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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20505

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4 June 1974

MEMORANDUM FOR: The Director of Central Intelligence
SUBJECT : MILITARY THOUGHT (USSR): Organization of a Landing of Amphibious Forces

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 discusses the factors involved in the preparation for the landing of an amphibious force. The length of time needed to prepare for such landings is analyzed, as is the determination of a definite time for the start of debarkation of forces. Past experience is drawn upon, particularly that of World War II, and charts and formulas are presented to illustrate the article's main conclusions. 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. For ease of reference, reports from this publication have been assigned



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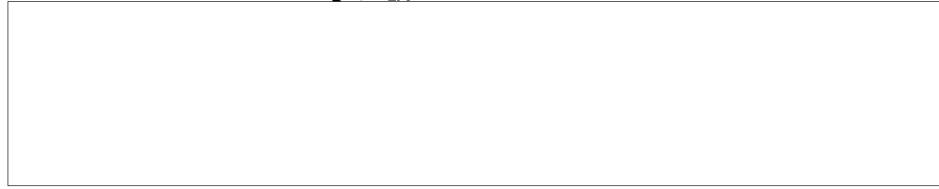
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William E. Nelson
Deputy Director for Operations



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50X1-HUM



Intelligence Information Special Report

Page 3 of 12 Pages

50X1-HUM

COUNTRY USSR



DATE OF INFO. Late 1970

DATE 4 June 1974

SUBJECT

MILITARY THOUGHT (USSR): Organization of a Landing of Amphibious Forces

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 authors of this article are Vice-Admiral F. Savelyev and Captain O. Shulman. This article discusses the factors involved in the preparation for the landing of an amphibious force. The length of time needed to prepare for such landings is analyzed, as is the determination of a definite time for the start of debarkation of forces. Past experience is drawn upon, particularly that of World War II, and charts and formulae presented to illustrate the article's main conclusions.

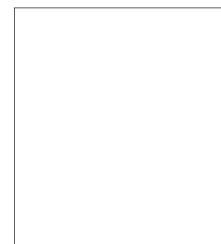
End of Summary

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Comment:

There is no information in available reference materials which can be firmly associated with the authors. The SECRET version of Military Thought was published three times annually and was distributed down to the level of division commander. It reportedly ceased publication at the end of 1970.



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Page 4 of 12 Pages

Organization of a Landing of Amphibious Forces

by

Vice-Admiral F. Savelyev and Captain O. Shulman

The successful solution of tasks by amphibious landings depends largely on the extent to which the complex of measures for preparing the command, staffs, and troops for the forthcoming combat actions has been accomplished. In turn, the possibility for the timely implementation of measures to prepare the landing force for combat actions will be determined by the ability to calculate the time required for their fulfilment. In the postwar period, especially in the past five to seven years, this problem has been given considerable attention by the staffs of the maritime military districts, and particularly by the staffs of the formations, large units, and units of the Leningrad and the Baltic Military Districts. However, working out problems of coordination in a training situation according to a previously prepared plan in which frequently a large number of measures have been worked out before the beginning of training, often gives an erroneous impression concerning the amount of time needed for the comprehensive and thorough preparation of an amphibious landing. In our opinion, this impression is further promoted by the lack of norms in the army and navy guidance documents which should be adhered to at least to some extent in preparing an amphibious landing of any composition.

As is known, the preparation for the landing of an amphibious force is made up of the following basic measures: planning of the landing by the appropriate levels; working out coordination among the diverse forces participating in the landing or its support; organizing all types of support; conducting reconnaissance in support of the landing; preparing the landing troops and moving them out to the waiting areas; concentrating the transportation and landing means; organizing the joint combat preparation of the landing forces; preparing materiel; loading equipment and amphibious forces onto the transport-landing facilities.

Usually, some of the measures (mainly those connected with planning) are accomplished in advance, in peacetime; and others, in the course of (or on the eve of) military operations at the same time or in strict sequence.

In the final analysis, the length of time to carry out these measures determines how far in advance the tasks are assigned. And this duration of time depends mainly on two factors:

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-- the numerical strength of the amphibious force and the conditions under which the preparation for the landing is being carried out;

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Page 5 of 12 Pages

-- the possibilities that nuclear weapons will be used, or only conventional weapons, during a front offensive or defensive operation.

The influence of the first factor may be judged to a certain extent by the experience of World War II. It took eight months to prepare for the Sicilian operation, one and one-half years for the Normandy operation, one year for the landing in southern France, and almost six months for the landings on the islands of Okinawa and Iwo Jima.

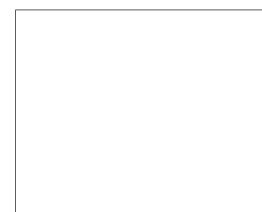
A favorable situation--the lack of any kind of interference and countermeasures by the enemy, as well as a considerable amount of time--allowed the US and England to carry out thorough planning of the operation, concentrate large human and material resources, and have them well-trained and supported. Of course, much of this was due to the policies of the US and England, who deliberately delayed the opening of the second front.

The amphibious landings carried out by the Soviet Navy were often prepared under very difficult conditions, especially during the initial stages of the Great Patriotic War, while conducting defensive operations, and during offensive operations of fronts, when the situation was changing sharply and rapidly and there were not enough trained forces available. And, in most cases, no specially built transport-landing means were available.

Chart 1 gives a graphic presentation of the conditions under which the Soviet Navy had to carry out amphibious landings during the war. It also shows that the attainment of goals was assured not only by the duration of training of the landing forces but also by a favorable combination of a number of factors.

(See Chart 1 on following page.)

50X1-HUM



~~TOP SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~Page 6 of 12 Pages
50X1-HUM

Chart 1

Controlling fleet and date	Duration of operation	Strength of landing force, landing area	Results of achieving the goal
Baltic 3-10-41	24 hours	Reinforced company of naval infantry brigade, Strelna	Not achieved
Baltic 4-10-41	Several hours	Company of rifle division	Not achieved
Baltic 15-3-42	4 days	320 men, Ust-Tosno	Achieved
Baltic 14-7-44	13 days	567 men	Not achieved
Baltic 25-9-44	7 days	3,061 men	Achieved
Black 26-12-41	22 days	22,754 men, Kerch-Feodosiya	Not achieved
Black 4-2-43	47 days	3 brigades, 2 regiments, 1 battalion, Stanichka-Yuzhnaya Ozereyka	Not achieved
Black 4-2-43	10 days	Novorossiysk	Achieved
Black 26-12-41	21 days	40,519 men, Kerch Peninsula	Not Achieved
Northern 9-10-44	days	2,800 men	Achieved

(Translator's note: Numbers in the above chart are not clearly legible.)

Taking into consideration the experience of the war and the results of the exercises of the past years, as well as calculations made for possible extreme conditions in which amphibious landings may be made in a future war, it may be assumed that the time needed to prepare for amphibious landings must be within the time limits shown in Chart 2. In those cases where the vessels of the Ministry of the Maritime Fleet had not been enlisted into service beforehand, for some reason or other, as landing-transport means, it is necessary to take into consideration the time needed to complete equipping them and to concentrate them in the embarkation areas.

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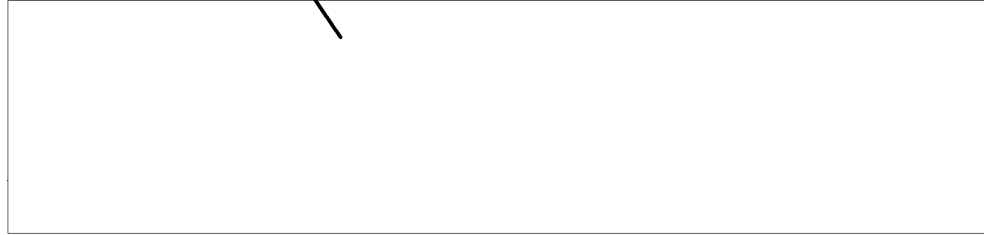
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Chart 2

Composition of Landing Force	Minimum training time (days)
Naval infantry battalion with reinforcements	1 - 3
Basic subunits of a naval infantry regiment	2 - 3
Naval infantry regiment at full strength	3 - 4
Naval infantry regiment, motorized rifle regiment, reinforcement units	8 - 10
Motorized rifle division	12 - 14
Motorized rifle division, amphibious landing division, naval infantry regiment, reinforcement units	25 - 30

As the preparation nears the end, the command which is organizing the landing operation must set a definite date and time the debarkation of forces is to begin; and it must take into account the time needed for the embarkation of troops, the loading of equipment, and the transporting of the landing detachments from the embarkation areas to the debarkation areas.

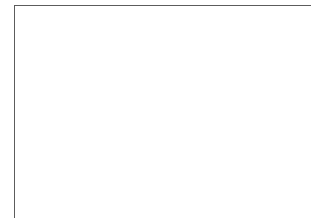
With these requirements taken into account, the length of time from the moment the preparation of the landing force is completed until the moment its debarkation begins is equal to

$$T_{pr} = T_{so} + T_t + T_{pogr} + T_{form} + T_{per} \quad (1)$$

where: T_{so} - time it takes to notify the forces of the exact time of the beginning of the debarkation of the landing force (communication time);

T_t - maximum time it takes any transport-landing means to reach loading and embarkation points from the initial (dispersal) basing area.

50X1-HUM

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~

Page 8 of 12 Pages

- T_{pogr} - the longest duration of time for loading troops and equipment on to any of the landing ships or vessels of the first and second echelon detachments.
- T_{form} - time it takes to form amphibious detachments after the completion of loading and the departure from ports and harbors.
- T_{per} - time it takes for the landing detachments of the first and second echelons to reach the debarkation area. 50X1-HUM

Taking into consideration the experience gained from the exercises of the past several years, there is reason to assume that the above formulas are approximately equal to the following values: $T_{so} = 30$ minutes; $T_t = 2$ hours; $T_{pogr} = 2$ or 10 hours (2 hours for Project 1171 amphibious ships, 10 hours for transport ships of 10,000 tons displacement). $T_{form} = 1$ or 2 hours; $T_{per} =$ depending on the distance between the embarkation and debarkation points and on the rate of speed (T_{per} for land-locked seas does not exceed 30 hours).

An analysis of formula (1) and the values included in it shows that the time for beginning the debarkation of the amphibious force must be announced not less than one and one-half days prior to the beginning of the landing. A postponement of the time to begin the debarkation of the amphibious force to a later date often does not substantially affect the fulfilment of the task. A premature landing, on the other hand, may entail serious consequences.

Experience shows that during the operational preparation conducted by the navy jointly with the troops of military districts, when allocating tasks to the landing force and when drawing up the plan for the battle on shore, not enough attention was paid to the pace of the debarkation or to the speed of the buildup of troops and equipment on the shore.

If we turn to the experience of World War II we can see that the pace of debarkation of the amphibious landing carried out by the Black Sea Fleet in 1941 in the area of Feodosiya was 2 divisions in 7 hours on the first day and one division in 12 hours on the second day. In the landing at Novorossiysk, the pace of debarkation reached that of one battalion in 20 minutes. These are examples in which the pace of the landing under conditions that existed then must be considered quite high. However, there are others. 50X1-HUM

In the area of Grigoryevka in 1941 a regiment of 1900 men was landed in 5 hours and 50 minutes. Such a long period of time could have been

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Page 9 of 12 Pages

fatal. And the only reason it was not was the fact that the landing force managed to achieve the element of surprise which assured its success.

On the whole, even for the conditions of World War II the pace of landings was often relatively slow, thus allowing the enemy to concentrate the necessary forces for a strike against the landing force.

The time it takes for the debarkation of an entire amphibious landing force, or its units and subunits, depends on many factors. However, the main ones are: the nature of the anti-landing defense, the availability of forces capable of neutralizing it, and the capabilities of the landing-debarkation means and amphibious equipment.

Generally speaking, this time can always be determined fairly accurately and, consequently, permits well-founded allocations of tasks to be made to the units and subunits of the amphibious landing force.

In our opinion, in allocating tasks to the landing force, as well as in drawing up the plan for their fulfilment by the landing force as a whole, the large units, units and subunits of the landing force must be guided by the planned pace of the landing. Only when each commander knows how soon after the beginning of the debarkation his subunit, unit, or large unit, either as a whole or the main part of it, will be on the shore, will it be possible to use and control them properly and purposefully.

The determinations of this time are achieved by preparing schedules for the debarkation or the buildup of forces and means on shore, these schedules are worked out by the staff of the debarkation force on the basis of the plan adopted by the commander of the landing force for conducting combat on shore (and, accordingly, the composition of the debarking troops and materiel).

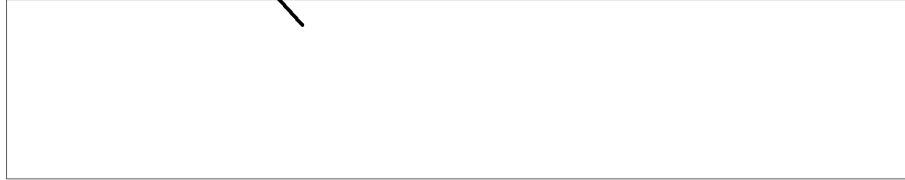
These schedules provide a visual presentation not only of the contemplated momentum of buildup of the basic types of combat equipment at one or another point of the debarkation, but they also reflect the sequence of arrival of the forces and means on shore.

Of great importance in the control of forces in an amphibious landing operation is the determination of the time the forces are to begin the battle for the landing.

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The experience of World War II tells us that there are two ways of resolving this problem; and they can be combined and can complement each other in accordance with a previously prepared plan and according to the actual situation in the debarkation area. For example, in the debarkation

~~TOP SECRET~~

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Page 10 of 12 Pages

of a landing force in the Sudak area in 1942, the artillery preparation was carried out in accordance with a previously prepared plan, but not according to the actual state of readiness of the landing force for debarkation. As a result, there was a 40 minute interval between the end of the artillery preparation and the beginning of the debarkation. Approximately the same interval occurred in the debarkation of a landing force in the area of Yuzhnaya Ozereyka in 1943.

In the debarkation of the landing force in the area of Sommers Island in 1942 the interval between the completion of the bombing strike and the beginning of the debarkation was 30 minutes.

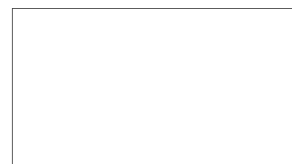
In those cases when control of the landing was carried out in accordance with the situation that had developed (the artillery and air preparation were begun on a signal from the landing force commander, and the fire was switched into the depth as the landing ships reached the shore), there was no interval between the actions of the forces during the debarkation, which permitted the successful achievement of the assigned tasks. Other examples are the debarkation of a landing force at Novorossiysk in 1943 and the one at the Kerch Peninsula in 1943.

In our opinion, the experience during the war, which confirmed the advantage of setting the time for the forces to commence actions to conform with the actual situation in the area of the battle for the landing, should be combined with the actions of forces in accordance with a plan.

Thus, for example, the beginning of aviation preparation for an airborne landing and the landing itself, the neutralization of the shore-based observation and communications system, the beginning of mine reconnaissance, and the neutralization of aviation on the airfields, should be started in accordance with a plan (which conforms with detailed reconnaissance information). The time to begin and end the aviation and artillery preparation and support of the debarkation of an amphibious landing force, the time for the debarkation of the second echelon and the rear services of the landing force, and the time that ships and vessels pass through channels and areas endangered by mines and areas subjected to radioactive contamination, should be determined in a manner to have it conform with the actual situation.

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The experience of exercises and war games shows that the rapidly changing situation in the area of the battle for the landing and of the battle on the shore makes it necessary to make corrections once or twice a day in the plan for the delivery of nuclear strikes. Moreover, if an amphibious landing is preceded by an airborne landing, the corrections can

~~TOP SECRET~~

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Page 11 of 12 Pages

be very important in regard to the time of delivery of the nuclear strikes against targets and the nature of the bursts.

It is important that the staff preparing the plan for the use of nuclear weapons in support of the battle on the shore take into account how much time must elapse before it is possible to realize the results of the nuclear strikes. This length of time is determined by the technical capabilities of the delivery vehicles and can be from some tens of minutes to several hours.

The control of forces in the debarkation of an amphibious landing is greatly influenced by how long it takes the command to complete its evaluation cycle of the correctness of assigning certain tasks to certain forces (what we mean here is the time that elapses from the moment it became necessary to carry out the task until the moment word is received from the executors that it was completed).

Generally, this cycle includes the following:

$$\text{where: } T_{\text{of cycle}} = T_{\text{an}} + T_{\text{resh}} + *T_{\text{pz}} \quad (2)$$

in which T_{an} is the time it takes the higher level to make an analysis of the information received from the executors.

T_{resh} is the time it takes to make a new decision.

T_{pz} is the time it takes to assign the new task (getting it to the executors).

The shorter the cycle the more stable the control of the forces is, and the more influence the command exerts over the course of the fulfilment of the task.

A minimum cycle duration is possible when the decisions are made quickly, the executors are informed of their tasks in good time, and the source of information is direct observation.

If the task assigned to the forces conforms with the objective situation and thoroughly covers all the factors that may influence its fulfilment, the process of control can be established very quickly. 50X1-HUM

Otherwise several cycles will be required to set up the kind of control that will assure the fulfilment of the assigned task, and for such a complex type of combat operation as an amphibious landing this is extremely undesirable as it may lead to a failure.

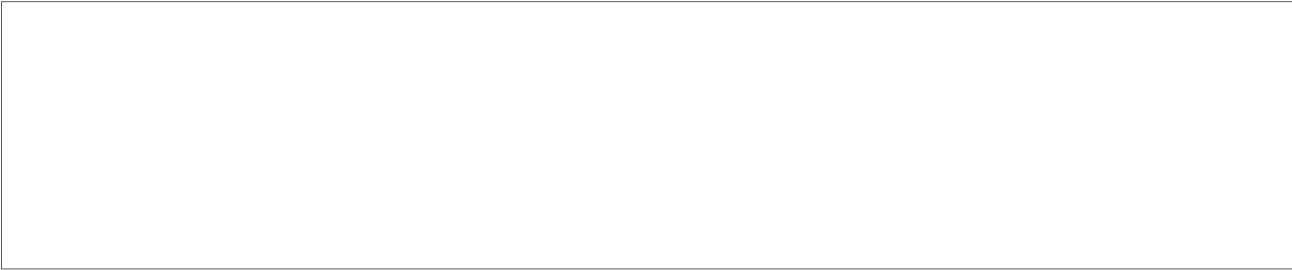

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Page 12 of 12 Pages

A proper functioning of control over the forces of an amphibious landing must provide for a differentiated approach towards the speed of the flow of information and the making of a decision.

Without further developing this idea, it should be said that this will, to a considerable degree, permit more effective distribution of the means of communications, an intelligent use of signal and other charts, and strengthening of the organs of control.

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