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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20505

30 January 1974

MEMORANDUM FOR: The Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT : MILITARY THOUGHT (USSR): Combat Commitment
of Rocket Troops of a Tank Army from the March

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 outlines the combat commitment of the rocket troops and artillery of a Soviet tank army directly from the march, without preliminary concentration in an assembly area. The major requirements cited by the author are to have rockets and missiles ready for launch while in transit, to position launchers with forward elements of the army, and to use minimal time in locating and surveying launch sites. A chart is provided to show the main features of launch preparations. The author believes that the army must assume, or at least duplicate, some front operations concerning rocket troop employment. This article appeared in Issue No. 3 (91) for 1970.

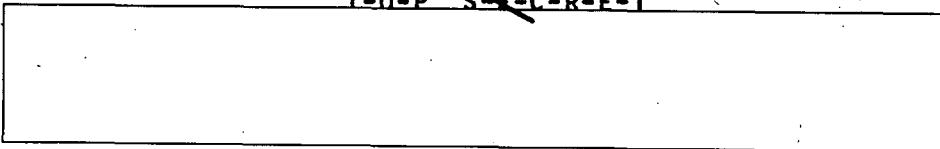
2. Because the source of this report is extremely sensitive, this document should be handled on a strict need-to-know basis within recipient agencies.

David H. Blee

Acting Deputy Director for Operations

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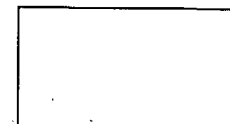
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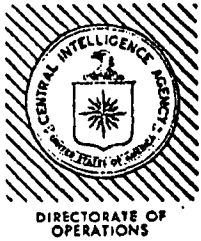
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Intelligence Information Special Report

COUNTRY USSR

[Redacted]

DATE OF INFO. Late 1970

DATE 30 January 1974

SUBJECT

MILITARY THOUGHT (USSR): The Use of the Rocket Troops and Artillery of a Tank Army During an Engagement from the March

SOURCE Documentary

Summary:

The following report is a translation from Russian of an article which appeared in Issue No. 3 (91) for 1970 of the SECRET USSR Ministry of Defense publication Collection of Articles of the Journal "Military Thought". The author of this article is Colonel A. Malenkov. This article outlines the combat commitment of the rocket troops and artillery of a Soviet tank army directly from the march, without preliminary concentration in an assembly area. The major requirements cited by the author are to have rockets and missiles ready for launch while in transit, to position launchers with forward elements of the army, and to use minimal time in locating and surveying launch sites. A chart is provided to show the main features of launch preparations. The author believes that the army must assume, or at least duplicate, some front operations concerning rocket troop employment.

End of Summary

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Comment:

There is no information in available reference materials which can be firmly associated with the author. Military Thought has been published by the USSR Ministry of Defense in three versions in the past -- TOP SECRET, SECRET, and RESTRICTED. There is no information as to whether or not the TOP SECRET version continues to be published. The SECRET version is published three times annually and is distributed down to the level of division commander.

Page 3 of 11 Pages

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The Use of the Rocket Troops and Artillery of a Tank
Army During Commitment Into an Engagement from the March

by
Colonel A. Malenkov

It is assumed that, when the final concentration area and the departure area for an offensive are designated for a tank army, its commitment to an engagement from the march (from the second echelon of a front) will be carried out in an organized manner after a brief period of preparation. However, a situation may arise in which a tank army moving up from the depth may have to be committed to an engagement directly from the march without preliminary concentration in the departure and assembly area.

The following are the most typical situations which bring about the commitment of a tank army into an engagement from the march: during an offensive operation, when the enemy seeks to delay attacking troops at advantageous (intermediate) lines, or when the situation requires that the success of the first echelon be exploited by shifting its efforts to a new axis; when a large enemy grouping makes a breakthrough into the depth of the operational dispositions of front troops; when deploying for a meeting engagement and large enemy groupings are advancing as the operation develops; and when the first echelon of the front loses its combat effectiveness due to a massive nuclear strike by the enemy. A tank army may also be committed from the march when it is moved up from the reserve.

It is obvious that in all of these situations the commander and the field command of the army will have an extremely limited amount of time in which to organize the commitment of the army to the engagement; and this is particularly true of the planning of combat actions of the rocket troops and artillery.

Under these circumstances, in order that the rocket troops and artillery of an army be used in a timely and effective manner, it is especially important that the chief and staff of rocket troops and artillery organize their work

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In parallel with that of the combined-arms staff and its subordinate large units (units). The network method may prove quite useful for this purpose, since it permits the most effective possible use of a limited period of time (see diagram).*

This method, which we have verified in a series of command-staff exercises, makes it possible to plan the use of the rocket troops and artillery in a very compressed time period.

As is known, planning for the use of army rocket troops and artillery is based on the army commander's decision and on directives from the front. As a rule, the front determines the general missions of army rocket troops and the number of warheads allocated to the operation; it designates the objectives within the army's zone of operation to be attacked by front and strategic nuclear means, and it defines which objectives are to be neutralized by army means in accordance with the plan of the front. In the situations being examined the front will often be unable to specify so extensively the tasks for all of the rocket large units and units of the army. Therefore, the army and the divisions may be confronted with the necessity of independently determining or defining the objectives to be struck and, accordingly, of conducting intensified reconnaissance with all the means at their disposal. When this occurs, the tank army should be reinforced with aerial reconnaissance means to be used on axes of actions of its principal groupings.

* In the excerpt from the scaled network timetable only a few levels of the work of an army commander and of the chief (and his staff) of the rocket troops and artillery are shown. The network timetable similarly depicts the work of the planning and control groups, and, in addition, within each group it depicts the work of individual officers by time period and by the nature of the tasks they accomplish.

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A special center is created at army headquarters for the receipt and processing of reconnaissance information obtained from various sources (including aircraft). This center is manned by officers of the intelligence and operations departments and also by the chief of intelligence of the rocket troops and artillery headquarters. Divisions and the rocket brigade establish posts for the receipt and processing of reconnaissance information. These posts are provided with R-313 radio receivers and also with sets of the necessary tables and prescribed forms for posting data received from aircraft.

The planning of a massive strike also has its own inherent characteristics, since a certain degree of decentralization (especially in the case of tactical rocket battalions) is unavoidable when designating objectives to be struck. The massive nuclear strike itself may well be delivered over an extended period of time, since it may consist of a series of successive salvos and even individual strikes. This may stem from the fact that before the army is committed to the engagement, the situation may be complex and swiftly changing or the front command may lack the necessary intelligence data to determine which objectives the army is to strike, and also because of the possibility that the large units of the army will not move forward simultaneously.

In addition, the existing practice is to have the timetable for the preparation and delivery of a massive nuclear strike drawn up by the front; it is not prepared in the army. However, exercise experience indicates that the army must also have a document to facilitate the systematic preparation of the rocket troops to participate in a massive strike in close coordination with front means. It should stipulate the following: the sequence of advance and deployment for the rocket troops and the progressive buildup of their degrees of readiness; the delivery of prepared rockets to the launching batteries and the designation of the objectives they are to strike; the order in which rocket strikes are to be delivered by army means in coordination with the rocket large units and aircraft of the front; the organization of reconnaissance (final reconnaissance) of the objectives to be struck and the procedure for determining their precise coordinates. When this document is put in timetable form, it visually depicts the rocket troops preparation for participation in the massive strike; and it

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enables the chief and staff of the rocket troops of the army to monitor more efficiently the forward movement of their troops and the progressive advance of their degrees of readiness, and to control rocket units while they are carrying out their missions.

The specific nature of the conditions under which a tank army is committed to an engagement from the march also predetermines the distinctive method of controlling its rocket troops and artillery. In the first place, it must be taken into consideration that the army strike groupings will be formed while the troops are advancing and deploying for the offensive. For this reason, even before completing the march, rocket and artillery units must be allocated in a manner that excludes complex maneuvers and ensures their timely deployment. In the second place, it must be kept in mind that a tank army may be reinforced by large units (units) engaged in combat actions in the area where it is committed to the engagement. It is therefore essential that all necessary preparations be made in advance to assure the rapid organization of control over the advancing units of rocket troops and artillery and of the coordination with the large units to be subordinated to the army.

If one takes into consideration that the control of the rocket troops and artillery under the conditions being discussed requires the simultaneous solution of such complex problems as the organization of their advance, deployment, and delivery of a strike, then special significance is attached to the rational distribution of officers of the staff and of the department of rocket-artillery armament between the command post, the forward command post, and the rear area control post. Experience demonstrates that when the operation is being planned, it is most advantageous to have the main complement of the rocket troop staff and of the rocket-artillery armament department at the command post, together with the chief of rocket troops and artillery. After the plan for the combat employment of the rocket troops and artillery has been worked out, it will suffice to have two staff officers remain with the planning group (to evaluate the planned rocket strikes and to take down the coordinates and transmit them to the branch officers). There should be a minimum of four persons in the control group, based on one branch officer for every one or two divisions (including an artillery division) and one for the rocket brigade. The deputy chief of staff of army

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rocket troops and artillery and one officer from the rocket-artillery armament department should be at the forward command post. When the army commander departs for the forward command post (after the troops have been issued their tasks), he is accompanied by the chief of army rocket troops and artillery and four or five officers; the chief of staff remains at the command post with three officers.

Under these conditions, the best method of transmitting tasks to the rocket brigade and mobile rocket-technical base is to send branch officers in helicopters with the combat instructions worked out on a map.

In order to ensure the timely delivery of strikes, it is desirable that the move forward of the rocket brigade, the mobile rocket-technical base, and the tactical rocket battalions be effected at the level of the forward units of the combined-arms large units of the army first echelon on those axes where they will most likely be employed.

As the rocket brigade advances close enough to the enemy to strike his installations, the battalions must be constantly ready to deploy from the march and deliver strikes. Accordingly, it is essential that all launchers have prepared rockets.

Since it is practically impossible during a march to establish in advance the exact time and place that the rocket troops will be deployed for the delivery of a strike, the timely selection and preparation of launching sites becomes a serious problem. In actuality, when a tank army is being committed to an engagement from the march, the decision to carry out a massive (group) nuclear strike can be made only after obtaining enough accurate and detailed reconnaissance data on the opposing enemy grouping; and this naturally requires a certain amount of time. And if, for example, the front commander makes the decision to commit the tank army to the engagement five to six hours before the commitment is to take place, the decision to deliver a massive (group) nuclear strike clearly can be made two to three hours later. Therefore, (allowing for the time spent at army level) a tank army rocket brigade will have only as much time available to deploy and prepare for nuclear strikes as is required by established technical norms. This is why it is necessary to ensure that operational-tactical rocket battalions deploy literally from the march, with a

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minimum amount of time spent in selecting and occupying launching sites and in preparing to launch rockets. To this end, we recommend that all work involved in surveying the launching sites (using the artillery gyro-compass to give bearings to aiming points) be done by launching battery forces. The tasks of the reconnaissance groups sent out from the rocket battalions after the order (signal) to deploy is received should include only the reconnoitering of sites for the launching batteries, locations for the command post of the battalion and the rocket-technical platoon, and approach routes to these places. It is advisable to use helicopters to speed up the work of the reconnaissance groups, since they permit inspection, in the shortest possible time, of the areas where the battalions are to be deployed.

As regards the separate rocket battalions of the tank divisions, if conditions are favorable and if these divisions are assigned their tasks while they are still a considerable distance from the enemy, they will have ample time to prepare for their strikes.

Brief remarks on the employment of artillery. When divisions move to the deployment line at different times, their fire support is independently planned by the staffs of the rocket troops and artillery of the divisions; the army plans artillery actions only on the axis of the main strike. In view of the limitations of time, it does not seem feasible to call upon the artillery of second-echelon divisions for these purposes.

As is known, a tank army has in its complement only howitzer artillery with a firing range of up to fifteen kilometers, significantly limiting its capability to combat enemy tactical nuclear means and artillery. Therefore, the tank army should be reinforced, primarily with long-range gun artillery and with tank-destroyer artillery.

To reduce the time required for deployment and for the delivery of preparatory fire in support of the first-echelon units, artillery should be placed at the head of the columns of first-echelon regiments in a grouping which conforms to the plans of the division commanders. When this is done, its deployment from the march will require 30 to 40 minutes.

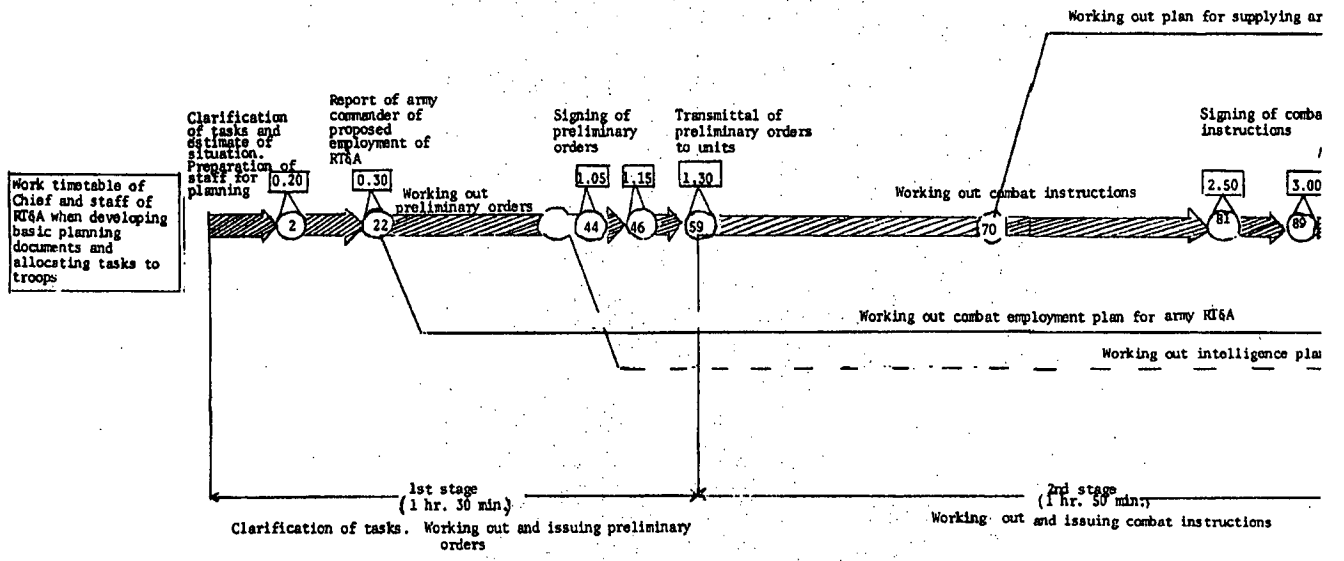
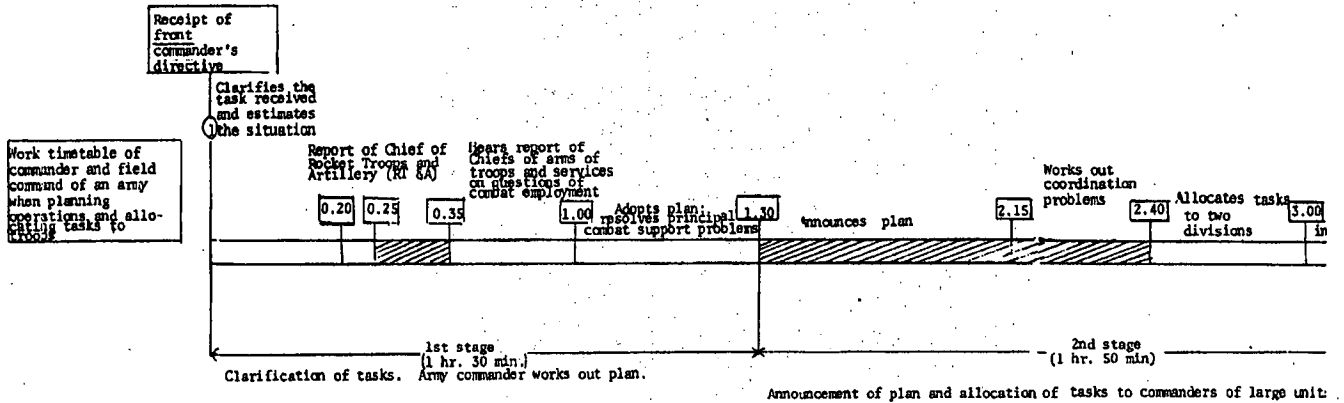
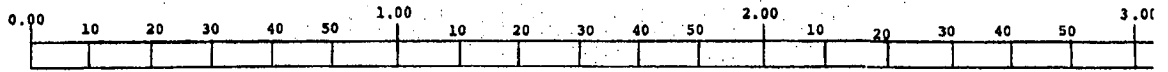
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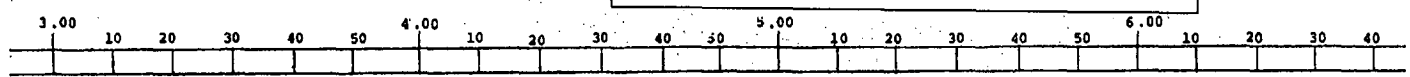
When tank large units are operating on a broad front, an army artillery group is not created. To take the place of artillery reinforcement, divisional artillery groups are organized to combat enemy tactical nuclear means and self-propelled artillery, and also to cope with other tasks relating to the deployment of first-echelon units.

When the enemy has been weakened by a massive nuclear strike, or when there are insufficient reconnaissance data on his grouping, it is advisable to provide fire support by means of a powerful artillery strike, initiated when the attacking units (subunits) enter the zone of fire of enemy antitank means. This strike may last 15 to 20 minutes (depending on the rate of advance of our troops) and may expend 0.4 to 0.5 units of fire of munitions.

The matters relating to the operations of the rocket troops of a tank army touched upon in this article far from exhaust all aspects of their tactical employment under the conditions being examined. The search for methods to reduce the time required to plan rocket troop operations and to prepare these troops for participation in a massive (group) nuclear strike when the tank army is committed to an engagement from the march requires close study of the experience accumulated during exercises conducted under complex conditions.

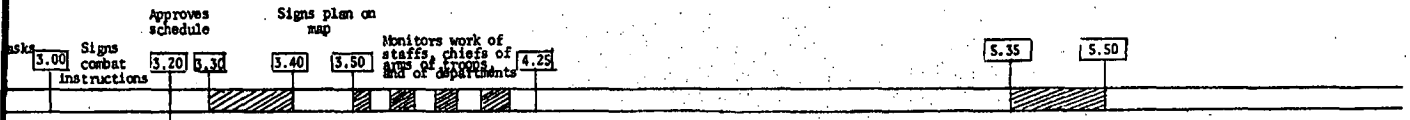


Attachment. Excerpt of a Sec the Combat Actions of the Roc



Hears detailed estimates on use of nuclear and chemical weapons from Chief of RT & A

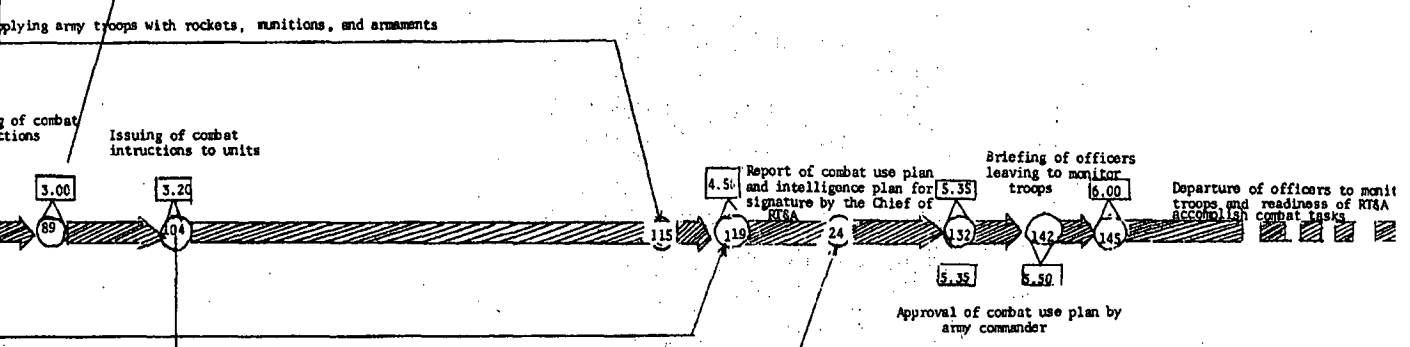
Signs orders and approves plan for combat use of RT & A



3rd stage (3 hrs. 40 min)

Working out the principal planning and combat documents. Checking work of the staff and of officers of Army Field command services and checking preparation of large units and units for combat actions

Working out control map for combat actions of RT&A

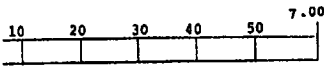


3rd stage (3 hrs. 40 min.)

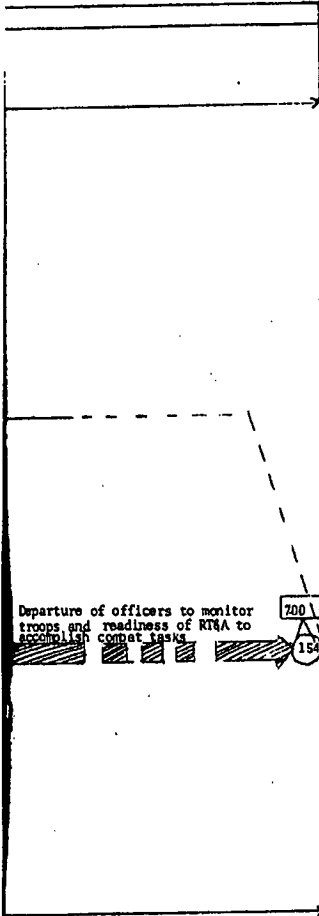
Working out planning documents, refining calculations, and organizing checking of readiness for combat actions of RT&A units

Part of a Scaled Network Chart for a Staff of Rocket Troops and Artillery, Used in Planning of the Rocket Troops and Artillery of a Tank Army.

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