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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20505

28 February 1977

MEMORANDUM FOR: The Director of Central Intelligence
FROM : William W. Wells
Deputy Director for Operations
SUBJECT : MILITARY THOUGHT (USSR): Certain Problems
in Protecting the Front Rear in Operations

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 emphasizes the importance of determining the appropriate forces and means needed to combat subversive and disorganizing elements in the front rear zone and to provide reliable protection of important installations located there. For this it is suggested to allocate rear security troops which include guard units, operational units, convoy units, and special and auxiliary units. Matters of equipping these troops and the procedure for their deployment also are discussed. The author proposes setting up independent control of rear security and defense forces and means to handle the particular problems of ensuring reliable protection and defense of the rear. This article appeared in Issue No. 2 (81) for 1967.

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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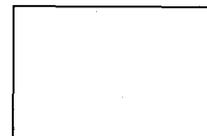
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Intelligence Information Special Report

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COUNTRY USSR

DATE OF INFO. Mid-1967

DATE 28 February 1977

SUBJECT

MILITARY THOUGHT (USSR): Certain Problems in Protecting the Front Rear in Operations

SOURCE Documentary

Summary:

The following report is a translation from Russian of an article which appeared in Issue No. 2 (81) for 1967 of the SECRET USSR Ministry of Defense publication Collection of Articles of the Journal 'Military Thought'. The author of this article is Colonel N. Bulanov. This article emphasizes the importance of determining the appropriate forces and means needed to combat subversive and disorganizing elements in the front rear zone and to provide reliable protection of important installations located there. For this it is suggested to allocate rear security troops which include guard units, operational units, convoy units, and special and auxiliary units. Matters of equipping these troops and the procedure for their deployment also are discussed. The author proposes setting up independent control of rear security and defense forces and means to handle the particular problems of ensuring reliable protection and defense of the rear. End of Summary

Comment:

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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Certain Problems in Protecting the Front Rear in Operations

by
Colonel N. Bulanov

In articles devoted to problems of protecting the operational rear, many authors, in characterizing the enemy forces which have an effect on the operational rear, refer in the majority of instances to enemy reconnaissance personnel and saboteurs. This extremely limited view of the factors threatening the operational rear leads to an incorrect assessment of the forces and means which are required to combat enemy subversive activity in the rear zone of a front. The strongest disorganizing action within the operational rear, and that which is the most difficult to assess, is exerted by the enemy underground, criminal elements, and individual stragglers and small groups of military personnel of routed enemy troops who have become lost from their units. An adverse effect on the operation of rear services organs may be exerted by panic and also by deserters. The danger represented by spies, saboteurs, and bandits is well known. We shall dwell on the nature of all of those other factors threatening the rear which are usually not mentioned in publications despite the growing importance of studying them.

The first days of the Great Patriotic War of 1941 to 1945 were characterized, as is known, by periods when there arose a fear of aircraft, tanks, and assault landings. The consequences of such phenomena were sometimes extremely unpleasant; they led to panic.

Even the highest level of combat readiness of an army is no full guarantee against the possibility that "nuclear fear", and the fear of biological and chemical effects, will arise in the very first days of a nuclear war. If we anticipate the probability of such human reactions at the front and in the rear, and if we organize the detailed study of them, we can in good time carry out the appropriate mental and psychological preparation of the army and the population and together with this develop effective methods of countering the possible outbreak of panic.

Another highly complex problem will also become acute in the very first minutes of a war -- handling refugees and evacuating large masses of people from industrial centers and threatened areas. The experience of World War II is very instructive in this regard. After the evacuation of

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northeastern France was declared, great masses of inhabitants took flight. Panic-stricken crowds clogged all roads and crossings and completely paralyzed the rear of the French army.

Deserters may present a very serious danger in the rear zone of a front. A deserter, the more so if he is armed, is a future traitor, bandit, and criminal. The morale and political unity of the Soviet people and Soviet patriotism are reliable guarantees against the occurrence of desertion. However, it cannot be ruled out that individual irresponsible military personnel may avoid fulfilling their obligations to protect the Homeland. Therefore, effective measures to counter desertion and actions to combat deserters, are ways of strengthening the combat effectiveness of the army and the security of its rear.

It is also necessary to take action against those persons who shun their military duty and their work obligation, since they too can create certain difficulties in the functioning of the rear services organs. Under the conditions of a modern war, the appropriate front organs should also plan for this line of activity.

Individual stragglers from their units and small groups of military personnel can also, under the conditions of a nuclear war, become a pronounced disorganizing force. They must all be detained, verified, fed, and sent to organizing points. During this process it must not be forgotten that enemy reconnaissance personnel, deserters, and other criminals may be concealed among them.

Military scholars and practitioners are faced with the task of investigating and determining the forces needed to combat all subversive elements in the front rear zone and the bases for employing these forces. In this regard we would like to caution against errors which may be allowed to occur if, when determining the number of forces and means needed for the protection and defense of the front rear, the work is limited solely to the task of combating sabotage-reconnaissance groups and does not take into account all of the other factors imperiling the rear.

A particularly acute problem which arises under the conditions of a modern war is that of providing reliable protection of missile technical units, army and front bases, large structures on railroad and motor vehicle lines of transportation, junctions and unloading points, pipelines, and other important installations in the front rear zone.

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Analysis shows that using their own forces, rear services large units, units, and facilities are only partially capable of providing immediate security for installations of the operational rear. In many exercises, the assumption is made that three or four regiments from a rear security division can fully compensate for a shortage of forces and will provide reliable security of the rear. On this basis, rear security divisions are thus for the most part assigned to fulfil this task.

In our opinion, this assumption is erroneous. In considering a procedure for employing division subunits for security of rear installations, the subject of discussion should not be the guarding of rear installations by sentries. This is the task of the rear services units and subunits themselves. The division, however, must strengthen the security of rear installations on the distant approaches to them and the security of the areas in which they are located.

This strengthening of security is provided for by continuously conducting field reconnaissance, searches, and patrolling, and by organizing a service for ambushes, listening posts, traffic control points, observation, etc. However, for immediate security of such installations as large railroad bridges and for transports with missiles and missile propellant, only an insignificant portion of the forces from the rear security division can be used.

In present-day operations there has been a great increase in the size of the front rear zone and the number of installations requiring especially reliable security. The operational rear services have become more maneuverable. The forces and factors disorganizing the rear have become more significant and more active. Investigations of problems of rear security, and exercises which have been carried out, demonstrate convincingly that a rear security division at the existing strength and organization will not be able to carry out the full range of varied and specific tasks. We think that rear security troops should include: guard units to protect installations of the operational rear and lines of transportation; operational units to combat enemy sabotage-reconnaissance activity and maintain order in the front rear zone; convoy units (subunits); and special and auxiliary units and subunits to eliminate the aftereffects of enemy employment of weapons of mass destruction.

Operational rear security units should be fully equipped with technical means so that they have the capability to implement the necessary maneuvering, to negotiate sectors of continuous barriers or conflagrations and zones of increased radiation, to seal off individual areas, to conduct

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searches, to pursue, to neutralize opposition by subversive elements, and to maintain and restore strict order on lines of transportation, at crossings, and in populated areas.

As a supplement to the usual small arms, it is desirable to have guns and antitank guided missiles with the rear security troops. Taking into account that the division's units will be operating throughout the entire rear zone of the front, radio means of varied power are necessary for stable communications.

Based on the experience of exercises, it may be assumed that the deployment of a rear security division will depend on the length of time it takes to mobilize, the time at which it joins the front, its readiness to carry out tasks, and many other conditions. However, the assumed situation requires a more rapid commitment of rear security large units to combat activity. Otherwise the front rear will remain inadequately protected against subversive forces at the most critical moment of combat. The enemy, however, as is known, counts on widely expanding the activity of his sabotage-reconnaissance forces immediately following a nuclear strike or, in many instances, even considerably earlier.

Consequently, there must be immediate, highly aggressive, decisive, and diversified actions by special security forces and means of the operational rear, since without strict order in the rear, we cannot count on successful combat actions by the front troops. In connection with the foregoing, it is fully justifiable to conclude that rear security troops should be deployed before combat actions begin, and it is very important to bring their combat readiness to the level of readiness of all other troops located on a given axis.

A few words regarding control.

Based on the experience of the Great Patriotic War and the special features of present-day troop control, it appears to us that without a special organ it will be very difficult for the front staff, as well as for the front rear services staff, to resolve the problems of ensuring reliable security and defense of the rear at the same time that the basic problems of troop control are being resolved.

In this regard it is advisable to discuss the possibility of setting up independent control of rear security and defense forces and means. In our opinion, it would be useful to have within the center and the front formation a special organ which would handle all matters concerning the

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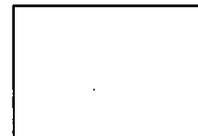
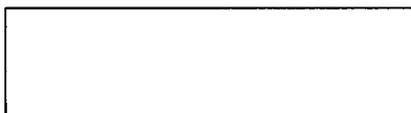
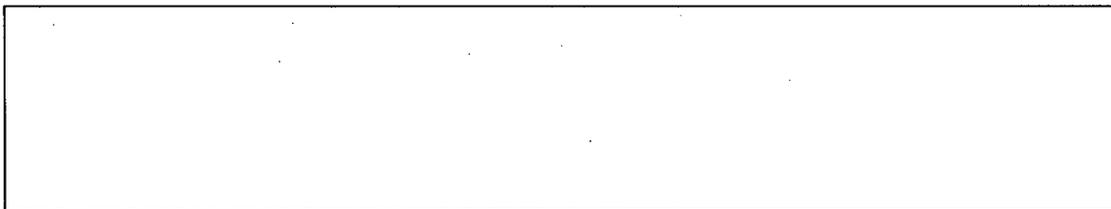
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protection, security, and defense of the rear and would command the security troops.

In a decree of the State Defense Committee of 4 January 1942 it was stated: "As actual practice shows, our troops, in occupying cities, leave garrisons in them and thus weaken themselves as they advance." Considering such a practice intolerable, the State Defense Committee decreed that liberated cities be garrisoned by NKVD troops (company, battalion, regiment) in order to rid the rear of enemy agents, collaborators, traitors, and other criminal elements. To carry out this task, several divisions of internal troops were brought in.

The necessity thus arises to allocate and prepare forces and means in advance to carry out security tasks in the interior as well -- behind the front rear zone, as the troops move forward. It must be assumed that under present-day conditions such tasks may arise quite often, and the procedure for carrying them out must be considered in good time.

In conclusion we would like to direct attention to the fact that rear security divisions should even now be in existence and they should be trained in full readiness to operate in the rear zone of the Group of Soviet Forces, Germany and of the border military districts. Their experience will considerably facilitate the resolution of many fundamental problems of protecting and defending the operational rear.



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