

HR70-14



# Intelligence Information Report

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PAGE 1 OF 14 PAGES

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[Redacted]

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SUBJECT Theory and Practice of Warsaw Pact Operations; Part I: Soviet/ Czechoslovak Operational Doctrine, Directives, and Tactics

[Redacted]

ACQ

[Redacted]

SOURCE

[Redacted]

Summary. This report provides general information on Soviet/ Czechoslovak operational directives including the processes of approval and amendment. The report also provides information on Czechoslovak operational doctrine (command and control, offensive and defensive operations, airborne operations, and manner of march) as it was stated in operational directives.  
End of Summary.

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Theory and Practice of Warsaw Pact Operations

Part I

Soviet/Czechoslovak Operational Doctrine, Directives, and Tactics

1. Directives governing the operation of Czechoslovak and other Warsaw Pact armed forces from division to front level in use in mid-1969 were derived from Soviet operational directives.   
 [redacted] Comment: Fronts and field armies were exclusively operational entities; a division could be considered an operational entity when it formed an independent axis of advance or tactical when it was viewed as a component of a field army.) [redacted] Comment: The term "axis of advance" in this report refers to all types of units, not just to armored units as it does in American usage.)

2. Source had no information on strategic directives, although he speculated that such directives probably existed. Within the Warsaw Pact, the need-to-know principle was observed vertically and horizontally; it applied to nations as well as to individuals. Since Czechoslovak military authorities were not privy to Soviet strategic thinking and the Southwestern Front was on the operational rather than the strategic or tactical level, no strategic directives were available in the CSSR. Tactical directives were field regulations applicable to divisions and their subordinate units. Source was not familiar with field regulations.

3. All commands in the Soviet forces were distributed on a geographic basis. This meant that any unit, when it moved from one area to another, automatically came under the command responsible for its new area. The terms "theater of war" and "theater of operations," which had geographical connotations relative to command responsibility, were used interchangeably in the USSR's military literature; no special significance should be assigned to the substitution of one term for another.

Operational Directives

4. Four types of Soviet operational directives were received by the Czechoslovak military:

a. Two or three copies of the first drafts of Soviet operational directives were sent to top Czechoslovak Army officers with requests for comments. The drafts were reproduced from stencils and were, therefore, called blue prints (modraky). They were translated into Czech from Russian and had probably not yet been introduced into the Soviet armed forces. They sometimes included items of little interest to the Czechoslovak armed forces, e.g., desert warfare.

b. The second drafts of operational directives were reproduced by the Czechoslovaks in larger numbers and were distributed to all staffs and military institutions of higher learning. Completely unsuitable directives, such as those on desert warfare, were dropped; information on more suitable matters, such as mountain warfare, operations in forests, etc., was expanded or added.

c. Provisional operational directives were the equivalent of permanent directives except that they did not carry the formal approval of the Chief of the Czechoslovak General Staff and Minister of National Defense. The provisional designation did not imply a time limit.

d. Permanent operational directives (Operacni rad) were last published in 1966 or 1967 and were designated OPER 1-3. They were still in use in September 1970. Generally, some chapters were obsolete by the time the directives were published.

5. Each directive was marked in its upper left corner with a group of letters which indicated who had approved it. The letters, given below, were followed by numbers not known to Source.

| <u>Directive</u>             | <u>Symbol</u> | <u>Approval</u>   |
|------------------------------|---------------|---|
| Operational                  | OPER 1-2      | Approved by the Chief of General Staff  |
| Missile rocket and artillery | DBL....       | Approved by the Commander of Rocket Troops and Artillery  |
| Air Force                    | LET....       | Approved by the Deputy Minister for Air Force and Air Defense of the State (PVOS)                   |
| Infantry                     | PECH....      | Approved by Deputy Chief of Staff for Operational Preparedness                                      |
| Armor                        | TANK....      | Approved by Deputy Chief of Staff for Operational Preparedness                                      |
| General regulations          | VSEOB...      | Various levels of approval (administrative)   |
| Basic regulations            | ZAKL....      | Various levels of approval (including Interior Guard, local security, etc.)                         |
| Intelligence                 | ZPRAV...      | Intelligence regulations (Field Comment: Source was not sure who approved intelligence regulations) |
| Blueprints                   | S.....        | First draft of operational directive  |

6. Operational directives in the Czechoslovak armed forces were amended each year, but the changes were generally insignificant. They were made as official amendments to regulations or as unofficial word passed at briefings and lectures. In late September or early October of each year, a conference on operational directives was held at the Czechoslovak Ministry of National Defense (MOND); it was followed immediately by a conference in Moscow which was attended by highest level functionaries and officers of the Soviet and Czechoslovak General Staff.

7. The magazine Vojenska mysl was used to disseminate operational information in the Czechoslovak armed forces. It was published by the Czechoslovak General Staff in 300 to 400 copies and generally reflected things to come in the realm of military doctrine. The magazine was classified either secret or top secret,

64

and the number of copies distributed depended on its classification.

8. Any document approved and signed by the Chief of the Czechoslovak General Staff was identified as being important. Operational directives themselves were classified top secret. Their content was very general, and they were written in a way to avoid serving as an excuse for commanders unwilling or unable to perform their missions. No specific figures were given in the directives. (Source Comment: For example, under no circumstances would an operational directive state that a field army must have a minimum of 500 tanks to make an attack. A commander was never to have a chance to refer to the directive and say that he had fewer than 500 tanks and, therefore, could not attack.) Operational information which emanated from command post exercises (CPX's) generally followed principles outlined in operational directives, because CPX's were closely related to actual war plans.

#### Operational Doctrine

9. According to OPER 1-3, the basic operational grouping was the front. It fulfilled its operational mission within the framework of the Operational (war) Plan which was based upon the "operational intent" of the next superior commander. A front normally consisted of two to six field armies and one or two air armies. (Source Comment: The Southwestern Front was actually a mini-front, because it had a smaller number of divisions and nuclear strikes allocated to it initially than did other fronts.) Comment: Information on nuclear strikes will be provided in another report from this source.) During an attack-from-the-march type of offensive operation, a front with two or three axes of advance divided its mission into a first front operation, which was expected to run for five to eight days over a distance of 400 to 500 km, and a second front operation, which formed a continuation of the first and was expected to run from ten to fifteen days for 1,000 km over a 500- to 600-km front. Front headquarters checked operations and issued directives once every 24 hours, usually in the evening.

10. A field army was an operational entity composed of two to seven divisions. Within a front operation, it was a tactical grouping which was normally responsible for one or two axes of advance. In an exceptional case, a field army could operate independently over one or two axes of advance; at such a time, it was to be commanded by its own headquarters outside of the front area and to receive its own air support. It was then called an operations group. (A field army headquarters issued orders once every twelve hours except during critical operations.) A field army operated over a 200-km-wide area; as prescribed by operational directives, it had a "nearer" objective (blizsi), which was within a 150- to 200-km range and should have been reached in three or four days, and a "next" objective (dalsi) which was within a 300- to 400-km range and should have been reached in five to eight days.

11. A division, depending on whether or not it operated over an independent axis of advance, was a tactical or operational grouping. The number of divisions in a front or field army was flexible, but front and field army organic units were prescribed in the table of organization and equipment (TO&E). (Source Comment: Soviet fronts usually received an additional artillery division as reinforcement.)

12. The following principles governed responsibility for maintaining communications between units and staffs:

- a. Superior to subordinate
- b. Support unit to supported unit
- c. Right to left
- d. Rear unit to front unit in an independent axis of advance

13. Each unit was assigned flank and rear boundaries. The rear boundaries of a field army were 150 to 200 km from the forward edge of the battle area (FEBA). (Rear boundaries for field armies of the Southwestern Front were on the eastern border of Moravia.)

14. The operational commander was the highest authority within his area. (In case of war, the authority of operational commanders in the Southwestern Front superseded that of territorial commanders.) However, the operational commander was not allowed to incorporate second echelon reserve units into his own organization even though the units may have formed in or transited the area under his authority.

15. Planning could be conducted on several levels at the same time. Preliminary planning in a unit began slightly prior to the formulation of final plans at a higher level, because staff officers of an echelon of command generally attended the final planning sessions at the next higher echelon and became familiar with the operational intent of the next higher commander. For example, a field army commander or members of his staff were usually present at front headquarters before front planning was completed. On the basis of the prior knowledge they obtained of the commander's intentions, the field army staff began developing its own plans before the final order reached them. This type of planning was practiced at all levels down to divisions. Operational orders could be issued only after the operational plan was completed, but subordinate units would have already begun their own planning.

#### Command and Control

16. According to the operational directives, each operational grouping was to create a three-echelon system of command consisting of a main command post, a forward command post which was sometimes designated an alternate command post, and a rear command post to provide support and services. (Source Comment: Having a three-echelon system of command was not an ironclad rule.) Generally, a field army's main command post was to be located in the field army's second echelon and its forward command post was to be located in the field army's first echelon. Its rear command post was usually to be located 80 to 100 km from the FEBA in the army's rear area. A front's forward command post was generally to be located near a field army's main command post, and its rear command post was to be about 150 km from the FEBA. Command posts were to be relocated by leapfrogging. (Source Comment: All numerical information given in the operational directives should be used as general guidance not as specific instructions.) No mobile command posts, such as those in a helicopter or a fixed-wing aircraft, were mentioned in OPER 1-3.



17. When the commanding officer was absent from the main command post, the chief of staff was to take over. Basically, the staff conducted the operation. When there were several axes of advance, the staff was organized into teams, one of which was responsible for each axis. An air force liaison group was attached to each staff; such liaison teams were often established for specific or partial operations.

18. A command and control liaison officer (smerovy dustojnik; literally, directional officer) was attached to each axis of advance. There were to be from one to twenty of these officers at each level of command. According to the level of the command to which they were attached, their rank ranged from general officer down. They represented higher headquarters, had participated in planning at headquarters, and were familiar with the commander's operational intentions. Their job was to keep the command to which they were attached posted on the operational intent of the higher commander, to insure that all actions taken on their level were consistent with the overall operational intent, and generally to insure compliance with instructions of higher commanders. These officers could make decisions within the framework of the superior commander's operational intent and, in case of need, could overrule the local commander. They could take over the command of the units to which they were attached under certain conditions, e.g., if the commander and staff were killed or communications with them had been interrupted and subordinate units required a quick decision.

19. The skipping of echelons of command was discouraged, but it was not forbidden. The bypassing of levels of command was routine in the case of rocket and missile troops.  Comment: Information on rocket and missile troops will be reported in a future report from this source.)

20. In case of war, a group of about twenty Soviet command and control liaison officers were to arrive at front headquarters from the Warsaw Pact Field Headquarters (Main Headquarters). (Source Comment: All representatives of Main Headquarters had always been Russian.) They were to be distributed among the various staff sections. In turn, the front was to dispatch a smaller group of command and control liaison officers, at least one of whom was to be a representative of Main Headquarters, to field army headquarters. The field army was to attach one of its staff officers to each of its divisions. This system assured the Soviets of a measure of control of all Warsaw Pact armies including those that had an independent front. The same system was used to control Soviet forces. (Source Comment: Historically, Russia had always fought its wars with relatively unreliable troops.)

#### Offensive Operations

21. As outlined in OPER.1-3, the aim of an offensive operation based on an attack from the march was to destroy or cripple enemy forces; its objective was to be prescribed by the next higher commander; and its mission was to be accomplished through the use of mass nuclear strikes and by the maneuvering of divisions. Nuclear strikes were to be the decisive asset in battle. All other assets, including the maneuvering of divisions, were to be subsidiary to nuclear fires. Ground forces were to attack to exploit nuclear strikes. (Source Comment: Until 1963, there was no provision in or outside of the directives for any Warsaw Pact approach to warfare except straight nuclear exchange. After 1965, there were indications that the possibility of other than nuclear war was officially admitted

although the directives remained unchanged. Official doctrine did not differentiate between nuclear and non-nuclear warfare except that, in a conventional situation, all forces were to conduct themselves as if nuclear war were imminent at all times. No provisions existed in the operational directives for selective or graduated use of nuclear weapons. It was to be all or nothing.)

22. Front and field army battles were regarded as combined arms (vsevojskovy; literally, all-army) battles. All combined arms commanders were able to order nuclear strikes after a blanket authorization for their use had been issued by higher headquarters. Commanders of rocket troops and artillery could not order nuclear strikes. Commanders of the air force, which was to be subordinate to the front commander, could order nuclear strikes against the enemy's means of delivering mass destruction.

23. Nuclear weapons were generally to be used only in mass and group strikes; individual strikes were to be rare. (Source Comment: The operational directives did not define the number of rockets or missiles that constituted a mass or a group nuclear strike.) [ ] Comment: Source's opinion on what constituted mass and group strikes will be provided in a forthcoming report.) Mass strikes were to be conducted by the front and were to include both air and missile strikes; group strikes were to be carried out by field armies and were also to include both air and missile/rocket strikes. Divisions were to have the lowest priority in the allocation of nuclear fires. Individual strikes were to have the lowest priority except when they were directed against enemy means of delivering mass destruction. In those cases, individual nuclear strikes could be ordered by an air force commander without specific authorization from the combined arms commander. However, the strike was to be subsequently reported to higher headquarters.

24. Means for delivering nuclear strikes were centrally controlled, and units containing such means had priority in site selection. In practice, this meant that a field army commander did not have the right to move units organic to his army which contained these means of delivery; he had to request permission for such a move from higher headquarters. As a result, field armies and divisions seldom commanded their organic nuclear delivery means. Operational directives stated that rocket/missile units were to be commanded by the next higher echelon. (Source Comment: Information on orders given by the higher echelon to rocket/missile units was often not provided to the division or field army commander.)

25. Operational directives dictated that no chemical and nuclear strikes were to be conducted concurrently in the same area. Aircraft were allowed to overfly a friendly nuclear strike only after fifteen minutes had elapsed. As a rule, nuclear strikes were to be conducted against personnel rather than against equipment unless the equipment was considered to be more vulnerable than personnel, for example, radar and aircraft. Nuclear strikes were to be used only against confirmed targets. Strikes under 0.5 time probability, except for enemy nuclear launchers, were not to be authorized. [ ] Comment: More information on this topic will be provided in a forthcoming report from this source.)

26. The use of both aircraft and missiles to deliver nuclear strikes in the same area at the same time was forbidden. Aircraft were to be used principally against potentially mobile targets while missiles were to be used against relatively stationary targets. (Source Comment: This principle was not always observed; it applied primarily to strikes made subsequent to the initial mass strikes at the outbreak of hostilities.)

27. The effect of each nuclear strike was to be computed before and after the strike. Pre-strike calculations indicated the expected effects of the strike, and post-strike effects were to be determined through reconnaissance.

28. The following passive defense principles were to be observed by friendly forces during an attack:

a. Dispersion, not digging-in, was to be the primary defense against enemy nuclear strikes. Dispersion was to be achieved by maintaining 2 to 3 km between battalions and 5 km between regiments while on the march and during the occupation of terrain. A division was expected to be spread over an area of 600 square kilometers, and it could not remain in the same area for more than 24 hours. (Source Comment: The second echelon of a front, therefore, was required to move forward even though the first echelon may have gotten bogged down shortly after crossing its line of departure.)

b. Friendly forces were to harry the enemy to prevent him from targeting his nuclear strikes.

c. The war was to be carried into enemy territory to force the enemy to reconsider the use of nuclear strikes and to weigh them against the detrimental effect of endangering his own population.

29. After the execution of nuclear strikes, a general advance was to be ordered. Units were to proceed into the attack in columns; they were to continue the advance as long as they could without being relieved. The attack operation was to continue without respite and was expected to cover 40 to 100 km per day. There was to be no operational contact between columns moving along different axes of advance. Regiments and battalions belonging to divisions were to operate independently, and field artillery was to be attached to individual battalions. Point units were to bypass strong points of enemy resistance, exploit breaks in the enemy's defenses, and avoid difficult terrain. The liquidation of enemy strong points was the task of second echelon divisions.

30. The offensive was to continue in the form of an armored attack with the infantry firing directly from its vehicles without dismounting unless it was absolutely necessary. When they encountered resistance, troops were to attack directly from the march without previous deployment and with only short artillery and air preparation. The enemy was to be outmaneuvered and not steamrollered. That is, friendly divisions were to be maneuvered to bring about a two to one ratio of friendly to enemy troops. Divisions were to be deployed during an advance to maintain all azimuth security. A division's objective, unless otherwise specified, was to destroy the enemy's operational reserve.

31. The point unit of an offensive operation was the advance echelon (predsunuty odrad) which was about 30 km ahead of the main body of troops. It usually consisted of a reinforced tank regiment with artillery, rocket launchers, and logistics capability. It was expected to fight independently of any support from its division.



32. Attack from the march was considered to be the main type of attack in a nuclear environment. The attacking force was to attempt to get through breaks in the enemy's defense system to attack the enemy's operational reserve. The enemy's first echelon troops which were bypassed in the initial attack were to be dealt with by second echelon divisions. March columns were to be carefully composed, and tactical rocket troops were to march right behind the vanguard. Rocket troops could break directly into a division column at any time. In contrast, front and field army missile units moved forward by leapfrogging.

33. Reserves, the principle portion of which was to be one-third of the available nuclear capacity, were to be held in readiness during an entire operation. Comment: Further information on this topic will be provided in a forthcoming report from this source.) A secondary part of the reserve was to be the combined arms reserve, the principal mission of which was to combat enemy airdrops. At front level, such a reserve was generally to consist of a tank division. In addition, each axis of advance might have an antitank reserve. Although a front might have an antitank brigade at its disposal, field army and lower echelons usually were to have only tank battalions. The rest of the reserves was to consist of equipment such as chemical agents and enough protective clothing for 10 percent of major unit personnel.

34. Attack from prepared positions was to differ from attack from the march in that the strongest points of the enemy's defense system were to be attacked rather than bypassed. A front required five to six hours to prepare for such an attack. Planning, preparation, and coordination for field army and division staffs required three and one-half hours; and one hour was required for division, regiment, and battalion preparations. During this time, a division was to deploy for attack in the classic manner. The main attack was to be initiated by a group nuclear strike which was to be followed by ten minutes of intensive artillery preparation. Troops were to go into attack firing and fighting from their vehicles and attempting to pass through the breach caused by the nuclear strike. Simultaneously, support from the artillery and air force was to hinder enemy operational reserves from closing the gap. The artillery support was to be limited to requested fires against specific targets. Protective fires of conventional and chemical ammunition were to be limited to the flanks.

35. Counterattacks were to be destroyed by group nuclear strikes on crossroads and points 5 to 10 kms from the line of the expected collision where the enemy troops would be deploying from march columns. Friendly forces were to attempt to hold the enemy by a screen of forces, and divisions from succeeding echelons were to outflank the enemy to achieve a two-to-one ratio of forces. Counter-counterattacks were always to be conducted on the flanks or from the rear of the Warsaw Pact position, and the use of thrusts by troops from neighboring axes of advance was recommended. In attacks from prepared positions as in attacks from the march, the aim was to outmaneuver the enemy rather than to engage him in pitched battles. Enemy operational reserves were to be watched closely at all times. (Source Comment: Tanks, antitank guns, and rockets/missiles were counted in computing the ratio of forces, but bazooka-type weapons were not counted. It was accepted that 40 dug-in, friendly tanks would be required to throw back an attack of 100 enemy tanks. An enemy tank attack was expected to crumble after 40 percent of the attacking tanks had been destroyed or disabled.)

36. Second echelon troops were to be used to increase the speed of advance. These troops were to go into action when they arrived in the battle area even if they were not needed. The protective principle of minimum concentration of troops was to be maintained if possible. The first echelon was to be fully responsible for supporting the second echelon as it passed through its area of operations; the first echelon was to clear all roads, provide logistical support, and make the second echelon's passage as smooth as possible. When large formations such as a front or field army passed through first echelon troops, the front or field army was to bring under its control those divisions of the first echelon which were still capable of combat. Such divisions were to remain in place until the second echelon had passed through and were then to join the rear of the second echelon. Support and service units were rarely to be transferred from the control of the first echelon to that of the second echelon, but air divisions or air armies were normally to be transferred. Operational directives stated that no unit was permitted to pass through friendly missile/rocket positions, but this rule was rarely observed in training exercises. Units engaged in combat operations were to be responsible for the areas immediately behind them to the rear of the main battle area. If a second echelon front were to pass through a first echelon front, part of the staff of the second echelon front was to join the staff of the first echelon front some time in advance of the passage. If it could be done without interfering with the work of the first echelon staff, they were to be briefed on the situation and were to participate in the work. When their unit arrived on the scene, they would already be well acquainted with the local situation.

37. The success of an encounter between two friendly axes of advance depended upon the establishment of good communications between the two. The approaching forces were to form a joint staff of officers representing all arms and services including the air army. They were to prepare a plan for the encounter and to draw up partial operations orders which were to take into consideration the time and area of restrictions imposed because of nuclear strikes and fighter/bomber activity. Such areas were to be outlined on maps. "No fire" or "no advance" lines were to be used for all other restrictions. There was to be a "no fire" line for artillery and tanks beginning 8 kms from the meeting point, and a complete ban on all firing was to be imposed 2 to 3 km from the meeting point. Another line was to be marked with flares or flags. At the point of contact, one kilometer was to separate the two axes of advance.

#### Defensive Operations

38. Defensive operations were treated only briefly in the operational directives. They were considered to be short and transitional activities forced on friendly units by circumstances on the battlefield. A defensive system was to be up to 15 km deep for a division and up to 80 km deep for a field army. A defensive operational posture could be adopted when no means were available to carry out nuclear strikes. The number of nuclear strikes allotted for a defensive operation was lower than for an offensive operation, but no specific number was given in the directives. A short break for re-supply or reorganization of an offensive operation was not considered to be a defensive operation although, tactically, a defensive posture might be adopted. The purpose of a defensive operation was to exhaust enemy forces and materiel;

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- 11 -

holding terrain was to be a minor consideration. A defensive operation was to be conducted actively. Operationally, it was to have the following phases:

- a. Partial operation to neutralize the enemy's means of delivering nuclear strikes,
- b. Partial operation to prevent the enemy from organizing an attack, and
- c. Artillery counterpreparation. Artillery counterpreparation was to last about 30 minutes and was required for this partial operation. It would be dangerous because artillery brought forward from the second line of defense would be committed and would be vulnerable to enemy nuclear strikes.

39. Defense in tactical depth was to consist primarily of repelling enemy attacks while making tactical counterblows. Great efforts were to be made to cordon off areas where enemy nuclear strikes had been made. Friendly nuclear strikes were to be used to cripple enemy nuclear assets identified by reconnaissance. This partial operation, which was to include strikes against all reachable enemy storage areas, was to be continuous and to take priority over all other partial operations.

40. Nuclear strikes were also to be used for counterpreparations and defense in operational depth. A counterattack by tanks was to be carried out to a depth of 15 to 20 km during defense in operational depth. If a good opportunity occurred, units were to attack; if not, the tanks were to be withdrawn. If friendly tactical defenses were broken by the enemy, friendly units were to go into "mobile defense" while launching constant counterattacks. (Source Comment: "Mobile defense" was a euphemism for retreat.) The directives required the defenders to canalize the attacks and to use smaller parts of the operational reserve to prevent further penetrations. Antitank defenses were to form the infrastructure of the defense system which was to be based on a chain of strong points. Each unit above battalion level was to maintain an antitank reserve.

41. Operational deception (cover and deception) was the responsibility of the chief of staff at each level and was to be implemented on the basis of prepared plans distributed by a special group from the Operations Administration of the General Staff. The objective of this activity was to deceive the enemy on the operational level about the time, mission, and objectives of friendly activity. Operational deception included a complex of intelligence networks, trained defectors to provide misinformation, electronic intercepts, bogus rocket/missile firing positions, and bogus radio traffic. Some of the activities were handled by the intelligence directorate of the army concerned. (Source Comment: The probability of a Czechoslovak advance into Austria and violation of Austrian neutrality was, as far as could be determined without actually entering the War Room of the Czechoslovak General Staff, accepted by the Czechoslovak military. However, only one Czechoslovak exercise, a command post exercise (CPX) held in early 1968, included the violation of Austrian neutrality. All mention of operations on Austrian soil were eliminated in documents classified lower than top secret-state importance and top secret-special importance.) [redacted] Comment: Source had access to

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these highly classified documents, but he did not participate in the 1968 CPX which involved a hypothetical violation of Austrian neutrality.)

42. To minimize the consequences of enemy nuclear strikes, one battalion per regiment was to be detailed and trained as a post-nuclear strike relief force (odtarasovací odrad). When called upon, it was to be reinforced by engineer, medical and chemical elements. Its mission was to save what remained of units hit by nuclear strikes. It was not to perform any decontamination duties, although it was to determine contamination. In a unit on the march, certain elements were to be designated units for movement security (pro zabezpečení pohybu). If the column was hit by a nuclear strike, it was to be the responsibility of the highest ranking officer still alive to determine whether the unit should clear the area. The completion of the assigned mission was to take priority over all other considerations. Contaminated terrain could be crossed by troops using protective clothing and masks and riding in vehicles. The total admissible radiation dose for personnel was 100 R with a 10 R maximum at one time or not exceeding 10 R on each of five succeeding days. If a prolonged stay in the contaminated area was required, the dose was to be limited to not more than 1 R daily or 0.1 R per hour. Contaminated areas were to be marked on the basis of reconnaissance and not solely on the basis of calculations. (Source Comment: Operational directives advised avoiding fallout areas; however, avoiding fallout areas was not to be used as an excuse for failing to accomplish the assigned mission.) Regular troops were to mark contaminated areas and make any changes necessary in the markings if no chemical troops were available to mark and decontaminate these areas. In an operational environment, the contamination of an area was not to stop the completion of a mission even if the troops in the area were to receive fatal doses of radiation. (Comment: Further information on this subject will be disseminated in a forthcoming report from this source.)

#### Airborne Operations

43. Airborne operations were to be conducted by airborne divisions or brigades; airborne units were to be used as complete formations for seizing critical terrain. Operations were to be mounted so that air-dropped troops would not be out of contact with friendly troops for periods exceeding 36 hours.

44. Long range reconnaissance operations were to be conducted by long range reconnaissance elements (Skupiny hloubkového průzkumu), Special Forces-type units which were to operate in small groups. (Comment: [redacted] for information on the organization of the Czechoslovak Southwestern Front.) Each group was to be assigned a specific intelligence collection or sabotage mission and was to be air-dropped between 200 to 300 kms from friendly lines.

45. Air assault operations were to be mounted not more than 100 km behind enemy lines. The first wave of assault troops was to be air-dropped and was to secure the target area. Follow-up troops were to be brought in by other means including gliders. (Comment: Source had never seen any evidence that gliders were used, but the operational directives mentioned them specifically.) No troop units were specifically designated air assault troops.

46. Helicopter-borne operations were to be limited range operations, and troops transported by helicopter were expected to operate independently for only 6 to 8 hours. One battalion of each regiment of every motorized rifle division was to be trained for helicopter-borne operations. (Source Comment: This was the case in the Czechoslovak Army, but the training consisted simply of getting in and out of a helicopter mock-up.) One helicopter regiment was designed to carry the assault elements of a motorized rifle battalion without its armored personnel carriers.

47. Interceptor aircraft were to protect areas not protected by SAM's and were to cooperate with aircraft assigned to the Air Defense of the State (PVOS). There were two types of reconnaissance aircraft: general reconnaissance aircraft and artillery reconnaissance aircraft. General reconnaissance aircraft were mostly to be occupied with monitoring enemy divisions. They were to carry out basic reconnaissance and supplementary reconnaissance missions, the latter mostly for target determination. (Source Comment: Divisions and field armies would only rarely gain direct advantage from reconnaissance flights which were controlled by the front.)

48. Fighter bombers were to be used for two main purposes:

a. To soften up or set up targets for a group strike. For example, fighter bombers could attack a moving division with conventional bombs, cause traffic jams at choke points, and then hit the division with nuclear strikes.

b. To fly armed reconnaissance patrols against targets of opportunity such as enemy air defense systems, air forces, nuclear delivery systems, or command and control facilities.

49. Organic army helicopters were to be used for command and liaison, usually on the friendly side of the lines, to control the movements of friendly forces and to conduct tactical reconnaissance. Regiments of air force helicopters were to transport troops or nuclear warheads. They could be used for emergency logistics and casualty evacuation. (Source Comment: Source doubted that they would be used for the evacuation of casualties, but the operational directives mentioned it.) (Source Comment: In the operational sense, there was no independent air force; there was only front air support. Transportation of Czechoslovak airborne troops was to be carried out by Soviet transport aircraft. There was some talk of a Czechoslovak air transport regiment using mobilized Czechoslovak Airlines aircraft, but there was no evidence that such a unit existed.)

#### Manner of March

50. Operational directives which prescribed the manner of march for operational units foresaw an axis of march for a front and army without determining the exact routing. Exact axes of communication, i.e., roads and highways were prescribed for each division which was to adhere strictly to the prescribed criteria for unit dispersion in a nuclear environment. Divisions were to move in battalion march columns or their equivalent. Each convoy was assigned an arbitrary three-digit number, e.g., 325, for traffic control and communication security purposes. This number was to remain with the march column for the entire movement. Only the commanding officer, chief of staff, and the drivers of the first

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- 14 -

and last vehicles in the convoy were to know where they were going; the troops were not to be informed of their destination. Prescribed convoy depth was 20 vehicles per kilometer. There were to be 2 kms between convoys and 5 kms between marching regiments. After the convoy had been closed and moved out, no one was to be permitted to join it although stragglers could travel in the spaces between convoys. Traffic control patrols from each marching unit were to patrol it on motorcycles and in jeeps. Whenever the convoy stopped, the assistant drivers were to jump out of the cabs. (Source Comment: This rule was strictly observed by Soviet units which did not allow a truck to move without the assistant driver. Czechoslovak armed forces did not enforce this rule, because their trucks were allowed to move without assistant drivers.)

31. The immediate security of the convoy was the marching unit's responsibility. Its speed of march was to be 30 to 40 kms per hour in daytime and 25 kms per hour in nighttime. The preferred speed was 30 kms per hour because equipment losses were excessive at 40 kms per hour. All trucks were to be equipped with night vision devices. (Source Comment: Operational directives did not refer to specific items of equipment.)

52. Every third day of travel was to be a rest day for the performance of maintenance and to allow the drivers to rest. During the rest day, the length of the convoy was to be shortened as the units concentrated; however, the convoys were to remain on or next to the road. Fronts and field armies were usually to organize their own groups of officers for traffic control at specified intervals. Engineer sections equipped with wreckers were to ensure the continued movement of the convoys. The territorial command was also to have its traffic control teams on the road. (Source Comment: These were mainly technical road service teams.) Territorial facilities were to provide POL as long as it was available to them. Radio silence (listening silence) was to be maintained during the march and was to be broken only at the time of engagement. The Soviets firmly enforced their rule that the paths of two marching divisions were never to cross for any reason. (Source Comment: Whenever such an event occurred, the division commander was automatically relieved. Marshal (fnu) K o n e v was relieved during the battle for Berlin during World War II because the paths of his divisions had crossed.) Operational directives stated that all troops were to move forward and that they were never to cross each other's paths.

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