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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20505

17 March 1977

MEMORANDUM FOR: The Director of Central Intelligence
FROM : William W. Wells
Deputy Director for Operations
SUBJECT : MILITARY THOUGHT (USSR): Reconnaissance
In Support of the Operational Rear Services

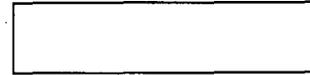
1. The enclosed Intelligence Information Special Report is part of a series now in preparation based on the SECRET USSR Ministry of Defense publication Collection of Articles of the Journal 'Military Thought'. This brief article contends that special organs should be set up to study the economy in prospective theaters of war in addition to continuing reconnaissance by normal means to provide information needed by the rear services. This article appeared in Issue No. 3 (79) for 1966.

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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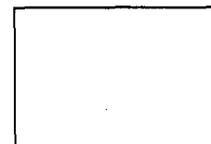
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Intelligence Information Special Report

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COUNTRY USSR

DATE OF INFO. Late 1966

DATE 17 March 1977

SUBJECT

MILITARY THOUGHT (USSR): Reconnaissance in Support of the Operational Rear Services

SOURCE Documentary

Summary:

The following report is a translation from Russian of an article which appeared in Issue No. 3 (79) for 1966 of the SECRET USSR Ministry of Defense publication Collection of Articles of the Journal 'Military Thought'. The author of this article is Colonel K. Ovdiyenko. This brief article contends that special organs should be set up to study the economy in prospective theaters of war in addition to continuing reconnaissance by normal means to provide information needed by the rear services.

End of Summary

Comment:

Colonel K. Ovdiyenko was identified as a rear services officer serving in the Odessa Military District who has published several articles in the magazine Rear Services and Supply on training, the operation of motor transport units, and the economical use of materials. 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.

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Reconnaissance in Support of the Operational Rear Services

(Based on the experience of exercises conducted
in the Odessa Military District)

by
Colonel K. Ovdiyenko

Operations by ground forces will, as we know, be conducted to a great depth and at high speeds. They will be marked by rapidity, high mobility, and the absence of continuous fronts and dense dispositions of troops. The massed employment of nuclear weapons by the belligerent sides will create numerous zones of continuous destruction and radioactive contamination, which in turn will cause lengthy interruptions in the operation of means of delivery, and the isolation of certain groupings of troops from their supply bases.

A considerable portion of the materiel (up to 30 to 40 percent) may be totally destroyed.

Thus the nature of modern operations greatly complicates the materiel support of troops.

The experience of the initial period of the Great Patriotic War, and especially of the exercises and war games conducted during the postwar period in our military district, shows that the rear services will be able to perform their tasks successfully only if they are in the same state of readiness as the troops they are supporting. This is the principal requirement of modern rear services.

One important element in the system of measures to ensure constant high combat readiness on the part of the front troops and the rear services is that of operational reconnaissance.

We should point out that problems of reconnaissance in support of the rear services have not as yet received the attention they deserve. And this is despite the fact that its function is to obtain very important data, without which it is difficult to count on the successful organization and functioning of the rear services during a rapid offensive.

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Reconnaissance, after all, must provide information on the condition of lines of transportation in territory occupied by the enemy, the extent of the damage inflicted upon them, and the possibilities of using them. Reconnaissance data makes it possible to determine the most advantageous areas for deploying rear services during a troop offensive, to take more effective measures to protect the rear, sources of water, and personnel, and to obtain a picture of the economic condition of the area of combat operations, the possibilities of obtaining supplies from local means, the presence and productive capacity of enterprises, the number and capacity of medical facilities, and the distribution of enemy depots and the supplies contained in them. It goes without saying that these questions are all studied in peacetime. But during an operation reconnaissance in support of the rear services must be given more attention.

The experience of the Great Patriotic War shows that certain fronts in offensive operations covered a considerable portion of their materiel needs from local resources. This made it possible to free means of transport for other purposes. And what are the possibilities in this regard now on one axis or another of the prospective operations by our troops?

Much information of interest to us may be found in various types of reference books and compendiums but, unfortunately, there are matters that are not treated in such documents.

The opinion has been expressed in the periodical press that we must set up special organs in the central directorates which would study the economy in a theater of military operations, and come up with proposals on how to make use of the resources of the theater. We fully share this point of view and consider it advisable to set up such organs in the event of war, and attach them to the rear staffs of military districts as well.

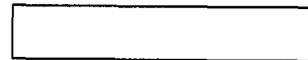
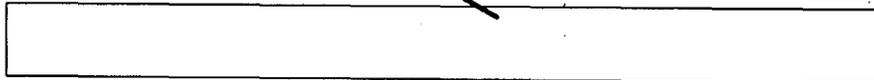
But we cannot assume that all the information required by the operational rear services will be obtained as soon as special organs are formed to study the economy of the foreign portion of the theater of military operations.

Since rear services organs do not have special reconnaissance organs, it is very important to continually accumulate information that is of interest to the rear services, utilizing for this purpose the overall system of reconnaissance used both in wartime and in peacetime.

In conclusion we would point out that for a deeper and more purposeful study of the organization and capabilities of rear services subunits,

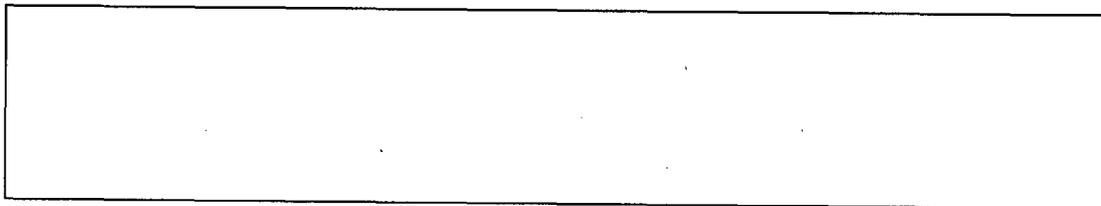
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units, and large units of the armies of the probable enemy, it would be useful if information collections, reference books, and other materials that are published were to show more specifically the rear services subunits of the enemy, and not confine themselves to merely listing the designations of the rear services subunits and rear control organs.



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