

2 March 1970

MEMORANDUM

Design, Development, Production, and  
Deployment of the Soviet T-62

1. The Soviet T-62 medium tank was developed in the late 1950's as a response to the then latest NATO tank, the US M-60. The T-62 reflects standard Soviet design practices of the post World War II period and does not depart significantly from previous models. The T-62 is similar to the other contemporary Soviet medium tanks--T-54 and T-55--in armor, protection, mobility, performance and construction, differing principally in its heavier gun.

2. Little is known of the development of the T-62, which evidently entered production in 1961. Since the T-62 is not a radical departure from preceding designs and uses many components from the T-54 and T-55, other Soviet experience suggests that it probably took only about 2-4 years to develop, compared to at least six years for a totally new model.

3. The T-62 is believed to be produced at only one of the three operating Soviet tank plants, the other two producing the T-55 medium tank. Current production is probably about 1,000 per year, a level reached in 1963. It is estimated that some 7,500 T-62s were produced by the end of 1969, or about 20 percent of the total Soviet tank inventory.

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4. Estimated annual production is as follows:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Annual Production</u>	<u>Cumulative Production</u>
1961	200	200
1962	600	800
1963	950	1750
1964	950	2700
1965	950	3650
1966	950	4600
1967	950	5550
1968	950	6500
1969	950	7450

5. The Soviets probably will continue to produce the T-62, or a slightly modified version, at least through the mid-1970s. The T-55 is likely to be phased out of production soon with full productive capacity devoted to the T-62. By 1979, the Soviet tank inventory should consist of roughly two-thirds T-62s and one-third T-54s or T-55s.

6. The T-62 originally appeared to have the mission of backing up the more common T-54 and T-55 Soviet battle tanks--principally by providing anti-tank support. Early statements by Soviet authorities seemed to support this role, and the Soviets first introduced only one regiment (90 tanks) of T-62s per tank division. However, by 1966, T-62s were observed in the motorized rifle divisions, and by 1968 at least two Soviet tank divisions were fully equipped with T-62s. The increased deployment probably indicates that the Soviets now see the T-62 as a standard battle tank, not limited to a special role.

7. Attached is a summary of T-62 characteristics.

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T-62 MEDIUM TANK

Main armament	115 mm smoothbore gun
Weight	40.2 tons
Speed	30 mph
Cruising range	216 miles
Crew	4

Developed from T-55. Distinguishable from T-54/55 series by spacing of road wheels, larger, more circular turret, longer hull, and 115 mm smoothbore gun with bore evacuator mounted in middle of tube. The 115 mm smoothbore gun has an almost 50 percent greater muzzle velocity than the 100 mm rifled gun of the T-54 and T-55 with a comparable increase in anti-armor effectiveness. The muzzle velocity is roughly equivalent to that of the 105 mm gun on the US M-60.

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