

~~TOP SECRET~~

9 1 MAR 1975

Copy 2 of 9

APPROVED FOR
RELEASE -
HISTORICAL
COLLECTION
DIVISION HR70-14
DATE: 07-18-2012

28809

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT: Review of CIA/OSR Report, "Evolution of Soviet Concepts and Forces for Nuclear War in Europe"

REFERENCE: EA/DCI Memo of 12 December 1974

1. Attached is a draft of our review of the OSR paper on changing Soviet nuclear doctrine. We were able to identify the contributions of a number of information sources and systems and evaluate their effect on the analytical process.

2. I propose this paper be published and disseminated as the first in a new series of reports which I suggest we call "PRD Reviews." I believe it would be most useful to have formal reviews every now and then of selected products published by the various agencies in the Community.

3. Copies of our evaluation were provided to OSR and DDC [redacted] and no objections were noted. OSR provided a few editorial comments which, in the main, we accepted.

4. I also wish to note the excellent cooperation we received while investigating the events and efforts which led to the development of the OSR paper. Our special thanks go to [redacted] of OSR.

HW

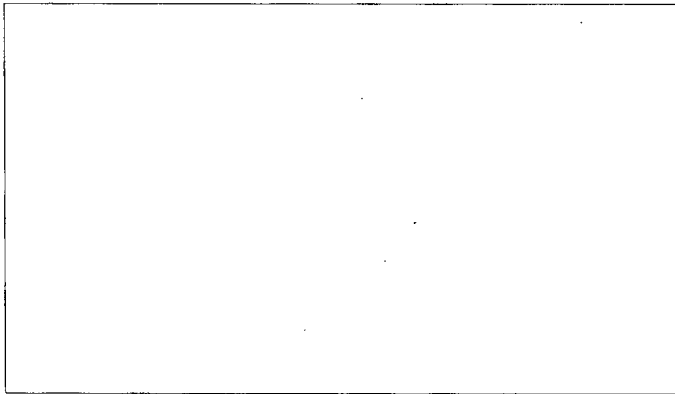
Samuel V. Wilson
Lieutenant General, USA
D/DCI/IC

Attachment:

[redacted]

[redacted] ~~TOP SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~



~~TOP SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~

PRD REVIEW:

of OSR/CIA Intelligence Report:

"EVOLUTION OF SOVIET CONCEPTS AND FORCES FOR
NUCLEAR WAR IN EUROPE"

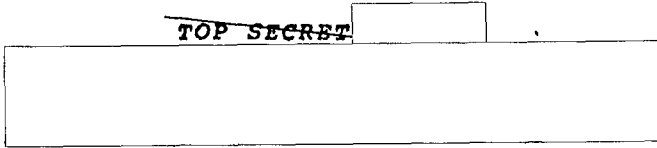
(SR IR 74-4, May 1974)

MARCH 1975

An evaluation prepared by the Product Review Division of
the Intelligence Community Staff at the request of the
Director of Central Intelligence

*PRD will from time to time--usually upon request--issue
special evaluations (Reviews) of specific finished
intelligence documents which warrant more extensive
treatment than can be accorded in the aperiodical
publication, the Review of National Intelligence.*

~~TOP SECRET~~



Introduction

Movement in Soviet military doctrine is normally glacial in pace and circuitous in direction. It is extremely difficult for outsiders to perceive, partly for these reasons and partly because it is a matter of great delicacy and extreme sensitivity to the Soviets themselves. But move it does, and, given the critical importance of doctrine vis-a-vis the mission, posture, and development of the Soviet armed forces, it is crucial that the United States be aware of and responsive to major changes in the USSR's fundamental military precepts and objectives.

This Review examines one particular effort, a Report prepared by the Office of Strategic Research of CIA, to identify a major change in Soviet doctrine and to inform US policymakers of its significance. The Review summarizes the study's findings, traces the development of research, and assesses contributions made by various means of collection, notably the Clandestine Service of CIA.



Summary of the Report (OSR/CIA, "Evolution of Soviet Concepts and Forces for Nuclear War in Europe"--March 1974)

In the late 1950's and through the early 1960's, the OSR Report states, Khrushchev's view that an East-West war in Europe would result in an almost immediate global nuclear exchange dominated Soviet military doctrine and dictated the character of the Soviet force structure. Highest priority was assigned to the development and deployment of theater and intercontinental strategic nuclear systems. Tactical nuclear weapons were regarded as ancillary to the strategic forces, and non-nuclear conventional forces were assigned the lowest priority.

Following Khrushchev's removal in 1964, proponents of conventional forces gained greater influence. At the same time, the United States' new concept of "flexible response" was winning greater acceptance among the members of NATO. This doctrine provided for a range of options and actions--conventional operations, limited nuclear strikes, and massive strategic attacks--the type and scale of which would depend on the nature of the Pact assault. These theories were tested in a 1964 NATO exercise and were reflected in part in Pact maneuvers the following year. By the late sixties Soviet military theoreticians apparently were convinced that a war in Europe would begin with some period of conventional conflict. This shift in views concerning the nature of initial hostilities may have helped to accelerate the modernization of Soviet conventional forces.

While thus conceding that the initial phase of conflict might be conventional, the Soviets, throughout the late sixties, persisted in the belief that a war in Europe would soon escalate to the use of nuclear weapons. This view was based on the Soviet assessment that NATO would be unable to contain or overcome Pact forces by conventional means alone. Citing NATO exercises, the Soviets identified a consistent pattern of NATO's resorting to the use of nuclear weapons whenever a Pact breakthrough with conventional forces was threatened. Then, either in response to NATO's use of nuclear weapons, or to preempt such use, Soviet doctrine called for a massive and decisive theater-wide nuclear strike.

[REDACTED]

But at least since 1970, evidence has accumulated that the Soviets are increasingly accepting, and even planning for, nuclear options which would enable them to limit both the intensity and the scope of a general European conflict. Senior Soviet Officers have theorized that the use of nuclear weapons might take a variety of forms, ranging from the firing of only a few tactical rockets, through larger strikes by frontal systems, to the participation of USSR-based strike forces. These views have emphasized the need for flexibility in Soviet doctrine and capabilities.

[REDACTED]

The Report concludes that these developments in Soviet forces and strategic planning suggest that the USSR is attempting a more flexible posture for nuclear contingencies in Europe. This growing flexibility includes options for the selective use of tactical nuclear forces in Eastern Europe as an alternative to exclusive reliance on massive strikes delivered primarily by USSR-based strategic systems.

[REDACTED]

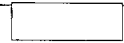
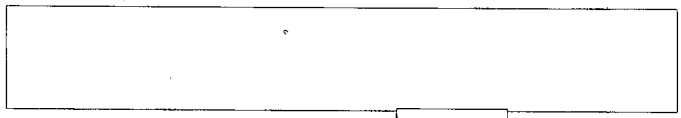
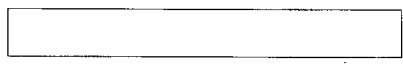
The Review: Substantive Background

Much has been written about the Soviet military and the doctrine or perceptions which would determine its use. Indeed, no other issue has generated as many requirements for the Intelligence Community nor had as much influence in focusing the efforts and products of the member agencies. But, of all the studies, memoranda, and estimates on this subject, the CIA/OSR Report must rank among the most significant in its treatment of an issue of critical importance to the United States and its European Allies. The paper does more than merely fulfill the title's promise to trace the evolution of Soviet concepts and forces for nuclear war in Europe. It also provides the rationale for US policymakers to reconsider their own options in a changing nuclear environment.

Clearly, this achievement was not easily accomplished. The Report was developed over a period of many months and required the collection, collation, analysis, and reanalysis of a plethora of information. Particularly noteworthy was the manner in which the analysts integrated and applied information from a variety of sources-some of it on hand for more than a decade, some acquired only shortly before publication.

[REDACTED]

~~TOP SECRET~~



[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

TOP SECRET

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

Hitherto, the community view had held that the Soviets probably preferred to keep any NATO/Warsaw Pact conflict limited to a "conventional" struggle involving non-nuclear weapons and forces. Lending apparent credence to this belief were the ongoing improvements in Pact forces' firepower, mobility, and logistics trains noted by western analysts. That many of the new aircraft, missile systems and even artillery pieces had, at least in theory, the capability to deliver nuclear weapons was viewed by most analysts as only an ancillary development in the continuing, and quite logical, advancement of conventional weapon sciences. To be sure, a number of analysts [redacted]

[redacted] questioned the validity of the established

[redacted]

[redacted]

[REDACTED]

view. But [REDACTED], the preponderance of evidence had offered little opportunity to develop these essentially visceral doubts.

Thus, what had been only a nagging doubt regarding the continuing Soviet commitment to a massive nuclear response, evolved over the months into a serious hypothesis of a change in Soviet doctrine. But, as early drafts of the present Report revealed, there was still insufficient evidence to permit definitive judgments on any such change.

[REDACTED] PHOTINT [REDACTED] provided evidence of a growing Soviet capability to engage in limited nuclear warfare.

[REDACTED] suggested the Soviets were at least exploring the feasibility and examining the techniques to use this new capability. But these "observables" could in no way resolve the issue of whether the Soviets had accepted a new nuclear doctrine. In an attempt to resolve this critical issue, the analysts turned to open Soviet literature, public statements, and, increasingly, to clandestine reporting. But information gleaned from these sources, while extensive, was inconclusive. Much of it seemed to echo earlier Soviet pronouncements concerning Soviet preemption or retaliation on a massive scale. Other material from HUMINT offered only hints that

[redacted]

new requirements and perhaps new responses thereto were being addressed within the Soviet General Staff.

Ambiguities and uncertainties occasioned by these problems were apparent in early drafts of the OSR Report. Unable to prove their hypotheses with direct evidence; the authors provided page upon page of theory, supposition, and conjecture on Soviet perceptions of the pros and cons of a limited nuclear exchange.

The Clandestine Contribution

But, [redacted], the Clandestine Service of CIA was able to provide the Intelligence Community with two classified Soviet documents which, finally, permitted a definitive judgment. The documents, written in 1970 by senior Soviet officers, confirmed that Moscow was indeed planning for nuclear options which could limit both the intensity and the geographic extent of a European War. Each of the two writers was apparently reacting to policy statements by Marshal Zakharov, Chief of the General Staff, on the need for greater flexibility in Soviet nuclear planning.



One of the writers, probably a senior member of the General Staff, conceded that a nuclear conflict could take a variety of forms, from the firing of a few tactical rockets in response to local battlefield contingencies to the employment of massive strikes from USSR-based systems. Although this author emphasized flexibility rather than the establishment of a new orthodoxy, this, in itself, marked a significant change in the heretofore inviolate Soviet perception of the course of an East-West conflict.

The second document provided even more convincing evidence of Soviet consideration of a new nuclear doctrine. In this paper the first deputy chief of Rocket Troops and Artillery of the ground forces described the deployment and control procedures which would be required during one phase of a European conflict. The implicit message that Soviet ground forces would indeed be operating in a limited nuclear environment was strengthened by an explicit statement that selected nuclear strikes represented an important option for the transition from conventional to nuclear war in Europe.

Here, then, was the evidence needed to complete the transformation from initial doubt, through unproven



[redacted]

hypotheses to definitive judgment. These clandestine acquisitions enabled the analysts to again review their holdings and filter out the spurious and conflicting data which had clouded the issue. As a result the final, published Intelligence Report is much shorter in length. (by more than half), much "tighter" in its organization, and it offers clear conclusions supported by specific examples.

In the six months or so since the appearance of the Report, the judgments presented by OSR appear to be gaining widespread acceptance both within the Intelligence Community and by a number of senior government officials. The Secretary of Defense, in his annual report to the Congress on 5 February 1975 stated that "...the Pact no longer foresees automatic escalation of a European War to [massive] nuclear exchanges...." He also noted that: "...however much the original initiative lay with us, the Soviet Union has shown the liveliest possible interest in the concept of theater nuclear warfare. As a consequence, it is now the Soviets who set the pace here,..." These remarks clearly reflect the growing U.S. perception of Soviet capabilities and concepts for waging nuclear war in Europe.

* * * * *

[REDACTED]

CIA/OSR clearly led the intelligence community in considering, researching, and producing a new "look" at an established intelligence "position." This effort required the examination and reappraisal of existing and new information derived from [REDACTED] PHOTINT, Open Source literature, public statements and clandestine human source reporting. The Report is the final product of the contributions of each of these information sources and the analysts own dedication and expertise. But the unique and obviously essential contribution of human source reporting--particularly that information acquired through clandestine means--deserves special mention. For not only did HUMINT provide a fair share of the pieces to the puzzle, it provided the critical ones, those which enabled the analysts to confirm that an epochal change was underway in Soviet military doctrine and to perceive the scope and direction of that change.