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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20505

25 October 1979

3824

MEMORANDUM FOR: The Director of Central Intelligence

FROM : John N. McMahon
Deputy Director for Operations

SUBJECT : The State of Operational Training in the
Soviet Armed Forces as of 1978 and Plans
for 1979-1980

1. The enclosed Intelligence Information Special Report is a translation of a TOP SECRET Soviet General Staff directive to operational-level staffs which summarizes trends in recent and future operational training of the Armed Forces. A candid appraisal of the state of training and readiness, the directive focuses on the major accomplishments and remaining weaknesses in the training of operational formations down to the corps level and names the individual staffs responsible. The tasks levied for 1979-1980 emphasize improving troop control and reorganizing strategic and operational command elements.

2. Because the source of this report is extremely sensitive, this document should be handled on a strict need-to-know basis within recipient agencies.

John N. McMahon

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Intelligence Information Special Report

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COUNTRY USSR

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DATE OF
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14 November 1978

DATE

25 October 1979

SUBJECT

Directive of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of the
USSR: Results of Operational Training in 1977-1978 and Tasks
for 1979-1980

SOURCE

Documentary

Summary:

The following report is a translation from Russian of a TOP SECRET Soviet General Staff directive to operational-level staffs which summarizes trends in recent and future operational training of the Armed Forces. The document is candid in its appraisal of the state of training and readiness, focusing on the major accomplishments and remaining weaknesses and naming the individual staffs responsible. The tasks for 1978-1980 are covered in nine broad categories which emphasize improving readiness and troop control, reorganizing strategic and operational command elements, and upgrading operational methods and support. Category six dwells in some detail on the action to be taken in each of the armed forces branches to improve the training of operational formations, which include army corps and strategic rocket armies.

End of Summary

Comment:

This document should be read in context with Order 00140 of the Minister of Defense (FIRDB-312/02434-79). The two documents taken together represent an evolution in top-level documentation of past and planned training from the joint Ustinov-Ogarkov directive on winter/summer training disseminated as FIRDB-312/02533-77.

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DIRECTIVE
OF THE GENERAL STAFF OF THE ARMED FORCES OF THE USSR
No. 00145

14 November 1978

Moscow

Results of Operational Training in 1977-1978 and Tasks for 1979-1980

Operational training in the Soviet Armed Forces in 1977-1978 has been conducted in accordance with the decisions of the 25th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union which pertain to strengthening the country's defense and in accordance with the tasks assigned by the Minister of Defense of the USSR in Order No. 00130 of 1976. The training of strategic-level control organs, including the high commands in the theaters of military operations, has been conducted more energetically. All types of strategic actions and the operations of fronts, fleets, and operational formations of the Armed Forces branches have continued to be studied. Cooperation with the armies of the allied states has been worked out more concretely.

Of critical importance in accomplishing the tasks of operational training have been the TSENTR-78 [CENTER-78] and ZAPAD-77 [WEST-77] exercises, conducted under the direction of the Minister of Defense of the USSR. Important conclusions have been drawn from the experience gained in the ATLANTIKA-78 [ATLANTIC-78] operational-strategic command-staff war game, in research operational exercises in the Baltic, Carpathian, and North Caucasus Military Districts, and in other exercises conducted by deputy ministers of defense, as well as in front (fleet) and army command-staff exercises conducted by commanders

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of military districts, groups of forces, and fleets.

In the majority of exercises, the commanders and staffs have successfully accomplished their tasks and have confidently and firmly exercised control of the subordinate troops (forces). There has been an improvement in the quality of the planning of operations (combat actions), a reduction in the time needed to assign tasks, and a more comprehensive working out of troop actions to repel an enemy invasion and conduct an offensive with the use of conventional weapons, the delivery of initial nuclear strikes by operational-tactical and strategic means, and the restoration of the combat effectiveness of the troops (forces).

In accordance with the requirements of Directive No. 0035 of the Minister of Defense of the USSR on combat readiness, work methods for use by control organs in directing the conversion of the troops (forces) from peacetime to wartime status and ways of preparing and conducting various types of modern-day operations have been explored and assimilated.

Considerable work has been done in all branches of the Armed Forces to improve the control of troops (forces), and a standard approach to organizing control posts in the fronts and armies has been achieved. The communications system has undergone further development, and its reliability has increased. There has been an improvement in the equipping of staffs with means of automation, which has made possible a reduction in the time needed to communicate combat control signals and to collect, process, and display information.

Research on a large scale and on a qualitatively new level with the use of mathematical modeling and other up-to-date methods has been done on new military matters, particularly in the Strategic Rocket Forces, Navy, Rear Services of the Armed Forces, Baltic, Carpathian, and North Caucasus Military Districts, and in the Military Academy of the General Staff. There has been an improvement in the effectiveness of military scientific work.

Political work has been carried out purposefully in the staffs, which has helped raise the quality of operational training and the degree of organization in the work of the control organs.

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Operational training methods have continued to improve. In the majority of the military districts and groups of forces, there has been an improvement in the quality of operational command-staff exercises. As a rule, they have begun to be conducted within greater spatial and time limits, with the working out of more complex operational tasks on a real time scale and under conditions of the continuous playing out of combat actions.

The following staffs have on the whole distinguished themselves positively in operational training tasks in 1977-1978: the staffs of the Group of Soviet Forces Germany, the Baltic, Carpathian, Far East, Odessa, Belorussian, and North Caucasus Military Districts, the Northern Fleet, the Moscow Air Defense District, and the 3rd Army, 8th Guards Army, 39th Army, 7th Tank Army, 27th Rocket Army,* and 26th Air Army.

However, serious deficiencies continue to exist in the state of operational preparedness of generals, admirals, and officers, and in the combat readiness and practical work of the staffs.

Up-to-date methods of making decisions and planning operations have not been mastered by all the commanders and staffs. The desire to keep within the recommended time without taking into account the situation and the scope and nature of the specific tasks to be accomplished frequently results in hasty decisions (Southern Group of Forces, Transbaykal Military District, Pacific Fleet, 28th Army of the Belorussian Military District, 11th Guards Army of the Baltic Military District). In many staffs, the greater part of the time is being spent on planning operations on maps; the proper emphasis is not being given to organizational work covering the direct operational preparation and support of combat actions and to the organization of cooperation and control (Central Asian Military District, 2nd Guards Tank Army of the Group of Soviet Forces Germany, 1st Guards Army of the Kiev Military District, 38th Army of the Carpathian Military District).

* Comment: Armies affiliated with the Strategic Rocket Forces have been arbitrarily designated "rocket armies" in translations for purposes of standardizing terminology.

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Many generals and officers of combined-arms staffs are inadequately prepared with respect to the employment of formations and large units of the branches of the Armed Forces, branch arms, and special troops.

The senior personnel of the staffs of formations and large units of the Armed Forces branches and branch arms have poor knowledge of the general fundamentals of preparing and conducting operations in theaters of military operations and of preparing and conducting front and army operations. The theoretical development and practical mastery of the air defense operations of air defense formations are in a rudimentary state. Air operations in theaters of military operations are being studied one-sidedly. For the most part, their planning is done only by aviation staffs, which at times work out many matters in isolation from the combat actions of formations and large units of the other Armed Forces branches.

The staffs of the coastal military districts (fronts) and fleets have still not fully mastered the art of preparing and conducting amphibious landing and antilanding operations.

Many staffs are not fully performing their duties with regard to the organization of operational and special support. The planning of reconnaissance in operations is not being done in a sufficiently concrete manner. Proper steps are not being taken to increase the effectiveness of reconnaissance actions aimed at detecting direct preparation by the enemy to attack and to employ nuclear weapons (Group of Soviet Forces Germany, Southern Group of Forces, Transcaucasus Military District, Baltic Fleet).

The planning and organization of radioelectronic warfare are being done without proper consideration to the expanded scope of its tasks and to the state and prospects for development of the probable enemy's systems and means of controlling troops and forces. The effectiveness of integrated countermeasures against the enemy's technical reconnaissance means remains low (Baltic Military District, Siberian Military District).

Many deficiencies are being noted in the organization of the control of troops (forces) and in the equipping of control posts. The mobility of communications centers still remains low. A great deal of time is being spent in setting up a field

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communications system (2nd Guards Tank Army of the Group of Soviet Forces Germany, 28th Army of the Belorussian Military District, 15th Army of the Far East Military District). The work methods employed by commanders and staffs in troop control are being improved slowly, and individual commanders are not granting their subordinates the time needed to make decisions and assign tasks.

The staffs of military districts, groups of forces, and combined-arms (tank) armies, in the course of front (army) operations, are not giving the necessary attention to working out ways of building up the efforts of the troops and providing for the timely replacement of their losses, particularly in lengthy combat actions in which nuclear weapons are not employed. The necessary steps are not being taken for the timely maneuvering of troops and the maintenance of a favorable balance of forces on key axes. Insufficient importance is being attached to the preparation of the wartime headquarters of military districts.

The staffs of the rocket armies have not fully worked out the control of troops following the delivery of a massed missile/nuclear strike by the enemy (31st Rocket Army), and much time is being spent on preparing and forwarding flight missions [sic] to the troops in the retargeting of launchers. Methods of controlling units with self-propelled launchers are being mastered slowly.

The staffs of formations of the Air Defense Forces of the Country have inadequately worked out control methods for use in the course of repelling strikes carried out by the air enemy on an operational scale. Attention is not being given to maintaining cooperation among troop groupings, building up efforts on key axes in a timely manner, restoring a disrupted air defense system, and preparing the troops to repel subsequent strikes (4th and 6th Separate Air Defense Armies). The concept of the air enemy's actions is not being examined in depth, and the proper measures are not being taken to disrupt these actions (Baku Air Defense District, 10th and 14th Separate Air Defense Armies).

The staffs of Air Forces formations in a number of instances are organizing the performance of tasks assigned to aviation in

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an oversimplified manner, without taking enemy countermeasures into account (Staff of Long Range Aviation, 17th and 73rd Air Armies). Air support of troops in front (army) operations is not being accorded sufficient importance and is being organized with serious deficiencies (5th and 34th Air Armies).

The staffs of Navy formations have not fully worked out methods of planning fleet operations within short periods of time. In need of improvement is the control of groupings of multiple-arm forces. The commanders of flotillas (squadrons) are not being drawn upon enough to control subordinate forces in the course of operations. The matters of organizing and maintaining cooperation with formations of the Ground Forces and Air Defense Forces in fulfilling joint tasks on a coastal axis have not been worked out to the full extent (Baltic Fleet, Pacific Fleet).

The rear services staffs of fronts, fleets, and formations of the branches of the Armed Forces have not made a sufficiently comprehensive study of rear services support under conditions of nuclear war. They are slow in accomplishing the tasks of increasing the autonomy of rear services support of actions conducted by groupings of troops (forces) in the East.

The Civil Defense staffs and control organs are working out the conversion of the Civil Defense from peacetime to wartime status without properly coordinating it with the conversion of the Armed Forces to wartime status.

Deficiencies continue to exist in the organization and methods of operational training. The concepts of exercises are not being developed on a sufficiently high qualitative plane (Leningrad and Kiev Military Districts, Northern Group of Forces, Black Sea Fleet, Pacific Fleet). A complex situation is not always being created in the course of operational exercises. Little attention is being given to the preparation of the staff of the directing body and the umpires. In a number of instances, combat actions involving the employment of the individual branch arms, special troops, and types of support are being played out in a non-instructive manner.

The organization of military scientific work in the staffs and troops still does not fully meet present-day requirements. Research in the fields of operational art and the development of

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armament and equipment is being performed without the proper mutual coordination. Several scientific research programs and works stipulated by Order No. 00112 of the Minister of Defense of the USSR, dated 1975, were not completed in the time prescribed.

The actual everyday practice of commanding troops is not always of a specific and planned nature. Some staffs are not devoting constant attention to the organization of precautionary supervision of the execution of orders and instructions and are not giving the troops the assistance they need to accomplish complex tasks.

The Minister of Defense of the USSR has ordered:

Concentrate the main efforts in operational training for 1979-1980 on further increasing readiness and improving the work done by the commanders-in-chief, commanders, and staffs to organize and provide reliable control of the Armed Forces, formations, and large units, on improving the knowledge and practical skills relating to the principal matters of strategy and operational art, and on mastering the methods of preparing and conducting present-day operations in a complex situation with the full use of the combat capabilities of the formations and of new types of weapons and combat equipment.

In planning and organizing operational training, be guided by the tasks set by the Minister of Defense of the USSR in Order No. 00140, paying special attention to the following.

First. In accordance with Directive No. 0035 of the Minister of Defense of the USSR, make a determined effort to increase the combat readiness of control organs and enhance their capability of accomplishing the tasks of commanding troops (forces) upon the conversion of the Armed Forces from peacetime to wartime status and at the start of a war.

All staffs are to improve the system of operational and mobilization planning. Develop and implement measures to ensure an increase in the stability of mobilization under conditions of nuclear warfare, using as a basis the prospects for the development of the Armed Forces in the next few years and the growing threat of a surprise enemy attack. Plan and constantly implement measures to increase the combat readiness of

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subordinate formations and large units. Establish systematic monitoring of their implementation.

Second. Continue the work of improving the control of troops and naval forces. In 1979 to 1980, improve the technical base of the control system at the strategic and operational level and achieve a further increase in its reliability and stability. Develop the network of stationary protected control posts, improve the organization and technical equipping of mobile control posts, bring their structure into conformity with the new organization of the control organs and troops, and increase their mobility and protection.

Improve the organization of communications and increase their stability and survivability. Devote particular attention to assimilating the array of means used in the combat control of the strategic nuclear forces.

Actively introduce and master systems and means of automating control. Devote particular attention to the timely completion of the development and introduction of sets of mathematical models of operations (combat actions) into the practice of operational planning and operational training and instruct commanders and staffs in how to make practical use of them in making decisions, planning operations, and evaluating the effectiveness with which operational tasks are fulfilled.

Third. Continue to research and improve the organizational structure of control organs at the strategic and operational level. Plan in advance measures to prepare for converting the control organs to the new organizational structure. After deciding on this structure, update the existing regulations and documents on combat and mobilization readiness. At the same time, continue further work to improve the organizational structure of the Armed Forces, taking into account the arrival of advanced types of weapons and equipment and the increase in their combat potential without an increase in their numbers.

Fourth. Develop in every way possible the operational outlook of generals, admirals, and officers, their organizational capabilities, and their ability to firmly control subordinate troops (forces) in a combat situation. Devote special attention to improving the skills of commanders and staffs in organizing

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cooperation between formations (large units) of the Armed Forces branches, branch arms, and special troops in joint operations. All command personnel are to study in depth "The Fundamentals of the Preparation and Conduct of Operations of the Armed Forces of the USSR."

They are to master modern methods of planning operations (combat actions) within short periods of time and employ them in accordance with concrete situational conditions. Develop and improve the forms and methods of planning as applied to the further development of the Armed Forces.

Fifth. Increase the level of preparedness of the central control organs of the Armed Forces to fulfil tasks on the eve of and in the course of war, and make them more cohesive and efficient in their work.

* * Continue to improve ways of conducting the operations of the strategic nuclear forces under different situational conditions and increase the effectiveness of their use in different variants of actions. Develop the theory, and master in practice the planning and conduct, of strategic operations in the continental and oceanic theaters of military operations.

Improve the planning and conduct of air and air defense operations in theaters of military operations, regarding them as operations to be conducted through the combined efforts of all the branches of the Armed Forces, with the key role played by the Air Forces and Air Defense Forces, respectively. Explore more expedient ways of conducting large-scale landing operations that have operational and strategic objectives.

Sixth. Proceed from the following in training commanders and staffs of formations:

Formation commanders, commanders, and staffs of military districts and groups of forces, combined-arms and tank armies, and army corps are to continue studying and improve ways of preparing and conducting front and army (corps) operations with the existing complement of troops, forces, and means and in keeping with the arrival of new means of combat.

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They are to work out a transition to the offensive both at the start of a war and following the repelling of an invasion. Learn to form powerful troop groupings on the main axes within short periods of time. Improve ways of building up troop efforts in the course of offensive operations. Skilfully combine the delivery of strikes against the enemy from the front with the extensive employment of operational airborne and amphibious landing forces.

They are to study more thoroughly and master the preparation and conduct of front and army (corps) defensive operations in active forms involving the delivery of powerful, surprise counterthrusts against the enemy in combination with the stubborn retention of important areas and lines.

They are to continue to improve ways of moving reserve fronts (armies) forward over great distances and committing them to an engagement.

They are to work out different variants for going over to the use of nuclear weapons, including [variants for] their selective use. Explore more expedient ways of restoring the combat effectiveness of troop groupings following nuclear strikes against them, and of preparing and conducting subsequent operations with a limited complement of troops. Study the special characteristics of troop control under such conditions.

They are to improve the preparation of the wartime headquarters of the military districts. Work out with them, as an integrated package, the fulfilment of the tasks of full mobilization, the activation and dispatch of reserves, the conduct of combat against airborne and amphibious landing forces, the elimination of the aftereffects of a nuclear attack, and the implementation of civil defense measures. Continue to improve the work of the local military control organs in the new organizational structure in close cooperation with the Party and Soviet organs within the confines of the respective administrative territories.

The commanders and staffs of the operational formations of the Strategic Rocket Forces are to improve ways of preparing and delivering the initial and subsequent missile/nuclear strikes

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under the various conditions of the start and conduct of a war. Study and work out in practice ways of employing the rocket units transferred to the Reserve of the Supreme High Command.

The commanders and staffs of formations of the Air Defense Forces of the Country are to improve the organization of air defense and master the planning and conduct of air defense operations. Improve the cooperation among large units and branch arms, as well as cooperation with the air defense troops of the fronts (military districts). Achieve greater effectiveness in actions to combat an air enemy who is employing new air attack means. Persistently improve and increase the reliability of the control of air defense forces and means with the use of automated systems.

The commanders and staffs of Air Forces formations are to master the employment of air formations and large units to accomplish tasks independently and in conjunction with other branches of the Armed Forces in continental and oceanic theaters of military operations. Achieve greater effectiveness of aviation actions in the battle for operational air supremacy. Continue to master the special features of the employment of the air forces in the new organizational structure.

They are to master ways of secretly concentrating air large units at operational (alternate) airfields, and military transport aviation at airfields used for airborne troop landing operations. Work out the maneuvering of large aviation forces and the rapid retargeting of aviation during the performance of combat tasks. Improve the efficiency of the control of aviation at the strategic and operational level.

The commanders and staffs of Navy formations are to master more effective ways of destroying groupings of the enemy's strike and antisubmarine forces within short time limits with the use of the new ships, aircraft, and weapons entering the fleets. Improve cooperation among the multiple-arm forces participating in the performance of these tasks. Research the organization of warfare against enemy submarine missile/nuclear systems equipped with intercontinental-range missiles.

They are to continue working out actions to gain and hold sea supremacy, assist ground forces advancing on coastal axes,

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and prepare and conduct amphibious landing and antilanding operations. Improve the system of control of the naval forces, and increase the role of formation commanders and large-unit commanders in commanding subordinate forces at sea during combat actions.

The rear staffs and services of Armed Forces formations are to increase the stability of the entire rear services support system and improve the planning and organization of materiel, medical, transportation, and other types of rear services support in operations conducted with the use of nuclear weapons. Make a more determined effort to accomplish the task of increasing the autonomy of troop (forces) groupings with respect to rear services, particularly in the East.

The Civil Defense staffs and organs are to achieve a reduction in the time needed to convert the Civil Defense to a wartime status and greater coordination in the procedure for implementing this changeover when the Armed Forces are brought into higher levels of readiness. Improve the system of control of Civil Defense forces and means. Participate actively in coordinating and training the integrated local military control organs that have been changed over to the new organization.

Seventh. Work more actively on further improving and increasing the effectiveness of all types of operational support. Make a determined effort to improve the reconnaissance training of the staffs. Raise the quality of the planning and organization of reconnaissance as well as the reliability of the control of its forces and means. Take steps to reduce the time needed to collect and process reconnaissance information and communicate it to the troops (forces).

In organizing radioelectronic warfare, devote attention to more reliably accomplishing the tasks of disrupting the enemy's control of troops (forces) by means of skilfully combining nuclear and conventional fire destruction with radioelectronic neutralization. Increase the reliability of the radioelectronic defense of one's own control systems and means.

Work determinedly at improving the protection of troops and naval forces against weapons of mass destruction, and explore ways of protecting against neutron weapons. Increase the

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effectiveness of forecasting the radiation and chemical situation.

Achieve greater reliability and effectiveness in operational camouflage. Explore ways of ensuring the secret mobilization and operational deployment of the troops (forces). Increase the effectiveness of integrated countermeasures against all types of foreign reconnaissance efforts.

Eighth. Increase the role and quality of military scientific work in the Armed Forces. Direct the main efforts of this work at exploring and developing effective ways of conducting operations and combat actions with the use of new types of weapons and combat equipment, and in keeping with the new organizational structure of the control organs and troops. Devote more attention to developing scientifically based operational-tactical standards. Achieve close coordination of scientific research in the field of military art and in the development of armament. Ensure timely synthesis of the results of scientific research and of advanced experience, and see to their effective introduction into the practical activity of the troops and staffs. Raise the requirements for the quality and scientific and practical utility of dissertations, monographs, and other scientific works under preparation. In military historical work, devote primary attention to preparing writings and textbooks necessary for assimilating and utilizing the experience of the Great Patriotic War and the local wars of recent years. Take measures for the timely and quality development of the scientific research programs and works stipulated by Order No. 00112 of the Minister of Defense of the USSR, dated 1975.

Ninth. Continue to improve the organization and methods of operational training. Plan the main operational training measures (such as exercises, training assemblies, and training practices) in such a way that all the main problems of preparing and conducting present-day operations are worked out within a two-year period. Devote special attention to raising the quality of the preparation and conduct of operational exercises. Create a complex and instructive situation at these exercises. In playing out combat actions, take into consideration the decisions and practical work of the commanders and staffs being trained.

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The previous procedures for submitting exercise concepts for approval and for reporting on operational training are to be retained.

This directive is to be distributed down to the staffs of military districts, groups of forces, air defense districts, fleets, armies, corps, flotillas, and squadrons.

Chief of the General Staff

Marshal of the Soviet Union N. OGARKOV

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