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MEMORANDUM FOR: The Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT : MILITARY THOUGHT (USSR): An Operation to Destroy Enemy
Antisubmarine Forces

1. The enclosed Intelligence Information Special Report is part of a series now in preparation based on the SECRET Soviet Ministry of Defense publication Military-Theoretical Collection of Articles of the Journal "Military Thought." This article briefly discusses the actions the Soviets would take in a special naval operation at the beginning of a war to neutralize the underwater, surface, and airborne ASW forces of the US and NATO and disable their underwater hydroacoustic surveillance systems, cable lines, data collection and processing points, and ASW control centers in the Atlantic, Mediterranean, and Pacific theaters. This article appeared in Issue No. 3 (7) for 1975.

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 also been assigned the

[] Codeword []

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John H. Stein

Deputy Director for Operations

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Intelligence Information Special Report

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COUNTRY USSR

DATE OF
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SUBJECT

MILITARY THOUGHT (USSR): An Operation to Destroy Enemy Antisubmarine Forces

SOURCE Documentary

Summary:

The following report is a translation from Russian of an article which appeared in Issue No. 3 (7) for 1975 of the SECRET USSR Ministry of Defense publication Military-Theoretical Collection of Articles of the Journal "Military Thought". This article, by Rear Admiral V. A. Samoylov, first defines the underwater, surface, and airborne ASW threat posed by US and NATO forces against the Soviets in the Atlantic, Mediterranean, and Pacific areas and particularly in the straits and narrows contiguous to the USSR. This is followed by a general description of the actions the Soviets would take in a special naval operation at the beginning of a war to neutralize US and NATO ship hunter-killer groups, nuclear and diesel ASW submarines, ASW aviation, and their basing system and to destroy or disable enemy underwater hydroacoustic surveillance systems, cable lines, data collection and processing points, and control centers of ASW forces. All of this would be accomplished by Soviet multiple-arm naval forces assisted by long-range and front aviation and (in the event of a nuclear war) the Strategic Rocket Forces.

End of SummaryComment:

According to available sources, author Vladimir A. Samoylov was promoted to vice admiral in 1977 and served as a First Deputy Commander of the Black Sea Fleet. Since August 1982 he has held the position of Commander of the Leningrad Naval Base where he was probably promoted to admiral in December 1982.

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AN OPERATION TO DESTROY ENEMY ANTISUBMARINE FORCES

Rear Admiral V. A. SAMOYLOV

According to the plan of the American command, combat against submarines at the beginning of a war will consist of a combination of decisive offensive actions joined together by the concept of "antisubmarine warfare" /ASW/, the ultimate purpose of which is to deny the enemy effective use of his own submarine forces, primarily his nuclear missile submarines. To conduct such actions, powerful forces and modern ASW means are being created whose efforts are to be concentrated on preventing the deployment of submarines and on destroying them in transit at sea and in their combat patrol and combat action areas.

The ASW forces are being developed by increasing the number of their most advanced types: nuclear ASW submarines, air-capable ships, and new land-based and carrier-borne ASW aircraft and helicopters. The upgrading of the inventory of surface ships and diesel submarines and their equipping with more sophisticated acoustic and non-acoustic means of submarine detection and with ASW weapons are being carried out simultaneously; and a stationary sonar surveillance system is being developed and perfected, particularly in the Atlantic and Pacific oceans, in the Mediterranean Sea, and in a number of other areas of the world ocean.

At present the ASW forces of the fleets of the NATO countries have over 200 submarines, more than 700 surface ships and boats, and approximately 2,000 aircraft and helicopters. In the Pacific Ocean more than 400 combat ships and as many as 500 ASW aircraft are included in their inventory. For the purpose of conducting antisubmarine warfare, the extensive use of mines is called for, particularly in the exits from bases, in straits and narrows, and also in the probable deployment routes of our submarines.

Combat against submarines, support of the combat actions of naval strike forces, and protection of sea lanes are viewed by the command of the US and NATO naval forces as a unified task. The principal role in accomplishing it is assigned to the ASW forces and to the system of underwater surveillance and control of forces which has been set up in advance.

With the combined employment of ASW submarines, aviation, surface ships, and stationary sonar means, it is envisaged to accomplish the above-mentioned tasks to the entire depth of the theaters, with due regard for their unique geographic features, by the establishment of ASW zones and barriers and by the close-in

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escort of strike groupings and convoys. Accordingly, the main efforts will be concentrated on the most important submarine deployment routes and in straits and narrows.

The American command intends to achieve the greatest concentration of ASW forces within the limits of the forward ASW zones immediately adjacent to the areas in which submarines have deployed from their basing points, or in sectors where, according to theater conditions, the task of detecting and destroying submarines can be accomplished most successfully.

In the Atlantic Ocean the Americans categorize the Barents, Norwegian, and Greenland seas as such areas, as well as the straits connecting those seas to the Atlantic. Measures are being implemented in those areas to make it possible to establish a strong ASW grouping having up to 75 submarines (15 of which are nuclear), more than 100 shore-based aircraft, at least one carrier group, and ships from a standing large unit of NATO's Allied Naval Forces.

In the Pacific Ocean it is planned to concentrate ASW forces in the area from Kamchatka to The Philippines and in the seas of Japan and Okhotsk with their straits, where plans call for having more than 10 nuclear and as many as 30 diesel submarines, two to three carrier groups, and approximately 250 aircraft.

In the Mediterranean Sea steps are being taken which are aimed at establishing ASW barriers in the straits zones and narrow passages with up to three to four nuclear and 10 diesel submarines, more than 50 aircraft, approximately 40 helicopters, and over 30 surface ships being allocated to them on the basis of the experience of exercises by NATO's Allied Armed Forces. These forces are being concentrated at the Gibraltar, Tunis, Crete, and Otranto barriers. The improvement of the system of close-in escort of ship large units against submarine attacks is also continuing.

When organizing the ASW defense of ship large units in transit at sea and in a combat action area, primary attention is given to the protection of strike carriers, landing forces, and convoys.

Frigates, destroyers, patrol craft, carrier-borne ASW aircraft and helicopters, and land-based patrol aircraft are used for close-in escort of strike carriers. In 1973 the Americans worked out and began the practice of using one or two nuclear submarines as part of the forces escorting a carrier strike force, which significantly increased the possibilities of detecting and destroying submarines in the combat maneuver area of the strike carriers.

As compared to World War II, the American command assigns an important place in its ASW system to stationary systems for surveillance of the water environment. Intensive work is being carried out to develop systems of

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long-range sonar surveillance of submarines not only on the approaches to the American continent and in straits and narrows, but practically in the entire water area of the ocean theaters. For these purposes they have established the SOSUS system for long-range detection of submarines, which includes the Caesar, Artemis, Colossus, and other sonar systems.

As follows from our combat training experience, the Americans are carrying out continuous surveillance and reconnaissance of the activities of Soviet submarines and they strive to track them constantly in order to destroy detected submarines at the beginning of a war.

Thus, in the ocean and sea theaters the command of the US and NATO naval forces has established a powerful system of ASW forces and means, including a system for surveilling our submarines, interpreting the underwater situation, and controlling ASW forces, and it has also established shipborne and airborne ASW forces.

If timely and effective steps are not taken to combat enemy ASW forces, they can destroy a certain number of our submarines at the beginning of combat actions, which would jeopardize the accomplishment of important combat tasks by these submarines.

To counterbalance the system set up by the enemy to detect and identify submarines, we require a system to provide for the concealment of their actions and to overcome the countermeasures of the ASW forces, including a combination of operational, tactical, and technical measures to be carried out systematically and according to a unified plan.

As demonstrated by the experience of special and large-scale operational-strategic exercises involving a large number of submarines, the preparation of conditions for successfully destroying enemy ASW forces can include the following: the early discovery of the enemy's ASW system in a theater and, in particular, the detection of his groupings of ASW forces, their basing and deployment areas, and also his stationary systems of underwater surveillance and control of forces; maintenance of the concealment of our submarines' actions; the systematic execution of a combination of measures to deceive the enemy; the direct support by surface ships of the actions of submarines when they break away from the enemy's ASW forces and when they pass through straits, narrows, and ASW barriers; and the diversion of enemy ASW forces to fake axes, where it would be possible to effectively destroy them at the beginning of a war.

Maximum concealment of the actions of our submarines during their deployment and performance of combat duty is a necessary condition for achieving the main objective -- to prevent the destruction of our submarines at the beginning of a war and to ensure that they successfully accomplish their assigned tasks. Both the actions of the submarines themselves, which should always be conducted with

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maximum concealment, and also the combination of measures pertaining to the operational camouflage of our own forces and the deception* of the enemy must be subordinated to that objective.

At the beginning of a war it is advisable to initiate aggressive and decisive actions to destroy within a short time ASW forces and means in the theaters, thereby bringing about favorable conditions for the deployment and combat actions of our submarines.

The neutralization and destruction of enemy ASW forces exceed the scope of conventional support actions. This has been confirmed by the experience of World War II. As is known, one of the major errors of the German Fascist command in using submarines was its neglect of matters concerning combat against enemy ASW forces, which resulted in heavy losses.

In present-day conditions, in order to ensure the deployment of a large number of submarines to remote areas and the massed use of them in the vast expanses of ocean and sea theaters, an objective necessity arises to conduct a special naval operation to destroy enemy ASW forces.

The aim of such an operation is to bring about favorable conditions for our submarines to effectively overcome the enemy's countermeasures and accomplish their assigned combat tasks.

In order to achieve this objective of the operation, it will be necessary to accomplish tasks aimed at defeating the main groupings of the surface, underwater, and airborne ASW forces of the probable enemy on the deployment and operational axes of our main groupings of submarines, particularly in the barriers and ASW zones; at disorganizing the system of surveillance and interpretation of the underwater situation in a theater; at disrupting the control of the enemy's ASW forces; and at destroying or disorganizing their basing system.

A characteristic feature of this operation will be its great spatial scope, which is caused by the deeply echeloned disposition of the enemy's system of ASW forces and means and also by the availability of the system of stationary surveillance, basing, and control that has been developed.

The qualitative diversity of the forces and means being introduced into the enemy's ASW system and the spatial distribution of them throughout entire theaters create great difficulties in neutralizing and destroying this system, and the accomplishment of this task requires the involvement of multiple-arm naval forces and other branches of the armed forces, which must operate according to a unified concept and plan under centralized control.

 *Translator's note: The Russian word translated "deception" and "deceive" in this report is dezinformatsiya, literally "disinformation".

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Specially established groupings of submarines, surface ships, and naval missile-carrying and ASW aviation, as well as large units of long-range and front aviation, can be assigned to accomplish tasks in the operation; in addition, shore-based missile units and, in certain cases, also light naval forces, missile units of fronts, and the Air Defense Forces of the Country in coastal and enclosed sea theaters /might be assigned/. Under conditions wherein nuclear weapons are used according to the decision of the Supreme High Command, the Strategic Rocket Forces as well can be assigned to participate in the operation.

The main action targets of the forces in the operation will obviously be the enemy's ship hunter-killer groups, nuclear and diesel ASW submarines, his ASW aviation, and their basing system. Simultaneously with this, it will be advisable to take steps to destroy or put out of operation underwater sonar surveillance systems, cable lines, information collection and processing points, and also the control centers of ASW forces.

Naval and long-range aviation and ship striking forces can be used to destroy the enemy's surface ASW groupings, whereas in coastal waters use can be made of shore-based missile units, light naval forces, and also front aviation. ASW submarines at sea will be destroyed by ASW ship forces, ASW aviation, and submarines. Strikes against the airfields of ASW aviation, against ASW ships and submarines at bases, and against shore-based information collection points, stationary surveillance systems, and control centers can be delivered by missile submarines, the Strategic Rocket Forces, and long-range and front aviation.

Hitting the enemy's stationary underwater surveillance systems, which are deployed in vast areas of the ocean and sea theaters and are carefully camouflaged, is a complex problem. For this purpose it is necessary to detect in advance the location areas of the underwater sonar surveillance systems, the cable lines, the information collection and processing equipment and facilities, as well as the control centers and, at the beginning of combat actions, to deliver strikes against the most vulnerable links in the stationary surveillance systems.

Underwater sonar systems and cable lines can be destroyed with the aid of underwater explosions by depth charges, torpedoes with nuclear charges, and also by remote-controlled mines laid out in advance in the identified areas where stationary underwater surveillance means are located.

Also of great importance are measures to "blind" the enemy's underwater surveillance system by the massed use of means of hydroacoustic countermeasures in order to create a false underwater situation, and of means of electronic suppression in the control networks of /his/ ASW forces.

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In order to lay out decoys, it is advisable to allocate special groups of submarines and aircraft which will divert enemy ASW forces from the actual deployment routes and operational areas of our submarines by the massed use of hydroacoustic countermeasures means on false deployment routes and in false combat action areas.

The operational disposition of the forces in the operation can include the following: on the main axis -- groupings to destroy enemy ASW forces at sea, at bases, in ASW barriers, and in straits and narrows, as well as ASW aviation at airfields, and also /groupings/ to neutralize and destroy the underwater surveillance and control system of ASW forces; for support actions -- groupings of forces to neutralize the continental air defense, weaken the defense of enemy ASW large units, and create a false underwater situation by the massed use of hydroacoustic countermeasures and electronic suppression means.

All the actions of the forces in the operation to destroy enemy ASW forces should be thoroughly coordinated with the deployment plans and actions of our submarines.

As the experience of exercises reveals, at the beginning of a war the initial strikes are of the greatest significance for achieving the objectives of the operation. They must be delivered within the shortest time by all the forces participating in the operation, above all against the ASW forces deployed in the /operational/ areas and ASW barriers and also against ASW aviation at airfields. Simultaneously with this, it is necessary to act against the forces at bases and against the surveillance and control systems of the forces. At the same time, it is advisable to blockade the forces at bases by laying mines and to contain the movement of the ASW ship groupings located at sea.

The operation to destroy enemy ASW forces must be planned in advance on the basis of specific tasks and the situation. An indispensable condition for the successful planning of the actions of the forces in the operation is the close coordination of these actions with the accomplishment of other tasks by the fleet and also with the actions of the troops of coastal fronts. The conduct of combat actions under conditions wherein nuclear or only conventional weapons are used must be provided for in the plans.

The prime consideration in the planning will be matters concerning the optimum allocation of our own forces according to tasks, times, and areas and the organization of cooperation with other branches of the armed forces. Especially important in organizing this cooperation will be the planning of the use of the nuclear weapons which are at the disposal of the fleet commander. Under conditions wherein a war begins with the use of nuclear weapons, there will be an opportunity to simultaneously act against all of the principal elements of the enemy's systems of ASW forces and means within the shortest time and to achieve their effective destruction and neutralization. When an

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operation is conducted with the use of only conventional means of destruction, the ASW forces and means can be destroyed only by the successive delivery of strikes with due regard for the deployment and operating times and areas of our submarines.

Of exceptional importance here is the art of selecting the strike targets and the optimum sequence of hitting them, as well as the ability to carry out a rapid and concealed maneuver in order to concentrate the necessary forces and means on the main axis within a short time.

The massed use of forces in the operation and the skillful coordination of their actions with the strikes of the Strategic Rocket Forces, the front, and long-range aviation bring about conditions for winning supremacy in specific areas of the seas and oceans for the deployment and operational period of our submarines.

Successful accomplishment of the tasks in the operation will largely depend on the organization of efficient cooperation among the forces participating in it. This should include coordinating the sequence of the delivery of strikes by multiple-arm naval forces and large units of the other branches of the armed forces; allocating the strike tasks and targets; and maintaining mutual guidance and target designation, exchange of information about the enemy, and also mutual safety when using weapons.

Subsequent actions in the operation to destroy ASW forces will be connected with the procedure for redeploying our submarines and building up their number in a theater through the deployment of the second echelon. During the subsequent actions, concurrent with the completion of the defeat of previously detected ASW forces, newly detected groupings of ASW forces which are opposing the accomplishment of tasks by our submarines are to be destroyed.

Decisive actions in the operation to destroy enemy ASW forces will promote the achievement of the main objectives in operations in the ocean and sea theaters of military operations.

The detection of the forces opposing the deployment of our submarines, the identification of the location and composition of the enemy's principal ASW groupings, and the exposure of the organizational structure of his ASW barriers and of the organized employment of the ASW forces and means in them should be considered the main tasks of reconnaissance in the operation to destroy ASW forces.

As the experience of special exercises demonstrates, it is particularly difficult to detect stationary underwater surveillance systems, above all such elements of them as underwater sonar receivers and cable lines. Therefore, systematic actions must be carried out in advance by specially allocated

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reconnaissance forces equipped with appropriate technical means for detecting these systems. However complex this task, if it is not accomplished it will be impossible to plan and carry out the actions to put these systems out of operation at the beginning of a war.

For simultaneous action against all the elements of the enemy's ASW system, the reconnaissance of his ASW forces and means must be conducted without interruption by all available methods and it must be aggressive in nature so as to ensure the issuance of data at the beginning of a war to the multiple-arm forces participating in the operation.

The operational camouflage of our own forces and the electronic suppression of the enemy are indispensable elements of the operation. Their main purpose is to provide for the concealment of the actions of our submarines and to disorganize the enemy ASW forces reconnaissance, surveillance, and control system.

Ensuring the air defense of surface groupings, particularly in combat action areas, will be an indispensable condition for their effective utilization. This can be attained in the overall combat plan for winning air supremacy and also by the correct utilization of ship forces and means.

An important place in the operation will belong to the well-thought-out organization and efficient control of the forces. The Commander-in-Chief of the Navy or the fleet commanders appointed by him will exercise control of the forces in the operation to destroy enemy ASW forces. Control of the large units of long-range aviation and Strategic Rocket Forces which are allocated to participate in the operation is to be exercised through the appropriate main staffs of the branches of the armed forces and the staffs of cooperating formations.

A main feature of the control of forces in the operation being discussed is the fact that all the actions of the forces in it are most closely connected with the deployment of our submarines and the accomplishment by them of specific combat tasks. Therefore, the plan for the operation to destroy enemy ASW forces must be closely coordinated with the plans for the other operations that are to be carried out by our naval forces, and the forces must be controlled from the command post which controls our submarines.

At fleet command posts it is advisable to have a unified command center for controlling the submarines and forces carrying out the destruction of enemy ASW forces and means along their deployment routes and in combat action areas.

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To ensure stability of control in remote areas, it is necessary to provide for the deployment of zonal commands which are capable of assuming control of all the forces operating in a given zone in case centralized control is temporarily disrupted.

Thus, the increase in the role of submarines and the importance of the tasks to be accomplished by them in a modern war, on one hand, and the establishment by the enemy of a powerful and ramified system of combat against our submarines, on the other, determine the need for conducting a special naval operation to destroy enemy ASW forces -- one whose purpose is to ensure favorable conditions for the utilization of our submarines in ocean and sea theaters.

This operation must be closely coordinated with the other operations of the fleets and must be constantly worked out during operational training.

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