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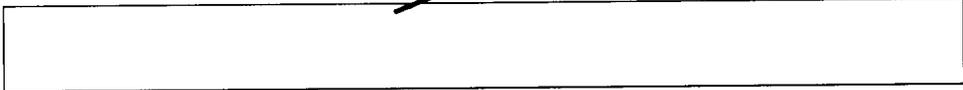
23 February 1977

MEMORANDUM FOR: The Director of Central Intelligence
FROM : William W. Wells
Deputy Director for Operations
SUBJECT : MILITARY THOUGHT (USSR): Conducting a
Front Offensive Operation Without
Nuclear Weapons

1. The enclosed Intelligence Information Special Report is part of a series now in preparation based on the SECRET USSR Ministry of Defense publication Collection of Articles of the Journal "Military Thought". This article comments on a previous article on organizing and conducting a front offensive operation in mountain regions employing conventional weapons, and, based on the experience of exercises in the Turkestan Military District, examines the special features of this as they apply to the conditions of the Middle Eastern Theater of Military Operations. The author also examines the procedures for maintaining the rocket troops in constant readiness to employ nuclear weapons and for employing front aviation. The allocation and equipping of engineer troops for restoration work and for support of the seizure and negotiation of mountain corridors which the enemy has prepared for demolition also are discussed. This article appeared in Issue No. 3 (76) for 1965.

2. Because the source of this report is extremely sensitive, this document should be handled on a strict need-to-know basis within recipient agencies. For ease of reference, reports from this publication have been assigned

William W. Wells



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Intelligence Information Special Report

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COUNTRY USSR



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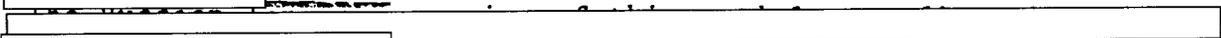
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Summary:

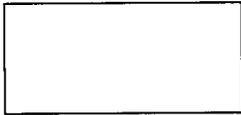
The following report is a translation from Russian of an article which appeared in Issue No. 3 (76) for 1965 of the SECRET USSR Ministry of Defense publication Collection of Articles of the Journal "Military Thought". The author of this article is General-Leytenant L. Baüköv. This article comments on a previous article on organizing and conducting a front offensive operation in mountain regions employing conventional weapons, and, based on the experience of exercises in the Turkestan Military District, examines the special features of this as they apply to the conditions of the Middle Eastern Theater of Military Operations. The author also examines the procedures for maintaining the rocket troops in constant readiness to employ nuclear weapons and for employing front aviation. The allocation and equipping of engineer troops for restoration work and for support of the seizure and negotiation of mountain corridors which the enemy has prepared for demolition also are discussed.

End of Summary

Comment:



The article to which it refers is not available.



Conducting a Front Offensive Operation
Without Nuclear Weapons*
by
General-Leytenant L. Baukov

In regard to the publication of an article by General Katyshkin, we would like, based on the experience of exercises and theoretical analyses conducted in the Turkestan Military District, to express some views on the matter under discussion, as it applies to conditions in the Middle Eastern Theater of Military Operations.

According to the views of Iran's military command, the armed forces of that country will, in the initial period of a war, confine themselves to defensive tactics. For this purpose, they have established in the area bordering on the Soviet Union a covering zone (20 to 80 kilometers in depth), a main line of defense (along the Turkmen-Khorosan mountains), several intermediate lines, and a rear line of defense. They intend to concentrate the main efforts of the troops on defending the main line of defense, primarily the most accessible axes. From one reinforced infantry battalion up to one reinforced infantry brigade is allocated for the defense of important installations (mountain corridors, passes, and oases). The defense is based on the principle of setting up individual pockets to the entire depth of the corridor, with large gaps and breaks between them. The most important installations in the corridors (passes, road junctions, hairpin turns, entrances into corridors and ways out of them) have been prepared for demolition and for use as obstacles and are guarded by special teams.

*Comment on an article by General-Leytenant I. Katyshkin, "Some Problems of Organizing and Conducting a Front Offensive Operation in Mountain Regions Employing Only Conventional Means of Destruction", Collection of Articles of the Journal "Military Thought", No. 1 (74), 1965 (not available).

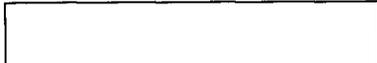


Under these conditions, and also in view of the physical and geographical features of the Middle Eastern Theater of Military Operations, front troops will possibly have to conduct not one, but two or three offensive operations. Five to six days will be needed to prepare and plan them. This can be explained by the need to plan and carry out measures which take into consideration the constant threat that weapons of mass destruction will be employed and which allow the troops to go over to the conduct of a nuclear war in an organized manner, as well as by the need to allocate sufficient time to prepare and plan the employment of conventional means of destruction. The period indicated may be somewhat shorter for operations in the initial period of a war, since these are planned in peacetime, and the appropriate grouping of troops is set up in advance and necessary reserves of materiel are stockpiled.

In the operation under discussion, the axis of the main attack, as a rule, is selected in the area of the most accessible terrain, which allows the employment of all branch arms. Most often it will coincide with the axis of the main corridors, roads, and through valleys which take the troops to those areas and targets whose seizure will fulfil the task or goal of the operation. However, these axes will always be defended by the enemy, and therefore, it will be necessary to break through his defense or deliver deep enveloping strikes. Depending on the number and capacity of axes available for troop actions, the disposition of the enemy defense, and the capabilities of the attacking troops, the width of the front offensive zone will reach 700 to 800 kilometers and at times even more.

The depth of the front offensive operation will exceed the depth of a front offensive operation in a mountain theater because of the great distance of the main enemy grouping from the state border, the limited number of operational and strategic targets (areas) and the considerable distances between them, and the great depth of the natural lines of defense. The depth was 750 to 960 kilometers at the front command war game (February 1965). The rates of advance will be somewhat different. For example, when breaking through a defense and negotiating mountains, the rate of advance will not exceed 20 to 30 kilometers a day, while, when developing an operation and offensive in valleys and deserts, it may reach 50 to 60 kilometers, and at times even 90 kilometers a day. However, it





should be kept in mind that these rates of advance often have a "seasonal" nature. The fact is that in salt marshes during the rainy season, and in sandy deserts during the dry season, the movement of motor transport becomes extremely difficult, and sometimes cannot take place at all.

It is most advisable to have a front operational disposition of two echelons. This is primarily because of the need to have sufficient forces to build up efforts when advancing to a great depth under conditions where large-scale regroupings of troops have become difficult.

We differ somewhat from General Katyshkin on the procedure for maintaining the rocket troops in constant readiness to employ nuclear weapons. In our opinion, the missile brigades and the missile battalions of the divisions must always have prepared and fueled missiles for the initial strike. The remaining reserve of missiles and their warheads must be stored at a mobile missile technical base (the missiles in Readiness No. 6, and the warheads in Readiness No. 4) with checked out electrical circuits. In the course of an operation, rocket troops must be kept in Readiness No. 3 at the main positions. When the threat of enemy employment of nuclear weapons arises part of the firing batteries will be switched to Readiness No. 2 or even Readiness No. 1.

Some remarks about the use of front aviation. First of all, we do not share the opinion expressed by the author in his article that, in carrying out air preparation, bomber aircraft will deliver concentrated strikes. The small number of these aircraft rules out this type of action. Nor can we agree with the suggestion to revise the principle of centralized control of aviation. This is inadvisable, if only because the front will have few aircraft and the need to redirect their efforts will arise considerably more often than during an advance on average rugged terrain. Moreover, an air army, supporting front combat actions on two or three axes, is able to provide stable control of aircraft from one post. And on the axes one can have operations groups.

The author's stated wish that the fighter and fighter-bomber aircraft, even if only in small groups (pairs), be constantly in the air on the most important axes does not correspond to the capabilities of the air army, either. Therefore, it must operate

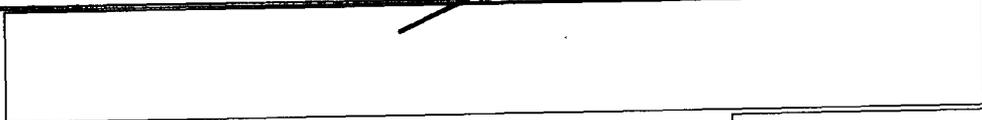


mainly on request from a state of "airfield alert", and, in individual cases, by means of an "airborne alert" and "hunting".

Because of the small number of fighter-bombers, it is advisable to employ them mainly to deliver strikes against the corps and immediate operational reserves which are moving forward. Based on the experience of exercises, when an air army has one division of fighter-bombers, its forces may be allocated as follows: for alerts with nuclear bombs -- 15 to 20 aircraft (according to the number of nuclear bombs allocated); for participation in preparatory fire -- up to one regimental sortie (two or three squadrons); for the destruction of enemy nuclear means newly detected at the beginning of combat actions -- ten to 12 aircraft (one squadron); for the support of ground troops when going over to the offensive -- three to four squadrons. No less than 70 to 80 percent of these forces should be used to carry out tasks on the axis of the main attack of the front troops.

I would like particularly to stress the importance of engineer support in seizing and negotiating mountain corridors in which the enemy has prepared a large number of demolition shafts. One can judge the effectiveness of these obstacles from the results of special exercises carried out in the military district. Thus, to restore a demolished road which is 15 meters in length and built on a ledge on rocky soil, one combat engineer company with mechanized means would have to be allocated for 1.5 to two days. The long periods of time needed for this restoration work are explained by the narrow work area, which, as a rule, prevents the use of machinery on both sides of the obstacle, and also by the insufficient performance of existing mechanized means in working on rocky soil.

In view of the volume and the difficulty of restoration work when negotiating mountain corridors, the troops must strive to seize passes and installations which have been prepared for demolition. Flanking detachments, tactical airborne landing forces, and special groups must be employed for this purpose. For each mountain corridor, it is advisable to have a seizure detachment in the strength of a reinforced motorized rifle regiment (battalion). A reinforced movement support detachment, whose task is to clear obstacles and restore demolished installations, must operate with it. One combat engineer (engineer road) battalion should be allocated to the movement



support detachment.

To cut down on the time needed for restoration work in mountain corridors, engineer troops should be supplied with small-size, transportable, high-performance means for work on rocky soil, as well as with light, prefabricated sectional road and bridge structural elements that could be delivered to the work sites by air. The flanking detachments should have the means to negotiate obstacles (canyons, steep rises, crevices, etc.). To support the advance of a motorized rifle (tank) division in one or two mountain corridors, it is necessary to reinforce it with no fewer than two combat engineer (engineer road) battalions. However, this requires an increase in the strength of the front operating in the mountain theater, and an increase in the total number of engineer units, principally the engineer road units.

The creation by the enemy of flooded zones brought about by demolition of existing reservoirs and allowing the water to flow out, may also affect the conduct of an operation under the conditions of the Middle Eastern Theater of Military Operations. To prevent this, it is necessary to undertake all possible measures to seize a dam. For this purpose, airborne landing forces may be used.

