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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20505

27 August 1975

MEMORANDUM FOR: The Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT : WARSAW PACT JOURNAL: The Preparation
and Conduct of Command-Staff Exercises, Based
on the Experience of the Polish Armed Forces

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 deals with various aspects of command-staff exercises conducted on maps and in the field with communications means. The author explores the advantages of using skeleton troops in exercises in the field, and ways of improving cooperation in combined operations with other Warsaw Pact forces. Three tables are provided to illustrate types of exercises and the sequences of operation and drafting of documents. 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. 2, which was published in 1971.

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
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DATE 27 August 1975

SUBJECT

WARSAW PACT JOURNAL: The Preparation and Conduct of Command-Staff Exercises, Based on the Experience of the Polish Armed Forces

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 of Brigade T. Khupalovski. This article deals with various aspects of command-staff exercises conducted on maps and in the field with communications means. The author explores the advantages of using skeleton troops in exercises in the field, and ways of improving cooperation in combined operations with other Warsaw Pact forces. Three tables are provided to illustrate types of exercises and the sequences of operation and drafting of documents. This article appeared in Issue No. 2, which was published in 1971.

End of Summary

Comment:

The names of authors are given in Russian transliteration.

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The Preparation and Conduct of Command-Staff Exercises,
Based on the Experience of the Polish Armed Forces

by

General of Brigade T. Khupalovski
Chief of Staff of a Military District

Command-staff exercises play an important role in the system for improving and raising the combat readiness of staffs. They constitute one of the basic forms of practical training for commanders and staffs in problems of control, and are also extremely important in preparing for exercises with troops. Command-staff exercises make it possible to achieve favorable results in training with relatively small expenditures.

The main purpose of command-staff exercises, in our opinion, is the collective improvement of the knowledge and practical experience of commanders and officers in accomplishing tactical or operational tasks under conditions close to those of actual combat. They assure all-round mastery of the fundamentals of the organization, planning, and control of a battle and an operation. Officers become more proficient in drafting and adopting decisions under conditions of a complex combat situation and a limited amount of time. Problems of raising the combat readiness of staffs for work under field conditions are worked out, while improvement is being made in problems of operational control using technical communications means. Command-staff exercises play an important role in improving among officers such qualities as broadening their administrative abilities and operational-tactical outlook, reacting correctly to a situation as it develops, and foreseeing the course of events. The exercises develop initiative and independence, and a sense of responsibility for the decisions being made. They make it possible to achieve a high degree of teamwork among staffs, and to train them in working collectively, and also in achieving cooperation among the various collectives of directorates and departments of a staff.

When properly prepared and conducted, command-staff exercises contribute to the psycho-physical endurance of officers, and to the smooth functioning of troop control under difficult conditions; they also raise the efficiency of officers during the simultaneous execution of several tasks in a short space of time, as well as their perseverance in fulfilling these tasks.

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Command-staff exercises increase the reliability of operation of a system of control, and serve to improve the organizational-technical forms and methods of staff work.

The main element in command-staff exercises is training for a control organ, which lasts several days and is conducted according to a unified concept and plan aimed at improving the performance of official duties by personnel of individual elements of the control organ, and also at developing coordination in the actions of this control organ as a whole. A superior officer, as a rule, is appointed director of the exercise, although in some cases the director can also be the immediate chief of a given level of control. In the second case control of this organ is usually entrusted to his deputy, and some of the officers of this staff are assigned to the directing body of the exercise.

The theme of a command-staff exercise, our experience shows, primarily should incorporate a multi-faceted problem aimed at raising the level of training of a staff and its combat readiness. It often includes a combat alert and the mobilization expansion of forces, followed by the organization and conduct of various types of combat actions. The exercises should be conducted in any season of the year, regardless of the weather. At exercises with combined-arms staffs the participation of officers and staffs from other branches of the armed forces (air forces, air defense, etc.) is also desirable.

Command-staff exercises may be conducted on maps, in the field, with communications means, and be one-sided or two-sided, and single-level or multi-level. The choice of the appropriate method for conducting the exercise depends on its purpose, the problems being worked out, the level of training, and those taking part in it, as well as the conditions under which it will be conducted. Here the rule of gradual transition from the simplest to more complex forms of training applies.

Command-staff exercises, depending on the theme, training goals, and problems being worked out, may be conducted either with operational transitions (skachki) or continuously. Best results are achieved when they are conducted continuously, without any operational transitions.

The types and classification of command-staff exercises are shown in Table 1.

The development of command-staff exercises, our experience shows, should be done in a definite sequence. One possible sequence is shown in

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Table 2.

In developing a command-staff exercise a number of documents are drawn up. A possible sequence for the drafting of these documents is shown in Table 3.

As may be seen from the tables, command-staff exercises may be conducted on maps and in the field with communications means.

Command-staff exercises on maps are the basic method of combined training of officers and commanders, and of coordinating staffs, for exercises in the field with communications means and also for exercises with troops. The main purpose of these exercises is to improve the forms, methods, and style of operation of staffs, especially the collective working out of a decision and the drawing up of combat documents. These exercises play an important role in improving the method of working out decisions, the organization of cooperation, and the methods of drawing up (working out) combat documents, and also in supporting combat actions.

In one-sided command-staff exercises, as a rule, the role of the enemy is played by the directing body of the exercise. The organization and conduct of these exercises are relatively simple. One-sided exercises are, therefore, usually conducted with staffs that are less well trained and coordinated, or on themes not as well studied (or entirely new ones).

In two-sided command-staff exercises, one side can operate according to the organization and tactics of the army of the probable enemy. A two-sided exercise makes it possible to compare the actual decisions of the opposing sides and, on this basis, determine the subsequent course of the exercise; it introduces an element of great tension into the work of those taking part in the exercise; and it makes the conditions under which they operate more realistic. Directing these exercises is more complex than directing one-sided ones. It requires a large directing staff, as well as continuous comparison of the decisions of the two sides and of the balance of forces and means, and systematic refinement of the dynamics of the battle.

The main purpose of command-staff exercises in the field with communications means is the practical improvement of commanders and staffs in controlling troops.

In the Polish Armed Forces the practice is being introduced of using command-staff exercises in the field with communications means to improve

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the work of staffs when switching from peacetime operating conditions to operation under field conditions with the organizational-mobilization expansion of all levels of control at field command posts, often upon a combat alert, and the working out of problems of control of the mobilization expansion of subordinate staffs and troops.

The problem of achieving a high degree of readiness on the part of staffs for operation at field command posts, of deploying a field system of control, and of carrying out the mobilization expansion of headquarters (commands and troops), constitutes an integral and inseparable part of the content of these exercises. As a result the Polish Armed Forces have made definite progress in training staffs for effective actions under the difficult conditions of the initial period of a war.

Command-staff exercises in the field with communications means make it possible to test the organizational structure and technical equipment of all levels of control.

In raising the combat readiness of staffs, an especially important role is played by exercises in the field with skeleton troops -- the highest form of command-staff exercises.

The purpose of attaching skeleton troops to these exercises is to further improve (at a higher level) the practical skills of commanders and staffs in organizing and controlling a battle (an operation). Skeleton troops force commanders and staffs to consider in their calculations practical possibilities, road conditions, weather conditions, the supply situation, etc.; and to make it possible to compare the calculations with the actual situation.

Methods of representing troops vary. At the tactical level subunits are more often represented as follows: a tank company by the tank of the company commander or by tanks of the commander of the tank company and the platoon commanders; a motorized rifle company by the armored personnel carrier of the company commander; an artillery battery by a single gun. At certain exercises some of the subunits participate at full table-of-organization strength. In addition to the subunits in support of staffs, there can also be assigned, for example: a reinforced motorized rifle company or motorized rifle battalion representing a regiment, reconnaissance subunits, and engineer, pontoon, chemical, and rear services subunits. The number and composition of participating subunits are determined, in the process, on the basis of practically worked-out training problems.

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Command-staff exercises with skeleton troops are conducted primarily as two-sided exercises. Most of the information on the enemy is obtained by the participants on the basis of data from their own reconnaissance. In addition, skeleton troops make it possible to avoid differences in the way the situation is played out by the two sides taking part in the exercise, as well as uncertainty in fixing the time for accomplishing successive tasks, since skeleton troops constitute a practical criterion of these elements. Skeleton troops on firing ranges can practice firing with live rounds and also perform other practical tasks.

On the basis of experience gained from command-staff exercises, it has been established that the most effective method of improving the knowledge of commanders and staffs is by means of multi-level, two-sided command-staff exercises in the field with skeleton troops. These kinds of exercises come closest to exercises with troops. They improve practical control of troop combat actions -- they eliminate chance elements to a great degree, and at the same time significantly reduce the expenditures of forces and means as compared with exercises conducted with troops.

With a view to training commanders and staffs for conducting combined operations with the fraternal armies of member countries of the Warsaw Pact, control organs of formations and large units of the Polish Armed Forces have taken part in many command-staff exercises. For example, in one command-staff exercise on maps, held in the Silesian Military District, the command of a Soviet Army division took part, which for the duration of the exercise became a part of a Polish combined-arms army; and the operations group of an adjacent Soviet combined-arms army also participated. At another exercise a group of Soviet Army officers fulfilled the role of the staff of a division operating on the axis where a Polish division was being committed to battle. Both divisions maintained communications with each other and also coordinated joint problems. To achieve better cooperation, division staffs exchanged operations groups with communications means. Problems of cooperation with staffs of formations of the Czechoslovak People's Army were solved in the same way at the SHUMAVA exercise.

To improve cooperation with fraternal armies, we are devoting considerable attention at command-staff exercises to training in the Russian language. Toward this aim, at many exercises, at certain stages or on certain days specified in the plan of the exercise, all combat documents, reports, situation reports, decisions, combat orders, etc. are worked out and delivered exclusively in Russian.

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In addition, intelligence officers are improving their knowledge of Western languages. Intelligence organs are given "captured" combat documents in English and German, and then the procedure for exploiting these documents is checked.

In command-staff exercises commanders and staffs are trained mainly to perform their prescribed duties. At the same time we are following the practice of training control organs to work at the next higher level. In addition, we are working out the problems of allocating groups of officers with communications means to replace subordinate levels of control that are put out of action, as well as to reinforce these levels of control with officers from other units and facilities.

Success on the battlefield will depend largely on the speed with which combat tasks are transmitted to the troops. Therefore, the time required to organize combat operations at certain levels must be reduced to the minimum. In order for subordinate staffs and troops to have the greatest possible amount of time, it is essential to be working out decisions and at the same time transmitting the tasks to the commanders and staffs of several levels. This can be achieved by assigning to the subordinate staffs preliminary individual tasks which are augmented with the necessary instructions as the decision is worked out. This method is being put into practice at multi-level command-staff exercises, as well as at exercises using skeleton troops.

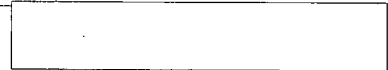
In reducing the time required to collect and process data and work out a decision, the use of means of the automation and mechanization of control is an important factor. In this field long-range plans have been developed, which come into use during command-staff exercises. Slowly but surely the organizational-technical means for staff service, along with electronic computer equipment, are being introduced.

During command-staff exercises it is advisable to create a complex operational-tactical situation, as well as working conditions at field command posts for control that are close to those of actual combat. The degree of complexity must depend on the level of training of the officers and on the cohesiveness of those staffs taking part in the exercise.

In order to make the situation during command-staff exercises more complicated, interruptions are created in the functioning of communications, responsible individuals are replaced, some of the officers are removed from their work because of casualties, staffs are reinforced with officers from another troop unit, and the working out of a decision

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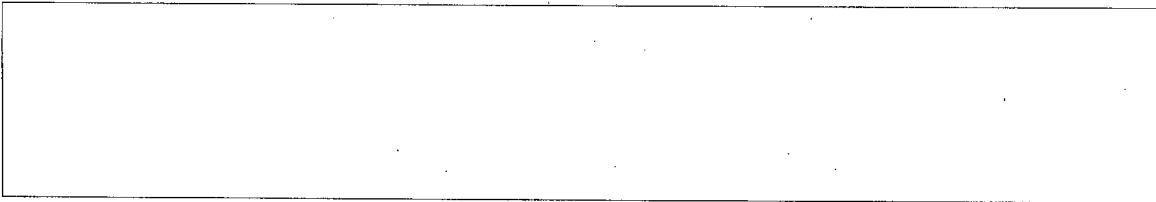


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and the control of troop actions under conditions of jamming are conducted on a parallel basis.

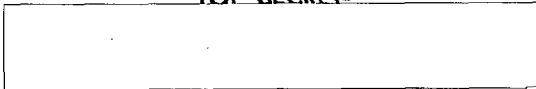
During command-staff exercises, particular attention is devoted to the creative solution of operational-tactical problems, and to the search for original solutions both in the use of subordinate troops and in the forms, methods, and style of operation of commanders and staffs.

Thus, the experience of the command-staff exercises conducted in the Polish Armed Forces shows that they are an important means of raising the combat readiness of staffs to perform the combat tasks assigned to them.



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TYPES AND CLASSIFICATION OF COMMAND-STAFF EXERCISES

Types of Exercises	Scale			Classification of Exercises									Number of Themes		
				Number of Levels			Number of Sides		Purpose and Training Goals						
	Tactical	Operational	Strategic	Single-Level	Two-Level	Multi-level	One-sided	Two-sided	Teamwork (Training)	Demonstration	Testing	Monitoring and Inspection	Episodic	One Theme	Several Themes
Exercises on Maps	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Exercises in the Field with Communications Means	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			X

Table 1

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SEQUENCE OF OPERATION WHEN PREPARING COMMAND-STAFF EXERCISES

Steps	Exercises	
	On maps	In the field with communications means
Planning the exercises	X	X
Studying the theoretical materials and experience of exercises previously held	X	X
Publishing instructions on preparing for the exercises	X	X
Developing the concept and plan for conduct of the exercise	X	X
Reconnoitering the terrain		X
Drafting the documents for the exercise	X	X
Drafting the organizational order to conduct the exercise	X	X
Holding a briefing with officers from the directing body and umpires		X
Organizing railroad shipments		X
Organizing the reinforcement of personnel and the replenishment of materiel for troop units participating in the exercise		X
Preparing the theoretical part of the critique of the exercise	X	X

Table 2

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SEQUENCE OF DRAFTING DOCUMENTS FOR COMMAND-STAFF EXERCISES

Name of documents	Exercises	
	On maps	In the field with communications means
Plan for preparation of the exercise	X	X
Concept for each side, and the legend	X	X
Organizational order	X	X
Operational-tactical mission		
Plan for reconnoitering the area of the exercise (command post)		X
Plan for conducting the exercise	X	X
Tentative outline of the dynamics of the battle (on maps)	X	X
Orders and instructions for participants in the exercise	X	X
Instructions for secure control		X
Plan for training axis officers and umpires		X
Plan for relocating the command post during the exercise		X
Instructions for umpires		X
Distribution for the delivery of exercise documents	X	X
Critique of the exercise	X	X

Table 3

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