

~~SECRET~~

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

2796
IRONBARK

MEMORANDUM FOR: The Acting Director of Central Intelligence
SUBJECT : MILITARY THOUGHT (SECRET): "Certain Questions
Concerning the Organization and Control of
Engineer Troops", by Colonel Ye. Kolibernov
and Colonel F. Myshak

1. Enclosed is a verbatim translation of an article from the SECRET Collection of Articles of the Journal "Military Thought" published by the Ministry of Defense, USSR, and distributed down to the level of division commander.

2. For convenience of reference by USIB agencies, the codeword IRONBARK has been assigned to this series of TOP SECRET CSDB reports containing documentary Soviet material. The word IRONBARK is classified CONFIDENTIAL and is to be used only among persons authorized to read and handle this material.

3. In the interests of protecting our source, IRONBARK material should be handled on a need-to-know basis within your office. Requests for extra copies of this report or for utilization of any part of this document in any other form should be addressed to the originating office.

Richard Helms

Richard Helms
Deputy Director (Plans)

Enclosure

APPROVED FOR RELEASE
DATE: DEC 2004

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

IRONBARK

Original: The Director of Central Intelligence

**cc: The Director of Intelligence and Research,
Department of State**

The Director, Defense Intelligence Agency

**The Director for Intelligence,
The Joint Staff**

**The Assistant Chief of Staff for Intelligence,
Department of the Army**

**The Director of Naval Intelligence
Department of the Navy**

**The Assistant Chief of Staff, Intelligence,
U. S. Air Force**

The Director, National Security Agency

**Director, Division of Intelligence
Atomic Energy Commission**

National Indications Center

**Chairman, Guided Missiles and Astronautics
Intelligence Committee**

Deputy Director for Research

Deputy Director for Intelligence

Assistant Director for National Estimates

Assistant Director for Current Intelligence

Assistant Director for Research and Reports

Assistant Director for Scientific Intelligence

**Director, National Photographic Interpretation
Center**

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

IRONBARK

14 September 1962

Distribution:

DCI	- Copy #1
State	- Copies #2 and 3
DIA	- Copies #4 and 5
JCS	- Copies #6 and 7
Army	- Copies #8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, and 15
Navy	- Copies #16, 17, and 18
Air	- Copies #19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, and 25
NSA	- Copy #26
AEC	- Copy #27
NIC	- Copy #28
GMAIC	- Copy #29
SecDef/ISA	- Copy #30
DDR	- Copy #31
DDI	- Copy #32
AD/NE	- Copy #33
AD/CI	- Copy #34
AD/RR	- Copies #35 and 36
AD/SI	- Copies #37, 38, and 39
NPIC	- Copy #40
LS/PAD (NPIC)	- Copy #41
DDP	- Copy #42
A/DDP	- Copy #43
CFI	- Copy #44
CSR	- Copy #45
SR/Rp	- Copies #46, 47, 48, 49, 50, and 51

~~SECRET~~

[Redacted]

IRONBARK

[Redacted]

COUNTRY : USSR

SUBJECT : MILITARY THOUGHT (SECRET): "Certain Questions Concerning the Organization and Control of Engineer Troops"

DATE OF INFO : December 1961

APPRAISAL OF CONTENT : Documentary

SOURCE : A reliable source (B).

Following is a verbatim translation of an article entitled "Certain Questions Concerning the Organization and Control of Engineer Troops", by Colonel Ye. Kolibernov and Colonel F. Myshak. This article appeared in Issue 6 (61) of 1961 of a special version of the Soviet journal Military Thought which is classified SECRET by the Soviets and is published irregularly.

Issue 6 (61) was sent to press on 7 December 1961.

Headquarters Comment: Military Thought is published by the USSR Ministry of Defense in three versions, classified RESTRICTED, SECRET, and TOP SECRET. The RESTRICTED version is issued monthly and has existed since 1937. The SECRET version is issued irregularly. By the end of 1961, 61 issues had been published, 6 of them during 1961. The TOP SECRET version was initiated in early 1960 and is also issued irregularly.

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

~~SECRET~~

IRONBARK

Comments on a Previous Article
Certain Questions Concerning the Organization and

Control of Engineer Troops

Questions concerning the tables of organization of engineer troops and of their control in modern operations have become so urgent that there can be no doubt about the necessity of solving them. Means of controlling engineer troops of an army and a front still lag far behind present-day needs, while the methods of controlling engineer troops have, to all intents and purposes, remained at the level of operations of the Second World War.

Lieutenant-General of Engineer Troops M. Kamenchuk¹ recommends the creation of general-purpose engineer large units of the brigade and divisional type, which, in his opinion, would considerably simplify control and eliminate primitive methods of communications. At the same time, it would enable the commander of such an engineer large unit to solve independently problems which arise, and he would be able to make massed use of engineer units on the main axes, by drawing on reserves, and by withdrawing men and equipment from sectors of secondary importance, etc.

However, experience gained during exercises and command-staff games shows that when faced with rapidly changing situations, headquarters of engineer large units are unable to control troops efficiently. Detailed knowledge of the operational situation, timely coordination of engineer support tasks with the tasks of other arms of troops, working out correct decisions in very short periods of time - all this can only be achieved by a commander of engineer troops of an army

1. Collection of Articles of the Journal "Military Thought", No, 2 (57), 1961, page 114.

-2-

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

IRONBARK

[redacted]

and front assisted by his staff. Therefore, in our view, the creation of general-purpose engineer large units not only would not simplify troop control, but would make it much more complicated.

At the same time, the headquarters of engineer troops of an army and of a front cannot control separate specialized engineer units and subunits via the headquarters of an engineer large unit. This would lead to a multi-stage form of control and to delay in assigning tasks to engineer troops.

In their turn, commanders and headquarters of general-purpose engineer formations, having under their command a large number of organic and attached specialized engineer units and subunits, carrying out tasks over enormous stretches of terrain, will not be able to exercise direct control over them, but will be compelled to combine them into temporary engineer groups in accordance with their functions. In this respect, suggestions were made some time ago by Major-General of Engineer Troops G. Bulakhov regarding the creation of temporary engineer groups¹ for fulfilling army and front tasks of engineer support, which seems quite acceptable to us. However, for the control of such a group, special subunits of control are necessary. Mere combination into groups of engineer battalions from brigades, and of companies from separate battalions, will not produce the desired effect, either from the standpoint of the organization of control, or of material-technical support. Therefore, in our view, it is expedient for the headquarters of army (front) engineer troops to exercise direct control of such groups. In this case, there will be no necessity to create cumbersome general-purpose large units, which would only lead to a numerical increase in the personnel of engineer troops.

1. Footnote missing

-3-

~~SECRET~~

[redacted]

[redacted]

~~SECRET~~

IRONBARK

Major-General of Engineer Troops A. Salomadin suggests that we should reorganize on the basis of specialized engineer battalions and separate engineer companies¹. Such fragmentation of engineer troops would also complicate control considerably. Direct control of battalions and companies by the headquarters of engineer troops of an army and of a front can be excluded, as battalions and companies do not have adequate means of communications, not to mention the fact that their number will be very large. Their combination into temporary engineer groups for carrying out uniform tasks will call for the inclusion in these groups of subunits for control and servicing. In its composition, such an engineer group will resemble a specialized engineer regiment (occasionally - a battalion, and more rarely - a brigade). Thus, it turns out from the standpoint of the organization of control and material-technical support of engineer troops, that the regimental organization is the most acceptable one.

Specialized engineering regiments can be employed in full strength for carrying out certain tasks. In the event, however, of the creation of a temporary engineer group on the basis of them, it will not be necessary to attach to it subunits for control and servicing purposes. The organic subunits of the regiment will be able to cope with these problems.

In recommending that a regimental organization should be adopted for army, front and engineer units of the Reserve of the Supreme High Command, we do not exclude a battalion organization for engineer-mine-sweeping, camouflage, and landing-crossing subunits, and for subunits responsible for equipping control posts.

E. Collection of Articles of the Journal "Military Thought" No. 3 (58) 1961/

-4-

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

IRONBARK

[REDACTED]

For engineer support of an army operation, it is, in our view, essential to have the following engineer units: two road and bridging regiments; one or two of each of the following regiments — pontoon - bridging, engineer-sapper, and position preparation regiments; one battalion for equipping control posts; one battalion for maintenance and evacuation duties.

Moreover, it seems to us that it is also necessary to introduce certain partial organizational changes. In order to increase the independence of the company, a pontoon platoon should be included in the establishment of the landing and crossing company of a sapper battalion of a motorized-rifle division. An engineer-sapper platoon, provided with high-capacity and mobile equipment, should be added to the T/O of missile battalions of motorized-rifle divisions.

In an army and a front, it is expedient to have sapper, road, and technical subunits organized identically with troop units; this will make it possible for engineer subunits from an army or front unit to be transferred to combined arms large units as replacements for units put out of action, and in the latter eventuality make it easier to solve the problem of forming such subunits.

For the effective employment of traffic control detachments, it is essential to include in their composition engineer-road machinery with higher speed and better cross-country performance than the combat and transport vehicles of other arms of troops.

Moreover, in our view, new engineer machinery should be created, using a common wheelbase, which would considerably simplify its use.

Colonel Ye. Kolibernov

-5-

~~SECRET~~

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

~~SECRET~~

KONBARK

* * *

In the organization of engineer support the views and principles which were established and proved in the Second World War still hold sway. As in the past, the grouping of engineer troops consists of three elements: troops attached to large units and formations as reinforcements; troops carrying out work for a front (army); and the engineer reserve.

If one takes into account that the most important tasks in scope and significance are given to engineer troops acting as reinforcements, and that changing a grouping in the course of an operation and a battle is very difficult in modern conditions, then continued adherence to obsolete principles means, in fact, placing engineer support in danger of breakdown. Therefore, the old principles should be thoroughly reexamined.

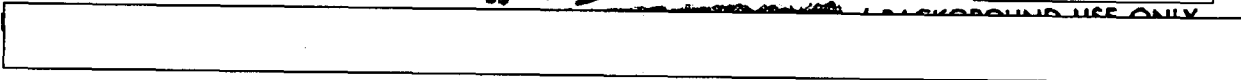
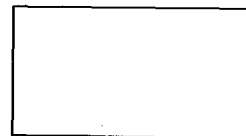
We fully share the views of Major-General of Engineer Troops A. Salomadin that large units and formations must have at their disposal everything necessary for conducting independent combat operations without having to rely on getting any significant reinforcements of engineer troops¹. This can be achieved in three ways: by the appropriate reorganization and equipping of engineer troops which are included in large units and formations; by the higher echelon fulfilling a number of engineer support tasks on behalf of large units (formations); and by creating adequate reserves for the timely replacement of engineer units and subunits which are put out of action.

In view of the fact that the main requirement is to provide support in an offensive battle and operation, it is, in our view, expedient that a regiment should, instead of a sapper company, have an engineer-sapper company consisting of two sapper, two road-bridging

I. Collection of Articles of the Journal "Military Thought", No. 3 (58), 1961, page 83.

-6-

~~SECRET~~



~~SECRET~~

IRONBARK

platoons, and one position preparation platoon. These subunits should be equipped with: modern means of reconnaissance, and equipment for clearing and laying mine-explosive barriers (road induction mine-detectors); equipment and machines for making passages through obstructions and for laying mines; road-layers, light and heavy mechanized bridges for cross-country routes and for overcoming small natural obstacles (rivers up to 35 m. in width, ditches, canals, etc); machines, mainly trenchers, for constructing control points and fieldworks which protect personnel and equipment against weapons of mass destruction, and ensure that organic weapons remain in a condition to fire. The time has come to provide subunits of a regiment — motorized-rifle battalions — with sapper platoons capable of dealing with obstructions and the simplest obstacles.

The main tasks of engineer support during a divisional offensive are the construction of one or two routes, the erection of obstructions in the path of counterattacking enemy tank groupings, dealing with obstructions, supporting river-forcing actions, and setting up control points.

On the basis of these tasks a divisional engineer-sapper battalion should consist of an engineer-reconnaissance platoon, a sapper company; two road-bridging companies; companies with landing-crossing equipment for getting tanks across water obstacles; and an engineer position preparation company. The subunits of the battalion should have modern means of carrying out engineer reconnaissance, including equipment fitted in helicopters (optical equipment for photography and observation, various measuring instruments, means for reconnaissance of rivers and obstructions in them, etc); road-laying machinery and graders for making military roads; self-propelled ferries; amphibious transporters of PTS type for ferrying tanks, missile launchers, and other heavy weapons, heavy and light mechanized bridges for bridging rivers up to 100 m. in width, and 3 m. in depth; and

-7-

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

ONBARK

high-capacity excavators of trencher and other types for the construction of defensive and protective field-works for personnel and equipment.

In our view, it is impossible to agree with the author when he suggests that there should be no army and front engineer units, and that practically all the main engineering tasks in an army and a front should be fulfilled by fragmented forces of tens of independent battalions and companies, drawn from the GHQ reserve. An army and a front may well find themselves without these subunits at the required moment.

In our view, an army must have one or two engineer-sapper battalions for erecting obstructions in the path of tank groupings which have driven a wedge, as well as in the path of enemy airborne forces which have made a landing; and for overcoming obstructions at the moment when second echelons and reserves are brought into action; two road-bridging battalions for making and maintaining army roads; a pontoon regiment with two sets of park of a PMP [pontoon - bridge park] and a landing-crossing battalion for ferrying tanks and heavy missile and other equipment, an engineer-anti-chemical and evacuation battalion; and a battalion for setting up control points. The listed units would carry out their tasks independently.

In these conditions, the existence of an army engineer-sapper brigade would be superfluous, and we fully agree with the author that, at the expense of this brigade, the officer strength of the headquarters of army and front engineer troops could, and should, be increased.

For the fulfilment of front engineering tasks, which are similar to those of an army, it is expedient to have in a front, in addition to those listed for an army, the following engineer units: special obstructions, water supply, and camouflage, as well as units for preparing various fieldworks and structures. In

-8-

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

IRONBARK

[REDACTED]

addition, when troops are carrying out defensive tasks, a front and army can be reinforced by battalions of engineer position preparation machines from the GHQ reserve.

The organization of the units listed by us should likewise be changed. Thus, an engineer-sapper battalion must have subunits and equipment capable of carrying out the work of mechanized setting up and clearance of various obstructions; carrying out major demolitions quickly; and blowing various things up rapidly, including things in rocky and frozen ground, etc. It is essential that the composition of a road-bridging battalion should include equipment for ensuring half line missing/advancing troops. A landing-crossing battalion must be able to ensure the simultaneous crossing of a whole battalion of tanks in one wave, and for this purpose it must have up to 35 tracked self-propelled ferries.

Finally, it is necessary to solve the question of eliminating the effects of a nuclear attack. Hitherto, improvised detachments have been detailed to fulfil these tasks. They have consisted of subunits which happened to be available, drawn from various arms of the troops, and have consequently lacked adequate experience, cohesion, and practical skills. In our view, it is expedient for an army and a front to have for this purpose special units - engineer-antichemical evacuation battalions. These should consist of: engineer-technical, antichemical evacuation, and sanitation subunits. The units must be equipped with modern engineer and other machinery for making openings in wrecked buildings, extricating injured personnel and damaged equipment, and for rendering necessary help and arranging evacuation.

Special attention should be paid to the organization of engineer subunits of missile units and large units of operational-tactical designation. The main tasks of engineer support of the operations of missile

-9-

~~SECRET~~

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

~~SECRET~~

ONBARK

units and large units are: engineer reconnaissance of the concentration area, movement routes and siting areas; preparation of these areas; preparation of routes; antinuclear protection of personnel and military equipment; eliminating the effects of nuclear attack; erection of obstructions to screen siting areas; camouflage of battle order elements, concentration areas, and the movement of battalions (division) in the course of an offensive; and setting up water supply points.

In our view, after appropriate reorganization, an engineer-sapper company of a missile large unit will be able to carry out independently all the main engineer support tasks. Only certain tasks, such as the construction of routes between siting areas, arranging crossings, etc, will have to be performed by front and army engineer troops in accordance with the plan for engineer support of the front (army). In this case, the engineer-sapper company of a missile large unit will include two engineer-sapper platoons of similar type for facilitating control by the brigade, and for reinforcing the missile battalions with a heavy mechanized bridge TMM; a camouflage platoon for carrying out complicated camouflage work at transloading points, at duty positions, at the technical battery and at control points, and also for setting up dummy battalion positions. Calculations show that a company organized on the suggested lines can carry out the main measures in the required time periods.

Colonel F. Myshak

-10-

~~SECRET~~