

TOP SECRET

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20505

14 March 1977

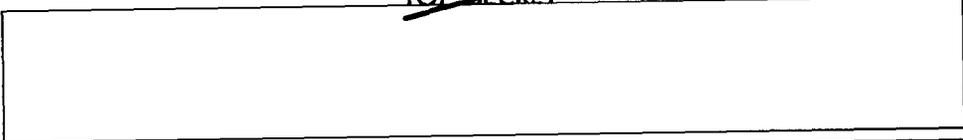
MEMORANDUM FOR: The Director of Central Intelligence
FROM : William W. Wells
Deputy Director for Operations
SUBJECT : MILITARY THOUGHT (USSR): Some Problems
of Political Work among Enemy Troops and
Population in the Initial Period of War

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 examines the general content and methods of ideological warfare applicable to a future nuclear war, based on an assessment of Soviet propaganda capabilities and the possible targets remaining after the initial strike. Radio is considered the most effective means of disseminating propaganda, but the possibility of using propaganda warheads on air-to-ground missiles also is suggested. The author dwells in some detail on the conduct of special propaganda in a front offensive operation, a meeting engagement, and in operations on coastal axes. Also emphasized are the avenues for cooperation between political organs and operations personnel and the importance of coordinating the propaganda activities of Soviet and Warsaw Pact forces. This article appeared in Issue No. 2 (75) 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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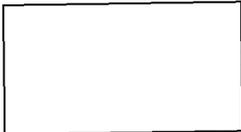
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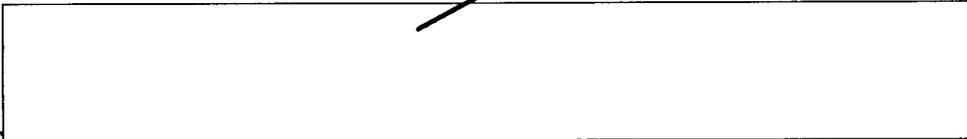
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Intelligence Information Special Report

Page 3 of 15 Pages

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DATE OF INFO. Mid-1965

DATE 14 March 1977

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MILITARY THOUGHT (USSR): Some Problems of Political Work among Enemy Troops and Population in the Initial Period of War

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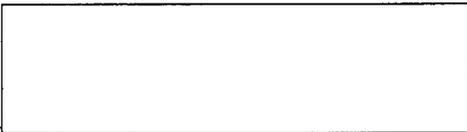
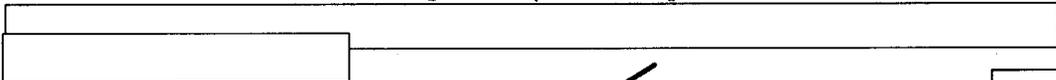
Summary:

The following report is a translation from Russian of an article which appeared in Issue No. 2 (75) 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-Mayor A. Shevchenko. This article examines the general content and methods of ideological warfare applicable to a future nuclear war, based on an assessment of Soviet propaganda capabilities and the possible targets remaining after the initial strike. Radio is considered the most effective means of disseminating propaganda, but the possibility of using propaganda warheads on air-to-ground missiles also is suggested. The author dwells in some detail on the conduct of special propaganda in a front offensive operation, a meeting engagement, and in operations on coastal axes. Also emphasized are the avenues for cooperation between political organs and operations personnel and the importance of coordinating the propaganda activities of Soviet and Warsaw Pact forces.

End of Summary

Comment:

General-Leytenant Aleksandr Mitrofanovich Shevchenko was identified as Chief, Special Propaganda Directorate of the Main Political Directorate of the Soviet Army and Navy as of March 1972. He was promoted to General-Leytenant in 1971. The SECRET version of Military Thought was published three times annually and was distributed down to the level of division commander. It reportedly ceased publication at the end of 1970.

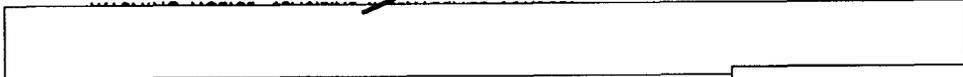


Some Problems of Political Work among Enemy
Troops and Population in the Initial Period of War
by
General-Mayor A. Shevchenko

A new world war, should it be unleashed by the imperialists, will assume from the very outset a clearly defined class character and will inevitably be accompanied by a bitter ideological struggle between the two coalitions. As a result of the employment of new means of armed combat, particularly nuclear weapons, as the principal means of destruction, the course and outcome of the war will depend to an even greater extent on the morale and fighting spirit of the soldier masses and on the morale and political consciousness of the populations of the warring sides. This necessitates even closer coordination between military actions and ideological forms of warfare in order to achieve complete victory over the enemy.

In the initial period of a future war, commanders and political organs will have to devote greater attention to special propaganda. We know that at the beginning of the Great Patriotic War there were serious shortcomings and even mistakes in the content and organization of political work directed at the German-Fascist troops and among the populations of the countries in the Hitler coalition. These consisted mainly of overestimating the degree of class consciousness of the enemy troops, isolating political work somewhat from combat actions, overcentralizing it, and the fact that the table of organization of the special propaganda apparatus did not entirely conform to the tasks to be carried out. All this served to considerably reduce the effectiveness of our propaganda among the enemy troops and population, particularly in the initial period of the last war.)*

In recent years the problems of special propaganda have been receiving increased attention at command-staff exercises and war games. They are being widely discussed at military theory conferences of officers in military districts, groups of forces, and in the fleets. The need therefore arises for a more comprehensive synthesis and understanding of the experience of the last war in the field of special propaganda, to practice this work at the command-staff exercises and war games, and to resolve the most urgent problems involving the organization and conduct of



ideological warfare against the enemy under the conditions of a modern war, primarily in its initial period.

Naturally, an exhaustive discussion of all the problems relating to the content, forms, and means of conducting our propaganda among the enemy troops and population is not possible in a single article. We shall therefore dwell here only on the following matters, which we believe are of the most practical value: the targets, tasks, and content of political work among the enemy troops and population, and the conduct of this work in the initial period of a war; the organization and conduct of special propaganda in a front offensive operation; and coordination and cooperation in the field of special propaganda between the political organs of the Soviet Armed Forces and the armies of the Warsaw Pact member countries.

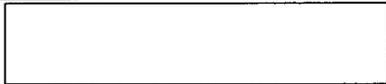
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The basic task of special propaganda in the initial period of a war will be to assist our Armed Forces, by exerting ideological persuasion on the enemy troops and population, to achieve their immediate strategic military goals. Accomplishing this main task depends primarily on the ideological level and purposefulness of special propaganda, and, with the special characteristics of the probable enemy taken into account, on its effectiveness and close coordination with the combat actions of the troops.

The main content of special propaganda will be set forth in the decisions of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the Soviet government, in the orders and directives of the Supreme High Command, and in the directives and instructions of the Main Political Directorate of the Soviet Army and Navy.

In view of the relative brevity of the initial period of a war fought with missile/nuclear weapons, it is important to determine the main items in the subject matter of special propaganda, on which attention should be concentrated in the initial days of combat. These items, in our opinion, will consist primarily of a complete explanation of the real causes and nature of the destructive war unleashed by the imperialists, and will expose its true perpetrators -- the imperialistic monopolists, who are using this war to pursue their class mercenary aims. The extensive propaganda along these lines must be accompanied by an explanation of the just war aims of the Soviet Union and all the socialist countries, and by a demonstration of the military might of the socialist commonwealth, with stress on its superiority in modern equipment, primarily nuclear weapons and their missile means of delivery. This is intended to convince the





enemy troops and population in the initial days of the war of the inevitable collapse of the adventure undertaken by the imperialist aggressors, and of the inevitable complete victory of the socialist countries. Of course, class, national, and other contradictions existing in the enemy's country must be exploited in the propaganda on these subjects, taking account of the special characteristics of each of the countries in the imperialist coalition. The ultimate aim of all our propaganda will be to demonstrate convincingly to the enemy troops and population how they can terminate as quickly as possible the destructive nuclear war unleashed by the imperialists, and how to disengage from it. The purposefulness of special propaganda in the initial period of a war and its effectiveness will depend largely on a correct assessment of the circumstances confronting commanders and political organs in the very first days of combat actions. We shall list a few of them.

In the event of a sudden outbreak of war, our armed forces will be mainly facing those enemy groupings currently stationed in the theaters of military operations. Our propaganda will therefore have to be directed at select, well-trained regular troops made up mainly of volunteers and mercenaries, who have long been subjected to intensive anti-Soviet and anticommunist ideological conditioning. We must therefore give prior thought to the content and develop in advance the propaganda material to be directed at actual formations and large units of a probable enemy's troops, taking into account the specific nature of each and the extent of their ideological conditioning.

It should be borne in mind that in the Central European Theater of Military Operations, for example, the NATO field armies will include formations of two or three nationalities. We must therefore provide for the publication of printed propaganda materials in two or three languages.

Starting with the first day of the war, propaganda will also be directed at the populations of countries overseas, who in the past have not been subjected to the horrors of war, and among whom the notorious "keelhauling theory" is currently being actively propagated. Of course, the actual military-political situation could give rise to other important subjects, and these would be reflected in the contents of special propaganda.

The success of ideological warfare against an enemy in the initial period of a war extending over a huge area depends on the skilful determination of the direction of the main efforts of special propaganda, and on the correct selection of its targets. We cannot agree with those



comrades who believe that the destruction caused by the use of nuclear weapons will result in there being no targets left for special propaganda. We believe that after our initial nuclear strike such targets could be:

- those at the front and in the rear that were not destroyed or were not completely destroyed by nuclear weapons;
- enemy strategic and operational reserves advancing from the interior;
- the population of cities and towns that were not subjected to nuclear strikes, as well as the population in areas located around the large destroyed centers of enemy countries and not affected by radiation.

To achieve the necessary concentration of special propaganda on the main targets in the initial period of a war, the staffs should define these targets beforehand in their operational plans, in the light of the capabilities of the political organs for conducting ideological warfare against the enemy. This will permit greater consideration of the morale factor in planning and carrying out an operation, and will serve to coordinate special propaganda with the combat actions of our troops. The political organs of the Soviet Army and Navy already have considerably more special propaganda forces and means at their disposal than they did in the last war. For example, a front political directorate has ATB-56 mobile printing presses able to print up to 500,000 leaflets in 1/16 format, or 100,000 newspapers with a format half the size of a page of Pravda, in a single day. It also has PAR-7RV mobile broadcasting stations with a range of up to 200 kilometers. The Navy political directorate has R-640 radio sets and ATS-53 mobile printing presses able to print up to 35,000 leaflets a day. The political departments of combined-arms and tank armies and of army corps use agitation detachments equipped with MZS-51 powerful loudspeaker sets (with a range of five to seven kilometers), OZS-62 lightweight loudspeaker sets (with a range of 2.5 kilometers), R-125M and R-820M radio sets, and the ATS-53 mobile printing press. The political departments of motorized rifle, tank, and airborne divisions will receive light OZS-62 sets and R-105M radio sets. They will also be supplied with standard foreign typefaces, which will make it possible to put out leaflets in the major European languages in the printing plants of division newspapers. To distribute propaganda materials, air armies and individual long range aviation bomber corps will be able to use AGITAB-250-85 propaganda bombs (containing up to 17,000 leaflets), and the APT-1 propaganda parachute container (which holds up to 36,000 leaflets). The air forces will have AG-1 propaganda balloons (with a range up to 300 kilometers), AG-2 balloons (range up to 2,500 kilometers) and AG-6 balloons (range up to 12,000 kilometers). Large units of ground forces may also use 122-mm propaganda shells for these purposes.

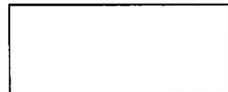


Thus a front political directorate, and the political departments of formations and large units, have the capability, using only the organic technical means at their disposal, to print and distribute to the entire depth of combat operations up to 700,000 leaflets a day (not counting the leaflets of the Main Political Directorate), and to reach with their radio propaganda enemy troops and population in the tactical and operational zones. Up to 10 MZS's and 20 to 25 OZS's of first-echelon armies and divisions can operate in a front area. It must be borne in mind that work is continuing on the modernization of present technical equipment and on the production of new equipment for carrying out political work among the enemy troops and population.

In peacetime the special propaganda apparatus of political organs is kept at minimum strength. As a result, if there is no period of threat a certain amount of time will be required from the moment combat operations are initiated until the contingents designated to conduct propaganda among the enemy troops and population are able to go into full operation. Therefore political directorates and staffs of military districts and groups of forces that plan specific measures for organizing special propaganda with the forces and means available to political organs, seek to reduce the time required to mobilize individual contingents, and build up cadres of officers and reserve technical specialists in special propaganda in the deployment areas of units and large units, are acting entirely correctly.

The most effective means of rapid dissemination of our propaganda after combat operations have begun will be by radio. Of course, radio propaganda will to a considerable degree be conducted by the state propaganda organs. With their permanent radio stations they will be able to reach the population of the main enemy countries in all theaters of military operations, including those overseas. The political organs of the army and the navy will also participate, directing their propaganda particularly at enemy troops. In addition, political organs, using their organic radio means, can conduct effective radio propaganda among the enemy troops and among the population near his front zone.

The dissemination of printed propaganda on a mass scale among the enemy troops and population is a somewhat more difficult matter. Printing and distributing leaflets, particularly in the deep rear of the enemy, takes a rather long time. As the experience of exercises shows, an average of from 10 to 12 hours is required to prepare and print leaflets, deliver them to airfields, and distribute them by front aviation. As for using AG-2 and AG-6 propaganda balloons to distribute leaflets in the strategic





rear of the enemy, several days will be required merely to deliver them to the maximum ranges of the balloons. It is readily apparent that this is not an efficient way to disseminate propaganda material. Moreover, propaganda balloons cannot be accurately targeted to deliver propaganda materials and do not always guarantee their dissemination to the intended areas. More precise means are therefore required to carry out the tasks laid down by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the Supreme High Command on disseminating the most important propaganda materials over the enemy's strategic centers. One possibility might be special propaganda warheads on the air-to-ground type missiles carried by long range aviation aircraft.

Timely and effective political work among the enemy troops and population in the initial period of war and during combat actions depends largely on close cooperation of the political organs with the combined-arms staffs and the staffs of the branch arms and services, as well as with the operations directorates (departments). The latter will help to keep the political organs constantly informed of changes in the operational zone of a front or army (corps), and will jointly determine the main targets of ideological persuasion and plan special propaganda measures appropriate to the combat actions being carried out by the troops.

The mutual exchange of information and close cooperation between political and intelligence organs are important elements in correctly evaluating the fighting spirit, morale, and political consciousness of enemy troops. They will make it possible to formulate the most persuasive theses and arguments to be used in special propaganda, and to effectively organize political work among prisoners of war.

The staffs of formations and large units of the air forces will assist political organs to ensure, on the necessary scale, the timely distribution of propaganda materials on enemy territory, while the departments of communications troops will assist them in the effective use of organic and combat radio and other communications means for ideological warfare against the enemy.

Cooperation between political organs and staffs on matters of political work among the enemy troops and population must be planned and worked out at command-staff exercises and war games. This experience enables the political organs to better coordinate special propaganda with combat actions during operations conducted in the initial period of a war.





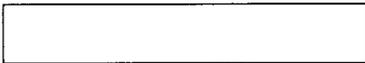
Of great practical interest, in our view, are the problems involved in conducting special propaganda in a front offensive operation. An offensive creates favorable conditions for effective political work among the enemy troops and population. Of course, in offensive operations during a nuclear war, ideological warfare against the enemy becomes exceedingly complex and requires that commanders and political organs organize propaganda with great efficiency, reduce to a minimum the time required to print and deliver propaganda materials, and skilfully maneuver special propaganda technical means. The experience gained from conducting special propaganda during offensive operations in the last period of the Great Patriotic War and the work done on these problems at a number of exercises in the postwar period, confirm the need to plan in advance the main special propaganda measures, as well as the fact that these measures unquestionably contribute to the successful execution of the tasks assigned to a front and to armies.

During the period in which a front is carrying out its immediate task in the Western European Theater of Military Operations, it is advisable in particular to determine which large units of the main enemy grouping, as well as which areas and targets in the depth of the disposition of his army group, should be subjected to massive ideological persuasion after the initial front missile/nuclear strike. It is also advisable to plan the principal measures for ensuring concentrated political work among the enemy troops and population on the axis of the main attack of the front during the execution of the immediate task. There should also be advance planning of measures to exert ideological persuasion on the deep reserves and population of strategically important enemy areas and targets during the period in which the front is carrying out a subsequent task in the offensive operation.

The experience of exercises confirms that the content and organization of special propaganda vary according to the nature of the combat actions being carried out by front troops in an offensive operation, in an offensive against an enemy on the defense, in a meeting engagement, in an advance along coastal axes, etc.

During negotiation of an enemy defense, when he will be attempting to repulse or delay the advance of our troops by defensive actions, special propaganda should lay stress on the results of our missile/nuclear and other strikes, so as to convince the enemy troops and population that no defensive lines will be able to delay the rapid advance of our troops. Of course, the major efforts of the political organs of a front and of first-echelon armies in the field of special propaganda should be concentrated on political work among the personnel of the main defensive





grouping of enemy troops, as well as among his approaching reserves.

In the Central European Theater of Military Operations, for example, targets of radio and printed propaganda conducted by the front political directorate could be the troops of the first and second (reserve) echelons of an army group, and the population to a depth of 250 to 300 kilometers. The political organs of the combined-arms armies and the tank army organize and conduct work on the appropriate operational axes, exerting ideological persuasion on opposing troops stationed on the forward defensive line of the enemy zone of defense, and on the reserves of his field armies and on the population to a depth of 80 to 140 kilometers. The targets of special propaganda of the political organs of motorized rifle and tank divisions will be individual strong points and defensive areas in the covering zone and forward security area (zone), and subsequently, the defensive areas of the enemy's first-echelon brigades and his divisional reserves.

Since a tank army may often be used in the first echelon on the axis of the main attack of a front during an offensive operation, the political directorate must concentrate special propaganda primarily in this army's area, and give appropriate assistance to its commanders and political organs.

For example, the political directorate of the Carpathian Military District did this during exercises, when working out the problems of organizing and conducting special propaganda during a front offensive operation to a great depth. The plan of the political directorate stipulated a number of measures for concentrating special propaganda in the area of the tank army operating on the axis of the main attack of the front. Specifically, these measures included: the dispatching of a reinforced operations group of special propaganda officers to assist the political department of the tank army; and the employment of organic special propaganda technical means, as well as local printing plants and radio stations captured in the course of battle. In addition, the front political directorate planned the operational printing of leaflets and their distribution primarily in the area in which the tank army was conducting combat actions, to the entire depth of the task they were carrying out.

In our view, this concentration of special propaganda efforts in the area of the offensive of a first-echelon tank army is entirely correct, since it makes for more purposeful and effective utilization of ideological weapons to assist front troops in carrying out their tasks.





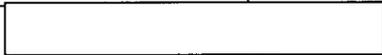
Since a troop offensive will develop swiftly along axes, and will bypass powerful enemy strong points and centers of resistance, ideological persuasion on the enemy groupings remaining in the rear of the advancing troops should be carried out by special propaganda forces and means of the political organs of the second echelon (reserve) of the front, and by individual first-echelon large units, depending on the tasks they are carrying out.

In a situation where counterattacks by enemy operational reserves are being repulsed, special propaganda is concentrated on undermining the fighting spirit and morale of the personnel of the main enemy counterattack grouping, especially the tank grouping. The political organs of individual attacking armies and divisions can actively assist in the defeat of the enemy counterattack grouping by exerting ideological persuasion on the personnel of large units and units on the flanks and in the rear of the grouping.

Experience shows that under conditions where enemy groupings are being encircled and destroyed, cooperation in the field of special propaganda between the political organs of formations and large units participating in the operation must be organized with particular care and their work "synchronized". Success depends on the timely and skilful use of ideological persuasion on the main grouping of the encircled troops. Special propaganda will explain to the encircled troops the hopelessness of their situation and the uselessness of further resistance, and will try to persuade them to surrender. The main thing is to dispel any hopes or illusions of the surrounded garrison of assistance from the outside, and to convey to them the appeal (ultimatum) from the front (army) command calling for their surrender.

We may conclude from the experience of certain exercises that the work of special propaganda political organs must be particularly purposeful, and concentrated in the period when the enemy is being encircled and destroyed. For example, in the command-staff exercise held in the Group of Soviet Forces, Germany (1963), after the "enemy" grouping was encircled, its command was "presented" with an ultimatum which had to be answered within two hours. As the situation developed, a decision was made to use primarily radio propaganda for political work against the surrounded troops. The "enemy" soldiers and officers were warned that if they rejected the ultimatum and continued to resist, they faced inevitable destruction. The point was convincingly made that any efforts by the enemy command to assist the encircled group would end in complete failure. Also envisaged during this "operation" was the release of war prisoners back to





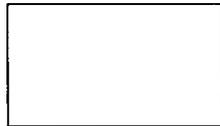
their own troops for agitation purposes.

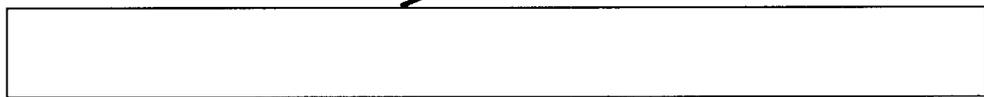
During pursuit of enemy troops, the task was assigned of making it clear to them that their retreat was the result of an overwhelming defeat and that only by surrendering would they be able to save their lives. In this situation, as the experience of the exercises shows, special propaganda is directed primarily at the personnel of the main retreating groupings and the advancing reserves of the enemy. Ideological persuasion is exerted on the enemy groupings remaining in the rear by the political organs of the formations and large units assigned to destroy these groupings.

The most difficult thing is to organize special propaganda in meeting engagements, which are typical of the initial period of war. In exercises held in military districts and groups of forces, the problems of organizing and conducting special propaganda under these conditions have not been satisfactorily resolved. We believe that it would be advisable to map out certain problems involved in the conduct of special propaganda in meeting engagements, so as to be able to test them out at the forthcoming command-staff exercises in 1965. The main thing in operational special propaganda during a meeting engagement is to convince the enemy troops of the inevitable failure of their command's plans and in this way undermine their offensive spirit. A major factor here will be that of notifying the enemy immediately of the results of the employment by our troops of nuclear weapons, and of successful actions by our troops on the flanks and in the rear of the enemy groupings. Special propaganda in a meeting engagement is concentrated on undermining the morale and fighting spirit of the main grouping of forces, both in its concentration area and when it is advancing and deploying. After a rout of an advancing enemy grouping, it is advisable to concentrate special propaganda forces and means on political work among personnel of his individual isolated groups.

The question of the organization and conduct of special propaganda by commanders and political organs of airborne troops taking part in a front offensive operation deserves more thorough and detailed study. During combat actions in the operational depth of the enemy, political work directed at the personnel of approaching enemy reserves and counterattacking groupings, his retreating forces, as well as at the population in the landing areas, will greatly assist them in carrying out their tasks.

The political directorates in a number of military districts and groups of forces, when working during exercises on the problems of





organizing and conducting special propaganda in a front offensive operation involving the landing of airborne troops in the enemy rear, have been mapping out a number of measures designed to provide maximum assistance to the political organs of these troops in the waging of ideological warfare against the enemy. Specifically, they send additional special propaganda officers to the political department of the airborne division, supply the landing forces with operational leaflets for distribution on the ground in the enemy rear, and supply the officers and men of reconnaissance groups with brief conversation books in the appropriate language. At the same time it was also planned to print operational leaflets and distribute them among the enemy units opposing our airborne troops. Special radio broadcasts were also planned.

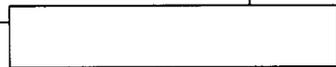
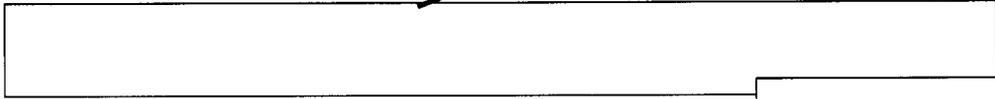
The organization of special propaganda in offensive operations on coastal axes has certain particular characteristics. It is carried out simultaneously among personnel of opposing groupings of the enemy ground forces and navy. This is made possible by precise cooperation between the command and the political organs of the front, army (corps), fleet and flotilla. It is carried out on the basis of a uniform plan containing measures for comprehensive political work among the enemy troops and population. As the experience of exercises shows, during offensive operations on coastal axes, the principal targets of special propaganda are: the main enemy coastal grouping; his naval bases, ports, troops, and population in the straits zones, islands, and other coastal areas. Its forms and methods have much in common with those discussed above.

When considering problems of ideological warfare against an enemy under the conditions of modern coalition warfare, we should dwell on certain questions of cooperation and coordination of the activities of the political organs of the Soviet Armed Forces and those of the armies of the Warsaw Pact countries. These problems are extremely important, but resolving them presents some difficulty.

Combined exercises in recent years have shown that this kind of cooperation is extremely necessary and possible. The main elements involved in achieving it are as follows:

-- coordination of the main subjects and contents of special propaganda, appeals and slogans directed at armed forces personnel and the population of individual imperialist countries. This coordination will make it possible to avoid discrepancies in the content of the leaflets and radio broadcasts, particularly in the appeals. Otherwise, damage could be done to special propaganda, and the enemy will take advantage of this to discredit it;





-- coordination of the assignment of targets of special propaganda, the concentration of the forces and means of the political organs of the fraternal armies on decisive sectors of the front or on individual operational axes; this will undoubtedly serve to enhance considerably the effectiveness and purposefulness of the general ideological battle against the enemy;

-- carrying out combined propaganda measures within the framework of the combined armed forces, mutual assistance in the production and employment of special propaganda technical means, and finally, the exchange of information about the morale and political consciousness of the enemy and the exchange of work experience in special propaganda.

Of course, the basic directions we have listed here do not exhaust the whole range of matters of cooperation and coordination of the efforts of the commanders and political organs of the allied armies in organizing and conducting joint ideological warfare against an enemy, in order to achieve the overall task of defeating him in the shortest possible time. They will be carried out according to a plan developed in advance, and will be supplemented and refined according to the actual situation.

* * * *

In this article, as indicated above, only certain aspects of political propaganda work among the enemy troops and population in the initial period of a war have been touched upon. The need to increase the readiness of commanders and political organs to conduct special propaganda calls for an extensive study of the problems involved, and practical work on them at command-staff exercises and war games.

