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JAPANESE SPECIAL STUDIES ON MANCHURIA

VOLUME XIII

STUDY OF STRATEGICAL AND TACTICAL PECULIARITIES OF FAR EASTERN RUSSIA AND SOVIET FAR EAST FORCES

PREPARED BY
MILITARY HISTORY SECTION
HEADQUARTERS, ARMY FORCES FAR EAST

DISTRIBUTED BY
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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY

SEE: DOD Directive 5200.20 (AR 70-31 NAVMATINST 5200.29 AFR 80-45

PREFACE

This work is essentially an historical study—rather than a military history—of the Soviet Army in the Far East from 1931 to 1945. Like all studies, it contains a number of opinions and comments, and clearly labels them as such. It was prepared by a former colonel in the Imperial Japanese Army, Saburo Hayashi, whose career consisted principally of assignments in intelligence work regarding the USSR. (See biographical note, next page).

The original study was prepared in 1953 under the supervision of the Historical Records Division of the First Demobilization Bureau, and was based mainly on Colonel Hayashi's notes and recollections, supplemented by the scant war records that were preserved. It is part of a series of thirteen studies on Manchuria prepared by the Demobilization Bureau.

The editor has had the benefit of Colonel Hayashi's advice in putting the study into its present form, and has himself conducted extensive research. In addition he has had invaluable research assistance from former Colonel Muraji Yano, a member of the staff of Japanese consultants retained by Military History Section, Headquarters, United States Army Forces Far East and Eighth United States Army.

January 1955

Biographical Note on Author

Lieutenant Hayashi was graduated from Japan's military academy in 1925. After about six years of duty with troops, he attended the three-year course at Japan's equivalent of the U.S. Command and General Staff College. Following graduation from this school, he was given a series of assignments that kept him in close contact with Soviet matters throughout the rest of his career: from December 1935 until April 1938, Captain Hayashi was with the Russian (Fifth) Section of the Intelligence (Second) Bureau of the Army General Staff; the following year Major Hayashi was sent to the USSR and Poland as a language officer; in March 1939 he became Assistant Military Attache at the Japanese Embassy in Moscow. Upon returning to Japan in October 1940 he was again assigned to the Fifth Section and was promoted to lieutenant colonel early the following year. He became chief of that section in October 1943, and after promotion to colonel in March 1944 continued in that post until June 1944. His next assignment was as chief of the Third Section of the Operations Bureau of the Army General Staff. Upon completing this assignment in April 1945, Colonel Hayashi became Military Secretary to the War Minister, a post he held at the end of the War.

Study No. 13

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CHAPTER I

Strategic Aspects of Far East Russia-Manchuria

Primary Considerations in Far East Strategy

As seen by the Japanese Army General Staff, Far Eastern Russia,[1] lacking economic independence and isolated from European Russia, was critically dependent upon the Trans-Siberian Railroad. Also as seen by the General Staff, Far Eastern Russia geographically formed a horseshoe around Manchuria.

These two statements sum up the factors of primary strategic importance to the General Staff prior to and during World War II in estimating the capabilities of the Red Army in the Far East. Other factors, of secondary strategic importance, were related to the existence of this railroad or to this fact of geography; these include, for the railroad, such factors as capacity, seasonal effects, and rolling stock, and for geography, such factors as land, sea, and air, plant and animal life, and man and his industries. It will be seen that all primary and secondary strategic factors were closely interrelated.

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1. The Japanese Army General Staff (JAGS) in referring to Far Eastern Russia meant generally the area east of Krasnoyarsk Province. The boundaries of political and administrative subdivisions of Far Eastern Russia, subject as they were to change, were not relied upon by the JAGS in military planning. Instead, to facilitate the collection of intelligence and the planning of operations, the JAGS arbitrarily established "military boundaries" which transected the

Relation of Geography and the Railroad to Offensive Operations of the Red Army

On the offensive, the Red Army in the Far East was viewed quite differently by the General Staff than when on the defensive, although in both cases its dependence on the railroad was critical. On the offensive, the Red Army had as its principal asset the fact that geography enabled it prior to hostilities to deploy in an encircling position around Manchuria. From such a starting position the attacker could tighten the encirclement and be in a favorable position to annihilate the opposing force. (Had the Soviet Far Eastern Army been sufficiently powerful in 1941 to capitalize on this geographic advantage and carry out a strategic encirclement, its prize would have been the Kwantung Army which at that time constituted the main strength of the Japanese Army.) But such a military campaign, to be sustained, would depend upon supplies shipped from the heart of the Soviet Union via the Trans-Siberian Railroad. The railroad, however, did not have sufficient transportation capacity to provide continuous supply support; nor were the resources of Far Eastern Russia alone adequate to support such a campaign. Thus, while geography afforded advantages, the lack of an adequate rear supply system constituted a decided disadvantage. Furthermore, since the railroad ran parallel rather than perpendicular to the frontier, the "rear" supply system in addition to being inadequate was vulnerable.

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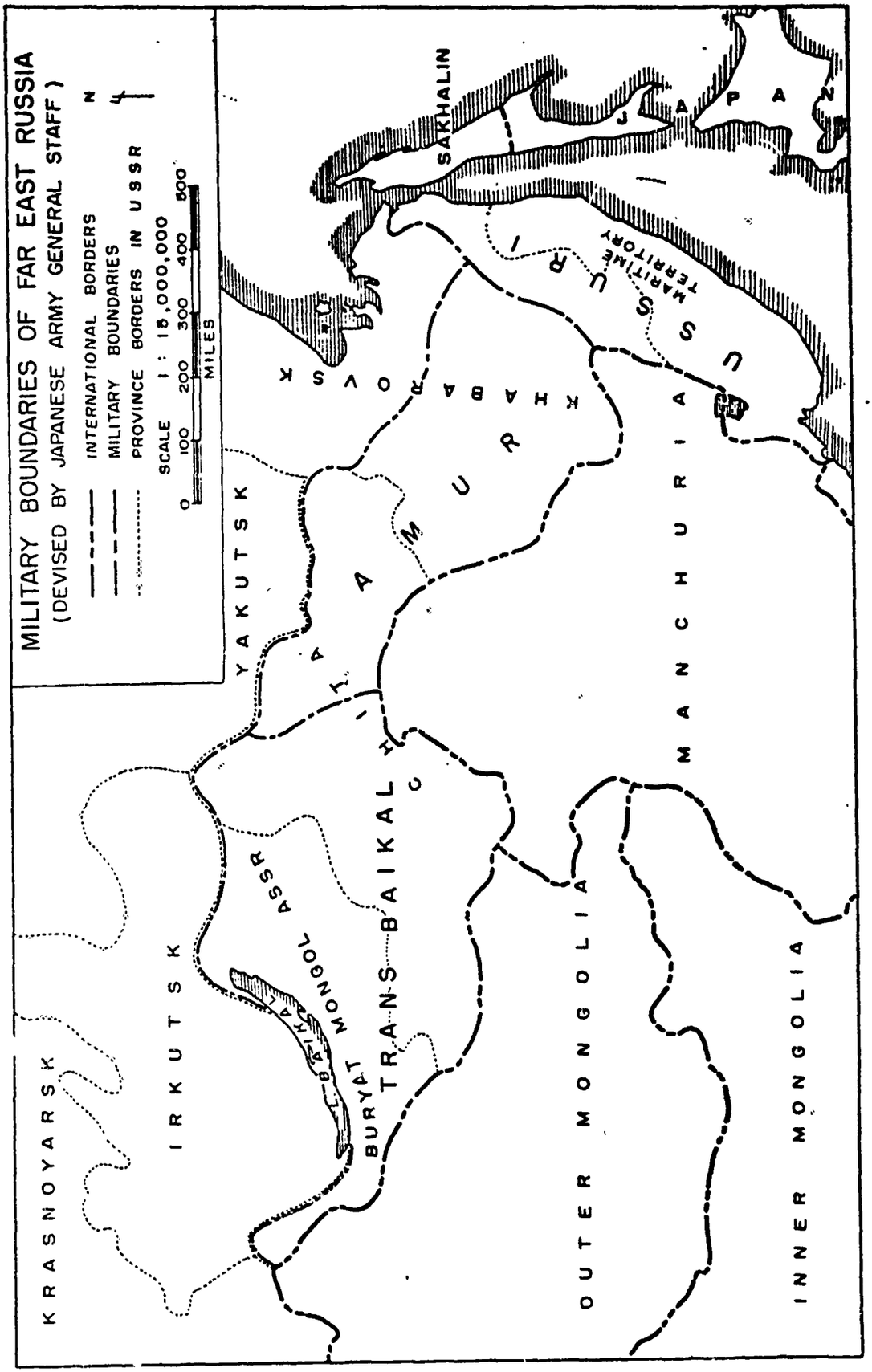
administrative boundaries (See Map No. 1), and did not necessarily conform to the boundaries of Soviet Army components. The regions enclosed by these military boundaries will be referred to simply as areas; the principal areas to which reference will be made in this study will be the Ussuri area, the Amur area, and the Trans-Baikal area. (See Map No. 1). References to SSRs, ASSRs, oblasts, krays, okrugs, and rayony will be made only when necessary, for example in connection with population figures.

MAP NO. I



Relation of Geography and the Railroad to Defensive Operations of the Red Army

Geography and the Trans-Siberian Railroad played as important a role in the national strategy of the Soviet Union as in its Far East strategy. In a situation in which the Red Army in the Far East was on the defensive, Far Eastern Russia would have to be viewed as part of the Soviet Union as a whole. (Had the Kwantung Army when it was at peak strength been able to occupy Far Eastern Russia, it would have meant only that the Far East wing of the Soviet Army had been defeated, not its main body.) The capture of Far Eastern Russia would not prove fatal to the Soviet Union, if the main body of its army remained intact and the heart of the Soviet Union remained unimpaired.

The Soviet Union had never maintained the main body of its army in the Far East. Even had it ever desired to do so (which would perilously weaken its European frontier) it would not be able to furnish adequate and continuous supply support so long as the rear supply system and the resources of Far Eastern Russia, separately or in combination, remained inadequate.

Under these circumstances it was inconceivable to the Japanese General Staff that the Soviet Union would deploy the main body of its Army in the Far East. So long as the Soviet Union did not do so, it followed that it was impossible to engage the main body of the Soviet Army in a decisive battle in the Far East. From this

reasoning the General Staff drew the conclusion that it was impossible to defeat the Soviet Union by operations on only the Far Eastern front.[2] Those operations that could be undertaken in the Far East would not be sufficient to defeat the Soviet Union, since they would involve only one front, and only one segment of the Soviet army. Furthermore, one of the most vexing problems confronting the Japanese Army General Staff in formulating operational plans against the USSR was to determine at which line to terminate operations. In this connection, it was generally believed that even if the Japanese advanced as far as the Trans-Baikal area the defeat of the USSR could not be accomplished.

General Staff Requirements for Defeat of USSR in World War II

What then should have been done to defeat the USSR in World War II? Theoretically, it was simple. The first requirement was to prevent a situation from developing whereby the Soviet Army would be enabled to defeat its enemies in Europe and the Far East one by

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2. German World War II commanders reached the same conclusion about a one-sided assault from the West. In a historical study entitled Terrain Factors in the Russian Campaign compiled by several former German generals and published on 26 July 1951 by the U.S. Department of the Army in pamphlet from (DA Pamphlet 20-290), the following statements respectively open and close the chapter called "conclusions." "Never in history has a one-sided attack from the West succeeded in subjugating Russia." The recent war (World War II) has reaffirmed only one fact: In any one-sided assault from the West, even the best of military forces will find it more than difficult to bring about the collapse of Russia." The use of the qualifying phrase "from the West" by the German generals undoubtedly refers to the fact that Russia was subjugated from the East (through the Caucasus) in 1240.

one, as was actually the case in World War II, or, stated offensively, to attack the Soviet Union simultaneously in Europe and the Far East. It can readily be seen that multi-front operations, undesired by the army of any nation, would be particularly disadvantageous to the Soviet Union.

The second and third requirements were, respectively, to neutralize the heart of the Soviet Union, particularly the industrial Ural area, and to cause internal disintegration by means of political strategems. That great difficulty would be encountered in carrying out these prerequisites was fully recognized by the General Staff.

It is safe to say that while geography favored Far Eastern Russia, the inadequacy of its economic development and its excessive dependence upon the Trans-Siberian Railroad most seriously handicapped the strategy of the Soviet Far Eastern Army. These and other weaknesses will be described in subsequent chapters.

CHAPTER II

Factors Handicapping Strategy

Sparse Population

The 1926 population of Far Eastern Russia (hereafter referred to simply as FER) was 3,168,839. During the twelve years between December 1926 and January 1939 it increased to 5,326,439, according to the 1939 national census of the USSR.[3] The average density in FER was only 1.12 persons per square kilometer, considerably less than the 8.05 for the entire USSR.[4]

One of the major effects of this small and dispersed population was to delay the development of the economy and transportation. This in turn placed a restraint on Soviet military activity in the Far East. For example, the sparse population meant an insufficient number of homes for billeting soldiers and inadequately produced local foodstuffs for feeding them.[5] These shortages, it should be

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3. Subsequent to the outbreak of war in Europe in 1939 the Soviets made no anncuncements regarding population. In March 1945, the Japanese Army General Staff estimated the population in FER to be 6,050,000, including about 700,000 troops (11% of the total) and about 300,000 forced laborers.

4. The density and dispersion of population in the four major pre-war provinces of FER are indicated by the following figures taken from the 1939 census: 4.39 persons per square kilometer in the Maritime Province, 0.56 in the Khabarovsk Province, 1.61 i Chita Province, nd 1.39 in Irkutsk Province.

5. The practice of quartering soldiers in private homes is perhaps least known in the US, where no wars have been fought since the Civil and Indian Wars. Article II of the Bill of Rights which

stated, would work to the detriment of an invader as much as they restrained Soviet forces.

Both in FER and in the USSR as a whole the city population was less than the farm population at the beginning of World War II. (In FER 2,348,163 people lived in cities, 2,978,276 on farms). However, in comparison with the USSR, FER's city population was greater percentagewise (see table below). This was interpreted as possibly indicating that a greater emphasis was being placed on industrial development in FER.

	Urban	Rural
USSR	33%	67%
FER	44%	56%

Shortage of Recruits and Reservists

The presence of a large percentage of FER population in cities (as compared with the USSR as a whole) aggravated the manpower problem created by sparse population. Because of the emphasis on industrial

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became effective in 1791 states: "No soldier shall in time of peace be quartered in any house, without the consent of the owner, nor in time of war, but in a manner to be prescribed by law." The reader should bear in mind that the modernity and wealth of the U.S. Army is most clearly seen when compared with other armies, particularly those that, while using modern weapons, continue to adher to such ancient practices as living off the land, quartering troops, and taking slaves (instead of POWs). To the extent that an army feels compelled to engage in such practices its organizational structure will vary. For example, an army that plans to live off the land will not have the same type of logistical elements as one that plans to supply itself.

development, the farms were the main source of new personnel. This gave FER a smaller manpower reservoir, percentagewise, than the USSR as a whole, and resulted in a shortage of both recruits and reservists.

To remedy the shortage of recruits, youths were drawn from districts west of Lake Baikal. During the annual enlistment period, conducted during September and October, east-bound trains transporting young men were frequently observed. Although this was also the period for discharging soldiers who had completed their training, west-bound trains transporting discharged soldiers were few. Soviet authorities in order to build up a manpower pool for mobilization in FER forcibly required many discharged soldiers to settle there. (Soviet attempts to encourage emigration to the Far East will be discussed in a later chapter.)

Since dependence on a large reserve that could be rapidly mobilized in the event of a surprise Japanese attack was a major factor in Soviet strategy, the shortage of reservists caused special concern to Soviet authorities, especially since it meant that reinforcements would have to be obtained from European Russia. In view of this the USSR, a few years before the war, authorized the Far Eastern Army to maintain its infantry divisions on a wartime (larger) table of organization. Although this level was never fully met, in 1940 the strength of some divisions was as high as about 85 per cent in both personnel and horses. In this way the number of reservists that would be needed in time of mobilization was kept at a minimum.

At any rate, the sparse population rendered it difficult for the

Soviet Far Eastern Army to maintain its strength, especially on a wartime basis. The Japanese Army General Staff ascertained that the only Soviet military bases in the Far East with enough reserves to mobilize new units were those at Vladivostok, Khabarovsk, Chita, and Irkutsk. Such being the case, it concluded that the Soviets in order to be able to carry out large-scale offensive operations in the Far East would have to transfer many divisions from the west. Since these divisions would have to be transported by the Trans-Siberian Railroad, the railroad was indispensable to the Soviets from a military viewpoint in the Far East.

Lack of Economic Self-Sufficiency

Far Eastern Russia was sleeping during most of the first Five-Year Plan (1928-1932); it awakened following the Manchurian Incident in 1931. For the second Five-Year Plan (1933-1937) the Soviets allocated large sums for the development of FER, with emphasis on heavy industries. The third Five-Year Plan (1938-1942) provided for continued development in the Far East. Through it the USSR sought to achieve economic self-sufficiency for FER so that in case of war it might be independent of Europe. Emphasis was placed on military requirements. Great efforts were made to diminish reliance on the Trans-Siberian Railroad so that in wartime the railroad might be used primarily for transporting military personnel and supplies, and also so that should the operation of the railroad be disrupted FER might be enabled to subsist independently. This plan was not carried out successfully mainly because the population was too small

to carry out such an ambitious program in so vast an area. At the beginning of 1945, the Japanese Army General Staff made an estimate of the degree of self-sufficiency attained. This estimate is discussed below.

Foodstuffs - Far Eastern Russia was short of grain every year by hundreds of thousands of tons despite the fact that it included the Ussuri and Amur regions, "the granaries of Far Eastern Russia." This shortage had to be made up from other areas. In 1937, for instance, 800,000 tons of grain had to be obtained from European Russia.

The normal crop of bread-making grain in FER was only about 1,130,000 tons, according to published statistics. About 200,000 tons of this, however, were required as seed for the following year, leaving an actual supply of about 930,000 tons. This represented a self-sufficiency ratio of 67 per cent against requirements computed on the basis of population (5,350,000 civilian, 700,000 military), and allowed a rate of 330 kilograms for each soldier per annum (900 grams daily) and 215 kilograms for each civilian per annum (360 grams daily). The wartime stockpile of foodstuffs was estimated at about 800,000 tons.

Petroleum - Although there were petroleum-producing areas in Northern Sakhalin, Kamchatka, and along the shores of Lake Baikal, only the one in Northern Sakhalin was active. The output there was estimated at about 1,000,000 tons annually, giving FER 66 per cent self-sufficiency in petroleum. (Records show that about 500,000 tons

of petroleum had to be obtained from the west during 1937). Apart from this, the petroleum stockpile in FER was estimated at 1,300,000 tons. (One ton equals approximately six barrels).

Iron and Steel - Although FER abounds in iron ore deposits, there were only two large iron mills, namely the Petrovsk-ZaBaikalskiy Iron Works and the Amur Steel Mill (Amur Stal). The total annual output of these and several smaller mills was only 2[illegible],000 tons of steel and 10,000 tons of pig iron. The self-sufficiency percentage of steel was estimated at 38 per cent. (No stockpile figures were available.)

Coal - Far Eastern Russia abounds in coal deposits also, and its output had increased year by year. In 1945, it was estimated at about 14,400,000 tons. However, after deducting the amount used at the coal mines, the actual output for outside consumption was about 13,200,000 tons. This amount was barely sufficient to meet peace-time needs.

Munitions - The munitions industry had not been firmly established at the outbreak of World War II, due principally to the weakness of the iron and steel industry, but also to the lack of aluminum production and the sad state of the machine-manufacturing industry. Its wartime production capacity was small: monthly production of aircraft was about 400, of tanks about 150, of armored cars about 30, and of various types of guns about 550. Most of the munitions factories were located near the Manchurian-Soviet border and hence

were vulnerable. To offset this disadvantage, Soviet authorities as early as 1940 attempted to develop the Komsomolsk area into a munitions manufacturing area. In addition, up to the time the war ended, the Soviets made extensive efforts to turn the Trans-Baikal area, especially near Irkutsk and Ulan Ude, into another munitions manufacturing area.

Failure to achieve a satisfactory degree of economic self-sufficiency constituted a strategic weakness, and made FER dependent upon supplies from European Russia. Hence, from an economic as well as a military viewpoint the Trans-Siberian Railroad inevitably came to assume a vital role in the Far East.

Limited Transportation Capacity of Trans-Siberian Railroad

Military and economic reliance upon the railroad served to emphasize the immense strategic importance of this life-line to Far Eastern Russia; without it, large-scale Soviet operations in the Far East were impossible.

The railroad itself, however, was inherently handicapped. The most important problem from the viewpoint of Far East strategy was its limited capacity: it meant that even if the Soviet Union could mobilize several hundred divisions it could not efficiently and promptly transport them to the Far East, nor support them. This capacity problem was of such importance, in fact, that the Japanese Army General Staff made a continuing investigation and study of it. (For a 1945 estimate of the track capacity of the railroad see Chart

Army General Staff Estimate of
Capacity of Trans-Siberian Railroad (1945)

Railway Section	Peacetime			Wartime		
	Track capacity (Daily Trains)	Maximum number of trains capable of operation		Track capacity (Daily Trains)	Maximum number of trains capable of operation	
		Summer	Winter		Summer	Winter
Vladivostok--Khabarovsk	43	38	36	49	44	41
Khabarovsk--Kuibyshevka	41	36	34	49	44	41
Kuibyshevka--Karymskoe	49	44	41	51	45	43
Karymskoe--UlanUde	51	45	43	60	54	51
UlanUde--Taishet	45	40	38	60	54	51
Taishet--Novosibirsk	60	54	51	60	54	51
Novosibirsk--Omsk	100	80	80	100	80	80

Operations vary with condition of locomotives, skill of engineer, supply of coal and water in the vast spaces, and other factors.

Chart No. 1

No. 1.)

The General Staff estimated the maximum wartime transportation capacity of the Trans-Siberian Railroad to be 13,000,000 tons per year,[6] of which approximately 9,300,000 tons could be alloted to military transportation. On the basis of this capacity, plus stockpiles in FER (about 800,000 tons of foodstuffs and about 1,300,000 tons of liquid fuel), the General Staff estimated the number of divisions that the Soviets could support in FER to be between 55 and 60.

To the great reliance on the railroad and to the railroad's limited capacity must be added its vulnerability; the Soviet Army in the Far East would be doomed if the railroad were disrupted. The railroad had many vulnerable points. Aside from the fact that it ran quite close to and along the Soviet-Manchuria border, several key points were close to Japanese installations; for example, the iron bridge at Iman was located within four kilometers of Japanese heavy guns emplaced at the border fortifications near Hutou. This was evidently a matter of great concern to Soviet army authorities.

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6. Based on following assumption: Maximum number of trains operating east of Karymskoe is 54 in summer and 51 in winter; loading capacity of one train is 750 tons in summer and 600 tons in winter; one year consists of a summer and winter of equal duration. (General John R Deane in The Strange Alliance, pp 263-64, states that U.S. planners calculated that the Trans-Siberian would fall short of the capacity needed to maintain Soviet Far East forces by about 200,000 tons a month. This was based on figures furnished by Stalin at the time of the Churchill conferences in October 1944.)

To offset this strategic weakness the Soviets began the construction of the Bam Railroad.[7] The route of this purely strategic railroad, with a length of 4,000 kilometers, followed the Trans-Siberian until it reached Taishet, where it branched off and ran through the trackless highlands north of Lake Baikal to Komsomolsk and continued on to the coastal city of Sovetskaya Gavan, opposite southern Sakhalin. (See Map No. 2)

The construction of this railroad was by no means an easy task so far as technical skill and the supply of labor were concerned. The Japanese Army General Staff interpreted the attempt to construct it in the face of great difficulties as a manifestation of the Soviet's firm determination to secure the eastern part of Far Eastern Russia at all costs and as evidence of deep concern over the possible disruption of the Trans-Siberian Railroad.

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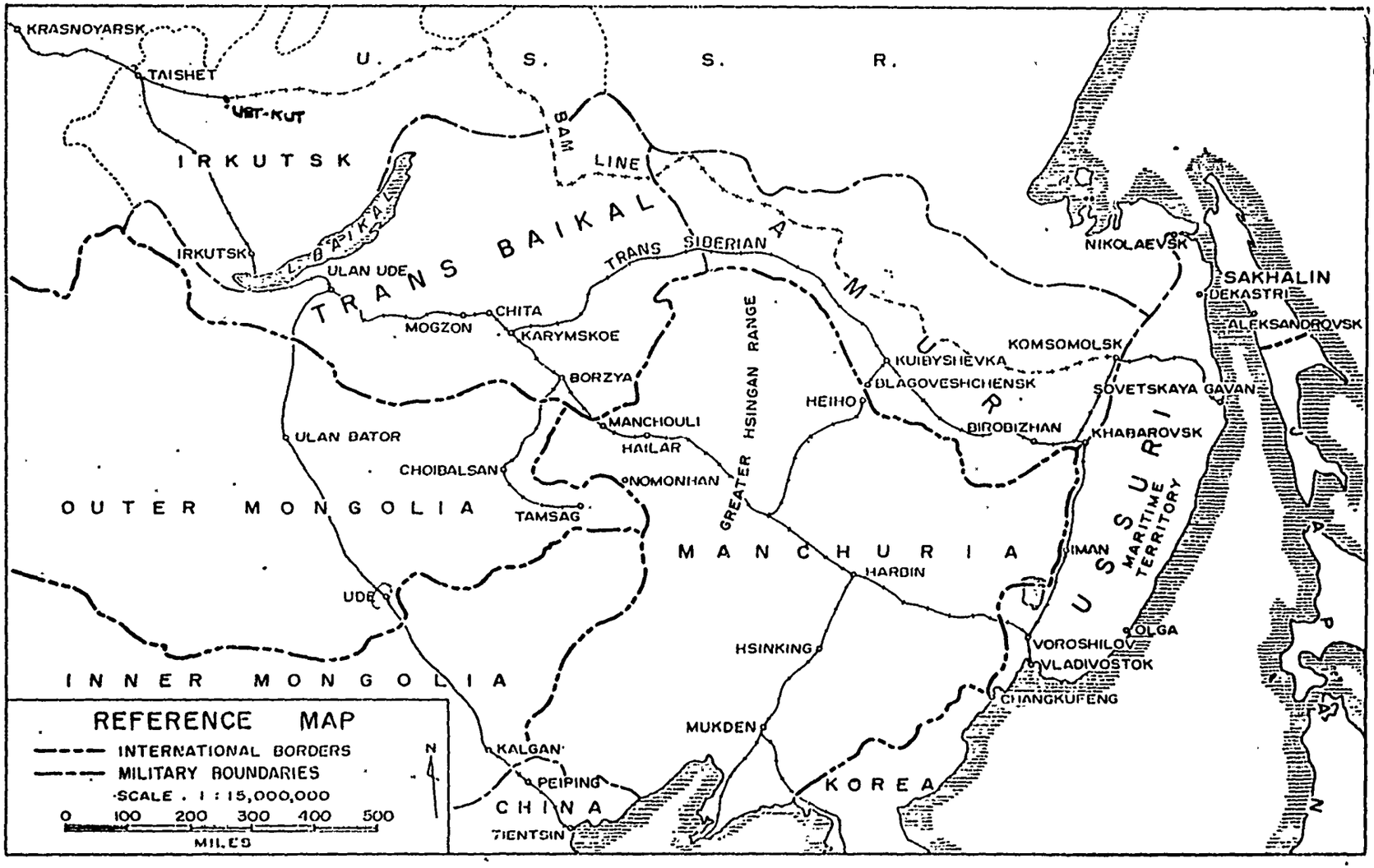
7. In 1939 the Japanese Army General Staff, after a special investigation, estimated that the Bam Railroad would be completed about 1945. Due to the outbreak of the German-Soviet War, the construction of the railroad was suspended until the termination of the war.

MAP NO. 2


KRASNOYARSK
TAISHET
UST-KUT
U. S. S. R.
BAM LINE
IRKUTSK
L. BAIKAL
IRKUTSK
ULAN UDE
TRANS BAIKAL
TRANS SIBERIAN
CHITA
MOGZON
KARYMSKOE
BORZYA
MANCHOULI
HAILAR
ULAN BATOR
CHOIBALSAN
NOMONHAN
TAMSAG
OUTER MONGOLIA
GREATER HSINGAN RANGE
MANCHURIA
HARDIN
UDE
INNER MONGOLIA
HSINKING
MUKDEN
KALGAN
PEIPING
CHINA
TIENTSIN
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AMUR R.
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KUIBYSHEVKA
BLAGOVESHCHENSK
HEIHO
BIROBIZHAN
KHABAROVSK
SOVETSKAYA GAVAN
SAKHALIN
DEKASTRI
ALEKSANDROVSK
USSURI
MARITIME TERRITORY
IMAN
OLGA
VOROSHILOV
VLADIVOSTOK
CHANGKUFENG
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CHAPTER III

Military Geographical Factors in Far Eastern Russia

Lines of Communication

The regions of Far Eastern Russia that lie adjacent to Manchuria have been identified at different times either geographically as provinces or territories, or as politico-administrative subdivisions (oblasts, krays, etc.) of the USSR. In this study they will be referred to as 1) the Ussuri area embracing all Soviet territory east of the Ussuri-Amur River line including the Maritime Province, 2) the Amur area to the north of Manchuria, and 3) the Trans-Baikal area (including Chita and the Buryat Mongol ASSR) to the northwest. These three areas, together with Outer Mongolia—a Soviet satellite since 1921—formed the horseshoe around Manchuria.[8]

Only in the Trans-Baikal area could it be said that the line of communication (Trans-Siberian Railroad) ran perpendicular to the front; hence, this was the only area that actually had a "rear" supply line. In the Amur and Ussuri areas the railroad ran parallel to the frontier. Considering the railroad's route through these latter areas the Soviets could not regard the railroad as a "rear line of communication" but more properly as a line of communication

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8. A comparison of World War II maps of the USSR prepared by the U.S. National Geographic Society with and postwar maps of the USSR prepared by the Army Map Service from British sources, clearly shows the changes in geographical and politico-administrative boundaries.

running in front of the enemy.

The Japanese, on the other hand, had extensive supply lines not only to Manchuria but also within Manchuria. Regular sea routes connected the Japanese islands with north and south Korea as well as with the Port Arthur and Dairen areas. Furthermore, the railroad network in Manchuria was comparatively well-developed and was linked with those of Korea and China.

The Soviet Special Far Eastern Army, which until 1935 had jurisdiction over all of Far Eastern Russia, that is to say the area east of Krasnoyarsk, was deeply concerned about lines of communication. Not only was it fearful of possible disruption of its own lines, but it was intent on severing the supply lines of the Kwantung Army.

The Trans-Baikal Area and Outer Mongolia

Of the several vulnerable segments of the Trans-Siberian Railroad, the one that gave the Special Far Eastern Army most cause for concern was that in the Trans-Baikal, "the throat of Far Eastern Russia." As can be seen from a map, once the Trans-Baikal segment is severed and the adjacent area seized by an enemy, the Amur and Ussuri regions to the east become completely isolated. (See Map No. 2)

In view of this apprehension, the Soviets took continuing steps to forestall a disruption of its line of communication in the Trans-Baikal. In 1931, after the Manchurian Incident, they began fortifying the area along the banks of the Borzya River, and reinforced tank

strength along the Outer Mongolian-Manchurian border and in the ar adjacent to the Karymskoe-Manchouli railroad. In 1936, the USSR made public a mutual assistance pact with Outer Mongolia, the poli purpose of which was to warn the Japanese to stay out of Outer Mon and the military purpose of which was to acquire the right to stat troops in Outer Mongolia. Thereafter measures to flank Manchuria the west and to complete the encirclement of Manchuria were pushed In 1938, the 36th Motorized Division, then at Chita, was sent to Outer Mongolia and stationed in the vicinity of Ude, a key point near Inner Mongolia, on the road between Ulan Bator and Kalgan. (Kalgan is only about 100 miles from Peiping).

Sending this division to Ude had as its obvious purpose the disruption in an emergency of the transportation of Japanese forces from China Proper to reinforce Manchuria.

> (That a plan with such an objective existed during World War II was corroborated by Major General John R. Deane of the United States in testimony given before the International Military Tribunal for the Far East on 5 June 1947. General Deane stated: "In the Soviet-American Joint Operational Conference against Japan, held in October 1944, Stalin proposed a plan to attack Peiping and Tientsin from the Trans-Baikal through Outer Mongolia and Kalgan with highly mobile groups, while bringing pressure to bear on the northeastern border of Manchuria.")

Another measure undertaken by the USSR to improve its strategic position in the Trans-Baikal and to extend its encirclement of Manchuria was the construction of a railroad connecting the Trans-Baikal with Outer Mongolia. This line was the first railroad to be

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constructed in the eastern part of Outer Mongolia. It branched off the Trans-Siberian system at the city of Borzya (in the Trans-Baikal), ran south, crossing the Siberian-Outer Mongolia border, to Choibalsan and then eastward to Tamsag, which lies within thirty miles of the Manchurian border. (This railroad, begun in 1936, was completed about 1939 and was called the Molotovskaya Railroad; it gave the USSR a distinct strategic advantage during the Nomonhan Incident in 1939.) (See Map No. 2)

The route of the railroad was generally parallel to and within about forty miles of the periphery of the Manchurian geographical salient into Outer Mongolia. Its importance lay not so much in its proximity to the frontier, however, as in the fact that it gave the USSR a more southerly approach to Manchuria through the geographical counter-salient (the Tamsag salient) which Outer Mongolia makes into Manchuria. Hence, the Borzya-Tamsag railroad would enable Soviet forces to consolidate for a major operational thrust against the central part of Manchuria, including the capital of Hsinking, instead of laboring along the more northerly Manchouli-Harbin route, where open stretches on both the approach and rear side of the mountains as well as the longer distance and greater obstacles (mountains, Hailar fortifications) posed greater handicaps.

> (That this southerly operational direction enables a more rapid military advance into the central plains of Manchuria than the routes from the Amur or Ussuri areas, was proved by the Red Army in August 1945.)

The greatest obstacle to operations in the these areas, which are mostly desert, was the difficulty in maintaining a rear supply system, especially as regards water and fuel.

> (The importance of water and fuel in this area was also shown in August 1945 when the USSR entered the war against Japan. The Soviet mechanized group that advanced through the Tamsag salient into the central part of Manchuria was forced to halt temporarily due to the shortage of fuel only two or three days after it started operations. Moreover, of the Soviet and Mongolian forces that advanced southward along the Ulan Bator-Kalgan road in the direction of Peiping, only one Soviet motorized infantry battalion and one Outer Mongolian cavalry unit got as far as Kalgan.

It should be said, therefore, that although these flatlands facilitate the passage of ground troops, they constitute a strateg obstacle zone where military operations would be extremely difficu unless a railroad or other adequate transportation facilities were available.

From the standpoint of offensive operations launched from Manchuria, it may be said that the Trans-Baikal area constitutes the "throat of Far Eastern Russia," and that the complete seizure thereof is the quickest way to control Far Eastern Russia. It must be recognized, however, because of the numerous attendant difficult that an advance into this area is by no means an easy task, its wi expanse of wasteland imposing as it does a heavy burden upon the supply effort of an invading force. On the other hand, (as was sh in 1945) the same supply difficulties would confront Soviet forces

advancing from the Trans-Baikal area into Manchuria or northern China. In short, transportation facilities determine the volume of supply support possible for operations in the area west of Manchuria and therefore play a vital role.

Amur Area

East of the Trans-Baikal area and connecting it with the Ussuri (maritime) area was the Amur area generally north of Manchuria. Three geographical features must be considered in connection with this northern border: 1) the Amur River, which provides a natural boundary, 2) the Greater Hsingan Mountain Range which extends to the border and is separated from Siberian mountains by the Amur River and 3) the "bulge" which Manchuria makes into Siberia in the western sector of the frontier.

The Trans-Siberian Railroad ran quite close to the frontier "bulge" in the western sector of this northern front, and was seemingly vulnerable. However large-scale operations in this sector were not considered possible because on the Manchurian side of the Amur the area besides being mountainous was densely forested. The Soviets did not fortify their side of the river in this protruding section, and the only Japanese fortifications in this region were considerably farther south, along the railroad.

From a strategic viewpoint the Greater Hsingan Mountain Range divided the Far East into two potential battlefields. The Soviets must have realized that should the area east of the range become

the principal battlefield, the Japanese Army would attempt to cross the Amur and advance to seize control of the Amur plains in order to sever the Trans-Siberian Railroad. The most likely place for such a crossing would be in the central sector of the northern front, specifically in the vicinity of Heiho. The Soviets in this vicinity considered the protection of the railroad in their area to be a most important mission. They fortified their side of the river with a series of pillbox positions, and in the rear areas maintained powerful air units in readiness. These positions, however, were not so well developed as those in the Ussuri area, presumably because of the security afforded by the natural obstacle of the Amur River.

The Amur River constituted a formidable barrier. It was difficult to cross except during the freezing season when, however, cold would be an obstacle. Aside from the task of negotiating the river it would be difficult to continue operations on the opposite bank. These obstacles would hinder operations launched by either side. From the Soviet viewpoint, an invasion through the Heiho area would provide a short cut into Manchuria, but would require crossing not only the Amur River but also the trackless Lesser Hsingan Mountain Range, and would involve an aggravated supply problem. It was therefore believed that the Soviets, should they invade Manchuria, would not send the main body of their army along this route.

At the eastern extremity of the northern front, where the Sungari River flows into the Amur, the Soviets prepared not only for ground

operations but also for river operations, planning to push operations up the Sungari simultaneously with a land offensive. The Amur Patrol Boat Division based at Khabarovsk had the mission of patroling the Amur River and was slated to carry out operations along the Sungari.

The Ussuri Area

The strategic value of the Ussuri area was immeasureable. Lying at the eastern and southeastern segment of the Soviet "horse-shoe" confinement of Manchuria, this maritime area possessed several submarine bases and many air bases, with a potential for completing the encirclement. These bases constituted a direct threat: the submarines, which yearly increased in number, were capable of disrupting surface transportation in the Sea of Japan; the aircraft, which likewise increased in number each year, were capable, in addition, of bombing the Japanese homeland.

As in the Amur area, the route of the Trans-Siberian Railroad in the Ussuri area closely paralleled the frontier. The most pronounced geographical feature of the Ussuri area, aside from the fact that it touched the sea, was the completely mountainous region immediately east of the narrow valley through which the railroad ran. These mountains stretched to the sea and had very few roads. Were the Soviet forces to be pushed back into these mountains by the Japanese Army, they would have no room for withdrawing or for regrouping. Furthermore, because of the narrowness of the area between the border and the mountains, the Japanese Army would not have to pursue them very far.

It was indeed the fear of being boxed up in an area with no room for maneuvering that compelled the Soviet Army in the Far East to construct its strongest border positions in the Ussuri area, to connect them with the fortress of Vladivostok, to fortify the coast of the Suchan Plain (east of Vladivostok), and in general to develop the entire Ussuri area into one great fortified zone. These defense measures did not mean, however, that the Soviet Army had any intention of assuming a defensive role in this fortified zone. Rather, since the zone left no room for retreat, the Soviet Army was expected to assume the offensive on this as well as other fronts at the beginning of hostilities and, while containing the main body of the Japanese Army in Ussuri area, to advance its own main body from the Trans-Baikal area into western Manchuria.

Ussuri Area Coastline

The Soviet Army in the Ussuri area was well protected on its southern and eastern flank by the Sea of Japan. The coast from Peter the Great Bay to Olga Bay was notched by numerous small bays. Farther north the coast was almost straight, and there were no harbors suitable for anchorages until Sovetskya Gavan and Datastri Bay were reached.

The Sikhote Alin Range ran north and south along the coast and inland to a considerable depth. Although its western slope (facing the railroad) was comparatively gentle, the eastern (seaward) side was steep and in some places upon reaching the coast ended in a sheer cliff. This range had practically no vehicular roads across it.

Coastal defense measures were rigidly enforced by Soviet troops

along the coast, particularly from Vladivostok to the Suchan Plain. North of this plain there were two places that might be considered suitable for landing operations: at Sovetskaya Gavan, the eastern terminus of the Trans-Siberian Railroad, from which an advance to Komsomolsk along the railroad was possible, and near Nikolaevsk at the estuary of the Amur, from which a push southward along the river banks could be made. All things considered, however, the Ussuri area was regarded as comparatively well protected by natural terrain features.

Conclusions

Yearly estimates made by the Japanese Army General Staff as to the strength which the Red Army was capable of concentrating in the Far East in the event of war repeatedly showed that the Soviet potential was far greater than that of the Japanese Army. In 1934, the General Staff estimated that the Soviet potential was 40 divisions (against Japan's 31 division); in 1937, 50 divisions (against Japan's 22); and in 1938, 60 divisions (against Japan's 50). All these estimates were based on a Japanese offensive. There was no doubt of the greater Soviet potential; at the same time, however, it was recognized that this potential would be handicapped by the factors already mentioned, and particularly by the limited capacity of the Trans-Siberian Railroad.

Aside from the wartime potential, the peacetime deployment of the Soviet Army in the Far East was greater than that of the Japanese

Army, as shown by the following figures of divisional strength for a five-year period:

	Soviet Army (Estimated)	Japanese Army
1937	20	6
1938	24	8
1939	30	9
1940	30	12
1941	23	14

As regards the type of operations the Soviets would undertake at the outbreak of war, the Japanese General Staff felt that Soviet forces would take advantage of their initially favorable strategic positions encircling Manchuria by assuming the offensive from all directions simultaneously to close the encirclement. It expected, furthermore, that the Soviets would push operations particularly along railroad routes and along the Sungari River in order to assure an uninterrupted supply line.

Although this study does not concern itself with the geography of Manchuria, one thing which must be mentioned in connection with a Soviet advance into Manchuria is the influence the Greater Hsingan Mountain Range would have on operations, to which brief reference has already been made. From a topographical viewpoint, this is the paramount terrain feature in Manchuria and, as already pointed out, divides the anticipated battlefield. Two factors, it was believed, would determine the course of operations in the early stages of the war: the time required by Soviet forces to reach the central plains

of Manchuria, and the time required by the Japanese Army to destroy Soviet forces in the Ussuri area. The General Staff felt that the proper course of action for the Soviet Army would be to advance to central Manchuria from the Trans-Baikal area as quickly and with as superior a force as possible, instead of dividing its strength in two on the eastern and western sides of the mountain range for extended operations. The execution of such operations would be influenced largely by 1) the transportation capacity of the Trans-Siberian Railroad, and 2) by the stockpile of war supplies, especially petroleum.

Accordingly, the main objectives of Japanese strategy against the Soviet Army in the Far East were to disrupt transportation and to destroy war stockpiles, especially petroleum. The conduct of operations to achieve these objectives would have to be based largely on military geography, and it would be necessary to choose battlegrounds within Soviet territory. In such a case operations would obviously be handicapped by the vast terrain, poor traffic networks, and during some months by severe cold. Therefore, it would be essential, in carrying out aggressive operations inside Soviet territory, to have excellent cold-proof equipment, vast logistical organizations, and superior maneuvering power. Finally, it should again be pointed out that the attacker would have to bear in mind that a strategic victory over Soviet Far Eastern forces would not necessarily mean the conclusion of the war against the USSR.

CHAPTER IV

Build-Up of Soviet Far Eastern Forces

Strategic Disposition

Until 1935, all Soviet forces east of Krasnoyarsk were under the Special Far Eastern Army, and were deployed in a more or less standard pattern. Around the periphery of Manchuria the main strength of the army was deployed; in other areas, such as the Kamchatka Peninsula and northern Sakhalin, one infantry division was deployed. The Soviet Pacific Fleet, based at Vladivostok and consisting largely of submarines, patrolled the Sea of Japan to protect the coastal flank of the army. (See Chart No. 2)

Aside from routine modifications made within this basic framework, major modifications both in disposition and strength were made periodically. These usually followed the outbreak of major border disputes (so-called "incidents")[9] which may be regarded as "boosters" marking the successive stages in the Soviet build-up

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9. The term "incident" should not be taken literally. As often as not it might indicate the existence of a state of war precipitated without the formality of a declaration. Furthermore, it is the translation of two different Japanese words: "Jiken" was the Japanese word for almost all incidents except the Manchurian and China incidents which the Japanese called "Jihen." Although the Japanese Foreign Office translated both terms as "incident," military usage gave them different meanings. The closest meanings the editor can arrive at are "Jiken," a dispute; "Jihen," an undeclared war. Prior to a "Jihen," troops were given regular wartime orders. (See Sketch No. 1 for major border incidents between Japan and the Soviet Union, 1935-1945)

Zones of Responsibility, SOVIET Far East Forces (1931-1945)

Headquarters	Year Established	Operational Zone			
		Outer Mongolia	Trans Baikal area	Amur area	Ussuri area[1]
Special FE[2] Army	1929		Krasnoyarsk to Maritime Territory		
Trans-Baikal Dist Army Special FE Army	1935		Irkutsk to Hsingan Mt	Hsingan Mt to Maritime Territory	
57th Corps Trans-Baikal Dist Army First RB Army[3] Second RB Army[3]	1938 1938 1938				
Trans-Baikal Dist Army FE Area Army	1940				
Trans-Baikal Area Army FE Area Army	1942				
FE General Army Trans-Baikal Area Army FE First Area Army FE Second Area Army	1945 1945 1945				At Bikin (?)

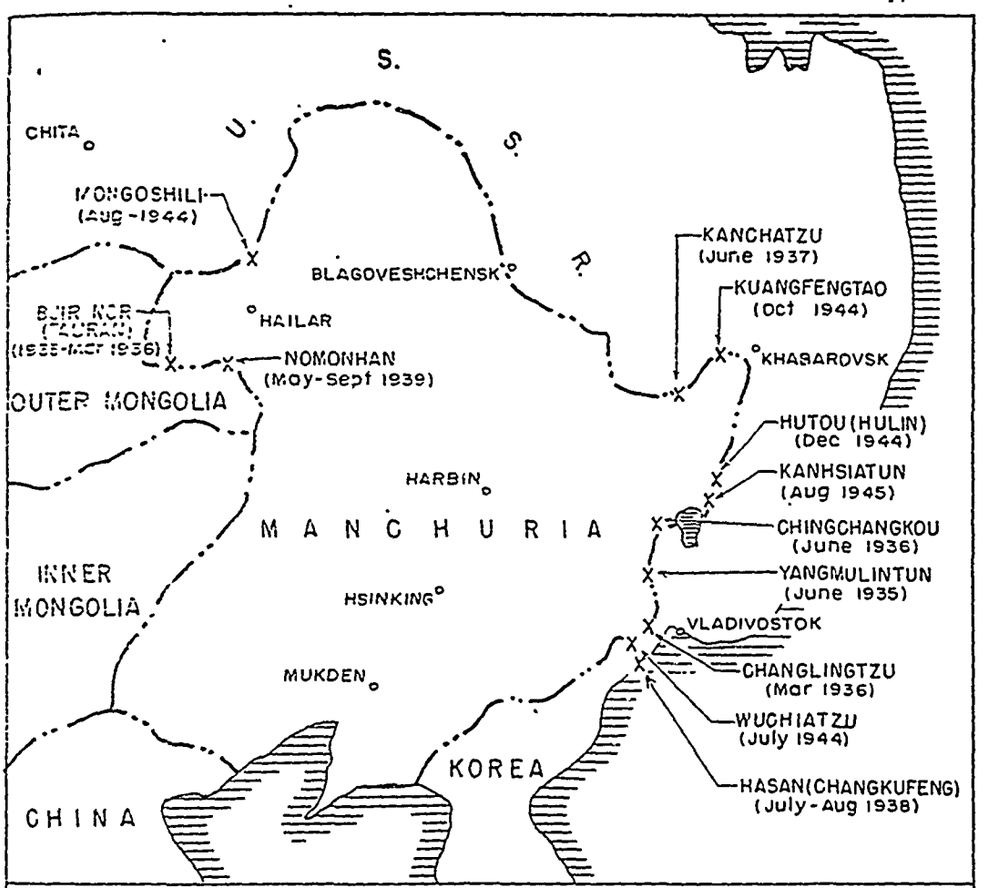
1. Including Maritime Territory.
2. FE ..... Far Eastern.
3. RB ..... Red Banner.

Note: 1. 16th and 17th Armies established in 1940, assigned to Trans-Baikal District Army
2. 15th Army established in 1940, 25th and 35th Armies established in 1941, these three Armies assigned to FE Area Army along with First and Second Red Banner Armies.

Chart No. 2

SKETCH NO. 1

MAJOR BORDER INCIDENTS BETWEEN JAPAN AND THE SOVIET UNION (1935-1945)



FROM THE FOUNDING OF MANCHUKUO IN 1932 UNTIL AUGUST 1945, THE NUMBER OF BORDER DISPUTES BETWEEN JAPAN (INCLUDING MANCHUKUO) AND THE USSR (INCLUDING OUTER MONGOLIA) TOTALED WELL OVER 1,000. (SEE VOLUME XI OF MILITARY STUDIES ON MANCHURIA)

of its Far East military strength. Three incidents in particular may be so regarded. The first of these began at Mukden (1931), the second occurred at Changkufeng (Hasan) (1938), and third at Nomonhan (1939).[10] The effect each of these incidents had on the Soviet Far East build-up will be discussed separately.

Build-Up Following the Manchurian Incident

At the outbreak of the Mukden Incident on 18 September 1931 the Special Far Eastern Army, deployed in the area east of Krasnoyarsk, consisted of only six infantry divisions and two cavalry brigades. (See Chart No. 2 for estimates of Soviet strength in the Far East from 1931 through 1944.) Those were the days of the First Five-Year Plan and the Soviet Government was maintaining a policy of cooperation with foreign countries. In fact, during December 1931, while the Mukden Incident was spreading into the Manchurian Incident, the Soviet Government maintained a conciliatory attitude toward Japan and even went so far as to propose a non-aggression pact. (The Japanese Government rejected this proposal about a year later.) Meanwhile, the Incident continued to spread, and Japanese forces extended their operations to all parts of Manchuria. Subsequently, in March 1932, the independence of the "three northeastern provinces" (of China) was proclaimed, and two weeks later these provinces were designated "Manchukuo." In September Japan, by concluding the

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10. See also footnote No. 12 (p. 32)

Estimate of Soviet Ground Forces Strength
(See Map No. 1 for Boundaries of Areas)

Chart No. 3

Year	Ussuri	Amur	Trans Baikal (Outer Mongolia)	Total
1931[1]				6 inf divs 2 cav brigs
1933	5 inf divs	2 inf divs	2 inf divs	9 inf divs 1 cav div, 1 cav brig planes: 350 tanks : 350
1934	7 inf divs 1 cav div 1 tank brig	2 inf divs	2 inf divs 1 tank brig	11 inf divs 1 cav div 2 tank brigs planes: 500 (includ TB-5 Hv Bombers: 170) tanks: 650 submarines: 14
1935[2]				14 inf divs 3 cav divs planes: 950 tanks: 800 - 900
1936[3]				16 - 20 inf divs 4 cav divs planes: 1,200 tanks : 1,200 submarines: 70
1937[4]				20 inf divs planes: 1,500 tanks : 1,500 submarines: 70
1938[5]				24 inf divs planes: 2,000 tanks : 1,900 submarines: 75

(Where breakdown is not given, it is unknown)

1. Manchurian Incident: on 18 September 1931.
   Manchukuoan Independence: on 1 March 1932.
2. U.S.S.R. sold the North Manchurian Railway to Japan on 23 March 1935.
3. Soviet and Outer Mongolia Protocol of Mutual Assistance: on 7 April 1936.
   Japan and Germany Anti-Comintern Pact: on 25 November 1936.
4. Manchatzu border incident: June 1937.
   China Incident: on 7 July 1937.
   Soviet and China Non-Aggression Pact: on 29 August 1937.
5. Hasan border incident: July-August 1938.

Estimate of Soviet Ground Forces Strength

Chart No. 3 (Cont'd)

Year	Ussuri	Amur	Trans Baikal (Outer Mongolia)	Total
1939[6]	11 inf divs	8 inf divs	8 inf divs (3 Mtzd inf divs) (1 cav brig) (6 tank brigs)	30 inf divs planes: 2,500 tanks : 2,500 submarine: 70
1940[7]	11 inf divs 2 cav brigs 4 tank brigs	8 inf divs (other 2) 2 tank brigs	8 inf divs 4 tank brigs (3 inf Mtzd divs) (1 cav brig) (6 tank brigs)	30 inf divs (other 2) 3 cav brigs 16 tank brigs planes: 2,800 tanks : 2,700 submarine: 103 strength : 700,000
1941[8]				23 inf divs planes: 1,000 tanks : 1,000 submarines: 105 strength: 800,000
1942				20 inf divs planes: 1,100 tanks : 800 - 1,000 submarines: 105 strength: 750,000
1943				20 inf divs planes: 1,100 tanks : 800 - 1,000 submarines: 108 strength: 700,000
1944[9]				20 inf divs 15 - 20 inf brigs 24 air divs (1,500 planes) submarines: 108 strength: 700,000

6. Nomonhan border incident: July-September 1939.
7. France surrendered to Germany: June 1940
8. Transfer of units for Europian front begun in March 1941.
   Japan and Soviet Neutrality Pact: 13 April 1941.
   Germany declared war against Soviet: 22 June 1941.
   Kwantung Army Special Maneuvers: June 1941.
9. Westward transfer of units ceased in 1944.

Japan-Manchukuo protocol, assumed responsibility for the national defense of the new state.

Although the limited Mukden Incident did not draw any pronounced Soviet reaction, its enlargement into the Manchurian Incident drew several responses. On 4 March 1942, Izvestia, official organ of the Soviet Government, denounced Japan. For the first time, it used the expression "Japan's challenge," and quoted Stalin: "We neither want even a clod of foreign territory nor will we yield even a single inch of our land." At the same time Izvestia called for increased military strength in the Far East.

Shortly thereafter the build-up of the Far East became noticeable. To strengthen its frontier positions, the Soviet Army, after the thaw of ice in the spring of 1932, began to construct concrete pillbox positions at key points. In the Ussuri area these points included the vicinity of Grodekovo and Poltavka (opposite the Suifenho-Tungning fortifications). In the Amur area, they were principally in the vicinity of Blagoveshchensk (opposite the Heiho-Sunwu fortifications), and in the Trans-Baikal area, mainly along the Borzya River. (A detailed description of border positions will be found in Chapter VIII).

Units in charge of garrisoning the border were supplemented by NKVD elements which were not under the Red Army chain of command, but rather under the direct control of the Peoples' Commissariat for Home Affairs in Moscow. These NKVD elements continually sent

espionage agents into Manchuria to spy on movements of the Japanese Army.

Toward the end of 1932 the build-up took the form of a sharp increase in troop reinforcements via the Trans-Siberian Railroad. This continued without interruption into the following year, and by the end of 1933 at least nine infantry divisions, one cavalry division, one cavalry brigade, as well as 350 tanks and an equal number of planes were in the Far East. The most conspicuous build-up during this period took place in the Ussuri area. Of the infantry divisions, five were in the Ussuri area, two in the Amur area, and two in the Trans-Baikal area.

During 1934 the reinforcement continued, particularly in the Ussuri area, with emphasis on the air build-up. The construction of roads, bridges, airfields, and other installations was stepped up. The increase in the number of planes, especially bombers, became conspicuous. Particularly distressing to the Japanese Army was the fact that a great number of TB-5 type long-range bombers, said to be capable of bombing Japan proper, were newly based in the vicinity of Voroshilov City. At the same time disassembled submarines, transported over the Trans-Siberian Railroad, began to arrive at Vladivostok for re-assembly, and the number of submarines in this naval port increased little by little.

By the end of the year, ground force strength in the Ussuri area alone had swelled to seven infantry divisions, one cavalry division,

and one mechanized brigade. (In the Amur area, ground strength remained at two divisions; in the Trans-Baikal area, the two infantry division were augmented by a mechanized brigade.) A comparison of the forces in the three Far Eastern areas showed that there were definitely more troops in the Ussuri area, and that this area was gradually becoming a powerful military base in the true sense of the word. At the end of 1934, moreover, the Special Far Eastern Army was believed by the Japanese Army General Staff to have about 500 planes, including 170 TB-5 type heavy bombers, and about 650 tanks, and 14 submarines in the Ussuri area.

In March 1935 the USSR sold its share of the North Manchurian Railway to Manchukuo.[11] This railway had been the major source of Soviet influence in Manchuria since 1924, and with the removal of this influence, Japanese and Soviet forces came face to face at the frontier. Since many sections of the border line were not clearly defined, it was inevitable that disputes or "incidents" would arise. To cope with this situation, the Special Far Eastern Army began to increase the strength of its border garrisons.

Soviet strength in the Far East almost tripled during the period of this first build-up (1931-1935), rising, according to estimates of the Japanese General Staff, to about fourteen infantry divisions,

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11. Formerly called the Chinese Eastern Railway. After World War II it was given a third name, the Chinese Changchun Railway, but this included the line to Dairen.

three cavalry divisions, 950 planes and 900 tanks. Although strictly speaking new Soviet build-ups during this period came on the heels of each fresh incident,[12] generally speaking, all stemmed from the Manchurian Incident.

Aside from tripling its troop strength during this period, the USSR during the latter months of 1935 made a major adjustment in the command structure in the Far East. Up to this time the army command that had jurisdiction over the entire area from Krasnoyarsk eastward (including Kamchatka and northern Sakhalin) was the Special Far Eastern Army. Toward the end of 1935, Soviet authorities divided this territory roughly at the Greater Hsingan Mountain Range: the area east of the range was retained by the Special Far Eastern Army; the area west of the range was assigned to the newly-formed Trans-Baikal District Army, whose headquarters was established at Chita. Both armies were under the direct control of Moscow.

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12. Not mentioned in this Japanese study, but perhaps of major importance was the Buir-Nor incident between Japan and Outer Mongolia beginning in January 1935. This incident may have been what provoked the USSR into making public the satellite nature of Outer Mongolia. Negotiations to settle this dispute began on 3 June 1935 and lasted five months during which the USSR publicly supported the Mongolian People's Republic. In February 1936 Stalin told American newspaperman Roy Howard, "In case Japan should attack the Mongolian people's Republic and endanger her independence we will have to help the Mongolian People's Republic." Quoted from Izvestia of 31 January 1936 by D. J. Dallin in Soviet Russia and the Far East, p. 27. It was after this incident that the USSR adopted a new national defense policy. (See page 33-34)

New Soviet Defense Policy

Even more far-reaching than the strength build-up and the reorganization of major commands, was the change in the Soviet's national defense policy, which stemmed from international developments. Late in 1935, the Soviet Government, after gaining foreknowledge of the proposed Anti-Comintern Pact between Japan and Germany,[13] announced the inauguration of a new policy which embodied a change in its concept of national strategy. According to the announcement, the purpose of the new policy was to establish a military structure that would enable the USSR to carry out independent operations against Japan and Germany simultaneously. This plan would require the stationing of major military forces both in Europe and in the Far East. It was a radical departure from the earlier "interior lines" plan through which the USSR, geographically "between" its two potential enemies, had hoped to defeat them one at a time, relying for the defeat of the second upon the redeployment of troops via the Trans-Siberia Railroad.

It goes without saying that the announcement of the new national defense policy was followed by additional military preparations in

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13. Walter Krivitsky, chief of Soviet intelligence in Europe learned of these negotiations. In July 1936 he acquired copies of the documents exchanged between Japan and Germany. W. Krivitsky, In Stalin's Secret Service, p. 15 et seq. Litvinov, on 28 November 1936, after the signing of the pact in Berlin on 25 November, declared during an Extraordinary Session of the Congress of the Soviets that the pact was "only a cover for another agreement." D. J. Dallin, op cit, p. 30.

the Far East, particularly in the Trans-Baikal (see pp. 16-19). On 12 March 1936 the signing of the Soviet-Mongolian mutual assistance pact (earlier referred to in connection with Soviet apprehension over the vulnerability of the Trans-Siberian Railroad) was announced.[14] This pact marked a turning point in Soviet-Japanese relations. It acknowledged the USSR's control over Outer Mongolia, thereby partly offsetting Japanese control of Inner Mongolia. The threat implied by the pact caused tension to mount.

Although the exact strength of Soviet forces in the Far East at the end of 1936 was not known, the Japanese Army General Staff estimated that it had quadrupled since the Manchurian Incident and that it consisted of between 16 and 20 infantry divisions, four cavalry divisions, 1,200 planes, 1,200 tanks, and seventy submarines.

The China Incident and FER's Improved Strategic Position

During 1936 the USSR made new conciliatory gestures toward Japan. For example, in the face of the Anti-Comintern Pact, the USSR renewed, albeit after extended negotiations, the North Sakhalin Petroleum Company's lease as well as the fishing agreement. The year 1937, however, was to see a reversal of this conciliation; in addition it was to become one of the most eventful years in recent

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14. An agreement similar to this had actually been reached in 1934, but was not published at that time because of China's sovereinty over Outer Mongolia.

Far East history.

The year opened with no more than the usual number of border disputes. In late June, however, Japanese and Soviet troops clashed in a relatively large-scale incident over the question of title to Kanchatzu, a small river island in the Amur River, not far from where that river is joined by the Sungari. This incident, despite its scale, was settled by diplomatic negotiations in Moscow, and the area quieted down. (The Soviet's Amur River Flotilla, as a result of its participation in this clash, was awarded "red banner" designation.)

Unquestionably the most significant event in the Far East during 1937 was the China Incident which began on 7 July. From a Soviet viewpoint the immediate result was the diversion of large Japanese forces from the Siberian border, long one of the goals of the USSR. In turning her guns on China, Japan lifted the pressure on the Soviets, with the result that the USSR's strategic position in the Far East was greatly improved.

On 21 August 1937, within six weeks of the outbreak of the China Incident, the USSR enhanced its position still further by signing a non-aggression pact with China. Immediately after signing this pact the Soviets secretly began supplying arms to China. Hence, Japan interpreted it not as a non-aggression pact but as a military alliance. Pravda, on 13 February 1938, showed its exhilaration over the diversion of Japanese strength to China:

"...the Japanese Army which possesses a strength of about 1,200,000 men, 2,000 planes, 1,800 tanks, and 4,500 heavy artillery pieces, committed about 1,000,000 troops and a greater part of its arms in China..."

Meanwhile, the new confidence gained by the Soviets by the improvement of their strategic position was being echced by Soviet officials in bold public statement. In January 1938, Premier Molotov declared: "The Soviet Union will know how to end Japan's hooliganism on the Far Eastern front." Furthermore, in March, Soviet Foreign Minister Maxim Litvinov told American Ambassador Joseph E. Davies that "...any aggression against the Soviet Union on the part of Japan is now out of the question on account of China's unexpected military success over Japan." Still later, in May, I. N. Smirnov, People's Commissar of the Navy, hurled vituperation against Japan in a speech made in the Far East, declaring "...the Japanese imperialists, like bloodthirsty mad dogs, tear to pieces the living body of China."[15]

Build-Up Following Changkufeng Incident

One of the largest border disputes between Japan and the USSR occurred in the vicinity of Changkufeng near the Manchurian-Soviet-Korean border during July and August 1938. In this clash one Japanese

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15. These three quotations appear in D. J. Dallin's Soviet Russia and the Far East. The author of this monograph apparently used them for diplomatic background, and the editor has retained them for the same purpose.

division was opposed by at least two Soviet divisions--the 32d and 40th--and one tank brigade, supported by about 150 aircraft.

Following this incident, the USSR made the first major change in its Far East command structure since the establishment of the Trans-Baikal District Army in 1935. The new change abolished the Special Far East Army, then singly in charge of the Amur-Ussuri areas--two thirds of the horseshoe--and in its place established a double command. The First Red Banner Army was given responsibility over the Ussuri area; its headquarters was at Voroshilov. The Second Red Banner Army, with headquarters at Kuibyshevka, was given charge of the Amur area. Both new armies, like the Trans-Baikal command, were placed under the direct control of Moscow (Peoples National Defense Commissariat).

The Japanese Army General Staff felt that this reorganization of the Soviet command structure either grew out of military necessity or was prompted by fear. Either the area was too vast to be effectively controlled by one commander or, in view of the purge (shortly after the Changkufeng Incident) of Marshal Galen Blucher, Special Far Eastern Army Commander, the Kremlin had begun to fear that so powerful a military force, farther away from Moscow than any other Soviet army, could not be entrusted to one man.[16]

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16. The purge in the Far East included many less prominent people. According to D. J. Dallin, in opus cited, (p. 53), the press reported the following figures for 1937 alone: In May, 43 death sentences against workers of the Trans-Siberian Railroad for

In any event, it had the net effect of placing all three area commanders in the Far East directly under Moscow.

To the west of Manchuria, meanwhile, the USSR made other moves. It organized the 57th Special Infantry Corps in Outer Mongolia, and assigned it directly to Moscow. Also, it was at this time (late 1938) that the 36th Infantry Division was motorized and transferred from Chita to Ude. This latter move was a counter-measure, it was believed, to Japan's establishing a Garrison Unit in Kalgan, Inner Mongolia, in the spring of 1938 and, on 7 July, elevating it to the status of an army headquarters for Inner Mongolia. Thus, as a result of the Changkufeng Incident, the USSR placed its horse-shaped encirclement of Manchuria under four separate commands, each directly responsible to Moscow. Reading clockwise these were the 57th Corps in Outer Mongolia, the Trans-Baikal District Army, the Second Red Banner Army, and the First Red Banner Army.

Still another measure taken by the USSR after the Changkufeng Incident was to tighten anti-espionage measures throughout Far Eastern Russia. (This subject will be discussed later). At the end of 1938, the General Staff estimated that Soviet strength in

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alleged sabotage on orders from Japan; 2 May, 43 men shot in Khabarovsk; 6 July, 22 railroad workers convicted in the Far East; 13 July, 61 men shot in the Far East; 11 August, 72 railroad workers shot in Irkutsk; 19 August, 34 railroad workers shot in Irkutsk; 19 September, unknown number shot in Vladivostok; 19 October, 54 men shot in Ulan Ude. This list, Mr. Dallin adds, is for from complete. "The Japanese issue played a foremost role ... in the great Russian purge of 1936-38," states D. J. Dallin, "especially after the conclusion of the anti-Comintern pact."

the Far East consisted of 24 divisions, 2,000 aircraft, 1,900 tanks, and 75 submarines.

Build-Up Following the Nomonhan Incident

Even larger than the Changkufeng Incident was the Nomonhan Incident which erupted on 12 May 1939 and continued until 16 September.[17] Soviet forces who participated in this "small war" vastly outnumbered Japanese troops. At the time of the truce, the Japanese force in the vicinity of Nomonhan consisted of about 3 divisions, of which 2 had not been committed; the Soviet force massed for this operation was estimated to consist of 4 infantry divisions, 5 mechanized brigades, and 3 air brigades.

The Soviet force that was stationed in the Trans-Baikal-Outer Mongolia area after the Nomonhan Incident was brought to a conclusion was impressive, especially as regards mobile units. The force stationed in Outer Mongolia alone consisted of 3 motorized infantry divisions, 1 cavalry brigade, and 6 mechanized brigades, with its main body deployed in the eastern part of Outer Mongolia. In the Trans-Baikal there were eight infantry divisions. Furthermore, by the time this Incident began, the strategic railroad from Borzya to Tamsag had been completed. This build-up, added to the measures mentioned earlier in the build-up of the Trans-Baikal

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17. It should be recalled that Hitler marched into Poland while his ally, Japan, was engaging his neighbor, the USSR, in this "small war."

(Borzya River positions, tank reinforcement, strengthening of defenses along the Karymskoe-Manchouli railroad), led to a growing belief in Japanese military circles that a change was taking place in Soviet strategy, and that should hostilities begin the Soviets would invade Manchuria with a high-speed group consisting of cavalry, tank, motorized, infantry, and air units. This belief subsequently gained more and more adherents.

Meanwhile, in order to provide better coordination for the Amur and Ussuri fronts, the USSR re-established a single command, with headquarters at Khabarovsk, called the Far East Front Army. The relodging of jurisdiction over the Amur-Ussuri area in the hands of one commander was interpreted by the Army General Staff not as a reversal of the earlier policy of dividing the command under Moscow's centralized control, but as a temporary expedience against the possibility that the Nomonhan Incident might spread to other parts of the Far East. Although Moscow wanted to retain centralized control during non-emergency periods, the General Staff felt, it apparently saw the wisdom of unifying both fronts under one commander in times of emergency.

At the end of 1939 (the year Hitler invaded Poland) the General Staff estimated that the number of Soviet divisions in the Far East had risen to 30, the number of aircraft to 2,500, of tanks to 2,500, and of submarines to about 70. Of the divisions, 11 were in the Ussuri area, 8 in the Amur area, 8 in the Trans-Baikal, and 3 in

Outer Mongolia.

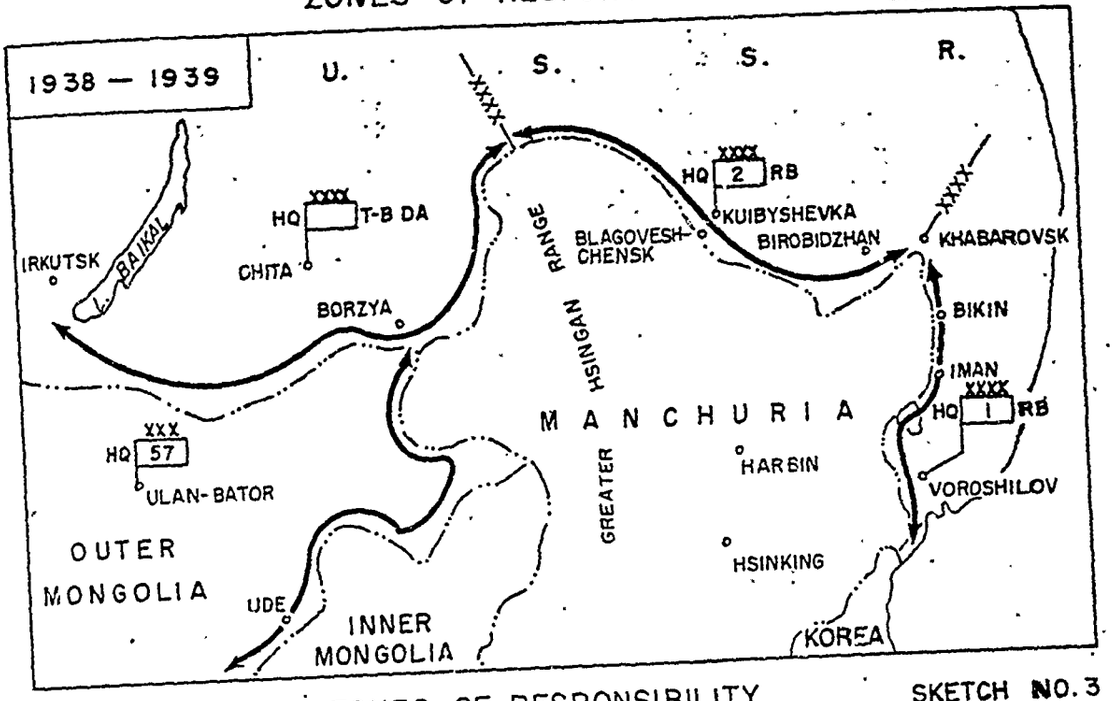
Improvement in the Soviet Command Structure

With the French Army's surrender to the German Army in the European Theater in June 1940, the Soviet Union began frantic efforts to strengthen its strategic position against Germany. These efforts included the Russo-Finnish War, the annexation of the three Baltic States, the annexation of Bessarabia, and the reinforcement of units on the Soviet-German frontier. In the Far East, too, the Soviet Union, while feigning a friendly attitude toward Japan (the 9 June accord on the disputed Outer-Mongolia-Manchurian border, the Soviet-Japan Commercial Conference), secretly pushed forward military expansion.

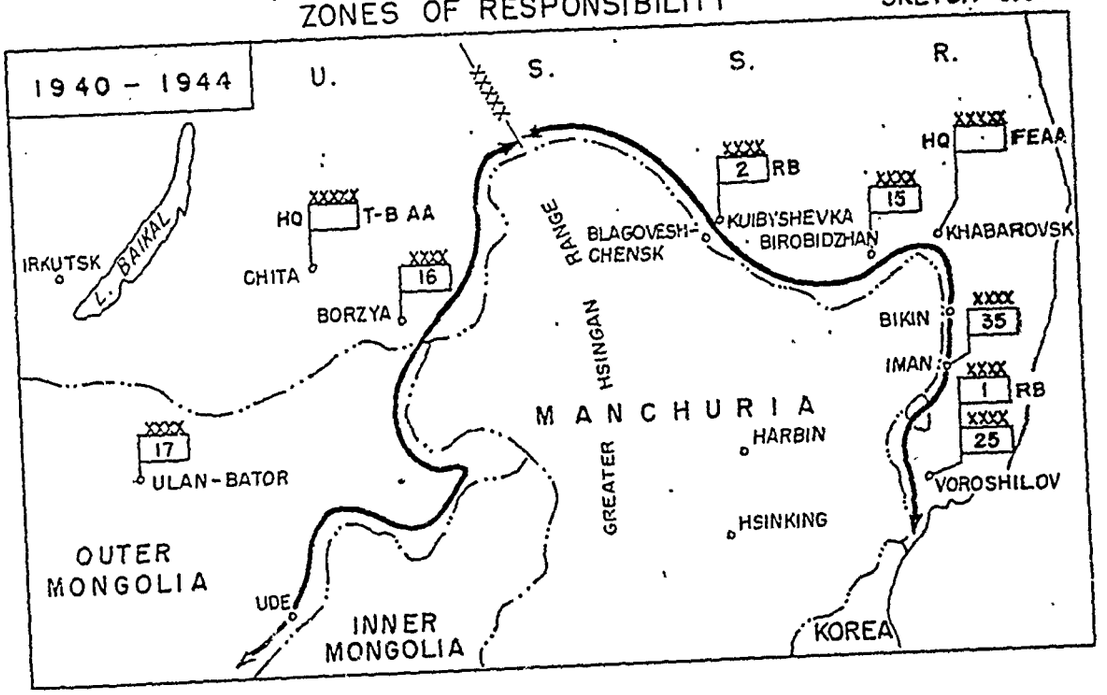
Especially noteworthy was the improvement in the command structure resulting from organizational changes and the establishment of three additional armies. The Far East Front Army Headquarters, organized for the Nomonhan emergency, was abolished. In its place, but as a permanent organization for the coordinated direction of operations in the Amur-Ussuri area, the USSR established Far East Area Army Headquarters in Khabarovsk. In July or August, this new headquarters, which then had command of the First and Second Red Banner Armies, organized the Fifteenth Army with headquarters at Birobidzhan in the Amur area. (See Sketches No. 2 and 3)

Also during July or August, in the area under the jurisdiction of the Trans-Baikal District Army, the USSR organized the Sixteenth

ZONES OF RESPONSIBILITY — SKETCH NO.2



ZONES OF RESPONSIBILITY — SKETCH NO.3



LEGEND: T-B DA ..... TRANS-BAIKAL DISTRICT ARMY
T-B AA ..... TRANS-BAIKAL AREA ARMY
FEAA ..... FAR EAST AREA ARMY
RB ..... RED BANNER

Army with headquarters at Borzya. At the same time it elevated the 57th Special Infantry Corps in Outer Mongolia to the status of an army, redesignated it the Seventeenth Army, and placed both armies under the Trans-Baikal command.

Thus the Soviet Army in the Far East in 1940 consisted of two major commands--the Far East Area Army which had jurisdiction over the Amur-Ussuri area, and the Trans-Baikal District Army which had jurisdiction over Outer Mongolia as well as the Trans-Baikal. Each of these two commands remained under Moscow's direct control. The Far East Area Army had three major subordinate commands: the First and Second Red Banner Armies and the Fifteenth Army. The Trans-Baikal District Army had two major subordinate commands: the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Armies.

The number of Soviet divisions in the Far East reached a peak of between 36 and 40 toward the end of 1940. The Japanese Army General Staff about that time made the following estimate of Soviet ground strength in the four major areas of the Far East:

Far East Area Army (Headquarters)

Ussuri Area	- 1 army headquarters, 11 infantry divisions, 4 mechanized brigades, and 2 cavalry divisions.
Amur Area	- 2 army headquarters, 8 infantry divisions. (It was believed that two more infantry divisions and 2 mechanized brigades were also in this area, but this could not be confirmed).

Trans-Baikal District Army (Headquarters)

Trans-Baikal Area	– 1 army headquarters, 8 infantry divisions, and 4 mechanized brigades.
Outer Mongolia	– 1 army headquarters, 3 infantry divisions, six mechanized divisions, and 1 cavalry brigade.

Soviet troop strength was estimated at 700,000, the number of aircraft at 2,800, tanks at 2,700, and submarines at 103.

Westward Troop Movement to German-Soviet Combat Zone

Subsequent to the German invasion of European Russia in mid-1941, the Soviet build-up or reduction in its Far East strength was regulated not so much by Far East border disputes as by developments in the European War.

The redeployment of troops from Far Eastern Russia to the German front had actually begun about March 1941, approximately three months before the outbreak of the German-Soviet War. After the outbreak of the war, the westward movement of troops was accelerated steadily and by the end of the year more than half of the divisional strength (at least 15 infantry divisions and 3 cavalry divisions) and 1,700 tanks, and 1,500 aircraft had been moved to the European front. The areas from which the divisions were extracted were believed to be: from the Ussuri area, 5 infantry divisions and 1 cavalry division, plus 3 tank brigades; from the Amur area, 2 infantry divisions and 1 air division, plus 1 tank brigade; from the Trans-Baikal, 7 infantry divisions, 2 cavalry divisions, and 3 air divisions, plus 2 tank brigades; and from Outer Mongolia, 1

infantry division plus 2 tank brigades. It will be noted that a large force was pulled out of the Trans-Baikal, since this area was less remote from the German front than other areas.

In July, while the Soviets were redeploying these troops to Europe, Japan began the Kwantung Army "special meneuvers" which, when completed two or three months later, had doubled Japanese strength in Manchuria (from 350,000 to 700,000). As a counter-measure, the USSR tightened control of the Ussuri front by establishing two new army headquarters under the Far East Area Army. Up to that time this entire front from Khabarovsk to Vladivostok had been the responsibility of the First Red Banner Army. Upon the formation of the two new headquarters, this extensive front was divided among the three commands: the Twenty-Fifth (at Voroshilov) was assigned to the left sector of the front, and the Thirty-Fifth (at Iman) was given charge of the northern half of this front, while the First Red Banner Army retained the important central segment. Another counter-measure, felt on all fronts, was the large-scale expansion of border positions.

Meanwhile, the USSR lost no time in carrying out new mobilizations to replace the losses in strength resulting from the transfer of troops to the west. At least 8 infantry divisions, 1 cavalry division, 1 infantry brigade, 3 tank brigades, and 1 air division were organized by the end of the year. The Japanese Army General Staff estimated at the end of 1941 that Soviet strength in the Far

East was 800,000 men, and that it consisted of 23 infantry divisions, 1,000 planes, 1,000 tanks, and 105 submarines. This troop strength showed an increase of 100,000 men over 1940 estimates, and was explained by the fact that Far East Russia had completely mobilized. The increase in strength was numerical only, however; it represented troops then undergoing basic training which, it might be added, was intense and carried out in severly cold weather.

In summary, from 1931 to 1941 both Japan and the USSR managed to increase their military strength in the FER-Manchuria area, Japan from 2 divisions to 13 divisions, the USSR from 6 divisions to 23 divisions. In 1941, the numerical strength was 700,000 for Japan and 800,000 for the USSR. In both cases the increase continued even after the demands of other fronts were felt, and in both cases the strength increase was quantitative rather than qualitative after the other fronts opened.

CHAPTER V

Effect on FER of Active Fighting Fronts

"Restoration" of Kwantung Army's Strength after Japan's Initial Successes in Pacific

Of no less importance than 1937 in recent Far East history was 1941. In April Japan and the USSR signed a non-aggression pact; in June Germany invaded the USSR and Japan promptly reinforced Manchuria; in August Japan made the decision to expand to the southern area (rather than in FER), and in December Japan went to war in the Pacific. Following the non-aggression pact, tension along the FER-Manchurian border lessened somewhat when the USSR's attention was deflected to its European frontier and Japan's attention was turned to the Pacific area. The lessening of tension, however, was to be short-lived.

To capture the southern areas Japan had to pull a sizeable number of units out of Manchuria. After her early victories the Pacific she returned some of these units. This "restoration" of strength in Manchuria took place in the spring of 1942 while Germany was pushing the Red Army back. It was accompanied by a reorganization in the command structure of Kwantung Army during which two area army headquarters (the First and Second) and a mechanized army headquarters were established. In addition, Kwantung Army Headquarters

was elevated to the status of General Headquarters.[18] Thus within the space of a year Kwantung Army's strength had been built up, reduced, and then rebuilt.

Soviet FER Reaction in 1942

Despite the fact that the USSR during this period was being pushed back on its European front, it was able to react vigorously to the Kwantung Army 1942 build-up. It began by reinforcing frontier positions and constructing field fortifications, particularly in the area surrounding Vladivostok and Voroshilov. Simultaneously it began to improve airfield defenses, specifically by constructing revetments for planes and by disposing dummy planes. In May it reorganized the Trans-Baikal Army District and redesignated it the Trans-Baikal Area Army. Also, it organized all air units in the Far East under two newly-created air army headquarters, assigning one headquarters to the Far East Area Army, and the other to the Trans-Baikal Area Army. In addition, after Japanese troops landed on Kiska and Attu Islands in June 1942, the USSR stepped up military preparations on Kamchatka Peninsula and in northern Sakhalin. (See Sketch No. 3)

Meanwhile, following the resumption of the German Army's second year offensive in May 1942, the USSR during July and August withdrew from the FER six additional infantry divisions--two each from the

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18. See Monograph No. 77, p. 23, and Monographs No. 138, 154 and 155.

Ussuri area, the Khabarovsk area, and the Trans-Baikal. As in the preceding year, however, it promptly replenished FER strength, by creating an estimated 2 infantry divisions, 10 infantry brigades, three tank brigades, and 10 air divisions. The Japanese Army General Staff estimated Soviet FER strength at the end of 1942 to be 750,000 men, and to include 20 infantry divisions, 1,000 planes, 800 to 1,000 tanks, and 105 submarines.

A noteworthy feature of the increased strength was the large number of infantry brigades. Apparently this was an interim arrangement until divisions could be organized, although the Soviets might have felt that brigades would be more convenient than larger commands for employment in defensive actions.

Turning Point of German-Soviet War

During the first nine months of 1942 Japan was winning victories in the Pacific and therefore able to reinforce Manchuria. The USSR was suffering defeats on its European front and therefore was compelled to withdraw major forces from FER. During the last three months of the year, however, the tide began to turn for both countries, unfavorably for Japan, favorably for the USSR.

The turning point of the German-Soviet war was the battle of Stalingrad, late in 1942. Following this, the Soviet Army in Europe shifted to the offensive. Thereafter the need for further withdrawals from the Far East diminished. During the first six months of 1943, the USSR withdrew only one infantry division and three cavalry divi-

sions, needed primarily to pursue the enemy. To offset even these losses, the USSR promptly formed one new infantry division, one cavalry division, and two air divisions. By the end of 1943, the exhaustion of manpower in FER began to tell, and Soviet Far East forces reached their lowest ebb. Nevertheless, they consisted, according to Japanese estimates, of 20 infantry divisions, 1,100 planes, 800 to 1,000 tanks, and 108 submarines. The troop total had dropped to about 700,000.

US-USSR Collaboration

Beginning in early 1943, American military planes were air ferried to the USSR over the route connecting Fairbanks in Alaska, Anadyr, Markovo, Seimchan, Yakutsk, and Krasnoyarsk. The Soviet civil air force (one division consisting of five air regiments) ferried these planes, initially at a monthly rate of 70 to 80; in April they ferried 220, and thereafter at an increased rate, with a maximum of 300 being reached in some months.

From Krasnoyarsk, a greater part of the aid-for-Russia planes were air ferried to the German-Soviet battlefield, but some of them were diverted to FER. The Japanese Army General Staff was highly apprehensive of the great advantage this air route would be to the Soviet Far East air force in the event of war against Japan, and of the possibility that the USSR might permit the United States to use Soviet military bases.

Reversal of Soviet Attitude Towards Japan

During 1944 Soviet operations against Germany progressed smoothly, and withdrawals of troops from the Far East stopped. The Soviet attitude towards Japan made a complete turnabout. Of especial significance was Stalin's slanderous speech branding Japan an aggressor, delivered on the eve of the anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution. At the end of 1944, the General Staff made its last year-end estimate of Soviet FER strength: 20 infantry divisions, 15 to 20 brigades, 24 air divisions (about 1,500 planes), 10 tank brigades, (about 1,000 tanks), and 108 submarines; the troop total was about 700,000, the same as at the end of the preceding year.

Following the Yalta Conference in February 1945, the USSR began moving troops eastward to reinforce Far Eastern Russia. On 5 April, the Soviet Government notified the Japanese Government that it had no intention of renewing the neutrality pact. Hence the General Staff began to believe that the USSR's entry into the war against Japan had become only a matter of time.

The number of eastbound trains redeploying troops to FER reached ten during April, and increased during May and June. The USSR's participation in the Potsdam Conference in July certified its intention to enter the war against Japan and, judging by the unexpectedly rapid progress of the Soviets in the reinforcement of FER, the Japanese Army General Staff estimated that the USSR would enter the war in early autumn.

Even up to the end of the war, the General Staff was never able to learn the exact number of troops transported east to reinforce FER, or the specific areas in which troop build-ups were made. However, General Staff Intelligence did make estimates based on the number of eastbound military transport trains. It assumed that between 800 and 1,000 trains were used during the build-up, and since forty trains were necessary to move one division, estimated that between 20 and 25 divisions had been re-deployed to FER.

CHAPTER VI

Indirect Military Measures to Develop FER

Measures to Encourage Emigration

In the early chapters of this study it was shown that the USSR developed the Far East militarily by increasing troop strength, by improving the disposition of forces, by altering the command structure, and by strengthening fortifications. The development of FER, however, was not limited to military measures, for at the same time the USSR exerted every effort to develop FER in other ways, politically, economically, and socially. While some of the measures undertaken did not contribute directly to military preparedness and therefore cannot be said to be of a purely military nature, most were so closely related to the military development that all tended to solidify the foundations of military strength. This was so much so, in fact, that no one can seriously deny that the development of Far Eastern Russia was fundamentally of a military nature.

Among the measures related to military preparedness undertaken by the USSR was the encouragement of emigration to the Far East. As pointed out earlier the sparse population in FER had long been a serious drawback from a military viewpoint. In 1932, for example, the population of Manchuria was about thirty million and of Korea about twenty million, while the population of FER was only about 2,860,000. It was only natural for the Soviet Government to feel

strongly that emigration to FER was an urgent necessity at that time.

As part of a plan to encourage emigration, the Soviet Government in December 1933 promulgated an ordinance granting "privileges to the inhabitants of the Far Eastern region." The ordinance enumerated the following inducements:

> Kolkhoz (community farm) members shall be exempt from contributing cereals to the Government for ten years, and independent farmers for five years.
>
> The price of fish purchased from Kolkhoz's engaged in the fishing industry and from its members shall be increased by 20 per cent.
>
> The pay of laborers, technicians, doctors, teachers, government officials, and others shall be increased from 10 to 30 per cent.
>
> The pay of men and non-commissioned officers of the Red Army shall be increased by 50 per cent and that of officers by 20 per cent.

In February 1934 the Soviet Government extended these privileges to the "Eastern Siberian region," which included additionally Irkutsk province, Chita province, and the Buryat-Mongolian Autonomous Republic, and at the same time made it semi-compulsory for soldiers discharged from active service to settle down in the Far East.

Most of the initial emigrants were unmarried men, and as a result there was an acute shortage of women. In 1937 the emigration of unmarried women was promoted by the so-called Khetagurov Patriotic Emigration Movement, a group of young women organized by Mrs. Khetagurov, wife of an army officer stationed in the Far East. As a further measure to encourage settlement in FER, the Soviet Government

relieved the Machine and Tractor Service Stations of the Kolkhozes from responsibility for back taxes, and also wiped out arrearages of cereals and other grains of inhabitants of the "Far Eastern region." In view of all these measures, it was surprising that it was not until May 1939 that the USSR established an agency to direct emigration work. This agency, known simply as the Emigration Bureau, was attached to the Council of the USSR Peoples' Commissars.

Although emigration (plus natural growth) gradually increased FER's population it fell far short of satisfying the shortage of laborers which had been acute for many years. Beginning in 1933, the USSR began to use forced laborers extensively, the number reaching a peak during 1938 and 1939, immediately after the purges, at which time according to General Staff estimates there were about 400,000.

Measures to Offset Army Shortages of Food and Shelter

The shortage of food and shelter in FER, especially after the military build-up was begun, was perhaps the greatest problem confronting the Army, and led the USSR to undertake still another measure, one more closely related to military preparedness. This was the creation, in about 1933, of two Kolkhoz Divisions of farmer-soldiers. Organized for the dual purpose of farming to alleviate the food shortage and of training for military operations, these divisions were stationed in the "granaries of Far Eastern Russia," one in the Ussuri area and the other in the Amur area, with elements

dispersed over the more fertile districts. The stable cereals they harvested were turned over to the Army for general use. In addition to alleviating the food shortage by growing foodstuffs for the Army and keeping militarily prepared, these divisions helped solve still a third problem by cultivating fertile land which otherwise might have been left untilled because of the shortage of hands. As more and more discharged soldiers began to settle down on the farmlands of the Kolkhoz Divisions, the divisions were reorganized (in 1937) into regular infantry divisions.

With increased emigration, a great shortage of barracks and dwelling houses began to be felt in various parts of FER. In some places troops were billeted in old barracks which in by-gone years had been used by the Tsarist Russian Army; but these were far from sufficient. In areas where there were civilian dwelling houses, troops were packed into them. In remote areas where there were no barracks or dwelling houses, troops built and lived in semi-underground shelters, called Zemlyankas. (It seemed a common practice, especially during the early years of the build-up in the FER, for the Soviet Army to begin transporting troops right after the thaw of snow. Upon arrival at the place of garrison, troops would immediately begin constructing Zemlyankas so that the shelters might be ready for use by the following winter. Units sent to FER during 1938 and 1939 were known to have more than the usual complement of construction elements.)

Measures to Increase Railroad Transportation Capacity.

During the ten years prior to World War II Soviet authorities exerted great efforts to improve the railroad system in FER in order to increase the transportation capacity and attain a greater degree of military preparedness. The measures undertaken were principally the double-tracking of the Trans-Siberian Railroad, the elimination of bottlenecks, and the construction of the Bam Railroad and other lines that were principally of strategic value.

The Trans-Siberian had been double-tracked as far east as Karymskoe by the Tsarist Government. In 1932, the year after the Manchurian Incident broke out, the Soviet Government resumed the project and, working eastward from Karymskoe, began double-tracking the section that looped around Manchuria to Vladivostok. It was during this period (1935) that the USSR sold the short-cut through Manchuria (Chinese Eastern Railway) to Manchukuo. By the end of 1937, double-tracking had been completed as far east as Khabarovsk, and in 1940 the entire project was completed to Vladivostok. However, the second track proved to be inferior, probably because of the great haste to complete it; for several years afterwards trains were frequently derailed or overturned at curves on the newly-laid track during thawing and rainy periods.

The principal bottlenecks of the Trans-Siberian were between Krasnoyarsk and Karymskoe. One bottleneck was the Yenesei River railway bridge near Krasnoyarsk which had been left with one track

after adjoining sections were double-tracked by the Tsarist Government. To eliminate this bottleneck, the bridge was double-tracked during the 1935-1936 freezing period. Another transportation bottleneck was the slope of the Yablonovy Mountain Range west of Chita, or to be exact, the slope between Yablonovaya Station and Mogzon Station. This bottleneck was eliminated in 1943 by laying a third track between these two stations.

The circumstances surrounding the construction of the Bam Railroad have already been mentioned (p 13-14). It might be added here that this railroad was intended to provide an additional and more rearward supply line for Soviet forces in the Ussuri and Amur areas. Other than this line, however, two other lines, shorter but of considerable strategic importance were constructed. One of these, the Borzya-Tamsag Railroad west of Manchuria has already been mentioned. Its construction completed the encirclement of Manchuria on the west.

Of the new strategic railroads the one next in importance to the Bam and the Borzya-Tamsag lines was that from Razdolnoye to the Korean border. The Trans-Siberian looped around Manchuria as far as Vladivostok, and thus encircled it completely except for this 100-odd mile coastal area. The Soviets filled this gap in 1940 by constructing a line from Razdolnoye, a station on the Trans-Siberian, to Kraskino. This line completed the iron belt around Manchuria, and threatened the lines of communication between Korea and Manchuria.

Counter-Espionage Measures

In developing FER during this period the USSR also took counter-espionage measures against Japan, a few of which are worth mentioning. Soviet authorities for some time had regarded the Japanese and Manchurian consulates in Soviet territory as centers of espionage activity. After the conclusion of the Anti-Comintern Pact in 1936, they initiated reductions in the number of their consulates in Japan and Manchuria, and at the same time made a strong request that Japan make a corresponding reduction in the number of Japanese consulates in FER. As a result of this request, Japan closed its consulates at Blagoveshchensk, Khabarovsk, Aleksandrovsk, Novosibirsk, and other cities. Thereafter, the USSR took even more thorough counter-intelligence measures.

Immediately after the Changkufeng Incident in 1938, the USSR forcibly and abruptly moved about 200,000 Koreans engaged in rice farming in the Ussuri area to the Kazakh SSR in Central Asia. The object of this mass movement was to eliminate all Korean hamlets, which then were being used by Japanese espionage agents as centers of activity.

[illegible]uction of Airfields in the Hinterland

In the Ussuri area, almost all Soviet airfields were located in the low narrow corridor between the Trans-Siberian Railroad tracks and the Manchurian-Soviet border, since the area to the east of the railroad was mostly mountainous. The proximity of these

airfields to Japanese bases made them extremely vulnerable, particularly the bomber fields.

Beginning in about 1937, the USSR began constructing bomber airfields in the mountainous regions. The first of these were constructed in the vicinity of Sysoyevka (about eighty kilometers east of Lake Hanka), in the Dauhikhe River valley, to which the main strength of long-range aircraft units was subsequently moved. In about 1941, in the Ulukhe River valley to the east of the Sysoyevka area, several more airfields were constructed. Also, around Khabarovsk and near Komsomolsk a number of large airfields were started during 1941, as bases for long-range bomber units. In addition, during 1944, when the ferrying of aircraft from the U.S. to Siberia was in full swing, the USSR constructed several relay airfields in the Khabarovsk and Ussuri areas so as to effect liaison with the American-Soviet ferry route.

Soviet Coordination with the Chinese Communist Army

The main strength of the Chinese Communist Army, which for several years had been operating from bases remote to the Soviet Ur[illegible] left the Jiukin area in Kiangsi Province during 1934 and l[illegible]d moved to Yenan, Shensi Province, in North China. From this more northerly base it could ccoperate more fully and promptly with the Soviet army in case of emergency.

Immediately after the outbreak of the China Incident in August 1937, the Soviet Union concluded a non-aggression pact with China.

In contrariety with normal diplomatic practice, this treaty took effect without ratification. The Soviet Union immediately began supplying military aid to China in an effort to undermine the Japanese Army. One of the major evidences of assistance the Soviet Union rendered to China was the construction of a road leading from the USSR to central China through Sinkiang Province. Called the "northwest route," this route was considered of immense strategic value.

CHAPTER VII

Soviet Deployment in Far Eastern Russia

Rble of Soviet Far East Forces to Red Army's Over-all Strategy

The national defense policy adopted by the USSR late in 1935 prescribed that the Red Army as a whole was to be disposed from one end of the USSR to the other. The reason for this, as was pointed out earlier, was to permit the Red Army to carry out independent operations on the eastern and western fronts simultaneously against two hypothetical enemies (Japan and Germany). That such a plan existed was clearly shown in a speech made by Marshal Michael Tukhachevski to the Central Committee Meeting of the Communist Party held in December 1935.[19]

The adoption of the new defense policy was accompanied by revisions in Soviet strategic-tactical concepts. In 1936, the principle of annihilation warfare, as distinguished from warfare of attrition, was incorporated into Soviet Army field manuals.[20] This

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19. Marshal Tukhachevski was executed 18 months later (12 June 1937) along with seven other generals accused of conspiracy with Japanese and Germans. Langer, Encyclopedia of World History, 1952.

20. The principle of annihilation warfare was adhered to by the German Army during World War I. Since, during the post-war years, German officers were widely used to train Soviet troops, it appears likely that the principle was adopted by the Red Army before being incorporated into field manuals. Annihilation warfare, as understood by the Japanese (who especially studied German warfare of World War I), had two basic tenets: 1) to envelop the enemy and,

concept placed strong emphasis on taking the offensive as early as possible during the opening phase of war. Toward this end the Soviet Army disposed powerful forces, particularly highly mobile groups such as cavalry and tank groups and air elements, close to the frontiers both in Europe and the Far East. These frontline forces were at all times kept in readiness for launching envelopment operations.

In Far Eastern Russia, all Soviet forces east of Lake Baikal were considered to be in the first line force for operations against Japan. The second-line force was the Siberian District Army, west of Lake Baikal,[21] which was disposed so as to be capable of promptly

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2) to destroy his forces rapidly (50 per cent casualties were considered "destruction"). Two 1914 battles of annihilation were studied in particular; in one the concept proved effective, in the other, although the concept was not successfully applied, the battle was won. At Tannenberg (August 26-30), the Germans under the direct command of General Hermann von Francois "annihilated" the army of Russian General Alexander V. Samsonov, and took 100,000 prisoners. At Lodz (November 16-25) German General August von Mackensen's attempt to envelop and annihilate Russian forces failed, and the Germans themselves were in danger of being surrounded until reinforced by divisions from the western front.

21. Major commands of first line forces of the Red Army were believed by the Japanese Army General Staff to be classified into three groups: 1) district army, 2) special district army (used principally on the German front) and 3) area army. The General Staff was never able to confirm the difference in the missions of these three classifications. It assumed, however, that while a district army was principally administrative in nature (maintenance of peace and order, etc.), a special district army and an area army were given operational missions and were so constituted as to be able to carry out operations of short duration without mobilizing local reserves. (On the German front, the designation special district army was adopted shortly before the outbreak of the German-Soviet war).

reinforcing the first line force. The third line force, actually a strategic reserve maintained for use as needed on either the Japanese or German front, was stationed in the Ural Mountain area, along the Volga River, and in Central Asia.

This strategic disposition was revealed in 1939, shortly after the outbreak of the Nomonhan Incident, when the Soviet Army, noting how the Incident was expanding, in early or mid-June alerted both the second and third line forces to mobilize part of their strength. On about 10 July, the Siberian District Army transferred two divisions to the Trans-Baikal District Army, and shortly thereafter the Ural District Army dispatched one division to the Trans-Baikal District Army, and another division (the 82d) directly to Nomonhan.

In FER, Soviet war preparations were more thorough than on the German front. This was ascertained by the Japanese Army General Staff from intelligence reports comparing both fronts. For example, the first line force of the Soviets along the German front matched, division for division, the first line force of the Germans. In FER, however, where no such face-to-face grouping was suitable, the number of Soviet divisions was two or three times the number of Japanese divisions in Manchuria and Korea. Because this favorable ratio was steadily maintained by the Soviets until 1941, it may be concluded that until the outbreak of the German-Soviet War, the USSR was planning offensive operations against Japan, particularly in view of Stalin's belief that such a ratio was necessary in order to launch

offensive operations.[22] During the period of the German-Soviet War, however, this ratio was not maintained in FER; in fact, Soviet strength was decreased until it more closely approximated Japanese strength in Manchuria and Korea.

The Soviet high command in the Far East placed great emphasis on tanks and tank units. In the Ussuri and Amur areas where infantry strength predominated, it assigned one independent tank brigade to each principal operational road to Manchuria, so that generally speaking the number of tank brigades equalled the number of operational roads. In addition, it maintained one "direct cooperation" tank brigade for each three or four infantry divisions. In the Trans-Baikal area, however, where tank strength predominated, the Soviets seemed to be planning independent use of a high-speed group consisting mainly of a tank corps plus two cavalry division for operations in the vast tracts of land in the Mongolias.

As to the basis upon which the Soviets determined the assignment of aircraft, the General Staff had no idea whatever. However, it estimated that during periods when no emergency existed, the Soviets deployed in the Far East about one-fourth of the total number

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22. This was confirmed in Major General John R. Deane's testimony before the International Military Tribunal for the Far East on 5 June 1945. General Deane testified that during the Teheran Conference (October 1943) Stalin stated that "the Far Eastern strength is adequate for defensive action, but it must be trebled to take offensive action."

of their military planes.

Estimates of Red Army Divisional Strength

To determine and study the strength of Soviet infantry divisions used during the Nomonhan Incident, the Japanese Army General Staff in 1940 appointed the Nomonhan Incident Research Committee made up of officers from its own staff and from that of Kwantung Army. While the conclusions reached by this joint committee were not based on adequate information, its findings did serve as a basis for comparison with other studies. One of its findings was that the strength of Soviet infantry divisions in the Trans-Baikal District Army during the Incident had been only about 70 or 75 per cent, both in men and horses, of the wartime table of organization, and that other divisions in the Far East were at about the same strength.[23]

Earlier, in 1938, the General Staff had been informed by the Polish Army General Staff that Soviet divisions in the first line force both in Europe and the Far East, were at about 85 per cent of wartime T/O strength (and presumably retained this strength through 1939), and that Soviet divisions in the second and third line forces were at about 60 per cent of wartime T/O strength. Pre-Incident estimates of the Japanese Army General Staff had ascertained only that the divisions in the first line force, in the Far East at least,

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23. The wartime T/O strength of an infantry division was estimated at about 13,000. Peacetime strength was estimated at between 80 and 85 per cent of this figure.

were at higher strength with respect to manpower, horses, weapons, and materiel, than those in the second and third line forces, and that the quality of first line force divisions was superior to that of second and third line divisions. Troops in the rear line divisions, and particularly pilots, were known to be required to attain a certain degree of skill before being assigned to first line units.

Post-Incident estimates of the General Staff determined that the Soviets were improving the actual strength of front line divisions. By the time the German-Soviet War broke out in 1941 the percentage had risen, it was believed, to 85 per cent for infantry divisions. After the start of the war in the Pacific, actual strength reached full wartime T/O, and thereafter was maintained at that level.

The General Staff also estimated that Soviet air strength was up to its wartime T/O during the Pacific War, but it could not confirm this. However, the number of regiments in an air division varied during 1944 and 1945. In an extreme instance, an air division might consist of only one regiment, maintained at wartime T/O strength. Such a structure might indicate an early phase in expansion; since it would include an air division headquarters, a full-strength air division might later be created, for example after the conclusion of operations against Germany.

Shifts from Defensive to Offensive

For several years after the Manchurian Incident the Soviet Union maintained a defensive attitude in the Far East. In 1933,

Marshal Bryukher, Soviet commander in the Far East, delivered a speech on the occasion of the May Day demonstration in Khabarovsk in which he declared: "The Red Army is prepared at all times to fight for the international proletarian revolution and protect the achievements of the October Revolution." Despite this bellicose speech, Soviet war preparations in the Far East remained defensive in nature. It was not until the conclusion of the Anti-Comintern Pact in 1936 that the Soviet defensive policy abruptly changed to an offensive operational policy, accompanied by hasty preparations including attempts to acquire the 3 to 1 ratio in division strength mentioned earlier. The Soviets continued this offensive policy until 1941 when they were compelled to withdraw sizeable forces from the Far East for their war with Germany. Again the USSR pursued a defensive policy in the Far East; this time it lasted until the conclusion of the war with Germany, following which the USSR began a large-scale re-deployment to the east for the subsequent invasion of Manchuria.

The Trans-Baikal Versus the Ussuri

Following Japan's occupation of Manchuria in 1931, Japanese and Soviet forces came face to face along a 4,000 kilometer border. The question of which area should be best defended confronted both countries, and each at different times had to look at the problem from both the defensive and offensive viewpoints. Involved in the question were such factors as the railroads and the Greater Hsingan Mountain Range.

In seizing Manchuria, Japan gradually took control of the trans-Manchurian Railroad which by linking the western with the eastern borders, connected the Trans-Baikal with the Ussuri area. (It would be quite impossible for a large army to carry out such operations within Manchuria without the use of this and other railroads). By controlling the trans-Manchurian Railroad, the Japanese were able to exert military pressure upon both the Trans-Baikal and Ussuri areas. This pressure mounted and, with the removal of the last vestige of Soviet influence in Manchuria following the sale of the railroad to Manchukuo in 1935, Soviet apprehension increased. The question of which front should be given priority for defense preparations undoubtedly presented itself to the Soviets who during and after the Manchurian Incident were defensive minded in the face of Japanese expansion. The answer was indirectly supplied by Japanese actions after the Manchurian Incident.

In Kwantung Army's consolidation of positions following this Incident, and in its subsequent preparations for operations against the USSR, it was most active in the regions east of the Greater Hsingan Mountain Range, and particularly along the eastern front. In effect, the Kwantung Army "called this shot" and the Soviets responded in this area. Subsequently both sides became preoccupied with strengthening their respective sides of this border. (Japan, in fortifying the eastern front, was not unmindful of the importance of the Trans-Baikal, but felt that the Greater Hsingan Mountains

would slow down a Soviet advance from this area and give it time to defeat Soviet forces on the eastern front before turning its attention to Soviet forces advancing from the Trans-Baikal.[24]

The USSR's development of the Ussuri area into a fortified zone on a high priority basis was therefore a defensive move conditioned by Japanese actions. It was not so much based on their concepts of strategy for the defense of the Far East (See pp 71-72), or so it appeared to the General Staff, as it was motivated by a fear of losing the vital Ussuri area. Because they fully anticipated a Kwantung Army offensive against this area, they accelerated war preparations there. Because they feared that uninterrupted transportation of troops to the Ussuri area, located at the terminal of the Trans-Siberian, would become impossible once war broke out, they concentrated troop strength along the Ussuri border. Because they desired to insure that the battlefield would be in Manchuria, and because they feared that if pushed back from the border they would have no room for withdrawal and would lose the operational use of important air and naval bases in the Ussuri area, the force they concentrated was the largest possible under the circumstances. Finally, because of the importance of this area, the Soviets, during the large-scale transfers of forces to the west for the German-

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24. In the Hachi-Go Plan formulated in 1937 the time required to defeat Soviet forces on the eastern front was estimated at three months.

Soviet War, postponed as long as possible withdrawing troops from this area.

The USSR, following the signing of the Anti-Comintern Pact in 1936, switched from defensive to offensive thinking. Until the Nomonhan Incident in 1939 the Japanese Army General Staff maintained the belief that the Soviet Union, if and when it invaded Manchuria, would launch its main drive from the Ussuri area and throw its main strength against the eastern part of Manchuria. Members of the Fifth Section (in charge of intelligence on the Soviet Union) based this belief on the fact that the greatest concentration of Soviet strength was in the Ussuri area and that war preparations there had advanced farther than in any other area. An invasion of the western front along the Manchouli-Harbin railroad was ruled out by the intelligence section because of the formidable obstacles in the path of such an advance particularly the strong Japanese fortifications and the Greater Hsingan Mountains.

In 1940 the intelligence section modified this viewpoint somewhat. It estimated that the main body of the Soviets would invade across the northern border of Manchuria from the Amur area in order to harass the left rear of the main strength of the Japanese Army concentrated in eastern Manchuria.

Meanwhile, however, the USSR's post-Nomonhan development of the Trans-Baikal area began to assume large proportions. After learning the extent of this build-up, the General Staff in late 1940 again

altered its viewpoint and estimated that the main strength of the Soviets would probably advance from the Trans-Baikal. By this time the Borzya-Tamsag railroad had been completed, permitting a more southerly invasion of Manchuria aimed directly at Hsinking. Also, infantry divisions had been motorized, and these in addition to one tank corps and two cavalry divisions with their high degree of mobility were ready to advance into Manchuria at the outset of war. Furthermore, this operational force, it was believed, would be reinforced with troops from the second-line force of the Siberian District Army. (The reason the Soviets prior to this time had always maintained a smaller force in the Trans-Baikal than in the Ussuri was because the Trans-Baikal was relatively easy to reinforce since it was closer to the second line and the third line "strategic reserve" forces.) Hence, the Japanese Army General Staff believed that the Soviet Army's offensive operational plan was to attract and withstand the main strength of the Japanese Army on the Ussuri and Amur fronts and in the meantime to send its own main body--a high-speed group--from the Trans-Baikal to strike the rear of the main body of the Kwantung Army.

The Soviet build-up of the Trans-Baikal was only one of the reasons the Japanese Army General Staff turned its attention to the western front. The USSR's prior pre-occupation with the Ussuri front, as already mentioned, was based on fear of losing it. From a purely strategic viewpoint, the Trans-Baikal was perhaps the most

important area in Far Eastern Russia: from the standpoint of Soviet defensive strategy, the loss of this "throat of Far Eastern Russia" would have a paralyzing effect on military activities in the Amur area as well as in the more vital Ussuri area; from the standpoint of Soviet offensive strategy, in view of the completion of the Borzya-Tamsag railroad, the Trans-Baikal offered the most direct route to the heart of Manchuria. Nevertheless, despite its build-up in the Trans-Baikal the USSR continued to maintain its predominant strength in the Ussuri area, possibly because the Ussuri could not be so readily reinforced as the Trans-Baikal.

With the German invasion of Russia in June 1941, the USSR reverted to a defensive policy in the Far East, and Japan, to exploit the situation, during the following two months carried out the aforementioned "Kwantung Army Special Maneuvers," with special emphasis on strengthening the eastern front. During August, however, the decision to invade the southern areas was made and in December this decision materialized into the Pacific War. Thereafter and until 1945 the Manchuria-USSR front remained relatively quiet with both sides withdrawing forces for use in their respective active operational areas. When the USSR again resumed an offensive policy in the Far East after the conclusion of its war with Germany, it was to carry out an actual invasion of Manchuria by launching attacks simultaneously from the Trans-Baikal, the Ussuri, and the Amur areas.

CHAPTER VIII

Study of Border Positions

Soviet Construction of Border Positions

It was during the thawing season in 1932 that the Soviet Far East forces, being extremely fearful of the movement of the Japanese Army which had launched operations throughout Manchuria, hurriedly began constructing defense positions all along the Manchuria-Soviet borderline. It was only natural that Soviets, in undertaking this defensive measure, would start construction in areas where they believed the Japanese Army was most likely to attack.

In 1932, border positions were constructed in the vicinities of Grodekovo and Poltavka (opposite Suifenho and Tungning), Leninskoe (near the confluence of the Amur and Sungari Rivers), Blagoveshchensk (opposite Heiho), and Borzya (northwest of Manchouli). In 1934, the principal construction undertaken was that in the vicinity of Barabash, not far from the Korean border. In 1938 positions were constructed where earlier only trenches had been dug; this included the area west of Lake Hanka, and the vicinity of Iman. In 1939, defense positions were constructed opposite Hunchun where only trenches had been dug earlier, and along the Korea-Soviet border, as well as northwest of Manchuria in the vicinity of Dauriya.

Japan viewed the construction of these border positions as a provocative and dangerous military action, and as early as January

1935, Foreign Minister Koki Hirota in an address before the Diet warned the Soviets: "We hope the Soviet Government will pay special attention to the question of military installations in the Far East." Later that year the Japanese Government, as a preliminary step toward the easing of tension, proposed the demilitarization of the border zone. However, the Soviet Government would discuss merely the withdrawal of forces. It refused to agree to the removal of border positions, and negotiations were broken off before a settlement was reached.

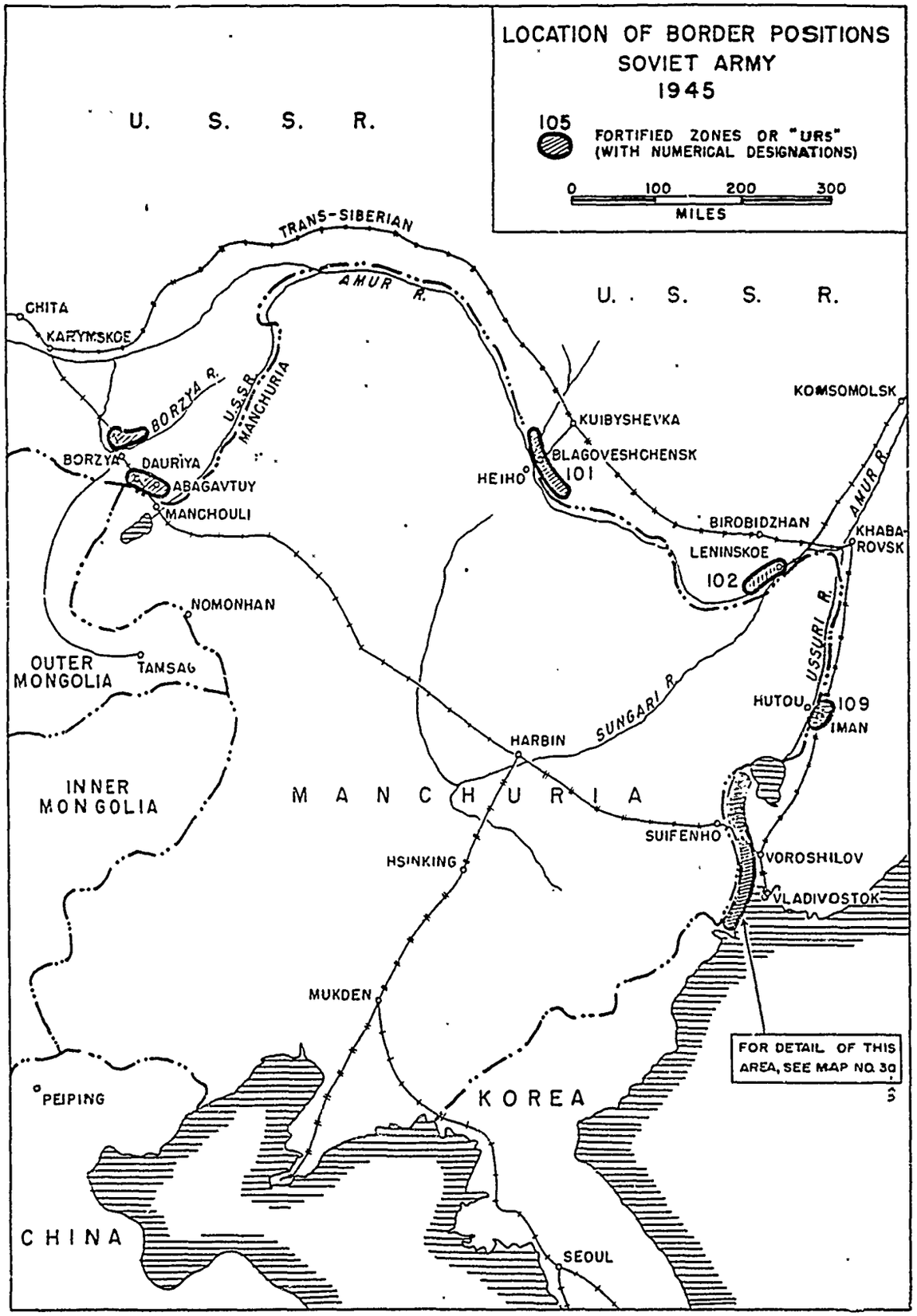
In May 1936, the Japanese Government proposed the establishment of a neutral zone in the border areas. Soviet reaction to this proposal was echoed sarcastically in Izvestia on 18 June:

> Behind our line of defense there runs a railroad which in many places is less than fifty kilometers from the border... The Japanese military suggest to us the destruction of our defense line. Why don't the Japanese Generals demand, as proof of our sincerity, that we build for them a route of approach to our trunk line?

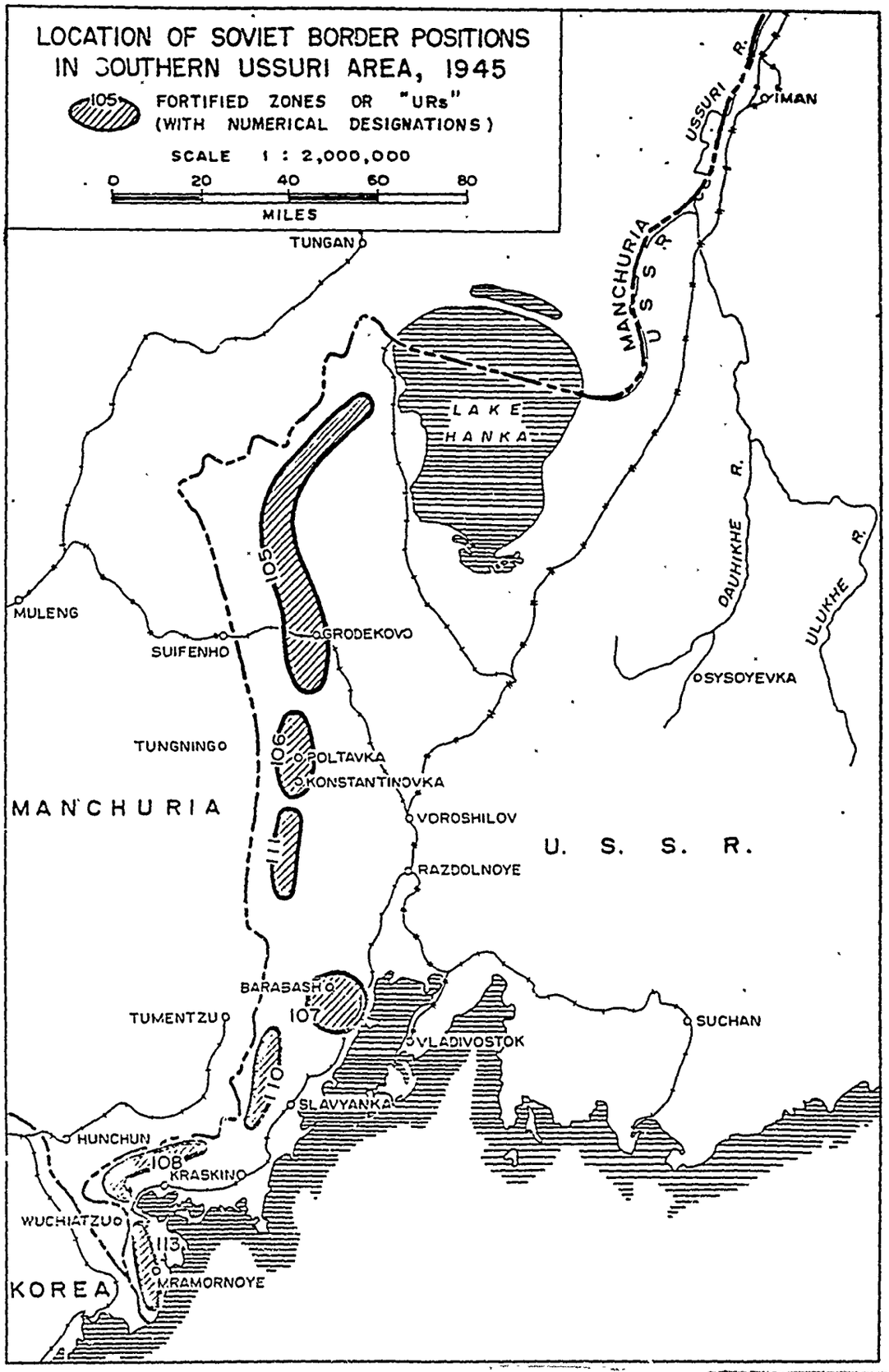
The Japanese General Staff concluded from this article that the Soviets intended to retain and even strengthen these border positions, and that they regarded them as essential to the defense of the Trans-Siberian Railroad.

With the outbreak of the German-Soviet War in 1941, the Soviet Far East forces renewed the construction of border positions in various areas. This was followed shortly thereafter by the construc-

MAP NO. 3a


LOCATION OF BORDER POSITIONS
SOVIET ARMY
1945
105
FORTIFIED ZONES OR "URS"
(WITH NUMERICAL DESIGNATIONS)
0 100 200 300
MILES
U. S. S. R.
U. S. S. R.
TRANS-SIBERIAN
AMUR R.
CHITA
KARYMSKOE
BORZYA R.
U.S.S.R.
MANCHURIA
BORZYA
DAURIYA
ABAGAVTUY
MANCHOULI
KUIBYSHEVKA
BLAGOVESHCHENSK
101
HEIHO
KOMSOMOLSK
AMUR R.
BIROBIDZHAN
LENINSKOE
102
KHABA-
ROVSK
USSURI R.
NOMONHAN
OUTER
MONGOLIA
TAMSAG
SUNGARI R.
HUTOU
109
IMAN
HARBIN
INNER
MONGOLIA
M A N C H U R I A
SUIFENHO
HSINKING
VOROSHILOV
VLADIVOSTOK
MUKDEN
FOR DETAIL OF THIS
AREA, SEE MAP NO. 3a
PEIPING
KOREA
CHINA
SEOUL

MAP NO. 3b



tion of ordinary trenches to the rear of the border, particularly at strategic points in the interior of the country, for example in the vicinities of Vladivostok and Voroshilov. The latter construction indicated a Soviet lack of faith in the power of its border installations to check a Japanese advance. (Map No. 3 shows location of border positions.)

Description of Border Positions

What has been referred to in this study as a border defense position (as distinguished from border defense region, which will be discussed shortly) was what the Soviets called a series of "tochkas," literally "points" with pillboxes and other installations. There were three types of tochkas: DOT, permanent fire point; SOT, disappearing fire point; and LOT, dummy fire point.

The most common type of DOT was hexagonal in shape, although some were round, square, rectangular, or pentagonal. The interior diameter was at least five or six meters for the smaller ones and as much as ten meters for the larger ones. The structure protruded about two meters above the ground. Its walls were made of concrete, and the thickness of the section facing the front was generally between 0.8 and 1 meters, although in some cases it was as much as 1.2 or 1.4 meters. Most DOTs were equipped with two or three machine-guns; some were equipped in addition with one or two 76-mm guns.

DOTs formed the backbone of a defense position. They were spread over the position at intervals varying between 400 and 600

meters depending upon terrain, and were arranged in two or three rows, or even four rows in some places. The distance between rows also varied. In the Poltavka area, the distance was 300 to 400 meters, while in the Borzya area it was between 800 and 1,000 meters.

In addition to these DOTs, border defense positions contained other installations, such as a pillbox for the commander, observation posts, wire entanglements, antitank obstacles, artillery emplacements, SOTs (disappearing fire points), communication trenches, signal installations, and LOTs (dummy fire points). The installations of each position were so arranged as to permit the massing of firepower. Unlike ordinary fortresses, however, the positions had no underground communication trenches.

Soviet Border Garrison Forces

Responsibility for defending the Soviet side of the border was divided between the MVD and the Army. Where there were no defense positions along the border, MVD security units were disposed. These uniformed secret police units were not in the chain of command of the Red Army; they were responsible directly to MVD Headquarters in Moscow. Each security unit was assigned an area with a seventy kilometer front and a twenty kilometer depth. Their main functions were to keep informed of movements of the Japanese Army (which they accomplished by constantly sending spies across the border), and to prevent unlawful entry into Soviet territory.

The border defense positions were the responsibility of the

Army. The tactics to be employed by border garrison units were prescribed in the 1936 Basic Field Manual of the Red Army. Article 258, Item 2, of the manual prescribed that the garrison unit was to compel the enemy to expend his strength, materiel, and time in frontal attacks, then to crush the enemy by massing the firepower of permanent fortifications. Finally, the enemy was to be destroyed by flank attacks carried out by mobile field units.

To facilitate such tactics, the border garrison units were organized largely from gunnery units. There seemed to be no fixed organizational structure, but the type most common was composed of the following elements:

Headquarters
One independent infantry regiment
Three to five independent artillery-machinegun battalions
One to three independent artillery battalions (or batteries)
One or two antitank gun battalions
One engineer battalion
One liaison battalion (or company)
A logistical unit.

It may be said that with such a structure the border garrison units tactically consisted of one force for direct defense of pillboxes and another force to counterattack and repulse an enemy who has penetrated the position. This reflects the Soviet Army's concept that defensive action cannot succeed unless direct position defense and counterattack are coordinated. In the border garrison organization cited above, the force for direct defense of pillboxes was

the independent artillery-machinegun battalions, while the counter-attack force was the independent infantry regiment.

Fortified Regions or "URs"

What had been known as "border defense positions" gradually assumed increased importance and became known as fortified zones or "URs." This term, first used in the Red Army's Basic Field Manual published in 1936, was adopted by Soviet Far East forces in 1940. (In Russian the term was Укрепленный Район, pronounced Ukreplenny Raion. It was abbreviated to УР, pronounced UR.)

Article 258 of the Red Army manual prescribed that fortified regions or URs should be established: 1) at points or areas which because of their economic, political, or strategic importance were to be held at all costs, 2) in an area whose security was necessary for the deployment or maneuver of forces, and 3) on the flanks of areas from which the main attack was to be launched.

Generally speaking, the URs in Far Eastern Russia were in the first category, and were assigned a numerical designation. In the Ussuri area, the URs were located along the border from Iman south through Grodekovo and Poltavka to Barabash and extending to the Vladivostok fortress on the one hand and to Kramornoye on the other. (See Map No. 3, and Chart No. 4). Although they constituted a series of closely integrated fortifications, they did not constitute an unbroken line, since areas where deep forests made operational actions impossible were left unfortified.

Fortified Zones (URs) in the Ussuri

UR Number	Headquarters	Area Covered (See also Map No. 3)	Construction of positions Begun	Completed	Frontage (in Km)	Depth (in Km)	No. of DOTs
113	Mramornoye (Chertovaya)	Lower reaches of Tumen River near Korea Border	Spring 1939	1941	35	2-7	125
108	Kraskino	North of 113th UR	Spring 1939	Summer 1941	46	2-8	105
110	Slavyanka	North of 108th UR	Unknown	1941	45	1-7	30
107	Barabash	Plugs gap between Vladivostok Fortress and 106th UR	1934	1936	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
111	(No nearby town)	South of 106th UR	Spring 1932	1935	36	1-8	55
106	Konstantinovka	North of 111th UR	Spring 1932	1935	35	2-8	155
105	Grodekovo	From Grodekovo, northward between the border and Lake Hanka	Spring 1932	1935	50	2-12	255
109	Iman	North and south of Iman	1939	Summer 1941	35	1-10	100

Chart No. 4 A

Fortified Zones (URs) in the Amur and Trans-Baikal

	UR Designation	Headquarters	Area Covered (See also Map No. 3)	Construction of Positions Begun	Completed	Frontage (in Km)	Depth (in Km)	No. of DOTs
Amur	102	Leninskoe	Vicinity of confluence of Amur and Sungari Rivers (a)	Spring 1932	1935	75	1-8	70
	101	Blagoveshchensk	Amur River front (b)	1932	1934	110	1-7	326
Trans-Baikal	Dauriya	Dauriya	From Abagavtuy to hills west of Dauriya	1939	1940	65	2-5	170
	Borzya	Borzya	Right bank of Borzya River	1932	1934	Unknown	Unknown	1/Sq. Km.

a. This UR was established to check a Japanese advance down the Sungari River and to prevent the Manchurian gunboat fleet from entering the Amur. Pillboxes were constructed on islands near the confluence.

b. Established to defend Amur Province and the Trans-Siberian Railroad, this UR garrison force defended a far broader front than those of other areas. A river defense unit, it was part of the river defense striking force of about three divisions always kept in readiness in its rear. Amur Province was shielded by the Amur River (except in freezing season). The sites of Japanese river crossings in this zone could be estimated from the location of operational roads in Manchuria.

The strength of each UR differed. The strongest, not only in Ussuri but in all of the Far East, were the URs of Grodekovo and Poltavka, respectively opposite the Japanese fortifications at Suifenho and Tungning. This was only natural since it was in this area that the Soviets expected the main body of the Japanese Army to attack.

The Dauriya UR, located close to the border in the northwest, formed the first defense line in the Trans-Baikal, and the Borzya UR, somewhat to the rear of the border, the second defense line. The latter, however, had been constructed much earlier than the former. The purpose of the Soviets in constructing two defense lines in the Trans-Baikal was never clarified. The Japanese Army General Staff presumed, however, that the Borzya line, constructed in 1932, offered a natural resistance line along the Borzya River that would be more effective for the defense of the Karymskoe area, key position on the Trans-Siberian, than would be the frontier. The construction of the Dauriya positions along the frontier, begun in 1939 following the completion of the Borzya-Tamsag Railroad, was believed to have been prompted by the reorientation of positions made possible by the railroad. The General Staff presumed that the missions of the Dauriya UR were 1) to defend the frontier, 2) to shield the Borzya railroad junction, and 3) to cover the strategic deployment of Trans-Baikal forces.

Discussion of Fortified Zones or URs

It may be said that the URs were effective military installations in the right places at the right time. They have become obsolete, however, by the wartime and post-war development of air lines of communication and of the use of paratroopers.

These fortified zones were designed as defenses against ground combat forces, completely dependent upon ground supply units. Hence, combat elements would first have to destroy the tochkas in order to get control of the roads to permit supply elements free access thereto.

There were few operational roads across the frontier, and the Soviets capitalized on this fact by establishing the fortified zones near all roads. The URs were conceived as limiting an invader's freedom of movement by effectively commanding all roads and adjacent areas, and indeed compelling him to make a costly frontal attack and to expend strength, materiel, and time in doing so. In this respect, the URs had a sufficient raison d'etre.

There is no room to doubt the initially defensive nature of the URs. The character of the URs changed, however, when the Soviets were able to step up war preparations and reinforce the border areas. With the adoption of an offensive operational policy, the Soviet's reliance upon the URs as defensive installations decreased. The URs began to be considered as springboards for offensive action against Manchuria. Proof of this can be found in the construction

of the Dauriya positions in front of the Borzya positions in the Trans-Baikal in 1939, and also in the fact that when the unit in charge of defending the UR in the vicinity of Poltavka was pulled back in 1940, it was reorganized into the 105th Infantry Division, apparently for future use in offensive operations in this vicinity.

As regards the tochkas, or pillboxes, they were simpler to construct and less expensive than fortresses. Their disadvantages were 1) they were excellent targets, 2) lacking connecting underground trenches they were likely to become isolated, and 3) with inadequate billeting and storage facilities, their fighting power would inevitably diminish with the passage of time.

It may be concluded that the fortified zones have become obsolete as defense installations, especially in view of the development of flamethrowers, and the tactical use of atomic weapons.

CHAPTER IX

Comments on Significant Aspects of Soviet Operations in Manchuria in 1945

Comments on Soviet Policy Changes and Troop Concentration in FER

The war policy adopted by the USSR in June 1941 was, first, to destroy the German forces in the west, and then to wait patiently for an opportunity to enter the war against Japan. It was only natural, therefore, that during the war against Germany, the Kremlin should take pains to avoid provoking Japan.

The avoidance of provocative acts continued until about the time of the American landing in the Philippines (October 1944), subsequent to which the tone of the Soviet press became anti-Japanese and Stalin made a speech openly denouncing Japan as an aggressor nation for the first time since the start of the Pacific War. As already mentioned, this denunciation highlighted the changed Soviet attitude toward Japan. It also marked the beginning of the Kremlin's preparations for entry into war against Japan.

The redeployment of troops begun towards the end of February 1945 to reconstitute Far East Soviet strength increased in volume month by month, reaching a peak in May and June when a daily average of about ten troop trains and about five munition trains passed over the Trans-Siberian's rails. Beginning in about the middle of July, the transportation of troops began to dwindle somewhat, while the

movement of antiaircraft guns and aircraft was accelerated.

Towards the end of April 1945, the Intelligence Section of the Japanese Army General Staff estimated that Soviet strength in the Far East had increased since January by 100,000 men, 1,800 aircraft and 300 tanks. At the same time, based on the volume of traffic moving along the Trans-Siberian, it made a projected estimate that this strength would be built up to the following levels:[25]

Number of / Period	End of April	End of May	End of June	End of July
Troops	850,000	1,050,000	1,300,000	1,600,000
Aircraft	3,500	4,800	5,600	6,500
Tanks	1,300	2,000	3,000	4,500

To what extent each area of the Far East was being reinforced by this strength, neither Kwantung Army's intelligence section nor the General Staff's intelligence section could ascertain. The only reinforcements that the Kwantung Army could confirm were those in the Grodekovo and Poltavka sectors opposite the eastern front, although

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25. These figures were never confirmed. They compare favorably, however, with Soviet projections. On 17 October 1944, the Soviet Union presented the U.S. with a list of supplies needed for Far East operations. This list was calculated on the requirements of a force of 1,500,000 men, 3,000 tanks, 75,000 motor vehicles, and 5,000 airplanes. Deliveries were to be completed by 30 June 1945. J.R. Deane in op. cit., p 248.

the extent of even these reinforcements could not be confirmed. In retrospect, this detected build-up may have been a ruse to draw Kwantung Army's attention to the eastern front.

The reconstitution of Soviet strength around the perimeter of Manchuria was accompanied by an increase in intelligence activities of the Soviet Army. The number of spies entering Manchuria rose sharply; incidents were frequently reported wherein Japanese and Manchurian lookouts were kidnapped by Soviet soldiers in the border areas. Thus, while Kwantung Army intelligence failed to ascertain much data regarding the Soviet Army, the Soviet Army was able to learn of Kwantung Army moves clearly and in full detail.

Comments on Soviet Motives and Objectives in Entering the War Against Japan

The operations of the Soviet Far East forces in Manchuria and Korea during August 1945 may be regarded as a sort of "political" expedition, and for this reason the following pages will deal occasionally with other than purely strategical matters. Actual hostilities lasted only 10-odd days and, although fierce local battles were fought, no major engagement worth mentioning from a strategical point of view took place.

The motives stated in the Soviet declaration of war against Japan were at variance with the conduct of Soviet operations and were inconsistent with Stalin's statement at the time of Japan's surrender. The declaration of war stated that "the Allies have addressed the

Government of the Soviet Union asking it to join in the war against the Japanese aggressors and in this way to shorten the war's duration ... True to its duty toward the Allies, the Soviet Government accepted the proposal of the Allies."[26] Hence, the motives ostensibly were 1) to shorten the war, and 2) to fulfill a duty to the Allies. An analysis of Soviet public statements and of military actions of the Soviet Army reveals somewhat different motives, and furthermore reveals clear-cut political objectives.

In a speech delivered on 2 September 1945, the day the surrender instrument was signed, Stalin revealed that revenge was one of the motives that prompted the Kremlin to attack Japan. After referring to the Russian defeat in the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-05, and to Japanese intervention in Far Eastern Russia during the early stages of the Revolution, as well as to border incidents of 1938 and 1939, Stalin declared: "For forty years we, the men of the older generation, have waited for this day. And now this day has come."[27]

The Soviets did not in fact seek an early end to the war. Japanese Imperial General Headquarters issued a cease-fire order to

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26. This quotation, like other quotations used in this study, was used by D.J. Dallin in op. cit.

27. The author might more appropriately have cited the terms of the Yalta agreement signed by Stalin on 11 February 1945, (prior to the invasion) to show that revenge was a motive. This document stated: "The former rights of Russia violated by the treacherous attack of Japan in 1904 shall be restored..."

the Commander in Chief of Kwantung Army on 16 August, whereas Soviet Army Headquarters did not issue a cease-fire order to its forces until 23 August, and on that same day dropped paratroops in the Dairen and Port Arthur areas.

In Outer Mongolia, furthermore, an element of the combined Soviet-Outer Mongolia army attacking in the vicinity of Kalgan, rejected a Japanese proposal for cease-fire negotiations, and continued to attack Kalgan until 23 August. These examples may be considered as strong evidence disproving the Soviet contention that it sought an early end to the war.[28]

Other Soviet actions reveal even more clearly the transparency of stated motives. Especially is this true when the objectives of the USSR in the Far East, as contained in the Yalta Agreement, are examined. Soviet objectives may be interpreted as follows: 1) to hand over Korea and Manchuria to the Chinese Communists, and thereby to facilitate the Communization of those areas and China, 2) to

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28. The Soviets may indeed have had no intention of shortening the war but the author's evidence is not conclusive. While it is true that Imperial General Headquarters on 16 August issued a blanket cessation order, this order did not apply to all military actions (e.g. airplane observation, troop movements). A comprehensive cessation order was not issued by Imperial General Headquarters until 22 August to become effective 25 August, two days after the Soviets concluded the campaign. (Army Department Order No. 1388, 22 August 45, IGH Army Orders, Volume III) Although no information can be obtained as to when Soviet Army Headquarters allowed local commanders to issue cease-fire orders, several Japanese accounts (See Monographs No. 154 and 155) of Soviet occupation of various parts of Manchuria prior to 23 August would indicate that local cease-fire orders had been issued much earlier.

supplement the inadequate resources of Far Eastern Russia with the resources of Manchuria, and 3) to strengthen the defense structure of Far Eastern Russia by wresting from Japan the Kurile Islands and the southern part of Sakhalin. Japanese observers noted that the Soviet Army, in carrying out operations in Manchuria, seemed to attach far greater importance to handing Manchuria over to the Chinese Communists than to the destroying the Japanese Army.

The missions of the Red Army as compared with its actions should also be examined in determining Soviet motives and objectives. The 1929 edition of the Red Army's Field Service Regulations stipulated that the mission of the Red Army was 1) to defend the county and 2) to support the struggle for liberation by the oppressed working people throughout the world. As revised in 1936, however, the Regulations limited the Red Army's mission to the defense of the country. The Red Army's invasion of Manchuria showed that it was not solely an army for the defense of the country, but essentially an armed political organization aiming at the Sovietization of the world.

Timing of Soviet Entry into War Against Japan

Pravda on 15 August, and Izvestia on 16 August emphasized that it was not the imminence of Japan's surrender that prompted the Soviet Union to enter the war against Japan, but contrariwise that it was the Soviet Union's entry that hastened the surrender of Japan. In its post-war propaganda policy the Soviet Union has consistently

emphasized, furthermore, that its participation in the war against Japan played a decisive role in bringing Japan to submission. However, this was not exactly the case.

The Red Army launched operations in Manchuria hastily and before it was fully prepared. At the time of the invasion, a great number of rocket guns and vehicles were still en route to the Far East via the Trans-Siberian Railroad; a large shipment of horses was at Irkutsk Station. The fact that large quantities of vehicles and horses were still en route indicated that the troop concentration, while possibly far advanced, had not yet been completed.

The haste of the Soviets entry into the war and their lack of complete preparations were also revealed by the fact that the mechanized group which entered Manchuria from Outer Mongolia developed a fuel shortage within three days of the commencement of operations. That the Soviet Army commenced the Manchurian invasion before military concentrations had been completed is borne out by Major General John R. Deane. In The Strange Alliance, he states that at the Potsdam Conference the Chief of Staff of the Red Army, General Alexi Antonov, in response to a question put to him by Admiral William D. Leahy to outline Russia's plans and intentions concerning the Japanese, stated that the Red Army would begin offensive operations in the "latter half of August."[29]

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29. According to General Deane's book, Antonov qualified this remark by adding that the exact date would depend on the conclusion

Why then, did the Soviet Union enter the war during the first half of August in such haste?[30] There is no telling what the truth was. But it may be presumed that the Kremlin, which previously had been requested by Japan to act as intermediary in peace negotiations with the United States, felt that the atom bombing by the United States forces would expedite the surrender of Japan.

Soviet Ground and Air Strength Used in Manchuria

The nucleus of the Soviet forces that were assembled for the invasion of Manchuria consisted of twenty infantry divisions in the

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of negotiations then being held with the Chinese (p 271). Deane also states (p 247) that at the Yalta Conference, five months earlier, Stalin, in reply to a direct question from U.S. Ambassador W. A. Harriman, said that the Soviet Union would take the offensive against Japan three months after Germany's defeat, provided... Dallin, in op. cit. (p 194) quotes the wording of the pledge signed at Yalta as stipulating that the USSR would enter the war against Japan "in two or three months after Germany has surrendered." In view of the documentation given in this last reference which the author used for political background in the preparation of this study, the editor feels that the author was not wholly objective in his presentation of these "other than purely strategical matters."

30. The theory that the USSR entered the war hastily is supported by the author's own evidence that the Soviets had massed only between 40 and 45 divisions in the Far East, whereas Stalin at Yalta had said he would need 60 divisions in the Far East before the Red Army could take the offensive there. (Deane, op. cit., p 247). However, even this is not wholly conclusive since Japan was in worse condition in August than in February and could be defeated by a smaller force in August than in February. Furthermore, in terms of effective fighting capacity the USSR exceeded Japan by far more than the threefold desiderata (see following page). Whatever the basis for her entry, it would appear safe to conclude that the USSR entered the war against Japan in her own self interest and at a time of her own choosing, her self interest being defined as including the gains to be derived from Japan's prostration and the prestige to be derived from living up to obligations.

first attack line. The number of divisions in the second and third lines could not be learned. The General Staff estimated, however, that between twenty and twenty five divisions had been transported east after the end of the war with Germany. This estimate was made by the Intelligence Bureau's section on Soviet affairs. It was arrived at by dividing the total number of trains used to transport troops eastward (between 800 and 1,000) by the number of trains (40) required to transport a single division. If this estimate was correct the Soviet had between forty and forty-five divisions for the invasion of Manchuria. Japan, on the other hand, had twenty-four divisions in Manchuria with a fighting effectiveness, however, of only eight, plus seven in Korea with a proportionate fighting effectiveness.

As to the number of Soviet aircraft in the Far East, the intelligence section of Second Air Army, which was attached to Kwantung Army, learned in early August that there were twenty-two air divisions. This meant a total of about 5,060 aircraft, since the estimated average number of aircraft in a Soviet air division at that time was 230. However, the actual operational strength of the Soviets--both as to ground and air units--was never confirmed.

As previously noted, Stalin at the Teheran Conference (November 1943) stated that Soviet forces in the Far East at that time would have to be increased threefold before offensive operations could be

undertaken. In view of the fact that at the time of that conference Soviet and Japanese strength in the Soviet-Manchuria area was about equal, (in terms of divisions about twenty each) it may be presumed that the Kremlin made strenuous efforts thereafter to triple its Far East strength.[31] However, whether the 3 to 1 strength planned by Stalin was ever actually assembled has never been confirmed. General Staff estimates of 40 to 45 divisions would indicate that it fell short of this ratio by 15 to 20 divisions. At this stage of World War II, however, the number of divisions an army had was not a satisfactory index to its strength. The 40 to 45 Soviet divisions with full fighting effectiveness as compared with the 31 Japanese divisions with only one-third effectiveness would seem to indicate that the ratio, if not reached numerically, was more than reached in terms of fighting effectiveness.

The concentration of numerically superior forces prior to the start of operations was one of the Soviet concepts in the use of military forces. Other concepts were to augment peacetime strength with secret peacetime mobilizations, to make thorough operational preparations in peacetime in order to take advantage of the slow start of the enemy, to annihilate the enemy, and to achieve a swift victory.[32] The lesson to be learned from the history of Soviet

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31. Whether this meant that the USSR had to increase its strength threefold independently of Japan's strength, or to three times Japan's strength is not clear. The author has apparently assumed the latter.

32. Stalin did not expect the Far East campaign to last more than from 2½ to 3 months. Deane, op. cit., p 264.

operations in Manchuria is that the Soviet Government because of its totalitarian nature is not under any legislative restraint as to the size of its military forces as are Democratic nations, and that its capacity for secret peacetime mobilization is beyond the imagination of other countries.

Soviet Strategic Concepts Regarding Manchuria

The Soviet operational plan for the Far East seemed to have four major objectives: 1) to disrupt the route of Japanese reinforcements from China to Manchuria, 2) to attract Kwantung Army's main strength to the east meanwhile advancing a high-speed group from the west, 3) to Bolshevize adjacent countries, 4) to have the Chinese Communist armies attack Manchuria jointly with the Red Army.

The China-to-Manchuria route for Japanese reinforcements was the only one available in 1945, since the U.S. air force was completely disrupting sea transportation between the homeland and Manchuria. Therefore, the Soviet Army attached importance to the disruption of the route from China, as was shown by Stalin's announced strategy to drive toward Peiping, testified to by Major General John R. Deane before the International Military Tribunal for the Far East on 5 June 1947, and referred to in an earlier chapter.[33] Furthermore, on 5 May 1945, the Chinese Communist Army high command established an operational plan for the invasion of

33. See Deane, op. cit., p 249.

Manchuria which was designed to sever lines between China and Manchuria. According to the plan, the main force of the Chinese Communist Army was to establish a base in the Jehol area by the end of September. Actually, operational activity was begun early in June. This operational plan must be regarded as an attempt to cut off the China-Manchuria route for the benefit of the Soviet Army. (See Below)

Soviet Command System

During the early stages of the German-Soviet War, the Soviet high command maintained three intermediate commands between itself and the seven area armies on the German front. These were the Northwestern Front Army, the Western Front Army, and the Southwestern Front Army. These intermediate commands were subsequently abolished, and Generalissimo Stalin assumed direct command of all area armies, including the three in the Far East, keeping a retinue of ten leading military commanders whom he dispatched as needed to the various fronts to direct operations.

In the operations against Japan, apparently because of the great distance between Moscow and the battle area, the system used in the earlier stages of operations against Germany was adopted. An intermediate command, the Far East General Army commanded by Marshal A.M. Vassilievsky, was established between Supreme Commander Stalin and the three Far East area armies. Marshal Vassilievsky's headquarters was established presumably as an outpost agency of the supreme command so that the top military commanders might

remain permanently at the battlefront.[34] Although his headquarters was subsequently revealed to be located at Khabarovsk, exactly when and where it was initially established has never been determined.

Under Marshal Vasilievsky command were the First and Second Far Eastern Area Armies, and the Trans-Baikal Area Army, as well as the air force. The Pacific Fleet based at Vladivostok was directly under Generalissimo Stalin. (See Chart No. 5)

The First and Second Far Eastern Area Armies had been created earlier by splitting the former Far Eastern Area Army into two area armies. Army General Alexander Purkayev, formerly in command of the Far Eastern Area Army, became commander of the Second Far Eastern Area Army. The other two army commanders, Marshal K.A. Meretskov and Marshal Rodion Malinovsky, were pulled out of the German-Soviet battlefield, the former to command the First Far Eastern Area Army, and the latter the Trans-Baikal area army. (See Sketch No. 4)

The boundaries of the Trans-Baikal Area Army and the First and Second Far East Area Armies could not be clearly ascertained. But judging from the fact that the Trans-Baikal Area Army, following the truce, was in charge of disarming Japanese forces and transporting prisoners of war in Hsinking and Mukden, it is almost certain that these cities were included in its zone of operational responsi-

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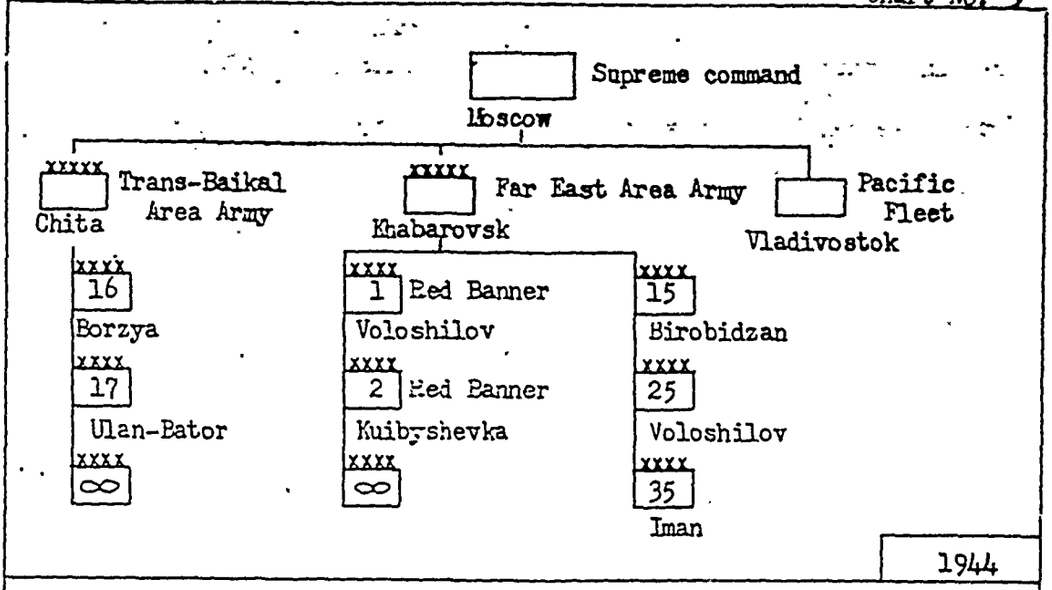
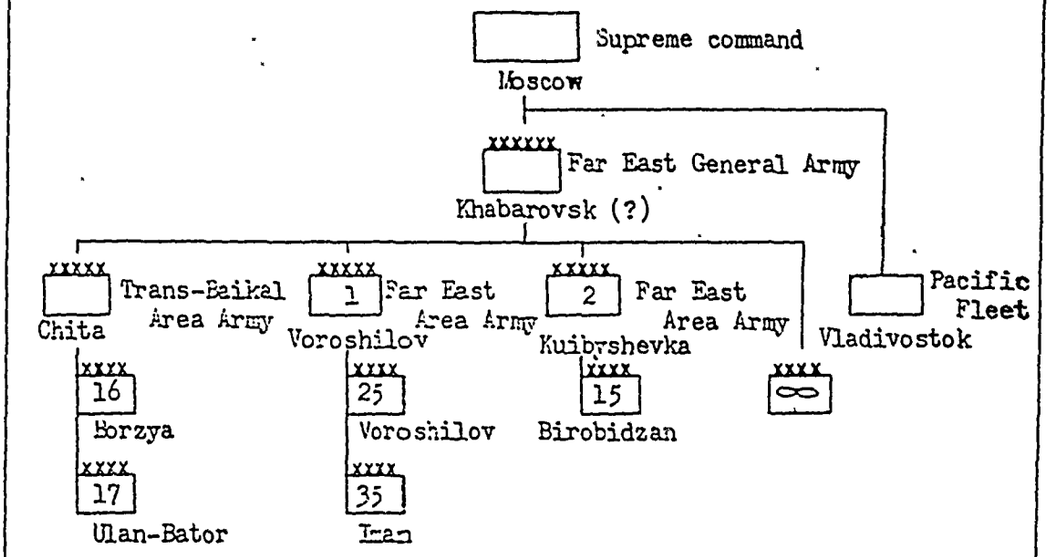
34. General Deane wrote in op. cit., (p 274) that Marshal Vasilievsky was given "complete control, without supervision from Moscow, of all Soviet operations in the Far East."

Organizational Chart of Major Commands
Soviet Far East Forces

Chart No. 5



1944



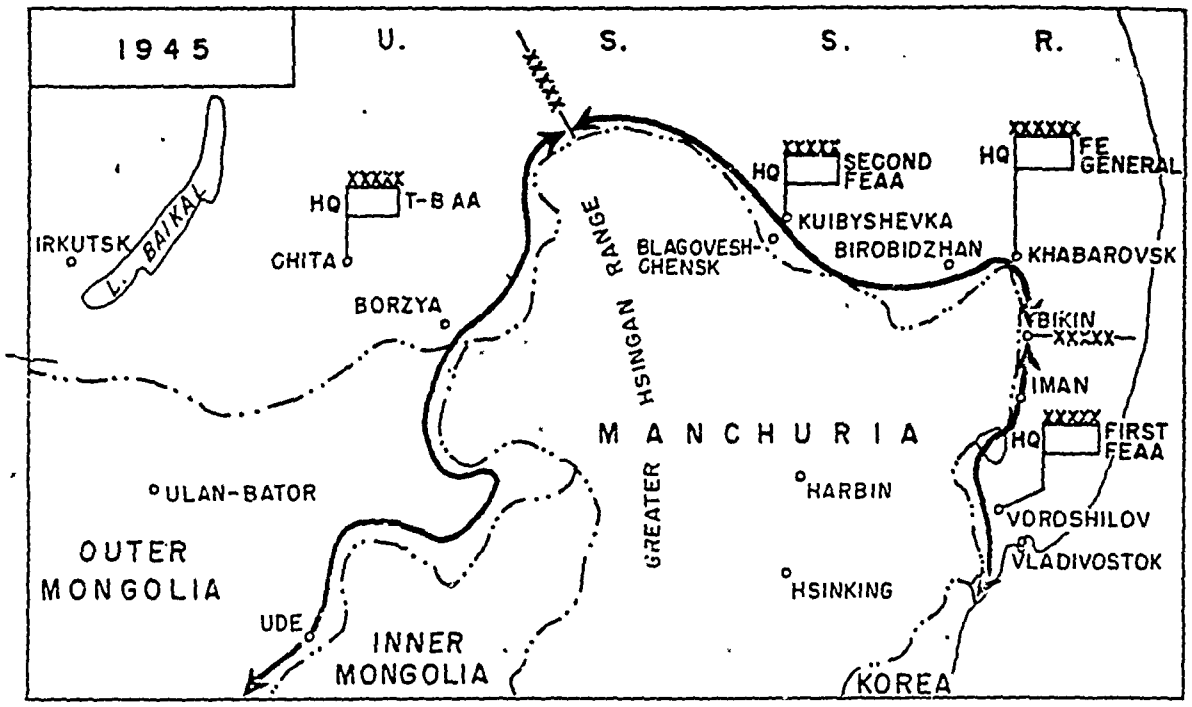
Commanders:

Marshal Vassilievsky, Far East General Army
Marshal Malinovsky, Trans-Baikal Area Army
Marshal Meretskov, Far East First Area Army
General Prukayev, Far East Second Area Army
General Zhegelev, Air Army

1945

ZONES. OF RESPONSIBILITY

SKETCH NO. 4



XXXXXX GENERAL ARMY

XXXXX AREA ARMY

XXXX ARMY OR DISTRICT ARMY

XXX CORPS

LEGEND: T-B DA ····TRANS-BAIKAL DISTRICT ARMY
T-B AA ····TRANS-BAIKAL AREA ARMY
FEAA ····FAR EAST AREA ARMY
RB ····RED BANNER

bility. (See Sketches No. 1, 2, and 3.)

The Soviet Far East Air Force was commanded by Air General Zhegelev, and its operations were under the overall direction of Air Marshal Novikov, head of the Soviet Air Force, who was attached to Marshal Vassilievsky's headquarters.

In studying the Soviet Army command structure, the Manchurian National Army to some extent and the Chinese Communist Army to a great extent had to be considered. The Soviet Union as a matter of practice made it a point to attempt to Bolshevize the armed forces of its neighboring countries in order to sow the seeds of Communism in that country. In Manchuria, these seeds fell upon fertile ground since much anti-Japanese feeling had existed among the Manchurian National Military forces ever since their founding. Many of the Manchurian military forces took sides with Soviet forces as soon as the Soviets launched the invasion of Manchuria.

That the Soviet Army expected the Chinese Communist Army to conduct operations against Manchuria so that Manchuria after its occupation might be placed under the control of Communist China was shown by the actions of the Chinese. On 11 August 1945, General Chu Teh hurriedly cabled the following operational order from Yenan to four Chinese Communist Army groups:[35]

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35. According to D. J. Dallin, in op. cit., the Soviet Government informed the Chinese Communist leadership that no Communist Army would be permitted in Manchuria, and sent a high ranking Soviet officer to Communist headquarters to announce this decision. [illegible] at

1. Lu Cheng-Tsao, a native of the Northeast, (i.e. Manchuria), will advance to the Mukden area with his force composed mainly of troops hailing from the Northwest.

2. Nieh Yung-Chin will organize a northward raiding army with the main strength (of his forces) in the Shansi-Chahar-Hopei Army District, and advance northward from Jehol with that army.

3. Chang Hsueh-Shih, in concert with Lu Cheng-Tsao's actions, will concentrate political forces among the Northeast people in the Northeast.

4. Ho Lung will move southward along the Fen River with the main body in the Northwestern Shansi Army District, and will occupy Taiyuan.

5. The units in the various army districts and sub-districts will capture the final Japanese positions in view of the emergency situation arising from the Soviet entry into the war against Japan.

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other negotiations he conducted there have not become known, but his instructions ... were complied with to the letter: no Chinese Communist army units, i.e., groups of armed and uniformed men, tried to penetrate into Soviet-occupied Manchuria. What did occur, however, was a tremendous movement of unarmed Communist 'civilians' into Manchuria from the west and south." Dallin adds that: "When the Communists arrived, unarmed, they were not issued weapons by the Soviet authorities. The Chinese Communists, however, knew what they were doing: they entered warehouses and opened arsenals, and quickly rearmed from Japanese stocks. Within a few weeks they had become a formidable force." (p. 249). Dallin apparently does not mean surplus Japanese stocks, since the Japanese were short of weapons, and their own troops had to use bamboo spears in some cases, but rather to arms collected after the Japanese capitulation. Dallin also states that three different groups of Chinese Communists entered Manchuria: 1) former Manchurian forces (of Marshal Chang Hsueh-liang) who had fled Manchuria after the Manchurian Incident, 2) parts of the former Fourth and Eighth Armies, and 3) "Chinese regulars and civilians" who had been organized on Soviet soil. This last group, which consisted of Chinese who also had fled Manchuria in the 1930s, "fanned out over the northern ... part of Manchuria ...; it was to play a primary role in the future of Manchuria." (p. 250)

6. The units will carry out "human-bullet" attacks when they run short of arms and ammunition.

Advancing Power of Soviet Forces

Each of the three Soviet area armies that invaded Manchuria advanced at a different pace. The motorized divisions that invaded from the eastern part of Outer Mongolia advanced toward central Manchuria for the first three days at a daily rate of about 100 kilometers without encountering any serious resistance. On the 12th, having run out of fuel, they halted temporarily.

The force that invaded eastern Manchuria, on the other hand, was impeded by local engagements in the frontier areas. Tank elements of this force reached the Mutanchiang plain, about 150 kilometers from the border, on the fifth day of the war. The slowest of all three thrusts was that from the north. The Soviet force penetrating from that direction was delayed in the opening phases of the invasion by the natural obstacle of the Amur River.

That the slow-down in the advance of the motorized divisions penetrating western Manchuria was attributable entirely to the fuel shortage cannot be doubted. The Kwantung Army intercepted uncoded messages of these motorized divisions requesting fuel supplies. Soviet forces generally enforced rigid discipline with regard to maintaining secrecy in communications. The breaking of this secrecy must be regarded as a drastic step showing concern over the fuel shortage. As regards the fuel shortage itself, it has never

been determined whether this resulted from inadequate transportation facilities or from insufficient quantities of fuel stored at the point from which operations were launched.

The Soviet rear supply capacity, because of its vital importance to the conduct of operations, was the subject of an annual study by the Japanese Army General Staff. Each year the Russian section of the Intelligence Division of the General Staff brought its study of this subject up to date. While the author cannot recall the concrete conclusions reached in these studies, he vividly remembers that the following points were always taken into consideration:

1. It is necessary for the Soviets to bring a great number of motor vehicles from the west, since facilities for logistical transportation are inadequate in Far Eastern Russia. (About 10,000 trucks were used in the Nomonhan Incident).

2. Since fuel consumption increases in proportion to the number of vehicles used and the lengthening lines, the more trucks used and the longer the lines, the more the fuel problem will be aggravated in Far Eastern Russia, known for its small production of fuel.

3. Inadequate transportation facilities and the scarcity of fuel probably place a heavy restraint upon the advance of Soviet forces in the Far East. For this reason, they will endeavor to make maximum use of railways and waterways in Manchuria.

The problems of fuel and transportation were regarded as restraints which would impede Soviet operations in the Far East. However, during actual operations, the period of hostilities was so short that it seemed that the fighting ended before the factors restraining the

rear supply became very apparent. However, that some groups were compelled to discontinue their advance temporarily because of the fuel shortage must be acknowledged as a historical fact.

If economic self-sufficiency in Far Eastern Russia remains inadequate in the future and if the Trans-Siberian continues to be the only line connecting FER with the Ural area, the most effective methods of weakening the advancing power of the Soviets in the Far East would seem to be to cut the Trans-Siberian, prevent the use of battlefield railroads, obstruct logistical transport facilities, and destroy all fuel dumps. It would not be necessarily difficult to accomplish these tasks, provided air superiority is seized. If air control is secured by the foe, Far Eastern Russia as an operational base would become very insecure.

Method of Warfare

The method of warfare employed by the Soviets in Manchuria seemed to be exactly the same as that employed by them in the German-Soviet battlefield: the coordinated use of infantry, tanks, and aircraft to destroy enemy forces. Inasmuch as the Soviet Army has a strong tendency to standardize warfare methods, it seems only natural that the Soviets should employ identical fighting methods in two different battlefields. However, there was a considerable difference in the terrain of the two battlefields. The Manchurian battlefield had a far less developed transportation network than the German-Soviet battlefields; it also had jungles, deserts, and a greater number of

swamps and uninhabited areas. Failure of the Soviets to make allowances for this difference of terrain may account for the fuel shortage that obstructed the advance of the motorized divisions. In the battlefield of the German-Soviet War, a large force fought on a wide front which was ill-defined at many points. In the Manchurian battlefield, a force of one or two divisions advanced along main arteries and fought local battles in the vicinity of the roads.

Although not directly related to methods of warfare, the quality of the Soviet soldier is worthy of comment. Most of the officers and men of the Kwantung Army were amazed at the Soviet soldier's great capacity to penetrate terrain obstacles and his strong perseverance. Two examples can be cited here: in eastern Manchuria, a powerful Soviet force managed to advance to the rear of Japanese forces by penetrating a jungle zone; in western Manchuria, it was noted that the exposed skin of nearly all the Soviet soldiers who had advanced from the eastern part of Outer Mongolia bore marks of insect bites. These two examples attest to the fact that the Soviet soldier is fully capable of fighting even in thinly populated and undeveloped areas with poor transportation facilities, such as in Manchuria, and of overcoming various natural obstacles.