

APPROVED FOR RELEASE  
CIA HISTORICAL RELEASE  
PROGRAM  
JUNE 2017

~~TOP SECRET~~

5459

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20505

30 September 1977

MEMORANDUM FOR: The Director of Central Intelligence  
FROM : Theodore G. Shackley  
Acting Deputy Director for Operations  
SUBJECT : Fundamentals of a Strategic Operation in a  
Continental Theater of Military Operations

> SECTION TECHNOLOGY UNIT 1212

1. The enclosed Intelligence Information Special Report is a translation from Russian of an apparent draft of an undated, TOP SECRET Soviet academy-level text or lecture which provides an overview of Soviet thinking on the content, planning and conduct of strategic operations in the Western theater. The front is considered the basic force operating in a continental theater in conjunction with strategic rocket forces, long range aviation, air defense forces, and the navy under the overall leadership of the Supreme High Command. A strategic operation may include both nuclear and non-nuclear offensive actions. The defense is considered a legitimate action of a forced, temporary nature.

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.

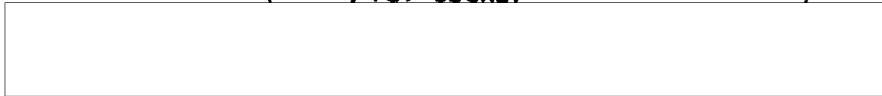
Theodore G. Shackley //

1 of 23 Pages

~~TOP SECRET~~

DB-162  
77-0194

~~TOP SECRET~~



Distribution:

- The Director of Central Intelligence
- The Director of Intelligence and Research  
Department of State
- The Joint Chiefs of Staff
- The Director, Defense Intelligence Agency
- The Assistant to the Chief of Staff for Intelligence  
Department of the Army
- Director of Naval Intelligence  
Department of the Navy
- The Assistant Chief of Staff, Intelligence  
U. S. Air Force
- Director, National Security Agency
- Deputy Director of Central Intelligence
- Deputy to the Director of Central Intelligence  
for National Intelligence Officers
- Deputy Director for Intelligence
- Director of Strategic Research
- Director of Weapons Intelligence

~~TOP SECRET~~



~~TOP SECRET~~



# Intelligence Information Special Report

Page 3 of 23 Pages

COUNTRY USSR



DATE OF INFO.

Unknown <sup>1976-77</sup> 1976

DATE

30 September 1977

SUBJECT

Fundamentals of a Strategic Operation in a Continental Theater of Military Operations

SOURCE Documentary

Summary:

The following report is a translation from Russian of an apparent draft of an undated, TOP SECRET Soviet academy-level text or lecture which provides an overview of Soviet thinking on the content, planning and conduct of strategic operations in the Western theater. The front is considered the basic force operating in a continental theater in conjunction with strategic rocket forces, long range aviation, air defense forces, and the navy under the overall leadership of the Supreme High Command. A strategic operation may include both nuclear and non-nuclear offensive actions. The defense is considered a legitimate action of a forced, temporary nature. The bulk of the document is devoted to measures for restoring combat effectiveness and resuming the offensive following an exchange of nuclear strikes, and to a strategic offensive begun with conventional weapons.

End of Summary

Comment:

General of the Army Ivan Yegorovich Shavrov, to whom this document is attributed, has been identified as Chief of the Military Academy of the General Staff since May 1973.



~~TOP SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~



Page 4 of 23 Pages

~~TOP SECRET~~  
Copy No. \_\_\_\_\_

Fundamentals of a Strategic Operation  
in a Continental Theater of Military Operations

General of the Army Shavrov

1. Content of a strategic operation in a continental theater of military operations.
2. Planning of a strategic operation.
3. Conduct of a strategic operation.

A strategic operation in a continental theater of military operations is the sum total of strikes, operations, and combat actions of formations and large units of the different branches of the armed forces coordinated by objective, place, and time, united by a single concept, and conducted under the overall leadership of the Supreme High Command to achieve a strategic objective of war in the given theater.

Large groupings of all the branches of the armed forces may be called upon to conduct a strategic operation. Their composition will depend on:

- the objective of the operation;
- the composition of forces and means of the enemy;
- the importance and peculiarities of the theater, and other factors.

Specifically, in a strategic operation in the Western Theater of Military Operations there may participate: ←

- | -- several formations and large units of the Strategic Rocket Forces; |
- several fronts;



~~TOP SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~

Page 5 of 23 Pages

- forces of the combined navy of the Warsaw Pact member states;
- large units of Long Range Aviation;
- formations and large units of the Air Defense Forces of the Country situated in the theater of military operations.

A considerable number of nuclear warheads of different yields may be allocated for the operation.

The formations and large units of the Strategic Rocket Forces are one of the main means of accomplishing the tasks of a strategic operation in a nuclear war. They are charged with destruction of the strategic and operational-tactical nuclear forces and the reserves of nuclear weapons of the enemy in the depth of the theater, destruction of centers and installations of the military economy, destruction of state control centers of the countries of the hostile coalition and of command posts and communications centers of the strategic and operational levels of control. Also destruction of large groupings of the armed forces of the enemy, destruction of transportation centers and other important targets.

The fronts taking part in the strategic operation, in terms of the number of forces and means, occupy the dominant position among the groupings of the other branches of the armed forces. In a strategic operation conducted with the use of nuclear weapons, they will with their nuclear forces destroy the opposing enemy groupings in the theater, and with the actions of the motorized rifle divisions, tank divisions, and airborne divisions of large units [sic] complete the rout of his troops surviving the nuclear strikes and take the key areas and centers on his territory which have vital importance for the enemy.

In a strategic operation beginning with the use of conventional means of destruction, fronts acting in conjunction and cooperation with long range aviation, naval forces, and air defense forces of the country will be the main force to defeat the enemy in the theater of military operations.

The formations and large units of the air forces, independently and in cooperation with the other branches of the armed forces, will accomplish tasks to destroy or weaken the aviation and the missile/nuclear groupings of the enemy in the theater, to support the combat actions of the ground forces, naval forces, and landing forces, to cover them against strikes from the air, carry on combat with reserves, destroy military industrial

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~

Page 6 of 23 Pages

installations and transportation centers, conduct aerial reconnaissance, and carry out airlifts of troops and materiel.

The naval forces taking part in a strategic operation in a continental theater of military operations will destroy the enemy in the sea portions of the theater, assist the ground forces on the offensive on coastal axes in the assault crossing of wide water obstacles and in the seizure of straits zones, support the landing of an amphibious landing force, blockade enemy groupings which have been pressed to the sea or cut off, destroy enemy amphibious landing forces at sea and participate in repulsing their landing on the coast, disrupt or stop the sea shipping of the enemy, support our own movements of troops and materiel by sea, and also destroy and neutralize important targets on the coast and in the depth of enemy territory.

The formations and large units of the air defense forces of the country, in cooperation with the air defense forces and means of fronts and the navy, will cover the most important economic areas and centers, major transportation centers, and other important installations of the theater of military operations, as well as groupings of armed forces, rear services installations, and naval bases within established boundaries against enemy aerospace strikes.

A strategic operation may include:

-- nuclear strikes of strategic nuclear forces against preplanned strategic enemy targets within the boundaries of the given theater of military operations in a war with the use of nuclear weapons;

-- the first and subsequent operations of fronts;

-- air operations with the participation of various branches of the armed forces, which may be conducted for the purposes of:

- a) destroying or weakening the aviation and the missile/nuclear groupings of the enemy;
- b) destroying or damaging the (most important installations) of the military economy in the enemy rear;
- c) routing or destroying operational and strategic reserves;
- d) stopping operational-strategic shipments;
- e) disorganizing the state and military control of the enemy;

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~

Page 7 of 23 Pages

-- an air operation of long range aviation for the accomplishment of independent tasks and its combat actions in support of fronts, the navy, and the airborne troops;

-- airborne landing operations;

-- naval operations and combat actions of the navy to defeat the enemy in the naval theater of military operations and in the areas of the ocean adjacent to the continental theater of military operations, to assist front troops operating on a coastal axis, and also to accomplish certain other tasks jointly with these troops;

-- combat actions of the formations and large units of the air defense forces of the country near the frontier (front).

The scope of a strategic operation is determined by its objective, the composition and capabilities of our armed forces and the forces of the enemy, the importance and peculiarities of the theater of military operations, as well as its dimensions.

The duration of a strategic operation is usually determined by the time necessary for the ground forces to capture the vitally important areas of enemy territory; in the Western Theater of Military Operations, with a depth of 1,200 to 1,800 kilometers and an average rate of advance of up to 50 kilometers per day, the duration would be as much as 25 to 35 days and more.

The basis of a strategic operation conducted with the use of nuclear weapons is the delivery against the enemy of strikes by the strategic and operational-tactical nuclear forces.

If a strategic operation begins with the use of conventional weapons, the decisive role in defeating the enemy grouping in the theater will belong to the front troops cooperating with the air forces, the air defense of the country, and the navy.

The strategic and operational-tactical nuclear forces in this period must be in full readiness to deliver nuclear strikes.

Having greatest importance for achieving the objective of a strategic operation are resolute actions of the armed forces to gain and subsequently hold air <sup>SUPREMACY</sup> superiority. The main form of the struggle for air <sup>SUPREMACY</sup> superiority is the air operation to destroy or weaken the aviation and the missile/nuclear

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~

Page 8 of 23 Pages

groupings of the enemy.

The preparation of a strategic operation in a continental theater of military operations includes a wide array of measures, of which the main ones are:

- adoption of the decision for the operation;
- planning of the operation;
- formation of the grouping of armed forces intended to conduct the operation, assignment of tasks to the operational formations;
- organization of cooperation of the groupings of all the branches of the armed forces participating in the operation;
- preparation of measures for all-around support of the operation;
- organization of the system of control of the groupings of armed forces in the operation;
- preparation of the troops and naval forces to fulfil combat tasks;
- preparation of the theater of military operations.

The preparation of a strategic operation is carried out in advance while it is still peacetime. The decision is made by the Supreme High Command.

When working out the decision for a strategic operation and developing the plan, the following tenets of Soviet military doctrine are taken as the basis:

First: Predatory wars are alien to the Soviet Union as a socialist state. Comrade Brezhnev pointed out at the Twenty-Fifth Congress: "The Soviet Union does not need war...Our country is consistently and unswervingly struggling for peace, and constantly coming forth with concrete proposals aimed at reducing armament and at disarming." The Soviet Union does not need expansion of its frontiers. But that which has been created by the hands of the Soviet people it will defend with all determination, including in respect to the socialist

~~TOP SECRET~~



~~TOP SECRET~~



Page 9 of 23 Pages

countries.

Second: In case the aggressor tries to encroach upon our socialist land and its national interests, the Soviet Union will conduct resolute military actions until the complete defeat of the foe with the use of all the military might of the country and all the forces and means at the disposal of our state. The Soviet Army and Navy will immediately go over to aggressive actions, to the offensive, if an aggressor violates our frontiers.

Third: Along with the offensive, Soviet military doctrine acknowledges the legitimacy of defensive actions on the strategic, operational, and tactical scales. However, defense is regarded as a forced type of action. It will be employed where and in those cases when there are not enough forces and means to conduct offensive actions or when it is necessary to gain time to build them up and bring about conditions for subsequently going over to a determined offensive.

The decision for a strategic operation may include:

-- conclusions from an assessment of the military-political situation in the theater;

-- an assessment of the groupings of armed forces and strategic installations of the enemy and his probable plans of military actions;

-- the composition and capabilities of one's own forces and means allocated for conducting the operation;

-- the balance of forces and means of the sides at the beginning of and during the operation (overall and by strategic axes);

-- the objective and concept of the strategic operation;

-- the disposition of the groupings of armed forces in the operation;

-- the procedure for using nuclear weapons;



~~TOP SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~



Page 10 of 23 Pages

- the tasks of the formations of branches of the armed forces;
- instructions on the organization of cooperation, all-around support and control.

The content of the objective of a strategic operation will depend on the political objective of the war, the capabilities of our forces and the forces of the enemy and the balance between them, on the military-geographical conditions of the theater of military operations, and other conditions.

In the concept of a strategic operation in a continental theater of military operations are determined the main countries and groupings of armed forces of the enemy on whose defeat the main efforts of our armed forces must be concentrated, and the methods and sequence of fulfilment of the designated tasks.

The groupings of armed forces participating in a strategic operation are assigned a number of general strategic tasks, for instance:

- to destroy the opposing grouping of armed forces of the enemy in the theater, above all his nuclear means;
- to ward off strikes of the enemy's aerospace means of attack;
- to destroy the most important elements of the military-economic base and undermine the morale and political potential of the enemy;
- to disorganize state and military control;
- to capture and hold vitally important areas of hostile territory.

The planning of a strategic operation in a theater of military operations is done in advance, while it is still peacetime, on the basis of the decision adopted. It includes the drawing up of:

- a plan of the strategic operation;
- plans of the operation of the fronts and of air and airborne landing operations;
- a plan of the combat actions of the formations and large units of air defense forces of the country near the frontier (front);

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~

Page 11 of 23 Pages

-- a plan of the operation and combat actions of naval forces.

The plan of the strategic operation is worked out by the General Staff. Those who take part in working it out are the commanders-in-chief and main staffs of the branches of the armed forces, the chiefs of branch arms and special troops, and the chiefs of the rear, respectively, in the matters that concern them. \*

The plan of a strategic operation is a set of documents which reflect the sequence and methods of actions of the groupings of armed forces and the time periods in which they are to fulfil the assigned tasks.

The plan of a strategic operation is the same for conditions of the start of military actions both with and without the use of nuclear weapons. A unified plan must be maximally flexible, but at the same time sufficiently finite. In all cases, all first-priority tasks must be formulated in it most concretely.

The plan of a strategic operation is periodically amended before the start of war in keeping with the changes taking place in the alignment of military-political forces in the world arena, in the status of one's own armed forces, and in the groupings and plans of the probable enemy.

#### Conduct of a strategic operation

With the growth of a threat of the outbreak of war, the armed forces are brought from peace to wartime status. The operational deployment of groupings in the theater of military operations is carried out.

In order to preclude a surprise enemy attack by land, sea, or air, and to ensure the organized commitment to action of the front troops and naval forces, operational coverage of their deployment is carried out.

For these purposes, large units and units allocated for frontier coverage take up the defense in land sectors of the national frontier, and additional combat duty forces and means are deployed at sea. The means of air defense are brought into readiness.

With the start of an enemy attack, the forces allocated for operational coverage are the first to ward off his invasion and ensure the organized deployment and commitment to the engagement of the main forces.

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~

Page 12 of 23 Pages

A strategic operation in a continental theater of military operations, depending on the conditions of the military-political situation and the method by which the enemy unleashes the war, may begin and develop in different ways. The beginning of military actions is possible after a period of worsening of the military-political situation or with a surprise unleashing of war. Military actions may begin with the use of nuclear weapons or of conventional means of destruction alone.

On the whole, though, depending on the concrete conditions, a strategic operation, as well as a world war, may include a number of periods:

- a period of military actions with conventional means;
- a period of military actions with limited use of nuclear weapons;
- a period of military actions with unlimited use of nuclear weapons;
- a period of subsequent (concluding) military actions.

Each of these periods will have its own special features and methods of combat actions.

Actions with unlimited use of nuclear weapons will begin with the delivery of the initial strike of the strategic and operational-tactical nuclear forces.

Simultaneously with the delivery of the initial nuclear strike, there will begin intense combat actions of the air defense troops of the fronts, of the navy, and of the air defense forces of the country to ward off the nuclear attack of the enemy.

The first nuclear strikes of the sides will be the most powerful and the most telling. It should be expected that the combat effectiveness of the opposing groupings may be undermined by these strikes alone.

Losses will be considerable also in the means of delivery of nuclear weapons. However, the sides may, after the initial strike, still have a certain number of nuclear warheads at their disposal and they will deliver further nuclear strikes against surviving important enemy targets in the theater.

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~

Page 13 of 23 Pages

Theoretical calculations and the experience of NATO armed forces exercises indicate that the most intensive nuclear strikes by the sides may be delivered in the first three to five days. In this time they may use up a large part of the accumulated nuclear warheads and delivery means and also sustain losses in nuclear warheads from enemy strikes.

Troops will also sustain great losses, and individual groupings may lose combat effectiveness altogether. In the rear and the frontier zone, many installations and whole areas will be subjected to destruction.

Transportation lines will be disrupted. The situation in the theater of military operations may change drastically. Zones of radioactive contamination, flooding, fires, and destruction will be formed over vast areas.

Under such conditions the further conduct of the strategic operation will depend chiefly on the capabilities of quickly restoring the combat effectiveness of the groupings of our troops which have been subjected to enemy nuclear strikes and organizing their subsequent actions.

Commanders and staffs must as soon as possible ascertain the situation that has developed, organize elimination of the aftereffects of the enemy nuclear strike, take steps to restore the combat effectiveness of subordinate troops, and direct the remaining forces and means toward fulfilment of previously assigned or refined combat tasks. In this period everything must be subordinated to preempting the enemy in restoring the combat effectiveness of troops and going over to the offensive on the most important axes.

It is necessary to emphasize that in a nuclear war the combat effectiveness of large units and units cannot be determined solely by the percentage of losses sustained in personnel and equipment. This indicator will be inadequate.

If a motorized rifle division, when conducting combat actions with the use of conventional means, loses 70 percent of its personnel and equipment, such a division cannot be considered ineffective for combat. Rather, it may be characterized as being of limited combat effectiveness. For actually it will still have over 3,000 soldiers and officers left, 60 to 70 tanks, 60 guns and mortars, and 120 antitank means. And this is a large force.

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~

Page 14 of 23 Pages

The case is different in a nuclear war. If, as the result of an enemy nuclear strike, a division loses 70 percent of its complement, such a division will more than likely prove unfit for combat.

Why do we think so? Because the division will sustain simultaneous losses in minutes with a large number of dead and wounded and of persons with burns and contusions. There will be a drop in the morale of personnel, which will be affected by considerable so-called psychogenic factors associated with the impairment of the psychic condition of personnel. Control will be disrupted. It will be necessary to carry out much work to restore the combat effectiveness of such a division, for which a definite time frame amounting to several dozen hours and possibly even several days is needed.

Restoration of the combat effectiveness of the groupings of armed forces in the theater after a massed nuclear strike includes:

- restoration of the disrupted control system;
- elimination of the aftereffects of the enemy nuclear strike;
- restoration of the combat effectiveness of the large units and units;
- reestablishment of the groupings of armed forces on the most important axes;
- restoration of the system of combat, special, and rear services support.

As a result of the performance of these measures, groupings of the armed forces capable of continuing combat actions under the new conditions should be restored or formed anew.

Restoration of the combat effectiveness of troops and forces objectively must begin with restoration of the disrupted control system at all levels, since successful performance of all the other indicated measures depends on this above all.

Restoration of the disrupted control system includes:

- transfer of control to the surviving forward, alternate, auxiliary, and rear posts;

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~

Page 15 of 23 Pages

- transfer of control to lower levels in case all of the posts of the higher level are put out of action;
- restoration of communications lines and centers;
- restoration of communications between cooperating formations and large units, etc.

Simultaneously with restoration of disrupted control, the command and staffs of all levels must take all steps to ascertain the condition of their own troops, forces, and means, the radiation and engineer situation, and the condition of the enemy.

On the basis of an assessment of the data received, the Supreme High Command and the formation commanders make decisions on the restoration of troop combat effectiveness, the reestablishment of groupings, and their subsequent actions. It is quite obvious that changes will be introduced into the plans of operations and the tasks of troops, in an number of cases radical changes stemming from the situation that has developed.

The composition of groupings to be reestablished must be determined on the basis of the tasks which are to be accomplished during the development of the operation after the massed nuclear strike, taking into account one's own surviving forces and means and the forces and means of the enemy.

On the basis of the decisions made, the staffs work out plans of the restoration of combat effectiveness of troops and means, in which all measures and the time periods for carrying them out are defined in detail.

Immediately after the first enemy nuclear strikes, steps are taken to eliminate the aftereffects of these strikes, aid is promptly given to the stricken personnel, water supply and decontamination treatment and radiation decontamination are organized, and, when necessary, the removal of troops to new uncontaminated areas is carried out.

In this period the replenishment of troops with personnel and combat equipment by drawing from reserve units will be extremely difficult. Therefore, all the main measures to restore the combat effectiveness of large units and units first are carried out predominantly with one's own troops, right down to the reorganization of units and subunits that have suffered great losses and the replenishment with personnel and combat equipment by drawing from troops that have lost combat effectiveness. Rapid restoration and repair of damaged armament, combat equipment, and

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~

Page 16 of 23 Pages

transport is organized.

In the course of reorganization, some large units, units, and subunits may be eliminated and their remaining personnel and equipment turned over for completing the manning and equipping of other large units and units. As a result, the total number of large units and units may be reduced.

At the same time, as the experience of exercises shows, when the combat effectiveness of troops is being restored it is necessary to endeavor to preserve their organizational structure. Composite detachments are less effective, and one should resort to the formation of them only in extreme cases and only to perform separate tasks.

An integral component of all measures to restore the combat effectiveness of large units and units is skilfully conducted party political work. It must be aimed at raising the morale and combat spirit of the troops in every possible way, strengthening troop discipline, and mobilizing the personnel to eliminate the aftereffects of the nuclear attack most quickly and complete the defeat of the enemy.

Reestablishment of the groupings of armed forces on the most important axes of the theater of military operations can be carried out by using the remaining large units and units and those that have restored their combat effectiveness, including second echelons and reserves of the front and armies, as well as by regrouping troops from secondary axes.

To strengthen fronts of the first operational echelon, the Supreme High Command can use some of the remaining troops of the fronts and armies of the second echelon, strategic reserves, and reserves of armament, combat equipment, and materiel. The experience of exercises shows that the strategic reserves, situated in the depth of the territory of the theater of military operations, have better conditions than first-echelon troops for a dispersed disposition and obviously will sustain fewer losses from an enemy nuclear strike. Therefore, in a number of cases, the strategic reserves may prove to be the decisive source for reestablishing groupings of the armed forces in the theater of military operations.

It is necessary to keep in mind that complete restoration of the groupings of armed forces in the theater of military operations up to the level of their original strength is virtually impossible. In addition, such a reestablishment of groupings, as a rule, is not required, since the strength of forces and means of the opposing enemy will likewise be drastically reduced.

~~TOP SECRET~~



~~TOP SECRET~~

Page 17 of 23 Pages

The time necessary to restore the combat effectiveness of troops and reestablish the groupings of armed forces in a theater of military operations will depend on the specific situation as well as on the proficiency of formation commanders and staffs.

The rapid restoration of the combat effectiveness of troops and reestablishment of the groupings of armed forces will have a decisive effect on the development of the strategic operation, and will make it possible to preempt the enemy in subsequent actions, to disrupt the measures he is carrying out to restore the combat effectiveness of forces and means, and, retaining the initiative oneself, to successfully perform the assigned tasks.

To preempt the enemy in actions, our troops must not await restoration of the combat effectiveness of all forces, but go over to the offensive in individual groupings and even individual large units and units as they are ready.

The large units and units of the first echelon of armies that have retained combat effectiveness may go over to the offensive on separate axes in the wake of a massed nuclear strike with the task of completing the rout of the troops of the first operational echelon of the enemy.

The main groupings of fronts that have been reestablished by using the troops that have survived the enemy nuclear strike must, without stopping, move forward to the maximum possible depth. The main task of these groupings will be completion of the rout of enemy reserves and prompt seizure of his vitally important installations and areas in the depth.

The troops must act with maximum courage and aggressiveness and independently accomplish tasks under conditions of exposed flanks and while separated from the remaining forces of the fronts and armies. They must not be drawn into combat with the enemy groupings remaining immediately in the front zone, especially those which are in areas with much destruction and strong radioactive contamination that are difficult for our units to operate in.

For actions beyond zones of solid destruction and radioactive contamination, it is advisable to use airborne troops and motorized rifle units landed from helicopters.

The objective of such a deep incursion on the ground, from the air and sea, into the territory of the enemy is to paralyze his possible

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~

Page 18 of 23 Pages

retaliatory actions faster and not let him restore the combat effectiveness of the grouping of troops in the theater or transfer forces from other theaters or from overseas.

In this period, bold and daring actions even of individual units that have retained their combat effectiveness may disorganize the enemy for good and paralyze his will for further resistance.

Completion of the rout of enemy troops which remain in the front zone eliminating the aftereffects of our nuclear strikes is advisably done with large units and units that have restored their combat effectiveness. They may be reinforced with troops from the operational and strategic reserves.

To develop a non-stop offensive of troops in the theater, the Supreme High Command will maneuver forces and means by axes, deliver strikes with the remaining strategic nuclear forces against enemy troop groupings and newly detected targets, reinforce fronts with separate large units of its own reserve, commit second-echelon fronts to the engagement, and use reserves of all types.

Commitment of second-echelon fronts or armies to the engagement is possible on the main strategic axes and on axes where there have been signs of success or where a serious threat has developed for our troops. Formations of the second operational echelon may be used to rout major groupings of the enemy and take important areas in the depth of the theater of military operations, to ward off an offensive (counterattack) of enemy reserves and rout the groupings of his troops invading our territory, as well as to replace the troops of fronts that have sustained great losses from the enemy nuclear strike.

Depending on the situation, the commitment of a second-echelon front to the engagement may be done at different depths, on the adjoining flanks or on an exposed flank of fronts operating forward, after concentration in an assigned area or from the march.

As the fronts are completing the first operations, the Supreme High Command will assign the tasks for their conduct of subsequent operations. The actions of the troops in the subsequent operations may amount to the elimination of individual surviving groupings and the taking of important installations and areas of the enemy in deep areas of the theater, as well as to organization of the population and restoration of vital activity in the territory of the theater.

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~



During the completion of a strategic operation, combat actions will in all probability be conducted with forces and means of limited strength, primarily with the ground forces with the use predominantly of conventional means of destruction. There will be few nuclear weapons left, and they will be used to deliver strikes against the most important targets.

In this period the combat actions of the ground forces will most likely be in the nature of scattered centers of fighting and develop along separate disconnected axes. The capabilities to reinforce fronts with strategic reserves will be limited. Therefore, the maneuvering even of small-size forces, a few divisions, will in many cases have decisive importance for the successful completion of the strategic operation.

Periods of a strategic offensive operation in a continental theater of military operations

I. A strategic operation in a continental theater of military operations that begins with the use of conventional means of destruction will be characterized by great intensity of combat actions and be conducted under the constantly growing threat of an enemy nuclear attack and with constant readiness to hold one's own nuclear forces for the delivery of a nuclear strike.

*and then it may not?*

It may begin with the conduct of an air operation to destroy or weaken the aviation and the missile/nuclear groupings of the enemy in the theater of military operations for the purpose of gaining air superiority, on which successful actions of the ground forces and the navy will depend. During the air operation it is necessary to:

- destroy the enemy aviation on airfields;
- inflict damage on it in air engagements;
- destroy runways and fuel depots;
- neutralize the control system;
- destroy the nuclear forces.

Of great importance for the seizure of the initiative and the success of the whole strategic operation will be the initial actions of the ground forces.



~~TOP SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~

Page 20 of 23 Pages

Fronts and armies, with the start of a strategic operation and in keeping with the situation that has developed, will conduct meeting engagements on some axes, and on others they will deliver deep splitting attacks with the subsequent encirclement and destruction of individual groupings.

In all cases, the initial actions of our troops must be maximally aggressive and determined, and aimed at thwarting enemy attempts to engage our forces in prolonged battles in the frontier zone. Fronts and armies must deliver deep splitting attacks with a simultaneous encirclement and destruction of individual enemy groupings. It is very important to quickly split up the forces of the enemy, to isolate his individual groupings, strategic areas, and individual countries, and to stop the transfer of reserves from the depth of the theater and especially from overseas.

It is necessary from the very start of the operation to thrust maneuvering methods of action on the enemy and to carry out the rout of his troops in meeting engagements.

Of great importance will be rapid thrusts into the rear of the enemy, flanking movements, envelopments, encirclement, and destruction of his forces in detail. In the process, special attention must be paid to the seizure of basing areas of tactical aviation, siting areas of operational-tactical missiles, and areas of the location of the most important nuclear weapons depots of the enemy.

On axes where the enemy succeeds in taking up a defense, the offensive may begin with a breakthrough of it. To quickly break through a defense requires creating the necessary densities of forces and means, especially of means of fire neutralization of the defending enemy.

✓✓ After breaking through the enemy defense, the fronts will develop a rapid offensive into the depth with strong attack groupings. In this period, on the instructions of the Supreme High Command, large airborne landing forces may be employed. To build up the force of the attacks, the fronts of the first operational echelon may be reinforced with large units and formations of the strategic reserve.

Under unfavorable conditions of the situation in the beginning and during the course of a strategic operation on separate axes, defensive actions may be undertaken on an operational or tactical scale for the purpose of repelling superior forces of the enemy, inflicting damage on him, and bringing about conditions for subsequently going over to a

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~

Page 21 of 23 Pages

determined offensive.

The repulse of the enemy offensive must be carried out aggressively with the delivery against him of powerful air and artillery strikes, as well as counterattacks and counterthrusts with the forces of the second echelons and reserves of the fronts and armies.

It is necessary, with aggressive actions of troops on the defensive and in a short time, to force the enemy to give up a further offensive, wear out his forces, and, using the available reserves as well as those that have arrived from the interior, rout the main attack or counterattack groupings of the enemy and continue the offensive.

The naval forces in the sea portion of the continental theater of military operations will begin operations and combat actions to rout the groupings of enemy naval forces. They will conduct landing operations and combat actions to take straits zones jointly with the troops of coastal fronts; they will disrupt enemy sea shipping, support our own sea shipping, and accomplish other tasks jointly with the troops operating on coastal axes.

The air defense forces of the country and the air defense forces and means of the front and fleet will concentrate their efforts on warding off the massed strikes of enemy aviation, which under the conditions of conducting an operation with the use of conventional means will most probably be delivered against our offensive groupings and against the most important rear services installations.

During the offensive, the strategic nuclear forces and the nuclear forces of the front and fleet must be kept in readiness to deliver a decisive nuclear strike against the aggressor upon receipt of the appropriate signal. The degree of readiness of the nuclear forces, especially of the delivery aircraft, is established in connection with an immediate threat of the use of nuclear weapons by the enemy.

From the very start of the offensive, special attention must be devoted to the detection and destruction of enemy means of nuclear attack, which remain the first-priority targets of destruction also under the conditions of conducting military actions with the use of conventional weapons alone.

As the troops of the fronts on the offensive move forward into the depth, many enemy targets designated for destruction with nuclear weapons

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~

Page 22 of 23 Pages

will have been captured or destroyed. Part of our nuclear forces, especially operational-tactical forces, may also have been put out of action as the result of enemy action. All of this requires the constant introduction of the necessary refinements into the plans of the use of nuclear weapons so that these plans are realistic when the moment of delivering nuclear strikes arrives.

During a strategic operation with the use of only conventional weapons, there may arise "crisis" situations in which the enemy will make a decision to use nuclear weapons. Such a "crisis" situation for the enemy may be brought about upon his loss of important defensive lines, after destruction of his major groupings of troops, upon the threat of the loss of key economic areas, etc.

At this crucial moment, the main task will consist in not giving the enemy the opportunity to preempt us in the delivery of massed nuclear strikes. It is necessary to conduct careful reconnaissance of the enemy and continuously follow the location and relocation of his nuclear forces in order, upon going over to actions with the use of nuclear forces, to destroy these means in the first massed nuclear strike. Simultaneously, it is necessary to take steps to disrupt a nuclear attack that is being prepared and first to allocate aviation in massive numbers to hit the enemy nuclear forces with conventional weapons, to speed up the rates of advance of the troops of the fronts for the purpose of quickly seizing the deployment areas of tactical nuclear forces, and to carry out the drop of airborne divisions and sabotage groups with the task of destroying the control posts of missiles, the delivery aircraft on the airfields, the nuclear warheads depots, and the aviation control and guidance centers.

Going over to the conduct of combat actions with the use of nuclear weapons will lead to a radical change in the nature and methods of conduct of the strategic operation; and it will require of the Supreme High Command, and of formation commanders and staffs, greater creativity in assessing the situation so as not to let the moment pass and not to let the enemy preempt us in actions.

It will be necessary to opportunely prepare all the nuclear forces for the delivery of a strike and to refine their tasks in the initial nuclear strike.

It will also be necessary to refine the tasks of the formations and large units and cooperation among them, and to carry out measures to protect troops against enemy nuclear strikes. All this work will have to

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~



formed in an extremely limited amount of time.

The enemy may employ simultaneously all types of nuclear weapons, including strategic ones, or he may deliver a nuclear strike with definite intentions.

The military-political leadership of the US and the NATO bloc is working out different variants of nuclear escalation. In recent years, in all the exercises of the NATO armed forces, there have been worked out variants of the start of war with the use of conventional weapons, and at a certain stage the sides go over to actions with limited employment of nuclear forces, and after a short time to the use of the entire nuclear arsenal.

II. With the beginning of limited use of nuclear weapons, the main method of conducting military actions by our armed forces will be the delivery of nuclear strikes chiefly to destroy nuclear weapons and hit the immediately opposing forces of the enemy, and the conduct of an offensive in the wake of these strikes for the purpose of routing the enemy and taking a definite territory.

It is most likely that, under the conditions of the uncompromising nature of a future world war, the period of limited use of nuclear weapons in Europe and other important areas of the world cannot be long. The possibility is not excluded that the first nuclear strikes even with tactical means will automatically lead to unlimited use of nuclear weapons with the employment of all nuclear forces.



~~TOP SECRET~~