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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20505

15 February 1979

MEMORANDUM FOR: The Director of Central Intelligence
FROM : John N. McMahon
Deputy Director for Operations
SUBJECT : WARSAW PACT JOURNAL: Combat Actions by
Naval Forces in the Process of Achieving
Supremacy at Sea

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 is an overview of the basic factors involved in attaining supremacy at sea in an enclosed naval theater with the end purpose of supporting the coastal flanks of ground forces in the capture of straits zones. The various aspects of coping actively and passively with the mine threat are presented. Mention is made of the need for air supremacy, support for amphibious operations, and blockade actions. 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. 12, which was published in 1976.

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].

John N. McMahon

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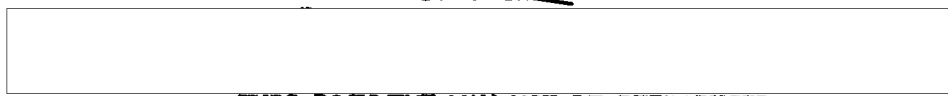
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Intelligence Information Special Report

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COUNTRY USSR/WARSAW PACT



DATE OF INFO. 1976

DATE 15 February 1979

SUBJECT

WARSAW PACT JOURNAL: Combat Actions by Naval Forces in the Process of Achieving Supremacy at Sea

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 Commander T. Mandat. This article is an overview of the basic factors involved in attaining supremacy at sea in an enclosed naval theater with the end purpose of supporting the coastal flanks of ground forces in the capture of straits zones. The various aspects of coping actively and passively with the mine threat are presented. Mention is made of the need for air supremacy, support for amphibious operations, and blockade actions. Discussing the combat for supremacy at sea, it touches upon the organization for combat, combat methods, reconnaissance requirements and tasks, coordination, and control. This article appeared in Issue No. 12, which was published in 1976.

End of Summary

Comment:

Commander Tadeusz Mandat is Deputy Chief of Staff of the Polish Navy. The names of authors are given in Russian transliteration.



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Combat Actions by Naval Forces in the Process
of Achieving Supremacy at Sea

by

Commander T. MANDAT
Deputy Chief of Staff of the Navy
of the Polish People's Republic

Under modern conditions combat actions at sea may be characterized by extensive scope and the massive employment of multiple-arm forces, an increase in the depth of mutual actions, the massed employment of nuclear weapons, and also a significant growth in the number of support forces and means.

The achievement and retention of supremacy at sea has acquired special significance. The accomplishment of this task will be predetermined largely by the effectiveness of the combat activities of the naval forces.

The basic factors determining the attainment of superiority over the enemy and the achievement of supremacy at sea, in our view, are associated with: the ability to forestall enemy actions, exploiting the element of surprise; the establishment of qualitative and quantitative superiority; the achievement of air supremacy; the attainment of a higher degree of combat readiness by [our] forces, and of a superior morale and political level by [our] personnel; and also the better preparation [by us] of the theater of military operations.

Success in combat actions within an enclosed naval theater can be ensured through the active and systematic utilization of multiple-arm forces for the purpose of destroying the enemy in specific regions and of preventing (or impeding) him from replenishing his forces with groupings from without. It is impossible to attain the ultimate goal -- the achievement of supremacy at sea -- by a single strike. To achieve this requires combat activities of the navy within the framework of one or several operations.

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It should be noted that the achievement of supremacy in an enclosed naval theater is not a purpose in itself -- it is an essential stage in achieving the purpose of the operation. The accomplishment of this task enables naval forces to establish favorable conditions for the effective support of the coastal flank of the ground forces. ||

Of great importance (in addition to the problem of air supremacy) are blockade actions, which include not only the isolation of specific groupings of enemy forces, but primarily aggressive combat against them so as to simultaneously rule out the possibility of having them penetrate deeply into our operational zone and also prevent the shifting of enemy forces from adjacent sea areas.

The course of blockade actions in a straits zone will depend on the general situation in the theater of military operations, foremost on the balance of forces of the sides, and likewise on the nature of the operations being conducted by the front troops.

Attention should be focused on the important matter of mine threat. Bearing in mind the technical sophistication of modern mines and their high combat resistance to minesweeping, one can draw the conclusion that the most effective method of combating mines will be to prevent their laying. Thus, while still at peace, those enemy ships capable of transporting and laying mines of various types as well as the depots for mine armaments must be the object of constant interest for reconnaissance forces, and from the instant war breaks out -- one of the chief targets for the actions of our strike forces. No less important is the creation of a reliable system for antimine surveillance and for the constant monitoring and adjustment of the physical fields of ships and vessels, and likewise the correct choice of their courses and speeds on sea crossings.

Our navy must use mine weaponry in a manner that will not limit the maneuvering capability of our forces. Bearing in mind that the blockading of straits is, as a rule, terminated by actions to capture them, mines must be laid with self-destruction devices.

It should be emphasized that the accomplishment of the tasks related to the achievement of supremacy at sea demands the closest cooperation between the forces of the navy and the ground forces. During this operation, the allied fleets will be charged with the embarkation, sea lift, and debarkation of landing force troops while fully providing antimine and antisubmarine defenses, and also with covering the landing force detachments against attacks by enemy naval forces; with participation

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in the air defense, the neutralization of the enemy's antilanding defense, and the fire support for the landing force troops operating on shore. Subsequently, the naval forces will provide the shipment of military cargo to supply the ground forces engaged in actions on the islands and shores adjacent to these straits.

The navy's main tasks in the battles for the achievement of supremacy at sea involve the following: the destruction or significant weakening of the enemy strike groupings, the disruption of their rear and disorganization of their system of bases and supply system, and also the curtailment of the enemy's opportunities to receive support from adjacent sea areas.

These tasks can be fulfilled under conditions of the employment of both nuclear weapons as well as conventional weapons. It is unnecessary to emphasize that nuclear weapons can have a radical effect in modifying the situation and changing the balance of forces. This being the case, the matter of delivering preemptive nuclear strikes on the enemy's most vulnerable installations, in order to eliminate his nuclear potential, assumes exceptional significance.

Combat actions by naval forces directed toward the achievement of supremacy at sea require further study in the light of the experience of combined exercises.

Let us state our viewpoint on this matter. It appears advisable to us to establish three operational groupings whose function is to fight for the achievement of supremacy at sea and the capture of straits zones:

-- first grouping -- for actions on adjoining open seas, made up mainly of missile-delivery aircraft and submarines. Its tasks would be the disruption of sea lanes, blockade actions, and the destruction of the enemy's naval forces in these water areas;

-- second grouping -- for combat actions within the enclosed naval theater. This grouping could be made up of large and small missile boats, submarines, bomber and ground attack aircraft, and also coastal missile forces. In specific circumstances it could operate on several axes;

-- third grouping -- for supporting blockade actions, made up primarily of missile, torpedo, and mine forces, and also coastal missile forces.

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Supremacy at sea can be achieved as a result of the first operation alone. The preparation for it must be carried out quickly and secretly.

Depending on the situation, the enemy's naval groupings can be destroyed as they are being radar tracked (the instant war begins); by strikes guided by reconnaissance forces; and by strikes preceded by independent search or surprise rapid strikes (raids) on ports, bases, or selected coastal areas. The last method can be successful only if we possess detailed data on the targets planned to be struck, which makes it necessary to study them comprehensively while still at peace.

The organization of the system for obtaining full and reliable information on the enemy affects greatly the result of combat actions. Therefore reconnaissance, which includes organizational and technical measures, and also the aggressive actions of specialized forces and means, must be characterized by precisely channeled application (in keeping with the specific tasks of the navy) and continuity and secrecy of actions.

The main tasks of reconnaissance during the struggle for supremacy at sea should involve: the collection and collation of data on the situation throughout the entire water area; the detection, classification, and surveillance of the enemy's groupings, including those forces and means of his considered to be the main targets of action by our forces (ship strike groups, minelayers, landing craft, the antilanding defense system, defensive minefields, the system of channels, etc.) and likewise the surveillance of those enemy forces which constitute a threat to our fleet (delivery means for nuclear weapons, missiles, and mines); the ascertaining of the system used to prepare the theater; and also the acquisition of data on the actions of those of our forces with whom communications have been temporarily lost.

The successful fulfillment of these tasks can be achieved only by an integrated system of reconnaissance. The organic units of this system will be the specialized subsystems for antimine surveillance, reconnaissance of the surface, air, underwater, and shore situation; observation of nuclear bursts, and the like -- which will be equipped with the most modern and highly automated means.

Meriting special attention is the organization of cooperation, that is to say, the coordination of efforts as to place and time, and also regarding specific enemy targets, since it enables us to more effectively exploit the combat qualities of our fleets. This cooperation must ensure a full synchronization of the actions of our forces on the main axis or

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against the main enemy targets with the undertakings on the secondary or diversionary axes. The correct organization of cooperation is especially important under conditions of the employment of nuclear weapons. Only effectively organized communications, complete knowledge of the situation in the theater of military operations, as well as firm and consistent leadership (control) and skillful foreseeing of the changing situation can provide the necessary continuity and reliability of control, and the capability of rapidly restoring the combat effectiveness of our forces even under the most unfavorable conditions.

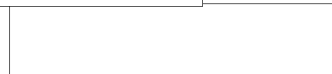
During the combat actions the situation in a theater of military operations will undergo fast-moving changes. This will necessitate rapid correction of previously adopted decisions, which is possible only when the systems of control are functioning reliably. Moreover, the successful employment of the forces and means of the allied fleets in the struggle for supremacy in an enclosed naval theater is possible, in our view, only if we have a centralized and reliably operating system of control. Within the framework of such a centralized system, the individual fleets and the operational-tactical large units (flotillas, bases) must have smoothly functioning subsystems of control which allow the individual commanders some freedom in choosing the method to accomplish the assigned tasks and make it possible for them to react rapidly to sudden changes in the situation.

In our view, the overall system of control for the forces of a planned operation must include a primary system composed of fixed command posts for the fleets and operational-tactical large units (flotillas, bases), an alternate system consisting of alternate (mobile) command posts for the fleets and operational-tactical large units, and also a zonal system, which would function in the operational zones of the individual fleets.

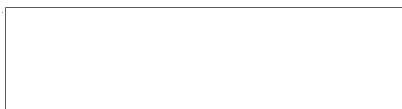
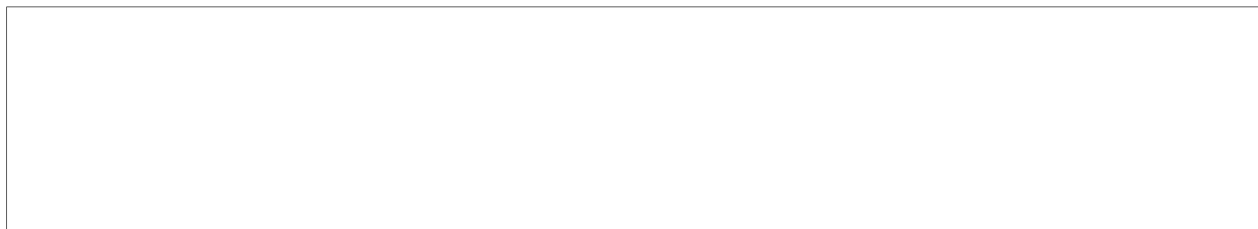
It is not necessary to emphasize that the matter of the functioning of such a system will to a significant degree depend on its advance preparation and peacetime development. Therefore, during all exercises in which multiple-arm coalition forces participate and while they fulfil other tasks, it is essential to constantly improve the control system's organizational structure and the methods of command under the different situational conditions.

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