

U. S. Using Disinformation Policy To Impede Technical Data Flow

By David M. North

Washington—The Defense Dept., in conjunction with the Central Intelligence Agency, has initiated a disinformation program that it is applying to a number of its aircraft and weapons development projects to impede the transfer of accurate technological information to the Soviet Union.

The policy decision to pursue the coordinated use of disinformation by a number of government agencies was made more than two years ago, according to officials involved in the program.

The CIA is a chief coordinator for the release through various channels of deliberately false, incomplete and misleading information. The disinformation effort covers 15-20 programs, six or seven of which are Defense Dept. projects.

Programs likely to be covered by the Defense Dept.'s disinformation policy include the Air Force's special mission aircraft flying in Nevada, the Air Force's Advanced Technology Bomber (ATB), the Navy's Advanced Tactical Aircraft

(A) and the Strategic Defense Initiative, one government official said.

Counterintelligence Benefit

"There has been discussion on establishing a disinformation, or counterintelligence, program of deception for years," another government official said. "It was not until recently that, after watching the Soviet Union practice this philosophy for years, the U.S. decided it would benefit by creating a similar program."

"Basically, you provide the Soviet Union with false or partly true data that prompts them to make decisions on wrong perceptions. The active part of the disinformation program has been going on for a time, but it has not been until very recently that there has been an increased emphasis on this type of approach to program management."

An outline for Defense Dept. disinformation activities involving all operational levels recently was circulated among many of the armed services' program offices and departments, signaling an increased emphasis on the active use of disinformation.

According to one government official, the 6-in.-thick document includes a request for comments on the use of false data for proposals, false or misleading information to be given at press interviews, inaccurate performance figures for aircraft and weapon systems, and other altered technical information.

The extent of disinformation envisioned by some Defense Dept. officials, and already in place in some military programs, could cover the spectrum of weapon system development. This disinformation application would include documents needed to initiate a specific project, such as a program objective memorandum. Disinformation would then be applied to the development schedule, prototype performance, testing results, production schedules and operational achievements.

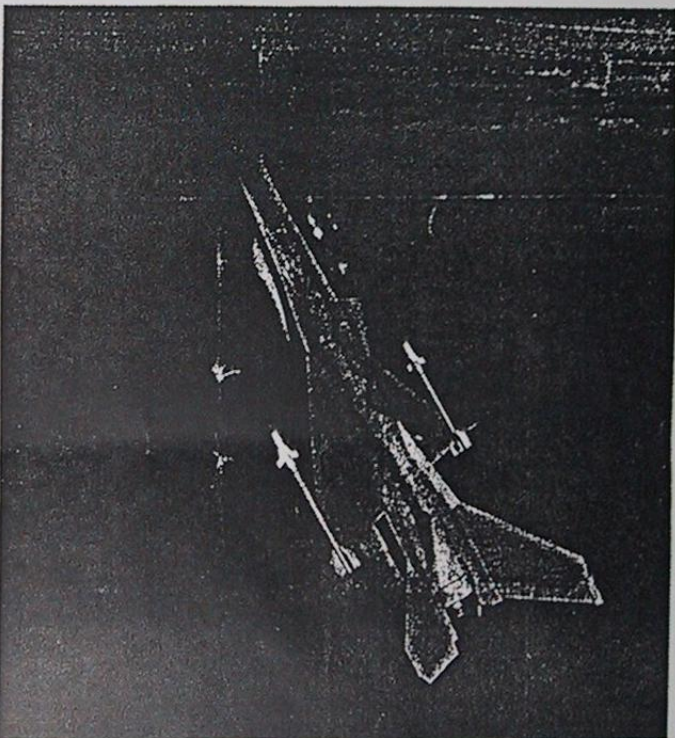
"Disinformation can be injected at every stage of a weapon program from documentation and the test envelope, to the actual operation of the system," a Defense

Dept. official said. "The range of deception can apply from the release of some inaccurate performance data and program milestones to the creation of a weapon system that does not exist with funds appropriated for the system being spent somewhere else."

"The most dangerous technique in supplying deliberately false information is a mixture of truth and fiction," he said. "This gives the Soviets a lot more to worry about."

"The most difficult decision in carrying out disinformation activity of this type is to determine what to convey and why. An active disinformation policy can cover in-

Korean Air Force Accepts F-16D Fighter



General Dynamics F-16D multimission fighter for the Republic of Korea Air Force is shown in test flight near the company's plant in Ft. Worth, Tex., prior to acceptance by Korean officials. The dual-seat F-16D is the first of the latest model F-16 to go to an allied nation. The U.S. Air Force began receiving F-16C/D models last year. The F-16C/D aircraft feature improved radar, expanded capacity fire control computers, greater structural strength for higher weapons loads and wiring provisions for advanced weapons now under development. Single-seat F-16C aircraft are to be delivered later to Korea, which has ordered 36 F-16s to date.