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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

REPORT

CD NO.

COUNTRY USSR (Kuybyshev Oblast)

DATE DISTR. 4 November 1955

SUBJECT Flight Training by VDA in Syzran

NO. OF PAGES 5

PLACE ACQUIRED

NO. OF ENCLS. (LISTED BELOW) 25X1

DATE OF INFO.

SUPPLEMENT TO REPORT NO.

25X1

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Comments:

1. The expansion of VDA in the title of this report is Verwaltung der Aeroklubs, a cover name for the East German air force.
2. In this report the city name, 'Kuibishev, has been misspelled and should be Kuybyshev.

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COUNTRY	USSR	REPORT	
TOPIC	Flight Training by VDA in Syzran		
EVALUATION		PLACE OBTAINED	
DATE OF CONTENT			
DATE OBTAINED		DATE PREPARED	27 December 1954
REFERENCES			
PAGES	4	ENCLOSURES (NO. & TYPE)	
REMARKS	This is UNEVALUATED Information		

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1. Upon completion of a preparatory course in Pinnow and Pirna/Sonnenstein between January and September 1952, the 400th VPL School/HVL transferred to the USSR in September 1952. The students, accompanied by about 10 Soviet officers wearing civilian clothes, were shipped by rail to Syzran (5311 N 4827 E) via Brest Litovsk - Moscow and Kuibishev (5312 N/5009 E). In Moscow, the students were shown the most interesting places during a one-day halt. ¹ The course in the USSR lasted from 1 October 1952 to about 22 October 1953. The students were quartered in a two-story brick building of a Soviet headquarters on the southern edge of Syzran. The kitchen and messhalls were housed in a separate building. The two buildings of the course were surrounded by a board fence and thus separated from the buildings of the Soviet headquarters which housed a Soviet Infantry regiment. Some of the Soviet instructors were quartered in the buildings of the Soviet headquarters and others apparently were quartered in the town. The sentries who guarded the installation were furnished by the Soviet Infantry regiment.
2. The training course comprised:
 - a. The chiefs of the course including:
 - 1 Soviet supervisor with the rank of lieutenant colonel,
 - 1 Soviet instruction leader with the rank of major,
 - 1 German instruction leader, Captain Raatz (fnu), about 36 years old, 175 cm tall, strictly following the communist party line, now chief of the 1st Aeroclub,²
 - 1 Soviet political officer with the rank of major, about 15 Soviet officers in charge of theoretical training, some of them belonged to various branches of the Soviet Army and,

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during the course, wore Soviet Air Force uniforms; and, about 25 Soviet officers, who served as flight instructors, detached from unidentified units.

- b. About 10 Soviet officers and NCOs acting as interpreters.
 - c. A total of 280 German officers of the VPL who were subdivided into 4 groups of 70 each.
3. From 1 October until about 28 December 1952, theoretical training only, was given daily from 0800 to 1300 and from 1530 to 1930. Private studies were held from 2030 to 2200. Instruction included the following subjects:

- political indoctrination
- aircraft engines
- airframes
- radio
- equipment
- navigation
- aerodynamics
- meteorology
- piloting of aircraft
- parachuting
- basic training
- firearms practice
- sports
- Russian language

Every Saturday, the students were engaged in basic training and also used the showers. The courses were given in Russian by Soviet officers, who were specialists in the various subjects given. The interpreters translated the instruction sentence by sentence. During these theoretical lessons, the subjects which had been given in the theoretical preparatory course in Finnow (near Angermuende) and in Prina were generally repeated. Every week, 4 hours of political indoctrination by the Soviet political officer, in addition to 6 hours of private political study and the required students' reports on special topics. All of the students were convinced communists or at least appeared as such. About 10 percent were fanatics.

Flight training was conducted on Yak-18s and Yak-11s at 4 auxiliary airfields located around Syzran. The aircraft were maintained by Soviet technicians and mechanics with whom the Germans had only very loose contact. It could not be determined which units or schools furnished the aircraft. Each student was scheduled to practice flying on Yak-18s for 60 hours and on Yak-11s also for 60 hours. The following flights were actually made:

- (1) Local flights: 4 turns of 90 degrees at altitudes between 150 and 200 meters; after the landing, taxiing back to the take-off point, with the instructor.
- (2) Local flights: same as item (1), but 3 or 4 circuits in succession, with go-around procedures after short touch-downs.

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- (3) Local flights: same as items (1) and (2), without instructor. The students were permitted to solo after 40 to 60 take-offs with the instructor, depending on the student's power of comprehension.
- (4) High-altitude flights: in the air space over airfield with the instructor at altitudes between 3,500 and 4,000 meters, without oxygen supply.
- (5) Flights in the area of about 20 km around the field: with instructor.
- (6) aerobatics: introduction by the instructor into the "figure program" of aerobatics; the student had to fly the individual figures of the program in solo flight. The program included: diving, Immelmann turn, roll, spins and loops.
- (7) Flying in an element of two.
- (8) Instrument flight.
- (9) Parachuting: each student had to make 2 jumps including 1 jump during the winter term and 1 jump during the summer term. For these parachute jumps, a Li-2 transport was used.

From October 1952 to March 1953, 20 students were replaced because of physical unfitness. 3

- 4. The four auxiliary airfields used for flight training were located 30 to 40 km around Syzran. They had a firm grass cover which was in poor condition. Each of the 4 training groups alternately practiced at one of the airfields. The students were hauled to the fields on trucks. At the individual airfields there were only 2 or 3 temporary buildings housing the flight control station, workshop, and a guard. The maintenance personnel were apparently not quartered at the fields. The individual landing fields measured about 850 x 600 meters. at the end of the training course in late October 1953, an examination was held before a Soviet commission which consisted of the flight instructors and the chiefs of the course. The examination included practical flying and theoretical knowledge. 4
- 5. Each student received a monthly pay of 600 rubles with which he could purchase some goods in a shop housed in the quartering building. Food was issued in sufficient quantity but there was no variety. After arriving in Syzran, all of the students were issued Soviet uniforms without service color or rank insignia. The mood among the students changed. The long service hours and strict separation from the population and members of the Soviet army had a bad effect on their morale. Flight training was done with great passion. During the trip to

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Syzran, where the students were trucked to the showers on Saturdays, it was strictly forbidden for them to talk to one another. The individual training groups were always kept in close formations. The students returned to East Germany over the same route they had taken to the USSR. After their arrival in the SAG, they were transferred to the 3 Aeroclubs.

1. Comment. The present report confirms a previous statement according to which VDA pilots were trained near Kuibishev between October 1952 and October 1953. 25X1
2. Comment. Captain Raatz is known to have been made the commanding officer of the 1st Aeroclub in Cottbus on 1 December 1953. Prior to that date, Captain Raatz had been a sub-departmental chief in the Planning Section of the Main Administration for Training - Air Force Department (Abteilung Planung in der Hauptverwaltung fuer Ausbildung - Abteilung Luftwaffe). 25X1
3. Comment. The information on air activity supports the assumption that training flights in the USSR were made on Yak-18s and Yak-11s as in the Soviet Zone of Germany. 25X1
4. Comment. According to reports covering the years 1948 and 1949, 3 airfields are known to be located in the Syzran area. One of these airfields has the coordinates 5311 N 4832 E. While the other two airfields are presumably located at the following coordinates 5309 N/4810 E and 5315 N/4839 E. No information has thus far been received on the installations or status of these airfields. 25X1

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