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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20505

19 October 1977

MEMORANDUM FOR: The Director of Central Intelligence

FROM : William W. Wells
Deputy Director for Operations

SUBJECT : WARSAW PACT JOURNAL: A Road Troop Exercise

1. The enclosed Intelligence Information Special Report is part of a series now in preparation based on articles from a SECRET Soviet publication called Information Collection of the Headquarters and the Technical Committee of the Combined Armed Forces. This article outlines the functions of the road troops. It goes on to show the role they played in the tactical-special exercise of the Red Banner Belorussian Military District of the Soviet Army which was held in June 1972. This journal is published by Warsaw Pact Headquarters in Moscow, and it consists of articles by Warsaw Pact officers. This article appeared in Issue No. 5, which was published in 1973.

2. Because the source of this report is extremely sensitive, this document should be handled on a strict need-to-know basis within recipient agencies. For ease of reference, reports from this publication have been assigned the

[redacted] Codeword [redacted]

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William W. Wells

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Intelligence Information Special Report

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COUNTRY USSR/WARSAW PACT

DATE OF
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19 October 1977

SUBJECT

WARSAW PACT JOURNAL: A Road Troop Exercise

SOURCE Documentary

Summary:

The following report is a translation from Russian of an article from a SECRET Soviet publication called Information Collection of the Headquarters and the Technical Committee of the Combined Armed Forces. This journal is published by Warsaw Pact Headquarters in Moscow, and it consists of articles by Warsaw Pact officers. This article was written by General-Leytenant Ye. Pastushenko. This article outlines the functions of the road troops. It goes on to show the role they played in the tactical-special exercise of the Red Banner Belorussian Military District of the Soviet Army which was held in June 1972. This article appeared in Issue No. 5, which was published in 1973.

End of Summary

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A Road Troop Exercise

by

General-Leytenant Ye. PASTUSHENKO, Senior Inspector-General
of the Staff of the Combined Armed Forces

In the execution of tasks of rear services support for troops, road troops play an important role. They prepare and lay military motor roads linking front bases with their branches and army mobile bases, and the latter with the rear services of first-echelon large units. They also prepare the approaches to unloading stations and ports, materiel support airfields, areas for stationing rocket troops and missile technical bases, divisional depots, and other installations. To support the maneuvering of troops and rear services they prepare lateral motor roads on the line of front-rear and forward bases as well as army mobile bases and their branches, and along large water barriers. Road troops carry out certain measures on military motor roads for the protection from weapons of mass destruction of troops and rear services who are relocating and they provide traffic control on military motor roads.

With these tasks in mind, a system for training large units and units of road troops of allied armies is also being established.

An example of this is the tactical-special exercise of road troops of the Red Banner Belorussian Military District of the Soviet Army held in June 1972, at which delegations from allied armies were present. Road traffic control, road-building, pontoon, and bridge-building units at the exercise tested their capabilities in preparing a military motor road of a front during a front offensive operation in the Western Theater of Military Operations. Also tested was the degree of readiness of front road troops to build a military motor road at a rate of 60 kilometers a day, while at the same time restoring bridges over middle-size water barriers using organic and local means.

To achieve the training goals the appropriate grouping of road troops was organized. A number of units were expanded in

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advance to the wartime level by calling up reservists and drawing supplies of needed equipment from the national economy. Personnel of the expanded units underwent 14 days of training at training courses, where the reservists learned to perform their duties, crews were trained, and combat cohesion of units and subunits was achieved.

After completion of the training courses a march was conducted into the area of the exercise, which made it possible to improve the march training of units and subunits, and to test the technical condition of motor transport and road equipment when moving at an average speed of 30 to 35 kilometers per hour and covering 300 and more kilometers a day.

Taking part in the exercise were more than 1,600 men and about 400 vehicles with sides and special vehicles, machines, and devices. The theme of the exercise was "Laying a military motor road of a front during an offensive operation by forces of a road traffic control brigade while restoring bridge crossings with organic and local means at a road construction rate of 60 kilometers per day."

Implementation of this theme entailed the following:

- testing the capabilities of provost and traffic control units and bridge units in preparing and laying a military motor road of a front during an offensive operation with successive restoration of bridge crossings over middle-size water barriers;
- training the brigade headquarters and staffs of units in planning and organizing the restoration of a military motor road of a front, deploying the provost and traffic control service on it, as well as in controlling subordinate units and subunits;
- training units and subunits in deploying the provost and traffic control service and performing its functions on a military motor road of a front, in laying and building bridges across middle-size water barriers with successive use of the same subunits and organic bridge sets;
- enabling conscript personnel and men called up from the reserve to fulfil their official duties within the complement of posts, crews, and subunits, to master the practical use of organic sets of bridge construction means, and impart and reinforce the skills in erecting floating bridges and building low-level bridges.

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The exercise lasted four days and was divided into three stages.

In the first stage the deployment of the road and traffic control service was carried out on a military motor road, and bridge crossings using organic means of road troops were prepared. In the course of the exercise the laying of a military motor road 120 kilometers in length and the organization on it of road traffic control service was accomplished in twelve hours. Six dispatcher points were operating on the road (one each from a brigade and a battalion and four company posts) and 54 traffic control posts.

All these points and posts were staffed by trained personnel and supplied with modern equipment.

Also deployed and tested in operation were service stations on the military motor road:

- a technical assistance station was able to refuel and service up to 100 vehicles traveling singly along the military motor road;
- a field mess provided 400 hot meals consisting of two courses and hot tea for small subunits and also issued 2,400 dry rations;
- a rest station equipped with tents and beds for 50 officers, and bunks for 200 sergeants and privates, as well as all the necessary supplies.

In the second stage the restoration and laying of the military motor road of a front was carried out, as well as the construction of bridges with organic and local means. An additional 190 kilometers of military motor road was laid, bringing the total length to 310 kilometers.

A great amount of work was performed by bridge-building units, which laid and built 740 linear meters of various types of bridges across the Dnepr and Berezina rivers. To ensure the viability of bridge crossings, backup bridges were set up and ferry crossings organized.

The capabilities of bridge-building units were also tested at the exercise. They processed 600 cubic meters of timber, stockpiled 420 cubic meters of bridge structural elements, drove

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in 240 piles, and completed 1,800 cubic meters of earthworks.

In performing all these operations the personnel of the bridge-building units displayed good special training, which enabled them to overfulfil the norms for bridge laying and construction by a considerable margin. Thus, to assemble a bridge from MARM (small motor road collapsible bridge) structural elements 118 meters long took seven hours as against a norm of eight hours (Figure 22).

A high bridge made from a SARM (medium motor road collapsible bridge) set 187 meters long was built in 25 hours (as against a norm of 30 hours), while a floating bridge from a heavy pontoon bridge set, 97 meters long and able to support fifty tons, was erected in one hour and ten minutes against a norm of two hours (Figures 23 and 24).

In building the low-level wooden bridge, the work was performed from both shores at the same time and a construction rate of eight linear meters per hour was achieved. The length of this bridge came to 174 meters.

An interesting experiment was conducted while assembling a composite bridge with an overall length of 164 meters made from two bridge structures: the first part, 108 meters long, from a MARM set was joined to the trestle part 56 meters long, built in the form of a low-level three-span wooden bridge using plywood sections. The rate of construction of the trestle from these structures came to nine linear meters an hour.

Thus at the exercise the bridge-building and pontoon-bridge units and subunits demonstrated a high level of training in constructing, assembling, and erecting various types of bridges, efficiently organized all types of crossings, and successfully coped with tasks arising out of the operational situation.

A test was also conducted here of the training of road reconnaissance personnel using a special vehicle to reconnoiter roads. Using this vehicle reconnaissance personnel determined the traffic capacity and passability of the road for wheeled and tracked equipment, conducted radiation, chemical, and mine reconnaissance, and determined the carrying capacity of the bridges.

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The ZNAK workshop displayed good production capabilities, turning out 600 road signs in a shift. It fully meets the requirements of one road traffic control battalion.

Seven new sets of road equipment were introduced for the first time at the exercise, the use of which greatly increased the productive capabilities of the road troops.

In the third stage of the exercise problems were worked out with regard to the control of road units when road traffic control service is temporarily suspended, or when taking down organic bridges and marching to a new section of a military motor road.

Commanders and unit staffs prepared operational and technical documents with adequate competence, and confidently exercised control over the subunits.

The control of traffic on the military motor road was exercised through the dispatcher points. Communications between company and battalion dispatcher points were maintained by means of R-104 radio sets, while between battalions and brigades by using wire lines of communications and backup radio means. In areas of bridge crossings, in addition, communications between dispatcher points and main traffic control posts were by telephone and were backed up by R-105 radio sets. This ensured reliable and stable control of traffic, especially in areas of bridge crossings.

By moving the dispatcher points to a distance of 40 to 50 kilometers away, it was possible to test the feasibility of providing stable communications under a simulated intensity of traffic on the military motor road of up to six or seven thousand vehicles per day.

At the critique that was held, it was pointed out that the exercise confirmed the ability of road troops to prepare and build military motor roads of a front during an offensive operation at a rate equal to the advance of troops, and to successively restore bridges across water barriers, if the capabilities of road and bridge units in preparing military motor roads are 10 to 20 percent greater than the rate of troop advance.

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During the exercise bridge-building and pontoon subunits, and crews of the dispatcher points made up of men called up from the reserve, displayed good training. But to impart to them skills in their work specialty and to achieve full cohesion among the subunits it will be necessary to allot a certain amount of time during the completion of mobilization.

The extensive use made at the exercise of sectional bridge and road structures, in conjunction with organic floating bridges and a high level of mechanization in assembling and erecting them, determines to an ever-increasing degree the progress made in the development of road support of modern operations.

At the same time the construction of low-level wooden bridges and the assembling of floating bridges out of river craft that have been prepared will also (depending on the conditions of the area, the nature of the water barriers, and the season of the year) have broad application, and in individual cases they will be the main type used.

The large group of specialists taking part in the exercise were of the unanimous opinion that efforts must be concentrated on developing and perfecting the most acceptable bridge structures and that experience should be exchanged on questions of their practical application.

The delegations present at the exercise showed great interest in the work of the road troops and commented favorably on their performance in action.

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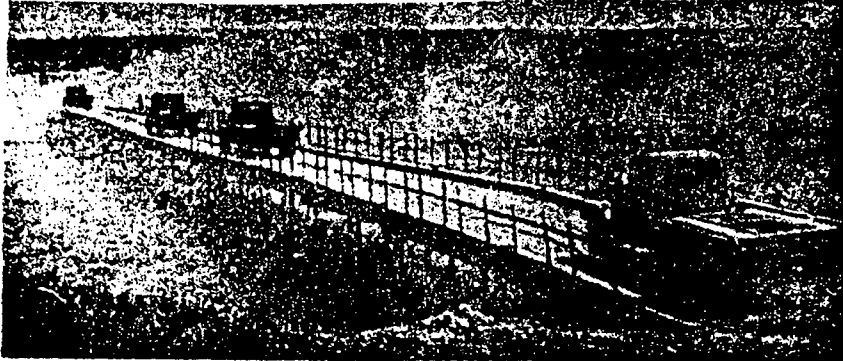


Figure 22. Bridge from MARM structural elements

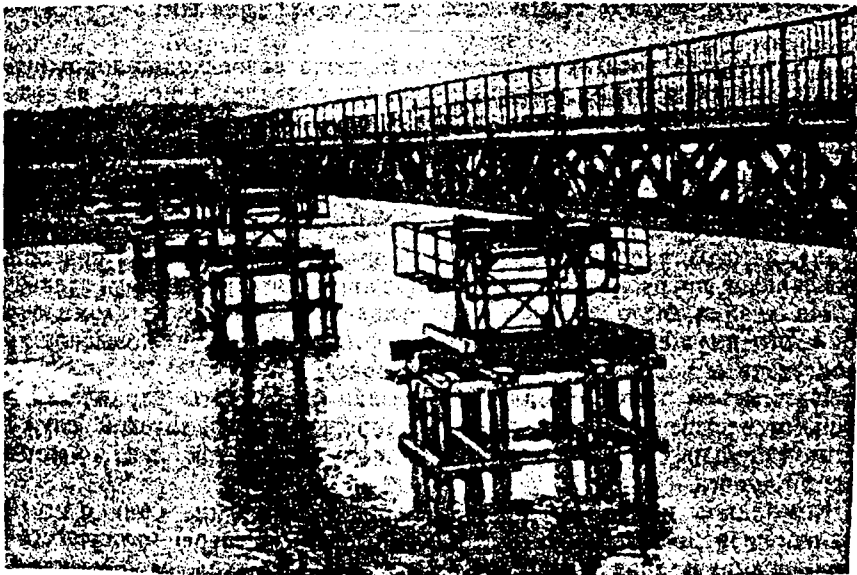
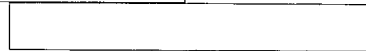
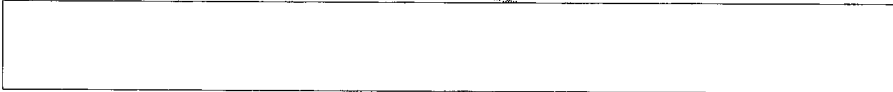


Figure 23. Laying the superstructure of a bridge from SARM structural elements

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Figure 24. A floating backup bridge from a TPP heavy pontoon bridge set



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