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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20505

21 April 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence

FROM : William E. Nelson
Deputy Director for Operations

SUBJECT : [redacted] Report

1. Enclosed is a [redacted] report. For convenience of reference by USIB agencies, the codeword [redacted] has been assigned to the product of certain extremely sensitive agent sources of CIA's Directorate of Operations. The word [redacted] is classified [redacted] and is to be used only among persons authorized to read and handle this material.

2. Requests for extra copies of this report or for utilization of any part of this report in any other form should be addressed to the originating office.

[redacted]
William E. Nelson

FIRDB-312/01190-76

TS #209867
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[redacted]

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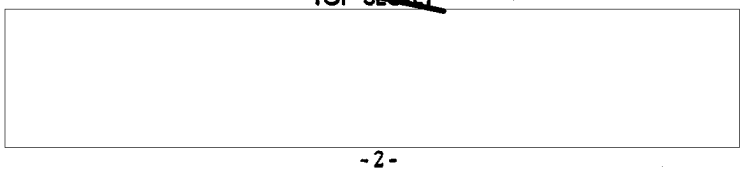

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Intelligence Information Special Report

COUNTRY Warsaw Pact

FIRDB - 312/01190-76

DATE OF INFO. 1975

DATE 21 April 1976

SUBJECT

Warsaw Pact Doctrine on the Operation of an Air Army

SOURCE A reliable Warsaw Pact officer.

SUMMARY:

This report discusses the role of air forces and air defense forces in the first days of a war, describes readiness levels for an air army and its sub-units, and gives performance characteristics for SU-20 (FITTER) and MIG-23 (FLOGGER) aircraft.

END OF SUMMARY

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1. The Arab-Israeli War of 1967 confirmed a principle long known to the Soviet military that the outcome of a war can be decided in its first phase by the air force. The past eight years have seen decided progress in Soviet air strength, so that there appears to be some basis to Soviet claims about the illusory nature of the supposed Western air superiority.

2. In line with this development there has been a change of thinking about initial deployment of Polish air forces in a war. Up until 1975 it had been intended that the Polish air army, at the outbreak of a conflict, would operate within the unified system of National Air Defense to repel Western air strikes. This plan has been changed in favor of immediate engagement of the air army in the theater operations, leaving defensive action to the National Air Defense alone, unless the war should be started by a sudden surprise attack on Poland. However, the division of areas of responsibility between the air army and defense forces is not absolutely clear-cut because, as the front advances, the air defense forces would move westward to fill the gap.

3. If a war broke out without the use of nuclear weapons the entire air force of the unified armed forces, i.e., Warsaw Pact frontal and long-range air forces, would engage in theater operations for up to two days. During that time there would be three massive air raids to overpower and destroy Western air forces and antiaircraft defenses, as elaborated in paragraphs 4-5 below. The exact moment ("Ch" or "H-hour") of crossing the border to enter enemy air space would be determined for the entire theater of military operations by the theater commander. (If nuclear weapons were used, this would not be an air operation of the military theater, but the so-called "first massed nuclear strike", involving strategic forces, missile forces and aviation of the front.)

4. The initial massive strike in an air operation to rout an enemy aviation grouping would be delivered by

the main forces of an air army, disposed operationally into three echelons:

a. The first echelon (of support) may consist of three regiments of fighters, up to four regiments of fighter-bombers, and units from the aerial reconnaissance and radio jamming forces. From H-hour + 0:01 to H-hour + 0:35 this echelon would neutralize NATO HAWK batteries, the control centers and posts, and the air defense warning system; it would destroy enemy aircraft at the most important airfields, and destroy enemy aircraft which had taken off.

b. The second echelon (strike echelon) may consist of two regiments of fighters, two regiments of fighter-bombers, three regiments of bombers, the main aerial reconnaissance forces and a radio jamming regiment. In the period H-hour + 0:15 to H-hour + 0:35, jointly with fighter aircraft of the first echelon, the second echelon would destroy enemy aircraft in aerial combat, destroy launchers of the missile troops, destroy aircraft at their fields and conduct aerial reconnaissance in support of the front.

c. The third echelon may consist of four regiments of fighters--to keep enemy aircraft away from the radar guidance zone and to reinforce fighter aircraft of the first two echelons.

5. In 8 to 10 hours the air army must be ready to deliver with its main forces a second massive strike, a third massive strike, and "D2".

6. The threat of a surprise attack by the probable enemy requires uninterrupted maintenance of all forces and keeping the means of the air army at high combat readiness. The ways of attaining this state are:

a. Improvement, and maintenance at a high level, of the combat readiness and morale-political qualities of personnel.

b. Advance development and refining of the plans for combat actions.

c. Maintaining at least 90 to 95 percent of combat aircraft and crews at constant readiness for combat action.

d. Maintenance of an airfield network, a control system and logistical support means in line with the plan for combat actions.

e. Continuous tracking of the air enemy and detection of his level of combat readiness.

f. Constant readiness of large units and units for combat actions in line with the initial strike plan or for repelling a surprise attack by enemy aviation.

g. Organization of combat alert status, dispersed basing and protection of personnel and equipment against weapons of mass destruction.

h. Round-the-clock readiness of command posts for controlling combat actions and constant readiness of radiotechnical means and communications means.

i. Organization of rapid transmittal of combat signals and their efficient implementation by personnel.

7. Depending on the specific conditions of the situation, the air army can be at constant, increased, or full combat readiness. The level of combat readiness of an air army is determined by the commander of front troops (group of forces, military district) in line with orders from the Minister of Defense or the Supreme High Command.

8. The air army is at constant combat readiness at all times during peacetime. When they are at this readiness, aviation units or large units and rear elements of the air army are at their permanent airfields, have been brought to full strength in personnel and equipment, and are at work in line with the plans for combat and operational preparation. As a rule, air regiments of all types of aviation are based one to an airfield. Every air squadron of combat aircraft has crews of flying personnel for one extra flight of aircraft, over and above the number of flights for which it has aircraft. This provides for rotating leave through the year and for constant readiness to begin combat actions with the full complement of combat-ready aircraft.

9. In order to combat aircraft which violate the state border or automatic balloons put up by the enemy, round-the-clock alert status is instituted for pairs and flights of aircraft in fighter aviation units at combat flight readiness number two (see paragraph 20 below). If the situation worsens, the number of forces on alert status is increased and the level of their combat flight readiness is raised.

10. At the command posts of combat units and large units and also at the command post of the air army, round-the-clock duty is carried out with combat teams at reduced strength.

11. An air army at constant combat readiness, after receiving the appropriate signal, can begin take-off for combat actions in 3 to 4 or 8 to 10 minutes for its subunits on alert status, and 1 to 2-1/2 hours for its main forces: One hour in summer and 1 to 1-1/2 hours in winter for fighters and fighter-bombers, and 1-1/2 to 2-1/2 hours for bombers.

12. Increased combat readiness is established in order to reduce the time limits for bringing flying and rear area units and large units to full combat readiness.

Under increased combat readiness, round-the-clock duty is put into effect at command posts of units and large units for generals and officers; the combat teams of command posts are reinforced or duty is mounted with full combat teams.

13. Personnel of units and large units are placed on barracks status; the forward commands of aviation units and the komendatura of the rear units, with the necessary logistical means, communications means and radiotechnical support means, move up to their dispersal airfields. The aviation units and large units are at their permanent or alternate airfields. The aircraft are dispersed, camouflaged, and brought to combat flight readiness number one, number two and number three. Aerial bombs, missiles and shells are mounted beneath the aircraft and the fuzes are armed.

14. Operations groups and aviation representatives either have training in communications means or go out to the all-arms and tank armies.

15. Commanders of the large units and units are given their specific missions for the first sortie. Flying personnel may also receive their combat tasks. The time limits for taking off on a sortie from increased readiness are determined by the commander of front troops. The time for sub-units on alert status may be 3-4 minutes after receiving the signal for the sortie, and for the main forces the time may be 10-15 minutes. (For bombers, depending on whether personnel are already wearing their pressure suits, the time may be 10-25 minutes, and for fighter-bombers it may be 9-22 minutes.)

16. Under full combat readiness, to which the troops have been brought from constant or increased readiness upon receipt of the combat alert signal, all units and large units of the air army, as well as their command posts, are brought to readiness for immediate execution of their combat tasks. The air army control occupies a

previously prepared command post near the command post of the commander of front troops. The forward command post is deployed. The deputy commander of the air army, with an operations group, moves over to the joint command post of the air defense troops of the front or of a large unit of the Air Defense Forces of the country, in order to control the fighter aviation of the air army.

17. Air regiments of all types of aviation, depending on the situation and what measures have been taken beforehand, are re-based to dispersed airfields or remain at the airfields at which the combat alert signal reached them, and are brought to combat flight readiness number one or numbers one and two. Dispersal of aircraft during the period when they are being brought to full combat readiness is not always possible since, in order to re-base an air squadron to an airfield where combat support means are available, 30 to 60 minutes are required (for take-off, flight, landing and refueling). For this reason it may be better to carry out the combat task from the permanent air bases and then to land at the dispersed airfields.

18. No combat aviation crews can be at combat flight readiness number one for more than one hour. Therefore, if the take-off time for the combat mission has not been determined and if the situation requires that crews be at full combat readiness for an undetermined period of time or more than one hour, combat flight readiness number one may be established in each unit for 50 percent of the combat-ready aircraft and readiness number two for the remaining 50 percent of the crews. Units at combat flight readiness number one can begin take-off in 3-4 minutes after receiving the command, and take-off will be completed in 8-10 minutes. For the 50 percent of crews at combat flight readiness number two, if the personnel are at their aircraft and wearing their pressure suits, take-off may occur 5-6 minutes later than from readiness number one. If personnel are located in specially allotted places but have not put on their special clothing, take-off from

combat flight readiness number two may occur 20-25 minutes later than from readiness number one.

19. Units of pilotless reconnaissance craft at full combat readiness are deployed at their launching pads. One group of pilotless reconnaissance craft are on their launchers; some or all of them (depending on the task) are kept at readiness for combat launching.

20. In order to maintain the constant readiness of aircraft to fly combat missions, and in order to provide rest periods for flying personnel and allow the necessary time for preparing aviation equipment, three levels of combat flight readiness have been established:

a. In combat flight readiness number one, for all types of front aviation, the crews are in the aircraft ready for immediate switch-on of engines and take-off. As a rule, the time spent by crews at readiness number one must not exceed one hour.

b. At readiness number two the crews are at their aircraft or in locations specified by the commander and the aircraft are completely prepared for combat flight.

c. At readiness number three the flying and technical personnel are either working or are resting at places specified by the commander, ready to proceed immediately to their aircraft. The aircraft are prepared for combat flight but the missiles and bombs have not been mounted and are being kept near the aircraft.

21. The time required for take-off, from receipt of the command signal to the beginning and completion of take-off, increases as the readiness number increases. This is shown on the table below, giving time (in minutes) required for beginning and completion of take-off.

Level of Readiness	Fighter and Fighter-Bomber Aviation			Bomber Aviation		
	Pair	Flight	Squadron	Single Crew	Flight	Squadron
No. 1	3-4	4-6	6-8	5-6	6-8	9-10
No. 2	9-10	12-15	15-18	10-15	15-20	25-30
No. 3*	25-30	30-35	Up to 40	35-40	35-40	45-50
No. 3**	55 ~~50-57~~ 51-52	55-60	55-65	65	65-70	75-80***

* - Time limits when conventional means of destruction are being used.

** - Time limits when nuclear bombs are being used.

*** - Time limits when four nuclear bombs are mounted.

22. Experience from training exercises has shown the capability of fighter and fighter-bomber regiments to take off for a sortie in 6-7 minutes from readiness number one when located in shelters. Preparation of air sub-units and units for a second sortie after landing at an airfield may require the following times:

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for fighter and fighter-bomber aviation	- air squadron: 1 to 1-1/2 hours - air regiment: 2 hours
for bomber aviation	- air squadron: 1-1/2 hours - air regiment: up to 2-1/2 hours

23. During combat actions, the commander and staff of the air army and the commanders and staffs of large units and units take all measures to bring the units to combat readiness quickly and to carry out repeat sorties, since in a tense combat situation a high intensity of air actions may be required--as many as four to six combat sorties per 24 hours.

24. Aircraft performances are shown in the table below:

	SU-20	MIG-23 [Bomber]	MIG-23 [Fighter]
	1	1	1
Maximum flight speed at altitude of 10,000 meters (kph)	2,250	1,800	2,500
Maximum flight speed at ground level (kph)	1,300	1,350	1,350
Practical ceiling(meters)	16,500	17,600	17,600
Maximum tactical radius in kilometers			
- at ground level	400	400	500 (at H=5,000 m
- with variable profile	600	600	800 (at H=10,000) m
Armament			
Rockets or Missiles	192 S-5KM or 6 S-24 4 R-3S	128 S-5K"Ch" or 4 S-24	4 R-3R or 4 R-3S or 4 K-13M
Guns	2xNR-30 2xChPK-23 Gun GSh-23	1xGSh-23 2xChPK-23 Gun GSh-23	1xGSh-23
Points for mounting/ Loading	8	6	5
Bomb load in kilograms	3,000-4,000	3,000	2,000

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20505

12 May 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence

FROM : William E. Nelson
Deputy Director for Operations

SUBJECT : [redacted] Report

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2. Requests for extra copies of this report or for utilization of any part of this report in any other form should be addressed to the originating office.

[redacted]

William E. Nelson

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Intelligence Information Special Report

COUNTRY Warsaw Pact

DATE OF INFO. 1975

FIRDB-312/01190-76
(CORRECT)
DATE 12 May 1976

SUBJECT

Warsaw Pact Doctrine on the Operation of an Air Army

SOURCE A reliable Warsaw Pact officer.

1. A [redacted] Intelligence Information Special Report with the above heading and report number was issued on 21 April 1976. The following corrections should be made to that report:

2. The last line of the chart on Page 11, Paragraph 21, should be changed to read:

No. 3**	55 51-52	55-60	55-65	65	65-70	75-80***

3. The aircraft performance chart on Page 12, Paragraph 24, should be replaced by the following corrected version of the chart:

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(CORRECT)

	SU-20	MIG-23 [Bomber]	MIG-23 [Fighter]
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Armament			
Rockets or Missiles	192 S-5KM or 6 S-24 4 R-3S	128 S-5K"Ch" or 4 S-24	4 R-3R or 4 R-3S or 4 K-13M
Guns	2xNR-30 2xChPK-23S Gun GSh-23	1xGSh-23 2 xChPK-23S Gun GSh-23	1xGSh-23
Points for mounting/ Loading	8	6	5
Bomb load in kilograms	3,000-4,000	3,000	2,000

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