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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20505

18 June 1980

MEMORANDUM FOR: The Director of Central Intelligence
FROM : John N. McMahon
Deputy Director for Operations
SUBJECT : [Redacted] Report

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Page 1 of 12 Pages

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Page 2 of 12 Pages



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Intelligence Information Special Report

COUNTRY Poland/ Warsaw Pact

DATE OF INFO. December 1979

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SUBJECT

Critique of Exercise TARCZA (SHIELD)-79 by Marshal KULIKOV

SOURCE Documentary

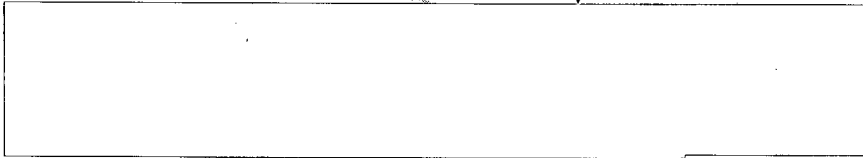
Summary:

This report is a translation of a SECRET Polish document, a Critique of Exercise TARCZA-79 by Marshal of the Soviet Union V. KULIKOV. The document describes the structure of participating allied forces, and the objectives of the exercise. Marshal KULIKOV points out several weaknesses in the command and control system, including insufficient use of automated command and control systems, and occasional delays in transmitting, receiving, and execution of combat orders, indicating problems in training. The language barrier was cited as a persistent problem during the exercise, in that military personnel of non-Soviet Warsaw Pact countries frequently had difficulty communicating with their Soviet counterparts because of inadequate knowledge of Russian.

End of Summary

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In accordance with the plan of joint training undertakings of the Combined Armed Forces, the joint operational and tactical exercise "TARCZA-79" (SHIELD-79) was held in May 1979 on the territory of the Hungarian Peoples Republic, under the direction of the Minister of Defense of the Hungarian Peoples Republic. The exercise was a practical realization of the main guidelines of our brotherly parties ordering further improvement of the level of combat readiness and training of the troops of the Combined Armed Forces, and also strengthening the defense system of the Warsaw Pact member states.

The forces taking part in the exercise demonstrated great readiness and capability to protect the attainments of socialism, jointly with forces of other fraternal states. This exercise was a good school for combat, patriotic, and internationalist education, a school for brotherhood in arms.

For the exercise, one of the more complex themes was adopted: "Organization and conduct of an offensive by combined-arms forces in coalitional structure, initially using classical means of warfare, and then nuclear arms."

The fundamental training objectives of the exercise were:

- improvement of practical competence of commanders, commands and staffs in planning, organization, and conduct of the offensive with forces grouped in coalitional structure;

- improvement in efficiency of troop actions on land and in the air, command of forces and organization of coordination during joint execution of tasks in a complex situation;

- further intensification and strengthening of internationalist and combat brotherhood in the ranks of the fraternal armies, and strengthening the might of the Warsaw Pact.

The main outstanding feature of the exercise was that the forces and staffs which took part were from the Bulgarian Peoples Army, the Hungarian Peoples Army, the Soviet Army, the Czechoslovak Peoples Army, as well as the staffs of the Socialist Republic of Romania.

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* The exercise participants included 6 motorized regiments, an air-assault landing regiment, 5 aviation regiments and 2 helicopter regiments, units and subunits of arms of troops, 2 army staffs, a corps staff, and 6 division staffs; there was also a considerable number of personnel, armament, and military equipment: about 25,000 troops, 197 tanks, 350 guns and mortars, over 700 infantry combat vehicles, and 280 aircraft and helicopters.

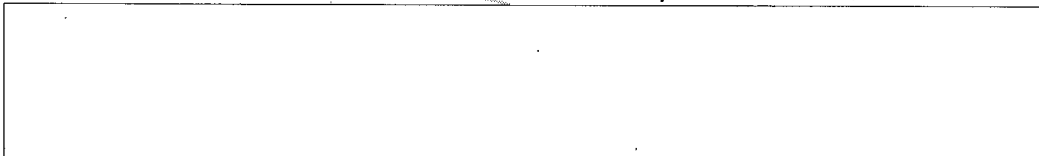
The application of operational and tactical training and the experiences from the "SHIELD-79" exercise confirm the objective and effectiveness of training commanders, staffs, and troops during command and staff exercises with the participation of full complements of tactical large units and units of all arms of troops, equipped with the latest modern armaments and military equipment.

This type of exercise permits a comprehensive revision of the entire problem of planning, organization, and conduct of combat activities. They teach in a practical manner commanders and control staffs the grouping of forces in coalition, they create for them a capability of close contact with forces, verification of the practicality of their decisions and calculations, and approximate conditions of combat situations.

By contrast, operational-tactical training cannot be limited only to conducting command-staff or CPX exercises without troop participation. This type of exercise does not as a general rule produce anticipated benefits. Commanders and staffs in the course of these exercises do not develop practical habits in commanding forces, deprived of the capability of verifying the practicality of their calculations, and improvement of their competence in organizing for battle on the scene. As a consequence, during exercises with troops, these commanders and staffs get confused and demonstrate a low competence in troop command. Such a state was ascertained, during the past exercise, in the staffs of the Army of the Socialist Republic of Romania.

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The "SHIELD-79" exercise was conducted as a unilateral, operational and tactical exercise in the field, according to a uniform design, against a background of a front offensive operation in a complex situation requiring great ingenuity from commanders and staffs, great efficiency and competent work organization, and skillful utilization of forces and means. All staffs and troops, except for the Army of the Socialist Republic of Romania, entered into the composition of the combined-arms army of the Hungarian Peoples Army. The division staffs and staff of one regiment of the Army of the Socialist Republic of Romania conducted separate operations as an independent Romanian corps.

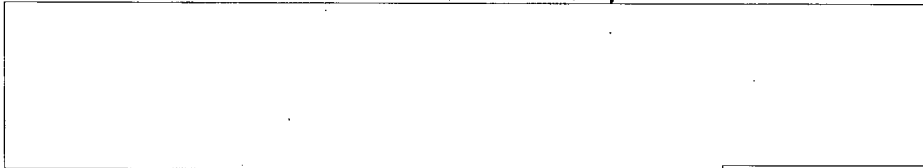
During the exercise, the basic types and methods of conducting combat activities were revised, characteristic of contemporary operations in an allied system: planning of the offensive operation, operational deployment of forces, repulse of an enemy attack, overcoming the security zone, breaking through the enemy defense line, development of the attack, overcoming wide water barriers from the march in coordination with operational and tactical assault landings, commanding forces by development and displacement of command posts over actual distances.

A positive element was the fact that consistent with the purposes of the exercise, it encompassed a number of tactical exercises with motorized and tank units and subunits with participation of artillery, aviation, and combat helicopters, including firing of combat ammunition. Practical operations of the troops during these exercises enabled commanders and staffs to revise realistically the problems of command, coordination, and the conduct of joint combat operations.

Generally Exercise "SHIELD-79" was conducted in a highly organized and instructive manner. Stated training objectives were attained. It was successfully conducted thanks to the great amount of preparatory work performed by the exercise director, the staff of the directorate, and the national and allied commands.

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The exercise demonstrated an increase in the operational and tactical degree of preparation of commands and staffs at all levels, competence in organization of combat operations within a limited period of time, their comprehensive security, and uninterrupted command of the troops and their cooperation under complicated conditions of joint operations (combat activities).

The personnel of the tactical large units, sections, and subunits demonstrated great sacrifice, discipline, training, competence of concerted action and good cooperation on the battlefield, in an atmosphere of friendship and fraternity of arms. The operations of the troops and work of the staffs demonstrated convincingly the aspirations of all participants in the exercise to strengthen friendship, solidarity and mutual respect.

Weapons and military equipment operated without fail. Use in the exercise of new models of armament and military equipment (T-72 tanks, AKATSIYA and GVOZDIKA self-propelled artillery, CHABER mortars, MIG-23M aircraft, MI-24D helicopters, KUB antiaircraft missiles) has demonstrated that the combat competency of units and subunits of the ground, air and antiaircraft defense forces, equipped with new types of armament and military equipment, has increased considerably and that personnel are capable of successful fulfillment of tasks in combat and operations.

The exercise corroborated the unanimity and aptness of views for preparation and execution of joint operations (combat), as well as the operational and tactical norms accepted in the allied forces.

During the exercise, automation of troop command and standardization of combat documents were widely applied in staffs at all levels. At duty stations of the main army staff functionaries, monitor screens were installed, which permitted fast reception of information from the electronic digital computers. Mobile data-processing stations were established at the quartermaster command posts of armies and divisions. The application of these means considerably improved the work of the officers and permitted accelerated sound decision making.

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Copy # 2





At the same time, the exercise showed that some problems in training of forces and staffs had not been fully mastered.

Various commanders and staffs in a number of cases conducted much too superficial analyses of situations, minimizing the combat capability of the enemy. The proposals were not always supported by essential calculations. There were instances where the combat orders arrived late, and monitoring their implementation was not organized. Information from reconnaissance was transmitted late and in garbled form. Radioelectronic warfare means were not utilized very widely, and were little effective.

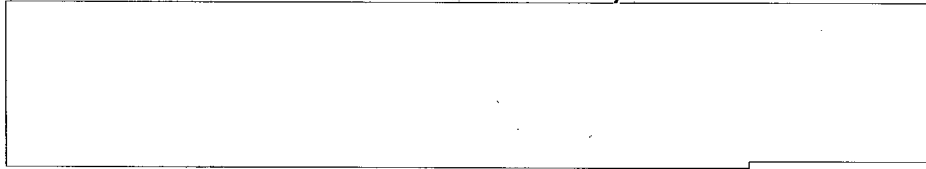
The exercise conducted confirms the need for additional improvement of commanders' work methods in the area of cooperation among operational and tactical large units of various nationalities, steadfast leadership for groupings of forces having coalitional composition, comprehensive support of their activities in combat and operation, fuller and more effective utilization of the combat potential of new armament and military equipment.

During planning of combat operations, formation of groupings of rocket troops and artillery is not anticipated in advance for the purpose of neutralizing the enemy while carrying out the main tasks in the course of operations, and a second launching of operational-tactical rockets is not planned during the first massed nuclear strike, which considerably lowers the effectiveness of the tasks being fulfilled.

Artillery preparation for breakthrough is organized during combat of assigned units, which permits detecting the defense structure and preparing fire strikes on its most important elements. During artillery preparation, great fire effectiveness was demonstrated by tanks firing point-blank, by self-propelled artillery, antitank guided missiles and CHABER automatic mortars. During fire support of the attack, self-propelled artillery demonstrated high quality.

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Copy # 8





Training confirmed that it is necessary to create in advance groupings of rocket troops and artillery for the purpose of supporting entry into combat of second echelon troops, to repel counterattacks, to overcome wide water barriers and for air assault-landing operations.

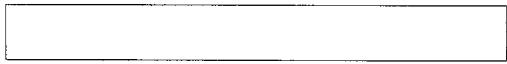
✓ In the course of the exercise, too little attention was devoted to coordination of fire and movement or to extensive troop maneuvers on the battlefield. The attack on the forward edge of an enemy defense by motorized subunits and tanks was carried out in a straight line manner with frequent stops. In the attack, the fire capabilities of infantry combat vehicles were not always fully utilized for the purpose of supporting the attack of the troops, successful deployment after nuclear strikes, and with selected units operating in the depth of the enemy's defense.

✓ The methods and sequence for dismounting of troops from infantry combat vehicles and armored transporters were poorly mastered; subunits often carried out this action too slowly. ✓ Calculations show that troop dismounts at vehicle speeds of 8-12 kilometers per hour permit maintaining a high tempo of attack, faster entry into direct contact with the enemy and protecting oneself against greater losses.

✓ The problem of organization of coordination has not been completely mastered by attacking forces in airborne landings nor were the methods of employing tactical assault landings and raider units operating in wooded and hilly terrain.

The troops and staffs have not fully mastered the methods of overcoming wide water barriers. Experience teaches that overcoming barriers should be conducted simultaneously on a wide front, after effectively rendering the enemy helpless by fire.

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An analysis of the exercise revealed likewise the necessity for further improvement of methods of using new aviation equipment, especially fire support helicopters. We should train personnel of helicopter subunits in attacking low-altitude targets by efficient utilization of terrain configuration, instilling the principle of strike execution at first sight, and firing rockets from over our own territory.

Conditions for conducting combat and operations within the allied structure require continuation and improvement of air command by TO&E centers and command groups (Combat and Command Control Center, Combat Command and Control Groups) and their unfailing cooperation with operational and tactical large units of ground forces and National Air Defense, rational and comprehensive utilization of radioelectronic warfare means for the purpose of overcoming the tactical and operational zone of the enemy antiaircraft defense. Further development of reconnaissance and bomber aviation from the point of view of increasing its effectiveness in ground forces support should be planned, as well as more use of aviation for gaining air supremacy and use on a mass scale on the axis of the ground forces attack.

The exercise again demonstrated that the language barrier constitutes a considerable difficulty during command organization, and in coordination among units and tactical large units of allied armies. It should be noted that one of the ways to resolve this problem is with more active study by cadres of staffs and officers in communicating in Russian and also by carrying out reciprocal exchanges among the allied forces in advance of prepared operational groups and radio station services. Resolving this problem undoubtedly will be conducive likewise to faster inculcation in the forces of a uniform establishment of combat and "conversation" handbooks in Russian.

Reliable troop command security demands mastery of unified principles of organization and security of communications, and an organizational structure of signal units responsive to these principles. For needs of secret troop command the aim is to link secure radiotelephone communications up to regimental level, tactical rocket battalion, and telephone and telegraph secure communications--up to missile divisions and brigades.

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Regardless of wide utilization during the exercise of various kinds of technical means improving troop command, their use has not changed the traditional methods of staff work and has not shortened the time in making a decision. This occurrence was the result of selective application of automated command means, instead of comprehensive.

At present the allied armies have started to develop a comprehensive field command system for the forces (PASUV) which will eliminate these deficiencies.

The high requirements established for the problems of combat readiness of the armies of the Combined Armed Forces confirm the great necessity of quicker introduction of the PASUV system to the forces.

The potential enemy has at its disposal great capabilities for setting up various types of mine barriers, the overcoming of which would present great difficulty.

The exercise showed that overcoming these mine barriers during combat is not assured by a required number of means to open passages. In this situation, it is undoubtedly advisable to apply a combination of methods to open passages, equipping first line tanks with sweeping gear (KMT-4, KMT-6), utilizing rockets with explosive charges, and skillful maneuvering of means designed to open passages on the battlefield.

The increasing tasks of rear area support of combat actions of forces with a coalitional composition require further balancing of the capabilities of large units and units of the allied rear forces, and establishment of a standard onomastics system. Calculations show that for reliable rear area support of forces under complex conditions of allied actions, it is necessary to increase mobile reserves of materiel in divisions for 5-7 days of combat (especially ammunition). This task, according to our view, can be implemented as a first priority by equipping transport subunits with multiton vehicles and increasing the amount of ammunition on new artillery prime movers.

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Page 12 of 12 Pages

The ministers of national defense of the allied forces during preliminary recapitulation placed great significance on the "SHIELD-79" exercise, serving as further improvement in the preparation of forces to conduct combat actions in an allied structure and expressed a view on the usefulness of conducting similar exercises in the future. We completely concur with this opinion.

According to us, the suggestions on the "SHIELD-79" exercise formulated in generalized material by the director of the exercise, and the proposed recommendations for practical implementation, will serve for further improvement of the level of operational and tactical training of the troops and staffs of the allied armies. In particular, this must be taken into consideration in the 1980 training year, in which it is necessary to prepare and conduct a number of large operational-tactical and tactical exercises.

V. KULIKOV
Marshal of the Soviet Union

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