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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20505

6 September 1978

MEMORANDUM FOR: The Director of Central Intelligence  
FROM : John N. McMahon  
Deputy Director for Operations  
SUBJECT : MILITARY THOUGHT (USSR): The Organization  
of the Air Defense of Front Troops During  
an Operational Deployment

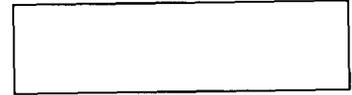
1. The enclosed Intelligence Information Special Report is part of a series now in preparation based on the SECRET USSR Ministry of Defense publication Collection of Articles of the Journal "Military Thought". This article amplifies an earlier article by discussing the role and activities of surface-to-air missile and antiaircraft artillery units of a front in the period prior to a war's outbreak and in support of front troops launching their initial offensive operation. It points out that owing to the high speed and possible surprise attack of enemy aircraft, most of a front's air defense forces must be on combat alert even in peacetime, and in discussing the problems of providing cover to ground forces moving forward to combat out of their military posts, it advocates establishing beforehand a concealed reserve of air defense forces. 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

John N. McMahon

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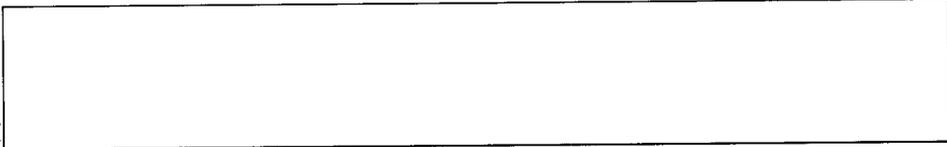
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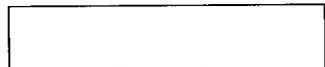
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# Intelligence Information Special Report

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COUNTRY USSR



DATE OF INFO. Late 1965

DATE

6 September 1978

SUBJECT

MILITARY THOUGHT (USSR): The Organization of the Air Defense of Front Troops During an Operational Deployment

SOURCE Documentary

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 of Artillery P. Levchenko. This article amplifies an earlier article by discussing the role and activities of surface-to-air missile and antiaircraft artillery units of a front in the period prior to a war's outbreak and in support of front troops launching their initial offensive operation. It points out that owing to the high speed and possible surprise attack of enemy aircraft, most of a front's air defense forces must be on combat alert even in peacetime, and in discussing the problems of providing cover to ground forces moving forward to combat out of their military posts, it advocates establishing beforehand a concealed reserve of air defense forces.

End of Summary

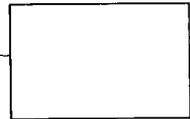
Comment:

The author also wrote "Certain Considerations Regarding Improvements in Field Air Defense Troop Control Systems" in Issue No. 3 for 1967. A Colonel General P. G. Levchenko was identified as Chief of Air Defense Troops of the Ground Forces in November 1969. 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.

The article referred to in the text was not received.



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The Organization of the Air Defense of Front Troops  
During an Operational Deployment

by

General-Leytenant of Artillery P. LEVCHENKO

The organization of air defense during the deployment of troops for an initial operation is a complex and critical task. Especially great difficulties can arise in organizing the air defense of troops moving up to attack directly from their areas of permanent location. The content and procedure for carrying out these undertakings still have not been studied very much.

All of this compels us to make a number of observations about this matter in elaborating upon the article of Army General I. YAKUBOVSKIY, "Some Problems of the Operational Deployment of Front Troops".\*

Our probable enemies, as we know, attach primary importance to the element of surprise. To this end they are maintaining in the theaters of military operations, and in the Western Theater in particular, strong groupings of ground forces and aviation ready for immediate combat actions. The main means of delivering nuclear warheads to targets in this theater remain, as before, manned aircraft and Mace cruise missiles. Their plans are to deliver massed nuclear strikes, with decisive importance being assigned to the first massed strike, in which from 1,000 to 1,100 aircraft and cruise missiles, as well as operational-tactical missiles, can be allocated to participate in the front zone.

To successfully repulse the strike of aircraft and cruise missiles in such numbers is to preserve the combat effectiveness of front troops and to create favorable conditions for them to deploy and fulfil their tasks during the operation.

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\* Collection of Articles of the Journal "Military Thought", No. 3 (73), 1964.

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On this basis it can be concluded that the main content of air defense in a front's first offensive operation must be that of repulsing the air enemy's first massed strike. It is precisely from this perspective that the matters of the organization and conduct of a front's air defense must be resolved.

Bearing this in mind, we shall try first of all to establish just at what degree of combat readiness must we keep air defense forces and means before the start and during the movement up of front troops from their areas of permanent location.

The current technical state of the means for the control and delivery of nuclear weapons to targets (aircraft, missiles, cruise missiles) is such that in preparing a strike it is necessary to carry out a series of preparatory measures that involve having radiotechnical means go on the air. Consequently, by a number of indications one can establish an enemy's preparation to deliver the first strike.

Analysis of the main intelligence indications of enemy preparation for delivery of the first nuclear strike and the experience of NATO Air Forces exercises in the Western Theater of Military Operations and, in particular, of the Air Forces command-staff exercise SWIFT STRIKE conducted in July 1964, show that the attack of the air enemy's first echelon should be expected within 35 to [NUMBER MISSING] minutes after the enemy receives [?reconnaissance data on?] the movement of troops [?from areas of permanent location?].

It is also assumed that the [?air?] enemy, striving to achieve maximum surprise, will make an attempt to preempt the movement of our troops and deliver the first massed strike on the troops when they are located in their permanent location sites. In doing this, in the first echelon of air attack means he may employ F-105 tactical fighters, which have an autonomous guidance system. The control system for the remaining tactical aviation and cruise missiles may be switched on when the first echelon crosses the state border. In this case, the beginning of the massed strike will most likely become known after the enemy aircraft are detected by the radar reconnaissance system of the front.

Thus, the front's air defense forces and means must be at such a level of combat readiness that they can initiate combat actions to repulse a strike immediately after detecting in the air the enemy's means of air attack. Hence it follows that the entire air defense system of the front

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in the border zone must be deployed even in peacetime and have the greater part of its forces on combat alert. Air defense units must be at full strength so that, with the introduction of increased combat readiness, they can prepare for combat actions in the shortest possible times.

With the start of the movement forward of front troops, the fighter aviation and surface-to-air missile units are brought to the first level of combat readiness and the antiaircraft artillery units move in the columns of their own troops. On the most probable axes of the actions of enemy aviation, in the first-line surface-to-air missile battalions there may arise the need to begin preparing the missiles before the air enemy is detected.

When front troops go over to the offensive from their areas of permanent location, the attack groupings, as we know, can be formed while front troops are moving to the border. The air defense forces and means in this case must be deployed beforehand and be

[ABOUT THREE LINES MISSING]

[?In this case?] [PART OF LINE MISSING]  
ensure the most dependable cover for the main groupings of front troops and [?thus?] implement control of the air defense forces and means [TWO TO THREE WORDS MISSING].

Carrying out a regrouping of air defense means when troops are arriving at the border will undoubtedly be impossible, since after the troops begin to move out of military posts it will be necessary to keep the main air defense forces and means in readiness to immediately repulse air strikes. Obviously, this will have to be done beforehand upon the introduction of increased combat readiness, and before the start of the movement of troops some regrouping will have to be done, primarily of the surface-to-air missile units on the planned axis of actions for the front attack groupings.

Some may object to this by referring to the impossibility of any maneuvering whatsoever during the period of increased combat readiness, since in this period the sides will be carrying on intensive reconnaissance of all types for the purpose of determining the intentions of the enemy, and, on discovering signs of his preparation for [?an attack?], they will take the appropriate countermeasures, right down to the delivery of a missile/nuclear strike.

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In our opinion, maneuvering by the front air defense forces and means can be carried out during a period of increased combat readiness if it is done continuously even during peacetime according to the integrated concept of the staff of the military district (group of forces). In the maneuvering we should include above all the surface-to-air missile and radiotechnical subunits of the air defense troops. The maneuvering itself must be done to improve the grouping of surface-to-air missile and radiotechnical units and to move them out from under a possible enemy strike. On the whole, it must be done in the interests of providing the most effective cover for the attack groupings of front troops.

Maneuvering air defense forces and means is advisable both to the [?main and most possible?] axes as well as to secondary sectors under the guise, for instance, of moving the units (subunits) out [?to training grounds for the conduct of prolonged exercises?]

[TWO LINES MISSING]

towards the front, along the border [PART OF LINE MISSING]  
movement of subunits from the interior.

The surface-to-air missile units can be moved [?into the maneuvering areas?] at full strength or by surface-to-air missile battalions, preserving as this is done the overall system of surface-to-air missile cover that was set up in the territory of the district (group of forces). The areas of launch sites should be assigned in such a way as to maintain reliable communications with the command post of the regiment. Provisions should be made to have the technical batteries maneuver simultaneously with the surface-to-air missile battalions. It is advisable to move the air defense radiotechnical units to the maneuvering positions by companies.

In this way, by the time the troops begin to move forward from their military posts, the grouping of air defense forces and means will to some extent correspond to the concept of the front offensive operation.

A few words about antiaircraft artillery. The article of Army General I. YAKUBOVSKIY recommended that for combat against low-flying aircraft and cruise missiles, part of the antiaircraft artillery [?forces and means?] of the armies and divisions be allocated and moved up beforehand into the areas to be occupied by the covering [?troops?]. The conduct of this measure is extremely necessary. However, for this the armies and divisions must have enough antiaircraft artillery to enable them to cover these formations and large units during their movement and simultaneously

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establish along the state border a zone of anti-aircraft artillery fire for combat against the enemy's low-altitude aviation forces.

Under conditions of a limited quantity of anti-aircraft artillery, the only acceptable principle for its combat employment remains that of having it provide close-in cover to troops and small rear installations. The idea itself of setting up along the border adjoining the probable enemy a zone of anti-aircraft artillery fire for combat against low-flying targets on the main axes of attack

[APPROXIMATELY TEN LINES MISSING]

The [PART OF LINE MISSING] [?under conditions?] of the offensive of front troops directly from their areas of permanent location, in our opinion, may be approximately as follows.

With the introduction of increased combat readiness, the anti-aircraft artillery must be deployed on the military posts or near them and made ready to immediately repulse low-altitude enemy air strikes. Part of the anti-aircraft artillery, under the guise of a maneuver, should be moved out to cover individual sectors of the movement routes of the armies (formations). With the start of the movement forward of troops, the anti-aircraft artillery units (subunits) deployed near the military posts must prepare to provide close-in cover to the advancing troops of the armies on the march.

The main efforts of fighter aviation during the movement of front troops to the state border [?must be directed toward?] covering the main groupings of front troops. In the interests of [?exploiting the capabilities?] of air defense as a whole, and especially at low altitudes, at the introduction of increased combat readiness, airborne alert should be established, with those fighters which can effectively combat low-flying targets being the first to be put into the zones. For camouflage, the airborne alert of fighters as well as the maneuvering of other air defense means is planned and practiced during peacetime.

As for the use of the air defense means of army (front) subordination when the troops start to move out from the military posts, we believe that, before repulsing the first massed strike, it is inadvisable to move them up immediately following the troops of the armies. During this period they must be used in the overall system of air defense according to the front plan.

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Under conditions where front troops are going over to the offensive from their area of permanent location, the matter of reserves of air defense means, and especially of surface-to-air missile units, occupies a special place. It is known that in the Western Theater of Military Operations the enemy has at his disposal a strongly developed radio reconnaissance system that permits him to detect radio emission sources to a great depth. Therefore, it is quite natural to assume that most of the positions at which surface-to-air missile and radiotechnical subunits perform their combat alert duty will have been detected by the enemy and be subjected to strikes. As a result, the air defense may be breached. Moreover, a number of formations may be left without air defense means altogether.

Furthermore, with the arrival of front troops in the border areas and the joining of a meeting engagement, their surface-to-air missile cover will be weakened, for the surface-to-air missile units that have been repulsing the enemy's first massed strike from the places of permanent location or maneuvering positions will lag behind the forward large units. And if one bears in mind the low maneuvering capabilities of the S-75 surface-to-air missile systems, then it will become perfectly obvious that forward large units of the front may be without surface-to-air missile cover altogether for a long time.

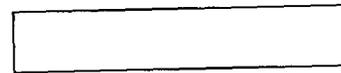
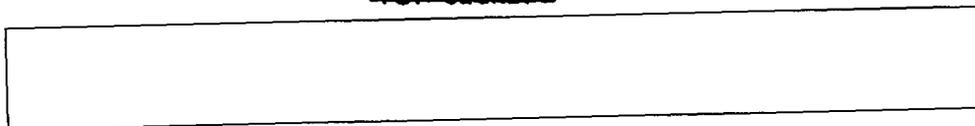
The way out of this situation, in our opinion, consists in the fact that the front must have a reserve of air defense forces and means. In peacetime this reserve must be kept in a "concealed status". It can be committed to action only on the decision of the front commander. Part of the reserve, and primarily the surface-to-air missile means, must move forward immediately following the troops that have gone over to the offensive, for the purpose of reinforcing their cover in the meeting engagement and during the subsequent offensive.

The reliability of air defense during the operational deployment of the front will depend to a considerable extent on stable control of the air defense forces and means. It is during the movement forward of troops and the setting up of attack groupings that air defense must be in the highest degree of readiness. And this means that all the command posts of the air defense troops and fighter aviation must at this time be kept in readiness to immediately begin controlling the combat actions of the front air defense forces and means.

Experience shows that to achieve continuous control of air defense means it is advisable to secretly relocate the mobile air defense command

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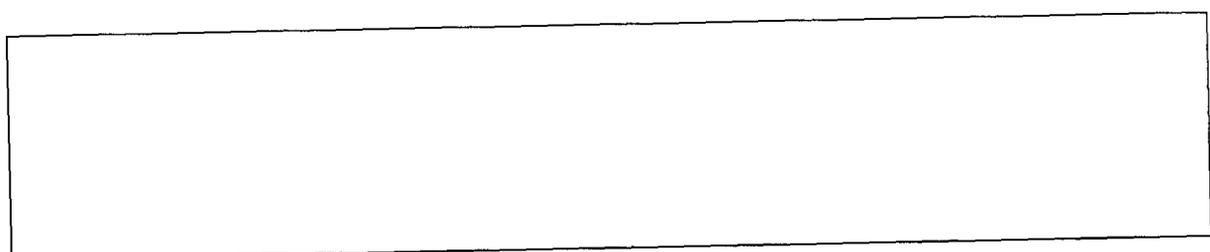
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posts of the armies and the front to the areas stipulated by the plan immediately upon the introduction of increased combat readiness, deploy them there, and keep them in readiness to assume control. At the mobile air defense command posts there should be complete combat teams headed by the chief of air defense troops.

Control of all the air defense forces and means operating in the front zone must be concentrated at the front air defense command post. The deputy commander of the air army for air defense, with means of communications for the control of fighter aviation, and an operations group from the formation (large unit) of Air Defense Forces of the Country must be located at it.

Dependable control of air defense troops is unthinkable without dependable radar reconnaissance of the air enemy. The main prerequisite determining its effectiveness is the prior establishment of a specific grouping of radar means that are capable of providing air defense command posts at all levels with dependable and continuous information about the air enemy.

In anticipation of an offensive directly from areas of permanent location, when organizing radar reconnaissance, it is necessary, as experience shows, to provide for the deployment of the first line of radar posts by using front radiotechnical units (subunits) and by including in the complement of these posts radars of different frequency ranges that ensure the establishment of continuous radar coverage at low altitudes. It is also necessary to allocate a reserve of radar means to restore and build up the radar coverage. The special importance and complexity of radar reconnaissance requires that the front air defense radiotechnical units be strengthened in an organized manner and that they be equipped with a sufficient number of modern radars and automated means of control.



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