

AD610627

MEMORANDUM
RM-4805-PR
DECEMBER 1964

COPY	OF	
HARD COPY		\$.4.00
MICROFICHE		\$.1.00

123P

TRENDS IN SOVIET THINKING ON THEATER WARFARE, CONVENTIONAL OPERATIONS, AND LIMITED WAR

Thomas W. Wolfe

PREPARED FOR:

UNITED STATES AIR FORCE PROJECT RAND

DDC
RECEIVED
9 1964

The RAND Corporation
SANTA MONICA - CALIFORNIA

ARCHIVE COPY



MEMORANDUM

RM-4305-PR

DECEMBER 1964

TRENDS IN
SOVIET THINKING ON THEATER WARFARE,
CONVENTIONAL OPERATIONS, AND
LIMITED WAR

Thomas W. Wolfe

This research is sponsored by the United States Air Force under Project RAND—Contract No. AF 49(638)-700 monitored by the Directorate of Development Plans, Deputy Chief of Staff, Research and Development, Hq USAF. Views or conclusions contained in this Memorandum should not be interpreted as representing the official opinion or policy of the United States Air Force.

DDC AVAILABILITY NOTICE

Qualified requesters may obtain copies of this report from the Defense Documentation Center (DDC).

Approved for OTS release

The RAND Corporation

1700 MAIN ST • SANTA MONICA • CALIFORNIA • 90406

PREFACE

This Memorandum, the latest in a continuing series of studies on Soviet military doctrine that RAND has undertaken for the United States Air Force over the last ten years, attempts to explore the degree to which Soviet military and political leaders may be concerning themselves with problems of theater and limited warfare, and with the capabilities needed for conventional operations and participation in local wars.

RAND Report R-416-PR, Soviet Military Strategy, by the present author and two of his RAND colleagues, made available in April 1963 a carefully translated and annotated text of a Soviet book edited by Marshal Sokolovskii that had appeared in Moscow in the fall of 1962, the most comprehensive work on Soviet strategy to be published in the Soviet Union in thirty-six years.

RM-4085-PR by T. W. Wolfe, Soviet Strategy at the Crossroads, was issued in April 1964, some time after a revised edition of the Sokolovskii volume had appeared in the Soviet Union. It examined the factors determining trends in Soviet strategy and evaluated current military thought on the basis of published Soviet materials, including both editions of the Sokolovskii book, with special attention to the nature of the revisions. The two editions of the Sokolovskii work and also the second, revised edition of On Soviet Military Science (a major work by four well-known military writers first published in 1960) have furnished particularly valuable insights to the author.

BLANK PAGE

SUMMARY

Some of the more difficult problems in Soviet military thinking and planning during the past few years have arisen around the relationship between strategic and theater warfare and the forces correspondingly required. Although Soviet thinking has shifted markedly from its traditional preoccupation with continental land warfare and now gives increasing attention to the problems of intercontinental strategic war, it has in many respects not yet come to grips with the interaction between the two. Soviet military theory, for example, now recognizes without reservation the "decisive" influence of strategic nuclear weapons upon the outcome of war as a whole, as well as upon its component theater actions. Indeed, some theoreticians have elevated this idea to the status of a "new general law of warfare." At the same time, however, most Soviet military discourse continues to treat problems of theater warfare in comparative isolation from the larger strategic context, as though theater operations were somehow divorced from the effects of global strategic operations, and vice versa.

In contrast to this compartmentalized approach by Soviet military theoreticians, the Soviet political leadership apparently has realized that the interaction between a theater campaign and global strategic war must be taken into account, especially as it affects

any planning aimed at the military seizure of Europe. By virtue of the military power at their disposal, the Soviets hold Europe "hostage" in an important sense. But their own country and its vital resources are, in turn, hostage to Western strategic power. This means that a Soviet strategy for the conquest of Europe, or even for lesser objectives in Europe through military action, would depend on the certainty that a European war could be isolated from the larger strategic context. The Soviet leaders would seem to be feeling no such certainty: thus far, despite a general lessening of emphasis on the escalation factor, the over-all Soviet political judgment appears to be that war on a theater-wide or even on a local scale in the heart of Europe could not be kept safely within bounds

Most Soviet writers are agreed on the character of future theater warfare. They picture it as taking place within the framework of a general war, which will have opened, at Western initiative, with an exchange of strategic (mainly medium-range) as well as tactical nuclear missiles. In current doctrine, this initial nuclear exchange is followed immediately by offensive operations of tank units, motorized infantry, and airborne forces, supported by tactical aviation, to prevent the enemy from bringing up reserves for a renewal of organized resistance.

The massing of troops in theater warfare is discouraged as furnishing targets for the enemy's nuclear weapons. But Soviet military writers do not attempt to reconcile this caveat with the requirement for

concentration of troops in conventional operations, depending rather on maneuver, mobility, and surprise to permit forces to be "quickly concentrated for mass blows in the necessary locale and just as quickly dispersed again."

Though current literature is not specific on this point, theater campaigns are expected to be of shorter duration than in the past, and thus to place heavier demands on command and control.

Tactical aviation in support of theater ground operations, for a time in danger of being superseded by tactical missiles, has enjoyed a renaissance recently, its importance having been stressed by such non-airmen as tank expert Marshal Rotmistrov and Chief-of-Staff of the Ground Forces Col. Gen. Shtemenko.

Subject to continuing debate in discussions of theater warfare is the distribution of roles between strategic and tactical missiles, and between tactical missiles and tactical aviation. The present tendency is to stress the primary role of strategic missiles; to upgrade the role of tactical aviation; and to treat tactical missiles, not as "a means of fire-support for troops, like artillery," but as "special means of the command" to be used against major theater targets.

Soviet doctrine clearly considers tactical missiles and nuclear weapons the "main firepower" of the ground forces. A question of major interest is whether it envisages large-scale theater or local wars as being fought

with nuclear weapons limited to the tactical kind. Although there is no change in the prevailing position that major theater campaigns will call for both strategic and tactical weapons, nor in the argument that with the introduction of tactical nuclear weapons local wars would escalate into world war, there are signs that a different operative (as distinct from declaratory) position may ultimately evolve. The propaganda and political value of stressing the escalation potential of tactical nuclear weapons argues against any imminent change in the declaratory position, but ampler supply of nuclear material for tactical weapons and a much-reduced risk of escalation as a result of greater mutual deterrence at the strategic level could change at least the operative attitude.

The Soviets' views on theater warfare closely involve their relations with other Warsaw Pact powers. Despite a growing stress on military cooperation, more frequent joint exercises, and the supplying of some East European countries with advanced military equipment (including tactical missiles with nuclear delivery potential), it is not clear how much trust the Soviet Union places in their reliability and effectiveness, and whether it would be willing to relax the control over nuclear weapons that now sets definite limits to the autonomy of other Pact members.

Despite the contention that any war "along the frontiers between the NATO powers and the members of the Warsaw Pact" would quickly become a general nuclear war, Soviet writers have been giving some attention lately to the question of conventional warfare, possibly in response to U.S. interest in improving NATO's conventional capabilities with a view to raising the nuclear threshold in Europe.

It is difficult to gauge the change, if any, that is taking place in operative Soviet views on the possibility of limiting theater warfare to conventional weapons, so long as Soviet writers continue to speak of conventional arms only in the framework of a general war dominated by nuclear weapons or in the specific context of local warfare. Marshal Sokolovskii, one of the collective authors of the widely discussed work Military Strategy, recently furnished, in a jointly-written article in Red Star, some views on conventional war that are of considerable interest. The article, which categorically asserted that any nuclear war would be short, made reference to prolonged military operations (presumably nonnuclear) that might arise out of a local war. It is unclear whether the authors had in mind a protracted war that remained local or one of geographically expanding operations of conventional character. However, it appears from internal evidence that they were not thinking of the European theater.

In the field of limited (or local) war, the customary doctrinal position about the inevitability of escalation shows signs of shifting toward a more flexible formula that would not preclude support of national liberation movements. The problems for the Soviet Union -- and the answer to whether it is possible to limit a given local war as to political objectives, weapons to be used, etc. -- differ basically according to the geographic locale of a limited war. In areas contiguous to the Soviet Union, where Soviet military capabilities would be adequate to the situation, but where the vital interests of the opposing alliance systems are closely involved, the escalation potential would seem too great to justify the risk of

military intervention. Any change in policy, therefore, is more likely to be oriented toward local wars in areas remote from the Soviet Union, a category that would include most "wars of national liberation" in Asia, Africa, and Latin America, whose leaders look to the major communist powers for support. This group of wars, unlike the first, involves the development of capabilities to project suitable weapons and forces into the areas in question, as well as the delicate political problem of competing with Communist China in the championing of revolutionary movements.

For a number of years, the Soviet leadership has sought to resolve the awkward contradiction of stressing the danger of escalation of local conflicts while pledging support to revolutionary movements by drawing a careful distinction between intergovernmental (or local) wars and national liberation wars. In early 1961, Khrushchev argued that the former might lead to dangerous clashes between U.S. and Soviet forces and were therefore to be avoided, while the latter could be more safely pursued with moral support and other indirect aid to indigenous forces. More recently, however, during the acute crises in Laos, Vietnam, and Cyprus, the distinction has become more difficult for the Soviets to maintain, as they have been challenged, both by the local insurgents and by the example of their Chinese rival, to take a more active part in these conflicts. Thus far, they have succeeded in straddling the issue and leaving unclear precisely how much and what kind of military support they are willing to furnish in these and similar situations.

The case of Cyprus, on the periphery of Central Europe, provided an interesting example, as it created both dangers and opportunities for Soviet policy and tested Moscow's approach to third-power conflicts in the European sphere. The present Memorandum traces the emergence of the Soviet position on Cyprus and analyzes the leadership's artful "crisis management" in the dangerous days of August 1964.

Similarly instructive were the developments in South-east Asia that culminated in the events in the Tonkin Gulf last August, for here the United States, the Soviet Union, and also Communist China were closely involved in a situation that combined features of both local and national liberation war and entailed the danger of a larger war. Khrushchev's speeches of July 8 and August 8 stand out as landmarks in the evolution of the Soviet position. In the first, he described the struggle in South Vietnam as both a local and a national liberation war (thus ignoring his own formula on the need to distinguish between the two, and jeopardizing the protection it afforded against involvement), in the apparent hope that an implied threat of intervention at the local level would restrain the United States. After the Americans had nonetheless taken strong retaliatory action, being careful to emphasize its limited character, Khrushchev in his second speech avoided any suggestion of imminent local involvement, falling back instead on vigorous but generalized assertions of Moscow's willingness to risk general war, that is to say, on the deterrent effect of the threat of world war.

Should Soviet policy hereafter move toward intervention in distant conflicts, the country's military capabilities would need expanding in a direction already partly evident.

Among relevant developments in recent years are: the presence of Soviet military personnel in such places as Cuba, Indonesia, and parts of the Middle East; the extensive military assistance programs in a number of nations outside the Soviet bloc, which have yielded useful experience in training and handling military forces under unfamiliar geographic and climatic conditions, and which might conceivably pave the way for future logistic bases abroad; a renewed interest in amphibious landing capabilities; and the recent rehabilitation (after their virtual eclipse) of the marines, whose role in special landing operations has been emphasized.

These developments do not necessarily point to a fully articulated and implemented Soviet doctrine of local war. They do, however, suggest a recognition that the Soviet Union might be well advised to enhance its capabilities for projecting military power into remote areas in support of local conflicts.

CONTENTS

PREFACE.....	iii
SUMMARY.....	v
Section	
I. INTRODUCTION.....	1
II. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN STRATEGIC AND THEATER WARFARE IN SOVIET DISCOURSE.....	4
New Book Responsive to Criticism.....	7
Short-War Implications for Theater Operations Not Explored.....	10
The Issue of Size of the Soviet Armed Forces	12
III. THEATER WARFARE.....	17
Image of Initial Theater Operations.....	18
Emphasis on Offensive Operations.....	21
Need to Avoid Massing of Troops in Theater Operations.....	24
Size and Duration of Theater Campaigns.....	25
Stress on Role of Tank and Airborne Forces..	27
Role of Aviation in Theater Warfare.....	29
Question of Tactical Nuclear Weapons.....	32
Warsaw Pact Considerations Affecting Soviet Theater Planning.....	35
IV. CONVENTIONAL WARFARE IN A THEATER CONTEXT.....	41
V. LIMITED WAR.....	49
Pressures for Change of Soviet Position on Limited War.....	50
Tactical Nuclear Weapons and Local War.....	54
VI. QUESTION OF LIMITING THIRD-POWER CONFLICTS IN EUROPE.....	59
The Cyprus Case.....	61
VII. THE PROBLEM OF NATIONAL LIBERATION WARS.....	69
Sharpening of Criticism from the Chinese Camp.....	72
Soviet Limited War Attitudes in Light of the Southeast Asia Situation.....	78

VIII.	LIMITED WAR AND THE DEBATE OVER WAR AS AN INSTRUMENT OF POLICY.....	91
IX.	THE QUESTION OF IMPROVING SOVIET LOCAL WAR CAPABILITIES.....	95
	Growing Interest in Amphibious Landing Capabilities.....	99
	Rehabilitation of the Marines.....	103

I. INTRODUCTION

The evolving relationship between strategic nuclear operations of global scale and continental theater warfare has given rise to some of the most vexed problems in Soviet military thinking and planning during the past few years. The relative weight which should be accorded strategic versus theater warfare considerations includes not only hard decisions as to priority claims on resources between strategic forces (offensive and defensive) on the one hand and theater forces (general purpose forces) on the other; it also involves basic conceptual problems as to the kind of war for which the Soviet armed forces should be equipped and trained to fight. Underlying these considerations is the still more basic issue whether Soviet military preparations should be aimed primarily at deterrence or at improving Soviet capabilities to fight a war if deterrence should fail.

The military policies pursued by Khrushchev from the late fifties to the time of his recent downfall have clearly resulted in a shift of resources from theater to strategic forces, and have been accompanied on the conceptual level by a shift from almost exclusive preoccupation with continental land warfare to a growing emphasis on the problems of intercontinental strategic war. Both trends have met with considerable resistance from various elements of the Soviet military, giving rise to a running debate during the past few years, but by and large it can be said that a body of practical decisions and theoretical views reflecting the outlook of Khrushchev and the "modernist" school of Soviet military thought has tended gradually to prevail.

This does not mean, however, that "final solutions" in an objective sense have been arrived at on either the practical or the conceptual level with regard to the relationship between strategic and theater warfare and the forces correspondingly required. Many factors combine to keep the problem in flux. These include among other things: an internal competition, as yet apparently unresolved, for allocation of resources;¹ the effect of

¹The competition for resources, both that between the armed forces and civilian sectors of the economy and among various elements within the military establishment itself, has been a persistent feature of the defense policy debate in the Soviet Union. Evidence of the continuing vitality of this issue is discussed in the present author's Soviet Strategy at the Crossroads, The RAND Corporation, RM-4085-PR, April 1964 (recently issued also as a book by the Harvard University Press), especially pages 4-6, 34-38, 172-192. Since publication of the foregoing, further evidence has appeared that the resource allocation competition remains unresolved. One of the more interesting signs was the apparent concern expressed in July 1964 by Admiral S. G. Gorshkov, head of the Soviet navy, with regard to the naval share of the defense budget. In an article celebrating Navy Day, and given over mostly to extolling the contributions of the naval forces to Soviet security, Gorshkov offered a brief glimpse into the background debate over resources. Using the technique of historical analogy frequently employed by Soviet officials to convey criticism of current policy, Gorshkov cited the earlier rejection by M. V. Frunze of the idea that, "in connection with our shortage of resources, some comrades think it would be better to concentrate our whole attention on the ground forces." Gorshkov's reminder that Frunze had considered "such a point of view to be very erroneous" came on the heels of a speech by Khrushchev little more than two weeks earlier in which Khrushchev had pointedly reaffirmed his own view that surface vessels "have largely become obsolete for warfare under today's conditions." See Admiral S. G. Gorshkov, "Guarding the Sea Frontiers," Pravda, July 26, 1964, and Khrushchev's Speech to Graduates of Military Academies, Pravda, July 9, 1964.

NATO military programs and strategy on Soviet planning; the requirements still to be met to provide a strategic posture suitable for deterrence and support of Soviet political objectives in a dynamic world situation; and pressure on the Soviet leadership from the Chinese wing of the communist camp to demonstrate that Soviet pre-occupation with the problem of world war and how to avoid its risks has not "immobilized" Soviet backing of revolutionary movements in the underdeveloped areas of Asia, Africa, and Latin America. Finally, of course, there is Khrushchev's fall from power, an event which may well have far-reaching effects upon Soviet military policy, but which is still too close (it occurred after the body of this study was written) to allow useful judgments as to its consequences.

II. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN STRATEGIC AND THEATER
WARFARE IN SOVIET DISCOURSE

So far as Soviet military discourse is concerned, the problems of conducting a continental war, especially in the European theater, and those of intercontinental strategic warfare with the U.S. adversary, have tended to remain more or less compartmentalized. Partly, this is due to a military tradition and body of experience in which the problem of land warfare in Europe has long been the dominant consideration. Even since the advent of the nuclear age, strategic operations and the forces for conducting them have tended, in the Soviet case, to be oriented mainly around the European theater. Thus, when many Soviet military writers speak of "strategic operations," they often have in mind operations directed at European rather than intercontinental targets, and similarly a very large proportion of the Soviet strategic missile force itself still consists of medium- and intermediate-range missiles which cannot reach targets beyond the Eurasian periphery. Only in the last few years, and under the relentless prodding of Khrushchev and the modernist school in general, has the traditional bent of many Soviet military men been sufficiently altered to bring the global strategic aspects of the situation more into the foreground.

In this connection, it is revealing that as late as 1963, in the second edition of the Sokolovskii volume Military Strategy, which appeared a little more than a year after the first, the authors had occasion to remark that "a debate continues" and that

In essence, the argument is over the basic ways in which a future war will be conducted. Will it on the one hand be a land war with the employment of nuclear weapons as a means of supporting the operations of the ground forces, or will it on the other hand be a fundamentally new kind of war in which the main means of solving strategic tasks will be missiles and nuclear weapons?²

As pointed out elsewhere by this writer,³ it strikes one as somewhat strange to find this issue posed as a matter of serious debate after the great outpouring of assertions in Soviet military literature of the last few years that a new war would be "fundamentally" different from any past war and that strategic missile-nuclear weapons would be the "main and decisive" means employed. One may venture to say that the question at issue noted by the Sokolovskii authors may have been less a matter of selecting one basic strategy versus the other -- i.e., a theater versus a global strategy -- than of debate over the ways in which theater campaigns on the Eurasian continent should be related in scope, character, and timing to global strategic operations. Or, putting it another way, the problem may be one of trying to define the interaction between strategic and theater warfare. Not only the Sokolovskii volume, but a good deal of other Soviet military discourse conveys the impression that Soviet thought on the relationship and interaction between strategic

² Marshal V. D. Sokolovskii et al., Voennaia Strategia (Military Strategy), 2nd edition, Voenizdat, Moscow, 1963 (hereafter cited by the Russian title), p. 367.

³ See Wolfe, Soviet Strategy at the Crossroads, p. 292.

and theater warfare is still feeling its way between conceptions relating essentially to a European land-war strategy and those associated with the strategy for a new kind of war against a powerful transoceanic enemy, without having yet managed to work out an organic connection between the two.

This impression, incidentally, is fortified by another major Soviet work, On Soviet Military Science, a book by four well-known military writers which has recently appeared in a second, revised edition.⁴ The first edition, published in 1960 at a time when Soviet military theory was just beginning to feel the influence of Khrushchev's thinking with regard to the primacy of strategic missile forces, proved to be somewhat controversial. In fact, it was conspicuously singled out for criticism in 1962 by the authors of Sokolovskii's Military Strategy (first edition) for having failed to appreciate properly the impact of nuclear weapons and missiles on modern warfare. Specifically, the Sokolovskii authors charged that the book had misinterpreted the role of the strategic missile forces in modern war by assuming that they would be used primarily to support the ground forces in theater campaigns -- an "incorrect concept," they said, resulting from "overvaluing the experience of the last war and mechanically applying it to modern conditions."⁵

⁴Major Generals S. N. Kozlov, M. V. Smirnov, Colonels I. S. Baz and P. A. Sidorov, O Sovetskoi Voennoi Nauke (On Soviet Military Science), 2nd edition, Voenizdat, Moscow, 1964.

⁵Marshal V. D. Sokolovskii et al., Soviet Military Strategy, 1st edition, with analytical Introduction and Annotations by H. S. Dinerstein, L. Gouré, and T. W. Wolfe, Prentice-Hall, Inc., Englewood Cliffs, N. J., 1963, p. 401.

NEW BOOK RESPONSIVE TO CRITICISM

In the second edition of On Soviet Military Science, its authors have quite obviously set out to amend this shortcoming by introducing extensive changes through which -- as the preface points out -- "is shown the decisive significance of missile-nuclear weapons in modern war and their influence on changing methods and forms of warfare."⁶ The new edition indeed reflects the growing emphasis given in Soviet literature in the last few years to the "decisive" influence of strategic nuclear weapons upon the outcome of war as a whole, as well as upon its component theater actions. A statement typifying the book's position on this matter, and elevating it to the status of a "new general law of warfare," runs as follows:

Under conditions of missile-nuclear war, the possibility arises of attaining decisive strategic results directly through strategic nuclear strikes, which can not only pre-determine the outcome of operations and battles, but of the whole war. This is a new general law, inherently related to the new means of warfare.⁷

Speaking elsewhere in the book of the radical changes in warfare brought about by missile-nuclear weapons, the authors state, among other things, that

In a missile-nuclear war . . . the focal point of military operations shifts from the sphere of front-line clashes between armed forces to the more vital regions in the depths of a warring country or coalition. As a consequence, the very concept of "front" and "rear" has radically changed.⁸

⁶On Soviet Military Science, 2nd edition, p. 321.

⁷Ibid., p. 32.

⁸Ibid., pp. 336-337.

One might expect, after such recognition of the new reach and power of strategic weapons and of the merging of "front" and "rear" in modern war, that the authors would attempt to explore in some detail the implications of this situation for theater warfare within the context of a larger general war. As a matter of fact, however, the authors make no real attempt to come to grips with questions of interaction between strategic and theater warfare in concrete circumstances, where both intercontinental strategic operations and specific theater campaigns could be assumed to be taking place within the common framework of a general war. Rather, they go on to treat theater warfare problems and developments in comparative isolation, as though these were somehow divorced from the effects of global strategic operations, and vice versa. At one point, after stating that long-range blows at the rear have become the focal point of modern war, the authors observe: "This does not mean that warfare in the form of clashes between ground, naval and air forces, contending in direct contact with each other along strategic fronts [in theaters], has lost its significance under modern conditions."⁹ However, they do not elaborate on the connection between these two forms of warfare. At another place, speaking of factors which influence the planning of theater campaigns, the authors even seem to dismiss the likelihood of bringing theater operations into concert with an over-all strategic effort. Military campaigns, they state, "will develop in various ways in main and secondary

⁹
Ibid., pp. 336-337.

theaters. They will follow a varied course in different seasons of the year. It will not be possible to plan them as a single strategic effort."¹⁰

In common with most Soviet military writing, the second edition of On Soviet Military Science continues to voice the caveat that, despite the leading role of the strategic missile forces, one cannot expect them to perform all the essential tasks of modern war or to insure military victory without the combined action of other forces. The following passage typifies the authors' outlook on this point:

Despite their leading role in the armed forces, the missile forces cannot fully supplant conventional weapons and forces, for they are not in a position to solve all the tasks in war. In particular, missile forces are unable to clean out local remnants of the enemy's forces, which have been subjected to missile strikes, nor can they seize territory and consolidate it on their own account.¹¹

This adherence to the doctrine of combined arms suggests that the authors' thinking is still oriented in large measure to the problems of theater warfare. The combined arms concept -- both in the light of Soviet military tradition and in view of the kinds of military forces at Soviet disposal -- applies more to theater warfare operations on the Eurasian continent than to intercontinental strategic war. Serious attention to the question how combined arms operations might be conducted by Soviet forces overseas and how such operations might be integrated with intercontinental strategic nuclear attacks is not to be found

¹⁰Ibid., p. 359.

¹¹Ibid., p. 298. See also pp. 13-14, 339, 389.

in the new volume, just as this is a relatively neglected area in other Soviet military literature.

SHORT-WAR IMPLICATIONS FOR THEATER OPERATIONS NOT EXPLORED

Another aspect of the interaction between strategic warfare and theater operations, with implications which the authors of On Soviet Military Science appear to have disregarded, arises out of their discussion of the possibility of a very brief war under nuclear conditions. The question of the duration of a future war has been for some time a central issue in Soviet discourse. The new volume hedges on this issue, but it does tend to cast the main weight of its analysis on the short-war side of the argument. For example, it presents the possibility of quick victory through direct strategic attacks as a new "general law of warfare."¹² In a number of passages, the book sounds variations on the theme that "a modern missile-nuclear war can be ended in a short time."¹³ It cautions, however, that this will demand the most stringent preparation and execution of strategic strikes.¹⁴ It also adds the usual caveat that the Soviet armed forces and the country as a whole "must be prepared also to conduct a possibly more or less lengthy armed conflict."¹⁵

¹² Ibid., pp. 321, 323.

¹³ Ibid., p. 343. See also pp. 325, 344, 346-347.

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 344.

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 388. Incidentally, the wording of this hedge -- "more or less lengthy" -- is somewhat more tentative than the usual formula found in Soviet military writing.

The essential point of interest here is not this hedging on the length of a nuclear war, but the failure to bring up in any serious way the implications which a war "quickly consummated" by strategic means would have for theater warfare. Certainly, such a short war would raise many basic questions about scope and duration of, and even the necessity for, extensive theater operations of the kind which the authors seem to believe would take place in any event. Again, the authors follow the custom prevalent in all but a minority segment of Soviet military literature, declining to probe such questions deeply, as if to imply that the initial period of strategic nuclear exchanges in a war would not substantially alter the situation with which theater warfare planners would be concerned.

At one point in their revised work, the authors seem almost prepared to come to grips with these matters. They discuss here the "ever-increasing scope of destruction in missile-nuclear war" and the need for "rigid centralization and coordination of the efforts of all forces under a single plan and a single command,"¹⁶ a conception, incidentally, which seems to contradict their assertion elsewhere that theater campaigns can not be planned "as a single strategic effort." Then they go on to say that all this "gives grounds for considering that operations [in a theater] may take on strategic scope." However, instead of exploring the implied merging of missile-nuclear strategic warfare and theater operations, they merely remark that further study should be given such theater operations.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 369.

Thus, like most other Soviet military writing, the new edition of On Soviet Military Science contributes very little on the whole to professional analysis of the influence of global and strategic operations upon theater operations, or of the interaction between the two. However, with respect to one issue which can be said to be of central importance within the context of the Soviet military policy debate, the authors do venture somewhat beyond the position taken by many of their military colleagues. This concerns the question whether the development of strategic capabilities, and particularly the creation of the strategic missile forces, means that now other elements of the Soviet armed forces may be reduced in size.

THE ISSUE OF SIZE OF THE SOVIET ARMED FORCES

This question has significant practical implications for Soviet theater or general purpose forces in particular, for they are the ones to bear the main brunt of the various troop-cut programs which Khrushchev has espoused from time to time. His latest suggestion for a further reduction (of indefinite size) came in December 1963, so that the issue -- as the authors of On Soviet Military Science were presumably aware -- has current policy implications that make it an even more touchy question than usual.¹⁷

¹⁷For a discussion of this proposal and the generally negative reaction to it among Soviet military leaders, see the present writer's Soviet Strategy at the Crossroads, pp. 172-192. One may speculate that Khrushchev's December proposal of a further troop reduction, which evidently has not yet been implemented, could have been among the issues which led to his downfall ten months later.

Despite this circumstance, the authors address themselves on a number of occasions to the numerical factor in military power, sometimes in the general context of "quantity versus quality" and sometimes coming closer to the direct issue of force levels, although it must be said that they still steer clear of specific figures on the latter subject.

One theme which turns up in their discussion several times is that the day has passed when military power could be defined by the "number of bayonets" or divisions,¹⁸ and that what counts most today is "not the number of soldiers, but the quantity and quality of missile-nuclear weapons, rocket artillery, missile-launching aircraft and ships, especially atomic submarines, and also other technical means of combat."¹⁹ It should be noted that this formula stresses both "quantity and quality" in selected categories, and not "quality" alone. Masses of ground troops and divisions are the main category which the authors seem ready to earmark for sacrifice. A fuller statement on the subject appears elsewhere, in a section where the authors argue that such Stalinist "permanently operating factors" as "the quantity and quality of divisions" no longer should be regarded as sacrosanct and should not be loosely applied apart from "concrete historical circumstances." They say:

The factor of "quantity and quality of divisions" in war has been considered in isolation from concrete historical conditions, giving rise to incorrect interpretation of it. In the period when war was primarily a matter of military operations in land theaters and when the military

¹⁸On Soviet Military Science, 2nd edition, p. 389.

¹⁹Ibid., p. 297. See also p. 390, where several items are added to this enumeration, including "nuclear stores in general" and "tanks."

power of a state was based on ground troops, combat capability was defined in terms of the quantity and quality of tactical units -- divisions. Nowadays, the new technical means of warfare, mainly missile-nuclear weapons, have emerged as the decisive factor in armed forces. Today the military power of a state depends basically not on the quantity and quality of divisions, but on how many nuclear weapons and what kinds of delivery means a state possesses.²⁰

Moreover, the authors go on, it must be borne in mind that divisions today are not the same as formerly, and while "the numerical size of a division has been significantly reduced in comparison with the past, its combat capability has sharply increased."²¹ All this, they observe, "demonstrates that the 'quality and quantity of divisions' must not be considered in the abstract, apart from concrete historical conditions."²²

When dealing with the specific question of how far the Soviet Union may properly go in reducing the size of its armed forces today in the light of "concrete historical conditions" currently prevailing, the authors become somewhat vague. They offer the view that modern firepower affords "the possibility of reducing the numerical size of the armed forces,"²³ and they state elsewhere that the Soviet government has consistently followed the line that "the size of our armed forces at each concrete historical stage should not exceed the actual defense needs of the country."²⁴ Nowhere, however, do they go beyond saying,

²⁰Ibid., pp. 292-293.

²¹Ibid., p. 297.

²²Ibid., p. 293.

²³Ibid., p. 297.

²⁴Ibid., p. 201.

in a current context, merely that the Soviet armed forces today are "at the level of current requirements."²⁵ While all this may provide general support for the troop-cut programs favored from time to time in the past by Khrushchev, it is studiously noncommittal as to the merits of a further reduction. Neither, incidentally, does the discussion go very far toward tackling on a professional analytical basis such interesting specific questions as the extent to which long-range strategic operations may have displaced theater warfare itself, and the consequent effects upon the size, deployment, and missions of theater forces.

Without pursuing this particular line of comment further, it is sufficient to suggest here, on the basis of the book in question and other Soviet discourse, that the Soviets still appear to be in the throes of an organizational and conceptual upheaval brought on by the revolution in military technology. Their ability to assimilate the changes produced by this revolution certainly should not be underrated. But in the meantime, their doctrine and strategy appears to be in flux on many questions, not the least of which are those bearing on the articulation between a European theater campaign and an intercontinental strategic war.

In terms of Soviet strategy, the interaction between a European theater campaign and larger strategic warfare on an intercontinental scale is, of course, clearly more than a theoretical matter. It bears directly on what can be regarded as the central and apparently unresolved problem of any Soviet strategic plan aimed at military

²⁵ Ibid., p. 202.

seizure or destruction of Europe. The Soviets, by virtue of the military power at their disposal, hold Europe "hostage" in an important sense. But in turn, their own country and its vital resources are also hostage to Western strategic power. This means that a Soviet strategy for the conquest of Europe, or even for lesser objectives in Europe through military action, would have to count upon being able to isolate a European war from the larger strategic context. Only if the Soviet leadership were confident that the United States would not honor its commitment to employ its full war-making capacity, if necessary, in the defense of Europe could the Kremlin calculate with assurance that a war would remain confined to Europe.

The Soviet political leadership seems to have appreciated this fundamental point, even though Soviet strategic thought has tended to ignore its implications. Thus far, the overall Soviet political judgment appears to have been that a war on a theater-wide or even local scale in Europe could not be kept limited. It is pertinent in this connection, as will be discussed later, that the tendency in recent Soviet thinking to play down somewhat the possibility of escalation of local and limited war does not apply to local warfare that might arise in the heart of Europe.

III. THEATER WARFARE

Turning now to the question of theater warfare itself, it may be noted that Soviet military writers continue to give this subject the bulk of their attention, despite the increase of emphasis in military media upon problems of intercontinental strategic war and the prominence given in a political-psychological context to the strategic missile forces as an instrument of Soviet policy and as the backbone of the Soviet deterrent posture.²⁶ Consequently, there is a large body of theater doctrine and concepts upon which, with certain exceptions, most Soviet military expositors seem to agree. A few of its main features are discussed below.

The central conception common to almost all Soviet discussion of theater warfare is that this kind of war will be fought within the framework of a general war which will have opened with strategic nuclear exchanges by both sides. In the case most frequently considered in Soviet literature -- that of a European theater campaign -- the major strategic objective of the theater operations would be the rapid occupation of Europe and its isolation from U.S. support, the latter objective being accomplished with the help of separate operations against sea and air lines of communication between Europe and America.²⁷

²⁶On the latter questions, see Soviet Strategy at the Crossroads, especially pp. 26-45, 52-71, 209-213.

²⁷See Voennaia Strategia, 2nd edition, pp. 382-390, 417.

IMAGE OF INITIAL THEATER OPERATIONS

Military operations in the theater have customarily been described in Soviet literature as beginning with simultaneous strategic nuclear strikes and an offensive by theater forces. The Soviet description of initial operations invariably ascribes war initiation to the enemy, of course, and pictures the opening Soviet moves as retaliatory action, intended, if possible, to break up a detected enemy attack before it can be fully launched. Needless to say, Soviet planners have probably given thought to other war outbreak scenarios in which the Soviet side would get in the first blow, but these are not mentioned in the open literature and may be discussed only indirectly even in classified literature.

The open literature does recognize some variations from the standard picture of war starting with a massive surprise nuclear attack on the Soviet Union. One of these is escalation from a local conflict into general war, and another is a war started under the cover of NATO field exercises, presumably in a period of crisis.²⁸ The possibility of third powers embarking on local hostilities into which the major powers would be drawn also is implied, with the case of possible West German intervention in East Germany apparently uppermost in the Soviet mind.²⁹ War beginning through miscalculation or accident is still

²⁸ See Soviet Military Strategy, pp. 47-48, 356, 383-393, 396.

²⁹ See Soviet Strategy at the Crossroads, pp. 44, 155-157.

another possibility on the Soviet list.³⁰ In all these variant cases, however, the Soviet literature offers very little idea of the different ways in which theater operations might be affected, beyond general statements that a war beginning by massive surprise attack could be expected to develop quite differently from one growing out of a local conflict.³¹ Most Soviet writers continue to assume that theater operations will be undertaken on a maximum scale, particularly in Europe, immediately at the onset of war.

The timing of theater force operations to begin simultaneously with the initial Soviet strategic strikes is not, however, a fixed feature of Soviet writing on this subject. In fact, recent descriptions in the second editions of both the Sokolovskii volume and On Soviet Military Science suggest that theater force operations would follow the strategic strikes after an indeterminate (but probably brief) interval. Airborne and tank forces, together with tactical air, are the first theater elements which may be employed. The Sokolovskii account, describing the initial phases of a hypothetical theater operation, reads in part:

This will be a theater offensive following nuclear strikes by strategic means, which will play the decisive role in defeat of the enemy.

Following the retaliatory nuclear strikes, airborne landings may be launched in great depth and -- depending on the radiological conditions -- the ground force formations which are still intact will initiate a rapid advance with the

³⁰ Ibid., p. 132. See also Voennaia Strategia, 2nd edition, p. 364.

³¹ Voennaia Strategia, 2nd edition, p. 378.

support of the air force, in order to complete the destruction of the surviving armed forces of the enemy.³²

The slightly varying account in On Soviet Military Science is as follows:

[The offensive] will begin with powerful missile-nuclear strikes against the enemy's defenses throughout the whole of his operational-strategic depth. Ground forces, particularly tank and airborne forces, will quickly follow up the missile-nuclear strikes, operating customarily in open formation. Simultaneously with the beginning of the offensive by tanks and motorized infantry, tactical and operational airborne landings will be conducted, both in the tactical and operational zones of the enemy's defenses.³³ Troops will penetrate the tactical zone at a rapid tempo, striving to break out into the operational-scale zone. For deep development of successes in the latter, powerful tank armies will be employed.³⁴

As in both of the above accounts, Soviet literature invariably calls for rapid exploitation of the initial nuclear strikes. This is considered important not only to seize the initiative and develop the offensive against the enemy, but also "to deny him the capability of bringing in fresh reserves and preparing himself for a renewal of

³²Ibid., p. 374.

³³In Soviet usage, a special category, labeled "operational," stands between tactical and strategic operations. An operation of this special "operational scale" might involve several fronts within a theater, but would ordinarily be something less than a theater campaign as a whole. Soviet writers differ as to the precise scope of this term, but some have referred to such major battles as Stalingrad, Kursk, and Berlin in the last war as typical examples of "operational-scale" events. Cf. On Soviet Military Science, 2nd ed., p. 259.

³⁴On Soviet Military Science, 2nd ed., p. 355.

organized resistance."³⁵ Both for the rapid exploitation of nuclear strikes and to mitigate the effects of the enemy's use of nuclear weapons, Soviet military literature underscores the greatly increased importance of maneuver in theater operations. Some accounts state that under modern conditions "maneuver has become the basic feature" of such operations, and this is said to be especially true from the standpoint of conducting offensive warfare.³⁶

EMPHASIS ON OFFENSIVE OPERATIONS

With regard to the question of the offensive, Soviet literature today lays great stress on the point that, in both strategic and theater operations, "the offensive constitutes the basic method of warfare."³⁷ Room is left for such other methods as the "strategic defense," "holding operations," and "strategic withdrawal" under specified conditions,³⁸ but the main emphasis is on the point that

Only a decisive offensive with massive use of all forces, involving both mutual cooperation and the exploitation of their specific individual capabilities and taking

³⁵ Ibid., p. 325.

³⁶ Colonel I. Vorobev, "Maneuver in Contemporary Combat of General Purpose Troops," Red Star, June 6, 1964. This article is one of a lengthy series which began in Red Star in January 1964 under the general rubric of "The Revolution in Military Affairs: Its Significance and Consequences."

³⁷ On Soviet Military Science, 2nd ed., p. 249

³⁸ Ibid., pp. 261, 264, 326, 328. See also Major General V. Reznichenko and Colonel A. Sidorenko, "Tactics at the Present Stage," Red Star, February 12, 1964. (This also is one of the series on "The Revolution in Military Affairs.")

into account the decisive role of missile-nuclear weapons, can bring victory.³⁹

The notion of adopting the strategic defense during the first phases of a war, as was done under Stalin in the early period of World War II, is now specifically rejected in Soviet military theory. Colonel General S. Shtemenko, chief-of-staff of the Soviet ground forces, and other Soviet military men have expressed strong opinions on the "unacceptability" of the strategic defense in a modern war, arguing that "orienting oneself on the strategic defense . . . means dooming oneself beforehand to irreparable losses and defeat."⁴⁰ While such statements appear generally to be written with the effects of strategic nuclear operations in mind, similar emphasis applies to the importance of adopting the offensive in theater operations also.

In speaking of the "offensive orientation of Soviet military doctrine" today, Soviet writers are careful to assert that it "has nothing in common with the aggressive, predatory tendencies in the military doctrine of the USA and its allies." If the Soviet Union is attacked, however,

³⁹ On Soviet Military Science, 2nd ed., p. 249. See also Lt. Colonel L. Korzun, "Defense in Modern Combat," Red Star, August 22, 1964, who said "history confirms that a defensive doctrine has never led to success."

⁴⁰ Colonel-General S. Shtemenko, "Scientific-Technical Progress and Its Influence on the Development of Military Affairs," Kommunist Vooruzhennykh Sil (Communist of the Armed Forces), No. 3, February 1963, pp. 27-28; Major D. Kazakov, "The Theoretical and Methodological Basis of Soviet Military Science," ibid., No. 10, May 1963, pp. 10-11; Colonel V. Konoplev, "On Scientific Foresight in Military Affairs," ibid., No. 24, December 1963, p. 28.

then Soviet forces will wage war at "maximum offensive intensity, in order to defeat the enemy in the shortest period of time."⁴¹ One of "the laws governing the offensive," according to the authors of On Soviet Military Science, is "to seize and hold the initiative," and it is also important to assure "that offensive formations are supplied with everything necessary, especially nuclear weapons."⁴² In theater operations, they note, new means of warfare have brought basic changes in the way the offensive may be conducted, and especially have affected the formerly predominant role of the ground troops:

The essence of the new situation is that an offensive operation has ceased to be the prerogative of ground troops only. A modern offensive operation is least of all an inherently "ground-oriented" matter. It has become a general operation of various branches of the armed forces.⁴³

Other writers likewise point out that at the tactical level also the participation of ground troops in offensive operations has undergone a radical change of character: "An attack by foot soldiers will be a rare phenomenon," for the old infantry tactics "have given way to new tactics based on motorized troops in armored personnel carriers."⁴⁴

⁴¹On Soviet Military Science, 2nd ed., pp. 388, 389.

⁴²Ibid., p. 319.

⁴³Ibid., p. 261.

⁴⁴Reznichenko and Sidorenko, Red Star, February 12, 1964.

NEED TO AVOID MASSING OF TROOPS IN THEATER OPERATIONS

Another change of great importance under modern conditions, according to Soviet writers, concerns the "principle of mass employment of forces." While concentration of forces "at the necessary place and time" for carrying out "the main, first-priority tasks" remains valid,⁴⁵ "it must be borne in mind, when conducting an offensive, that the enemy may employ nuclear weapons at any moment."⁴⁶ Therefore, troops must operate in "dispersed formations," and "exceptional flexibility must be exercised in directing them so they can be quickly concentrated for mass blows in the necessary locale and just as quickly dispersed again."⁴⁷ A similar rationale is advanced by other writers in stressing the new importance of maneuver and mobility in modern theater warfare.⁴⁸ Because of the nuclear threat, restrictions on massing troops in theater operations also apply during conventional operations, according to the authors of On Soviet Military Science:

Even when conducting operations with conventional means, the principle of mass employment of forces must be applied with great care, since the chances of surprise

⁴⁵ On Soviet Military Science, 2nd ed., p. 327.

⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 329.

⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 355. See also p. 325, where the warning is given that troops must be able to fight in dispersed fashion "in order to avoid the destruction of large groupings with a single nuclear weapon."

⁴⁸ Vorobev, Red Star, June 6, 1964.

missile-nuclear attack, even if with tactical nuclear weapons only, remains.⁴⁹

The matter of surprise nuclear attacks on field forces in the course of operations is not looked upon solely from the viewpoint of necessary Soviet vigilance against such attacks by the enemy. This is suggested by the statement that Soviet military theory considers important, not only the principle of simultaneous suppression of enemy forces to their full tactical and operational depth, but also "the principle of secret preparation and surprise delivery of strikes in the course of a war on a strategic as well as operational and tactical scale."⁵⁰ Other writers have put it still more bluntly, stating that "secrecy" in maneuvering one's forces will "facilitate surprise strikes against the enemy; make it possible to take him unawares and inflict heavy losses on him."⁵¹

SIZE AND DURATION OF THEATER CAMPAIGNS

The size of the Soviet forces contemplated for campaigns in various theaters, including the European theater, is a subject which, as previously noted, is not discussed in specific terms in the open Soviet literature. However, the general impression given in most Soviet writing is that combat forces of somewhat smaller size than formerly would be involved in theater operations. For example, in discussing the combined-arms forces necessary to "achieve

⁴⁹On Soviet Military Science, 2nd ed.; p. 329.

⁵⁰Ibid., p. 325.

⁵¹Vorobev, Red Star, June 6, 1964.

major strategic results" in a theater of military operations, the authors of On Soviet Military Science observe that a "single front" can now perform the strategic tasks carried out in the last war by "groups of fronts":

In contrast with the last war, when strategic operations usually unfolded in the form of operations by groups of fronts, they can be accomplished now in a theater of military operations by the forces of a single front, and in a maritime theater -- by the forces of a single fleet.⁵²

The expected duration of particular theater campaigns likewise is a subject not treated in specific detail in the open Soviet military literature. Again, however, the general impression conveyed is that theater campaigns would run their course much more rapidly than in the past. On this point, speaking of the development of a typical offensive in a theater of war in which the stated objective would be "to destroy all the forces of the enemy in the theater, including his missile sites, airfields and rear bases," the authors of On Soviet Military Science state:

Such an offensive may take a varying amount of time. In the last war a strategic offensive continued without interruption for three to five months. In a missile-nuclear war, of course, it will be conducted at a much more rapid tempo, and will be of significantly shorter duration.⁵³

The rate of daily movement made possible in theater operations by modern mechanized warfare -- put at "more than 20 kilometers per day" under conditions already existing at the close of the last war -- is also cited by

⁵²On Soviet Military Science, 2nd ed., p. 360.

⁵³Ibid., p. 357.

some authors as a factor which, along with the increase in firepower with the advent of nuclear weapons, will make it possible to defeat the enemy "in the shortest period of time."⁵⁴ Another aspect of the time factor in modern theater operations which receives a good deal of attention in Soviet literature is the high demand it places on command and control,⁵⁵ and upon the instant readiness of forces to go into battle "from the march," without the lengthy preparation for launching an offensive customary in the past.⁵⁶

STRESS ON ROLE OF TANK AND AIRBORNE FORCES

With regard to the forces to be employed in theater warfare, current Soviet literature, as indicated earlier places great emphasis on the formula of combined arms, rather than on the ground forces alone.⁵⁷ Within the

⁵⁴ Vorobev, Red Star, June 6, 1964.

⁵⁵ See Captain 3rd Rank V. Puzik, "The Commander's Thinking and Cybernetics," Red Star, May 27, 1964, and P. Kurochkin, "Modern Warfare and One-Man Command," Red Star, June 5, 1964. These articles approach the question of command and control from quite different directions, but both stress that new demands of various kinds have been imposed by modern conditions of warfare. In addition, the Kurochkin article has internal political overtones reflecting the long-standing issue of "one-man" professional military command versus collegial command. Kurochkin finds the latter concept unacceptable under conditions of nuclear warfare when complex, fast-moving situations require quick and decisive action.

⁵⁶ Reznichenko and Sidorenko, Red Star, February 12, 1964.

⁵⁷ Besides On Soviet Military Science, 2nd ed., p. 261, see Voennaia Strategia, 2nd ed., p. 246; Colonel General

ground forces, the increased importance of tank forces and airborne troops in a future war is repeatedly stressed by Soviet military writers. The second edition of On Soviet Military Science states, for example:

Modern tank forces represent a powerful means for conducting battlefield operations, either independently or in cooperation with other forces. They are also a most important means for exploitation of results following delivery of missile-nuclear strikes.⁵⁸

The role of airborne operations likewise has received greater attention, as in the second Sokolovskii volume, which noted that "air landing as well as paratroop operations have taken on a new significance."⁵⁹ Besides allotting airborne operations a primary role in quick exploitation

N. Lomov, two-part article on "The Revolution in Military Affairs: Its Significance and Consequences," Red Star, January 7, 10, 1964; Colonel General S. M. Shtemenko, "The New Requirements Posed for the Combined-Arms Commander," Red Star, January 16, 1964; Major-General N. Sushko, "The Laws Determining the Course and Outcome of Wars," Red Star, February 7, 1964.

⁵⁸On Soviet Military Science, 2nd ed., p. 340. See also Marshal Chuikov, "Modern Ground Forces," Izvestiia, December 22, 1963; Marshal P. Rotmistrov, "The Causes of Modern Wars and Their Characteristics," Kommunist Vooruzhennykh Sil, No. 2, January 1963, p. 31. Some reservations about tanks have cropped up in Soviet statements. A vivid example was Khrushchev's comment after a visit to training grounds near Moscow in September 1964, the same visit which also gave rise to his widely quoted (and apparently misquoted) words to Japanese visitors on "terrible weapons." Speaking of an anti-tank demonstration he had witnessed, Khrushchev said: ". . . it hurt. After all, we are spending a lot of money to make tanks. And if . . . a war breaks out, these tanks will burst into flames even before they reach the battle line." Khrushchev speech to World Youth Forum, September 19, 1964. TASS international service, September 21, 1964.

⁵⁹Voennaia Strategia, 2nd ed., p. 307.

of initial nuclear strikes, as previously pointed out, Soviet writers specify that such operations will be aimed particularly at seizure of enemy nuclear weapons, airfields, and naval bases.⁶⁰ Soviet literature has also indicated that airborne forces now have at their disposal heavier weapons and equipment deliverable by airdrop than formerly.⁶¹ Along with airborne operations, another subject to which greater attention has been devoted in the last couple of years is that of amphibious landing operations. Trends in Soviet treatment of the amphibious landing question will be taken up later under the topic of limited war, although amphibious landing capabilities are also pertinent, of course, in the context of theater operations in a general war.

ROLE OF AVIATION IN THEATER WARFARE

The role of aviation in theater warfare apparently has undergone some re-evaluation in recent years. Following a period in which the introduction of tactical missiles into the ground forces appeared to pose questions concerning the future role of tactical aircraft in support of theater ground operations,⁶² there has been a renewed tendency to

⁶⁰Ibid. See also Reznichenko and Sidorenko, Red Star, February 12, 1964; editorial, "Airborne Troops," Red Star, August 24, 1964.

⁶¹Lieutenant General V. Margelov, "The Precepts of a Paratrooper," Red Star, January 31, 1963.

⁶²For example, a Soviet Air Force general writing as late as March 1963 noted that the battlefield support tasks formerly given to tactical (frontovaia) aviation might be better performed by operational-tactical missiles. A. Kravchenko, "The Battlefield and Air Operations," Aviatsiia i Kosmonavtika (Aviation and Cosmonautics), Vol. 45, No. 3, March 1963, pp. 2-5.

upgrade the battlefield potential of tactical aviation, particularly with regard to its value for reconnaissance and for suppression of mobile targets. The revised Sokolovskii edition in 1963, for example, states:

. . . There are many specific tasks, such as destruction of mobile targets, which can be more effectively carried out by bombers or fighter-bombers than by missiles. The future improvement of aircraft-missile technology may significantly increase the operational effectiveness of the bomber air forces on the battlefield.⁶³

Interestingly enough, strong champions of tactical aviation have appeared among Soviet military leaders not immediately associated with the air forces. One of these is Colonel General Shtemenko, chief-of-staff of the ground forces, who emphatically endorsed tactical aviation in February 1963, observing that there is "no substitute" for it, "especially when independent searching out of targets is required."⁶⁴ Another powerful advocate has turned up in the person of Marshal Pavel Rotmistrov, the tank expert, who singled out the role of aviation for special praise in a memorable article in the spring of 1964 which questioned the tendency to overemphasize missiles at the expense of other arms.⁶⁵ Speaking of the use of air power in support of theater operations in a future war,

⁶³Voennaia Strategia, 2nd ed., p. 311.

⁶⁴Kommunist Vooruzhennykh Sil, No. 3, February 1963, p. 24.

⁶⁵For fuller discussion of this question, see the present author's paper, Some Recent Signs of Reaction Against Prevailing Soviet Doctrinal Emphasis on Missiles, The RAND Corporation, P-2929, June 1964.

Rotmistrov said, among other things:

. . . despite the employment of missiles, aviation also will play an important role, especially in operations of tank forces and other strike groups separated from the remaining forces.

In a war of maneuver, aviation will become not only an irreplaceable means of reconnaissance, but also a reliable and adequately effective means for suppression of mobile targets, through use of both nuclear and conventional bombs.⁶⁶

With regard to the problem of the survivability of aircraft operating in a battlefield environment where surface-to-air missile defenses might be a major threat, Rotmistrov expressed the view that aircraft will still be able to carry out their ground support missions despite surface-to-air missile developments. Along the same line, another Soviet military writer suggested that low-level operational techniques could enable aircraft to cope with the enemy's air defenses, saying: "Military air operations at very low altitudes can yield precisely the most appreciable military effect; they are more suitable for overcoming the enemy's air defense system."⁶⁷ In addition to such treatment of the evolving role of aviation in theater operations, Soviet military discourse today also ascribes growing importance to air force contributions to airborne operations, logistic support, and communications.⁶⁸

⁶⁶ Marshal P. Rotmistrov, "Military Science and the Academies," Red Star, April 26, 1964.

⁶⁷ Major General V. Bolotnikov, "Man, Altitude, Speed," Red Star, April 25, 1964.

⁶⁸ Voennaia Strategia, 2nd ed., p. 312; Marshal K. A. Vershinin, "The Might of the Air Force Is Growing," Red Star, February 1, 1964.

Among points which have come up in connection with air support of theater operations, interestingly enough, is renewed stress on the need for training in the use of unimproved airfields. A lead editorial in Red Star dealt recently with this question, criticizing those who hold that unpaved air strips are incompatible with modern high-performance jet aircraft, and stating that "the rapid rate of advance by ground forces may require frequent redeployment of air units and make it necessary for them to get along essentially without airfields prepared in advance."⁶⁹

QUESTION OF TACTICAL NUCLEAR WEAPONS

A matter of major interest in connection with Soviet doctrine of theater warfare concerns the use of tactical nuclear weapons. Specifically, the question is whether in Soviet thinking the employment of nuclear weapons would be limited to tactical types, either in theater warfare of considerable scale or in local war situations. Soviet views in this regard will be discussed later under the topic of limited war, but it may be observed here that the main body of Soviet writing on the conduct of theater warfare starts with the assumption that both kinds of weapons, tactical and strategic, will be used in any major theater campaigns that develop as part of a general war.

There is another aspect of the employment of tactical nuclear weapons and tactical missiles in theater warfare that deserves some comment at this point. In current Soviet

⁶⁹"Master Flying from Air Strips," Red Star, June 24, 1964.

military literature, it is made clear that tactical missiles with nuclear warheads⁷⁰ constitute today the "main fire-power" of the ground forces.⁷¹ At the same time, the role of tactical missile forces assigned to theater ground forces seems to have been the subject of much debate, perhaps still not settled.

One question concerns the relative contribution to be made by strategic and tactical missiles in theater operations. At present, the tendency is to stress the primary weight of strategic missiles, leaving to tactical missile forces the task of "destroying any important enemy targets that may survive strikes by the strategic missile forces."⁷² A second problem has concerned the appropriate distribution of effort between tactical missiles and tactical aviation. As suggested above, the earlier tendency to assume that tactical missiles would largely replace aviation now seems to have changed. A third problem,

⁷⁰Soviet military as well as civil defense literature refers occasionally to the use of chemical and bacteriological munitions as an alternative or supplement to nuclear weapons. But the open literature, at any rate, generally attributes any plans for using them to the West, leaving only the implication that the Soviet Union is prepared to do likewise. See Soviet Military Strategy, pp. 304,337; On Soviet Military Science, 2nd ed., p. 342.

⁷¹Voennaia Strategiia, 2nd ed., p. 246; Marshal R. Ia. Malinovskii in Red Star, February 23, 1963; Marshal V. Chuikov, "Modern Ground Forces," Izvestiia, December 22, 1963.

⁷²Voennaia Strategiia, 2nd ed., p. 304; Soviet Military Strategy, p. 341. For a discussion of changes between the 1962 and 1963 editions of this work which seem to reflect a downgrading of the contribution of the tactical missile troops see Soviet Strategy at the Crossroads, pp. 216-218.

recently brought up in a significant Red Star series of articles by Marshal Sokolovskii and a colleague, has been that of dealing with an apparent disposition among some ground-force officers to regard tactical missiles primarily as "a means of fire support for troops, like artillery."⁷³ Artillery concepts should not be applied to these new forces, according to Sokolovskii, but should be regarded as "special means of the command" to be used against major theater targets.

A further hint that evaluation of missile roles may be in flux was given in the second edition of On Soviet Military Science, which noted that until recently tactics had not been worked out "for employment of various kinds of missiles," and that even now tactics were "quite a different matter" for tactical missiles used by the ground forces, and for missiles employed by the air force or submarines.⁷⁴ In another place, however, the new edition seemed to strike an impartial balance between tactical delivery systems for battlefield employment by using the formula that the main firepower would be provided by tactical missiles with nuclear warheads, "delivered both by the tactical missile troops and by aviation."⁷⁵

⁷³ Marshal V. D. Sokolovskii and Maj. Gen. M. Cherednichenko, "New Stage of Military Art," two-part article, Red Star, August 25 and 28, 1964, appearing as part of the series "The Revolution in Military Affairs."

⁷⁴ On Soviet Military Science, 2nd ed., p. 264.

⁷⁵ Ibid., p. 366. The Soviet wording was "missile troops of operational-tactical designation," the term "operational-tactical" as applied to missiles being equivalent in general to what in Western usage would be "tactical."

WARSAW PACT CONSIDERATIONS AFFECTING SOVIET THEATER PLANNING

Among major considerations bearing on Soviet doctrine and planning for theater warfare, particularly as concerns the European theater, is the role that other Warsaw Pact armed forces would be expected to play. Since the early sixties (roughly coincident with the worsening of Sino-Soviet relations), there has been a growing Soviet tendency to stress close military cooperation with the East European countries, expressed both in military literature and in the practice of holding more frequent joint military exercises with various Warsaw Pact members. This trend also has been evident in the provision of advanced Soviet military equipment to some of the Pact countries, underscored in mid-1964 by the public display in Warsaw of tactical missiles in the hands of Polish forces, and later in Rumania and East Germany.⁷⁶

Many questions are raised by this closer military relationship to which answers are not readily available in Soviet discourse. While participation of other Warsaw Pact forces in European campaigns is foreseen in Soviet writing, the extent to which the Soviets may have confidence in the reliability and effectiveness of East European forces

⁷⁶ At a military parade in Bucharest on August 23, 1964, celebrating the 20th anniversary of Rumania's "liberation," the announcer called attention to the passing display of missiles and other equipment furnished by the USSR, commenting that "Today, we have . . . a completely mechanized army which has every kind of weapon including rockets." Bucharest domestic broadcast, August 23, 1964. East Germany's Soviet-made tactical missiles were paraded for the first time on its 15th anniversary, October 7, 1964. The New York Times, October 8, 1964.

is by no means clear. No written Soviet work has specifically indicated, for example, that the existence of large East European armed forces would reduce the Soviet Union's own theater force requirements. It also seems to be understood that in wartime the other Warsaw Pact forces would be largely subordinated to direct Soviet command, which perhaps does not testify to a high degree of confidence in their performance on an autonomous basis.⁷⁷

On the other hand, some of the joint exercises involving Warsaw Pact forces apparently have been under at least the nominal command of non-Soviet military men. For example, when referring upon one occasion to joint exercises held in East Germany in September 1963, in which units of East German, Czechoslovak, and Polish as well as Soviet forces had taken part, Marshal Malinovskii, the Soviet Defense Minister, made a point of noting that the man who directed these exercises was General Heinz Hoffmann, the East German Minister of Defense.⁷⁸ This would suggest a somewhat greater tendency of the Soviets than in the past to encourage the other Pact forces to stand on their own feet. One might also read into some of the public remarks

⁷⁷ Soviet military relations with other Warsaw Pact countries and Communist China are discussed in Soviet Strategy at the Crossroads, pp. 267-288.

⁷⁸ Speech by Marshal Malinovskii at Soviet-German Friendship Rally in East Berlin, April 2, 1964, broadcast over East Berlin Domestic Television Service. The practice of putting a non-Soviet officer in charge of joint exercises evidently has not become fixed, however. Soviet reference to a subsequent joint exercise in mid-1964 in Czechoslovakia indicated that Marshal Grechko, the Soviet officer who heads the Warsaw Pact forces, had been in command. Red Star, July 2, 1964.

by Khrushchev, during Walter Ulbricht's visit to the Soviet Union in May-June 1964 for signing of the Soviet-GDR treaty, a broad suggestion that East Germany might be reaching the point where it could begin looking out for itself.

Khrushchev at least twice made the point that the GDR is "steadily strengthening its position" and "will continue to grow stronger." However, any inference that Khrushchev might now consider the Ulbricht regime militarily better able to get along without Soviet help was greatly weakened by Khrushchev's further remark that "The Bonn militarists and revanchists should remember -- the GDR is not alone; the Soviet Union and the entire mighty socialist camp sides with it."⁷⁹

One of the real stumbling blocks to a possible Soviet policy of shifting greater responsibility to other Warsaw Pact forces is clearly the problem of nuclear weapons. This matter has taken on new significance now that the Soviet Union has provided some of these forces with potential nuclear delivery means in the form of tactical missiles and advanced aircraft, raising the question whether the USSR also contemplates furnishing them nuclear weapons. Unless the Soviets are willing to relax control over nuclear weapons to a greater extent than they apparently have been willing to do in the past, definite limits would seem to be set on the degree of "autonomy" the Pact forces might achieve.

⁷⁹Khrushchev Speech at Kremlin dinner, Pravda, May 30, 1964; Khrushchev Speech at Kremlin Palace of Soviets, Pravda, June 13, 1964.

It is possible that a Soviet tactic of suggesting that provision of nuclear weapons to East European countries is imminent but not actually taking this step might be geared to Soviet diplomatic efforts to block the realization of NATO plans for MLF. Soviet statements on the subject of the Multilateral Force have vaguely hinted as much. The July 11, 1964, Soviet note to the seven NATO participants in the USS Biddle "mixed crew" experiment warned, for example, that should the Western powers give Bonn access to nuclear weapons through the MLF, then "it is obvious that with such a development of events, the Soviet Union, together with other peace-loving countries, would be obliged to take appropriate measures dictated by the new situation and to duly safeguard their security."⁸⁰ The same note observed that implementation of MLF plans would "block" any nuclear proliferation agreement, seeming to imply that the Soviets would then feel free to permit the "proliferation" of such weapons among their Warsaw Pact allies.

Leaving aside the knotty question of nuclear arming of the Warsaw Pact countries, from the Soviet viewpoint there are probably a number of pros and cons with regard to a policy of giving a more independent role to the East European forces. In peacetime, for example, such a policy might provide a useful rationale for some reduction in the

⁸⁰ Pravda, July 13, 1964. See also a somewhat similar warning by Marshal Grechko, commander of the Warsaw Pact forces, who stated that "the unified command of the Warsaw Treaty countries . . . will undertake all necessary measures to insure their security and to maintain a high level of combat readiness of the unified forces." Red Star, August 2, 1964.

size of Soviet forces maintained in Europe, or for a shift of Soviet forces to certain other areas, such as the Far East opposite China. Politically, a policy permitting some withdrawal of Soviet troops would provide leverage in disarmament and European security negotiations, and might even seem to offer the prospect of throwing NATO itself into disarray by ostensibly reducing the Soviet threat aimed at Europe. In the event of war, obvious advantages would accrue to the Soviet Union if it could count on having well-equipped and reliable Warsaw Pact forces already in place close to the arena of European warfare. This might seem particularly important to Soviet planners if they should become convinced that it would prove difficult under nuclear conditions to carry out large-scale reinforcement of the European theater from the USSR itself.⁸¹

On the other side of the picture, definite difficulties would also be presented by any policy of greater Soviet military dependence on the Warsaw Pact countries, especially if accompanied by a significant reduction of Soviet forces in the area. Some of these difficulties would be internal, such as the probable opposition of many Soviet military and perhaps political elements to placing the Soviet Union in what they might consider a militarily disadvantageous position. But the more troublesome consequences could arise in the area of Soviet foreign policy. One adverse

⁸¹ Some recognition of the problems of logistic support and of "moving troops to the theater of military operations" under nuclear conditions can be found in Soviet literature, but such discussion does not bring up the specific link with Warsaw Pact forces suggested here. See Voennaia Strategia, 2nd ed., p. 417; Soviet Military Strategy, p. 439; Reznichenko and Sidorenko, Red Star, February 12, 1964.

effect might be to spread the impression that the Soviet Union had abandoned hope of changing the Berlin and German situation, which Peking could seize upon as further evidence of Soviet unfitness to lead the world communist movement. Another might be to stimulate a greater show of autonomy and political independence in East Europe, especially in countries like Rumania, or perhaps, in the case of East Germany, to encourage a popular movement against the Ulbricht regime if it looked as though Soviet protection were being reduced. In light of such considerations pro and con, perhaps the most likely Soviet course would be essentially to continue the current line of policy regarding the relationship between Soviet and other Warsaw Pact forces, with small adjustments for greater efficiency, better coordination, and so on.

IV. CONVENTIONAL WARFARE IN A THEATER CONTEXT

As previously noted, the main body of Soviet discourse on theater warfare has for some time dealt with the subject almost exclusively in terms of nuclear warfare. In part, this may reflect a Soviet assumption that NATO planning is predicated on the early use of nuclear weapons, or it may simply reflect an independent Soviet conviction -- as sometimes expressed by Khrushchev and other Soviet figures -- that if it comes to a war involving the major antagonists, neither side can be expected "to concede defeat before resorting to the use of all weapons, even the most devastating ones."⁸²

With the increased attention given in U.S. military policy statements of the last couple of years to improving NATO's conventional capabilities in the expectation of raising the "nuclear threshold" in Europe, new interest has focused on the question of Soviet thinking with regard to the possibility of waging conventional war on a substantial scale in the European theater without escalation to nuclear warfare.

It may be said at the outset that Soviet political spokesmen have shown little inclination to depart from the long-standing Soviet contention that any war "in the

⁸²Pravda, March 8, 1961. For similar statements see also Pravda, November 29, 1957; January 15, 1960; July 11, 1962. Khrushchev's most recent comment was made in an interview with Lord Thompson in August 1964, when he said: "The trouble is, the losing side will always use nuclear weapons in the last resort to avoid defeat If a man thinks he's going to die he'll take any steps." The Sunday Times, London, August 16, 1964.

center of Europe, along the frontiers between the NATO powers and the members of the Warsaw Pact,"⁸³ would quickly take on the dimensions of a general nuclear war. Khrushchev himself, in his 1964 New Year's message to heads of state, reaffirmed the notion that hostilities "in such a region as Europe" would pose great danger of expansion into global nuclear war.⁸⁴ On the other hand, Soviet military literature -- which, incidentally, has always included the point that Soviet forces must be prepared to use both nuclear and conventional weapons -- has tended during the past year or so to give slightly more attention to the question of conventional warfare.

More often than not in Soviet military writing, the use of conventional arms is mentioned within the framework of general war operations dominated by nuclear weapons, or in the specific context of local wars, rather than in connection with a European theater campaign that would be confined to conventional operations.⁸⁵ Even the maintenance by the Soviet Union and its Warsaw Pact allies of large ground forces which could ostensibly be employed for a conventional theater campaign does not prompt Soviet military leaders to dwell on this aspect of their employment. In fact, Marshal Malinovskii and others have almost invariably argued that large forces are justified because the conduct of a nuclear war would entail heavy losses, and substantial replacements would be needed to ensure the defeat of surviving enemy forces and occupation of enemy territory,

⁸³ See Soviet Strategy at the Crossroads, p. 155.

⁸⁴ Pravda, January 4, 1964.

⁸⁵ See Soviet Strategy at the Crossroads, pp. 219-220.

BLANK PAGE

in addition to handling internal security and rear area defense and rehabilitation tasks.⁸⁶

Certainly, despite the maintenance of dual capabilities in the Soviet general purpose forces which would be engaged in a European campaign, there has been surprisingly little open professional discussion of the technical and operational problems of preparing these forces to wage exclusively conventional theater warfare.⁸⁷ At the same time, however, some statements have mentioned the employment of conventional forces under circumstances suggesting nonnuclear operations of fairly extensive scope in what might be interpreted as a European theater situation.

One writer, for example, after speaking in early 1963 of the likelihood that the "imperialists" would launch any future war with a surprise nuclear attack, then turned to the possibility that they would not, and that the Soviet Union might first be confronted with a different set of circumstances:

One ought not to lose sight of the fact that the imperialists, fearing an inevitable retaliatory missile-nuclear blow, might launch against us one or another form of war without employing nuclear weapons. From this comes the practical conclusion -- our armed forces

⁸⁶ See Marshal R. Ia. Malinovskii, Pravda, October 25, 1961; Kommunist, No. 7, May 1962; Soviet Military Strategy, pp. 338, 341; Major General V. Kruchinin, "Why Mass Armies?" Red Star, January 11, 1963; Voennaia Strategia, 2nd ed., p. 300.

⁸⁷ One partial exception, previously mentioned, is the concern expressed by the authors of On Soviet Military Science to avoid concentration of troops in a conventional combat situation where the threat of nuclear weapons would be ever-present.

must be prepared to deal an appropriate rebuff also with conventional means, while keeping missile-nuclear weapons in the highest state of readiness.⁸⁸

A new passage in the second edition of the Sokolovskii volume in 1963 also described some hypothetical nonnuclear military operations in a theater setting which went well beyond anything in the first edition to suggest the possibility of rather large-scale conventional warfare.⁸⁹

This example, to be sure, was not a solid argument for the likelihood of a major conventional war in Europe. The description was in terms of a "local war" for one thing, and it concluded on the note that tactical and subsequently strategic nuclear weapons might be introduced in the course of the hostilities pictured.

A number of other statements relative to the possibility of conventional warfare of somewhat ambiguous scale have been made from time to time. Colonel General Shtemenko, chief-of-staff of the Soviet ground forces, observed in early 1963 that "the level of equipment and training of the ground forces enables them to operate successfully when nuclear weapons are used as well as when only conventional weapons are employed."⁹⁰ Later in the same

⁸⁸Major D. Kazakov, "The Theoretical and Methodological Basis of Soviet Military Science," Kommunist Vooruzhennykh Sil, No. 10, May 1963, pp. 11-12.

⁸⁹Voennaia Strategia, 2nd ed., p. 374. See also Soviet Strategy at the Crossroads, p. 146.

⁹⁰Colonel General S. M. Shtemenko, "Ground Forces in Modern War and Their Combat Preparation," Red Star, January 3, 1963.

year, Marshal Rotmistrov asserted that the Soviet armed forces are "able to wage both atomic and conventional warfare, on a large or small scale, in any climate and on any territory."⁹¹

A more recent statement, made in April 1964 by Colonel General I. Glebov, reflects perhaps the position which most Soviet military opinion is at present prepared to take on the question of conventional theater operations. Writing on the development of Soviet military theory and practice pertaining to "operational-scale" activities in theater warfare, Glebov concluded:

Finally, it must be pointed out that in addition to working out the theory and practice of employing operational-scale units in nuclear war, Soviet operational art examines problems of operations and combat actions conducted without the employment of nuclear weapons, but under conditions in which they may possibly be employed at any time. In conducting operations without nuclear weapons, the role of large units of the ground and air forces increases. Units of the National PVO and the navy also retain their importance.⁹²

This formula, if an accurate reflection of present thinking, suggests that Soviet military theory has shifted its sights somewhat to give more attention to the possibility of conventional warfare. It does not, however, suggest that priority concentration on the problems of nuclear war has changed, nor that a substantially

⁹¹ Marshal P. Rotmistrov, "Historic Victory," Moscow News, No. 19, May 11, 1963.

⁹² Colonel General I. Glebov, "The Development of Operational Art," Red Star, April 2, 1964.

higher expectation of conducting a nonnuclear war on a European scale now prevails.

Two notable articles in Red Star of August 25 and 28, 1964, previously mentioned in another context, provide a further slant on current thinking about conventional warfare. The authors are Marshal V. D. Sokolovskii and Major General M. Cherednichenko, one of Sokolovskii's collaborators in the book Military Strategy. The main focus of their Red Star series was, as usual, on problems of nuclear warfare. In fact, they went beyond their previous positions in arguing that strategic nuclear operations would be decisive, that a nuclear war would be short, and that use of both strategic and tactical nuclear weapons in theater warfare would reduce the need for ground troops "to occupy enemy territory." However, the authors also gave somewhat more attention than customary to conventional operations. They noted in their first article, for example, after commenting that theater warfare and the over-all outcome of a war would be dominated by nuclear weapons, that "in the course of operations there will frequently be occasions when combat tasks will have to be accomplished without use of nuclear weapons. Therefore, troops must be able to conduct such operations."

Perhaps the most interesting new aspect of the Sokolovskii-Cherednichenko series bearing on the prospect of conventional warfare arose out of the discussion in their second article of the probable length of a future war -- a much-debated issue in Soviet military literature. They first said that this question must be settled on a different basis than formerly, since the time factor will be of "decisive significance" in any new world war.

All the tasks which in the past took months and years to accomplish will be decided in missile-nuclear war in minutes, hours, or a few days. From this, in our view, flows the indisputable conclusion: a thermonuclear war cannot be a prolonged one. Therefore, in our opinion, it is necessary to prepare in the first instance for a short war.

The authors then went on to say:

At the same time, one cannot exclude the possibility that a comparatively lengthy war may arise. This could pertain to a war in which nuclear weapons would not be used (for example, a local war, capable of growing into a world conflict). Therefore, one cannot neglect preparation also for a comparatively protracted war.

The above formulation on the length of a war, probably the most emphatic Soviet comment on this much-debated point to date, has two very interesting features. First, it is more categorical than usual in asserting that nuclear war will be short. Even Khrushchev, the most prominent exponent of the short-war thesis, had never used such unequivocal language as ". . . cannot be a prolonged one."

Second, the possibility of a lengthy war is admitted, but it is hinged on the apparently new proposition that only a war which remains nonnuclear can be protracted. Presumably, a war beginning locally under nonnuclear conditions would best meet this prescription, though it too might spread. If the two arguments were meant to be logically consistent with each other, the point at which a spreading war became nuclear would mark its quick acceleration and conclusion.

Unfortunately, the statement of Sokolovskii and Cherednichenko leaves unclear the key point, namely, whether they were thinking of a war whose local and conventional phase might extend over a lengthy time period, or

a war of local origin which would remain conventional throughout a lengthy period of geographically expanding operations. Since elsewhere in the same article the authors spoke specifically of warfare in the European theater in which NATO and Soviet forces were assumed to exchange nuclear strikes from the outset, it would appear that they did not have in mind the possibility of extended conventional operations in this theater.

The practical effects of the two articles is that they leave standing the familiar argument that the Soviet Union must prepare itself not only in respect to the decisive short-war nuclear forces -- strategic delivery and strategic defense forces -- but also in respect to the kinds of forces and wartime economic mobilization needed to prosecute a long-drawn-out war.

V. LIMITED WAR

To a somewhat more pronounced degree than in the case of conventional theater warfare in Europe, the customary Soviet doctrinal position on limited and local war has tended recently to show signs of change. While nothing approaching a full-fledged doctrine of limited war involving the use of Soviet forces has yet emerged in the open literature, more attention is being given to the possibility of local wars, and there seems to be a fairly consistent effort to find a more flexible formula than the hitherto standard Soviet position that small wars involving the nuclear powers would "inevitably" escalate into global nuclear war.

Before commenting on recent signs of change in Soviet views on limited war, we should make it clear that Soviet writing still gives predominant emphasis to the danger that small wars may expand into general war. Much Soviet discussion of the subject continues to center around criticism of ideas allegedly fostered by Western theorists to "popularize" a doctrine of limited war. Thus, for example, the second Sokolovskii edition argues that U.S. political and strategic objectives in small wars are not limited, despite claims of their modest character; that the setting of geographic limits on local wars is "complicated" by the Western alliance system; that a distinction between tactical and strategic targets is not feasible; and that, if nuclear weapons are employed in local wars, their use cannot be limited to tactical weapons alone or according to yield.⁹³

⁹³Voennaia Strategia, 2nd ed., pp. 94-95. See also the discussion in Soviet Strategy at the Crossroads, pp. 141-158.

PRESSURES FOR CHANGE OF SOVIET POSITION ON LIMITED WAR

While critical attacks on Western theories of limited war can be expected to continue, it also seems evident that the Soviets have been obliged to rethink their own position on limited war under the pressure of various converging circumstances. In terms of the Soviet declaratory position, certain liabilities have arisen from the constant emphasis on the inevitability of escalation, which seems to have been meant originally to discourage the West from intervening militarily in local conflict situations. For one thing, the old line on inevitability of escalation has made the Soviets vulnerable to Chinese Communist charges that this attitude interferes with support of national liberation movements. Furthermore, the old line has tended, at least in the view of some critics within the Communist camp and possibly in Moscow also, to give the West undue freedom of action in local conflict situations, by conveying the impression that the Soviet Union itself would be loath to act because of fear of escalation. Thus, changes in the Soviet declaratory position may be calculated to reduce both of these liabilities.

Looking at the limited war problem less in terms of a declaratory Soviet position and more in terms of operative

For a more recent discussion of Western limited war theories, in which the author accuses Western theoreticians of planning to use local wars as cover for preparation of global nuclear war, and reiterates the danger of escalation of small wars into world war, see Colonel N. Ponomarev, "The Crisis of Bourgeois Theories on War and Peace," Kommunist Vooruzhennyyh Sil, No. 16, August 1964, pp. 14-16.

policy, it would appear that two somewhat different categories of questions are involved. One of these is the question whether limits -- defined geographically, by weapons use, by political objectives, or otherwise -- can be imposed on local war situations that may arise in contiguous areas to which Soviet military power has relatively direct access, or whether limited-war situations in this category still have such a high escalation potential that it would be risky to contemplate engaging in them in pursuit of Soviet policy. Although Soviet capabilities would be relatively good for conducting local wars in territory contiguous to the Soviet Union, political caution has consistently marked the Soviet approach here. Recently, there have been signs that the Soviets are recognizing the possibility that their forces might have to cope with limited war situations in this category, but by and large the Soviet attitude seems to remain that such local wars would be too intimately entangled with the vital interests of the opposing alliance systems to yield political results commensurate with the risks involved.

The second category of problems arises mainly around the question of Soviet support for national liberation movements in areas to which Soviet military power -- other than long-range strategic delivery forces -- has little direct access, and where indigenous forces have been largely expected to do their own fighting. While the matter of escalation is also pertinent to many situations here, this category involves other problems, such as the development of capabilities to project suitable types of Soviet military support into areas remote from the continental base of Soviet power. Competition with the

Chinese as patrons and supporters of national liberation movements in Asia, Africa, and Latin America is another immediate factor here.

For the most part, recent Soviet expressions of interest in limited war problems have not made a sharp distinction between these two categories, although it can perhaps be inferred from frequent assertions of Soviet intent to lend strong support to national liberation movements that the Soviets have chiefly the second category in mind.

Recent signs of change in Soviet treatment of limited war questions became evident around the time the first Sokolovskii volume was published in 1962. Both the first and the second edition of this work alluded more pointedly than had generally been the case to the fact that "the armed forces of the socialist countries must also be ready for small-scale local varieties of war which the imperialists might initiate" and to the consequent need for Soviet military strategy to "study the methods of waging such wars."⁹⁴ A conspicuous example of the effort to re-define the customary Soviet doctrinal position on limited war and escalation occurred in a Red Star article in November 1963, in which four of the Sokolovskii authors took great pains and some liberties with their original text to make the point that Soviet doctrine does not

⁹⁴ Soviet Military Strategy, pp. 288, 356; Voennaia Strategia, 2nd ed., pp. 234, 319. The need to consider problems of local war had received occasional mention in Soviet military literature prior to the Sokolovskii book, but this marked the beginning of more frequent elaborations on the subject.

preach the "inevitable" escalation of limited wars into general war.⁹⁵ Other Soviet discussion, some of which has been cited above in connection with the conventional war issue, has sounded variations on the theme that in Soviet military doctrine "the possibility of waging local and limited wars is not to be rejected."⁹⁶ Marshal Rotmistrov, tank expert and outspoken and prolific writer on military affairs, was one of those who took up the theme, stating in early 1963: "Limited wars have occurred in the past; they may occur also in the future."⁹⁷

Perhaps the most direct testimony to a newly-awakened recognition that Soviet military theory has been giving insufficient attention to the limited war question came in an article in April 1964 by Colonel I. Korotkov. Discussing the postwar development of Soviet military theory in what is probably the most candid Soviet account of this subject in the open literature, Korotkov made the following comment on the matter of limited war:

It must be admitted that our military thought, while having duly worked out problems of missile-nuclear war, has devoted insufficient attention to the study of limited (local) wars, although the imperialist powers repeatedly

⁹⁵ Red Star, November 2, 1963. For further comment on this article, which dealt critically with U.S. commentary on the original Sokolovskii work, see the present author's "Shifts in Soviet Strategic Thought," Foreign Affairs, April 1964, pp. 481-483.

⁹⁶ See Voenno-Istoricheskii Zhurnal (Military-Historical Journal), No. 10, October 1963, p. 123.

⁹⁷ Marshal P. Rotmistrov, "The Causes of Modern War and Their Characteristics," Kommunist Vooruzhennykh Sil, No. 1, January 1963, p. 27.

throughout the postwar period have resorted to them for attainment of their goals by forcible means. Only recently have we begun to correct this shortcoming.⁹⁸ [Underscoring added.]

TACTICAL NUCLEAR WEAPONS AND LOCAL WAR

One of the key questions, which has received considerable attention in the open literature since Soviet military thought began to grapple with the problems of limited war, and perhaps a good deal more attention in private, concerns the employment of tactical nuclear weapons and its implications for the escalation of local wars. Most Soviet writers have not departed from the standard argument that introduction of tactical nuclear weapons in local war situations would mean escalation to world war. The second Sokolovskii volume, for example, discussing the possibility of local wars in which the belligerents might "employ tactical nuclear weapons, without resorting to strategic nuclear weapons," went on to say:

However, the war would hardly be waged very long with use of tactical nuclear weapons only. Once matters reach the point where nuclear weapons are used, then the belligerents will be forced to launch all of their nuclear power. Local war will be transformed into a global nuclear war.⁹⁹

⁹⁸ Colonel I. Korotkov, "On the Development of Soviet Military Theory in the Postwar Years," Voenno-Istoricheskii Zhurnal, No. 4, April 1964, p. 48. For an analysis of Korotkov's article, together with a full translation of it, see Roman Kolkowicz, Soviet Strategic Debate: An Important Recent Addendum, The RAND Corporation, P-2936, July 1964.

⁹⁹ Voennaia Strategia, 2nd ed., pp. 374-375. See also pp. 94-95.

Some minor lapses from this standard argument that limited wars are likely to expand rapidly up the escalation scale once nuclear weapons are introduced have been discernible in other Soviet commentary. A brochure on military doctrine by Colonel General N. A. Lomov in 1963, for example, included a matter-of-fact reference to the possibility that nuclear weapons might be employed in local war, without adding the usual caveat that this would bring inevitable escalation.¹⁰⁰ Some expressed Soviet interest in the development of low-yield nuclear weapons for battlefield use¹⁰¹ could be construed as pointing to a new direction in Soviet thinking on employment of tactical nuclear weapons, possibly in a limited war environment.

Such signs as these, however, are tenuous pegs on which to hang a theory that the Soviets have changed their position on the use of tactical nuclear weapons at the local war level. Factors may be at work, of course, which could bring changes in the operative Soviet view. The possibility that Soviet supplies of nuclear material for tactical purposes may be more ample in the future than hitherto, and a Soviet conviction that mutual deterrence at the strategic level had become stable enough to substantially lower the risk of local war escalation, are two such factors. The Soviet military in particular may also feel a professional obligation to devote more

¹⁰⁰ Colonel General N. A. Lomov, Sovetskaia Voennaia Doktrina (Soviet Military Doctrine), Izdatelstvo Znanie, Moscow, 1963, p. 15.

¹⁰¹ See Major General I. Anureev, "Physics and New Weapons," Red Star, November 21, 1963.

thought to the problems of tactical nuclear employment in limited wars and to press for development of the requisite means.¹⁰²

But while one may take such factors into account, it does not follow that a marked shift of the Soviet declaratory position is necessarily in the wind. Political injunctions -- similar to those which have prompted Soviet rejection of "rules of the game" for applying nuclear restraints in general war¹⁰³ -- seem likely to keep public Soviet discussion of tactical weapons use tuned more to propaganda ends than to technical-analytical purposes. The Soviet position here is closely related to that advanced by Soviet spokesmen in an arms control context, namely, that nuclear limitation concepts are merely attempts to "legalize" nuclear war and the arms race.¹⁰⁴ Development of an openly available Soviet technical-analytical literature on limited war use of tactical nuclear weapons is likely to be regarded, from the Soviet viewpoint, as something which would make poor propaganda for the Soviet disarmament line and which might undermine its emotional force. Thus, without discounting the possibility that operative Soviet views may be in flux, it would seem improbable that we shall see any appreciable

¹⁰² See also discussion later in this paper of apparent Soviet military interest in the local-war implications of nuclear weapons, in the context of debate over the relationship between war and politics in the nuclear age.

¹⁰³ See discussion in Soviet Strategy at the Crossroads, especially pp. 43, 206-213, 323-333.

¹⁰⁴ See ibid., pp. 307-309. See also I. Glagolev and V. Larionov, "Soviet Defence Might and Peaceful Coexistence," International Affairs, No. 11, November 1963, pp. 30-31.

Soviet disposition in the near future to adopt publicly the view that limited war can be safely contained if nuclear weapons are introduced.

In this connection, the stance taken in the 1964 edition of On Soviet Military Science is of some interest, for it reflects a tendency to seek a politically acceptable position without foreclosing a military interest in the conduct of local wars. On the one hand, the authors again state firmly their earlier position that theories of "limited nuclear war" and merely the "tactical use of nuclear weapons" are untenable, and they reassert that "any local, limited war in the age of atomic weapons . . . can grow at any moment into a general world conflagration."¹⁰⁵ On the other hand, however, the authors do not take a consistent position that local wars will necessarily assume a nuclear character, with consequent high danger of escalation. At one place, for example, they speak of the usefulness of conventional forces -- "especially for conducting limited, local wars, in which nuclear weapons may well not be used."¹⁰⁶ In another passage, touching on the future role of aviation, they state that "As concerns local wars, which most often will be waged with conventional arms, the role of aviation in them will remain high as before."¹⁰⁷

Neither of the latter statements on local war, it may be noted, was accompanied by any suggestion that escalation would be a dangerous factor to be considered. The authors' position thus appears to accommodate itself

¹⁰⁵ On Soviet Military Science, 2nd ed., p. 6.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., p. 298.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., p. 341.

on the one hand to politically-oriented expressions to the effect that local wars have a dangerous escalation potential, particularly if nuclear weapons are involved, while at the same time it allows room for a military judgment that given local war situations may be handled without necessarily bringing on a world conflagration.

VI. QUESTION OF LIMITING THIRD-POWER
CONFLICTS IN EUROPE

It has been a consistent Soviet contention that a small war in Europe, where two great coalitions stand face-to-face, would pose great danger of expansion into a global nuclear war. Even in the recent tendency to convey an image of greater flexibility in support of local conflicts the Soviets have stopped short of implying that a small war in the center of Europe could be effectively contained. This position, naturally, has tended to obscure whatever private interest and concern Soviet policy-makers might have in limiting third-power conflicts which might arise in the area without the nuclear powers' being immediately brought in.

One such case could be a conflict involving in some way the two rival German regimes. Whether they really consider it likely or not, the Soviets have frequently asserted that West Germany might start a local war against East Germany on its own initiative, hoping to draw in the major powers.¹⁰⁸ These assertions have increased in connection with Soviet opposition to the MLF; and even the Cyprus crisis, during which Turkish air units were withdrawn from NATO, has been cited in communist propaganda as a precedent to "prove" NATO's inability to guarantee that "the West German militarists will not one day extricate atomic weapons from the multilateral force

¹⁰⁸A. Prokhorov, "The Possibility of Preventing and the Danger of Unleashing Wars," Red Star, December 26, 1962; Voennaia Strategia, 2nd ed., p. 362; "Dangerous Activity Threatening the Interests of Peace: Note of the Soviet Government to the Government of the USA," Pravda, July 13, 1964.

in order to use them for enforcing their own revanchist policy."¹⁰⁹

Perhaps a more plausible case, but one which the Soviets have not discussed, could grow out of disturbances in East Germany similar to those of a decade ago. Given a train of developments different from that in 1953, a West German government might conceivably be brought face-to-face with the decision whether to go to the aid of fellow Germans in revolt against a communist regime, thus posing the danger of a third-power conflict. Even cases in which the lines were not clearly drawn between opposite camps might raise the question of limiting third-power conflicts before the major powers became inextricably involved. An Albanian-Yugoslav conflict, or more recently the Greek-Turkish crisis over Cyprus, are two examples of such possible situations.

It has been noted elsewhere by the present writer that Soviet spokesmen have given some very tentative hints of interest in the possibility of isolating certain third-power conflicts so as to check the danger of their escalating to the level of a US-USSR strategic nuclear exchange.¹¹⁰ The indications in question came from four of the Sokolovskii authors in their November 1963 Red Star article responding to U.S. commentary on the first edition of their book.¹¹¹ They made a pointed effort to explain

¹⁰⁹ East Berlin ADN domestic broadcast, August 15, 1964; Moscow broadcast to Germany, August 15, 1964.

¹¹⁰ See Soviet Strategy at the Crossroads, pp. 155-158.

¹¹¹ Major Generals I. Zav'ialov, V. Kolechitskii, M. Cherednichenko, and Colonel V. Larionov, "Against Slanders and Falsifications: Concerning the U.S. Editions of the Book Military Strategy," Red Star, November 2, 1963.

that Soviet nuclear attacks upon the United States itself would not follow automatically in the event of "an attack by imperialist forces" on a member of the Soviet bloc. Nuclear retaliation, they said, would be aimed at the United States only if the latter's forces had been used in the first instance. This suggests that in some situations, for example, in Central Europe, the Soviet Union might hope to lower the possibility of automatic escalation by distinguishing between the United States and third powers in the event of a local conflict.

THE CYPRUS CASE

The Cyprus crisis, while still far from closed, offers the most recent example of Soviet interest in and thinking about the problem of limiting third-power conflicts in the European area. Cyprus is peripheral to Central Europe, to be sure, but at the same time it clearly furnishes both dangers and opportunities for Soviet policy which make it an interesting test case.

Soviet attitudes during the tense phase of the crisis in July and August of 1964 were foreshadowed to some extent by the position carefully sketched out by the Soviet Union following the outbreak of communal violence and threatened Turkish intervention in the closing days of 1963. The main feature of the Soviet approach seems to have been to nurse the situation along, chiefly by giving Makarios quiet encouragement, so as to enhance its divisive impact on NATO, while at the same time taking care to keep the pot from boiling over in order to avoid the unpredictable dangers of a widening war. In the process, the Soviets

also established the point that they considered their security interests impinged upon by the developments on Cyprus.

Early in 1964, the Soviet Union through a number of statements indicated that it was an interested party in the evolving crisis. On January 30 it reported that the government of Cyprus "has informed the Soviet government that there is now serious danger of aggression against Cyprus." Warning that threats of aggression "affect the interests of all peace-loving people," the statement said that the Western powers "must refrain from steps that could complicate the situation in that area of the world."¹¹² A short time later, in a message to five of the NATO powers, Khrushchev again urged restraint and advised the United States and Great Britain particularly to "consider realistically and fully all the consequences which may be entailed by an armed invasion of Cyprus."¹¹³ He also noted that the Soviet Union, although not "directly bordering" Cyprus, "cannot remain indifferent to the situation that is taking shape in the eastern Mediterranean area, not very distant from the southern borders of the USSR."¹¹⁴

As internal developments in Cyprus proved intractable during the next few months and brought heightened tension

¹¹²TASS Statement, "Aggressive Designs Against Cyprus - A Threat to International Security," Pravda, January 31, 1964.

¹¹³"Message from N. S. Khrushchev to the Prime Minister of Great Britain, the President of the USA, the President of France, and the Prime Ministers of Turkey and Greece on the Cyprus Question," Pravda, February 8, 1964.

¹¹⁴Ibid. See also M. Mikhailov, "Cease the Clattering of Arms," Izvestiia, March 14, 1964.

between Greece and Turkey, the Soviet line reflected increasing awareness of both opportunity and danger in the situation. In a sense, Soviet policy seemed to be trying to balance buckets on both shoulders. On the one hand, it sought to appear responsive to Greek Cypriot requests for assistance and to justify its interest in extending such help by charging the Western powers with egging Turkey on and planning to turn Cyprus into a missile base aimed at the Soviet Union.¹¹⁵ On the other hand, Soviet policy also seemed anxious to head off the possibility of military intervention. Khrushchev and others argued that a Cyprus settlement could not be imposed by force

¹¹⁵ A Soviet commentator in June charged NATO with planning to turn Cyprus into "a place d'armes for nuclear missiles" aimed at "the USSR and other socialist countries," and said that under these circumstances it was not surprising that the Makarios government was opening negotiations "with a number of countries" for the purchase of arms. See K. Kuznetsov, "The Just Cause of the Cypriots," Red Star, June 27, 1964. Earlier, the Soviets referred to "slanderous" statements that "the Soviet Union is using agreements on trade and air service with the Republic of Cyprus to transfer arms, military supplies, and personnel to Cyprus," and claimed that such statements were meant "to give NATO an additional 'argument' for armed intervention in the internal affairs of the republic." Statement by Soviet Embassy, Nicosia, TASS broadcast, March 9, 1964; Pravda, March 10, 1964. In a speech on July 8, 1964, in which Khrushchev included Cyprus among the countries where a violation of sovereignty could touch off "a dangerous chain reaction," he evidently sought to avoid alienating Turkey, while siding with the Greek Cypriots, by charging that the Western powers were to blame for urging Turkey on for their own "adventuristic purposes." Pravda, July 9, 1964.

and that, if left alone, the people of Cyprus could solve their own domestic problems.¹¹⁶

An interesting test of which element of Soviet policy would prevail -- that of championing the Makarios government's struggle for "complete independence" at the risk of an escalating conflict or that of dampening a dangerous turn in the crisis -- came when Turkish air strikes were carried out against targets in northern Cyprus in the period of August 7-9. The result was a near-classic case of Soviet "crisis management," marked by Soviet ambivalence at the peak of the crisis, vigorous demonstration of Soviet interest and threats not to "remain on the sidelines" as the crisis entered the downslope, followed, as the crisis subsided, by assertions that Soviet policy had cut short "military gambles" and saved the peace.

At the height of the crisis Soviet diplomacy was very active, but it left in doubt precisely what the Soviet Union might do. On August 9, a letter from Khrushchev to Premier Inonu of Turkey said: "The Soviet government calls on the government of the Turkish Republic to stop military operations against the Republic of Cyprus . . . attempts to impose by force of arms decisions which do not answer the interests of the people can only make the situation more acute, increase the conflict, and increase the danger of war."¹¹⁷ Another letter informed

¹¹⁶ Khrushchev Statement to Izvestiia correspondent, Moscow TASS broadcast in English, May 4, 1964; Kuznetsov, Red Star, June 27, 1964.

¹¹⁷ Published with letters to Makarios and U Thant under heading "Put an End to the Military Attack on Cyprus," Pravda, August 10, 1964.

U Thant that the Soviet Union had already called upon the Turks "to stop military aggression against Cyprus" and to allow the Cypriots to settle their affairs "without foreign interference."¹¹⁸ At the same time, Khrushchev acknowledged receipt of a telegram from Makarios concerning the Turkish air attacks. His answer was curiously equivocal, for, while stating that Soviet sympathy was "on the side of the people of Cyprus," Khrushchev also seemed to be wary of being put on the spot by Makarios, reminding the latter somewhat obliquely not to go too far. Khrushchev said:

The Soviet government, as it has frequently stated, believes solution of the Cyprus problem in the spirit of the well-known resolutions of the Security Council on the basis of respect for the sovereign rights of the Republic of Cyprus and withdrawal from Cyprus of all foreign troops will help establish calm in the Eastern Mediterranean, to extinguish the source of tension in the island. . . .

The Soviet government is convinced that cessation of bloodshed on the island and your efforts with that aim in view could be an important contribution toward the normalization of the situation.¹¹⁹

Several days later, when the peak of the crisis was passed, the Soviet Union began to take a sterner line, going farther than at any time previously to promise Soviet help in case of "foreign armed invasion." A Soviet government statement on August 15, noting that Makarios had requested military aid, declared: "If foreign armed invasion of the republic's territory takes place, the

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

Soviet Union will help the Republic of Cyprus defend its freedom and independence from foreign invasion and is prepared to begin negotiations on this matter right now."¹²⁰ While emphasizing that "the Soviet Union will not remain on the sidelines" if Cyprus is invaded, the statement offered no hint as to what Soviet action might be taken, nor did it say anything about Soviet response in the event of moves against Cyprus short of invasion, such as a renewal of air attacks.

The following day at the close of a long speech at Frunze, Khrushchev reiterated that the Soviet Union would not "remain indifferent to the threat of armed conflict that may flare up near our southern borders and affect the security of our country," but again he left open the question of what measures the Soviet Union might have in mind.¹²¹ He did, however, touch on one point passed over in the Soviet statement of the day before, saying: "We want to warn the Turkish government that their bombers may not with impunity drop bombs on Cyprus." This admonition was somewhat softened by Khrushchev's prior observations that the Soviet Union desired "good relations with Turkey," and that Turkey probably would not have risked a "dangerous military adventure" if it had not been "under the strong influence" of circles responsible for the policy of the "aggressive" NATO bloc.

¹²⁰ Soviet Government Statement, Moscow TASS broadcast in English, August 15, 1964; Pravda, August 16, 1964.

¹²¹ Khrushchev August 16 Speech at Frunze, "Successes of Soviet Kirghizia: Triumph of the Leninist Nationalities Policy," Pravda, August 17, 1964.

The Soviet statement of August 15 noted that the Cyprus situation has "eased somewhat in recent days," though it was still to be regarded as "fraught with complications." A few days later it was evidently felt that the crisis had subsided sufficiently to stake out claims for the Soviet Union's peace-making role. A Pravda commentator took up this point on August 19, asserting that Khrushchev's Frunze speech had been "of special significance for stabilizing the situation in the Eastern Mediterranean and for cutting short military adventures on Cyprus."¹²² Other Soviet comment described the people of Cyprus as being "deeply grateful to their great friend, the Soviet Union, for the powerful support rendered to them in defending their just cause."¹²³

Toward the end of August, Soviet policy seemed to be moving into a new, post-crisis stance, with some effort to placate the Turks as well as to reap the gratitude of the Greek Cypriots. There were unconfirmed reports that the Soviet Union had informed Turkey of its desire to remain neutral on the Cyprus question, and that it was urging Makarios to adopt a more lenient attitude toward the Turkish Cypriot minority.¹²⁴ Thus, it would appear that the Soviet Union had decided to settle for the peace-maker's role rather than to fish further in the troubled waters of a third-power conflict which, at its acute stage

¹²² N. Bragin, "Provocations Doomed to Failure," Pravda, August 19, 1964.

¹²³ TASS August 18 dispatch from Nicosia, "Grateful Cyprus," Red Star, August 19, 1964.

¹²⁴ The Washington Post, August 30, 1964.

in early August, may have seemed in danger of getting out of control.

In the evolution of this particular situation, it remains to be seen precisely what form Soviet aid to Cyprus eventually will take. Several developments in this regard were under way from mid-August to early October. At one point in mid-August, Foreign Minister Kiprianou of Cyprus announced that he was going to Moscow to discuss Soviet aid of a "political and military nature." His trip was at first postponed, but in early September he led a delegation to Moscow for negotiations on a reported Soviet offer of \$30 million in economic credits as well as undefined military aid. On October 1, the Cypriot government announced the signing of an agreement reportedly covering economic, political, and military aid, but it disclosed no details, and neither did Moscow. However, there was press speculation that antiaircraft weapons would be among the military aid to be supplied. These several developments,¹²⁵ though still partly obscured by diplomatic reticence at the time of writing, suggest that one may see the unfolding of closer military relations between Cyprus and the Soviet Union in the future.

¹²⁵ Sources pertinent to these developments are: Kiprianou Statement after meeting in Athens, Athens domestic broadcast, August 18, 1964; "Soviet Reported Offering Cyprus \$30 Million Credit," The New York Times, August 25, 1964; "Makarios To Send Mission to Soviet," ibid., September 8, 1964; "Makarios To Get Soviet Weapons," ibid., September 30, 1964; "Greek Cypriots Hail Arms Accord with the Soviet," ibid., October 2, 1964.

VII. THE PROBLEM OF NATIONAL LIBERATION WARS

The question of Soviet support of "national liberation wars" has for some time posed complications for the Soviet doctrinal position on limited or local war. While asserting on the one hand that local wars involve great danger of escalation (and in the interest of controlling the risk of general war should therefore be avoided), Soviet policy-makers from Khrushchev on down have at the same time pledged Soviet support of national liberation wars. Since the latter may appear indistinguishable in many respects from local wars, this ambivalent formula has placed the Soviet Union in the awkward position of having made a pledge whose logical outcome -- by its own definition -- could be escalation of a local conflict into a general war.

Signs of doctrinal difficulty in discriminating between local and national liberation wars have appeared from time to time in Soviet literature. For example, in his mid-1963 brochure on military doctrine, General Lomov observed:

. . . local wars must not be evaluated on the basis that they can be waged within local territorial limits. If one takes this position, then one must also place in this category wars of national liberation and civil wars -- that is, just wars which also are waged within territorial limits. The only correct criterion for defining the character of wars is their socio-political content.¹²⁶

¹²⁶Lomov, Soviet Military Doctrine, p. 21. For a discussion of Soviet views on the political content of various types of wars, and the place of national

Khrushchev himself had sought a way out of the seeming paradox into which Soviet limited war doctrine had fallen when, in early 1961, he stressed that national liberation wars "must not be identified with wars between states, with local wars."¹²⁷ By making this careful distinction between intergovernmental or "local" wars and "national liberation wars," Khrushchev could take the operative position that "local" wars involving a possible "intergovernmental" clash between U.S. and Soviet forces were dangerous and should be avoided if possible, while national liberation wars might be pursued at less risk, with the Soviets lending moral support and various forms of indirect aid to guerrilla and other indigenous forces.

Khrushchev's January 1961 views received a good deal of attention as an authoritative expression of Soviet thinking on the question of local war and the problem of supporting national liberation movements without incurring the risk of general war. His January report was widely interpreted in the West at the time as signaling the start of a new aggressive phase of Soviet policy in the underdeveloped world, in which Soviet support of, and possibly participation in, limited wars and insurgency actions was expected to increase dramatically. Soviet policy in this respect proved somewhat more cautious than expected.

liberation war in the spectrum, see Leon Gouré, Soviet Limited War Doctrine, The RAND Corporation, P-2744, May 1963, especially pp. 4-5.

¹²⁷ N. S. Khrushchev, "For New Victories of the World Communist Movement," Kommunist, No. 1, January 1961, p. 20. Khrushchev's piece in this theoretical journal of the Party was the same as his January 6, 1961 report on the world conference of 81 party delegations in Moscow in November-December 1960.

Some of the factors which may have been responsible include Sino-Soviet differences over revolutionary strategy and tactics in the emerging nations, the sobering lessons of the Cuban missile confrontation, and economic and other difficulties which apparently made a period of relative détente in Soviet-U.S. relations appear desirable to the Soviet leadership. More active Soviet sponsorship of local conflicts would have tended, of course, to jeopardize a détente approach toward the United States.

Although Khrushchev's January 1961 formula of avoiding local wars of intergovernmental character while encouraging national liberation wars may have seemed from the Soviet viewpoint a suitable recipe for having one's cake and eating it too, it apparently has fallen somewhat short of expectations under the pressure of events. In particular, competition with the Chinese for influence over national liberation movements, and the development of more acute conflict situations in such places as Laos and Vietnam (and later, Cyprus), have placed the Soviets increasingly in a position where they are obliged to seek ways of rendering more effective help to local claimants for their support. In a sense, Moscow has found itself challenged both by events and by the Chinese wing of the communist camp either to put up or shut up.

Characteristically, the Soviets thus far seem to have straddled the issue. They have neither shut up, nor have they yet made clear whether the kind of support they are prepared to put up will include the use of Soviet forces in military situations growing out of the national liberation struggle. From late 1963 and early 1964 on, the Soviets began to defend their record more assertively

against Chinese charges of timid and ineffective support of the national liberation movement in Asia, Africa, and Latin America.¹²⁸ Khrushchev in December 1963, citing an example of Soviet help, publicly declared for the first time that the Soviet Union had "dispatched large quantities of weapons to the Algerian patriots free of charge,"¹²⁹ and some Soviet military leaders joined in emphasizing that the Soviet people "know how to fight" if necessary in "just wars" such as national liberation wars.¹³⁰ These Soviet statements, however, carefully avoided specific commitments of military support. They were hardly an adequate response to charges from the Chinese camp that the Soviet Union was defaulting on its obligations to the world revolutionary movement.

SHARPENING OF CRITICISM FROM THE CHINESE CAMP

These charges, incidentally, had begun to take on a much sharper tone with the publication in the fall of 1963 of the first of a series of joint articles in Red Flag-People's Daily,¹³¹ and they became still more

¹²⁸ See, for example, D. Volskii and V. Kudriatsev, "Practical Reality and the Fantasies of the Splitters," Red Star, October 10, 1963; editorials in Red Star, October 22, December 18, 24, 1963, and Pravda, January 19, 1964.

¹²⁹ Pravda, December 22, 1963.

¹³⁰ Marshal S. Biriuzov, "Politics and Nuclear Weapons," Izvestiia, December 11, 1963.

¹³¹ The series of articles began on September 6, 1963, as a rejoinder to the CPSU letter of July 14. The fifth article in the series, published on November 19, 1963, was especially critical of Khrushchev's military policies. See

vitriolic in 1964. A particularly vivid example of criticism from the Chinese wing of the communist movement, notable for its attack on the failure of Soviet military policy to serve the needs of national liberation movements, was furnished by a North Vietnamese writer in April 1964.¹³² Addressing himself to "erroneous" and "harmful" views of Soviet revisionists in the "military domain," the writer berated revisionist tendencies to see "only nuclear weapons" and to concentrate on "techniques of using nuclear weapons" in "orthodox war," while failing to "understand that armed class struggle has many forms and sizes." He also criticized revisionist efforts to propagate the idea that war had become too dangerous in the nuclear age to serve as an instrument of politics, as Lenin had taught. All this, he said, prevented "the revolutionary masses from realizing . . . that they are able to defeat the imperialists despite the modern weapons they are equipped with."

The North Vietnamese writer pointed out in this connection that the United States had not "dared" to use atomic weapons, even "during the days when the U.S. imperialists were defeated in the aggressive war against North Korea (1950-1953) and when the French imperialists were defeated in the aggressive war against Vietnam (1945-1954)." This reminder seemed calculated to refute

"Two Different Lines on the Question of War and Peace," New China News Agency broadcast, November 18, 1963.

¹³²Hoang Van Thai, "It Is Necessary to Hold Fast to the Party Military Line and Check the Revisionist Influence in the Military Sphere," Hoc Tap, Hanoi, Issue No. 4, April 1964.

Khrushchev's view that neither side in a war would back down without using its most destructive weapons, and thereby to undermine the Soviet position on the danger of escalation in local wars.

Stating that revolutionary armed forces in many countries might have "to engage in minor wars before engaging in major wars, and use conventional weapons before using nuclear weapons," the writer then said:

He who does not study all categories of wars, and make full preparation for them, fails to realize clearly the imperialist plots and detaches himself from the political tasks of the world revolutionary movement. From the viewpoint of military studies . . . he who fails to counterattack the imperialists to defeat their attacks and sees only the necessity to prepare for world war has fallen into the state of negative defense and deprives himself of an opportunity to take the initiative. . . . The modern revisionists' errors have had disastrous effects on the military activities of the socialist countries in particular and on the military studies of the proletariat in general.

Indictments of this sort, paralleled by other charges that Soviet policy and preparation had neglected the problems of national liberation wars while overconcentrating on problems of general nuclear war,¹³³ doubtless did

¹³³ One such charge, which heaped particular abuse on Khrushchev's personal policy role, was contained in a Chinese article of March 31, 1964, the eighth in a joint Red Flag-People's Daily series on the Sino-Soviet quarrel. The article, entitled "The Proletarian Revolution and Khrushchev's Revisionism," asserted that no communist party ever came to power by peaceful means alone, as the CPSU was trying to prove. It said Khrushchev was "frightened out of his wits" by U.S. military power, and moreover,

not go unheeded in the Soviet Union. Indeed, as already suggested, they probably help to account for the Soviets' growing interest in modifying their position on support of local conflicts. However, no manifest effort was immediately forthcoming to commit the Soviet Union more specifically to military support of local conflict situations, particularly those which China had a hand in stirring up. As a matter of fact, the general tenor of Soviet comment was to hint broadly to Peking that its intemperate criticism might even jeopardize Soviet treaty obligations to China in case of serious trouble.

One Soviet commentator on June 21, 1964, in an article referring to Soviet military aid to China both before and after Mao's accession to power, pointedly asked whether China's current "dirty anti-Soviet campaign" was not a "dangerous political game" which could cost it Soviet help in some "terrible hour of trial."¹³⁴ A few days later,

that he was proving to be "an accomplice" of imperialism. The article then charged that wherever Khrushchev's "revisionist" line had been followed, communist parties had suffered, as in Iraq and Algeria. Where Khrushchev's line had been "by-passed," on the other hand, as in Cuba, the local revolutionary movement had successfully seized power. Another Chinese allegation, growing out of alleged mistreatment by the Soviets of a representative of the South Vietnamese liberation movement at an executive meeting of the World Peace Council in Budapest in April 1964, was that the Soviets were merely "putting up a pretense of supporting . . . the heroic struggle against the U.S. imperialists waged by the South Vietnamese people." See "Chinese WCP Delegates Refute TASS Slander," New China News Agency broadcast, May 5, 1964.

¹³⁴Yuri Zhukov, "Chinese Wall," Pravda, June 21, 1964. On the question of past Soviet military aid to China, a generally jaundiced view has been expressed by the Chinese. In a letter of February 29, 1964, to the CPSU, for example,

Valerian Zorin, Deputy Soviet Foreign Minister, in an article complaining of Chinese criticism of Soviet disarmament proposals, gave a further hint that Soviet support of China in a crisis should not be taken for granted. Zorin noted that the Chinese were "particularly zealous" in trying to acquire their own nuclear weapons, despite frequent Soviet assurance that Soviet nuclear-missile forces "are protecting the entire communist camp." However, implying that such protection was not necessarily automatic, Zorin then pointedly recalled a Soviet government statement of September 21, 1963, which had suggested that Soviet forces could not be counted on to back up "any sort of special aims and interests" of China.¹³⁵

Such signs of Sino-Soviet sparring were part of a developing pattern of events in the spring and summer of

the Chinese pointed out that Soviet military aid had been neither "free" nor "one-way" -- an ironic reference to the fact that the Chinese bore the brunt of fighting in the Korean war. Further, the Chinese letter observed, most Soviet loans went into war matériel which was used up in that war.

¹³⁵ V. A. Zorin, "Problems of Disarmament and Peking's Maneuvers," Izvestiia, June 30, 1964. In contrast to the Zhukov and Zorin statements, it should be noted that M. A. Suslov's February 14, 1964, Central Committee plenum speech (released on April 3, 1964) had made a particular point of saying that: "Nuclear weapons at the disposal of the Soviet Union are a reliable guarantee of the defense of not only our country, but of the entire socialist camp, including China." This statement occurred in a passage where Suslov defended the Soviet policy of not giving nuclear weapons to China, on the grounds that this would "inevitably arouse" the Western powers to arm West Germany and Japan with nuclear weapons. See "On the CPSU Struggle for Solidarity of the International Communist Movement," Pravda, April 3, 1964.

1964 which seemed to be gradually closing in around a somewhat reluctant Soviet Union, forcing it bit by bit to give more tangible public evidence that it was prepared to shoulder its responsibilities toward revolutionary struggles in various parts of the world. In a speech on July 8, about which more is to be said in a moment, Khrushchev ticked off a list of places around the world which he considered to be dangerous "hotspots of international tension."¹³⁶ The list included South Vietnam, South Korea, Laos, Cuba, Cyprus, Aden, Malaysia, and, in Europe, Germany.¹³⁷ In all or at least most of these places, according to Khrushchev, "local wars are actually being waged." Among the various "hotspots" mentioned, that in Southeast Asia appears to be particularly interesting for the light it may shed on the current evolution of the Soviet position toward limited wars and the national liberation struggle. Here, not only the United States, but Moscow's Chinese Communist rival is closely involved

¹³⁶Speech to Graduates of Military Academies, Pravda, July 9, 1964.

¹³⁷There were some interesting omissions from Khrushchev's list. Aside from Aden, for example, no mention was made of other trouble spots in the Middle East, such as Yemen, where a local conflict toward which the Soviets have been scarcely indifferent is in progress. Neither did the Congo appear on Khrushchev's list, although it may be noted that in Khrushchev's report on his Scandinavian trip, released the day of his July 8 speech, he had included the Congo when offering assurance of "full Soviet support to the peoples of South Vietnam, Laos, the Congo, South Korea and all other countries where a struggle is being waged for national independence, freedom and democracy." See "Report by Comrade N. S. Khrushchev over Moscow Radio and Television on his Trip to the Scandinavian Countries," Pravda, July 8, 1964.

in a situation which combines features of both local and national liberation war, as well as the potential danger of a larger war. In a sense, developing events in Southeast Asia provide a graphic test of the relative strength of two contrasting trends in Soviet thinking -- the recent trend toward a more flexible attitude on local wars, and the older line that such wars are likely to be too dangerous to be politically remunerative.

SOVIET LIMITED WAR ATTITUDES IN LIGHT OF THE SOUTHEAST ASIA SITUATION

In the spring of 1964, the situation in Southeast Asia gave rise to widespread speculation about possible new U.S. military moves in the area, eliciting from both the Soviet Union and Communist China a series of warnings, together with pledges of varying degrees of specificity that neither power would "remain indifferent" to the pleas of their lesser clients for support.

In late May, following stepped-up activity against the Pathet Lao by Souvanna Phouma's government, which included brief use of U.S. jet aircraft against communist targets in Laos, the Soviet Union began to air its belief that plans were in the making for a broadening of U.S. "aggression" in Southeast Asia. Several Soviet commentators charged that the United States was planning to turn all Southeast Asia into a theater of broad military operations.¹³⁸ On May 27, in a draft message to the Geneva

¹³⁸ A Leontiev, "'Dirty War' Against the Peoples of Southeast Asia," Red Star, May 23, 1964; Observer, "Why Is Southeast Asia in a Fever?" Izvestiia, May 26, 1964; V. Kozyakov commentary, Moscow broadcast in English to North America, May 26, 1964; Moscow broadcast in English to S.E. Asia on "SEATO Military Exercises," May 25, 1964.

Conference co-chairman, the United States was warned that it was "assuming grave responsibility for all the consequences" ensuing from such matters as jet flights over Laos, alleged concentration of troops in Thailand, and so on.¹³⁹ Despite the tone of increasing gravity in Moscow's comments on the Southeast Asia situation, the public Soviet acknowledgment of a note of June 25 from North Vietnam, in which Hanoi had expressed concern over alleged U.S. plans to "carry military operations into the territory of North Vietnam," brought to light some reservation on Moscow's part about becoming immediately involved in the situation. The Soviet reply, made public on July 8, warned of the danger of expanded hostilities in Southeast Asia. However, it was conspicuously noncommittal on the key question, whether Soviet aid would be forthcoming in the event North Vietnam were attacked.¹⁴⁰

¹³⁹Message reported under heading "Flights of U.S. Military Planes Over Laos Violate Geneva Agreements," Soviet News, Soviet Embassy, London, May 29, 1964.

¹⁴⁰"Cease Intervention," Izvestiia, July 8, 1964. A TASS version was made public on July 7. It may be noted that a year-and-a-half earlier, in February 1963, Khrushchev had offered what seemed to be a fairly specific commitment to aid North Vietnam in case of attack. In an election speech on February 23, Khrushchev named North Vietnam, along with Cuba, China, North Korea, and East Germany, as countries threatened by the "imperialists," adding that if any of them were attacked, "then the Soviet Union will come to the aid of its friends and will deliver a crushing blow against the aggressor." Speech of Comrade N. S. Khrushchev to the Kalininskii Electoral District, Moscow, 27 February 1963, Pravda, February 28, 1963. A year later the Soviet commitment was being phrased somewhat less explicitly, as in a statement TASS was authorized to make in February 1964: "The Soviet people . . . follow with profound sympathy the just national liberation struggle

In contrast to the rather guarded approach taken by the Soviet Union to the developments shaping up in South-east Asia in this period, Peking was somewhat more positive. In early and mid-July a series of statements, some recalling China's 1950 intervention in the Korean war,¹⁴¹ warned of China's interest in the developing situation. A letter from Chen Yi, the Chinese foreign minister, responding to a June 25 letter from North Vietnam's foreign minister, asserted that the United States was "threatening" to blockade and bomb North Vietnam, and said: "The Chinese people cannot be expected to look on with folded arms in the face of any aggression against the DRV."¹⁴² Other Chinese sources sounded variations on the same theme,¹⁴³ as Peking edged closer to suggesting that Chinese military forces might take a hand in the situation. On the tenth anniversary of the Geneva agreements of 1954, for example, a Peking statement gave renewed pledges of support for North Vietnam and for the first time raised the question

of the South Vietnamese people and will render the necessary assistance and support to this struggle." Pravda, February 26, 1964.

¹⁴¹ See article by Max Frankel, The New York Times, July 10, 1964.

¹⁴² New China News Agency broadcast, July 7, 1964. Chen Yi's letter was dated July 6, 1964.

¹⁴³ New China News Agency broadcast of Kwangming Daily editorial, July 8, 1964; People's Daily editorial, NCNA broadcast, July 9, 1964. A speech by Tran Huy Lieu, North Vietnamese delegate to a July 20 mass rally in Peking, referred to Chen Yi's warning that China would not look on with folded arms as a demonstration of "close relations between the Chinese and Vietnamese people." The speech did not, however, indicate what kind of specific military commitments may have been made by Peking, if any. Peking domestic broadcast, July 20, 1964.

of Chinese military involvement, saying that China had thus far refrained from dispatching "a single soldier to Indochina," but adding that there was "a limit to everything."¹⁴⁴ Even so, there was also a certain leavening of caution in Peking's position, exemplified by a comment by Chen Yi made public on July 19 that "the correct means to solve the questions of Vietnam and Indochina . . . is peaceful negotiations and not the use or threat of force."¹⁴⁵ It seemed, in particular, that Peking was interested less in committing China alone to bail the DRV out of any future trouble than in shifting part of the obligation to the Soviet Union, as suggested by the emphasis placed in some statements on the duty "of all socialist countries" and of the Geneva Conference participants, "particularly its co-chairmen, . . . to take effective and timely measures to check the new war plots of U.S. imperialism."¹⁴⁶ The reference to the Geneva co-chairmen, of course, put the finger squarely on the Soviet Union, which shares the chairmanship with Great Britain.

Meanwhile, the Soviet Union itself was evidently weighing its obligations against the various risks involved, including the effect that its stance in the Southeast Asia situation might have on the climate of guarded détente which had been painstakingly cultivated

¹⁴⁴Government Statement, New China News Agency broadcast, July 19, 1964.

¹⁴⁵Chen Yi reply to letter of July 15 from Xuan Thuy, DRV Foreign Minister, NCNA broadcast, July 19, 1964.

¹⁴⁶People's Daily editorial, NCNA broadcast, July 9, 1964; Chen Yi reply to DRV letter of July 15, NCNA broadcast, July 19, 1964.

in Soviet-U.S. relations over the past year or so. Two speeches by Khrushchev, a month apart in time and still farther separated by the implacable pressure of events, cast particular light on the evolution of the Soviet position. In them, Khrushchev seemed to move from a tentative hope that suggestions of local support in Vietnam might help to cool off the situation to a belief that his best chance of avoiding unpredictable pitfalls would be to raise again the generalized prospect that world war was waiting in the wings to take over.

The first of these two significant speeches came on July 8, 1964, when Khrushchev delivered his customary annual address to the graduates of Soviet military academies. This speech, castigating the United States for striving "to suppress the national liberation movement of the people of South Vietnam," pledged Soviet support to "the people of South Vietnam in this struggle."¹⁴⁷ It did not, however, specify whether the Soviet Union had in mind entering the local situation with its own forces. Neither did it refer to the question of a possible attack on North Vietnam, nor offer a commitment of direct Soviet aid in this event. Indeed, passages in the speech claiming that the Soviet Union had eliminated

¹⁴⁷ Pravda, July 9, 1964. The possibility that Soviet support of a material sort had been given, or was under contemplation, at the time of Khrushchev's speech, was suggested a few days later by remarks of I. P. Smirnov, Soviet delegate to the DRV anniversary celebration in Hanoi. On July 18, Smirnov said the USSR "has not only supported the South Vietnamese patriots morally and politically, but also has granted material aid." This was the first such flat claim of Soviet material aid. Hanoi international broadcast, July 19, 1964.

earlier strategic advantages enjoyed by the United States, and that Soviet creation of "strategic nuclear missile forces . . . has radically changed the power balance," seemed to imply that Khrushchev was still counting more on the deterrent effect of these forces than upon a local military effort in Southeast Asia.

Some passages in this speech seemed to hang midway between a deterrent warning of general war and an ambiguous suggestion that merely a local rebuff to "imperialist aggression" was under contemplation, as when Khrushchev threatened that the Soviet Union was prepared to "deal a decisive and crushing rebuff" to any forces which might "violate the borders of the Soviet Union and of our friends and allies." However, several aspects of Khrushchev's July 8 speech also raised the possibility that the Soviet Union might be thinking mainly in terms of taking a more direct hand locally in the Vietnam situation.

For one thing, Khrushchev's reference to the danger of escalation "in various parts of the world" where "local wars are actually being waged" was couched in somewhat less categorical terms than he has customarily employed. He said that such wars "could, under certain circumstances, develop into a large conflict and even entail a global conflagration." This slight departure from the usual line on the escalation potential of local wars was interesting because South Vietnam was included in the enumeration of local wars "actually being waged" today. At another place in his speech, where Khrushchev asserted that the Soviet Union "will not desert its friends and allies," he went on to say: "Let the imperialists know that we are not indifferent to the situation that is shaping up in various

parts of the world as a result of the activities of the aggressive imperialist powers." This statement, while perhaps meant simply for its general deterrent effect, also carried the implication that the Soviet Union might be thinking of sending more material help to the "various parts of the world" where its "friends and allies" were presumably threatened (a suggestion given further point by the subsequent remarks of a Soviet representative in Hanoi, cited in footnote 147).

Perhaps the most interesting aspect of the July 8 speech with regard to a possible shift in the Soviet approach to the conflict in South Vietnam was the way Khrushchev managed to blur the careful distinction he himself had hitherto sought to make between "local" and "national liberation" wars. In the July 8 speech, he first repeated the formula in much the same sense he had given it in January 1961:

. . . When I say we are against war, I have in mind aggressive, predatory wars. But there are other wars -- national liberation wars, when the oppressed peoples rise to fight their oppressors, the colonialists, and the imperialists. We consider such wars to be just and sacred. And we support them not merely in words but with concrete deeds.

Khrushchev then went on to identify the conflict in South Vietnam as a "national liberation" struggle which the United States was actively seeking to suppress. While this was not the first time that Soviet spokesmen had described the situation in Vietnam as a "national liberation" conflict, Khrushchev's remarks in the same speech now ascribed to it also the characteristics of a "local war," thus in effect contradicting his own previous precepts on the need to discriminate carefully between

the two kinds of wars. By so picturing the conflict in South Vietnam as both a local and a national liberation war which the Soviet Union meant to support despite the substantial U.S. presence there, Khrushchev seemed to be closing the doctrinal escape hatch which his formula hitherto afforded.

Whether this was inadvertent, or a deliberate effort to emphasize that Soviet policy toward the South Vietnam conflict was now shifting toward more "concrete" forms of action, it is difficult to say. But in any event, Khrushchev's remarks left it unclear whether the formula calling for avoidance of "local" or "intergovernmental" wars should be regarded as a continuing doctrinal guideline for Soviet policy. Whatever the operative calculus may be which would govern future Soviet action with regard to Southeast Asia or similar situations, the doctrinal basis for avoiding Soviet involvement in conflict situations which pose the risk of an escalating war was at least temporarily eroded by Khrushchev's July 8 remarks on the Vietnam question.

Khrushchev's next notable pronouncement relating to the Vietnam situation came in early August in the wake of the crisis growing out of attacks by North Vietnamese torpedo boats on U.S. naval vessels in the Gulf of Tonkin. Speaking at Ordzhonikidze on August 8, three days after the retaliatory U.S. air strike at North Vietnamese coastal installations, Khrushchev denounced what he termed the "aggressive actions of the United States," and issued a stronger warning than any he had previously given in the context of Southeast Asia concerning Soviet willingness to risk war. While this warning came after the United States

had taken unusual pains to communicate the limited character of its reprisal action against North Vietnam, so that Khrushchev may have felt assured that there was no immediate danger of being called upon to act, he nevertheless seemed to extend the Soviet commitment another step by pledging that "if the imperialists impose war on the socialist countries, the people of the Soviet Union will fulfill their sacred duty; they will know how to stand up for their motherland and other socialist countries."¹⁴⁸

However, in contrast to his July 8 speech, this one -- presumably made under the pressure of North Vietnamese appeals for stronger evidence of Soviet support¹⁴⁹ -- did not suggest that Khrushchev might be thinking in terms of stepping into the situation only on a local basis. On the contrary, it is interesting in this particular case that Khrushchev ignored entirely any suggestion that armed conflict with the United States over Vietnam might involve merely limited warfare on a local scale.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁸Speech, August 8, 1964, at Ordzhonikidze by N. S. Khrushchev, Pravda, August 9, 1964.

¹⁴⁹See article by Henry Tanner, datelined Moscow, August 8, The New York Times, August 9, 1964.

¹⁵⁰Other Soviet commentary in the interval between Khrushchev's July 8 and August 8 speeches had also taken the line that a general threat to peace throughout the world, not merely further local disruption, would follow any stepping up of U.S. military activity in Vietnam. For example, one pair of Soviet military commentators warned in late July that it was "time to understand that attempts of the Pentagon to widen the war or use nuclear weapons . . . would be pregnant with baneful consequences for peace throughout the world." Lieutenant Colonel A. Leontiev and Major V. Polyanskii, "'Small' War Is Laden with a Great Threat," Red Star, July 24, 1964. See also V. Maevskii, "Risky Game," Pravda, July 10, 1964.

Indeed, he did not even dwell on the question of escalation from local war, but merely spoke in general terms of a world war, without delineating any intermediate stages. He said:

The Soviet Union does not want war and is doing everything it can to prevent it. However, if the imperialists dare to impose war, then this war, even though it will bring great losses and calamities to the peoples of the world, will end in the complete defeat of capitalism.

Thus, Khrushchev in effect fell back on the deterrent threat of general war, rather than implying that the Soviet Union was prepared to intervene on a local scale to carry out its obligations to North Vietnam. Elsewhere in his speech, noting that the Soviet Union was "fighting for world peace" and that it was still "unswervingly" dedicated to the policy of peaceful coexistence, Khrushchev alluded to efforts of the Party and the government to see that the Soviet army was "equipped with the latest weapons," again seeming to place emphasis on the deterrence of general war rather than showing any disposition to become more deeply involved locally.

Interestingly enough, Chinese comment on the Tonkin Gulf events and upon Khrushchev's attitude toward the August 2-5 crisis revealed an unabated suspicion that the Soviet Union could not be counted on to assist locally if further military operations were undertaken against North Vietnam. Peking's own response to the U.S. air strikes was more prompt than that of Moscow, even though it too took the form of words rather than immediate action. On August 6, Chinese statements reiterated previous pledges to aid North Vietnam in the event of "U.S. aggression,"

and also laid down a new formula to justify Chinese military entry into the North Vietnamese picture. The U.S. air attacks, it was asserted, had voided the Geneva Conference ban on foreign bases in Vietnam, and consequently the DRV "and all countries upholding the Geneva agreements have gained the right to assist the DRV in its fight against aggression."¹⁵¹

The contrast between this prompt repledging of Chinese support and Soviet tardiness in the same situation was pointed up by a cool and accusatory comment from Peking on August 11. After noting cryptically that Khrushchev had condemned the "aggressive acts of the United States" in his August 8 speech, the Chinese went on to say:

Khrushchev's statement, made six days after the U.S. war provocations against the DRV, expresses for the first time the attitude of the leaders of the Soviet Union on this incident. Apart from a TASS statement on 5 August, the Soviet government has up to now not made an official statement on this incident. Both the TASS statement and Khrushchev's statement did not refer to giving support to the just struggle of the DRV against U.S. aggression.¹⁵²

The foregoing discussion of Soviet attitudes toward the Southeast Asia situation does not mean to suggest that Soviet policy of supporting communist interests in that area has come to a standstill. Like the problem of Cyprus,

¹⁵¹Government Statement, New China News Agency broadcast, August 6, 1964; People's Daily editorial, "The U.S. Aggressors Cannot Cover Up Their Ugly Countenance," NCNA broadcast, August 7, 1964.

¹⁵²New China News Agency broadcast, August 11, 1964.

discussed earlier, the situation in Southeast Asia is still far from a closed case. While the developments centering on Vietnam in the spring and summer of 1964 suggest, among other things, that the projection of Soviet military power into distant areas for the support of local conflicts is a problem as yet unresolved, none of this precludes the Soviet Union from furnishing more substantial support on the local scene without resorting to direct introduction of Soviet forces.

Increased logistic support, provision of Soviet military equipment and stepped-up training of local personnel to man it, perhaps even the use of "volunteers," especially in certain specialist categories such as crews for air defense missile launchers -- these are some of the ways, not without precedent at various times and places in the past, by which the Soviet Union might take a more vigorous "proxy" hand in conflict at the local level without becoming directly and formally involved in a situation which could lead to a great-power confrontation. Further, in formulating its policy toward a given local war, such as the Vietnam case, the Soviet leadership will presumably have its eye on more than the factor of military intervention or support. That is to say, the local political climate and the measure of success enjoyed by indigenous insurgent elements will doubtless also count heavily in Soviet calculations as to the form and dimensions of aid required of the Soviet Union. In a political context, it may even be pertinent to speculate that the Soviet leaders are not entirely averse to seeing their verbally more bellicose Chinese rivals reminded by events, such as those in the Tonkin Gulf crisis, that the West can respond in dangerous fashion to imprudent provocation.

To sum up, the main point that the above discussion of Soviet attitudes toward the Vietnam crisis is meant to suggest is this: despite an apparent inclination to revise the Soviet position on the risk of escalation, the Soviet leaders evidently do not believe that it is possible for the major powers to convince each other of the secondary or limited nature of their political objectives in areas such as Vietnam -- an understanding which, in turn, might make it either safe or feasible for them to contemplate engaging in a local war against each other.

VIII. LIMITED WAR AND THE DEBATE OVER WAR
AS AN INSTRUMENT OF POLITICS

Where the doctrinal evolution of the Soviet position on limited war may lead, and what measures may be taken to give it teeth, remains to be seen. Meanwhile, however, it may be useful to comment on certain developments not hitherto mentioned which bear on the subject. An interesting aspect of the limited-war question as it has evolved in the Soviet Union in the past couple of years has been its relation to a curious debate over the continuing validity in the nuclear age of Lenin's dictum on war as an instrument of politics. Military writers in general have defended the validity of the Leninist thesis that war is a continuation of politics by violent means, while some political commentators, following Khrushchev's cue, have suggested that, in view of the destructiveness of nuclear weapons, "war can be a continuation only of folly."¹⁵³

Among the questions underlying the debate is what kind of war may still be considered a useful instrument of policy. While nuclear wars have become questionable instruments of policy because they may yield no meaningful victory, limited or local wars would not necessarily be likewise tainted if they could be kept from growing into general nuclear war. This, indeed, is very much the argument that the Chinese have been pursuing in the Sino-Soviet polemics, by saying simply that the Soviets overestimate the possibility that the United States would

¹⁵³ For discussion of this debate, see Soviet Strategy at the Crossroads, pp. 71-83.

actually risk nuclear escalation. Soviet military men can scarcely afford to align themselves openly with the Chinese argument, but in a sense they do so whenever they show tolerance of the idea that small wars can be waged without danger of nuclear escalation.

Thus far, Soviet military opinion, as previously noted, has tended to stay within safe political bounds by largely accepting the notion that "local" or "inter-governmental" wars -- in terms of Khrushchev's 1961 definition -- are escalation-prone, hence dangerous and to be avoided if possible. This leaves for consideration as politically serviceable wars the category of national liberation wars, which by political definition are not only "just and permissible, but inevitable." However, such wars also are customarily understood to be the province of indigenous insurgent forces, and not the direct concern of Soviet combat personnel. In effect, then, if only national liberation wars were to be considered doctrinally sanctioned instruments of policy, there would not be much room left in the picture for the Soviet armed forces. They would, of course, continue to serve the crucial functions of deterrence, and of orthodox warfare if deterrence should break down, but their capacity to contribute immediately to the active pursuit of political ends in the arena of revolutionary struggle would be narrowly restricted. This is essentially what the Chinese say has happened.

An uneasy suspicion that the Chinese may be right seems to have crept into the Soviet discussion of war as an instrument of politics. In effect, Soviet military theorists may sense that something must be done to offset

the tendency to regard all wars in the nuclear age as too dangerous to serve political purposes. The recent tendency in Soviet military literature to call for more attention to the problems of small wars can be seen as a step in this direction. A related question concerns the employment of nuclear weapons in small wars. As noted earlier, small wars could be addressed in less gingerly fashion if the use of nuclear weapons, with their assumed escalation potential, could be ruled out. Thus far, it has not proved possible to lift the nuclear shadow hanging over the category of "local" or "intergovernmental" wars, although some slight revision of Soviet thinking in this direction has been observable. As for national liberation struggles, if there is to be freedom of action for more vigorous support of these wars, the constraining influence of nuclear weapons must not be allowed to intrude into doctrinal consideration of this category of wars also.

Interestingly enough, in this connection, in an article dealing with the relationship of war to politics, two Soviet military writers in early 1964 sought to draw the nuclear line so as clearly to exclude national liberation wars. In addition to restating the customary Soviet view that national liberation wars are "just," "permissible" and "inevitable," the authors went on to say that in such wars "it is fully understood that the question of missiles and nuclear weapons being used will not arise."¹⁵⁴ This

¹⁵⁴ Maj. Gen. N. Sushko and Maj. T. Kondratkov, "War and Politics in the 'Nuclear Age,'" Kommunist Vooruzhennykh Sil, No. 2, January 1964, p. 23.

statement only makes explicit the heretofore implicit view that national liberation wars would be nonnuclear. By making the point explicit, however, the authors seemed to be taking another small step in preparing the doctrinal ground for what could become a more active Soviet effort in support of national liberation conflicts.

IX. THE QUESTION OF IMPROVING SOVIET
LOCAL WAR CAPABILITIES

The Soviet armed forces on the whole appear to be reasonably well adapted to the problems of conducting local wars in areas contiguous to Soviet territory, despite the political caution consistently exercised in avoiding such wars. A somewhat different situation seems to obtain with regard to Soviet capabilities for direct local intervention in distant conflicts -- a field of military enterprise little cultivated until recently by an essentially continental-minded Soviet military establishment. The question therefore remains what may be done to improve Soviet local war capabilities in distant areas, should Soviet policy elect to move in this direction.

It should be observed, of course, that the Soviet Union is not starting wholly from scratch today in this regard. The presence of Soviet military personnel in such places as Cuba, Indonesia, and some parts of the Middle East in the past few years, in capacities which could at one time or another involve them in local military action, indicates that considerable Soviet professional attention must already have been given to relevant problems. For example, the rather sizable Soviet ground contingent sent to Cuba in 1962, in addition to personnel associated with ballistic missile and air defense missile deployments, certainly involved a great deal of planning for movement, logistics support, communications, relations with local civil and military elements, and so on, even though these particular forces were projected overseas under conditions which did not require that they fight their way in.

The case of Indonesia seems to be a particularly instructive one, in terms of gradual penetration of Soviet military influence into an area of the world previously remote from Soviet attention. The Soviets have made no secret of the fact that Soviet military personnel were sent to Indonesia to train Indonesians in the use of modern weapons supplied in rather generous amounts to that country during the past few years. As noted by Anastas Mikoyan during a ten-day visit to Indonesia in the summer of 1964, "We are proud . . . that we are delivering excellent modern arms to the Indonesian armed forces. There are also Soviet officers in Indonesia, who as brothers are teaching Indonesian officers and soldiers to master modern arms."¹⁵⁵

Mikoyan's remarks on another aspect of the presence of Soviet military personnel in Indonesia were of particular interest, for he implied that they were prepared to take part in local military action under certain circumstances. Speaking in Surabaya on June 28, Mikoyan made the following comment while discussing preparations made in 1962 for "the liberation of West Irian" in the "eventuality that the colonialists would not surrender West Irian, and it would have to be taken by force":

¹⁵⁵ Mikoyan June 27 speech in Djakarta, Moscow international broadcast, June 27, 1964. In a speech two days earlier, Mikoyan made the same point, saying: "The Soviet Union has not only delivered weapons to Indonesia but has also dispatched Soviet personnel to train their Indonesian brothers so that they can use the weapons in the most effective way." He also said that Soviet-supplied weapons were "better than those in other Asian countries . . . and those possessed by Britain in this region."

We are glad that in those historic days for you, Soviet servicemen were with you here, in Indonesia, in your warships, in your military units, and that your friends, Soviet specialists, today continue to work like brothers with your servicemen.¹⁵⁶

This statement, hinting but not quite saying that Soviet military men were ready to help fight for West Irian, represents, even so, an unusually candid departure from the usual close-mouthed Soviet attitude toward the combat role of Soviet military personnel in such situations. To the present writer's knowledge, no similar admissions have been made concerning the part taken by Soviet military men in such instances as the Suez fighting in 1957, when Soviet military training personnel were present in Egypt, or, for that matter, some years earlier in North Korea.¹⁵⁷

The extensive Soviet military assistance program carried out in a number of other countries outside the Soviet bloc since 1955 are not without significance for the future development of Soviet local war capabilities. Most of these programs, to be sure, appear to have been designed with other primary aims in view, such as to provide the entering wedge for Soviet political influence in

¹⁵⁶ Mikoyan June 28 speech in Surabaya, Moscow TASS international broadcast, June 29, 1964. Incidentally, this statement was omitted from the brief account of Mikoyan's speech published in the Soviet press. See "The Heart of the Soviet People Is on the Side of the Indonesians," Pravda, June 30, 1964.

¹⁵⁷ The writer recalls, however, a conversation several years ago with a high-ranking Soviet fighter pilot who casually mentioned his tour of duty in North Korea. He did not elaborate on what his duties were.

the recipient countries, or to wean them away from association with the Western alliance system. And in some cases, the local appetite for arms aid seems to have grown somewhat beyond a level considered convenient by Soviet leaders. This was indicated by Khrushchev's impromptu comment at a banquet in Cairo in May 1964, when he remarked that soldiers never seem to feel they have "enough" weapons, and then went on to say: "Marshal Amir [Egyptian vice-president] extended his hand to me and said 'Give us more arms.'"¹⁵⁸

Nevertheless, apart from the routine difficulties which Soviet military assistance programs may entail, these programs also yield a number of potential opportunities for improving Soviet political-military maneuverability abroad. For one thing, they give the Soviets useful experience in training and operating military forces, even if not their own, in varied geographic and climatic settings. For another, the deployment of Soviet equipment, supplies, and training missions to recipient countries in selected areas of the world means, in a sense, that potential logistical bases are being created against a time when political developments may permit their use. The working out of arrangements with several countries for fishing fleet and trawler bases is a similar step which could have implications for the future support of some kinds of Soviet naval activities, political

¹⁵⁸ Khrushchev May 18 speech in Cairo, Cairo domestic broadcast, May 18, 1964. Khrushchev's reference to Marshal Amir was not included in the version of his speech published in the Soviet press. See "Speech by N. S. Khrushchev," Pravda, May 19, 1964.

conditions again permitting. Certainly, however it may be obtained, access to a system of bases abroad would give the Soviet Union greater flexibility for the military or quasi-military support of local conflicts in scattered areas of the world. The tendency of many of the young countries involved to guard their political sovereignty jealously is, of course, a distinct obstacle that would stand in the way of open Soviet establishment of bases on their territory.

Besides the backlog of Soviet experience and activity mentioned above, which seems relevant to the process of improving Soviet capabilities for local military intervention abroad, there are some other trends that deserve mention.

GROWING INTEREST IN AMPHIBIOUS LANDING CAPABILITIES

One of these trends is the increasing attention given in the past couple of years to the question of amphibious landing capabilities. Soviet reviewers of the first Sokolovskii edition had criticized the work for its neglect of this subject. A naval officer who played a prominent role in the last war, Admiral V. A. Alafuzov, was a particularly sharp critic on this score, noting that without the requisite naval and amphibious forces "The ground forces would be in a terrible quandary, to say the least, in attempting invasion of enemy territory across the sea."¹⁵⁹ In their revised edition of 1963,

¹⁵⁹ Admiral V. A. Alafuzov, "On Publication of the Work 'Military Strategy,'" Morskoi Sbornik (Naval Collection), No. 1, January 1963, p. 92.

the Sokolovskii authors took note of this criticism by observing that

In developing the navy, one must take into account the mission of combined operations with the ground forces, and above all, make provision for amphibious operations.¹⁶⁰

Other Soviet military writing also has taken up the question of amphibious operations more frequently than before. Among articles on the subject, a notable piece was contributed by a navy captain in the September 1963 issue of Morskoi Sbornik. Its author discussed many of the problems associated with amphibious landing operations in the nuclear age. While concluding that "it is possible to carry out amphibious landings even under modern conditions," the writer, Captain N. P. Viunenko, noted that large-scale landings of significant strategic scope against a major adversary could be expected to take place only "when the nuclear capabilities of the belligerents have declined and when the conflict has taken on a more protracted character."¹⁶¹ This analysis, like most others, seemed to assume that nuclear weapons would be an ever-present factor in amphibious operations, and it did not deal specifically with landings under nonnuclear conditions in local war situations.

Another treatment of the subject by two naval officers in early 1964 noted that there were conflicting views about the feasibility of major amphibious operations in the

¹⁶⁰ Voennaia Strategia, 2nd ed., p. 313.

¹⁶¹ Captain First Rank N. P. Viunenko, "Modern Amphibious Landings," Morskoi Sbornik, No. 9, September 1963, p. 27.

nuclear age, but found several reasons for concluding that they could be carried out successfully, particularly if surprise were preserved and special modern landing equipment were used to speed up their tempo and avoid mines and other beachhead obstacles.¹⁶² In the latter connection, the potentials of hydrofoil and "air cushion" or "surface effect" vehicles were stressed.

The advantages of "air cushion" vehicles, which possess high speed, draw no water, and are thus true amphibians, seemed to impress the authors particularly. "The employment of air cushion vehicles," they wrote, "will permit successful landings not only directly through restricted waters, but also far beyond them into the rear of defending forces and at any season of the year."¹⁶³ In light of this assessment of air cushion vehicles, which, incidentally, is shared by other Soviet writers,¹⁶⁴ it is of interest that the Soviet Union has developed test vehicles of this type -- the 20-ton Neva for 50 passengers and the 17-ton Raduga for 38 passengers -- in addition to more than 100 hydrofoil craft.¹⁶⁵

¹⁶² Captains First Rank A. G. Svetlov and L. A. Shimkevich, "Features of Amphibious Landings Under Modern Conditions," Morskoi Sbornik, No. 3, March 1964, pp. 22-25.

¹⁶³ Ibid., pp. 24-25.

¹⁶⁴ Rear Admiral D. A. Tuz, "The Role of Amphibious Landing Operations in Missile-Nuclear War," Morskoi Sbornik, No. 6, June 1964, p. 29.

¹⁶⁵ A brief discussion of these vehicles and Soviet interest in them may be found in N. A. Shadrin, "Some Considerations for Solving Certain Administrative and Engineering Problems of the U.S. Maritime Industry . . .," Master's essay, The George Washington University, Washington, D.C., June 1964, pp. 119-121.

The account of amphibious landing operations by Captains Svetlov and Shimkevich, it may be noted, foresaw that attacking forces might find it useful to employ tactical nuclear weapons. The use of larger-yield weapons against the enemy's defenses, they pointed out, would entail "the risk of destroying the attacker's own units."¹⁶⁶

Admiral Tuz, another of those who recently have given attention to amphibious landing problems, wrote in June 1964 that "one may expect amphibious landings to acquire ever-increasing significance in the future."¹⁶⁷ He noted that in the light of practical experience "it makes sense" to combine amphibious and airborne landing operations, although he also pointed out that the latter are more dependent on favorable weather conditions.¹⁶⁸ While not addressing himself specifically to local war applications, Admiral Tuz recognized that widespread geographic areas of military operations would increase the need for amphibious landing capabilities:

With the increased scope of military operations and the areas in which they are conducted, there is a corresponding increase in the requirement for transporting troops across maritime expanses to broaden and establish new centers of operations (and to provide for wide maneuver of forces). Hence, the requirements for landing operations increase in number and scale.¹⁶⁹

¹⁶⁶ Ibid., p. 23.

¹⁶⁷ Tuz, Morskoi Sbornik, No. 6, June 1964, p. 26.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid., p. 27.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid., p. 27. The authors of the 1964 edition of On Soviet Military Science noted (p. 371) that landing operations have acquired "special significance," particularly for "opening up military operations in new directions and on other continents." However, they discussed such operations only in the context of "missile-nuclear war."

Although making clear that in his own view the problem "of making amphibious landings and repelling them" is "one of the important questions" affecting naval combat readiness,¹⁷⁰ Tuz conveyed the impression, given also by other writers, that there is some internal disagreement about the feasibility of amphibious operations under nuclear conditions.¹⁷¹ Another indication that the formulation of Soviet amphibious landing doctrine may still be in a state of flux was a comment by Tuz on "the necessity of giving the most serious attention to the comprehensive elaboration of a modern theory of landing operations . . . since only by this means is opened the possibility of determining the character and methods of operations in new conditions where combat experience is lacking."¹⁷² Whether in the process of developing such a theory Soviet attention will remain concentrated on the problems of amphibious landings under conditions of general nuclear war, or whether it will also take in the application of landing operations for the conduct of local wars, is yet to be seen.

REHABILITATION OF THE MARINES

A new development of related interest which has some bearing on the Soviet potential for local war operations

¹⁷⁰Tuz, op. cit., p. 28.

¹⁷¹He wrote: "It is true that in our country, as well as abroad . . . one finds officers who consider it impossible to conduct amphibious operations when weapons of mass destruction are used." Ibid., p. 26.

¹⁷²Ibid., p. 28.

in maritime areas is the recent revival in the Soviet military press of special attention to the marines (morskaia pekhota, or literally -- naval infantry). The marines, an element of the Soviet armed forces actively employed in some of the operations of World War II, had largely dropped out of the picture by the early fifties, and may have been formally deactivated at about that time. At any rate, there has been virtually no mention of them for a number of years.

A possible advance sign of reviving Soviet interest in marine landing forces came in March 1964 in a Soviet naval journal article previously mentioned. The authors, Captains Svetlov and Shimkevich, pointed out that both the United States and Britain made it a practice, even "in peacetime," to maintain "special forces" for landing operations -- marines in the case of the United States, and commando units in the case of the British.¹⁷³ This discussion, professional in tone and shorn of any accusatory reference to the West's use of such troops against colonial peoples "struggling for liberation," seemed to suggest that Soviet thinking might be running in the direction of restoring the marines to a place in the Soviet military establishment.

Four months later, in July 1964, in connection with the observance of Navy Day in the Soviet Union, came the first open acknowledgment that the marines were back in the picture. It took the form of a large front-page pictorial

¹⁷³ Svetlov and Shimkevich, Morskoi Sbornik, No. 3, March 1964, p. 26.

display in Red Star, showing a marine contingent being put ashore from armored, amphibious personnel carriers.¹⁷⁴ Subsequently, the same paper pictured a marine outfit setting up a mortar position in a forested coastal region.¹⁷⁵

An unusual feature of these photographs was the distinctive dress of the marines, who were shown wearing uniforms of new design, with berets very similar to those worn by U.S. Special Forces troops. The caption in one case noted the important role played by Soviet marine units in World War II. While nothing was said about future missions for Soviet marine forces, it was perhaps more than coincidental that the unveiling of the marines came at a time when pressures were growing upon the Soviet Union to demonstrate its capacity for special landing operations of the type that might arise in support of local conflict situations overseas.

The developments mentioned do not add up thus far to a conclusion that the Soviet Union has perfected its own doctrine of local war and a full panoply of measures to give it teeth. They do, however, suggest the awareness that a better capability to project Soviet military power into distant areas for the support of local conflicts may be what the times demand.

¹⁷⁴Red Star, July 24, 1964.

¹⁷⁵Ibid., August 22, 1964.