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**THE SOVIET BATTALION, ITS COMMANDER,  
AND COMBINED - ARMS WARFARE**

**A Monograph  
by  
Major James P. Mault  
Adjutant General Corps**

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**School of Advanced Military Studies  
United States Army Command and General Staff College  
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Many Western analysts believe that junior Soviet officers lack initiative, experience, and technical competence, and that Soviet tactics consist solely of hackneyed drills. However, observations of training and articles in Soviet military journals indicate that battalion commanders have improved considerably, although they still have problems with tempo and the employment of supporting fires.

The monograph concludes that the quality of Soviet tactical leaders lags behind the ever-increasing capabilities of the maneuver battalion force structure. However, the gap is closing, the Soviets recognize their problems, and they are solving them, albeit slowly. This evolution of Soviet military doctrine is almost certainly tied to Soviet conventional arms reduction proposals, and should be integral to NATO's counter-proposal options.

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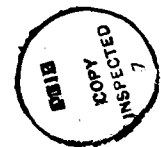
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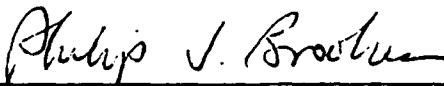
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## ABSTRACT

THE SOVIET BATTALION, ITS COMMANDER, AND COMBINED-ARMS WARFARE by Major James P. Mault, USA. 49 pages.

The purpose of this monograph is to evaluate the current capability of Soviet motor rifle and tank battalion commanders. Since the end of World War II, the Soviets have frequently reorganized their ground forces, each time combining arms at lower and lower echelons. Currently they are experimenting with Unified Corps, which are divided into brigades, having subordinate "combined-arms" battalions of both tanks and BMPs. This appears to be the formalization of field task organization policies, and it reflects a certain amount of confidence in the tactical abilities of junior Soviet officers. Is that confidence well-founded, and how has it developed over time?

As World War II progressed, the Soviets began giving some battalions increased responsibility and independent missions as forward detachments. Not all battalion commanders were capable of this, but several of those who were, rose to positions of authority after the war and helped shape future force structure and doctrine. Technological developments enhanced mobility and firepower, and increased the size, scope, and tempo of the battlefield. As a result, the Soviets sought a structure and a junior commander which could cope. By 1980, the regiment had become a true combined-arms organization and military theorists renewed emphasis on tactics with the publication of Taktika, Forward Detachments in Combat, and The Motor Rifle (Tank) Battalion in Combat. The focus since 1980 has been on the battalion.

Many Western analysts believe that junior Soviet officers lack initiative, experience, and technical competence, and that Soviet tactics consist solely of hackneyed drills. However, observations of training and articles in Soviet military journals indicate that battalion commanders have improved considerably, although they still have problems with tempo and the employment of supporting fires.

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## INTRODUCTION

According to the latest Soviet Military Power, the Soviet Army is experimenting with the formation of a new organization, called the Unified Army Corps (UAC). The UAC, unlike divisions which have subordinate regiments of tank and motor rifle battalions, is subdivided into brigades of combined-arms battalions. These combined battalions have a mixture of both tank and BMP companies, and are likely complemented by organic artillery, air defense, anti-tank, chemical, engineer, and other support podrazdeleniye (subunits)<sup>1</sup>. It appears that this new organization is the institutionalization of the current Soviet practice of attaching artillery, engineer, chemical, and tank or motor rifle podrazdeleniye from regimental assets to motor rifle or tank battalions (MRBs or TBs) during tactical exercises. Creation of the UAC also reflects the confidence which the Soviet high command has in their maneuver battalion commanders' technical and tactical ability to successfully employ these varied all-arms assets under combat conditions.

Despite this, there exists considerable doubt about the capabilities of these junior officers,<sup>2</sup> some of which stems from World War II experiences. For



example, German Major General F. W. von Mellenthin in Panzer Battles, described junior Soviet officers as

. . . clumsy and unable to take [make] decisions; because of draconian discipline they were afraid of shouldering responsibility. Purely rigid training squeezed the lower commanders into the vice of manuals and regulations, and robbed them of the initiative and originality which are vital to a good tactician.<sup>3</sup>

Today observers voice similar opinions. An air force officer, for example, wrote that the "inability to develop the necessary degree of tactical initiative makes it likely that [Soviet tactical level commanders] should not be able to adapt rapidly to changing conditions."<sup>4</sup> One American army general, after watching a Soviet demonstration exercise commented that if they advance in combat as they do during exercises, his gunners will have a "turkey shoot."<sup>5</sup>

Even the Soviet military press has been wrestling with this issue for some time. On one hand, it often expresses concern about limited initiative, technical incompetence, and slow decision making of junior officers, and the frequency of stereotypical tactical training. Yet on the other hand, it routinely includes accounts of junior officers who performed adequately and admirably during exercises. It also routinely prints articles from current and former battalion commanders, who describe their own

successful command and control methods and offer innovative suggestions on tactical employment issues.

Since the early 1980s, the Soviet military hierarchy has shown renewed interest in ground tactics. They have published two editions of the tactical manual Taktika this decade, when the most recent previous version dated from 1966. In 1986, they issued both The Motorized Rifle (Tank) Battalion in Combat and Forward Detachments in Combat. These publications, articles in Voyennyy vestnik (Military Herald), Voyenno-istoricheskiy zhurnal (Military-historical Journal), and Krasnaya zvezda (Red Star), and force structure changes, as evidenced by the UAC, all indicate that the focal point of doctrine and organization in the Soviet ground forces is at the battalion level.

This trend leads to many questions about the leader who will command those Soviet battalions. Is the current battalion commander, often only a captain or major in his late twenties, capable of successfully performing all the tasks now required? Can he adequately motivate and train his conscript soldiers to employ their tanks or BMPs in proper synchronization with the other assets of the battalion and with higher headquarters' support? Can he demonstrate the initiative, independence, and

decisiveness required by the time, space, and tempo factors inherent in the modern battlefield? In short, is the Soviet tactical system broken as many analysts hold, or has the army so refined podrazdeleniye command and organization that the system now works "well enough," given Soviet doctrine and Russian temperament?

In this paper, I intend to answer these questions by looking at the historical evolution of the (motor) rifle and tank battalion, the role of the battalion commander, the expectations the military hierarchy has had of him, and the success the commander has had in meeting those standards imposed by the system. Starting with the 1930s, I will identify the roots of today's combined-arms tactical concepts and explain how they were executed at battalion level in the Great Patriotic War. Next, I will analyze the modernization and organizational changes in the ground forces, from the 1950s through the 1970s, and their impact at the battalion level. Finally, I will review, in detail, the current decade to determine the extent of Soviet success in developing capable combined-arms battalion commanders, and what the results bode for the United States and NATO in the future.

BACKGROUND: THE 1930s AND THE GREAT PATRIOTIC WAR

Echoing the ideas and works of Tukhachevskiy and Triandafillov, the 1936 Red Army Provisional Field Regulations emphasized the importance of combined-arms cooperation, rapid maneuver, and commanders' personal initiative to achieve success in future war. The regulations affirmed that infantry in close cooperation with artillery and tanks decides the outcome of battles, and that personal initiative is of the utmost importance, especially when sudden changes occur in the combat situation.<sup>6</sup>

These regulations gave the battalion commander considerable responsibility for the control and employment of combined arms.<sup>7</sup> For example, it directed the maneuver battalion commander to take attached tank and artillery commanders on personal reconnaissance prior to battle, and ensure that proper cooperation was maintained between the artillery, the tanks, and the infantry.<sup>8</sup> The commander would receive attached tanks to support his infantry units, and in offensive actions he could even place these tanks under control of his infantry platoon or company commanders. Direct support artillery battalions were also to respond to orders from the infantry battalion commander (sometimes company) whom they supported.

These concepts closely replicate the responsibilities of today's MRB and TB commanders; however, the Red Army of the late 1930s and early 1940s was not yet up to the task.

There were two major reasons for their failings. First, Stalin's brutal purges destroyed the senior level command of the army, which caused a crippling chain reaction throughout the junior officer ranks. According to Robert Conquest, the purges led to the removal of: three of five marshals; 14 of 16 army commanders; 60 of 67 corps commanders; 136 of 199 division commanders; and 221 of 397 brigade commanders.<sup>9</sup> In total, about one-third to one-half the officer corps (totalling about 70,000) was either shot or imprisoned. The effects of these losses on the Red Army's tactical abilities became apparent during the Russo-Finnish War, where:

[a]t the company/battery and infantry- and artillery-battalion level the lack of proper coordination with other arms was especially marked. The officers simply did not know how to use their forces properly nor did they understand the possibilities of other arms. The infantry was not properly trained for close-in fighting, nor could it always take proper advantage of artillery support during the offense.<sup>10</sup>

When the Germans invaded the USSR in June 1941, inexperienced commanders abounded in the Soviet ranks. Officers, who had recently headed companies and

battalions, were now commanding divisions and corps. Is there any wonder why the Soviets had problems with combined-arms warfare at all levels in 1941, when the experienced junior leaders had either already been promoted (often beyond their level of competence), were imprisoned, or were dead?

Second, heavy losses of equipment in the early days of the war complicated and hampered the army's combined-arms capabilities. To make better use of their remaining assets, the Soviets quickly disbanded their large rifle and mechanized corps and created smaller armies of rifle brigades and divisions. Some field artillery and anti-air units were withdrawn from rifle divisions and armies, and placed directly under the High Command where they could be allocated depending on the needs of the battlefield. Tank brigades, regiments, and battalions were formed for infantry support and counterattack missions. However, they were often parcelled out piecemeal to infantry podrazdeleniya, leaving none for exploitation or counterattack.<sup>11</sup>

As a result, on 22 January 1942 the Stavka ordered that tank brigades and separate tank battalions would not be divided when committed. These units were generally assigned to armies or corps and employed in close connection with infantry, artillery

and aviation units.<sup>12</sup> The combined-arms concept remained strong, but because of the limited assets and few capable commanders, the lowest element of combined-arms control, apart from these tanks units, was now placed at the regiment/division level. While the 1936 Field Regulations spoke of tanks, artillery, and infantry under a battalion commander, the 1942 version addressed only pure battalions, making the line battalion, at least for a time, a mere cog in a developing operational machine.

Reviewing accounts of Soviet unit deployments during the Great Patriotic War leaves little wonder why German commanders such as Mellenthin, Manstein, and Guderian claimed to have seen minimal initiative on the part of junior Soviet officers. In 1941 at the battle of Moscow, the Red Army averaged 0.8-1 battalion per KM of front; by the summer of 1942 this had grown to 2-4 battalions per KM, and in 1943-45 it was 6-8.<sup>13</sup> At Kursk and Yassy-Kishinev, some rifle corps even reached 9 battalions per KM.<sup>14</sup> With 8 or 9 battalions operating across one kilometer, it was probably quite difficult for a battalion commander to demonstrate any independent thought or action. However, just because one showed no initiative when operating as part of a larger body, there is no reason to assume that given a different set of circumstances

a commander would not relish the opportunity to make his own decisions, to control and maneuver his unit independently, and to demonstrate his technical competence. This is precisely what occurred when battalions and brigades<sup>15</sup> became forward detachments for their parent organizations.

According to the Soviet Dictionary of Basic Military Terms, a forward detachment (or peredovoy otryad) consists

of a tank (or motorized infantry) subunit (or unit), reinforced by subunits of special troops. In offensive combat, [it] is put out ahead of a combined-arms unit (or formation) to seize and hold important lines and objectives, major road junctions, mountain passes, [and] bridgeheads . . . , pending arrival of the main body. In defensive combat, [it] . . . conduct[s] defensive actions in the security zone.<sup>16</sup>

In the early days of the war, forward detachments were not very effective because of inexperienced commanders and limited mobile equipment, but by late 1941 at the battle of Moscow, they began to show their worth. Colonel Mikhail Katukov commander of the 4th Tank Brigade (of the 1st Guards Rifle Corps) conducted a masterful defense against Guderian's 4th Panzer Division near Mtsensk by using camouflage, deception, and ambushes. For seven days, he held Guderian's advance to only 30 KM, allowing the Soviet Army time to reinforce its defenses near Tula.<sup>17</sup>

Initially, forward detachments were formed around



tank battalions by attaching supporting units, such as machine guns, reconnaissance, engineers, as well as an anti-tank battery, mortar battery, and 1-3 artillery batteries. There were some cases of rifle battalions also acting as forward detachments, especially in the defense. In the North Caucasus, for example, the 383rd Rifle Division employed three forward detachments, ranging in size from a reinforced company to a reinforced battalion; they managed to hold off a larger attacking German force for three days.<sup>18</sup> Although the rifle battalions lacked organic mobility, they were at times successful even in the offensive, especially when their commanders improvised by having the infantry ride on tanks, trucks, or wagons. Some even used skis to enhance their mobility.<sup>19</sup> By mid-1943, many forward detachments were larger, forming around tank, mechanized, or motorized brigades, and reinforced by as much as a regiment of artillery, plus anti-tank, air defense, and engineer battalions. To understand just how far advanced forward detachments were from the main body of Soviet forces, one should note that tank armies generally led attacking rifle armies by up to 120 KM. Brigades of the army's tank corps were often separated by up to 40 KM, and the forward detachments were usually about 60 KM in front of them!<sup>20</sup>

The 7th Guards Tank Corps of the 3rd Guards Tank Army (GTA) often employed the reinforced 55th Guards Tank Brigade (Gds Tank Bde), commanded by David A. Dragunskiy (now a Gen-Col), as its forward detachment. In this capacity, Dragunskiy noted that he usually received "mission type orders" directly from Gen Rybalko, the army commander. For example, in 1943 near Kiev, he received a simple command: rest tonight, tomorrow bypass the city of Fastov, break to the rear of the enemy, seize Pavoloch, dig in, and wait for the arrival of the main body. On another occasion, Dragunskiy received just a map with the order to take Velyun in the morning, although it was 120 KM away. He did!<sup>21</sup> On one occasion, his brigade had the mission of seizing the transportation center of Yendzheyuv and preventing the German troops there from withdrawing. When Dragunskiy realized that he could not accomplish this from the east, he circled the city and successfully attacked the defenders from the west.<sup>22</sup> Such independent action was not uncommon for commanders of forward detachments.

Certainly, not all Soviet battalion and brigade commanders were dynamic and free-thinking masters of combined-arms tactics; yet, there were enough capable commanders available that armies were able both to rotate the task among several units and to create

multiple detachments simultaneously. The 7th Gds Tank Corps, mentioned above, changed its forward detachment five times between 14 and 24 January 1945. The 1st Gds Mechanized Corps of 2nd GTA changed six times in less than two weeks during the same month.<sup>23</sup> In 1944 in the Crimea, the 2nd GTA first echelon had eleven forward detachments, and in the Mogilev offensive, the 13th and 49th Armies each had eight operating in its area.<sup>24</sup>

By 1944, the junior Soviet officer had done much to redeem himself for the failures of 1941. Even von Mellenthin, once so critical (see p. 2), acknowledged

large armored and mechanized formations developed into a highly mobile and keenly edged tool, handled by daring and capable commanders. Even the junior officers became remarkably efficient.<sup>25</sup>

The Soviets, too, took notice and returned some responsibility for combined-arms coordination to the battalion commander. By 1945, companies and battalions of both close support tanks and artillery were often attached to support individual rifle battalions.<sup>26</sup> The 1944 Field Regulations further determined that battalions needed "at least 3 hours of daylight for work on the terrain" in preparation for an operation.<sup>27</sup> Since commanders of forward detachments usually took two to three hours to prepare their podrazdeleniye, the 1944 Regulations, in

effect, considered the average commander nearly as capable.

Even though only a minority of junior officers ever controlled a forward detachment during the war, several who did, rose to influential positions afterwards. They became marshals and generals, and played major roles in the doctrinal and organizational development of the Soviet Army in the postwar years. To identify just a few, A. Kh. Babadzhanyan became a Marshal and Commander of Armored Forces; O. A. Losik-- Marshal and Commandant of the Malinovskiy Tank Academy; I. I. Gusakovskiy--General, Commander of the Baltic Military District and subsequently Chief of the Cadres Department; D. A. Dragunskiy--General-Colonel and Commandant of the Vystrel Course; and I. I. Yakubovskiy--Marshal of the Soviet Union, CINC of the Warsaw Pact and First Deputy Minister of Defense.<sup>28</sup>

#### THE POSTWAR YEARS (1945 TO 1980)

Any tactics corresponds [sic] to a certain historical era: if the type of weapons changes or technological improvements are introduced, then at the same time there is a change in the forms of military organization and methods of leading troops.<sup>29</sup>

These words were spoken in the 1920s by War Commissar Mikhail Frunze, but they were still

applicable in 1945 and continue to be so to this very day. Since the end of World War II, Soviet military doctrine has evolved to ensure the harmonious integration of past experiences with current technological realities in order to effect continual improvements in force structure, organization, tactics, training, and command and control (C<sup>2</sup>). Therefore, as new equipments were developed and deployed, the ground forces have undergone force restructuring roughly every five years from the late 1940s to today. The effect of these reorganizations has been that with each new iteration, more and more responsibility for the employment of combined-arms weaponry has been given to successively lower and lower levels of command.

After the war, Stalin's Permanent Operating Principles<sup>30</sup> drove doctrine, so wartime organization was modified only slightly until his death in 1953. His goal was to further improve the successful infantry-tank-artillery team; hence, modern equipment, having enhanced firepower and mobility, was added to the divisions. Rifle divisions kept their name, but became motorized with the addition of trucks. They also acquired their own organic tank regiment of 52 tanks. Tank and mechanized (mech) corps were redesignated tank and mechanized divisions, with their

subordinate brigades becoming regiments. Otherwise, these units stayed much the same as they were at the end of the war, with the exception of some modest changes in personnel and tank authorizations, and the deployment of the new wheeled BTR-152 armored personnel carrier (APC) and the T-54 tank in 1948 and 1949, respectively.<sup>31</sup> It should be noted that the mechanized regiments were becoming all-arms units, with three mech battalions, a medium TB (with 35 tanks), six 120mm mortars, eighty 82mm mortars, 257 vehicles, and 2711 troops, of which 1510 were riflemen.<sup>32</sup>

Let us take a look now at developments in these regiments since then. In about 1957, rifle and mechanized divisions were reformed into new, more flexible motor rifle divisions (MRDs). At that time, the MRRs of these new MRDs had 1800 personnel, 31 T-54/55 tanks, 66 wheeled BTR-152 armored personnel carriers (APCs), and nine 82mm mortars. They had no organic artillery or air defense. By the mid-1960s, the regiment replaced the BTR-152s with 105 BTR-60s and acquired a battery of six D-30 122mm howitzers. In 1967 the Soviets deployed their first tracked infantry fighting vehicle, the BMP-1. In each MRD, one of the three MRRs re-equipped with 102 BMPs, in lieu of the BTRs. During the early 1970s, MRRs grew to

about 2400 personnel, expanded the tank battalion to forty T-62s, acquired a battery of four ZSU-23-4 self-propelled (SP) anti-aircraft guns; increased their organic artillery to a battalion of 18, and created three mortar batteries of six 120mm mortars each (one per MRB, replacing the nine 82mm mortars listed above). After 1972, the air defense battery gained four SA-9 surface to air missile (SAM) launchers in addition to the ZSU-23-4s; and after 1974, the BMP-equipped MRRs began replacing their D-30s with an SP version, called the 2S1. Finally in 1980, MR companies expanded from ten to twelve BMPs/BTRs, giving each battalion 43 and each regiment about 133 BMPs/BTRs. Also beginning that year, the mortar battery expanded from six to eight mortars, so each regiment now has 24 120mm mortars. Lastly each MRB formed an automatic grenade launcher platoon of eight AGS-17s (24 per MRR).<sup>33</sup>

Today, an MRB commander has three MR companies, a mortar battery, grenade launcher platoon, air defense platoon, materiel support and signal platoons, a medical section, and in BTR-equipped battalions an anti-tank platoon. In addition, during exercises the commander will likely receive as attachments from his regiment any or all of the following: an artillery battery (possibly up to a battalion), a tank company

(at times two), an air defense platoon or battery, an engineer platoon or company, and a chemical defense platoon. Is there any wonder why a captain or major with about eight years experience might be overwhelmed?

Sometime in the late 1960s Soviet military theorists began discussing the growing complexity of ground operations, be they nuclear or conventional. These works focused on tactical and operational techniques, and on the moral-political aspect of command. They were rooted in World War II experiences, but relied heavily on the current reality of the expanded battlefield, which required a level of technical, tactical, and leadership excellence that had heretofore not been required in the Soviet Army. In The Basic Principles of Operational Art and Tactics, Col Vasilii Savkin put it quite succinctly when he wrote about new demands placed on commanders:

Contemporary warfare presents particularly high demands on the organizational capabilities of the command personnel. . . .

Under these conditions, success in battle or operation will depend on the profound and comprehensive training of military personnel and the training and education of personnel of the army. Success will be attained by the one who surpasses the enemy in mastery of troops, in quality of command personnel, and in level of development of military theory and military art (emphasis added).<sup>34</sup>

He and others, such as Reznichenko, who wrote



Taktika, and Sidorenko, author of The Offensive, all identified the emerging requirements of modern combat as: coordination of tanks, artillery, infantry, and aviation; moral-psychological preparation of all ranks; timely and appropriate reaction to rapidly changing situation; high tempo movement; reduced decision making time; improved troop control; more independent action; elimination of stereotyped execution; rapid concentration of fires; and dispersion of troops.

Yet despite these "situational imperatives," other military authors were at the same addressing inherent flaws in both leadership and execution. Nathan Leites and Herbert Goldhamer have conducted thorough review of the Soviet military press during the 1970s and identified several of them: slow decision making; over-reliance on the initial plan; a reluctance to be held responsible; over concern for minutiae; and cheating to beat the "norms."<sup>35</sup>

As mentioned in the introduction of this monograph, the Soviets are continuing their restructuring process today, by experimenting with new combined-arms battalions, which include both tanks and BMPs, and large amounts of other support equipment. After having successfully accomplished the Herculean task of reorganizing the ground forces and enhancing

their capacity for combined-arms combat during the 1970s, where do the Soviets stand now in the late 1980s with their efforts to mold a more decisive, independent, and proficient junior commander? Herein lies one of the major question concerning the Soviet Army today--"Just how good is their battalion commander; can he successfully employ all the assets now given to him and can he adequately make all the decisions now required of him"?

#### THE PRESENT

When Savkin, Reznichenko, and Sidorenko wrote their series of books in the early 1970s they put most of their emphasis on nuclear war and the operational level of war. However, by the start of the 1980s, Soviet military doctrine had expanded to include the possibility that a future war with the West might be waged successfully by purely conventional means. Hence, their military theorists began focusing more and more on conventional tactics and tactical C<sup>2</sup>.

When Reznichenko's Taktika appeared in 1984, it was the first Soviet tactical treatise since Reznichenko wrote the initial version 18 years previously. He opened this new book announcing that it was designed as a textbook for officers and

students at military academies in order to improve their tactical skills:

An officer should be highly educated in terms of military technology; he should know and skillfully apply, in combat, the new methods of action developed by modern tactics; he should be [able to] exploit the growing capabilities of formations, units and subunits of all combat arms; he should participate in developing scientifically based tactical principles and methods of combat actions in line with possibilities of combat resource development. It is the aim of this book--Tactics--to help him in this. . . . [T]he authors hope that it will serve to improve the tactical training of command personnel and help broaden their outlook on the operational and tactical level and to systematize progressive training practice . . . (emphasis added).<sup>36</sup>

And lest there be any doubt about the relevance of the study of tactics, Reznichenko unequivocally defined it as "the most dynamic domain of the art of war."<sup>37</sup>

Such acclaim for tactics might come as somewhat of a surprise to those who believe that the Soviets so revere their operational art that they neglect tactics. However, Reznichenko's comments are not that unlike those of Gen-Maj A. A. Svechin in 1927 (in Strategiya), who said: "tactics makes the steps from which operational leaps are assembled."<sup>38</sup>

Unquestionably, the Soviets recognize that one level of military art depends upon the other--both then and now.

Following this, Reznichenko listed and explained the characteristics of modern combined-arms combat and

the principles a commander must follow when conducting such operations. The characteristics are:

decisiveness, maneuverability, intensity, fast evolution, rapid and drastic changes in situation, diversity of methods, and the likelihood of high momentum on the ground, in the air, at great depths and along broad fronts.<sup>39</sup> The principles are:

A constantly high level of combat readiness.

Great aggressiveness, resolve, and continuity.

Surprise.

Coordinated joint employment of the combat arms and combat service support troops, and the maintenance of continuous cooperation.

The decisive concentration of the main troop efforts on the main axis at the necessary time.

Maneuver of resources, nuclear strikes, and fire.

Due regard for the use of moral-political and psychological factors.

Comprehensive support.

Maintenance and timely restoration of troop fighting efficiency.

Firm and continuous troop control and determination to achieve the planned objectives and to implement decisions made and missions assigned.<sup>40</sup>

Of these principles, three warrant special attention.

Coordination and cooperation--or synchronization, as they are called in FM 100-5--are major issues in the development of Soviet tactical skills.

Cooperation has been mentioned in nearly every article

I have found on battalion tactics; one author

commented that "the organizing and maintaining

coordination have become the most important elements

of the commander's work."<sup>41</sup> Coordination and

cooperation encompass the employment of assigned and attached weapons systems, task organization of podrazdeleniye, phasing of the operation, and coordination with adjacent and supporting units. Successful execution of these tenets requires a thorough understanding of the mission, properly calculated force ratios, correct control measures, and constant focus on mission accomplishment. Finally, the transfer of timely information to the senior commander is also critical. Considering the importance placed on cooperation and coordination in Taktika, and by the many references to them in Voyennyy vestnik, I believe that they constitute an area where Soviet military leaders want their battalion commanders to become better versed. By implication, many battalion commanders today are having problems ensuring that they are accomplished successfully.

Second, Taktika portrays surprise as a significant force multiplier. For the Soviets, surprise has the added meaning of organizing and deploying in a manner not expected by the enemy. It includes use of night operations, reduction of decision time, and avoidance of stereotypical combat formations, such as modifying norms based on the situation.

Third, despite the Spartan conditions which

Soviet conscripts must endure, the harshness and the cruelty, commanders are required to care for their soldiers' morale, welfare, and moral-political development. Certainly, this is not an area where junior (or even senior) officers have been successful or even concerned; at least that was the case before Mikhail Gorbachev became Party General Secretary. Gorbachev and his perestroika are now having an even more pronounced impact on the military than on the civilian sector. One goal of this program is to make the conscript's memory of his tour of duty more positive. Gorbachev and his supporters believe that contented soldiers will be good soldiers; they hope that those good soldiers will after discharge become diligent producer-citizens who will work hard to improve both society and the economy of the USSR.<sup>42</sup>

One final point on Taktika is worthy of mention: battalion operations now seek to penetrate to new depths. According to the 1984 edition, battalions in the offense receive an immediate objective of the enemy battalion's forward defenses, and a subsequent objective of the brigade (regiment) reserve. Further, a battalion will also have a "subsequent direction of the attack," which supports the regiment's mission.<sup>43</sup> This is a change from the objectives cited in the 1966 edition, in Sidorenko's

Offensive, and in the U.S. Army FM 100-2-1, The Soviet Army Operations and Tactics.<sup>44</sup> None of these three include the battalion's subsequent objective and they limit the immediate objective to either forward platoon and company strongpoints (FM 100-2-1) or to strong points of the first echelon battalion (1966 Taktika and Offensive). The depth and nature of these new objectives in Taktika signify that a battalion today can drive deeper and fight longer than its predecessor of twenty years ago. The increases in fires, mobility, and versatility, which resulted from the several reorganizations, have had a major effect on battalion capabilities. What remains is for the battalion commander to become better able to capitalize on his unit's added capabilities, including the ability to conduct independent operations.<sup>45</sup>

The next two battalion-level manuals to arrive were Forward Detachments in Combat by Col Sverdlov and The Motor Rifle (Tank) Battalion in Combat by Gen-Col Dragunskiy. Both works raise the standards expected of a 1980's battalion commander even higher than had Reznichenko. For example, in addition to the commanders role in coordination, planning, and reaction to a rapidly changing situation, both manuals alluded to a new, more dynamic and vigorous role for the battalion commander. It appears that the Soviets

are now looking for many of the same traits and characteristics that we in the U. S. Army seek from our battalion officers.

Dragunskiy wrote that commanders should not wait passively for a situation to develop, rather they should create the conditions which force the enemy into errors. He also addressed the need for commanders to think creatively, know and understand the enemy, and anticipate enemy action. Additionally, the commander should demonstrate boldness and initiative while complying with the regimental commander's concept of the operation.<sup>46</sup> Although this sounds similar to American concepts of "commander's intent" and auftragstaktik, it is not quite the same.

For the Soviet commander, initiative results when he makes an appropriate alteration to the plan, but only after the initial plan has become unworkable. He must also take responsibility for his decision, should it fail. Soviet initiative deals only with modification of the ways--never with the ends. They call it initsiativa komandera--"initiative of the commander," implying that it is not part of a non-commander's repertoire, and they define it as:

a creative, informal solution by a subordinate commander during an operation (or battle), which is part of a mission assigned to him, and the readiness to take a calculated risk in con-



nection with such a solution. [It] consists in striving to find the best method of fulfilling the assigned mission, in utilizing favorable opportunities, and in taking the most expedient measures promptly, without awaiting orders from one's immediate superior (emphasis added).+7

Soviets apparently have no problem with this definition or with manuals which place equal stress on both "control" and "initiative." In fact, they believe that these two terms complement, rather than contradict, each other.+8 Yet despite the acceptance of these concepts, junior leaders are having difficulty practicing them. We will address this in more detail later, but suffice it to say that in 1987, three years after publication of the 1984 Taktika, Reznichenko had to put out a second edition. One of the most noticeable changes in the 1987 version was the addition of a chapter on troop control and command. I believe that this would not have been necessary if the majority of battalion commanders were successfully discharging their duties within the guidelines found in The Motor Rifle (Tank) Battalion in Combat.

Two final points on Dragunskiy's book remain. First, it prescribed that commanders take terrain into account when planning and executing an operation. Terrain, wrote Dragunskiy, will affect one's choice of formation, employment of podrazdeleniye, fires, and

sequencing of action.<sup>49</sup> While the importance of terrain to the tactical commander is not new, the author plainly tells commanders that they cannot blindly apply norms, without modifying them for the conditions at hand. Evidence from Soviet military journals shows that there are still some commanders, however, who are having considerable difficulties adapting them to specific situations. My experience in U.S. and NATO exercises and review of western publications indicate that there are many in the West who assume that nearly all Soviet commanders rigidly apply norms in every instance. Both sides as a result have much to learn!

Lastly, The Motor Rifle (Tank) Battalion in Combat, accepts the reality that all commanders are not equal. In fact, it even advises the battalion commander to consider the personal qualities and experiences of his podrazdeleniye commanders when assigning them missions.<sup>50</sup> This suggests that the more difficult tasks, such as advanced guard or semi-independent missions, should go to the better-trained leaders. Based on some recent Voyennyy vestnik articles, as well as the added chapter appearing in the 1987 Taktika, it would appear that the regimental commander should also use similar discretion when giving independent or forward

detachment missions to his battalion commanders.

One might wonder that if senior Soviet military and political leaders do, in fact, recognize these problems with junior leader proficiency, why they continue insisting that battalions be employed independently as forward detachments? A close look at Forward Detachments in Combat answers this, for it shows that not all battalion commanders will get the opportunity. It specifically states that today both tank and BMP-equipped battalions are suited for the forward detachment mission, but it fails to mention BTR battalions. Also, the tirazh (number of copies printed) for Sverdlov's book is only 10,000; this is less than one-third that of Dragunskiy's and one-tenth of the 1987 Taktika. It appears from both the limited circulation and Sverdlov's reference to units which "specially train"<sup>51</sup> as forward detachments that not all battalions will perform that mission. I estimate that, for the present, not more than three or four battalions per division will train to operate as forward detachments. In an MRD, the three BMP battalions and the TB of the BMP-equipped MRR will likely be so trained. Similarly one TR from the Tank Division will also be so designated.<sup>52</sup>

Not unlike Clausewitz, the Soviets believe the proper application of initiative comes from knowledge.

They hold that knowledge comes from experience and experience comes through repetition and drills. Hence, it is no surprise that they consider training key in the development of both the battalion commander's initiative and the unit's combat effectiveness. Despite these beliefs, there can be no denial, even among Soviets themselves, that problems exist in tactical training today. Critics often cite examples of commanders who neglect their artillery or air defense until the very time they are needed (and by then it is too late to effectively employ them). There are examples of officers, who upon approaching a mine field, waste time trying to decide whether to breach it or to bypass. One commander spent 15 minutes on the radio trying to get instructions from his regimental commander. Finally, there is the problem of prior information. Commander often find out ahead of time what tasks he will have to perform during a particular field training examination. One battalion commander, knowing that he would be counterattacked, in anticipation oriented all his attention and weapons to his left, because on every previous exercise the counterattack had originated from the left!53

Yet despite these seemingly ubiquitous problems, there are scores of examples of successful

performances, many recorded each month in Voyennyy vestnik. Battalion commanders, identified by name, have succeeded in defeating "the enemy," by anticipating events, conducting deception, effectively coordinating artillery, helicopters, air defense, and planning for several contingencies prior to the operation. Others have been praised for taking risk. One commander split his force in order to destroy two parts of an opposing advanced guard. Another weighed his advanced guard heavily with tanks to defeat his opponent quickly and set up more favorable conditions for his own main body. Still another battalion commander limited his defensive force in one area so that he would have sufficient forces available for a counterattack in another. Certainly none of these are hackneyed performances.

Voyennyy vestnik periodically runs serials dealing with a particular tactical issues and major concerns. Titles have included: "Precise Coordination--the Guarantee of Victory in Battle (1980)," "Swiftness and Continuity of the Attack (1983)," and "Control of Subunits [battalions] in Battle (1987)." Each one starts with a keynote article and is followed up each month by letters and articles from battalion and regimental commanders, staff officers, and even Military District commanders and

officers of the General Staff. These usually provide detailed examples, both from training and from history, explaining how the task can be accomplished and how specific units have done it successfully. Here again, names are given of those commanders who had done well and those who had done poorly. Generally, the "good" names exceed the "bad" ones by a ratio of 3-5 (or more) to 1. But the numbers are not of great importance. What should matter to us is that not all Soviet commanders are alike; not all fit the "stereotyped" view.

The Soviet Army has about 202 divisions today, which equates to about 3,200 motor rifle and tank battalion commanders. The active U.S. Army, on the other hand, has somewhat less than 180. Like us, the Soviets have excellent, average, and poor battalion commanders--only they have a lot more of each type! If one were to assume the Soviet battalion commanders were equally divided between "excellent, average, and poor", there would be enough in the "excellent" category to fill out more than two-thirds of the Soviet divisions facing NATO, or all the potential forward detachments in entire army.

Despite the improving quality of Soviet battalion commander, there are a few systemic problems remaining, which will continue to plague him. First,

there is no qualified NCO corps to assist the commander and his officers. Warrants, or praporshchiki, help with maintenance, medical, and administration, but the officers are still required to do work that is usually done by NCOs in NATO battalions. Additionally, about 85% of both the TB and the MRB is made up of conscripts, one-fourth of whom rotate every six months. Without NCOs and with such a large turn-over, it is nearly impossible for the commander to build any continuity.

Secondly, there are very few officers in the battalions. An MRB has only 31 officers, and a TB 16. In a U.S. mechanized battalion, 5.3% of the personnel are officers; the MRB is 7.2% officers, but it lacks the NCO support present in the American battalion, and the situation becomes even worse, when we consider that six of those 31 officers man the mortar platoon. As a result, the battalion staff, by any standard, is minuscule: a Chief of Staff, a Deputy for Technical Affairs (maintenance and rear support), a Deputy for Political Affairs, a signal platoon commander, a medical warrant, and a supply warrant. This small staff is barely capable of coordinating the actions of all the attachments that the battalion can potentially receive; I sincerely doubt that it can control the larger combined-arms battalions of the UAC. True, the

regimental commander and his staff do have more of a role in supporting the battalion than does an American brigade staff; nevertheless, "the battalion staff as presently configured is likely to be severely stressed and may be incapable of employing all its assets to maximum advantage."64

Voyenny vestnik has recently addressed several problems with the performance of regimental staff officers. They are apparently so concerned with their own affairs and with paper work that they often neglect the battalions under them. Higher staff support is important to any commander, but it is essential to the Soviet MRB or TB commander in the 1980s. Unless improvements in regimental (brigade) staff procedures are made, or unless the battalion staff is enlarged, the Soviet Army will continue to have difficulty implementing its tactical doctrine satisfactorily.

In summary, the Soviet Army has made tremendous strides organizationally in less than twenty years. It has also made considerable improvements with its command and control, albeit more slowly and less dramatically than with the structural changes. Nevertheless, there are still gaps between what currently exists, what the Soviet Army wants, and what it can reasonably expect from its junior officers.



## THE FUTURE AND CONCLUSIONS

Most Western analysts who study the Soviet Armed Forces believe that the creation of corps and brigades are likely in the army's future. Yet, the Soviet Army has been experimenting with this new UAC since 1984 (possibly longer), and today there are still only two of them in the inventory. Perhaps the Defense Ministry never intended to replace all of their divisions with corps, or perhaps they are waiting to take this step when political events make it more palatable. It is more likely, however, that the Defense Ministry is waiting to cultivate a sufficient number of "excellent" battalion commanders before creating combined-arms battalions force wide.

We in the United States and NATO should expect that both force reorganization and leader development in the Soviet Army will continue to focus around the maneuver battalion. Clearly, the USSR shows no signs of slowing the process of structural changes ongoing since the end of World War II. Most recently, they added BMP-2s to their MRBs and the new ZSU-30-2 to some regiments.<sup>55</sup> The BMP-2 is a much better tank-killer than the BMP-1 and both new weapons provide enhanced air defense capability for the

battalion (and regiment). Even more significantly for our purposes in this study, both deployments will free-up the older BMPs and ZSU-23-4s for use elsewhere. Indications are that some MRDs in Group of Soviet Forces, Germany (GSFG) are now converting one of their BTR regiments to BMP.s. Since the ZSU-23-4 is already task organized to battalions during field exercises, would it not be likely for some of them to be reassigned to motor rifle and tank battalions, as they are replaced at regiment by the ZSU-30-2?

Although leader development is progressing at a slower pace, the Soviet Army has reason to expect a brighter future ahead. Young officers, many with combat experience in Afghanistan, are taking over battalions. They have worked directly with artillery and helicopter support units, and know first hand the importance of coordination and how to achieve continuous cooperation among supporting podrazdeleniye.

Similarly, younger officers are taking command of the Military Districts and Groups of Forces. Unlike their predecessors, they lack experience in the Great Patriotic War, but they seem to have more of an open mind about the merits of innovation and support for perestroyka. If their writings are any indication, they are bound to stress the following

during their tenures of command:

- more realistic training, with emphasis on defense, night operations, independent action, and all-arms coordination.

- improved regimental staff procedures, enhanced by command post exercises to ensure better assistance for subordinate battalions.

- improved training for junior officers, conducted personally by division and regimental commanders, to include training exercises without troops and quick decision exercises.

- improved quality of life for warrants, NCOs, and conscripts, to include better housing, facilities, treatment, and training (technical, tactical, and political).

For the past two years, Gorbachev has frequently expressed a willingness on the part of the USSR to make conventional force cuts at the upcoming Conventional Stability Talks in Vienna.<sup>57</sup> This goes hand-in-hand with his army's tactical improvement plans. A smaller force would be easier to equip and train. A reduction in force would eliminate several officers, with the bulk coming from the "bottom one-third." There would be fewer battalions, and proportionally more high-qualified captains and majors to command them. With a smaller active force, the army would need fewer conscripts, so it could take in only the best qualified (Russians and other Slavs rather than the large number of Central Asians and Tadzhiks needed today; those with more education; those best able to cope with sophisticated weaponry and

battlefield complexities). Similarly, a smaller manpower requirement might allow for longer conscriptions without adversely impacting on the economy. Longer tours would reduce personnel turn-over in battalions and thus enhance continuity and training.

For the U.S. and NATO the negotiation of conventional force reductions will be complicated and will require close monitoring of Soviet force structure and C<sup>2</sup> developments. What advantage would NATO gain by negotiating the withdrawal of ten Soviet divisions from Eastern Europe, only to have the Soviets replace them with five or six corps, having more lethality than the ten divisions? What would NATO gain by a mutual withdrawal of two American divisions and ten Soviet divisions, if the battalions of the remaining Soviet divisions become two, three or four times more capable over the next few years? While participating in the CST negotiations, NATO and the U.S. must keep close watch on ground force order of battle developments, on training, and on the performance of junior Soviet officers. All three should influence our choices of what to give up and how much to ask in return from the Soviets.

NATO and the United States can ill-afford the luxury of ignoring changes in Soviet force structure

and C<sup>2</sup>. We can no longer anticipate an adversary who is a norm-constrained, non-thinking automaton.

Although the success of Soviet Army's junior leader development lags behind that of its force structure, the gap is closing. And the Soviets can patiently await the outcome. Their unified military doctrine has brought them from near disaster in 1941 to the point now where they feel they might be able to win a conventional war in Europe. They believe that time will eventually remove that doubt if they stay the course.

It takes operational sense, tactical proficiency, and effective organization to achieve strategic ends. The Soviets know that, and act accordingly. Will we?

## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup>According to the Russian definition, a podrazdeleniye or subunit is a subordinate unit of a larger podrazdeleniye or chast'. A regiment is a chast', with its subunits being battalions and smaller units. A division, brigade, or corps is considered a combination of several chast' and is called a soyedineniye.

<sup>2</sup>In this monograph, junior Soviet officers are defined as those serving as battalion commanders and in lower positions. Generally, this means lieutenant colonels, majors and below. Conversely, for Americans, a battalion commander (lieutenant colonel) is considered a senior officer because of the time it takes to become one, the selection process, and the small number of battalions which exist (in comparison to the Soviet Army).

<sup>3</sup>F. W. von Mellenthin, Panzer Battles (New York: Ballentine Books, 1956), p. 353.

<sup>4</sup>Price T. Bingham, "NATO Needs a New Air Interdiction Approach," Armed Forces Journal International 124 (October 1986) reprinted in Tactical Dynamics (Fort Leavenworth, Kansas: AMSP Course Readings, 1988/89), p. 115.

<sup>5</sup>Scott D. Dean and Benjamin F. Schemmer, "Warsaw Pact Success Would Hinge on Blitzkrieg, US Army Observer Says," Armed Forces Journal International 125 (November 1987) : 32.

<sup>6</sup>Field Service Regulations, 1936. Translated by U.S. Army War College (Carlisle Barracks: U.S. Army War College, 1937), pp. 2 & 5.

<sup>7</sup>cited in Raymond Garthoff, Soviet Military Doctrine (Glencoe, Illinois: The Free Press, 1953), p. 180.

<sup>8</sup>Field Service Regulations, 1936, p. 48. Cooperation or vzaimodeystviye is also of major concern today. It entails proper employment, coordination, and exploitation of combined-arms weapon systems and combat support systems (such as engineers, reconnaissance), from units assigned, attached and those supporting. Its purpose is to synchronize their efforts to ensure a positive synergistic effect.

<sup>9</sup>Robert Conquest. The Great Terror (New York:

The Macmillan Co, 1968), p. 485.

<sup>10</sup>John Erickson. The Soviet High Command (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1984), p. 553.

<sup>11</sup>P. Rotmistrov, "Armored Troops," Military-historical Journal (January 1982). Translated by Foreign Broadcast Information Service JPRS 80772 (10 May 1982) : 26. V. Ye. Savkin, The Basic Principles of Operational Art and Tactics. Translated by U.S. Air Force. (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1972), pp. 142-43.

<sup>12</sup>Savkin, 144.

<sup>13</sup>Savkin, p. 136. David Glantz, The Great Patriotic War and the Maturation of Soviet Operational Art: 1941-1945 Draft Copy (Fort Leavenworth, Kansas: Soviet Army Studies Office, April 1987), pp. 5-15 & 5-42.

<sup>14</sup>Savkin, p. 217.

<sup>15</sup>Although this monograph deals with battalions, I include brigades here because during World War II Soviet tank brigades were approximately the same size as postwar tank battalions. Brigades had from 46 to 65 tanks; present day battalions range from 31 to 51.

<sup>16</sup>Dictionary of Basic Military Terms. Translated by the DGIS Multilingual Section, Translation Bureau Secretary of State Department, Ottawa, Canada (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1965), pp. 155-56.

<sup>17</sup>Richard Armstrong, "Soviet Tank Commanders." Military Review LXVII (November 1987) : 15-16.

<sup>18</sup>F. D. Sverdlov Peredovyye otryady v boyu [Forward Detachments in Combat] (Moscow: Voenizdat, 1986), p. 10.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid., pp. 10-11.

<sup>20</sup>David Glantz, "Overview of the Vistula-Oder Operation," reprinted in Readings in Soviet Operational Art (Fort Leavenworth, Kansas: U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, 5 January 1987), p. 223. The size of the forward detachment generally depended on the size of the parent unit. While corps generally employed reinforced brigades as forward detachments, rifle corps usually relied on truck-

mounted rifle regiments or battalions; divisions often used reinforced companies or battalions. For more detail, see COL Glantz's "Soviet Conduct of Tactical Maneuver: The Role of the Forward Detachment."

21D. Dragunskiy, "Tyranny of Time," Military Herald (December 1983). Translated by U.S. Army Foreign Science and Technology Center (FSTC-HT-8-85) : 77.

22N. Kireyev and N. Dovbenko, "From the Experience of Combat Employment of Forward Detachments of Tank (Mechanized) Corps," Voyenny-istoricheskiy zhurnal (September 1982) : 24-25.

23Ibid., p. 26.

24I. Vorob'yev. "Forward Detachments in Offensive Operations and Battles," Selected Readings from Soviet Military Thought, 1963-1973 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1982), p. 96.

25von Mellenthin, p. 361.

26V. G. Reznichenko, Taktika [Tactics]. Translated by CIS Multilingual Section, Translation Bureau, Secretary of State Department, Ottawa, Canada (Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1984), p. 82. Glantz, The Great Patriotic War and Maturation, p. 5-39.

27Red Army Field Regulations, 1944. Translated by Foreign Broadcast Information Service JPRS-UMA-85-006 (17 January 1985), p. 64.

28Kireyev and Dovbenko, p. 21.

29Cited in Savkin, p. 105.

30Stalin's Permanent Operating Principles were: stability of the rear; morale of the army; quantity and quality of divisions; equipment of the army; talent of commanders; and reserves.

31Rolf Hilmes and Guenter Lippert, "The Mechanization of the Infantry in the East and the West," Soldat und Technik (April 1984). Translated by Chief Intelligence and Security, NDHQ Ottawa, Canada, p. 5. Field Manual 100-2-3, The Soviet Army: Troops, Organization and Equipment (Washington, D.C.: HQ Department of the Army, 1984), p. 5-32. See also Tables in Glantz, The Great Patriotic War and



Maturation, pp. 5-32 to 5-35; and John Erickson, Lynn Hansen, and William Schneider, Soviet Ground Forces: An Operational Assessment (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1986), pp. 22-24.

<sup>32</sup>Erickson, Hansen, and Schneider, p. 24.

<sup>33</sup>There are multiple sources for this information. Erickson, Hansen, and Schneider, pp. 31-35. David Glantz, "Soviet Offensive Ground Doctrine Since 1945," Air University Review (March-April 1983) : 26-29. Field Manual 100-2-3. Guenter Lippert, "The GSFG --Four Decades of Soviet Troops in Germany," Soldat und Technik (November 1986). Translated by Foreign Broadcast Information Service (JPRS-EER-87-033, 6 March 1987). "The Soviet GSFG MR [motor rifle] Battalion Detailed," International Defense Review 18 (September 1985) : 1385.

<sup>34</sup>Savkin, p. 103.

<sup>35</sup>See Nathan Leites, Soviet Style in War (New York: Crane Russak, 1982) and Herbert Goldhamer The Soviet Soldier (New York: Crane Russak, 1975).

<sup>36</sup>Reznichenko, Taktika, p.2.

<sup>37</sup>Ibid. p. 4.

<sup>38</sup>Cited in a briefing by Col David Glantz at the School for Advanced Military Studies, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas on 17 August 1988.

<sup>39</sup>Reznichenko, Taktika, pp. 36-40.

<sup>40</sup>Ibid., pp. 41-58.

<sup>41</sup>V. Sokolov, "Precise Coordination Is the Guarantee of Victory in Battle," Military Herald (January 1980). Translated by U.S. Army Foreign Science and Technology Center (FSTC-HT-1239-80) : 33. I earlier described the term "cooperation" (vzaimodeystviye) in endnote number 7. It has nearly the same meaning as "coordination" (soglasovaniye). In one dictionary, the authors even translate both as "coordination." I believe the best way to comprehend their difference is that: "coordination" is what the battalion commander must do to ensure his subordinate commanders are able to make their weapons systems "cooperate" in support of the common mission.

\*2For discussion of this issue see Natalie Gross, "Perestroika and Glasnost in the Soviet Armed Forces," Parameters XVIII (September 1988) : 68-75. In addition, since early 1987 there have been numerous articles and speeches by senior military officers dealing with the commander's personal responsibility for the welfare, morale, and education of his soldiers.

\*3Reznichenko, Taktika, p. 77.

\*4A. A. Sidorenko, The Offensive. Translated under the auspices of the U. S. Air Force (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1970), p. 80. Field Manual 100-2-1, The Soviet Army: Operations and Tactics (Washington D.C. HQ Department of the Army, 1984), p. 5-15.

\*5Reznichenko, Taktika, p. 84.

\*6D. Dragunskiy, Motostrelkovyy (tankovyy) batal'on v boyu [Motor Rifle (Tank) Battalion in Combat] (Moscow: Voenizdat, 1986), p. .

\*7Dictionary of Basic Military Terms, p. 92.

\*8V. Reznichenko, Taktika [Tactics] (Moscow, Voenizdat, 1987), p. 100. Dragunskiy, Motostrelkovyy batal'on, p. 19.

\*9Dragunskiy, Ibid., p. 25.

\*10Ibid.

\*11Sverdlov, p. 7.

\*12Independent Tank Battalions (ITBs) might be used as forward detachments. They are large, having 51 tanks; their commanders are considered the best in the division. However, the ITB would need additional motor rifle and support assets, similar to that available to battalions in MRRs and TRs, in order to perform effectively as a forward detachment.

\*13Salmanov, G. I. "Instilling a Sense of Responsibility," Military Herald (November 1980). Translated by U.S. Army Foreign Science and Technology Center (FSTC-HT-1408-81) : 42.

\*14Kerry Blount, "The Soviet Maneuver Battalion Commander and His Staff," How They Fight (April-June 1988) : 6.

ssSoviet Military Power, (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1988), pp. 75-76 and "The Soviet GSFG MR Battalion Detailed," p. 1385.

ssLippert, "The GSFG--Four Decades of Soviet Troops in Germany," p. 36. and Viktor Suvorov, Inside the Soviet Army (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1982), p. 71.

s7The Conventional Stability Talks (CST) are scheduled to replace the Mutual and Balanced Force Reduction Talks which have been going on between NATO and the Warsaw Pact since 1972 in Vienna.

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