
**Study of the Special Features of a Surprise Outbreak of War, Prepared for
Discussion by Senior-Officer Groups of the Ministry of Defense and the Hungarian
People's Army, 22-23 February 1966**

III.

THE CHARACTER OF THE ACTIVITY EXPECTED OF THE TROOPS OF THE
HUNGARIAN PEOPLE'S ARMY, IN CASE OF A SURPRISE OUTBREAK OF WAR

Based on what has been said so far, it can be stated that a surprise outbreak of general war will start with massive strikes of strategic missiles, not preceded by a period of threat, or if so, of a brevity (a few hours) that precludes carrying all the regulations for transferring the country, including the military forces, from peace conditions to war conditions.

In the light of this, let us examine briefly the scope and main features of the activity of the military services of the Hungarian People's Army, in case of a surprise outbreak of war.

a) National air-defense troops

Due to quantitative and qualitative changes in the strategic air-attack forces of the NATO powers and the grouping of the tactical means of air attack, and to their greater readiness in recent years, surprise mass air-*cum*-cosmic attack arises as a realistic possibility. Thus of the possible versions dealt with earlier, primarily the first version of a first air-*cum*-cosmic strike by the enemy should be taken as a starting point when examining the scope for the national air-defense troops of the Hungarian People's Army

With the simultaneous launching of air-*cum*-cosmic means of attack, their appearance in the air-space of the Hungarian People's Republic may start with "POLARIS"-type ballistic missiles, 8–10 minutes after launching from submarines patrolling in the Mediterranean. Some 20–30 minutes later—after the start of take-off—the strike forces of tactical planes (belonging to the 4th and 5th Allied Tactical Air Headquarters) and 1.5–2 hours later, the tactical bombers located in Europe (Spain) may reach the borders of the country. Some 6-8 hours after the start of take-off, we can expect strikes by strategic bombers taking off from United States territory and the return of the tactical planes participating in the action.

The national air-defense troops of the Hungarian People's Army, cooperating with the national air-defense systems of the member-states of the Warsaw Treaty, will provide the reconnaissance and destruction of the expected means of air attack on the territory of the Hungarian People's Republic, except for ballistic missiles.

The active air-defense forces (air missile defense units and fighter planes) will be able to destroy the enemy's means of air attack, flying at 1.7–2 times the speed of sound, from the heights of 500 m and lower up to 27,000 m, in any time of year or day.

The radar troops will be able to detect the means of air attack at 60–70 km from the country's borders at heights of 500 m and 200–250 km at heights of 16,000m. This detection potential (taking 960 km/h as the cruising speed) means that the air targets are noticed about 4 minutes before they reach the borders of the country, if they are flying at low altitudes, and 13–15 minutes beforehand at high altitudes.

The levels of manning and material-*cum*-technical supplies and the system of combat readiness of troops basically allow immediate entry into combat for part of the forces, without replenishment (this means in 1–1.5 hours for the majority of forces), from their original positions and airfields.

Detection of intercontinental ballistic missiles by the reconnaissance facilities of the Unified Air-defense Headquarters will probably take place 25 minutes before detonation, in case of a flight of about 10,000 km. At this time, there may still be 9–10 minutes left before the launching of "POLARIS"-type missiles and the take-off of tactical aircraft. The appearance of "POLARIS" can be expected 17–20 minutes later (counting with 8–10 minutes of flying time). Some 10–15 minutes after these strike (detonate), the tactical aircraft of NATO will reach the furthest limit of detection by the Hungarian People's Army's radar (assuming a location distance of 350–450 km, travelling speeds of 960 km/h and a low flying altitude.)

The activity of national air-defense troops is determined during this time by how short a period they need to process rapidly and transmit the data passed on by the Unified air-defense system and acquired from their own detection facilities. At what levels are the readiness of the details on duty at the command posts, the build up of command (alarm) facilities, the readiness of the troops, the material-*cum*-technical provision and military-technical state of the troops, the ubiquitous provisions for transfer to a high level of combat readiness?

Under the most unfavorable conditions described, with no prior indication that the enemy is preparing for combat and the implementation of preliminary regulations therefore unable to take place, the command posts of the national air-defense troops can raise the alarm for the troops of the Hungarian People's Army and notify the Civil Defense and participating air-defense forces about 15–20 minutes before the "POLARIS" ballistic missiles explode.

In the few minutes after the alarm, the command posts of the national air-defense troops reach full readiness for command. The forces on alert are placed on the highest level of readiness and capable of carrying out military activity within a few minutes, of beating off the first echelons of the means of tactical air attack.

Of the enumerated assignments, the troops of the national air-defense services are capable of the following:

The radio-engineering troops, after increasing the radar detection field—which takes a few minutes—can provide continuous reconnaissance and tracking of the enemy's means of air attack and information on these and guide the fighters to their aerial targets. At the same time, by relocating some of the forces and equipment to reserve positions, they can create a new radar reconnaissance field.

The fighter crews can execute take-off in a few minutes, with their fighter aircraft on combat-ready duty, and start destroying the enemy's means of air attack.

The troops not in a state of readiness can be deployed in their order of arrival and technical preparation. After the first deployment in combat, depending on the situation, the aircraft will land at operational, participant and base airfields. Some of the means of flight and combat command can be relocated to operational airfields within 10 hours.

The air missile defense units on readiness duty can be at their full strength and in readiness to open fire within a few minutes, while the divisions not on readiness duty require one hour.

By this time, the technical divisions can begin to transport the supply missiles to the combat divisions.

Based on the above, it can be concluded that there is only partial provision for beating off the first massive strike by the enemy in a case of complete surprise. With the tactical aircraft, there can be expected to be many more air targets within 20–30 minutes than the means in readiness are able to repulse. To enable the national air defense to repulse a surprise attack by the enemy, there should be further study of the possibilities for providing a rapid and significant increase in the strength of the service held in combat readiness.

The entry of the main forces of the national air-defense troops into combat is complicated greatly by the fact that lack of time will prevent them from taking up reserve positions (at operational airfields) before the first strike by the enemy. So some of the forces in the main districts (airfields) may suffer losses. As far as possible, we must therefore pay more heed to questions of executing maneuvers and carrying out action from reserve positions (operational airfields).

If the enemy starts the attack according to the second version—commencing air attacks in echelons—the national air-defense troops will have 5–6 hours available to prepare. In that case, the active forces can participate at full strength—partly from reserve positions and operational airfields—in beating off the enemy air strikes.

If there is a longer period of threat, the national air-defense troops will be able to apply all the basic regulations, and organize and start combat action with their main forces from reserve positions and operational airfields.

It is apparent from the above that the ability of the national air-defense troops to reach combat readiness as rapidly as possible and act successfully is a function of the effectiveness of detection (depth of detection, extending the point of time of warning)

b) The activity of ground troops

In the initial stage of the war, successful military action by the ground troops depends on the extent to which troops can be withdrawn before the strikes of the enemy, drawn forward and deployed into units.

Correspondingly, in case of surprise enemy attack, the main efforts of ground troops will be directed at reaching alert and full combat readiness in the shortest time possible, evacuating permanent stations at once, overcoming the consequences of the enemy nuclear strikes, quickly restoring combat ability; and executing in an organized fashion their advance, deployment and engagement.

Several specific problems arise with organizing and executing the full combat readiness, advance and deployment of the ground troops. These result primarily from the fact that the different peace strengths and degrees of readiness of the troops.

With surprise enemy attack, the following versions are possible for bringing to full combat readiness and advancing the first-echelon superior units:

According to one possible version, after execution of the alert the first-echelon superior units appointed to secure the borders (deployed closer to the borders and more or less up to combat strength) leave the barracks as soon as possible, take up the battle order assigned to them, and prepare to execute their assignments. The appointed units will be able to carry this out in 6–12 hours—depending on the distance between the border and their permanent stations.

Concurrently, the main forces of the first-echelon superior units—executing the alert—immediately leave barracks and occupy the "Main" or "Alternate" districts assigned to them, to ensure the reception, equipping and assignment of the reserves arriving to replenish them (manpower, technology). Thereafter, the superior units start to advance to the holding districts, or if the situation requires, to the deployment sectors to commence combat action.

The first-echelon superior units will be able to execute the above in 24 hours—depending on their deployment.

To cross the border and commence combat action requires a period of a few hours—depending on their distance from the border.

According to another version, the first-echelon superior units do not occupy their "Main" or "Alternate" districts after executing the alert, but without waiting for replenishment, start advancing from the fixed divisional sector to the sector of deployment (perhaps the holding districts). At a signal given from the deployment sector, the troops may commence their combat action at once. The order of the activity of the units appointed to secure the border is the same as in the first version.

Of course, the troops do not all reach the deployment sector at the same time according to this version—depending on the distance between the country's border and their barrack stations—and furthermore, they can enter into combat in their order of arrival.

In terms of time, this version is much more favorable than the previous one, since the first-echelon superior units cross the border 5–7 hours earlier.

However, a big disadvantage of this version is that the first-echelon superior units are forced to commence their combat assignments without replenishing their peacetime strengths.

There may be a further version in which only some of the first-echelon superior units (first-echelon regiments) enter combat at peacetime strength, without replenishment, in case of a surprise outbreak of war. Furthermore, the second-echelon regiments of superior units can occupy their "Main" and "Alternate" districts, where they may carry out their replenishment tasks, and on reaching full combat readiness, prepare for a rapid advance and accomplishment of military assignments.

This version—which can be considered for superior units where the peacetime strength of the second-echelon regiments calls for greater than average replenishment—is advantageous in providing for rapid entry into combat and the possibility of increasing military value, but its disadvantage is that it concurrently makes the command complicated.

Behind the regiments securing the border and under their cover, the missile units of the army advance and deploy in their prepared positions. In the first nuclear strike on the Front, the missile brigade will be the primary participating army force. In case of lack of time and a surprise strike by the enemy, stations for the missile units can also be assigned near their permanent barrack stations.

The readiness of the missile units needed for dealing nuclear strikes depends on the time requirement for occupying their positions, the existence of prepared and checked missiles, and transportation of these to the units and subordinate units.

The second echelon of superior army units on short alert, leaving their peacetime garrisons after the alert order, occupy their "Main" or "Alternate" districts and execute replenishment and augmentation of troops.

The troops of the second echelon of superior troops on longer alert carry out mobilization at their peacetime garrisons. The second-echelon superior army units, after finishing mobilization and replenishment and reaching full combat readiness, prepare for the execution of advancing and deployment in the operations.

With the superior units on both short and long alert, we have to reckon with their time requirement for readiness and deployment.

The advance of these troops—as the second echelon of the army—should be organized so that some can be deployed during the offensive operation, even before execution of the army's nearest assignment.

Depending on the evolved situation, some or all of the second echelon (reserves) of the army may receive assignments in the destruction of the enemy's air commandos and diversionary reconnaissance groups, and in clearing up the consequences and aversion of the nuclear strikes dealt to the country and in rescue work.

The air defense of the army is executed within the system of national defense until the military operations begin. The army air-defense troops must be kept in a state that allows them to defend the main forces of the army during deployment into units and assumption of the offensive. During the repulsion of the surprise attack, the main air-defense forces have to be concentrated to defend the objects and troops (missile brigade, the army's mobile missile-technology base, first-echelon divisions, army combat positions) against which enemy strikes are likeliest.

When ordering the military alert and placing the troops on full combat readiness, commanders and staff must specify the assignments of subordinates promptly.

Taking the time factor into account, military assignments must be defined in the shortest time primarily for missile units, air-defense forces, reconnaissance bodies, border-securing regiments and first-echelon superior units.

For the regiments and subordinated units, the assignments in connection with the advance—and possibly the military assignments—must be set even before occupation of the commencing sectors.

It may be possible to pass military assignments on to subordinates only during the advance. In such cases, the regimental commanders make their decisions during the advance, based on calculations that the subordinate units will receive the assignments referring to them before their arrival in the deployment sector

Liaison officers must be widely used in the forwarding and specification of the military assignments. Ordering commanders to appear before superior staff can only be permitted in exceptional cases.

Based on comparison of the enemy's expected air and ground action and the scope open to our ground troops, it may be concluded:

- The first strategic nuclear strikes by the enemy, using missiles and the air force, may reach those of the troops deployed at or near strike targets, even while they are still in their local garrisons.

- During the whole activity of troops, from leaving barracks onwards, we must expect cumulative strikes by the enemy air force. However, the chances of warding these off are favorable, although they may influence the above-described activity of ground troops significantly. So special attention should be paid from the outset to organizing air defense.

- Concerning ground action, the scope for the troops is favorable compared with that of the expected enemy. The units of the first-echelon superior units designated for securing the borders can reach the border at the same time as the border-securing troops of the expected enemy, and even precede them in some directions. The main forces of the superior units—especially according to the second and third versions—can start advancing at the same time as the main forces of the expected enemy, but they may precede them in deploying into units and enter into combat with the main enemy forces under more favorable conditions.

- It would be reasonable to bring the regiments assigned to securing the borders up to wartime strength already in peacetime, so as to make them more successful in carrying out their assignments.

- From the point of view of a rapid and organized advance of troops, it is very important for them to have the best possible deployment. The nearer the troops are positioned to the direction and zone of their expected deployment and the less divided is the peacetime deployment of superior units, the faster and more organized will be the way they draw forward and deploy into units. So improving the deployment situation of troops must always be kept on the agenda.

- With a surprise attack, another very important factor, besides the system of putting the troops into a state of full combat readiness, is the time factor. So activity directed at reducing the time norms for putting troops into a state of full combat readiness has to be made more effective. Work concerned with this has to extend to permanent improvement of the notification and alarm system, continuous increases in the reliability and operability of forwarding certain signals, and development of the organization of troop activities in case of alert.

c) The rear formations of the Hungarian People's Army and the military formations of Civil Defense

To analyze surprise nuclear war thoroughly entails going beyond the preparation and deployment of the military to examine the problems of defense in the rear as well.

It can be presumed that the enemy in a surprise outbreak of war, apart from delivering mass nuclear and chemical strikes, will deploy bacteriological means and air commando and special troops against the rear, with the likely goal of paralyzing the country's economic and administrative system and state and military leadership, disorganizing the air-defense system, preventing mobilization, the regrouping of combat troops to operational territories and the reinforcement of allied troops, and thereby paralyzing life in the rear, so as to prevent successful action by combat troops and turn the course of the armed combat to its advantage.

Among other consequences, surprise attack by the enemy may cause organized state activity in the territories suffering the strike to cease, destroy certain leading bodies, break links within the administrative apparatus, which should be directing civil-defense assignments as well. So these assignments will not or will only partly be carried out. There may be great material damage, manpower losses, fires, flooding *etc.* The field may become seriously polluted, which may obstruct all kinds of movement and actions significantly. The necessary forces will not be at our disposal for rescue and relief. Besides planned evacuations, there may begin panic flights of the population, which block prohibited roads and vehicles secured for other purposes. At the same time, the regrouping of the combat army must continue and the transit of allies be made possible. In this situation, it will be extremely difficult (and in some places impossible) for the special civil-defense

services to set up their planned mass formations, so that the rescue and clearing operations begin only slowly.

Taking the above—expected—situation as a starting point, the military formations of the Hungarian People's Army assigned to the rear and the units of civil defense must be ready to execute mobilization and replenish material stocks, to enable the regrouping of combat troops and transit of allied troops, to make up manpower and material losses, to eliminate the consequences of strikes and destroy the hostile groups appearing in the country, and to provide help for the population and the people's economy.

The assignments of the military formations assigned to the rear and of the civil defense are quite varied. At the same time, all of these formations will need mobilization.

Under the conditions of a surprise outbreak of war, the execution of mobilization and attainment of functional readiness by these formations pose a more serious problem than with other military services. It is more serious because the vast majority of these formations are on longer alert and their readiness periods of several days may increase further due to the enemy strikes.

But the military formations assigned to the rear and those of civil defense are the most needed at a time of mass nuclear missile strikes by the enemy.

It follows from the above that steps must be taken to resolve this sharp contradiction. We must seek solutions that allow more successful solution of the assignments caused by the enemy's surprise attack, in the case of rear and civil defense formations.

APPENDIX 1

Reports on the exercises of the Ministry of Defense and HPA Headquarters groups
Supplement number 12 to the K-1/ 103/1966 to the First Group Directorate of the Hungarian
People's Army Headquarters

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REPORT

on the exercise held by the Ministry of Defense group on February 22–23, 1966

According to Command 0066 of the Ministry of Defense, the subject of "The special features of the surprise outbreak of war and the influence of these on preparation of the military force" was explored at the exercise, using the method of a theoretical conference. The participants had prepared thoroughly for the exercise, which was demonstrated by the lively and open discussion that evolved, the high level of contributions, and the high level of activity. (A total of three 3 reports and 30 contributions were heard.)

Based on the statements and contributions it may be stated that the majority of participants interpret and discern correctly the theoretical and practical problems raised by the subject. As a positive fact, it must be mentioned that the contributions—besides the general and theoretical

clarification of questions—gave practical solutions as well, bearing in mind the special features and scope of the Hungarian People's Army. A significant proportion of the proposals contained notable solutions.

At the same time, it must be pointed out that some of the participants, in making their proposals, ignored our membership of the Warsaw Treaty, the consequences of coalition strategy and the basic function of the Hungarian People's Army and, within it, of the Fifth Army.

The subject on the agenda was elaborated within the framework of 6 questions for study.

1) The increased role and importance of surprise as the basic military factor determining the end of the war:

The great majority of contributors interpreted the increased role of surprise correctly. A lively discussion evolved around the question of when the outbreak of war can be considered a surprise under modern circumstances. The view was heard that a surprise outbreak of war can be prevented if reconnaissance is good. (If the socialist camp has good reconnaissance, the outbreak of war cannot reach us unexpectedly.)

The contributors pointed to the erroneous nature of this position, which simplifies the problem of obtaining data and ignores the factors of time, place, *etc.*

The contributions further discussed the role of reconnaissance, the importance of military readiness, and the necessity of maintaining combat-ready forces.

It was clarified that the outbreak of war must be considered a surprise if there is no time to realize the plans and measures for transferring the country and the military from peace conditions to war conditions.

It was also pointed out that preparing the country and its military for a surprise outbreak of war is not only a theoretical question, but an economic and financial question with great impact.

2) The US and NATO positions and possibilities to do with a surprise outbreak of general war:

It may be stated concerning the comments on this study question that the participants know very well the US and NATO military doctrines and their possibilities for the surprise outbreak of the general war. They detailed the feature of expected activities of the enemy forces—on the air and on the ground.

3) The nature of Hungarian People's Army air-defense and ground-force activity in case of a surprise outbreak of general war.

Several contributors dealt with this question as well. Besides explication of the contents of the opening lecture, they raised several practical proposals. These covered, for instance, the need to improve the deployment of ground troops (at present the deployment of two divisions from the three first-echelon divisions can be considered favorable); putting chemical defense formations into a state of permanent combat readiness even in time of peace; reducing the multiple assignments shouldered by army staff (completion and "M" leadership, conduct of troops, *etc.*)

Contributors dealt with the character of the army's military activity. Some—ignoring the tasks resulting from coalition strategy—proposed that the Fifth Army should have forces capable of reaching and occupying the North Italian and South German passages earlier than the enemy.

Contributors also mentioned that, besides the national air-defense troops, in the ground troops and in the rear as well we must have units that may be deployed at any time (that is completely filled up). And for the divisions of the second echelon of the army and other formations (e.g. academic institutes), it is worth planning assignments concerning the overcoming of the consequences of the enemy's strike and preparing them for this.

4) The influence of the surprise outbreak of war on the mobilization of the Hungarian People's Army:

All contributors pointed out that we cannot do without mobilization; it is needed under modern conditions as well. But it was also stated that our system of mobilization had not kept pace with the army's development and had fallen behind.

Many largely correct, practical proposals were heard about improving mobilization and making it more flexible. For instance, more attention needs paying to practicing local replenishment, in which we have little experience. We should dispense with calling in heavy technical machines (transported on trailers) and instead take as our basis light machines that can be moved easily. To save manpower reserves, we should concentrate in towns and villages those of the population capable of armed service, keep them in organized, disciplined groups, and replenish the troops from them.

Some of the contributions also contained irrational solutions (e.g. an "M" plan in several versions; founding mobilization on divisional and regimental staff and exempting the army staff, instead of having cadre staff twinning.).

During the discussion of this question, it came up that instead of the troops being engaged in doing away with the consequences of strikes dealt on the country in peacetime, the mass Civil Defense divisions should be called up, as the regulations allow. This would help to accustom the local leadership to acting on its own initiative in complicated situations and the population to fulfilling its conscription obligations.

5) The effect of the surprise outbreak of war on the material, technical and health provisions of the Hungarian People's Army:

This study question aroused the liveliest and most practical discussion among participants. The contributions dealt from various aspects with the scope for organizing material and health provision under such complicated circumstances. The time factor and what it meant to have insufficient time were sensed strongly.

Concurring opinions were expressed on the need to control the movable stocks and make units independent in all important kinds of materials during the early days of the war (by Day 3–5), as this is the only way to attain functional readiness of operational military supplies. The contributors considered it necessary to increase the dispersion of material stocks, set up store units on the borders, and standardize the packaging of stock.

Lively discussion developed about the question of industrial mobilization, using the capacity of the remaining factories, solving the collection and mending of arms and other technology, and the capabilities in transportation and health-care provision. The discussion yielded many practical, useful proposals and showed that participants were deeply concerned about solving these major problems.

6) The special features of Civil Defense in the case of a surprise outbreak of a war:

Although the consequences of mass nuclear strikes on this country were surveyed only briefly and in outline, this conveyed to participants the gravity of the situation that might evolve in case of a surprise outbreak of war. They reached correct and effective conclusions on how to reduce the effects of these consequences on the higher leadership, the ground army and the population.

Apart from this, the view was heard that the main assignment of the ground forces under such circumstances should be rescue-*cum*-reconstruction work in the rear. The faultiness of this view was clarified during the discussion.

To sum up:

- The exercise achieved its purpose, with the participants managing to accept a uniform position on the questions on the agenda. It gave a good foundation for leaders of the bodies of the Ministry of Defense for solving more successfully their training assignments, while contributing to the practical solution of several important questions we had to answer.

- The readiness and activity of the participants in the exercise developed to a great extent, making possible an analytical, specific and many-sided elaboration of questions.

- The method used in the exercise turned out to be successful. The abstract nature ceased and important theoretical and practical questions were discussed. At the same time, there was an opportunity for open and lively discussion.

APPENDIX 2

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SECRET!

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REPORT

on the exercise held by commanders-in-chief on February 22–23, 1966

The following subject was elaborated at the exercise: "The special features of the surprise outbreak of war and the influence of these on the preparation of the military force."

To elaborate on the subject, a discussion paper was issued. This was complemented by three reports: on the subjects of mobilization, material-*cum*-technical provision and civil defense.

The exercise was conducted by Major-General Lajos Tóth, by the method of a theoretical conference. There were 22 generals and officers participating on the first day and 21 on the second day. (Colonel József Lantódi, Colonel János Stadler and Lieutenant-General Imre Grényi were absent due to sickness. Lieutenant-Colonel Ferenc Drapál was absent only on the second day.)

The subject on the agenda was elaborated and discussed based on the following questions.

1) The increased role and importance of surprise as the basic military factor determining the end of the war:

- The possibilities of reducing the influence of a surprise attack.
- Interrelations between surprise and the permanent high level of military readiness in the military.

2) The US and NATO positions and possibilities to do with a surprise outbreak of general war:

3) The influence of a surprise outbreak of war on mobilization of the Hungarian People's Army and the character of the activity of troops:

- The special features of the peace and "M" force of the Hungarian People's Army and their effect on mobilization.
- The general problem of replenishing and mobilizing ground troops, and the basic requirements of an up-to-date system of mobilization.

4.) The effect of the surprise outbreak of war on the material-*cum*-technical provisions of the Hungarian People's Army:

5) The special features of the assignments of civil defense:

General experience with the two-day exercise:

The discussion paper issued and the reports that complemented it formed a good basis for successful elaboration of this complex of subjects.

Participants had prepared thoroughly for the exercise. This was apparent in exceptional interest in certain questions, exploration and knowledge of interrelations between theoretical and practical questions, linkage of these with the HPA's potentialities, scope, mobilization, military readiness and material-*cum*-technical provision, and last but not least, the activity of participants (23 contributions a day, totaling 46.)

A positive feature of the exercise was that contributors did not look for ideal solutions. Taking into account the specific conditions of the country and the army, they sought the processes, opportunities and means that fitted best with modern principles and requirements.

The majority of the proposals were constructive, so that the Headquarters and the HPA bodies should attend to elaborating them in more detail.

Although uniform positions generally emerged on the decisive significance of surprise and its effects, it cannot be ignored that some contributors, in making their proposals, ignored HPR membership of the Warsaw Treaty, and the effects and characteristics of coalition strategy. Further study is therefore needed of the theoretical and practical relations of the subject.

Experience during question-by-question elaboration of the subject
and the basic proposals advanced

1st question: – The increased role and importance of surprise as the basic military factor determining the end of the war

On the theoretical side of the question, most participants, in underlining the increased role and importance of surprise, related this to imperialist policy and the means available to and

prepared (programmed) to stroke for this policy, as an objective factor prepared on the basis of earlier political decisions.

According to some opinions, surprise is possible in a technically absolute sense as well. However, we also heard views that military actions are preceded by political decisions (tensions), and that if the intention to attack can be learnt, surprise is not possible. Surprise is relative in terms of timing, means, effect and object.

Ultimately, it was agreed by [those holding] the diverse views of surprise that the effect of surprise decreased the more effective readiness was.

As for reducing the effect of surprise, there was very correct assessment of the active (missile strike, air defense) and passive (various regulations) factors, which had to be implemented already in peacetime, in various plans and measures.

They weighed thoroughly the scope for action after the outbreak of war (production, formation of reserves, command, *etc.*) and came to the agreed position that the extent and significance of measures taken in peacetime had grown to an extreme degree. During preparation, attention must be paid to the most complicated and difficult [situations] to be expected.

On preparation, much was said about increasing the combat readiness of the HPA, improving deployment, synchronizing the degrees of readiness of the people's economy and the military (direct preparation of the people's economy must precede military action), mobilization, and dispersion of stocks and leadership (reserve staff).

At the same time, views were expressed that as Hungary is a small state, preparation of the HPA is significant primarily not from a military, but from political point of view, and that "traditional" advance (of troops) is not possible after the strike. The primary assignment of troops is not to crush hostile troops threatening the country, but to clear up the consequences of the strike in their districts, as these assignments will need the whole capacity of the Army.

During discussion, the contributors and the conductor of the exercise, pointing to deficiencies and dangers in certain views and opinions, emphasized that surprise as a factor indeed existed and that reconnaissance (detecting an intention) did not preclude surprise, if we were unable to carry out necessary measures in the time left before the action (strike). Also pointed out was the erroneous nature of views that alluded to restricting the assignments and attributing exclusively political significance to preparation of the HPA.

2nd question: – The US and NATO positions and possibilities to do with a surprise outbreak of general war.

This question was discussed essentially within the frames of the first question. Essentially, there was correct evaluation of the views deriving from the policy and the scope for the forces and equipment available. Their reports were based on adequate calculations. They arrived at the position that the aggressive war to be waged against the socialist camp—though extremely high-risk—could be started only by surprise—this was necessary for them. Many referred to the adventurism of imperialism, drawing attention to NATO military exercises, the periods of which had to be considered periods of threat.

The opinion was also heard that strikes by the imperialist bloc would be directed primarily against military objects, not the general population.

Responding to this opinion, Major-General Tóth strongly underlined that humanity could not be expected from policy that had not been able to control itself in peacetime and had gone to war (see Hiroshima, Vietnam, *etc.*) We had to prepare for the most "terroristic" war.

3rd question: – The influence of a surprise outbreak of war on mobilization of the HPA.

Concerning the peacetime strength of the HPA, most contributors argued for bringing the first echelon up to strength, the need for the readiness of covering troops (at least in the main direction) and setting up some military-supply institutions that lack a peacetime skeleton unit. Improvement of deployment was characterized by aiming at Transdanubia. This was expressed in the positioning of troops and setting up manpower and material "M" reserves, transportation and other bases. Some suggested replacing the many degrees of readiness for existing divisions by completed and "M" force divisions. Concerning the change in deployment and effort towards Transdanubia, some contributors expressed concerns that the reserve forces were covered from the present district of deployment, and that the effort towards Transdanubia might result in excessive density. This effort should be examined in concert with shielding and the danger of aircraft crashing should be considered as well.

With mobilization and replenishment, the discussion brought into the foreground the need for dispersion, increasing flexibility in mobilization (personnel, materials), modernization of the "M" apparatus and auxiliaries (the decrease of "M" readiness of certain troops). Concerning "M," we should not ignore the fact that a very high proportion of the reserves (personnel, materials, vehicles, *etc.*) are in endangered cities. We must prepare for "M" from non-endangered areas and mobilization based on factories and enterprises. More attention should be paid in future to mobilization of the motor-vehicle force—as this forms the basis for "M"—and it would be reasonable to find a way to conscript people and materials simultaneously. More attention needs paying to forging "M" divisions and staffs together in peacetime. In an eventuality where the central command might be eliminated, continuity of leadership must be guaranteed by secondary staffs and county military committees. Some expressed views that the army staff is not capable of commanding troops at "M" readiness, that the establishment of an echelon of operational conduct is needed to take much of the burden off the army staff in such a period.

4th question: – The problems of material-cum-technical provision of the HPA.

Very great interest was shown in material-cum-technical problems. Most contributors concluded that the existing potentials of the people's economy and the HPA were not used well enough in connection with material-cum-technical provision. The scope offered by related government decisions was not being used well enough; the armed forces were not asserting their claims when certain orders were compiled. The "M" categories and notions of the people's economy needed modernizing. The material command structure was very complicated and divided.

Very many people brought up the need to disperse material stocks and transportation capacity and create mobile repair stations.

Some contributors expressed the view that the material stocks of the HPA (especially the troops) had to be re-examined and unnecessary material released—transportation capacity could also be increased in this way. There was a need to issue new instructions concerning loading.

The need to increasing mobile stocks (fuel, ammunition) was raised, on the grounds that the army would be in the hardest situation in precisely the most critical period of the operation.

Some considered that material stock could be damaged much worse than the troops, so that in accumulating reserves and in reconstruction, the priority of transport and energy production had to be emphasized.

The dependence of the material cover of the National Air Headquarters on imports was also raised. It was suggested that common Unified Armed Forces Headquarters reserves be created.

Summing up on the question, the conductor of the exercise pointed out that it was not right to discuss certain concepts (technical) more deeply [word excised, handwritten correction: stubbornly], since they were not in accord with state and party resolutions. He pointed out that transport and energy reservation and reconstruction is only a half-solution in the absence of production capacity. During reservation, special attention must be paid to supplies not possessed by the people's economy. In the light of resolutions, the military command has to exert more influence on the civilian leadership, so that they correspond to the interests of the people's economy and of the army, since clashes of certain interests were inevitable in peacetime.

As for concentration of material command—after thorough examination—it certainly called for bold decision-making.

5th question: – Civil defense in case of an surprise attack

The majority of contributors expressed the opinion that all spheres of civil defense should be drawn together into a tighter unit concerned with the whole of armed defense.

Despite the quite alarming data in the report, opinions were heard that there existed possibilities for greatly reducing the effects of the expected destruction, even if room could not be found for the whole population underground (tightening relations between the Civil Defense and the Army, more support and help for Civil Defense, harmonization of active and passive defense regulations, putting the preparation of individuals into the foreground (education), general self-help, modernization of the alarm, *etc.*)

The possibility of exercising leadership after the exclusion of the higher state and military leadership came up sharply. Preparation of certain doubling-up in peacetime seemed reasonable. More attention needed paying to the higher-level (military) training of leading Civil Defense staff, while widening the knowledge of Civil Defense among military commanders.

Major-General Tóth, evaluating the two-day exercise, emphasized that:

- the drill had achieved its goal,
- they had managed to agree on all questions on the agenda;
- the exercise provided a good basis for the heads of the bodies to solve the military-operational and training assignments (drills, war games, exercises) for the year 1966 more successfully;

- the exercise had greatly contributed to providing effective help for the planning-*cum*-organizational work of the bodies—and this should be considered a major achievement.

He drew participants' attention to the fact that the opinions and proposals heard at the exercise, and the replies to them, should not be treated in any way as official decisions. At the same time, the majority of them required serious attention; realization and systematization of them needed further study and joint effort.

Budapest, February 25, 1966

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[Archives: War History Archive, Unit 68/014/186 Pages: 19–31.]