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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20505

16 November 1978

MEMORANDUM FOR: The Director of Central Intelligence

FROM : John N. McMahon
Deputy Director for Operations

SUBJECT : MILITARY THOUGHT (USSR): Combat
Against Landing Forces

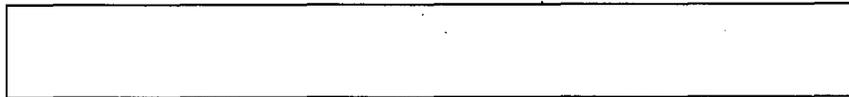
1. The enclosed Intelligence Information Special Report is part of a series now in preparation based on the SECRET USSR Ministry of Defense publication Collection of Articles of the Journal "Military Thought". This article discusses at length what it says are the plans of the American-NATO command to combat airborne and amphibious landing forces of the Soviet Union and its allies, stressing that antilanding actions were worked out against the background of such exercises as QUICK KICK-5, GOLD BOX, etc., which were held in 1964. Examined in the article are the types of weapons, the composition of the forces, and the tactics which the American-NATO forces intend to employ in the antilanding actions. This article appeared in Issue No. 3 (76) for 1965.

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

JNV John N. McMahon

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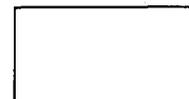
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Intelligence Information Special Report

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COUNTRY USSR

DATE OF INFO. Mid-1966

DATE 17 November 1978

SUBJECT

MILITARY THOUGHT (USSR): The Combat Readiness of a Division

SOURCE Documentary

Summary:

The following report is a translation from Russian of an article which appeared in Issue No. 2 (78) for 1966 of the SECRET USSR Ministry of Defense publication Collection of Articles of the Journal 'Military Thought'. This article contains two separate reviews, the first written by General-Leytenant Kh. Ambaryan and the second by General-Mayor P. Maltsev and Colonel Ye. Safonov, of a book dealing with the requirements for the combat readiness of a division. Both articles discuss various aspects of this question from the procedure for alerting the troops by a combat alert signal to the assembly and departure of the troops from permanent deployment areas, stressing the need at each stage to carry out tasks in the shortest possible time. End of Summary

Comment:

A General-Leytenant P. Maltsev was identified as Chief of Staff of the Central Group of Forces as of March 1972. P. Maltsev and Ye. Safonov collaborated on "Some Features of Preparing and Conducting a Front Offensive Operation, Beginning Without the Employment of Nuclear Weapons, in Mountainous and Desert Terrain" in Issue No. 1 (80) for 1967

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The Combat Readiness of a Division

by

General-Leytenant Kh. AMBARYAN
General-Major P. MALTSEV
Colonel Ye. SAFONOV

The Soviet Armed Forces are solving the very important problem of raising combat readiness in every way possible. To accomplish this task, formation commanders, commanders, and staffs at all levels, as well as military scientific institutions are persistently seeking ways and methods of improving the combat effectiveness and combat readiness of formations, large units, and units.

One of the results of work in this area is the book The Combat Readiness of a Division. And, although the division level does not fully conform to the profile of our journal, the editorial board thought it necessary to publish a selection of reviews on this book.

The authors of the reviews are from the military. They express their reaction to the published book, as well as recommendations which have important practical meaning.

* * *

In recent years much practical work has been done in seeking ways and methods of shortening the time for bringing large units and units to full combat readiness. Units and subunits now leave their camps in a time calculated in minutes. However, this valuable experience has not been generalized and has not become the accomplishment of others. In connection with this, the book The Combat Readiness of a Division arouses special interest.*

* The Combat Readiness of a Division. Assistant Professor Colonel General K. SKOROBOGATKIN, Ed. Military Publishing House, 1965, 92 pages.

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The topicality of the book is indisputable. On the basis of an in-depth analysis of the special features of a future war and of a comprehensive summarization of troop experience, the book sets forth requirements for the combat readiness of a present-day division at full strength, and recommends methods for bringing combined-arms large units to combat readiness more quickly. We believe that the book will be a great help to commanders and staffs in shortening the time for bringing troops to full combat readiness.

We agree with the authors that under present-day conditions one of the most important requirements for combat readiness of a division (whether it is of a border or an interior military district) is bringing it to full combat readiness in the shortest possible time, since the maximum range of means of delivering nuclear weapons threatens all large units no matter how far they are from the state border.

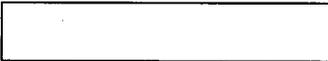
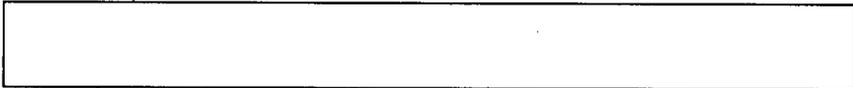
The possibility of the surprise employment of nuclear weapons urgently requires that a division leave permanent deployment areas with everything necessary for battle in a very short time (before the delivery of nuclear strikes against it).

In examining the time in which a border division can arrange for assembling and leaving permanent deployment areas, the authors, having taken as a basis the assessment of the nuclear attack means of the probable enemy, conclude that it takes a border division an average of 30 minutes to assemble and leave permanent deployment areas.

We consider that this length of time is completely realistic for border divisions where the officer personnel are quartered compactly and close to the military camps, and more often, directly in them. In spite of less favorable conditions regarding the quartering of the officer personnel, the location of combat equipment in parks, the layout of military camps, the capabilities for leaving the garrisons, etc., divisions of our army only take a little more than 30 minutes to leave permanent deployment areas. But, we are continuing to investigate ways and methods of further reducing the time for leaving permanent deployment areas.

In analyzing questions of where and when a division will prepare armament and combat equipment for combat employment (pages 11-12), the authors arrive at the conclusion that each border division will decide these questions differently: depending on the combat task, the place in the operational disposition, and the distance from the area of combat actions. One division will have to come to combat readiness during the





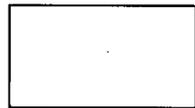
movement forward, while another will do it in the concentration area. In our opinion, and even the authors themselves believe that, the situational conditions can require drastic changes in a previously outlined plan of actions, for which we must prepare troops in peacetime. The stiffest demands must be made of a division, wherever it may be deployed. It must be capable of conducting combat actions even with individual detachments directly from permanent deployment areas.

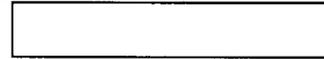
Of no less importance for bringing troops to combat readiness is the maintenance of combat equipment and armament in good working order. As is well known, the loading of mobile reserves is a very labor-consuming process. Experience shows that their distribution in depots by subunits (tanks and guns), as it is pointed out in the book (page 14), saves some time in loading. However, this method, in our opinion, does not fully answer present-day requirements. For example, we have solved this problem differently -- by means of maintaining mobile reserves (of regiments and divisions) immediately in motor transport. At first, many people were wary of such an arrangement, but now they view it as the correct solution.

✓ It is impossible to agree with the authors' assertion that a division in constant combat readiness is still unable to start fulfilling a combat task (page 14).

In our opinion, upon the introduction of increased combat readiness, it is necessary to recall the officer personnel from leave and, in addition to preparing control posts, to send out operations groups with communications means to the command posts to prepare the posts for operation. This involves setting up communications centers at the command posts and checking the warning system and the condition of wire communications with the army and subordinate staffs.

The authors consider that the designation of main and alternate concentration areas for a division does not fully conform to present-day requirements (page 17) and they propose the designation of three areas of concentration for each division when conditions warrant it: a main area, an alternate area for use if the danger arises that the main area will be subjected to nuclear strikes, or in case the main area is already destroyed (contaminated), and, finally, a training concentration area for withdrawal in a practice alert or for bringing a division to increased combat readiness. Such a variant has not been ruled out. However, in border districts, which are literally saturated with troops, it is difficult to designate three areas.





The main requirement for a plan of bringing a division to combat readiness is that it must be convenient to use (clear, understandable, and precisely formulated). We agree with the authors, and this is confirmed by experience, that preferably the plan should be drawn up on a map on which all basic questions of bringing a division to combat readiness are clearly reflected graphically and in the legend. Questions of support, which are necessary primarily for specialists, should be set forth in separate appendices.

✓ The authors recommend that three plans of combat readiness be worked out for a division -- for the main, alternate and training areas (page 26). We feel that there should be one plan, otherwise there could be confusion. In the event of a surprise outbreak of combat actions by an aggressor, our troops will not know upon which plan variant they should act. For the other variants it is necessary only to work on a map with a small legend. There should also be a chart of basic measures written up, not as an appendix to the plan, but rather contained in the plan itself, and only basic measures included in it.

✓ In order to have more efficient work by duty officers, it is advisable to have a specially prepared chart, which shows the sequence of their duties. Such a chart makes it considerably easier for duty officers to complete their work.

Not long ago, the poorly organized warning of large units, units, subunits, and especially the officer personnel was one of the reasons for the late departure of troops in an alert. In recent years this problem has basically been solved. Examples were given in the book of the organization of transmitting combat alert signals in various districts (Chapter III). We think it is necessary to share our experience of sending signals to the troops.

Repeated testing of the system of warning the troops of our army has shown that it takes one to two minutes to send a combat alert signal from the army operations duty officer to the duty officer of a regiment. It takes approximately the same amount of time for warning within units. We use the system which is employed in civil defense for transmitting the signal. By pressing a button the operations duty officer of the army sends an alert signal by collective call to all large units and units under army subordination and automatically to the division units. Simultaneously the signal is sent to the telephones in the officers' quarters.



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At present we are working on improving this system for the purpose of sending a signal to subunits directly without the participation of duty officers of large units and units. For this, a local system for warning units is being worked out which consists of a "combat alert" illuminated indicator board and sound signalling on each floor of the barracks.

Employing this warning system ensures a practical capability of sending a combat alert signal from the army staff to subunits in two to three minutes without intermediate levels of command. Upon receiving a return signal, the duty officer knows whether the signal reached its destination.

Along with the given system, the sending of the signal is paralleled by other communications channels. An essential shortcoming in the accepted system is: first, that the transmission of a signal is conducted over wire communications means; second, the automatic exchange of the authentication signal and the reply between duty officers is not ensured.

We are in full agreement with the authors' opinion that, at present, it is necessary to grant duty officers the authority to raise the troops in a combat alert upon receipt of a signal from a superior staff, after which the duty officer is required to report it to his commanding officer.

The state of preparedness of duty officers at all levels, the comprehensive and well thought out organization for warning officers and servicemen, as well as their location are very important in assembling and moving a division from permanent deployment areas. Examples and recommendations included in the book for solving these problems deserve serious attention. We have already implemented many of these and we are continuing to work on the others.

In examining possibilities for shortening the time for preparing combat equipment for departure, the authors recommend maintaining storage batteries in tanks. Experience confirms the advisability of this. Such a method of storage allows even a single driver-mechanic to prepare and drive a tank out of the park in a short time.

As is known, in many units tanks are arranged in parks in two and even three rows. When all the tanks in a park are started up simultaneously, so much gas exhaust accumulates that the personnel cannot work without protection means; the use of gas masks considerably increases the time for bringing tanks to combat readiness. In order to establish normal working conditions for a crew it is advisable to equip parks with gas outlet hoses

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which lead out of the park. We use such a method in the troops.

In the book it is correctly acknowledged that the question of bringing equipment of the rear services to combat readiness is still unresolved. This applies especially to taking kitchens, laundry and bath means, medical supplies, etc., out of reserve. Hopefully, officers and generals will share their experience in this area on the pages of our press.

There is no doubt that if the personnel of units and subunits have been well trained for skilful and coordinated activity during a combat alert, then the time for bringing a division to full combat readiness would be shortened. Rich experience in training personnel has been accumulated in the districts, and it is well stated in the book.

We agree that alerting the troops by a combat alert signal when they are departing for exercises and training periods does not permit the establishment of a true condition of combat readiness of a large unit. Combat readiness must be tested in surprise drills. Only the commander and chief of staff should know the time when the troops will be alerted by a combat alert signal, and the officers, allocated for the test, should be briefed before the exercise.

In conclusion, it is necessary to express several remarks and considerations about bringing a division to full combat readiness. From the initial receipt of a signal for bringing a division to combat readiness until the reporting of the officer personnel and servicemen, as is well known, the operations duty officer directs the raising of the alert. He himself must monitor the sending of the signal, the progress of assembling, the timely giving of commands, the organization of the traffic control service, etc. Experience shows that in order to successfully accomplish all these tasks the duty officer needs a semiautomatic control panel which lights up the appropriate illuminated indicator board when the unit duty officers report. Without this, no officer would be able to successfully cope with all the tasks assigned to him. The assistant to the division duty officer for control should be an officer, not an NCO.

In many cities where troops are deployed, there are one to two routes for moving out. With this number of roads, if units leave the city in succession, then a division needs at least three hours to move out. In our opinion, and experience demonstrates this also, it is necessary to designate for units and subunits assembly points (from which they can leave for the march route in order to complete the assigned task) at five to ten kilometers from the permanent deployment area. Only by such an arrangement

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can they leave the camps quickly. If the troops wait for a task, then the enemy's strikes could find them still in the permanent deployment areas. These assembly points must be set up permanently for any type of combat alert.

We have no objection to the procedure, which is examined in the book, for moving a division out of permanent deployment areas and completing the division's preparation for battle (pages 68-84). The situational conditions for a division actually can be quite diverse. However, under any circumstances the division must, in the shortest possible time, leave deployment areas and be prepared to accomplish any task regardless of whether or not it has been stipulated in the plan.

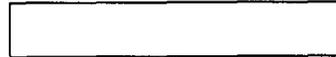
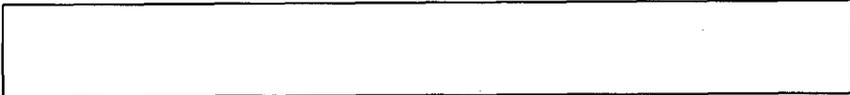
It should be remarked that the movement forward of a division from permanent deployment areas and the completion of preparation of its units and subunits for accomplishing combat tasks is a complex and labor-consuming process. It requires of all personnel an exceptional knowledge of equipment, a state of training in the duties of each member of a crew so that reactions are automatic, a high level of organization, the exertion of moral and physical strengths, clever initiative and resourcefulness, and of the commanders and staffs, besides this -- efficiency, good management, and continuous and purposeful control of subordinate units and subunits.

As a whole, the book The Combat Readiness of a Division investigates all basic situations which relate to this important problem. The value of the work is that the authors confirm many theoretical positions with examples from troop practice, and, on the basis of this, offer recommendations.

The shortcomings which we have pointed out do not lessen the practical significance of this work. Undoubtedly, the book will be of great help to commanders and staffs at all levels in further raising the combat readiness of the troops.

✓ Along with the publication of the work about the combat readiness of a division of a border military district, it is necessary to investigate and summarize this experience for bringing divisions of interior districts, which have specific peculiarities, to full combat readiness.

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The authors of the book regard the combat readiness of a division as the aggregate of its manning with well-trained personnel, equipping with modern armament and combat equipment; and the combat and field training of its personnel, that is, the sum total of those factors which as a whole ensure the capability of each unit and division to successfully accomplish a combat task.

The calculation of the time for assembling and moving a division out of permanent deployment areas is given in the book. In making this calculation, it should not be derived solely from the example of the Central European Theater of Military Operations where divisions are at a distance of 200 to 250 kilometers from the border, but rather, other theaters of military operations, having a variety of special features connected with the nature of the terrain and the capabilities of the probable enemy, and a somewhat greater distance should also be considered.

It is impossible to agree with the authors' statement that, after departing from a permanent deployment area, a division should be concentrated in some area in order to prepare combat equipment and armament for combat employment (page 8). It is more advisable, obviously, for divisions in constant readiness to designate only lines from which they can refine tasks, bring a division (or its units) into formation, and perhaps even issue equipment, replenish stores and continue movement for fulfilling the combat task. In our Turkestan Military District border divisions are trained so that they can enter combat with the raising of a combat alert, without moving to any other areas. Consequently, the armament and combat equipment of these divisions must always be in readiness for combat employment, or be brought to combat readiness in the course of their movement forward to the area of combat actions.

Initial data are given in the book for the commander's making the decision to bring a division to increased and full combat readiness (Chapter II). Practice shows that, when a division is situated in cities, the officers' living quarters, as a rule, are dispersed, and a considerable amount of time is spent in their assembling and reporting to their units. The rapid warning and assembling of officers is still a problem requiring that work be done to find a solution. Concerning remote areas of cities where there are no telephones in the quarters which are connected to the switchboard of the district staff, it is advisable to install a low-power radio set of the R-105 type in the quarters of one of the officers. A



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second set can be installed at the post of the operations duty officer, who sends a signal to the receiving radio set by switching on a tumbler switch. Having received this signal, the officer, in whose quarters the radio set has been installed, presses the button of a bell in the quarters which connects all the bells of the quarters of the officers being warned, and, in the course of one to two minutes, gives the warning signal. With this method it takes two to three minutes to warn the officers.

Besides this, automobiles are supplied for bringing the officers to units (staffs) at designated assembly points.

In his decisions, it is advisable that the commander of the division and of each regiment designate his place at the time of the alert, that is, the point from which the commander controls a division (regiment) when an alert is sounded.

In examining the plan for bringing large units (units) to combat readiness, it is necessary to direct attention to the close coordination of the combat and mobilization readiness plans formulated in staffs of large units and units at reduced strength.

A large number of documents for persons on 24-hour duty is offered in the book (page 32). These recommendations require further study and refinement in order to reduce the number of documents of the duty officer. In the limited time during the alerting of a division by a combat alert signal, many duties are assigned to the duty officer of a division staff which are set forth in these documents. It would have been better if documents on troop combat readiness, which were shown in the appendix to the book, had been more successfully worked out and tested in practice.

Questions of shortening the time for preparing combat and motor transport equipment were set forth in sufficient detail in the book under review, and do not call for further remarks. In the troops of our military districts storage batteries are also stored in tanks and recharged by low currents, which shortens the time needed to prepare the tanks for departure. By such a method a crew of three men can bring a tank from a park in 25 to 30 minutes in both summer and winter conditions in Central Asia.

The method of training the personnel of a division for actions in a combat alert is examined in great depth in the book. It seems to us that special attention in training personnel should be given to the new recruit. From the first day that a soldier is in a unit he should know his place in

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a combat alert. Recruits should be trained for actions in an alert even before they take their oath, that is, simultaneously with the program of studies for training a recruit.

After soldiers have left their unit and been transferred to the reserve, all calculations of the plan for a combat alert are quickly revised to correspond to the number of personnel in the unit.

The task should consist of the systematic adjustment of calculations of the alert plan, the timely reviewing of loading teams and teams of traffic controllers, etc.

Questions of alerting units and subunits of a division by a combat alert signal and bringing them to full combat readiness to accomplish a combat task are examined thoroughly and in sequence in the book (Chapter IV). As experience shows, the transmission of alert signals by technical means alone is not always possible. A surprise strike of the enemy against the deployment area of a division can put stationary communications means out of action. Therefore, it is always necessary to have messenger communications means and other backup communications means in readiness.

In examining the departure of a division from permanent deployment points, in our opinion, it is expedient to determine the time and sequence of the departure of the commander and certain officers of the staff of those divisions which have reserves in depots; they must go to the area and, at the same time, decide questions of activating (deploying) the large units and units.

One must note that the initial formation of a division for movement forward in mountainous-desert terrain can have certain special features. A march formation must include, besides the usual elements, detachments for seizing mountain passes and enveloping detachments. These can be division or regiment detachments and their composition depends on the tasks to be fulfilled.

The authors deal with questions of the provost and traffic control service and traffic control in great detail. Here, one should keep in mind the complexity of organizing traffic control and the provost and traffic control service in mountainous-desert terrain. Primary attention should be devoted to traffic control of columns entering mountain passes, negotiating defiles, and exiting mountain passes onto plains. The complexity of traffic control consists in the very irregular rate of movement of columns in ascending and descending. It is especially difficult to control

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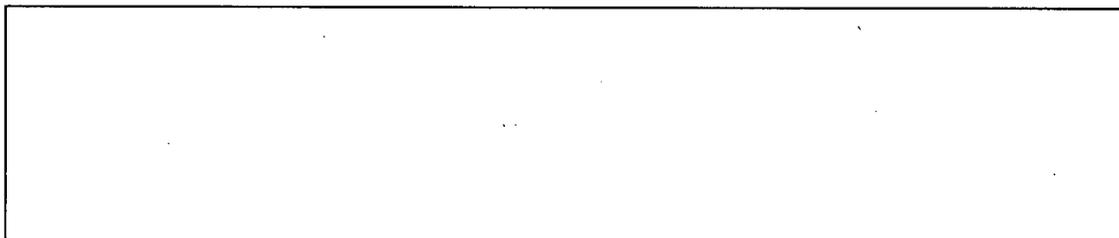
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movement when negotiating winding roads. Their turning angles do not always permit the quick turning of large combat equipment. Besides this, in ascending mountains, the power of the engines is sharply reduced because of the low atmospheric pressure, and fuel consumption is increased.

In organizing traffic control and the provost and traffic control service in mountains, it is necessary to carefully organize communications between the area commandants and the traffic control posts, allocating a sufficient amount of communications means for this.

The authors conclude the final stage of bringing a division to full combat readiness (Chapter IV) with the investigation of basic questions of preparing combat equipment for conducting a battle. It should be kept in mind that the final preparation of a division for actions in mountainous-desert terrain has several peculiarities. For example, for movement in sand, wheeled vehicles must be provided with means with cross-country capability, a sufficient amount of water, and, during actions in mountains -- means for braking the vehicles, fuel, etc.

The work under review is of great benefit for commanders of divisions, regiments, and also other officers, allowing them to have common views on deciding questions of troop combat readiness, which is very important under present-day conditions of conducting a war. It would be advisable for this book to include a more acceptable plan of alerting a division and regiment by a combat alert signal, both for divisions in constant readiness, and for divisions at reduced strength.



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