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Some Factors Affecting the Planning of a Modern Offensive Operation

by

Colonel-General Ye. Ivanov

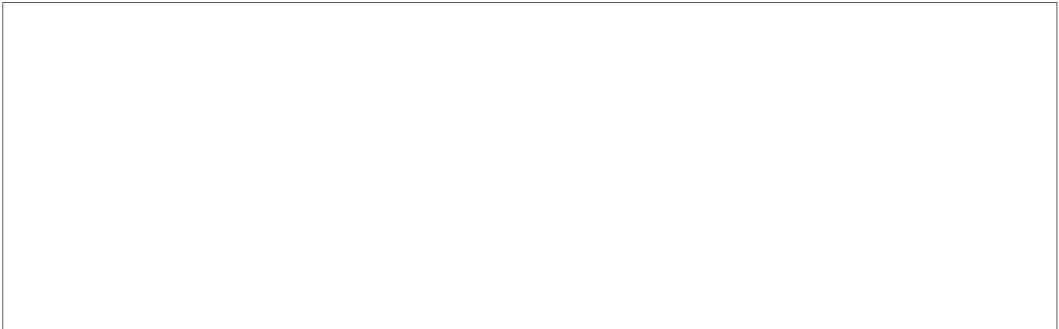
The concept that the planning of a modern operation should be based primarily on the capabilities of nuclear weapons and their most effective utilization, which now appears to be the decisive factor in achieving victory over the enemy, has become universally recognized. However, it would be useful to examine some particular factors affecting the planning of operations.

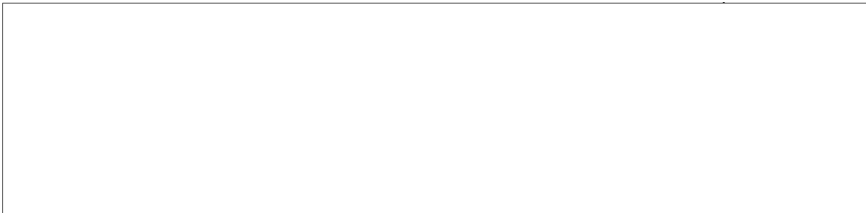
In this connection, the first point on which we must dwell is the clarification of the concept "the main strike and the number of strikes in an operation."

In the past, the direction of the main strike for a breakthrough of a solid positional defense, which was typical, was always selected in support of the most effective use of the infantry, artillery, and tanks which were concentrated for the delivery of a strike on the weak spot on a selected axis, as a rule, in narrow zones, for subsequent destruction of the basic enemy grouping. This axis had precise limits in an operation and required compulsory superiority over the enemy in forces and weapons. This, naturally, had its definite influence on the content of the planning of the operation.

Under modern conditions, atomic weapons without the aid of other weapons of combat can, in the shortest periods of time, destroy the basic enemy troop groupings and deprive them of their combat effectiveness and in this way ensure an advantageous correlation of forces for the delivery of strikes and the development of an offensive.

Hence, when working out a solution and planning an operation, primary attention must be given to the determination of the sequence of the utilization of nuclear/missile weapons, which would guarantee maximum effectiveness of the latter in the destruction and neutralization of enemy groupings in the entire depth of the tactical and operational formation.





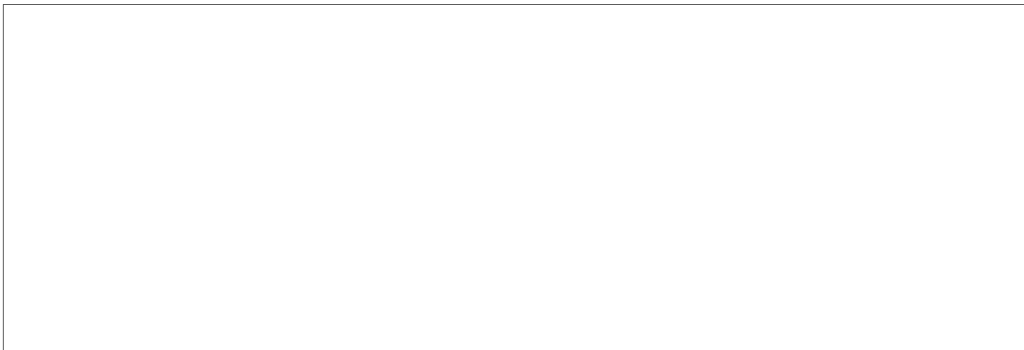
With such a solution to the problem, very often on the axes and through the areas where nuclear weapons will be used (4 to 5 words missing) groupings of ground troops or in general to circumvent these areas in avoidance of a sharp deceleration of the rates of advance as a result of the serious destruction of populated points, of road structures, and of radiation contamination of the terrain.


It appears that the concept "main strike" under modern conditions and on an operational scale is primarily a mass nuclear strike against the enemy's nuclear weapons and his basic troop groupings which is followed by strikes with tanks and infantry on several axes, and no longer against a solid positional defense, but against a defense having primarily a clustered nature (ochagovyy kharakter).

In resolving the problem of the quantity of strikes, the mechanical transfer of the experience of the past war to modern conditions must be decisively rejected in a front and an army because of the still extant conception of the inadvisability for a front to deliver more than two strikes and of the impossibility for an army to deliver a strike on more than one axis. Substantiation of this leads to assertions which are far from the truth, namely that with a large number of strikes a front, and even more, an army, will dissipate its forces and will not be able to perform the assigned mission.

If concentration and utilization of a large mass of fire and of considerable masses of troops were required to execute a breakthrough in the past, now it can be carried out much more simply. Now nuclear/missile weapons are capable of breaking through an enemy's defense over large areas not only along a front but in depth and to form in it such breaches and even vacuums as to lead not only to the weakening of the enemy but also to his complete loss of combat effectiveness on the axes selected for the offensive. Thus, conditions have been created in which the operations of ground troops are possible without amalgamating them into some sort of a dense striking force. 50X1-HUM

Consequently, if one speaks of strikes, keeping in mind the axes of ground troop operations, there can be several of them, both of an army and of a front. Their number will be determined by the capabilities of the nuclear/missile weapons, the advantages of utilizing them, and also by the conditions supporting convenience in the operations of large units of ground troops.



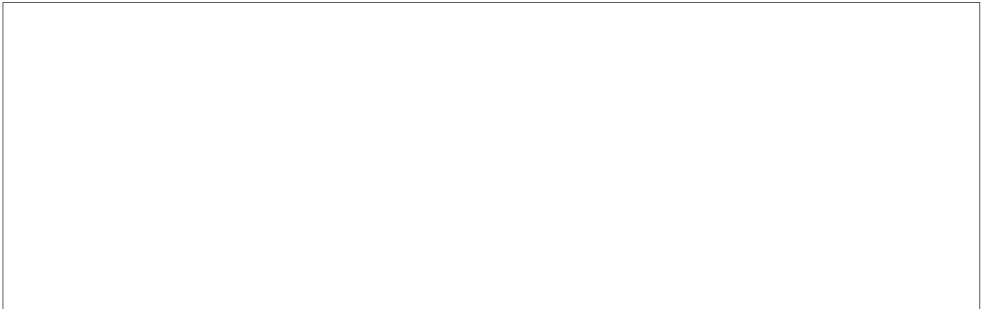


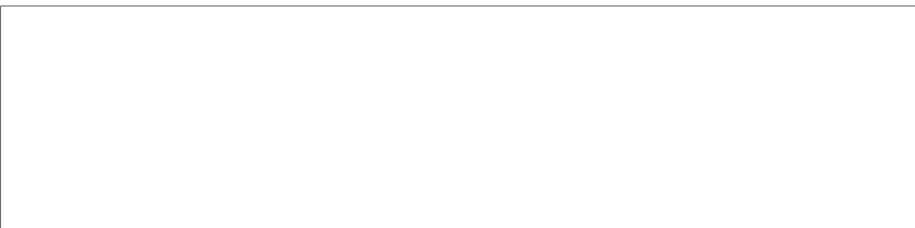
The delivery of several strikes by a front and an army, united by a common concept and directed toward the achievement of the assigned goals of an operation, is advantageous not only from the point of view of the availability of possibilities for ensuring these strikes by nuclear/missile weapons but also because with this, favorable conditions for achieving surprise are created. Dispersion of troops in several areas and over a large expanse together with the execution of other measures for operational concealment hinders the enemy in the timely determination of the intentions of the attacker. This will permit concealment from the enemy of not only the actual employment of the troops in an operation but also of the nature of the utilization of nuclear/missile weapons.

The operations of front (army) troops on several isolated axes create more favorable conditions for the utilization of the most varied forms of operational maneuver, permit a comparatively easy change in the direction of operations, especially during the course of the operation's development, and a quick transfer of the efforts of the troops into the depth. Furthermore, such conditions considerably simplify the use of various arms of troops since excessive congestion and shifting of their combat and precombat formations are eliminated, they permit a more effective utilization of the terrain, assist in the better organization of the work of the rear services and in particular, permit a more rational utilization of the main railroad and vehicular highway networks, and also of bridges and rivercrossings in support of supply and evacuation.

It is perfectly obvious that troops dispersed along a front for operations on various axes cannot be equivalent in composition or equipment. The content and importance of their missions will also differ. But they will be united by a single concept and the efforts of the troops will be directed toward the achievement of the overall goal of the operation. Moreover, now it is not important how many groupings have been created in a front for an offensive, but rather how the troops are organized for the most effective exploitation, at high tempos, of the results of the use of nuclear/missile weapons. Therefore, dispersion of troops along a front does not at all mean that their efforts are dissipated as a result.

The spatial scope, tempos and the duration of an operation must also be examined in a different manner from that which is still the practice at the present time.






First of all, the establishment of rigid and constant sizes in relation to the width of offensive zones loses its significance, especially for operational formations. In reality, when planning an operation, a front (army) will be assigned zones, determined not on the basis of some constant size, but rather on the basis of such factors as the composition and condition of the troops, the availability of nuclear/missile weapons, the possibility of organizing not only simultaneous neutralization of the enemy by fire in the entire depth and by a strike against the enemy from the front, but also the effect on him of airborne troops and motorized rifle units and large units transported by air, and also (and this is very important!) by the necessity to support an extensive maneuver of troops in the course of an offensive both for the delivery of simultaneous and successive strikes against the enemy from the most advantageous axes as well as for protection from his nuclear weapons.

From this, it is obvious that the principle of planning an army offensive operation is a zone 50 to 70 km wide with a breakthrough of the enemy's defense on a front of 25 to 30 km is outmoded. If this principle is examined carefully, it will be found to hide nothing more than an indirect requirement for the necessity, even now, to concentrate a large number of men and equipment on a sufficiently limited area (even if for only a brief span of time), i.e., as previously, to accomplish the tasks of breaking through the enemy's defense by an avalanche of troops and not by the power of modern fire and maneuver.

It appears to us that at the present time an army can, right from the beginning of an offensive, conduct it successfully in its entire zone or even in a significantly wider one than indicated above, including an offensive against a prepared enemy defense.

It is all the more possible that the basic methods of its operations will be mutually coordinated, in space and time, maneuvering operations of its individual large units, which come into direct contact with each other only in cases when the efforts of several large units are required against some particular enemy grouping. Under these conditions, moreover, even the large units of an army may often have to operate as individual units in wide zones. Consequently, in planning an operation, the offensive zone of an army should be such as to permit conduct of maneuvering operations both at the beginning of the operation and during its development and to provide a capability to concentrate the strength of the strike by means of the reserves dispersed in depth. Apparently, a zone of 100 to 150 km, in the

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absence of a solid front, will ensure such operations to the highest degree to the troops of an army, particularly under conditions of considerable radioactive contamination of the terrain, which will better assist the fulfilment of assigned missions, and will undoubtedly lower the possibility of their destruction by the enemy's nuclear/missile weapons.

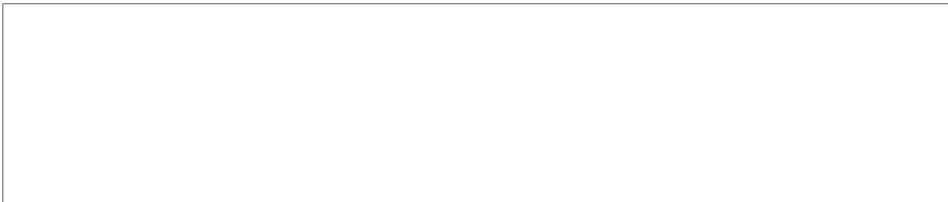
The necessity for maximum exploitation of the capabilities of nuclear/missile weapons for the speediest shifting of the efforts of a front's (army's) troops into the depth of the enemy's defense aimed at his final destruction and the seizure of the enemy's means of using nuclear ammunition and his missile weapon bases, engenders a legitimate desire to sharply increase the rates of offensive, which is now proposed to be 80 to 100 km per 24-hour period.

In connection with such a presentation of the problem of offensive tempos, we think that 80 to 100 km can be only an average daily rate with the presence of completely favorable conditions of the development of the operation.

Daily troop movement of 80 to 100 km can take place only with the absence of any enemy activity and, obviously, this cannot be counted on for the course of the entire operation; this is confirmed by past combat experience and by the experience of all exercises.

High offensive tempos and inevitable losses will, naturally, demand a high degree of strain on the troops and consequently the timely relief of large units of the first echelon, who have borne considerable losses and have lost their combat effectiveness as a result of the enemy's nuclear strikes. This very factor must be carefully appraised in order to correctly plan the conduct of operations at high but realistic rates, determined in light of the concretely developing situation. From this it appears that in each specific case, depending on the goals of the operation and the capabilities of the nuclear/missile weapons at hand, the indicated rates can vacillate to one side or the other.

Further, to the extent that as a result of the use of nuclear/missile weapons by both sides considerable areas of the terrain will be transformed into solid radioactive fields and because of which the engagement will break up into individual centers of combat over a



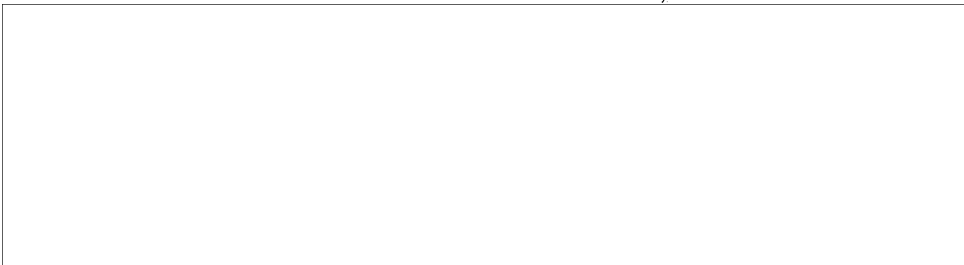
wide expanse, it must be assumed that the planned movement of ground troops will not take place as was done during the years of the past war. For example, an operation can begin with the simultaneous use of nuclear/missile weapons and of ground troops over the entire depth of the enemy's operational formation and will conclude as soon as the surviving centers of resistance have been destroyed, and the enemy's potential for undertaking any serious countermeasures to regain its lost position or to reestablish equality in forces on a given axis has been paralyzed.

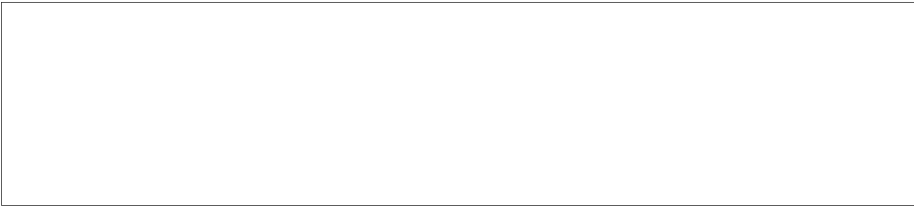
With this method of conducting an operation, the degree of fulfilment of the assigned missions must be provided for in the plan of operation not by the number of kilometers covered by ground troops but by the possibility of seizing as much of the enemy's depth as possible through active combat operations including airborne landings, in order to paralyze his freedom over significant expanses and to bring to naught his efforts to continue resistance. Under such conditions, the most important thing is to calculate correctly the time necessary for a particular front or army grouping to conclude the destruction of the enemy in individual areas of resistance.

Of considerable importance in planning an offensive operation is its depth, which also cannot be of constant magnitude and which depends on the goals of the operation, the scale of use of nuclear/missile weapons, and the distance from the enemy's key operational-strategic objectives, which the front (army) must seize. In the category of these objectives which have a decisive influence in the determination of the depth of the operation and consequently the depth and content of the front's (army's) missions, the enemy's political-administrative and economic centers, important supply junctions, and the disposition areas of the enemy's bases of nuclear/missile weapons should be included.

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The factors which in the past influenced the planning of the rates, the depth, and the duration of operations, such, for example, as the need for a front (army) to use force against the enemy successively depending on the means of destruction on hand for this goal, the depth of its operational formation, the possibility of a lag in airfield basing of aviation, of artillery, and a number of other things, which, if they must be considered at the present time cannot be determining because the capabilities of nuclear/missile weapons are actually limitless and, therefore, conditions for significantly speedier destruction of enemy groupings and the seizure of his territories are created.





At the present time, as is known, it is customary to plan offensive operations by missions, in which all intermediate missions composing the substance of the immediate and subsequent missions of a front are included.

Thus, in planning for the execution of a front's immediate mission, the subsequent execution of the following intermediate missions is usually envisaged: the breakthrough of the tactical depth of the enemy's defense and the destruction of his nearest reserves, the seizure of the army zone and of the intermediate zones, the encirclement and destruction of the enemy by the forces of the front or, in coordination with adjacent units, the forcing of water obstacles, etc.

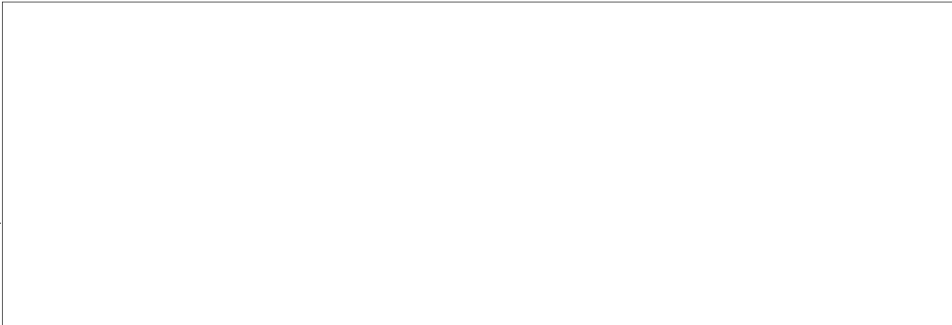
This type of mission assignment is connected in principle with methodical operations of the troops with their relatively steady movement on a solid front, from one line to another.


Moreover, modern conditions, operations of the troops of a front will be completely different and will not resemble the operations of the period of the past war, since both an offensive and defensive will be conducted on different principles.

The shifting of troops to an offensive will be effected, as a rule, from areas removed from the line where both sides are in direct contact; broad maneuver must be incorporated in the methods of troop operation, based on a combination of swift movement in columns with operations in precombat and combat formations along separate axes with subsequent conduct of individual engagements and battles in individual areas on a large expanse. Moreover, on some axes groupings of troops will advance swiftly, on others they will conduct meeting battles and engagements, temporarily withdraw, circumvent vast zones of radioactive contamination, changing the direction of advance or wait for a time.

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Deep mutual breaking in by troops will become a normal phenomenon. Loss of direct contact of advancing and defending troops will take place frequently. An airborne landing may at times be the only possible way for the speedy fulfilment of the goals of the operation because (2 to 4 words missing) mass nuclear/missile strikes, whole expanses may become inaccessible for operations from the front of troops for an extended period of time.





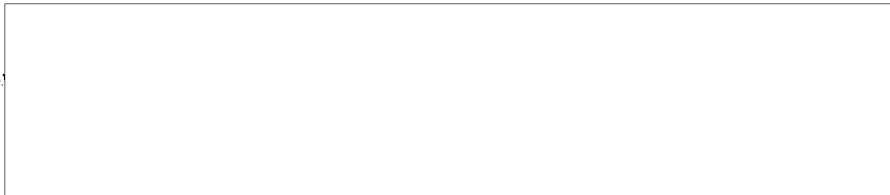
Armies of a front will advance, exposing themselves to enemy nuclear strikes, encountering the fierce opposition of his individual mobile groupings in separate areas, with which it will be necessary to wage heavy battles and engagements, and then to swiftly advance at rates close to those of marches, in order to seize the more deeply deployed objectives or to destroy the enemy groupings which are covering them.

As a result of the nature of combat operations by troops of a front, the rates of advance of the armies operating in the first echelon, and of the divisions which are part of the complement of the armies will be most uneven. Therefore, under conditions when the enemy's defense has lost its clearly expressed positional nature, when the mobility of the troops has significantly increased, and combat operations in the absence of solid fronts have become exceptionally maneuverable, by which both sides, in the course of executing combat operations will strive to deliver powerful deep strikes in order to break through into the depth of the territory along separate axes to seize the most important areas and objectives. The seizure of certain lines will not be a necessary condition for the complete defeat of the troops of the enemy whose groupings will also be maneuvering on the battlefield.

The assignment of missions by lines binds the maneuver capabilities not only of tank but also of combined-arms armies and paralyzes the commanders' initiative in their choice of the method of operations and the direction of a strike when deciding on missions for the destruction of the enemy.

One should also keep in mind that the basic fire strike force are nuclear/missile weapons on whose destructive power the success of the operation depends in the final analysis, but these weapons, as is known, are not permanently located in some limited area. They are dispersed in the depth and along the front, practically throughout the entire zone of the defender.

With movement of our troops, the bases of the enemy's nuclear/missile weapons will be changing all the time, therefore, the arrival of troops of the front (army) at some given line still does not ensure the mission of routing the enemy.



On the basis of the above, we come to the conclusion that the content and character of their assignment to the troops must be changed and brought into accord with the new methods of combat operations of troops.


The missions of a front (army) must be assigned so that their content does not bind the commander to the seizure and holding of certain lines on a solid front, but so as to have their fulfillment lead to the achievement of a perfectly definite operational or operational-strategic result.


In this, the main attention of the commander and staff should be aimed, above all, at the destruction (neutralization) of the enemy's nuclear/missile weapons, on the destruction of his basic groupings and the seizure of individual areas having important significance for the further development of the operation.

For example, the most immediate mission of a front in the initial period of a war can be the destruction (neutralization) of the enemy's nuclear/missile weapons along the entire depth of his operational formation, the route of the first operational echelon of the opposing grouping by gaining the main routes of approach of the major enemy reserves, and prevention of their inflow and unification for a strike against the troops of the front.

A subsequent mission of a front can consist of the destruction of the enemy's nuclear/missile weapons that have remained intact or have newly appeared, the destruction of deep reserves, the seizure of the primary areas of his missile bases, political-administrative or economic centers, and also the disruption of mobilization measures in a particular area of the country.

However, in these questions also, we must decisively reject our accepted practice of strict centralization and detailing of missions. The experience of war shows that the degree of detailing in assigning missions to troops depended, in every case, on the scale and the designated purpose of formation and large units, on the specific conditions of the situation and the nature of the combat activity of the troops. In this, great independence in operations was permitted at the operational level and to a lesser extent at the tactical. During the war, there was also a very clear expression of





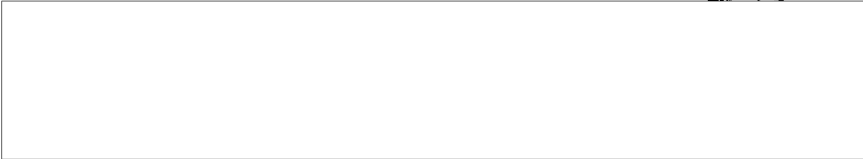
the tendency toward strict centralization of control in the preparation for an operation and combat and a relatively smaller degree of centralization in the process of their conduct. At all levels, centralization of control by the senior commanders also took place with regard to the utilization of fire and strike means.

However, in the course of the past war it had already become evident that strict centralization of control is applicable in those forms of combat operations where the troops lack a capability for an extensive maneuver, for example, during a breakthrough of a prepared positional defense and also in instances when the qualities of the troops are not adequate for maneuvering. But as soon as conditions were created for an extensive maneuver of forces and weapons, the necessity immediately arose to switch from strict centralization to granting subordinates more initiative and independence in accordance with the specific situation within the framework of the general operational concept.

Under the conditions of highly dynamic combat operations and abrupt changes in the situation, it would hardly be correct to centralize the control of troops right up to the point of indicating to large units and units the methods for fulfilling their combat missions, as sometimes happened during the past war. The increased combat capabilities of troops, the nature of a modern battle and operation now urgently require granting subordinates greater independence and the opportunity to manifest initiative in operations in all instances.

Of course, the degree of centralization of control, even under new conditions will depend on the specific situation which has taken shape, the nature of the combat operations, and the preparedness of command cadres and staffs at all levels of the military organism.

Under certain situational conditions, the senior commander, in addition to assigning missions to subordinate troops and allocating to them the means of reinforcement, can define the method by which the assigned missions are to be fulfilled, under others, he can apportion to subordinate troops the necessary means for reinforcement and indicate combat missions without predetermination of the methods of fulfilling them and the sequence of the use of forces and weapons, granting this right to the subordinate commanders.

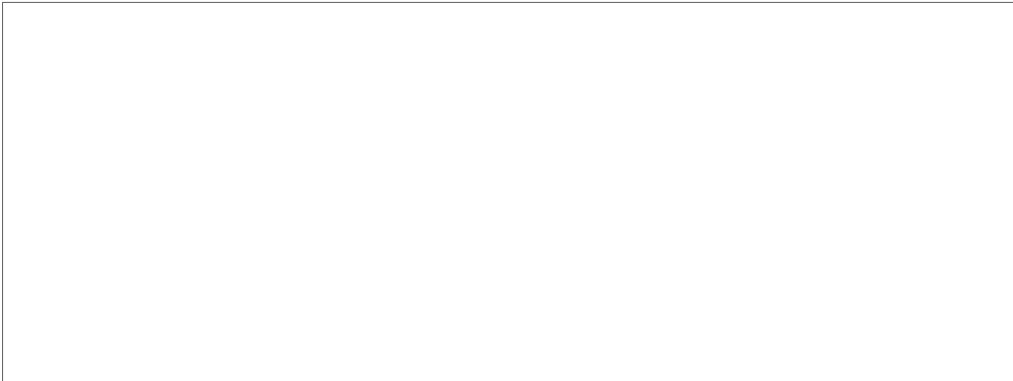


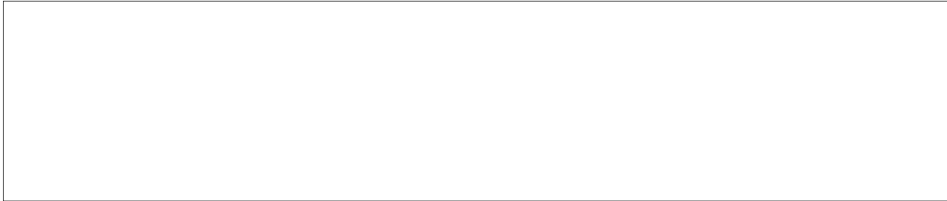
However, the general trend in the development, characteristic of troop control under modern conditions, must lead to subordinate commanders and staffs using greater freedom and independence than was the case, for example, in World War II.

The circumstance, that a tendency has been clearly noted to change the combat composition of the operational formations of the front and armies, in the direction of a quantitative reduction also has very great significance for the planning of an operation.

In the past, the basic criterion determining the troop composition of a front and an army for the successful execution of a major offensive operation, as is known, was the necessity to create on the main axis, one and a half, double or sometimes even triple superiority over the enemy in forces and weapons. Therefore, it was completely natural to have the desire to achieve such superiority by means of a maximum increase in the combat composition of formation for the execution of not only the initial, most difficult missions of an operation, but also those in the course of its development. In this way, the strength of front and army formations was determined by the number of large units, and also by the capability of the weapons of destruction, chiefly of artillery and aviation to whose level of development the methods of combat operations corresponded. These methods, although they were basically maneuvering and fast moving, were developed in complex situational conditions, and always required for their initiation and development, the availability of compact groupings of troops and fire, coordination and close lateral contact between them and their separate elements. This is why army and front formations included in their composition a large number of combined-arms large units, not counting the units and large units of arms of troops and special troops. It is known, that the combat composition of a front reached 35 to 40 large units and of an army up to 12 or more large units.

It is perfectly obvious that in view of the existence of nuclear/missile weapons and their limited capabilities, front and army formations can no longer have their former composition in motorized rifle and tank divisions. Under modern conditions, the criterion of the ability of a front and an army to execute its assigned missions is determined by their capabilities to deliver crushing strikes with nuclear weapons and other fire weapons.






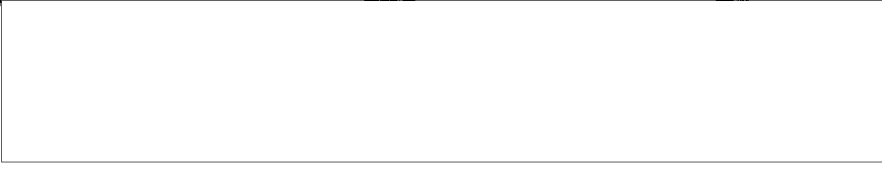
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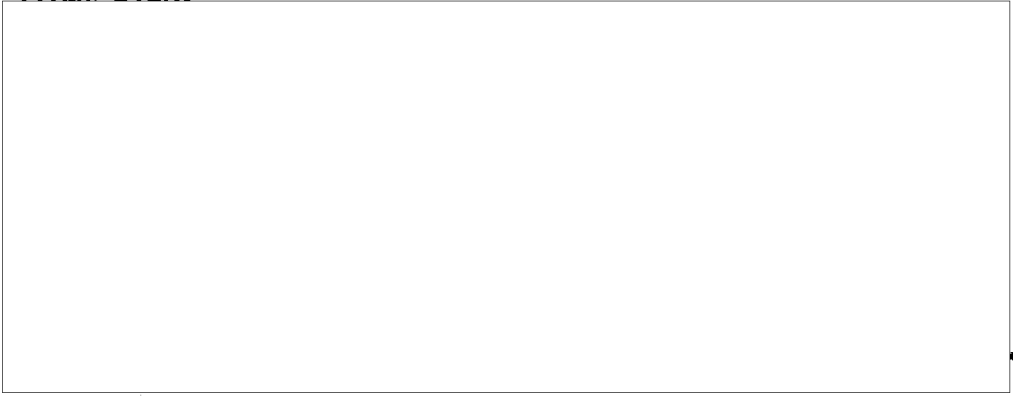
Considering the above-mentioned conditions in total, the composition of a front for the West European theater of military operations can be defined as 15 to 20 motorized rifle and tank large units, 4 to 6 missile large units and a number of special units.


With the indicated number of large units in a front, the operational density will be from 25 to 35 km for a division (when conducting an operation in a zone of up to 500 km), i.e., 2.5 to 3.5 times larger than was accepted in accordance with the experiences of the past war.

In view of this possible composition of a front, the problem arises as to the number of armies in a front and the number of divisions in an army. We consider that it is inadvisable for a front to have, as formerly, less than three or more than five armies. Concerning an army, its composition should also include no more than 5 divisions plus a missile large unit and special units. This composition, in comparison with 7 divisions, is sufficiently capable of strikes and is more flexible from the point of view of control, does not lead to unnecessary supersaturation of the operational formation with forces and weapons and, consequently, to a possible increase in losses from enemy nuclear strikes. Hence, the need for army corps finally passes away to the degree that an army and a corps cease to be in any way substantially different from one another in their composition. With such limited composition of the armies, army corps could be used in a front in their stead but this step is hardly advisable if only for the reason that in every respect, the control of an army is in its capabilities, undoubtedly a more dependable and secure operational organ for control of troops under modern conditions, when great military erudition is required from a command element on this scale.

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Planning the use of nuclear/missile weapons in an operation is the most important and definitive part of the planning of the entire operation. In attributing great significance to this principle, it is impossible, in our view, not to turn attention to a sometimes not thoroughly correct understanding of the role of the missile troops of a front. In concrete terms, we are speaking of certain opinions according to which the initiation of an offensive by front troops should be preceded by a missile operation conducted by these troops, i.e., in other words, an attempt is being made to mechanically extend the principles for conducting missile operations in a strategic plan to the front also.





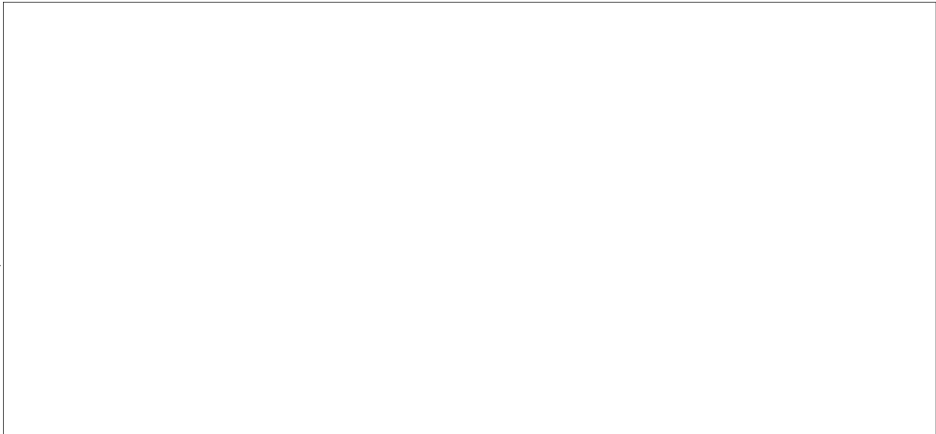
With such an approach to this problem, the fact is overlooked that missile large units and units are the main fire and strike force of the ground troops and are intended not only for combat with enemy nuclear weapons which, as is known, constitutes one of the basic tasks of any missile operation, but for the support of troop combat operations as a whole. For this reason, they cannot, in principle, be planned separately from the utilization of motorized rifle and tank troops, aviation, tube artillery, and other combat weapons of the armies and front as a whole. It is, therefore, all the more important to emphasize the fact that the relative weight of conventional weapons of destruction has sharply decreased at this time.


The missile troops of a front are varied in their combat characteristics and are found at various troop levels. It follows from this, that every type of missile has its definite operational-tactical designation and every echelon of command to which they are subordinate assigns them tasks in the required detail.

Thus, we believe, that striving to conduct missile operations at the level of the front, with the means organizationally included in the composition of the various combined arms elements of the front, has no basis.

Nevertheless, measures for the timely and qualitative planning of the use of nuclear/missile weapons in an operation are complex, many-sided, and therefore require a very correct approach to the delimitation of functions between the commander and staff of the front on the one hand, and the commander and the staff of the missile ^{50X1-HUM} and the air force (VVS) of the front on the other.

However, it must be said that in problems of control of missile large units and units in a front and in an army, various extreme points of view are expressed at times. Some believe that the entire control, including the issuance of commands, must be executed by the commander of troops of the front (army) through the staff of the front (army) which is directly connected with the missile large units and units, others believe it to be advisable to transfer almost all questions of control to the commander of missile troops and artillery of the front (army), leaving to the commander of troops of the front (army) the obligation, in essence, to review and approve the proposals of the commander of missile troops and artillery of the front (army).





These extreme points of view are clearly not acceptable and it therefore appears more correct that only the commander of troops of the front with his staff be able to take it upon himself to decide the basic fundamental problems in the utilization of nuclear weapons. It is his prerogative alone to determine the targets for nuclear weapons, the time and sequence of the utilization by the missile troops and aviation, the expenditure of nuclear warheads in an operation, and distribution of them among the armies and missile large units (units) of front subordination.

Of very great significance is the planning of combat with the enemy's weapons of nuclear attack by all possible means (not only with nuclear weapons, as is sometimes done), as well as the organization of control of the means of using nuclear weapons in light of the concrete conditions of the impending operation. In this, the front and army must very carefully work out the problems of ensuring massed fire of several missile large units and units of various subordination for the execution of the most important tasks in the course of the operation.


The staff of the front conducts the operational planning for the use of nuclear weapons, organizes and ensures control of the means of using them through the commanders and staffs of the missile troops and the VVS.

Specifically, the staff of the front (army) must organize reconnaissance of all kinds in support of the utilization of nuclear weapons, organize the collection and analysis of intelligence data, organize communications for control of the means of utilizing nuclear weapons, organize engineer support for the deployment and maneuver of the missile troops, and also organize security and defense of the missile troops and organs of the missile rear services in areas of disposition and during transfers.

At the same time, direct control of the missile large units and units of the front (army) and especially of their fire, must naturally be the prerogative of the commander of the missile troops and artillery.

On the basis of all these considerations, the following sequence of work can be recommended.

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The commander of troops of the front (army) determines the enemy grouping to be destroyed by nuclear warheads and the most important objectives to be destroyed, the expenditure of nuclear warheads for the missile troops and aviation, the types of nuclear bursts, the order and the time of delivering the nuclear strikes.

The operational directorate of the staff of the front (army), together with the staffs of the artillery and the air army (the representative of the supporting aviation) works out the specific problems of nuclear preparation and nuclear support of the offensive, distributes the objectives for destruction between the missile troops and aviation, determines the yield of the nuclear charge, the type and the height of the burst for the destruction of each objective, the safe distance of our troops from the ground zeros (centers) of the nuclear bursts, evaluates the expected results of the nuclear strikes and the possible resultant radiation situation, determines the large units (units) of missile troops and aviation to be used to deliver strikes and other matters resulting from the specific situation.

After confirmation of the problems which have been worked out by the commander of troops of the front (army), the transmission of fire missions to those who will execute them and the entire work of fulfilling them is organized by the commanders of the missile troops and of the air army personally and through their staffs.

Such a work sequence speeds the planning and transmission of decisions to the troops, and the combined-arms staff and the staffs of arms of troops are freed of the necessity to request and prepare necessary memoranda and considerations for the preparation of nuclear strikes.

The problems of utilizing nuclear/missile weapons must be the basis of the plan of the operation. It must reflect: the objectives to be destroyed, the time and sequence of the delivery of strikes, the expenditure of nuclear warheads with an indication of their yields, the types and heights of bursts and also the coordinates of their ground zeros for each objective, safe distance for troops and the time periods of their readiness, and also a tentative calculation of the use of nuclear warheads in the course of the entire operation. Only after deciding all these problems do the operations of the remaining forces and weapons of the front, the combined-arms formations and large units, the conventional field artillery, the aviation, and other arms of troops and special troops, become reflected in the plan of the operation.

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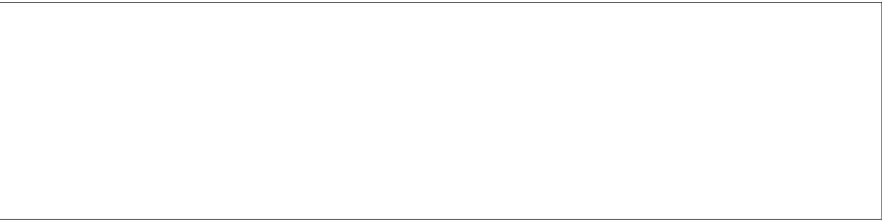
It is completely obvious, that there is no need whatsoever to draw up a special plan for the use of nuclear/missile weapons as an attachment to the general plan for an operation. All questions of the organization and conduct of an offensive operation are covered by a single plan of the operation. This is a direct result of the leading role of nuclear/missile weapons in accomplishing the goals and missions of an operation.

Weakening the nuclear strength of an opposing grouping of the enemy and depriving him of his capability to use nuclear weapons is one of the most important tasks, whose correct solution ensures the success of the offensive operation as a whole. It is completely obvious, that planning the fulfilment of the tasks of achieving and maintaining nuclear superiority over the enemy must be carried out within the framework of the nuclear preparation and support of the offensive of the troops of the front.

In this connection, the following should be mentioned. At the present time, we employ such concepts as "fire preparation for an offensive", "nuclear preparation for an offensive", while at the same time such concepts as "artillery and aviation preparation for an offensive" continue to exist. A correct clarification of these concepts, it seems to us, is of a fundamental significance in planning the utilization of missile troops and nuclear/missile weapons. But are all these concepts valid and do not some contradictions exist in this problem?

It seems to us that they all have a quite definite content. Fire preparation for an offensive is a somewhat general collective concept and includes fire strikes by nuclear/missile weapons, as well as by aviation and artillery. Therefore, a direct result of this is that component parts of the fire preparation for an offensive are nuclear, artillery, and aviation preparation.

Fire preparation must be examined and planned as a comparatively brief, powerful, massed, and sudden strike by nuclear/missile weapons, aviation and artillery against the most important objectives of the operational formation of the enemy's troops to a depth required by the specific conditions of the situation.



One of the most essential problems in planning nuclear preparation and fire preparation as a whole for an offensive is the ability to accomplish it in the most limited periods of time and at the same time to ensure the delivery of a powerful fire strike against the most important objectives of the enemy. The mass utilization of nuclear weapons in short periods of time is the only way to achieve decisive destruction of the fire power of an opposing enemy grouping, destruction of his main nuclear/missile and aviation means, and also disruption of the control of troops and the disorganization of work of the rear services.

As to nuclear support of an offensive, depending upon the expected nature of the combat operations of the troops, it can be planned to include the delivery of individual, group, and mass nuclear strikes. These strikes must ensure the fire support for the advancing troops in the most vital and intensive (3 to 5 words missing) for the use of nuclear weapons during the days of the operation, obviously, are possible only tentatively during the period when the troops are fulfilling their immediate tasks. Detailed planning of nuclear support against targets and objectives to be destroyed, can apparently be executed only for 1 or 2 days of the combat operations.


Briefly summarizing the thoughts expressed above concerning the influence of new factors on the planning of a modern offensive operation, it is not difficult to reach the conclusion that little remains of former concepts, including those drawn from the experience of World War II. The time has come for a much more discriminating approach to the use of this experience under new conditions which would sweep aside everything which to any degree hinders the further evolution of our views, which should not lag behind the development of the modern weapons of armed combat.

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Taking advantage of the opportunity presented to share thoughts on the pages of this Collection, the publication of which must be warmly greeted, I should like to touch very briefly on an abnormal situation which has been created in connection with the working out of the operational instructions necessary for the Armed Forces.

The fact is that, such instructions, as is known, have not yet appeared since the conclusion of World War II, if we disregard the



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several published drafts which were not approved even though they were widely used in their time during the training of higher staffs. Such a situation does not help to bring about unity of views and does not provide guidance for long-range elaboration of theories in particular directions.

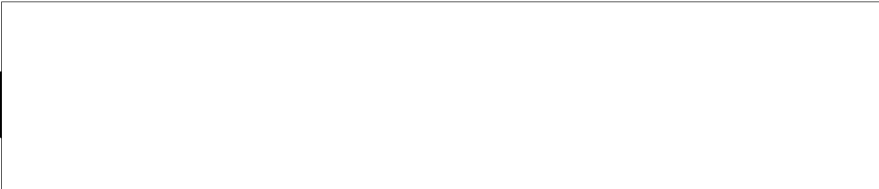
It is not possible to agree with the point of view which gives preference to so called works which are not intended to give strictly defined recommendations and, consequently, are not to be categorized as either regulations or instructions.

A situation such as this evokes serious concern and in the study particularly of sectors of applied military theory, it leads to the necessity for orienting oneself primarily to analyses of the major measures of operational training, carried out by the types of Armed Forces and the General Staff which, as is known, most clearly elucidate the specifics of a given measure. In addition, the lack of official instructions also gives rise to the situation that the level of preparation and knowledge of generals and officers always depends upon the personal views of superior commanders on any particular question. And since these commanders come and go, it is perfectly obvious what consequences this has.

In passing, it should be noted that in the work published by the General Staff called "Bases of Modern Operations", it is difficult to grasp anything different in the nature of the exposition of problems from what was accepted as the content of previously proposed instructions. There are fewer practical recommendations, but it is questionable whether this is really good. And does this better support the training of young cadres who are moving up and have no combat experience in commanding formations and in serving in higher staffs?

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It seems that it would be far more correct to decide in favor of working out those instructions necessary for training the command personnel of the Armed Forces in the conduct of front and army operations, and as a matter of fact, those and others as well. At present, it is intended that the instructions for conducting army operations will be worked out separately from and parallel to the work "Bases of Modern Operations" without any coordination between them, one in the General Staff and the other in the Main Staff of the Ground Troops.



The working out of operational instructions must be organized so that it does not become a substitute for the working out of theoretical works in development of and on the basis of these instructions. Therefore, it seems to us, this practice in working out regulations should be judged as an extraordinary inflation of their scope by means of superfluous detail and repetition. That this is very widespread with us can be easily confirmed by looking at previously worked out drafts of similar instructions and even of other works.

Moreover, it is very important to clarify published instructions in a timely manner. Under present conditions, which are unprecedented in rates of development and perfection of combat equipment, one can never be completely sure that the problems have been finally worked out. Obviously, many of them will, to one degree or another but at different times have to be clarified to the extent of the study and revelation of new factors. It is asked, how can this be best done? To republish the instructions yearly makes no sense but nevertheless, every year changes concerning one problem or another become solidified and they must reach the proper people in a timely manner. Failure to do this will result in the fact that many outdated situations in the above-mentioned work of the General Staff will continue to exist along with other recommendations that have been elaborated later.

In order to correct this situation, yearly directives should be issued on operational training, not only stating shortcomings and assigning general tasks for this training, but primarily clarifying those problems and recommendations in previously published instructions which require changes and supplements. In this instance, the significance and authority of these directives will increase immeasurably. As for the republication of instructions, this should be done after a few years, depending on the necessity.

Experience in working out instructions and regulations shows that it is clearly inadvisable to conduct parallel elaboration of them, since this gives rise to the necessity for numerous and frequently fruitless coordination, hampers to a great degree the selection of author groups, and dissipates efforts. It is perfectly obvious that this work could be fulfilled in a significantly more productive and qualitative manner and even in a shorter time of there was a prearranged plan for working out operational instructions and issuing them before the field regulations, and not vice-versa, as is still the case today.