

Intelligence Information Report

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Intelligence Information Report

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COUNTRY USSR/Warsaw Pact

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SUBJECT Principles of a Modern Offensive
Operation of a Front, by Soviet
Col.-Gen. Glebov

ACQ

FIELD NO.



Summary

This report is a translation [redacted] of an undated article attributed to Col.-Gen. Glebov. It outlines the general features of a front offensive operation, especially under nuclear warfare conditions. Figures are given for the depth, area, and rate of movement planned for a Warsaw Pact front grouping under various conditions.

End of Summary

[redacted] Comment: Col.-Gen. Glebov is probably Col.-Gen. Ivan Semenovich Glebov, a senior professor at the USSR General Staff Academy. This article may have been extracted [redacted] from a classified issue of the Soviet military publication Military Thought. The paragraphs were not numbered in the original document.

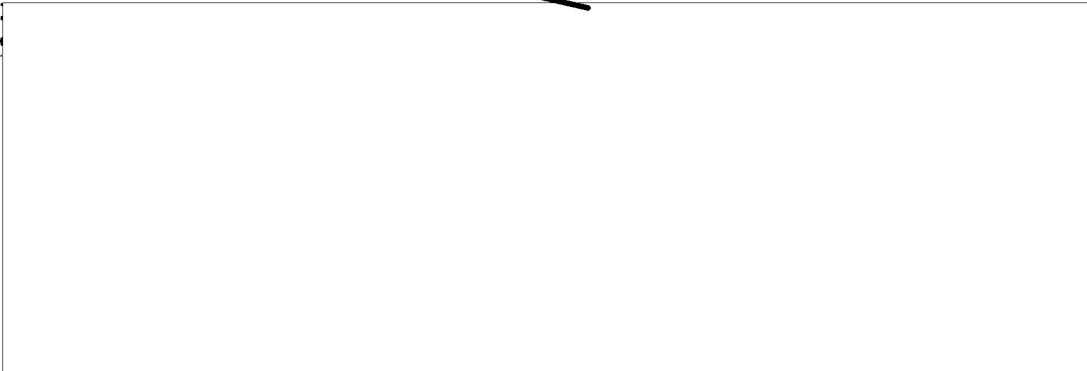
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Colonel-General Glebov

PRINCIPLES OF A MODERN OFFENSIVE OPERATION OF A FRONT

1. The development of our art of operations is determined by the nature of a future war and views on its conduct, the strength of our armed forces, the strength of the armed forces of a probable enemy and the experience of previous wars.

2. As a result of considerable scientific-research work and conclusions from information from many important exercises that have been conducted, we now have a scientifically founded theory on the art of operations; the theory includes the organization and conduct of an offensive operation of a front.

3. It is known that a future war will be primarily a nuclear/missile war. It may be initiated with either unlimited or limited use of nuclear weapons. The political and military-strategic situation may also be of such a nature that military operations will be initiated and conducted for a certain period of time without the use of nuclear weapons.

4. Therefore, offensive operations of a front may be initiated and conducted with either the use of nuclear weapons or conventional means of destruction and possible transition to the use of nuclear weapons.

5. Under contemporary conditions, the importance of surprise has increased. In this connection, one of the most important tasks is to assure the maintenance of constant combat readiness of the troops and their capability of launching surprise attacks against the enemy, repulsing enemy attacks and changing over to offensive operations under various conditions for the development of military operations.

6. In a subsequent section of this report, the most important problems will be raised with regard to the organization and conduct of contemporary offensive operations of a front with and without the use of nuclear weapons.

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I. CONDUCT OF OFFENSIVE OPERATIONS OF A FRONT DURING A STRATEGIC OPERATION IN THE AREA OF OPERATIONS

7. A strategic operation is conducted in full depth of the area of operations in order to achieve military and political objectives. Operational (or tactical) formations of the strategic rocket troops, air and ground forces, national air defense forces and navy participate in a strategic operation; and the strategic rocket troops play the (a) decisive role. Front offensive operations are considered to be a component part of a strategic operation in the area of operations.

8. The experiences of operations training indicate that achievement of the objective of a strategic operation definitely requires more than only the destruction of enemy nuclear weapons located deep in the area of operations, infliction of losses to enemy main forces and disruption of both the enemy rear and the government and military control system. Achievement of final victory requires the following:

- defeat of enemy forces which are directly opposing the front forces and have not come under the attacks of the strategic nuclear forces;

- final defeat of enemy remaining forces and those that retain their combat effectiveness after coming under the attacks of the strategic nuclear forces;

- defeat of enemy forces which are located deep in the area of operations and were out of range of the strategic attacks;

- seizure of major areas and targets in the area of operations.

9. Therefore, the front forces participating in a strategic operation should not only defeat enemy groupings of various types and sizes but at the same time independently carry out the mission of defeating enemy groupings with the use of only their own troops and equipment.

10. Under contemporary conditions, the conduct of front offensive operations has changed in relation to the conduct

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of these operations during previous wars. However, it is impossible to achieve the final defeat of the enemy in the area of operations without the participation of fronts and the joint effort of all troop components and armed forces, i.e., it is impossible to achieve a decisive victory over the enemy.

11. The fronts comprise the main and actually the only force for the execution of missions such as the seizure of major targets and areas or the entire territory of the enemy.

12. The conduct of each front offensive operation during a strategic operation will be determined by the requirements of the area of operations, the plan of the strategic operation, the operational situation, the objective and axis of attack of the front forces.

13. The front may either operate as part of the first operational echelon on the main or other axes of operations or be in the second operational echelon (in the reserves of the supreme command) and be committed to battle during a strategic operation. In particular, it must be stressed that the objectives of an operation may be achieved only through the joint effort of operational (or tactical) formations of all components of the armed forces. Therefore, the use of any operational (or tactical) formation of a certain component of the armed forces must be considered in coordination with operational formations of other components of the armed forces.

14. In this connection, it is highly important to coordinate the operations of a front with those of operational formations of other components of the armed forces and with those of other fronts.

15. The successful conduct of a front offensive operation is based on the action conducted, in coordination with the long-range air force, national air defense forces, navy, strategic airborne assault forces and adjacent fronts, by the forces of a front after the launching of attacks by the strategic rocket troops.

16. Coordination of offensive operations of a front with the operations of strategic rocket troops is based on the

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strategic operation plan and to a considerable extent on the most effective utilization by front forces of the effects of nuclear/missile attacks in order to defeat decisively the strongest enemy groupings. Therefore, it is advisable that the front should receive timely information about the strategic nuclear attacks to be launched in its zone, the time schedule of these attacks and the yield of the nuclear warheads, because at that time the front commander can efficiently use his strike force after the strategic nuclear attacks (however, it appears that this may not always be accomplished).

17. The long-range air force may participate in the first strategic nuclear attack of the nuclear forces, and at the same time elements of this force may participate in the operations of the front and navy. The long-range air force will have a very considerable effect on the conduct of the front operation, during which it will be assigned a designated number of air missions. On the other hand, effective operations of the long-range air force will be determined by the operations of fronts, especially with regard to carrying out flight support activities.

18. It is very important to coordinate the operations of front antiaircraft defense forces with those of national air defense (OPK) forces in order to repulse enemy air attacks during both the initial period of war and strategic operation.

19. With regard to the navy, it must be emphasized that its submarines participate in the first nuclear strike; furthermore, the navy conducts operations to destroy task forces of aircraft carriers and submarines and also interdicts enemy lines of communication; as a result, this directly affects the conduct of the offensive operations of fronts. Naval operations especially affect the conduct of an offensive operation of the front attacking on the coastal axis, during which time it will become necessary to carry out joint missions in order to control the straits and to land amphibious forces and also to prevent or repel the landing of enemy amphibious forces.

20. If strategic and operational airborne forces are landed in the zone of a front, it is necessary to coordinate the operations of the assault landing forces and front forces to defeat enemy groupings and to seize major areas and targets located deep in the enemy rear.

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21. It is important to conduct coordinated action between a front and adjacent fronts with regard to missions to be carried out during the first nuclear strike; this pertains especially to repulsing enemy air attacks, performing missions for the destruction of enemy means of nuclear attack and defeating enemy groupings at the contact points of flanks of adjacent forces (or on the flanks).

22. The conduct of offensive operations of a front during a conventional war will now be discussed. In our opinion, there is a real possibility of conducting a conventional war in Europe and other areas of operations (including the Near East and Far East); this may pertain only to either the period of a strategic operation or one of the methods of conducting war. However, it must always be remembered that a conventional war may, at any moment, be converted to decisive nuclear warfare with all of its consequences. We must examine the offensive operations of a front during a conventional war within the framework of an operation of a group of fronts.

23. A conventional war is conducted only with the use of conventional weapons. Ground forces (or fronts), in conjunction with the air force, play the main role in achieving strategic objectives in the area of operations during a conventional war. The main objective of the offensive operations of ground forces (or fronts) may be to prevent enemy aggression and invasion, to destroy the enemy main forces and nuclear weapons and to seize the most important enemy areas, thereby creating a situation in which the enemy will be defeated even if he attempted to use nuclear weapons. During a conventional war, it is very important to coordinate the operations of operational ground forces (or fronts) with those of the long-range air force and antiaircraft defense forces and also, during operations on the coastal axis, with those of the navy.

24. To recapitulate, the main role of a front in offensive operations during a strategic operation will be to change over, after the attacks of the strategic rocket troops, to conducting decisive actions for the final defeat of the enemy. It is obvious that the fronts, during a conventional war, will play the main role in carrying out missions in the area of operations; this must be considered during the organization and conduct of an operation.

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II. OFFENSIVE OPERATIONS OF A FRONT WITH THE USE OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS

A. General Principles, Objective, Missions and Scale of an Operation

25. With regard to the objectives, missions and scale of contemporary offensive operations of a front, it must be stressed that they will be considerably different from those of operations of previous wars, because nuclear weapons and the increased capabilities of conventional means of destruction will have a decisive effect on these operations at the present time:

26. Capabilities of a front are as follows:

a) A front possesses considerable means for the employment of nuclear weapons to assure the destruction of the enemy in an area 400 to 500 kilometers in depth. A front is capable of destroying all major targets and enemy troop groupings which are opposing a front and have not been destroyed by the strategic nuclear forces.

b) A large number of troops with tanks, combat vehicles and armored transporters. A front possesses up to 6,000-8,000 tanks, up to 1,000 combat aircraft and approximately 4,000-5,000 combat vehicles and armored transporters. This permits the forming of strong strike forces of ground troops and aircraft of a front for conducting offensive operations of the ground troops at a rapid rate of advance and in great depth.

c) Capability of front troops to launch heavy strikes against the enemy with the use of conventional and chemical weapons.

d) Providing of front troops with considerable means of aerial combat against enemy aircraft (anti-aircraft missile systems and interceptor aircraft) that are capable of simultaneously destroying hundreds of air targets during the period of repulsing air attacks.

27. Furthermore, the capabilities for supporting troop

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actions during an operation are considerably greater in the following areas: Reconnaissance of the enemy; radioelectronic warfare; and engineering and logistical support. Capabilities have increased considerably in providing continuous and reliable command control of troops as a result of providing command elements with new communications equipment and using the means of automation and mechanization in certain processes of command control.

28. The overall objective of a front offensive operation is the following: Final defeat of enemy rocket, air and ground main forces; disruption of enemy mobilization undertakings; and seizure of major targets and areas on a specific strategic axis of the area of operations.

29. The scale of front offensive operations may vary. Under the most favorable conditions, an operation will be characterized by the following data: Depth of an operation may range from 500 to 800 kilometers, and on the main axis, up to 1,000 kilometers; average rate of advance--from 60 to 80 kilometers [per day]; duration of an operation--from 12 to 15 days; width of the zone of advance--from 300 to 500 kilometers. Each front offensive operation conducted in a specific area of operations and in a specific strategic situation will be of a specific scale whose data will be more or less than that cited above.

30. In order to achieve the objective of an operation, the front is usually required to determine the tasks of the first nuclear strike and also the initial and subsequent missions.

31. The tasks of the first nuclear strike to be launched by use of the means of a front may include the following: Destruction of enemy operational-tactical means of nuclear attack in order to prevent their use against our troops and rear installations; decisive destruction of enemy air and ground main forces; and destruction of enemy means of anti-aircraft defense, major command and air control posts and rear installations. This should create conditions assuring a quick and final defeat of enemy groupings during an offensive operation.

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32. The initial mission of a front includes the following: After the initial strategic attacks--initiation of both ground and air attacks in order to either complete the destruction or destroy the opposing forces and their nuclear weapons; and seizure of areas and targets in order to disrupt the continuity of enemy operations and create favorable conditions for further exploitation of offensive actions at a rapid rate of advance deeper into the area of operations. The depth of the initial mission of a front may be from 300 to 500 kilometers.

33. The subsequent mission of a front may include the following: Destruction of newly detected enemy means of nuclear attack; either completion of the destruction or destruction of enemy strategic reserves; and seizure of targets and areas in order to assure the achievement of the operation's objective. The depth of the subsequent mission of a front may be from 400 to 500 and more kilometers.

34. The substance, depth, performance time (and rate of advance) of the initial and subsequent missions of a front are always determined on the basis of the specific requirements in the area of operations.

B. Organization of an Offensive Operation

35. The main task of organizing an operation is to predetermine and perform, prior to the outbreak of hostilities, undertakings which would assure the following: The successful performance of front missions under any conditions at the start of war; and primarily the launching of surprise attacks against the enemy and, at the same time, preventing of the enemy from launching attacks. All undertakings related to the organization of an operation must not only be interrelated but must also be coupled with undertakings conducted by other operational formations participating in a strategic operation. The performance of all undertakings concerning the organization and conduct of an operation is based on the front commander's decision on the operation. The decision, only in this regard, is correct if it is based on the following: Reliable information on the disposition of enemy forces; objective assessment of the actual capabilities of the forces of both sides; and the most precise operational estimates.

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36. A major problem in organizing an operation is the planning of the operation. It is essential in planning to select, in accordance with the plan and decision of the front commander, the best possible variant for the use of available forces and equipment to perform the assigned missions and to achieve the objective of the operation.

37. The offensive operation of a front is planned on the basis of missions. The following [initial mission] is planned precisely and in great detail: the use of forces and equipment in the first nuclear strike; repulsion of enemy attack; defense of troops against the means of mass destruction; method of covering troops during their movement and deployment; and troop operations during the first, second, as much as possible, and occasionally third days of the attack. The subsequent mission is planned in a more general manner; the daily tasks are not designated, and only the objective of the operation and disposition of forces after achievement of the objective are designated.

38. The use of nuclear weapons is the main problem in planning an operation. Planning the first nuclear strike requires special consideration; this is a responsible and laborious process. Correct determination of the targets for the attack is required most of all. Of the large number of various targets, the most important targets must be skillfully selected; the destruction of these targets will have a decisive effect on the achievement of the objectives of the operation. In order to assure the highest level of destruction, correct determination of the most critical elements of the targets is required; maximum destruction of these elements will reduce the combat effectiveness of the targets to be attacked. In addition, it is necessary to determine precisely the yield of the nuclear warheads and the means of their delivery and to consider the efficient and advantageous use of all means of delivery.

39. During the planning of the first nuclear strike, it is necessary to be guided by the requirements and nature of coordinated action with strategic rocket troops; it is of primary importance that the front nuclear forces are used outside the zone of attacks to be launched by the strategic nuclear forces. Therefore, the front must know

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the line beyond which targets are destroyed by strategic rocket troops. This line is usually designated at a distance of 300 to 400 kilometers from the line of friendly forces.

40. An important role is played by the plan and duration of the first nuclear strike.

41. The first nuclear strike of a front may be launched unexpectedly against enemy forces located at permanent location sites, or during their movement from garrisons and their deployment; this strike may also be launched simultaneously against enemy forces which have begun to move from the garrisons and against the permanent location sites. It is also possible to have a situation in which our first nuclear strike will be launched simultaneously with an enemy nuclear attack (nuclear meeting engagement). Finally, it is conceivable to have an unfavorable situation in which the first nuclear strike of a front will be launched under conditions of an enemy surprise attack and will then be a retaliatory strike. Under all of the aforementioned conditions, the first nuclear strike may be launched during either the daytime or nighttime. The launching of missiles is not determined by either the season or day or atmospheric conditions. It is understood that the aforementioned conditions will determine the method of launching the first strike and also the required forces and means.

42. In order to prevent the enemy from launching a surprise attack, the plan should provide for the launching of the first nuclear strike of a front on the basis of the first signs of enemy preparations for this attack. The first nuclear strike is launched against permanent location sites of enemy forces, or during their movement and deployment for attack. The plan of the first nuclear strike must provide for the necessity of maintaining readiness to launch this strike even under conditions in which the enemy succeeds to a certain extent in launching a surprise attack against us.

43. During the planning of the first nuclear strike of a front, the following should be precisely determined: Yield of the nuclear warheads to be used against each target; required number of warheads; and type of delivery means for the warheads. The yield and number of warheads and also their delivery means are selected on the basis of the required level of destruction of enemy troop groupings and targets.

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44. The required level of destruction of targets is determined on the basis of the following: importance of the targets; type of enemy troop groupings; and the effect which their destruction will have on the performance of missions and the achievement of the objective of the operation. The level of destruction of targets should provide the superiority required to defeat enemy forces by conducting decisive offensive actions, primarily on the axis of the main attack, and to commit to battle the front air force and airborne assault forces.

45. The criterion for the level of destruction of other targets, such as enemy command posts, communications centers, radiotechnical posts and rear installations, is the neutralization of equipment and personnel on the equipment. If the personnel are located in shelters, the objectives may be to demolish and destroy these shelters in order to disrupt temporarily or completely the operation of the targets under attack.

46. Maintaining a constantly high state of combat readiness of front troops is a major problem in organizing an operation. A high state of combat readiness of troops is the major requirement for performing each mission which may stem from any situation and also the basic requirement for launching by surprise the first nuclear strike against the enemy and for changing over to offensive operations by front troops after this strike is launched.

47. One of the basic requirements for the successful and timely performance of the operation's missions is to develop precisely during peacetime a system for placing troops in a state of increased and full combat readiness.

48. During peacetime, the state of combat readiness of troops may vary. Under normal peacetime conditions, the troops are in the regular state of combat readiness required by the armed forces. In a situation of certain tension, the troops are placed in a state of increased combat readiness, and in expectation of a possible outbreak of war or drastic worsening of the international situation, in a state of full combat readiness.

49. Comprehensive support of combat operations is also a basic problem of organizing an operation.

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50. The most important elements of support are the following: Reconnaissance; operational deception; defense of troops against weapons of mass destruction; and logistical support of troops.

51. The main task of all reconnaissance components is to provide timely detection of immediate enemy preparations to launch a nuclear attack and to determine the most probable starting time of the attack. Reconnaissance should provide clarification of the enemy plan of operation and information on the disposition of enemy forces, especially the disposition of nuclear weapons, and should precisely determine the most important targets to be attacked by the use of our nuclear weapons. The reconnaissance task is to provide all information required for the most effective use of nuclear weapons and other means of destruction. In order to obtain reliable and credible information on a timely basis, the use of reconnaissance forces and equipment of the various components of the armed forces is planned.

52. Achievement of surprise and success in an offensive operation during the initial period of war depends to a considerable extent on deception regarding its preparations, i.e., primarily the planning and performance of activities regarding operational deception.

53. The aim of operational deception is to deceive the enemy regarding the actual location of troops, the plan and nature of the operations and also the targets and time schedule for the use of nuclear weapons and other means of mass destruction. Operational deception is conducted by a large variety of methods. The most important methods include the following: Concealment; diversion; demonstration actions; and deception.

54. Under contemporary conditions, special importance has been attached to the planning and organization of the defense of troops and rear installations against weapons of mass destruction. The aim of undertakings in this regard is the following: Prevention of their destruction primarily by nuclear weapons and also by chemical and biological weapons, or reduction of their effects to a minimum; retainment of the combat effectiveness of the troops and rear services; and assurance of conditions for performing missions and achieving

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the objectives of an operation.

55. During preparations for an operation, it is necessary to organize precisely the logistical support of troops. Therefore, the following is required:

a) Establishing of concealed and dispersed reserve supplies in the areas of operations before the outbreak of war; the quantity of reserve supplies should support troop operations in full depth of the planned area of an operation, considering possible losses caused by enemy nuclear attacks.

b) Organizing of a troop supply system which would assure the maintaining of reserve supplies at the prescribed levels.

c) Maintaining of ordnance and other technical means in good operating condition.

56. It is important during peacetime to place the rear elements of military groups and border districts in the same state of combat readiness as that of the army.

57. These are the basic problems of organizing the offensive operations of a front.

C. Conduct of an Offensive Operation

58. Under contemporary conditions, various methods of conducting an operation are possible. However, a primary method is to strike the enemy by surprise with the large-scale use of nuclear weapons and, after the nuclear attacks, to launch a quick, decisive attack with the use of motorized and armored forces in coordination with the landing of airborne assault forces on several of the shortest axes (obviously by by-passing the unsafe zones of contamination) in order to cut off the enemy main forces and other forces and subsequently destroy them piecemeal.

59. Another method of conducting an operation may be used. After the nuclear attacks, the troops would launch

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a pincer attack in order to encircle and destroy the enemy main forces either in coordinated action with adjacent armies and fronts or independently and, at the same time, would exploit the attack in depth on another axis (or other axes) in order to cut off a certain enemy grouping and destroy it piecemeal.

60. On the coastal axis, the method of conducting an offensive operation may be to cut off the opposing enemy grouping (or elements of its forces) either from another grouping in the area of operations or from the naval base, and subsequently destroy it.

61. It is possible also to use other methods of conducting an operation, and various combinations of methods.

62. The methods of defeating large enemy groupings may also vary. The aim of each method is to coordinate the use of nuclear weapons with decisive troop operations. Currently the primary method of defeating large enemy groupings is to launch mass nuclear attacks in coordinated action with quick, decisive troop operations conducted to destroy completely these groupings. It is also necessary to consider that, under contemporary conditions, large enemy groupings may be destroyed by the use of nuclear weapons only.

63. If the forces and equipment of a front are not in readiness for the launching of a mass nuclear attack or the necessary information on the location of enemy targets is lacking, the defeat of large enemy groupings may be accomplished by the method of successive group nuclear attacks; and their destruction may likewise be accomplished by successive offensive actions of troops.

64. In many cases, enemy groupings may be destroyed by the use of only chemical weapons in coordination with the use of conventional means of destruction and with troop operations. Under specific conditions, only the attacking forces with the use of conventional means of destruction will carry out this mission.

65. With regard to the general nature of troop combat operations, it is necessary, first of all, to state that certain long-range objectives of both combatant sides in a

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nuclear war determine the nature of contemporary offensive operations, such as the confrontation of forces to be conducted from the very beginning with extreme pressure, tenacity and flexibility. Each side will attempt quickly to take the best advantage of the effects of their nuclear attacks in order to carry out their missions and achieve the objectives of the war in the shortest time possible.

66. Combat operations will be characterized by their rapid pace and unexpected and drastic changes in the situation. Both sides will make deep penetrations and will form isolated centers of combat operations and also extensive breaches and gaps in the operational grouping of forces because of their attempt to take the best advantage of the effects of nuclear attacks. This situation will necessitate the use of many various types and methods of combat operations which generally will be conducted without continuous front lines and on individual axes at various rates of speed and levels of intensity.

67. In order to either destroy or complete the destruction of the enemy and seize his territory, the troops will frequently conduct meeting engagements, overcome the defenses, pursue and destroy retreating forces, encircle and destroy enemy forces, withstand enemy counterattacks and destroy the counterattacking forces. Troops of a front will be required to overcome various barriers and to seize large areas and also important political, administrative and economic centers. It is conceivable that, during an offensive operation, a front will be compelled to conduct defensive actions with elements of its forces on certain axes.

68. During an offensive operation initiated under conditions of the use of nuclear weapons, special importance will be attached to the timely launching by a front of a powerful, surprise first nuclear strike in coordinated action with strategic and other forces during a possibly short period and with the use of the largest quantity of operationally ready operation-tactical means.

69. Experience indicates that the most effective variant for the launching of the first nuclear strike of a front will be a situation in which the first launching of operational-tactical missiles and the air mission of front aircraft will

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occur simultaneously with the first strike of the strategic nuclear forces.

70. However, this is not always possible. The strategic nuclear forces, which are kept in a high state of combat readiness, can initiate the first nuclear strike before the front can. Therefore, it is obviously inadvisable to base the launching of the first strike of the strategic nuclear forces, which play a decisive role in defeating the enemy, on the readiness of front nuclear forces. Under these conditions, the front can launch simultaneously with the strategic nuclear forces its first strike with the use of only on-duty forces which are directed to act against enemy operational-tactical nuclear weapons and the most important command posts. Subsequently, they launch strikes against enemy main forces, antiaircraft defense means and other targets as the rest of the rocket troops and front air force are being placed in a state of full readiness.

71. When the troops of a front change over to offensive operations, their primary mission will be either to destroy or to complete the destruction of the forces opposing the front in the border zone.

72. Depending on the level of destruction of the enemy, the capability of front forces and the emerging ratio of forces, the requirements for defeating the enemy will vary. If the action against the enemy is effective to the extent that only isolated, divided, ineffective groupings remain in the enemy border zone, the troops of a front will advance at a rapid rate in pre-combat formations and even in march columns. On the other hand, it is sufficient to detach elements to defeat enemy remaining forces.

73. If both sides suffer heavy losses on the individual axes or throughout the zone of a front, it is important to launch pre-emptive nuclear attacks against enemy remaining forces, to change over to offensive operations with the forces retaining their combat effectiveness, to eliminate the effects of nuclear attacks and to commit to battle as quickly as possible those troops which were the target of enemy nuclear attacks. It is conceivable that individual elements of a front grouping will lose all their combat effectiveness, and the enemy will change over to offensive operations with his remaining forces. In this situation, the front will

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have to resume the nuclear attacks against the most threatening enemy groupings and to commit reserves of both the front and adjacent armies, and in certain cases, even the forces and equipment of armies of the second echelon of the front. In certain cases, it will be advisable to make changes in the zones of action of the armies.

74. It is also possible to have a situation in which the enemy will suffer heavy losses on certain axes and will maintain the combat effectiveness of forces and equipment for conducting combat operations on other axes in the border zone; on the other hand, the troops of a front will suffer substantial losses on individual axes. In this case, the troops of a front will resume nuclear attacks against the remaining enemy forces in the border zone and will invade enemy territory with most of their forces after the nuclear attacks.

75. The defeat of enemy air groups, regardless of the nuclear attacks launched against them during battle in the border zone, requires the capture and destruction of enemy airfields by tank and airborne forces penetrating the enemy interior.

76. During the exploitation of offensive actions of a front, it is necessary to aim at continuously increasing the rate of advance and hastening the defeat of the remaining enemy forces until they are finally destroyed. Therefore, nuclear attacks and decisive troop operations should be mutually supporting and should be coordinated with regard to time and area. The final defeat of enemy forces is accomplished primarily by tank and airborne forces.

77. Tank forces comprise the leading element of strike forces operating on the main axes of a front. They have special striking power, high maneuverability, considerable resistance against the damaging effects of nuclear explosions and the capability of overcoming barriers and zones of radioactive contamination and destruction. Because of these qualities, the tank forces have the best capability for the following: conduct of operations after the nuclear attacks; quick and final defeat of the remaining enemy forces; destruction or capture of airfields, missile bases, anti-aircraft defense (OPL) facilities and large towns; and

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disruption of enemy mobilization undertakings.

78. During the exploitation of offensive actions, airborne assault forces have an important role in the final defeat of the enemy. Airborne assault forces, which vary in composition and are landed after a nuclear attack on a single axis or adjacent axes, can form a comprehensive system of airborne assault.

79. Decisive action and maneuver of troops during the exploitation of an offensive operation and the launching of increasingly heavier attacks require the reinforcement of the first echelon of combat troops with combined-arms reserves of the front. Reinforcement of armies of the first echelon with reserves may also be required during the routing or final defeat of enemy forces moving up and counterattacking, if the effort of the troops is shifted to another axis or the various attacking forces suffer heavy losses from enemy nuclear attacks and the formation of a new force becomes necessary. In addition, the reinforcement of armies will be required, if the ratio of forces on specific axes becomes unfavorable for the attacking strike forces of a front.

80. An army of the second echelon of a front may be committed to battle in the final phase of completion of the initial mission by a front or at the start of the subsequent mission; this obviously does not preclude the use of this army during the initial days of an operation, depending on the situation emerging during an operation.

III. OFFENSIVE OPERATIONS OF A FRONT WITHOUT THE USE OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS

A. General Principles, Objective, Missions and Scale of an Operation

82. Offensive operations of a front without the use of nuclear weapons is conducted on the basis of missions and objectives of the ground forces during a strategic operation in the area of operations. It is obvious that the organization and conduct of an operation, considering the capability of the conventional means of destruction of the enemy, will be affected primarily by the capability of the conventional means of destruction of front troops and

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operational and tactical formations acting in coordination with them from other components of the armed forces, especially the air force.

83. The enemy's basic means of destruction during an offensive operation are aircraft, artillery and tanks. Tanks, which have a combination of high maneuverability, firepower and striking force, will play a very important role.

84. The front's conventional means of combat enable the main elements of the front air force to launch mass and group attacks against enemy forces located in an area 350 to 450 kilometers in depth. Fighter-bomber aircraft have the capability to launch attacks of this type in an area up to 150 to 250 kilometers in depth, i.e., to attack enemy troops of the first echelon, corps reserves and reserves of an army group. However, the capabilities of the front air force to destroy enemy groupings are limited. For example, a fighter-bomber or bomber division is capable of striking (approximately 20 percent losses) one or two enemy brigades during a single day by carrying out two or three air missions.

85. The main artillery forces are organic to an army. Artillery is capable of striking enemy forces in an area 15 to 18 kilometers in depth, and elements of the artillery forces, over 20 kilometers in depth. This artillery is capable of neutralizing exposed forces and weapons on a front up to 14 kilometers [in width], and concealed forces and weapons, approximately 7 kilometers.

86. The overall objective of an offensive operation of a front without the use of nuclear weapons may be the following: Disruption of an enemy offensive operation; defeat of the main forces of an army group, primarily all corps of the first echelon and their nuclear weapons; and seizure of important areas for the exploitation of an offensive operation deep in the area of operations.

87. In the western area of operations, the depth of the area of a front offensive operation may range from 350 to 450 kilometers, and the depth of the area of the initial mission may be from 150 to 250 kilometers.

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88. The rate of advance of an offensive operation will be determined by the following: Level of destruction of enemy groupings from air and artillery attacks; extent of the use of fire and maneuver capabilities of tank and motorized forces; nature of enemy operations; and the ratio of forces. The rate of advance may be from 25 to 50 kilometers per day. Therefore, the duration of an offensive operation of a front without the use of nuclear weapons may be from 10 to 12 days, on the assumption that the average rate of advance is approximately 35 to 40 kilometers per day (24-hour period).

89. The initial mission of a front may include the following: Defeat of the main forces of various army corps of the first echelon and the reserves on the axes of attack of a front; destruction of the primary means of nuclear attack; and seizure of areas and sectors in order to disrupt the continuity of enemy operations and create suitable conditions for the successful exploitation of an offensive operation in depth.

90. The subsequent mission of a front under these conditions may include the following: Final defeat of the main forces of the first echelon and the reserves of army groups; overcoming of the defensive zones from the march; and seizure of areas in depth to facilitate the undertaking of a subsequent offensive operation in central zones of the area of operations.

91. An air operation conducted according to the plan of the higher headquarters is important in the accomplishment of missions during an offensive operation; the air army of a front also participates in an air operation. The objective of this operation will be to destroy the enemy air force in the area of operations and to gain air supremacy. At the same time, missions of striking enemy ground forces may be carried out. Troops of a front should initiate an attack either after or at the same time of launching surprise air attacks during the initial period of the war.

B. Organization of an Operation

92. An offensive operation of a front without the use of nuclear weapons is organized simultaneously with an

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operation in which nuclear weapons are used. On the basis of objectives and missions which will be assigned to a front for the duration of a strategic operation with the use of conventional weapons, the commander of a front renders decisions on the conduct of an operation without the use of nuclear weapons and also takes into consideration his plan of action for an offensive operation with the use of nuclear weapons, especially with regard to the disposition of forces, the assurance of constant readiness of forces and means for the use of nuclear weapons and the organization of defense of troops against weapons of mass destruction.

93. In the organization of an operation, the following is planned: Forming of strike forces; use of the front air force for gaining air supremacy and supporting the attack of strike forces; use of the artillery of strike forces; use of troops in coordinated action with the air force and airborne assault forces for decisive exploitation of the attack in depth; organization of antiaircraft defense of troops; and support of troops, primarily with regard to ammunition and POL.

94. The planning of a front offensive operation without the use of nuclear weapons is regarded to be a component part of the planning of an operation with the use of nuclear weapons. This position is warranted, because offensive actions during the initial period of war may be initiated both with and without the use of nuclear weapons. In either case, a front will generally have the same forces and equipment, with the exception of nuclear weapons.

95. Therefore, it is advisable to consider the planning of an offensive operation with the use of conventional weapons as a special provision of the general plan of an operation with the use of nuclear weapons, because the plan, objective, missions and methods of defeating the enemy in an offensive operation conducted with the use of conventional weapons will be different from those of an offensive operation with the use of nuclear weapons.

96. The experience of the Great Patriotic War of the Soviet Union indicates that, in planning, special attention must be devoted to the coordination of air and artillery operations with those of motorized and tank forces.

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97. It is also necessary to plan precisely the first day of an operation and to take into consideration the various variants for the exploitation of combat operations. It is apparently necessary to adopt as the basic variant the transition of front troops to offensive operations either at the same time or after the launching of a surprise attack by the air force initiating an air operation.

98. The experience of the Great Patriotic War, especially with regard to the use of tank forces, and also the conducted studies indicate that a strike force should be formed with the intention of fully utilizing the maneuvering capabilities of the troops in order to assure the following: Disruption of an enemy surprise attack; repulsion of this attack; launching of a pre-emptive (surprise) attack against the enemy main force with the use of a larger ratio of forces (1.5 to 2) on a selected axis; and a decisive superiority (three or four times more artillery and tanks) in the sectors of the attack.

99. As a result of troops operations, it is important to prevent the enemy from changing over to position warfare and to assure the exploitation of a decisive attack in full depth of the area of an operation.

100. The use of the front air force in an operation for the purpose of gaining air supremacy is planned on the basis of directives of the higher headquarters. Air actions in support of the attacking forces of a front are concentrated on the main axis in order to carry out the primary missions and to support primarily the tank and airborne assault forces.

101. It is advisable to base the use of the artillery of strike forces on the experience of the last war and postwar operations training with regard to the organization and conduct of an artillery attack. The forming of artillery groupings in the sectors of the assaults should be based on the full utilization of the mobility of artillery. In addition, it is necessary to deploy artillery from the march before the arrival and deployment of the main motorized and tank forces.

102. Antiaircraft defense (OPL) forces which are also maneuvering should provide cover for the strike forces, especially during the assembly of motorized and tank forces in the sectors of an assault.

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103. It is necessary to establish reserve supplies of ammunition and POL in anticipation of additional requirements of the troops and also to assure the timely delivery of these supplies to the troops during an operation.

C. Conduct of an Offensive Operation

104. The conduct of an offensive operation will surely be based on the launching of concentrated and mutually supporting air and artillery attacks and also on the operations of motorized and tank forces on selected axes in order to divide, disperse and encircle the opposing enemy groupings and subsequently destroy them piecemeal. In addition, it is necessary to assume that the enemy will be defeated successively along the front and in the interior; at the same time, it is necessary to breach and split the enemy grouping of forces.

105. It is necessary to launch attacks with air and tank forces in coordinated action with airborne assault forces, to exploit decisively the attack in depth and to widen the breach in the enemy grouping of operational forces in the direction of the flanks in order to encircle and destroy enemy main forces.

106. Therefore, it is possible during an offensive operation without the use of nuclear weapons to launch the main attacks on the shortest axes in order to disperse the enemy groupings and conduct a pincer movement for the purpose of encircling and destroying the enemy groupings. On the coastal axis, one of the methods of conducting an operation may be to intercept the enemy grouping, to pin it down on the beaches and subsequently to destroy it. It is also possible to use various combinations of different methods.

107. The defeat of enemy groupings is based on the launching of air and artillery attacks against them and the launching of a decisive attack by motorized and tank forces which should be provided with close air and artillery support. In certain cases, depending on the situation, the defeat of enemy defensive forces will require air and artillery preparation fire; however, under conditions in which the enemy does not intend to deploy for meeting engagements or to pass quickly

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to the defensive, air strikes and heavy barrages against the enemy grouping of forces will be adequate.

108. Depending on the enemy position and strength, the artillery and air force are combined with the attacking motorized and tank forces. If the enemy is prepared to repulse our attack, a rolling barrage is delivered; in other cases, successive concentration of fire is established or a combination of both of these methods is used. In general, the air force should be combined with tank groupings, especially during the exploitation of offensive actions in depth.

109. Artillery and motorized and tank forces designated to defeat the enemy and to achieve decisive superiority of forces and equipment may be concentrated in selected sectors of the assaults to conduct pincer movements and to provide, in this way, a large number of forces and equipment for the purpose of launching an attack. It is understood that the concentration of such a large number of troops is not consistent with the requirements of nuclear/missile warfare. Under contemporary conditions, the concentration of forces and equipment entails considerable risk and may be conducted only for the duration of the combat missions, after which it is necessary to disperse the strike forces quickly. Therefore, a great concentration of efforts is possible only for a short period (no longer than 4 to 6 hours) and only in a situation in which there are no signs of enemy preparations to use nuclear weapons.

110. After air and artillery preparation fire, the troops launch a decisive attack against the enemy forces, widen the breach in the direction of either one or both flanks and conduct combat operations on the axes of attack in order to encircle and destroy the enemy piecemeal. The main mission of tank forces acting in coordination with air and airborne assault forces will be to move out to the enemy rear and to exploit the attack in depth.

111. In the course of defeating the enemy in the coastal zone, the following will be required:

- strong concentration of air effort (including that of the long-range air force, if it conducts an

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air operation on a given axis) in order to launch, with the use of nuclear weapons, pre-emptive attacks against enemy air and ground main forces;

- delivery of preparation fire by artillery and tanks against enemy forces approaching the national border;

- decisive operations by front motorized and tank forces using various methods of defeating the enemy, depending on the emerging situations and nature of enemy operations.

112. Because of the successful performance of missions for defeating the enemy forces in the coastal zone and those in contact with us or the enemy forces approaching from the rear, the capabilities of these forces to oppose the attack of our forces may be reduced considerably; this creates favorable conditions for the conduct of wide-scale maneuvering operations which facilitate the exploitation of our offensive actions in depth.

113. Exploitation of an offensive operation is effected by the following: Decisive offensive actions conducted by large tank forces deep in the area of the grouping of enemy forces; destruction of the means of nuclear attack and targets of major importance in coordinated action with operational airborne assault forces; and destruction of approaching enemy reserves. The success of an offensive operation depends to a considerable extent on the timely increase of efforts of the first echelon by the use of forces and equipment from other axes and also by the use of second echelons and reserves. Enemy attempts to halt the attacking forces of a front by changing over to the defensive may be hindered by the launching of air and artillery attacks, the landing of airborne assault forces and the conducting of quick, decisive operations by the attacking forces.

114. As the offensive actions of front troops are being exploited, the threat of enemy use of nuclear weapons is increased, especially in a situation in which the enemy will lose the major operational-strategic zones (or areas) and will be threatened with the defeat of the major groupings of forces and equipment in the area of operations. Therefore, the troops

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of a front should be in a state of full readiness for operations with the use of nuclear weapons.

115. The transition of front troops to operations with the use of nuclear weapons is one of the most important and complicated tasks of an operation. By the use of nuclear weapons, it is possible to change radically a situation to our favor, to inflict heavy losses on the enemy and to create conditions for achieving the objectives of an offensive operation in a shorter time. Performance of these tasks depends on the organization and completion of undertakings assuring the constant state of readiness of forces and equipment for rapid and organized transition to operations with the use of the means of mass destruction and primarily for the timely launching of a heavy nuclear surprise attack against the enemy and, at the same time, the disrupting of enemy preparations to launch an attack of this type.

116. Therefore, the primary objective of the first nuclear strike may be the following: Disruption of enemy preparations to launch nuclear attacks; and infliction of losses to enemy nuclear weapons and main forces, especially tank forces, to the extent that conditions will be created for the final defeat of the enemy.

117. The first nuclear strike launched by a front during conventional combat operations is basically different from a nuclear strike launched at the start of the war. The differences will depend on the status and location of targets for attack, the location and readiness of our own means for delivery of nuclear warheads and also the conditions for the conduct of reconnaissance. Moreover, the forces and equipment of the first echelons of both sides will be already deployed and in direct contact. The aforementioned situations require that the first nuclear strike of a front should destroy enemy operational-tactical and tactical means of nuclear attack and main forces of the first echelon. Effective action against enemy nuclear weapons during the entire period of conventional operations, i.e., until the use of nuclear weapons, will eliminate enemy superiority, if the enemy had possessed it.

118. The launching of the first nuclear strike during an offensive operation will be organized in a complicated, rapidly changing situation; and the front will not always be

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able to designate the targets for all means committed to the launching of the first nuclear strike. In this connection, it may become necessary to authorize army and division commanders to select targets for attacks launched by subordinate missile formations and units, depending on the situation and missions to be carried out by the troops.

119. In conjunction with the designation of targets for nuclear attack, the timing of the first nuclear strike, i.e., the timely launching of this strike, will have considerable effect on the success of an offensive operation. Even a slight delay in the launching of this strike will enable the enemy to use all of his nuclear means of destruction. This may be avoided only by the launching of the first strike on the basis of the first signs of enemy preparations to use nuclear weapons. Therefore, during combat operations it is always necessary to have ready a sufficient quantity of nuclear means of destruction and to maintain the means for delivery of nuclear weapons in the highest state of readiness that technical requirements and the current situation permit. The front commander, on the basis of the actual situation, should precisely determine the specific quantity of these means and their state of readiness; he also determines the undertakings for strengthening the defense of troops against weapons of mass destruction.

120. The staff, on the basis of the front commander's decision, should effect the following:

- timely revision of the plan for the first nuclear strike;
- organization of additional reconnaissance of enemy targets;
- prompt assignment of missions to be performed;
- transmission of signals for the placement of nuclear means of destruction in the next state of readiness.

121. It is understood that the methods of front troop operations are changed at the time when nuclear weapons are used. The front commander must quickly render a new decision and assign to the troops new combat missions assuring the

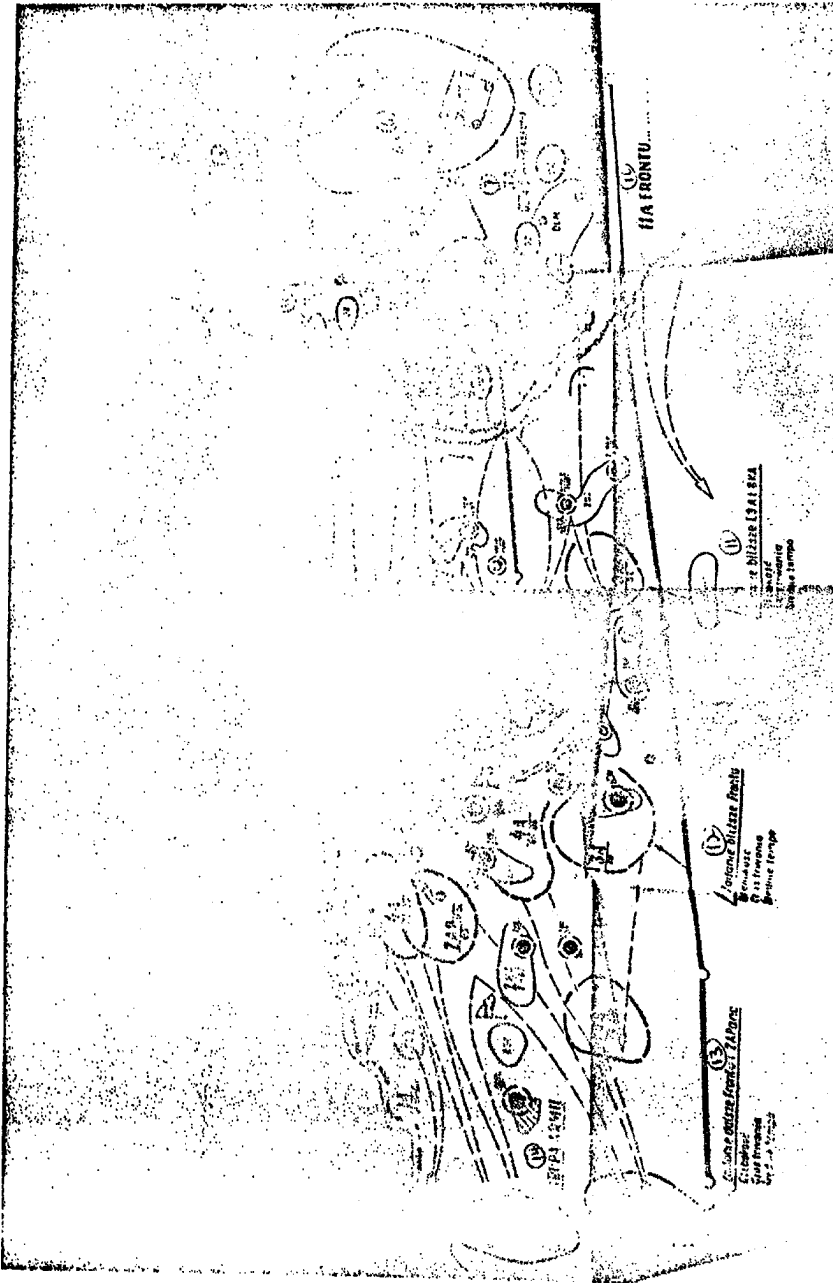
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achievement of the objectives of an operation. In addition, the following is of considerable importance: Directing of troops to take advantage of the nuclear effects; organizing of coordinated action; and applying of means to maintain the combat effectiveness of front troops, if the enemy uses weapons of mass destruction.

122. In this report, only the most important problems of organization and conduct of offensive operations of a front were raised; these problems were selected from accumulated and general experiences of operations training and from operating practices of staffs. At the same time, we request all generals and officers to conduct additional studies on the organization and conduct of offensive operations, especially in the new aspect of nuclear/missile and conventional warfare and also warfare with the limited use of nuclear weapons.

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Diagram 1



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The following is keyed to Diagram I:

- 1) Plan of an Offensive Operation of a Front (Variant)
- 2) Front -- 2 armies; one tank army; one air army; one front operational-tactical missile brigade; 3 mechanized divisions.
- 3) 8th Army Corps -- 3 mechanized divisions.
- 4) 1st Army -- 3 mechanized divisions; one tank division; one army operational-tactical missile brigade.
- 5) 2nd Tank Army -- 4 tank divisions; one army operational-tactical missile brigade.
- 6) 4th Army (second echelon of a front)-- 3 mechanized divisions; one tank division; one army operational-tactical missile brigade; arrival by D-day plus 2 or 3 days.
- 7) 3rd Army -- 4 mechanized divisions; one tank division; one army operational-tactical missile brigade.
- 8) Embarkation point of amphibious landing force.
- 9) Mechanized division -- reserves of a front.
- 10) 11th Army of the Front
- 11) Initial mission of the 1st and 3rd Armies and 8th Army Corps -- depth, duration and average rate of advance.
- 12) Initial mission of a front -- depth, duration and average rate of advance.
- 13) Subsequent mission of a front and the 2nd Tank Army -- depth, duration and average rate of advance.
- 14) Army group

Legend

A - army

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ABROT - army operational-tactical missile brigade
AL - air army
APanc - tank army
BKA - army corps brigade
D - division
D2 - D-day plus 2 days
DLB - bomber aviation division
DLM - fighter aviation division
DPanc - tank division
DZ - mechanized division
dp "H" - Hawk missile battalion
dp "S" - Sergeant missile battalion
FBROT - front operational-tactical missile brigade
gr "P" - Pershing missile group
KA - army corps
paplot - antiaircraft artillery regiment
prplot - antiaircraft missile regiment
prsk - contamination reconnaissance regiment
WAK - rocket artillery troops
Front - front
K/Front - front corps
odw. Front (or Fr.) - front reserves
"Mace" - Mace missile

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1A - 1st Army - D-day plus 10 or 11 days
D10-D11

4-40-P - tactical nuclear strike with four 40-kiloton yield
sygn. missiles [sygn. - signal, meaning unknown]

024 - nuclear strike of 24-kiloton yield by rocket artillery
WAK troops

025
ABROT - nuclear strike of 25-kiloton yield by an army
operational-tactical missile brigade

02 - nuclear strike of 2-kiloton yield by the 11th Bomber
11DLB Aviation Division

500 (1,000) - strategic nuclear strike of 500 to 1,000-kiloton
str. yield

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Planned tactical nuclear strike



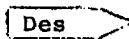
Planned strategic nuclear strike



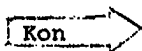
Airborne landing



Airfield

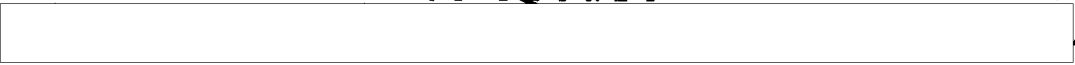


Amphibious landing force



Convoy

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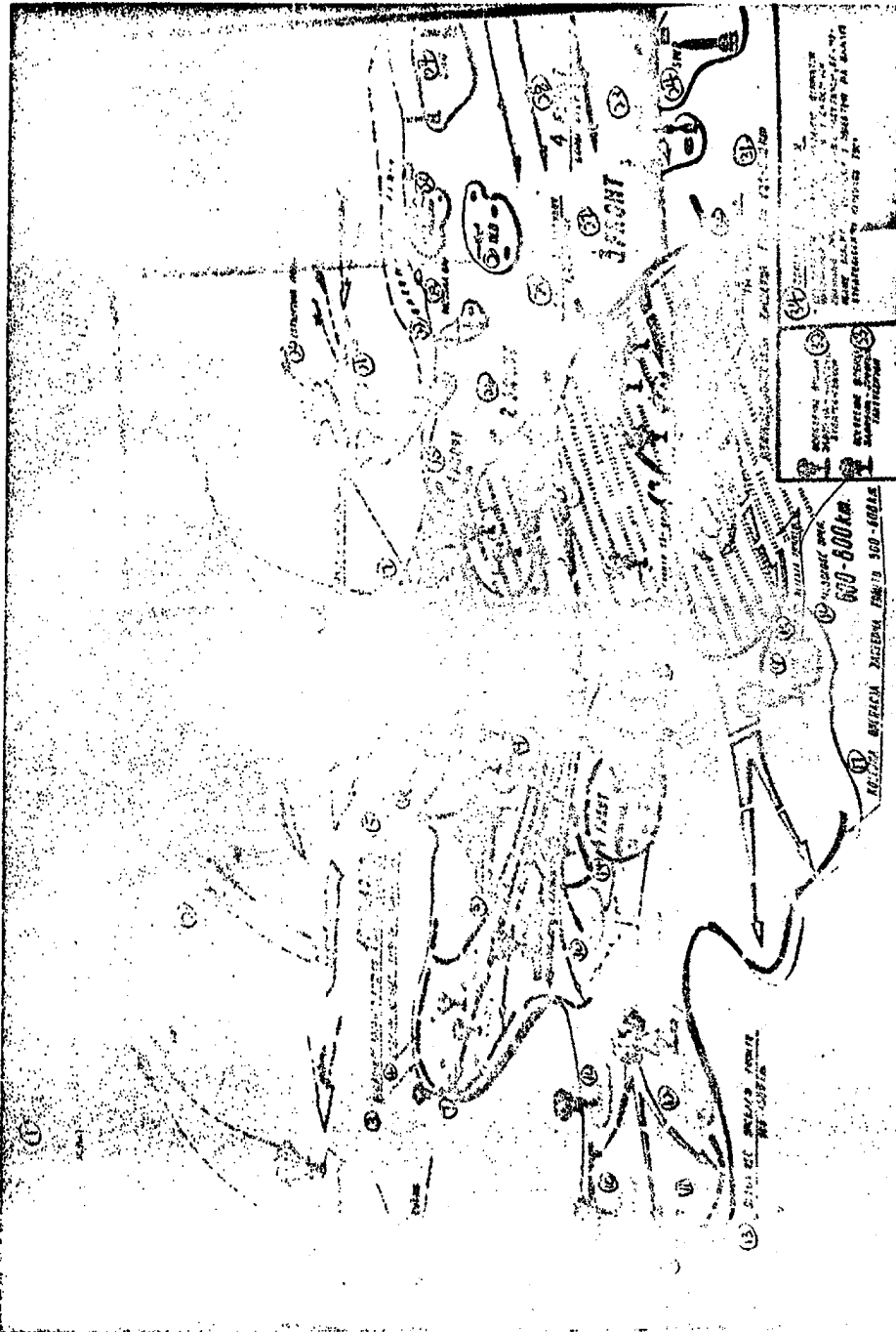




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Diagram 2



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The following is keyed to Diagram 2:

- 1) Conduct, Objectives and Missions of a Front Offensive Operation
- 2) Bomber aviation division
- 3) Depth of an operation of a front, 1,000 to 1,200 kilometers
- 4) Subsequent mission of a front, 500 to 600 kilometers
- 5) Depth of an operation of a front, 500 to 600 kilometers
- 6) Subsequent mission of a front, 250 to 300 kilometers
- 7) Port
- 8) Industrial area
- 9) Mobilization area
- 10) Reserves
- 11) Reserves
- 12) Strategic air force
- 13) Depth of an operation of a front, 900 to 1,000 kilometers
- 14) 4th Front committed to battle
- 15) Initial mission of a front
- 16) Depth of an operation, 600 to 800 kilometers
- 17) Follow-up offensive operation of a front, 500 to 600 kilometers
- 18) Subsequent mission of a front, 500 to 600 kilometers
- 19) Initial mission of a front, 150 to 300 kilometers
- 20) Naval air force
- 21) Submarine

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- 22) Base area of fleet
- 23) National air defense forces
- 24) Strategic rocket troops
- 25) 1st Front
- 26) 2nd Front
- 27) 3rd Front
- 28) 4th Front -- second operational echelon
- 29) First operational echelon -- 1st, 2nd, 3rd Fronts
- 30) Initial mission of a front, 300 to 400 kilometers
- 31) First offensive operation of a front, 600 to 800 kilometers
- 32) Strategic nuclear strike
- 33) Tactical nuclear strike
- 34) General Objectives of an Operation

Objective of an operation -- final defeat of the main groupings of air and ground forces.

Disruption of mobilization undertakings.

Seizure of important areas and targets on a given strategic axis of the area of operations.

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Possible Rate of Advance

Level of neutralization of the enemy (percentage)	80	60	40	20
	up to 150	100 to 125	60 to 80	50 and less
[kilometers per day]				
Under conditions of overcoming zones of radioactive contamination	up to 100	60 to 80	up to 50	30 to 40
Under conditions of destroyed roads and bridges	up to 70	50	up to 50	20 to 30
On the basis of the destruction of friendly forces (percentage)	80	?	?	*
		* [Question marks appear in original.]		
	40 to 60	70 to 100	60 to 80	up to 50
20	150	100 to 125	80	-

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DURATION AND SEQUENCE OF PERFORMING BASIC UNDERTAKINGS TO DETERMINE AND ADOPT A PLAN OF ACTION AND TO ASSIGN THE MISSIONS TO TROOPS DURING THE ORGANIZATION OF AN OPERATION IN A LIMITED PERIOD OF TIME

Chart 1. Computed length of time to adopt a plan of action and to assign missions to troops, depending on the method of organizing work activities (on the basis of experimental exercises)

Command level	Length of time (in hours)								Total
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
Front			X	X					8 hours 8 hours 8 hours
Army		X	X	X	X	X			4 hours, 30 minutes 5 hours, 40 minutes 6 hours, 30 minutes
Division				X	X	X	X	X	2 hours, 40 minutes 3 hours, 50 minutes 5 hours
Regiment					X	X	X	X	1 hour, 30 minutes 2 hours, 20 minutes 4 hours
Battalion									30-40 minutes 1 hour, 10 minutes 3 hours

Legend: -.-.- successive performance of work activities
 ----- performance of part of work activities at the same time in all command elements
 performance of most work activities at the same time in all command elements
 X length of time to assign missions to be performed

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Length of time (in hours)								
Designation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
<u>Front</u>	Analysis of tasks; brief estimate of the situation; initial formulation of plan and missions for troops. Assignment of missions with initial orders.		Continuation of the estimate of the situation and precise determination of the plan of action. Assignment of precise missions to troops.					
	Preparation of estimates, precise determination of plan of action and verification							
Army	Briefing on the scheduled operation		Same as above		Same as above			
	Preparation of estimates, precise determination of plan of action and verification							
Division	Briefing on scheduled combat operations		Same as above		Same as above			
	Preparation of estimates, precise determination of plan of action and verification							

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