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**CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY**  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20505

27 May 1975

MEMORANDUM FOR: The Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT : WARSAW PACT JOURNAL: From the Exercise Sphere -- The SOYUZ-73 Operational War Game on Maps

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 reviews the results of the SOYUZ-73 war game held in February 1973 for ground forces, air defense and naval staffs of Romania, Bulgaria and the USSR. Among the problems worked out were the planning of an initial nuclear strike, the restoration of combat effectiveness, and the development of an offensive in the operational depth. The naval and air defense staffs performed tasks related to the support of the ground forces actions. 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. 5, which was published in 1973.

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]

William E. Nelson  
Deputy Director for Operations

[redacted]

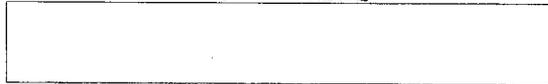
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## Intelligence Information Special Report

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COUNTRY USSR/WARSAW PACT

DATE OF  
INFO. February 1973

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SUBJECT

WARSAW PACT JOURNAL: From the Exercise Sphere --  
The SOYUZ-73 Operational War  
Game on Maps

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 reviews the results of the SOYUZ-73 war game held in February 1973 for ground forces, air defense and naval staffs of Romania, Bulgaria and the USSR. Among the problems worked out were the planning of an initial nuclear strike, the restoration of combat effectiveness and the development of an offensive in the operational depth. The naval and air defense staffs performed tasks related to the support of the ground forces actions. This article appeared in Issue No. 5, which was published in 1973.

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From the Exercise Sphere:  
The SOYUZ-73 Operational War Game on Maps

In February 1973, a war game was conducted on maps in the Socialist Republic of Romania with the operational staffs of the ground forces, the air defense forces, and the air forces of the Bulgarian People's Army, the Army of the Socialist Republic of Romania and the Soviet Army, and also with staffs of the navies of the People's Republic of Bulgaria, the Socialist Republic of Romania, and the Red Banner Black Sea Fleet of the USSR.

The war game was directed by the Commander-in-Chief of the Combined Armed Forces of the member states of the Warsaw Pact, Marshal of the Soviet Union I. I. Yakubovskiy.

In the game, problems were worked out in setting up strike groupings in a theater of military operations under conditions in which a war has already begun with the simultaneous repulsing of an enemy attack, elimination of the aftereffects of a nuclear attack, restoration of the combat effectiveness of the troops and of the forces of the navies, and preparation and conduct of front offensive operations with the breakthrough of fortified areas and the seizure of a straits zone, as well as the conduct of combat actions by the naval and air defense forces of the Warsaw Pact countries.

The war game was begun from the situation which had developed on the second day of war. The participating commanders and staffs were placed in a situation in which the enemy was striving to attain his objectives by the use of conventional means of combat. However, in case of failure, loss of initiative in actions, or the threat of destruction, the enemy was planning on the limited use of tactical nuclear weapons and also, if necessary, the entire arsenal of nuclear weapons available in the theater. Such a variant of transition to the conduct of a nuclear war in the Southwestern Theater of Military Operations was worked out by the leadership of NATO and by the national commands of

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the countries belonging to NATO in exercises of various scales.

A characteristic of the work of operational staffs in such a situation was the fact that the establishment of groupings and the planning of front offensive operations and combat actions of allied navies and air defense forces of the Warsaw Pact countries were carried out parallel to the completion of measures for mobilization expansion, the advance of troops into areas designated for operations, and the repulsing of an enemy offensive under conditions when he threatens to use nuclear weapons.

During this period, attention was mainly devoted to working out the problems of breaking up an enemy offensive and ensuring that our troops were in constant readiness for the use of nuclear weapons. The operational staffs of the three allied armies, on a sufficiently sound basis, planned the delivery of the initial massive nuclear strike, as well as measures for eliminating the aftereffects of enemy use of nuclear weapons, for restoration of the combat effectiveness of our troops in a short amount of time, and for the comprehensive support of their combat actions.

The advance of operational formations of the Army of the Socialist Republic of Romania and the Soviet Army into areas of combat actions was planned to be carried out by their organic transport means (by march) and by using rail transport. In the process, measures were taken to ensure a high degree of combat readiness for quick deployment for commitment to battle from the march.

Provision was to be made to coordinate and amplify with the general staffs the following matters concerning support of the advancing troops: routes of movement, organization of the provost and traffic control service, cover of main groupings from the air, and measures for the materiel and technical support of troops, especially on barrier lines.

Problems of repulsing an enemy offensive also received due attention. In accomplishing this task, it was planned to keep firm hold of certain of the most important lines and areas, with the subsequent delivery against the enemy of

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decisive destruction by aggressive offensive actions.

During the second stage of the game, the participants were placed in a situation in which the enemy, in order to isolate an area of combat actions from an influx of fresh reserves from the interior of allied countries, laid a nuclear barrier. Commanders and staffs being trained in this complex situation efficiently planned reliable and comprehensive support of the advance of our troops and at the same time succeeded in moving them into designated areas.

The basic content of this stage of the war game was working out the problems of restoring the combat effectiveness of the troops and of the forces of the navies, and eliminating the aftereffects of enemy use of nuclear weapons.

Participating commanders and staffs devoted special attention to: planning and restoring the disrupted control of the troops and of the forces of the navies; determining the most advisable types of troop actions on contaminated terrain and when negotiating a barrier line across the Danube River; carrying out radiation reconnaissance, rescue operations, and medical-evacuation measures, as well as carrying out special decontamination of personnel, materiel, and water; extinguishing fires; and restoring routes for forward movement and maneuver. The problems of supporting the crossing of troops across water obstacle lines were examined in detail.

Commanders and staffs skilfully solved the problems involved in setting up composite formations from combat-effective subunits and units, in replenishing the personnel, combat equipment, and materiel reserves of units and subunits which sustained losses, and in amplifying the tasks of troops for subsequent combat actions. Here, the possible effect on the troops and equipment of the casualty-producing elements of each nuclear burst was considered in detail. According to the calculations of the trainees, three or more days were required to restore the combat effectiveness of some large units and units which had been subjected to enemy nuclear strikes.

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In the final stage of the war game, the development of an offensive in the operational depth was worked out. The trainees devoted considerable attention to methods of breaking through fortified areas and zones with the simultaneous liquidation of enemy groupings operating in the rear of our troops. The breakthrough of a fortified area was planned, as a rule, from the march with the use of flanking detachments, and airborne and amphibious landing forces. Necessary measures were taken to prevent the enemy from withdrawing his own main forces and seizing positions and zones of fortified areas from the march.

During an assault crossing of water obstacle lines, commanders were required to substantially amplify previously adopted decisions, to plan the destruction of the enemy on the approaches to these water obstacle lines, and to take measures to seize and use local water crossing means. Here the fact was taken into account that for the troops to lay bridge crossings across straits in the situation which had developed was practically impossible. Therefore, a major role in the accomplishment of this important task was assigned to the allied navies, which landed amphibious landing forces and supported ground forces advancing on a coastal axis. ✓

For the quick seizure of a straits zone, it was planned to use operational and tactical airborne landing forces. |

The problems of air defense and engineer support of an assault crossing were thoroughly worked out.

During the war game, naval staffs accomplished the tasks of destroying groupings of enemy naval forces, of supporting the ground forces advancing along the coast, and of seizing a straits zone. Operations groups of air defense staffs worked out the problems of covering main groupings of ground forces during their advance into areas designated for operations and during their execution of the tasks assigned. ✓

Providing the staffs with information on the position and status of the troops of the two sides during the war game was accomplished by specially established groupings which played the role of headquarters of armies. This

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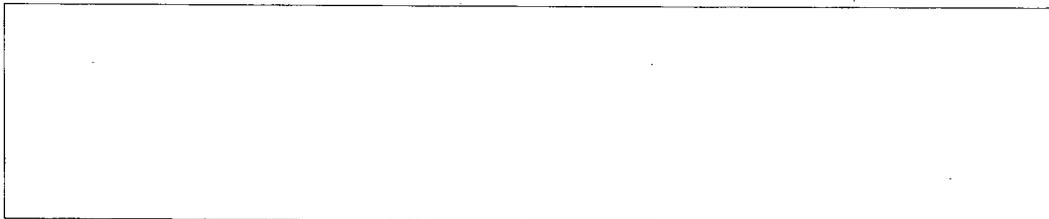
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brought the work of commanders and staffs in collecting, collating, and analyzing a situation closer to the actual conditions of a combat situation.

At all stages of the game, the trainees worked out, in a limited amount of time, combat orders and instructions to the troops and to the forces of the navies, and other necessary documents.

Summing up the war game, Commander-in-Chief of the Combined Armed Forces, Marshal of the Soviet Union I. I. Yakubovskiy gave a favorable assessment of the work of the commanders of the formations of the branches of the armed forces, and the staffs of the allied armies and navies, which took part in the game.

He noted that the war game demonstrated a unity of views held by generals, admirals, and officers of the three friendly armies in matters of preparing for and conducting offensive operations in the Southwestern Theater of Military Operations. It contributed to greater harmony among the higher staffs of the Bulgarian People's Army, the Army of the Socialist Republic of Romania and the Soviet Army, to an improvement in the coordination among them, and to the strengthening of combat cooperation. The designated training tasks and assigned objectives of the game were completely fulfilled.



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