

2000:02364 **Year of maximum danger? The 1983 'war scare' and US-Soviet deterrence** Stephen J Cimbala *Journal of Slavic Military Studies*

Examines the evidence relating to (1) the Soviet response to the perception in 1981, that the Reagan administration was preparing for a nuclear first-strike against the USSR, code-named Op RYAN (2) the background factors that led the Andropov administration to this pessimistic view (3) the way in which the Strategic Defence Initiative (SDI) supported the paranoia (4) the impact of the KAL 007 shoot-down (5) the Soviet interpretation of Ex ABLE ARCHER, a CPX (command-post exercise) held during 2-11 Nov 1983, as a preparation for the initiation of nuclear war. The episode illustrates the importance of moving away from 'launch on warning' postures. *Professor of political science at Penn State University, Delaware County campus.*

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