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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20505

25 June 1974

MEMORANDUM FOR: The Director of Central Intelligence
SUBJECT : MILITARY THOUGHT (USSR): The Control of Forces in a
Naval Landing Operation

1. The enclosed Intelligence Information Special Report is part of a series now in preparation based on the SECRET USSR Ministry of Defense publication Collection of Articles of the Journal "Military Thought". This article examines the factors involved in the successful control of forces in an amphibious landing operation conducted by the navies of allied socialist countries. It is concluded that the conduct of such landings is best accomplished by combining the forces and means of the allied navies, rather than keeping them separate in their original organizational structures. Since the length of the landing front is an important variable in resolving problems of control, sketches show the organizational structure of forces when landing on both broad and narrow fronts. This article appeared in Issue No. 3 (88) for 1969.

2. Because the source of this report is extremely sensitive, this document should be handled on a strict need-to-know basis within recipient agencies. For ease of reference, reports from this publication have been assigned

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William E. Nelson
Deputy Director for Operations

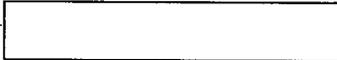
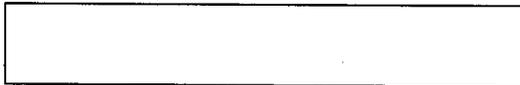
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Intelligence Information Special Report

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COUNTRY USSR

DATE OF INFO. Late 1969

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DATE 25 June 1974

SUBJECT

MILITARY THOUGHT (USSR): The Control of Forces in a Naval Landing Operation

SOURCE Documentary
Summary:

The following report is a translation from Russian of an article which appeared in Issue No. 3 (88) for 1969 of the SECRET USSR Ministry of Defense publication Collection of Articles of the Journal 'Military Thought'. The authors of this article are Captain First Rank O. Shulman and Captain First Rank N. Shmarov. This article examines the factors involved in the successful control of forces in an amphibious landing operation conducted by the navies of allied socialist countries. It is concluded that the conduct of such landings is best accomplished by combining the forces and means of the allied navies, rather than keeping them separate in their original organizational structures. Since the length of the landing front is an important variable in resolving problems of control, sketches show the organizational structure of forces when landing on both broad and narrow fronts.

End of Summary

[Redacted Box] Comment:

Captain First Rank O. V. Shulman wrote an article entitled "The Mine as a Weapon Under Contemporary Conditions", Morskoy Sbornik, No. 12, 1967. Captain First Rank N. Shmarov wrote two articles, one regarding submarine training and the other about technical knowhow of submarine commanders, Red Star, 30 November 1966 and 17 July 1965 respectively. The SECRET version of Military Thought was published three times annually and was distributed down to the level of division commander. It reportedly ceased publication at the end of 1970.

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Control of Forces in an Amphibious Landing Operation

by

Captain First Rank O. Shulman and

Captain First Rank N. Shmarov

The geographic locations of the socialist commonwealth countries and of the probable enemy allow us to consider that, of the many tasks that may have to be accomplished in an amphibious landing operation, one of the most important, especially at the beginning of the war, is the capture of islands of a straits zone. This is the reason why for the past several years, the navies and the ground forces of the Warsaw Pact countries have been working out all the details of conducting such operations jointly.

Theoretical research and accumulated experience both testify convincingly to the fact that the main condition for the effective use of allied forces in such an operation lies, first of all, in precise, scientifically founded organization of their control with due consideration to the special features of the national organization of the ground forces and navies of each country, the operational-tactical views that have been developed in them, the language differences, the degree of sophistication of the available communications means, etc.

It is generally assumed that the conduct of an amphibious landing operation for the capture of straits zone islands (as is the case in carrying out a number of other operations) is possible by employing one of the following two organizational forms of using forces, in the framework of which effective control can be attained.

First--by combining the forces and means of the allied navies into one combined navy; in this case, the control functions will belong to one of the allied naval commanders and his staff.

Second--the allied navies are not united into one combined navy, retaining their original organizational structure, but the control functions over the allied navies will be placed under the unified command of the Warsaw Pact countries.

From the standpoint of control of the forces in an amphibious landing operation, both these organizational forms have their positive and negative features.

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A positive feature of combining the navies is, first of all, the fact that there is no need for a special coordinating organ to direct the actions of each allied navy separately and to organize their coordination. Also, the organization of the landing force is simplified, and planning of its use is made easier. The coordination of the appropriate control organs of the combined navy with the front headquarters (or the control organ of the front) carrying out the overall direction of the landing operation is considered to be less complicated.

On the negative side is the fact that combining the forces and means of the allied navies leads to dual subordination. At the same time, this presents difficulties for the commander of the combined navy and his control organs in coordinating various measures with the plans and intentions of the commanders and staffs of the national navies. And all this increases the amount of work for the command and the organs planning the operation. Furthermore, if one takes into consideration that the problems of coordinating forces participating in the operation might not be worked out adequately in peacetime, then the whole complexity of organizing the control of the forces in the course of military operations becomes even more obvious.

If the allied navies are not brought together into a combined navy, a positive factor is that, first of all, each national navy possesses an organization and system of control developed in peacetime. Naturally, this makes it easier to conduct an operation.

In a number of cases it is possible to carry out an amphibious landing (albeit, as a rule, on a tactical scale) with the forces of only one of the navies (the other navies can be carrying out other tasks or operating on secondary axes). At the same time, it provides for better operational security and more stable control.

The main negative feature is the fact that a coordinating organ must be created every time to organize the coordination of several navies.

Additional difficulties also arise in connection with the fact that some of the allied navies do not have aircraft or submarines, which do happen to be especially needed to support a landing. This makes it necessary to allocate such forces from the navy that possesses them and, besides, to organize their operations in the zones of responsibility of the allied navies or in the theater of naval operations as a whole.

Finally, the organization of coordination with the front is also complicated, since it has to be carried out by the control organs of each allied navy.

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Of course, each of the abovementioned organizational forms for the use of naval forces also has other positive as well as negative features, depending on the specific conditions concerning their bases, the geographical features of the seas and, most important, of the straits zones, as well as by other factors. It simply would not be possible to examine them in this article, but they certainly must be considered when one has to decide which of the organizational forms for the use of forces is most suitable for carrying out an amphibious landing operation to capture straits zones.

Considering all the abovementioned circumstances, and bearing in mind the experience accumulated by the navies and the ground forces of the Warsaw Pact countries while conducting amphibious landing operations during maneuvers and exercises, we feel that it is to the overall advantage of all the countries of the socialist commonwealth that the navies of the allied countries be used on the basis of the principle of a combined navy.

Organizationally, it is necessary for the staff of the combined navy to have departments or permanent operations groups (it does not matter what they are called) representing the appropriate navies. These departments or permanent operations groups should be capable of providing the necessary operational-tactical information that may become necessary during the preparation of the amphibious landing, and of helping to process the incoming information from their own navies; in this way they will actively participate in the process of control. This must be reinforced by a reliably operating, automated, secure communications system at all levels of control, and not just between the headquarters of the coordinating allied navies.

An analysis of previous experience, as well as theoretical research conducted under conditions similar to the actual ones which will prevail when the islands of a straits zone are captured, show that it is most advisable to include the allied navies in the composition of the combined navy as independent operational formations consisting of permanent or temporary components of subunits, units and large units of ships of various classes, aviation, and naval infantry, without resubordinating them to the corresponding arms of forces of the combined navy. This approach will permit the preservation, without any changes, of the organizational structure by which the daily control of forces was previously carried out; and it will permit linking the top level of the allied navy control system with the overall control system of the combined navy. In this way it will be possible to achieve the necessary centralization of control of the forces participating in the landing of the amphibious assault force or in its support, while the intermediate control levels of the landing forces

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will be able to carry out their own functions more effectively (the appropriate intermediate levels are depicted horizontally in Sketch 1).

Of considerable importance in resolving the problems of control of the forces in a landing operation are the length of the landing front and the number of axes along which the landing is to be carried out.

A very long landing front makes it necessary to have several commanders of the landing force on each axis.

If, for example, the landing front is 120 to 150 kilometers wide and if, because of geographical features, the landing forces operating on different axes are separated from each other (landing on the islands of the straits zone), one landing force commander will not be able to exercise effective combat control on each of the axes. A vivid example of this is the Kerch - Feodosiya landing operation carried out from 26 to 31 December 1941. One of the reasons why the ultimate goal of the landing was not achieved was the absence of a single commander and an insufficiently precise delineation of the functions of control of forces along each of the landing axes of the amphibious landing force. The operation was commanded by four different commanders. No commanders had been appointed for the landing forces for the Sea of Azov, the Kerch Straits, and the Black Sea (the southern coast of the Crimea).

It must be noted that even in the exercises held in recent years, not enough attention has been given to the necessity of appointing landing force commanders for each amphibious landing axis. Sometimes during exercises or war games, when planning an amphibious landing on individual islands often separated from each other by tens of miles, only one commander for the landing forces was appointed on the assumption that he would be able to control the battle for the landing on all axes.

One of the possible versions of the organizational structure of forces in a landing along a broad front is shown in Sketch 1.

This version provides for the presence at the intermediate level of the control organs of a landing force commander for the operation. He is charged with coordinating the activities of the landing force commanders of each of the axes (for example, in a simultaneous landing of forces on several islands of a straits zone).

In addition, this version of the organizational structure takes into account the complexity of maneuvering forces (in a number of cases, over considerable distances between sectors of the landing), for which purpose

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each landing force on each of the axes has appropriate forces and means included.

In the battle for the landing, control over strike aviation and the rocket/artillery grouping is not stipulated to be carried out by each landing force commander along his axis, but through the commander of the landing force for the operation.

The proposed organizational structure of the landing forces and their control makes it possible to increase the responsibility of each of the allied navies for the preparation of its forces on a designated axis of the landing. At the same time it simplifies the control at the tactical level (from the landing force commander of each of the axes and lower), as well as the organization of coordination with the cover force detailed from the same navy.

An alternate version of an organizational structure of forces when landing on a narrow front is shown in Sketch 2. It takes into account the possibility and the necessity of control of the battle for the landing by one landing force commander and allows him to control the aviation and rocket/artillery groupings allotted from the front to support the actions of the landing from the moment the battle for the landing begins.

In this type of a structure, the commander of the landing force is able to use the forces and means of each of the allied countries in whichever sector of the landing they are needed. In addition, the landing force commander is relieved of the control of the landing air defense grouping (with the exception of the air defense forces and means directly included in the composition of the landing detachments and their security).

In the final analysis, this proposed organization of forces makes it possible for the commander of the combined navy to devote more of his attention to the control of the coalition forces engaged in carrying out other tasks.

The abovementioned versions of the organizational structures of landing forces anticipate that an amphibious landing operation conducted for operational or operational-tactical goals is carried out by the front, with the navy providing support for the landing. The advisability of such a distribution of efforts is supported by the following considerations.

At the beginning of the war, the navy will be engaged in carrying out several tasks simultaneously on the maritime axis, concentrating the main efforts of its forces and means on these tasks and exercising control over these forces and means. Having at its disposal various forces and means

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for the successful conduct of combat operations at sea, the navy is not capable of simultaneously carrying out a large number of tasks on shore.

To assign the navy the task during this period of carrying out an amphibious landing with an operational or operational-tactical goal would inevitably affect the fulfilment of other tasks, and it would lead to the dispersal of its efforts and create additional difficulties in the control of forces. An amphibious landing operation for the capture of straits zones generally is part of a front offensive operation on a maritime axis, which predicates unified control in the preparation, conduct, and support of these operations.

The conduct of an amphibious landing operation, especially during the battle for the landing, will require calling upon the forces and means of the front and to carry out tasks on the shore; to deliver missile/nuclear strikes; to carry out aviation preparation and support; to organize air defense and radio countermeasures; and to seize landing points by a helicopter landing force. In other words, the value of the contribution of the front to an amphibious landing operation, especially in its final stage, is more significant than that of the navy.

Naturally, the achievement of the goals assigned to the landing will in many ways depend on the extent to which the actions of the maritime front troops and the amphibious landing force are coordinated in regard to timing. Only the favorable development of combat actions by troops of the maritime front in the initial period of the offensive operation, and the certainty of their successful fulfilment, will allow the correct determination of the time to begin the debarkation of the amphibious landing force. It should be assumed that only the front commander can make the most accurate and timely evaluation of the situation that has developed at the front and make the decision on when to begin the debarkation of the amphibious landing force.

The arguments presented give grounds for assuming that it is advisable to have the control of all the forces of the landing operation assigned to the front commander, or to his first deputy with a staff or operations group specially created for this purpose.

The landing of amphibious forces for tactical purposes, especially outside the zone of actions of front troops, should, in our opinion, be assigned to the navy. In this case, control of all the forces allotted for the landing and for support of the landing will obviously be the responsibility of the commander of the combined navy or of the commander of one of the allied navies through their respective staffs.

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As is known, the direct control of the forces of an amphibious landing during the preparation, embarkation, sea crossing, and in the battle for the landing is carried out by the landing force commander with the help of his staff. Success in the control of forces in many ways depends on the teamwork of the staff at all stages of the landing operation. Yet, in peacetime there are no permanently functioning control organs of landing operations. They have to be formed each time landing operations are being planned as part of maneuvers or exercises. The experience of training in the navies and ground forces of the Warsaw Pact countries has shown during recent years that there are several ways of organizing the staff of a landing force: from the control organs of the fleet, formations, or large units (combined staff of the landing force); on the basis of the staff of one of the naval bases; or on the basis of the staff of one of the allied navies.

In landing a coalition amphibious force, it is advisable to form the staff of the landing force for that navy which has allocated the largest amount of forces and means for the landing and whose commander is the deputy to the front commander for the naval element (or commands all the amphibious landing forces during the conduct of the operation by the navy).

Based on the experience of exercises, the combined staff of a landing force, which is made up of officers of control organs of a navy, large units, and units, must be formed not later than a month prior to the landing. This period of time is needed to achieve cohesiveness of the staff as a control organ, to permit the officers to master their functional duties, and to study the forces designated to support and carry out the operation. It is obvious that to count on that much time in an actual combat situation is quite impossible. Besides, if a number of officers are assigned to the staff of a landing force) away from the staffs of large units and other control organs where they serve regularly, this may have a negative effect on the state of affairs of these large units and formations. Therefore, the abovementioned method of organizing the staff of the landing force is not always acceptable.

When organizing a staff of a landing force based on the staff of one of the naval bases, it will be possible to distribute beforehand, and organizationally formalize, the additional responsibilities of the officers for the period that the staff of the landing force is functional. The preparation and establishment of a staff from a control organ can be accomplished systematically in the course of daily combat training. Such a staff can be based on a daily functioning and cohesive basis, does not require specially organized, lengthy preparation should it be necessary to carry out an operation in the shortest possible time, and makes it possible

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to quickly study and plan the combat use of the forces and means allocated for the operation.

However, the relatively small number of personnel in the staffs of naval bases, the irregularity of their contacts with the headquarters of the allied navies and of military districts in the course of daily combat training, and the lack of a number of documents covering joint operations, can complicate the control of the landing force in an amphibious landing operation, especially in an operation to capture a straits zone by joint effort of allied countries. ✓

In this case, obviously, it will become necessary to transfer part of the functions of the staff of the landing force, especially those dealing with the problems of organizing coordination with the headquarters of the front and the headquarters of the allied navies, to the navy from which the staff of the landing force was formed.

Considering these conditions, and also in view of accumulated experience, it is not difficult to conclude that the second method of forming a staff for a landing force is most acceptable for a tactical amphibious landing.

The third method--forming the staff of a landing force on the basis of a staff of one of the allied navies--is most effective when conducting a landing operation for the capture of straits zones by the forces of several allied countries, especially when the landing is carried out on a broad front.

The advisability of such a method of forming the staff of a landing force is confirmed by the exercises of the allied navies, both within the framework of a single combined navy and in the independent operations of each one of them (with parts of the forces of the other navies allocated to the navy responsible for the landing of the amphibious force).

Such a staff of a landing force, having had daily experience in controlling heterogeneous large units and having had the appropriate training, is considered the best qualified and can control the forces of allied navies operating on independent axes of the landing (the landing force on each axis, as shown in Sketch 1). At the same time, being in constant contact with the military districts even in peacetime, it is in a position to set up reliable coordination with the front carrying out the amphibious landing operation.

To assure efficient control of the landing forces participating in the operation, and of the allied fleets, it is advisable that the staff of the

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landing force include operations groups through which, and with whose help, the commander of the landing force would be able to control efficiently and reliably the forces of the allied navies assigned to him, and coordinate with all the allied navies.

Proceeding from the organizational structure, the degree of preparation, and the capability of controlling the forces, it would be more accurate to call such a staff "the staff of the landing force commander for the operation" or "the staff of the deputy commander of the landing operation for the naval element".

It is also appropriate to note that by forming a staff of a landing force to include operations groups will allow the commander of one of the allied navies to control the naval part of the landing operation, and the commander of the combined navy to concentrate on the control of forces carrying out other tasks.

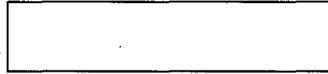
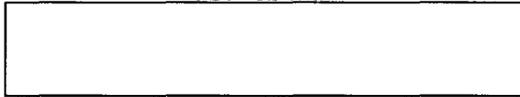
The solution to the problem of which allied navy should be used and as the base for the formation of the staff of the landing force will depend primarily on which troops (of which allied country) will be operating as part of the maritime front and will constitute the main force of the amphibious and airborne landing. For example, if the forces concentrated on a maritime axis are mainly those of a certain country and if they also constitute the main part of the amphibious and airborne landing forces, it is best to form the staff of the landing force on the basis of the staff of the navy of that country. This will provide for better mutual understanding with the staff of the maritime front, will facilitate the organization of coordination with the forces and means allotted by the front in support of the landing, and will simplify the control of the forces.

As may be seen from the foregoing, each of the above versions of forming a staff for a landing force has negative features which prevent the achievement in peacetime of a high degree of preparedness for the fulfillment of the task of landing an amphibious force to capture a straits zone at the beginning of the war.

A comprehensive analysis of exercises which have been conducted leads to the conclusion that the shortcoming indicated above could have been eliminated, for example, by organizing the staff of the landing force on the basis of a special operational amphibious formation consisting of several amphibious large units in each sea and formed in peacetime by the navies of the allied countries in accordance with national principles. The commander and the staff of such a formation could continually study the probable enemy, collect the necessary information about him, make a detailed study of the areas where tasks may be carried out, and prepare

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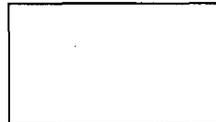
themselves purposefully to carry out within the shortest possible time their main function--to be the control organ in an amphibious landing. In addition, it would enable the staff of the amphibious formation to maintain continuous coordination with other arms of troops and branches of the armed forces which could participate in an amphibious landing operation, and also enable it to work out the organization of control and communications on a daily basis and continuously carry out operational planning.

While examining the control of forces in an amphibious landing operation we would like to dwell also on the matter of the exchange of operations groups (representatives) of coordinating staffs. On the basis of many years of experience of coordination with the staffs of certain allied navies, we consider it advisable during the preparation and conduct of an amphibious landing operation carried out by the joint efforts of a front and a combined navy, to effect an exchange of operations groups between the staffs of the front and the combined navy, and also between the staffs of the national navies. In addition, the staff of naval aviation should have operations groups, or representatives, from naval large units and from attached aviation; the air defense commander of the landing force should have them from air defense formations of the front and of the countries which are providing air defense for the landing supporting the landing air force; and the landing force commander should have them from the units and large units which are included in the composition of the amphibious landing force.

It is possible that certain difficulties will be created by forming operations groups from the complement of a staff and sending them to other control organs, since it will complicate the functioning of those organs from which the officers were detached. The problem of providing operations groups with communications means may prove to be just as difficult. Therefore, in case the number of them has to be decreased, the guiding principle should be the following: only the higher control lines will send operations groups (representatives) to the lower ones.

This principle will provide for a proper way of conveying the task and other instructions from the higher level to the lower ones and will allow a check to be made on how well they have been understood; and it will also provide for control over the adoption of a plan, a reduction in the volume of orders to lower control levels and, accordingly, a reduction in the amount of inquiries from them, and, at the same time, a considerable improvement in the stability of control.

Experience shows that the contemplated principle of the exchange of operations groups makes it possible for all participating forces to receive the information needed for control directly, without wasting time on



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additional discussions with the higher echelon. Such groups also help overcome language difficulties.

If control of the actions of the landing force at sea is carried out by one of the commanders of the allied navies, and the other navies assign part of their forces and means to his command, it may be recommended that the staff of the landing force (staff of the navy) include operations groups from the allied navies. These operations groups should be headed by chiefs with the proper authority and capable of organizing control of their own national forces in conformity with the plan of the commander of the landing operation (commander of the allied navy). Such a chief will actually be the deputy to the commander of the landing force (commander of the navy) for his own national forces.

Which, then, is the most desirable composition for operations groups and what are the main requirements that should be demanded of them? It is considered sufficient for them to include one or two operatives, an intelligence officer, a political worker, a naval air defense specialist, a naval infantry officer, a communications man, and one or two secure communications specialists (the number of the latter depends on the number of channels of automatic secure communications the operations group will have).

Senior officers of the operations groups departing to join the front staff or the staff of the coordinating navy, and the other officers leaving for the units of their respective responsibilities, must be well informed about the plans of their respective commanders, especially on matters which require mutual clarification or which may affect the fulfilment of tasks by another navy.

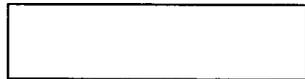
A situation may often develop whereby the operations groups will have to depart before the operations plan of their respective navies have been formulated. In this case, the staff that has sent the operations group must inform it in good time on all matters that may be of interest to the coordinating formation.

An absolute requirement for the operations group is that it have detailed knowledge concerning the status of the national forces allocated for the landing force, their combat capabilities, the availability of communications means, and the special aspects of control.

It is strongly recommended that the composition of an operations group be determined beforehand by an appropriate schedule and its training conducted during exercises in peacetime. In order to prevent difficulties arising from language differences, it is advisable that these groups

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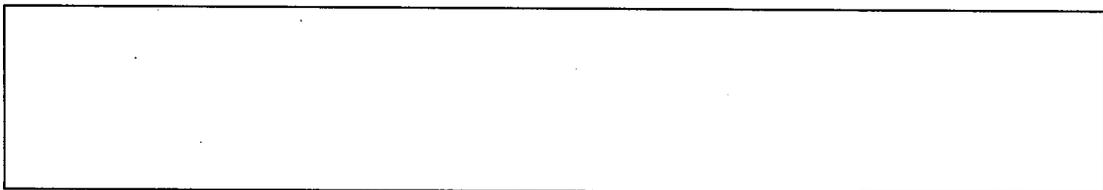


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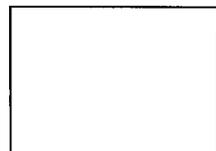
include officers who have a good command of the appropriate language and who are capable of reporting immediately any information received from the national navies.

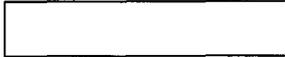
Thus, the successful control of forces in an amphibious landing operation conducted by the navies of allied countries depends greatly on the organizational structure within the framework of which it is being carried out.

(See Sketches 1 and 2 together with a key to each on following pages.)

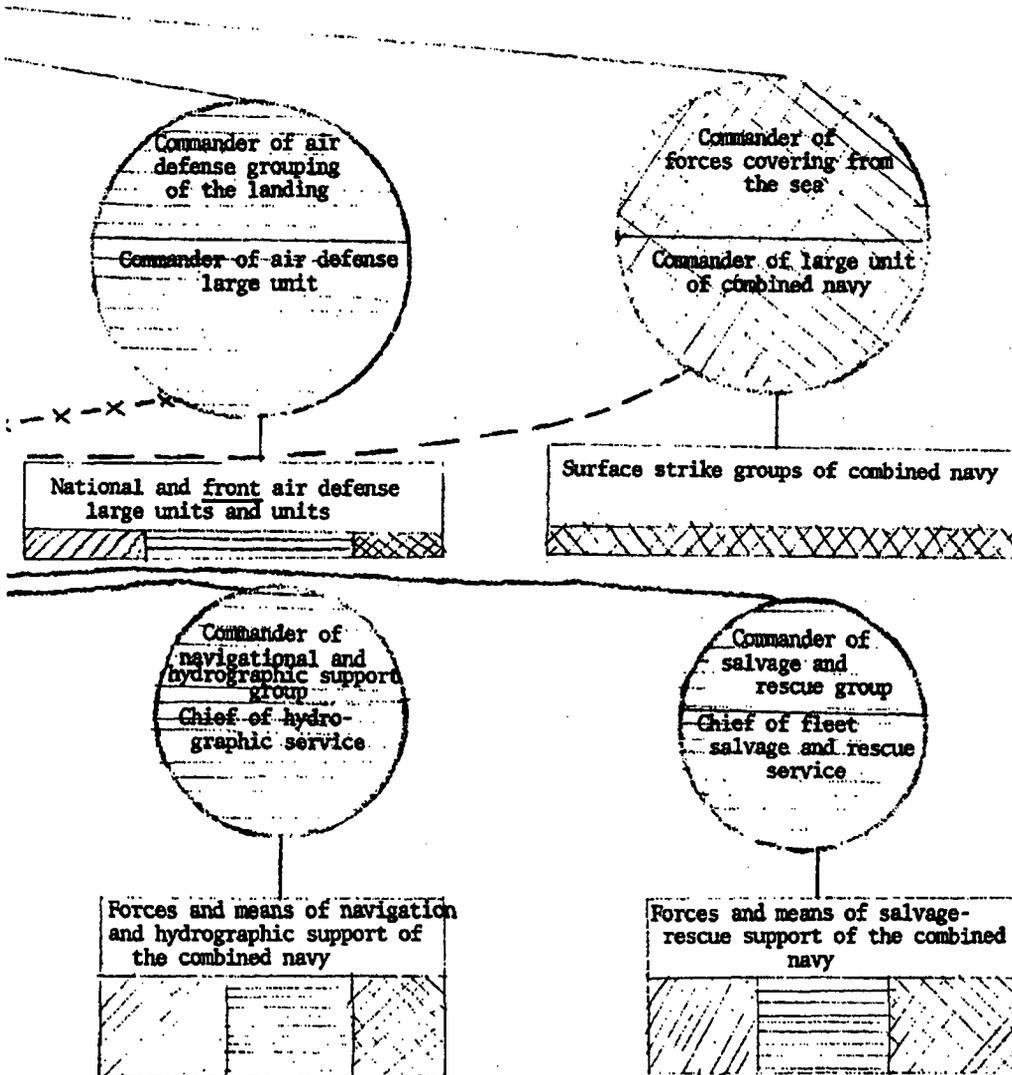


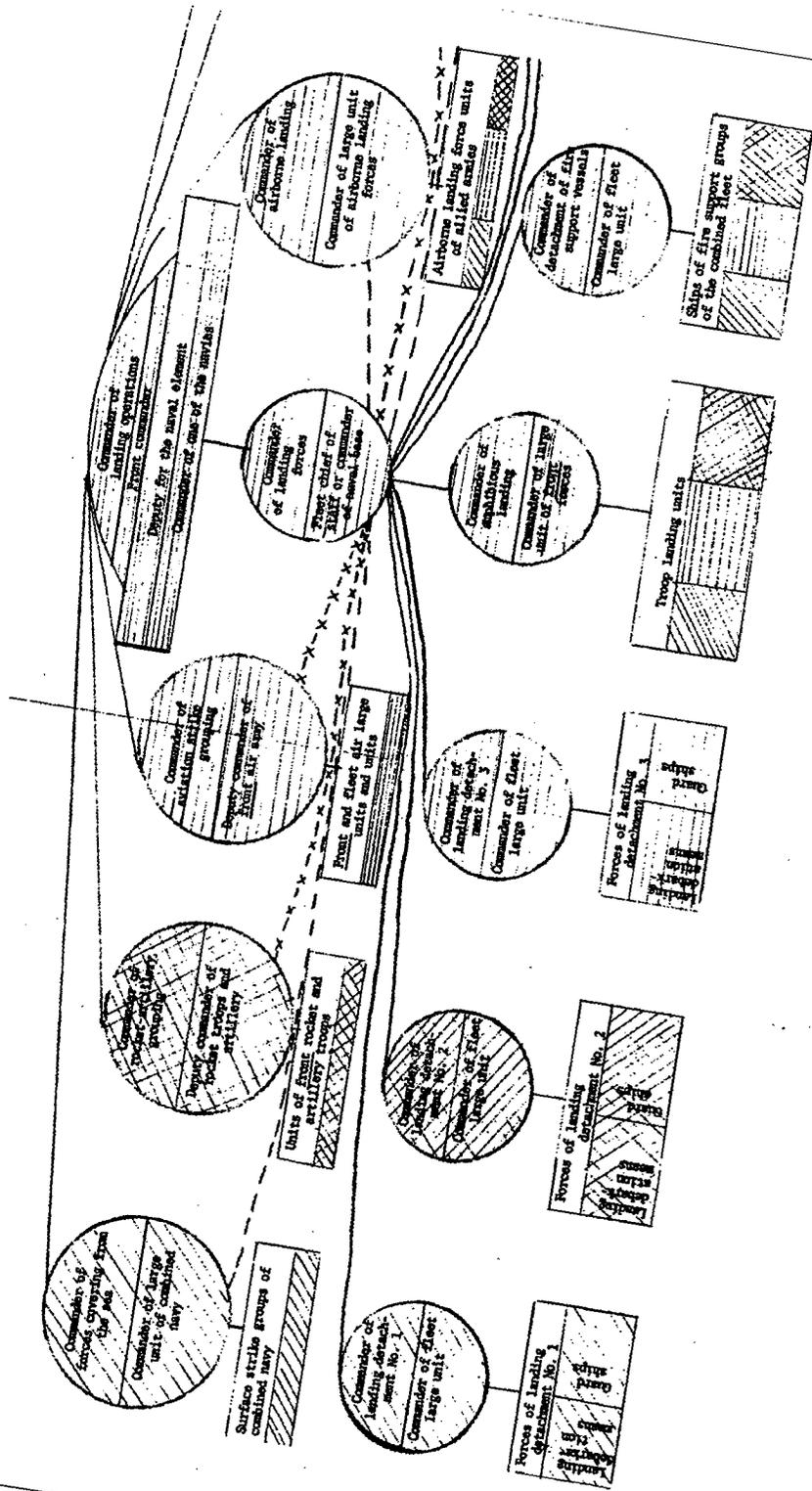
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Sketch 1





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Key to Sketch 1

Diagram of the organizational structure of forces and their control in a landing of an amphibious force on a broad front (hachuring shows the participation in the landing operation of the forces and means of allied navies).

 is the line along which the control of forces is conducted in the battle for the landing.

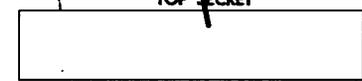
x x x is the line along which the control of forces is conducted before the battle for the landing begins.

 is the line along which the exchange of information is conducted concerning the situation and actions.

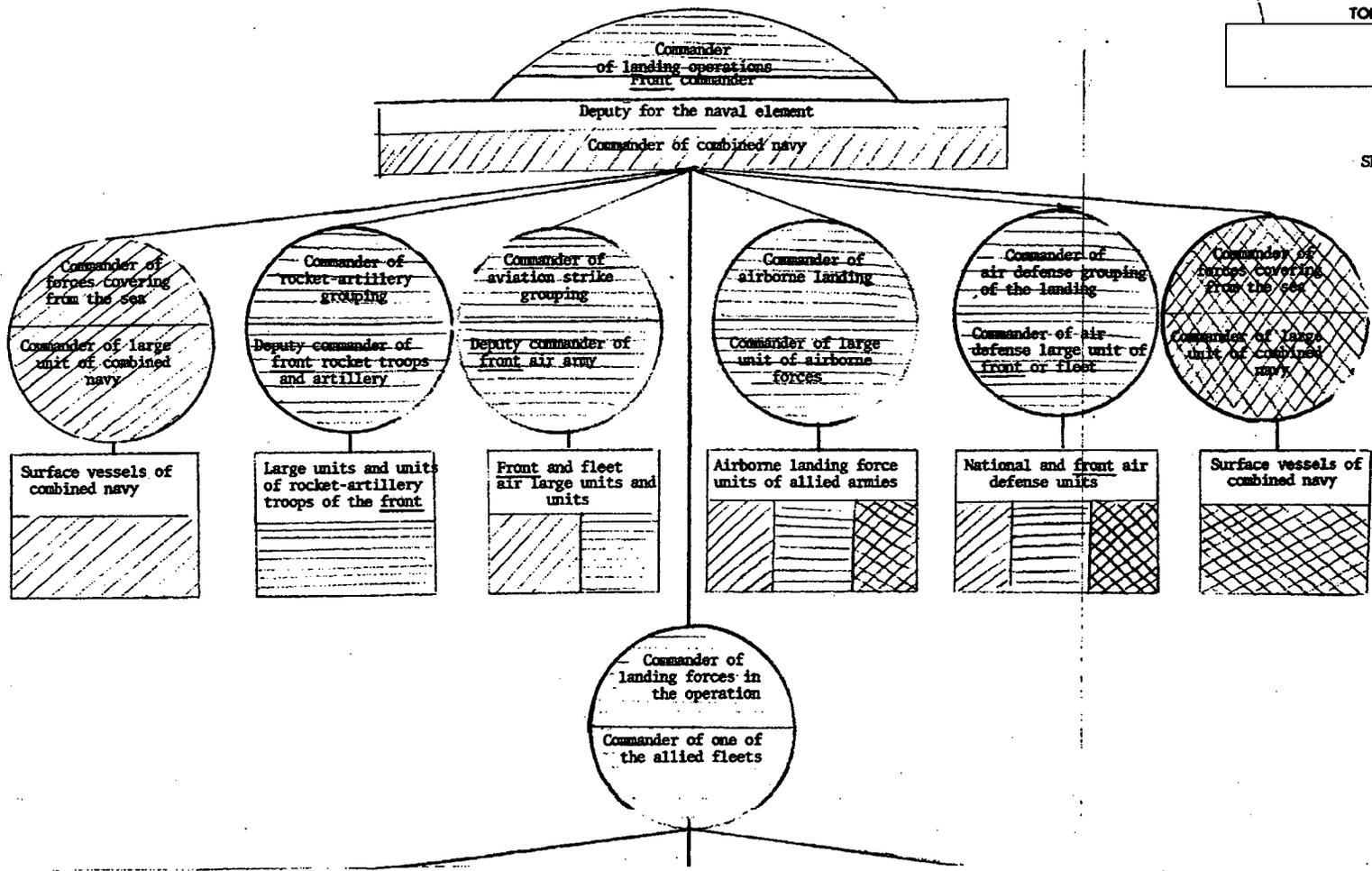
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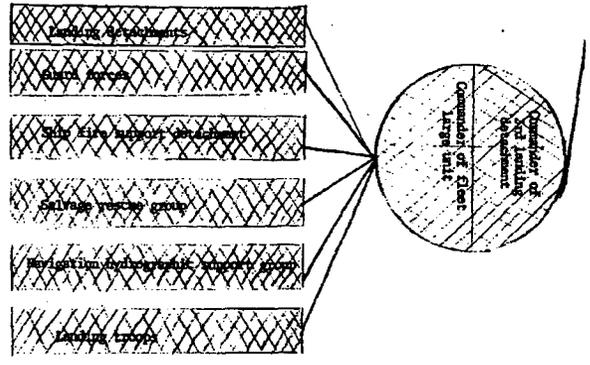
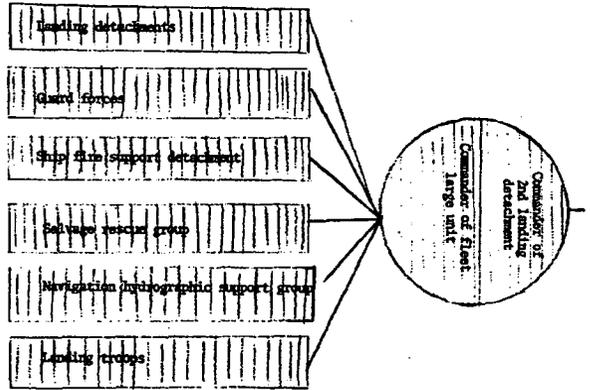
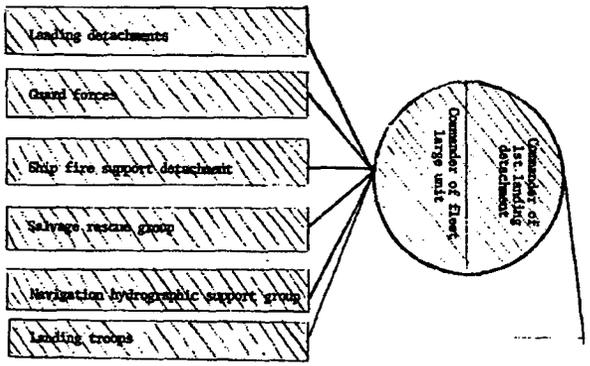


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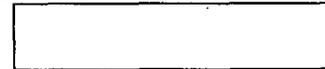
Sketch 2





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Key to Sketch 2

Diagram of the organizational structure of forces and their control in a landing of an amphibious force on a narrow front (hachuring shows the participation in the landing operation of the forces and means of allied navies).

 is the line along which the control of forces is conducted in the battle for the landing.

- - - - - is the line along which the exchange of information is conducted concerning the situation and actions.

x _ x _ x is the line along which requests are made for forces for air support or rocket-artillery preparation.

Abbreviations:

- KUG -- ship strike group
- DESO -- landing detachment
- OKOP -- detachment of ship fire support
- NGO -- navigational and hydrological support
- ass -- emergency rescue service
- VDV -- airborne forces

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