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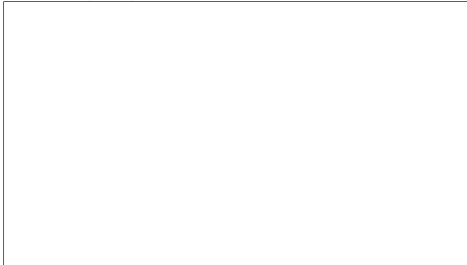
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ARMED FORCES OF THE MINISTRY OF STATE SECURITY USSR



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This report includes information on the types, classification, subordination, recruiting, training, and assignment of armed forces of the Ministry of State Security USSR.

The following is a general, elementary discussion of the armed forces of the MGB USSR (Ministry of State Security USSR).

In studying this material, it is to be kept in mind that changes might have occurred over the past few months, information which is not presently at the writer's disposal. Aside from that, the following will provide enough information on the subject, and, in the absence of other material, should provide for adequate orientation purposes.



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I. TYPES, CLASSIFICATION, AND SUBORDINATION

The armed forces of the USSR are not limited to the regular Soviet Army. The USSR maintains an entire army consisting of the so-called MGB troops, militia of the MGB, and various militarized armed organizations, in addition to regular forces. These units are for protecting the existing Soviet structure, maintaining internal order within the country, defending Soviet borders,

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protecting various important objectives, isolating the huge number of prisoners, and carrying out special mass punitive measures. Even in peacetime, these military and militarized units encompass millions of persons; in wartime, their membership is considerably increased.

All of the existing armed organizations, except for the Soviet armed forces, whether subordinate organizationally to the MGB or under its operational subordination, regardless of the government department to which they belong, can be divided into three types: regular troops of the MGB, militia of the MGB, and armed guard of the various government departments.

Regular troops of the MGB are under the organizational subordination of the GUPVO (Main Administration of Border and Internal Defense) of the MGB USSR, headed by a Deputy Minister of State Security USSR. Regular troops of the MGB may be divided into internal troops and border troops.

MGB internal troops are composed of OSNAZ (Special Assignment) troops; troops for the protection of important objectives and installations (guard troops); and escort troops.

Each of the above has its own administration, supervisory organization, staff, supply and training organization, and assignment.

The organizational structure and armament of the various types of MGB troops corresponds to the purposes of each and are not standardized.

MGB border troops also have various functions and assignments. Border troops consist of: troops which are engaged directly in protecting the borders of the USSR; border reserve troops; and troops undergoing training at border military-educational institutions.

The organization and armament of each of the above types are dependent upon their functions.

All of the above types are among the so-called regular troops, which also include troops recruited through periodic drafts of the population which undergo regular training as a result of the existing law on compulsory military service for citizens of the USSR.

Each of these troops has its own distinctive uniform coloring, exhibited on service cap, shoulder straps, and collar tabs. Blue and red are the colors for internal troops; dark blue and green are for border troops.

It is to be noted that during the Soviet era, MGB troops have changed their name, organization, and subordination a number of times with the repeated reorganizations of the central organs of State Security now known as the MGB USSR.

Thus, during the period 1917 - 1922, under VChK (All-Russian Extraordinary Commission for Combating Counterrevolution, Banditry, Espionage, Speculation, and Sabotage), these troops were known as ChON, or units of special assignment. Later, they were called VChKR, or [armed guard of internal defense troops]. During the period 1922 - 1933, through the reorganization of VChK, they became known as OGPU troops, or troops of the Unified State Political Administration. From 1933 to 1945, they were known as NKVD troops. With the reorganization of NKVD and its conversion into a ministry, which resulted in the removal of the Administration of State Security and its conversion into a separate ministry, the troops became known as troops of the MVD USSR. In 1950, troops of the MVD and GUPVO were transferred to the MGB, receiving the name, troops of the MGB USSR.

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There are two types of subordination among MJB troops: regular, in which they are under the supervision of their immediate superior officers, and operational.

Operational subordination, according to the regulations for internal and border troops, is defined in the following manner: The operational head of MGB troops shall be the head of the MGB organization in charge of the area where such troops are located. When MGB troops are used operationally, units and sections are placed under the command of operational agents of organs of the MGB, who are specially appointed senior operational heads for the duration of the operation. In those cases, operational agents attached to units or sections become the units' operational heads for a given period of time.

In an organizational sense, MGB troops are subordinate to their own center, that is, GUPVO MGB USSR, by-passing any subordination, in the organizational sense, to republic Ministries of State Security.

MGB troops are not subordinate to the Soviet Army command.

The militia of the MGB is subordinate to GUM (Main Administration of Militia) of the MGB and to the Administrations of Militia under the republic Ministries of State Security.

The head of GUM is a Deputy Minister of State Security USSR, while the heads of Administrations of Soviet Militia in the union republics are Deputy Ministers of State Security of these republics.

On the lower levels, the militia organization corresponds to the administrative divisions of the USSR; for example, oblast militia administrations, rayon sections of the militia, etc.

The militia of the MGB is not a regular military organization, but is considered to be a police force. It is staffed on a volunteer basis, with applicants being carefully screened and their political reliability carefully checked. Persons in militia command capacities must serve a specified number of years, while rank-and-file members must sign statements agreeing to serve for not less than 2 years.

Both the militia of the MGB and regular MGB troops, despite their local sections and administrations, are subordinate operationally to heads of organs of the MGB in their locality.

The subordination and name of the militia has also changed since it was organized. Previously, it was never included within the organizational setup of VChK or OGPU, but was always under the NKVD, even after that commissariat's split into the MVD and MGB. Until 1945, it was called the Workers' and Peasants' Militia by analogy with the name Workers' and Peasants' Red Army. With the renaming of the army as the Soviet Army, the militia became known as the Soviet militia. The Administration of Soviet militia was also thus renamed in keeping with the trend. It was not until 1950 that the militia was taken from the MVD and placed under the MGB.

The militia has its own uniform, with blue and red trimmings.

There are armed militarized organizations under various governmental departments, the largest being the armed guard of the corrective labor camps, under GULAG (Main Administration of Corrective Labor Camps) MVD USSR, the armed guard of the GUMZ (Main Administration of Prisons) MVD USSR, and the armed guard of the Ministry of Transportation USSR.

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These militarized guards are kept under centralized supervision in relatively large organizational units, consisting of many tens of thousands of persons, while the size of armed prison guards is maintained at 4 percent of the total number of prisoners in Soviet camps. The armed guards are well armed with light weapons, including mounted machine guns. They are well organized and receive regular military training.

In addition to the militarized organizations, there are armed guards at all industrial enterprises and at factories, plants, mines at large Soviet institutions, ministries, etc. Subordination is not centralized in these militarized organizations and there is no general organizational structure. They are separate, with organization limited to the purpose served. Separately, the membership of each of them is insignificant, usually not more than several dozen, but such a multitude of them exists throughout the Soviet Union that their over-all membership reaches tens of thousands. They wear various types of uniforms, are semimilitarized, and are poorly armed, sometimes only with rifles or pistols. Their military training is poor and they are best placed in the category of armed watchmen.

It would seem that these armed guards should not be considered part of the armed forces of the MGB, even considering their rather large over-all membership. However, they are a component part of these armed forces because, despite their insignificant individual membership, they are under the direct surveillance and guidance of territorial organs of the MGB, in the form of special units and special divisions to be found in all Soviet institutions, enterprises, and industries. These special units and divisions constitute a secret type of MGB organ. All of these guards are under the operational subordination (but not organizational or administrative) of the head of the special section of the MGB. Territorial organs of the MGB exercise their control over these armed groups responsible for the internal defense of enterprises to a considerable extent through the planning and organization of operational measures.

All armed organizations used by all government departments for guard duty carry the shortened name of VOKhR (Armed Guard), and all of them, regardless of whatever department they are under, are under the operational subordination of MGB organs. If it can be said that these smaller militarized guards at enterprises are under the operational supervision of heads of special sections and units of those enterprises, the same could be said of the larger armed guards. For instance, VOKhR of the corrective labor camps is under the operational supervision of secret-agent sections, otherwise known as special sections of the MGB, which are to be found in all camps and which are under GULAG itself. Similarly, the VOKhR of the Ministry of Transportation USSR is under the operational subordination of the Main Transportation Administration of MGB USSR and its affiliates under all administrations of railroad, water, and air transport. VOKhR of GUMZ of the MVD USSR, which is in charge of prisons and labor colonies, is under the operational supervision of similar secret-agent divisions of the MGB at prisons, colonies, and also under GUMZ itself.

In addition to the armed militarized organizations, there are other un-armed militarized organizations which are also under the operational surveillance and control of MGB organs. The so-called Militarized Fire Defense of the MVD, headed by the Main Administration of Militarized Fire Defense, under the MVD USSR has similar administration in each of the MVD of the union republics, divisions under oblast MVD administrations, and fire inspectors under rayon MVD divisions.

The militarized fire defense receives elementary military training. It accepts citizens for not less than 2 years' service after a careful check of their political reliability.

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There are two types of fire-defense units: city fire-fighting units and fire-fighting units responsible for particularly important objectives. Particular care is exercised in recruiting persons for the latter units since these units serve particularly important and secret objectives.

II. RECRUITING, REGULAR TROOPS OF MGB USSR

Recruitment of regular troops of the MGB is carried out on the basis of the law on compulsory military service for citizens and the regular draft for the Soviet Army. However, in drafting its recruits, the MGB very carefully chooses the better elements in the draft contingent and makes a careful check of their political reliability.

Every year, long before the next age group is drafted, military commissars make a check, in their respective areas, of the draft contingent and its pre-draft military training. At the same time, MGB organs, through their special divisions and the military divisions of local executive committees, make a check on the political reliability of persons facing the draft, adding, going over, and checking personal data on each of the draftees.

The heads of Soviet enterprises, institutions, factories, plants, educational institutions, and the like, together with party, Komsomol, and trade union organizations, draw up a letter of reference for each draftee within their jurisdiction. Additional party and Komsomol references are written for party and Komsomol members. References for draftees from rural areas are made up by rural soviets and kolkhoz administrative boards.

Personal files on the entire draft contingent are begun at rayon military commissariats long before it is called up for service with the army. This is done for every person in the contingent regardless of future appointment.

The recruitment of MGB troops is carried on in the following manner.

The organization and mobilization section of GUPVO estimates the number of privates and noncommissioned officers who are about to complete their service and who are due for release. This check covers all types of MGB troops, both internal and border. In close liaison with corresponding administrations of the Ministry of the Armed Forces, GUPVO then submits to that ministry a figure on the number of draftees who should be sent to it and specifies the number to be sent to each border district and each internal troop unit.

On the basis of that request, the Ministry of Armed Forces then sends an order down to the headquarters of the military districts, which, in turn, hand it down to oblast military commissariats. From the oblast military commissariats, the order goes down to rayon military commissariats. The request for men is divided between oblasts and rayons on the basis of population, social groups, and "political quality." Thus, the oblast and rayon military commissariats know well beforehand what percentage of their draftees must be sent to join the MGB.

Where the quality and quantity of draftees has been determined beforehand, military commissariats, together with representatives of territorial organs of the MGB, make a preliminary selection "in absentia" of draftees who, in their opinion, might be sent to join the MGB. This category of draftees must meet the following requirements:

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1. They must be absolutely and unconditionally physically fit.
2. They must be irreproachable as far as their political reliability is concerned and neither they, their family, nor their relatives must be compromised in any way.
3. They must have at least a fourth-grade education.
4. They must be, preferably, either Komsomol members or party members (or candidates for membership) and, as far as social background is concerned, workers; the percent of party, Komsomol, and working-class members among MGB troops must be several times greater than that of the entire draft contingent.
5. They must have, if possible, a civilian specialty which might be put to use, such as radio operator, telephone operator, sailor, mechanic, driver, tractor operator, machinist, etc.

After the preliminary selection is completed, this category of draftees is again thoroughly checked well in advance of their draft by local MGB organs; this results in names being dropped from the list when facts appear which sometimes makes impossible an assignment to the MGB, despite even party or Komsomol membership. For this reason, the number of persons chosen for assignment to MGB troops at such preliminary selections is considerably greater than required by the order.

It is in this manner that the most reliable and best men among the draft contingent -- Soviet patriots, activists, those with a higher education, the physically fit, those with unblemished work and political references, those carefully checked by MGB organs -- are selected for the MGB.

On the eve of the draft, commissions are set up at rayon and city military commissariats. Draft commissions consist of representatives of the army (in some cases the navy also), MGB troops, local MGB organs, rayon party and Komsomol committees, and rayon trade union committees. Also on the commission is a doctor, who determines the physical fitness of those called in the draft. Usually, three or four medical specialists are members of the commission. As a rule, the chairman of the commission will be the rayon military commissar (Rayvoyenkom).

This commission takes up the case of each of the rayon's draftees, reviewing the file of each while interviewing the draftee. It is this commission which assigns draftees to an arm of the service and which makes the final selection for assignment to the MGB. Here again a considerable number of names are dropped.

After the draft commission's work is completed, the military commissariats assemble the draftees and send them to their assignments. Those persons assigned to the MGB receive special instructions by way of special orders. Persons assigned to border troops are sent to border districts, while those ordered to report to internal troops are sent directly to their units.

Upon their arrival in border districts, new recruits are assigned to reserve border regiments and battalions of the various arms of the service. Recruits assigned to internal troops of the MGB -- ChON, guard troops, and escort troops -- proceed directly to their units.

The noncommissioned officer staff of all types of MGB troops, both internal as well as border, is trained in special noncommissioned officer schools attached to regiments or divisions.

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In event of an increase in the number of MGB troops, or the formation of new units, the mobilization plan calls for drawing replacements from:

1. Persons subject to the military draft but on indefinite deferment, and from reserve border and internal troops of the MGB. A record of the reserve contingents of MGB troops is kept by military commissariats, but kept separately from those of the Soviet Army.

2. Regular units of the Soviet Army, chosen and assigned in advance to specific units of the MGB according to the mobilization plan.

Persons subject to the draft but on deferment, those in the reserve border and internal troops of the MGB, and persons on duty with the Soviet Army who, according to the mobilization plan, are scheduled for assignment to MGB units, are constantly checked. Should any compromising material appear, raising even the slightest doubt as to their political reliability, these persons are removed from the MGB reserves and transferred to the general reserves of the Soviet Army. Persons serving in the regular Soviet Army, but destined for the MGB under the mobilization plan, also undergo a constant check and, if adjudged unsuitable for service with the MGB, are transferred in the mobilization register to another organization.

The recruitment of officers for the MGB is carried out in various ways. Border troop officers are drawn from special border schools, while officers in the internal troops are taken from military schools which also train officers for the regular Soviet Army.

The term of service for enlisted, noncommissioned, and commissioned personnel of the MGB is the same as that for men of the Soviet Army.

According to the mobilization plan, the recruitment of additional officers for the MGB is the same as that for enlisted and noncommissioned personnel, i.e., from the reserve troops of the MGB or from units of the Soviet Army. It is to be noted that the MGB troops are maintained at a prescribed strength and that their number does not vary from peacetime to wartime; however, the mobilization plan calls for the formation of new units of MGB troops supplied with cadres from peacetime troops and with command and enlisted personnel added in accordance with the plan.

The personnel of internal and border troops of the MGB are considerably better equipped than Soviet Army personnel. MGB troop pay allowances are higher, troops are provided with a better quality of uniform, and receive better rations. Their barracks are also provided with better equipment than that of the Soviet Army.

In addition to a higher rate of pay, MGB officers receive a higher rate of pay both for longevity and for service in isolated areas. Thus, for instance, in the Soviet Army the pay increase for longevity cannot exceed 25 percent of base pay, while MGB officers receive 50 percent of their base pay on the basis of longevity.

MGB officers receive better equipment than Soviet Army officers, while MGB troops in general are in a particularly privileged position.

III. TRAINING OF REGULAR MGB TROOPS

Draftees joining border and internal troops of the MGB are enrolled as "young soldiers" by the units.

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After completion of the course of training for young soldiers, the new troops are gradually introduced into their military duties. At first they are entrusted with a secondary post involving few responsibilities. Then, later, new troops are placed on duty together with older soldiers.

All MGB troops, regardless of their functions, undergo four types of instruction and training.

1. Political Instruction

As in the Soviet Army, political instruction of the serviceman receives priority, with approximately 25 percent of instruction time devoted to political training. "A politically illiterate soldier is a gap in the army" is a maxim of the Tsk VKP(b). This has an important meaning in the training of soldiers and officers, particularly in the MGB. In political instruction, special attention is paid to instilling in the soldier a spirit of absolute devotion to party and government, and to the development within him of a political and Chekist vigilance. It is during political instruction that the serviceman is first acquainted with the forms and methods of hostile activity by enemies of the people and with foreign espionage.

2. General Military Training

MGB troops receive instruction in army regulations, materiel, and drill, in addition to technical, rifle, and physical training and other general military subjects, in keeping with the plan for training troops of the Soviet Army. The same holds true for special arms of the MGB, such as the artillery, tank, engineering, signal and other troops.

The scale of general military training for MGB troops depends upon the type involved. For example, OSNAZ troops receive full-scale training in all types of weapons, similar to Soviet Army training, including training for actions of a scale which might involve large units. Escort and guard troops, because of their limited mission, receive training on a more limited scale, particularly in tactics, with training limited to the battalion and regimental level.

3. Operational and Tactical Training

This type of training, which is characteristic of the training given MGB troops, calls for instruction and training of troops for action under specific conditions in localities and populated areas in keeping with their combat mission, such as suppression of insurrections, mutinies, disorders, etc. As a consequence, OSNAZ and border troops are given full-scale operational and tactical training. Similar training, but on a smaller scale, is given guard and escort troops, with their operational and tactical training limited to problems involving the defense of security objectives. This limited training deals with the tactics of operation of such units as the section, platoon, company, battalion, and, rarely, the regiment, in keeping with the purposes and duties of these types of troops.

4. Operational and Routine Training

This type of training is also characteristic of the training given MGB troops. The degree and scale of training of troops depends upon the mission and assignment. For example: OSNAZ troops, in addition to their combat mission, carry out operational assignments in support of MGB organs. Part of the operational and routine training of OSNAZ troops involves instruction in making individual, group, and mass searches of persons, quarters, buildings, localities, small populated points, city rayons and entire cities, as well as instruction in rounding up, surrounding, seizing, arresting, and conveying prisoners.

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Escort troops, during their operational and routine training, learn the various methods of escorting and guarding prisoners or convicts and the techniques of organizing and conducting a search for an escapee.

Guard troops, or, as they are otherwise known, troops for the protection of particularly important objectives, deal with questions of guard duty and the organization of defense of objectives, plans of defense of objectives, and instruction of detachments at objectives during their operational and routine training. They also learn the procedure of making checks and searches of people, transports, and shipments. They study the checking of passes and other questions related to the protection of objectives.

The training of noncommissioned personnel in both internal and border troops of the MGB takes place in units, with training being given in all needed military specialties. The schools for noncommissioned officers are attended by enlisted men in their first year of training, but only after they have completed and mastered the initial training. Those chosen to attend the school are usually the more literate, better disciplined, and, for the most part, Komsomol and party members or candidates, who have proven themselves in the course of duty. The course of training in noncommissioned officer schools is 8-10 months, depending upon the arm of service. The term of compulsory military service for the noncommissioned personnel is one year longer than that of the enlisted man. After completion of his term of service, the noncommissioned officer may, if he so desires, remain in the service. This privilege is available also to the enlisted man, providing his service record is good. Enlisted men who remain in the service voluntarily are promoted to a noncommissioned rank and appointed to a command post.

Training of commissioned personnel of border troops takes place in special military border schools. The course of training in these schools has been set at 3 years, but usually persons are graduated after an accelerated 2-year course of training. Appointed to border schools are enlisted and noncommissioned personnel of border and internal troops of the MGB, in addition to civilian youths with not less than a tenth-grade education sent to attend by party and Komsomol organizations. In addition to their general military training, the future officers take courses in operational and routine training and operational and tactical training in the protection of the frontier. They study the forms and methods of secret-agent work, the organization of secret-service activities, as well as the elements of espionage and counterespionage.

There are also various other border schools for the special services, such as for the training of maritime border troops, coastal artillerymen, marine engineers, helmsmen, etc.

In addition to the specially trained officers the border troops receive from their schools, the service sometimes gets officers from the internal troops of the MGB and even from the Soviet Army. Such officers receive preliminary special training through accelerated courses for the advanced training of officers given at border schools.

A Higher School for Border Officers (VVO) in Moscow gives advanced training courses for MGB border officers. The course of training is one year.

Border officers, in the course of their service and work, can raise their qualifications through practical activity and through special officer training in their units. This instruction is conducted regularly in accordance with a special program. In addition, border detachments and districts frequently call their officers together for short periods of instruction and training.

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Internal troops of the MGB receive their officers from regular military schools that train officers for the Soviet Army. In some cases, Soviet Army officers may be ordered to duty with the MGB.

Young officers, graduated from military schools or transferred from the Soviet Army, learn the specific duties of MGB troops in the course of their practical work in the units, at classes for officers, and through study of MGB manuals and special regulations, such as the "Manual for Internal Troops of the MGB", "Regulations on the Military Utilization of Terrain Features," and others. In addition, special statutes, instructions, circulars and secret orders are issued periodically for the guidance of troops.

Upon appointment to service duty, officers are carefully instructed by their senior commanders or by the heads of the MGB organs under whose leadership the troops have been placed for the execution of the operational mission. In the course of time, all of these activities taken together serve to train MGB officers for their practical work and help raise their special qualifications.

For higher education, officers of border and internal troops of the MGB are granted the same opportunities as Soviet Army officers to attend the Military Academy imeni Frunze or other special military academies, such as the Academy of Tank and Mechanized Troops imeni Stalin, the Military Quartermaster Academy imeni Molotov, the Military Aeronautical Academy imeni Zhukovskiy, the Military Juridical Academy, Military Medical Academy, the Artillery Academy, and others.

Upon graduation from these academies, MGB officers may receive new appointments, although not necessarily with their own troops.

IV. ASSIGNMENT AND USE OF REGULAR MGB TROOPS

The organizational structure, branch of service, and weapons of any given type of MGB troops depend upon their assignment.

The careful selection of personnel, their careful political indoctrination, their excellent training and high military discipline, their modern equipment and materiel, as well as their good supply system, have served to make these MGB troops active and politically reliable. It has imbued them with a deep devotion to the party and to their own superiors. The strict responsibility for violation of duty and severe punishment for negligence and abuse of privileges, the constant insistence upon special state importance and secrecy of MGB troop activities, in addition to the broadly developed network of spies and informers within their units and staffs, makes of these powerful armed forces blind, fanatical executioners, who do not reason out or analyze their actions and deeds. Aiding this to a great extent is the fear of being held responsible for every action.

Under the guise of protecting the workers from enemies of the people, these MGB troops have often been used against, and are being used against, these very same people, often carrying out their assignments with great zeal and ruthlessness. Examples of such actions will be cited in the following section.

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OSNAZ troops of the MGB USSR are the state secret-agent reserve, maintained to keep internal order within the country and for the struggle against and liquidation of whatever mass disorders, mutinies, and insurrections that should arise. In addition, these troops are used to implement operational measures of MGB organs.

Depending upon their mission, these troops may have attached to them various branches of the service, such as mechanized infantry, artillery, tank units, cavalry, and various special units up to and including air force units. Their organizational structure is such as to allow them to carry out independent combat missions.

Technical equipment furnished OSNAZ troops is better than that supplied to the Soviet Army. OSNAZ troops have been so organized as to include whole divisions in addition to separate regiments of the various branches. During World War II, two armies of special designation troops were formed, one in Central Asia, with its center in Tashkent, the other in Central European Russia, with its center in Moscow. The creation of these armies, in addition to the units already set up in peacetime, was for their use at the front, or rather, for use behind the front lines to maintain the stability of the Soviet Army in the rear. The approximate ratio of the relative strength of an army committed to the front and special designation troops committed to its immediate rear was one regiment of OSNAZ troops for one army. This does not include those units of the MGB attached to units of division strength or higher. One regiment of MGB troops was to be found in every rifle division of the Soviet Army; in larger units such as corps, armies, and fronts, units of MGB troops were correspondingly larger.

In peacetime, OSNAZ troops, except for periodic missions in support of MGB organs, are occupied with military training and integration of their units and the carrying out of their immediate security duties.

From time to time, out of necessity, OSNAZ troops are employed in the execution of operational assignments in conjunction with MGB organs. Thus, in 1933, when insurrections broke out in several places in the Northern Caucasus (Kuban) and there were mass demonstrations against the shortage of food, OSNAZ troops were rushed there from Moscow to restore order.

Having suppressed the embryonic insurrection of the Kuban' Cossacks, resulting in the exile to Siberia of entire villages and rayons of the native populace from Krasnodar Kray, from Nov-Labinsk, Kavke Sliy and other rayons, OSNAZ troops participating in this operation received awards from the government. The rich grain-producing black-earth region of the Kuban', cleared of their native Kazakh population, were immediately resettled with the poorest landless peasants from the central oblasts of the USSR.

The entire operation was conducted under the guise of liquidating sabotage and destruction on the part of counter-revolutionaries.

In 1936, OSNAZ troops, together with MGB agents, participated in the re-settlement and exile of the native Korean population from the far East to Central Asia. Declared politically unreliable by the Soviet government, the Koreans were deemed a danger to the state by virtue of their residence in the border areas of the Far East. At the same time, Red Army commanders of Korean nationality were dismissed from the service.

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In 1937 - 1938, OSNAZ troops, together with MIB organs, participated in mass arrests throughout the country and were held in full combat readiness for the suppression of any mutinies and disorders in units of the Soviet Army at the time of the arrest of Soviet commanders.

In 1942, during the rebellion of the people of the Kara-Kalpak ASSR in Central Asia, two motorized divisions of OSNAZ troops were rushed from Tashkent to help quell the rebellion.

In 1945, after the end of the war, OSNAZ troops participated in the mass arrest and exile of the population during the liquidation of the Kalmyk ASSR, the Crimean ASSR, and a number of other oblasts after those people had proven their unreliability during the German occupation.

Usually, when mass celebrations, parades, and demonstrations take place in the large cities of the USSR on revolutionary holidays, operational reserve units are detached from OSNAZ troops and put on the alert. These troops do not participate in the parades and celebrations, but are kept on the alert in their barracks to be sent to city rayons and to outposts in the event of any extraordinary incidents.

In wartime, OSNAZ troops, in addition to their peacetime functions, are used to:

1. Cover detachments behind the front, immediately behind field troops of the army.
2. Carry out particularly important military tasks because of either a lack of stability of field troops or because of a catastrophic situation at the front.
3. Keep order in the area behind the army, and to assist local organs of the MGB.
4. Fight partisan movements on Soviet territory and, in certain instances, to dispatch groups to the rear lines of the enemy.

Guard Troops

Guard troops of the MGB USSR, or troops for the protection of particularly important objectives, are used for security and defense of such objectives which are considered to be particularly important or secret. In this category might be placed government buildings and the homes of state leaders, large war plants, scientific research institutes and their enterprises, large bridges, tunnels, buildings of the Ministry of State Security and other important ministries, repositories of state wealth, state archives, etc. Guard troops are organized and carry out their duties under the direct administration and control of local territorial or central organs of the MGB, depending upon the importance of the objective.

One interesting example might be given about the use of troops for the protection of particularly important objectives.

In Saratov Oblast, between the towns of Aktarsk and Vol'sk, there was built in the 1930's a large military chemical combine and next to it a large artillery firing range. This objective has a secret and very important significance. It was closely guarded by NKVD troops throughout its entire radius of 15 kilometers, with a battalion of 800 troops assigned to protect it.

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The combine was situated in a densely forested area, and large reservoirs were built on the property of the combine. On a hot June day in 1940, one of the reservoirs suddenly froze up, despite the fact that the temperature in the area rarely goes below zero /centigrade/. Panic broke out in the plants of the combine and soon spread to the entire combine and its several tens of thousands of employees. Within a few minutes, all of the combine's security posts were reinforced and additional guard posts set up. Groups of troops equipped with machine guns were brought onto the property. Troops were placed on the alert.

Not an hour had gone by before reserve troops rode up in trucks to the combine from several directions. These were the operational reserves of an NKVD regiment located some 50 kilometers from the plant, who had been called by order of the commander of the battalion guarding the combine because he was not sure he had enough troops on hand.

The combine was immediately ringed by a second line of troops, and the newly arrived agent from the MGB organization, together with agents stationed at the combine, began interrogations and making arrests. All workers and employees were warned to say nothing about the event and signatures were taken to that effect. It was officially announced that experiments were being carried out to find freezing compounds intended for the transportation of perishable goods.

In traveling by railroad in the USSR, any passenger may see, while crossing railroad bridges or going through tunnels, the security posts for those objectives. Careful observation will disclose that the approaches to the bridges or tunnels have barbed-wire barriers, are lit up, and are equipped with searchlights and with a network of trenches for several rifle sections with their machine gun nests. By counting the trenches, it is possible to determine the size of the unit designated for the defense of this objective, independently of the number of guards who usually protect it. Should an unusual situation develop, reserve guard troops are thrown into action. This small detail must be noted: before passenger trains cross over large bridges or go through tunnels, the conductor closes all windows and does not permit washrooms to be used. Passengers are warned not to go out onto the platforms of the train.

In wartime, guard troops, in addition to their peacetime duties, are used to:

1. Carry out their peacetime duties, not only on their own territory, but on territory seized from the enemy.
2. Evacuate protected objectives with the retreat of their own forces. If evacuation is impossible, the objectives are destroyed.
3. Maintain order and fight partisans, both on their own and the enemy's territory.

Guard troops are organized into separate battalions and regiments, and are equipped with light weapons.

Escort Troops

Escort troops are used to accompany persons under arrest and prisoners.

There is no definitely established and fixed ratio of escort troops to prisoners; the number of troops is determined by the importance of the prisoners, the distance and condition of travel involved, the time of year, and the weather.

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There are various types of escorts: long-distance escorts, local escorts, through escorts, and special escorts.

Escort in stages involves the movement of a large number of prisoners or persons under arrest over great distances.

Local escort is any movement of prisoners or persons under arrest, regardless of number, over relatively short distances.

Through escorts are those troop escorts which travel in special railroad cars equipped for the transport of prisoners over all railroad lines. Such railroad cars are coupled to regular passenger trains and travel the route regardless of the presence or absence of prisoners. Prisoners may be picked up along the route traveled for transport to another point along the same line.

Special escorts are assigned by special orders to transport particularly important criminals, regardless of the number. Sometimes special escorts of from three to five soldiers are assigned to accompany one prisoner, while up to 30-35 soldiers may escort small groups of 10-15 important prisoners. The number of escorts will depend upon the particular circumstances involved.

Escorting may be done on foot, in carts, by automobile, by railroad (in railroad cars specifically designated for the transport of prisoners, or in specially equipped freight cars), by water (in specially equipped barges or steamer), and by plane, where only individuals or small groups are involved.

In certain cases, escorting is done in civilian clothing. While escorting the insane, regulations call for escort troops to dress as medical orderlies and to wear white smocks over their clothing and weapons.

The use of weapons is forbidden while escorting the insane, with the weapons intended only in case an attempt is made to free the prisoners. In general, the use of weapons in escorting or guarding prisoners is permissible, either after giving warning of their use, or without warning. According to the regulations, escort troops not only have a right to use their weapons, but, under certain circumstances, must use them if the situation arises. Escort regulations exact the same penalty for improper use of arms as they do for failure to use the arms when necessary.

The use of weapons without warning is intended for those situations involving an attack on the escorting soldier and the escape of the prisoner. Weapons are used if no other means of halting the escapee are possible and a warning would simply mean a loss of time enabling the escapee to conceal himself, as for example, while on a moving train.

The use of weapons after a warning is intended for those instances where the instructions of the escort troops are not heeded, in case of open disorder or mutiny among the convoyees, or in case of attempts to escape or in case of an attack upon the escort.

It must be noted that escort troops of the MGB, as a rule, accompany prisoners from deportation (staging) prisons to labor camps or other places of incarceration. Usually, the transfer of prisoners from one camp to another is not done by escort troops of the MGB, but by the armed camp guard. It is only rarely and only under special circumstances that the transfer of prisoners from one camp to another is entrusted to escort troops.

In wartime, convoy troops carry out the following duties, in addition to their regular peacetime duties:

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1. They evacuate persons under arrest and prisoners from territory threatened by the enemy. If such evacuation is impossible, as was often the case during World War II, these troops are entrusted with the annihilation of such prisoners.
2. They escort into the interior prisoners of war, interned persons, and members of repressed groups from front-line areas of their own territory as well as territory occupied by Soviet forces.
3. They guard prisoner-of-war camps and internment camps for foreign diplomatic personnel, in addition to special-designation camps too important to be assigned to an armed guard.

Escort troops are organized in separate regiments and divisions and are equipped with light weapons, including machine guns.

Border Troops

Border troops of the MGB USSR are not a part of the internal troops of the MGB but are completely independent, with uniforms of a different color than those of the internal troops.

Border troops, as well as various other types of internal troops, have their own Administration for Border Defense. This administration is distinctive because of its secret-agent divisions that are entrusted with the security of the border area and with the execution of special, secret measures both on its own territory and the border areas of contiguous states. Also under this administration are divisions which carry on espionage and counterespionage independently of, but in close liaison with, special organs of the MGB dealing with such problems.

Unlike internal troops of the MGB, border troops have their own military educational institutions for training officers, for advanced training, and for training border troops in various military specialties.

Border troops have their own peculiar organizational structure, which differs in certain respects from the organizational structure of the Soviet Army and that of the internal troops of the MGB.

Border troops are organized into units directly engaged in guarding the frontier as well as into reserve units situated in depth behind the border.

The border expanse of the Soviet Union is divided into border districts (okrugs), each with its border reserve troops organized into regiments and divisions of the various branches of the service and border detachments engaged in guarding the frontier. Border detachments may be either of the first, second, or third category, depending upon their size, the extent of border area guarded, and the importance of the border area. Border detachments of the first category are maintained on the basis of a division; those of the second category, on the basis of a brigade; and those of the third category, on the basis of a regiment. This is only a very relative comparison and has nothing to do with the organizational structure of the corresponding military units. However, officially, such delimitations do exist, and, in keeping with them, commanders of border detachments may be either colonels or generals.

Border detachments have subordinate to them command posts (kazendatory) and border outposts directly engaged in guarding the border. Command posts and higher border units use both military and secret-agent methods in guarding the border.

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Border detachments may consist of land or sea forces, or a combination of the two. Small air units are also attached to border units, equipped with both ground-attack and fighter aircraft, assigned to carry out reconnaissance and surveillance from the air. Maritime border detachments are equipped with light warships.

In event of war, border troops are given the following duties in addition to their peacetime work of guarding the frontier:

1. To strike the first blow in event of the invasion of Soviet territory by enemy troops and to offer resistance to such forces until troops of the Soviet Army located in the border regions are ready for action.
2. In event of the successful advance of Soviet Army troops, border troops are to continue guarding the old frontier and to help in keeping open the army's lines of communications.
3. In event of a retreat of Soviet forces into the interior under pressure of enemy attack, border troops are to move behind the fighting forces guarding the army's rear, regulating traffic and keeping lines of communications open.

During World War II, border troops were used by the Soviet Army as combat units during the period of greatest pressure at the front. These units became noted for their exceptional stubbornness in battle, their high political spirit, and their combat ability.

Other Armed Forces of MGB USSR

1. Militia of the MGB

There are various types of militia, each with its own assignment and use. The militia may be divided into: administrative militia, criminal (ugolovnaya) militia, industrial militia, departmental militia, and militia reserves.

Administrative militia is entrusted with carrying out administrative procedure, such as issuing passports, visas, etc. It supervises traffic and makes health and vehicle inspections.

The criminal militia exists for the fight against criminals, for the disclosure of theft and robbery, and the exposure of people without definite places of residence and without definite occupations, i.e., matters relating to the declassed element, otherwise known as the SVE, the socially harmful element. This militia also seeks to combat prostitution and neglect of children. A so-called Criminal Investigation Division under this militia is entrusted with the fight against the criminal element through secret methods.

Industrial militia guards objectives of less importance than those protected by guard troops of the MGB, but of more importance than those guarded by industrial militarized guards. Certain objectives are guarded by a combination of guard troops and militia.

Departmental militia serves to keep order in the various governmental departments. There are, for example, a railroad militia, a waterways militia, an air lines militia, Moscow subway militia, a militia for guarding certain prisons, etc.

There are unmounted, mounted, and motorized militia reserves which exist only in the larger cities. They are organized into platoons, companies, battalions or squadrons (diviziony), are similar to military organizations, and receive military training.

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Persons who have served in the Soviet Army and who have been carefully checked for political reliability are enlisted for not less than a 2-year period of service in the militia. During their period, militia personnel are subject to the laws governing military men.

The officer staff of the militia serves in accordance with special regulations, and receives special ranks and promotions.

By ukase of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet, a special medal "For the Maintenance of Public Order," was introduced at the end of 1950, to be awarded to enlisted, noncommissioned, and officer personnel of the militia of the MGB.

Subjects used in the militia training vary with the type of unit and its mission. Political instruction is given to all members of the militia, regardless of mission, while operational and tactical training are given to the militia reserves, particularly to industrial militia. Operational and routine training as given to all types of militia, with the exception of the criminal militia. All members of the militia receive training in marksmanship and drilling, as well as in methods of self defense, such as judjitsu. Whether or not a certain type of militia receives special training depends upon its mission.

Special instruction is provided for members of the militia to enable them to master their duties and raise their qualifications. There are special schools which train militia officers and provide them with advanced training. In addition, there are special schools for workers of the Criminal Investigation Division, with a 2-year course of training.

2. VOKhR of Corrective Labor Camps and Prisons

The VOKhR ITL (Armed Guard of the Corrective Labor Camps) and the VOKhR GUMZ (Armed Guard of the Main Administration of Prisons), both of the MVD USSR, are similar to the militia of the MGB in recruitment of troops and in duties.

The difference between VOKhR ITL and VOKhR GUMZ is the the former guards camps, the latter, prisons, labor colonies, and labor and special settlements. Whereas the guard at a camp usually consists of several thousand persons, the number of guards at a prison and labor colony rarely goes beyond 100-150. VOKhR of camps, prisons, and colonies wear the particular uniform of the institution involved.

The organizational structure of the VOKhR ITL differs slightly from that of the border troops and its jurisdiction is limited to the boundaries of the camp. VOKhR ITL is organized into platoons, battalions, and detachments, with the ratio of guards to prisoners varying from 2 5 to 5 percent, depending upon the size of the camp, its location, organizational structure, character of the work done by the prisoners, and the number of prisoners. Both the camp and its militarized guard are directly subordinate to Moscow. There is, under GULAG MVD USSR, a Section of Guards and Operations, to which the guards at all camps are subordinate organizationally. Neither the camps nor its guards are subordinate to republic Ministries of Internal Affairs.

Internally, VOKhR ITL is subordinate to the head of the camp and, operationally, to the head of the secret-agent sections to be found at every camp of GULAG.

VOKhR ITL is responsible for guarding prisoners within the camp, both to and from their place of work, as well as during their transfer from one camp to another. It is also responsible for searching for escapees within the immediate vicinity of the camp.

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The training of VOKHR ITK units is similar to that received by escort and guard troops.

3. VOKHR of the Ministry of Transportation USSR

Up until about 1932, the guarding of transportation facilities was entrusted to special railroad troops of the GPU. With the reorganization of the GPU, a special militarized transportation guard was set up under the People's Commissariat of Transportation USSR and the system of GPU railroad troops was liquidated. The defense of railroad objectives of special importance, such as bridges and tunnels, is at present entrusted to guard troops of the MGB; all other railroad objectives are guarded by VOKHR guard of the Ministry of Transportation. These objectives include railroad depots, locomotive repair shops, storage places, warehouses, elevators, electric power stations, water towers, etc.

Despite the fact that VOKHR of the Ministry of Transportation is officially listed under the Ministry of Transportation, operationally it is completely subordinated to transport divisions of the MGB which exist both under the Ministry of Transportation as well as under all railroad administrations of the ministry.

In recruitment and in duties, VOKHR of the Ministry of Transportation is similar to VOKHR of camps, prisons, and labor colonies, as well as to the militia of the MGB.

Training VOKHR of the Ministry of Transportation is placed on the guarding and defense of the immediate objective, with additional training given in the special problems of transportation.

VOKHR of the Ministry of Transportation wear the uniform of the railroad service.

Age and health requirements for members of the militarized armed organizations and the militia of the MGB correspond to those of the wartime Soviet Army, with the requirement for political reliability, however, considerably higher. Upon mobilization, all members of these militarized organizations ordinarily would be called up for service with the army, a situation which could not very well be permitted. Therefore, both the militia of the MGB and all militarized organizations receive a so-called "armor" (otorya) or exemption.

This "armor" or "armor plating" is a complete exemption or deferment for several months, from the call for service with the army upon mobilization. This "armor plating" is provided not only for the militia and militarized organizations, but for specialists on the railroads, in industry, in agriculture, as well as in certain other Soviet institutions and enterprises. Such "armor plating" is provided even in peacetime and is taken into consideration when mobilization plans are drawn up.

Militia and armed organizations of the MGB receive an indefinite "armor," that is, a complete exemption from service with the army upon mobilization for up to 50 percent of their members, with the other 50 percent receiving a "temporary armoring" or exemption of from 3-6 months.

If, among draftees called up for army service, there are persons holding this temporary exemption, military commanders are obliged, under law, to replace them with members of older age groups or draft contingents being held in reserve.

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Under special circumstances, the percentage of those temporarily exempted may be increased.

The militia of the MGB and the armed guard are of a higher quality, than Soviet Army personnel, both in peacetime and in wartime. It goes without saying that the personnel of all types of MGB troops, both in peacetime and in wartime, are incomparably better than the personnel of even the peacetime Soviet Army cadre.

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