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Translation

HISTORY OF WORLD WAR II

VOLUME 11

The Defeat of Militaristic Japan.

The End of World War II



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HISTORY OF WORLD WAR II
VOLUME 11
THE DEFEAT OF MILITARISTIC JAPAN.
THE END OF WORLD WAR II

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MILITARY-POLITICAL ISSUES

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The following contributed data used in writing certain sections: B. A. Vayner, Yu. K. Vorontsov, V. G. Zorchenko, G. I. Nekhonov, A. M. Noskov, G. A. Pozdorovkin, A. S. Savin, V. P. Sologub and I. N. Chaban.

Individual chapters and sections were reviewed by V. V. Voznenko, M. N. Kozhevnikov, N. G. Pavlenko and M. I. Povaliy.

Consultants for the volume were I. Kh. Bagramyan, P. F. Batitskiy, P. I. Batov, I. M. Galushko, N. M. Gribachev, I. I. Gusakovskiy, P. I. Yefimov, I. G. Zav'yalov, P. I. Ivashutin, V. P. Karpunin, P. S. Kutakhov, V. S. Makhalov, K. S. Moskalenko, I. G. Pavlovskiy, P. A. Rotmistrov, N. D. Sergeev, Ye. I. Smirnov, L. N. Smirnov, S. L. Tikhvinskiy, V. F. Tolubko, V. I. Chuykov and N. A. Shchelokov.

Chief of the editorial staffs for the work "History of World War II 1939-1945" was N. K. Glazunov. Editor in chief for the editorial staff for military history literature of Voenizdat [Military Publishing House] was P. N. Sharpilo. Supervisory editorial staff was N. G. Andronik, B. I. Pavlov, A. T. Sapronov and Ye. M. Fedotov.

Literary editor was G. A. Khvilevitskaya. The chronology of main events and indexes were compiled by I. M. Kalinina.

The author collective was aided in scientific-organizational and checking work by N. N. Vinogradova, V. V. Gromova, N. N. Yefimova, N. V. Ivanova, V. D. Kozinets, V. G. Kononov, Ye. Yu. Koroleva, R. N. Kucherova, A. Ye. Moshko, N. F. Smirnova and V. I. Sokolova.

Auxiliary work on preparing the volume was performed by P. A. Akat'yev, T. N. Gorbunova, N. M. Zhabinskaya and S. S. Yudin.

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[pp 5-8]

Introduction

In May 1945, a destroyed and overrun fascist Germany surrendered unconditionally. With joy and rejoicing, all the people on earth welcomed the Great Victory that brought long-awaited peace to the nations of Europe.

But in the countries of Southeast Asia, in the Far East and the Pacific, the war still raged on. Korea, Indochina, Indonesia, Malaya, part of China, Burma and the Philippine Islands were under the yoke of the Japanese occupationists. And although the United States and Great Britain had been waging war with Japan for over three years and had made some progress, they had not been able to achieve decisive victory. The governments of the United States and Great Britain, evaluating the military-political situation realistically, recognized that the war with Japan would require yet much force, time and, above all, sacrifice, and that it would be impossible to achieve a quick victory without the Soviet Union. That is why the American president and the British prime minister persistently strove to get the Soviet government to agree to get the USSR into this war.

Such an understanding was reached in the Crimea at the Yalta Conference. In the agreement signed 11 February 1945, it was stated that the "leaders of the Three Great Powers--the Soviet Union, the United States of America and Great Britain--had agreed that within two to three months after the surrender of Germany and the end of the war in Europe, the Soviet Union will enter the war against Japan...."¹

The agreement by the USSR government to enter the war with Japan was dictated primarily by allied obligations. In addition, it was also necessary to secure the safety of Soviet far eastern borders, considering the anti-Soviet, aggressive course of the policy of militaristic Japan that had been making raids repeatedly for a long time on the land of the soviets. It had actively taken part in the intervention by the imperialist states in 1918-1920, had tried to invade Soviet territory in 1938 at Lake Khasan, and started the battle at Khalkhin-Gol.

During World War II, while the Soviet Union was engaged in a stubborn struggle with fascist Germany, Japan, in a gross violation of the neutrality pact, moved the Kwantung Army right up to USSR borders; this army was a powerful grouping of ground troops, ready to invade the Soviet Union at any moment and unleash war on a large scale.

Consequently, the decision by the Soviet government to enter the USSR into the war against Japan was not only an obligation to the allies in the antifascist coalition; it also met the interests of the state, the necessity of protecting its far

¹ "The Soviet Union at the International Conferences during the Great Patriotic War 1941-1945," Volume 4, "The Yalta Conference of the Three Allied Powers--the USSR, the USA and Great Britain--4-11 February 1945," "Collection of Documents," Moscow, 1979, p 273.

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eastern borders. Therefore, the war by the Soviet Union against Japan was a logical continuation of the Great Patriotic War.

To end World War II most rapidly, Soviet Armed Forces, strictly carrying out the obligations agreed to, launched a decisive offensive against the Kwantung Army on 9 August 1945.

The military and political circles of militaristic Japan understood that a state had entered the war whose army had the strength of many millions and the widest experience of the war in Europe, lasting almost four years, an army the powerful military machine of fascist Germany had not withstood. The rout of Hitler's Reich by the Soviet Armed Forces foreordained the defeat of militaristic Japan too.

The war demanded fresh great efforts from the Soviet people, the Communist Party, the Army and the Navy. The Central Committee of the Communist Party, the State Defense Committee, and the General Headquarters of the Supreme High Command exerted enormous effort on the strategic regrouping of the Armed Forces from the west to the east on a scale and for a distance unprecedented in the history of the world. The country's national economy supplied the powerful grouping, deployed in the Far East, with everything needed; this enabled carrying out the strongest strategic offensive in several disconnected directions, in the shortest time and on an enormous expanse.

The Soviet Union's entry into the war against Japan was a major event that had a decisive effect on the entire subsequent course and outcome of World War II in the Far East, in the countries of Southeast Asia and in the Pacific. The rout of the Kwantung Army, the most trained and well-equipped Japanese grouping of ground troops, snatched from Japan the main means of further waging of war and compelled it to surrender. Without the Soviet Union, the United States and Great Britain could not have accomplished this mission successfully. The Soviet Union made the main contribution to the attainment of victory in the concluding stage of the war with Japan.

The decisive role of the Soviet Army in defeating the far eastern aggressor strengthened the strategic, political and economic positions of the USSR in the Pacific. In addition, the Soviet Union restored its historic rights to the Kuril Islands and the southern part of Sakhalin Island.

The rout of the grouping of Japanese troops, over a million in strength, deployed at the borders of the USSR and the MNR [Mongolian People's Republic], played the decisive role in liberating many nations of East and Southeast Asia, and above all the Chinese nation, from the occupationists. The Soviet Union rendered great assistance to the Chinese people in the struggle with the Japanese invaders, the establishment of the Manchurian revolutionary base and the victory of the revolution in this country.

Immediately after the war, the Soviet command transferred in full to the troops, led by the KPK [Communist Party of China], the arms and combat materiel captured in Manchuria by the Transbaykal, 1st and 2nd Far Eastern Fronts. A little later, they were also given a substantial share of Soviet arms. All this made it possible to rearm the people's troops in Manchuria and to form and outfit new units and large units. It is precisely this Manchurian revolutionary base that became the

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strategic springboard, relying on which the troops led by the Chinese Communist Party were able to develop the offensive and liberate the entire country from the followers of Chiang Kai-shek and their protectors.

In terms of saturation with military-political events, the concluding period of World War II (May - September 1945) holds a special place. It is determined by a number of specific factors; among the chief ones are the radical changes in the military-political situation in this region as a result of the surrender of fascist Germany, the Soviet Union's entry into the war and, finally, the unconditional surrender of militaristic Japan.

The 11th volume of the "History of World War II" is devoted to an examination of the complicated complex of military, political and economic processes in the Pacific basin, in the countries of Southeast Asia and in the Far East.

Part I covers the events prior to the Soviet Union's entry into the war with militaristic Japan. Studied here is the course of operations, as a result of which American-English armed forces reached the immediate approaches to Japan. Considerable space is allocated to the national liberation struggle of the nations of East and Southeast Asia against the occupationists. Analyzed in this part are the operations of the navies and air forces of the allies in their attempts to knock Japan out of the war by bombing and naval blockade, as well as the barbaric use of atomic bombs which did not stem from military necessity.

Part II looks at the events in the Far East in August-September 1945 that had a decisive effect on the end of World War II and the unconditional surrender of Japan. In the course of skillfully planned and executed operations, and in the shortest possible time, the rout of the resisting grouping of Japanese troops was completed and the liberating mission of the Soviet Army in Manchuria and North Korea was carried out. This exposes the Beijing falsifiers who try to minimize the role of the Soviet Armed Forces in liberating northeastern China and establishing the Manchurian revolutionary base or who quite deliberately pass over it in silence. The active participation of the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Army in liberating northeastern China is shown in the volume.

In part III, there is an analysis of the events that affected both the course of the war and the postwar system of countries of East and Southeast Asia, and of the complex processes of transition from war to the establishment of postwar relations in the Far East. Examined in detail are the consistent and active policy of the Soviet government on effecting the demilitarization of Japan and the struggle of the eastern nations for self-determination.

A special chapter is devoted to the development of the military art of the main states that waged the war.

The Soviet Union's participation in the war with Japan accelerated considerably the end of World War II; this saved from death many thousands of inhabitants of the countries of East and Southeast Asia, spared the Japanese nation itself sacrifice and suffering and had great influence on the development of the national liberation struggle in Asia.

The victory of the Soviet Union and its Armed Forces, guided by the Communist Party, and Japan's surrender created favorable conditions for the nations of China, Korea

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and the other countries of East and Southeast Asia for the successful struggle for freedom and independence and for socioeconomic reforms. The path of democratic development was opened for them. But the Soviet Union gave an especially great deal of help to the Chinese people. In the postwar period, many countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America, having been freed from colonial slavery, confidently embarked on the path of development on their own.

Bourgeois historiography, especially American, perverting the nature, course and results of the war with Japan, tries to make use of the falsified history of the past war for their own reactionary aims. Maoist historians are also making such distortions. Despite the apparent difference in positions between American bourgeois and Maoist historiography, it pursues a common aim--to belittle the Soviet Union's contribution to the victory over militaristic Japan. A critique of these anti-scientific versions is made in the volume.

As a result of the rout of militaristic Japan, the world's democratic forces headed by the Soviet Union won a historic victory of worldwide importance. A new stage began in the history of mankind; the growth of the international authority of the USSR, the establishment of the socialist community, the disintegration of the colonial system of imperialism, and the rise of the world communist and workers movement became its characteristic features.

Peace came throughout the entire world.

[p 9]

Part I. Military Operations by the United States, England and China against Japan.
Struggle by the Nations of the Enslaved Countries

[p 11] Chapter 1. Military-Political Situation in the Pacific, and in East and Southeast Asia

[p 29]

* * *

Thus, at the start of 1945, the military-political situation in the Pacific, and in East and Southeast Asia was shaping up in favor of the allies in the antifascist coalition. They had made great progress in the war against militaristic Japan. The forces of the national liberation movement had been stirred to greater activity in the countries occupied by Japan--Indochina, Indonesia, Malaya and the Philippines.

At the same time, the position of militaristic Japan deteriorated more and more. With the loss of a number of strategically important islands, it was not only deprived of the sources of raw materials. Japan began to face the real prospect of the enemy invading its homeland. In addition, the major victories of the Soviet Armed Forces in Europe had forced its main accomplice, fascist Germany, to the brink of collapse, which led to a radical change in the course of the war.

This was the military-political situation in the theater of war at the start of 1945. Both sides were preparing for a protracted, fierce conflict.

[pp 30-34] Chapter 2. Build Up of Forces by the Sides. Diplomatic Maneuvers by Japan

1. The Yalta Conference. The Decision on the Soviet Union's Entry into the War against Japan

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The United States and Great Britain had been trying to get the Soviet Union to enter the war against militaristic Japan practically since the very start of military operations in the Pacific. As early as 8 December 1941, the day after the Japanese navy attack on Pearl Harbor, President F. Roosevelt, in a conversation with M. M. Litvinov, the Soviet ambassador to Washington, spoke from the viewpoint of USSR participation in the war against Japan being desirable.¹ On 16 December, Roosevelt broached this subject in a message to I. V. Stalin.

The actions by the president and the State Department were fully supported by the higher command of the armed forces. Thus, General D. MacArthur wrote in December of that same year that "the enemy is most of all afraid of Russia's entering the war," and persistently recommended speeding up an attack on Japan from the north, that is, from the direction of the Soviet Far East.²

Similar steps were taken by the U.S. and Great Britain's leaders over the following two years. The Americans were the most interested in this, since it was they, and not the English, who bore the main burden in the war against Japan. As a rule, appeals to the USSR to open military operations in the Far East would follow events in the Pacific unfavorable to the United States. Thus, soon after the Japanese captured Kiska and Attu islands (Aleutian Islands), F. Roosevelt, acting at the request of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, again raised this subject in his message of 17 June 1942 to I. V. Stalin.³

The Soviet government could not respond at that time to the overtures of the allies. In 1941-1943, prior to the opening of the second front, the Soviet Union was engaged in the heaviest combat practically face to face with fascist Germany and its satellites, with the main grouping of the aggressive bloc. Powerful strikes by the Soviet Armed Forces were crushing Hitler's military machine and this was having an effect on all the Axis countries including militaristic Japan. But, while bearing the main burden of the war against fascist Germany, the USSR could not at the same time enter the war against militaristic Japan.

Only after a fundamental change in the war was brought about by the efforts of the Soviet Union and its Armed Forces did the head of the Soviet delegation at the Tehran Conference of the three great powers agree in principle to the USSR's entry into the war against Japan. Timing for this entry was dependent on the surrender of the main enemy--Nazi Germany.

¹ "Perepiska Predsedatelya Soveta Ministrov SSSR s prezidentami SShA i prem'yer-ministrami Velikobritanii vo vremya Velikoy Otechestvennoy voyny 1941-1945 gg." [Correspondence of the Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers with the U.S. Presidents and Prime Ministers of Great Britain during the Great Patriotic War 1941-1945] (hereafter cited as "Correspondence of the Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers"), in two volumes, Vol 2, "Correspondence with F. Roosevelt and H. Truman (August 1941-December 1945)," Moscow, 1976, p 12.

² "The Entry of the Soviet Union into the War against Japan," p 1.

³ "Correspondence of the Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers," Vol 2, p 21.

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Such conditions were created in 1945 when the war in Europe shifted to German territory and its fate had been virtually predetermined. Militaristic Japan remained the most significant barrier on the path to the long-awaited peace. The policy for protracted war that the Japanese militarists chose under the established conditions required the allies to take effective steps capable of putting an end to the bloodshed in the shortest possible time. These steps were definitively agreed upon at the Yalta Conference.

The Yalta Conference of the three great powers was held in Livadiyskiy Palace, near Yalta, from 4 through 11 February 1945. In addition to the heads of the governments of the USSR, the USA and Great Britain--I. V. Stalin, F. Roosevelt and W. Churchill, taking part in its work were the ministers of foreign affairs V. M. Molotov, E. Stettinius, A. Eden and their deputies, the Soviet ambassadors A. A. Gromyko, in Washington, and F. T. Gusev, in London, the American and British ambassadors in Moscow A. Harriman and A. Kerr, leaders of the military departments of the three countries, and military and diplomatic advisors. At I. V. Stalin's suggestion, F. Roosevelt presided at the conference.¹

The conference participants discussed and decided a number of important problems concerning completing the war against fascist Germany, the postwar arrangement of Europe and the establishment of the United Nations.² The timing for the Soviet Union's entry into the war against militaristic Japan was also determined.

As a result of a constructive discussion of the problem (the positions of the parties, including the need to get the Chinese government's consent, were definitively specified during meetings between I. V. Stalin and V. M. Molotov and F. Roosevelt and A. Harriman on 10 February), the heads of the great powers worked out an agreement on Far Eastern questions. The British delegation had no objections and, on 11 February, I. V. Stalin, F. Roosevelt and W. Churchill signed this agreement.³

The leaders of the USSR, the USA and Great Britain agreed that the Soviet Union would enter the war against Japan within two-three months after Germany's surrender and the end of the war in Europe under the condition of:

- "1. Maintenance of the status quo of Outer Mongolia (the Mongolian People's Republic);
2. Restoration of the rights that had belonged to Russia that were violated by the treacherous Japanese attack in 1904, namely:
 - a. the return to the Soviet Union of the southern part of Sakhalin Island and all islands contiguous to it;
 - b. internationalization of the commercial port of Dairen with safeguarding of the preeminent interests of the Soviet Union in this port and restoration of the lease on Port Arthur (Lu-shun.--ed.) as a Soviet naval base;
 - c. joint operation of the Chinese-Eastern Railway and the Southern-Manchurian Railway providing an outlet to Dairen based on organization of a joint

¹ "Istoriya diplomatii" [History of Diplomacy], Vol 4, Moscow, 1975, pp 420, 533.

² For more details, see: "History of World War II 1939-1945," Vol 10, pp 130-141.

³ W. Churchill, "The Second World War," Vol 6, "Triumph and Tragedy," London, 1954, p 342.

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Soviet-Chinese company with safeguarding of the preeminent interests of the Soviet Union and China retaining full sovereignty in Manchuria;

3. Transfer of the Kurile Islands to the Soviet Union."

When the agreement was signed, the parties took into account that some of its provisions would require the consent of the Chinese government. Trying to speed up the Soviet Union's entry into the war, Roosevelt promised to undertake to secure this consent. For its part, the Soviet government expressed readiness to conclude a pact of friendship and alliance between the USSR and China "to help it with its armed forces to liberate China from the Japanese yoke."¹

For obvious reasons, the document was kept particularly secret.² The war continued in Europe, and the Soviet Armed Forces and the armies of the Western allies were engaged in fierce battles against fascist Germany. Any hint to this agreement could reveal the intentions of the allied powers. "Our joint military plans," it was stated in a summary statement on the conference, "will become known only when we are implementing them, but we are confident that the very close working cooperation among our three staffs achieved at this conference will lead to speeding up the end of the war."³ The transfer of Soviet troops from the European front to the Far East met the common interests of all the allied powers. It was fully understood, Harriman wrote, that this "was the main reason for secrecy."⁴

Having signed the agreement on the Far Eastern questions, the leaders of the USA and Great Britain recognized the valid restoration of the historic rights of the Soviet Union to the southern part of Sakhalin and the islands contiguous to it. Responding to the statement by the head of the Soviet delegation to the Yalta Conference regarding this, the U.S. president declared that to him it "seems like a reasonable proposal on the part of the Soviet ally. The Russians want to get back what was torn away from them."⁵

The United States and Great Britain also recognized the legality of transferring the Kurile Islands to the Soviet Union. Taken into account in the process was not only the circumstance that by having seized the southern part of Sakhalin in 1905, Japan had violated the Saint Petersburg Treaty of 1875,⁶ but also the fact, no less important, that having gained a foothold in southern Sakhalin and the Kuriles, it

¹ "Sovetskiy Soyuz na mezhdunarodnykh konferentsiyakh perioda Velikoy Otechestvennoy voyny 1941-1945 gg." [The Soviet Union at the International Conferences during the Great Patriotic War 1941-1945], Vol 4, pp 273-274.

² In accordance with a prior understanding between the governments of the USSR, the USA and Great Britain, the text of the agreement was published simultaneously in Moscow, Washington and London a year after it was signed.

³ PRAVDA, 13 February 1945.

⁴ A. Harriman and E. Abel, "Special Envoy to Churchill and Stalin, 1941-1945," London, 1976, p 400.

⁵ Quotation from: W. Leahy, "I Was There," p 373.

⁶ According to this treaty, Japan gave up claims to Sakhalin in exchange for tsarist Russia giving up its rights to the Kurile Islands.

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closed to the Soviet Union a clear outlet to the Pacific and to the Kamchatka and Chukotka ports. Having built military bases and airfields on these islands, Japan transformed them into a springboard for an attack on the USSR. During World War II, Japan made use of the Kuriles and southern Sakhalin to virtually blockade the Soviet Far East.

Pointing out the threat to USSR security and to peace in the Far East that the Kurile Islands and southern Sakhalin represented while Japan possessed them, the head of the Soviet government raised the question of transferring them to the USSR in conversations with the leaders of the allied powers.¹

The decision made at the Yalta Conference was a recognition and confirmation of USSR rights to these territories. These rights of the Soviet Union, it was stressed, "must be unconditionally satisfied after the victory over Japan."²

The agreement by the three great powers on Far Eastern questions became an important part of the overall system of measures approved by the conference to not only hasten the end of the war, but also to ensure the establishment of a lasting peace and the preservation of it in the postwar years. In the process, military plans and strengthening cooperation in waging the war against the aggressive bloc made up the main portion of its work. The Yalta Conference took place under the conditions of decisive victories by Soviet Armed Forces and immeasurably increased authority of the USSR and its consistent foreign policy. It became a major stage in the struggle by peace-loving mankind for the quickest end to the war and a democratic solution to postwar problems.³

The Soviet press noted that the conference would go down in the annals of the war as an historic demonstration of the close combat cooperation of the great democratic powers. A similar evaluation of it was also made by the realistic-minded leaders of the Western powers. President Roosevelt wrote Stalin: "The nations of the world, I am sure, will look upon the achievements of this conference not only with approval, but also as a true guarantee that our three great nations can cooperate well in peace as in war."⁴

However, while the Yalta Conference has always been considered in the Soviet Union as the most fruitful stage in the development of relations between the allied powers in World War II, the lofty spirit of cooperation that prevailed in it did not

¹ "The Soviet Union at the International Conferences during the Great Patriotic War 1941-1945," Vol 2, "The Teheran Conference of the Leaders of the Three Allied Powers--the USSR, the USA and Great Britain (28 November-1 December 1943)," Collection of Documents, Moscow, 1978, p 142.

² "Vneshnyaya politika Sovetskogo Soyuz v period Otechestvennoy voyny. Dokumenty i materialy" [Soviet Foreign Policy during the Patriotic War. Documents and Materials], Vol 3, Moscow, 1947, p 112.

³ "Istoriya vneshney politiki SSSR. 1917-1976," [History of USSR Foreign Policy, 1917-1976], in two volumes, Vol 1, "1917-1945," Moscow, 1976, p 485.

⁴ "Correspondence of the USSR Council of Ministers," Vol 2, p 204.

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suit the taste of many reactionary figures in the United States and Great Britain.

The first attempts to place the Yalta Conference decisions, including the agreement on the Far Eastern questions, under doubt were made in the United States already within a month after the death of F. Roosevelt.¹ Attacks on the conference results were especially intensified in the years of the "cold war." Reactionary political figures made accusations against Roosevelt, charging that the "concessions made by the United States to Russia at Yalta were too great," that by that time, they said, there was no need whatsoever for the USSR to enter the war, and that in general the leaders of the Western allies had committed neither more nor less than "treachery."

During the work of the Yalta Conference, there were really compromises: the Soviet delegation met the desires of the U.S. and British representatives, and the latter in turn had to take the interests of the USSR into account. And with respect to the restoration of the historic rights of the Soviet Union in the Far East, Churchill spoke most clearly. He declared: "We will be glad to see Russian ships on the Pacific Ocean and we approve of making up for the losses suffered by Russia in the Russo-Japanese War."² Moreover, the Yalta Conference decisions on the Far Eastern question were in full accordance with the letter and spirit of the Cairo Declaration of 1943 in which it was stated that Japan would be deprived of all territories seized by it.

And the thesis that there was no need of Roosevelt and Churchill trying to get the Soviet Union to enter the war against militaristic Japan does not hold water. It should not be forgotten that at the start of 1945 when the Yalta Conference was held, the allied forces had reached only the outer edge of the defense of the Japanese empire, which still had major ground forces in the homeland and on the continent, and the resistance of Japanese troops had not only not weakened, but even increased. All the war experience gained by the allied command indicated that Japan's armed forces would fight to the end. According to estimates by the U.S. and British leaders, the war against Japan would be long and bloody. They viewed help from the USSR as the sole practical way out of the impasse of protracted war. As E. Stettinius wrote, at the Yalta Conference the U.S. delegation wanted above all to get the Soviet Union to enter the war against Japan.³

The agreement on the Far East was not a result of just Roosevelt's efforts alone and was not a consequence of his lack of political foresight or poor health, as supporters of the "anti-Yalta" current try to represent it in Western bourgeois historiography. At the time, the president was supported by many political figures and the higher command of the U.S. Armed Forces (Secretary of State Stettinius, General Marshall and others). In particular, prior to the start of the conference,

¹ F. Roosevelt died on 12 April 1945. H. Truman was sworn in as the U.S. president on the same day.

² W. Churchill, "The Second World War," Vol 6, p 341.

³ E. Stettinius, "Roosevelt and the Russians: the Yalta Conference," London, 1955, pp 90-91.

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Roosevelt's considerations were approved at a session of the Combined Joint Chiefs of Staff, held in January 1945 on Malta.¹ Therefore, accusations by "anti-Yaltans" that Roosevelt made a "deal behind the back of Congress and the nation" are completely unfounded.

The Yalta agreement on Far Eastern questions was a farsighted step that played a major role in hastening the end of World War II.

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Analysis of the actions of the opposing sides during the period January to August 1945 shows that they did a great deal to carry out the plans adopted by them. The United States and Great Britain substantially increased their naval and air forces, and somewhat less, their ground forces in this theater of war. At the same time, recognizing that without the USSR it would be impossible to achieve a rapid and decisive victory, at the Yalta Conference they reached agreement with the Soviet government for the USSR to enter the war against militaristic Japan within two to three months after the surrender of fascist Germany.

The leaders of militaristic Japan placed all their hopes on dragging out the war. In the first half of the year, they too significantly increased their armed forces. By the start of August, Japan had the largest ground army in its history. The defense of the homeland, Manchuria and Korea was being strengthened at a rapid rate. Simultaneously, the empire's ruling clique actively carried out diplomatic maneuvers, while trying to disrupt the united front of the allies in the antifascist coalition and primarily prevent the Soviet Union from entering the war. However, these attempts ended in utter failure.

[p 48] Chapter 3. Landing Operations by Allied Armed Forces in the Pacific

[p 79]

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As a result of offensive operations, by August 1945 U.S. and Australian armed forces had definitively deprived Japan of sources of oil, occupied extensive territory and improved strategic positions, having built new air and naval bases. The Japanese armies in the countries of the South seas were completely blocked and the imperial headquarters could not make use of them in the decisive battles for the homeland.

The last aircraft the blocked armies had were destroyed or disabled in the battles for Balikpapan. Naval convoys no longer needed air cover in the entire southwestern part of the Pacific, and the allied command was able to transfer disengaged large units to the Ryukyu Islands.

¹ FRUS [Foreign Relations of the United States], "The Conference at Malta and Yalta, 1945," Washington, 1955, pp 395-396, 827-830.

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[p 80] Chapter 4. Completion of the Burma Campaign

[p 91]

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The fight for Burma in 1945 was characterized by new changes in the structure of the armed forces: mobile units emerged for use in the offensive in the Irrawaddy valley and along the Mandalay-Rangoon road, and the navy greatly increased its activity, carrying out landing operations in contrast to past years. Employment of combat and transport aviation underwent additional development.

At the same time, a difference in the aims of the allied powers began to show even before completion of military operations on the Burma front. After getting ground lines of communication from India to China at the start of 1945, the Chinese refused to fight for English interests and demanded immediate withdrawal of their troops to the homeland. Allied ties were unstable between the United States and England too. After abandoning aircraft, the Americans withdrew on top of that small ground forces from the Burma front, after restricting the English commander in the right to make use of their materiel at this front. U.S. imperialists directed their efforts to China to strengthen their positions there.

Japanese troops, even though deprived of vital reinforcements after the defeat in the Imphal Operation of 1944, resisted staunchly, often fighting to the last soldier.

[p 92] Chapter 5. Military Operations in China

[pp 107-108]

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Military operations in China against militaristic Japan in the last year of the war were extremely limited: the Kuomintang and the Communist Party were primarily engaged in preparing for civil war, building up forces and arms and strengthening strategic positions. Both parties held their congresses, in the resolutions of which the armed forces and party organizations led by them were aimed at more intensive preparation for a decisive fight.

American ruling circles, in trying to become stronger in Asia, allotted a major role to China in their plans. They were counting on the Kuomintang and Chiang Kai-shek.

The hopes of the Chinese Communist Party leaders to pit the United States against the Soviet Union were not realized. Mao Zedong, for support of his mercenary motives--to survive and be able to continue the struggle for power, under pressure from below, from the popular masses and local party organizations, had to switch over to USSR support. The Soviet government, guided by the principles of proletarian internationalism, rendered and continued to render assistance to the Chinese people in the liberation struggle.

In the summer and fall of 1945, especially after the USSR entered the war against Japan, troops led by the Chinese Communist Party managed to achieve some local successes. This resulted from the Kwantung Army going to pieces under the thrusts of the Soviet Armed Forces, while the Kuomintang government did not then have sufficient forces to fight the Chinese Communist Party, since it was transferring its armies to the north--to Manchuria and north China. However, the revolutionary forces needed several years to establish the Manchurian revolutionary base and the modern and well-armed, for those times, Separate Democratic Army of Northeastern

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China. All this would have been impossible without the military, economic and moral-political assistance of the Soviet Union and its Armed Forces.

[p 109] Chapter 6. Rise of the National Liberation Movement in the Occupied Countries of Asia

[p 134] * * *

Thus, in the concluding months of the war, the situation in the Far Eastern and Southeast Asian countries was exceptionally complicated. Under these conditions, primarily those organizations that used the method of scientific analysis could correctly assess the numerous and often contradictory phenomena and processes, properly divine the leading sociopolitical tendencies and develop appropriate strategy and tactics. In the Philippines and Vietnam, the liberation movement was more popular precisely because the anti-Japanese movement was headed by communist parties.

Very important to the successful activity of the communists was the moral support of the international communist movement, which resolutely and consistently always upheld the principle of self-determination for nations.

The Communist Party of the Soviet Union had a great mobilizing effect on the communist parties of the countries occupied by Japan; it led the fight against fascism and always resolutely supported the national liberation movement of the oppressed nations. "In the annals of the liberation struggle of the Asian nations," noted L. I. Brezhnev, General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, "there is not a single page on which would not be imprinted the effective support and solidarity on the part of the Soviet Union, on the part of our people, and on the part of our party." ¹

The Soviet Union's entry into the war against Japan also was of major importance to the development of the national liberation movement in the occupied countries. People who had experienced the yoke of Japanese militarism associated with its definitive rout the possibility of radical changes in their own fate.

[p 135] Chapter 7. Campaign on Sea Communications. Air and Atomic Bombing of Japanese Cities

[pp 157-158] * * *

By August 1945, the armed forces of the allied powers had made considerable progress. They had damaged the Japanese navy and air force, and had also gained complete supremacy in the air and on the ocean. An invasion of Japan could have been launched from the springboards seized on the immediate approaches to it. Here were the forward naval and air bases that enabled them to build up force for strikes on the enemy and implement an ever more effective naval blockade.

Nevertheless, many of Japan's political and military leaders did not believe the war was lost and stubbornly strove to continue it. To this end, they intended making use of the political differences between the allies in the antifascist coalition,

¹ L. I. Brezhnev, "Leninskim kursom. Rech i stat'i" [By Lenin's Course. Speeches and Articles], Vol 4, Moscow, 1974, p 252.

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especially the anti-Soviet attitude of a certain part of the ruling circles of the United States and England that was showing up ever more distinctly.

Japan's higher military leaders placed their hopes on being able to prolong the war, wear down the enemy, cause great losses and in the end get honorable conditions of peace. It was considered in the process that Japanese ground forces, in contrast to the air force and navy, had suffered relatively small losses and maintained full combat capability. In addition, the Manchurian-Korean military-economic spring-board was hardly damaged and could become the base for establishing a protracted and firm defense. It was also considered that the U.S. and British armed forces, concentrated in the Far East, did not yet have experience in conducting large-scale ground operations, that they had insufficient strength, and that no little time would be needed to transfer personnel and combat materiel from the European theater of war.

Neither bombing nor blockades, which caused considerable damage to Japan's economy and seriously weakened its military-economic potential, could shake the resolution of the militaristic circles "to perish, but to not permit defilement of the sacred land of the emperor." They also did not affect the overall combat morale of the armed forces, and in any case, those who wished to continue the war faced no serious and organized opposition. Even the atomic attacks, that some political and military figures in the United States and Great Britain believed would force Japan's immediate surrender, did not yield the expected result.

This circumstance should be emphasized also because the objectivity in assessing the value of the air operations of the summer of 1945 was sometimes less than adequate in U.S. military circles after the war. Typical in this respect are the reports by General Arnold, commander of the Air Force, to the Secretary of War. In them, aviation is depicted as almost the main means that ensured victory. Arnold wrote, in particular, that the mass raids on Japanese cities seriously weakened its economic and moral potential.¹ In contrast to this, General Marshall, the U.S. Army Chief of Staff, believed that "the Air Force will not be able to knock Japan out of the war, just as it could not accomplish this mission in the war with Germany." Air Force capabilities were limited further by the fact that Japan's armed forces were dispersed over extensive, hilly territory."²

Indeed, neither bombings, nor blockades, nor any other measures could weaken the combat capability of the Japanese ground army in a short time and in a substantial way, that is, the force the Japanese militarists were counting on primarily in their plans for continuing the war. But their last hopes were lost definitively when they found themselves face to face with the Soviet Armed Forces.

1 "The War Reports," p 440.

2 VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL, 1963, No 8, p 79.

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[p 159] Part II. Entry of the Soviet Union into the War against Militaristic Japan

[p 161] Chapter 8. Preparation of Soviet Armed Forces for Military Operations
against Militaristic Japan

[p 211] * * *

After the rout and surrender of fascist Germany, the Soviet Union could not consider its security safeguarded while the hotbed of war and aggression existed in the Far East. Destruction of this hotbed met the vital interests not only of the Soviet Union, but also of many other nations in East and Southeast Asia.

All mankind awaited the quickest end of World War II. However, achieving Japan's unconditional surrender in good time could be done only after the rout of the Kwantung Army. Prior to May 1945, the Far Eastern grouping of Soviet troops carried out defensive missions. Moreover, it had insufficient strength for a quick rout of the enemy. As a result of the regrouping, enormous in its scale, troops that had abundant war experience and that had taken part in many major offensive operations in Europe were transferred to the Far East. To strengthen the fronts with experienced cadres of commanders and political workers, generals and officers who had gone through the hard school of war with fascist Germany were sent there.

For three months, a great effort was made to prepare the major strategic operation for the rout of the Kwantung Army. The experience of the war with fascist Germany was taken into account in the comprehensive combat and political preparation of the troops and staffs. By the start of August, Soviet Armed Forces in the Far East had all that was needed to carry out the operation successfully and were ready to inflict a crushing strike on the Far Eastern aggressor.

[p 212] Chapter 9. Entry of the Soviet Union into the War with Japan.
Beginning of Military Operations

[p 237] * * *

As a result of six days of operation, Soviet and Mongolian troops dealt a severe defeat to the Kwantung Army. They routed the enemy troops in 16 fortified areas and advanced the Transbaykal Front 250-400 km (reaching the line (Dolonnor), Linhsi, (Taoan'), Wangyehmiao), the 1st Far Eastern Front 120-150 km (the line (Lin'kou, Mulin, Nachzhin)) and the 2nd Far Eastern Front 50-200 km (the line (Heihe, Haolizhen, Baoging)), accomplishing the missions assigned by General Headquarters ahead of schedule.

The Japanese command, having already lost control of the troops in the first days, was unable to organize staunch resistance in any sector prior to 15 August. However, in a number of fortified areas and centers of resistance, enemy garrisons put up a stubborn defense, and then the fighting became fierce. This was the case in the areas of Hailar, (Soluni, Fujinia, Jiamusi, Suifynhe, Dunnin and Mudanjiana).

The combat operations of the troops of all fronts were highly maneuverable and developed over very isolated operating directions. This was especially typical for the operations of the mounted-mechanized group of Soviet-Mongolian troops who operated in the arid steppes of Inner Mongolia.

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[p 238] Chapter 10. Completion of Rout of Japanese Troops.
Liberation of Northeastern China

[p 273]

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Thus, the elimination of the main base of operations of Japanese militarism in Manchuria created the conditions for forming a revolutionary base in this part of the country. The presence of Soviet troops allowed the Chinese people and their Communist Party to take a number of steps to establish and strengthen the Manchurian revolutionary base.

Playing a large role in this were the Soviet-Chinese Treaty of 14 August 1945 and the agreements that consolidated the presence of Soviet troops in Port Arthur, Dal'niy and on the KChZhD [Chinese-Changchun Railroad]. Within a relatively short time, the Chinese Communist Party succeeded in creating in Manchuria revolutionary formations that were armed with captured weapons and combat materiel and well-supplied with ammunition. It was in Manchuria that the main strike force of the Chinese revolution was created--the United Democratic Army, supported by the union of the working class and the working peasantry under the active guiding role of the Chinese Communist Party organizations.

The experience of the Manchurian revolutionary base shows once more that only a regular army supported by the people could in a relatively short time rout the Kuomintang troops who enjoyed the all-round support of American imperialism.

[p 274] Chapter 11. Liberation of North Korea, Southern Sakhalin and Kurile Islands

[p 295]

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The combat operations to liberate the naval bases and ports of North Korea were carried out in the close contact of the troops of the 1st Far Eastern Front and the forces of the Pacific Fleet. They began after the success of the 25th Army in the maritime sector had been determined. The ships and units of the Pacific Fleet facilitated the swift offensive of the Soviet troops which completely contained the Japanese grouping.

Soviet troop actions on Sakhalin were a combined operation of ground and sea forces supported by air. Here the ground troops overcame a strong fortified area, organized in mountainous-wooded and wooded-marshy terrain. Attacks by the air force and landing forces prevented the enemy from maneuvering his reserves.

The Kuriles landing operation, although not developed in a main sector, was one of the most important and most complex in the Far East.

A significant role in carrying out the joint operations was played by the ships and air forces of the Pacific Fleet. In addition to defending the coast, during the Far Eastern campaign, the ships in the fleet completed 29 convoys and the air force made 5,419 sorties.¹

¹ Calculated from: IVI [Institute of General History, USSR Academy of Sciences], Documents and Materials, inventory No 1284, folio 354.

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The high morale, heroism and decisive actions of the soldiers, sailors and officers facilitated the success of the troops of the 1st and 2nd Far Eastern Fronts and the Pacific Fleet in North Korea and on South Sakhalin and the Kurile Islands.

Soviet troops and forces of the Pacific Fleet completed operations in the maritime sectors in good time. They made a major contribution to the liberating mission of the Soviet Armed Forces who gave freedom to the people of North Korea and returned to the homeland the age-old Russian lands--South Sakhalin and the Kurile Islands.

[p 296] Chapter 12. The Communist Party--Inspiration and Organizer of the Victory of the Soviet People over Imperialist Japan

[pp 325-326]

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The Soviet Union's victory in the war against militaristic Japan showed the vital force of the policy of the Communist party and its organizational and ideological activity. Reflected in it were the historic invincibility of socialism, the advantages of the economic and political organization of the Soviet system, the socio-political and ideological unity of society, socialist patriotism and proletarian internationalism. USSR workers, united closely around the Communist Party, displayed unparalleled heroism and courage in the rear and at the front.

Based on Lenin's legacy of military theory and the experience of the fight with fascism, the party developed and implemented a scientifically substantiated program to mobilize the forces of the people to eliminate the second hotbed of war and to strengthen the security of the Far Eastern borders. It was able to fully make use of the advantages of the Soviet political system and the socialist system of economy to achieve victory. The farsighted policy of the party on all development possible of the economy of Siberia and the Far East had a huge effect on the course of events.

Commanders, military councils, political organs and party organizations of the army and navy, and the entire party-political apparatus firmly and consistently carried out the policy of the VKP(b) [All-Union Communist Party (of Bolsheviks)] in the Armed Forces, and imbued the personnel in the spirit of iron discipline, high organization and loyalty to the duty to the homeland. Communists were in the front ranks of those who fought and inspired Soviet warriors to a feat by ardent words and personal example. During combat operations against imperialist Japan, the party enriched and multiplied still more its multifaceted experience of leading the armed struggle in defense of the socialist homeland.

[p 327] Chapter 13. Rebuilding the National Economy of the Soviet Union in 1945

[pp 348-350]

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The long and exceptionally severe war with fascist Germany and its allies inflicted tremendous damage to the Soviet national economy. The Hitlerites destroyed and plundered 1,710 cities and urban settlements, and burnt more than 70,000 villages and rural settlements. They destroyed, completely or partially, about 32,000 industrial enterprises, destroyed 65,000 km of rail track, plundered 98,000 kolchozes, about 5,000 sovkhoses and MTS [machine and tractor stations], and destroyed tens of thousands of hospitals, schools, tekhnikums, VUZes and libraries. On the whole, the Soviet Union lost about 30 percent of its national wealth in the war.

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The Communist Party and the Soviet government set about restoring the national economy destroyed by the war long before the end of the war. As early as August 1943, the USSR SNK [Council of People's Commissars] and the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (of Bolsheviks) adopted the decree "On Urgent Measures to Restore the Economy in Areas Liberated from German Occupation."

Based on this and other decrees, extensive measures were implemented in the following years to revive the economy in the republics and oblasts that had been occupied by the fascist aggressors. Plants, factories, mines, railroads, schools, hospitals, cultural institutions and dwellings were rebuilt. This was a gigantic effort made by the Soviet people with great enthusiasm led by the Communist Party; this effort entailed great difficulties.

L. I. Brezhnev, in the book "Rebirth," recalling the devastation and labor efforts, in particular on the revival of Zaporozh'ye, wrote: "In full swing, obstructions were being taken apart, and many thousands of builders were working on projects, on almost all of them simultaneously. They worked almost without machinery, manually—it seemed there would be no end to this work. On the way, I met people, many of whom I later got to know and remembered, but for the time being I just listened to their explanations, and basically observed, for the main thing was clear anyway: a beautiful city of metallurgists and power engineers essentially no longer existed on our earth. Everything was blown up, burned and destroyed by the war."¹ And such fate befell thousands of Soviet cities and settlements.

And all this was restored, built and filled with confident labor activity. Cities, villages and rural settlements were revived. The sovkhozes and kolkhozes appeared again. The whole country helped the agriculture of the republics and oblasts destroyed by the fascist occupationists.

New and ever more broader possibilities in restoring the country's national economy were opened with the completion of the rout of fascist Germany and with the end of the war in Europe. The Soviet state could now direct considerably more money and material to restoration work. Numerous industrial and other facilities were revived and quickly put into operation in the national economy, new ones were built, and the output of peacetime production grew continuously.

All Soviet people took part in rebuilding the national economy. Millions of Soviet people, and a large percentage of them were women and youths, demonstrated in the process high labor enthusiasm and strove to heal the serious wounds of war as quickly as possible.

While solving the problems of restoring the national economy after the end of the war against fascist Germany, the Communist party and the Soviet government took into account the needs for preparing and waging war against militaristic Japan.

Attaching great importance to strengthening the defensive capability of the Soviet Far East, the party and government paid continuing attention to its economic development and to establishing an industrial base there. This was facilitated by the

¹ L. I. Brezhnev, "Vozrozhdeniye" [Rebirth], Moscow, 1978, pp 3-4.

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vast natural resources in the area, the abundant minerals and raw materials. During the years of Soviet power, the gross industrial production in this territory, poorly developed in former times, increased 173-fold, land under cultivation increased 3.9-fold and population grew 4-fold. But additional material means were needed to prepare and wage the military operations of the Far Eastern grouping of Soviet troops against militaristic Japan. And the country supplied the Armed Forces with everything needed to successfully conduct the campaign in the Far East.

The main tasks of the Communist Party and the Soviet government in 1945 were to supply the needs of the Soviet Armed Forces at the Soviet-German and Soviet-Japanese fronts and to shift the economy more rapidly to peacetime functions. These huge and complicated tasks were successfully accomplished. Socialism, based on a planned national economy, demonstrated its insuperable force.

The restoration of the national economy during the war and in the postwar period is yet another glorious heroic page in the labor exploits of the Soviet people.

[p 351] Part III. Completion of the War against Militaristic Japan

[p 353] Chapter 14. Capitulation of Militaristic Japan

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The signing of the instrument of Japan's surrender on 2 September 1945 was the historically inevitable finale of the aggressive aspirations of Japanese militarism and put an end to a long series of military adventures. For nearly 70 years, the military-bureaucratic clique in Japan had waged war almost continuously, condemning its people and those in neighboring countries to cruel ordeals, severe sacrifices, hardships and suffering.

After receiving from the allies the right to head the process of Japan's demilitarization, American military representatives began carrying out a policy of seizing preferential rights for the United States in allied agencies. Starting with the ceremony for the signing of the instrument of surrender and up to the concrete steps on demilitarizing the country, they were guided by the interests of American monopolies.

Under the new conditions with the Truman administration at the head of the United States, many ideals that Roosevelt had supported were forgotten. Already in the course of disarming Japanese troops, a tendency showed up in the Far Eastern policy of the imperialist powers that was dangerous for the postwar peace--the striving to restore at any price the colonial domination in its possessions.

With the signing of the instrument of surrender, U.S. flirtations with leaders of the national liberation movement in Asian countries ended. Despite the fact that the people in this vast region of the world received the opportunity of expanding the struggle for national liberation, many of them were a long way from being able to immediately enjoy the fruits of victory gained primarily as a result of the selfless struggle of the progressive forces of the whole world headed by the USSR.

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[pp 367-368] Chapter 15. Policy of Imperialist States in the Far East and Southeast Asia

World War II led to a major political changes in the whole world, including in the Far East and in Southeast Asia. While the war was in progress, the nations of the colonial countries and the ruling circles of the imperialist powers making up the antifascist coalition waged a fight against a common enemy, and to a certain extent this smoothed over the acuteness of the contradictions between them. But as victory approached and especially after it, the irreconcilability of their basic interests became more and more acute and an important political factor that largely determined the development of events in this part of the world.

A special position with respect to the countries of the "colonial periphery" was held by the United States that advocated in words their political liberation, but in deeds tried to squeeze out, and if successful, then replace their European competitors and secure for itself a preferential position in these countries. American propaganda strongly emphasized that in contrast to Great Britain, France and the Netherlands, the United States of America had always been an "anticolonial" country.¹ However, in the Philippines, representatives of the American military and civil administration acted the same way as the colonial authorities of the other imperialist powers in their own possessions. U.S. officials restricted democratic organizations in every way possible and disarmed the detachments of patriots who had actively participated in liberating the Philippines, etc. At the same time, they in essence did nothing to resolve the agrarian problem that was most acute for the overwhelming majority of the Philippine population--the peasantry.²

In selecting areas for penetration and obtaining preferential rights, American political and military circles proceeded from the interests of U.S. monopolistic capital for the postwar time. In the process, strategic interests were also considered: military bases on the annexed mandated territories of Japan allowed the United States to turn the Pacific into an "American ocean." Supporters of a more cautious policy suggested that the United States not resort to direct annexation, but try to get control over these territories using the institution of trusteeship as a new form of colonialism replacing the "classical" and making it possible to first eliminate the advantageous positions of the European parent states in their possessions, and then using economic and financial levers to obtain access to new sources of raw materials and markets.

The U.S. attempt to squeeze the European states out from their possessions in the Far East and Southeast Asia was naturally met with extreme disapproval in the capitals of the "old" colonial powers. Interimperialist contradictions became a serious factor that determined the political climate in Southeast Asia and the Far East after the end of World War II.

There were also some differences between the "old" colonial powers, but in the concrete situation established in this region by the end of 1945, they were of

¹ "Problemy istorii mezhdunarodnykh otnosheniy i ideologicheskaya bor'ba. Sbornik statey" [Problems of History of International Relations and the Ideological Struggle. Collection of Articles], Moscow, 1976, pp 102-103.

² (E. Abayya), "Nerasskazannaya istoriya Filippin" [Untold History of Philippines], translated from English, Moscow, 1970, p 54.

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secondary importance. By the time of Japan's surrender, neither France nor the Netherlands had the armed forces that would have permitted them to fight the national liberation movement on their own. Their units were too small in strength and completely dependent on the British Army for materials and equipment. In view of this, France and the Netherlands were forced to rely on the aid of Great Britain.

For their part, the English authorities tried to support these colonial powers in the fight against the national liberation revolutions in Vietnam and Indonesia, fearing their spreading to British colonies.

The joint operations of London, Paris and Amsterdam against the nations that demanded independence were yet another major feature of the political situation in the Far East and Southeast Asia. The class solidarity of the imperialists in the face of the impending general crisis of the colonial system became a more important factor than the disagreements within their camp.

Resolving Far Eastern questions was also complicated by the reluctance of certain circles in the United States and Great Britain to cooperate with the USSR, although the war experience had shown that an agreement on problems of this scale could be reached only with the participation of the Soviet Union. Realistically thinking Americans recognized that attempts to bar the USSR from discussion of the Far Eastern questions were doomed to fail. But subsequent steps by the White House showed that the policy on isolation of the Soviet Union prevailed there.

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Thus, in the second half of 1945, the determining factor of the policy of the governments of the United States and Kuomintang China in the Southeast Asian countries was the attempt to make use of the difficulties of the "old" colonial powers for territorial acquisitions or expansion of their political and economic influence. At the same time, Great Britain, the Netherlands and France tried to restore political and economic positions in their former possessions, relying primarily on armed force. The immediate consequence of this was the aggression against the independent states of Indonesia and Vietnam, while Burma, Malaya, Cambodia and Laos were actually reoccupied.

However, under the new historic conditions established after the end of World War II, the colonizers could no longer freely carry out their plans. The rout of fascist Germany and militaristic Japan had fundamentally changed the alignment of forces in the world arena in favor of the forces of peace, independence and socialism. The positions of imperialism weakened substantially and the crisis of the whole capitalist system grew deeper.

In addition, in the conflict with the Japanese aggressors in the Asian countries, patriotic organizations sprang up that gained experience in political mobilization of the masses, and in a number of states, national armed forces were formed too. For all these reasons, even in the regions actually occupied by the troops of the former parent states, the colonizers did not succeed in suppressing the national liberation movement. Its growth indicated the start of a second stage in the crisis of the colonial system and foreshadowed its inevitable downfall.

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[pp 396-398] Chapter 16. Soviet Foreign Policy. Solving Far Eastern Problems

The historic victories of the Soviet Army over Hitler's Germany and militaristic Japan led to further growth in the authority and influence of the world's first socialist state. A major achievement of the foreign policy of the Communist Party and Soviet government was the establishment and successful activity of the anti-fascist coalition which in turn promoted strengthening of the alliance of all people who fought against the forces of world reaction. A great contribution to strengthening the international positions of the USSR was made by Soviet diplomacy which throughout the war strived to secure the most advantageous foreign policy conditions for the quickest military and political rout of the fascist bloc and the establishment of a stable democratic world.

After the war, Soviet diplomacy was aimed primarily at consolidating its results in international legal documents, creating effective agencies to monitor the demilitarization and democratization of the conquered Axis states, and organizing competent international courts for the perpetrators that unleashed World War II.

The most important place in the foreign policy activity of the Communist Party and Soviet government was held by the questions of the postwar system of the world. The USSR was one of the founders of the United Nations and took an active part in the development of its basic documents. In the process, the USSR showed special concern for ensuring representation of the "new states" of the world in the United Nations. Thus, guided by the desire to ensure the new states of Asia that had not yet achieved independence the opportunity to make their contribution to creating a lasting peace, the USSR supported inviting delegations from India and the Philippines to the first UN session.¹ Soviet diplomats established and maintained extensive contacts with representatives of the Asian countries that arrived for the founding conference of the United Nations in San Francisco.

The Soviet government paid much attention to the Far Eastern problems. It had already gained some experience in working with the new American administration headed by President Truman. Soviet diplomacy could not but consider the "tough policy" that Truman pursued with Churchill's agreement and support; Churchill believed that they had "in their hands the means² that will restore the correlation of forces with Russia" (meaning the atomic bomb).² It was clear that the U.S. government intended to make use of nuclear blackmail to achieve its aims in the postwar time.

Soviet diplomacy, resting on the increased international authority of the USSR, the mood of the progressive world public and the growth of national consciousness of the liberated nations of Europe and Asia, insisted that the United States of America and Great Britain carry out the interalliance agreements on questions of the postwar world system reached during the war.

The basic principles of the U.S. postwar policy with respect to Japan were worked out back in 1944 by Roosevelt's government which had quite a few supporters of the

¹ "Vneshnyaya politika Sovetskogo Soyuz v period Otechestvennoy voyny" [Soviet Foreign Policy during the Patriotic War], Vol 3, p 241.

² Quotation from: "History of Diplomacy," Vol 4, p 667.

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democratization and demilitarization of Japan. A State department draft at that time stipulated: "a) Japan must return the territories seized by it as a result of aggressive wars; b) during the military occupation, the Japanese government will cease to exist as a political entity. Only the ministries having administrative functions (home affairs, finance, health and welfare, etc.) will be retained and they will continue their activity under the direction of the allied administration; c) the allied powers that fought against Japan will participate in its occupation and administration. Contingents from Asian countries (China, India, Philippines, etc.) will also perform occupation service to prevent the impression that the war against Japan was a war by the white race against the yellow." ¹

However, the Truman administration began to back away from these principles and began actively taking measures to maintain monopolies in Japan, the emperor's authority and a court bureaucracy on which the United States could rely in its policy in the Far East.

American political figures held talks with Japanese diplomats about Japan surrendering prior to the USSR entering the war. Precisely on these grounds, the Japanese Minister of Foreign Affairs in the review "Attitude of Public Opinion of the United Nations to Japan on the Eve of the Adoption of the Potsdam Declaration" wrote: "Among Americans who maintain faith in the military aims of the United Nations, but do not trust the Soviet Union, and fear it, attitudes in favor of reconciliation with Japan are quite strong."² The United States, England and China tried to carry out these same goals and they prepared and publicized the text of the Potsdam Declaration on Japan without USSR participation.³

The Soviet government, informed about the political maneuvers of the allied powers, did not follow in their footsteps. And when the Japanese government, trying to end the war on terms advantageous to it, asked the USSR to mediate, the Soviet government immediately informed its allies about this. It put the interests of nations in first place and their desire to bring peace closer to the Far East.

Taking the repeated official requests by the leaders of the allied states to the Soviet government into account, the Soviet Union entered the war with Japan, routed the Kwantung Army and thereby forced Japan to surrender. The faithfulness of the USSR to its allied duty and its policy based on principle foiled the plans of the Japanese ruling circles to split the antifascist coalition in order to drag out the war and escape from unconditional surrender.

The Soviet Union, being a consistent fighter for the creation of a stable peace, directed its efforts after the war too toward maintaining allied relations with the United States and England and reaching coordinated decisions with them on questions of the postwar arrangement.

¹ "History of Diplomacy," Vol 4, p 701.

² Ibid., p 717.

³ Ibid., p 689.

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A major result of the Tokyo trial was the recognition that aggression is the most heinous international crime and the people responsible for it are subject to severe punishment. It is hard to overestimate the special importance of this thesis since it was established in spite of the changed foreign policy situation and intensification of the "cold war," and despite the fact that the conclusions of the Nuremberg tribunal evoked the violent protest of the entire reactionary camp and by the time of the announcement of the sentence in Tokyo had given rise to much literature that attempted to discredit the Nuremberg court and shake the public's faith in it. The flow of it increased after publication of the sentence in Tokyo. It was precisely the decisions of the court on the recognition of the criminality of preparing for and waging aggressive war that provoked the most malicious and sharp objections by the apologists for imperialism.

The Tokyo trial declared and applied in practice those legal principles that had entered into contemporary international law and had been subsequently approved by the United Nations as the establishment of international criminal law providing for responsibility for crimes against peace, military crimes and crimes against humanity.

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[pp 427-458] Chapter 17. Military Art of the Main Participants in the War

1. Characteristic Features of Soviet Military Art

During the war with fascist Germany, Soviet troops in the Far East as a component of the USSR Armed Forces had reached largely the same stages of development as all the troops in the field fronts. Of crucial importance in this process was the combat experience acquired on the Soviet-German front.

By the start of the Great Patriotic War, the large units and units of the Far Eastern grouping in organizational structure, effective strength for combat, availability of arms and combat materiel, as well as disposition fully corresponded to the missions that stemmed from the operational plan for covering the Far Eastern borders, that had been drafted on the eve of the attack by fascist Germany. On 22 June 1941, the Far Eastern grouping had the following personnel strength: 100 percent for the Ground Troops, 88.6 percent for the Air Force and 97.4 percent for the Navy.¹

During the period 1941 to 1945, the General Headquarters of the Supreme High Command, considering the experience of the war with Hitler's Germany, devoted much attention to the development in the Far East of the Air Force, the Air Defense Force and the Navy. At the same time, the General Headquarters had information that materialistic Japan was systematically building up the combat might of its ground forces in Manchuria; therefore, in strengthening the Far Eastern grouping, the policy on the predominance of ground troops in it was followed. This is confirmed by the data given in Table 20.

Table 20. Ratio of Branches of the USSR Armed Forces in the Far East during the Great Patriotic War (by personnel strength in percentages)²

Branches of the Armed Forces	22 June 1941	19 Nov. 1942	1 July 1943	1 Jan. 1944	9 May 1945
Ground Troops	73.6	78.5	77.8	78.1	74.7
Air Force	11.3	7.6	8.2	8.0	7.9
Air Defense Troops	-	2.6	2.7	2.7	3.2
Navy	15.1	11.3	11.3	11.2	14.2

¹ Calculated from: IVI [Institute of General History, USSR Academy of Sciences], Documents and Materials [IGH, D&M], f. [fond = archive group] 244, op. [inventory] 287, d. [item] 1, 1. [folio] 3; f. 239, op. 98, d. 599, 1. 25.

² Calculated from: IGH, D&M, f. 239, op. 98, d. 101, 1. 28; d. 520, 1. 7; d. 523, 11. 7, 8, 16, 30; d. 525, 11. 46-47; d. 599, 11. 25, 32, 54, 73; d. 613, 11. 8, 29; f. 244, op. 287, d. 1, 1. 3; d. 14, 1. 5; d. 32, 1. 59; d. 52, 11. 32, 67, 85.

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The years of the Great Patriotic War were characterized by great changes in organizational forms and combat and numerical strength of all the branches of the Soviet Armed Forces. The basic factors which had an effect on the improvement of the structure of the Soviet troops, as well as on the change in their combat and numerical strength were: military-economic capabilities of the socialist system, the continuous build-up and improvement in combat hardware, the growth in numbers and improvement of the combat strength, and the scientifically established ratio of the branches and arms of the troops based on the correct assessment of the strongest aspects of each of them and the nature of the missions they had to perform, and the skillful use of the great experience of the combat operations acquired at the Soviet-German front. Also affecting the building of the Armed Forces were the features of the military-political aims of the Soviet Union in the Far East, as well as the peculiarity of the Far Eastern nature and climate.

The development of the optimal organizational forms of the combined units and units, and the ratio of branches and arms, the determination of the numerical and combat strength of the Far Eastern grouping, and the implementation of all the plans and calculations for the country's defense in this theater in the tense years of the Great Patriotic War were performed by the General Headquarters of the Supreme High Command, the General Staff, the commands and staffs of the Far Eastern and Transbaykal Fronts,¹ the Pacific Fleet and the formations and combined units that comprised them.

To manage the Soviet troops in the Far East during the war with fascist Germany, special sectors for operational control--the Far Eastern and the Transbaykal--were established in the General Staff. In addition, during the time that was most difficult for the country (1941-1942), the position of Deputy Chief of the General Staff for the Far East was established.

Serving as the agencies for immediate military control of the Far Eastern grouping during the war were: the commands and field directorates of the Far Eastern and the Transbaykal Fronts, the Commands and staffs of the Pacific Fleet and the Red Banner Amur Military Flotilla, and the directorates and staffs of the Far Eastern and the Transbaykal air defense zones.

The general growth of the combat might of the Soviet Armed Forces made it possible to increase the combat capability of the Far Eastern grouping. The primary concern was to increase our capabilities, maneuverability and striking force of the combined units and units.

¹ The Far Eastern Front was formed on 28 June 1938, and the Transbaykal on 15 September 1941.

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Up to 70 percent of the ground troop personnel in the Transbaykal and Far Eastern Fronts were in large infantry units. The number of large infantry units and units increased steadily and they were equipped with the latest types of combat equipment and arms. For example, the number of submachine guns in an infantry division from 22 June 1941 through 9 May 1945 increased almost 21-fold and automatic rifles more than doubled. With the growth in output of artillery equipment, more modern cannons and mortars entered the inventory of the divisions in increasing quantities. However, transportation remained inadequate. This was due to the complicated relief of the Far Eastern theater which restricted the mobility and maneuverability of a division.

The number of infantry troops in the Far East doubled during the war despite the fact that a great number of large units were sent from here to the Soviet-German front.

Artillery was the main fire power of the ground troops. During the war, the artillery of the Transbaykal and the Far Eastern Fronts increased considerably in quantity and quality. At the end of 1943, gun, tank-destroyer, mortar and anti-aircraft regiments were assigned to each combined arms army. The artillery pool of the Far Eastern grouping of ground troops increased 1.8-fold during the war, despite the fact that about 5,500 guns and mortars were transferred during this time to the Soviet-German front.² This was achieved thanks to the efforts of the defense industry that was being rapidly restored and developed; during the war this industry sent about 11,000 guns and mortars to the Far East. In 1943 alone, the Transbaykal and Far Eastern Fronts received more than 8,000 guns and mortars for 23.8 percent³ of the deliveries during this time of this type of arms to the field forces.

It is generally known that a fundamentally new and effective weapon for combatting enemy personnel and equipment--rocket-launching artillery--appeared in the Soviet Armed Forces during the Great Patriotic War. In the summer of 1942, the Supreme High Command General Headquarters explored the possibility of introducing it in the ground troops of the Far East, having sent rocket-launching artillery to the Far Eastern and Transbaykal Fronts for the purpose of conducting combat training for each regiment.

¹ USSR Ministry of Defense Archives, f. 15a, op. 161, d. 53, l. 8.

² IGH, D&M, f. 244, op. 287, d. 54, ll. 50-52.

³ Calculated from: USSR Ministry of Defense Archives, f. 41, op. 11584, d. 13, ll. 131-141; f. 81, op. 12074, d. 32, ll. 103-106, 120-122.

⁴ IGH, D&M, inv. [inventory] No 34, ll. 97, 117.

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Major artillery formations, such as artillery corps, divisions and brigades that had become widespread in the ground troops at the Soviet-German front, appeared in the Far Eastern and Transbaykal Fronts only after the rout of fascist Germany. Throughout the entire Great Patriotic War, the basic formation in troop artillery, artillery of the RGK [reserve of the high command] and anti-aircraft artillery in the Far East was the regiment. During the war, 107 artillery, tank-destroyer, mortar and anti-aircraft artillery regiments were formed there, and some of them were sent to the Soviet-German front. By the end of the war with fascist Germany, the artillery of the Far Eastern grouping of the ground troops was gradually shifted from horse-drawn to mechanized.

Armored and mechanized troops, being the main striking and maneuvering force of the ground troops in the Far Eastern grouping, at the start of the Great Patriotic War were represented by eight tank and motorized divisions and a motorized armored brigade.¹

The experience of combat operations at the Soviet-German front demanded improvement of the organization of armored and mechanized troops. In connection with this, in 1941, the tank (except for two) and motorized divisions in the Far East were inactivated, and their personnel and materiel were transferred for organization of lighter and more maneuverable formations--tank brigades, separate tank regiments and battalions. During the war, 27 tank and mechanized brigades were formed here.² While new types of tank formations--armies and corps--were created at the Soviet-German front, this process was delayed in the Far East because of the weakness in the material and equipment base of the armored and mechanized troops. Not until December 1944 did the formation there of the 10th Mechanized Corps begin, the only one in the entire Far Eastern grouping of the ground troops.

However, prior to 1945 both the organization and the arms of the armored and mechanized troops in the Far East made it possible to make effective use of them in coordination with other arms in event of defensive actions against Japan. Offensive missions required decisive reinforcement, or rather the creation of a new grouping of armored and mechanized troops. Therefore, in preparing for the war with Japan, the armored and mechanized troops of the Transbaykal and the Far Eastern Fronts underwent significant reorganization and were substantially strengthened as the result of the regrouping from the West.

¹ IGH, D&M, f. 244, op. 287, d. 1, l. 8.

² IGH, D&M, f. 244, op. 287, d. 54, ll. 70-72.

³ IGH, D&M, f. 244, op. 287, d. 18, l. 64.

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During the war with fascist Germany, there was practically no change in the tank pool in the Far Eastern grouping of ground troops, either in quality or in quantity. In 1941, the light tanks made up 100 percent of the tank pool, in 1942-1945, from 90 to 95 percent.¹ Their low effectiveness under the conditions of the mountainous-swampy-taiga relief reduced the scope of employment of these combat vehicles. In 1941-1944, the Far Eastern Fronts were completely lacking the new type of armored weapon that was used extensively at the Soviet-German front, the self-propelled artillery.

The organizational structure of the Soviet Air Force in the Far Eastern grouping underwent the most substantial changes in 1941-1945. The General Headquarters of the Supreme High Command decided to renounce the scattering of aviation, just as in the field forces, and to unite large air units and units into larger formations--air armies.² In connection with this, in August 1942, all frontal aviation in the Far East was concentrated into four air armies. The creation of air formations was a major stage in improving the organizational structure of aviation in the Far East.

Another major measure in strengthening the Far Eastern grouping of the Air Force was the shift in 1942, just as in the entire Air Force, from large units and units of mixed composition to homogeneous large units and units of bomber, attack and fighter aviation.

The improvement of the organizational structure of the Air Force led to changes in their combat strength. All these measures made it possible for the command of the Far Eastern and Transbaykal Fronts in event of necessity to make use of aviation in a more massed and purposeful manner, which facilitated coordination of it with ground troops.

The Far Eastern Air Force had been reinforced with new types of war planes since 1944: Yak-3, Yak-9, La-5, La-7 fighters, Il-4, Tu-2 bombers and Il-2 attack planes. While bombers made up most of the aircraft in the Far East at the start of the war (42.2 percent), taking into account the combat experience of aviation at the Soviet-German front, the command began to gradually change the ratio of arms of aviation in favor of increasing the number of fighters. At the time of fascist Germany's surrender, the Air Force in the Far East had the following composition: 55 percent were fighters, 22 percent were bombers, 16 percent were attack aircraft and 7 percent reconnaissance aircraft. In tactical and technical data and numbers, the Soviet Air Force was far superior to the Japanese Air Force grouping in Manchuria.⁴

¹ Calculated from: IGH, D&M, f. 244, op. 287, d. 1, ll. 7,8; d. 12, ll. 5, 6; d. 15, ll. 50, 51; d. 16, ll. 5, 6; d. 32, ll. 5, 6, 59, 60.

² In December 1944, one of them (the 11th Air Army) was regrouped into the 18th Air Corps, included later in the 10th Air Army.

³ Calculated from: IGH, D&M, f. 239, op. 98, d. 599, l. 93.

⁴ IGH, D&M, f. 211, op. 253, d. 9, l. 66; f. 239, op. 98, d. 599, l. 93.

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During the war with fascist Germany, the National Air Defense Forces in the Far East did not undergo substantial change. While their structure was continually improved and combat and numeric strength increased in the Western Theater in 1941-1945, the air defense system underwent radical reorganization only once-- at the end of 1941 when the appropriate large units and units were transferred from the Far Eastern and the Transbaykal Fronts to the direct subordination of the commanders of the Far Eastern and the Transbaykal air defense zones.

The Far Eastern grouping of the National Air Defense Forces consisted of fighter aviation (consolidated in each air defense zone into one division) and anti-aircraft artillery (consolidated in the Transbaykal Air Defense Zone into three brigade regions, and in the Far Eastern, into seven). Air observation, warning and communication (VNOS) was handled by battalions established in each air defense brigade region. This air defense troop organization provided for sufficiently flexible control and the concentration of forces and means to protect troops and the most important facilities in the Far East from possible attacks by the Japanese Air Force.

The USSR Navy in the Far East during the Great Patriotic War consisted of the Pacific Fleet (which included the North Pacific Military Flotilla) and the Red Banner Amur Military Flotilla. The strategic mission of the Far Eastern grouping of the Navy in 1941-1945 was, in conjunction with the other branches of the Armed Forces, to reliably defend the coast of the Soviet Union and to protect its sea communications from the aggressive operations of militaristic Japan.

Throughout the entire war, the Soviet Pacific Fleet was considerably inferior to the Japanese Navy. It had no aircraft carriers or battle ships, and it had only two cruisers and then only at the start of 1945. However, it had sufficiently strong aviation and coastal artillery and a considerable strength in submarines. The Red Banner Amur Military Flotilla was superior in all respects to the Japanese Sungeni Military Flotilla.

Thus, the Soviet Supreme High Command during the Great Patriotic War, in devoting the main attention to the armed conflict at the Soviet-German Front, improved the organizational structure and strengthened the combat and numerical strength of the Armed Forces in the Far East. The Far Eastern warriors persistently studied the combat experience of the field armies and fleets. Many officers and generals were sent to the field fronts for training. Upon their return to the Far East, they passed on their acquired experience to the troops. Sending soldiers, master sergeants, officers and generals who had already gained combat experience at the Soviet-German front to the Far East was also of positive value.

In preparing for the war with Japan the strength and organization of the Far Eastern grouping underwent radical change. During the period May-July 1945, the agencies for operational-strategic command of the Soviet troops in the Far East were restructured taking into account the experience of the Great Patriotic War and the peculiarities of the Far Eastern Theater: the High Command of the Soviet Troops in the Far East was established. This stemmed from the great distance between the theater of military operations and the General Headquarters

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of the Supreme High Command, as well as the huge spatial scale of the forthcoming military operations in this theater. All ground, air, air defense and naval forces in the theater were subordinated to the High Command of the Soviet Troops in the Far East.

At that time, the General Headquarters of the Supreme High Command and the General Staff as before had direct communication with the fronts and fleets. The organization of the High Command of the Soviet Troops in the Far East made it possible to expeditiously implement the orders of the Supreme High Command for routing the Kwantung Army, to thoroughly consider all changes in the strategic and operational situation, and to react to them in a timely manner.

In the spring and summer of 1945, there was an intensive and substantial build up of combat forces and means needed for decisive offensive actions in the Far East. Transferred for this purpose was a large quantity of personnel, arms and combat equipment, mainly of ground and air formations--combined arms and tank armies, aviation corps and divisions, and large air defense units. At the same time, the large units and units of all the Armed Forces and branches and arms of troops that had been in the Far East throughout the entire war with fascist Germany were reorganized.

In the Ground Forces, the infantry divisions were shifted completely to the organic organization which had well proved itself in the concluding engagements against fascist Germany. A large share of them were reinforced with modern types of arms and combat equipment--self-propelled artillery, automatic weapons, trucks and mechanical traction.

In the period May-June 1945, the large units and units of the armored and mechanized troops received heavy and medium tanks and self-propelled artillery, both delivered by industry and transferred from the West. As a result, by 9 August, heavy and medium tanks and self-propelled artillery made up 45 percent of the total number of tanks in the Far East.¹ Artillery changed both in quality and quantity. As a result of the measures implemented, the pool of artillery was increased 1.4-fold.²

During the strategic deployment of Soviet troops in the Far East, all three fronts each had an air army; two bomber corps of the RVGK [Reserve of the Supreme Command] were attached to the 12th Air Army, and a long-range bomber corps was operationally subordinate to the 9th Air Army. Thanks to industrial deliveries and transfers from the Soviet-German front, the number of aircraft

¹ Calculated from: IGH, D&M, f. 244, op. 287, d. 54, l. 10.

² Calculated from: IGH, D&M, f. 239, op. 98, d. 599, l. 93; f. 244, op. 287, d. 54, l. 11.

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increased almost 20 percent within three months, and the ratio of air arms was changed somewhat (the number of bombers was increased primarily).¹ Considering the peculiarities of the region for the forthcoming operations, the High Command strengthened the air armies with air transport divisions and regiments. As a result of this restructuring, the striking power of the Soviet Air Force had substantially increased by 9 August.²

The National Air Defense Forces in the Far East were also reorganized. The air defense system established at the Soviet-German front was used as the basis for the new organization. Based on the Far Eastern and the Transbaykal Air Defense Zones, three air defense armies were created to protect the troops of the Transbaykal and the 1st and 2nd Far Eastern Fronts. The former air defense brigade regions were reorganized into air defense divisions. In addition, three air defense corps were transferred from the West to here. As a result of this reorganization and increase in combat forces, the artillery of the National Air Defense Forces in the Far East increased almost three-fold within three months, and fighter aviation increased 13 percent.³

The naval air force was equipped with new aircraft; the ship strength of the Pacific Fleet (TOF) was augmented with frigates, patrol vessels and landing ships. The naval infantry was replenished with personnel that had combat experience. However, the Pacific Fleet as before was inferior to the Japanese Navy in major surface vessels.⁴

In preparing for military operations against Japan, the Soviet Supreme High Command restructured the Armed Forces in the Far East. Within a short time, a powerful offensive strategic grouping of troops was created that was capable of performing the mission to rout the Japanese troops in Manchuria, North Korea, on southern Sakhalin and the Kurile Islands.

In transferring the front directorates, formations and large units to the Far East, the concrete experience gained in combat operations at the Soviet-German front was taken into consideration. Formations and large units that had experience in breaking through strongly fortified positions were assigned to the 1st Far Eastern Front. Troops that had skill in operating in mountainous terrain were assigned to the Transbaykal Front which had to surmount the Greater Khingan Mountains.

¹ Calculated from: IGH, D&M, f. 239, op. 98, d. 599, l. 93; f. 244, op. 287, d. 54, l. 11.

² "Sovetskiye Voenno-Vozdushnyye Sily v Velikoy Otechestvennoy voyne 1941-1945 gg." [Soviet Air Force in the Great Patriotic War 1941-1945], Moscow, 1968, p 425.

³ IGH, D&M, f. 244, op. 287, d. 52, ll. 89, 106; d. 54, l. 17.

⁴ S. Zakharov and others, "Krasnoznamenny Tikhoookeanskiy flot" [Red Banner Pacific Fleet], p 168.

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The peculiarities of each strategic direction, the capacity of the operating directions, the nature of defense and numeric strength of the enemy grouping had considerable influence on the organization and combat strength of the fronts. Since the Transbaykal Front faced no prepared defense, the Soviet command sent more tanks and self-propelled artillery there, but more artillery and mortars to the 1st Far Eastern Front where there was a solid zone of permanent defensive fortifications.

The experience of the operational-strategic cover of the deployment of Soviet troops is instructive. Major steps had to be taken in this direction, for the enemy had over a million men ready for active operations.

During the deployment of the Soviet Armed Forces, the troops and fortified regions in the Maritime Territory and the Transbaykal area were brought to full combat readiness, a plan for conducting defensive operations was drafted, an air defense system to protect in advance the prepared unloading stations, major rail junctions and areas of concentration was established, measures were taken to counter air assaults, defense of the seacoast was organized and brought to readiness, and reconnaissance was strengthened in every possible way. The questions of camouflage and fabricating information for the enemy were resolved during the defensive efforts.

The Border Troops played a definite role; they strengthened protection of the state border and reported intelligence on the enemy grouping and condition of the terrain in the border zone to the units that had arrived, and took a direct part in the combat operations of the troops of the fronts.

The measures taken to insure the secret transfer of a large number of troops from the West to the East, and of the large-scale intrafront regroupings, and the operational-strategic deployment of troops and concentration of materiel are extremely interesting and instructive. The requirement to maintain secrecy was strictly taken into account in the entire complicated system of preparing for the Manchurian operation.

The Japanese command knew about the offensive being prepared, but it did not know the time that it would start, nor the true scale, nor the directions of attacks. Consequently, Soviet troops on the scale of the whole campaign succeeded in attaining surprise which had strategic value.

The campaign of the Soviet Armed Forces in the Far East was of short duration. Its aims were achieved during the Manchurian strategic offensive, the southern Sakhalin offensive and the Kurile landing operations. The Manchurian operation was the main one in the Far Eastern campaign. Taking part in it were the three fronts, the Pacific Fleet and the Red Banner Amur Military Flotilla, the Border Troops and the National Air Defense Forces in the Far East.

The most important feature of the Manchurian operation is that the strategic aims of the war were achieved at the start of it. As an operation it is also characterized by certain other features typical for the initial period of war: secrecy of

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concentration and deployment of groupings of troops, surprise shift to the offensive at night and a crushing initial strike with the participation of the maximum of forces and means in the 1st echelon. All this required precise organization of coordination between the three fronts, the navy and river flotilla in time, objectives and lines.

Consequently, in the war with Japan, the Soviet Armed Forces were enriched with the experience of preparing a major operation designed to seize the strategic initiative, and a rapid maneuver of part of the troops and aircraft over great distances, and of organizing coordination of the Ground Forces with the Air Force and Navy. At the same time, experience was gained in organizing and conducting a major offensive operation under the conditions of mountainous-taiga and desert-steppe theater of military operations.

The development of the strategic concept and plans for the Manchurian operation was the result of intense creative activity of the Supreme High Command, the General Staff and High Command of the Soviet Forces in the Far East, and the commands and staffs of the fronts and the fleet. The personal visit by the High Commander and Front Commanders of the main sectors of the fronts, their acquaintance with the troops, and reconnoitering were of great value in planning the operation. After appropriate discussion, the necessary changes were made to the plans that had been adopted earlier. A problem of strategic importance was the determination of the amount of force needed for the Manchurian and other operations.

The strategic concept of the Manchurian operation was distinguished by purposefulness and decisiveness of actions and insured a quick rout of the Kwantung Army. The decision by the General Headquarters of the Supreme High Command on two powerful strikes in opposing directions to encircle the main forces of the Kwantung Army proved its value fully. The offensive plan made it possible for the Soviet command to maintain the initiative throughout the entire operation. Indicative of this in particular is the fact that the enemy border fortifications in the ridge of the Greater Khingan Mountains were surmounted as of the 5th-6th day of operation.

The choice of the main thrust directions was exceptionally fortunate. The selection of them was determined primarily by the form of the strategic operation for encirclement. Also taken into consideration were the advantageous configuration of the state border, the nature of the placement of areas fortified by the Japanese, the peculiarities of the grouping of the main forces of the Kwantung Army (two-thirds on the Manchurian plain and in the area of the Korean ports), and the inadequate network of internal lines of communications which restricted the enemy's capability to maneuver reserves.

The main thrust directions brought the Soviet troops to the flanks and into the rear of the main enemy grouping and deprived the enemy of contact with the home country and with the strategic reserves located in North Korea. Thus the Transbaykal Front reached the shore of the Yellow Sea over the shortest direction (from the territory of the Mongolian People's Republic to Kalgan and Beijing) and carried out their mission of isolating Manchuria in an extremely short time.

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Simultaneously, the main forces of this front with a deep cutting thrust to Shenyang, Lu-shun and (Dalyan') divided the troops of the 1st and the 3rd Fronts of the Kwantung Army which hastened its capitulation.

Such decisiveness and purposefulness of actions also described the operations of the remaining fronts. The 2nd Far Eastern Front with the operationally subordinate Amur Military Flotilla swiftly advanced in the Sungari sector which made it possible to subsequently mop up northern Manchuria.

Troops of the 1st Far Eastern Front, after breaking up the reinforced concrete belt of fortified regions, in the course of fierce combat reached the central Manchurian plain and rushed to link up with the Transbaykal Front, and on the left wing in coordination with the Pacific Fleet they liberated North Korea and deprived the enemy of communications with the home country. In the zone of the 1st Far Eastern Front the main efforts were shifted from the main direction to the direction of the secondary attack where more decisive success was indicated. This became possible thanks to the preplanned alternatives for operations of the troops and the availability of substantial reserves to the front commander.

As a result of the series of strong attacks on his defense, the enemy was pinned down on the entire extent of the Soviet-Manchurian and the Mongolian-Manchurian borders and had no opportunity to establish where the Soviet troops were making the main thrust.

Because of the geographic conditions of all the strategic directions, a feature of the operation was that Soviet troops did not attack with a solid front, but only in selected operating directions, often separated from each other by hundreds of kilometers. The disconnection of the operating directions determined the relative independence in operations of the fronts, armies and even large units. For example, there was a 200-km gap between the 6th Guards Tank and the 17th Armies which made up the main attack grouping of the Transbaykal Front.¹

The flanks of the fronts were separated by hundreds of kilometers of inaccessible mountainous-taiga or swampy terrain. Because of this, coordination of the fronts was organized in time, missions and directions of the main as well as the secondary attacks. This made it possible to subject the enemy defense to simultaneous strong attacks on a huge front.

The operations of the fronts and armies in the Manchurian strategic operation took place in a huge space. The width of the zone of the offensive of the Transbaykal Front reached 2,300 km (the active sector was 1,500 km), for the 2nd Far Eastern, it was 2,130 km (the active sector was 520 km), and for the 1st Far Eastern, it was 700 km. The depth of the front operations was: 800 km for the Transbaykal Front (reaching the line (Chihfeng), Shenyang, Chungchun, and (Buhedu)), and 200 km for the 1st Far Eastern (reaching the Mudanjiang River). The fronts were able to execute missions at such a great depth because of the power of the initial thrust, the great swiftness, boldness and continuity of the attack by the troops, the availability of strong large mobile units, air supremacy, and the lack of defense zones in depth of the enemy disposition in the operating sectors. The scale of the offensive by the fronts and the armies is shown in table 21.

¹ VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL, 1975, No 8, p 19.

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Table 21. Scale of Soviet Troop Offensive in the Manchurian Operation
(as of 19 August 1945¹)

Army	Depth of Advance, km	Width of Zone of Advance, km	Average Daily Rate of Advance km
Transbaykal Front			
In the direction of the main attack			
6th Guards Tank Army	820	200	82
39th Army	380	200	38
17th Army	450	200	45
In other directions			
36th Army	450	700	45
Mounted-Mechanized Group of Soviet and Mongolian Troops	420, 550	300	42, 55
1st Far Eastern Front			
In the direction of the main attack			
1st Red Banner Army	300	135	30
5th Army	300	65	30
In other directions			
35th Army	250	250	25
25th Army	200	285	20
2nd Far Eastern Front			
In the direction of the main attack			
15th Army	300	330	30
In other directions			
2nd Red Banner Army	200	150	20
16th Army*	360	150	24

* The 16th Army attacked on 11 August.

¹ Compiled from: IGH, D&M, inv. No 55, l. 62.

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The High Command of the Soviet Troops in the Far East, considering the features of the theater of military operations and the high individual training, stamina and fanaticism of the Japanese soldier, expected stubborn resistance from the enemy. Therefore, front operations were planned for a period of 20 to 25 days. The strong attack groupings created in the major sectors and the high aggressiveness of the Soviet troops made it possible to more than double the rate of the offensive and reduce the duration of the operations on the average to 10 days.

A characteristic feature of the offensive operations by the fronts and the armies was the skillful massing of forces and means in the sectors of the main thrusts. With the total extent of the front in Manchuria of 5,130 km,¹ the active offensive operations were conducted on 2,720 km, while the main groupings attacked on a still narrower front: 300 km for the Transbaykal Front, 200 km for the 1st Far Eastern, and 330 km for the 2nd Far Eastern. The Transbaykal Front concentrated 70 percent of the infantry troops and up to 90 percent of the tanks and artillery in the sector of the main thrust. This made it possible to establish superiority over the enemy: 1.7-fold in infantry, 4.5-fold in cannon, 9.6-fold in mortars, 5.1-fold in tanks and self-propelled artillery and 2.6-fold in aircraft. In the 29-km breakthrough area of the 1st Far Eastern Front, the ratio of forces and weapons was: 1.5:1 in manpower, 4:1 in cannon and 8:1 in tanks and self-propelled artillery. The ratio was about the same in the breakthrough areas in the sector of the main thrust of the 2nd Far Eastern Front.

Two echelons were used in the operational formation of the troops in the fronts and a large part of the armies; the 2nd echelons of the combined-arms armies were committed to engagement earlier than had been planned. This stemmed from the successful development of the army operations and the necessity of making use of the advantageous situation for increasing the rate of the offensive.

In the Transbaykal Front, the operational formation of the troops differed by the presence of a tank army and a mounted-mechanized group in the 1st echelon, which was due to the necessity of forestalling the enemy in seizing the passes of the Geater Khingan Mountains and of quickly reaching the Manchurian plain. In the 1st Far Eastern Front, the 10th Mechanized Corps operated as the echelon for exploitation of success. Up to 30 individual tank brigades attacked on all fronts with the 1st echelons of the infantry division. They insured a high rate of attack.

An appreciable role in the offensive was played by airborne landings at Changchun, Shenyang, Harbin, Kirin, Lushun, (Khamkhyn, Pkhen'yan) and other major cities and ports. They paralyzed the operation of the rear communications of the enemy and protected major military and industrial facilities, preventing their demolition and destruction, prior to the approach of the ground forces.

¹ Included is the difficult sector of terrain stretching about 2,000 km between the left wing of the Transbaykal Front and the right wing of the 2nd Far Eastern Front.

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The depth and rate of advance of the Soviet troops in each direction depended on the nature of the enemy defense, the forces and strength of his groupings, the degree of his power to resist, and the relief of the terrain. Thus, in the zone of attack of the Transbaykal Front, the enemy had built fortified regions only in isolated sectors. The nature of the terrain permitted bypassing these fortified regions. The enemy main forces withdrew in depth, and the covering forces were inadequate to offer serious resistance to the powerful thrusts of the armies of the Transbaykal Front. As a result, within 10 days these armies advanced to a great depth with a high average daily rate.

The situation was different in the 1st Far Eastern Front where the enemy had an almost continuous chain of fortified regions in the Manchurian border zone and had posted troops greater in number than those facing the Transbaykal Front. Moreover, the difficult mountain passes and taiga blocked the way of the Soviet troops. All this naturally had an effect on the rate of the offensive of the armies in the 1st Far Eastern Front.

The experience of breaking through fortified regions at night without artillery and air preparation in the Manchurian operation deserves attention. The sudden appearance of Soviet forward detachments in the disposition of the strong points of Suifenho, Tungning and other fortified regions caught the Japanese garrisons by surprise, and the swift actions of the troops prevented the possibility of organized resistance. The strong points were bypassed or blocked. Large gaps were formed in the enemy defense and the main forces of the attacking troops rushed through them. This decided the fate of a large part of the enemy fortified regions that were captured in the very first days of the operation.

Forward detachments played a very large role in attaining the high rates of the offensive. They were established in almost all divisions and corps of the first echelons of the armies. The strength of a detachment ranged from a tank battalion to a tank brigade, from several companies to a regiment of infantry in motor vehicles, a battalion of self-propelled artillery, a battalion (regiment) of artillery, tank-destroying and antiaircraft battalions and other subunits for support.

In some cases, separate tank brigades operated as forward detachments; they were capable of a swift attack even while cut off from the main forces of the large units.

Surprise and bold and decisive actions were the basis for the combat operations of the forward detachments. Their mission included: capture and holding of advantageous positions until the approach of main forces, envelopment of enemy flanks and gaining his rear, and parallel pursuit of the withdrawing enemy. Forward detachments advanced at the rate of 100-150 km/day, main forces of the armies--infantry--35-40 km/day, and cavalry at 50-60 km/day.

The rate of advance of armored and mechanized troops of the Transbaykal Front on some days reached 150-160 km/day and averaged 70-90 km/day, in the 1st Far Eastern Front--50 km/day, and in the 2nd Far Eastern Front--40-50 km/day.

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Troops of the 16th Army in southern Sakhalin in coordination with naval and air landing operations advanced during the 15 days of the offensive to a depth of 360 km with an average rate of 24 km/day.

Combat operations in Manchuria developed primarily along roads built on mountains, and often without any roads--along ridges, mountain valleys, over the centuries-old taiga, unsteady swamps and deserts. They had the nature of an offensive by individual columns that operated without direct tactical contact between them. Therefore, prior to the start of the offensive, all needed measures for combat, engineering, road, materiel and air support for these columns were provided for and they were given full independence.

The Soviet Air Force, covering the main groupings of the front forces from the air, attacked enemy railroads, defensive constructions, control centers, concentrations of manpower and equipment, interdicted the approach of reserves from north China and Korea, and conducted intensive aerial reconnaissance on all the main directions of the troop offensive. For the operations of frontal aviation, the efforts of the three air armies and the separate long-range bomber corps were combined under the unified command of the commander of the Air Force of the Soviet Army, which under the conditions of the disconnected attack directions and the special geographic and weather conditions in the theater had vital importance. To disorganize enemy rail shipments and deny the approach of reserves, up to 85 percent of all bomber sorties were flown in the attack zone of the Transbaykal Front alone.

As a result, the engagement regions were isolated from the inflow of enemy fresh forces, and his measures to evacuate physical assets from the border regions and to withdraw large units from the thrusts of the attacking troops were disrupted.

Another feature in the operations of combat aviation was the enlistment of a substantial amount of forces to conduct aerial reconnaissance in the interest of the commanders of the fronts, combined-arms and tank armies. This was necessary due to the lack of precise data on the enemy and the fact that Soviet troops went on the offensive immediately after the declaration of war. The air armies used from 20 to 33 percent of all sorties to perform this mission.

With the development of the attack by the ground troops, the efforts of aviation were switched to supporting forward detachments and large mobile units. A special role was given to aviation in its coordination with the 6th Guards Tank Army. In surmounting the ridge of the Greater Khingan Mountains, two air assault and one fighter division acted in direct coordination, while two bomber divisions attacked enemy centers of resistance on the route traveled by the tanks.

Transport aviation played an active role in the subsequent offensive by the combined-arms and tank armies, delivering fuel and ammunition to the attacking formations. It subsequently executed missions to land airborne forces at the

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airfields of the major political-administrative and industrial centers of Manchuria, North Korea, and southern Sakhalin, which were carried out to hasten the surrender of the Kwantung Army and to prevent destruction of physical assets.

The landing of the airborne forces was supported by the operations of combat aviation of two air armies and special air reconnaissance. Fighter and bomber aviation patrolled above the airfields, ready to support the landing forces at any moment.

Coordination of the Pacific Fleet with the ground forces consisted in covering the maritime flank of the 1st Far Eastern Front during its attack into North Korea. The Red Banner Amur Military Flotilla coordinated closely with the main grouping of the forces of the 2nd Far Eastern Front throughout the entire Sungari operation.

Most characteristic of the operations of the fleet and the flotilla were the air strikes, and the landing and support of naval forces at the ports of Yuki, Seishin, Rashin, and Sakhalin and the Kurile Islands where nine forces were landed. This made it possible to quickly liberate the major ports of the northeastern coast of Korea, to suppress enemy resistance and take the Kurile Islands, as well as the southern part of Sakhalin Island. Fleet war ships, especially torpedo boats, were used in the majority of cases to land the forces, and special landing vessels only in some cases. Use of fast torpedo boats was dictated by the necessity to quickly capture the enemy ports and bases. Naval infantry, setting brilliant examples of boldness and courage, were usually landed in the first assaults. Ground force units also operated courageously in the landings.

The Pacific Fleet landing forces acted quickly in capturing the North Korean ports and bases and the ports were captured before ground troops could approach. As a result of the forestalling attacks by the fleet, the Kwantung Army was deprived of maritime communications and completely isolated.

The flotilla had the major missions of landing forces and their artillery support, helping ground troops in forcing wide water barriers, and providing river transportation. Thus, the Red Banner Amur Military Flotilla transported across the Amur almost all of the 2nd Red Banner Army of the 2nd Far Eastern Front and up to half of the 15th Army forces and means of combat. The coordination of the 15th Army troops of the 2nd Far Eastern Front with the large units and ships of this flotilla is of considerable interest.

The thorough practice of fleet coordination with the ground troops and training ship personnel for operations against enemy ground troops which was carried out long before the start of the war with Japan played a large role.

Flotilla ships with ground troops on board operated continuously in the advance guard of the main forces of the 15th Army. In the beginning of the operation, forces were landed and troop river crossings made at various sectors of the Amur and Ussuri rivers. During the operation, the flotilla supported with

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artillery fire the landing detachments who fought to expand and maintain beachheads, as well as the 15th Army that attacked in the coastal zone. After 10 days of operation, the flotilla main forces, in coordination with the 15th Army, had covered more than 900 km along the Amur and Sungari--from (Fuyuanya) to Harbin.

At the beginning of the operation, 15th Army troops in turn used artillery to support the forces landed by the flotilla and the capture and holding by them of islands and beachheads, and during the operation they protected flotilla ships operating on the Sungari River from enemy ground forces. The operational subordination of the flotilla to the front command, and a brigade of river vessels to the armies and the 5th Separate Infantry Corps fully proved its value.

The enemy was taken by surprise and stunned by the force of the attacks by the Soviet Armed Forces, and was unable to make use of its Sungari Flotilla in an organized manner.

The success of the operations and their rates were largely determined by the proper and precise organization of coordination which was achieved thanks to the personal contact of the commanders who coordinated the units and large units, the exchange of liaison officers, and the control of the heterogeneous forces from one command post. The contact and joint operational training of the front and flotilla officers in the period preceding and during the operation played a large role.

The National Air Defense Forces were constantly combat ready in the Far Eastern campaign, although they did not carry out major combat operations, inasmuch as the Japanese Air Force was not very aggressive.

In preparing for and during the campaign, the rear organizations faced missions of great complexity. Rear supply was one of the major factors limiting the start of the Manchurian operation.

Measures associated with troop materiel and equipment supply began as early as March 1945 and continued right up to the very start of military operations, and some were taken even after the start of the offensive by the Soviet troops. In all three fronts, the main difficulty was the huge space, the shortage of transportation and the poor possibility of making use of local industry and raw materials to support the troops with ammunition and fuel. A large part of this materiel had to be delivered over many thousands of kilometers. Thanks to the timely measures taken, by the beginning of August 1945, the necessary reserves of all types of ammunition and rations were established in the forces.

All the work accomplished by the rear agencies in the preparatory period ensured the successful course of the operation. Despite the fact that Soviet troops advanced 300-800 km during the first 10-15 days, they did not experience serious supply difficulties, with the exception of temporary interruptions in fuel supply for the 6th Guards Tank Army.

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Special note should be made of the noble and selfless labor of the Soviet medics who accomplished much work in eliminating the various epidemic diseases among the local Manchurian population.

The brilliant victory of the USSR Armed Forces in the Far East once more confirmed the unquestionable advantages of Soviet military art in the field of strategy, operational art and tactics. The Manchurian strategic operation by three fronts, the Pacific Fleet and the Red Banner Amur Military Flotilla in concept, scope, performance, methods of executing missions and final results is one of the outstanding World War II operations. The simultaneous attack by several fronts and armies, using all branches and arms of the Armed Forces, united by a common strategic concept, made it possible to achieve utter defeat of the enemy in a short time.

Even bourgeois historians who try to belittle the Soviet Union's contribution to the rout of militaristic Japan, in an analysis of the Manchurian operation, admit that it "deserves careful attention and a definite place in the history of World War II" primarily because the Soviet command "was forced to employ a new strategy here to deal with the Japanese defense." This "new strategy," in their opinion, showed up primarily in the high rates of the offensive, the close coordination of the branches of the Armed Forces, the open flanks, the landing of airborne forces in front of the attacking troops, etc. All these features, they assert, were more typical of the "post war strategy and doctrine of the Soviet command" than for the period of the war.¹

The tremendous experience gained by the Soviet command, officers and soldiers in the uncompromising conflict with a strong and experienced enemy, fascist Germany, was embodied in the Manchurian operation. That is precisely why in it were displayed such features of the art of command and military skill as the high level of strategic planning, the maneuver, unprecedented in scope and time, of part of the Armed Forces to a new theater 8,000-12,000 km away, and the organization of a surprise and simultaneous attack by three fronts, the air force, the navy and air defense forces in the various strategic directions. Also characteristic of it were the great depth of the front and army operations, the unusually high rates of attack in the separate operating directions, the extensive maneuvering with employment of envelopments, turning movements and encirclements of the enemy grouping, and the use of large tank units to swiftly cover broad expanses of desert-steppe and desert-mountainous regions. Also significant were the efficient coordination of the ground troops with the navy on the maritime flank, the dropping of airborne forces for coordination with forward units and capture of strategically important objectives, and the organization of close and thorough coordination of the air force with the ground troops and the navy in the interest of their most rapid advance. Thus, victory was achieved with lightning speed: after only 24 days the powerful enemy grouping was utterly defeated.

¹ "History of the Second World War," Vol 6, No 16, London, 1968, pp 2663-2666.

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2. Military Art of the Armies and Navies of the United States, England and China.

By the beginning of 1945, the United States, Great Britain and China had considerable naval, air and ground forces in Southeast Asia and the Pacific. There were two commands in the Pacific, one in the central portion and the other in the southwestern part. The central command was headed by a navy commander with army forces subordinate to him; the southwestern command was headed by an army commander who had naval forces operationally subordinate to him. With the approach of the American forces to the Japanese home islands, the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff reorganized the command in the Pacific in March-April. In place of the central and southwestern Pacific commands, a commander in chief of allied ground forces in the Pacific and commander in chief of allied naval forces were designated and the appropriate staffs established.

In the winter of 1945, the situation in the European theater was such that the United States and England were able to transfer part of the navy, especially landing forces, and the air force to the Pacific. The opportunity for transfer increased with the end of the war in Europe. Meanwhile, the American command estimated that the forces in the Pacific and even the reinforcements that could be sent from Europe by America and England were insufficient to defeat Japan. Therefore, the allies tried to get the Soviet government to agree to enter the USSR in the war against Japan.

Military operations in the Pacific were characterized by the army and navy fighting for possession of islands to bring naval and air bases closer to Japan itself. The strategic offensive to attain intermediate objectives was carried out from one line of bases to another. Much work went into equipping the captured bases and insuring sea communications with them. Possession of the Philippine Islands, Iwo Jima, and later Okinawa, the main island in the Ryuku archipelago, made it possible for the American command to intensify air and naval attacks on Japan's sea communications with the South seas region, and to bring its naval and air bases substantially closer to the Japanese home islands (it is 1,200 km from Iwo Jima to Tokyo, and about 600 km from Okinawa to China, Taiwan and Kyushu). This enabled better preparation for the invasion of Japan.

All major offensive operations by the American Armed Forces in the Pacific in 1945 were conducted by the joint efforts of the army and the navy. Some of them were strategic in terms of the objectives set and the amount of forces and means enlisted. Such was the Anglo-Indian operation to liberate southern Burma which was conducted primarily by air and ground forces with naval support.

A strategic offensive was carried out in a broad expanse of several thousands of kilometers along the front and in depth. Thus, for Operation "Iceberg" to capture Okinawa, forces were drawn from almost all over the Pacific, from the U.S. west coast, and from the islands of Hawaii, Fiji, Solomons, Philippines and others. The nature of the theater and the plan adopted dictated waging offensive operations only by separate disconnected directions.

Naval landing operations were the only possible way to conduct military operations to occupy enemy territory in the Pacific. The islands of Luzon, Iwo Jima, Okinawa and many others were occupied as a result of such operations.

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The naval forces of the United States and, in part, those of Great Britain during the strategic offensive fought to gain and maintain sea supremacy, carried out amphibious operations and supported them, disrupted Japan's sea communications and provided transport for troops and equipment on a substantial scale within the Pacific theater.

The experience of the war on the huge expanses of the Pacific Ocean overturned the theory on the dominating role of battleships that had previously existed in the United States and England. Their place was taken by fast-moving aircraft carriers which became the navy's main striking force. They not only fought successfully for supremacy on the sea and in the air, but also supported other naval operations. Major surface vessels of other classes lost their former importance, although they played an important role in protecting and supporting the operations of aircraft carriers.

Employment of carrier aviation almost completely supplanted in combat practice the operations of artillery-torpedo groupings of surface vessels. Clashes between carrier forces replaced them. While the United States, England and Japan had 43 carriers of various classes at the beginning of the war, these states constructed 178 carriers during this period.

In the strategic offensive, aviation carried out missions by independent air operations to weaken the military-economic potential of the enemy. Air strikes were carried out on objectives, as a rule, at night using a large quantity of incendiary bombs. However, the results of the so-called "burning" of Japanese cities, conducted over a period of four and one half months in 1945, show that of the 98 cities destroyed, 72 had no major military objectives.

Large units of strategic aviation were also enlisted for direct support of ground forces, mine laying in the enemy coastal waters, supporting landings of naval and airborne forces, and inflicting strikes on naval bases and ships.

Tactical aviation was used to support ground force operations both in direct support and in strikes on operational enemy targets in depth. The basic principle of its employment was massing of force in the main direction of the attacking troops and on major groups of targets.

With the emergence of airborne and ship radar, broad possibilities were opened for advance detection of enemy aircraft and ships, and for successful conduct of combat operations not only during daytime, but also at night and in fog.

U.S. Armed Forces gained substantial experience in amphibious operations of various scales. They were all conducted under the conditions of complete superiority over the enemy in ground, naval and air forces. Thus, the battles for Iwo Jima were fought by 111,000 soldiers, 680 ships and vessels, and 1,500 aircraft,

¹ "Istoriya voyenno-morskogo iskusstva" [History of Naval Art], Moscow, 1969, p 522.

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against about 23,000 Japanese, 5 submarines that carried the "Kaiten" human torpedoes and up to 40 aircraft. In the operation to capture Okinawa, on the American side, there were almost 550,000 men (183,000 in the first line), 1,500 ships and vessels, 1,727 carrier aircraft and over 700 strategic aircraft, while at the time of the landing, the Japanese had a garrison of 87,000 and insignificant naval forces.

The planning and preparation for the operation were characterized by great thoroughness and on the basis of prearranged places and time included: determining the necessary forces and means, the points of embarkation for the troops and loading of equipment, the sea routes for transporting the landing detachments; development of plans for operations of ground, naval and air forces, organization of support and cover from the sea and the air; organization of communication and materiel supply and a number of other questions. Enemy naval force opposition in the landing areas was weak in many cases, but despite this, major large units of carriers and other surface ships and large units of submarines were allocated to cover the landing teams from Japanese naval strikes.

The composition of a landing force depended on the forces of the defending enemy, the nature of his defense and the missions to be accomplished by the landing force. Marines and infantry were used in a landing force. In the overwhelming majority of amphibious operations, the number of infantry participating did not exceed two reinforced divisions, except for Okinawa and Luzon where four divisions were landed just in the first echelon.

The ground, naval and air forces allocated to an operation were consolidated into so-called large amphibious and other operational units (actually formations). Nine such large units were created for the operation to capture Okinawa and nine for Iwo Jima.

Landing ships, vessels and specially built debarkation craft that provided rapid and convenient troop debarkation and equipment unloading on an unequipped shore were used extensively to take the landing forces to the assigned region.

The rapid development of combat hardware had a great influence on the ways and means of conducting amphibious operations. During the war, special transport, landing and landing-debarkation craft for infantry, and tanks (tank carriers and tank barges) as well as amphibious tanks and transporters-amphibians were developed and improved; this made it possible to deliver the landing subunits and units to debarkation points and successfully land them on the shore in a short time.

An amphibious operation included the following stages: preliminary air and artillery preparation of the landing area, concentration and embarkation of troops on to vessels, sea transport of the landing force, direct air and artillery support, debarkation of the landing force and consolidation of the beachhead. Subsequently, support was given to the landing force while it performed its missions on the shore.

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Much attention was paid to operational support (reconnaissance, camouflage, and cover), materiel and special types of support (navigational-hydrographic, hydro-meteorological, emergency rescue), as well as to the problems of organizing antiaircraft, antisubmarine, antimine, and anticutter defense.

In all amphibious operations carried out by the U. S. Armed Forces in the Pacific in 1945, an important role was played by large aircraft carrier units. Their mobility made it possible to maneuver aircraft over a great distance, concentrate large forces in the major sectors, and to achieve air superiority over the enemy at the chosen time and in the chosen area.

Large aircraft carrier units had the following missions: fighting for air and sea supremacy in the area of forthcoming operations by destroying enemy aircraft and naval forces at sea and at their bases (it was precisely the American carrier aircraft that did the most damage to Japanese aircraft carriers and battleships), preliminary and direct air support of the landing area, air support of the landing forces while they were performing their mission to capture islands.

To create favorable conditions for landing operations, large units of fast-moving aircraft carriers and strategic bombers (B-29, B-24 and B-17), and sometimes even large gunboats began attacking aircraft at airfields and ships at naval bases, and enemy antilanding defenses in the zones contiguous to the landing areas two to three months before the start of the landing. That is how the preparation was made before the amphibious landing on Iwo Jima. Several days prior to the start of the operation, aircraft and large ship units began preliminary preparation of the landing area with fire support, and provided direct support on the day of the landing. It was characteristic that in the operation to capture Iwo Jima, aircraft bombed the island itself for 72 days before the landing operation.¹

The troops embarked and equipment was loaded on the landing-transport craft on a broad front. Departure of the large landing units began according to the time needed to cover the route to the landing area and the prearranged sequence of arrival of the particular landing echelons. To capture Okinawa, 183,000 troops and 747,000 tons of freight were loaded at 11 different points from Seattle on the U. S. west coast to the Island of Leyte. The distance from Seattle and Leyte to Okinawa was 5,400 and 900 miles, respectively.

Each large landing unit, which, as a rule, transported a division with reinforcements, was made up of about 25 transports and 50 landing ships and vessels that traveled in groups protected by escort ships; measures needed for all types of defense were taken. When the forces reached a point about 5 to 18 km from shore, the division was landed by the "sea-shore" method.

Upon the arrival of the large landing units in the area of deployment, and in some cases even earlier, direct artillery and air preparation of the beachhead began. To reliably suppress the forces and means of antilanding defense, preparation was conducted over several days (three days for Luzon and Iwo Jima; two and a half days for Okinawa).

¹ (F. Khaf), "Voyna na ostravakh" [The War on the Islands], p 380.

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Battleships, cruisers, destroyers, gunboats, and small ships, cutters and barges with rocket-launching weapons were used extensively for direct artillery preparation of the landing and artillery support for the landing forces. Thus, in the Okinawa landing, 10 battleships, 13 cruisers, 32 destroyers as well as many small ships and barges were used for this purpose; this made it possible to create a rather high density of fire of rifled and rocket-launched artillery (100-200 launchers per kilometer of the landing front).

Artillery and air preparation during the Iwo Jima landing continued for 2 hours and 20 minutes. First came fire from the battleships, cruisers, and destroyers, and then large mortar-firing cutters were included. An hour before the landing, ship-fired artillery ceased firing and aircraft began working over the landing sectors with bombs, napalm, rockets and machine gun fire. At 35 minutes before the landing, fire was resumed from all artillery weapons from 16-inch (406.4 mm) guns to mortars to a depth up to 1,000 yards (900 m). Aircraft made strikes during the last seven minutes. During the landing, a rolling barrage was used for the first time in the Pacific combat operations. This was conducted by 5-inch (127 mm) guns supporting a 400-yard (360-meter) security zone for the disembarking troops.¹ The line of deployment for the landing force was two miles (3.7 km) from the shore, which it had to cover in 30 minutes. Troops were landed in waves with an interval of three to five minutes.

In some operations (Luzon and Okinawa), frogmen teams were used extensively. As soon as artillery preparation began (and sometimes even earlier), they made gaps in the enemy antilanding obstacles. For example, ten 100-man teams took part in the Okinawa landing. For the first time the Americans landed on the shore one to two Ranger regiments and detachments, and the English landed one to two Commando brigades and detachments. Tanks-amphibians and armored cars were included in the forward regiments and detachments.

Forward detachments, suppressing enemy resistance, captured his strongpoints and shore positions. Ships and aircraft made strikes upon the call by the landing forces, while simultaneously covering the landing from the sea and air.

The landing front was from 3.2 to 12.5 km for a corps of marines or army corps, and from 1.6 to 6 km for a division in the 1st echelon. In attacking the shore, a corps generally had a single-echelon formation. As a rule, after the landing on the shore, the large reserve units moved immediately into the first echelon.

Infantry and marine divisions used an order of battle of one or two echelons, depending on the nature of the Japanese defense. The width of the attack zone was determined usually by the width of the island and was not large. Infantry attacked the shore together with tanks supported by aircraft and artillery (including ship-fired artillery).

¹ G. Garand and T. Strobridge, "History of the U. S. Marine Corps Operations in World War II," Vol 4, Washington, 1971, pp 502-504.

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The use of special landing-debarkation craft, as well as the lack of serious enemy resistance in the landing area made it possible to develop relatively high landing rates on the unorganized shore: 68,000 men were landed in a day at Luzon, and 60,000 on Okinawa. On the average, an American infantry division was landed in 8 to 10 hours.

After capturing the beach and suppressing enemy resistance in the tactical zone of his defense, landing forces, supported by ship artillery and aircraft, tried to expand the beachhead. The rates of advance depended on the degree of enemy resistance. Thus, on Okinawa, a corps of marines that had landed in the northern part of the island did not meet serious resistance and within four days reached lines that had been planned for the 21st day of the operation.¹ But an army corps that operated in the southern part of the island where the enemy put up a stubborn defense could accomplish its mission for the 20th day only after three months of combat. On Iwo Jima, combat lasted for 36 days instead of the planned 5.

A landing operation was considered terminated when the troops captured the designated beachhead and consolidated their hold on it or when they accomplished the assigned mission by complete capture of the island.

Providing amphibious operations with supplies and equipment was one of the most important problems in the war in the Pacific. Troops, supplies and equipment had to be concentrated on a captured beachhead in sufficient quantity to successfully execute subsequent missions on shore. If one considers the high expenditure of materiel in the operations, as well as the conditions of time and weather that affected sea transportation and landing of the forces, it becomes clear how complicated this was.

A feature of the Pacific amphibious operations was that the troop landing areas were located at a great distance from supply bases. Therefore, continuous supply of the landing forces was one of the major problems. Intermediate supply bases were established for this purpose on previously occupied islands. Large service units (the "floating rear") were extensively developed to support naval forces. They had facilities to repair ships to docks inclusive and consisted of separate detachments of ships, transports, tankers and available floating facilities. Following immediately behind the invasion forces, they were always ready to replenish ship supplies, tow a damaged vessel, perform repairs, etc.

The large service units made it possible for American large maneuvering units to operate for a month or more without returning to base. Special supply detachments, for example protected tankers, delivered fuel from the Caribbean Sea to the Marshall Islands where it was transferred to fleet tankers or barges; other transport detachments carried ammunition, arms and rations for the landing forces.

¹ (F. Khaf), "The War on the Islands," pp 419-420.

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Military operations at the Burma front were conducted primarily on ground. The largest were the operations on the Mandalay plain (January-February 1945), and the attack on Rangoon (March-April) in two isolated directions. The British had made advance preparations for these operations: two divisions had been re-equipped with modern and light arms and made more mobile. Attacking under the conditions of weak resistance from Japanese troops, the two Anglo-Indian corps advanced along the roads practically in columns.

The British command twice made airborne landings in 1945: a brigade at Taungtha and a separate battalion at Rangoon, but only the former affected the successful outcome of a battle. The latter was landed in an area where there was no enemy.

Operations of the British East Indian Fleet in the Indian Ocean were limited in objectives and value and consisted in landing tactical forces on the island of Akyab, Ramree and Cheduba near the Arakan coast and on the coast (Myebon, (Ruiva and Letpan)), as well as at Cape Negrais south of Rangoon. These landings were made by small forces with no opposition from the Japanese from the sea.

With the departure of Japanese warships from the Bay of Bengal, British ships shelled the shores of Malaya, and the Andaman and Nicobar islands in the Bay of Bengal.

Aviation played a great role in the success of the allied ground troops in Burma. In addition to the combat effect on the enemy, aviation carried supplies and equipment to the majority of combat units in the theater which lacked an adequate quantity of communications. Allied air supremacy over Burma and areas adjacent to it was complete, since the enemy had only several dozen planes against the approximately 2,500 allied warplanes.¹

The allies succeeded in attaining greater coordination in employment of aviation than in the other arms. Under Mountbatten was the post of the high command of the air force which was held by British Air Marshal (G. Gerrod).² Subordinate to him was the Eastern Air Command (commanded by the American General G. Stratemeyer, and he was deputy commander in chief of allied air forces), two British air groups and a subunit of combat aviation. Making up the Eastern Air Command were two other British air groups, two air armies (one of them American, the other--strategic aviation--Anglo-American), and an Anglo-American operational group for transport of freight and troops and special aviation squadrons. The American

¹ (Dzh. Erman), "Bol'shaya strategiya. Oktyabr' 1944-avgust 1945" [Grand Strategy. October 1944-August 1945], p 172.

² Mountbatten's Report, p 273.

³ S. Kirby and others, "The War against Japan," Vol 4, pp 441-445.

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20th Bomber Command with 100 B-29 heavy bombers was based in India. In February-March 1945, it coordinated with large units under Admiral Mountbatten, commander of allied forces in Southeast Asia. The long range of the strategic aircraft made it possible for them to attack Japanese bases located at a considerable distance, in Saigon, Cam Ranh and Singapore.

The air force performed combat missions on bombing tactical targets on land and laying mines in harbors at the enemy coast. During the offensive for Rangoon, the air force subjected the Mandalay-Rangoon and Burma-Thailand railroads and the Irrawaddy River to continuous attack, preventing thereby the Japanese command from maneuvering forces. In the process, guidance stations in the enemy rear area were used extensively. For example, in April 1945, almost all fighter-bombers of the 224th Air Group operated with guidance provided by scouts located in the enemy rear area.¹

Transport aviation operated intensively. The British and American commands, conducting combat operations under jungle conditions and an extremely limited number of communications, were forced to devote great attention to establishing air transportation services to carry personnel as well as supplies.

The Indian-Chinese Command of the U.S. Air Transport Command, which delivered supplies to China, continually built up its forces. In December 1944, 249 aircraft were used on the air route; in January 1945, 287 aircraft; and in July, 332 aircraft.² During the period January-August 1945, 430,898 tons of freight were delivered to China.

At the Burma front, the British and later the allied command assigned transport aviation important and crucial missions to deliver supplies and equipment to the forces operating in jungles under difficult climatic conditions. While there was one air transport squadron (25 aircraft) in the British Air Force in Southeast Asia in June 1943, the decision was made to make maximal utilization of transport aviation with the establishment of the allied command for Southeast Asia. Then all transport aircraft in the British and American air forces in this region were consolidated into a transport command for air delivery of troops, which transported a considerable amount of both troops and freight. For example, the air force delivered supplies to the 150,000-man grouping in the Imphal area, after transferring there two infantry divisions, two infantry brigades and smaller subunits.

The allies reorganized the air transport command in October 1944. An operational air transport-landing group was established to replace the command for air troop transportation. This group consisted of 17 squadrons (9 British and 8 American) and a headquarters for delivery of air freight (6 squadrons). There were in all 600-650 aircraft with 25-30 aircraft per squadron in the 23 squadrons. They delivered about 2,000 tons of freight daily.

The availability of a large number of transport aircraft made it possible to transfer troops to the needed sectors of the front and to support the combat activity of the grouping of land forces which had almost 350,000 men.

¹ Mountbatten's Report, pp 175, 178, 179.

² This does not include American Air Force aircraft (120-130 planes) that supported the domestic Chinese and Indian airlines and the aircraft of the commercial Chinese national transport civil air company that flew the same route.

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In the opinion of British historians, the operation of transport aviation was one of the decisive factors in the success of the allied troops in Burma and China.

The experience of the offensive operations by the forces in Asia and in the Pacific confirmed the possibility of coordinated employment of all arms and aviation in mountains, deserts, forests and jungles. However, these special conditions required special measures to overcome various difficulties and limitations. On the whole, American forces gained quite varied experience and displayed skill in conducting offensive operations employing the most modern means of combat for that time.

Military operations in the Pacific enriched the military art of the United States and Great Britain in the first place in the area of preparing for and conducting amphibious operations at a great distance away from bases. The main principle for conducting them was the establishment of overwhelming superiority in air and naval forces and multifold superiority in troops. Typical of these operations was the efficient operational and tactical coordination between all branches and arms of the armed forces.

Major factors in attaining the successes by the allied armed forces were their high level of technical equipment and the ability of the commands and staffs to plan and support operations, to quickly react to a changing situation and to persistently strive for the goal set. The knowledge of the Japanese ciphers was also of great value.

The U.S. military and political leaders used the atomic bomb against Japan. Employment of this weapon was not due to military necessity; it was a barbaric act with respect to the peaceful population and done for imperialistic purposes. More than 100,000 peaceful inhabitants perished from the explosions of the two bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.¹ At the same time, it became quite evident that this new means of combat would cause the most profound changes in military affairs and in the entire system of combat operations on land, at sea and in the air.

Military operations were conducted against the Japanese Armed Forces in China by the troops of the Kuomintang government, and the 8th and the New 4th Armies and the guerrillas led by the Chinese Communist Party.

The Kuomintang command, confident that the allies would handle the Japanese for them, did not plan independent major offensive operations, but concentrated its main efforts on preparing for civil war. For this purpose, in addition to the existing 11 military regions, Chiang Kai-shek created four fronts that included almost all the divisions trained and armed by the Americans. These troops could be transferred to any part of China.

The Chinese command in 1945, just as in previous years, could not organize proper opposition to the Japanese troops, although they did conduct offensive operations with only limited forces to safeguard traffic on the Beijing-Hankou and Hankou-Guangzhou railroads. The Chinese troops withdrew into the mountains and did not engage in protracted combat. More aggressively, and even then only under the pressure of their American advisors, they did defend the air bases at (Zhejianie and Laohekou).

¹ When the victims of radiation sickness and other factors were taken into account, this figure grew to 447,000 ("History of Diplomacy," Vol 4, p 720).

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The two armies and the guerrillas led by the Chinese Communist Party were spread over a huge territory in the rear of the Japanese troops or within the Border (Special) Region established in 1937. They operated with small forces--regiments or brigades, detachments or columns numbering from several thousand to several tens of thousands of fighters.

They could not conduct major offensive operations. Their efforts were directed most often to repelling the attacks by Kuomintang, Japanese or puppet troops that took part in punitive operations, or to expanding the territory of the occupied region on a small scale.

After 10 August 1945, they were all enlisted simultaneously for attacks on communications and combat operations to expand territories. About 100,000 of them were transferred in August-November to Manchuria, to the territory liberated by the Soviet Armed Forces from the Kwantung Army where they established the Manchurian revolutionary base with the aid of the Soviet Union.

3. Main Features of the Military Art of the Japanese Army and Navy

The sharp deterioration in Japan's military and political situation by the start of 1945 and the urgency of solving specific questions on the defense of the home country very obviously revealed the deficiencies in the traditional system of Japanese military-political leadership. The system that had remained unchanged throughout the entire war did not permit efficient coordination of the operation of state agencies, in particular the cabinet of ministers and general headquarters.¹

Under the situation strictly preserved by the militaristic leaders, the cabinet of ministers where all state authority was concentrated for all practical purposes had slight influence on directing the war.² The intention of Prime Minister Koiso in July-August 1944 to establish a single agency that would represent the government and military leadership, as well as the attempts to establish a unified ministry of defense, did not have positive results because of the objections raised by the army and navy commands.

Establishing the Supreme War Direction Council on 4 August 1944 did not resolve the problems, since the representatives of general headquarters and the government that were on the Supreme Council did not constitute a unified entity, but merely coordinated military-political questions. Just as before, the prime minister did not participate in the meetings of the general headquarters. Only after 16 March 1945 upon special instructions by the emperor was he permitted to be present at these meetings.³ However, he had no deciding voice and was only sort of a high ranking observer.³

¹ T. Hattori, "Daitoa senso zen shi" (Complete History of the War in Greater East Asia), p 793.

² Ibid., p 794.

³ Ibid., p 878.

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Along with that, although general headquarters had combined the army and navy departments that had closed about the chief of the army general staff and the chief of the naval general staff, respectively, it was not the supreme agency for coordination of war direction since both chiefs were directly subordinate to the emperor.¹

Consequently, the army general staff and the naval general staff were essentially two independent agencies of the supreme command.

For the first time during World War II, and in essence for the entire military history of Japan, a joint operational document for the army and navy, "Basic Provisions of the Operational Plan for the Imperial Army and Naval Forces," was drafted only on 20 January 1945.² But even after this, contacts between the army and navy commands went no further than consultative meetings.³

In the last year of World War II, the most critical period in Japan's military history, the question arose with all palpability on the necessity of uniting the efforts of the army and the navy and establishing a unified military command. While each main branch of the Japanese Armed Forces had previously pursued its own independent and isolated policy based on the fundamental tenets of Japanese military strategy that the "enemy of the Army is Russia, and the enemy of the Navy is the United States,"⁴ they now had to combine efforts in 1945 as the front grew immediately closer to the home country and the probability of war with the USSR increased.

The army leaders, proceeding from the premise the army in particular would have to wage a decisive battle, were especially insistent on establishing a unified command.⁵ However, the efforts by Army Minister Anami in April 1945 to establish a unified military command produced no great results, for the naval command took exception. Only the information departments of the Army and the Navy were combined.

The traditional rivalry of the main branches of the Japanese Armed Forces, behind which were certain monopolies who fought for military appropriations and to obtain profitable military orders, was an insurmountable obstacle to combining the efforts of the Army and the Navy even at this most critical moment.

The top Japanese leaders tried with all their efforts to drag out the war, hoping to inflict a significant defeat on the American and British forces now on the territory of Japan proper and thereby find a way out of the war on terms more or less advantageous for themselves.⁶

¹ T. Hattori, "Complete History...", p 139.

² "Daitoa senso kokan sen shi" (Official History of the War in Greater East Asia), Vol 73, part 2, p 292.

³ T. Hattori, "Complete History...", p 793.

⁴ S. Hayashi, "Kantogun to kyohuto sorengun" (Kwantung Army and Soviet Far Eastern Army), Tokyo, 1974, p 297.

⁵ S. Hayashi, "The Japanese Army in Military Operations in the Pacific," p 144.

⁶ "Official History of the War in Greater East Asia," Vol 73, part 2, p 70.

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For this purpose, further mobilization of all the country's personnel and physical resources and formation of new military units and large units continued.

As a result of the total mobilization, the total number of personnel in Japan's Armed Forces increased substantially and by the end of the war reached 7.2 million men, of which 5.5 million were in the land forces and 1.7 million in the Navy.¹

With the increase in the numerical strength of the Army and Navy, the qualitative indicators also changed. While 60 percent of the rank and file in the Armed Forces were regular in 1941, less than 15 percent were in 1945.² The new military formations in the Army were less trained and prepared. This was especially evident in the flying personnel in the Air Force who during training had neither the time nor the equipment for practical flights. Japan continued to form new units and large units in 1945 right up to the time that the Soviet Union entered the war.

In February 1945, 14 infantry divisions were formed in Japan proper, and 16 in April. In Manchuria and Korea, 8 infantry divisions and 4 separate composite brigades were also formed in January, and 8 infantry divisions and 7 separate composite brigades in June. In August 1945, the combat strength of the Japanese land forces was the largest for all the years of World War II.

The number of infantry divisions increased most rapidly while the divisions of the other arms remained at their former level. The sharp drop in production of the most important types of military products, primarily tanks and aircraft, limited not only the formation of new tank and air large units, but even the replacement of losses in the field.

However, the Japanese leaders, considering the large role of tanks and aviation in battles for the empire, searched for all possibilities to establish separate tank brigades, regiments and air detachments. By August 1945, Japan had 9 separate tank brigades, 46 separate tank regiments, 10 air divisions, 67 air detachments and 19 separate air squadrons.³

In March 1945, the 1st and 2nd Combined National Defense Armies and the Combined Air Army were established for better control and concentration of efforts in organizing the defense of Japan proper. These were completely new operational-strategic formations of land forces.

All fronts on the territory of Japan were included in the 1st and 2nd Combined National Defense Armies and all aviation in Japan, Manchuria and on the island of Taiwan was included in the Combined Air Army. In April 1945, the Combined Armies were subordinated directly to general headquarters.⁴

¹ T. Hattori, "Complete History...", p 955.

² "Taiheiyo senso shi" (History of the War in the Pacific), Vol 5, part 2, p 70.

³ "Official History of the War in Greater East Asia," Vol 73, part 2, p 103.

⁴ T. Hattori, "Complete History...", p 816

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By 1945, the Japanese Navy had suffered huge losses and was forced to withdraw to their home bases. The number of ships continued to decline sharply, which is indicated in table 22.

Table 22. Change in the Number of the Main Classes of Japanese Naval Ships in the Last Years of the War.¹

Ship Class	As Of 1 January 1944	As of 1 January 1945	As Of 9 August 1945
Aircraft Carriers	13	6	3
Battleships	9	5	1
Cruisers	31	10	3
Destroyers	78	44	44
Submarines	72	57	58
Total	203	122	109

As is evident from the table, the number of ships decreased to almost a half, and the number of major ships to one-fourth to one-tenth. The Japanese leaders exerted great efforts to increase the number of naval ships; however, construction and commissioning of new ships did not make up for those losses suffered by the Japanese Navy.

Table 23. Construction and Losses of the Main Classes of Japanese Naval Warships in the Period 1943-1945²

Ship Class	1943	1944	1945**
Aircraft Carriers	4/1*	5/12	-/2***
Battleships	-/1	-/4	-/4
Cruisers	3/2	1/24	-/7
Destroyers	12/32	24/58	17/17
Submarines	36/27	38/54	26/27
Total	55/63	68/152	43/57

* Numerator is ships commissioned; denominator is losses.

** During January to August.

*** In addition, one was severely damaged and reequipped as a submarine base.

¹ Calculated from: S. Fukui, "Nihon-no gunkan" (The Japanese Fleet), pp 312-318; "Okinawa homen kaigun sakusen" (Naval Operations in the Okinawa Area), Tokyo, 1968, p 155.

² Calculated from: S. Fukui, "The Japanese Fleet," pp 312-318.

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The reduction in the combat strength of the Japanese Navy occurred not only as a result of huge losses, but also because of insufficient rates of construction of new ships, which is evident from Table 23.

The table shows that in 1945, not a single carrier, battleship or cruiser was commissioned, although 13 ships of these types were lost.

In connection with the new missions of strategic defense, the Japanese headquarters reorganized the Navy in December 1944. By the beginning of 1945, it consisted of the Combined Fleet which had the mission of defending Japan proper, and the fleets in the southwestern and southeastern sectors. The main combat strength of the fleet was included in the Combined Fleet.

In the last months of the war, the Japanese Armed Forces primarily conducted operations to retain key positions on the approaches to the home country, prepared for a decisive engagement for Japan proper and conducted defensive operations on a broad front against the Soviet Army.

In this period, instead of the principles of offensive combat and attack as the basic type of military operation, precisely defined in all the prewar manuals, the Japanese command was forced to conduct only defensive operations on all fronts (in Manchuria, on the Pacific islands and in Burma). The exception was the offensive operations with limited goals in China. Prior to the war, defense was permitted only on the condition of a subsequent shift to the counteroffensive.¹

Turning to defense as the main form of troop operations was evidence of the sharp change in the correlation of forces in favor of the allies; this showed up especially in the directives to the Japanese land forces for conducting combat operations against the Soviet Army, although neither defense nor withdrawal are discussed at all in the document, "Basic Principles for Conducting Combat Operations against the Soviet Army."

The defensive operation against Soviet forces in August 1945 by the Japanese command was conducted within the scope of a group of fronts of the Kwantung Army, but against the Anglo-American forces, within the scope of a field army.

A field army usually defended in a zone 200-500 km wide and 150-200 km deep. As a rule, the defense had a core nature. In the major sectors, it consisted of the main defense area and the rear defense line with a total depth of 20-25 km. The main area included combat security positions, forward positions and the main zone of resistance with a depth up to 6-9 km. An infantry division defended in the main sector in a zone of 10-20 km, and in the secondary, 60-80 km.²

The rear defense line, at which the army reserves were located, was organized 15-25 km from the main area. In the defensive operation against the Soviet Army in Manchuria, a third defensive line was established, at which the front reserves were positioned.

¹ "Official History of the War in Greater East Asia," Vol 73, part 2, pp 121, 139.

² "Okinawa homen rikugun sakusen," (Ground Troop Operations on Okinawa), Tokyo, 1973, map appendices No 5, 7, 10.

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The defense was prepared in advance and well equipped in an engineering sense: dugouts, reinforced concrete pillboxes and earth and timber pillboxes were built, trenches were dug, and minefields and various portable obstacles were established. In cities and populated areas, buildings served as pillboxes (Manila, Shuri and Naha). Special attention was paid to exploiting terrain relief.¹

Whole systems of engineering fortifications were built on commanding heights (Suribachi on Iwo Jima). On the hill slopes and steep bluffs of Iwo Jima and Okinawa, there were many caves in which garrisons of 30 to 90 men were placed. The approaches to them were covered by the fire of machine guns, mortars and artillery located on adjacent hills and in other caves.

In Manchuria, strong centers of defense were established in the mountains of (Kengtei-Alingya, Changbaishangya and Liaolingya). Small subunits took up the defense on critical avenues of tank approaches.

However, the swift attack by Soviet forces in sectors converging on the center of Manchuria and the rout of the Japanese covering forces in all sectors foiled the Japanese command's defense plan, led to the loss of control of troops and forced them to conduct uncoordinated defensive actions at hastily occupied lines. The attempt by the Japanese command to gather sufficient forces in the area of Mutanchiang to make a powerful counterattack failed. It was a frontal counterattack weakly supported by artillery and tanks. The Japanese not only did not stop, but could not even delay the rate of advance by the troops of the 1st Far Eastern Front and gain time to organize a counteroffensive.

As a rule, Japanese forces conducted defensive operations in Manchuria and also in Burma on a broad front, by separate sectors with defense of sequentially occupied lines. This corresponded to the Japanese theoretical views under which defense was divided into static and mobile. If attacking forces overcame the static defense, the Japanese forces switched to a mobile defense at intermediate lines until a static defense was created at a new line. Japanese defensive operations against attacking Soviet forces were very large in scale and characterized by a high level of aggressiveness and intensity. In defensive combat, the Japanese command counted primarily on the stamina of his infantry and strong counterattacks. Such directives for combat with weak fire support led to huge losses in personnel.

Japanese forces switched to the counterattack unexpectedly and practiced feint counterattacks, committing the main forces when the enemy believed that it had already been repulsed. The enemy was often let into the depth of the defense through well camouflaged formations of forward subunits and then destroyed by fire from the flanks and the rear. Sometimes, only enemy forward subunits were let through the combat formations and then his main forces were met with strong counterattacks.

The Japanese made extensive use of suicide soldiers on defense to combat tanks and motor vehicles. The suicide soldiers operated in groups or alone. Committing

¹ "Ground Troop Operations on Okinawa," pp 386, 395.

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themselves with TNT and grenades, they threw themselves under tanks and motor vehicles, or after sneaking up to groups of enemy soldiers, blew themselves up and destroyed them by the fragments.

Exploding mine obstacles set off by suicide soldiers were used extensively. Sometimes the suicide soldiers, committed by grenades and TNT, formed an entire mobile minefield. Despite this blind fanaticism, the suicide soldiers achieved the desired results only in isolated cases. A great number of them were destroyed by infantry weapons fire.

Japanese land forces had poor artillery. Artillery in defensive operations, as a rule, was used on a decentralized basis and its density was small. However, the Japanese were skillful in constructing a defense in an antiartillery sense. This is confirmed by the large number of reinforced concrete and earth and timber pillboxes. On Iwo Jima and Okinawa, for example, they buried tanks in the ground and used them as fixed fire positions.

The defense was inadequately equipped with antitank weapons. Thus, the Japanese infantry division with an authorized numerical strength of up to 15,000 men had only 18 antitank 37-mm guns. The main burden of combatting tanks was borne by groups of tank-hunters--infantry men.

The island position of Japan forced the command to pay special attention to questions of organizing shore defense and conducting antilanding operations.

The huge losses in naval ships, the weakness of the air force, and the misfortunes in the defense of the small islands forced the Japanese leaders to reexamine the earlier established principles for conducting antilanding operations.

It was now proposed that American landing forces be destroyed not on the open sea, but in their landing areas. The tactics of the troops who performed the antilanding defense were changed considerably. This was caused by the fact that the defensive positions located at the shore had been subjected to air strikes and heavy fire from ship artillery. Under the new provisions, the main defensive positions were organized in the depth of the island, at a considerable distance from shore, and the decisive combat with the enemy was planned there.

The shortcoming with this approach to conducting antilanding defense was that the enemy received the opportunity of landing on the shore almost unhindered. Thus, on Okinawa, American forces came in contact with the resistance by the Japanese garrison only in the interior of the island. Two American corps that had landed advanced almost unhindered into the central and northern parts of the island and were stopped by defensive positions in the southern part only on the fifth day.

The Japanese antilanding defense boiled down in essence to defense of land at previously prepared positions. However, even here their capabilities were limited, and not only because of the relatively small strength of the island garrisons, but mainly due to the lack of proper naval and air support.

The Japanese command, having considerable forces of troops and detachments for civil defense, did not have time to improve the antilanding defense of the main islands of the home country. The most prepared were the islands of Kyushu and the

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eastern shore of Honshu, where the antilanding defense was capable of stopping and wearing down enemy forces. The American command knew about this, and was therefore apprehensive about the large losses that would result from amphibious operations on the shore of Japan proper.

The limited force of Japanese aviation, its technical backwardness and poor pilot training prevented proper support to land forces in the campaign for the islands and in Burma. Suicide pilots ("Kamikaze") began to be used extensively in the concluding stage of the war in the Japanese Air Force. Their main goal was to strike aircraft carriers and other major surface ships.

The most characteristic example of using the "Kamikaze" was the Japanese air campaign for Okinawa. From 6 January through 22 June 1945, air combat was fought in the Okinawa area. As a result of stubborn attacks, Japanese pilots succeeded in sinking 33 American ships and vessels (26 of them were sunk by "Kamikaze") and destroying more than 1,000 aircraft. Japanese losses were 16 ships and vessels and over 4,200 aircraft.

Japan's great distance from the American air bases gave it relatively low vulnerability, but as the front shifted to the home country in 1945, the American Air Force bombed its cities and military industrial facilities with increasing force.

Japan's antiair defense was inadequately equipped with antiaircraft artillery and detection and warning systems. Air defense aircraft had a limited ceiling (5,000 m) and low speed. All this forced the Japanese command to reorganize the air defense system. Measures on the coordination of the army and naval airforce were taken.

After the reorganization in May 1945, the 1st and 2nd Combined National Defense Armies were responsible for defense of the homeland in the regions established for them. The command of the Combined Air Army coordinated with them.

The basis for air defense was formed by specially allocated air units of the army, navy and antiaircraft artillery. As of June 1945, 970 aircraft (including 510 naval aircraft) and 2,590 antiaircraft guns (including 935 naval guns) were allocated for air defense. However, these weapons were completely inadequate under the conditions of intensified strikes by the American Air Force.

When the bombers began striking medium-sized and small localities, the air defense service was generally helpless. The peaceful population perished, and communications disrupted. Despite the new measures and the reorganization of air defense, the losses from raids by the American Air Force increased.

Because of the weakness of the Air Force, shortages in antiaircraft artillery and disruptions to the warning system (as a result of continuous bombing strikes), Japan's air defense was not able to accomplish its missions to protect military-industrial and civil facilities.

The basic strategic missions of the Japanese Navy in 1945 were: to assist the land forces in the defense of key positions on the approaches to the home country and to protect ocean and sea communications.¹ During defensive operation by land

¹ "Naval Operations in the Okinawa Area," p 2.

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forces on the islands, naval forces had to provide artillery and air support to the garrisons, replenish and resupply them, and strike American landing forces and the forces supporting them. However, due to the huge losses sustained by the Japanese fleet, it was unable to successfully accomplish even one of its major missions. This led to large losses in commercial tonnage from the actions of the American fleet which in turn caused a substantial reduction in imports of strategic raw materials. Reduced fuel imports led to severe limitations on the fleet's fuel supply and some of its ships could not leave port.

The Japanese command underestimated the capabilities of American submarines which resulted in insufficient attention being paid to antisubmarine defense. Few anti-submarine ships were built (a total of 18 escort ships in 1945). The number of ships enlisted for security did not correspond at all to the needs.

A paramount mission of the Japanese fleet was destruction of enemy troop transports at sea, but American sea and air supremacy prevented accomplishment of this mission also. The American Air Force inflicted massed strikes on Japanese surface ships even before they were within effective firing range (for example, during the combat operations for Okinawa). Therefore, strikes on enemy transports in areas where landing forces were transferred to landing craft were made from the air and the primary missions in these attacks were laid on individual aircraft, the "Kamikaze." Massed air attacks were conducted relatively rarely.

Japanese fleet operations on communications were episodic. Submarines and aircraft were used primarily against the warships. The surface vessels of the Combined Fleet were also practically never used to disrupt enemy sea communications. Because of this, the loss inflicted on Anglo-American tonnage was insignificant.²

In the defense of the islands, the Japanese command placed great hopes on the so-called "special offensive weapon for surprise attack"—baby submarines, human torpedoes ("Kaiten"), as well as exploding cutters ("Shinyo") controlled by suicide soldiers. "Special attack units" were established and intensively trained for a decisive engagement for the home country.

However, use of these new weapons could not affect the course of the war. The number of submarines reequipped to carry the "Kaiten" human torpedoes was small, and the results of their attacks were relatively moderate. The "Shinyo" cutters had no success at all, and the majority of them were destroyed. One of the reasons for the Japanese defeat at sea was the weakness of the base of the materiel and equipment for the Navy.

¹ The battleship Yamato and ships that escorted it were sent to Okinawa to attack the landing forces in the landing area with just enough fuel to reach the island and conduct the battle.

² (V. Belli) and others, "Blokada i kontrblokada" [Blockade and Counterblockade], p. 643.

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Even though the defensive operations of the Japanese land forces and navy in the first half of 1945 ended in the most complete failure, they showed that the Japanese command was full of determination to fight to the end in event of an American landing on the territory of Japan proper, and therefore it drafted plans for waging war for 1946.¹

The Soviet Army's swift and complete defeat of the Japanese forces in Manchuria in August 1945 put an end to the development by Japanese strategists of principles for further conduct of the war and forced the Japanese government to sign the instrument of surrender.

¹ T. Hattori, "Complete History...", p 819.

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[pp 459-464] Conclusion

On 2 September 1945, militaristic Japan that had suffered a crushing defeat signed the instrument of unconditional surrender. World War II that had lasted a long six years was over. Japanese imperialism that had strived to enslave the nations of the East and establish hegemony in Asia, having lost the extensive territories that it had earlier seized of Korea, Taiwan, Manchuria, south Sakhalin, the Kuriles and the former mandate islands, was deprived of its former might.

The military-political defeat of Japan sharply changed the sociopolitical situation in the country: the authority of the monarchy collapsed, and the militaristic ideology, the cult of military force, and the samurai code of Bushido that had glorified blind obedience and self-sacrifice in the name of the emperor's interests had discredited themselves in the eyes of the broad popular masses. The Japanese people became aware of the extreme reactionary character of the fascist-militaristic regime that had brought it and neighboring nations so much suffering. The conditions were established to democratize the country and to encourage the growth of progressive forces.

Cardinal changes occurred in the national liberation movement. The victories won by the Soviet Armed Forces over fascist Germany and militaristic Japan, and the decisive contribution by the USSR to the rout of the main striking forces of world imperialism had a profound effect on the fate of all humanity and promoted a rise in the revolutionary and national liberation movement of the nations of East and Southeast Asia, and first of all the nations of China, Korea, Vietnam and Indonesia. "The Soviet Union," stressed Ho Chi Minh, "saved the world from enslavement by Hitler's barbarians and dealt a decisive blow to the main forces of Japanese militarism, earning itself thereby the gratitude of all nations, and in particular the nations of the East. The latter with admiration were convinced that the imperialist oppressors are not invincible. The fascist aggressors were crushed despite the fact that they had modern arms and had begun preparing their criminal aggression long before World War II." ¹

Favorable conditions had been created for revolutionary reforms in the Asian countries. In September 1945, after Japan signed the instrument of unconditional surrender, the Democratic Republic of Vietnam was proclaimed in Hanoi and it became the first socialist state in Southeast Asia. The Soviet Union's victory in the Far East had a huge impact on the development of the struggle by the Chinese people for their liberation. The reunification of Manchuria, liberated by Soviet troops, with China was of major importance; here with the aid of the USSR was established the strong revolutionary base that played a decisive role in the subsequent victories of the Chinese revolution.

Having routed the Japanese troops, Soviet Armed Forces liberated North Korea from the forty-year colonial yoke and gave the Korean people the opportunity to decide their fate on their own, to implement democratic reforms and proclaim a people's democratic republic. Kim Il-Song noted that "Only the army of the world's first socialist state could bring the Korean people the freedom and independence that they

¹ Ho Chi Minh, "O Lenine, leninizme i nerushimoy sovetsko-v'yetsnamskoy družbe" [On Lenin, Leninism and the Inviolable Soviet-Vietnamese Friendship], p 134.

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had yearned for. The day Korea was liberated by the great Soviet Army, 15 August 1945, was marked by a fundamental turning point in the history of Korea. The Soviet Army not only liberated Korea, but also protected the interests of the Korean people so that the fruits of liberation really became their property."¹

The wave of the national liberation movement that unfolded in the last period of World War II eliminated the 350-year Anglo-Dutch domination in Indonesia, a country with over 70 million people. On 17 August 1945, the Republic of Indonesia appeared on the political map of the world.

In the national struggle against the Japanese militarists, the role and authority of the communist parties in the Southeast Asian countries increased; the parties made up the front ranks of fighters for the national interests of their countries and nations. The downfall of the colonial system of imperialism in the East had begun.

Thus, the victories of the Soviet people had a multifaceted revolutionizing influence both on the domestic political situation in Japan, and on the situation in Asia as a whole. That is precisely why bourgeois, and in the first place American and Japanese historiography makes every effort to distort the military-political events of World War II in the East.

Bourgeois historiography strives in every possible way to belittle the great contribution by the Soviet Union and its Armed Force to the rout of militaristic Japan and at the same time exaggerates the role of the United States of America. U.S. historians describe the matter as if the United States waged the continental war in Europe with one hand, and the sea war in the Pacific with the other. And the war in the East was allegedly completely independent of military-political events in the other theaters of military operations. And the other allies in the antifascist coalition, including the USSR, supposedly made only a "symbolic" contribution to achieving victory over Japan.

To substantiate this false conception, bourgeois historiography usually gives a number of arguments indicating the allegedly decisive role of the United States in the rout and surrender of Japan. The main ones are the naval blockade and the massed air bombings by the Armed Forces of the United States of America.

There is no question that each of these factors played a certain role in hastening victory over the aggressor. But even taken together, they could not force the surrender of Japan which had large land forces. Under the established conditions, powerful land forces with abundant combat experience were required for victory over militaristic Japan. And that force was precisely the Soviet Army that had defeated the fascist Wehrmacht.

The theory of a "separate," "American" war scientifically does not hold water also because it ignores the main feature of World War II--its coalition nature, and consequently too the mutual conditionality of the results of the armed conflict in the European and Asian theaters of war. The Japanese proceeded precisely on this

¹ Kim Il-Song, "Torzhestvo idey Velikogo Oktyabrya" [Triumph of the Ideas of Great October], Moscow, 1960, p 9.

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interconditionality believing that "if Germany ever weakens, Japan will find itself facing the world coalition,"¹ and that means facing the inevitability of defeat as well. Therefore, the catastrophe of fascist Germany and its allies at the Soviet-German front made it necessary for Japan to not only reexamine its military strategy, but also to begin to search for a way out of the war. Events themselves tell how the Soviet-German front, where the main battles with the fascist coalition were fought, had a decisive effect on the military-political situation both in the European and in the Asian theaters of war.

Yet another version circulated in the United States, as if it in general were against the USSR's entry into the war with Japan. However, here too bourgeois historiography comes into clear contradiction with the facts that show that the governments of the United States and Great Britain persistently and systematically tried to get the USSR to enter the war against Japan. This question was raised by them at the Teheran Conference in 1943, during the talks by W. Churchill and A. Eden with Soviet leaders in Moscow in 1944, in the Yalta Conference in February 1945 and at the Potsdam Conference. The British bourgeois historian A. Taylor stressed that such persistence by the president and government² of the United States was based on "the unanimous opinion of his military advisors."²

Thus, claims by bourgeois historiography on the "undividedness" of the U.S. victory over Japan have no serious foundations under them.

Persistent attempts to falsify history are also made by Maoist propagandists who advanced the theses in particular on the "main theater of military operations" and the "decisive role of the Chinese front" in World War II. But these theses are patently untenable.

As is known, during the engagements that occurred between the two opposing groupings, two theaters of war were formed--the European (Western) and the Asian (Eastern), each of which embraced several theaters of military operations. The main role in World War II right up to the rout of Hitler's Germany was played by the European theater, and in it--the Soviet-German front where the greatest engagements took place and where the outcome of the war with the aggressive fascist bloc as a whole was decided.

The Asian theater of war had a secondary, subordinate importance since Japan was allocated an auxiliary role in the global strategy of the fascist coalition. But even in the Asian theater of war, the Chinese front did not play a dominant role. Actually, Chinese troops did not carry out a single major strategic operation throughout the entire war. For all practical purposes, the American-British command did not associate with it the possibility of a definitive victory over Japan. In the summer of 1945, General G. Marshall stated that Japan "may surrender only if it is faced with the fact of the hopelessness of continuing the war: 1) in view of the losses and destruction caused by the naval blockade and aerial bombings; 2) in view of an invasion of its homeland by our forces or 3) in view of the Soviet

¹ "Nyurnbergskij protsess. Sbornik materialov" [Nuremberg Trial. Collection of Materials], Vol 1, Moscow, 1952, p 402.

² "History of the Second World War," Vol 6, No 2, p 2296.

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Union's entry or threat of entry into the war in the Far East.

As for driving the Japanese Army off the Asian continent, we must see that this is done by the Russians in Manchuria (and if necessary, also in Korea)..."¹

The Kuomintang government simultaneously fought both the Japanese and the troops led by the KPK [Chinese Communist Party = CCP]. And it devoted greater attention to the latter. That is why the CCP, whose troops fought both against the Japanese and the Kuomintang troops, directed a considerable part of its troops first of all to preserving its own forces. Thus, the mutual distrust between the leaders of the CCP and the Kuomintang prevented the establishment of a really united and active anti-Japanese front before the end of the war. Moreover, Mao Zedong, guided by his personal hegemonic goals, curtailed the anti-Japanese struggle of the Chinese people. After fascist Germany's attack on the Soviet Union, the Chinese national liberation forces, the 8th Army in particular, not only did not intensify, but on the contrary, noticeably reduced their aggressiveness in the rear areas and on the communications of the Japanese troops. The CCP leaders dreamed at that time of only one thing--to sit snug in (Yanani) and build up forces so that they could begin the struggle for power at the suitable time. Mao followed this bourgeois nationalistic concept throughout the entire war.

Giving up active operations, relying on minor actions by guerrillas, using troops primarily to perform administrative and agitation-propaganda functions, burying in oblivion systematic combat training in the units and large units and underestimating military theory led to weakening of the people's armed forces. Disregarding theoretical knowledge and bowing to "practical experience" in all activity, in military affairs Mao substituted general discussions on the experience of waging armed conflict especially by guerrillas for knowledge of contemporary military theory.

The lack of aggressiveness on the part of the Kuomintang troops and the troops led by the CCP allowed the Japanese command to maneuver forces and transfer their units and large units from the Chinese front to other, more active regions of military operations.

The Beijing leaders try to falsify the facts from the history of the establishment of the Manchurian revolutionary base, present their positions in an advantageous light and shift the blame for misfortunes during the revolutionary struggle to the Soviet Union and the CPSU. However, the Maoist fabrications are refuted by reality that confirms that the political vacillations of Mao and his followers did serious harm to the Chinese revolution.

Maoism's hegemonic aspirations found their natural and logical completion in the field of the history of World War II--ideologically they closed with the extremely reactionary current in American and other bourgeois historiography. Not only the zeal for hegemony and the attempt to "overdo" using propaganda the results and lessons of World War II make them related, but also the unsubstantiated reasoning and blind anti-Sovietism.

¹ Quotation from: VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL, 1963, No 8, p 78.

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The year 1945 went down in recent history as the year of the great victory of freedom-loving people over the forces of fascism and militarism, to which the Soviet people and their Armed Forces guided by the Communist Party made a decisive contribution. The experience of the postwar years revealed even more clearly the importance of the victory over fascism and militarism. A major result of this historic victory of world importance that gave rise to a powerful revolutionary process was the entry into the path of socialism by a number of countries in Europe and Asia. The emergence of socialist states, the collapse of the colonial system and the appearance of a number of new national states in the world arena changed the correlation of forces in Asia in favor of peace and progress.

The experience of World War II showed convincingly that the Soviet Union and its Armed Forces are the true and reliable allies of the nations enslaved by imperialism. History confirmed that only with the Soviet Union was it possible to stop and then to defeat the mighty military machine on which the fascist-militaristic bloc relied in its aggression.

The unflinching striving by the USSR for cooperation and strengthening of the anti-fascist coalition and faithfulness to allied obligations, which was shown especially clearly by the Soviet Union's entry into the war against militaristic Japan—all this contributed to a decisive extent to the antifascist coalition being able to cope with its tasks successfully for the most part, despite enemy intrigues. This is indicative of the triumph of reason and the desire by the leaders of the great powers to reach mutual understanding on the problems most important for humanity. "The experience of the war years showed that the difference between social systems is no impediment to uniting efforts in the struggle against aggression and for peace and international security. In the war years, we cooperated rather well to end the war more quickly."¹

However, the progressive shifts that occurred in the postwar period seriously troubled the imperialist powers who try to retard the revolutionary process engendered by the results of World War II and hold the nations of Asia by chains of neo-colonialism. In its actions, imperialism, just as before, tries to rely on the ideology of anti-Sovietism and anticommunism and the policy of setting nations on others. In the process, imperialism has not given up traditional military-political methods of enslaving the nations of the Asian countries typical for the period of World War II. Direct aggressive actions and dozens of so-called "local" wars and conflicts were unleashed by the imperialists in the postwar period with the aid of satellites and allies in aggressive blocs. The attempt to achieve their goals by surrogates and with the help of reactionary pro-imperialist regimes to whom the imperialists transfer the functions of oppressors of the liberation struggle of nations is a characteristic feature of neocolonialism.

Militarism, the inevitable companion of imperialism, is again raising its head in the East. In the material sphere, this is manifested first of all in the arms race and the revival of mass armies. In the ideological sphere—in the rehabilitation of the aggressors who unleashed World War II, in the propaganda of the ideas of revanche and preparing for a new war, and finally, in the political sphere—in the knocking together of blocs and groupings aimed against the Soviet Union and the countries in the socialist community.

¹ L. I. Brezhnev, "By Lenin's Course. Speeches and Articles," Vol 5, Moscow, 1976, p 291.

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However, the experience and lessons of the past war and the postwar development of mankind graphically demonstrates the irreversibility of the revolutionary transformations in the world and the inevitability of failure of a policy based on anti-Sovietism and colonialism. The ideas of peace, good neighborliness and mutual respect that the Soviet Union has advocated and advocates are gaining ever greater support among the nations of the entire world, including those of Asia. "The Soviet Union," stressed L. I. Brezhnev in his summary report at the 25th CPSU Congress, "also intends henceforth to participate actively in the search for ways to strengthen peace and security on the Asian continent and to develop cooperation equal in rights here too." ¹

The historic victory over fascist Germany and militaristic Japan of world importance was achieved at the price of huge efforts and sacrifices by the countries in the anti-Hitler coalition and all freedom-loving people who fought against German fascism and Japanese militarism. The Soviet people and their Armed Forces under the leadership of the Communist Party made a decisive contribution to this victory. For many countries it opened the way to democratic development and progress.

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¹ "Materialy XXV s"yezda KPSS," [Materials of the 25th CPSU Congress], Moscow, 1976, p 15.