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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20505

26 October 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR: The Director of Central Intelligence  
FROM : Theodore G. Shackley  
Acting Deputy Director for Operations  
SUBJECT : MILITARY THOUGHT (USSR): Organization of  
the Control of Front Troops from Posts  
Designated to Replace the Main Command Post

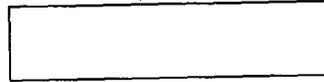
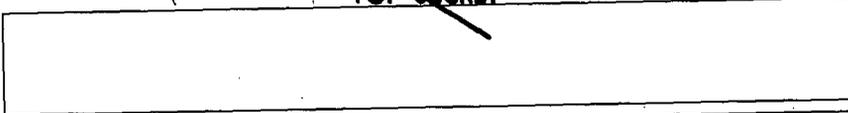
1. The enclosed Intelligence Information Special Report is part of a series now in preparation based on the SECRET USSR Ministry of Defense publication Collection of Articles of the Journal "Military Thought". This article examines the capabilities and requirements of certain posts designated to assume control of the front troops based on the experience of exercises. After discussing the shortcomings of the forward command post and the rear control post, the author proposes turning control over to the air army and its staff, emphasizing the advantages of this: the air army staff's close connection and close personal contact with the front staff, its close cooperation with the rocket troops and air defense troops, and its stable communications system. The author also discusses the need to revise the T/O of front control organs and their communications units and to conceal posts from enemy detection. This article appeared in Issue No. 1 (83) for 1968.

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

Theodore G. Shackley

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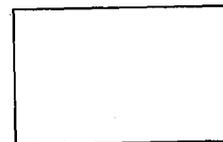
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## Intelligence Information Special Report

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COUNTRY USSR

DATE OF INFO. Early 1968

[REDACTED]  
DATE 26 October 1976

SUBJECT

MILITARY THOUGHT (USSR): Organization of the Control of Front Troops from Posts Designated to Replace the Main Command Post

SOURCE Documentary  
Summary:

The following report is a translation from Russian of an article which appeared in Issue No. 1 (83) for 1968 of the SECRET USSR Ministry of Defense publication Collection of Articles of the Journal 'Military Thought'. The author of this article is General-Mayor N. Reut. This article examines the capabilities and requirements of certain posts designated to assume control of the front troops based on the experience of exercises. After discussing the shortcomings of the forward command post and the rear control post, the author proposes turning control over to the air army and its staff, emphasizing the advantages of this: the air army staff's close connection and close personal contact with the front staff, its close cooperation with the rocket troops and air defense troops, and its stable communications system. The author also discusses the need to revise the T/O of front control organs and their communications units to promote their autonomy and interchangeability, the need to conceal posts from enemy detection, and the need to set up reserve control organs.

End of Summary

[REDACTED] Comment:

The author also wrote "Special Operational Training" in Issue No. 2 (72) for 1964 [REDACTED] and "Planning the Initial Front Offensive Operation" in Issue No. 1 (89) for 1970 [REDACTED]. 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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Organization of the Control of Front Troops from Posts  
Designated to Replace the Main Command Post

by  
General-Mayor N. Reut

Because of their significance, an enemy will regard troop control posts as the most important and first targets to be destroyed by nuclear weapons. This applies to both sides. Consequently, it is impossible to conceive of continuous troop control unless there is advance organization of the assumption of control of the front troops by the posts designated to replace the main command post in the event the enemy delivers a nuclear strike against it.

The experience of operational exercises and of practical work in the troops confirms that these problems have not yet been fully worked out and, above all, that all the conditions necessary to ensure command of the front troops from control posts other than the command post have not yet been created. One begins to fear that the forward command post and the rear control post of the front and the command post of one of the armies, from which control of the front troops could first be organized in the event that the front command post is put out of action, would not be in a position to ensure stable troop control in an extremely complex situation unless they were allocated additional officers and reinforced with communications means.

As we know, the front command post always exercises command over: reconnaissance, the rocket troops and aviation, the air defense troops, the combined-arms and tank armies, the reserves, the special troops of the front and the front rear services, as well as continuous cooperation between the forces and means and adjacent units. It also maintains communications with the General Staff. The appropriate organs are located at the front command post.

To successfully control the troops, these organs must be able to: continuously collect and collate information on the position, status and nature of actions of the enemy and of their own troops; thoroughly assess the situation and make timely decisions or report their views on a decision to the front commander; plan the combat operations of the troops and assign them tasks; support cooperation within the front troops and between them

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and adjacent units; provide the troops with everything they need to carry out their assigned tasks and continuously monitor their execution; and submit timely reports to the senior chiefs and the General Staff and keep adjacent units informed.

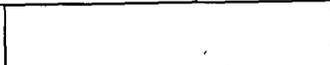
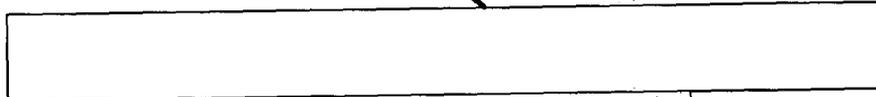
In connection with this, it is above all necessary that the organs capable of ensuring control of the branch arms, services, and of the front as a whole be located (although at reduced strength) at any control post from which command of the front troops can be carried out. It is important that the enemy not detect this post ahead of time and destroy it and the front command post simultaneously.

According to established views, these tasks can be assigned to the forward command post of the front, which, as a rule, is set up for the purpose of controlling the troops operating on the main axis. The commander of the front will exercise command from this post in the event that it becomes difficult to do so from the command post or it is necessary that he exert a direct influence on the course of combat operations. The chiefs of the primary directorates, branch arms and special troops and their subordinate officers usually come to the forward command post with the commander of the front in order to control the troops on the main axis, while the remaining large units and units are controlled through the front command post. Accordingly, the forward command post establishes direct communications with the troops that are operating on the main axis and carrying out the main tasks within a given period of time, while communications with the other troops and adjacent units are set up through the command post.

The practice of exercises shows that while the commander of the front is at the forward command post, it becomes the main control post, and its personnel and communications means are fully able to ensure control of the front troops in the event that the enemy delivers nuclear strikes against the command post. During this period control of the troops operating on the main axis can be set up from the front command post if the enemy delivers a nuclear strike against the forward command post, since the command post has the appropriate organs and communications with the troops have previously been set up.

A completely different situation arises when the forward command post is designated to control the troops only during the period of the relocation of the front command post to another area. According to the experience of exercises, under these conditions the following personnel usually go to the forward command post: the first deputy commander of the

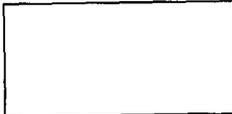
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front; the front deputy chief of staff; the deputy chief of the operations directorate accompanied by two to four officers; the deputy chief of intelligence or a senior officer of the intelligence department accompanied by one to two officers; the department of the communications directorate authorized for the forward command post; two to three officers from the 8th department; the deputy chiefs of the rocket troops, air defense troops, and the engineer and chemical troops, each accompanied by one to two officers; and a representative from the staff of the air army accompanied by one to three officers. Because it is assumed in advance that the work at the forward command post is of a temporary nature, officers with less training are usually assigned to it, and they are primarily drawn from the officers assigned to the given directorate or department.

In the event that a nuclear strike is delivered against the command post at that moment, a forward command post thus staffed will not be able to quickly collect information on the situation and provide the senior commander located at this post with sufficiently competent assistance in controlling the air defense troops and aviation during the repulsing of an air attack; in organizing and effecting the delivery of nuclear strikes by the rocket troops and aviation against the main groupings and nuclear attack means of the enemy; in refining the tasks for the combined-arms and tank armies, the front reserves, and the special troops; and in restoring disrupted cooperation and control. A forward command post with a working organization this variable and uncoordinated can only appear to assume control of the front troops; it will not carry out all tasks during the course of the operation.

In our opinion, and as the experience of exercises shows, in order to eliminate this shortcoming, in addition to the deputy chiefs of the directorates and branch arms and services, the forward command post should have a working organization staffed as follows: two officers from the operations directorate to take turns in maintaining a map of the situation on a front-wide scale and one officer from each of the primary departments for each axis; two officers from the intelligence directorate to work on the map together with the operations personnel and one officer from each of the primary departments to collate information from the different types of reconnaissance; the authorized communications department for the forward command post from the communications directorate; one officer from the staff of the rocket troops for each front missile brigade or unit and one or two officers to work on the maps and prepare the instructions for the missile brigades to deliver nuclear strikes; and also, a reduced complement from the command posts of the air defense and the air army. Also, solving the problem by manning the forward command post with the remaining



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personnel is a possibility.

Moreover, it must be noted that at the present time the front forward command post does not have an adequate number of communications means; the communications battalion of the front forward command post is able to monitor the operation of less than one-third of the most important radio nets and radio links of the command post with its own radio means and thereby switch them over to itself when necessary. At the same time the main wire and radio-relay communications between the forward command post and the troops are set up primarily through the communications centers of the front and army command posts, and should they be destroyed by nuclear strikes, these communications would also be destroyed. These communications means and the methods of setting them up clearly do not ensure the rapid organization of control of the front troops by the forward command post under conditions of mass jamming. The radio means at the forward command post operate at the same time as the radio means of the front command post. This makes it possible for the enemy to determine in advance the location of both control posts and deliver nuclear strikes against them simultaneously.

Frequently the plan of the operation, the operational directives, combat orders and instructions, and other basic operational documents are not sent to the front forward command post since the existing regulation calls for making an extremely limited number of copies of them.

Consequently, to make the front forward command post a full-fledged post capable of providing control of the front troops and stable command over them under conditions of extremely rapid changes in the situation such as arise when the enemy delivers nuclear strikes against the front command post, it is necessary to make it sufficiently autonomous and to fully conceal it; to set up, train, and integrate in advance the working organization necessary to it; to increase the number of communications means and improve the organization of communications, with due regard for the interchangeability of control posts; and to allocate a reduced complement from the command posts of the rocket troops, the air defense troops, and aviation.

The rear control post is customarily regarded as another control post capable of exercising command over the front troops during an operation. However, at present it is designated to command the front rear only, and therefore, only organs associated with the control of the numerous rear services units and facilities of the front, army, and tactical rear are located at it.

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Accordingly, direct communications between the rear control post of the front, the rear control posts of the armies, and the large units and units subordinate to the front are set up by radio, while radio-relay and wire communications are set up through the communications centers of the command posts of the front, armies, and large units. Should these communications centers be destroyed, then communications between the rear control post and the troops as well as the control organs of the army rear and the tactical rear would be disrupted. Even if the communications battalion at the rear control post uses more than half of its radio communications means for the purpose of controlling the front troops, its capabilities permit it to monitor less than one-third of the most important radio nets and radio links of the command post, and this is clearly inadequate.

The experience of everyday activities and of war games and exercises shows that if the rear control post is to assume control of the front troops and effectively command them, it is necessary to allocate to it ahead of time a certain number of operations officers and intelligence personnel to ensure the collection of information on the situation, the maintenance of maps for all the front troops, and the preparation of information needed by the chief of the rear and the chief of the rear staff to make operational decisions, plan the combat operations of the troops and assign them tasks. It is also necessary in advance to send to the rear control post a reduced complement from the command posts to control the rocket troops, the air defense troops and aviation. Perhaps this complement should have a somewhat smaller number of officers than that sent to the forward command post of the front, since the rear control post is the second post designated to assume control of the front troops. On the whole, the officer specialists of the various branches of the armed forces and branch arms should be capable of carrying out from the rear control post the tasks entrusted to them, which primarily consist of commanding reconnaissance, the rocket troops and aviation, the combined-arms and tank armies, and the front reserves.

To alleviate the situation that arises when it becomes necessary to control all the front troops from the rear control post, the command of the engineer, chemical and other special troops during the initial period may be assumed by the communications section of the front rear staff and by the officers of the directorates of communications, engineer troops and chemical troops that are in charge of the materiel-technical supply of their special troops and services. However, this is possible only if these officers are given appropriate operational training in advance.

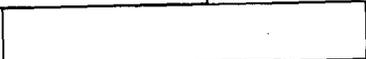
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The command post of one of the combined-arms or tank armies constitutes a third post which can be designated to control the front troops. However, in this case special difficulties arise, primarily because the complement of officers and the communications means at the command post are intended to control only the army troops. For it to assume control of the front troops, the commander of the given army and its command post must have operational orientation on a front-wide scale and an additional number of officers to maintain maps of the situation throughout the front and to maintain contact with its troops; also, the command post requires considerable reinforcement of its communications means, and communications must be organized to enable the army to maintain communications with the rest of the front troops.

The commander of the air army and its staff would have a certain advantage if control of the front troops were turned over to them in the event that the front command post is put out of action. This advantage lies in the fact that the commander of the air army knows the concept of the front commander for the conduct of the operation and the tasks assigned to all the front troops to a greater degree than the other army commanders. Since a map of the situation throughout the front is constantly maintained at the command post of the air army, all that is necessary is to give it further detailing. The air army staff has the closest connection with the front staff, and the officers of both staffs keep in personal contact which creates better conditions for the air army staff in the event it controls the front troops.

The commander of the air army and its staff always maintain very close cooperation with the rocket troops and air defense troops of the front that carry out combat tasks jointly with aviation. The air army staff sends operations groups to the command posts of almost all the armies of the front first echelon and as a result the commander of the air army and its staff constantly have stable communications with the other armies of the front. This communications system operates parallel to and independently of the communications organized by the front staff. The staff of the air army is in a favorable position to organize and conduct reconnaissance as well as to restore control of the front troops, employing for this liaison officers in aircraft and helicopters.

The staff of the air army is located closer to the front command post ?! than the other staffs, and therefore can more quickly learn from it the results of a nuclear strike delivered by the enemy against the front command post; this will aid it in ascertaining the situation and in making use of the officers remaining at this post for troop control. It goes



without saying that the front command post and the command post of the air army must be located at a safe distance from each other in case a large yield nuclear warhead strikes one of them. Finally, the commander of the air army usually is a member of the front Military Council, and this gives him a certain legal authority over the other army commanders.

In our opinion, all this indicates the capability of the commander of the air army and its staff to assume control of the front troops in the event the enemy delivers a nuclear strike against the front command post. For this purpose the commander of the air army and its staff need appropriate training in the control of the front ground forces, and the staff needs to be somewhat reinforced with officers of the ground forces and with communications means.

It is obvious from the above that all posts that may be designated to control the front troops must be additionally reinforced with officers from the operations and intelligence directorates, from the rocket troops, the air defense troops and from the air army, as well as with communications means. At the present time, the table of organization of these directorates clearly is not designed to allocate this number of officers without detriment to troop control from the front command post. Thus, if in accordance with calculations, 13 to [missing] officers are assigned to work at the forward command post and the rear control post of the front, there will not be enough officers left to carry out such important work as collating information about the situation throughout the front and maintaining maps for the commander of the front troops and the chief of staff, planning combat operations, drafting reports for the General Staff, and informing adjacent units about the situation. The situation of the intelligence directorate is the same. The dispersal of the efforts of its small departments would cause considerable difficulties in command over radio and radiotechnical, tactical, special, and other types of reconnaissance. This applies equally to the staff of the rocket troops and artillery, the organization of the chief of the air defense troops, and the operations personnel of the staff of the air army. The communications directorate is in a somewhat better position. It has an authorized communications department for the forward command post, and at the rear control post -- a communications department (section) of the staff of the front rear and the officers of the communications directorate who are in charge of supplying the troops with communications means.

The procuring of communications means to further reinforce the forward command post, the rear control post of the front and the command post of one of the armies presents serious difficulties, since the capabilities of



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the front communications units are not geared to the allocation of these means without detriment to the organization of communications at the two positions of the front command post.

From everything that has been said it follows that in order to make each control post autonomous and to create the conditions for their interchangeability, it is necessary to revise somewhat the table of organization of the control organs of the front troops and their communications units.

Control posts that are in continuous operation are usually designated to assume control of the front troops. However, the enemy may determine the location of these posts by the operation of their radio means and deliver nuclear strikes against them simultaneously with strikes against the front command post. In connection with this, it becomes necessary to conceal some of the posts designated to assume troop control so that the enemy cannot detect them in advance by the operation of their communications means and other identifying features. The forward command post and the post occupied by the reserve troop control organs may be included among them.

In the interest of security, the forward command post should be designated to control the front troops only in the event that the enemy delivers a nuclear strike against the front command post. It should not be used to control the front troops during the period of relocation of the front command post to a new area, since the forces and means available to the two positions of the front command post make it fully possible to organize the consecutive relocation of the front commander and the front chief of staff with the appropriate officers from one command post position to the other without disrupting the stability of troop control. It is also essential to alter the work schedule of the communications means at the forward command post to improve its camouflage and to better conceal its location and operation.

Conducive to a positive solution to the question of designating the forward command post as a concealed control post is the fact that the commander of the front is able to command the modern means of armed warfare and the highly mobile large units only from a post where the main control means are concentrated. The command post meets this description. In connection with this, the commander of the front obviously will go to the forward command post to control the troops, even those on the main axis, only extremely rarely.

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The experience of our troops' two-sided operational exercises and of the exercises of the probable enemy has demonstrated that reciprocal nuclear strikes delivered against control posts cause great losses of the personnel of the control organs. Frequently these losses cannot be compensated for within a short period of time, and this undoubtedly affects the stability of troop control. Obviously it has become necessary to solve the problem of setting up reserve control organs so constituted as to be capable of ensuring control of the front troops and also of replacing a forward command post or a rear control post, as they are designated today, that has been put out of action.

It is important that these reserve organs and the control posts set up by them constitute an integral part of the entire system of control of the front troops during an operation and that they be concealed from the enemy. This would substantially increase the survivability and stability of the control system.

When control of the front troops is assumed, it becomes of primary importance that there be continuity of knowledge as to the previous situation, the tasks assigned to the troops, and the reports presented to the senior commanders and to the General Staff. In this regard, it is essential that the deputies who take over the appropriate official duties have a detailed knowledge of those aspects of the situation that affect them.

The deputies (replacements) should be briefed as to the details of the concept of the commander of the front for conducting the operation and as to the contents of the plan of the operation, the operational directives, and the combat orders (instructions). Therefore, one copy of the basic operational documents prepared at the command post should be sent to the posts designated to assume control of the front troops. This applies equally to reports sent to the General Staff (to the senior chiefs) and to information for adjacent units. Information about the position, status, and the nature of the actions of our troops, as well as copies of all summaries and reports from the staffs of the armies and the branch arms must be promptly transmitted to these posts.

Of course, all this puts an additional burden on the personnel of the front command post; however, this is necessary in order to maintain the stability of control of the front troops during an operation.

It is of great importance that the procedure for assuming control of the front troops be worked out in advance, particularly the methods

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employed by the deputies (replacements) to obtain information about the enemy delivery of a nuclear strike against the front command post and the destruction caused by it, as well as about transmitting to the troops the time the deputy assumes command of the front troops.

In connection with this, it can be recommended to designate in advance the signals and the persons who are to transmit them, after first, of course, personally checking the situation at the front command post. The command personnel of the staff of the air army and the commanders and chiefs of the staffs of the front communications regiment and the security and servicing regiment, or the surface-to-air missile unit covering the command post may be among the persons designated. These persons, as a rule, are permanently located at a safe distance from the front command post in view of the possibility that the enemy will employ large yield nuclear warheads. These signals may also be given to the officers of the operations directorate and the communications directorate as well as to the command personnel of the front headquarters that is located at the command post. Of course, the signals must be kept in great secrecy and transmitted as quickly as possible via the communications means that survive the strike. The signals pertaining to the assumption of command of the front troops by a deputy may be indicated in the operational directive opposite the assignment of each deputy. In the event the troops receive signals from several deputies, the authority is given to the deputy who was designated to be the first to assume command of the front troops.

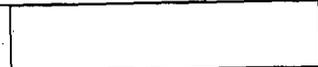
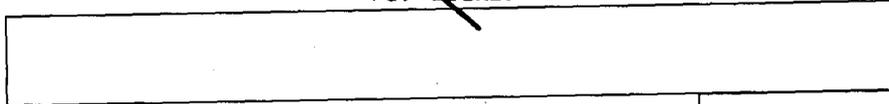
The speed with which the posts that are to control the front troops are reinforced by the officers remaining at the front command post after a nuclear strike has been delivered against it, is of definite importance to the effectiveness of their work. For this reason the procedure for further work in troop control and for assembling at the appointed places should be determined, and the transport and senior personnel who are to direct the transfer to the new control post should be designated in advance. The procedure for switching communications from the former front command post to the new control post should also be established ahead of time.

It is important that the remaining officers immediately display initiative and resourcefulness in restoring troop control from the front command post and in replacing commanders who have been put out of action and also that the switching of communications means be conducted so as to mislead the enemy as to the results of his nuclear strike.

Measures for assisting personnel who have suffered enemy nuclear strikes must be worked out and implemented in a way that does not affect

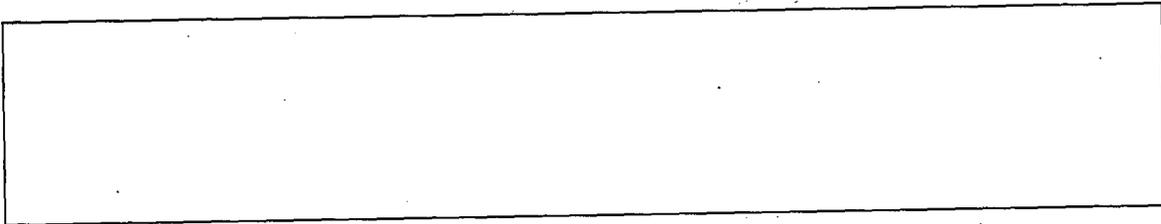
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the speed and thoroughness of the transfer of control of the front troops to the other posts designated to assume it. The personnel of the directorates of the operational formations and of the communications and servicing units should study this problem.



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