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INFORMATION REPORT INFORMATION REPORT

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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Organization

1. The Bulgarian Air Force is the Voeno Vuzdushni i Protivovuzdushni Sili (Military Air and Antiaircraft Forces) which is commanded by Lt. Gen. Zakhari Zakhariiev and is directly subordinate to the Ministry of Defense. The headquarters of the Military Air and Antiaircraft Forces is located in barracks formerly occupied by the railroad regiment which are bounded by Stalin, Tolbukhin and Petko Karavelov Boulevards and Frityov Nansen Street in Sofia. All Air Force units, as distinguished from the Antiaircraft units, are organized into one Air Army.
2. [redacted] headquarters of the Bulgarian Air Army is located in the same place as headquarters of the Military Air and Antiaircraft Forces and both are commanded by Lt. Gen. Zakhariiev. these headquarters are identical.
3. The following is the organization of the Air Army which is outlined in the sketch on page 6.
  - a. Three Jet Fighter Divisions at Yambol, Graf Ignatiev and Kumaritsa.
  - b. Independent Bomber Battalion (Eskadrila) at Tolbukhin.
  - c. Air Transport Regiment at Vrazhdebna.

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- d. Military School for Pilots at Dolna Mitropoliya.
- e. Military School for Technicians at Gorna Oryakhovitsa.
- f. Air Force Supply at Provadiya.
- g. Attack Bomber Division at Plovdiv.

4. Each Fighter Division includes three fighter regiments, one supply battalion and a communications unit. Each fighter regiment consists of three fighter battalions (Eskadrila), one supply unit and one communications unit. Each fighter battalion includes three companies (Zvena) and each company has two to four jets.

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5. The Independent Jet Bomber Battalion is composed of three companies, each having three to four jets, and the battalion has supply services of battalion strength.

The Air Transport Regiment is composed of three battalions, one supply battalion, one plane repair shop, one motor vehicle shop and a medical service.

7. The Attack Bomber Division is composed of three regiments and since 1 July 1958 the entire division has been in the process of disbanding.<sup>2</sup>

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Air Army Headquarters

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8. There are approximately 200 soldiers and 300 officers in Air Army Headquarters in Sofia. personnel of the following headquarters sections:

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- a. Commander - Lt. Gen. Zakhari Zakhariyev.
- b. Soviet advisor - unknown Major General.
- c. Chief of staff - Colonel Dechev (fnu).
- d. Political officers - Colonels Gancho Staribratov, Marinchevski (fnu), and Panchev (fnu).
- e. Combat training - Colonels Simeon Simeonov and Dobrev (fnu) and Lieutenant Colonels Petkov (fnu) and Rozev (fnu).
- f. Paratroops - Colonel Stefan Kalupchiev.
- g. Personnel - Colonel Gerasimov (fnu), Lt. Col. Boris Venchev and Major Zgurov (fnu).
- h. Instructors in advanced piloting - Majors Atanas Dinitrov, nicknamed Tacho, Filip Georgiev Tsekov and Todor Trifonov.
- i. Supply service - Lt. Colonels Manolov (fnu) and Petkanski (fnu) and Captains Ananiev (fnu) and Manolov (fnu). Petkanski is in the oxygen service.

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9. All members of the headquarters have identification cards with photographs which are required for entry into the building, the main entrance of which is on Stalin Boulevard. Military visitors from other units must obtain permits from another building in the area before they can enter the headquarters building. On leaving the building the visitor's permit is surrendered at the main entrance. No civilians are admitted to the headquarters building.

Strength

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10. the strength of the Air Army 5,000 to 6,000, which includes approximately 2,500 officers, 1,000 non-commissioned officers and 2,500 to 3,000 enlisted men. The strength of each Fighter Division is 1,000 to 1,200, of which 550 to 600 are officers, 200 to 250 are non-commissioned officers and 300 to 400 are enlisted men.

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Soviet Advisers

11. An unidentified Soviet General is adviser to General Azkhariev, Commander of the Air Army. Attached to each Fighter Division is a Soviet adviser who is actually commander and usually holds the rank of colonel or lieutenant colonel. The Soviet adviser to the Fighter Division at Graf Ignatiev was Colonel Shishenok (fnu) until June 1958 when he returned to the USSR.

Fighter Division at Yambol

12. Colonel Atanasov (fnu) is commander of the Fighter Division at Yambol, the headquarters of which are Yambol airfield. The three regiments of the division are at Ravnets, Balchik and Bezmer airfields. Until August 1957 Major Duzhilov (fnu) was commander of the Fighter Regiment at Ravnets airfield.

Fighter Division at Plovdiv

13. Headquarters of the Fighter Division at Plovdiv [redacted] are at Graf Ignatiev airfield and the commander is Colonel Zhelyazko Manev Zhelyazkov. Two regiments of the division [redacted] are at Graf Ignatiev airfield and the third regiment is located at Uzundzhovo airfield.

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Fighter Division at Sofia

14. Colonel Dragan Draganov is commander of the Fighter Division at Sofia, headquarters of which are at Kumaritsa airfield. The division has two regiments at Kumaritsa airfield and one at Gabrovnitsa airfield.

Planes of Fighter Divisions

15. Although each Fighter Division is supposed to have 108 jet fighters, making a total of 324, there are actually no more than 300 jets in the three Fighter Divisions combined and only 250 of these are in use. Most of the jets are FAGOT and FRESCO and only the FRESCO is equipped with radar.
16. In December 1957 the first FARMER's [redacted] arrived in Bulgaria and were first used at the beginning of 1958 at Graf Ignatiev airfield by the fighter regiment [redacted] which is still the only fighter regiment with FARMER's [redacted]. These FARMER's [redacted] are equipped with radar and there are only 25 to 30 of them in Bulgaria. Part of the FAGOT's and FRESCO's [redacted] of the Fighter Division at Kumaritsa airfield are of Czechoslovakian origin.

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Independent Bomber Battalion

17. The Independent Bomber Battalion (Samostoyatelna Bombardirovacha Eskadrila) is directly subordinate to Air Army Headquarters in Sofia. Headquarters are at Tolbukhin airfield and Major Shteryu Shterev is commander of the battalion which has approximately 100 officers, 40 non-commissioned officers and 80 to 100 enlisted men.

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18. Although the Bomber Battalion is supposed to have 12 jet bombers, at the beginning of 1958 it actually had only eight or nine bombers which are two-engine IL-26 or BEAGLE's. These bombers are equipped with radar, have a maximum speed of approximately 1,000 kilometers per hour, maximum altitude of 11,000 to 15,000 meters and can fly approximately three hours without re-fueling. The engines of the bombers are beneath the wings and each plane is manned by four, the pilot, navigator, radio operator and a technician. The radio operator is seated in the back of the plane.

Air Transport Regiment

19. The Air Transport Regiment (Transporten Polk) is called TRAP and has headquarters at Vrazhdebna airfield. The approximate strength of the regiment is 200 officers, 50 to 60 non-commissioned officers and 100 enlisted men.
20. Each of the three battalions of the regiment has 10 to 12 transport planes, making a total of 30 to 35 planes in the regiment. Until 1957 the regiment also possessed one helicopter which was subsequently transferred to the Military School for Pilots at Dolna Mitropoliya. The transport planes are CRATE's, Douglas transports and CAB's. Most of the planes are equipped for night flying and for difficult weather conditions. In 1957 all the German Junker transports were junked in front of the repair shop of the regiment.
21. The usual duties of the regiment are to provide planes for transporting high commanders and airfield personnel and for parachute jumps or paratroop exercises. When the transport planes have completed their mission they return to Vrazhdebna airfield.

There are approximately 50 men in the plane repair shop which is located in one of the four hangars at Vrazhdebna airfield and which handles all small engine and body repairs and can replace engines. Attached to the regiment are repair shops for parachutes, oxygen masks and other equipment plus storage for parachutes.

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23. The medical service of the regiment is located in a separate, two-story building at Vrazhdebna airfield. It is called the Air Medical Institute (Avio Meditsinski Institut) and serves the entire Bulgarian Air Army as well as the Dobrovolna Organizatsiya za Sudeistvie na Otbrana (DOSO). The institute includes approximately ten doctors with officer ranks and several civilians, and it has the necessary equipment and facilities for checking the health and efficiency of the pilots. Jet pilots are checked here every six months, in May and December, and other pilots are checked once each year.

Attack Bomber Division

24. Headquarters of the Attack Bomber Division (Shturmova Vuzdushna Divisiya) are located at Plovdiv airfield. One of the regiments of the division is at Plovdiv airfield and the other two regiments are at Krumovo airfield. Each regiment is composed of three battalions, each of which is composed of three companies (Zvena). However, since 1 July 1958 the entire division has been in the process of disbanding. One supply battalion at Plovdiv airfield and a battalion at Karlovo airfield are believed to be subordinate to the regiment at Plovdiv airfield.

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25. Colonel Velev (fnu) is commander of the division, Colonel Totyu Nanev Petkov is chief of staff and an unidentified Soviet colonel is adviser. There are approximately 500 officers, 150 non-commissioned officers and 300 to 400 enlisted men in the division.
26. There are 108 planes in the entire division, 36 in each regiment, 12 in each battalion and four in each company. Most of the planes are BEAST's & COACH's... propeller planes used by the USSR in World War II. Some of the planes are old FLORA's!.

Military School for Pilots

27. The Military School for Pilots is located at Dolna Mitropoliya airfield and is commanded by Lt. Col. Lazar Iliev Belukhov. Every year approximately 70 youths are admitted to the school which offers a three-year course. Only youths with a high school education and who pass a difficult examination in physics, mathematics, literature, and a special medical examination can enter the school. At the end of the third year the students are promoted to lieutenants and are ready to fly any kind of plane, including jets. Approximately 70 students graduate from the school each year. The school also offers training courses to officers and non-commissioned officers of the Air Army but these are not regularly scheduled.
28. There are at least 50 officers teaching in the school which uses Vrabche, Siniger, MULE's, LAZ-M-7, YK-10 and MOOSE' propeller planes. The jets used for training purposes are believed to be FAGOT's or FRESCO's and YG-23.

Military School for Technicians

29. The Military School for Air Technicians was located at Lovech until 1953 when it was transferred to Gorna Oryakhovitsa airfield. The school is equivalent to a school for junior sergeants because the enlisted men who graduate are promoted to junior sergeants.
30. The course of training lasts approximately one year and the students are primarily enlisted men serving their regular military term. They receive training as radio technicians, gun and ammunition technicians, engine technicians, electrical technicians, etc., and graduates subsequently serve as technicians in all Bulgarian Air Army units. Sometimes courses are offered at the school to only graduates of technical high schools and the graduates of these courses are promoted to officers and remain in the Air Army for longer periods.

Air Force Supply

The Air Force Supply unit is located in a marsh area approximately 500 meters east of the Provadiya railroad station. The unit consists of approximately 15 officers, 10 non-commissioned officers and 80 enlisted men. In the area of the unit, which is 200 to 300 decares in size and which is surrounded by a barbed wire fence, there are four to five large, one-story brick buildings, 30 to 40 meters in size, with yellow walls and red tile roofs. The area also contains several smaller buildings which are barracks and offices. Some of the supplies stored in the larger buildings are plane tires, M-16 oxygen masks, plane and engine spare parts and parts for guns used on planes.

Comments:

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the anti-aircraft forces, headquarters [redacted] are subordinate to the headquarters of the Bulgarian Air Army.

2.

[redacted] the planned. 25X1  
reduction of the Bulgarian Armed Forces would not take place because of the Mid East situation.

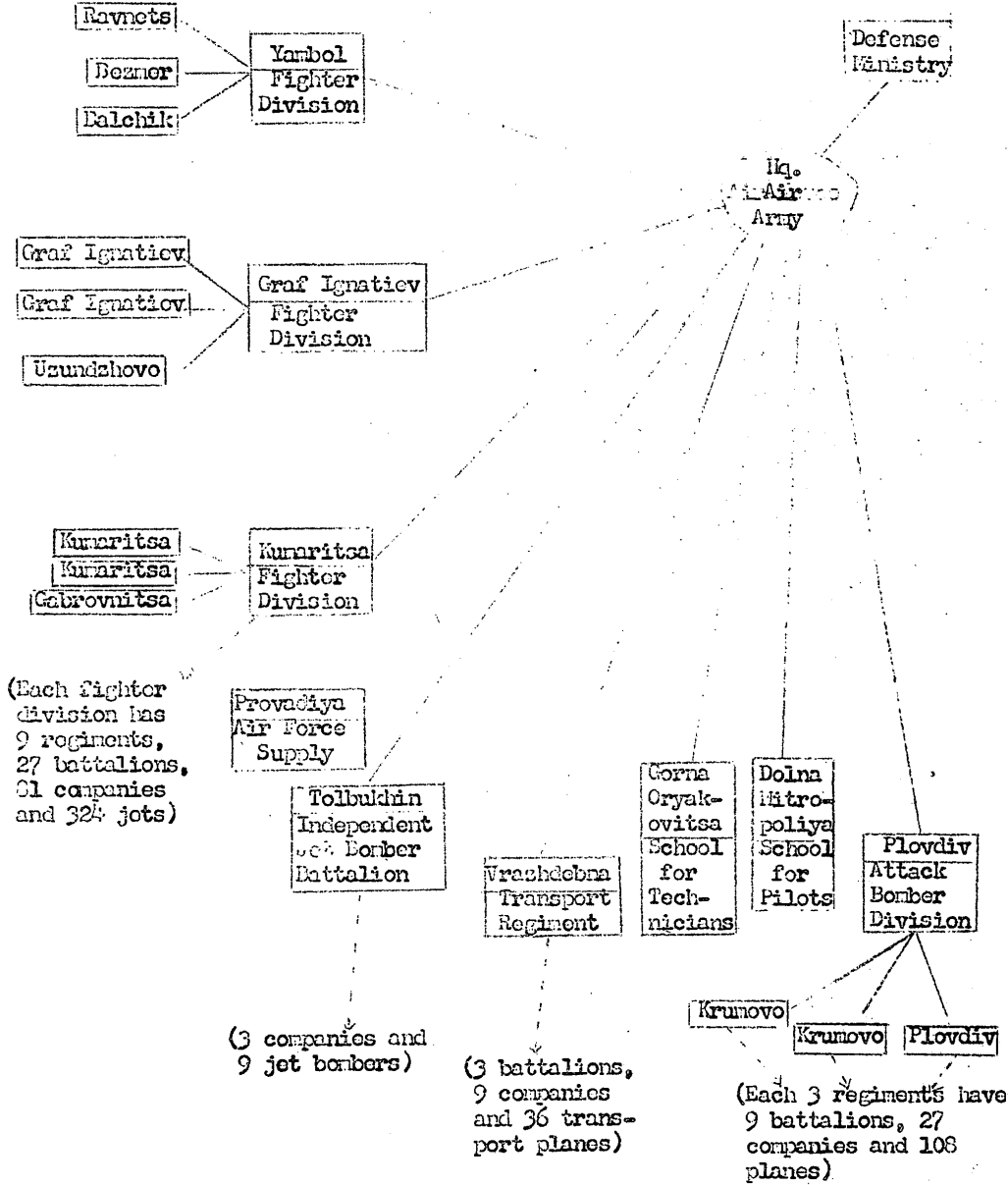
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Organization  
Bulgarian Air Army



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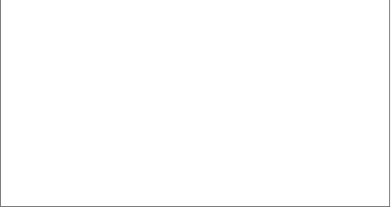


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 sketch of the Headquarters  
of Bulgarian Air Army in Sofia with a legend.

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Legend to Sketch of ~~H~~quarters, *b/f* Bulgarian Air  
Army in Sofia

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**SECRET**~~SECRET~~Legend to Attached Sketch (HQ of the Bulgarian Air Army) :

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1. "Stalin" Boulevard
2. "Skobelev" Boulevard
3. "Tolbukhin" Boulevard
4. "Frityof Nansen" Street
5. "Ernst Telmann" Street
6. No. 1 - Streetcar Line
7. No. 6 - Streetcar Line
8. Two-meter high wall, which surrounds the entire installation (blue line)
9. Main Entrance for vehicles and pedestrians
10. Sentry armed with rifle
11. Office of the officer on duty - 8x4 meters, one-story brick building consisting of only one room
12. Office Building - 100x12 meters; two storys; yellow walls; red tile roof; inside there are about 24 offices; for every four offices there is a separate entrance; most of the branches of the HQ have there offices here; among these offices are:

- . oxygen service- Liet. Col. PETKANSKI (inu)
- . paratroopers - Col. Stefan KALUPCHIEV (*fnu*)
- . personnel - Liet. Col. GERASIMOV (*fnu*)
- . photography - Major Boris (inu)
- . communication
- . fuel
- . electric and radio equipment

There are many other services, but Subject does not know them.

13. One-story brick building with yellow walls and red tile roof; 10x8 meters; inside there are only two rooms; in one of them is the office of the Commandant of the HQ.
14. One-story brick building with white-washed walls and red tile roof; 2x2 meters; here, permits for entering the HQ are issued by a civilian employee.
15. Entrance (always locked); not in use.
16. One-story, brick building. Probably a garage and repair shop; 16x8 meters;

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## Legend to Sketch (continued):

17. Roofed storage for coal, firewood and other supplies; 12 x 8 meters
18. Handball playground
19. Soccer playground
20. Two-story brick and concrete building with yellow walls and red tile roof; 80x15 meters; new building - constructed probably 1954. Used as HQ of the Supply Service of the Air Force  25X1
21. One-story brick building with yellow walls and red tile roof; 10x8 meters; ~~and contents of building~~ contents of building unknown.
22. One story brick building with a good basement; 10x8 meters; yellow walls and red tile roof; inside there are several offices ~~with~~ ~~undetermined~~ contents unknown but prior to 1951 it was the office of the lawyers of the HQ.
23. Two-story brick and concrete building; no plaster on the outside walls; red tile roof; new building-constructed after 1951; this building houses the offices of:
  - . General ZAKHARIEV
  - . Chief of Staff, Col. DECHEV
  - . Combat Training
  - . Political Branch
  - . Several other offices with contents unknown

Altogether, there are 15-20 offices in this building.
24. Two-meter high brick wall, separating the installation of the HQ from the rest of the barracks (red line).
25. Area with big two-story building (contents unknown); probably the medical service or something else.
26. Entrance.

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# SKETCH OF THE HEADQUARTERS OF THE BULGARIAN AIR ARMY IN SOFIA

