

November 1987

Committee for State Security (KGB), 'About Results of Intelligence Activities to Note Indicators for a Surprise Nuclear Missile Attack'

Citation:

"Committee for State Security (KGB), 'About Results of Intelligence Activities to Note Indicators for a Surprise Nuclear Missile Attack'", November 1987, Wilson Center Digital Archive, BStU, MfS, ZAIG, Nr. 6755, S. 55-57. Translated by Bernd Schaefer.
<https://digitalarchive.umd.edu/document/119922>

Summary:

This report from the KGB contains results from intelligence activities conducted in November 1987 aimed at exposing indicators of a surprise nuclear missile attack on the USSR.

Credits:

This document was made possible with support from Carnegie Corporation of New York (CCNY)

Original Language:

German

Contents:

Translation - English

Translation from Russian

Strictly confidential!

About results of intelligence activities to note indicators for a sudden nuclear missile attack

(November 1987)

(1883/87)

During the past month improvement of state government mechanisms established for wartimes played a major role within the framework of planned measures by the US and NATO.

During NATO's strategic command staff exercise "Able Archer" (November 6 to 10), a version of transformation of member states and the bloc's armed forces from peace to wartimes was rehearsed. In context of the exercise, a situation of "nuclear consultations" between NATO's military-political leadership and governments of member states was simulated. Secure command posts for governance were used where significant representatives from government institutions were deployed.

In the US, plans were tested for mobilization of armed forces and the economy within the framework of strategic command staff exercise "Proud Scout" held between November 12 and 21. The readiness of civil defense services was reviewed with regard to the first stage of a conflict including the use of nuclear weapons. The apparatus of the National Security Council was involved in this exercise. In the Department of State, and in a couple of other government agencies, special "crisis groups" were established.

In the final stage of annual exercise series in November, increased activities by nuclear forces stationed in Europe were noted. Their combat strength was actually increased in context of the "Able Archer" exercise. In addition to the 27 "Pershing 2" missiles on alert, 45 launching pads were installed and made ready. Simultaneously, groups of American strategic "B-52" and "FB-111" bomber aircraft conducted flights near the Kola Peninsula. In order to coordinate their operations and secure reliable communication with the staff of the US Strategic Air Command in Europe, a mobile air-based command center (an aircraft of type E-4A) was relocated to Europe. About at the same time, suddenly heightened combat readiness was ordered for NATO forces (October 27 and 28) and the FRG armed forces (November 8).

In the Persian Gulf and the Indian Ocean there still exists a high concentration of battle and support ships of the NATO states' naval forces. A worrisome aspect within developments of the situation in the region, was the introduction of continuous air and space monitoring of the entire territory of Iran by the Americans. For this purpose, in November a special intelligence satellite "KN-II" was launched. Additional aircraft from the strategic intelligence of the US Air Force were relocated to the region.

In the US Department of Defense a new plan for mobilizing the industry for the case of emergency is nearing completion. Stages of the industry's transition to war conditions are made contingent upon potential developments of the military-political situation in the world. In crisis situations, current labor legislation is supposed to be suspended, and environmental restrictions are supposed to be lifted.

In the context of exercise "Proud Scout," security plans for the population under

emergency conditions were tested in the US Federal and regional bodies collaborated with regard to information and evacuation of the citizens, to installation of evacuation sites and medical care centers, and to supply of food and medicine. Simultaneously, joint exercises by military and civil defense units were held in the US states of Ohio and North Carolina. In that context a new shelter got tested. It is also designated for first aid to victims of chemical weapons and accordingly equipped.

Further improved were national civil defense systems in the NATO states. In the FRG, a new law was drafted to have private organizations provide more means for preparation of living spaces and medical institutions for emergency conditions. In the US and Canada measures were noted to guarantee security of citizens in areas near nuclear power plants. There are weekly alert drills, and the operability of acoustic signal installations gets regularly checked.

Following a decision by NATO's Nuclear Planning Group, recommendations were drafted and measures taken to increase security for American nuclear arms depots in Europe. According to expert assessments, possible operations by diversion and intelligence groups from the potential adversary, as well as from different terrorist organizations, represent the biggest danger. Within the framework of NATO forces, in the European states a standardized system of five stages of readiness was introduced for objects in case of an outside attack. In essence, it corresponds to the analogous system of the American armed forces.

Main features of the military-political situation in November were measures taken by the US within the framework of strategic command staff exercise "Proud Scout". They simultaneously touched on basically all aspects of potential occurrences of indicators for a sudden attack. In the context of conclusion of annual exercises within the framework of combat training, for December a certain reduction in activities by NATO forces is to be expected.

Translated: Petzold, Captain
2 Copies