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# Soviet Union MILITARY HISTORY JOURNAL

No 2, February 1988

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[The following is a translation of the Russian-language monthly journal VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL published in Moscow by the Krasnaya Zvezda Publishing House. Refer to the table of contents for a listing of any articles not translated.]

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## MILITARY HISTORY JOURNAL

**Created by V.I. Lenin, Fostered by the Party**  
00010032a Moscow VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY  
ZHURNAL in Russian No 2, Feb 88 (signed to press  
21 Jan 88) pp 3-11

[Editorial, published under the heading "The 70th Anniversary of the USSR Armed Forces": "Created by V.I. Lenin, Fostered by the Party"]

[Excerpts] Seven decades ago, the Great October Socialist Revolution occurred. For the first time in the history of mankind, a worker and peasant state appeared and an era of a universal revolutionary renewal of the world, the era of transition from capitalism to socialism, began. The victory of October marked the start to the liberation of peoples from exploitation and was an embodiment of the ideas of scientific communism.

The organizing of a battleworthy, regular Red Army was impeded by the severe economic situation in the nation. "Romanov and Karenskiy," wrote V.I. Lenin, "left the working class as a heritage a nation devastated as much as can be by their plunderous, criminal and harsh war, a nation picked clean by the Russian and foreign imperialists."(1) [Footnotes renumbered from original text]

A significant portion of industry was on enemy occupied territory while the defense enterprises remaining at the disposal of Soviet power were cut off from the main raw material and fuel areas. There was a shortage of raw materials, fuel, food and clothing.

The Communist Party was the organizer and inspirer of the Soviet people's victory. Its Central Committee headed by V.I. Lenin was a true combat staff and an organ of collective leadership for national defense, for the fight on the fronts and the work in the rear. "And only due to the fact," pointed out V.I. Lenin, "that the party was on guard, that the party was most strictly disciplined, because the party's authority united all departments and institutions, and under the slogan which was given by the Central Committee, as a single man there marched scores and hundreds of thousands and ultimately millions, and only because the unprecedented sacrifices were made—only for this reason only the miracle which happened could happen. Only for this reason, regardless of the double, triple and quadruple campaign of the imperialists of the Entente and the imperialists of the entire world were we able to win out."(2)

The Red Army was tempered and grew stronger in the flames of war. A glorious galaxy of famous military leaders grew up in its ranks.

At a joint ceremony of the CPSU Central Committee, the USSR Supreme Soviet and the RSFSR Supreme Soviet devoted to the 70th anniversary of the Great

October Socialist Revolution, M.S. Gorbachev in a report pointed out: "Remaining always in our memory is the feat of the legendary heroes, the courageous sailors and cavalymen, the soldiers and commanders of the young Red Army and the red partisans. They defended the revolution and their glory is eternal!"(3)

The victories of the Red Army during the years of the Civil War provided the young Soviet state with the possibility of beginning to carry out the main task of the revolution, building a socialist society. It was essential to rebuild the national economy, eliminate the chaos and hunger, reorganize agriculture and begin a cultural revolution. However, under these conditions an important task for the party and the people was the concern for the armed defense of the motherland and the strengthening of its Army and Navy as the Soviet Republic was surrounded by bourgeois states.

The Communist Party, in conducting a peace-loving foreign policy, was firmly directed by Lenin's instructions that "our steps to peace should be accompanied by the intensifying of all our military preparedness, and certainly without disarming our army."(4)

The Circular Letter of the RKP(b) [Russian Communist Party (Bolshevik)] Central Committee "On the Red Army" sent out to all party organizations in January 1921 stated: "...Only the party can preserve the army. Only our attentive, considerate, careful and affectionate attitude toward the army can support and strengthen the combat capability of the army."(5)

Upon the decision of the party and the government, a military reform was carried out in 1924-1925 under the leadership of M.V. Frunze. Its execution made it possible to strengthen the central bodies of military administration and improve the organizational structure of the formations. One-man command was established in the Red Army, combat capability was increased, the system for training and indoctrinating the Red Armymen was improved and a network of military schools and courses was established for training command personnel. During these years there was the urgent question of industrializing the nation and reconstructing the economy. Without this socialist construction, the strengthening of defense capability and the outfitting of the army with military equipment would have been inconceivable. This stemmed from the direct instructions of V.I. Lenin and from his theoretical heritage. Equally important was the question of the socialist transformations in the countryside.

Under the leadership of the party and its Central Committee, the nation quickly reestablished a heavy industry, including machine building and the defense industry, and the GOELRO [State Commission for the Electrification of Russia] Plan was carried out. We built a good number of motor vehicle, tractor, aviation, chemical, artillery and other plants producing defense products.

Major changes occurred in agriculture. The Soviet Union was turned from a backward agrarian nation into a powerful industrial-kolkhoz state.

Industrialization brought the country to a qualitatively new level. By the end of the 1930s, the USSR in terms of the output of industrial product had emerged in first place in Europe and had become a great industrial power.

During the same years, we established new scientific research institutes and the network of higher and particularly secondary military schools and courses for training the command, political and technical personnel of the Army and Navy were expanded. All of this made it possible to strengthen the defense might of the USSR and its Armed Forces.

Unfortunately, there were also negative phenomena. The system of administration by command arose in the managing of the nation, bureaucracy was strengthened as V.I. Lenin had warned at one time. The corresponding management structure and planning methods began to develop. All of this had a pernicious effect upon the nation's sociopolitical development and involved lamentable consequences. The absence of the proper lack of democracy in Soviet society also made possible the cult of personality of V.I. Lenin, the violations of legality and arbitrariness. Many Soviet people, including military personnel, were subjected to mass repression. In this context harm was done to the combat capability of the Army and Navy.

During the first postwar years in the situation of the Cold War initiated by international reaction, our party, in carrying out the tasks of rebuilding the war-devastated national economy was forced to be concerned with the continuous strengthening of the nation's defense capability. The motherland will always be proud of the labor valor and the strength of spirit shown by the Soviet people who after the hardest war raised cities and villages from the ruins, resurrected the nation and strengthened its defense might. The economy, science and technology developed continuously. The economic ties of the USSR were broadened with the socialist commonwealth countries and the international situation of the Soviet state and the other socialist countries was strengthened.

On the basis of a profound study of the previous war's experience, there was an ongoing improvement in weapons and combat equipment and in the organizational structure of the troops. Over a short period of time, the Soviet Armed Forces had received the most advanced models of automatic weapons, tanks, artillery, radar and other equipment. The complete motorization of the army was carried out. Aviation became jet-powered. Essential changes also occurred in the Navy. The fact of the development of nuclear and thermonuclear weapons

in the Soviet Union eliminated the U.S. atomic monopoly and forced the imperialists to consider the increased might of our state and its Armed Forces.

The mass arming of the troops with missile and nuclear weapons, the appearance of supersonic missile-carrying aviation, the nuclear-powered missile-carrying submarine fleet and the establishing of a new Armed Service, the strategic Rocket Troops, sharply altered the appearance of the Armed Forces and the views as to the forms and methods of their combat employment and necessitated an improvement in the organizational structure and the elaboration of new regulations.

As long as the threat exists of encroachment on the victories of socialism, the Soviet state and our allies have no other path but to strengthen the Army and Navy further and to allocate as much as is required for defense. "In favoring measures of disarmament," states the document "On the Military Doctrine of the Warsaw Pact States," "the Warsaw Pact states are forced to maintain their armed forces at such strength and on such a level which would make it possible for them to repulse any attack from outside against any Pact member state."(6)

The military doctrine of the Warsaw Pact states is strictly defensive. It proceeds from the view that under present-day conditions, the employment of military means for resolving any disputed question is inadmissible. The armed forces of the allied countries are maintained in a state of combat readiness sufficient to prevent our being caught unaware and, in the event of attack, they are ready to deal a crushing rebuff to the aggressor.

The party maintains the high combat readiness of our Armed Forces on a basis of further increasing the role of the human factor in the defense of the victories of socialism. In carrying out this most important task, the CPSU has assigned a special role to the military personnel. The January (1987) Plenum of the CPSU Central Committee emphasized: "It is essential in the future to increase the responsibility of the commanders, the political workers and all the officer personnel, the Army and Navy party organizations for maintaining military discipline on a high level, for the ideological and moral indoctrination of the men, their combat and political training, and be constantly concerned for the everyday conditions of the servicemen and their families."(7)

Presently, the Soviet Union is living through a crucial stage, a stage of acceleration and the most complete realization of the potentialities and advantages of socialism. This stage has assumed the nature of a essentially revolutionary restructuring which the June (1987) Plenum of the CPSU Central Committee has shifted into the area of concrete practical deeds.

The restructuring has also been initiated in the Armed Forces. But it, unfortunately, is going on more slowly than we would like, and as yet only the first steps have

been taken. The matter was much more complicated and there were many more problems than assumed. The Candidate Member of the Politburo of the CPSU Central Committee and USSR Minister of Defense, Army Gen D.T. Yazov, has pointed to the necessity "in the shortest time to achieve real shifts in improving the qualitative state of the troops and naval forces. In organizing and directing their activities, the commanders, staffs and political bodies must be guided by the provisions of Soviet military doctrine. This is subordinate to the task of preventing war."(8)

The combat capability and readiness of the Army and Navy are inconceivable without iron military discipline and a further strengthening of one-man command as one of the main factors in successful troop leadership. Only the completeness of executive authority of the commanders and chiefs of all levels, their high personal responsibility to the party and to the Soviet state for all aspects of the life and activities of the Army and Navy personnel, and the unconditional obligation of constantly observing the requirements of Leninist leadership principles and relying in their work on the party organization make it possible to best carry out party policy in the Armed Forces, ensuring their functioning under the conditions of the revolutionary restructuring. Discussion together but responsibility for the individual was how V.I. Lenin explained the importance of one-man command in the socialist state's army. "We need people who in any instance would learn independent command."(9) During the period of restructuring, the recruitment of personnel should, as V.I. Lenin admonished, be carried out "according to new measures and in accord with the new tasks..."(10)

The Soviet people have been working for more than 40 years under conditions of peace. This is the longest peacetime period over the 70-year history of the Soviet state and its Armed Forces. This peace has been achieved due to the wise foreign policy consistently carried out by the Communist Party. During the December days of last years the attention of the world's peoples was focused on the historic event of the concluding of an agreement between the Soviet Union and the United States on eliminating medium- and shorter-range missiles. The first unbelievably difficult, small but great in import step was taken along the path to a nuclear-free world. The treaty demonstrated to all the possibility of a turn from the arms race to disarmament. The successful implementation of the Peace Program and the prevention of nuclear war to a significant degree are to be explained by the fact that our party relies on the economic, scientific-technical, moral-political and military potentials of the nation and the combat might of the Soviet Armed Forces.

Soviet military science plays an important role in successfully carrying out the tasks of increasing the combat readiness of the Army and Navy. It is becoming an evermore active driving force and one of the effective means for improving combat and operational training

and the system of troop instruction and indoctrination. Soviet military science from its first days has elaborated the fundamental problems of theory and practice in the organizational development of the Armed Forces, military art, troop control, as well as the methods of training and indoctrinating the personnel. It must forecast and foresee the development trends in military affairs and lay the path for practice. This role of its as a whole has been carried out successfully under the leadership of our party over the entire existence of the Soviet state.

For 70 years the Soviet Armed Forces had dependably stood on guard for the motherland's security. Fostered by the party, it has traveled a historic way, they have covered their colors with immortal glory, defending the cause of Great October and the victories of socialism.

#### Footnotes

1. V.I. Lenin, PSS [Complete Collected Works], Vol 36, p 359.
2. Ibid., Vol 40, p 240.
3. M.S. Gorbachev, "Oktyabr i perestroika: revolyutsiya prodolzhayetsya" [October and Restructuring: The Revolution Continues], Moscow, Politizdat, 1987, p 9.
4. V.I. Lenin, PSS, Vol 40, p 248.
5. "KPSS o Vooruzhennykh Silakh Sovetskogo Soyuza" [The CPSU on the Soviet Union Armed Forces], Moscow, Voenizdat, 1981, p 53.
6. *Pravda*, 30 May 1987.
7. "Materialy Plenuma Tsentralnogo Komiteta KPSS, 27-28 yanvarya 1987 goda" [Materials of the Plenum of the CPSU Central Committee, 27-28 January 1987], Moscow, Politizdat, 1987, p 91.
8. *Pravda*, 29 July 1987.
9. V.I. Lenin, PSS, Vol 39, p 429.
10. Ibid., Vol 45, p 447.

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**Military Activities of Labor, Defense Council  
Headed by V.I. Lenin**

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ZHURNAL in Russian No 2, Feb 88 (signed to press  
21 Jan 88) pp 13-18

[Article by Lt Col V.N. Maltsev: "The Military Activities of the Labor and Defense Council Headed by V.I. Lenin"]

[Text] The idea of transforming the Council of Worker and Peasant Defense (The Defense Council) into the Labor and Defense Council belonged to V.I. Lenin and was raised by him repeatedly at the end of February and the beginning of March 1920 in talks with the Chairman of the VTsIK [All-Russian Central Executive Committee], M.I. Kalinin, and the Secretary of the SNK [Council of People's Commissars], L.A. Fotiyeva. This was discussed by the Central Committee in the process of preparing for the 9th RKP(b) [Russian Communist Party (Bolshevik)] Congress and at the congress itself on 31 March 1920. V.I. Lenin announced the renaming of the Council of Worker and Peasant Defense as the Labor and Defense Council.(1) This renaming was reinforced by the Decree of the 8th All-Russian Congress of Soviets of Workers, Peasants, Red Army and Cossack Deputies of 29 December 1920 which stated: "The military situation in April 1920 made it possible for the Soviet Republic to turn to economic construction and the Defense Council was confronted with the task of most closely unifying the work on the labor front and in accord with this the Defense Council was changed into the Labor and Defense Council."(2) This was given the task of quickly rebuilding the national economy, developing socialist construction, developing the defense industry and on this basis organize the technical rearming of the Red Army and Navy with modern combat equipment and weapons as well as strengthening the Soviet Armed Forces. The name "Labor and Defense Council" appeared for the first time in the minutes of its session signed by V.I. Lenin on 2 April 1920. This reviewed the economic questions and on 7 April the first decrees were adopted involving military affairs: "On the Return of Water Transport Workers and Employees From the Ranks of the Red Army," "On the Militarizing and Release From Induction in the Red Army of Workers Involved in Building Powerful Radio Stations in Chelyabinsk, Omsk and Kiev," "On Allocating Additional Financial Means for Troop Units Located in the North"(3) and others. The great attention given to military questions by the STO [Labor and Defense Council] at the very outset of its activities can be seen from the questions raised at the sessions and the decrees adopted on them. For example, on 16 April, they discussed the report of the Deputy Chairman of the RVSR [Republic Revolutionary-Military Council], E.M. Sklyanskiy "On the State of the Red Army" and on this the following decrees were adopted: "On Eliminating All Matters of the Special Commission for Registering Former Officers Under the RVSR and Its Provincial Committees"; "On

the Additional Allocation of 150 Horses and 20 Gun Carts for the 3d Division"; "On the Moving of Two Labor Army Regiments From Morshansk and Kozlov to Kharkov."(4)

The role and importance of the STO increased particularly during the period of repelling the attack by bourgeois-landowner Poland and defeating Wrangel. At the same time, it, in essence, was the extraordinary state-political body while the People's Commissariat for Military and Naval Affairs and the RVS [Revolutionary-Military Council] were its working bodies. On the very first day of the attack by bourgeois-landowner Poland (25 April 1920), a joint session of the STO and RVS reviewed the plan for defeating the White Poles(5) and 3 days later this was approved by the Politburo of the RKP(b) Central Committee. The intense work pace of the STO can be seen from the following data: just from 25 April through 31 May 1921, it reviewed 62 questions involving the situation on the Western and Southwestern Fronts.(6) On 26 April, the RKP(b) Central Committee, having discussed the question of the situation in the Ukraine, decreed "withdrawing from the Caucasus Front a maximum number of divisions for the Southwestern Front.... The Field Staff...is to accelerate the shift of the reserve armies into the Ukraine"(7) and up to 3,000 communists are to be mobilized, including at least 100 responsible workers who have military experience and they are to be sent to the Southwestern Front.

During this period, an important place in the activities of the STO was held by the questions of organizing complete support for the Red Army and coordinating the efforts of the front and the rear. In a decree of 4 May 1920, it pointed out: "The central task of the Worker-Peasant Government at present is the struggle on the Polish Front. All the nation's forces should be concentrated on achieving a complete and rapid victory."(8) Some 6 days later (10 May) the STO adopted a full decree on supplying the armies of the Western Front with clothing, footwear, weapons and ammunition. A special commission was set up to seek out additional resources. From the military department they demanded a report on the state of cartridge, rifle and machine gun production as well as practical proposals to further strengthen military production. The next two sessions held on 12 and 14 May were devoted to the following: the first to supplying the military department with textile and woven materials to produce clothing supplies for the Red Army and primarily the troops of the Western Front; the second to the question of allowing deserters to redeem their guilt to the working people by voluntarily returning to the ranks of the Red Army and fighting worthily against the motherland's enemy.(9)

After the end of the war against bourgeois-landowner Poland and the expulsion of Wrangel from the Crimea, the problems of reorganizing the Red Army held an enormous place in the work of the STO. At its sessions they studied and discussed 30 proposals of the RVSR, the military institutions and individual military leaders

on the given question. On 13 December 1920, an enlarged session of the STO was held with the participation of party, soviet and military leaders (68 persons attending, including 8 members of the STO) and this reached the unanimous opinion that a standing regular army combined with territorial militia formations was the most effective organization of the armed forces.(10) And the latter were to be based upon professional army units and formations. In accord with the decree of the STO and the RVSR of 29 December 1922, in our nation at the beginning of 1923, the first ten territorial divisions were constituted.(11) "On 1 October 1925, in the Soviet Army were 26 regular and 36 territorial divisions. In addition, there was 1 territorial-military cavalry divisions and 1 regiment of armored trains."(12) The number of territorial troops continued to increase in the 1930s. This was justified by the nation's economic difficulties and the relative lull in the imperialist camp. But in line with the growing threat from Nazi Germany and the increased economic might of the Soviet state, the STO adopted a decision to replace the territorial-professional system of manning as it did not ensure a dependable level of troop combat readiness and by the beginning of 1939, all the Soviet Army divisions were regular ones.

Simultaneously with the reorganization of the armed forces, the STO also worked on demobilizing personnel from the Army and Navy and reducing their size, since by the end of 1920, they had 5.5 million men in their ranks, of which 83.4 percent had been mobilized and 16.6 percent were volunteers.(13) In following the instructions of the party Central Committee, the STO on 4 November 1920 adopted a decision to reduce the size of the army by at least 2 million men and approved the plan of the RVS for cutting back command and political personnel of the Armed Forces. For this purpose a governmental commission was formed of 17 men and including F.E. Dzerzhinskiy, M.I. Kalinin, E.M. Sklyanskiy, and responsible workers from the military department, the trade unions, transport and other organizations. Analogous commissions were set up in the Ukraine, in the Transcaucasus, Belorussia, the autonomous republics, krays, oblasts, rayons and local soviets. On 18 February 1921, a full STO decree signed by V.I. Lenin was adopted and entitled "On Support for Red Armymen Discharged Ahead of Time." This pointed out that "the contingents of Red Armymen discharged ahead of time and returning to their homes after hard labor and hardship on the combat fronts and victoriously eliminated by them are to make their trip under the best conditions and be fully provided for in sanitary terms."(14) This decree outlined measures to provide the demobilized personnel with fuel as well as allocate additional stocks of textiles, clothing, underwear and footwear to the Chusosnabarm.(15) On the following month (9 March) the STO upon the initiative of V.I. Lenin adopted the decree "On Providing Aid to the Agriculture of Red Armymen Discharged on Long-Term

Leave." This provided for the supplying of planting stock, agricultural supplies, money loans and so forth for Red Armymen being discharged.

As a result of the enormous work done by the party Central Committee, the STO, the RVSR, the soviet, party and military organizations, the cutback in the Army and Navy was completed by the end of 1924. The size of the USSR Armed Forces had been reduced from 5.5 million men to 562,000.(16)

In carrying out diverse activities in the area of the organizational restructuring of the Army and Navy, the STO at its sessions reviewed 173 questions involving their reorganization. In its minutes and decrees there is a significant number of reports and speeches by V.I. Lenin on such questions as: "On Strengthening Work in the Area of Military Defense," "On the Importance of a Special Audit of the Military Bodies and Armed Forces of the Republic and on Cartridges," "On Measures to Combat Counterrevolutionary Elements in the Army," "On the Food Army" and "On Radio Communications in the Red Army."(17) Among the measures adopted by the STO, particular attention should be paid to the decree of 27 February 1921 on the restructuring of the military command bodies. By this decree the Field Staff and the All-Russian High Staff were combined into the RKKA [Worker-Peasant Red Army] Staff and the military personnel was sharply curtailed (by more than 5-fold from 1921 through 1923). The plan of the RVS was approved on reorganizing the military districts and on changing the organization and establishment of the Red Army units and formations.(18)

In the spring of 1921, the STO demanded that the RVSR take decisive measures to carry out the decrees of the 10th RKP(b) Congress on the military question and in particular "to restore and strengthen the Red Navy"(19) which over the years of the Civil War and intervention had lost a significant portion of its ships and bases. By its decree of 19 April 1921, the STO obliged the soviet bodies to return the former sailors to the fleet. In October 1922, it approved the initiative of the Komsomol to assume sponsorship of the Navy. Some 7,766 men (not counting the graduates of military schools) were sent to the Navy.(20) Upon the proposal of V.I. Lenin, on 11 January 1922, a session of the STO adopted the Decree on Organizing on the Black Sea the Expedition for Special-Purpose Underwater Work (EPRON) for raising sunken ships. Due to the constant concern of the Communist Party and the Soviet government as well as to the efforts of the Soviet people, in 1922-1923 the Baltic Fleet received the battleship "Marat" (the former "Petropavlovsk"), the cruiser "Avrora," 8 destroyers, 9 submarines, 20 minesweepers and 17 patrol boats. The Black Sea Fleet received the cruiser "Komintern," the destroyers "Nezamozhnik" and "Petrovskiy," 2 submarines and other ships.(21)

The interests of defending the Soviet state required the adopting of immediate measures to strengthen the Air Forces and on 26 January 1921, upon the proposal of

V.I. Lenin, the STO adopted a special decree on instituting a commission to work out a maximum program in the area of air navigation and aviation construction. Some 5 months later (on 28 June) "the STO was presented with a number of works which set out the number of means of air combat and established the required number of skilled specialists for aviation construction. A supply plan and a plan for overseas purchases were drawn up and the main air routes were set and so forth."(22) Upon the initiative of V.I. Lenin, the STO adopted a decision to establish the Air Force Academy imeni N.Ye. Zhukovskiy (on the basis of the engineer institute of the Red Air Fleet) and reorganize the Central Aerohydrodynamic Institute (TsAGI), it allocated 35 million gold rubles for the development of aviation and supported the initiative of the workers in establishing the volunteer Society of Air Fleet Friends (ODVF). Around 100 aircraft were built from funds collected by the members of this society. On 1 December 1922, the STO approved a plan for the Main Directorate of the Defense Industry and at the aviation plants appointed its own representatives for assisting aviation production and supervising it. The STO obliged certain plants to expand production of aviation propellers, paint and allocated an additional 11 million gold rubles for building and equipping aviation plants.(23)

In analyzing the immediate tasks for military development, the STO gave chief attention to the development of heavy industry and primarily to the rebuilding and modernizing of the defense plants. V.I. Lenin participated personally in drawing up the title list for the first group of defense plants. For improving leadership over the defense industry, the STO on 4 April 1921 established the Military Industry Council (Promvovensovet) and a month later introduced the Regulation governing it.(24)

The following facts show the great attention of the STO to the defense industry in these years. In 1921, 39 sessions were held at which 150 decrees were adopted, for example, the session of 15 January 1921 with "On the Results of Investigating the Siberian Cartridge Plant"; "On the Sevastopol Arsenal" (17 January 1921), "On the State of the Naval Department Plants" (9 April 1921), "On Developing New Artillery Equipment" (12 May 1921)(25) and so forth. The STO sought out the funds, raw material and manpower for building new plants and organized the production of weapons and combat equipment. At its sessions they periodically heard reports by the chairman of the Defense Industry Council. At a full session on 27 November 1921, after discussing the work results of the commissions, a decree was adopted which pointed to the necessity of having the local party, Soviet and economic bodies pay more attention to the artillery plants. In the aims of further modernizing the Red Army artillery, a design bureau headed by F.F. Lender was incorporated as part of the Commission for Special Artillery Tests (KOSARTOP).(26) As a result of the measures adopted by the RKP(b) Central Committee, the SNK and the STO, the artillery plants in 1922 increased their product output by 5-fold.

Over all the years the STO also showed concern for developing motor vehicle building in the nation and for creating armored equipment (armored trains, armored vehicles and tanks). The following data show the attention the STO gave to the development of armored equipment. In 1920-1923, it adopted 42 decrees, it discussed around 200 questions related to domestic production of tanks, armored vehicles and armored trains.(27) On 31 August 1920, the first Soviet light tank under the name of "Borets za svobodu Tov. Lenin" [Freedom Fighter Comrade Lenin] came out of the plant gates. Another 14 were built after the first tank. The Defense Industry Council on 1 December 1920 sent to the STO in the name of V.I. Lenin a report which announced the successful execution of the government assignment and emphasized that "all the work has been done with our own means, with Russian workers and technicians."(28)

Nor did the STO overlook the other combat arms. In 1920-1921, 18 decrees were issued on the questions of the development and build-up of the railroad troops and 14 decrees for the engineer troops.(29) In 1920, upon the initiative of V.I. Lenin, 7 STO decrees were adopted in the area of radio and communications equipment.(30)

Thus, due to the constant concern of the party and the Soviet government and to the direct leadership on the part of the STO, the defense industry in 1920-1923 was almost completely rebuilt and modernized and as a whole met the requirements of the Army and Navy for combat equipment and weapons. In the activities of the STO to implement the military policy of the Communist Party attention was paid to the questions of routine, cultural and medical support for the Red Army and Navy personnel, as well as to political indoctrination. Red Army clubs and soldier clubs were organized to carry this out in many military garrisons while at all the railroad junctions there were agitation points. The STO sessions systematically heard reports and information by the chairman, deputies and members of the RVSR on the state of ideological political work among the personnel of the labor armies and the fighters of non-Russian nationality as well as the combating of illiteracy. Over the 3 1/2 years, under the leadership of V.I. Lenin, some 211 STO sessions were held and 118 had the participation of V.I. Lenin. At these they examined more than 2,500 military questions.(31)

The establishing of the STO was a great accomplishment of the Communist Party and V.I. Lenin. M.V. Frunze said very aptly and precisely about the activities of the STO: "The experience of the Civil War shows that if we had not have had in the STO a body which encompassed all aspects of our Soviet life, we would scarcely have emerged the winners from that clash which the course of our revolution confronted us with."(32)

On 27 April 1937, the VKP(b) [All-Union Communist Party (Bolshevik)] Central Committee adopted a decision which stated: "In the aims of unifying all measures



and questions of USSR defense, under the USSR SNK the USSR Defense Committee is to be established with a membership of seven persons."(33) In line with this, the STO by a decree of the USSR Central Executive Committee was abolished as of 28 April 1937.

The very rich experience of the activities of the Council of Worker and Peasant Defense and the Labor and Defense Council was employed in the years of the Great Patriotic War in the work of the State Defense Committee which played an enormous role in achieving victory over Nazi Germany and imperialist Japan. At present, according to Article 121 of the USSR Constitution, in the nation and in the Armed Forces there is the USSR Defense Council formed by the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet with large state, military-political and economic powers. Under the conditions of the growing military danger, the USSR Defense Council is taking the necessary measures to further strengthen the nation's defense capability and improve the Soviet Armed Forces.

#### Footnotes

1. V.I. Lenin, PSS [Complete Collected Works], Vol 40, p 273.
2. "Syezdy Sovetov RSFSR i avtonomnykh respublik RSFSR: Sbornik dokumentov 1917-1922 gg." [Congresses of the RSFSR and RSFSR Autonomous Republic Soviets: Collection of Documents, 1917-1922], Moscow, Gosyurizdat, Vol 1, 1959, p 147.
3. TsGAOR [Central State Archives of the October Revolution], folio 6751, inv. 1, file 1, sheet 27.
4. TsPA IML [Central Party Archives of the Marxism-Leninism Institute], folio 19, inv. 3, file 111, sheets 86-87.
5. TsGAOR, folio 130, inv. 4, file 800, sheet 105.
6. TsPA IML, folio 19, inv. 3, files 129-131; TsGASA [Central State Archives of the Soviet Army], folio 33987, inv. 2, files 149-157. Estimated by the author.
7. "Iz istorii grazhdanskoy voyny v SSSR. Sbornik dokumentov i materialov v trekh tomakh: 1918-1922" [From the History of the Civil War in the USSR. A Collection of Documents and Materials in Three Volumes: 1918-1922], Moscow, Sovetskaya Rossiya, Vol 3, 1961, p 280.
8. TsGAOR, folio 130, inv. 3, file 132, sheet 17.
9. TsPA IML, folio 2, inv. 1, file 13990, sheet 2; file 13954, sheet 1.
10. TsGASA, folio 65, inv. 4, file 107, sheets 143, 153.
11. TsGAOR, folio 130, inv. 3, file 278, sheet 174.
12. N.F. Kuzmin, "Na strazhe mirnogo truda (1921-1940 gg.)" [On Guard for Peaceful Labor (1921-1940)], Moscow, Voenizdat, 1959, p 31.
13. "Sovetskiye Vooruzhennyye Sily. Istoriya stroitelstva" [Soviet Armed Forces. History of Organizational Development], Moscow, Voenizdat, 1978, pp 123, 124.
14. TsGAOR, folio 130, inv. 5, file 375, sheet 20.
15. The position of extraordinary representative of the Council of Worker-Peasant Defense for the Supply of the Army and Navy ("Chusosnabarm") was established by a decision of the VTsIK of 8 July 1919.
16. "50 let Vooruzhennykh Sil SSSR" [Fifty Years of the USSR Armed Forces], Moscow, Voenizdat, 1968, p 169.
17. TsGAOR, folio 5671, inv. 2, file 14, sheets 37, 39, 42, 47, 79, 127.
18. TsGASA, folio 4, inv. 3, file 2665, sheets 32-33.
19. "KPSS v rezolyutsiyakh i resheniyakh syezdov, konferentsiy i plenumov TsK (1898-1970)" [The CPSU in Resolutions and Decisions of Congresses, Conferences and Central Committee Plenums (1898-1970)], Moscow, Politizdat, 9th Revised and Supplemented Edition, Vol 2, 1983, p 378.
20. "Boyevoy put Sovetskogo Voyenno-Morskogo Flota" [The Campaign Record of the Soviet Navy], Moscow, Voenizdat, 1974, p 130.
21. Ibid., p 132.
22. "V.I. Lenin i Sovetskiye Vooruzhennyye Sily" [V.I. Lenin and the Soviet Armed Forces], Moscow, Voenizdat, 2d, Supplemented Edition, 1969, p 215.
23. TsGAOR, folio 130, inv. 5, file 462, sheet 76; inv. 3, file 19, sheet 147.
24. On 13 May 1921, by a STO Decree, the Defense Industry Council was turned over to the VSNKh [All-Russian Council of the National Economy] which in turn, by the Decree of 6 July 1921, turned the Defense Industry Council into the Main Directorate of the Defense Industry (TsGANKh [Central State Archives of the National Economy], folio 3429, inv. 1, file 456, sheet 431).
25. TsGAOR, folio 130, inv. 5, file 650, sheets 6, 8, 23, 79.
26. "Voyenno-tehnicheskii progress i Vooruzhennyye Sily" [Military- Technical Progress and the Armed Forces], Moscow, Voenizdat, 1982, p 57.

27. TsGAOR, folio 130, inv. 5, files 651-654. Calculated by the author.

28. "V.I. Lenin i Sovetskiye...", p 216.

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31. "Vladimir Ilich Lenin" Biograficheskaya khronika 1870-1924" [Vladimir Ilich Lenin: Biographic Chronicle 1870-1924], Moscow, Politizdat, Vols 8-12, 1977-1982. Estimated by author.

32. M.V. Frunze, "Izbrannyye proizvedeniya" [Selected Works], Moscow, Voenizdat, 1984, p 213.

33. "KPSS o Vooruzhennykh Silakh Sovetskogo Soyuz. Dokumenty 1917- 1981" [The CPSU on the Soviet Union Armed Forces. Documents 1917- 1981], Moscow, Voenizdat, 1981, p 268.

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**Genesis, Development of Soviet Military Doctrine**  
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21 Jan 88) pp 19-26

[Article by Col R.A. Savushkin, doctor of economic sciences, professor: "Genesis and Development of Soviet Military Doctrine"]

[Text] At the meeting of the Political Consultative Committee held on 28-29 May 1987 in Berlin, a document was adopted which is exceptionally important for the fate of the world. This formulated the main provisions of the military doctrine of the Warsaw Pact member states, with this doctrine being of a strictly defensive nature. This new act of peace-loving foreign policy of the Soviet Union and the other socialist commonwealth countries evokes a natural interest in the history of Soviet military doctrine.

The present article is devoted to the periods of its genesis and subsequent development: the former from the Great October Socialist Revolution up to the end of the Civil War and the latter from the start of peacetime construction (1921) to the 17th VKP(b) [All-Union Communist Party (Bolshevik)] Congress which, having pointed up the essential changes which had occurred by 1934 in the world military-political situation and in the views on the nature of a possible war, by the very content of its decisions posed the question of the need to make definite adjustments in the initial contents of Soviet military doctrine.

V.I. Lenin was the founder of Soviet military doctrine. He is responsible for working out its political aspects concerning: the nature and types of wars in the modern era and the place among them of wars in the defense of the socialist fatherland; on the main goal of Soviet policy, that is, to achieve a lasting peace and the influence of the level of a nation's defense capability on carrying out this task; on the conduct of modern wars by peoples and the importance of a profound understanding on the part of the working masses of the political content of a war aimed at repelling imperialist aggression; on the role of proletarian internationalism in preventing war. The leader of the revolution also made a major contribution to solving military-technical questions of Soviet military doctrine. He defined the purpose and tasks of the Armed Forces, the principles of their organizational development, training and employment and formulated the principles of Soviet military art.

Our state from the first days of its existence proclaimed a policy of peace and the defense of the liberty and equality of all peoples. One of the first decrees of Soviet power was the Peace Decree adopted by the Second Congress of Soviets on 26 October (8 November) 1917. However, world imperialism and the counterrevolutionary forces within the nation took up arms against the Soviet Republic. Under these conditions, of all the tasks confronting the victorious proletariat, the most essential was the task of the armed defense of the victories of October, the thwarting of the aggressive plans of imperialism and providing peaceful conditions for the building of socialism in our country. The Communist Party, in creatively developing Lenin's ideas on the defense of the socialist fatherland, the principles of the organizational development, training and indoctrination of the Armed Forces, successfully carried it out.

After the end of the Civil War, the Communist Party, in considering the ongoing danger of a new military intervention against the Soviet Union, gave great attention to strengthening the nation's defense capability. On the basis of a study and critical analysis of the imperialist and Civil Wars, important theoretical concepts were formulated and these defined the main path of military organizational development. Soviet military thought for the first time in the theory and history of wars from a scientific position approached the question of the need to work out the very concept of "military doctrine" and the isolating of the structural elements of its content.

In working out a military doctrine, the party encountered great difficulties and was forced to maintain a struggle against an incorrect understanding of the main Leninist provisions. The RKP(b) [Russian Communist Party (Bolshevik)] Central Committee in line with this carried out a discussion of the fundamental military theoretical questions within the circle of the leading party and military figures and at the 11th Party Congress gave battle to the Trotskyites who denied the necessity of working out a Soviet military doctrine.\*

The ideas voiced in the course of the debate about Soviet military doctrine lasting from the second half of 1918 until mid-1921, the conclusions of the article by M.V. Frunze "A Unified Military Doctrine and the Red Army," as well as the subsequent supplements and clarifications incorporated in the doctrinal concepts made it possible to define Soviet military doctrine as a system accepted in the Soviet state:

a) of theoretical concepts concerning the types of wars in the modern era, their sociopolitical essence and nature, the balance of military-political forces and the political and strategic aims of the opposing sides;

b) of political views on the employment of the military might of the Soviet state together with the military might of other peace-loving countries in the aim of preventing a world war and other aggressive wars by imperialism and in the event of necessity, repelling imperialist aggression;

c) of theoretical concepts concerning the military-technical nature of a possible future war, the methods of preparing for and conducting armed combat and its combination with other types of combat (economic, ideological, diplomatic and so forth);

d) of guiding principles for military organizational development and the preparation of the nation and the Armed Forces for defense of the socialist fatherland.

As can be seen, the content of the military doctrine included two groups of concepts: the first concerning the essence and nature of future war and the second which disclosed the ways of opposing war and repelling aggression.

The concepts and conclusions of Soviet military doctrine concerning the essence and nature of a future war were of important significance for improving the military organization of the Soviet state and for developing military art. The efforts of many party, state and military leaders as well as scientists went into elaborating them. Research on this problem involved the talented representatives of the Soviet military-theoretical school, M.V. Frunze, S.I. Gusev, M.N. Tukhachevskiy, B.M. Shaposhnikov, A.I. Yegorov, V.K. Triandafilov, K.B. Kalinovskiy, G.S. Isserson, A.N. Lapchinskiy and others.

The question of the nature of a future war was examined from the political and the military (technical) viewpoints.(1) The political assessment of a future war included conclusions from an analysis of the socio-economic and political systems of states, the nature of the contradictions between them and within them, and the ability of these contradictions to give rise to wars of varying type; the balance of political forces (classes, nations, states) and the possible changes in this before the war and in the course of it; the political aims of a war

which could be set by individual enemies and opposing groupings; the degree of involvement of the masses of people in a war; the social consequences of a war.

Proceeding from the contradictions engendered by the rule of capitalist relations over a larger portion of the world's territory, the following possible types of wars were defined: a) wars of imperialist states between themselves; b) wars between imperialist states and nations and peoples carrying out national liberation revolutions; c) wars between imperialist countries ("capitalist counterrevolution") and countries either building socialism or carrying out a socialist revolution.(2) Moreover, it was emphasized that "in the present era of imperialist wars and world revolution, it is inevitable that there will also be revolutionary, as V.I. Lenin pointed out, civil wars of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie...."(3)

From an analysis of the policy of the imperialist powers, a conclusion was drawn that in the listed wars the aims of the powers would be: a new reapportionment of the world in the interests of the monopolies, the crushing of the world's first socialist state, the suppression of the liberation struggle of the working masses in the capitalist states and the peoples of colonial and dependent countries and the winning of world domination. By their nature, these would be unjust, predatory, counterrevolutionary wars of the world's most reactionary forces.

The core proviso of Soviet military theory concerning the political nature of a future war was Lenin's instructions that, if the imperialist powers force a war on the Soviet people, this would assume the nature of a fierce conflict between the old, rotten and decrepit world of capitalism and the insipient, growing and strengthening new order of socialism. This war from the very first days would assume an outrightly class nature and on behalf of the Soviet Union would be a just, liberation war in defense of the victories of the socialist revolution and national sovereignty.

In the 1920s, on the RKKA [Worker-Peasant Red Army] Staff, a collective of authors comprising M.N. Tukhachevskiy (leaders), Ya.M. Zhigura, A.N. Nikonov and Ya.K. Berzin worked out the theoretical volume "Budushchaya voyna" [Future War] which voiced the supposition that an attack by the imperialist states on the Soviet Union could occur in the form of new military coalition intervention within which the roles between the countries would be allocated in the following manner: "Some would assume the task of inspirers and bankers financing this 'undertaking,' others would comprise the military-economic base for the anti-Soviet armed front, a third group would supply the manpower ('cannon fodder') for this front, a fourth group would play the role of the breeding ground and disseminator of political propaganda hostile to us, a fifth group would perform the functions in the area of an economic blockade of the USSR, while a sixth group would limit itself to the role of 'observers' and would maintain benevolent 'neutrality' for the enemies of the USSR." It was

assumed that "there could be (theoretically) states and nations (for example, the nations of the liberated East) which would assume a benevolent position toward us and not toward our enemies, and could even be our allies supporting us primarily politically and, in exceptional instances, also by armed force."(4)

Great hopes were placed upon the help from the international proletariat. It was considered that the just, liberating goals of a war of the Soviet Union which was repelling imperialist aggression would ensure its support from the proletariat and the working masses in the capitalist nations. The fight of the Red Army would be combined with revolts and civil wars in the enemy rear. At the same time, it was emphasized that aid from the proletariat in the aggressor countries would scarcely reach large amounts and become effective. "...Without the serious efforts and victories of the Red Army, the work 'Budushchaya voyna' emphasized, 'the disintegration of our enemies cannot assume scope sufficient that a war of the imperialists against the USSR could be turned into a civil war, into a revolution'."(5)

The international balance of political forces was determined considering the type of states, the nature of their relations with the Soviet Union and the distribution of functions in the imperialist coalitions. Thus, in 1928, the RKKA Staff arbitrarily divided all the main nations of the world into four groups which appropriately included states: clearly hostile to the USSR and comprising the anti-Soviet front; capable under certain conditions of joining this front; not interested in a war against the Soviet Union out of geographic, economic and political factors; friendly toward the USSR.(6)

On the basis of an analysis of the balance of military-political forces, a conclusion was drawn on the possibility of several variations of attack on the USSR by a coalition of imperialist states. In line with this the necessity was recognized of quickly strengthening the nation's defense capability, raise the combat might of the Soviet Armed Forces and work out the optimum methods and forms of armed combat. Since the main danger derived from the Western countries it was essential to train the Armed Forces and work out a military theory proceeding primarily from the state of military organizational development and military theoretical views on the conduct of armed combat among the most probable enemies in the West as well as considering the particular features of other possible theaters of operations. The main operational and strategic calculations were made in terms of the situation on the Western frontier. Also from this viewpoint the boundaries of the theaters of operations were delimited, and calculations were made for the capacity of the strategic and operational sectors and they defined the approximate strength of the field forces, the width of the zones of the defensive and subsequent offensive, the depth of the operations, the length of the war and many other operational-strategic and operational-tactical indicators.(7)

In strengthening its defense capability, the Soviet state simultaneously has done everything to prevent a war and to exclude it from the arsenal of means for resolving international contradictions. Beginning with the Lenin Peace Decree, the Soviet government has repeatedly proposed the establishing of peaceful relations between states and the concluding of just peace treaties. By the efforts of Soviet diplomacy in 1925-1927, the Soviet Union succeeded in concluding nonaggression and neutrality treaties with Germany, Afghanistan, Lithuania, Iran and Turkey. In 1932-1933, the system of such treaties was substantially broadened. It included treaties with Finland, Latvia, Estonia, Poland, France and Italy.(8) In a difficult struggle against imperialist provocations, the Soviet policy of peaceful coexistence in the second half of the 1920s and the beginning of the 1930s made major progress, having ensured a comparatively extended peaceful lull for building socialism. In the 1930s, the Soviet Union was the initiator of the struggle for disarmament, for collective security, for checking the aggressor having opposed imperialism which was conceiving a war with a realistic and well thought-out plan for preserving and strengthening peace. Although the forces favoring peace were not sufficient to carry out the intentions of our state, the initiative advanced by it played its role in the subsequent uniting of the freedom-loving peoples to fight against the Nazi enslavers.

Thus, the struggle to prevent war was an inseparable and most important element in the political aspect of Soviet military doctrine predetermining its strictly defensive nature. Along with this, the growing threat of imperialist aggression against the USSR had a decisive impact upon the content of its military-technical aspect in which the idea was established of creating powerful Armed Forces capable of checking the aggressor and, if need be, repelling its attack. This idea was reflected and thoroughly worked out in the works of M.V. Frunze, M.N. Tukhachevskiy, N.Ye. Varfolomeyev, A.N. Lapchinskiy, V.A. Melikov, Ye.A. Shilovskiy, A.A. Svechin, V.K. Triandafillov, D.M. Karbyshev and other researchers as well as in the 1929 RKKA Field Manual.

Taking into account the economic might of the possible participants in a future war, the acuteness of the contradictions existing between them and the scope of the goals which they had set, the Soviet military theorists concluded that an armed conflict would involve millions-strong armies equipped in the last word of science and technology and having all modern armed services: ground troops, aviation, navy and air defense troops. In justifying these ideas later on, V.A. Melikov wrote: "The gigantic scope of a modern war which will involve mighty armed coalitions with millions of personnel and thousands of military-technical means, can be victoriously resolved only by the skillful employment of the three categories of armed forces operating on land, in the air and at sea."(9)

Soviet military theorists felt that the crucial role in armed struggle would be played by the ground troops armed with artillery, tanks and aircraft. In accord with

these views, the ratio between the various Armed Forces and combat arms was constantly adjusted and brought into accord with the requirements of the development of military affairs. Here the nation's rear was viewed as a direct participant in the armed struggle, since the extensive employment of aviation, particularly bomber, and air defense troops involved a further obliteration of the distinction between front and rear.

Considering the coalition nature of the war, the presence of millions- strong, well-equipped armed forces in the leading states of the world and the mass mechanization and motorization of the troops, Soviet military theorists concluded that combat would have a highly maneuverable nature and be marked by great dynamicness and unprecedented scope. At the same time, positional forms of armed combat were not denied and the necessity of their elaboration and introduction into troop combat practices was emphasized. Thus, M.V. Frunze pointed out that "no most maneuverable war can ever dispense with elements of a positional sort. The very support of maneuver even in a certain situation and under certain conditions requires the employment of positional procedures. For this reason the familiarization of the Red Army with these forms of combat is an imperative necessity for each Red commander.(10)

Soviet military theory assumed that in a number of theaters of operations an unfavorable situation could develop for our troops and this might require the employment of such forms of maneuver as pull-back and retreat into the interior of the nation. In such instances on the abandoned territory plans were made to establish partisan detachments and organize combat in the enemy rear.

The listed theoretical views underlay the military-technical aspect of Soviet military doctrine in 1921-1934. However, a significant portion of the ideas related to the methods of armed combat, during this period underwent major changes under the impact of the technical reconstruction of the Armed Forces. Considering the latter, it is possible to establish two stages in the development of Soviet military doctrine: the first from 1921 through 1929 and the second, from 1930 through January 1934.

Characteristic of the first stage was the elaboration of linear forms of armed combat which were based upon the ability of the troops to effect the enemy only along the line of immediate contact with it by the forward units within the range of artillery fire. All of this was reflected in the theory of successive operations(11) and the theory of the "successive neutralization of individual dispersals of enemy battle formations."(12)

The second stage was characterized by a transition to the elaboration of in-depth ("spatial") forms of armed combat with the massed employment of tanks, aviation, artillery and airborne forces to defeat the enemy groupings to the entire depth of their configuration and rapidly achieving strategic (operational, tactical) results. The

bases of the new theory later called the theory of battle and operation in depth were worked out right until the start of the Great Patriotic War and were reflected in the instructions on combat in depth (1933, 1934, 1935) and the field manuals (1936, 1939, 1941).

An important place in the provisions of military science was held by conclusions concerning the growing role of the rear and the economy in modern warfare as well as on the means and methods of economic combat. The methodological basis for resolving these questions was the fundamental ideas worked out by V.I. Lenin on the relationship of war and the economy and on the waging of war by peoples. Lenin's ideas on the need to turn the Soviet nation into a single military camp in the event of imperialist aggression were at the center of attention of the Soviet military theorists.

Thus, V.M. Frunze in his article "A Unified Military Doctrine and the Red Army" began to set out his ideas on the given question with the thesis that modern "wars draw into their vortex and decisively subordinate all aspects of social life and involve all state and social interests without exception."(13) Subsequently, he constantly emphasized that "the army is merely the leading, armed part of the entire people which should be ready to conduct the struggle with its entire mass."(14) In this context M.V. Frunze saw success in the practical execution of the task of readying the nation's rear to repel the imperialist aggressors in indoctrinating the broad masses of people in a conscious attitude toward the question of defense and incorporating a planned approach on the question of preparing the nation's rear for the forthcoming hardships, as well as in the moral-political preparation of the population and ensuring high stability of the Soviet economy.

The change in the role of the rear in a war brought about a revision of the entire range of mobilization questions. First of all, the very concept of "mobilization" was clarified. M.V. Frunze emphasized: "When we employ now the word 'mobilization,' by this we will not understand the mobilizing of the army as such, the mobilization of the personnel, the supplying of it, transport and so forth. No, the concept of mobilization in the sense which this is now caused by our understanding of a future major war, extends to all our worker-peasant rear, it should encompass our entire economy as a whole, it should encompass our education and so forth, and so forth."(15)

Proceeding from these ideas and taking as a base the experience of the Communist Party in turning the Soviet nation during the years of the Civil War into a united military camp, a group of workers from the RKKA Staff under the leadership of M.N. Tukhachevskiy in 1926 worked out in the event of a war the "Theses on the Militarizing of the Nation" envisaging in organizing the defenses the preparation of an economic mobilization, the preparation and mobilization schedule for personnel contingents both for the deployment and manning of the

Armed Forces as well as the providing of trained personnel for all industrial enterprises in the nation and the appropriate organization and preparation of bodies providing on a state-wide scale leadership in the area of political security (foreign and domestic), education, public health, social welfare and so forth.(16) The national economic mobilization plan worked out later in accord with the elaborated views was a system of particular mobilization plans for: finances and trade; labor, science and technology; agriculture; industry, transport and communications; administrative and political mobilization.(17) They were all aimed at the early organization of repelling the aggressor and provided an opportunity to carry out the most important peacetime task of ensuring the complete preparation of the nation's rear for a future war.

The forming of combat reserves was a most important task for the rear. According to Soviet military theory it was felt that the exceptionally fierce nature of a future war and the mass employment of automatic weapons and other combat equipment possessing great destructive force would lead to significant human and material losses and the replacement of these would be possible only in the event that early and continuous military training for inductees was provided. For resolving this problem, the Communist Party, the Soviet government and the military department established conditions for switching from a mixed troop manning principle to a regular one and this was to permit a gradual increase in the size of the Armed Forces and prepare a significant number of militarily trained reserves. A system was worked out for the training persons liable for military service and a new procedure for their serving in the reserves and ensuring rapid mobilizational deployment of the Army and Navy; an extensive network of higher and secondary military schools was established for training command, political and engineer-technical personnel as well as for advanced instruction of reserve personnel from servicemen in regular service; military training was organized for the public and during the interwar years this assumed a mass scope.

Great attention was given to ensuring the strength of the rear of the Soviet nation. "...We should carry out our work in such a manner," pointed out M.V. Frunze, "that our future rear in the area of both the economy as well as moral strength be guaranteed against any accidental disturbances and storms."(18)

The Soviet military theorists felt that a war forced upon the Soviet nation would be a protracted one. Victory in it could not be won by a "lightning-like" attack. Explaining this both by the political nature of the war, its acuteness, uncompromisingness and fierceness as well as by the ability of the states to quickly reproduce their armed forces even after severe defeats, they expressed confidence that the advantages in carrying out the tasks of mobilizing the efforts of the entire people to achieve victory would be on the side of the Soviet country, the

country with the most advanced political and socio-economic systems. This confidence was instilled by the inexhaustible capabilities of the socialist social system, by the leadership of the Communist Party, by the growing moral-political unity of the Soviet people, by the developing fraternity of the Soviet peoples, by the increasing might of the Soviet Armed Forces as well as by other factors. Our people were convinced that the war would end not only with a defeat of the imperialist aggressors but also that there would be profound social consequences and the question would arise of the very existence of the capitalist system. "It can scarcely be doubted," pointed out the Accountability Report to the 17th Party Congress on the Work of the VKP(b) Central Committee, "that a second war against the USSR would lead to the complete defeat of the attackers, to a revolution in a number of the European and Asian countries and to the defeat of the bourgeois-landowner governments in these countries."(19) Life confirmed this forecast.

As a whole, Soviet military doctrine during the examined period met the requirements of the times. It played an important role in strengthening the defense capability of the Soviet state, it was that basis which gave a purposeful nature to the work of the military personnel and ensured a unity of their views and efforts aimed at increasing the combat capability and readiness of the Armed Forces.

From the very first days of the victory of Great October, a unity of the peace-loving foreign policy of the Soviet state and its readiness to repel any aggression from imperialism have been an unswerving initial basis in Soviet military doctrine and in the organizational development and training of the Armed Forces.

During subsequent years, Soviet military doctrine underwent further development. Since its subsequent period (1934-1941) differed significantly from the examined both in political and military-technical aspects, this requires special analysis.

#### Footnotes

\* For more detail see: *Voyenno-istoricheskiy zhurnal*, No 5, 1961, pp 61-74.

1. M.V. Frunze, "Izbrannyye proizvedeniya" [Selected Works], Moscow, Voenizdat, Vol II, 1957, p 39.

2. "Kommunisticheskiy internatsional v dokumentakh 1919-1932" [The Communist International in Documents 1919-1932], Moscow, Partiynoye Izd-vo, 1933, p 709.

3. Ibid., p 797.

4. TsGASA [Central State Archives of the Soviet Army], folio 33988, inv. 2, file 682, sheets 21-22.

5. Ibid., file 685, sheets 60-61.

6. Ibid., file 655, sheet 4.
7. Ibid., file 688, sheets 50, 57, 59, 62, 72-73; folio 4, inv. 2, file 515, sheets 1-25; folio 7, inv. 10, file 791, sheets 1-13.
8. "Istoriya vtoroy mirovoy voyny 1939-1945 [History of World War II of 1939-1945], Moscow, Voenizdat, Vol 2, 1974, pp 275-276.
9. V.A. Melikov, "Strategicheskoye ravertyvaniye" [Strategic Deployment], Moscow, Voenizdat, Vol 1, 1939, p 514. Prof V.A. Melikov was the head of the military history chair at the Military Academy imeni M.V. Frunze, and later the Military Academy of the General Staff.
10. M.V. Frunze, op. cit., Vol II, p 46.
11. See: N.N. Movchin, "Posledovatelnyye operatsii po opyту Marny i Visly" [Successive Operations From the Experience of the Marnè and Vistula], Moscow-Leningrad, Gosizdat, 1928, p 118; V.K. Triandafillov, "Kharkater operatsiy sovremennykh armiy" [The Nature of Operations of Modern Armies], Moscow, Voenizdat, 3d Edition, 1936, pp 185-187.
12. "Polevoy ustav RKKA (1929)" [RKKA Field Manual (1929)], Moscow, 1932, p 12; "Voprosy strategii i operativnogo iskusstva v sovetskikh voyennykh trudakh (1917-1940 gg.)" [Questions of Strategy and Operational Art in Soviet Military Works (1917-1940)], Moscow, Voenizdat, 1965, p 375.
13. M.V. Frunze, op. cit., Vol II, p 6.
14. Ibid., p 50.
15. Ibid., p 222.
16. TsGASA, folio 7, inv. 1, file 230, sheets 146-147.
17. Ibid., file 165, sheet 15.
18. M.V. Frunze, op. cit., Vol II, p 345.
19. "XVII syezd Vsesoyuznoy Kommunisticheskoy partii (b): Steograficheskiy otchet" [The 17th Congress of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolshevik): Verbatim Report], Moscow, Partizdat, 1934, p 12.

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### Military Legal Views of M.V. Frunze

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[Article by Maj Gen A.F. Inyakov and Col Just V.P. Maslov, doctor of legal sciences: "The Military Legal Views of M.V. Frunze"]

[Text] The outstanding Soviet military leader, Mikhail Vasilyevich Frunze, left a rich military theoretical heritage which is of enormous significance in resolving the problems of ensuring national defense, in strengthening discipline, law and order in the Army and Navy as well as maintaining constant combat readiness in the troops. Over 200 books and pamphlets and 550 articles have been written about M.V. Frunze and these take up various aspects in the activities of the military leader but virtually nothing has been said about his military legal views. The sole exception is the monograph by Doctor of Military Sciences, Col Gen M.A. Gareyev.(1) It, along with other problems, examines a broad range of questions relating to military law and military legal theory in its relationship to military theory. Acquaintance with the military theoretical work by M.A. Gareyev substantially broadens the understanding of M.V. Frunze and helps to improve the general and legal culture of the men, to reshape thinking in the interests of improving the quality of military legislation as well as to strengthen the legal bases in the life and activities of the troops.

M.V. Frunze, on a basis of the Marxist-Leninist teachings about state and the law, not only formulated but also consistently carried out in his practical activities an ordered system of views concerning the role of law and legislation in military organizational development, he worked to ensure the optimum functioning of the socialist state's military organization and to maintain strong military discipline and firm troop order and, finally, at achieving the main goal for the sake of which the Soviet Armed Forces existed, mainly to securely protect the peaceful labor of the Soviet people and when necessary to immediately check any aggression.

We see a concrete expression of the military legal views of M.V. Frunze as early as 1905 in organizing and training the Shuya-Ivanovo combat militia. The structure, the demands made on the members of the militia, the principles of preparing for combat and control of the militia in combat were reinforced in a manual which was a compendium of social standards obligatory for each member of this fighting organization. This was of decisive significance in ensuring its combat readiness. When, in December 1905, the Shuya-Ivanovo militia appeared on the barricades of Presnya in Moscow, it was an organized, disciplined and dependably controlled military formation. The militia successfully carried out street fighting against significantly superior forces of the tsarist troops and then upon orders in an organized manner disengaged and retreated, having maintained its fighting capability.

In 1917, M.V. Frunze was one of the active organizers of the Red Guard and the organizing of these detachments began with the working out and adoption of manuals. This introduced stability into its structure and strengthened the guarantee that the detachments would be manned by ideologically and morally reliable persons, it contributed to the effectiveness of instructing the Red Guards in military affairs as well as indoctrinating them as dedicated, organized and disciplined fighters for the revolution. M.V. Frunze supported precisely such views about the regulations of the Red Guard, in viewing these as a compendium of prescripts obligatory for all the Red Guards (both rank-and-file and commanders). In particular, he worked out the regulations for the Red Guards of the town of Shuya and organized a detachment which played an important role in the victory of the socialist revolution in Shuya and Ivanovo-Voznesensk.

After the Great October Socialist Revolution, the views of M.V. Frunze on the role of law and the state-legal institutions underwent further development in his works on the questions of military organizational development as well as in his speeches, reports, articles and orders. These reflected the military legal views of a military leader and the experience of military organizational development employing the legal means and laws of the worker-peasant state. The views of M.V. Frunze on the relationship of military doctrine and military legislation hold one of the central places of his heritage in the examined area.

The question of the military doctrine of the world's first socialist state arose during the first years of its existence. A discussion of the given problem on the pages of the Soviet military press involved many military theorists including P.D. Parskiy, A.A. Svechin, S.S. Kamanev and others. M.V. Frunze also participated in it and on the basis of Marxist methodology he set out his views. Since these views have been taken up in detail in the above-mentioned monograph by M.A. Gareyev, we feel it necessary to point to the important significance of the conclusion of M.V. Frunze that the elaboration of a military doctrine is only the start of organizing national defense and the organizational development of the state's Armed Forces. In his opinion, "for carrying out its purpose the ideas of the doctrine should permeate and saturate all our military regulations, instructions and so forth, they should become an organic part of the ideology of the Red Army mass and particularly its command."(2) The military leader felt that after the elaboration of the military doctrine and for a number of questions simultaneously with it, there should be theoretical and practical work done to establish and strengthen the legal bases in the area of military organizational development. This would also be, in the opinion of M.V. Frunze, the realization of military doctrine and the carrying out of its purpose, if all military legislation would be permeated with its ideas.

The given thesis is fundamental in all the practical work of M.V. Frunze as a military figure. No matter what assignments were given to him by the party in the Civil

War and military intervention as well as in peacetime, he was constantly concerned for strengthening the legal bases for the activities of the military control bodies, the life and service of the troops as can be seen from the numerous works of the military leader, his orders and other documents relating to questions of the organizational development of the Soviet Armed Forces as well as troop command on the battlefields. Thus, the "Concise Report by the Commander of All the Armed Forces and the Representative of the RVSR [Republic Revolutionary Military Council] in the Ukraine" compiled by M.V. Frunze begins with an examination of the question of establishing the legal bases for the activities of the commander: the structure and powers of the military apparatus for the entire Ukraine and its legal status are defined and other military legal problems are resolved. This shows that the military leader gave primary significance to the establishing, strengthening and strict observance of the legal bases of the military apparatus. M.V. Frunze took a direct part in working out many draft legislative enactments which established the structure of military command and defined their powers. He felt that an indispensable condition for the optimum functioning of any military command body was the presence of clear, properly established enforceable enactment about the given body and its range of powers as well as the strict observance of the corresponding legislative enactments by all officials, including commanders. He himself showed profound respect for laws and other enforceable enactments and here did not turn them into dead, ossified schemes but rather sought out ways to improve them.

The military reform of 1924-1925 is linked to the name of M.V. Frunze. In carrying out this responsible party assignment, he began with what strengthened the legal bases for the life and activities of the troops and took measures to improve the military legislation. Thus, in the report "Results and Prospects of Military Organizational Development Related to the 1924 Reorganization" and which M.V. Frunze gave on 17 November 1924 at a meeting of the chiefs of the district political directorates, the commissars and chiefs of the divisional political sections, he said that one of the fundamental factors giving a "immediate impetus to the entire reform was the necessity of giving the army a more constant and permanent nature...and to establish conditions strictly regulated by law for its life and activity...."(3) For this reason, "one of the main tasks of the Narkomvoinmor [People's Commissariat of Military and Naval Affairs] during the current year was the very rapid elaboration and publishing of the corresponding laws."(4)

In the struggle for strict observance of legality and discipline in the troops, M.V. Frunze was a decisive opponent of intimidation frightening and the excessive employment of reprimands. Upon his initiative or under the influence of his views, in the mid-1920s important work was done in the troops in the aim of detecting and eliminating the social bases of infractions and thereby



prevent crime among the servicemen. He entrusted responsibility for the organizing of this work in the troops to the commanders and political workers.

A most important provision of military doctrine where M.V. Frunze participated in its elaboration was the conclusion that "only a person who without any compulsive measures achieved complete subordination to his will can be called a true Red commander," and for this reason "the narrowest limits should be applied" to the use of compulsion.(5) The military leader strictly thwarted attempts to conceal infractions of the law. He was also concerned with increasing the effectiveness of organizational and indoctrinational work of the commanders aimed at having each court trial provide maximum benefit to the cause of strengthening discipline, law and order. In the Order of the RVS [Revolutionary-Military Council] No. 651/5 signed by M.V. Frunze, it points to the advisability of shifting the review of cases by the military tribunals to the barracks and clubs of the units and subunits in order to provide an opportunity for the mass of servicemen to be present at the trials and in person become acquainted with the crimes, the distorted deviations from the existing law and order as well as the punitive measures for them. This order obliged the commanders (superiors) to take up the trials in the court, to announce the sentences of the military tribunals in the orders as well as carry out other explanatory work. It discussed the underestimating of the popularizing of the court activities of the military tribunals, as in such instances the most important task in this area was not achieved, that is, to serve as a means of indoctrination and warning for the Red Army mass.

From what has been said it follows that the military leader saw the implementation of military doctrine in enormous work, in the first place, in the area of legislative, law-development activities so that the main ideas of the doctrine be reinforced most completely and precisely in laws, legal prescripts, and, secondly, in the area of preventing infractions of the laws in the troops, strengthening military discipline and ensuring legality and military order.

Modern Soviet military doctrine, like the military doctrine of the Warsaw Pact, in being defensive, presupposes a particularly clear organization of troop service, a system of legislative concepts the strict observance of which is essential to guarantee the security of our nation as well as the security of the other Warsaw Pact states. For this extensive work is required in improving military legislation and ensuring its unswerving observance as a whole.

At the same time, it is essential to emphasize that a further improvement in military legislation is possible only under the condition of a profound and thorough scientific elaboration of the questions requiring legal

regulation. Unfortunately, we are far from doing everything in this regard and many enforceable enactments have been published hurriedly, without sufficient scientific back-up.

M.V. Frunze gave exceptionally great importance to the scientific soundness of the draft enforceable enactments, to studying the mechanism which should ensure the optimum functioning of the military legal system as a whole. Fundamentally important on the given question is his conclusion that military "**doctrine capable of being a vital organizing element for the army cannot be invented. All its main elements have already been given in the surrounding world and the work of theoretical thought consists in seeking out these elements, in reducing them to a system and to bringing them into conformity with the main provisions of military science and the requirements of military art.**"(6)

Such an approach to the legal system was most fully realized by M.V. Frunze in preparing legislation on the manning of the Army and Navy with command personnel and their period of service. The military leader gave this great importance, as in his opinion, "the absence of firm legal provisions regulating service procedures," in being a major shortcoming, would reflect grievously "on the inner life of the army."(7)

The preparation of such legislation upon the initiative of M.V. Frunze began in March 1924, that is, immediately after the party Central Committee had approved measures to carry out the military reform. For this purpose, under the USSR RVS a special commission was established which included representatives from the field. The commission studied troop practices and the experience of legal regulation as well as the legislation concerning service by officers in the prerevolutionary Russian Army and the armies of other countries. The materials prepared by it, upon the decision of the USSR RVS, was distributed to the troops for extensive discussion while on the pages of the military press there was a debate and certain articles were published by the newspaper *Krasnaya Zvezda*.

The legislation prepared in this manner and named "Service for the Military Department" along with other questions, established the procedure for manning the Army and Navy with command personnel and their service procedures. This was introduced subsequently by three orders of the USSR RVS (two in 1924 and one on 2 January 1925).

M.V. Frunze closely followed the correct understanding and application of the adopted legislation in the troops and somewhat later had high praise for its first two sections. "The published rules," he commented, "regulate the defined procedure for appointment to command positions and eliminate the illegal element of chance in transfers and shifts, incorrect removals from position and so forth. This opens up for all the command personnel the possibility of the calm and confident

execution of one's official duty."(8) He went on to write that "the command and political personnel is becoming more confident in itself and in its further advancement in service."(9)

However, this was not the end of the work in improving legislation dealing with service. In 1925, the monograph of N.Ye. Yefimov was published on the given question(10) with a foreword by the chairman of the USSR RVS and the Narkomvoyenmor M.V. Frunze. This foreword ended with the wish that the publishing of the book offered to the reader would serve as the start to research on the complex questions of manning and service by command personnel.

After this there followed 3 more years of intense scientific research on investigating Soviet, prerevolutionary Russian and foreign experience in the legal regulation of the procedure for recruiting officer personnel and their service, as well as the preparation and publication of monographs and other works. The result of this research was the publishing in 1928 of the enforceable enactment, "Regulation Governing the Service of Middle, Senior and Superior Personnel."

The military legal research conducted in the 1920s upon the initiative or under the influence of M.V. Frunze had a decisive influence on the development of Soviet military legislation and contributed to improving its role in military organizational development, in the daily life and activities of the troops as well as in the realization of a military doctrine. Along with the measures of an organizational and indoctrinational nature, they made it possible within a short period of time to carry out the most immediate task at that period of strengthening discipline in the troops and making the Army and Navy battleworthy.

The ideas of M.V. Frunze in the area of military legal theory and its link to general military theory and troop practices are an example of the creative development and employment in military organizational development of the teachings of K. Marx, F. Engels and V.I. Lenin on the socialist revolution, state and law. The military legal views of the military leader are particularly pertinent at present in light of the ideas of the 27th CPSU Congress, the decree of the January (1987) Plenum of the CPSU Central Committee "On Party Restructuring and Personnel Policy" and the decree of the CPSU Central Committee on further strengthening socialist legality, law and order and greater safeguarding of the rights and legitimate interests of the citizens (*Pravda*, 30 November 1986). These are of exceptionally important significance for carrying out the restructuring policy worked out by the party in the USSR Armed Forces. The work of implementing this under the conditions of troop activities and the functioning of the military command bodies poses for the commanders, the superiors and all the personnel a series of complex problems, both theoretical and practical. The military legal views of M.V. Frunze

provide very much for an understanding of these problems and for the search for the organizational principles, procedures and methods of resolving them.

#### Footnotes

1. M.A. Gareyev, "M.V. Frunze—voyennyy teoretik. Vzgl'yady M.V. Frunze i sovremennaya voyennaya teoriya" [M.V. Frunze—Military Theorist. The Views of M.V. Frunze and Modern Military Theory], Moscow, Voenizdat, 1985.
2. M.V. Frunze, "Izbrannyye proizvedeniya" [Selected Works], Moscow, Voenizdat, Vol II, 1957, p 21.
3. *Ibid.*, Vol II, p 146.
4. *Ibid.*, p 158.
5. *Ibid.*, p 21.
6. *Ibid.*, p 13.
7. *Ibid.*, p 158.
8. *Ibid.*
9. *Ibid.*, p 159.
10. N.Ye. Yefimov, "Prokhozheniye sluzhby v RKKA i Flote" [Service in the RKKA and Navy], Moscow, Voenizdat, 1925, p 12.

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**Preparation, Conduct of Operations to Encircle, Eliminate Large Enemy Groupings**  
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[Article, published under the heading "Soviet Military Art," by Maj Gen I.Ye. Krupchenko, doctor of historical sciences, professor: "The Preparation and Conduct of Operations to Encircle and Eliminate Large Enemy Groupings"; the article was written from the experience of the Great Patriotic War]

[Text] A most important achievement of Soviet military art during the years of the Great Patriotic War was the successful resolution to the problem of encircling and destroying large enemy groupings. Encirclement became one of the leading methods in conducting offensive operations by the Soviet Armed Forces. Suffice it to say that on the Soviet-German Front over 200 Nazi troop formations were defeated in encirclement operations by our troops. In terms of the level of military art and the

results achieved, such encirclement operations as the Stalingrad, Korsun-Shevchenkivskiy, Belorussian, Berlin and Manchurian were classic examples of the decisive defeat of an enemy.

Certainly during World War II on the other fronts operations were conducted during which the enemy was surrounded. However, the largest number of these was carried out on the Soviet-German Front. The uncompromising nature of the war between the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany predetermined the employment of decisive forms and methods of conducting warfare by both sides. In this regard, an encirclement, as experience showed, was the most decisive method for conducting an offensive producing particularly effective operational and often strategic results. The preparation and conduct of such operations represented a very complicated problem.

During the years of the Great Patriotic War, the Soviet Armed Forces carried out around 15 strategic encirclement operations and 10 front-level ones. Even in 1941-1942, our troops endeavored to conduct such operations, however they were unable to surround and destroy a large enemy grouping until November 1942. For example, at Demyansk the enemy was surrounded but not defeated. The basic reasons for the incompleteness of the encirclement operations was the lack of forces, particularly armored troops, and the absence of experience in conducting such operations among the command personnel. MSU G.K. Zhukov has commented: "...Our fronts did not have available viable tank and mechanized formations and without them, as the experience of the war was to show, it was impossible to conduct offensive operations with decisive goals and broad scope. To anticipate the enemy's maneuver, to quickly envelop its flanks, to cut the rear paths, to surround and cut up the enemy groupings was only possible with the aid of tank and mechanized formations."(1)

The turning point in the development of the art of preparing and conducting encirclement operations was the Soviet troop counteroffensive at Stalingrad. Here an enemy grouping numbering 330,000 men was surrounded and completely destroyed. The successful carrying out of this task was ensured by the growing combat might of the operational field forces by incorporating in them tank and mechanized corps, by the simultaneous establishment of an interior and exterior perimeter of encirclement, by a dependable sealing off of the isolated forces, by the successful repulsing of enemy counterstrikes against the exterior perimeter and by powerful thrusts against the surrounded enemy.

Analysis indicates that the surrounding of enemy groupings was sometimes carried out by the forces of a single front. However, the most frequent were operations conducted by 2 or 3 fronts. Thus, of the 32 offensive operations of the Soviet Armed Forces in 1944-1945, in 24 the encirclement and destruction of the enemy were

carried out by the forces of several cooperating fronts and only in 8 of them by a single front. The operations carried out by the troops of several fronts led to the encirclement and destruction of large enemy groupings having 10 and more divisions. Particularly characteristic in this regard was the Manchurian Strategic Operation in the course of which the main forces of the Kwantung Army were surrounded. The Soviet troop counteroffensive at Stalingrad also ended with the encirclement of over 20 divisions.

The involvement of large forces in conducting the encirclement operations gave the latter great spatial scope. The operations developed along a front of 380-540 km and were conducted to a depth of 160-270 km and more. The average daily rate of advance for the rifle troops was 15-20 km and for the armored troops up to 20-50 km.

The spatial scope of the encirclement operations also depended upon the composition of the enemy grouping, the depth of envelopment of it by our troops, the size of the area occupied by the grouping and the positioning of reserves. The larger the opposing grouping the deeper the envelopment was made. The task of dependably cutting off the surrounded grouping from the main forces was carried out in precisely this manner. In line with this some enemy groupings were surrounded within their tactical defensive zone while others were in the operational depth which was more frequent. Regardless of the place of surrounding the enemy, an indispensable condition for the successful conduct of the operation was the envelopment of one or both flanks of the opposing grouping. The most effective method of encirclement was the launching of two outflanking thrusts along convergent axes.

An important indicator of the encirclement operations was the reciprocal distance of the assault groupings of advancing troops. Thus, in the Stalingrad Operation, the areas from which the Southwestern and Stalingrad Fronts launched their main thrusts was almost 300 km apart, in the Korsun-Shevchenkivskiy it was 120 km (Diagram 1) and in the Iasi-Kishinev, the distance between the assault groupings of the Second and Third Ukrainian Fronts at the starting position was 200 km.

In a number of operations the encirclement was achieved by launching envelopment (cut-off) thrusts against the enemy with the simultaneous pressing of the enemy up against a natural obstacle such as mountains or the seacoast. This was the case in the Iasi-Kishinev, Memel, East Prussian (Diagram 2) and East Pomeranian Operations.

One of the conditions for successfully conducting the encirclement operations was the able choice of the axes of the enveloping attacks. Experience showed that all such attacks were launched, as a rule, against the most vulnerable places: at the base of salients formed in the front line and against the boundaries of the defensive zones of the formations and field forces. The terrain on these axes should permit the employment of all combat

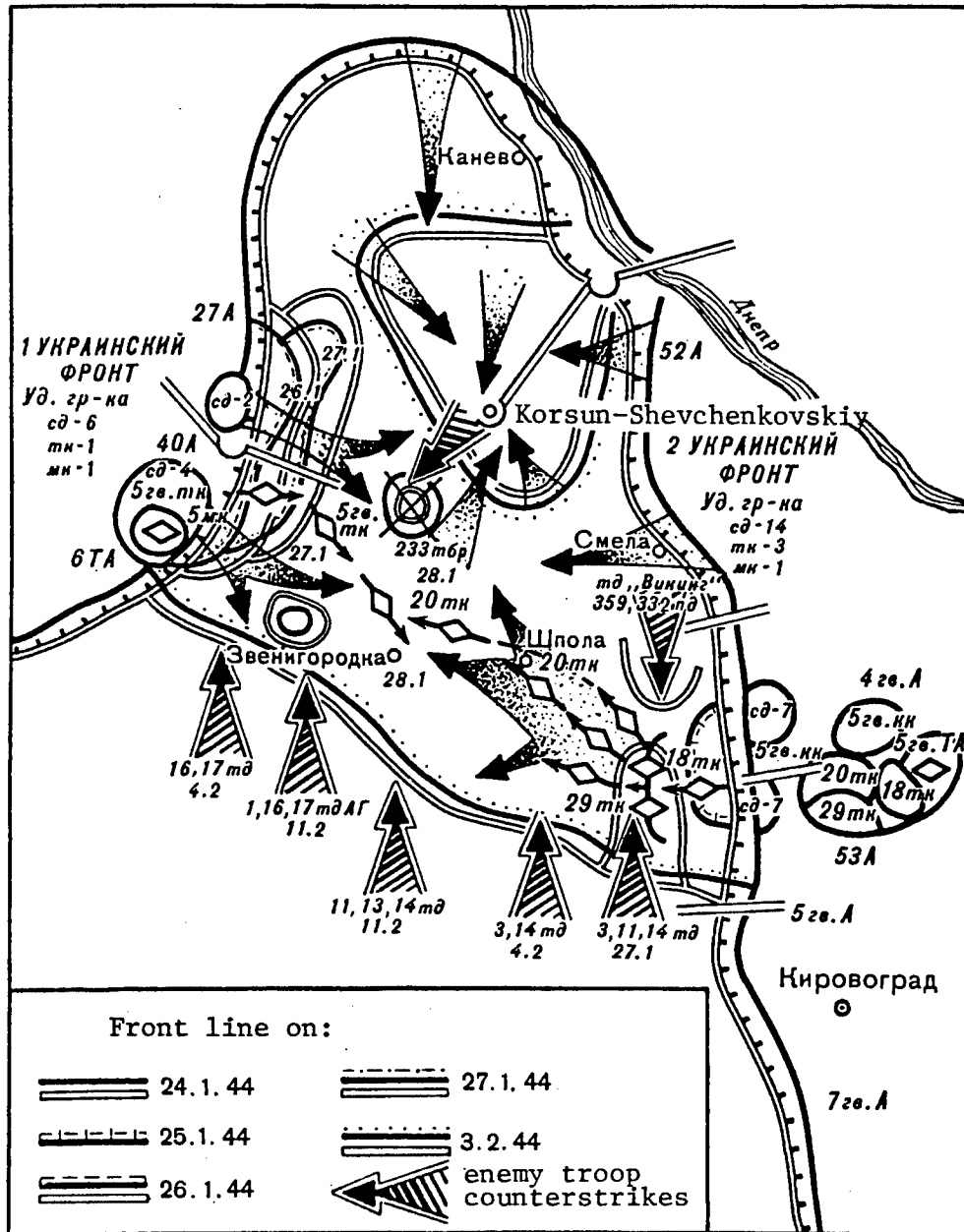


Diagram 1. Encirclement and Destruction of Korsun-Shevchenkovskiy Enemy Grouping

arms. In the Stalingrad Operation our fronts launched the main thrusts against sectors defended by Romanian troops the combat capability of which was significantly below the Nazi armies. The attacks on the selected axes made it possible, moreover, to come out by the shortest routes in the rear of the enemy grouping fighting directly in Stalingrad. In the Iasi-Kishinev Operation, the Soviet troops launched the main thrusts against the most vulnerable enemy points. The Second Ukrainian Front between the Iasi and Tirgu-Frumos fortified areas and the Third Ukrainian against the boundary of the 6th German and 3d Romanian Armies.

A majority of the encirclement operations was carried out under the conditions of a general superiority of the advancing side in forces. The decisive massing of the forces on the selected axes made it possible to establish relatively high operational densities on the breakthrough sectors. Most often these were 150-240 guns and mortars and 20-30 tanks and SAU [self-propelled artillery mount] per kilometer of front. The designated force densities ensured, as a rule, the launching of a strong initial thrust, the rapid breakthrough of the tactical defensive zone and the exploitation of the offensive in the operational depth.

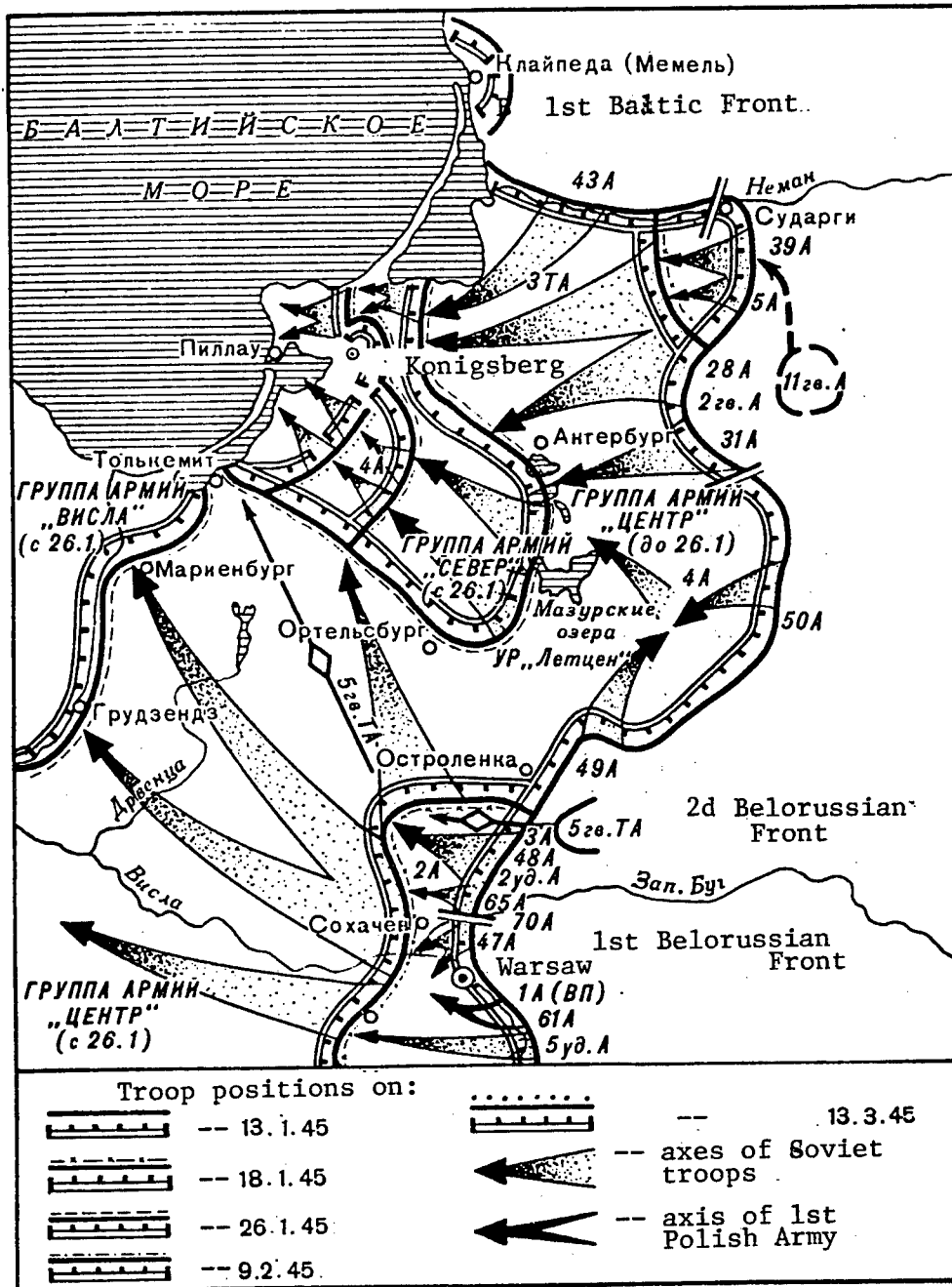


Diagram 2. Encirclement and Defeat of Enemy Grouping in East Prussian Operation (13 January-25 April 1945)

In the encirclement operations of 1944-1945, the operational configuration of the fronts, in addition to first echelons and its other elements, included strong second echelons, mobile groups and reserves. When the fronts had a single echelon, the depth of configuration was achieved by the troops of those armies which comprised the assault groupings. A deep operational configuration ensured the build-up of the forces in the course of breaching the defenses, in the process of carrying out the encirclement maneuver and in destroying the isolated

grouping. Moreover, this made it possible to maintain an advantageous balance of forces on the axes of the main thrusts over the entire operation.

For achieving the goals of an encirclement operation, surprise was of important significance. The offensive of our envelopment groupings had to be organized in such a manner that they reached the link-up areas before the enemy command could take countermeasures. In skillfully concealing the preparations for the offensive or

carrying out feints, the Soviet Command confused the enemy on the possibility of conducting an operation. At Stalingrad, for example, the enemy expected our offensive but had an inaccurate understanding of the axis and the force of the attacks by the Soviet troops. The former chief of staff of operational leadership under the Headquarters of the Supreme High Command of the Nazi Armed Forces, Col Gen A. Jodl, in speaking about the Stalingrad Operation, commented: "We had absolutely no idea of the strength of the Russians in this area. Previously there was nothing here and all of a sudden an attack of great force was launched of decisive significance...."(2) Nazi intelligence also did not succeed in establishing the strength of the attacks and the plans of many other Soviet troop operations.

The experience of the war was to show that the establishing of internal and external perimeters of encirclement was a most important obligation of the commanders and staffs in the encirclement operations. If the inner perimeter was not solid, the enemy troops left the occupied area and pulled back from under the threat of encirclement. A strong inner perimeter was always the guarantee for successful actions in mopping up the isolated forces. Passivity of the external perimeter made it possible for the enemy to relieve the surrounded grouping by using reserves.

The tank armies, the tank and mechanized corps played an important role in establishing perimeters of encirclement. In possessing great strike power and high maneuverability, with the support of artillery and aviation they quickly crossed the enemy defenses, they rapidly came out in the operational depth and established the internal and external perimeters of encirclement. The field forces and formations of the armored troops which established the inner perimeter of encirclement subsequently, as a rule, moved to the outer perimeter. By their active operations they repulsed the enemy on the external perimeter to a depth which excluded the breakthrough of its reserves to the surrounded grouping and at the same time did not allow the isolated groups to quickly cross the space between the inner and external perimeters. But this was not always possible to achieve. Thus, the Nazi grouping isolated in the Kamenets-Podolsk area was not destroyed due to the weakness of the established perimeters of encirclement. A significant portion of the grouping broke out of the encirclement to the west.(3) An analogous situation arose in the Belorussian Operation as a solid inner perimeter was not established around the enemy grouping surrounded to the east of Minsk. However, the decisive offensive by the Soviet troops on the external perimeter made it possible to successfully destroy the enemy formations which had broken out of the initial encirclement area.

On the external perimeter the Soviet troops went over to the defensive in those instances when the enemy had strong reserves and endeavored to relieve the surrounded troops using them. For example, in the Korsun-Shevchenkivskiy Operation for relieving their troops the

Nazi Command successively drew on 14 divisions, including 8 tank ones.(4) In order to repulse these enemy attacks, the 5th Guards and 6th Tank Armies went over to the defensive.

In a majority of instances the troops on the external perimeter did not restrict themselves to holding the occupied lines. Having ground down the counterstrike groupings in the defensive engagements, they usually went over to the offensive, dealt the enemy a defeat and finally thwarted its attempts to relieve the surrounded troops. Our troops fought in such a manner in the Stalingrad, Korsun-Shevchenkivskiy and other operations.

An analysis of the examined encirclement operations makes it possible to establish two main stages in implementing them. The content of the first was the breaching of the enemy defenses, the exploitation of the defensive in depth, the establishing of the inner and external perimeters of encirclement, while the second consisted in eliminating the surrounded grouping, that is, concluding the offensive operation.

Like the encirclement maneuver, the elimination of the surrounded groupings was carried out under various conditions which dictated the employment of the appropriate methods of action. Experience showed that the most effective of them was the cutting off of the surrounded groupings by launching pincer attacks and the eliminating of the split up forces piecemeal. During the third period of the war, the Soviet troops often succeeded in splitting the enemy groupings in the course of completing the encirclement (Vitebsk-Orsha, Bobruysk and Iasi-Kishinev Operations). This ensured a unity of the processes of encircling the splitting the groupings with the subsequent destruction of each individual part and substantially shortened the time for conducting the operation. The splitting of the enemy groupings carried out after their encirclement was a complex process. Experience showed that in a number of instances the enemy resorted to a maximum shortening of the inner perimeter (the compression of the occupied territory) but undertook desperate efforts to maintain the integrity of the grouping.

Resistance was stubborn by the most significant isolated parts of the split groupings. This can be traced from the example of eliminating the Frankfurt-Guben Nazi troop grouping in April-May 1945 to the southeast of Berlin. This grouping had up to 200,000 men, over 2,000 guns and over 300 tanks and assault guns.(5) Over a period of 5 days the Soviet troops launched attacks against it. The territory occupied by the surrounded troops was reduced from 1,500 to 400 km<sup>2</sup> but it was impossible to split the group. The enemy made several attempts to breach the inner perimeter of encirclement and link up with the 12th Army which was launching counterstrikes against the external perimeter. As a result of these actions the enemy grouping was turned into a mobile pocket, however ultimately it was destroyed.

During the period of eliminating the surrounded troops, important tasks were carried out by the Air Forces as they fought enemy reserves and covered and supported the ground troops on the internal and external perimeters of encirclement. They were the chief means of an air blockade the aim of which was to deprive the enemy of the possibility of air supplying the surrounded troops, that is, to completely seal them off from the rear.

For implementing an air blockade it was essential to win air supremacy over the entire area where the operation was to be conducted. This was achieved by active air operations as well as by the other services and combat arms in the aim of destroying the enemy aircraft in the air and on the ground. The latter task was carried out by air strikes against the airfields and landing strips located behind the line of the external perimeter and inside the encirclement area. The air defense weapons also took an active part in the air blockade. The offensive actions by the ground troops on the external perimeter helped to achieve the aims of the blockade. In exploiting the operation in depth, they continuously increased the length of the air lines of communications which linked the main enemy forces with the surrounded grouping and thereby reduced the capabilities of its combat and transport aviation. Thus, at Stalingrad all attempts of the Nazi Command to supply the surrounded grouping by air were thwarted. During the period of its blockade, some 1,160 enemy combat and transport aircraft were destroyed.

Aviation also provided substantial aid to the ground troops by attacking the enemy on the battlefield. Both in the course of the encirclement maneuver and in the period of eliminating the isolated formations, by attacking the enemy columns, lines of communications and crossings the aviation prevented the moving up of reserves, the retreat and regrouping of the troops, and checked the enemy's attempts to break out of the encirclement. In a number of instances the aviation launched massed strikes against the surrounded groupings and this significantly shortened the time of their elimination. Such actions were characteristic for the Bobruysk and Konigsberg Operations. In the first instance some 526 aircraft from the 16th Air Army were scrambled simultaneously and they launched a massed raid against the enemy columns which were concentrating to break through in the northern part of the area. The results of the air strikes were immediately used by our ground troops and in a period of 2 days the Bobruysk enemy grouping was defeated. For a period of 4 days the aviation made 13,930 aircraft sorties against the enemy sealed off in Konigsberg and this also accelerated the elimination of the enemy garrison.(6)

In destroying the surrounded groupings on coastal sectors, the necessity arose of organizing not only an air blockade but also a sea blockade. The task was to eliminate the enemy transports carrying troop and cargo

at sea and destroying the loading and unloading ports. This was carried out by diverse naval forces as well as by the frontal and long-range aviation.

In the encirclement operations, great attention was given to the operational support for the troops, particularly the flanks of the assault groupings. The last task was carried out by various methods. At times, it was enough to move up strong screens toward the exposed flanks while in other instances the assigning of large forces was required. Thus, in the Stalingrad counteroffensive, insignificant Romanian troop forces were threatening the left flank of the assault grouping of the Stalingrad Front. For this reason, to support it only the IV Cavalry Corps was employed and this had the task of moving up to the Abganerovo area and be ready to repel possible enemy counterstrikes. In the Belorussian Operation, it was essential to securely cover from the Baltic side the main Soviet troop grouping against the strong Army Group North. For this reason, this task was carried out by a significant portion of the First Baltic Front which initiated an offensive to the northwest.

The flanks of the assault groupings were also supported by the simultaneous development of offensive actions on adjacent sections of the front. For example, the right flank of the assault grouping from the Second Ukrainian Front in the Iasi-Kishinev Operation was covered from the direction of the Carpathians by the 7th Guards Army and by a horse-mechanized group.

The experience of supporting the flanks underwent further development in 1945. Thus, in the Berlin Operation the right flank of the First Belorussian Front was supported against an attack by the 3d German Panzer Army and the Steiner Army Group by the 1st Polish Army and the 61st Army. In this operation the 2d Polish Army and the 52d Army were employed to support the left flank of the main grouping of the First Ukrainian Front against possible attacks from Army Group Center.

The great spatial scope of the encirclement operations and the involvement of two or three fronts in them all with the same task required firm control, organization and constant support for cooperation. The resolving of these questions was the prerogative of Hq SHC [Headquarters Supreme High Command] which together with the General Staff determined the goal of the operations, worked out the over-all plan of action, set the tasks for the fronts, corrected and approved the plans for the front operations, directly organized cooperation between the fronts and directed the course of the operation. Certainly the activities of Hq SHC and the General Staff did not release the commanders and staffs of the fronts and armies from organizing cooperation. The organizing of cooperation assumed great importance in the concluding stages of establishing the inner and external perimeters of encirclement as well as in eliminating the surrounded groupings.

In the course of hostilities, situations often arose, particularly in launching pincer attacks, when each of the fronts had to fight on both the inner and external perimeters of encirclement. This led to the splitting of attention for the front command and as a result of this troop control was seriously complicated. When on the external perimeter they had to repel counterstrikes by small enemy groupings endeavoring to relieve the surrounded troops, the situation became extremely exacerbated. Under such conditions the need arose on each perimeter of encirclement to hand over troop leadership to a single commander. Thus, in the Korsun-Shevchenkovskiy Operation, from 12 February 1944, the elimination of the surrounded grouping was entrusted to the commander of the Second Ukrainian Front, Army Gen I.S. Konev, while MSU G.K. Zhukov began to coordinate the actions of the First and Second Ukrainian Fronts on the external perimeter of encirclement.(7)

In a number of operations, Hq SHC, because of the frequent changes in the situation, effectively influenced the development of events by constantly adjusting the tasks of the fronts. For example, in the course of the Berlin Operation, due to the low pace of advance on the First Belorussian Front during the first days of the operation, the idea of encircling the entire Berlin enemy grouping could have been thwarted. In order to prevent this, Headquarters on the second day of the offensive ordered the commander of the Second Belorussian Front, after crossing the West Oder, to attack around Berlin from the north, while the commander of the First Ukrainian Front was ordered to turn the tank armies to the northwest to attack Berlin from the south, as had been planned by one of the versions of troop operations. Thus, the adopted measures guaranteed the encirclement of the Berlin grouping even in the event that the rate of advance of the First Belorussian Front subsequently continued to remain the same. However, this did not happen and there was no need to alter the axis of the attack of the Second Belorussian Front.

Many encirclement operations, particularly the strategic ones, had a great impact on the course of the hostilities. Thus, the defeat of the Nazi troops at Stalingrad in the winter of 1942-1943 led to the start of a fundamental change in the course of the Great Patriotic War and World War II. The Belorussian Operation was of enormous importance. In the course of it, Army Group Center was completely defeated and the Soviet troops had advanced up to 550-600 km by the end of the operation. The defeat of the German and Romanian troops in the Iasi-Kishinev Operation led to the collapse of the enemy front and all the enemy's plans in the south. Moreover, Romania withdrew from the war on the side of Nazi Germany and declared war against it. The encirclement and destruction of the Berlin enemy grouping and the taking of Berlin by Soviet troops in May 1945 were the crucial factor in concluding the military defeat of Nazi Germany. Also effective in terms of their political and strategic results were the other Soviet troop operations involving the encirclement and defeat of large enemy groupings.

With each conducted operation, the complex art of encirclement was honed and developed. The Stalingrad and Korsun-Shevchenkovskiy Operations have gone down in history as brilliant examples of the encirclement and complete destruction of large enemy groupings. The Belorussian Strategic Operation provided the first experience in the successive surrounding of large enemy forces in several areas which were a significant distance apart. The Iasi-Kishinev Operation was an example of an operation where encirclement and destruction of the enemy merged into a single process. The Berlin and Budapest Operations provided an example of the destruction of a large grouping surrounded in a city.

The experience of preparing and conducting encirclement operations has not lost its importance at present. It is completely obvious that the use of it requires a creative approach and a complete consideration of the development of the means and methods of warfare. In order that the modern theory of operational art can more completely employ it, profound historical research is required on such key questions of the encirclement problem as the simultaneous establishing of the inner and external perimeters of encirclement, the achieving of the unity of the processes of encirclement and destruction of the surrounded grouping, the employment of the most effective methods of encircling and destroying the isolated forces, the combating of mobile pockets, the blockading of the surrounded enemy, dependable operational support, the organization of firm control and cooperation, the reasons for failures in the encirclement operations and so forth.

An analysis of the experience indicates that, regardless of the changes in the methods of fighting, under present-day conditions in preparing offensive operations in the aim of encircling an enemy grouping, the obligatory conditions should include the following: the decisive massing of forces on the axes of the outflanking groupings; a concrete determination of the forces which are to be assigned to establish the inner and external perimeters of encirclement; ensuring a high pace in conducting the operation; continuing the offensive on the external perimeter of encirclement; the wide employment of aviation and airborne forces; firm centralized control and close cooperation of all the forces involved in the encirclement and elimination of the surrounded enemy groupings.

#### Footnotes

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**Experience of Army Defensive Operations**  
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[Article by Cols V.P. Krikunov and V.G. Matveyev:  
"From the Experience of Army Defensive Operations"]

[Text] Defense during the years of the Great Patriotic War, particularly in its first period, held a significant place in the military operations of the Soviet Army. The article examines certain questions in conducting an army-level defensive and characterizing its activeness.

The experience of conducting army defensive operations showed that the content, nature and methods of troop operations in repelling the enemy offensive was largely determined by the conditions of the army's going over to the defensive and by the available weapons.

In going over to the defensive outside of contact with the enemy, actions against enemy troops commenced by the launching of attacks even at the distant approaches, from the moment they moved into the range of the army weapons and the forces of the front employed in the army's interests. Under the conditions of direct contact with the enemy, the hitting of its troops began with their deployment for the offensive as well as during the period of the enemy assault.

Aviation played the leading role in operating against the enemy at the distant approaches to the defenses during the period of the concentration and move-up of the enemy assault groupings. It was at that time the only means for combating the enemy personnel and combat equipment, when its infantry and tanks were beyond the range of our artillery. Even in the defenses of the combined-arms armies at Moscow, the basic efforts of aviation were aimed at destroying the enemy tank and motorized columns. The air formations and units caused the enemy great losses by the air strikes and reduced the offensive capabilities and rates of advance. However, the paucity of front and army aviation, due to the losses suffered at the outset of the war, did not make it possible

to successfully combat the enemy. Moreover, the subordination of the larger portion of the aviation to the commanders of the combined-arms armies impeded the massed employment of aviation along the front on the axis of the Nazi main thrust.

With the increased aircraft fleet of the Air Forces and the gaining of experience in the combat employment of aviation, the effectiveness of its operations in the army defensive operations rose. In contrast to the defensive at Moscow, at Stalingrad and Kursk, aviation was employed on a massed basis and this was aided by the organizing of air armies and homogeneous air formations. For example, on 5 July 1943, in the defensive zone of the 13th Army in just 2 1/2 hours (from 0930 hours to 1200 hours), pilots from the 16th Air Army (commander, Lt Gen Avn S.I. Rudenko) made 520 aircraft sorties. They attacked the enemy reserves, impeding their advance to the forward edge and to a significant degree disorganized command.(1)

The concentrated air strikes against the enemy troops often led to the aborting of the enemy assaults. On 7 July 1943, an assault by large forces of enemy tanks and infantry in the zone of the 6th Guards Army was checked by the concentrated strikes of the I Ground Attack Air Corps (commander, Lt Gen Avn V.G. Ryazanov).(2)

Forward detachments operating a distance of 15-20 km away from the forward edge played an important role in weakening the thrust of the advancing enemy at the distant approaches to the defenses of the 62d and 64th Armies at Stalingrad. The 62d Army (commander, Maj Gen V.Ya. Kolpakchi) for this purpose moved up to ten divisional forward detachments from a company to a battalion in strength and three army ones consisting of a reinforced rifle regiment each to the line of the Chir River.(3) The 64th Army (commander, Lt Gen V.I. Chuykov) sent out from the first echelon rifle divisions forward detachments up to a rifle regiment in strength each to the line of the Tsimla River.(4) The forward detachments in fighting stubbornly, with constant air support from the 8th Air Army (commander, Maj Gen Avn T.T. Khryukin) forced the enemy to deploy prematurely a portion of the main forces. As a result the Soviet Command succeeded in detecting the Nazi troop grouping, the axis of its main thrust and thus gain time for regroupings and improving the defenses on the main line.

With the start of the defensive engagement, the main efforts of the army were directed at repelling the enemy assault ahead of the forward edge. For this the defending troops using all types of artillery fire as well as air strikes put pressure on the approaching enemy formations and units which were taking up the starting position even before the beginning of their offensive. Fire (artillery and air) counterpreparations was an effective measure for

increasing the activeness of the defenses. This was planned and carried out in the aim of thwarting the offensive or reducing the force of the initial thrust by the main enemy grouping.

The first artillery counterpreparation fire was conducted by Soviet troops in the autumn of 1941 at Leningrad and Moscow. Thus, the counterpreparation fire in the 42d Army (commander, Lt Gen F.S. Ivanov, from 16 September 1941, Maj Gen I.I. Fedyuninskiy) of the Leningrad Front was planned and carried out on 10, 21 and 24 September. The aim of this was to check the enemy offensive on the axis of Krasnoye Selo, Leningrad and against Pulkovo. On 21 September, the artillery from the army and the Red Banner Baltic Front took part in this and this made it possible to establish a relatively high density for those times: 21 guns per kilometer of front.(5) As a result of the 15-minute intense shelling, the Nazi troops suffered heavy losses.

Artillery counterpreparation fire planned in the 16th Army (commander, Lt Gen K.K. Rokossovskiy) of the Western Front was carried out three times. On 1 October 1941, this prevented two enemy attempts to go over to the offensive in the center and on the right flank of the field force's defenses. On 2 October, the army artillery checked an enemy assault on the axis of Kholm, Svyatets.

An analysis of the artillery counterpreparation fire carried out by the Soviet troops in the autumn of 1941 shows that although due to the insufficient amount of artillery in an army, the limited expenditure of ammunition and the time of firing they did not produce substantial results, in a majority of instances they did disrupt and weaken the enemy assault groupings and forced them to defer the time for the start of the assault.

The artillery counterpreparation fire assumed even greater significance in the army-level defensive operations at Stalingrad. It had a particular effect on 5 October 1942 in the 62d Army (commander, Lt Gen V.I. Chuykov) of the Stalingrad Front in the area of the Silikat Plant and the STZ [Stalingrad Tractor Plant] settlement. The fire strikes were launched against the infantry and tanks of two infantry divisions preparing to break through out defenses on a front of 3 km in the aim of reaching the Volga. Over 300 guns, mortars and rocket launching vehicles were involved in the counterpreparation fire. The enemy suffered significant losses and it was able to resume the offensive only 5 days later after the receiving of reinforcements and the regrouping of forces.(6)

As a whole the artillery counterpreparation fire carried out in the defensive operations at Leningrad pursued more decisive aims than in the 1941 summer-autumn campaign. However, they were still not widely employed in the army defensive operations at the start of the second period of the war as a consequence of the shortage of artillery and ammunition.

The artillery counterpreparation fire was most effective in the Battle of Kursk. This was planned in all the armies on the defensive on the sectors of the assumed enemy main thrusts. On the Central Front counterpreparation fire was carried out in the zone of the 13th Army and on the flanks of the 48th and 70th Armies (commanders, Lt Gens N.P. Pukhov, P.L. Romanenko and I.V. Galanin), and on the Voronezh Front in the zones of the 6th and 7th Guards Armies (commanders, Lt Gens I.M. Chistyakov and M.S. Shumilov). Involved in this were: in the 13th Army, 595 guns and mortars and up to 100 rocket artillery vehicles; in the 6th Guards Army, respectively, 555 and 88 weapons, and in the 7th Guards Army, 696 and 47. As a result, the enemy suffered significant losses and this forced it to start the offensive in the zone of the 13th Army 2 1/2 hours later than the designated time, and in the zone of the 6th Guards Army, 8 hours later. Simultaneously with the artillery counterpreparation fire, some 132 ground attack planes and 285 fighters from the 2d and 17th Air Armies (commanders, Lt Gens Avn S.A. Krasovskiy and V.A. Sudets) attacked simultaneously 8 enemy airfields and destroyed 60 aircraft.(7) However, in analyzing the results of the counterpreparation measures in the course of the Kursk Battle, MSU G.K. Zhukov concluded that both fronts commenced it too early as the Nazis were still in their shelters and the tanks were in the assembly areas.(8)

The enemy suffered maximum losses by the firing of all types when the enemy troops went over to the assault and in the fight for the main defensive zone. During the first period of the war, the main role in destroying enemy personnel, particularly on the approaches to the forward defensive edge, was assigned to small arms. Due to the shortage of artillery, artillery fire was planned, as a rule, only ahead of the forward edge while the limited amount of ammunition did not make it possible to widely employ creeping barrage fire (PZO).

With the increased amount of artillery and the higher degree of its massing, the effectiveness of the fire damage to the enemy ahead of the forward edge and in the near depth of the defenses increased significantly. Thus, in the battle of Kursk in the 13th Army on the axis of the expected main enemy thrust, the artillery density (considering the antitank cannons) was brought up to 105 guns, mortars and rocket artillery vehicles per kilometer of front. This made it possible by setting a heavy PZO on 5 July alone, to thwart an enemy tank attack twice in the zone of the 148th Rifle Division.(9) In addition, fixed barrage fire (NZO) was prepared and carried out with concentrated fire against the places of tank accumulation and against the deployment lines.

For repelling the massed attacks of enemy tanks, a system of antitank fire was established with a rather high density of antitank weapons. Thus, in the Kursk Battle on the Orel-Kursk sector our troops had an average of 25 guns per kilometer of front and this made it possible to repulse the enemy tank attack with a density up to 45 units per kilometer of front.(10)

Thus, from one defensive operation to another the role and importance of the maximum weakening of the enemy attack on the approaches to the defenses grew continuously. The air strikes, the active operations of the forward detachments, the counterpreparation fire and various types of artillery fire were decisive measures to weaken the attacking enemy, to disrupt control and reduce the morale of the advancing troops.

The maneuvering of forces was an important factor in achieving activeness of the army defense. This made it possible to establish the necessary densities and ensured the defending troops of an advantageous position for repelling the enemy assault, for carrying out counterpreparation fire, for launching counterstrikes, for combating enemy groupings which had broken through as well as airborne assault forces and carrying out other tasks.

The forces were maneuvered both along the front by withdrawing a portion of the forces from secondary sectors and using them to reinforce the formations fighting on the axes of the main enemy thrusts, as well as from the interior by committing the second echelons and reserves to battle. The maneuver began to be employed by our troops in the fighting of the summer of 1941. However, in these defensive operations, it did not always achieve the set goals due to the paucity of reserves and which were inferior to the enemy in mobility. In a majority of instances they were committed to battle under disadvantageous conditions, when the enemy offensive was being carried out in the entire army defensive zone with superiority of enemy aviation in the air. The maneuvering of forces from secondary sectors to the axis of the enemy main thrust was carried out slowly due to poor enemy troop control under the conditions of the high rate of advance of the enemy troops.

In the autumn of 1941, the maneuvering of forces in the army's defense assumed a broader scale. For example, on 16 November the Nazis went over to an offensive against the 16th Army of the Western Front, launching the main thrust on the Volokolamsk axis. Here, on a front up to 40 km wide, four panzer divisions, a motorized division and an infantry division from Army Group Center was advancing against four divisions. On 17 November, the enemy breached the defenses of the 50th and 53d Cavalry Divisions and reached the area of Pokrovskeye, Gryady.(11) The army commander shifted the 1st Guards Tank Brigade to this sector. By the joint efforts of the tanks and cavalry, the further advance was halted in this area.

From the autumn of 1941, in a number of armies they began establishing second echelons consisting of one or two divisions in conducting the defensive. By the end of the first period of the war, such elements in the operational configuration appeared as artillery groups as well as artillery-antitank reserves. All of this contributed to the broader maneuvering of forces. The art of carrying this out underwent further development in the defensive operations at Stalingrad. Thus, in August 1942, in the

64th Army (commander, Lt Gen M.S. Shumilov), four rifle divisions, one tank brigade and two officer candidate regiments were regrouped from the right, less active flank to the left as well as from the reserve of the Southeastern Front. As a result, the operational troop density on the axis of the main enemy thrust increased from 40 to 9 km per division and this made it possible for the enemy to hold the occupied line, causing substantial damage to the enemy.(12)

The antitank artillery was maneuvered on a particularly wide scale in the course of the Stalingrad Battle. In the second half of August 1942, for example, in the 62d Army (commander, Lt Gen A.I. Lopatin) which was defending on the external defensive perimeter, the maneuvering of the artillery antitank regiments to the threatened sectors was carried out 29 times. This was done, as a rule, in a single night over a distance of 100-150 km and more.(13)

The art of maneuvering forces rose to a higher degree in the army defensive operations at Kursk. The defensive actions of the 13th Army of the Central Front show the scale of this.

On 5 July 1943, the enemy went over to the offensive, launching its main thrust with the forces of four panzer divisions and three infantry divisions against the army's left flank on the Olkhovatka axis. Simultaneously, four infantry divisions reinforced by tanks attacked the army right flank and the left flank formations of the 48th Army on the Maloarkhangel'sk axis. In having a numerical superiority, the enemy breached the defenses on both axes. Under these conditions the army commander moved up the 74th Rifle Division (from the second zone) and the 13th Antitank Artillery Brigade to the Protasovo area for covering the right flank.

For reinforcing the formations on the defensive on the Olkhovatka axis, the commander shifted the 27th Guards Heavy Tank Regiment to the commander of the 81st Rifle Division, he committed it to battle in the zone of the 129th Separate Tank Brigade with the 1442d Self-Propelled Artillery Regiment and moved up from his own reserve two mobile obstacle construction detachments into the defensive area of the 15th Rifle Division. Also shifted to this sector were the 1st Antitank Artillery Brigade and the 21st Separate Mortar Brigade which had arrived from the front's reserve. As a result, the enemy offensive on this axis was halted.

Being unsuccessful on the Olkhovatka axis, the Nazi Command shifted its efforts to the Ponyri area. In order to check the enemy advance, the commander of the 13th Army reinforced the 307th Rifle Division on the defensive here with an army mobile obstacle construction detachment and transferred to the division a portion of the forces from the 81st Rifle Division which had been withdrawn from battle. Units of the 5th Artillery breakthrough division were concentrated for supporting the 307th Rifle Division. In addition the III Tank Corps of

the 2d Tank Army went over to the defensive behind the division and the 13th Antitank Artillery Brigade from the front's reserve took up positions.

The broad maneuvering of forces both from the interior of the defenses as well as from unattacked sectors made it possible for the commander of the 13th Army to promptly boost the effort on the most threatened axes and check the enemy attempts to exploit the success. At a price of great losses, the Nazis succeeded in advancing just 6-10 km into the army zone. Having exhausted their offensive capabilities, they were forced to abandon the offensive against Kursk from the north.

The maneuvering of tank and mechanized troops, artillery and special reserves assumed ever-greater importance from operation to operation. For example, in the course of the Kursk Battle, when the enemy by the end of 5 July 1943 had concentrated up to 300 tanks in the aim of breaching our defenses on the axis of Butovo, Rakovo, the commander of the 6th Guards Army quickly regrouped to the Cherkasskoye area the 27th Antitank Artillery Brigade, having put it under the commander of the 71st Guards Rifle Division. To this same sector from the 40th Army and the front's reserve another two antitank artillery brigades (29th and 14th) were moved up, and upon orders of the commander of the Voronezh Front, Army Gen N.F. Vatutin, two corps (VI Tank and III Mechanized) from the 1st Tank Army were deployed in the army second defensive zone. As a result, the fire capabilities of the defending troops were sharply increased. The tank density on a number of sectors was raised to 20-25 per kilometer of front and for antitank guns up to 25.(14) Under these conditions, the advancing enemy, having up to 50 tanks per kilometer in the battle formations, was unable to exploit the further offensive.

The increased scale of the maneuvering of forces on the defensive can be seen from the example of the 26th Army (commander, Lt Gen N.A. Gagen) in the Balaton Operation. During 6 March 1945, to the south of Lake Velence the enemy succeeded in pushing 3-4 km into our defenses. On the axis of the thrust of its main grouping, the commander moved up the 22d Rifle Division which was in the reserve to the second defensive area and transferred it to part of the XXX Rifle Corps. The 108th Guards Rifle Division, one regiment of each of the 78th and 136th Rifle Divisions of the 27th Army were moved to the prepared army defensive line. Upon orders of the front's commander, the 110th and 170th Brigades of the XVIII Tank Corps were regrouped to an area to the southeast of Seregeles. The 3d Guards Airborne Division and a tank regiment were also shifted here from the front's second echelon. The 122d Rifle Division was transported by rail to the Pecs area, the 18th Rifle Division by motor transport to the zone of the 1st Bulgarian Army, while the XXXIII Rifle Corps was concentrated in the Dunafoldvar area ready to act

according to the situation.(15) As a result of the maneuver on the axis of the enemy thrust, the balance of forces changed in favor of the defending troops and the enemy was forced to abandon the offensive actions.

The skillful maneuvering of the mobile obstacle construction detachments played a significant role in increasing the activeness of the defensive. For example, in the Kursk Battle it took to blow up one enemy tank 120-150 mines set in the course of the defensive operation by the mobile obstacle construction detachments and around 400 mines in minefields laid previously.(16)

Very instructive was the maneuvering of the mobile obstacle construction detachments in the 57th Army (commander, Lt Gen M.N. Sharokhin) in the course of the Balaton Operation. When on 6 March 1945, the enemy succeeded in driving up to 4 km into the field force's defenses, the army commander for checking the breakthrough committed to battle the mobile obstacle construction detachments which by the morning of the following day had laid 6,660 antitank mines and 1,350 antipersonnel mines. The mining density on the likely tank approaches reached 1,000 antitank mines per kilometer. In suffering significant losses in tanks, the enemy undertook a maneuver to attack on another axis. Having detected this, the mobile obstacle construction detachments during the night of 8 March bracketed the new breakthrough sector with minefields and set 26,570 antitank mines and 41,500 antipersonnel mines.(17) On this axis the enemy was halted on the fourth day of the offensive.

Thus, the experience of the war showed that on the defensive, by the skillful maneuvering of forces, it was possible with fewer numbers to establish on a threatened sector a balance of forces which would make it possible to cause significant harm to the enemy and halt its offensive.

At the same time, the enemy, in establishing a significant superiority in forces on the selected axis and in carrying out heavy artillery and air softening up, frequently crushed the defenses of the Soviet troops and then by the massed employment of tanks and motorized infantry with the support of other forces, crossed the defenses. Even in the Kursk Battle, where our defenses were the strongest and most active, the enemy, in suffering enormous losses, advanced up to 10-12 km in the zone of the 13th Army and up to 35 km in the zone of the 6th Guards Army.

Under these conditions, in the course of an army defensive operation, the **army counterstrike** was one of the important measures carried out in the aim of eliminating the enemy which had forced its way in. Combined with a stubborn defense of the important lines and areas, the army counterstrikes bled white and halted the enemy and created good conditions for our troops to go over to a counteroffensive.

The army counterstrikes were carried out rather frequently in the defensive operations in the summer of 1941. They made it possible for the Soviet Command to gain time to improve the defenses on the most important axes, they forced the advancing troops to disperse the efforts of the assault groupings and alter the axis of the attacks and they also involved very significant losses in enemy personnel and equipment. However, at that time in a majority of instances, the counterstrikes in the army's defenses did not always achieve their aims. The reasons for the setbacks were the hurry in preparation, a poor knowledge of the enemy grouping and its intentions, the moving up to the deployment lines without an air cover and the inexperience of our commanders and troops in conducting defensive operations.

As the capabilities of the army field forces broadened and as combat experience was gained, the importance of the counterstrikes in the army defenses grew. For example, on 6 August 1942, the enemy with the forces of the XLVIII Panzer Corps and two infantry divisions broke through into the Abganerovo area and created a danger of coming out in the rear of the 64th Army of the Stalingrad Front. For defeating this grouping, the army commander on 9-10 August organized a counterstrike by the forces of the XIII Tank Corps, the 38th, 126th and 204th Rifle Divisions. This was supported with the fire of 396 guns and mortars and was carried out in a zone of 9 km. On the axis of the main thrust, treble superiority over the enemy was established in terms of personnel, double for artillery with an equal ratio in tanks. Prior to the start of the counterstrike, they planned a 30-minute artillery softening up and a brief air softening up. Over 2 days were assigned to organize the counterstrike. As a result of carrying it out, the enemy suffered significant losses, the army's defenses were stabilized and over the following 10 days the Nazis did not initiate active combat on this sector.

During the second period of the war, when the strategic initiative was already with the Soviet troops, the going over to an operational defensive was carried out chiefly intentionally for holding the lines gained in the course of the offensive, for repelling enemy counterstrikes and thwarting counteroffensives. The defenses were organized as deeply echeloned, with strong second echelons and reserves based upon formations of tank and mechanized troops. Under these conditions, the counterstrikes began to play a crucial role in defeating the enemy which had broken in and in thwarting the enemy offensive plans.

Thus, the commanders of the Central Front and the 13th Army, having ascertained the axis of the enemy main thrust, decided on the morning of 6 July 1943 to launch a counterstrike and restore the situation. This was to be carried out by the forces of the XVII Guards Rifle Corps of the 13th Army, the XVI Tank Corps of the 2d Tank Army and the XIX Tank Corps. As a result, a major change occurred in the course of the engagement, the enemy was halted and could not continue the offensive

during the following days. The success of the counterstrike was determined by a careful analysis of the situation, by the prompt choice of the moment of its launching (from the morning of the second day of the operation to recover the main defensive zone), the support for the fighting by massed artillery and air strikes as well as by the firm and continuous troop control.

The experience gained in preparing and launching counterstrikes was reinforced in the 1943 Draft Field Manual. The counterstrikes were planned and carried out at various stages of the enemy's push into the defenses. The first echelon armies launched counterstrikes, as a rule, in the fight for the main defensive zone and more rarely, for the second, usually on the second day of the defensive engagement or somewhat later, when the enemy, in suffering losses in fighting the first echelon of defending troops, had been halted, its close reserves had been consumed and the deeper ones had not yet been moved up. In a majority of the defensive operations, the counterstrikes were launched against one or both flanks of the advancing enemy, and this created better conditions for the encirclement and defeat of the enemy grouping which had pushed in.

Also involved in the launching of the counterstrike were the second echelons reinforced by troops withdrawn from less threatened sectors and it frequently involved reserves of divisions (brigades) defending on the main axis.(18) The counterstrike was supported by aviation and it was preceded by artillery softening up. Cooperation was organized according to the same principles as on the offensive. Chief attention was paid to coordinating the artillery fire and air strikes with the actions of the troops launching the counterstrike. Leadership over the counterstrike grouping was exercised, as a rule, by the commander from a control post set up on the sector of its advance. Frequently, for this an operations group was established headed by the deputy army commander or leadership was entrusted to one of the corps commanders.

During the third period of the war, in certain defensive operations, counterstrikes were not made. This was explained by the fact that the aims of the defensive were the repelling of enemy counterstrikes and the establishing of conditions for resuming the offensive. For this reason, the commanders endeavored to repel the enemy strikes using the first echelon forces while the second echelons and reserves were kept as the basis of assault groupings for subsequent offensive operations.(20)

The war's experience shows that counterstrikes were an important manifestation of activeness on the defensive. Their success depended upon the correct choice of the moment and method of launching the thrust, the precise coordination of efforts by the assigned forces as well as all-round support and control. In the course of the war, the main trends in preparing and launching a counterstrike were: a constant rise in the quantitative and qualitative composition of the counterstrike groupings,

the ever-greater saturating of them with armored and mechanized troops, the maximum massing of forces on the main axis and the launching of a powerful initial thrust with its exploitation in depth.

In the course of the Great Patriotic War, rich experience was gained in the successful conduct of army defensive operations. As the effective and numerical strength of the armies increased, as their was a quantitative and qualitative rise in the means of armed combat and as the combat skill of the commanders, staffs and troops improved, the stability and insurmountability of the army defense rose.

From operation to operation there was an improvement in the methods of hitting the enemy on the approaches to the defenses. The most effective defensive measure in weakening the enemy thrust was artillery and air counterpreparation measures. These achieved the best results when they anticipated the enemy artillery softening up and were carried out against troops taking up the starting position for an offensive.

The Soviet Military Command correctly assessed the importance of the maneuvering of forces in the army defensive operations as one of the decisive factors in its activeness. The maneuvering of reserves as well as troops from the unattacked sectors assumed an evermore decisive and effective nature. In anticipating the enemy in actions an important role was played by the maneuvering of the tank and mechanized troops, the artillery and particularly the antitank artillery, as well as the mobile obstacle construction detachments.

The counterstrike was a decisive form of hitting the advancing enemy. Combined with the stubborn holding of important lines and areas, an army counterstrike could not only cause major loss to the enemy and halt its offensive but also restore the position of the defending troops.

The experience of the conduct of an active defense is of important significance under present-day conditions. A profound study and its creative employment in light of the defensive military doctrine of the Warsaw Pact will contribute largely to increasing the operational skill of our military personnel.

#### Footnotes

1. TsAMO SSSR [Central Archives of the USSR Ministry of Defense], folio 368, inv. 6476, file 101, sheet 4.
2. "Sovetskiye Voenno-Vozdushnyye Sily v Velikoy Otechestvennoy voyne 1941-1945 gg." [Soviet Air Forces in the Great Patriotic War of 1941-1945], Moscow, Voenizdat, 1968, pp 183-184.
3. TsAMO, folio 345, inv. 5487, file 47, sheets 12-14.
4. Ibid., inv. 208837, file 1, sheets 12-14.

5. Ibid., folio 217, inv. 300435, file 14, sheet 135.
6. Ibid., folio 345, inv. 5487, file 48, sheets 183-184.
7. *Voyenno-istoricheskiy zhurnal*, No 9, 1983, p 21.
8. G.K. Zhukov, "Vospominaniya i razmyshleniya" [Recollections and Reflections], Moscow, Nauka, Vol 2, 1974, p 168.
9. "Kurskaya bitva" [The Battle of Kursk], Moscow, Voenizdat, 1970, p 223.
10. "Armeyskiye operatsii" [Army Operations], Moscow, Voenizdat, 1977, p 169.
11. TsAMO, folio 208, inv. 2511, file 218, sheet 111.
12. "Voyennoye iskusstvo vo vtoroy mirovoy voyne" [Military Art in World War II], Moscow, VAGSh, 1973, p 364.
13. "Artilleriya v oboronitelnykh operatsiyakh Velikoy Otechestvennoy voyny" [Artillery in Defensive Operations of the Great Patriotic War], Moscow, Voenizdat, Book 1, 1958, p 401.
14. G.A. Koltunov, B.G. Solovyev, "Kurskaya bitva" [The Battle of Kursk], Moscow, Voenizdat, 1983, p 139.
15. TsAMO, folio 243, inv. 2900, file 1903, sheets 50-55.
16. "Voyennoye iskusstvo vo vtoroy..." p 356.
17. TsAMO, folio 243, inv. 2939, file 479, sheets 49-50.
18. "Polevoy ustav Krasnoy Armii (proyekt)" [Red Army Field Manual (Draft)], Moscow, Voenizdat, 1943, p 258.
19. TsAMO, folio 219, inv. 36549, file 3, sheets 224-226.
20. "Armeyskiye operatsii," p 204.

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### Combat Operations by Units of 256th, 372d Rifle Divisions in Encirclement

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[Article, published under the heading: "Scientific Papers and Information," by Col (Ret) F.N. Utenkov, candidate of military sciences, docent: "The Combat Operations by Units of the 256th and 372d Rifle Divisions in Encirclement"]

[Text] In the course of the Novgorod-Luga Offensive Operation of the Volkhov Front, the troops of the 8th Army (commander, Lt Gen F.N. Starikov), in continuing the offensive at the beginning of February 1944, approached the city of Luga from the east. The 67th Army of the Leningrad Front under the command of Lt Gen V.P. Sviridov was approaching the city from the north.

The VII Rifle Corps of Maj Gen R.I. Panin which was part of the 8th Army with the forward detachments from the 930th and 937th Rifle Regiments of the 256th Rifle Division cut an important line of communications, the highway running from Luga to Pskov.(1) In the area of Oklyuzhnye, units from the 256th Rifle Division under the command of Col A.G. Koziyev, linked up with units from the 5th Brigade of Leningrad Partisans under the command of K.D. Karitskiy.(2) To the right the 372d Rifle Division of Col P.I. Radygin was advancing successfully while to the left was the 191st Rifle Division under the command of Maj Gen I.N. Burakovskiy.

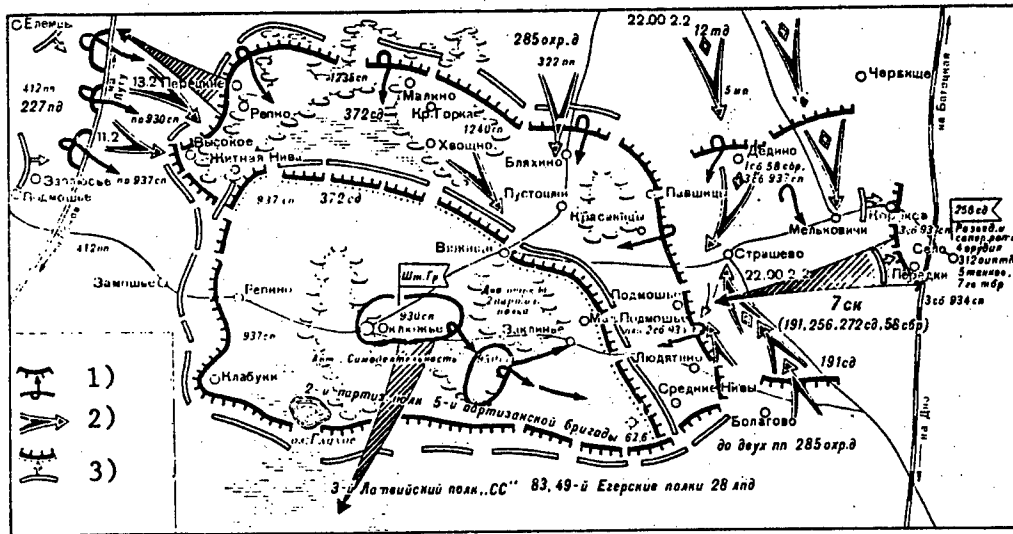
In order to prevent the main forces on the left wing of the Volkhov Front to reach the Pskov—Luga Highway and thereby ensure the pullback of its Luga grouping to the

southwest, the enemy decided to destroy our subunits which had broken through to the highway as well as in the area of Dedino, Melkovichi, Bolagovo.

At 2200 hours on 2 February 1944, the enemy initiated strong counterattacks. One group from the 12th Panzer Division consisting of up to 350 submachine gunners with 20 tanks, one-half of which was heavy, in the area of Dedino succeeded in overcoming the resistance of the 1st Battalion of the 58th Rifle Brigade and the 3d Battalion of the 937th Rifle Regiment of the 256th Rifle Division and break into the area of Stashevo. A second group of motorized infantry with 10 tanks and assault guns broke into the area of Melkovichi. Simultaneously, infantry numbering up to 200 submachine gunners from the 285th Security Division launched a strike against the 191st Rifle Division and broke into the Strashevo area from the south.(3) As a result, a large portion of the forces of the 372d and 256th Rifle Divisions and one regiment of the 5th Partisan Brigade fell into an encirclement.(4) From 3 February, the units and the partisan detachments in the encirclement began to go over to the defensive (see the diagram).

In the surrounded troops were: 2,870 men, 3 guns and 18 mortars while the enemy had: around 6,000 men, 76 guns, 146 mortars and 60 tank and assault guns.(5)

The situation of the surrounded troops was exacerbated by the fact that the forces of the VII Rifle Corps had been split: the staff of the 256th Rifle Division with 3 battalions of the 934th and 937th Rifle Regiments, 4 guns from the 312th Separate Antitank Artillery Battalion, an intelligence company and a company of a combat engineer battalion, 5 tanks from the 7th Guards Tank Brigade with a portion of the forces of the 58th Rifle Brigade and the 372d Rifle Division were fiercely engaged against the encroaching enemy in the area of



Combat of Units of the 256th and 372d Rifle Divisions in Encirclement and Breaking Out of It

Koroksa, Peredki, Selo. The 934th Rifle Regiment of the 256th Rifle Division was fighting to the north of Bolagovo, being under the 191st Rifle Division.(6)

The conditions under which the surrounded troops had to fight were also difficult. The area of combat was wooded-swampy terrain. The situation was greatly complicated by the thaw which had set in. The existing few country roads and paths became impassable not only for motor vehicle traffic but also cart transport. In the course of the fighting, virtually all the artillery and rear services fell behind while the delivery of ammunition, food and fodder was extremely limited.

For ensuring firm command of the surrounded troops, Maj Gen R.I. Panin ordered Col A.G. Koziyev to fly into the encirclement area by plane and head the fighting of the troops located there.(7) Being unable to do this because of the absence of a landing strip to receive the aircraft in the area of encirclement, Col A.G. Koziyev during the night of 3 February gave the orders by radio. These stated that all the units in the encirclement were to unite under his command into an operations group and that until his arrival leadership over the units would be entrusted to the chief of the operations section of the staff of the 256th Rifle Division, Maj G.D. Fedorov. Orders were given to establish a continuous defensive front, to create tree barriers, to set out minefields on the most probable axes of enemy assaults, to destroy the log roadways, make an accounting of all ammunition and food, establish strict order over their expenditure and prepare a strip to receive aircraft.(8)

From the morning and all day long on 3 February, the troops of the group dug in on their lines, establishing a continuous defensive. Along the entire front, trenches were dug, tree barricades were built, minefields were set out and communications established between the units and subunits as well as between the units and the group staff located in the Pustoshki area. A landing strip for aircraft was prepared a kilometer to the northwest of Vyazhishchi.

As a result of the measures taken, on 4 February, all the assault initiated by the enemy against the forward detachments of the 930th and 937th Rifle Regiments and in the sector defended by the separate ski battalion with the 2d Rifle Battalion of the 934th Rifle Regiment were successfully driven off.

However, the situation continued to become more complicated. Maj G.B. Fedorov, having established contact by radio with the chief of staff of the 256th Rifle Division, Col A.A. Maslennikov, announced the difficult situation with ammunition and food in the group and that the power for the radio was nearly exhausted. He also transmitted the coordinates for the landing strip for airplanes.

Having received these data, Col A.G. Koziyev immediately got in touch with the staff of the 8th Army. He asked that he be transferred as quickly as possible to the encirclement area and requested emergency help for the group with ammunition, food, medicines and power for the radio. The army command took the required measures. Although the drop was impeded by bad weather, nevertheless from 3 through 8 February, over 21.6 tons of cargo were dropped in the area of encirclement and this included 2.5 tons of food and 19 tons of ammunition.(9) Along with this, considering the extreme need for ammunition, Col A.G. Koziyev, still outside the encirclement, established two groups of 15 and 20 men who were to make their way through the forests and swamps to the surrounded troops and deliver ammunition. One group succeeded in crossing the front line while the other could not get through and turned back.

Regardless of the measures taken, the surrounded troops as before had extremely little ammunition and food (there was just 100 gm of dry biscuit per man), and the radio stopped operating. However, the men of the 256th and 372d Rifle Divisions behaved courageously. The chief of the political section of the 256th Rifle Division, Col P.G. Nikishin on 3 February reported to the chief of the political section of the 8th Army that, regardless of the existing difficult situation, the political morale of the personnel was high.

At 1000 hours on 5 February, the enemy again assaulted the 930th and 937th Rifle Regiments, throwing against each of them up to an infantry regiment with tanks supported by artillery and aviation. With two battalions the enemy launched an attack against the 1238th and 1240th Rifle Regiments. Nazi submachine gunners numbering up to 75 men broke into the Vyazhishchi area. This forced the group's staff to immediately abandon the Vyazhishchi area and retreat to the Oklyuzhye area. In the retreat Maj G.B. Fedorov was killed. The enemy succeeded in driving the forward detachments of the 930th and 937th Rifle Regiments from the Luga—Pskov Highway and they retreated to the main forces of their units.(10)

In the morning of the same day, Col A.G. Koziyev took off for the area of encirclement, but in approaching Vyazhishchi, where the landing strip had been readied, the aircraft was fired on by the enemy which had broken through there, and it had to land on the edge of the forest to the southwest of Oklyuzhye.(11)

Having arrived on the scene, Col A.G. Koziyev issued the following orders: to strongly hold the occupied lines; individual groups which had moved up to the highway were to prevent enemy traffic along it; all units were to have at least a company in reserve, positioning the reserves on the most important sectors; on likely tank approaches to set up antitank strongpoints; the rears of the units were to be united into a group rear; it was to be explained to all the personnel that all the men were carrying out a most responsible task. Simultaneously, the



group commander warned that no subunit had the right without his orders to leave the occupied positions and that the violation of this demand would be viewed as betrayal of the motherland.(12)

For establishing a strong defense the battle formations of all the units were formed up into a single echelon with the establishing of a reserve. A rifle company from the 937th Rifle Regiment was assigned as the reserve of the group commander.

Under the pressure of the advancing troops from the Leningrad Front from the north and the Volkhov Front from the east, the enemy was forced to roll back to the southwest. As before, it was impeded by the group of Col A.G. Koziyev. For this reason the enemy decided to split the group and destroy it piecemeal in order by a thrust along the road of Vyazhishchi, Oklyuzhye, Zamoshye to open a way to the Luga—Pskov Highway. The preparation of the new enemy assaults was promptly detected. According to the data of reconnaissance which was carried out in the enemy rear basically by the partisans, Col A.G. Koziyev concluded that the strongest assaults might be expected from the north and the east. He demanded that the unit commanders continue the defensive works while the regiments were to have two positions and on the most important axes three, the engineer obstacles were to be reinforced, camouflaging was to be strictly observed and the burning of campfires at night was categorically banned.

After a 4-day lull, the enemy on 10 February, in carrying out a 40-minute artillery softening up, went over to the offensive with the forces of up to two battalions of the 322d Infantry Regiment on the axis of Khvoshchno, Vyazhishchi and with two battalions from the 113th Infantry Regiment on the axis of Lyudyatino, Podmoshye. The infantry actions were supported not only by artillery and tanks but also by aviation. The enemy succeeded in pressuring the subunits of the separate ski battalion and the 2d Battalion of the 934th Rifle Regiment against which were thrown tanks from the 5th Motorized Regiment of the 12th Panzer Division. The enemy captured Podmoshye, Lyudyatino and Sredniye Nivy.

Having analyzed the results of the fighting over 10 February, the group commander in the interests of the greatest stiffening of the defenses, regrouped the forces. Under the cover from the north and west of subunits from the 372d Rifle Division and the 937th Rifle Regiment of the 256th Rifle Division, he pulled back the 930th Rifle Regiment into the reserve and 0500 hours on 11 February this was to turn over its sector to the 937th Rifle Regiment and concentrate 2 km to the southwest of Zaklinye. Two detachments from the 2d Partisan Regiment were pulled back to the new defensive line of Zaklinye, Vyazhishchi. The separate ski battalion was

ordered to take up the defensive along a line of elev. 62.6, Mal. Podmoshye; units from the 372d Rifle Division were to defend the line of Vyazhishchi, Peretskiye.(13)

The regrouping carried out played a positive role. On the morning of 11 February, the enemy resumed the assault, however now from three directions. Up to two infantry battalions with tanks went over to the offensive on the axis of Mal. Podmoshye, Zaklinye. All day long there was heavy fighting here against the Nazis who succeeded in capturing Mal. Podmoshye. In line with this, Col A.G. Koziyev ordered his reserve, the 930th Rifle Regiment, to counterattack the enemy and drive it out of Mal. Podmoshye. This was done. At the same time, up to two enemy battalions attacked the subunits of the 937th Rifle Regiment on two sectors. But they were halted by the fire of the combat security. Having been defeated in a frontal attack, the enemy outflanked the combat security and pushed into the regiment's battle formations. However, the enemy was thrown back by a counterattack of the regimental reserve. After the unsuccessful enemy assaults, the group's position still remained difficult. They were short of ammunition, food and medicines. Because of the bad weather the aircraft were not flying. Because of this, in the corps they organized two groups of ammunition carriers consisting of 25 and 30 men headed by experienced and bold officers. They succeeded in reaching the designated areas and somewhat eased the position of the surrounded troops. On 12 February, five aircraft (three Douglas and two PO-2) were able to land at the small landing strip near Oklyuzhye and they delivered ammunition, food, medicines, power supply for the radio and so forth. On the return trip they carried sick and wounded.

By this time Col A.G. Koziyev had been informed by the army staff on the approach of the Leningrad Front. For promptly detecting their approach, on 12 February he organized a special reconnaissance group headed by Lt Maslov, having given it the task of reaching the area to the west of Lake Glukhoye, setting up observation over the traffic along the Luga—Pskov Highway both by the enemy and our own troops and reporting the results by radio to the group staff.

In the morning of 13 February, the enemy undertook another attempt to destroy the surrounded units. Having moved up additionally the 712th Separate Chasseur Regiment, the enemy with forces of up to an infantry battalion attacked the 937th Rifle Regiment and seized Repno, but by a counterattack of the regimental reserve was thrown back and the situation restored.

The enemy initiated assaults here twice more but unsuccessfully. Considering that the 937th Rifle Regiment had suffered heavy losses, Col A.G. Koziyev reinforced it with two rifle companies from his reserve.

In the aim of intensifying troop actions, the group commander during the night of 15 February conducted a reconnaissance in force. A reinforced rifle platoon from the 937th Rifle Regiment attacked the enemy on the axis of Zhitnaya Niva. Not encountering resistance here, it occupied this population point. By morning the remaining platoons from the company had arrived here and took up an all-round defense.

At the same time, partisans were also conducting reconnaissance. They established that there were up to 200 Nazis in Blyakhina, 150 in Pustoshki, up to an infantry battalion with artillery in Podmoshye, 600 in Lyudyatina, up to 100 in Sredniye Nivy, 200 in Klabutitsy and up to 100 Nazis in Gorki.(14)

The enemy command, utilizing these forces, on 15 February initiated the last assaults against the surrounded troops but they were driven off. On the same day Col A.G. Koziyev was able to establish radio contact with the 67th Army of the Leningrad Front advancing from the north and which was fighting several kilometers away from the area of encirclement. He decided to use the forces of the 937th Rifle Regiment under the command of Col G.D. Kornilov, to attack toward the Leningrad troops. Subsequently, the 930th Rifle Regiment (commander, Lt Col P.R. Podlesnyy) which was in the reserve of the group commander, was to attack to the southwest with the task of occupying Mal. Utorgosh, cutting the Shimsk Highway and preventing the retreat of the enemy troops along it. The group which was in the area of Koroksa, Peredki, Selo under the command of Col N.V. Dynnikov (commander of the 934th Rifle Regiment), in the morning of 16 February went over to the offensive on the axis of Podmoshye, the Independence Artel.

Benefiting from the success of the Leningrad Front and the VI Rifle Corps of the 59th Army from their own front, on 16 February at 0200 hours the 930th and 937th Rifle Regiments from the 256th Rifle Division by thrusts to the northwest and southwest, breached the perimeter of encirclement. Subunits from the 937th Rifle Regiment, having broken through the enemy defenses on the sector Peretskiye, Vysokoye, at 0430 hours linked up with the troops of the Leningrad Front. The 930th Rifle Regiment, having successfully carried out the battle task, by the morning of 16 February, liberated Mal. Utorgosh. By 1200 hours of the following day, the encirclement had been completely eliminated. The enemy had suffered a defeat and was retreating and our troops were continuing the pursuit.

Thus ended the heavy 12-day fighting by units of the 256th and 372d Rifle Divisions of the 8th Army of the Volkhov Front and the partisans. This was carried out in a complete encirclement, with a predominant superiority in forces for the enemy, under conditions of a wooded-swampy terrain, heavy mud, with an acute shortage of ammunition, food, fodder and medicines and with limited means of communications.

The soldiers and commanders demonstrated exceptional tenacity and steadfastness. Regardless of the enormous difficulties, they thwarted all the enemy attempts to split the encircled troops, and caused it great losses in manpower, weapons and combat equipment.

The successful fighting was brought about by the high combat skill and mass heroism of our men, by the continuously and skillfully carried out party political work conducted by the political apparatus, the party and Komsomol organizations among the personnel. A major contribution to the outcome of the fighting was made by the commander of the surrounded troop group, Col A.G. Koziyev, who showed courage, cool-headedness, circumspection and activeness. The combat accomplishments of Col A.G. Koziyev were highly regarded by the Soviet government. On 21 February 1944, he was awarded the title of Hero of the Soviet Union.(15) On 6 June of the same year, he was awarded the military rank of major general. For high combat results in the 256th Rifle Division alone during the period from 21 January through 22 February 1944, 790 soldiers and officers were decorated, including 182 with orders and 608 with medals.(16)

#### Footnotes

1. TsAMO SSSR [Central Archives of the USSR Ministry of Defense], folio 1315, inv. 1, file 5, sheet 20.
2. Ibid., folio 204, inv. 89, file 2276, sheet 120.
3. Ibid., folio 1315, inv. 1, file 14, sheet 79.
4. Ibid., sheet 80.
5. Ibid., file 5, sheet 21.
6. Ibid., file 2, sheet 16.
7. Ibid., folio 823, inv. 1, file 14, sheets 60, 61.
8. Ibid., folio 1315, inv. 1, file 7, sheet 8.
9. "Bitva za Leningrad" [The Battle of Leningrad], Moscow, Voenizdat, 1964, p 396.
10. TsAMO, folio 1315, inv. 1, file 2, sheet 19.
11. Ibid., file 7, sheet 53.
12. Ibid., sheet 60.
13. Ibid., file 5, sheet 18.
14. Ibid., file 14, sheet 86.
15. "Bitva za Leningrad," p 397.
16. TsAMO, folio 1315, inv. 1, file 2, sheet 25.

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