

A History of NASIC

NATIONAL AIR AND SPACE INTELLIGENCE CENTER

WRIGHT-PATTERSON AIR FORCE BASE, OHIO

HAVE NOSE—Iraqi MiG-29 of the US Air Force

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The HAVE NOSE project took place in the closing days of Operation DESERT STORM. On 9 March 1991, a team from the Foreign Technology Division (FTD) of the United States Air Force (USAF) and the Joint Captured Materiel Exploitation Center landed at Jalibah Air Base, Iraq, with the goal of collecting enemy equipment and bringing it home for analysis. Leading the group was a young lieutenant from FTD.

The American/British team traveled to the site in a Texas National Guard CH-47 helicopter, with a British Squadron Leader's Toyota 4X4 Land Cruiser inside. They found three Soviet-built MiG-29/FULCRUM A fighters in various stages of destruction. The first aircraft was totally destroyed. The second offered a scorched yet intact fuselage nose section. The third aircraft was in the best shape, but was surrounded by USAF cluster bomblets. After considering their options, the team chose to acquire the nose section off the second FULCRUM.

Using a hatchet from the helicopter, the team finished the job a US Army satchel charge started. A week before, as the Army overran Jalibah, a soldier had destroyed the aircraft by throwing explosives into the cockpit. Now, the exploitation team finished slicing through its shattered remains, and wrapped it in a loading strap from the Chinook.

Using the 4X4 Toyota, they dragged the MiG-29 nose 150 yards and loaded it on the CH-47. The large piece of Saddam's destroyed FULCRUM consisted of the nose of the aircraft, just forward of the cockpit. It featured stenciling in English, along with a little Russian. This is common on Arab aircraft, because English is the common aviation language. This particular aircraft turned out to be a MiG-29 Article 9.12b, manufactured in 1987.

The Iraqi MiG-29 provided USAF intelligence personnel with a SLOTBACK I radar and the FULCRUM infrared search and track system (a heat-seeking targeting device). After much study, the remains of the fuselage were placed in storage. Later, many parts went to the National Museum of the US Air Force.



A US-British team examines a badly damaged Iraqi MiG-29 fighter before cutting its nose off.



This MiG-29 became Project HAVE NOSE. The US Army badly damaged it before the Joint Captured Materiel Exploitation Team arrived.