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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

24 JUL 1962

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MEMORANDUM FOR: The Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT : MILITARY NEWS: "Combat with Tactical Nuclear Weapons", by Lieutenant-General of Tank Troops M. Shaposhnikov

1 Enclosed is a verbatim translation of an article which appeared in the Soviet Ministry of Defense publication Collection of Articles of the Journal Military News (Voyenny Vestnik). This publication is classified SECRET by the Soviets, and the issue in which this article appeared was distributed to officers from regimental commander upward.

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Richard Helms
Deputy Director (Plans)

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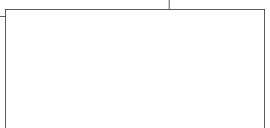
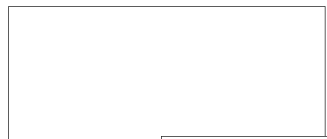
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- Original: The Director of Central Intelligence
- cc: The Director of Intelligence and Research,
Department of State
- The Director, Defense Intelligence Agency
- The Director for Intelligence,
The Joint Staff
- The Assistant Chief of Staff for Intelligence,
Department of the Army
- The Director of Naval Intelligence
Department of the Navy
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COUNTRY : USSR

SUBJECT : MILITARY NEWS: "Combat with Tactical Nuclear Weapons", by Lieutenant-General of Tank Troops M. Shaposhnikov

DATE OF INFO: January 1961

APPRAISAL OF CONTENT : Documentary

SOURCE : A reliable source (B).

Following is a verbatim translation of an article entitled "Combat with Tactical Nuclear Weapons", by Lieutenant-General of Tank Troops M. Shaposhnikov. This article appeared in Issue No. 34, 1961, of the Soviet military publication Collection of Articles of the Journal Military News (Voyenny Vestnik). This publication is classified **SECRET** by the Soviets and is published by the USSR Ministry of Defense.

According to the Preface, Issue No. 34 was sent for typesetting on 14 December 1960 and released to the printer on 25 January 1961. The Preface states that articles express the opinions of their authors and are published as a form of discussion. Distribution of Issue No. 34 was to officers from regimental commander upward.

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Combat with Tactical Nuclear Weapons

by

Lieutenant-General of Tank Troops

M. Shaposhnikov


At the present time the development of nuclear/missile weapons has attained a wide scope from quantitative and qualitative standpoints. It is the decisive means of fire action against enemy personnel and combat equipment. At the same time, enemy nuclear weapons are the main objectives that must be destroyed first of all with all available weapons. Consequently, the resolution of problems of destroying enemy nuclear/missile weapons is the basis of antiatomic troop protection.

Let us examine some problems pertaining to combat against enemy tactical nuclear weapons with the weapons of the commanding officers of a division and regiment.

The principles advanced in our press that one of the main goals of modern operations is the destruction of enemy nuclear/missile weapons of strategic designation and of other objectives, which may be airfields of strategic aviation, depots of nuclear weapon supplies, etc, are wrong.

In the majority of cases, our missile troops of operational-tactical designation are also regarded as a means of destroying deep objectives and, first of all, enemy weapons of nuclear attack located at a relatively great depth from the line of the front.

The inadequate attention that is allotted to problems of combating enemy weapons of nuclear attack during command training and also at exercises with troops leads our officers and generals to at least two mistakes.


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Firstly, they consider that in the majority of cases it is necessary to use only the available nuclear/missile weapons to combat enemy weapons of nuclear attack.

Secondly, not having nuclear weapons at their disposal, or having them in very limited quantities, some commanding officers of divisions think that problems of combating enemy weapons of nuclear attack are a function of the army commander and of senior commanding officers (nachalnik).

As is known, the basic means for delivering nuclear warheads to the target in the army of the USA are the NURS (free rocket - nepravlyayemyy reaktivnyy snaryad) "Honest John", URS (guided missile - upravlyayemyy reaktivnyy snaryad) "Lacrosse", "Corporal", "Redstone", and others. The 203.2mm gun is also used for tactical targets. These weapons, with the exception of the URS "Redstone", probably. . .

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. . . weapons with conventional artillery weapons.

Maybe the example given was accidental? It is possible. But the investigation should be continued.

But here is a different result. To investigate the effectiveness of tank and SAU (assault guns - ~~snaryad~~ samokhodnaya artilleriyskaya ustanovka) fire from covered positions against enemy weapons of nuclear attack during combat operations, battalions of medium and heavy tanks and a battalion of tank destroyers were brought in.

Missions were assigned by the artillery commanding officer by radio: to commanding officers of tank battalions through the commanding officers of regiments, and directly to the commanding officer of the tank destroyer battalion.

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At night, the tanks and SAU required 30 minutes to cross 6 to 8km from the concentration area to the area of fire positions, to assume positions, and to find their bearings. The coordinates of the targets, the sizes of the sectors, the expenditure of ammunition, the procedure of firing, and corrections for meteorological and ballistic firing conditions were determined by the artillery staff of the division.

Topographic data for planned targets were prepared analytically. Twelve minutes were required to prepare initial data for the firing.

In practice, the fire was conducted by part of the tanks taken out for the exercise, the remainder conducted dry fire.

Thus, a battalion of medium tanks conducted fire against a 203.2mm howitzer located on an area 100 by 150m at a range of 9270m. Fire was conducted with one setting of the sight according to complete initial data prepared directly for the target. Of thirty 100mm caliber shells expended, 8 shells exploded on the area of the gun position. A satisfactory result was achieved. Two shells exploded in the immediate proximity of the gun.

To destroy a 280mm atomic cannon at a range of 9520m, a battalion of heavy tanks was used. The preparation of data was carried out in the same way as for the medium tank battalion.

Of the 30 shells fired at the gun, 22 shells exploded on the firing position (an area 100 X 150m), and this was 73 percent hits. The fire of the heavy tanks put out of action the means of traction, crew (prisluga), and with one hit broke the breech and mount of the gun. This was an excellent result. It shows the high effectiveness of heavy tank fire on nuclear weapons located at a distance of up to 10km.

The fire of a tank destroyer (SU-122) battalion against antitank guided missiles of a missile-destroyer antitank

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company is of interest. The battalion of tank destroyers conducted fire at a range of 8140m. Of 30 shells fired at the target located on an area 300 by 200m, 9 shells hit the target, and this is 29.7 percent hits.

Our three-year experience in combat firing by tanks from covered positions showed that when firing at a range of up to 10km against targets that cannot be observed, the tank subunits are equal to the artillery in accuracy of fire and time of readiness and are capable of carrying on combat with enemy nuclear weapons located within the field of fire as successfully as artillery.

Thus, the results of the firing show the advisability of using tube artillery with conventional ammunition and. . .

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. . . the increased norm of ammunition expenditure and does not give an answer to the problem of whether fire should be conducted if success is not fully guaranteed? These problems are answered by experience: it not only should be, but it is vitally necessary!

Consequently, the norms that are foreseen in the Manual already do not correspond to the changed conditions. Now, more flexible recommendations are necessary that will assist all commanding officers of large units in combating enemy nuclear weapons.

* *
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One of the most important conditions for combating enemy nuclear weapons is correctly organized and actively conducted reconnaissance. The concentration of up to 40 units of enemy nuclear weapon delivery means in the zone of the division



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makes it essential to have in large units and regiments forces and means of reconnaissance capable of handling tasks which have increased in volume and quality.

The most effective means of reconnaissance in the tank (motorized rifle) division is the dispatch of reconnaissance groups into the enemy rear area.

At one of the exercises, 3 reconnaissance groups composed of 5 or 6 persons were sent out to reconnoiter the "enemy" nuclear attack weapons. Moving on foot, each group was assigned the task of penetrating into the "enemy" rear area and carrying out reconnaissance in an area 1 to 2km². The groups fulfilled their combat task by observation. Communications were maintained only with the division intelligence chief. The personnel of the groups did not have special training in the reconnaissance of nuclear weapons.

Therefore, the reconnaissance personnel were unable to fulfil the mission quickly and headquarters was unable to take timely measures to destroy disclosed targets. The slowness was a result of the fact that reconnaissance groups did not search for targets but waited until they arrived in specific areas. Having discovered the means of nuclear attack, however, they were unable to report quickly because their report passed through several echelons of command, and this took much time, during which the "enemy" had time to deliver a strike and to move the mounts to reserve positions.

Undoubtedly, the reconnaissance would have been successful if the personnel of the reconnaissance groups had been specially trained, had been expert in orientation on unfamiliar terrain by day and night, had known and had quickly identified "enemy" tactical nuclear weapons on the terrain, had used the map freely, and had known how to transmit the coordinates of targets accurately and quickly.

Under the conditions of modern, highly maneuverable combat operations, reconnaissance groups must fulfil their missions on mobile means. In our opinion, the best one of these so far

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is the armored personnel carrier of the BRDM type that has radio sets.

The tactics of conducting reconnaissance of enemy nuclear weapons are of definite interest. Even now it is possible to say that the tactical weapons of nuclear attack with which the army of the USA is armed are capable of being moved over all dirt roads and of assuming fire or launch sites anywhere.

In connection with this, it is impossible to limit oneself to conducting reconnaissance on separate axes or in small areas, because this will not ensure the disclosure of enemy tactical nuclear weapons. It is most advisable to. . .

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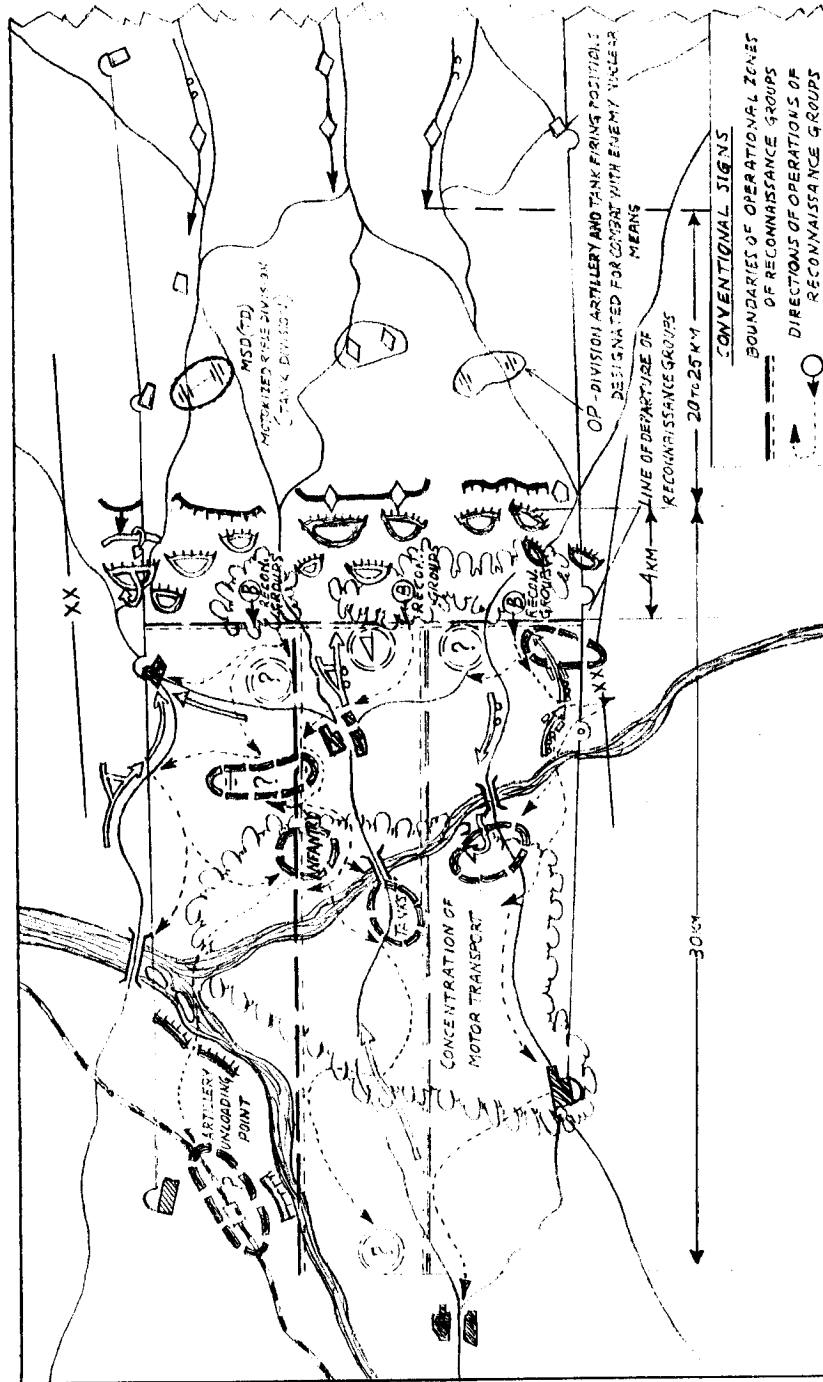
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Tactics of conducting reconnaissance in the rear area of the enemy with reconnaissance groups of the large units.

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