

Soviets Destroyed Own Jet In Downing of Powers' U-2

Army Daily Tells of Attempt to Ram Plane

Associated Press

MOSCOW, April 29—The Soviet army newspaper disclosed today that when the Russians downed a U.S. spy plane 30 years ago they also destroyed one of their own fighters that was pursuing the American U-2.

The U-2, piloted by Francis Gary Powers, was shot down on May 1, 1960, disrupting a meeting 19 days later in Paris between president Dwight D. Eisenhower and Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev and forcing the cancellation of another summit planned for later that year.

Red Star, the Soviet army newspaper, said the Soviets lost a MiG-19 and its pilot in the operation. The paper also disclosed that the Soviets sent up a new fighter plane and ordered its pilot to ram the U-2

in a suicide mission. The new fighter reached the U-2's altitude but failed to ram it.

Red Star said Khrushchev was atop Lenin's Mausoleum on Red Square watching the May Day parade when he learned that a new model Soviet SA-2 surface-to-air missile had brought down the U-2.

The commander of the Soviet air defense forces, Marshal Sergei Biryuzov, climbed the mausoleum "carrying happy news, that the plane had been hit by the first rocket," the article said.

Soviets hurrying to the May Day parade in the Ural Mountain city of Sverdlovsk saw a far different sight, what appeared to be fireworks high in the air, said the article, signed by a Col. A. Dokuchayev.

The fiery debris was not fireworks, but a Soviet MiG-19 that

was hit by the same type of missile that exploded behind Powers' U-2 and damaged it, Red Star said.

Powers was captured at a collective farm near Sverdlovsk, was held for two years, then exchanged for the Soviet spy Rudolph Abel.

The article disclosed that the Soviets had ordered a new model Sukhoi-9 fighter to pursue the U-2 in an unsuccessful ramming attempt. The Su-9 was unarmed, but was able to reach nearly to the 70,000 feet at which the U-2 operated, the report said.

The Soviets also scrambled two MiG-19s, which were not capable of flying that high. The pilot of one MiG-19, Boris Ivazyan, reported to ground control that the debris from the U-2 was actually that from an SA-2 that had missed the U-2, prompting the ground battery to fire another.

The next Soviet missile struck the MiG-19 flown by Sergei Safronov, 30, who was killed. He was one of 21 Soviets given medals for their role in bringing down Powers, and the Red Star article disclosed that he was honored posthumously.

Ivazyan survived and later married Safronov's widow.