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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20505

2 August 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR: The Director of Central Intelligence
FROM : William W. Wells
Deputy Director for Operations
SUBJECT : WARSAW PACT JOURNAL: Tasks to be Accomplished
by the Navy When Assisting Ground Forces
Attacking on a Coastal Axis

1. The enclosed Intelligence Information Special Report is part of a series now in preparation based on articles from a SECRET Soviet publication called Information Collection of the Headquarters and the Technical Committee of the Combined Armed Forces. This article examines the special features of a ground forces offensive operation on a coastal axis necessitating the support of naval forces, enumerates specific tasks to be accomplished by the navy in this, and emphasizes the importance of close and well-organized cooperation and the careful coordination of actions in achieving success. Among the tasks designated for the navy are destroying the enemy's naval forces, conducting amphibious landings and antilanding defense, and disrupting the enemy's sea lines of communication and defending one's own lines. This journal is published by Warsaw Pact Headquarters in Moscow, and it consists of articles by Warsaw Pact officers. This article appeared in Issue No. 5, which was published in 1973.

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 [redacted] Codeword [redacted]

William W. Wells [redacted]

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Intelligence Information Special Report

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COUNTRY USSR/WARSAW PACT



DATE OF INFO. 1973

DATE 2 August 1976

SUBJECT

WARSAW PACT JOURNAL: Tasks to be Accomplished by the Navy When Assisting Ground Forces Attacking on a Coastal Axis

SOURCE: Documentary
Summary:

The following report is a translation from Russian of an article from a SECRET Soviet publication called Information Collection of the Headquarters and the Technical Committee of the Combined Armed Forces. This journal is published by Warsaw Pact Headquarters in Moscow, and it consists of articles by Warsaw Pact officers. This article was written by Vice Admiral V. Em. This article examines the special features of a ground forces offensive operation on a coastal axis necessitating the support of naval forces, enumerates specific tasks to be accomplished by the navy in this, and emphasizes the importance of close and well-organized cooperation and the careful coordination of actions in achieving success. Among the tasks designated for the navy are destroying the enemy's naval forces, conducting amphibious landings and antilanding defense, and disrupting the enemy's sea lines of communication and defending one's own lines. Measures for cooperation are also enumerated with specific attention given to coordinating the efforts of troops in delivering the initial massed strike. This article appeared in Issue No. 5, which was published in 1973.

End of Summary

 Comment:

The names of authors are given in Russian transliteration.



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Tasks to be Accomplished by the Navy When Assisting
Ground Forces Attacking on a Coastal Axis

by
Vice Admiral V. Em,
Deputy Minister of National Defense and
Commander of the People's Navy of the
German Democratic Republic

It is well known that victory over a powerful enemy can be gained only through the joint efforts of all branches of the armed forces. Therefore, close and all-around cooperation between naval and ground forces advancing on a coastal axis is one of the most important factors for success.

In this article, on the basis of an analysis of the combined exercises which have been held, tasks are set forth which might be accomplished by the navy when assisting the ground forces.

Special features of an offensive operation by
ground forces on a coastal axis

A coastal axis is that portion of a theater of military operations which includes a continental zone and an adjacent area of the sea. As a rule, a certain number of ports and transshipment points with various capacities are located in the continental zone and are linked with the overall network of lines of communication through an appropriate system of roadways, railways, and waterways. In addition, industrial and military installations, political and administrative institutions, and also troops of various types are located here. The military installations usually include naval bases, emplacements and positions for coastal defense, for coastal missile and artillery troops and for the shore-based observation system, and forces and means of the air defense of the country, including airfields and the positions of surface-to-air missile units. But units and subunits of ground forces designated to conduct combat actions in this area might also be located here.

When the land portion of a theater of military operations adjoins the sea, the enemy is given an opportunity to use his naval forces against the coastal flank of the attacking troops. This corroborates the well-known assumption that on a coastal axis of a theater of military operations, the aim of an operation can be achieved only through the joint efforts of the various branches of the armed forces, primarily the ground forces and navy.

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An offensive operation of the ground forces, as is known, is conducted for the purpose of destroying opposing enemy groupings, and seizing enemy territory and the most important political and economic centers, as well as the military installations which have definite significance in achieving the goals of the operation.

When combined actions are being conducted, one of the special features of an operation is that the groupings of ground forces deliver strikes in conjunction with naval forces and other branches of the armed forces in order to weaken the enemy's nuclear potential on the ground and at sea, neutralize his control posts and also destroy the enemy's strike and landing groupings. Leaving coastal flanks exposed facilitates action by enemy naval and air forces against our troops; and also, when there is inadequate defense of the coastline, permits the enemy to conduct landing operations on the flank or in the rear of the attacking troops, which in turn makes it necessary to organize an antilanding defense on the seaward side.

To guarantee the success of combined actions by groupings of various branches of the armed forces, it is necessary, during the preparation for an operation, to carefully coordinate the tasks to be accomplished between the branches of the armed forces, especially between the ground forces and the navy. It is also necessary to bear in mind that when conducting an offensive operation on a coastal axis, military-geographic conditions exert a great influence. For example, by correctly using the geographic features of a closed naval theater, the enemy can relatively quickly and with a small expenditure of means prepare a broken shoreline including bays and fiords for the defense, and also prepare peninsulas and islands located in the zone near the shore. In addition, such an area is poorly surveyed, which hampers the conduct of reconnaissance. Owing to the relatively short distances and limited space of a closed naval theater of military operations, the troops of either side can conduct both landing and other surprise actions. Under these conditions, it often becomes necessary to transfer combat actions from the continental portion of the theater to islands, which entails the negotiation of wide water obstacles. This is possible only when combined actions are organized involving the ground, air and naval forces, as well as the air defense forces of the country and airborne troops. The main conclusion to be derived from the special conditions involved in conducting offensive operations on a coastal axis should, in our opinion, be the importance of forestalling enemy offensive actions. It is necessary to strive to destroy the enemy's main groupings while they are still in the departure areas, and to opportunely and completely seize the initiative.

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Possible tasks of the navy, the number and nature of them

In spite of the increasing capabilities of all branches of the armed forces to conduct independent operations, assisting the ground forces which are conducting an offensive on a coastal axis remains, as before, one of the main tasks of the navy.

The number of possible tasks to be accomplished by the navy in support of the ground forces is determined by the goal and nature of an offensive operation and by the conditions of the theater. These, in our opinion are the tasks:

- the destruction of the enemy's naval forces at sea, in departure areas and deployment areas, and also at bases in order to prevent them from operating against groupings of our ground forces operating on a coastal axis;
- the blockade of enemy naval forces in bases or within a definite section of the naval theater, and the subsequent destruction of them;
- participation in landing amphibious landing forces to seize islands, important portions of the coastline, straits, channels, ports and naval bases, and also the providing of assistance to the ground forces when they are making an assault crossing of wide water obstacles;
- the destruction of enemy landing groupings in embarkation areas and during their sea transit, and also participation in the antilanding defense of the coastline;
- the disruption of enemy sea lines of communication and the seaward blockade of groupings of enemy ground forces which have been driven back to the shore;
- the defense of our sea lines of communication and ensuring the movement of troops, combat equipment, and materiel for ground forces operating on a coastal axis.

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As for the main task of the navy in a closed naval theater, even in the future it will continue to be the destruction of enemy naval forces in order to gain supremacy in this theater. This is primarily achieved through actions by submarines, naval aviation, strike groupings of surface forces, and coastal missile units.

The task of destroying enemy naval forces is a highly complicated one, especially when geographic conditions make it possible for the enemy to secretly base and widely disperse his ships and aviation. Modern means of observation, whose range of detection often exceeds the distance from one shore of the water area to the other in a closed naval theater, enable both sides to continuously monitor ship movements. Therefore, in addition to organizing our reconnaissance well, it is extremely important to plan in advance and continuously combat all types of enemy reconnaissance, and to put his system of observation out of action across a broad front, especially on the axes of planned combat actions.

The destruction of enemy naval forces, as is known, is achieved only as the result of decisive offensive combat actions conducted by naval forces, both independently and in cooperation with other branches of the armed forces.

One of the possible tasks of the navy in assisting the ground forces is to participate in the landing of amphibious landing forces. Amphibious landing operations are planned and conducted in close cooperation with ground, air and naval forces, and also with the air defense forces of the country. They are used when it is necessary to seize islands or portions of the enemy coastline and to subsequently bypass enemy groupings which are on the defensive along the coastline. Amphibious landing forces may also be used to seize enemy ports and naval bases. This to a certain extent provides for sea shipments for ground forces groupings operating on the coastal axis, and, for the navy, ensures that basing areas are brought closer to the front line. In order to successfully set amphibious landing forces ashore, it is very important to organize, at the proper time, the reconnaissance of a landing area, the neutralization of enemy antilanding defense, the loading of troops onto amphibious landing means, the crossing of the sea by the landing force, and the landing of troops and combat equipment on the enemy shore. Then it is necessary for the navy to support the actions of the landing force on the shore and to deliver sea shipments for it.

Equipping ground forces with modern amphibious equipment, and equipping tanks with means of flotation enables them to relatively

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independently negotiate certain water obstacles, of course, only under favorable weather conditions. In these cases, the navy provides cover from the sea of the ground forces which are negotiating a water obstacle, and when necessary provides navigational and emergency rescue support.

The movement of naval forces from a closed naval theater to an open sea area adjacent to the ocean creates favorable conditions for assisting in a subsequent offensive by groupings of ground forces along the seacoast, and also for disrupting the enemy's sea lines of communication in these areas. The task of breaking through a strait is highly complicated, and for its fulfillment, coordinated actions by all branches of the armed forces are necessary. Among the many individual tasks which need to be accomplished in this case, particular importance is attached to effective mine warfare.

Naval forces carry out combat actions to disrupt the enemy's sea lines of communication, primarily in order to prevent the transfer by sea of enemy reserves and to impede the delivery of cargo for his ground forces. Effective assistance can also be provided to our attacking groupings by blockading enemy troops which have been driven back to the shore, and by preventing their evacuation by sea.

Of great importance in supporting offensive actions is the establishment of our own sea lines of communication, which would ensure the movement of troops, combat equipment and materiel, and reliable protection of them by the navy. Sea shipments are desirable if only because significantly less time is spent by using sea transport for these purposes than when a task of the same scope is carried out using ground transport means. Calculations show that to deliver up to 20,000 tons of cargo to an army located at a depth of 800 to 900 kilometers, sea transport will require about 48 hours, while 1,500 to 2,000 trucks will take at least four to five days to transport the same cargo. We must not forget that shipments by truck are possible only when the road network has been preserved, but it is precisely these roads and the railway junctions that will be targets of enemy strikes. This situation once again confirms convincingly the importance of sea lines of communication. Therefore, the task of the navy is to provide reliable protection for transports in ports and during sea transits, as well as navigational-hydrographic support for them.

One of the important tasks of the navy is to prevent the landing of enemy amphibious landing forces on the flank of attacking groupings. In this respect, the most effective way to assist the ground forces is to combat enemy landing ships during the embarkation of the troops to be

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landed and during their sea transit in order to force the enemy to abandon his intention. If the landing is still successful, naval forces could prevent the enemy from bringing up reserves and delivering shipments of supplies to the troops which have been landed.

Some problems of cooperation between branches of the armed forces in an offensive operation on a coastal axis

We can state with full justification that assurance of reliable control and precisely coordinated cooperation among all the large units and formations of various branches of the armed forces participating in an operation is required in order for the assistance provided by the navy to ground forces attacking on a coastal axis to be successful.

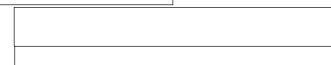
Cooperation between the ground forces, the navy, and other branches of the armed forces is organized according to tasks, axes, time, targets, and methods of fulfilling the tasks. Between operational formations or tactical large units, cooperation is carried out in support of those forces which accomplish the main tasks. As a rule, the commander of the ground forces grouping, along with the commanders of operational large units of other branches of the armed forces, organizes cooperation.

Cooperation is achieved by:

- coordination of tasks and methods of fulfilling them by all forces taking part in an operation;
- setting up of accurate mutual recognition by ground, naval and air forces, amphibious and airborne landing troops, and air defense troops;
- well-timed mutual exchange of information about the situation on the ground, in the air, and at sea;
- exchange of operations groups;
- organization and maintenance of stable communications between large units and units of all branches of the armed forces;
- organization of a unified warning system and coordination of the actions of air defense forces and means during

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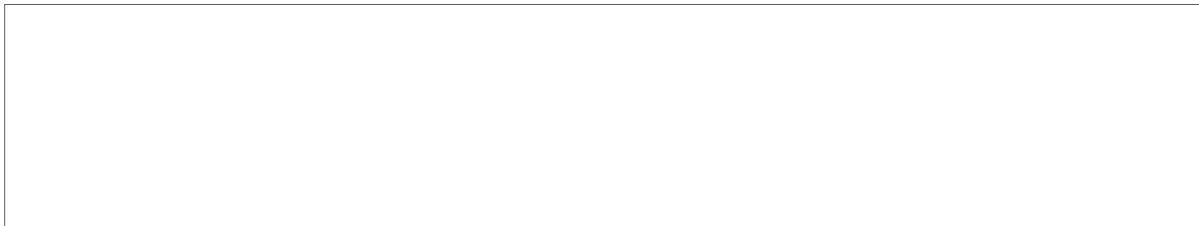
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- combat against an air enemy;
- implementation of other measures directed toward supporting an operation;
 - conduct of advance special and combined training for groupings of ground forces and naval forces operating on a coastal axis and their staffs.

Coordination of all matters connected with the delivery of the initial strike is the main factor in the organizing of cooperation during an offensive operation on a coastal axis. The aims of the initial massed strike, its strength, the time and method of delivery, the tasks of groupings of the rocket troops and front aviation, the procedure for cooperation among the forces participating in the strike, and also control signals are all determined, as a rule, by the commander of the ground forces grouping. It is necessary, first and foremost, that the first massed strike destroy nuclear means, ship groupings, naval bases, large ports and important administrative centers of the enemy located along the sea coast. There is no doubt that an expedient allocation of the efforts of large units and units of various branches of the armed forces taking part in an operation plays a decisive role.

The implementation of the measures enumerated for organizing cooperation creates favorable conditions for the achievement of the overall goal of an offensive operation on a coastal axis.

In conclusion, we would point out that it is necessary, in our opinion, to continue in the future the study and discussion of problems connected with the use of naval forces to assist ground forces operating on a coastal axis. We must constantly devote attention to these problems while training the commanders and staffs of the appropriate formations and large units of the various branches of the armed forces.

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