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Next 3 Page(s) In Document Denied

SOME WAYS OF FURTHER IMPROVING STAFF OPERATING METHODOLOGY

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The increasing complexity of troop command calls for particularly high requirements for scientifically organizing the creative work of control organs. It is not by chance, therefore, that in recent years the military press has begun to devote considerably more attention to the problem of improving troop command in general, and to staff operating methodology in particular.

V. I. Lenin urged the serious study of the theories of scientific control, and advised, "to beware of enthusiasm for command, know first how to deal with that which science already has produced" (Complete Works, Volume 42, page 347). The problems of scientific control were profoundly developed by M. V. Frunze, M. N. Tukhachevskiy, B. M. Shaposhnikov, and other Soviet military leaders.

What are the basic tasks of the theory of scientific troop control? This theory is called upon to reveal and explore conformity in control processes, to determine the principles of troop command in the interest of reaching maximum productivity in administrative work. In addition, it gives specific recommendations pertaining to the work of generals and officers for example, standards and a detailed account of the duration of the work of staffs in general, and of the activities of each executor. Specific recommendations help to fully occupy all personnel of control organs with purposeful work in accordance with an established schedule, taking into account the qualifications and abilities of the executors. This is very important, for organization of this kind can avoid bustle, nervousness, uncertainty, waiting, pointless and frequent summons of subordinates to their chiefs, and other vices of disorganized work.

Troop control in general, and staff operating methodology in particular, obtain further development only if the theory of scientific control is based on Marxist-Leninist methodology, and comprehensively takes into account the rules and methods of cybernetics, statistics, psychology, and practical field experience.

Speaking of scientific methods, we would like to emphasize the special role of the methods of cybernetics which allow deeper penetration into the essence of control and disclosure of the fundamentals of staff operating methodology, since in general this method represents a precise determination of the component parts and the entire scope of the problems being solved, and the sequence of their implementation. The mathematical methods of cybernetics facilitate working out scientifically valid schedules of staff activities such as, for example, adopting a plan under various conditions of a situation. The network method of planning determines the optimum variant for the order of carrying out very complicated measures. It is highly convenient for monitoring and operational command, especially in the planning for bringing troops to full combat readiness and for working out coordination.

The experience of the foremost staffs of military districts and armies attests that statistical methods should be used more widely for the creation of a scientific method of work in control organs. It is well known that military statistics are used to study the quantitative characteristics and activities of staffs. They help systematize the volume of work, properly assess functional responsibilities and the optimum composition of working groups, establish work standards, and, as a result, raise the productivity of staff work. The experience of employing methods of cybernetics and statistics in staffs keenly suggests the question of developing standards of administrative work and formalizing a great bulk of documents. Such standards significantly facilitate the planning of work, heighten its efficiency, and permit specific definition of the requirement for operational preparation.

In widely using the laws of cybernetics and statistics, one must not forget that they give only quantitative characteristics of administrative processes, whereas troop command has qualitative sides and also a practical foundation of previous experience. Therefore, in the research of scientific staff operating methodology it is necessary to take into consideration, for example, moral and political aspects, and the requirements of psychology, ethics, and esthetics. In particular, it is a question of ways of strengthening a congenial relationship among staff personnel and of building a more favorable creative atmosphere. Research shows that timely assessment, say, of the psychological aspects--proper relations between chiefs and subordinates, authority of the supervisor, a system of encouragement and punishment, an atmosphere of comradeship, initiative and creativity, normal working conditions--ensures a great upgrading of staff work productivity and at times even predetermines

the success of control. According to the data of psychologists, a man in the process of work usually uses only about ten percent of his physical and mental capacities. The supervisor's task is to create all the conditions for maximum utilization of such an enormous reserve of human capabilities.

In the practice of operational preparation, such an approach to scientific troop control is not always observed. Many staffs of formations spend nine to fourteen hours and more just on preparation, adopting a plan, and the allocation of tasks to subordinate staffs; and the entire process of assigning tasks to subunits sometimes takes twenty to twenty-four hours. It appears that field commands literally "devour" time which is so necessary for the purposeful training of troops for combat actions, so that the process of adopting a plan does not always flow in an organized and precise manner.

Such activity of separate control organs, in our view, is explained by the very slow and halting assimilation of the methods of scientific troop control, and also by the great persistence of archaic concepts of staff operating methodology in operational situations. There is a widespread view that the work methods of formation commanders and staffs supposedly have no clearly expressed regularity, since the work methods are predetermined by specific conditions and, especially, by the work style of the formation commander and chief of staff. Sometimes the question of scientifically based staff operating methodology is directly related to the degree of automation of the control process, although full automation, especially at the operational-strategic levels, is still in the distant future.

Of all the complicated problems of scientific troop control we will examine only the specific question of the possibility of creating and using a single scientific method of adopting a plan and allocating tasks to executors in all staffs from top to bottom, on the scale, for example, of a front, and also the principles, which, in our opinion, can be assumed to be the basis of this scientific method.

Sometimes the question is asked: is it possible to recommend a single specific method in staff work for adopting a plan in a front operation being prepared in peacetime or, even more so, at the beginning or during the course of a war? It is known that at any given time troop commanders and staffs will be required to take almost instantaneous action in solving highly

complex problems. Some comrades question the possibility of working out such a method. In doing so, they usually allude to the varied nature of the problems, their magnitude, and the specificity of the conditions of a situation for the pertinent staff, with the result that each plan must have its own distinctive approach. Of course, the conditions under which the plan is adopted exert a definite influence over the nature of work of a given staff, but surely there just cannot be an infinite number of work methods of adopting a plan.

It occurs to us that all the objective conditions exist for the creation of a single scientific method in staff work, the whole complexity of this problem notwithstanding. If examined by analogy with algorithms in the mathematical method of solutions, the process of adopting a plan for an operation and allocating tasks to troops consists of the same elements at all levels of control and is worked out in the same sequence: collection and collation of information, clarification of the mission, adopting the plan, allocation of tasks, and monitoring. Staffs and other control organs have the same uniform structural makeup in all instances. The difference consists only of the volume and content of problems to be solved and of the period of time required for their solution, so it predetermines only the scale of the work.

Consequently, from the standpoint of the quantitative nature of control processes, the possibility of working out a single scientific method for staff functions cannot be denied. It corroborates both the experience of operational preparation and the experiments conducted by the Red Banner Belorussian and Volga Military Districts.

In our opinion, in adopting a plan, there can be the following basic staff operating methodologies: consecutive, parallel and so-called directed, and also combinations of them. Each of them has its own specific features.

The method of consecutive work is best represented in situations when the time factor does not exert a decisive influence, for example, up until the beginning of war. It is set forth in detail in manuals and regulations, and consists of clarification of the problem, a detailed estimate of the situation with due attention to the comprehensive reports of the chiefs of arms of troops and services, conduct of reconnaissance, adopting a plan, announcing it, working up the orders, directives, and instructions, etc. This process is followed strictly from top

to bottom right to the tactical level. In general, several days are spent on this on the scale of a front. This method undoubtedly is scientifically valid and ensures the most complete solution to all problems. However, it is unacceptable during a threatening period, and even less acceptable in wartime.

In wartime all staffs use the method of parallel work for adopting a plan and allocation of tasks to the executors on the basis of preliminary instructions; and only this method ensures the essential reduction of time in the process of adopting a plan at all front and army command levels and rapid allocation of tasks to units and subunits. In the Red Banner Belorussian Military District synchronized parallel staff work permitted shortening the process of implementing General Staff directives on a task for tactical elements from twenty-four to seven to eight hours. Such an experience undoubtedly deserves attention. This method for the activities of control organs is aimed first of all at maximum gain in time without lowering the quality of work. It is fundamental in combat conditions, when it is necessary to quickly adopt a new plan and allocate or clarify tasks from top to bottom.

The third method, directed, is used primarily when almost instant reaction is required to a situation which has developed. The troop commander of the front or armies directing the operation makes a decision at definite times during the operation to clarify the operational plan and issues the necessary instructions personally or through his staff.

In the overwhelming majority of cases the method of parallel work in the process of adopting a plan is the principal one used. In our view, the fundamental experience of the Red Banner Belorussian, Volga, and Carpathian Military Districts, can be stipulated to be the following basic principles of staff operating methodology.

The first principle is the optimum distribution of functional duties among command personnel and the staffs of a front, armies and divisions; and between command posts, departments, and working groups and the executors within each of these echelons.

Each staff, its component elements, and officer-executors must determine specific duties and individual assignments and break down the process of their fulfilment in time periods in conformity with the basic work schedule. It must be clear what should be resolved independently, and which problems should have

guidance. The formation commander and his closest assistants should proceed on the basis that under modern conditions they can resolve only the main problems in short periods of time, and otherwise leave the initiative to subordinates. For example, it is advisable that chiefs of arms of troops and services, on the basis of the concept of the operation, submit for the formation commander's approval not a report but a plan for the utilization of the troops subordinate to them. Only then will they actually become true assistants to the formation commander and organizers of the combat use of the arms of troops.

In determining the functional responsibilities of generals and officers it is necessary to take into account skilled and unskilled work, the capabilities and inclinations of executors, the time needed for preparation and the order of priority for finishing each document. It is necessary to free the most capable and creative officers from duties which can easily be performed by junior officers, draftsmen and typists. In this respect, an analysis of the work of the officer-operator in exercises conducted in the Red Banner Belorussian Military District deserves attention. The analysis showed that the officer-operator spent almost half of his working time pasting together maps and coloring situations plotted on them, drawing up documents in the secret section, making an inventory of materiel, and other things. These deficiencies are the consequence of an improper T/O for staff directorates and departments. For example, the directorates of a front staff have one junior officer for about 30 senior officers, and one draftsman for 40 officers. It appears to us that it would be more rational for an operational directorate of a front staff to have thirty to forty percent senior and junior officers, ten to fifteen percent draftsmen, and no less than ten percent clerks out of the total T/O of a directorate. In this case, up to forty percent more experienced and trained officers could raise the productivity of work twofold, and on the whole the pace and quality of the work of the directorates and departments would increase significantly. As a result, the performance of duty by officers would improve, and the total costs of maintaining staffs in general would be reduced.

The experience of operational preparation has shown that, to regulate the functional responsibilities of generals and officers, it is very important not to change the basic tasks assigned to them from exercise to exercise. It is advisable to set forth in the work books specific duties, the time required to fulfil them, a standard work schedule for a command post

(forward command post, rear command post) in the process of adopting a plan, samples of completed documents and standardized blank forms, important operational-tactical estimates and memos, radio operating data for communication with the staffs two echelons lower, and also sheets for notes and transmission of instructions or messages. It is useful to keep these work books permanently and to improve their contents during exercises and in the course of training sessions for officers.

The second principle is broad specialization as the basis of sharply increasing productivity in staff work. It is known, for example, that the operational directorate of a front staff has operational and information departments, but the operational department of an army staff has no specialized sections. This is likewise the situation in other directorates and departments of staffs. The experience of the past war and of postwar exercises has shown that the operational directorate and department solve the following problems in parallel and continuously: planning, information, the work of the branches, the duties of communications officers, work at the forward command post, and various organizational problems. Accordingly, similar working groups are set up in exercises, and in other directorates and departments are usually set up groups for planning, information, and control, or branch officers.

However, sometimes objections are raised against such a compartmented principle of staff work allocation which has been formulated in practice. It is thought, for example, that a planning department should not be created in the operational directorate of a front staff, because it is impossible to separate planning functions from the assigning of tasks to troops and the monitoring of their actions. It apparently is deemed inadvisable to designate branch officers in an operational directorate and department, since it supposedly leads to the narrowing of officer-operator specialization and lessens his knowledge of the general situation. In many cases the thought is expressed that every officer-operator should be able to skilfully solve the major problems connected with maintaining control of troop combat actions.

In our opinion there is no more dangerous tendency in the theory of control than the denial of the principle of specialization in staff work. This principle is the basis of scientific organization of control in general. If an officer-operator is charged with the planning of combat actions, then required to report on the condition of any given army, and, finally, made

to prepare a situation report, then these tasks will be carried out in an imprecise, impromptu, and unskilled manner. It is clear that in such a statement of the problem one cannot seriously talk about ways of attaining a high level of efficiency in staff work.

Meanwhile, there is talk not only of specialization but also of ~~achieving automation~~ making automatons of so-called narrow specialists. It is the direct route to solving the problem of the time factor. It is important that specialization be scientifically based, and rational. We do not reject the principle of interchangeability of officers of a staff, but that is another question. In peacetime an officer-operator should prepare himself for solving all problems which may be placed before him, but first and foremost he must be a virtuoso-specialist in his assigned activity in wartime.

The third principle is the organization of the work process of a formation commander and staff when adopting a plan for an operation in a definite sequence and in a minimum amount of time in order to attain synchronization in the work of field directorates and all their elements from top to bottom. For this the entire activity of formation commanders and staffs must be regulated by a corresponding work schedule.

The fourth principle is the organization of parallel activity within a command post and in all subordinate staffs on the basis of a single methodology and an adopted concept of the plan. The experience of operational preparation has shown that the optimum variant in the work of control organs can be attained by organizing the work of staffs, chiefs of arms of troops, services, and chiefs of subordinate staffs, on the basis of preliminary instructions given after adopting the concept of the plan. According to the experience of the work of front field directorates, the concept of a front operation can be formulated in one to one and one-half hours after receipt of the General Staff directive. The preliminary instructions for the army, which were prepared on the basis of the concept, indicate the position of the army in the operational makeup of the front, the missions or the axis of the offensive, and the boundaries between formations. With this data available the chiefs of arms of troops and services of the front and the chiefs of subordinate staffs can start their work in parallel with the front staff without waiting for the final adoption of the plan and receipt of the directive. This gains five to six hours just at the front level.

50X1-HUM

To attain positive results, it is necessary to resolutely reject archaic methods of adopting a plan, wherein officer-operators first prepared proposals and then repeatedly refined them. From the very beginning, the work must be performed as a collective. From the moment of receipt of the directive of the General Staff until the allocation of tasks to the troops, and also during the operation, the front troop commander must always have with him the chief of staff, a member of the Military Council, the chiefs of the operational and intelligence directorates, and the chief of rocket troops and artillery.

The front troop commander personally adopts the plan on the map, while the remaining generals and officers actively assist him. All resolved problems are immediately plotted by officer-operators on two maps (formalizing the decision and the operations plan). The place where the collective work of this group of supervisory personnel of a field directorate takes place is customarily called the control center. Here are located the planning group and branch officers of the operational directorate. The remaining personnel attend as requested, but preferably in accordance with the work schedule.

In line with their functional duties officer-operators must have samples, and preferably completed forms. The moment work is completed on the concept or other problems of the plan, branch officers must present the completed forms of preliminary instructions and directives for signature and immediately relay them to their subordinate staffs through their assistants, using technical means of communication. The deputy chief of staff, or another responsible person, takes the concept to the chiefs of arms of troops and service who by this time have assembled in the control center so they can, in parallel, work out a plan for the use of the troops subordinate to them. This is their way of allocating tasks as required by instructions and regulations. During the preparation of the plans, the chiefs of arms of troops and services submit them, according to the schedule, to the troop commander of the front or army for approval.

At a certain point the group of supervisory workers at the control center may be temporarily divided into two parts. For example, after determining the concept of the operation, the formation commander will continue to work on the plan, while the chief of staff, along with the chief of intelligence, the chief of rocket troops and artillery, and other necessary officers, in parallel, will prepare proposals for delivery of the first nuclear strike, and report them to the formation

commander in one to two hours. This shortens the total time needed to reach a decision.

After the map for the plan has been completed (according to experience, five to six hours), all directives and instructions, which had already been prepared by this time on standard forms are immediately signed and forwarded to subordinate headquarters. By this method, the plan adopted for the operation need not be explained to the generals and officers of the field command, since, while the plan is being worked on, each of them learns everything necessary about that part of it which pertains to him.

If all the signed directives and instructions arrive at the subordinate staffs at approximately the same time, the work of these staffs is significantly facilitated. In particular, army staffs will know the general contents of these documents from the preliminary instructions relayed by the branch officers while the plan was still being worked on at the front; and that is why the staffs can make the very essential clarifications in the army plans and immediately start allocating tasks to the troops.

The fifth principle is a desirable disposition of command posts and their elements which will be conducive to shortening the contact time between them. It has a significance of no small importance for attaining a high level of efficiency in the work of control organs. With this view, as is known, it is advantageous to situate the principal elements of control posts closer to each other, although the interests of viability dictate their dispersal at intervals of three to five kilometers. In our opinion this problem should be solved differentially. Such independent elements of a command post as the air defense command post, the operational group of the air army, the topographic department, and the support group can be situated two to three kilometers and more from the location of the troop commander. It is advantageous to deploy the leading directorates and departments not far from the control center (250 to 500 meters). If dependable, secure, selective circuit communication is established between the most important elements, these distances can be increased.

Finally, the sixth principle is the organization of continuous representation at the front command post of appropriate personnel from the forward command post, the rear

50X1-HUM

control post, and the replacement staff, for more efficient solution of problems which may arise, especially during the course of an operation.

These, in our view, are the general principles and some proposals on staff operating methodology during the drawing up of a plan by a front and by armies in short periods of time, and in light of the requirements of the theory of scientific troop control.

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