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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20505

23 February 1978

MEMORANDUM FOR: The Director of Central Intelligence  
FROM : John N. McMahon  
Deputy Director for Operations  
SUBJECT : MILITARY THOUGHT (USSR): Improving Troop  
Control in the Modern Battle and Operation

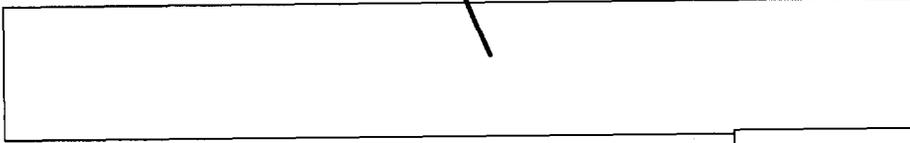
1. The enclosed Intelligence Information Special Report is part of a series now in preparation based on the SECRET USSR Ministry of Defense publication Collection of Articles of the Journal "Military Thought". This article summarizes the military science conference which was held at the Frunze Military Academy on 26 to 27 December 1962. The topics that were on the agenda of the conference included methods of working out decisions and transmitting them to the troops, the preparation of combat documents, the passing of information, technical means of control, the organizational structure of control organs, and the system of control posts. A large portion of the article is devoted to Minister of Defense Malinovskiy's speech on various aspects of troop control and needed improvements. This article appeared in Issue No. 2 (69) for 1963.

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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# Intelligence Information Special Report

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COUNTRY USSR



DATE OF NFO. Mid-1963

23 February 1978

SUBJECT

MILITARY THOUGHT (USSR): Improving Troop Control in the Modern Battle and Operation

SOURCE Documentary

Summary:

The following report is a translation from Russian of an article which appeared in Issue No. 2 (69) for 1963 of the SECRET USSR Ministry of Defense publication Collection of Articles of the Journal 'Military Thought'. The authors of this article are Colonel M. Kiryan and Colonel L. Druzhinin. This article summarizes the military science conference which was held at the Frunze Military Academy on 26 to 27 December 1962. The topics that were on the agenda of the conference included methods of working out decisions and transmitting them to the troops, the preparation of combat documents, the passing of information, technical means of control, the organizational structure of control organs, and the system of control posts. A large portion of the article is devoted to Minister of Defense Malinovskiy's speech on various aspects of troop control and needed improvements. End of Summary

Comment:

General-Mayor M. Kiryan has also written an article entitled "Protection of Rear Area Troops and Installations from Weapons of Mass Destruction During an Offensive Operation" in Issue No. 2 (87) for 1969

In 1974 the author was identified as head of a department at the Frunze Military Academy. 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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Improving Troop Control in the Modern Battle and Operation

(From materials of the military science conference  
of the Military Academy i/n M. V. Frunze)

by

Colonel M. KIRYAN  
Colonel L. DRUZHININ

On 26 and 27 December 1962 at the Military Academy i/n M. V. Frunze, the XII military science conference was held, which was dedicated to seeking ways of improving troop control on the basis of existing and future technical means.

General-Leytenant N. N. SHKODUNOVICH presented the main report.

Primary attention during the conference was devoted to examining the following very important matters.

Methods of working out decisions and transmitting them to the troops. The conferees supported the recommendation of the speaker to decrease the number of questions decided personally by the commander, and to limit the volume of decisions for a battle and operation.

In the decision, it is necessary to specify only the concept of actions, the procedure for employing means of mass destruction and tasks for the troops. All remaining matters, connected with supporting combat actions of troops, should be decided by the staff, deputy commanders and the corresponding chiefs of branch arms and services, on the basis of the commander's plan, without any particular instructions from him. Colonel General LYUDNIKOV, General-Leytenant KOCHETKOV, General-Mayor KOMKOV and Colonel REZNICHENKO pointed out the need of getting rid of faulty methods for collectively "working out" decisions by listening to extensive information reports at crowded and prolonged meetings. The commander makes his decision personally, and does not look for it in the reports of subordinates.

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Adopting a decision, drawing it up and transmitting it to the troops is now the only process which cannot be divided by time into some sort of independent stages. Transmitting a decision to its executors should not depend on the full completion of planning a battle and operation, and especially on the drawing up of military documents.

Preparing combat documents. The speakers at the conference said that reducing the number of documents should not be to the detriment of the quality of organizing battle and troop control. General-Mayor KOMKOV feels that, by eliminating superfluous details about tasks, it is possible to decrease the length of a combat order. It is quite sufficient to point out the general task to subordinates without specifying the methods for fulfilling it.

The matter of employing standard (formalized) documents was exhaustively discussed. According to General-Mayor GAYVOROVSKIY, the mistrust shown toward these documents among certain groups of officers is explained by the insufficient training for employing them, and by the fear that this practice could lead to stereotyping. The experience of work with standard documents in the Leningrad Military District provides the basis to suppose that their employment is extremely useful, especially in those cases when brief instructions and orders are sent.

General-Leytenant KOCHETKOV expressed the opinion that such documents as a combat order cannot be formalized. Colonel DIDENKO, citing the experience of the Turkestan Military District, said that, where secure communications devices are present, standard documents will undoubtedly find wide application and will play a positive role in raising the efficiency of troop control. General of the Army KUROCHKIN feels that introducing well worked-out standard documents into practice will relieve the communications channels considerably and will increase the efficiency of troop control, that also formerly documents always had a specified form, fixed by manuals and regulations, but this did not make them devoid of creative content.

The passing of information. The report pointed out that at the present time the volume of information has grown sharply, and the amount of time for passing it has significantly decreased. At the same time, as the experience of exercises shows, information on the situation, the nature of actions and condition of the troops, even without taking possible enemy jamming into consideration, reaches a division in 1.5 to two hours and an army -- in three to four hours. According to General-Mayor KURNOSOV, this occurs because of the parallelism and many stages involved in transmitting

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information. Often, the very same data are transmitted simultaneously over several communications lines. In addition, all information about the situation is reported to the commander, although much of it is not necessary at a given moment. It loads the communications lines, as a result of which information or instructions of the senior commander, which are necessary for adopting a decision, are transmitted with great delays.

In order to prevent such a situation, it was proposed that the information be separated into three categories according to its importance and priority. To the dispatches (reports) of the first precedence it was recommended to attribute that information which requires the immediate action of the commander and without which it is impossible to adopt the correct decision (information on our own and enemy missile/nuclear and chemical strikes, the combat readiness of rocket troops, orders and instructions to subordinate troops). The second precedence includes information which does not require the immediate action of the commander, but which has important significance for firm and uninterrupted troop control (the situation of our own and enemy troops, the nature of their activity, etc.). All remaining information will be included in reports of the third precedence.

In addition, in order to eliminate parallelism in passing information in a report, it has been proposed to have groups (sections) for collecting and processing information at control posts. Certain conferees spoke out against doing this, since, in this instance, the responsibility for the correctness of the information coming from these groups is removed from the corresponding chiefs.

Technical means of control. In the opinion of the conferees, the technical means for control, which exist at the present time in the troops and which are entering service, on the whole, are able to support troop control. However, they have a wide variety of essential deficiencies and need improvement. Thus, for example, radio sets do not possess sufficient range and do not ensure duplex communication. Many of them are poorly adapted for operation during movement, and they are complex in use and servicing. Certain radio sets, which have been mounted on vehicles with limited mobility, lag behind the troops and require considerable time for setting up and closing down. The absence in the troops of secure communications devices, as well as of mechanization and minor automation means, is a great hindrance to improving troop control.

In order to ensure reliable and stable communications between control posts of adjacent command echelons, the conferees recommend wider



employment of rebroadcast of radio transmissions, and having unattended radio and radio-relay rebroadcasts. It is advisable to have reserve subunits in the army for restoring control posts of regiments and divisions which have been put out of action. This will considerably decrease the number of communications forces and means placed in reserve, and it will increase the capability of maneuvering them.

In the report and speeches of the conferees, the wish was expressed to introduce duplex radio sets into the troops as soon as possible, which are equipped with an optical or sound call indicator, which do not require prolonged time for setting up and closing down, and ensure uninterrupted communications when control posts are in transit. The range of newly developed radio sets was recommended within the following limits: for company-platoon -- up to five kilometers, for battalion-company -- up to ten kilometers, regiment-battalion -- up to 25 kilometers, for division-regiment -- up to 50 kilometers. For radio-relay means it was proposed to increase the number of channels and widen the sphere of their employment up to the regiment inclusive.

In the opinion of the conferees, the introduction of secure communications devices into all levels and securing of all channels of radio, radio-relay and telephone communications by them, will play a decisive role in raising the efficiency of troop control and bringing it into conformity with modern requirements. It was proposed that the tactical level should have a secure communications device with a temporary security of five to eight hours.

Concerning means of mechanization and minor automation, the conferees gave examples of their important role for raising the efficiency in the work of commanders and staffs, but the majority of these means in the districts appear only for the time of the experimental exercises and, therefore, officers do not know how to use them. In connection with this, it was suggested to include these means in the T/O&E of control organs and to set up a centralized supply of them.

The organizational structure of control organs. The conferees were in favor of a single T/O&E strength for control organs in peace and wartime, and also of decreasing the number of officers which are directly subordinate to the commander. In particular, it was proposed to make the chiefs of engineer and chemical troops subordinate to the chief of staff, and to make the deputy for technical matters, all chiefs of supply of military-technical equipment, and finally the chief of missile and artillery armament subordinate to the deputy commander (deputy formation



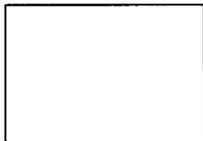
commander) for the rear. As a result of such organizational measures, only five or six men (the chief of staff, the first deputy, the deputies for political affairs and the rear, and the chief of rocket troops and artillery) will be directly subordinate to the commander. Certain conferees did not agree with the proposal to make the chief of chemical troops subordinate to the chief of staff, since he is involved, not only with matters of protection against means of mass destruction, but also with the employment of chemical weapons.

The system of control posts. The low survivability rate of control posts, especially of the command post, was noted at the conference. This is explained by the fact that now more than 75 percent of the personnel and the main mass of technical means are located in it. Basically, it is impossible to control troops for a prolonged period of time from the alternate command post which has been set up, since it is essentially a temporary organization.

In connection with this, in the report and in a number of speeches it was proposed to set up two control posts for commanding troops in an army and a division -- a command and a reserve post, each of which must be capable of independently controlling troops, and, if necessary, of detailing a forward command post from among its personnel. For setting up such control posts in staffs of divisions and armies, it is recommended to make up the combat crew of personnel without delay and include it in the tables of organization. However, many speeches pointed out that the currently existing system of control posts (command post, forward command post, and rear post) has fully justified itself. It is only necessary to make these posts less unwieldy and more mobile.

At the conference, a proposal was made that it is necessary to train staffs in transferring troop control (when the command post is put out of action) to a lower command level (from an army -- to one of the division command posts, a division -- to one of the regiment command posts), and also to the rear control post.

In the opinion of General of the Army KUROCHKIN, the proposed ways for improving the system of control posts should be carefully studied and tested in exercises. Along with this, it is necessary to recall the former good practice, when, at the end of a combat order, the commander of the division designated his deputies from among subordinate commanders of units. In this instance, the commander of the regiment will already begin to prepare himself and his staff in advance for control of the division, when the command post of the division is put out of action, and the



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commander of the division -- will be prepared in advance to control the army. It is indisputable that on the tactical level it is now necessary to support control of troops in movement. Therefore, the control posts of a battalion, regiment and division must be placed on vehicles with a high cross-country capability, equipped with all the technical means necessary for troop control. For testing the proposals made at the conference, General of the Army KUROCHKIN suggested setting up in certain districts, experimental staffs of regiments, divisions and armies of various organization and to test them in exercises. An analysis of the experience of the work of these staffs will allow us to draw the most correct conclusions.

\* \* \* \*

Minister of Defense Marshal of the Soviet Union Comrade R. Ya. MALINOVSKIY presented a lengthy speech at the conference. The main content of his speech briefly amounts to the following.

The Minister of Defense expressed satisfaction with the work of the conference and dwelled on the matter of the attitude toward his article, published in the sixth issue of the Special Collection of the Journal "Military Thought" for 1962. He said that at the conference certain speakers cited this article, examining a number of its proposals as guiding instructions. In doing so, each cited the proposal he liked best. Of course, staff workers especially liked the idea about a single staff, therefore they confidently proposed abolishing all staffs, except the combined-arms staff.

"I must say", emphasized Marshal of the Soviet Union R. Ya. MALINOVSKIY, "that in the first place, I spoke there not as the Minister of Defense, but simply as an author and, in the second place, it is necessary to remember that articles in the Collection of the Journal "Military Thought" are published by way of discussion and they express only the opinion of the authors of the subjects treated. I would not say that this is the official point of view. This is a point of view, which seems most suitable to us in a given situation, but it is published by way of discussion. And, the sharper each article in this Collection is, the more it will attract the readers' attention and evoke more discussion. It would not be bad at all, if, let us say, you would begin discussing this article or journal somewhere as we always discuss any book...."

Then the Minister of Defense expressed his views on the following matters.

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The requirements put on troop control. The Minister of Defense noted that in recent years, in no exercise have we been able to organize troop control as well as we did during wartime. We can frankly say that at that time, we controlled troops better than in the exercises which have been conducted recently. But, this does not mean that "we have to call for help because the matter, we say, is in complete shambles -- this is not true... It is not necessary to make it into an emergency; now, in peacetime, we do control rather poorly, but when war begins, then, able men will be found and we will control better. There is not much you can do, war is the kind of a test which eliminates all poorly prepared people from the command pedestal and puts those on it who are worthy of it. But, in order to keep these costs down, so that we would not suffer great losses from this natural phenomenon, we must do everything in order to improve our system of troop control."

This improvement, according to the Minister of Defense, must first of all take the form of speeding up all processes of troop control. Modern means of destruction and mainly missile weapons, which are the main carrier of nuclear warheads, brought about this requirement. When missile/nuclear strikes are delivered, everything changes very rapidly. "Therefore, it is necessary to control quickly, to react quickly, to plan quickly, and to convey the decision to the executors quickly." The Minister of Defense said, "The main requirement for troop control in modern conditions consists of this." He further emphasized that now, six to eight, and even ten hours are quite often spent in making a decision and relaying it to its executors, and the lower echelon takes as much time. "As a result, there is an agonizingly slow rate for conveying an order to the chief executor, who is always the soldier."

How to unburden commanders, so that they can better resolve the main matters of troop control. The Minister of Defense agreed with the recommendations of the speaker that in the decision it is advisable to specify only the concept of combat actions, the procedure for employing nuclear and chemical weapons and the combat tasks for subordinate troops. But, these problems, as a matter of fact, cover all of the activity of the commander. The remaining problems must be resolved by other officers. When this is done, they should not resent the fact that they have been given a secondary role. It has always been this way, and will continue to be so; the staff and chiefs of branch arms, in comparison with the commander, are secondary and they fulfil secondary duties. The commander answers for everything: for winning and losing an operation. In the war years, Military Councils led the troops, but even then, the primary responsibility for everything was borne by the chairman of the Military

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Council -- the commander of an army or front.

We must dismiss the opinion that the commander can be more poorly trained than the chief of staff, but the main thing is that he must be decisive and willful. This is not true. "Such decisive people," says the Minister of Defense, "must study, but, it is necessary for the best educated, the most resourceful, and the best prepared to acquire decisiveness."

In peacetime, emphasized the Minister of Defense, it is very difficult to decide matters of selecting and training commanders, although this is done in exercises which are conducted. This is why in an order on combat training and a directive on operational training for the new training year a very great emphasis is placed on the personal training of commanders, on their ability to quickly adopt a decision, to quickly and precisely draw it up and convey it to the troops.

Further, the Minister of Defense remarked that in exercises since the war, the procedure for adopting a decision turns almost into a scientific conference. Sometimes, in the exercises "you feel, and see that the person has no decision, that he greedily devours every word of subordinates, should someone suddenly offer a decision, so that he only has to repeat it. And, this is why we have an agonizing process."

The Minister of Defense suggested refraining from using the term "working out a decision", by which we usually understand the combined work of the formation commander and many chiefs, and to replace it with the term "adopting a decision". It is difficult to collectively work out a decision. The collective can only be mobilized to fulfil the decision which has been adopted, to resort to its help in drawing up this decision, and sometimes to adopt certain ideas necessary for adopting the decision. But, to collectively adopt a decision for a battle and operation is very, very difficult. The commander must make it personally. And it is most important that the decision be relayed in a timely manner to the troops. An ideal decision is useless if it is delayed.

The existing system of troop control. Marshal of the Soviet Union R. Ya. MALINOVSKIY remarked that the currently existing system of control is considerably different from the one which we had in the last war. But, much depends not on the system, but on the people, who set it up and work in it.

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The Minister of Defense noted that in exercises we sometimes arrive at disturbing conclusions, that staffs have been poorly trained, and that certain commanders have been poorly trained. However, we do not have "such poorly trained staffs, as we do poorly trained commanders, chiefs of staff, chiefs of operations directorates...in the staffs, in departments, capable people have been selected..., they quite often are indignant at such a situation, but they can do nothing. Therefore, we must stop praying as before icons, before the incompetent, although highly placed people, and we must boldly speak out at exercises, resolutely state our specified proposals on a decision, and then everything will clear up. An indignation which is expressed among us in tents and behind them, is of no use to us -- we must boldly speak about deficiencies."

Speaking about the work of operational organs, the Minister of Defense remarked that "axis officers -- this is a worthless organization, an organization which seriously restricts the work of the axis officer, changing him, if one can express it this way, into a petty bureaucrat of operational activity." Sometimes these axis officers "are driven hard. It is required that he know precisely the division for which he is responsible, up to the individual soldier. This is not right." Marshal MALINOVSKIY said that he had worked a great deal in his time in an operations directorate, but there had been no axis officers. However, troop control was none the worse.

Further the Minister of Defense dwelled on the reasons for the deficiencies in troop control. One of the reasons for the prolonged "working out" of a decision, he said, is that our commanders and chiefs of branch arms still cannot manage without expert advisers. The chief of a branch arm goes to the formation commander to report and "takes two or three expert advisers with him. And, thus, everyone arrives with expert advisers and the "pow-wow" begins for a whole day. Therefore, you get the decision only towards evening." This, in his opinion, is one of the main reasons for our deficiencies. The Minister of Defense emphasized that it would be better if the expert advisers came to the formation commander, that is, the informed people, rather than the chiefs with their consultants.

The second reason for deficiencies in troop control "is the inept use of existing technical means, and the still weaker technical equipping of our control organs. At the same time, the main means of control do not fully conform to new conditions of conducting combat actions."

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Finally, the third reason -- "This is the imperfect organizational structure of control organs and posts. They are very cumbersome, immobile and insufficiently adapted to work in conditions of highly mobile combat actions."

Concerning electronic computers, the Minister of Defense said that we have many of them, but we do not yet derive the proper result from their employment. Many of the available machines, besides keyboard calculators, are not suited for war.

The Minister of Defense noted that we have countless numbers of various types of radio sets, and still new types are being developed which have not been received from industry. But, along with this, communications personnel do not take decisive measures for decreasing the amount of obsolete equipment. The radio sets which we have are unwieldy. We do not utilize all the newest technical achievements in their development. In particular, we have not introduced microminiaturization at all, which is already used in the national economy. We must strive to make the radio sets exceptionally portable and convenient to use. It is also necessary to ensure cover of all channels of communication by secure communications devices, since we cannot now conduct war without them. We need secure communications devices of both high and limited security, which would ensure keeping transmitted information secret over the course of five to eight hours.

Finally, it is necessary to provide the staffs with devices for duplicating documents, but only ones which would be suitable for use in field conditions.

The combat order. The Minister of Defense said that a written combat order must be drawn up at every level from the front down to the division. It must be maximally brief and sufficiently clear so that whoever receives it, even if he may not want to understand, will, nevertheless, be able to. It is necessary to achieve such a situation, that there will be no basis for subordinates to interpret the written order in a different way. This is the duty of our operations officers.

In speaking about separating documents according to the level of importance, the Minister of Defense gave an example from the experience of work of the staff of the front which he commanded during the Great Patriotic War. He related that all documents were produced in three copies. The combat order -- on red, the action report and situation report -- on blue, and the remaining documents -- on white. And, if the

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telegrapher received a document on red paper for transmission, then, all other documents were immediately put aside, and, when beginning transmission of the cipher message, he would first of all inform the addressee that a document on red paper was being sent. Therefore, already at the time when the document was being transmitted, the cipher clerk of the subordinate staff was at the side of the telegrapher and he deciphered the message which was being received. This procedure for determining the priority and transmission precedence justified itself. We should introduce it into practice now.

Control posts. We have been occupied with this matter for a long time, said the Minister of Defense, and we must say that the system of control posts adopted by us -- forward command post, command post and rear control post -- is a good one. The forward command post moves forward and as the troops advance it becomes the main command post.

Now the question is being raised about an observation post, which was set up in the last war. Now, the commander of an army, and also the commander of a front can see little from such a post. But, the commander must, when necessary, move forward, and for this purpose the forward command post is detailed.

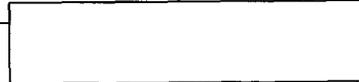
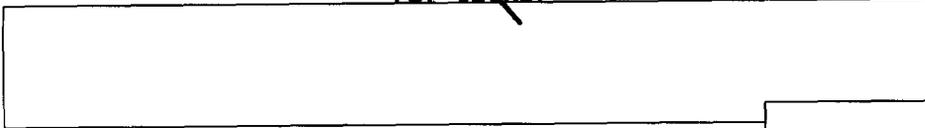
As for the rear control post, it must be so organized that, if necessary, it could assume control of the troops.

It is necessary, said Marshal MALINOVSKIY, to restore the previously existing practice of designating deputies from among subordinate commanders. Such a deputy has his own organ of control and can assume the command of a higher-level large unit, and, when this is done, he can obtain some reinforcement of officers and communications means from the higher staff.

The structure of control organs. The Minister of Defense remarked that it is necessary to sharply decrease the number of control organs, having improved the quality of training of generals and officers, and having raised the productivity of command work. "Large staffs are a sign of weakness of an army, many generals in control organs are evidence of a weakness of command... The fewer the people, the easier it is to have them be compatible with one another, and to organize them for common useful work. A small staff is easy to control, a large staff -- a disaster." Control organs are needed of the type that can control troops immediately from the initiation of war, without any mobilization. Therefore, the structure of staffs in principle must be the same for both peace and

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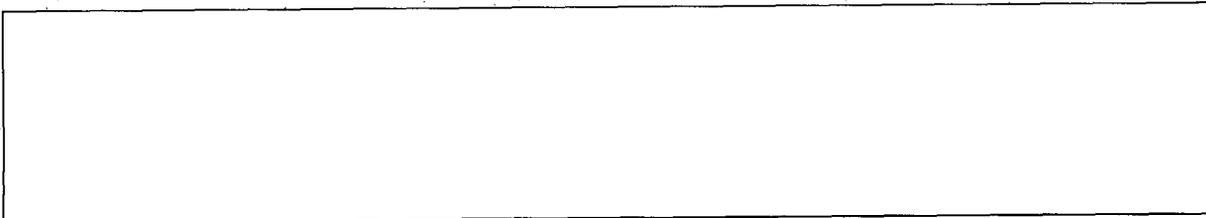


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wartime.

Further, the Minister of Defense dwelled on the matter of a single staff. He said that he is opposed to numerous staffs. "With us, each chief strives to make a staff for himself, without this he feels that he is not a chief. It is necessary to strive for a single staff, although this will not be easy to achieve. With time, we nonetheless will achieve this."

In conclusion, the Minister of Defense appealed to all participants of the conference to study and raise their qualifications, so that they would really be model commanders, and to apply maximum efforts to eliminating deficiencies existing in troop control as soon as possible.



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