

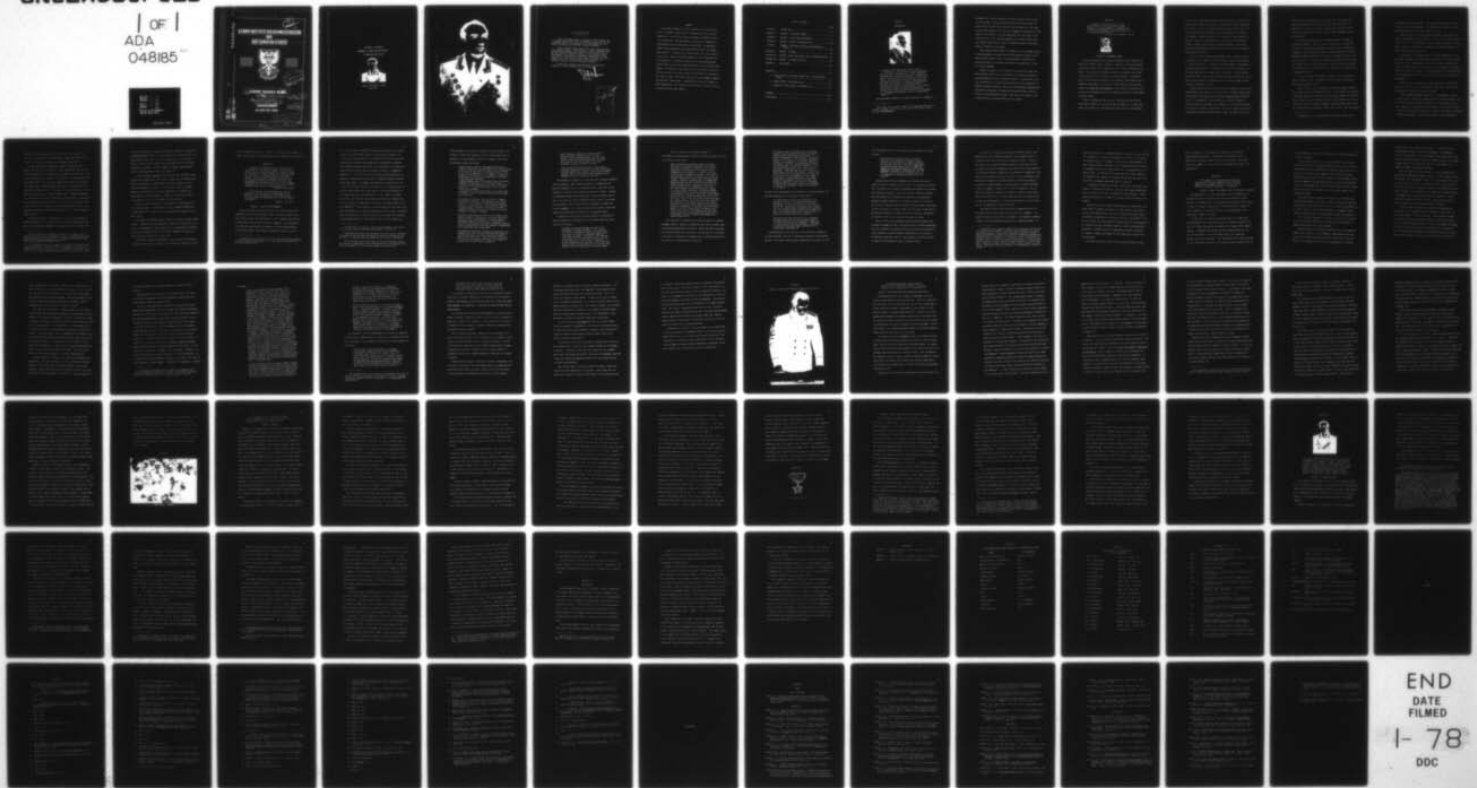
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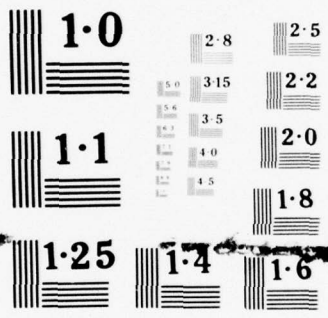
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11 May 77

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A Dimming Red Star.

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VICTOR G. KULIKOV  
MARSHAL OF THE SOVIET UNION:  
A Dimming Red Star?



Major Richard M. Naab  
May 1977

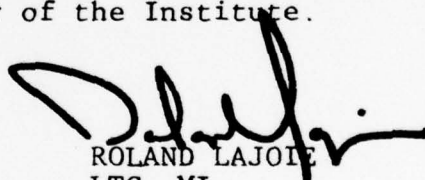


FOREWORD

This research project represents fulfillment of a student requirement for successful completion of the overseas phase of training of the Department of the Army's Foreign Area Officer Program (Russian).

Only unclassified sources are used in producing the research paper. The opinions, value judgments and conclusions expressed are those of the author and in no way reflect official policy of the United States Government; Department of Defense; Department of the Army; Office of the Assistant Chief of Staff of Intelligence; or the United States Army Institute for Advanced Russian and East European Studies.

Interested readers are invited to send their comments to the Commander of the Institute.



ROLAND LAJOIE  
LTC, MI  
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#### SUMMARY

This paper examines the career of Marshal of the Soviet Union Victor G. Kulikov, former Chief of the General Staff of the Soviet Armed Forces. He has been recently reassigned to command the forces of the Warsaw Pact. Marshal Kulikov at the age of 55 represents a new generation in the Soviet military leadership. His generation, unlike their predecessors, participated in World War II as company grade officers. In spite of his relative youth, much of his writing on doctrine is based on the Soviet experience in the "Great War for the Fatherland." In addition to being a well-trained professional military officer he is also a skillful politician and articulate public speaker. He achieved an unprecedented rise from relative obscurity in the early sixties to the top echelon of Soviet military in a period of less than six years. The future course of his career appears somewhat uncertain now. Nevertheless, the importance of Victor G. Kulikov remains undiminished. His voice will still be heard in the top circles of the Soviet military policy makers.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
SECTION I INTRODUCTION.....	1
SECTION II KULIKOV - A BIOGRAPHIC SKETCH.....	3
SECTION III KULIKOV - A CARD-CARRYING COMMUNIST.....	9
SECTION IV KULIKOV - CHIEF OF THE GENERAL STAFF.....	18
SECTION V KULIKOV - ON MILITARY DOCTRINE, ORGANIZATION AND TACTICS.....	28
SECTION VI KULIKOV - THE MAN.....	36
SECTION VII KULIKOV - ONE OF THE ELITE IN THE "CLASSLESS SOCIETY"....	42
SECTION VIII KULIKOV - A DIMMING RED STAR?.....	47
SECTION IX CONCLUSIONS.....	54
APPENDICES.....	57
A. SOVIET ARMY MILITARY RANKS COMPARED TO U.S. ARMY MILITARY RANKS.....	58
B. FORMER CHIEFS OF THE GENERAL STAFF.....	59
C. CHRONICLE OF MAJOR EVENTS IN KULIKOV'S LIFE.....	60
FOOTNOTES.....	62
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	69



SECTION I

INTRODUCTION



16 September 1962; Radio Volga via East Berlin:

"Comrades! A few days ago the Soviet Government asked the USSR defense minister, and the command of the Soviet Army, to take all measures to maintain the highest level possible combat readiness of our armed forces. This measure was caused by the new and impertinent (provocations) of the American imperialists and their true servants, the Pentagon military. ... the militarily minded reactionary powers of the United States have recently increased their provocative actions, which could lead the world into the catastrophe of a worldwide war involving the use of thermonuclear weapons."\*

Thus spoke Major General of the Soviet Army Victor G. Kulikov in

---

\*This speech was recorded in Berlin on 16 September 1962 and subsequently recorded in the first edition of the East German journal For You, Comrade Sergeant.

September 1962. He was addressing the Group of Soviet Forces Germany over Radio Volga. The speech was delivered when tension between the United States and the Soviet Union was at an all time high. His words provide a good sample of the tone of the propaganda used during this epic period of the Cold War. But, more importantly for this study, it provides one of the first recorded examples of the rhetoric used by the then rapidly rising red star, Victor G. Kulikov, Marshal of the Soviet Union, the subject of this report.

This research effort began as a biography and as a learning vehicle. As work progressed, it became clear that many important aspects of the Soviet military were not clear. Certain phenomena, definitions and relations peculiar to the Soviet system had to be understood. In this way the work expanded.

Because the purpose of the report was to discover more about the Soviet military machine and its leadership, it necessarily expanded to include peripheral areas not originally intended. In writing the final copy a decision had to be made regarding how much of the tangential information should be included. Some of this non-essential information was retained for the purpose of helping others understand facets that are unique to the Soviet military system. Other data were excised in order to keep the focus on Marshal Kulikov and his thoughts.

## SECTION II

"Commanders need to possess the right qualifications to be able to make the right decisions...in modern warfare, a commander must be able to make monumental decisions quickly and carry them out persistently."<sup>1</sup>

Lt. Gen. V. G. Kulikov - Feb. 67



V. G. KULIKOV

### KULIKOV - A BIOGRAPHIC SKETCH

This section presents the available biographic data on Kulikov from his birth to present times. As might be suspected, the Soviets maintain rather tight secrecy on the background of their current leadership in all fields. They reveal only abridged versions of biographies barely sufficient for entry in an encyclopedia in the Western world. Consequently, much of the information presented here was gleaned from European sources; primarily, West German. This was then checked against that information found in the Great Soviet Encyclopedia. Other pieces of information were extracted from newspaper articles and speeches written by or about Kulikov during his career.

Victor G. Kulikov was born on July 5, 1921 near the city of Orel, Kursk oblast (region) in the Russian Federated Republic. As Soviet biographers are prone to do, they point with pride to the fact that Kulikov

was the son of a poor peasant farming family.<sup>2</sup> This fact is significant. Growing up on a farm for a young man at this period of Soviet development was difficult. The rural farming family had suffered a great deal. The Russian Civil War was just ending and the great famine of the twenties was beginning. Kulikov was seven years old when the countryside had to endure the horrors of collectivization. The burden of this Stalinist economic innovation fell heavily on the peasant/farmer. All of these events influenced Kulikov's decision early in life to select the military profession as his career.

At the age of 18, having attended middle school, he decided to give the military a try. Military life in the Soviet Union at this time was no utopia either; but, to a young man coming from Kulikov's environment it afforded some opportunity for education and enrichment that would not be generally available to his generation of farm youths. In 1939, Kulikov entered the Army. There is some confusion about his early military career. Soviet sources indicate that Kulikov entered a military academy in 1939 and that he graduated in 1941.<sup>3</sup>

German sources indicate he entered school in Grozny in 1939 and then, sometime later that same year or in early 1940, he became a combat leader of tank units by participating in the Winter Campaign against Finland in 1939-40.<sup>4</sup> Subsequently, he was involved in the Soviet occupation of Estonia and shortly thereafter, was assigned to a unit which participated in the Soviet occupation of Bessarabia. In 1941, he fought for the first time against the Nazis during the seige of Kiev. He often tells a story

about the battle for Kiev when he and his tank crew, after having abandoned their destroyed tank, came under a heavy Nazi bombardment. The shelling was so intense that he had to "dig-in" with the spoon from his mess kit and in this way, he claims to have escaped becoming a prisoner of the Germans.<sup>5</sup>

In the winter of 1941, and in the following spring, he fought in the battle for Moscow. Later, in 1942, he became part of an elite 200 man unit of the Red Army that managed to escape from the surrounded city of Kharkov. (This operation was under the overall supervision of Marshal Timoshenko. Nikita Khrushchev was a member of Timoshenko's military council at that time.) Following this, Kulikov was decorated for his actions and received the rank of Senior Lieutenant "while 240,000 of his comrades who stayed behind were taken prisoner and considered by the leadership as a 'despicable horde.'"<sup>6</sup>

It was at this time that Kulikov was convinced by his superiors to join the Communist Party. He appeared to have a bright future ahead of him and this proved to be true.

Later in the war, he participated in the battle at Velikye Luki and then became active in a Reconnaissance unit. In this capacity he returned to Kharkov, then Rostov and Odessa before they were retaken by the Soviets. After the Soviet counter offensive started, he found himself in the cities of Warsaw, Bucharest, Vienna and Budapest; again long before these cities were "liberated" by the Red Army.<sup>7</sup> Soviet sources do not cover this portion

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\*See Appendix A for a comparison of US and Soviet Military Ranks.

of Kulikov's career in any detail. The operations described here appear to be of a very secretive nature. It is possible he belonged to a highly sensitive diversion or infiltration unit at the time.

During the course of the war, Kulikov commanded a tank platoon and later a tank company. He also served as chief of staff of a tank battalion; chief of staff of a tank brigade; and then, as deputy commander of a regiment.<sup>8</sup> Service in these units took place on the Southwest Kalinskii, 1st Baltic and 2nd Belorussian fronts.<sup>9</sup>

At one point in his wartime career, he served in Murmansk as a tank specialist responsible for supervising the arrival of U.S. Arms and equipment that was part of American aid effort to the Soviets during the war. And, in the fall of 1944, at the age of 23, he was promoted to Lieutenant Colonel and served as a member of a Soviet delegation of the United Nations. In the concluding phases of the war, he served in Stettin, Neubrandenburg and Wismar.<sup>10</sup>

After the war his career seems to have slowed down. Some say this was due to the fact that he did not devote enough time to party work.<sup>11</sup> Nevertheless, his military schooling continued.

In 1953, Kulikov graduated from the M. V. Frunze Military Academy. He was then sent to Irkutsk to command the 29th Tank-Strike Division. The local party organization from this Siberian city sent Kulikov as one of their delegates to the famous 20th Party Congress held in Moscow in 1956. It is said that Kulikov made some critical remarks concerning the liquidation of Marshal Tuchashevski. They were made openly in front of Khrushchev.

The party chief was angered by the statements and it is reported that this is the reason Kulikov's ascending career slowed until Khrushchev was ousted.<sup>12\*</sup> However, his professional development moved forward.

In 1958 he entered the Voroshilov Academy of the General Staff in Moscow. Entrance into this academy is highly competitive. Only the best of the Soviet Officers are selected after a rigorous series of tests. One of his classmates at this time was N. V. Ogarkov, his future assistant on the General Staff,<sup>\*\*</sup> and the man who replaced him in 1956 as the Chief of the General Staff. Kulikov graduated with honors. Undoubtedly his academic record helped his career. The topic of his dissertation was: "The High Cost and Losses in an Extended Defensive War." Kulikov was praised for the work which advocated an offensively oriented defense. After graduation, Kulikov was assigned to posts in the Kiev, the Far Eastern, Transbaikal, Turkestan, Transcaucasian, and Leningrad Military Districts. But, promotions came slowly until Khrushchev's ouster.<sup>14</sup> Then, they came in rapid succession.

He received his first star sometime in 1962. This was preceded by various assignments in the Leningrad Military District including the command of a Tank Division somewhere in the northern part of the District.<sup>15</sup>

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\*The exact date of his promotion to General is not known. But, it appears that he could have been promoted as early as 1962 while Khrushchev was still in power. He is referred to as a general in 1962 in the book: History of the Leningrad Military District.<sup>13</sup>

\*\*N. V. Ogarkov was the First Deputy to the Chief of the General Staff from 1968 until 1974. From 1974 until his reassignment as Chief of the General Staff he served as an Assistant to the Minister of Defense. He was one of the chief Soviet negotiators during the first series of SALT talks.

In 1965 he was promoted to Lieutenant General and assigned as commander of the Murmansk Military District. It was while he was in this position that people began to take notice of this fast-rising star. He was invited to Estonia in June of 1965 to speak at the 25th anniversary of the Estonian annexation to the USSR. "All who attended the ceremony were impressed with the skillful political tone of his speech."<sup>16</sup>

In 1966-67 Kulikov commanded a large combined arms operation in East Germany that included most of the Soviet strategic forces stationed there. Later he was promoted to Colonel General and given command of the all-important Kiev Military District. In this capacity he was succeeding Marshal Ivan Yakubovski for the first time.<sup>17</sup> He was to follow in the famous Marshal's footsteps again, as commander of the Group of Soviet Forces-Germany, and then, as commander of the Warsaw Pact.

During the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia, the Kiev Military District provided some of the ground units and the airborne division that occupied Prague.<sup>18</sup> His units must have performed well because his star kept rising.

In December 1969 Kulikov assumed command of the Group of Soviet Forces-Germany. In March 1970 he was promoted to General of the Army and in the Fall of 71 (September 22) he was announced as the replacement for Zakharov as Chief of the General Staff.<sup>19</sup> His latest assignment as Chief of the Warsaw Pact was announced on 8 January 1977.

In addition to having been wounded six times during the war, Marshal Kulikov has been awarded: 3 Orders of the Red Banner, 2 Orders of the War



for the Fatherland First Class, an Order of the Red Star and an Order of Lenin. He also wears seven liberation medals and numerous other ribbons.<sup>20</sup>

### SECTION III

"Sometimes the question arises: Why does a man join the Party? The answer is simple. The one way to become a success in any profession is through the Party. It is possible to become a general in a technical field, e.g. as a doctor or scientist without being a Party member. But if you want to command even a platoon or be a military attache, you must join the Party. The same applies in the civilian sector in terms of leadership positions. If you are the director of the smallest enterprise, you have to be a party member."<sup>21</sup>

Abdurakman Avtorkhanov\*

"The leadership of the Communist Party over the Armed Forces and the constant strengthening of the influence of party organization in the Army and Navy was and still is the fundamental base of Soviet military development."<sup>22</sup>

Kulikov Nov. 1974

### KULIKOV - A CARD-CARRYING COMMUNIST

Victor G. Kulikov was inspired early in his career and joined the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in 1942. Had he not joined at this time, several things could have happened. First, judging from the words of Avtorkhanov, he would never have been a commander. But there would have been other opportunities for Kulikov to join his fellow military officers/party members whose numbers have grown constantly since the

---

\*Avtorkhanov is an instructor at the U.S. Army Institute For Advanced Russian and East European Studies. He is recognized as an authority on the Soviet Communist Party.

war.\* Had his career followed a technical pattern instead of a command course, as he reached higher levels, he would have been coopted into the party. Or his attendance at certain military institutes would have brought with it automatic party membership. Additionally, graduation from a military academy often results in the placement of the graduate on a party list of officers who are considered eligible for nomenklatura positions.\*\* It is also true that certain high level positions in the military or bureaucracy also carry with it seemingly parallel positions within party ranks. For example, when Kulikov was assigned to the job as Chief of the General Staff of the Armed Forces, in September 1971, he had just become (April 1971) a full member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. In this respect, he joined many other of his comrades, senior military officers, who through a process of cooptation or nomenklatura have reached the highest levels of the party apparatus.\*\*\* The significance of their presence in this inner circle will be discussed in the concluding paragraphs of this section. But before going to that analysis, it will be useful to look at some of the speeches and writings of Kulikov for their political slant. As was noted in his

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\*In 1958, 86% of the officer corps were party members. This number grew to 90% in 1962 and continues at that level to this day.<sup>24</sup>

\*\*Nomenklatura positions are assignments that are strictly controlled by the party. The party has established and maintains a listing of the position. It alone nominates the people who are to occupy these jobs.<sup>23</sup>

\*\*\*For the Twenty-fifth Party Congress, 35% senior military officers were elected to membership in the Central Committee of the Communist Party. Thirty full members and five candidate members were selected.<sup>25</sup>

short biography, he is known as a skillful orator and writer. On November 7, 1968, while holding the rank of Colonel General and as Commander of the Kiev Military District, he spoke at the October Revolutionary anniversary parade:

Comrade soldiers, sailors, noncommissioned officers, officers and generals, working people of the Soviet Ukraine and of the hero city Kiev! On behalf and at the behest of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Ukraine and the Government of the Republic, I greet and congratulate you on the 51st anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution.

...Soviet people, led by the Communist Party successfully implement the decisions of the 23rd CPSU Congress...

...The successful completion of the flight of the spaceship Soyuz -3 ...was an outstanding success of Soviet science and technology.

...together with the working people of the Soviet Union, the peoples of other socialist countries are also building a new life...

We celebrate the October fete this year in a complex international situation. The imperialists are taking to overt acts of violence and brigandage and creating a threat of a new world war. They intensify subversive activities against socialist countries and the world communist movement, and strive to strangle the national independence struggle of peoples.

The Soviet people vigilantly watch the intrigues of the enemies of peace and socialism. Our party, our workers' class, peasantry, intelligentsia, all Soviet people unanimously support and approve the foreign policy of the CPSU Central Committee and Soviet Government directed toward strengthening the socialist community, safeguarding and strengthening peace among people.

Considering the aggressive intrigues of imperialism, the Communist Party and the Soviet Government are taking all the necessary steps to further increase the military might of our armed forces. Today our army and navy have all they need to safeguard efficiently the conquest of October and the great cause of communism.

Soviet soldiers, formed by the immortal ideas of Marxism-Leninism, honorably carry out their patriotic and international duty. They are always ready to smash any aggressor whatsoever who would dare reach for the sacred borders of our great motherland and other socialist countries.

Long live the 51st anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution! Long live the heroic Soviet people and their valiant armed forces! Long live the Leninist Communist Party of the Soviet Union, the inspirer and organizer of all our victories! Hurrah!<sup>26</sup>

The foregoing is typical of the style and tenor of Marshal Kulikov's political speeches. More accurately speaking, it exemplifies the political language that has to be present in every speech and article delivered or written by Soviet leaders, military or civilian. Perhaps, one additional example will be sufficient to give the reader a better idea of the political aspects contained in every article. The following are excerpts from an article written by Kulikov in the May 1976 issue of Communist. It is quoted here to show the reader a high level military man considering his profession in a political light.

He begins the article with the often repeated cry regarding the political purpose of the Armed Forces of the Soviet Union and the essence of its doctrine:

The Armed Forces are defending the cause of the revolution, socialism, and peace. At no time in the history of mankind has there ever been an armed force that has served such genuinely humane and noble aims and ideals. The essence of all our military doctrine can be summed up in the fact that the Soviet Union, by its very nature, is opposed to foreign plundering and unjust wars. The Soviet Union does not intend to attack anyone, nor do we need war. However, what has been gained by the Soviet people

will be reliably and decisively defended...<sup>27</sup>

He continues by relating Soviet intention and their anticipated reaction to the threat as they see it:

While recognizing the positive changes that have been made in international relations, the Communist Party must nevertheless consider the fact that the situation in certain parts of the world is still complicated and contradictory. There are forces in the world that are opposed to detente. They reject the principles of peaceful coexistence as a basis for relations between states with their different social systems. Although the opportunities for imperialist aggression have now been considerably curtailed its nature remains the same. One must realize that the military preparations of imperialist states have not been curtailed, instead their military budgets are being annually increased. The military budget of the United States has reached immense proportions. The Pentagon was allocated a record sum in the Nation's history of more than 100 billion dollars for the current fiscal year. Next year it will receive more than 112 billion dollars. In the last five years the military spending of NATO member countries has doubled. Extensive resources are being directed toward further qualitative development of strategic and conventional weapons. The NATO General Staff, alleging a fictitious "Soviet Threat" are working out new long-term military programs, actively modernizing their armies, and equipping them with sophisticated weapons and combat technology.<sup>28</sup>

This reads like the standard line turned out daily by the Soviet propaganda machine. Kulikov is spewing out here like an ordinary agit-prop (agitation/propaganda) functionary. Having described the purpose of the Soviet military and the threat as they perceive it, he proceeds to what must be considered the obligatory part of any major article in any field i.e. the leading role of the party:

The Communist party, proceeding from the Leninist command to reliably defend the gains of socialism, exercises direct leadership in all spheres of military development, constantly holds the country's defense at the center of its attention, vigilantly follows the development of the military-political situation in the world, and appropriately uncovers the possible sources of military conflicts. A subject of particular concern to the Party and the government - something which was stressed with renewed vigor at the 25th CPSU Congress - is that the Soviet Armed Forces are provided with whatever they need to carry out the responsible tasks of being the guardian of the peaceful labor of the Soviet people and the bulwark of peace in general...The defensive capability of our country is constantly increasing with the growing economy and development of science and technology. Thanks to the concern of the CPSU.<sup>29</sup>

The author then encapsulates for his audience in a few key phrases, the political significance of the results of World War II:

In celebrating the thirty-first anniversary since the rout of fascism - that monstrous offspring of imperialism - we note with pride that this great victory was a witness to the invincibility of socialism and its unquestionable superiority over imperialism. The decisive battles of World War II which took place on the Soviet-German front confirmed that no force in the world can destroy socialism...

The victory over fascism proved to be a worldwide historical event which has had a profound impact on the entire course of world development. Socialism, as a new social system, was permanently established in the world arena and became a leading force of international development.<sup>30</sup>

Kulikov includes in the last part of the article that element of the Soviet military role that is perhaps most important to the internal politics of the Soviet Union and least appreciated in the West i.e. the

role the military plays in the training and indoctrination of Soviet citizens:

Great attention should be paid to the moral-political and psychological training of Soviet soldiers and to perfecting the forms and methods of party-political work. The Soviet Armed Forces have been and will continue to be a school for courage for ideological conviction, and for high vigilance on the part of all personnel. All this dictates the need for more thorough research and the preparation of appropriate guidance for the forces.<sup>31</sup>

Having read all these and numerous other similar articles and speeches written by Kulikov, one can arrive at the erroneous conclusion that the military and the policy makers/political leaders in the Soviet Union speak with one voice. All of the articles contain the typical political expressions and slogans that one finds in any agitation/propaganda pamphlet published by the political organs of the country. But, by their continuous efforts to keep the military under the absolute control of the party, the Soviets admit that they have not been able to politically monopolize the thoughts of all the citizenry, particularly the military. This is not to say that they have not tried.

Since the days of the revolution, Russian political leaders have attempted to preempt any real or potential threat of military domination. They have succeeded in establishing various institutions and methods of control designed to keep the military subordinated to the control of the political leadership. Most of these measures, in spite of efforts of military men like Marshal Zhukov, still exist today.

So, when it is said that the modern Soviet military leader, like Kulikov, has a lot of political influence, one must keep in mind the structure of the Soviet Army which has shaped his career. In spite of his lack of fear to speak out against policies he felt were incorrect, and despite his own party membership since 1942 and his current position in the Central Committee, Kulikov was not permitted to command any of his units in the true Western sense of the word. He was not allowed to command because throughout the Soviet Armed Forces there exist political controls that mitigate against the Soviet publicly acclaimed principle of unity of command. Decisions are not made by commanders, they are made by the Council of Defense or by military councils at those levels where the councils exist.\* At lower levels decisions are operative only if they have been approved by the political department or by the assistant to the commander for political affairs.

The military Councils were in existence throughout World War II. The Council had to agree to any orders issued by the commander. "Frequently there were difficulties and arguments. Our Regimental Commander ordered a six man intelligence patrol out on a dangerous mission. The

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The existence of a Council of Defense can be traced all the way back to the time of the revolution. During the Second World War the council was headed by Stalin. Only recently have Soviet publications begun to openly acknowledge the existence of a Council of Defense in peacetime and Brezhnev's role as chairman of it.<sup>33</sup> Military Councils and Political Departments exist at the Ministry, Army and Front Levels. Political Departments only exist at Corps, Division, Brigade levels and in certain Regiments, (Aviation, Strategic Air Defense and Strategic Rocket Force Regiments.) Below these there are assistants to the Commander for political affairs.<sup>34</sup>



political assistant to the commander would not agree to the order because all six members of the patrol were members of the CPSU. He (the political officer) advised the commander to send only three Party members and three ordinary soldiers declaring, "I am a representative of the Party." The commander sent all six saying, "What am I, a representative of the Fascist Party?" The political assistant dispatched a letter reporting the incident to his superiors. The operation went well; but, had it not gone well, the commander would have been in trouble."<sup>32</sup>

In addition to these party controls, there exists yet another institution of control within the Army. The *osobi otdel* (Special Department) which is a branch of the K.G.B. (Committee for State Security). These special police units act as spies for the party within the ranks of the military.

Besides all of these controls, Marshal Kulikov is subjected to more subtle forms of pressure that affect his career as well as the careers of every other military man. Every one of Kulikov's efficiency reports has included an evaluation by a political officer of the command.<sup>35</sup> This is not to mention the added influence the party gains over the military by its control of his pay, privileges, benefits, social status and finally his pension. Considering all the aforementioned, one has to marvel at the courage of someone like Kulikov who will speak out in spite of all those pressures.

This type of political control over the military reflects a basic

lack of confidence in an individual, his loyalty, and his ability to make independent decisions. It undermines the principle of unity of command and can be most clearly seen in the next section of this report on Victor G. Kulikov - as he is seen in his old position as Chief of the General Staff.

#### SECTION IV

"The resemblance of the present Red Army Staff System to that of the Old Imperial Army of the Tsars demonstrates how deeply rooted in a nation's way of life are the military traditions of its past."<sup>35</sup>

#### KULIKOV - CHIEF OF THE GENERAL STAFF (The Brains of the Army)

The appointment of the then Army General Victor G. Kulikov as the new Chief of Staff of the Soviet Armed Forces was reported in a Tass message of 22 September 1971. The announcement was hailed in some circles as a sign of "a change of generations in the Soviet military command."<sup>37</sup> He was ascending to the position vacated by an ailing Marshal of the Soviet Union - Matvei V. Zakharov.

At that time, there was much speculation about the driving force behind Kulikov's rise. He had won out over the assumed successor to the post and a fellow classmate at the General Staff Academy (1959), Nikolay Ogarkov. It appeared that Zakharov had been grooming Ogarkov for the post (he had filled in for the Chief many times); but, apparently Marshal Grechko favored Kulikov. Some said Kulikov was not well qualified for the job because the majority of his earlier military experience was as

a troop commander. He had little high level staff or Moscow experience before the assignment.

There were even reports that at one time Kulikov served together with Party Chief Leonid Brezhnev during World War II. But, this was not substantiated by the facts.<sup>38</sup> Others attributed his quick rise to the fact that the airborne troops supplied from his command (the Kiev Military District) during the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia, had so favorably impressed the high level politicians, that he was identified then for a future position of increased responsibility.<sup>39</sup> This, coupled with his other previous commands and his outstanding academic record undoubtedly helped.

But a more logical explanation can be found in the rivalry that existed between Zakharov and Grechko. Kulikov received the promotion because Zakharov wanted Ogarkov to have it so, Grechko backed Kulikov for the post in order to smite Zakharov.<sup>40</sup> However, it happened, Kulikov joined an illustrious list of Soviet Military leaders (See Appendix B).

Some historical background on the role of the Chief of the General Staff of the Soviet Armed Forces is necessary before an analysis of Kulikov's performance in the job is possible.

Like most aspects of the modern Soviet Army, many of the essential elements and traditions of the contemporary Soviet General Staff have been carried forward from the Imperial Army of Old Russia. There are numerous sources available that trace the development of the Russian

General Staff to the time of Peter the Great. A strong current of Prussian/German influence can be found throughout the development of Russian Staff procedures. Karl von Clausewitz, who achieved great fame with his military techniques and books on military doctrine, e.g. On War, actually served in the Russian Army, 1812-14. The influence of his thought is evident in Soviet doctrine today.

History documents the varying degrees of success achieved by the Russian Army in implementing imported ideas on military thought and staff functioning. What is important to note, in a brief outline such as this, is the fact that even after the revolutions of 1917, and the turmoil of the Civil War, the German influence on Soviet staff training and doctrine did not diminish. This influence was not limited to the former officers of the Imperial Army who joined forces with the communists. Russian traditional alignment with German military thought continued and was actually formalized by written agreement with the Germans.

In 1922 the German, von Seeckt, succeeded in circumventing the restrictions of the Versailles Treaty by completing a treaty with the then Soviet Commissar of War, Leon Trotsky. Germans would be allowed to use Soviet territory for training exercises to include live firing on rifle, tank, and artillery ranges. In return for allowing the Germans to conduct these activities, which were violations of the provisions of the Versailles Treaty, Germany would provide instructors for the Red Army. German tutelage of the Red Army also extended to instruction of

high ranking officers. According to some sources: "Groups of 100 superior officers of the Red Army were sent to Berlin each year for military instruction."<sup>41</sup> Practically all of the Red Army's high command participated in this educational program. German Soviet military cooperation continued until Hitler became Reichs Chancellor. General Voroshilov ended this program for the Soviets in 1935.<sup>42</sup>

But, like every other aspect of Russian society since the revolution, the Army went through many reorganizations and mutations that were peculiar to its political development. Different structures and systems of command and control were utilized in order to ensure political control over the Soviet Military, but throughout all of these attempts, up to the present time, the staffing procedures have remained relatively unchanged. The reorganizations that were implemented were designed to centralize decision-making powers and keep the military under tight control. Thus, during World War II, the General Staff became a part of a much larger General Headquarters, "Stavka", which was directly subordinate to Stalin and the State Defense Committee he headed. The General Staff became the major planning element of the General Headquarters.<sup>43</sup>

A central pool of staff officers was created at the General Staff Headquarters. "This pool referred to as 'the flying circus' provided command and staff teams which the 'Stavka' assigned to direct major operations. Teams would often consist of from two to half a dozen high-ranking officers, usually headed by a marshal."<sup>44</sup> They were dispatched

by the General Headquarters and would appear in the field to direct an operation.

Understanding this brief history of the General Staff, the reader can now begin to appreciate what General Kulikov is talking about when he discusses the roles of the General Staff.

As Chief of the General Staff, Kulikov was consulted on all major decisions and appointments. Just as his predecessor Zakharov intervened directly into the affairs of the Armed Forces of the United Arab Republic,\* so, too, has Kulikov played a major role in important Soviet decisions from 1971-1976 such as Soviet support to North Vietnam, Soviet support to the Arab world during the 1973 Arab-Israeli War, and the expanding Soviet aggression in Africa. But, what is most important to the Western audience are the thoughts of the Chief of Staff regarding historical events and his analysis of the past as a basis for current decisions. In June 1975, in an article he wrote for the Military Historical Journal, Marshal Kulikov provides an excellent example of how he thinks. In this article, he also provides an example of his willingness to frankly criticize the system when he perceives mistakes or a structural weakness. As is always the case in his military writings, he first goes to the fount of all inspiration of Soviet thought - the World War II experience. He writes

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\*Zakharov was responsible for the removal of "incompetent" UAR officers following the Six Day War in 1967. He reportedly "intervened directly in the armed forces of a non-aligned nation," (UAR).<sup>45</sup>

as follows:

From the very beginning, the war demanded a major reorganization of the organs of party and state leadership. Complete authority in the country was concentrated in a single organ which unified the efforts of the front and rear--the State Defense Committee (GKO) under the chairmanship of J. V. Stalin...The State Defense Committee (GKO) solved the most important questions connected with the mobilization and utilization of all manpower, material, and spiritual resources of the state for meeting war requirements and provided leadership in all forms of combat during the war including the ideological, economic and diplomatic struggle. In that area which concerns the conduct of military operations, the GKO, on the basis of general political goals established by the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolshevik), determined the military-political tasks of the Armed Forces in the campaigns and the most important strategic operations, reviewed their plans, planned for the forces and equipment necessary for their fulfillment, set up deadlines for the callup of draftees, established the volume of the production of armament, combat material and military equipment, and established the formations of all services of the armed forces and branches of troops and readiness deadlines for them. In other words, the GKO unified all aspects of state activities in the field of defense... As a whole, the principle of the unity of the political, state and military leadership found its practical realization in the leadership activity of the party during the war. This principle was closely combined with the principle of centralism, and of iron discipline and a scientific approach to the resolution of military tasks, taking into careful consideration the general military-political situation, and the economic and moral potential of the warring sides...

The great spatial scope of the armed struggle, extreme tension, decisiveness, and the dynamic nature of operations which developed from the very first hours of the war, the utilization of great masses of troops and various kinds of combat material, and the unprecedented costs and losses confronted the strategic leadership with tasks which were not encountered in any wars in

the past. Under these conditions, a requirement for the creation of a radically new and sufficiently streamlined and flexible organization of organs of operational and strategic leadership on a nation-wide scale arose.\* As is known, by the start of the war these problems had not been fully resolved by us. They had to be resolved in the course of the fierce battles that were to come.

On the second day of the war, 23 June 1941, the Politburo of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) approved a resolution of the USSR Council of People's Commissars concerning creation of the Headquarters (Stavka), High Command of the Armed Forces. It included the People's Commissar of Defense S. K. Timoshenko (Chairman), J. V. Stalin, V. M. Molotov, Chief of the General Staff, G. K. Zhukov, and Marshals of the Soviet Union K. Y. Voroshilov and S. M. Budennyi, and Admiral N. G. Kuznetsov. The General Staff, together with the Directorates of the People's Commissar for Defense and of the People's Commissar for the Navy, became working organs of the Stavka.<sup>46</sup>

He continues in this vein explaining why the effort was organized in this fashion. Kulikov points out several of the reorganizations that had to take place. He then begins the build-up to his main argument in the article.

In this manner the basic instrument of strategic leadership was organizationally formed approximately three weeks after the start of the war. This is a very short period of time, but it is necessary to take into account that with the entry of the Armed Forces in the war there was a need for an especially high degree of organization and exceptionally precise actions by them which may be attained only with firm and centralized control over the troops from top to bottom...

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\*He reiterates all of these ideas on the magnitude of war and the need for collective leadership in a November 1976 article in Pravda containing his review of Marshal Shaposhnikov's book Mozg Armii (The Army's Brain).<sup>47</sup>



Consequently one of the lessons of the war consists of the fact that the system of strategic leadership must be thought out, worked out, and coordinated in all details ahead of time, before the start of a war...

On the whole, the experience of the last war concerning the organization of the strategic leadership of the Armed Forces is of practical interest, even though no one can have any doubt that a future war cannot avoid leading to the appearance of radically new organizational forms of troop control...

In the postwar period the vigorous development of science and technology, the radical changes which have occurred in the ways and means of waging war,...Under these conditions, constant perfection of the forms and methods of work by organs of strategic leadership is required both in peacetime and in wartime.<sup>48</sup>

What is Kulikov suggesting? Judging from these passages and the tenor of the entire article, one can conclude that he is making a strong case for a more streamlined system of strategic leadership. A system that will be more responsive in a fast moving situation where a nuclear confrontation is possible. Kulikov's call for constant efforts to streamline the system of strategic leadership is important for a number of reasons.

Soviet leaders frequently criticize the system or inadequacies that occur within the system. But, what Kulikov seems to be suggesting here goes further than routine criticism. Given the fact that the Soviets are now more openly acknowledging the existence of a State Defense

Committee as the highest organ of strategic leadership, Kulikov's criticism becomes more provocative. His suggestion crosses important lines of political power and enters into the political arena. This is the realm of the top party policy makers. He seems to be trying to communicate to the political leadership, i.e. the men who actually man the State Defense Committee, Brezhnev et al, that changes are needed. He is telling them that the World War II solution to the problem of strategic leadership is not good enough for modern warfare. The implication is clear, and could be a source of irritation among today's politicians.

In a later article in Mozg Armii (The Brain of the Army) Kulikov offers more specific recommendations. He advocates an automated system of troop control and decision making; a sybernetic system that would be capable of rapidly solving complex decisions brought about by the "military technical revolution."<sup>49</sup>

He concludes the June 1975 article with a discussion of the role of the "flying circus." The circus was extremely valuable in the campaign of 1943-44. According to the author, they helped the front commands make correct operational decisions.<sup>50</sup> This type of a philosophy regarding command and control over operations seems to be a root cause of one of the Soviet vulnerabilities.

Most Western experts consider the Soviet Army weak in command and control; and, more importantly in initiative. Soviet small unit commanders and commanders of Soviet trained armies of other countries seem

to be unable or unwilling to make decisions or deviations from predetermined tactical plans. This is an extremely critical vulnerability to a force that relies heavily on mass attacks that emphasize speed and shock action. If the momentum of an attack is to be maintained, if units are to fire and maneuver effectively in meeting engagements, then authority and decision making powers have to be delegated to the lowest possible level. This does not seem possible given the fact that, the Soviet penchant for a highly centralized politically controlled decision-making process, emanates from the very top strategic leadership. Marshal Kulikov realizes at least part of the problem and addresses the issue openly in articles such as those quoted above.

Fortunately for the West, it does not appear that he will be able to solve this problem in the immediate future. The source of the perplexity lies in the fact that Soviet policy makers still do not trust the military. An Armed Force whose officers had a lot of initiative and were capable of making decisions independent of political control could become a real internal threat to the party politicians.

SECTION V

KULIKOV - ON MILITARY DOCTRINE, ORGANIZATION AND TACTICS



"The experience gained during the Great Patriotic War in the sphere of military strategy has not lost its significance for the present."<sup>51</sup>

KULIKOV - ON MILITARY DOCTRINE, ORGANIZATION AND TACTICS

Following World War II, three stages of development can be discerned in Soviet Military doctrine and practice: The first stage lasts from 1945-1953; the second from 1953-1959, and the third stage began in January 1960 with Krushchev's announcement of the creation of a new Branch of Service: Strategic Rocket Forces.<sup>52</sup> In spite of the accompanying new developments in equipment, particularly in the sixties with the advent of strategic and tactical nuclear missiles, one basic element of Soviet Military Doctrine has remained relatively unchanged. The dominant theme of this seemingly immutable element is the Soviet experience gained during the Great War for the Fatherland.

In an article written for Kommunist in March 1975, Marshal Kulikov described some of the lessons learned from World War II which, he maintains, have not lost their significance for modern warfare. He regards one of the most valuable new developments of this War was the use of the strategic offensive launched by a group of fronts. "Such an operation was launched in order to achieve a specific objective through the coordinated efforts of several fronts together with units and formations of other services of the Armed Forces. This was an entirely new phenomenon in military art."<sup>53</sup>

He goes on to describe how the operations were characterized by the

decisive nature of the targets, large distances involved, participation of great masses of troops, a variety of maneuvers, dynamic nature of the combat operations, the high offensive pace; and, of course, the achievement of decisive results.<sup>54</sup> This new phenomenon remains a continuing and dominant part of all Soviet Military Doctrine. He continues with a discussion of other developments that were adopted during World War II; but, are still important today. Specifically, some of these innovations which were the key to success then and should predominate in modern warfare are: 1) Maneuver - Encirclement operations made a major contribution towards the Soviet victory. The Battle for Stalingrad, East Prussia and Berlin became, and should still be considered, classical examples of these maneuvers. 2) Penetrations in depth: Penetrations of up to 600 kilometers were achieved by splintering operations which resulted in deep breaches of the enemy defenses. A good example of this type of an operation is the Belorussian Campaign. The penetration was achieved and then individual pockets of resistance were isolated and then destroyed piecemeal. Deep encirclements and raids were also carried out. 3) Meeting Engagements: Meeting engagements became more important to combat operations as deep penetrations were effected and enemy defenses were breached. They were occurred in both offensive and defensive operations and required that Soviet troops seize and maintain the initiative by bold maneuvers. 4) Night offensives were conducted by units ranging in size from a squad to entire armies. The Berlin operation included a

night attack by an entire front! 5) Aviation - The air force gave the Soviet commander in this war the added capability of massing fire power and the ability to support the salient of deep penetrations along the entire length of the penetration. Independent "air force offensives" were also developed. 6) Creation of reserve fronts - By 1943, the Soviets were using strategic reserves of frontal size. One such reserve contained nine combined arms armies, three tank armies and one air army. They maneuvered these reserves extensively so that they would be in the most important locations at decisive moments. 7) Logistics: The conduct of such large scale offensives made enormous demands on the Soviet supply system. These demands were fulfilled by the development of the principle of pre-stock points called by Soviets "the early creation and deployment of supplies."<sup>55</sup>

These were but a few of the most important items stated by Kulikov in this article. To the student of Soviet Military Science and Tactics, they are not new. Most have been elaborated in far greater detail in 1973 by Colonel Vasiley G. Savkin in his book The Basic Principles of Operational Art and Tactics. What is important to note is that the Soviets still base much of their modern doctrine on the World War II experience. In saying this, they are revealing quite a bit of vital information about themselves. If they intend to use this "new phenomenon" (the strategic offensive launched by a group of fronts) then opponents can expect massing of troops on a large scale to occur before the attack. Kulikov states

this quite clearly and openly when he writes: "This type of an operation was only possible in the latter stages of the war when the correlation of forces\* greatly favored the Soviet side ... a particularly high degree of massing of forces and equipment was achieved."<sup>56</sup> Knowing this, Western strategists can plan for security in the European theatre with a higher degree of confidence. The Soviet need for maintaining such a large presence in East Germany and other areas West of their capital can be easily understood in this context. And, if the Soviets truly favor such a large scale offensive, recent critics of Western strategy who insist that NATO forces will not have adequate warning time, can be finally quieted. No army in the world can prepare for an operation of this magnitude without giving numerous indications of preparations well in advance of the attack. One now asks, how are they organized to accomplish these missions? Kulikov provides an answer.

Writing in an earlier comprehensive article in *Kommunist*, Kulikov elaborates on how each branch of service of the Soviet Armed Forces will carry out modern warfare in support of national strategy. It is not surprising to note that as he discusses each branch of service, he again seems to be describing their capabilities in terms of being able to execute the strategic objectives that have evolved out of the lessons of the Great Patriotic War.

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\*In the context of this article the author intends "Correlation of forces" to mean that the Soviets simply outnumbered the Nazi forces.<sup>57</sup>



In this article, the author credits the scientific community for providing the means of conducting a modern sophisticated war. Kulikov then outlines the organizational structure of the Armed Forces and their combat might.

"The combat power of the Soviet Armed Forces is based on the Strategic Rocket Troops, which are equipped with modern automated missile complexes and with intercontinental and medium-range missiles. The great range, high level of combat readiness, and colossal destructive power of strategic missiles makes it possible to regard the Strategic Rocket Troops as the most important means for restraining the imperialist forces aggressive aspirations."<sup>58</sup> He goes on to describe another key element of the Soviet Forces.

"The Ground Forces are the strongest service of the Armed Forces numerically and the most diversified in terms of their arms and equipment. They are equipped with high powered operational and tactical missiles, up-to date tanks, infantry combat vehicles, diverse artillery and anti-tank weapon systems, air defense facilities and other types of equipment. Their high level of mechanization and motorization and abundance of all possible means of destruction insure high striking power, firepower, maneuverability and mobility and contribute to a broad range of tasks in modern war."<sup>59</sup> Highly mobile troops equipped in the above mentioned fashion seem ideally suited to a doctrine espousing the massing of troops, followed by a penetration of enemy defenses, and then a rapid exploitation of the penetration with a break through operation. Victory will be

achieved by employing pursuit and mop-up tactics against isolated pockets of resistance. The most desirable encounter with an enemy force under these conditions would be the meeting engagement where the attacking force has the initiative and maintains it by firepower and by maneuvering its motorized forces. Kulikov expands the discussion with a description of the strategic elements of the Armed Forces that will complement this "strongest" arm.

"The Airborne Troops are being developed and improved and their ability to conduct successful operations deep behind enemy lines is growing."<sup>60</sup> The importance of this capability seems to coincide with his expressed ideas on deep raids. He completes this portion of the article with a brief discussion of the other Services, their capabilities and how they, too, will contribute to future warfare.

In the concluding parts of the essay, Marshal Kulikov deals with the most changing component of Soviet Military art - tactics. "Innovations are taking place in the field of tactics as new weapons systems are adopted and the level of training of the individual soldier is improved."<sup>61</sup> One of the most revolutionary changes, according to the author, came about with the development and the introduction of nuclear weapons into the Armed Forces. He feels that in addition to providing the capability of massing nuclear strikes, the advent of the nuclear age has caused the formulation of principles concerning the conduct of air operations, the frustrating of attacks from the sea, and the use of navy forces to

resolve other missions with nuclear weapons. But, most importantly; "nuclear weapons at the disposal of the strategic, operational and tactical command provide great independence in the choice of Combat action methods. The dependence of strategic successes on operational results and of operational successes on tactical results, has altered under these conditions. There is not a possibility of directly influencing the course and outcome of operations and of a war as a whole by using the powerful means at the higher command's disposal. Now the strategic leadership cannot only determine the aims and tasks of combat actions and the procedures for using strategic reserves... but, also, by using its own means, achieve the resolution of strategic missions before operational or tactical missions are resolved."<sup>62</sup>

Kulikov includes one final important point in this comprehensive statement on Soviet Military Armed Forces and Military Science. "The raising of combat readiness is a multifaceted problem with its own special features in all levels of organization of the Armed Forces. This is why it is necessary in the future to continue to search for a reduction in the time taken to bring troops into combat readiness and to formulate new norms."<sup>63</sup> One can easily conclude by this statement that regardless of the scale of the operation being considered, the improvement of combat readiness will always be one of the Soviet Union's primary goals. The Soviets like all other peacetime armies are finding that by the time they get a new recruit trained, he is ready for release from the

Army as the period of his mandatory active duty obligation expires. This problem will become more acute for the Soviets in the next ten years. Most experts feel, that given the estimated size of the future draft-age Soviet manpower pool, that the Soviets cannot maintain the current size of their armed forces without extending the period of obligatory service or implementing some other measure of this kind. They could reduce the size of their standing Army? It will be interesting to see how they solve the problem.

## SECTION VI



А вдруг выиграем у генерала...

"It happens you are on a tank, the exhaust ports are working and the smell of gas seems to you more pleasant than Eau de Cologne."<sup>64</sup>

#### KULIKOV - THE MAN

Visitors to the Soviet Union describe Marshal Kulikov as gregarious, sharp and professional.<sup>65</sup> Western attaches describe him as being less stern or foreboding in appearance than Yakubovsky or Grechko. Those who have had occasion to be present during official Soviet ceremonies and celebrations, e.g. the November 7, Moscow Military parade, report that when he was Chief of the General Staff he always took the time to come down off the reviewing stand to greet each military attache personally.<sup>66</sup> The attaches feel that Kulikov has what can best be described as good military bearing and presence. He is a distinguished looking military officer who appears to be a lot younger than most of the senior officers around him. He always acts properly as one might expect of a professional officer of his caliber.<sup>67</sup> These brief, though helpful comments, provide us with a general idea of his official stature. What also is important, is that the comments seem to coincide with one of the rare very personal descriptions of the man that the Soviets themselves have printed. The Soviet magazine, Ogonek, describes the man and how he conducts himself in a February 1968 article titled: "A Day of the Commander."

The author describes a day in Kulikov's life when he was commander of the Kiev Military District. He visits a military academy there and

the immediate reaction of the students is to comment on how young the three star general looks. Kulikov, answering lightheartedly emphasized that he was already a grandfather.<sup>68</sup>

The author emphasizes that Kulikov at this time was manning the post that was previously occupied by such outstanding military men as Frunze, and Marshals Zhukov and Grechko. In spite of the demands of the job, Kulikov took time to sit down with the students and play a game of chess. He chatted with them and related stories to them about his experiences in the military. He recounts one rather harrowing event when he had to dig a hole in the ground with his soldier's spoon in order to survive a heavy shelling.<sup>69</sup> He talks easily with the students and they are portrayed as being comfortable around him.

The author's description of Kulikov is very similar to the personality described by Western visitors to the Soviet Union. They see Kulikov as this author is trying to portray him: an extremely busy man, but one who has time for the troops. Even as a Colonel General he took the time, according to this article, to go out to a field exercise in progress to personally congratulate one of the sergeants of the district on the occasion of his receiving his first military decoration.<sup>70</sup>

But all of these official duties take their toll on the General's family life. He by his own account does not have time to play with his grandson, Sergei, who was only six months old in 1968. Kulikov said at that time that he would not allow his grandson to play with military type

toys; but there reportedly were two miniature tanks on the bookshelf of Sergei's room. One is made of black iron and one is bronze; but, "they don't shoot."<sup>71</sup> In all aspects of the article, the author presents Kulikov as a very human, sophisticated and warm person. Very unlike the fat, stern acting, medal bedecked stereotype of a Soviet military officer that is often times portrayed in the Western press. Perhaps the most important aspect of Kulikov as a man, is his role as a critic of the system.

It has already been noted in his biographic sketch that he is very outspoken and that this trait may have hurt him in the past. This characteristic increases in importance when you consider the tremendous amount of courage it must take for anyone to speak out critically at anytime in the Soviet Union. Kulikov stands to lose a lot when he speaks out, particularly when the criticism extends into politics. Nevertheless, he speaks when criticism seems appropriate. The following are just two samples.

The first example of Kulikov inveighing appeared in the February 23, 1973 edition of Red Star. In what appears to be a rather innocuous article about the "Armed Forces of a Developed Socialist Society" Kulikov is able to insert some subtle but critical political commentary.

The article was written while MBFR negotiations were in progress and the main portions of it describe the role of Soviet Armed Forces and their unique relationship with the Warsaw Pact. But in the introductory

paragraphs, Kulikov slips in a few jabs at the political practices of the past. He begins with a description of the heroic evolution of the Red Army. During the Civil War...fifteen thousand civilian soldiers were awarded the order of the Red Banner. Of these, 285 men received it twice; 31 men received it three times and V. K. Bliukher, S. S. Vosmretsov, Y. F. Fabrutsius and I. F. Fedko received the award four times.<sup>72</sup> The four named men, decorated four times with the order of the Red Banner, were all subsequently executed by Stalin during the years of the purges. The point is a subtle one, but it is clear. Kulikov did not have to list each man by name but he did it and for a good reason. Most Soviet citizens recognize the names of these military men and know what happened to them. They understand Kulikov's intended criticism of political practices that led to the liquidation of some of the real heroes of their country. Four men who fought heroically for the revolution were later executed by the leadership of the very political system they helped to come to power! They could have remained nameless numbers in this article; but, they did not.

The second example of Kulikov criticizing the system will be treated here briefly because it has already been covered in detail in Section V of this paper that examined Kulikov's views as Chief of the General Staff. The topic of criticism is the role of the General Staff in warfare.

The important part of the article for this discussion is contained in a few sentences. The criticism that Kulikov offers is that

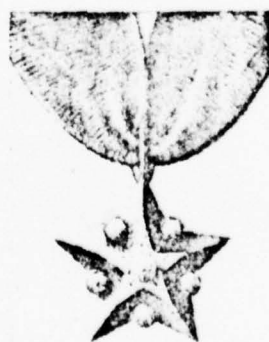


the basic instrument of leadership used during World War II was: "formed approximately three weeks after the start of the war."...and that in order for the General Staff to operate more efficiently, ..."the system of strategic leadership must be thought out, worked out, and coordinated in all details ahead of time, before the start of a war."<sup>73</sup>

In this instance, Kulikov's criticism is open and direct. He is criticizing a system of leadership that could be described as the "sacred cow" of the Party leadership. There is a great deal of evidence that a similar system of leadership of military affairs by the party chieftans (State Defense Committee) that was used during the war exists now in peacetime and it will be the system of strategic leadership used in the event a war breaks out in the future.<sup>74</sup> Kulikov is saying this arrangement will not be adequate. The article stirred up much controversy in the Soviet Union as well as in the West. Leading to the conclusion by some Western journalists that "Soviet Hawks" led by Kulikov were fighting with the Kremlin Leadership.<sup>75</sup> These were but two examples of the outspokenness of Victor Kulikov. There are others available in periodicals that circulate outside the Soviet Union. It is also possible to assume from this that he has spoken out strongly on other issues which a Western audience will never find out about. The important thing to realize is that Kulikov the man, has the character to speak out to the political Leadership when he feels they are wrong. This fact alone could be valuable to the West. It lends credence to the theory held by some

political scientists who have the opinion that there are distinct "lobbies" within the USSR. These lobbies or interest groups offer differing opinions on how to allocate scarce resources among competing interest groups i.e. military industries versus consumer industries. These groups are capable and unafraid to argue for their position. It remains for the West to determine who represents each faction in the country and what makes up their constituency. Kulikov, as one of the top military men in the country, can be considered the spokesman for a rather powerful interest group, the Armed Forces. However, historically, the influence of the military has been under the control of the political leadership of the country. This control and the limitations it can put on the military leadership was the topic of Section III of this report.

## SECTION VII



«Маршальский Знак» Маршала  
Советского Союза.

## KULIKOV - ONE OF THE ELITE IN THE "CLASSLESS SOCIETY"

In any biography on Kulikov written by Soviets, they are quick to point out his humble origin - "born in a family of poor peasants." Soviet biographic sources frequently utilize this approach in describing current leaders. This may surprise Westerners who might wonder about the significance of a "rags to riches" rise to prominence in a classless society. But, the fact of the matter is, that the Soviet Union, despite all claims to the contrary, does have a highly stratified society. And one of the most favored layers of this society is the military. Kulikov, as a Marshal of the Soviet Union, is one of the elite of this upper echelon. In a study such as this, it will be valuable to determine just what this elite status means in concrete terms.

Western Kremlinologists go to great lengths to explain that Soviet economic plans traditionally have favored the military sector. This is apparent when one considers the quality and quantity of Soviet military equipment produced versus the shortages and poor quality of goods produced for the citizen-consumer. The ordinary tourist needs only to be in a large city of the Soviet Union a matter of hours before he realizes how well off the Soviet military man appears to be. By dress alone, the Soviet soldier as a class of society, stands out.\* His uniform, and they

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\*Typical of extravagance that is given to the military is the Marshal's Star.<sup>76</sup> It is given to Marshals of the Soviet Union, Marshals of branches of the service and some Generals of the Army. Years ago, Soviets claimed its value in excess of 6,000 rubles. It is a five pointed star made of gold and platinum and equipped with a 2.65 karat diamond in the center, it has 5 additional .6 karat diamonds on the rays of the star and 25 diamond chips. Today, its costs could easily exceed \$20,000. They become the personal property of the recipient.

are seen in great numbers, is of the best quality, appear to be far better made than the street apparel of the average Soviet citizen. Further, one need only make one visit to the Moscow Circus, the ballet, the Palace of Congresses or any other major cultural event at a given time in Moscow, before he realizes that they are frequented by Soviet Military officers. Their uniforms set them apart in the audience. Somehow, the military are able to afford the going prices for these events and, they manage to get scarce tickets that are often never available to the general public. But Kulikov has at least two additional claims to substantially more perquisites than theatre tickets. Within the military, as a marshal of the Soviet Union, he has benefits that are generally well beyond the means of even the upper classes of Soviet society.

It is reported that Marshals receive 2000 rubles a month as base pay, (The average monthly pay of a Soviet worker is 170 rubles per month.)\* Army commanders are authorized 4 room apartments (not counting kitchen and bath) and it can be safely assumed that Kulikov's quarters far exceed this minimum standard. As an officer with over twenty-five years service, he is entitled to forty-five days annual leave. Additionally, as is the custom in some Western European countries, officers

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\*Actually, the real average wage is between 100-120 rubles per month. The Soviets in typical fashion can quote this higher figure, but; it includes highly inflated salaries of workers in the Far East. The Soviets have had to create monetary incentives to entice workers to work in the Far East and by means of these bonuses, a few workers can earn as much as 1000 rubles a month.<sup>79</sup>

are entitled to an additional 30 days health rest. Some of the over-sixty-five marshals credit their vigor and vitality to these long compulsory leave policies.<sup>77</sup>

To make leisure time more attractive, the Ministry of Defense maintains resort areas for swimming, skiing and boating. The Army also maintains 150 hunting and fishing lodges, officers' clubs and sanatoriums where their elite take their "cure." An additional benefit available to Major Generals and above is permission to take their vacations in Eastern Europe. (Perhaps this is allowed because generals are considered senior enough to be politically reliable.) So even a man as busy as Victor Kulikov was, when he was Chief of the General Staff, found time in his busy schedule to take a luxurious vacation in Yugoslavia in November 1972.

The second claim that Marshal Kulikov has to a whole series of additional perquisites are a result of his position as a member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

Hedrick Smith has enumerated these benefits quite well in the opening chapters of his current bestseller, The Russians. So, in addition to chauffeured limousines and special military stores and commissaries that a Westerner would not consider extraordinary benefits, Kulikov has the following: access to stores selling Russian delicacies and Western goods that are open to Central Committee Staff only; home delivery of the "Kremlin ration" free of any charge (food valued at 480-600 rubles

per month); access to the secret shop for military officers in the basement of the Army-Navy Store in Moscow; access and permission to buy goods in any of the hard currency Beryozka shops in Moscow or any other Soviet city; restaurant catering service for parties; a residence in the green-belt villa area of Moscow; use of the best health treatment clinics for himself and his family; a dacha for his private use; special tickets (usually box seats) for all cultural events; and perhaps most importantly, special educational opportunities for his family, including special schools for children of the elite.<sup>80</sup>

In addition to all of the foregoing, Marshal Kulikov can look forward to a retirement that will literally pay him back for his long and honorable service. He will receive "fifty percent of his last pay for serving twenty-five years, plus three percent of each extra year up to 75% of his pay" (war-time service at one of the fronts counts triple).<sup>81</sup> Kulikov can augment his retirement pay as he does his active duty pay with generous royalties received for his prolific writing.

In spite of his long work day and awesome responsibilities, Marshal Kulikov can come home from a long day at the office to relax and be comfortable in his home in true bourgeois style. This is an option that will never be available to the vast majority of Soviet citizens that live in this classless utopian society.

SECTION VIII



"The unity of the Warsaw Pact Forces has considerably strengthened over the past five years. Joint research has led to the development of common views on the nature of conceivable wars that the imperialists could unleash, on methods of waging these wars, on a unified approach to comprehensive training of the forces of each country of the socialist community for the defeat of the aggressor by modern means of combat."<sup>82</sup>

KULIKOV - A DIMMING RED STAR?

The 8 January 77 announcement by TASS of General Kulikov's assignment to the position of Commander of the Armed Forces of the Warsaw Pact, caused mixed reactions among Soviet analysts in the West. Some regarded it as a promotion while others regarded it as a setback for Kulikov, a demotion. Those taking the latter position presented the following arguments.

Kulikov's reassignment to the position of Chief of the Warsaw Pact

moved him out of the mainstream of the military decision making process. Further, his authority and responsibility were diminished.\* According to Soviet Regulation, only the Chief of the General Staff has the authority to sign orders for the Defense Minister. Further, as Chief of the General Staff, he had direct control of all Services of the Armed Forces of the Soviet Union to include those combat units assigned to the Warsaw Pact. Despite Soviet contention that these forces are allocated to the Warsaw Pact and are responsive to the leadership of that organization, their direct subordination to Moscow can be proven.\*\*

Another important aspect in their view is the fact that Kulikov was not promoted to Marshal during the over five years he occupied the position of Chief of the General Staff. It was only after Nicolai V. Ogarkov

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\*"For Kulikov, his new assignment means that he has become the second man in the Armed Forces of the Soviet Union."<sup>83</sup>

\*\*The impression Soviets hope to create is that the forces assigned to the Pact are controlled by the countries who participate in this "defensive" agreement. When Kulikov was assigned to the position Krasnaya Zvezda indicated that Kulikov was "freed from his duties of Chief of the General Staff...and assigned as Commander of the Forces of the Warsaw Pact by the participants of that treaty."<sup>84</sup> But, in another article announcing the death of Shtemenko, Chief of Staff of the Warsaw Pact, they seem to be destroying their own myth. "After a serious and extended illness, the outstanding military leader, First Assistant to the Chief of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of the Soviet Union, (emphasis, R. N.) Chief of Staff of the Warsaw Pact...General of the Army - Sergei M. Shtemenko died."<sup>85</sup> In Soviet Military organizations, the Chief of Staff acts as an executive officer does in the U. S. Army, i.e. he assumes command in the absence of the commander. Thus, in this short announcement, the Soviets are admitting the direct link and subordination that exists between Moscow and these Soviet forces stationed outside her borders, i.e. the Chief of Staff of this quasi independent military defense pact is in fact - subordinate to the Chief of the General Staff of the Soviet Armed Forces.



was assigned to the job that both received promotions to the rank of Marshal of the Soviet Union.<sup>86</sup> If Ogarkov was in fact Zakharov's first choice in 1971, then he obviously has all the qualifications necessary for this important position. More importantly, Ogarkov's background and qualifications as an engineer closely resemble the background in technical subjects of the present Minister of Defense - Ustinov.\* Kremlinologists would add to this that some recent developments serve to support the argument that Ogarkov has overtaken Kulikov.

On 23 February of this year, a day celebrated throughout the Soviet Union as Armed Forces Day, Soviet newspapers add one more piece of evidence to the growing puzzle. In an article describing a reception held in Moscow that was part of the 59th anniversary celebration of Armed Forces Day, the list showing the names of those attending the celebration had Ogarkov's name ahead of Kulikov's.<sup>87</sup> For those who make a career out of studying the Soviet Union, and her leadership through periodicals, things of this nature just do not happen accidentally. Soviet editors are very meticulous about naming dignitaries in the order of their standing in the bureaucracy. Leaders' names are not listed alphabetically; rather, by rank or position held. Unfortunately, there have been no major obituaries

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\*Additionally, from 1969-72 Ogarkov served as the senior Soviet delegate to the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks. His new assignment may reflect the importance the Soviet Union places on these negotiations.

in the Soviet newspapers since this occurrence with which one could corroborate the relative prominence of the military leadership.\* In spite of all of the above, there exists a whole body of information that supports the opinion that Kulikov's new assignment is in fact, a promotion.

Kulikov's duties as Chief of the Warsaw Pact will not remove him from the Soviet capital. Although the Pact maintains operational headquarters for each of its potential wartime fronts in the cities of Riga, Lvov and Odessa, the main headquarters is in Moscow. All of the top military leaders and their command elements are located in the Soviet capital. As commander of Pact Forces Kulikov retains his old title of First Deputy to the Minister of Defense, and, if tradition holds true, this alone will demonstrate the supremacy.

In the past, Marshal Ivan Yakubovsky, former Chief of the Warsaw Pact, was the first among equals when compared to the other two First Deputies. (Kulikov and Sokolov). When the Minister of Defense was absent, Yakubovsky would substitute for him. Further, Western diplomats report that all protocol lists indicate that after the Soviet MOD, the Chief of the Warsaw Pact Forces is always the next important when making arrangements for official functions.

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\*Obituaries of top Soviet citizens are signed by the leadership in order of prominence in the bureaucracy. The highest leader signs first and then others in his department sign in descending order.

Kulikov is better suited for this job by experience than he was when he was appointed Chief of the General Staff. As the commander of the Warsaw Pact, Kulikov joins a very distinguished group of Soviet officers. As was noted earlier, this is not the first time he has followed in the footsteps of Ivan Yakubovsky.\*

Yakubovsky himself was considered by many to be a likely successor to Marshal Grechko. Perhaps he would have been had it not been for his poor health.\*\*

The command relationship that exists between the Soviet General Staff and the Commander of the Warsaw Pact is more difficult to explain because less is written about it in the open press. Suffice it to say that the Staff of the Warsaw Pact is subordinate to the Chief of the General Staff and receives much of its planning guidance from that organization today; because, the Soviet General Staff is the Supreme Headquarters for all strategic planning. But, the command relationship is different. Kulikov works directly for the Minister of Defense of the Soviet Union and the participating countries of the Warsaw Pact. It was the participant countries of the Warsaw Pact that assigned him to the job according to Soviet newspapers.<sup>89</sup> And, an added note for the

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\*He replaced Yakubovsky in 1967 as Chief of the Kiev Military District. Additionally, both have served as commander - Group of Soviet Forces Germany.

\*\*He was a terminal cancer patient at the time of Marshal Grechko's unexpected death.

Kremlinologists, - the positioning of the announcements and the pictures of Kulikov and Ogarkov in the papers on 9 January 1977 was not accidental. Kulikov was given the top billing. Also, the chronicle in that same paper wrote how the change of assignments was effected. It stated that the Union of Ministries of the USSR had "freed Kulikov of his duties as Chief of the General Staff in connection with his assignment to the post of Commander of the Warsaw Pact by the participants in the Pact."<sup>90</sup> It seems from this that the Soviets are at least trying to create the impression that the other countries of the Warsaw Pact have something to say about who commands their organization. This adds some prestige to the assignment.

A good indication of the importance of the job can be seen in the accounts by Soviet newspapers of Kulikov's first trip to Warsaw following his appointment. Warsaw, 17 February TASS: "...V. G. Kulikov was met at the airport by members of the Central Committee of the Polish Communist Party of Poland, the Minister of Defense of Poland,...and the Secretary of the Central Committee of the Polish Communist Party - S. Kania ... S. A. Pilotovich, the Soviet Ambassador to Poland, was among those greeting Kulikov."<sup>91</sup> In an accompanying article, it was further reported that Gerek himself - the First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Polish Communist Party received Kulikov that same day.<sup>92</sup> It is obvious from this how highly the Warsaw Pact members regard their new commander.

The matter of Kulikov's non-promotion to Marshal during his tenure as Chief of the General Staff is a more difficult problem to solve.

There are many theories as to why no member of the Soviet military leadership had been promoted to Marshal since 1968. Then, following the eight-year drought the first two people to receive the rank of Marshal were not professional Army officers. On May 8, 1976, Party Secretary Brezhnev received his promotion and on 31 July 1976, Ustinov was promoted. For Ustinov, this promotion came just three months after his May promotion to Army General.\*<sup>93</sup> Christian Duevel has written a number of research reports on this subject for Radio Liberty. None of the analysis provides the information needed to answer the question - why were certain officers promoted? If anything can be safely said, it is that if the assignment of Kulikov was indeed a demotion, the Soviets would never have subsequently promoted him to Marshal.

It is the opinion of this writer that Kulikov's star is not dimming; it is shining brighter than ever before! His new assignment is prestigious and corresponds perfectly to his background and capabilities. During his years as Chief of the General Staff he gained knowledge and experience that people say he lacked before he was assigned to the post. Particularly valuable was the experience he gained in working at the highest political levels in Moscow. He gained expertise but at the same time he was able to maintain his reputation for tough independent mindedness. His assignment as Chief of the Warsaw Pact keeps him right on the track that

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\*In this respect he has moved faster than Joseph Stalin did during the war. Stalin was not promoted to Marshal of the Soviet Union until March 1943. Russia had already been fighting over two years and Stalin had a number of Marshals subordinate to him.

Marshal Grechko followed to the job of Minister of Defense,<sup>\*</sup> the post all top Soviet military leaders must desire.

Considering the age of Ustinov, it is very likely that Victor G. Kulikov, Marshal of the Soviet Union could fulfill his aspirations. All indications are pointing in that direction. It should be just a matter of time.

#### SECTION IX

#### CONCLUSIONS

Marshal Kulikov's rapid rise to the highest echelon of leadership of the Soviet Armed Forces is remarkable. A relative unknown in the early sixties, he suddenly became the man to watch with the announcement in May 1967, of his assignment to the prestigious job of Chief of the Kiev Military District. From this point, it was a short uninterrupted rise to the top. Less than four years later he was elected to the Central Committee of the Communist Party and within months announced as the replacement for Marshal Matvei V. Zakharov as Chief of the General Staff.

He has an outstanding record as a combat leader; but, interestingly enough, most of his important promotions have come to him in peacetime.

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<sup>\*</sup>Marshal Grechko, the last professional military man to be the Minister of Defense, was the Warsaw Pact Commander from 1960-7.<sup>94</sup>

In spite of his relative youth, most of his writing, like that of his predecessors, is based on Soviet experiences in World War II. Yet, he has recognized the need for adapting Soviet military doctrine to the technologists of modern warfare.

Kulikov, a total military professional is also a skillful politician. His ability as an articulate speaker became well known in 1965 after his speech at the Estonian Republic 25th Anniversary celebration. He is a man who is quite capable of spewing the standard party line. Yet, on occasion, he has dared to censor past practices when he felt criticism was necessary. He has accomplished this knowing full well that success in his career is dependent upon the nurturing of good relations with the political leadership and the Party. Good relations are not easily maintained by a military professional when his denouncements extend into political territory. Only the skillful can survive in his area, but Kulikov has achieved much more than mere survival. He has reached the top in an unprecedented manner. However, the last line of his biography has not been written.

Since completion of this report, additional evidence has become available that supports the contention in favor of Ogarkov's supremacy. In three separate articles appearing in Kraznaia Zvezda (March-April) Kulikov's name was listed after the name of Ogarkov. This lends credence to the argument that the top military man in the Soviet Armed Forces today is Ogarkov, the Chief of the General Staff. It appears that Yakubovsky's dominance during Kulikov's tenure as Chief of the General

Staff stemmed from his higher rank. He was a Marshal at the time and Kulikov did not receive his promotion until 14 January 1977--the same day Ogarkov was promoted.

In spite of the mounting evidence to the contrary, one should not too hastily dismiss Kulikov's potential. If the next Minister of Defense is selected from the ranks of the military, Kulikov has to be regarded as a probable choice. The fact that he is now first or second in line for the position of Minister is not of primary concern.

Victor Kulikov, a man who at the age of 50 was the youngest man ever to ascend to the post of Chief of the General Staff of Soviet Armed Forces, is important because he represents a new generation in the top leadership of the military. He is typical of a breed of Soviet officers who fought in World War II as young men. Most commanded units below regimental level. For all of them, the only combat experience they have ever had is now over thirty years old! All will be assuming positions of influence and authority in the Soviet Armed Forces of today. It is important that the backgrounds and thoughts of this new generation of top Soviet military leadership become well known and understood. This research report was prepared for that purpose.



## APPENDICES

- Appendix A. Soviet Army Military Ranks Compared to U. S. Army  
Military Ranks
- Appendix B. Former Chiefs of the General Staff (or its equivalent)
- Appendix C. Chronicle of Major Events in Kulikov's Life

## APPENDIX A

## SOVIET ARMY MILITARY RANKS COMPARED TO U.S. ARMY MILITARY RANKS

<u>SOVIET</u>	<u>U.S. EQUIVALENT</u>
Marshal of the Soviet Union	General of the Army
Chief Marshal of a Branch/Service	None
Marshal of a Service/Branch	None
General of the Army	General
Colonel General	Lieutenant General
Lieutenant General	Major General
Major General	Brigadier General
Colonel	Colonel
Lieutenant Colonel	Lieutenant Colonel
Major	Major
Captain	Captain
Senior Lieutenant	First Lieutenant
Lieutenant	Second Lieutenant
Junior Lieutenant	None

## APPENDIX B

FORMER CHIEFS OF THE GENERAL STAFF  
(or its equivalent)

M. V. Frunze	April 19 - January 1925
M. I. Tukhachevskii	November 1925 - May 1928
B. M. Shaposhnikov	May 1928 - May 1931
B. K. Triandafilov	May 1931 - July 1931
A. I. Egorov	July 1931 - May 1937
B. M. Shaposhnikov	May 1937 - August 1940
K. A. Meretskov	August 1940 - January 1941
G. K. Zhukov	February 1941 - July 1941
B. M. Shaposhnikov	August 1941 - May 1942
A. M. Vasilevskii	June 1942 - February 1945
A. I. Antonov	February 1945 - March 1946
A. M. Vaselevskii	March 1946 - November 1948
S. M. Shtemenko	November 1948 - May 1952
V. D. Sokolovskii	May 1952 - April 1960
M. V. Sakharov	April 1960 - March 1963
S. S. Biryuzov	April 1963 - October 1964
M. V. Sakharov	November 1964 - September 1971
V. G. Kulikov	September 1971 - 9 January 1977
N. V. Ogarkov	9 January 1977 -----

## APPENDIX C.

## CHRONICLE OF MAJOR EVENTS IN KULIKOV'S LIFE

- 1921 July 5, Birth of Victor G. Kulikov
- 1921-3 13 July 1921 Maxim Gorky appealed to the world for help to fight a famine in Russia.
- 1928 The First Five Year Plan and Collectivization
- 1934 Purges by Stalin begin
- 1935 On September 9, a system of military rank was introduced in the Red Army.
- 1939 Victor Kulikov enters the military academy at Groznyi
- 1939-40 He qualifies as a tank-unit commander in the Winter Campaign against Finland.
- 1940 Kulikov is a member of the Soviet occupation force in Estonia and later, Bessarabia.
- 1941 He participates in the battle for Kiev.
- 1942 Kulikov joins the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and is promoted that same year to the rank of Senior Lieutenant.
- 1943 On January 6, new uniforms for officers were introduced in the Soviet Army. Officers began wearing rank on epaulets.
- 1943 Kulikov works in Murmansk as a tank specialist supervising the delivery of American equipment.
- 1944 Kulikov is promoted to Lt. Colonel. He served as a member of a Soviet Delegation to the United Nations.
- 1947 He completes the advanced school for Armor officers.
- 1953 Kulikov graduates from the M. V. Frunze Military Academy.
- 1956 He is selected to attend the 20th Communist Party Congress as a delegate from Irkutsk.

- 1959 Graduation from the General Staff Academy
- 1962 Kulikov receives his first star.
- 1965 He delivers a keynote speech at the celebration of the 25th Anniversary of the Estonian Republic.
- 1965-67 Kulikov is Commander of the Murmansk Military District and is promoted to the rank of Lieutenant General.
- 1967 In March of this year, Kulikov was promoted to Colonel General and in May he is announced as the new Commander of the Kiev Military District.
- 1967-69 Commander of the Kiev Military District
- December 1969-September 1971 Commander - Group of Soviet Forces Germany
- 1970 In March of this year, Kulikov is promoted to the rank of General of the Army
- April 1971 Kulikov is elected to the Central Committee of the Communist Party.
- 22 September 1971 - He is announced as the successor to Marshal Zakharov as Chief of the General Staff
- 8 January 1977 - Kulikov assumes the position of Commander of the Warsaw Pact.
- 14 January 1977 - Kulikov is promoted to Marshal of the Soviet Union.

FOOTNOTES

## FOOTNOTES

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