; these officials rendered a great deal of assistance to the military communications personnel in setting up and tuning the channels, eliminating defects, preparing bypasses, etc. Collaboration of the military and civilian communications personnel proceeded on a high level and allowed us to accumulate experience which will be used in the future. The exercise fully confirmed that the cooperation of the organs of the Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications, communications troops and military communications komendaturas has to be given constant attention, and that new, more improved forms are needed to fulfil the tasks of satisfying the requirements of the Czechoslovak People's Army and fraternal armies for communications channels.

Valuable experience also was obtained in the matter of setting up connecting lines from the repeater points of the Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications to the communications centers of the operating staffs, especially of formations and large units. The exercise showed that these connecting lines and their technical development must be given more attention to allow for the requirements of secure communications equipment. It must be noted that the use of secure communications means on this scale gave us our first opportunity to obtain solid experience in planning and using secure channels.

It was clear to the communications personnel of the Czechoslovak People's Army from the very beginning, that it is very difficult to fulfil an assigned task to the entire depth of an operation during a short time period with the communications forces and means which the Czechoslovak People's Army has at its disposal. Therefore close cooperation was established with the communications personnel of the fraternal armies, especially with the communications personnel of the Central Group of Forces of the Soviet Army, to establish a unified secure communications system using the means of the Czechoslovak People's Army and our allies.

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During the exercises, the crews of the communications operating rooms of all the participating armies worked in the secure communications system. It may be noted with satisfaction that all of them, despite their different national affiliations, fulfilled their tasks extremely well; during the exercise they provided stable secure communications, and found the mutual understanding required to fulfil common tasks, and "one language".

Radio-relay communications made it possible to resolve the very complex problems which arose as a result of locating the directing staff and the operating staffs at great distances. For example, just to provide the communications of the directing staff, 1,600 kilometers of radio-relay line were set up by field means and, in addition, more than 1,500 kilometers of the permanent radio-relay network of the Czechoslovak People's Army were used.

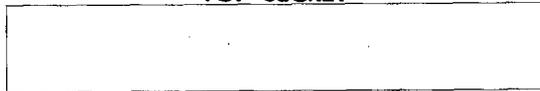
Multichannel radio-relay sets were used to provide radio-relay communications on the main axes, and connecting lines were set up from the light radio-relay sets to auxiliary communications centers. Subunits of the Czechoslovak People's Army and the Soviet Army jointly set up a network of radio-relay lines. A great achievement in the exercise was that, with the combined setting up and operation of radio-relay lines, there was no requirement for exchanging crews of different nationalities, setting up two sets in one place, or sending one's own communications means to an allied army. Since standardized equipment was available, even this complex task was fulfilled. It was not at all evident that the radio-relay lines were set up and operated by subunits of different national armies.

Radio communications, as already mentioned, were organized in readiness to begin operating in the event wire or radio-relay communications were disrupted. In describing the operation of radio communications, it should be stated that the good work of the wire and radio-relay units did not give the radio operators an opportunity to begin actual operation. But this was a positive factor, since the concept of the exercise, the location of the staffs and the course of combat actions were concealed from the radio reconnaissance of our probable enemy.

However, the exercise reconfirmed that at all levels of control a great deal of attention has to be paid to radio means and the layout of radio communications, a unified communications system has to be organized using the entire inventory of communications means, and security of control has to be ensured on all channels, including radio.

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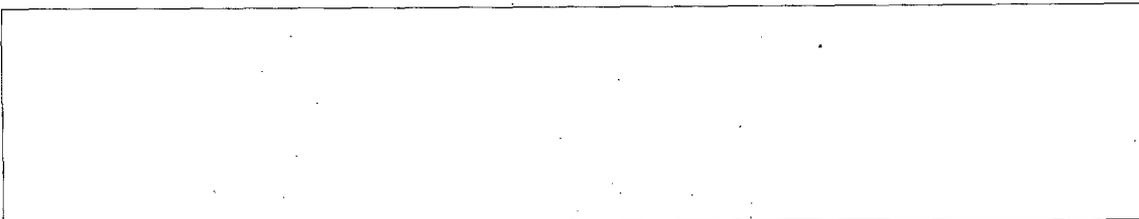


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This exercise was the first time courier-postal communications, organized in appropriate circumstances, were used for sending official and personal correspondence under our conditions. Since the communications personnel of the Czechoslovak People's Army had had no experience with this matter, during the exercise there occurred several deficiencies stemming both from the organizational structure of certain courier-postal communications institutions, and from certain peculiarities involved in satisfying the requirements of the allied armies participating in the exercise. It became obvious that we need to give this type of communications more attention and use the experience of the Soviet Army more extensively.

The SHIELD-72 exercise confronted the personnel of the communications departments and the unit commanders with a number of tasks in planning and organizing communications.

The communications units and subunits of the Czechoslovak People's Army set up the communications system of all levels of control in conjunction with the communications personnel of all the armies. This work was carried out successfully.



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