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23 February 1977

MEMORANDUM FOR: The Director of Central Intelligence

FROM : William W. Wells  
Deputy Director for Operations

SUBJECT : MILITARY THOUGHT (USSR): Problems of  
Armed Combat in the Non-Nuclear Period  
of War

1. The enclosed Intelligence Information Special Report is part of a series now in preparation based on the SECRET USSR Ministry of Defense publication Collection of Articles of the Journal "Military Thought". This article provides a general view of the problems of armed combat in the non-nuclear period of war, in which only limited objectives can be achieved in limited space and in anticipation of a transition to nuclear actions. It outlines the tasks of the participating armed forces branches, and examines the specific roles and tactics of the ground forces, airborne troops, long range and front aviation, the navy and the air defense forces of the country. The author stresses the need to combat enemy nuclear means in this period, and the importance of reconnaissance to this effort. This article appeared in Issue No. 2 (81) for 1967. The Russian-language version was disseminated as FIRDB-312/02366-75.

2. Because the source of this report is extremely sensitive, this document should be handled on a strict need-to-know basis within recipient agencies. For ease of reference, reports from this publication have been assigned the  
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William W. Wells

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## Intelligence Information Special Report

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COUNTRY USSR

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SUBJECT

MILITARY THOUGHT (USSR): Problems of Armed Combat in  
the Non-Nuclear Period of War

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Summary:

The following report is a translation from Russian of an article which appeared in Issue No. 2 (81) for 1967 of the SECRET USSR Ministry of Defense publication Collection of Articles of the Journal "Military Thought". The author of this article is Colonel A. Volkov. This article provides a general view of the problems of armed combat in the non-nuclear period of war, in which only limited objectives can be achieved in limited space and in anticipation of a transition to nuclear actions. It outlines the tasks of the participating armed forces branches, and examines the specific roles and tactics of the ground forces, airborne troops, long range and front aviation, the navy, and the air defense forces of the country. The author stresses the need to combat enemy nuclear means in this period, and the importance of reconnaissance to this effort. Plans for front offensive operations should be based on the employment of nuclear weapons, with provision for non-nuclear actions.

End of Summary

Comment:

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Problems of Armed Combat in the  
Non-Nuclear Period of War

by  
Colonel A. Volkov

In recent years the strategic thinking of the US and NATO command has undergone significant changes under the influence of the growing missile/nuclear might of the Soviet Union. Thus, the strategy of "massive retaliation" or "nuclear deterrence" has been replaced by the strategy of "flexible response", which along with the recognition of general nuclear war as the basic and decisive means of achieving the political and military objectives of imperialism, envisages the possibility of conducting armed combat "at any time and any place with those forces and means corresponding to the given situation". In this light the American command is persistently studying various methods of unleashing and waging war, including in Europe where the two most powerful military groupings, NATO and the Warsaw Pact countries, are opposing each other. Particular attention is being given to studying the possibilities of unleashing and waging war for a certain period of time using only conventional means of destruction or tactical nuclear weapons. It is sufficient to note that in 1963 all major NATO troop and staff exercises in Europe were conducted with a non-nuclear period at the beginning of combat actions. This is occasioned primarily by the exceptional danger of the probable consequences of mass employment of the modern strategic nuclear forces at the disposal of the Soviet Union and the US. The threat of colossal losses, complete destruction of whole nations and the devastation of vast territories is now a sufficiently powerful deterrent, forcing Western politicians and strategists to seriously contemplate the prospects of the nuclear war they are preparing.

This to a considerable extent explains the heightened attention to studying non-nuclear actions. In recent years the US and NATO command carried out a whole series of measures directed toward increasing the capabilities of their forces to conduct combat actions in the initial stage of the war without using nuclear weapons.

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Our Armed Forces are being prepared for actions under the various conditions of the beginning of a war both with and without the employment of nuclear weapons. In the troops considerable work has been done in studying methods of performing combat tasks using only conventional means of destruction. However, we must not fail to note that all this is done largely on an operational-tactical scale. The actions of our Armed Forces in the non-nuclear period of war require deeper and more comprehensive research on a strategic plane. Therefore, singling out the period of non-nuclear actions as an independent period of war undoubtedly is correct and timely.\* From this vantage point we will try to briefly examine the most important problems of armed combat in this period.

First the objectives, tasks and make-up of the non-nuclear period. The complexity of researching these problems lies in the fact that it is very difficult to accurately determine the duration of this period in advance. The transition from combat actions employing only conventional means of destruction to the use of nuclear weapons actually can take place at any time, since both the strategic and operational-tactical nuclear means of the belligerents will be in constant readiness. Judging from the experience of NATO exercises, the duration of non-nuclear actions might be one to four days. However, in studying this problem one cannot rely completely on the experience of exercises, since these are pre-planned operations to show their allies their resoluteness (which the latter have begun to doubt all the more) to support them with all available means right up to the use of strategic nuclear forces.

Under actual conditions an enemy apparently decides to employ nuclear weapons only as a last resort, when he already will have used all other means to achieve his objectives. We also have to remember that under certain conditions the non-nuclear nature of actions might appear advantageous to the US, since it provides the opportunity to protect its own territory from vast destruction.

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\*Article by Colonel-General M. Povaliy, Collection of Articles of the Journal "Military Thought" No. 1 (80) for 1967 ("On the Question of the Initial Period of a Modern War", FIRDB-312/02423-74).

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The enemy will not always decide to employ tactical nuclear weapons, either, if he knows he will receive a destructive retaliatory strike by all nuclear means designated to destroy targets in the theater of military operations.

All this provides the basis for believing that the duration of the non-nuclear period of war may be even longer than that simulated in recent NATO exercises. It goes without saying that these estimates can in no measure serve as the basis for resolving the problems of troop readiness for transition to actions which employ nuclear weapons, for readiness must be constant.

An approximate determination of the duration of the non-nuclear period of war helps, in our view, to more specifically formulate objectives which can be achieved in this period, determine its make-up and plan troop actions more purposefully.

It is quite obvious that in the non-nuclear period limited objectives may be achieved, and only individual but highly important operational-strategic tasks can be accomplished. For example, in Europe the objective of the non-nuclear period generally might be to thwart the aggressive intentions of the enemy and eliminate the threat of his armed forces groupings invading the territory of the Warsaw Pact countries, and to create favorable conditions for our Armed Forces and for all the Warsaw Pact states as a whole to successfully accomplish the tasks required to defeat the enemy in the event war is continued with mass employment of nuclear weapons.

Achieving this objective basically requires accomplishing two main tasks. First, to inflict decisive destruction on the principal forces of the Northern and Central Army Groups deployed in the border zone and on the forward line, as well as on the tactical aviation supporting them, and to deprive the enemy of the ability to carry out his aggressive plans with respect to Warsaw Pact countries without using nuclear weapons; secondly, to weaken the nuclear capabilities of NATO forces as much as possible, so that as a result of losses sustained, including losses in nuclear means, the command of this bloc would not be able to resort to the employment of even tactical nuclear weapons.

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These in general terms are the possible objectives and tasks of our Armed Forces in the non-nuclear period of a war in Europe. Despite their limited nature, their successful and rapid achievement may have decisive importance for the subsequent course of combat actions.

The spatial scope of armed combat apparently also will be limited. Combat actions on land may envelop the territory and airspace within range of conventional means of combat. The radius of action of the enemy tactical air forces and of our front aviation may be taken as the criterion. Of course individual strikes against deeper targets cannot be ruled out, but they hardly will play an essential role. At this time remote territories actually will be beyond the influence of the combat means employed.

Armed combat on water may take on a broader scope. Here the actions of naval forces will seize the disposition (patrol or maneuvering) areas of enemy groupings of naval forces carrying nuclear weapons: missile submarines and strike aircraft carriers.

Along with conducting aggressive combat actions to inflict decisive destruction on the main forces of enemy ground forces groupings deployed in the theater and to weaken enemy nuclear capabilities, the most important part of the make-up of this period will be measures to ensure constant and maximum readiness of strategic and operational-tactical nuclear means for immediate actions, continuous and rapid reinforcement of armed forces groupings conducting combat actions in the theater by forced movement of reserves from the depth of the country, completion of the full mobilization of first strategic echelon troops and mobilization expansion of the second strategic echelon and reserves, conversion of the national economy to production according to wartime plans, as well as measures along the civil defense line (including evacuation of the population from large cities), and others.

It goes without saying that we cannot count on fully implementing all these measures during the short period of non-nuclear actions. However, the successful conduct of even some of them will create, for our armed forces and for all the Warsaw Pact states as a whole, more favorable conditions for achieving victory in the period of decisive nuclear actions.

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The experience of exercises shows that all branches of the armed forces, with the exception of the Strategic Rocket Forces, may be allocated to conduct combat actions in the non-nuclear period. However, the role and importance of each of them, in view of their different capabilities for employing conventional weapons, will be far from equal.

The main role in carrying out the principal tasks of this period unquestionably will belong to the ground forces and aviation, especially front aviation, as well as the navy, which is entrusted with the crucial task of weakening enemy nuclear power on the sea. As regards the Air Defense Forces of the Country, their role and tasks are maintained at full volume.

While examining the question of employing ground forces, we first should emphasize that in nuclear war fronts are assigned tasks of completing the destruction of the strategic means of enemy groupings which have been subjected to nuclear strikes, whereas under the conditions being examined front troops will have to destroy these means with their own forces at the very beginning. Thus, front capabilities are markedly decreased.

A significant part of the most powerful and longest-range means which could also be used to deliver strikes with conventional means of destruction, actually are not allocated for this purpose, since they must be in constant readiness for immediate employment of nuclear weapons. Therefore, the basic means of destruction of the enemy under these conditions will be aviation, tanks and artillery. The concentration of their efforts on the most important axes and at highly critical points of the operation, and the organization and continuous coordination of their strikes in conjunction with maneuvering actions by the troops, will be the basic factors in achieving success. Tanks will play a particularly important role, as their fire and striking power can compensate to a considerable extent for the shortfall in artillery fire power.

Concentrating efforts and establishing the required densities on axes selected for attacks is the most complex problem facing the command and staffs of all levels, since the troop dispersal principle must not be disregarded in the non-nuclear period in view of the constant threat of enemy employment of nuclear weapons. It all comes down to the fact

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that the offensive zones for formations and large units may not be substantially reduced. At the same time we cannot count on successfully accomplishing tasks to defeat the enemy without resorting to the establishment of superiority of forces and means on the axis of main attack. Of course the concentration and density scales we had in the past war are out of the question. Moreover, such densities will not be required now, since ground forces large units have now acquired a completely new quality, and anyway, the enemy will operate in dispersed dispositions in the non-nuclear period, which will result in the absence of a continuous front and in the development of troop combat actions on separate axes. Consequently, the nature and scale of troop concentrations will be different. It seems to us that under these conditions the spatial concentration of troops to defeat the opposing enemy may be most often on a division scale, and more seldom on an army scale. The influence of a front here must be manifested in the decisive massing of the aviation and artillery of the Supreme High Command Reserve on selected axes of attack, and through the appropriate allocation and use of reserves.

The establishment of superiority of forces on the most important axes at the decisive moment in the course of an operation is usually achieved by moving forces from the depth and along the front. However, it may be difficult, and in some cases even impossible, to move along the front when troops will be advancing along separate axes. Therefore, the basis for calculations when establishing superiority of forces will be the maneuvering of forces from the depth, for which it has been stipulated in advance that troops be more deeply echeloned along axes, and that the striking power of the first echelon not be weakened.

Here we would like to turn our attention to another possible way to establish superiority over the enemy. We are speaking of the fact that along with the conduct of an offensive along converging axes, the actions of a certain part of the advancing front troops in the immediate enemy rear acquire extraordinarily great significance.

In our opinion these actions should be based on special detachments detailed from attacking first-echelon large units and tactical airborne landing forces from the same large units, as

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well as subunits and units of the airborne troops. In many cases forward detachments also may be used for this purpose. The strength of a special detachment obviously will not exceed a reinforced battalion, otherwise its actions would be contained by the enemy. Under these conditions a division will be required to detail two or three such detachments with means of reinforcement. Depending on the availability of air transportation, the airborne landing force may consist of up to a company and sometimes more. We cannot, of course, rule out other variants of the strength and number of such detachments and landing forces. Apparently we should consider forming special subunits (units) in divisions and armies for this purpose, since without specific training we cannot count on these troops successfully performing the complex tasks assigned them. These tasks might be: to destroy nuclear attack means, command posts and communications centers, to capture parts of obstacle zones and prevent the laying of nuclear land mines, support troops advancing from the front by courageous attacks on enemy positions from the rear and by neutralizing his antitank means, or to prevent an orderly and organized enemy withdrawal and occupation of intermediate lines of defense. It is quite obvious that this requires allocating considerable forces, which in strength and volume of tasks being carried out may resemble none other than the original forward echelon of the attacking troops.

The actions of forward-echelon troops must be based on courageous, daring and swift attacks on the enemy and wide maneuvering within the assigned zone.

To penetrate the enemy rear special detachments (airborne landing forces are airlifted) make use of unoccupied gaps and breaches in his battle formations, and where there are none, they break through in force using the fire support of the first-echelon troops.

The proposed method of ground forces actions in the non-nuclear period in our opinion permits resolving, to some extent, one of the important problems of this period -- establishing superiority over the enemy in forces and means without resorting to troop concentrations in narrow sectors. Furthermore, the decisive and courageous actions of our troops from the front and rear will create a situation in which the enemy will be denied the opportunity to effectively employ

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tactical nuclear weapons without risking the destruction of his own forces.

In this connection we will deal briefly with the nature of employing airborne troops. It may be assumed that their main forces will be in readiness for a landing deep in the enemy rear following nuclear strikes at the beginning of the decisive nuclear period of the war. But that does not entitle us to think they never can be employed in the non-nuclear period. Some of them, possibly one or two large units, in our opinion can and must be used for a drop of small landing detachments with the mission of combating enemy nuclear means in the operational depth, destroying command posts, seizing crossings in the paths of attacking troops and fulfilling other tasks. Further, as we already noted, it is desirable to use a certain part of the airborne troops in the forward echelon, particularly when seizing operationally important areas (lines or targets).

One of the most important tasks of ground forces in the non-nuclear period is combat against enemy nuclear means. Its complexity is obvious. Nevertheless it can and must be accomplished.

We know that ground forces large units have the bulk of the means for delivering nuclear warheads, therefore the decisive defeat of their first echelon will result in seriously diminishing enemy nuclear capabilities, particularly in the employment of tactical nuclear weapons. However, this does not mean we do not have to take special steps to reconnoiter and destroy enemy tactical nuclear means even during combat actions, employing aviation, artillery, special detachments (groups), and airborne landing forces, as well as other forces and means, for this purpose.

In the non-nuclear period the principal means of combating the enemy nuclear means we classify as belonging to the operational category (Pershing, Sergeant and Mace missiles and tactical aviation), will be front aviation. However, its capabilities for reliable neutralization of these enemy means will be limited. Therefore, to perform this task we should, along with other forces and means, make wide use of specially trained sabotage groups infiltrated into the enemy rear or dropped there to detect the appropriate means. With careful training their

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actions can be highly effective.

Speaking of combating enemy nuclear means, we should emphasize the importance of reconnaissance, without which the successful accomplishment of this task is absolutely inconceivable. But combat with nuclear means is a mutual process. The enemy in turn will try to weaken our nuclear capabilities as much as possible. To prevent or hamper his fulfilling this task, all measures must be taken to ensure concealed disposition and relocation of each launcher and organization of their protection from enemy air strikes and attack by sabotage groups. In so doing, particular caution should be observed in using missiles with conventional warheads. If our troops, while conducting combat actions in the non-nuclear period, succeed in destroying most of the enemy tactical nuclear weapons located immediately in the large units of the first echelon of his ground forces, then under these conditions, he hardly will decide to employ nuclear weapons by the other means available to him in the theater, since our superiority in similar means will be a serious deterrent.

A few words about planning the combat actions of ground forces in the non-nuclear period of war.

We explained above that this period can last four days, and in a number of cases even longer. During this time troops will perform important operational-strategic tasks. It is clear that it is inconceivable for troops employing only conventional means of destruction to accomplish them successfully without timely and thorough planning. But how is this to be done if troops, while engaged in combat actions with conventional means, have to be at constant readiness for transition to actions employing nuclear weapons?

Supposing, for example, there are two plans for a front offensive operation: one for the event that war begins with the immediate employment of nuclear weapons, and the other with only conventional means of destruction. We could agree with this in principle, if the plan envisioned conducting all front operations without nuclear weapons. But we apparently cannot count on this since we can know neither the day nor the hour of transition to nuclear actions in advance. Obviously the difference in planning will apply only to the beginning of the front operation.

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Therefore, the plan of the front offensive operation, in our opinion, should be developed separately. It will be based on the employment of nuclear weapons as the principal means of defeating the enemy and accomplishing the objectives of the operation. However, the plan also must reflect front troop actions in the non-nuclear period of the operation. To do this it is desirable to develop and apply to the basic plan a separate variant providing for troop actions in this period. In practice this will result in separate planning of the immediate task of the front. Front offensive operations currently are planned by tasks (immediate and subsequent). Accordingly, the immediate and subsequent tasks of the front usually are equal in depth. Because of the possibility of unleashing and conducting war during a certain period of time without employing nuclear weapons, we think this planning principle needs to be refined.

First of all, in our view, the immediate and subsequent tasks of the front will differ sharply in depth, since it is quite obvious that the depth of troop progress for the subsequent defeat of the opposing enemy and for seizure of some of his territory retains its significance only in the period of non-nuclear actions when a front's combined-arms and tank large units and formations become its main and decisive force. If the operation is begun with the immediate employment of nuclear weapons, the immediate task of the front will be decided by the first nuclear strikes, the results of which will determine the progress of the troops. Hence, it follows that determining the depth of the immediate front task first must be subordinated to accomplishing the tasks of the non-nuclear period of the operation.

In respect to the Western Theater of Military Operations, defeating the principal forces of the enemy army group may be included in the make-up of the immediate task in the period of non-nuclear actions. The depth of disposition of these forces, according to the experience of NATO exercises, varies from 200 to 250 kilometers. In our opinion the depth of the immediate task of the front should be limited accordingly. Two variants, with nuclear weapons and conventional means, should be planned for its accomplishment. Thus the army of the front's first echelon in fact has to plan its first operation twice. The depth of this operation can be within 200 to 250 kilometers. Its duration, depending on the variant by which war begins, can be

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approximately four days when the rate of advance averages 50 to 70 kilometers per day.

As regards the subsequent task of the front, in all cases it will consist of concluding the defeat of the enemy and seizing the most important areas in the depth of his territory. Therefore, it also must have considerably greater depth than the immediate task.

Developing and carrying out measures to maintain the means of employing nuclear weapons in constant readiness and to protect troops from sudden enemy nuclear strikes must be the most important factor in the plans of operations conducted with conventional means of destruction, so that literally at every minute the commander will have a plan ready for delivering the initial strike against the enemy and for going over to actions under conditions in which weapons of mass destruction are employed. As a whole the question of planning modern operations deserves separate and more detailed examination, since to this day there are various viewpoints on resolving it.

The conditions under which the Air Forces are employed and the tasks they perform in the non-nuclear period differ substantially from the conditions and tasks of the nuclear period. Their principal striking force, long range aviation, will be forced to maintain its principal forces in constant readiness to deliver nuclear strikes. Its use to reinforce the aviation of fronts is quite limited, since its principal forces make up the nuclear echelon. Furthermore, it must be taken into consideration that in the non-nuclear period when enemy air defense is poorly neutralized, long range bombers will be highly vulnerable. Therefore only part of long range aviation may be used to destroy the most important enemy means of nuclear attack. Naval aviation will be in the same position.

Front aviation may be utilized to a comparatively lesser extent in this period, since part of its forces also must be in readiness to employ nuclear weapons (according to the experience of exercises about 50 percent of the fighter-bombers and bombers, i.e., up to 25 to 30 percent of the strength of front air armies), at the same time the demand for aviation increases and its capabilities to carry out its tasks with conventional means fall sharply. In this period it apparently is necessary to

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concentrate the principal forces of long range, naval and front aviation to carry out the most important tasks. One of them is to weaken enemy nuclear weapons employment capabilities as much as possible. Furthermore, front aviation will be charged with the highly important task of close support of ground forces formations and large units in defeating opposing enemy groupings.

Front aviation will begin to carry out the tasks of weakening enemy nuclear capabilities and assisting ground forces in defeating groupings of enemy ground troops by destroying nuclear warhead depots and storage bases, aircraft at airfields and in the air, operational-tactical missiles, means of control, and artillery, particularly nuclear artillery.

Front aviation's combat capabilities for carrying out these tasks may be increased by massing its forces to carry out the more important ones on the main axes of ground forces actions. In a number of cases aviation may be massed most decisively. Maneuvering aircraft both from the depth of the theater of military operations and along the front to rapidly establish superiority of forces on the primary axes is of paramount importance. Aviation's mobility, i.e., its capacity for rapid redeployment from one area to another, can compensate to a great extent for an overall shortage of aircraft.

Another way to increase the combat capabilities of front aviation is to intensify its utilization by increasing the number of sorties of each aircraft. But in so doing we must remember that the physical capabilities of flight and technical personnel are limited. Without a considerable reserve of flight and technical personnel it is impossible to maintain a high aircraft sortie rate for an extended period.

The concept and unified plan for employing aviation in an operation must be based on the requirement to ensure its constant readiness to carry out combat actions employing nuclear weapons (with a variant for employing aviation in the non-nuclear period). It will not be easy to fulfil this requirement in practice. The maintaining of a certain amount of aviation forces in constant readiness for immediate delivery of a powerful nuclear strike against the enemy is complicated by the fact that aircraft must systematically change home airfields in order not to sustain losses on the ground. Furthermore, the number and

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location of targets will change frequently during combat actions. Therefore the tasks assigned before the war began to forces designated to deliver the initial nuclear strike will require constant refinement during combat actions in the non-nuclear period.

Aviation methods of operating with conventional means of destruction will have their own specific features. The conventional armament used by aviation in this period will require allocating a sizable detail of aircraft, which forces aviation to be concentrated in a limited area. Present-day air defense, which differs radically from the air defense of the past war, will be an incomparably more serious obstacle to aviation operations when only conventional means of destruction are employed. This obstacle can be overcome only by destroying and neutralizing air defense means on the selected aviation flight paths to the primary strike targets, by using these flight paths for the principal aviation forces participating in the strikes, breaking down aviation dispositions by depth and altitude, carrying out a direct attack on targets from a single approach, as a rule, as well as by using the various tactical procedures of a sudden, concealed approach to the strike targets. Low-altitude aviation operations, the effectiveness of which was proven by the experience of employing aviation in the Vietnam war, deserve special attention.

The basic objective of operations of the Navy in the non-nuclear period of war will be to weaken the nuclear forces of the enemy navy as much as possible. Such forces are his carrier strike large units and nuclear missile submarines, which in this period can be located in maneuvering and patrol zones, ready to deliver nuclear strikes against targets in the theaters of military operations. Successful fulfillment of this task may result in disrupting or considerably weakening an enemy nuclear strike from the sea.

As we know, the capabilities of the navy also are considerably reduced when conducting combat actions without nuclear weapons. This is because part of its aviation forces will make up the nuclear echelon and will not be able to take part in combat actions. Missile submarines with nuclear missiles on board will begin in this period to deploy in waiting positions or occupy fire positions in readiness for delivery of nuclear

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strikes against land targets, and consequently will not take part in combat actions, either. Yet, the remaining forces of the navy will have to carry out their tasks in the non-nuclear period of actions with nuclear weapons on board, which undoubtedly will decrease their capabilities to employ conventional means of destruction. For example, salvos from torpedo submarines will not be full since some of the torpedo tubes will be occupied by torpedoes with nuclear warheads.

If in addition we consider that the use of conventional ammunition will require a considerable increase in the detail of forces to accomplish combat tasks, the whole complexity of the conditions under which the navy has to carry out its principal task in the non-nuclear period of war will become completely obvious. How can we compensate for the shortage of forces and ensure successful accomplishment of the task of weakening the nuclear power of the enemy navy under these conditions?

In our opinion, this can be achieved by the most efficient utilization of the naval forces available for this purpose, by their timely deployment in enemy aircraft carrier maneuvering areas and missile submarine patrol areas, as well as by massed employment against aircraft carriers of all naval and long range aviation which is not subject to "nuclear readiness". Much will depend on the organization of reconnaissance at sea, which is required to provide timely detection of groupings of strike forces of the enemy navy, establish surveillance and carry out guidance against them.

Naval forces conducting combat actions with conventional ammunition but with nuclear weapons on board, as well as the nuclear echelon of naval aviation, in turn have to be in constant readiness for delivery of nuclear strikes against the enemy. Measures for maintaining nuclear forces in this kind of readiness must be provided for in advance while planning naval actions; this planning, like that for aviation, must be implemented using two variants: the first (primary) -- for conditions when nuclear weapons are employed immediately at the beginning of war, and the second -- when only conventional means of destruction are employed. In either case the planning and control of naval forces must ensure that their actions while using both conventional and nuclear weapons are highly effective.

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In addition to fulfilling the main mission of combating the strike groupings of the enemy navy, part of the naval forces also can fulfil others in the non-nuclear period of war, for example, disrupting enemy sea and ocean shipping, protecting its own sea lines of communication, landing amphibious landing forces, etc.

The Air Defense Forces of the Country also will retain great importance in the non-nuclear period of war. However, in view of the comparatively limited scope of armed combat in this period, the Air Defense Forces of the Country will be employed on a smaller scale, and the conditions under which they carry out their tasks will be somewhat easier. And this is understandable, since a rather significant part of the enemy tactical air forces and, apparently, all or a large part of his strategic aviation will not be operating in this period, and the conduct of combat actions without employing nuclear weapons will in itself permit the stability of the air defense system as a whole to be maintained despite possible significant losses to its individual elements.

The troops of border air defense formations and of the air defense of Warsaw Pact countries obviously will devote full efforts to this task. The remaining forces of the air defense of the country will take on another task -- to repel attacks made only by individual groups of aircraft and be in readiness to prevent the enemy from delivering nuclear strikes from the air against deep areas of the theater and the country as a whole.

We should note that the economical expenditure of surface-to-air missile reserves will be especially important to the air defense forces when conducting combat actions in the non-nuclear period of war (it is important that they not be expended before the period of decisive nuclear actions begins). At the same time it is impossible to find out what load of bombs and missiles (conventional or nuclear) enemy aviation is carrying in all situations, which means enemy aviation in any event cannot be permitted near the installations and troops being covered. Therefore the missile expenditure of these air defense formations will be essentially the same as in the nuclear period. And if non-nuclear actions last several days, the whole missile reserve may be expended. Hence, the conclusion that border air defense formations have to have an increased reserve of surface-to-air missiles. It is very important that air defense troops not

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permit the enemy to learn the entire air defense system of the country, since he will strive to do this by all possible ways, first of all by conducting aerial reconnaissance to the entire depth of our territory. For this purpose we obviously should plan for a certain part of air defense means to operate from alternate positions in the non-nuclear period.

[The Strategic Rocket Forces are the only branch of the armed forces which, as we already noted, will not take part in the non-nuclear period of war. The command and staffs of all levels of the rocket forces will be faced with accomplishing an enormous amount of work in this period to bring troops to, and maintain them in, constant readiness for timely delivery of the initial nuclear strike by the maximum number of launchers against pre-planned targets, to maneuver troops with mobile launchers out from under a possible enemy nuclear attack, and to reallocate strike targets among units and large units, as well as take many other measures connected with preparing for the decisive nuclear period of war.]

In this article we made an attempt to examine only some of the very general problems of armed combat in the non-nuclear period of war and express our views, which do not claim to be complete and indisputable. Further work in this area may provide a number of useful theoretical and practical conclusions concerning the preparation of our Armed Forces to conduct combat actions without employing nuclear weapons.

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