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HR 70-14

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20505

15 February 1978

MEMORANDUM FOR: The Director of Central Intelligence  
FROM : John N. McMahon  
Deputy Director for Operations  
SUBJECT : MILITARY THOUGHT (USSR): Textbooks for  
Higher Military Educational Institutions

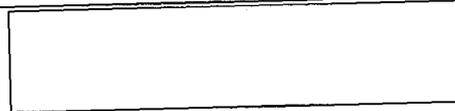
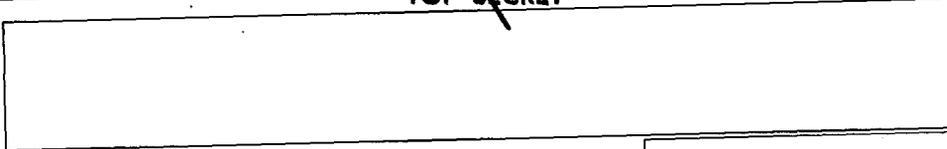
1. The enclosed Intelligence Information Special Report is part of a series now in preparation based on the SECRET USSR Ministry of Defense publication Collection of Articles of the Journal "Military Thought". This article strongly criticizes current textbooks used in Soviet military academies, describing their tendency to be out of date, non-uniform in views and approaches, with internal factual defects, unscientific grounding, overlong texts, and also lacking in interacademy and even intra-academy coordination. It also presents recommendations on overcoming these deficiencies, primarily by the centralized and coordinated standardization of the curricula and texts of the higher command military educational institutions. This article appeared in Issue No. 1 (62) for 1962.

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

*for* JOHN N. McMahon

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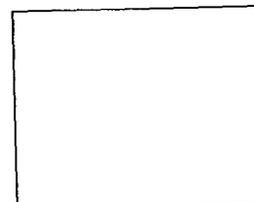
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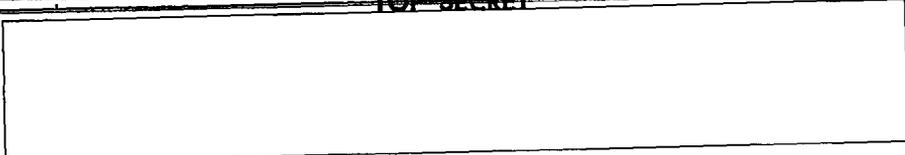
Director of the National Foreign Assessment Center

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# Intelligence Information Special Report

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COUNTRY USSR



DATE OF INFO. Early 1962

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SUBJECT

MILITARY THOUGHT (USSR): Textbooks for Higher Military Educational Institutions

SOURCE Documentary

Summary:

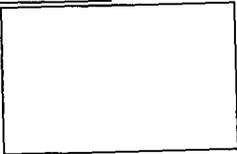
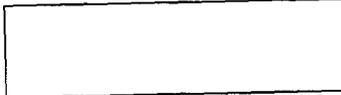
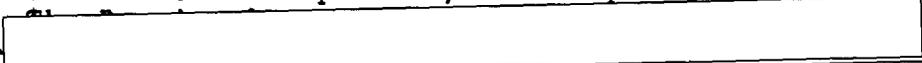
The following report is a translation from Russian of an article which appeared in Issue No. 1 (62) for 1962 of the SECRET USSR Ministry of Defense publication Collection of Articles of the Journal "Military Thought". The authors of this article are Colonel M. Kiryan, Colonel I. Prokhorkov, and Colonel V. Yakovkin. This article strongly criticizes current textbooks used in Soviet military academies, describing their tendency to be out of date, non-uniform in views and approaches, with internal factual defects, unscientific grounding, overlong texts, and also lacking in interacademy and even intra-academy coordination. It also presents recommendations on overcoming these deficiencies, primarily by the centralized and coordinated standardization of the curricula and texts of the higher command military educational institutions.

End of Summary

 Comment:

After 1962 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.

discontinued



Textbooks for Higher Military Educational Institutions

by

Colonel M. KIRYAN  
Colonel I. PROKHORKOV  
Colonel V. YAKOVKIN

In recent years many fine textbooks have been written in our academies on operational and tactical disciplines, providing students with a high level of instruction. Some of these textbooks, however, still contain a number of serious defects. One of the reasons for this, in our opinion, is that each higher military educational institution tries to prepare textbooks on all subjects, and as a result many textbooks are published but they are not of high quality.

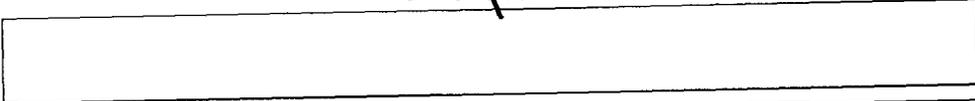
We know that a textbook can be written only by a collective which has accumulated sufficient teaching experience and has mastered teaching methods, while the subject itself is developed as a scientific discipline. Unfortunately, the directors of higher military educational institutions and departments do not always take these principles into consideration. As a result certain textbooks are written by inadequately trained comrades, and the work is drawn out over many years, since the books are reworked several times. The textbooks thus become obsolete even before they are published. This defect is especially noticeable when the faculty collectives are small, and when, due to the great work load involved in teaching methods and scientific research, they are unable to devote enough time to writing the textbook. In addition, the qualifications of the authors in a number of cases do not meet the requirements needed to accomplish this work.

Writing textbooks on military subjects undoubtedly requires a different approach to the organization of their composition. As we know, a textbook is related to a curriculum which defines a field of knowledge, and the skills and habits which the students must master. Naturally, the stability of the textbook depends on the stability of the curriculum itself. In this regard, we cannot fail to note the unsound practice employed in some educational institutions of altering the curriculum each year, and sometimes

even revising it several times during an academic year. This kind of situation is caused by the curriculum being drawn up not on the basis of scientifically substantiated data gained while teaching and in the practical activity of graduates, but rather sometimes at random, without regard to the future development of one or another area of the given discipline. It is frequently said that this defect is natural since military science and the practice of troops are developing so rapidly that it is impossible to foresee new problems in the curriculum. But a situation like this can develop only when faculty collectives are not engaged in scientific work or where there are serious defects in carrying it out. Consequently, in order to achieve high quality in textbooks, the development of the curricula must first of all be placed on a scientific basis.

An analysis of the curricula of a number of command academies (the Military Academy i/n M. V. Frunze, the Academy of Armored Troops, the Military Artillery Academy, the Military Political Academy i/n V. I. Lenin, the Air Academy, and others) shows that in the area of general subjects, they hardly differ from one another in content. Yet all the academies try to write their own textbooks for each discipline. Where collectives are not in a position to develop their own textbooks for a number of reasons, they adapt the textbooks of other higher military educational institutions. In our opinion, this procedure cannot be considered normal. It is therefore extremely urgent to develop standard curricula for command higher military educational institutions in general subjects. This would make it possible for qualified teachers to be assigned to write textbooks not for one educational institution, but for a number of them, having discussed these works prior to their publication. In this way students from different higher military educational institutions in related fields would study from the same textbooks. A uniformity of views and concepts would be established, which would have a positive influence on practical work among the troops. In addition, the stability of the textbooks would be considerably enhanced in view of their high scientific level, while the cost of developing them would be greatly reduced.

The present apparatus of the Deputy Minister of Defense for Higher Military Educational Institutions could organize the development, discussion, and approval of these uniform curricula.

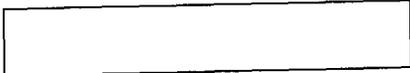
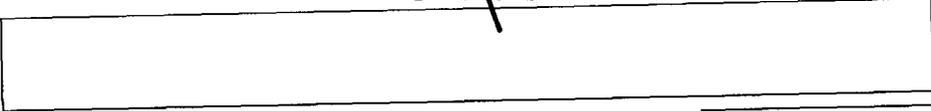


However, since it takes a considerable amount of time to standardize the curricula, a different method can be used at first: develop uniform textbooks in individual subjects for a number of higher military educational institutions, where the number of credit hours is approximately the same. We have already had some experience in this area. For example, the Military Academy i/n M. V. Frunze has published a textbook on reconnaissance in a regiment and division, and another on the history of military art, for several higher military educational institutions. A textbook on the combat employment of missiles and artillery developed by this same academy is also being used in the Armored Academy and in several other academies. On the same principle a textbook on the fundamentals of air defense forces was developed by the Military Academy i/n M. V. Frunze.

As for specialized disciplines, each higher military educational institution must develop textbooks within its own departments. Some comrades feel that the textbooks on specialized subjects of some higher military educational institutions can also be used to teach students in other disciplines where these subjects are not specialized. For example, students in the Military Academy i/n M. V. Frunze can study from the textbook on the tactics of rocket troops and artillery developed by the Artillery Command Academy, while the latter can use the textbook on general tactics from the Military Academy i/n M. V. Frunze. In practice, however, this does not happen. The fact is that the content of the curricula and the number of hours per subject in a higher military educational institution is several times greater for a specialized subject than for a non-specialized one. Naturally, then, the amount of knowledge acquired by the students of these academies in one discipline or another cannot help but vary.

It will be difficult to standardize the curricula in command higher military educational institutions as long as there is a marked difference in the training periods. We now have a situation where the training periods for students in combined-arms academies are shorter than those in command academies of the branch arms and branches of the armed forces. This leads to inconsistencies in the amount of material presented and in the time devoted to mastering it. We cannot tolerate a situation where a combined-arms commander's overall outlook, technical training, and knowledge of the combat employment of all





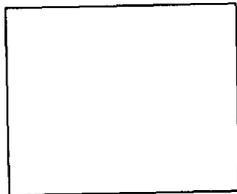
branch arms in a battle and operation is inferior to that of a commander of one or another branch arm or special troops. If we are to improve the quality of textbooks we must resolve a whole series of organizational and practical problems aimed at further improving the training of our command personnel.

Let us examine to what degree the textbooks published meet the requirements made of them. We shall take as an example the textbooks on general tactics. They are published in a number of higher military educational institutions, although this subject is specialized only in the Military Academy i/n M. V. Frunze and in the Armored Academy.

Soviet military science regards general tactics as the most comprehensive military discipline. It includes the theory and practice of combat actions by troops, beginning with the actions of a single soldier and ending with such a large-scale large unit as a corps, and even touches on an army in a number of matters. General tactics is distinguished from the tactics of the branch arms by the fact that it examines the combined efforts of all branch arms participating in a modern combined-arms battle. It is therefore based on a profound knowledge of the combat characteristics and tactics of the actions of all branch arms. The amount of scientific knowledge accumulated in the area of general tactics and the tactics of the branch arms is very great. The operative manuals alone (field service regulations, field manuals, and handbooks and manuals of the branch arms) are made up of more than 100 printer's sheets.\* The manuals contain only basic principles and practical recommendations; there are no substantiations, discussions, or system of proofs. Consequently, if we were to imagine all the works on a given scientific discipline, covering all aspects and details of a combined-arms battle, there would be hundreds of printer's sheets. And besides general tactics, the students also study operational art, which is an extremely broad discipline with its own manuals and enormous amount of literature, as well as a number of other disciplines.

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\* [A printer's sheet is 16 pages of printed text.]



It is natural that the study of a large amount of literature cannot be accomplished by even the most gifted student. Therefore, the volume of materials studied by students is strictly regulated by the training curriculum. Consequently, the textbook must correspond to this curriculum and explain its content in depth. As a result it will acquire the importance of a basic training manual. From this it is clear why the selection of materials and the methodology of their presentation in the textbook must be given considerable attention.

The textbook must include material which provides the commander with the necessary knowledge, imparts to him the correct concept of warfare and its characteristics, equips him with the dialectic method of approaching the determination of methods of conducting a battle and operation, and teaches him the skilful use of the means of armed combat.

Another requirement in the writing of a textbook is that the exposition of the material in it be methodologically correct and on a high scientific level. Textbooks which have been published on general tactics and on the tactics of branch arms, on the whole meet the requirements made of them, but their main drawback is insufficient scientific substantiation of the positions set forth. There are also inadequacies of a methodological nature, and in the language and style. For example, in the textbook on general tactics now in use\*, the fundamentals of offensive combat are presented superficially and without scientific analysis. The material is more instructional in nature, since the positions set forth in it do not stem from the facts, discussions, or arguments given in it.

A textbook can be of real help to an officer only if it explains the latest achievements of modern military science and technology with due regard for their future development. However, frequently, in order not to raise the security classification of the textbook, the necessary data on new models of armament and military equipment are not included in it. This cannot be considered normal. Of course, at times it is not necessary to give the specific tactical and technical characteristics of one or another model of equipment. But discussions, demonstrations, and explanations must be based on these characteristics and they must consider the possibilities of

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\* General Tactics (Book One), Moscow, Publishing House of the Military Academy i/n M. V. Frunze, 1960, page 608.

changing them. This also applies to the use in textbooks of data on organizing the troops. It is hardly advisable to dilute these materials for reasons of security. In these cases it is difficult to achieve stability or viability in our textbooks.

The presentation of the material must be based on broad scientific generalizations, and the textbook itself must be predominantly theoretical in nature. Unfortunately, the authors of textbooks in operational and tactical disciplines are a long way from accomplishing this task. Very often the material is presented not as discussions, substantiations, comparisons, etc., but rather as pure dogma. After a stereotyped turn of phrase -- for example, the commander "points out", "clarifies", "specifies" -- a steady stream of enumerations follow. In addition, the textbooks often merely contain principles drawn from regulations but set forth in slightly different terms. All this points to the fact that the authors of these textbooks are not rising to the level of broad scientific generalizations.

Without question, it is virtually impossible to do away with enumerations in a textbook. However, they must not be the result of an unsubstantiated assertion, but the result of previous discussions, or a conclusion drawn from an analysis which has been made. For example, in the aforementioned textbook General Tactics one of the authors writes, "Thus at the present stage in the development of the means of armed combat, tactical support of troops includes: reconnaissance, security, air defense and antitank defense, antiatomic, antichemical and antibacteriological protection, combat against enemy airborne landing forces, securing of boundaries and flanks, and camouflage of troops and important installations" (page 138). Here the enumeration appears to be a conclusion drawn from evolutionary development. The author brings the reader to this point, having first substantiated the content of tactical support, based on the nature of the combined-arms battle and the means of armed warfare.

In addition to scientific conclusions, which are of primary importance in establishing the interrelation of phenomena, textbooks should contain those theoretical propositions, laws, and principles which the student, having once mastered them, could successfully employ in his practical activities. Unfortunately, because of the specific nature of a military

subject, it is very difficult and sometimes altogether impossible to discover strict laws like, say, those in physics. It is even impossible to apply principles as in the exact sciences, since they may manifest themselves differently in each specific situation. Therefore, in a textbook it is important to show the manifestation of these principles with specific examples taken from the experience of warfare and operational and tactical exercises, and with specific calculations or those based on convincing statistical material.

All aspects of a battle and operation must be examined in textbooks in their historical perspective, and show trends in their development, taking into account that the experience of the last war is becoming increasingly outdated due to the development of new means of warfare. The experience of operational and tactical exercises is of exceptional importance in testing the new methods which have arisen as a result of the development of more improved means of warfare. Extensive use of combat experience and the experience of exercises being conducted helps to strengthen the link between theory and practice. A textbook must imbue the students with a Marxist attitude both toward the military legacy of the past and toward contemporary military thought. It is impossible, for example, to ignore bourgeois military theory and practice. On the contrary, we should study bourgeois military art and, by critically judging it, take what is valuable from it. Textbooks, therefore, must correctly show the objective factors determining the development of the theory of a battle and operation.

Textbooks in operational and tactical disciplines must foster in the students Soviet patriotism and a feeling of pride in the Soviet Homeland and its Armed Forces.

A textbook, as we know, must be marked by brevity and clarity of exposition, and by precision in its definitions. This is achieved by linguistic means and by the proper format of the book as a whole. Repetitions stem most frequently from incorrect structure of a book. For example, in the textbook Reconnaissance in a Division and Regiment\* the separate discussion of such questions as reconnaissance in defense prior to the enemy's going over to the offensive and when our own troops are preparing an

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\* Reconnaissance in a Division and Regiment, Publication of the Military Academy i/n M. V. Frunze, Moscow. 1960, 376 pages and 17 diagrams.

offensive cannot be considered correct. With this format it is impossible to avoid repetitions. The defending troops obtain information not only in support of the defense, but also in support of the offensive under preparation. Therefore, in presenting the problems of organizing reconnaissance immediately before an offensive, only those measures needed to be carried out additionally should have been presented.

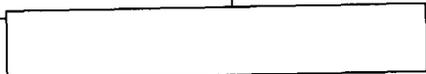
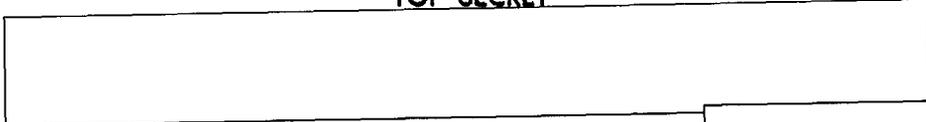
Not all the definitions in our textbooks are marked by clarity of exposition or precision. There are judgements by authors which may be interpreted in different ways. In addition, students not only use textbooks but also regulations and manuals. It is therefore important to establish to what extent the regulations and manuals will be reflected in the textbooks, and what the relationship between them should be.

A study of the textbooks in operational-tactical disciplines has revealed three viewpoints on the relation between regulations (manuals) and textbooks.

According to some, a regulation (manual) is the main guide. Therefore, the material in a textbook must be arranged the same way as in the regulation (manual) with only a few phraseological corrections, and in places the manual can be quoted verbatim.

Others, who by the way are in the majority, while they consider the regulations (manuals) to be the main guide, believe that it is necessary to substantiate the principles taken from them with calculations and comments.

And, finally, a third group of authors when writing a textbook regard a regulation (manual) as one of the sources which they use when writing a chapter or section. They do not deny its leading role, but at the same time they do not give it any preference where a question of scientific truth is concerned. And provided the regulation (manual) or any of its principles become obsolete, these are presented in such a way that the new scientific principles do not look like a challenge to or denial of the existing regulation (manual), but rather as a development of and supplement to it. Let us cite one of the examples. In writing the textbook General Tactics (Book One) the collective of the Military Academy i/n M. V. Frunze made use of the Field Service Regulations of 1948. According to these regulations, one



of the main tasks of security was stated as: "securing our troops against the sudden appearance of a ground or air enemy" (Field Service Regulations of 1948, p. 84). After studying the nature of the means of armed combat, the authors came to the conclusion that this provision of the manual had become obsolete. Security, as it was presented in the manual, cannot accomplish this task. Therefore, the authors of the textbook treated this question differently: "Under modern conditions security of the troops is achieved by all types of combat support. For example, only air defense is in a position to secure troops against a surprise attack by an air enemy, only antichemical protection can protect the troops from the effects of chemical weapons, etc. As for security as one of the measures of combat support, it is organized only against a ground enemy" (page 146).

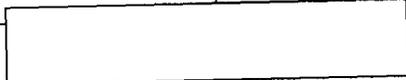
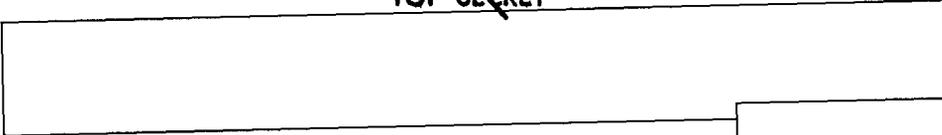
We agree with this group of authors. Textbooks in operational and tactical disciplines must be coordinated with the regulations which are in effect. They should develop and supplement them but not rewrite them.

The content of textbooks in operational and tactical disciplines must be coordinated, since they are all directed toward the achievement of a single goal -- training an officer who can meet all the requirements of a modern war. In spite of the fact that textbooks, taken as a whole, reveal all aspects of a battle and operation and the methodology of the work of a commander and staff, preference should be given to textbooks on general tactics and operational art. The textbook of a department of the branch arms should be of an auxiliary nature: to supplement and develop the basic textbooks on matters of the combat employment of its own branch arm, but not to repeat them.

Consistency in the treatment of the main principles and in terminology is very important for coordination. If we analyze our textbooks it becomes clear that in writing them this matter was probably not even raised. Let us take, for example, the textbook Missile Weapons and Their Combat Employment (Part III).\* Inaccuracies appear in the treatment of the question of the combat employment of a tactical missile battalion (pp. 24, 25). The recommendations on setting up special artillery groups and on several organizational questions are also incorrect (p. 74).

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\* Missile Weapons and Their Combat Employment, Part III. Moscow, Military Publishing House, 1960. 120 pp. and one sheet of diagrams.





Individual errors also occur in an analogous textbook of the Military Academy i/n M. V. Frunze.\* In it, in particular, calculations of the required number of nuclear weapons and launchers are based on conditions of a breakthrough of a prepared enemy defense, which cannot be regarded as typical under modern conditions (pp. 48, 50, 58, 277). The proposals for setting up strong artillery groupings in large units and formations (pp. 60, 8?, 262) are also obsolete. And questions on control posts (p. 24) are not set forth clearly either.

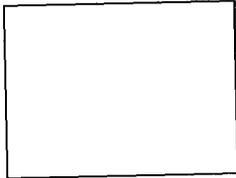
The examples cited confirm the absence of interacademy communication when textbooks are being written.

There is even a lack of coordination between departments of one and the same academy when textbooks are being written. In textbooks published by special departments, one senses a desire for autonomy, which leads to unnecessary repetitions and reduces interest in them among the students. For example, all the textbooks of the departments of the branch arms of the Military Academy i/n M. V. Frunze repeat certain propositions from the textbook General Tactics published by the same academy. Some propositions are also repeated in the textbooks of the branch arms. For example, questions of the employment of fighter aviation can be found in the textbook of the department of the tactics of aviation and in the textbook of the department of air defense. By eliminating repetitions in textbooks designated for one and the same student, their volume could be cut practically in half.

The sequence and system of exposition in the textbook are spelled out in the plan-prospectus, in which the chapters and sections are listed, their content is briefly indicated, and the methods of exposition and the main conclusions are set forth.

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\* Missile Weapons and Artillery in a Battle and Operation, Moscow, Publishing House of the Military Academy i/n M. V. Frunze, 1960, 356 pp. and 14 diagrams.



Determining the size of a textbook is a rather complex matter. The authors proceed from the need for the textbook to reflect all aspects of the training program, to contribute to the development of a Marxist world outlook among the students, and to promote the development of operational-tactical thinking, memory, and language, and therefore they strive to increase its size.

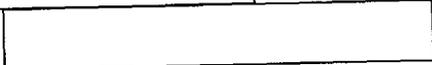
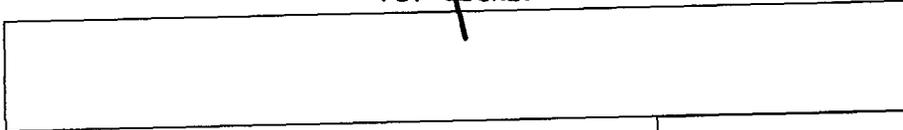
For example, the total volume of all textbooks on general tactics published in the Military Academy i/n M. V. Frunze comes to more than 100 author's sheets\* and greatly exceeds the established norms. If we examine the volume of textbooks on tactics of branch arms published by the Military Academy i/n M. V. Frunze and the Military Academy of Armored Troops alone, an even more curious picture emerges.

As can be seen from the table, textbooks on tactical reconnaissance and foreign armies exceed the volume allotted to them by more than three times; textbooks on artillery are slightly more than double. The volume of textbooks in other disciplines has also been set too high. It could be reduced considerably through better arrangement of the material, more careful editing, and also by eliminating repetitions in the textbooks of related departments. For example, the textbook on general tactics (Book One) of the Military Academy i/n M. V. Frunze was submitted for publication with a volume of 60 author's sheets, but after editing only about 35 author's sheets remained.

Experience shows that the size of a textbook on general tactics, and on the tactics of the branch arms and special troops, should not exceed an average of 0.5 author's sheets per lecture hour.

In a number of higher military educational institutions, when these subjects are studied more attention is paid not to theoretical training of the students, but rather to their acquisition of certain skills. As a result, 15 to 20 percent of the allotted time is spent at lectures and seminars, while 80 to 85 percent is devoted to accomplishing specific tactical tasks in a certain situation. In our opinion, at least 30 to 40 percent of the time allotted for this discipline should be devoted to the study of the theory of general tactics and the tactics of the

\* [An author's sheet is 40,000 typographical characters.]

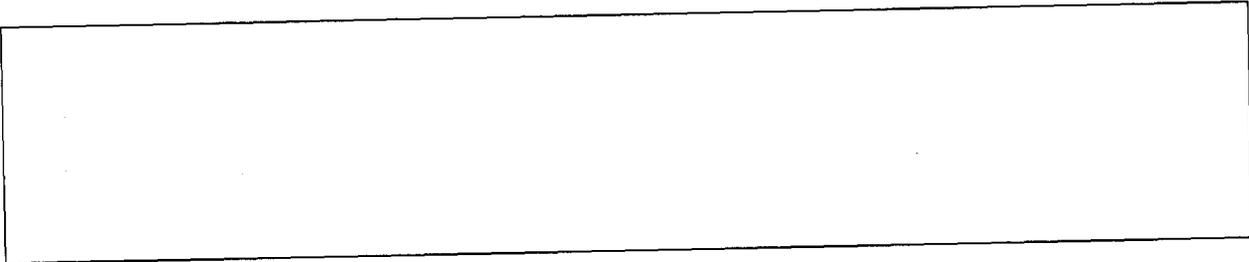


branch arms and special troops. Only the most necessary skills should be introduced and these must be coordinated with grounding in theory. The entire range of practical skills can be acquired only on the job in a specific duty.

Good illustrations are also of great importance in mastering the material presented in a textbook. However, the quality of the illustrations is not as yet satisfactory in all our textbooks. Diagrams as a rule are too cumbersome and add little to the material presented.

And, finally, a word about the scientific reference section of a textbook. This is very important since it enables the student to quickly find the necessary principles and definitions, and select the necessary literature and sources. The scientific reference section depends on the nature of the textbook. For operational-tactical subjects, in our opinion, it should include a bibliographical index of domestic and foreign literature, and a subject-thematic index; an explanation of old and new terms given in the footnotes or at the end of the book; and references to the sources from which factual material was taken.

In conclusion it remains to mention that the proposals and wishes contained in this article do not exhaust all the questions involved in improving the development of textbooks in the academies of the ground forces. But one thing is certain in resolving this important problem: it is time to switch from words to action. The successful accomplishment of the tasks of training officers depends largely on the quality of the textbooks.



Table

Title of Textbook	Number of hours in a lecture course	Prescribed size of textbook in author's sheets	Actual number of author's sheets
Reconnaissance in motorized rifle and tank divisions and regiments	12	6	21
Combat actions of troops of the US and British Armies under conditions where means of mass destruction are employed	24	12	39.9
Artillery in a combined-arms battle	32	16	37
Air defense of troops	18	9	19.5
Engineer support of a combined-arms battle	26	13	20.5
The tactical rear services	20	10	14.9
Tank troops in a modern battle	132	66	66

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