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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20505

8 November 1977

MEMORANDUM FOR: The Director of Central Intelligence
FROM : William W. Wells
Deputy Director for Operations
SUBJECT : WARSAW PACT JOURNAL: The Conduct of
a Tactical Exercise with Field Firing,
Based on the Experience of the Czechoslovak
People's Army

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 describes the conduct of tactical exercises with field firing. It goes into some detail as far as methods and equipment are concerned, and on what level these exercises are conducted in the Czech Army. 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

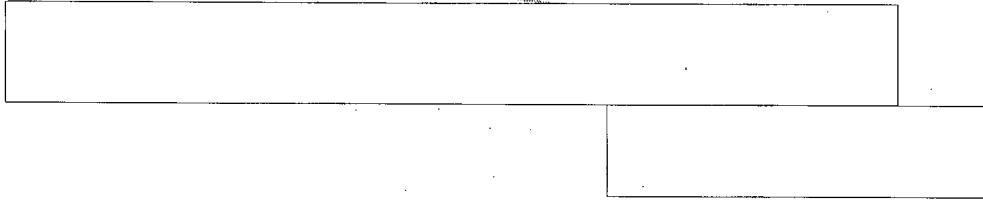
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William W. Wells

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Intelligence Information Special Report

Page 3 of 11 Pages

COUNTRY CZECHOSLOVAKIA/WARSAW PACT

DATE OF
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DATE
8 November 1977

SUBJECT

WARSAW PACT JOURNAL: The Conduct of a Tactical Exercise with Field Firing, Based on the Experience of the Czechoslovak People's Army

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-Major E. Blagut. This article describes the conduct of tactical exercises with field firing. It goes into some detail as far as methods and equipment are concerned, and on what level these exercises are conducted in the Czechoslovak People's Army. 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. 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.

TS #778591
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Page 4 of 11 Pages

The Conduct of a Tactical Exercise with
Field Firing, Based on the Experience of
the Czechoslovak People's Army

by

General-Major E. BLAGUT
Chief of the Combat Training Directorate
Deputy Minister of National Defense
of the Czechoslovak People's Army

Tactical exercises with field firing occupy a key position in the system of field training of troops, commanders, and staffs of the Czechoslovak People's Army. They are the final stage of training and combat coordination of subunits, units, and large units. We have already been planning and conducting tactical exercises with field firing at the level of a company-battalion for a number of years. For small-subunits (field firings of a detachment and platoon), the tactical situation and the ensuing nature of its combat operations are determined by regulations. Tactical exercises with field firing for a company and higher are conducted according to an integrated theme, which includes several types of combat operations.

Since 1969, tactical exercises in the Czechoslovak People's Army have been conducted with field firing at the level of a regiment-division. The basis for this was the necessity of establishing such conditions for commanders, staffs, and subunits, that would make it possible for them to make decisions and to operate in a situation that approaches combat reality to the maximum. The conduct of tactical exercises with field firing is an effective form of field training of the troops. Such exercises also contribute in imparting, to all commanders and subunits taking part in the exercise, practical skills in bringing about cooperation under combat conditions. These exercises allow for the most objective examination of the combat training of troops.

Each tactical exercise with field firing is preceded by careful preparation. With this goal in mind, a number of preparatory exercises are carried out with subunits, both with and without equipment. At the level of a division-regiment, battalion tactical exercises are usually conducted, and the

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training of commanders and staffs is organized. The scale and orientation of the training is determined by the complexity of the theme of the exercises, the level of training, and the combat coordination of the troops and staffs.

Practice has shown the advisability of conducting tactical exercises with field firing with each company (motorized rifle and tank) once a year (at the end of the second half of the training period). For a battalion and higher, the number of these exercises is determined annually in basic training documents. Here, we take into consideration that exercises with field firing are carried out over an entire training year which makes a substantial contribution to the maintenance of constant combat readiness of the troops.

In the troops, a great deal of experience has already been accumulated in organizing and conducting tactical exercises with field firing of companies and battalions. To conduct them, there are firing ranges with portable target equipment for all types of weapons.

We will mention several peculiarities of organizing and conducting exercises at the level of a regiment-division.

For the purpose of conducting an exercise to the full depth with the playing out of different variants of actions of the staffs and troops, on the basis of the increasing fluidity of combat actions, we believe it advisable to begin the exercise outside the firing range usually as a command-staff exercise. In some cases, with the representational troops and with the inclusion of command vehicles up to a company, inclusive, the subunits which were moved out earlier should be brought into battle formation on the border of the firing range. After the playing out of combat actions on the firing range the exercise is ended for subunits, while commanders and staffs with the representational troops continue it as a command-staff exercise.

Tactical exercises with field firing in the Czechoslovak People's Army are usually conducted against a background of army operational command-staff exercises with the partial allocation of troops. During these exercises, as a rule, intensive field firings are carried out on several firing ranges, located on the axis of combat actions, as a form of playing out separate



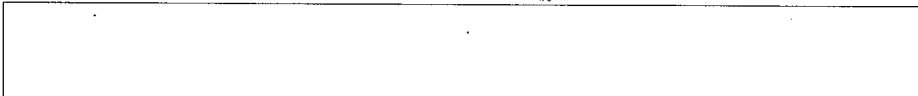
episodes of combat actions. Our army practiced this procedure in several combined exercises of the allied troops. During these exercises, close cooperation was carried out between units and large units of the Czechoslovak People's Army with the troops of the Central Group of Forces. This brought a substantial contribution to strengthening the international unity of fraternal armies. Thus, at the exercise TARAN [BREAKTHROUGH] which was conducted in 1970 against a background of army operational exercises, nine regiments took direct part in the tactical exercise with field firing which included firings by missile subunits and operations of bomber aviation to the entire depth of the army operation.

It is clear that conditions do not always allow field firings to be carried out by all subunits of the combat disposition of units or large units. However, this, in our opinion, is not the decisive factor. Well thought out and clearly planned cooperation of the elements of the battle formation of combined-arms units and subunits, and of artillery and aviation at different stages of the exercise makes it possible, for all practical purposes, to check the field firing of any component part of the combat disposition during a battalion tactical exercise based on the conditions and capabilities of the firing ranges.

Tactical exercises with field firing, which have a conventional structure, are conducted as ordinary tactical exercises at a specific level, and only at separate stages of combat actions is ammunition employed. It follows from this that preparing and conducting such exercises, except for the peculiarities connected with the use of ammunition, have, on the whole, a common form which leads to the unity of views of the director of the exercise and his staff, as well as the umpire organization.

One of the important matters when preparing tactical exercises with field firing is the assurance of safety measures. When working them out, the lines for opening fire and ceasing fire should be defined and all problems should be resolved which ensure reliable safety during the conduct of field firings from the various weapons of the branch arms in accordance with the tactical situation and the calculation of time for commencing and ceasing fire along the lines right up to the simulation of firing

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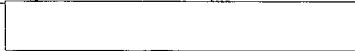
at targets. This whole array of problems should be planned out in advance and worked out with the umpires. Any improvisation can create a threat to the successful conduct of the exercise and can be the cause of its premature termination while playing out the most important stages, and also can violate safety measures. On a similar scale, specific safety measures should be investigated and supported while servicing the target field.

The matter of supporting the timely commitment to action of the "enemy" is rather complicated in those areas where fire tasks are accomplished by field firing. The target field and the movement of targets on it should meet not only the requirements of modern tactical actions, organization, and armament of the probable enemy, but should also allow the directing body to respond both to the trainee commanders' decisions and also to the combat actions of the subunits. This requires that, in addition to the basic type of target situation, other ways also should be prepared according to the earlier assumed actions of the trainee subunits. For this purpose, we practice carrying out the following measures: the target field with targets arranged on it for all types of armament is electrified to at least the depth of the first position of the enemy with the use of the EAMU-56 electrical automatic target device. Targets for firing from tanks with a table of equipment shell are mounted on rotating hoists, and mobile targets are drawn on cables by special winches. The control of a target situation is carried out from the control tower by an order which the director of the exercise gives by radio. Registration of a hit of the pop-up target is ensured by lowering them (rotating them) after they have been hit. Simulation of firing from targets is carried out remotely by wires, battle-noise simulators, or by light simulators (when firing at night).

In the future, we expect control over wires will substitute control by radio.

For support of artillery firings, the firing ranges will be equipped with a target mechanism with pneumatic power distribution and with radio control. We also intend to equip the firing ranges with devices that do not require immediate servicing on the target field, by which the safety of servicing personnel will be ensured.

TS #778591
Copy # 3



Artillery with high trajectory usually fulfils its task by T/E shells from fire positions outside of the combat disposition of motorized rifle subunits. This was elicited, on the one hand, by the necessity of preventing damage of the very sensitive target device, and on the other hand, by safety measures.

When organizing field firings from various types of armament, safety measures should be strictly observed. However, while observing this rule, we try to create a situation which is close to an actual combat operation. Here, we mean to carry out a system of specific measures which, without lowering the safety of the trainees, would allow artillery fire to be conducted over the heads of our troops, bombing by aviation, and negotiation of areas of engineer obstacles, contamination and destruction, creating, in the process, conditions under which actions of attached and supporting weapons of reinforcement would not disrupt the movement of the target in sectors of field firing. At the present time, work is being carried out for the solution of these problems.

The study of the problem of the capability of conducting fire over the heads and through gaps of the troops and the use on a wider scale of explosive and chemical substances is only one of the ways of realizing the requirement of bringing the training closer to combat conditions. For fulfilling this task within the system without arbitrary situations, enemy combat actions should be played out and a situation should be created for the actual working out of matters of materiel, technical, and medical-sanitation support. This means the working out on a full scale of medical, evacuation, and supply activities from small subunits up to large units, inclusive, conducting radiac monitoring of personnel and materiel, working out actions of rescue squads, and carrying out evacuation and repair of combat equipment under field conditions, etc.

With such a structure of organization of tactical exercises, some subunits may resolve certain training problems with the use of live ammunition and others with training ammunition. In so doing, according to the course of the exercises, field firing may be conducted at the beginning, at the end, or in the middle of the exercise, but always in the fluidity of combat actions.

TS #778591
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The experience of exercises conducted shows the necessity of giving a great deal of attention to measures when changing from the use of one type of ammunition to another, especially if after firing with live ammunition, firing with training ammunition is continued. A definite time should be allotted for checking weapons and for removing unexpended ammunition.

The organization and conduct of tactical exercises with field firing at night remains a relatively complicated question. At these exercises, personnel of subunits must show skill in conducting fire against targets in an artificially lighted area and against targets which have decamouflaged themselves by their silhouettes or by muzzle flashes.

For illuminating the battlefield, artillery illuminating rockets (FLG-5000) and illuminating shells are used as well as aerial illumination bombs, illuminating signal cartridges, and to a lesser degree, improvised means. For this, a plan for illumination is being formulated in which each type of illuminating means has its purpose, and in the aggregate forms a specific system of illumination strictly calculated by time and intensity of illumination which supports the necessary conditions for successful actions at night.

When selecting different illumination means, their specific characteristics must be considered both by intensity and by time of illumination, but even with unlimited expenditures for illumination means, it is impossible to make day out of night. Therefore, problems of organizing and conducting a night battle will also remain relevant in the future.

The troops should be taught by taking these peculiarities into consideration.

In order for personnel to get practice detecting and destroying targets with different features of illumination, we usually proceed from the calculation that 50 percent of the targets will be detected by muzzle flashes, 20 percent by silhouettes, and 30 percent by night vision instruments and by illumination means.

When planning the exercises, we also consider that the shift from day combat actions to night combat actions and vice versa

TS #778591

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will be worked out.

A very important question when organizing tactical exercises with field firing at night is the marking of base and side lines with lights which ensure the direction and boundary of firing, and also the marking of our troops with lights. For maintaining direction in the depth of the enemy defense, a bonfire (burning object) may be lit or any other illuminated object (reference point) may be used. Illuminated markings on the backs of the helmets is the way we identify our troops. The sides of the trainee subunits are marked, as a rule, by illuminated cartridges. Combat vehicles are marked in the same way. In order to achieve unity of marking, we have established by regulations that the flanks of firing subunits and of antitank grenade launcher personnel are designated by a red light, and the stern of each combat vehicle is marked with a blue light (lantern). This enables the director of the exercise to see at any time all elements of the battle formation of trainee subunits.

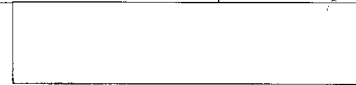
We are conducting, for the time being, tactical exercises with field firing at night up to a company, inclusive.

Tactical exercises with field firing to a significant degree promote an increase in the morale-psychological training of the soldier and also strengthen his faith in his weapon. This especially concerns soldiers who make up the service teams of the crew-served weapons for whom field firing is the conclusion of the complicated period of special training. Frequently, during these firings, soldiers determine their assignment completely and make their contribution to the successful conduct of field firing. On the other hand, even to the simple soldier with an assault rifle, these exercises instill a feeling of combat comradeship, and inspire collective efforts in the interests of fulfilling combined tasks. For commanders and staffs of all levels, these exercises are checks of their theoretical knowledge and practical preparedness for troop control. During the exercises, their organizational abilities and proficiency in controlling subordinates are more fully revealed.

The practice of combat training has confirmed that tactical exercises with field firing, conducted in the final stage of training of the troops are the most effective form of training

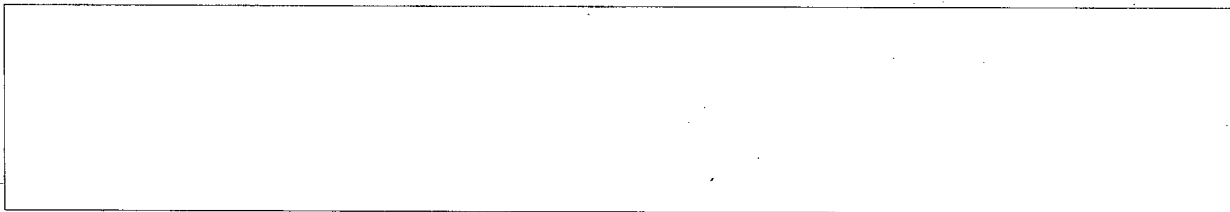
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Page 11 of 11 Pages

and combat coordination of subunits, units, and large units and their staffs, bringing troop actions closer to combat reality, which corresponds to the conditions of modern battle, and also making it possible to more objectively determine the level of combat effectiveness of the Czechoslovak People's Army.



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