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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20505


26 April 1974

MEMORANDUM FOR: The Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT : MILITARY THOUGHT (USSR): The Nature of
Modern Warfare and the Missions of the
Military Services


1. The enclosed Intelligence Information Special Report is part of a series now in preparation based on the SECRET USSR Ministry of Defense publication Collection of Articles of the Journal "Military Thought". This article by the Chief of the Soviet General Staff discusses the nature of a future war in view of the decisive capabilities represented by nuclear weapons. The general discussion leads to observations on trends in each of the military services and their roles in warfare. The author emphasizes the need for increasing strategic nuclear capabilities, the striking power of each branch of service, and their readiness to conduct military operations on all scales under conventional and nuclear warfare conditions. This article appeared in Issue No. 2 (87) for 1969.

2. Because the source of this report is extremely sensitive, this document should be handled on a strict need-to-know basis within recipient agencies.


WILLIAM E. NELSON
Deputy Director for Operations

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Intelligence Information Special Report

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COUNTRY USSR

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SUBJECT

MILITARY THOUGHT (USSR): The Possible Nature of Modern Wars and the Tasks of the Branches of the Armed Forces

SOURCE Documentary

Summary:

The following report is a translation from Russian of an article which appeared in Issue No. 2 (87) for 1969 of the SECRET USSR Ministry of Defense publication Collection of Articles of the Journal "Military Thought". The author of this article is Marshal of the Soviet Union M. Zakharov. This article by the Chief of the Soviet General Staff discusses the nature of a future war in view of the decisive capabilities represented by nuclear weapons. The general discussion leads to observations on trends in each of the military services and their roles in warfare. The author emphasizes the need for increasing strategic nuclear capabilities, the striking power of each branch of service, and their readiness to conduct military operations on all scales under conventional and nuclear warfare conditions.

End of Summary

Comment:

This article was written by the late Chief of the General Staff, Marshal of the Soviet Union M. Zakharov. He has written another article in this series, entitled "The Development of the Means of Armed Combat in the Postwar Period", Issue No. 1 (86) for 1969 (FIRDB-312/00679-74, TS #205477, 26 February 1974). The SECRET version of Military Thought was published three times annually and was distributed down to the level of division commander. It reportedly ceased publication at the end of 1970.

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The Possible Nature of Modern Wars and the
Tasks of the Branches of the Armed Forces

by
Marshal of the Soviet Union M. Zakharov

✓ The theory and practice of military affairs testify that the principal concepts of military strategy are constantly changing in regard to the possible nature of a future war, the preparation of the country for it, the organization of the armed forces, and the determination of the methods of conducting war. This is caused, first of all, by the military-political situation, the economic and morale potentials of countries, and the equipping of armies with massive quantities of new means of armed combat. The decisive influence on the nature of strategy, its goals, and the methods of achieving them is policy. ✓

As the means of armed combat are developed, the scope of the problems of strategy increases, and its role and place in military art change. If in the past total victory was the result of a multitude of individual successes achieved successively at the tactical and operational levels, then now the strategic command has at its disposal such powerful means of armed combat as strategic nuclear forces which permit decisive results to be achieved in war. [] ✓

✓ Strategy based on directives from the political leadership of the country develops sound methods of using military-economic potential in war. It determines the overall bases for the use of the various branches of the armed forces in a plan for achieving a single strategic goal; and these bases are taken into account when developing the forms and methods of using each branch of the armed forces. ←

This article contains certain considerations on such important, in our view, questions as the possible types and aspects of wars in the present era; their nature and role, and the problems to be resolved by individual branches of

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the armed forces; and the probable directions of their development.

In the process of social-historical development, one social-economic structure is superseded by another, more progressive one, the class structure of society is reorganized, and relations between classes, nations, and states change. This causes a basic change in policy and it acquires a different qualitative substance. In turn, changes in policy have a very decisive effect on the concept of each individual war, are responsible for differences between wars of one era and another, and are the objective basis for their scientific classification and for determining their type and nature. Under the influence of policy, and based on the development of production forces and on scientific and technical progress, the means, methods, and forms of combat operations are being improved, the scopes of wars keep expanding and they are becoming more and more destructive. Thus, each war in our present era is examined from two aspects--social-political and military-technical.

History tells us that the inherent characteristics and diversity of wars, by virtue of their social-political nature, are conditioned, first of all, by the specific content and peculiarities of antagonistic contradictions fraught with the possibility of unleashing wars. The main and decisive contradiction in our era is the one between socialism and imperialism. The continuing process of the deepening crisis of capitalism is the cause of its increasing aggressiveness. It has become even more greedy, capable of any kind of venture.

The policy of American imperialism is clearly aggressive in nature. Its principal goal is the destruction of the USSR, the elimination of the socialist system, and the achievement of world supremacy. The imperialists are preparing for this on all fronts--economic, ideological, political, diplomatic, and military. In the capitalist countries, following the US line, the militarization of the

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economy is constantly increasing, the arms race is being stepped up, and a broad program is being implemented in preparation for a new world war.

After encountering the ever-growing might and the solidarity of countries of the socialist alliance around which all the progressive forces of the world are united, the American imperialists, along with all-round preparation for nuclear world war, started looking for other, as they think, less dangerous methods of achieving their aggressive aims. By using bribery, blackmail, and reactionary military coups, and by unleashing local wars, they are trying to weaken the socialist alliance and to break off piecemeal individual countries from the democratic camp. And this means that there still is a danger that the Soviet Union may be drawn into local wars.

As a result of the sharp shrinking sphere of capitalist supremacy and the increasing action of the law of uneven development of capitalism, the struggle among imperialist countries themselves for export markets, sources of raw material, and cheap labor is becoming more and more intensified. Sharp competition with the United States has been initiated by the Federal Republic of Germany, Japan, and France, who until recently found themselves almost totally dependent on their transoceanic "ally". And although the imperialist countries are bound to each other by means of some definite obligations within the system of various military-political blocs directed against the countries of socialism, a further aggravation of contradictions between them may conceivably lead to armed conflicts.

Thus, in the light of the aforementioned contradictions, the basic types of wars in the present era may be wars between the two social systems of socialism and capitalism, revolutionary civil wars, wars of national liberation, and wars between two imperialist countries.

As regards the military-technical aspect, history indicates that the more diversified and powerful the arsenal of weapons at the disposal of the two sides, the more

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complex the nature of the war and the methods and forms of its preparation, initiation, and conduct. Under modern conditions of a complex military-political situation subject to rapid and sharp changes, and with the availability to armies of a wide variety of the means of armed combat, in all likelihood these means will be used in many combinations and in different sequences. In addition, we must take into account not only our own forces and means, but also the capabilities of the enemy and his views regarding the methods of unleashing and conducting armed combat.

International imperialism, especially the US imperialists, assuming that their superiority over the Soviet Union in nuclear weapons and the strategic means of delivering them is assured, expect to realize their aggressive plans with the aid of these weapons. Various theories have appeared which propound that nuclear weapons are the universal and the only means by which all tasks of war can be solved and victory achieved. These views are reflected in official US doctrine adopted in 1953 and called the strategy of "massive retaliation". It provided for the use of nuclear power in unleashing conflicts of any size. In light of this strategy the main attention in military build-up was given to the development of nuclear means and working out methods of their application.

However, the reliance by American imperialists on nuclear weapons alone has collapsed. The Soviet Union's successes in missile development and the creation and stockpiling of new, powerful types of nuclear munitions have forced the American strategists of nuclear blackmail to stop and think about the prospects of such a war. When evaluating the nuclear power of the USSR, McNamara, the former Secretary of Defense, in an interview with Life magazine (in 1967), had stated that "The Soviet Union will be capable of destroying all of America after receiving the initial powerful strike from the US".

When the policy of nuclear blackmail proved to be a failure, the imperialist circles began to look feverishly for an escape from the situation in which they found

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themselves. They began to place considerable emphasis on conventional means of destruction in their aggressive plans.

In 1961, the so-called strategy of "flexible response" was introduced in place of the "massive retaliation" strategy. By January 1968, this strategic concept of "flexible and phased responses using conventional and nuclear weapons depending on the degree of threat" was adopted by NATO as the official military doctrine. The US and NATO commands consider it to be the most adaptable to modern conditions.

Fundamentally new in this concept is the admission of the possibility that military operations of various durations can be waged in Europe without using nuclear arms. This also raises the significance of the Bundeswehr as the most powerful NATO land force in Europe. A derivative of this strategy, the concept of "forward defense", permits the deployment in peacetime of a grouping of forces near the western borders of the German Democratic Republic and the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic so that, in case of war, and if conditions are favorable, a preemptive strike can be delivered and the combat operations transferred to the territory of the socialist countries, or at least to prevent any loss of Federal Republic of Germany territory.

However, in this strategy, too, the basic reliance is on preparation for nuclear war. The policy of intimidation in regard to the socialist countries is still one of the NATO weapons. It was clearly evident at the session of the NATO council in Brussels (November 1968) where threats were continuously directed at the USSR and the entire socialist alliance. Particularly pointed remarks were made concerning the questions of increasing the number of troops of the NATO grouping in Europe; moving its main forces closer to the borders of the German Democratic Republic and Czechoslovakia; faster equipping of troops with modern arms, and raising their combat and mobilization readiness; and reviewing certain conditions of the strategy of "flexible response" towards more "decisive actions".

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An analysis of the above-mentioned prerequisites of a military and political nature permits the conclusion to be made that, with the present arrangement of forces in the international arena and the status of the means of armed combat, two types of wars are considered possible: nuclear and non-nuclear. If, by their social-political nature, these wars, thrust upon the Soviet Union and other countries of the socialist commonwealth by the imperialists are alike, and represent a collision between two opposite social systems, then they will be different in their strategic aspect and military-technical content. Nuclear and non-nuclear wars will fundamentally differ from each other by the nature of strategic tasks to be solved; the methods of accomplishing them and the types of strategic operations; the means used; the duration and spatial scope; the probable consequences; and other factors. Each of these wars has its own specific traits, its own particular division into periods, and its own strategic intensity.

Nuclear war is the kind of war in which both sides make unlimited use of all the forces and means at their disposal, and, first and foremost, strategic nuclear forces as the main means of destruction. Taking part in this war are groupings of all the branches of the armed forces, which were established in the theaters of military operations before the beginning of the war. The most important feature of nuclear war is the decisiveness of its military-political aims and the exceptionally tense, destructive and uncompromising nature of its military actions.

Nuclear war may start by a surprise enemy nuclear attack; or by his unleashing a conflict using only conventional weapons but in which, should the outcome be unfavorable, the use of tactical, at first, and later also strategic nuclear means is not excluded. In other words, in the latter case the war will not begin at once with an unlimited use of nuclear arms but proceed in its development through a number of consecutive and closely interrelated periods, i.e., it will be conducted by phases.

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Undoubtedly, the most dangerous is the unleashing of war by an aggressor's sudden nuclear attack. This is what properly determines the strict requirements for maintaining the high combat readiness of our Armed Forces and their capability for delivering at any moment a crushing blow upon the enemy, and for ensuring the timely ascertainment of enemy preparation for attack. As far as a nuclear war beginning with the use of conventional means of destruction is concerned, its nuclear strikes may be preceded by a period of not only non-nuclear but also limited nuclear actions. The means of armed struggle will be introduced in succession and, as a result, the scale of military operations will increase gradually or spasmodically, simultaneously with the growth of their intensity. At the same time, a war that has begun by the use of conventional means of destruction or tactical nuclear weapons in a theater of military operations may cease before the use of strategic nuclear means will be required, i.e., it doesn't escalate into an unlimited war. Consequently, it must be assumed that nuclear war will not be reduced to some sort of single diagram. The most unexpected situations are possible.

From an assessment of the most typical features of nuclear war, it is not difficult to draw some conclusions concerning its most probable division into periods, taking into account, first of all, the permissible scales and consequences of the use of strategic nuclear forces whose operations will be the decisive act. It is our opinion that in a nuclear war there is a possibility of either one decisive nuclear period, or two--a decisive period and a concluding period. Besides, with the phased development of a nuclear war, as has already been mentioned, we allow for not only a non-nuclear period but also a limited nuclear period of war. However, we do not nourish any illusions regarding the duration of the waging of limited nuclear wars. They, obviously, will quickly escalate into unlimited wars, since the losing side will begin ceaselessly building up its strike in order to restore the situation.

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Nuclear war, by its scales, (can) impart a global scope right away, and envelop, directly or indirectly, many continents. The consequences of nuclear strikes are felt by all nations. In this kind of war, the two sides will bear tremendous losses in human resources and industrial production, and will be denied the possibility of a planned restoration of their armed forces.

Thus, a war can be conducted by fundamentally new methods, differing considerably from the past ones. The main efforts of strategic nuclear forces--strategic rocket troops, nuclear submarines and long-range aviation--will be directed at the destruction of the enemy strategic nuclear means and his military economic targets, disorganization of his system of state and military control, and destruction of main groupings of troops, first of all, his strategic nuclear means in theaters of military operations.

The necessity of such a combining of efforts is dictated by a number of factors. First of all, there will take part in the accomplishment of the above-mentioned tasks a vast quantity of all-arms forces, dispersed over a large area and requiring a strongly centralized leadership for coordination of their actions. Secondly, the need will arise for carrying out a large number of measures connected with support of the actions of these forces, and especially of submarines and long-range aviation. Thirdly, various variants of introducing strategic nuclear forces can arise with the start of war. And finally, it must be kept in mind that with the improvement of the effectiveness of the antimissile defense and the air defense of the enemy and of the survivability of his means of attack and his most important military economic objectives, evidently, it will not always be possible to accomplish all the tasks with a single strike. In a number of cases, it will be necessary to carry out repeated launchings, assign new tasks, and reallocate targets of destruction.

All of this says that the use of strategic nuclear forces must be planned in detail in advance and must be carried out under a single leadership. Combat operations of the armed forces will take such strategic forms as strikes

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of strategic nuclear forces, strategic operations in theaters of military operations, operations in ocean theaters of military operations, and operations for repelling enemy air attacks.

Non-nuclear war most likely will be a local war and will involve only certain countries and the corresponding areas of their territories. (We assume that a non-nuclear world war is unlikely.) In the course of a non-nuclear war, the remote areas of the warring sides will not be subjected to significant strikes, and, consequently, will retain considerable personnel and material resources, making it possible to replenish the losses of the armed forces. The basic method of conduct of the war will be the successive destruction of deployed enemy groupings on land, sea and in the air, with seizure of his territory and also frustration of enemy attempts to invade the territory of our country. Non-nuclear war will be waged under a constant threat of nuclear strikes.

This is the way the possible nature of wars of the present era and their military and political goals are visualized by us. Let us now examine briefly the role of individual branches of the armed forces in achieving common strategic aims in each of these wars, the tasks accomplished by the troops, and the methods of their operations.

In a nuclear war, the main means of enemy destruction will be the strategic rocket troops. It is their salvos that will constitute the basis of nuclear strikes against the most important targets in enemy territories and in the theaters of war. The tremendous power of the warhead, the high accuracy and reliable delivery of warheads to the target, the complete invulnerability of missiles on the ground and in the air, and their high combat readiness make this branch of the armed forces the main means ensuring the inevitability of a nuclear strike against the aggressor. In addition to the strategic rocket troops, nuclear submarines and long-range aviation will also be employed in the strikes. After the exchange of the initial nuclear strikes, the same means may be assigned tasks of delivering group and

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individual strikes against partially destroyed or newly detected strategic targets for their final destruction.

At the same time as the strikes of the strategic nuclear forces, intensive combat operations will be developed by the armed forces within the framework of strategic operations in the theaters of military operations, for the purpose of completely destroying the groupings of troops of the enemy.

A strategic operation in a theater of military operations will include operations of all branches of the armed forces united in a common aim and directed towards a single strategic goal. Strategic nuclear strikes against the most important economic and administrative-political centers and groupings of troops in a theater of military operations, and, first of all, against enemy nuclear means, and tactical strikes coordinated with them, will constitute the basis of a strategic operation in a theater of military operations, and their results will predetermine the nature of the operations of all the other troops.

Formations of the ground forces operating jointly with frontal aviation, and on coastal axes also with the participation of naval forces, are assigned the task of most rapid exploitation of the results of nuclear strikes for destruction of the surviving groupings of troops and nuclear means of the enemy, and seizing and holding the most important areas of his territory. Their basic form of combat operations will be front offensive operations, in which nuclear strikes will be delivered against the enemy by the rocket troops and front aviation, airborne and heliborne assault landings will be widely used, and swift strikes by tank groupings will be carried out.

A special feature of using the nuclear means of the fronts lies in the fact that they have to accomplish tasks of destroying primarily mobile targets, which represent the overwhelming majority of targets within the operational depth. This makes high demands for reconnaissance of all types, especially air reconnaissance, and for maintaining nuclear means in a degree of combat readiness which would

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make it possible to carry out a strike in the shortest possible time.

The ground forces with a decisive offensive complete the destruction of the enemy and seize his territory. However, some of their groupings may suffer considerable losses and the need will immediately arise for restoring their combat effectiveness and, first of all, of the organs of control and of the troops of the first operational echelon. For this purpose there can be used reserve fronts, armies of the second echelon, and also forces and means from other axes. It is appropriate to note at this point that some authors in their theoretical works and articles often express the idea that apparently large units and formations of the ground forces equipped with missile/nuclear weapons do not require serious artillery or aviation support any more. One cannot agree with this. They will need both types of support since nowadays it is important not only to neutralize the centers of fire resistance impeding the advance of the troops but also to destroy at the same time such targets within the depth as operational-tactical nuclear weapons, which at any moment can be committed to action, as well as radio-electronic means, mobile reserves, and others.

Main efforts of frontal aviation in a strategic operation will be directed towards destruction of enemy means of nuclear attack and repelling his air strikes. At the same time, destruction by strategic means of the most important targets in the rear of the enemy will allow concentrating the efforts of the aviation on destroying mobile and small targets.

In addition, aviation will have to fulfil tasks of reconnaissance of the enemy, since it is, for the present, the primary means of obtaining information for all of the branches of the armed forces, and, first of all, for the rocket troops.

The main task of the airborne troops in a strategic operation is the most rapid exploitation of the results of nuclear strikes and cooperation with the ground forces in

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seizing important areas of enemy territory, destroying his means of nuclear attack, and disorganizing his control. The basic form of their combat operations will be the airborne assault operation, conducted in close cooperation with other branches of the armed forces. Unlike the operations of previous wars, in which airborne assault landings were made primarily in close proximity to the operating troops and their main goal was to seize areas of terrain and hold them until the approach of the troops advancing from the front, the combat operations of airborne assault forces under present-day conditions will be aggressive, offensive, and mobile in nature.

Effective exploitation of the results of nuclear strikes will require landings (drops) of airborne troops at great depth, which, in turn, will increase the duration of their independent operations in the rear of the enemy. In conjunction with this, the problem of covering the flight of Military-Transport Aviation aircraft with the airborne assault force to the landing area and the support of its combat operations, arming the airborne troops with more powerful fire and strike means, and increasing their mobility, assumes a particular urgency.

Long-range aviation having in its armament aircraft with a large radius of action can accomplish the tasks assigned to it, as was already mentioned, jointly with other strategic nuclear forces, and also deliver strikes against enemy targets in the depth of his territory, on the sea and in the ocean by means of conducting its own independent operations and in cooperation with other branches of armed forces. Of particular importance among the tasks being fulfilled by aviation in the main theaters of military operations is the destruction of enemy aircraft groupings, without which one cannot count on successful operations of the ground forces. For this purpose, special air operations with the participation of several air armies of the fronts and significant forces of long-range aviation may be planned.

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In modern war, the role is considerably increased for Military-Transport Aviation which, besides airlifting airborne assault forces, will find wide use in moving troops, arms and other materiel to the most diverse areas.

Intensive combat operations from the beginning of nuclear war will be developed by the air defense forces of the country. Namely, they are charged with the responsibility for repelling the global nuclear attack of enemy strategic forces, which, as is known, include intercontinental ballistic missiles, the missiles of nuclear submarines, and intercontinental bombers.

Global nuclear attack, according to the views of the US military leadership, is expected to be conducted in the form of an aerospace operation in which operational-tactical nuclear means will be used simultaneously with strategic means. Obviously, success in repelling or even weakening an attack by nuclear forces of such a powerful and diversified nature can be achieved as a result of operations of the air defense forces of the country which are planned in advance, and coordinated with other branches of the armed forces, and first of all, with the strategic rocket troops and the nuclear forces of the navy, capable of destroying the nuclear means of the enemy in missile deployment areas and at airfields.

In repelling an enemy aerospace attack, it is particularly important to achieve a rapid commitment to action of the necessary air defense forces and means along the main axes of his strike, because to accomplish such a maneuver during the course of the strike will be extremely difficult. This requires a careful planning of operations of the air defense forces while it is still peacetime, establishing an optimum grouping of forces and maintaining them in the highest possible degree of combat readiness, and organizing a reliable service for early warning against an enemy attack.

The basic tasks of the navy, apparently, will be to destroy important enemy military economic targets, to weaken the strikes of his naval forces, and to cooperate with other

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branches of the armed forces in destroying the enemy. The task of destroying the military economic power of the enemy is assigned to missile-carrying nuclear submarines composing the main forces of the navy. They will cooperate closely with the strategic rocket troops. ✓

Another most important task of the navy will be to combat enemy missile submarines and strike aircraft carriers. Exceptionally complex as far as its accomplishment is concerned, this task will require employing a large amount of all-arms naval forces. Their actions within the framework of a single aim will take the form of a strategic operation to destroy the strike forces of the enemy navy in an ocean theater. The navy will also be assigned the tasks of destroying enemy amphibious assault-landing forces while in transit at sea, disrupting his sea communications, and also tasks for fire support of the front troops, advancing on a coastal approach, for supporting sea shipments for the fronts, and for landing amphibious assault-landing forces. □

Thus, we have been convinced once more that in a nuclear war, in its decisive period, fulfilment of the entire diversity of its tasks by strategic nuclear forces alone can not be achieved. Finding broad use in it will be all branches of the armed forces, which in close cooperation, and with the decisive role of strategic rocket troops, will fulfil their assigned tasks. At the heart of the cooperation of the strategic rocket troops with other branches of the armed forces in the theaters of military operations lies ensuring the most effective exploitation of the results of their strikes by the ground forces and airborne troops, front and long-range aviation, and the fleets. Of decisive importance in organizing the cooperation is an advantageous allocation of the targets for nuclear strikes among the strategic nuclear forces and the forces of the fronts and fleets, and also coordination of the operations of these forces and means in regard to time. ✓

In the concluding period of a nuclear war, if such a period occurs, all of the branches of the armed forces can participate. However, their role in the overall strategic □

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task will substantially change since the main goal of this period will apparently consist of pressing home the destruction of enemy groupings of troops in the theater of military operations and the seizure of his territory. It is easy to see that the decisive role in the fulfilment of this task will belong to the ground forces. They will be forced to operate under very difficult conditions. It will be necessary to create new groupings of forces from the surviving large units, units and subunits. On some axes these groupings sometimes will not possess the features of complete operational formations such as a front and an army. It will become very difficult to implement mobilization measures and to supply troops with arms and other equipment, and at times it will be practically impossible.

The basic method of achieving the goals of the concluding period will be an offensive by the ground forces with the support of the surviving forces and means of the other branches of the armed forces. In these conditions the action on both sides will be intensified because of their great effort to retain the initiative, to very quickly exploit the results achieved by nuclear strikes, and to press home the destruction of the enemy. Each side will try to go over to the offensive ahead of the other, to deliver strikes along selected axes to prevent the deployment of enemy forces, and to destroy any groupings he may have created. The initiative can repeatedly shift from one side to the other. At the same time the offensive is going over, fierce defensive engagements can develop on individual axes.

During this period the Air Defense Troops of the Country will most likely continue fighting against the surviving enemy aviation forces, his main strike force. Therefore, after enemy nuclear strikes, it will first be necessary to restore the forces and means of antiaircraft defense to protect the most important installations using the air defense forces and means of the ground troops and the navy.

It must be assumed that aviation losses will be so high that it will be able to fulfil only a very limited number of the tasks to destroy individual important mobile targets in

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support of advancing groupings of ground forces. Transport aviation will be used to support these ground forces and to provide supplies and airlifts.

5200 The navy can preserve a considerable amount of its forces because it will be dispersed by the time of the enemy nuclear strike. These forces can be directed to intercept sea crossings by the enemy who will attempt to restore the combat power of his groupings in the theater of military operations; and they can also be used to combat surviving enemy submarines and his strike aircraft carriers.

In a war begun with the use of conventional means only, there are some special features in the actions of the different branches of the armed forces in the first possible periods. During the period of non-nuclear actions the main burden for fulfilling tasks will fall on the ground forces, aviation, the navy, and the border formations of the Air Defense Troops of the Country. This period will be characterized by an all-out effort by both sides to inflict maximum destruction on the enemy, especially on his nuclear grouping, and to secure a more advantageous position for further actions. It will be especially important to gain air supremacy because it will sharply limit the enemy use of nuclear weapons by its aviation against our groupings of ground forces and other objectives in the theater of military operations when the transition is made to nuclear operations. This is achieved by carrying out special operations to destroy the strike forces of enemy aviation on airfields and in the air and to disrupt its system of control and of fuel and munitions supply.

In operations involving the limited employment of nuclear weapons, there will be a sharp increase in the capabilities of troops to destroy the main enemy groupings in a strategic operation in a theater of military operations. Their initial efforts will be directed towards the destruction of enemy nuclear forces by delivering strikes against enemy aviation at airfields, missile positions, and main control posts; and the destruction of the strongest groupings of ground forces. The navy, jointly with long-range aviation, will concentrate its strikes

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against the main enemy groupings at sea, especially his submarines and strike aircraft carriers.

Strikes by operational-tactical nuclear means will be of decisive significance. At the same time, while fighting to gain the initiative, each side will strive to deliver increasingly powerful strikes in order to assure the timely commitment of action of its strategic nuclear forces.

Depending on the amount of nuclear means used by the two sides, strategic operations, by their resoluteness and intensity and by the nature of the tasks performed by troops, will take on many of the features of the above-mentioned operations of an unlimited nuclear war.

In a non-nuclear war, i.e., under conditions in which combat operations will be conducted only with the use of conventional means of destruction, our Armed Forces may be faced with the tasks of delivering a decisive blow against the main groupings of enemy troops in land and sea theaters of military operations and of seizing his territory. Unquestionably, most of the tasks in the achievement of the war aims will be fulfilled by the ground forces. Operations of fronts will take on a decisive role in a strategic operation in a theater of military operations. Efforts of the other branches of the armed forces, in the final analysis, will be directed to assisting the ground forces to carry out the main tasks of destroying the groupings of enemy armed forces in the theaters of military operations, destroying his nuclear means, and seizing his territory.

Fronts will evidently carry out their missions initially by using the same forces (besides the nuclear means) as in a nuclear war. The constant threat of enemy use of nuclear weapons will not allow the creation of relatively dense strike groupings. In a number of cases it will be necessary to concentrate forces for a strike against the most important objectives first by reducing the forces designated for the capture of secondary objectives. It will be necessary to break up the enemy piecemeal by delivering strikes against his groupings on individual axes, then encircling and destroying him. Should the enemy set up

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strong defensive lines, the staffs and troops must be prepared to quickly organize and carry out a breakthrough.

In carrying out military operations without using nuclear arms, no less responsible tasks are assigned to front aviation which under these circumstances constitutes the basic long-range means of destruction for the front. It is aviation that will be assigned the task of defeating enemy aviation on airfields and in the air and of destroying his operational-tactical missiles and his air support for his advancing forces. All this requires that front aviation be used economically, that it be assigned primarily those targets and installations which affect the enemy combat effectiveness the most.

In a non-nuclear war, the quick destruction of enemy aviation and naval strike forces is of great importance. To accomplish this, special air and naval operations can be conducted with the participation of several front aviation air armies, large units of long-range aviation, and naval forces. Their basic purpose will be to deliver powerful strikes against enemy aviation at its air bases, against ship groupings at sea and at naval bases, and against aviation and naval control posts.

Proceeding from the nature of modern wars as we have examined them here and from the tasks that may be assigned to the different branches of the armed forces, it is not difficult to come to the conclusion that, along with strengthening the power of the strategic nuclear forces, especially the strategic rocket troops, it is also necessary to increase in every possible way the strike power of the ground forces, the Air Defense Troops of the Country, aviation, and the navy; and we must also improve their capability of solving operational and strategic tasks with or without the use of nuclear weapons.

The further development of strategic nuclear forces will proceed along the lines of increasing their degree of readiness to deliver strikes; the invulnerability of missiles in positions and in flight towards their targets; protection from countermeasures of enemy radiotechnical

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means; and stability of guidance and accuracy in reaching the targets. The main means of delivering nuclear munitions in the immediate future will still be ballistic missiles fired from stationary, mobile, and underwater launch positions.

The accuracy of intercontinental ballistic missiles is achieved not only by perfecting the operation of the guidance mechanism during the powered-flight phase of the flight trajectory but also by guidance of the nose cone during the free-flight phase when entering the atmosphere. As far as protection of the nose cone in flight is concerned, the following are the principal ways being contemplated: the creation of multiple (with several separate warheads) and maneuvering nose cones; accompanying them in flight with false targets or jamming transmitters; and protecting the nose cones from x-ray radiation of a nuclear burst. Our probable enemies are conducting important work on creating space strike means, including orbital aircraft, and support systems for operations of the strategic nuclear forces (reconnaissance, navigation, and communications).

Ever-increasing importance is being attached to rocket troops and to missile/nuclear weapons in other branches of the armed forces as the principal means of conducting combat operations. Their further development is directed first of all toward increasing their range and accuracy, reducing the time of launch preparation, and improving the reliability and simplicity of operation.

The ground forces will receive more powerful missile systems; and there will be an increase in the quantity and quality of their artillery, especially antitank missile means, air defense means, tanks, and armored vehicles. This will increase still more their fire and strike power and their capability of repelling enemy air attacks; and it will also increase their mobility, i.e., it will allow them to be highly maneuverable under the most complex conditions of war. The further development of the means of armed combat will require an improvement in the organizational structure of forces at both the tactical and operational levels. ✓

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Increasingly more attention in front aviation is being given to increasing the proportion and development of fighter bombers adapted for use with both nuclear and conventional weapons. Significant changes are contemplated in fighter and reconnaissance aviation. The acknowledgement of the probability of conducting a non-nuclear war makes it necessary to strengthen air support of ground forces, for which assault aircraft will be developed. Important work is being conducted at the present time in the armies of the world toward increasing the range and speed of aircraft at various altitudes, including extremely low altitudes, and increasing their capability to operate in complex meteorological conditions and at night. Aviation armament is being improved, with priority given to guided missiles and communications means.

Missile-carrying and reconnaissance aircraft with supersonic speed are being developed for long-range and naval aviation; the range and accuracy of missiles are being increased; and homing devices and search and targeting systems for antisubmarine defense aircraft are being improved.

The development of Military-Transport Aviation is following the line of creating aircraft with supersonic speeds at various altitudes--high, medium, and extremely low; these will provide for transportation of landing forces with heavy and large-size combat equipment from the deep interior of the country to the entire depth of the theater of military operations without refueling. The aircraft will have integrated navigational and flight equipment, as well as missiles and other weapons for combat with enemy air defense means.

Much attention in the development of air defense means is being given to the creation of anti-missile means and to the search for new physical principles to be used as the basis of these means. At the same time, the possibility of a non-nuclear war does not lessen the need to find new methods and means of combat against aviation, especially against aircraft which operate at low and extremely low altitudes. Not of least importance in this planning is the

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role of the anti-aircraft guided missiles which can destroy modern aircraft with great accuracy.

The common tendency in the development of naval forces of the principal world powers consists of the further growth of submarine forces, especially the number of nuclear submarines which can carry long-range missiles and antisubmarine means; and the improvement of naval missile-carrying aviation. Here, special significance is attached to increasing the strike power of nuclear submarines, increasing their submergence depth and their speed, reducing the propulsion noise, improving their means of observation, and improving their handling and armament. Considerable work is being contemplated to improve the capability of naval forces and means to conduct a non-nuclear war.

Thus, in a modern war, regardless of its nature, no one branch of the armed forces can resolve all the diverse tasks. The skilful utilization of the strong features of each of the branches to fulfil the overall strategic mission will guarantee victory. All this obliges us to combine harmoniously, in certain definite proportions, the development of all the branches of the armed forces, taking into account the fulfilment of the main requirement--the subordination of this development to the common, overall principles of Soviet military strategy.

The correct understanding of the nature of modern wars and the proper employment of the armed forces will allow the armed forces to fulfil successfully the missions before them. This is why our leading command cadres and scientific and creative collectives of the higher military educational institutions must make a deep study of military affairs; carry out the timely development of new methods of using armed forces in war which meet modern requirements; and determine the problems and principles of troop combat operations. The problem is not only to keep up with the study of the process of development but, mainly, to stand at the head of it and to keep moving forward.

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