

059352

JPRS 82549

28 December 1982

USSR Report

MILITARY AFFAIRS

No. 1731

MILITARY HISTORY JOURNAL

No. 8, August 1982

DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT A

Approved for public release;
Distribution Unlimited

19990505 125

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RYBKIN ON THE ARMED FORCES UNDER DEVELOPED SOCIALISM

Moscow VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL in Russian No 8, Aug 82 (signed to press 26 Jul 82) pp 3-12

[Article by RSFSR Honored Scientist, Professor and Doctor of Philosophical Sciences, Col Ye. Rybkin: "The Army in the Political System of Developed Socialism"*)]

[Text] As was pointed out by the 26th CPSU Congress, the present-day international situation is characterized by an exacerbation in the struggle between the forces of war and peace. Its distinguishing feature is the policy set out on by American imperialism of achieving military superiority over the USSR and a desire for world domination and the suppression of all liberation movements. This policy has been accompanied by extremely overblown and cynical anti-Soviet and anticommunist propaganda. The aggressiveness of imperialism, particularly American, at present has increased sharply. Its most militant circles, in intensifying passions, have seriously posed the question of a nuclear war. They have reinforced their plans by developing new types of weapons and by an unprecedented increase in their number. The arms race is assuming an unprecedented scope. In this situation the Communist Party and the Soviet government, in continuing to consistently and steadily carry out a Leninist peace policy, at the same time are forced not for a single moment to overlook the questions of strengthening the defense might of the nation and its armed forces.

The Army—An Important Component Element in the Political System of Developed Socialism, Its Class Essence, Basic Features and Functions

As is known, the class essence, the sociopolitical purpose and historical type of an army are determined by the type of state an organ of which the army is. Our Constitution states that in the USSR, a developed socialist society has been built and its characteristic features have been outlined. At this stage, when socialism is developing on its own base, the creative forces of the new system and the advantages of the socialist way of life are evermore fully disclosed and the workers benefit evermore widely from the fruits of the great revolutionary victories.

The army of a developed socialist state is a socialist type army at the higher stage of its development. It is characterized by certain features or traits.

* Material for a seminar on the same topic.

These traits are divided into **general, specific and individual**. The first relate to all periods in the development of socialist type armies, the second are inherent only to an army of developed socialism and differ from the specific traits of the previous stage while the third are determined by the particular specific historical features of a given country.

The most important general trait of an army of developed socialism is that this is an **army of the socialist revolution and the defense of its victories**. In all the stages of its development, it embodies socialist relationships. All its life is based upon socialist principles and all its indoctrination is aimed at ensuring the firm and consistent defense of its victories. The social relations are based upon social uniformity, but also understand a varying degree of their development depending upon the evolution of society inherent to socialism.

The second general feature of an army of developed socialism is that it, in contrast to bourgeois armies, guards the interests not of an exploiting minority, but is **an army of all the working people**. Such an army is born in the course of a proletarian revolution carried out by the proletariat in alliance with the working peasantry. In the stage of developed socialism, this army becomes one completely of all the people.

A third distinguishing feature of an army of developed socialism is manifested in the fact that it acts as **an army of friendship of peoples and proletarian internationalism**. The friendship of the USSR peoples is one of the sources of might of their Armed Forces. This trait assumes particularly important significance with the Warsaw Pact as well as in the process of relationships with the other friendly armies which are not members of it. The indoctrination of socialist armies is carried out in a spirit of fraternal solidarity with the workers of the socialist nations and a profound awareness of their international duty in the cause of defending world socialism.

The specific traits of an army of developed socialism are manifested in a number of new features. Thus, at present **the proportional amount of representatives of the working class in the army has risen by many-fold and become predominant**. The working class, as was pointed out at the 26th CPSU Congress, has become in our nation not merely the most numerous class, but also a majority of the working people.¹ Our Army and Navy completely reflect the social structure of Soviet society. At present, more than 56 percent of the men on active service prior to induction worked in industry, transportation and construction, around 30 percent in agriculture and over 13 percent in other spheres.² Along with this one can clearly spot the traits which show the approaching elimination of the difference in the social status of the worker and the peasant. The time will come when the USSR Armed Forces become a body of a completely socially homogeneous society.

Inherent to an army of developed socialism are the following: **unprecedentedly increased technical arming**, and for its personnel **high educational level combined with ideological conviction and developed political awareness**. All of this provided grounds for the General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, Comrade L. I. Brezhnev, at the 26th Party Congress, to describe combat potential as "a strong alloy of high technical equipping, combat skill and unshakable morale...."³

One also cannot help but point out such a specific trait of an army of developed socialism as the further **strengthening of friendship and an even closer solidarity among the**

representatives of the various peoples and nationalities. The drawing together of development levels and the growth of the economic and spiritual commonness of the nations and nationalities of our country have led to the appearance of a new historical community, the Soviet people, in which unity, a similarity of traits in the way of life and the psychology of nations predominate over differences and separateness. This naturally has a beneficial influence also on the relations between the representatives of the various nations in the military collectives.

As for the particular, individual traits in an army of developed socialism, the most important of them would be the **vanguard role** of the USSR Armed Forces among the armies of the socialist commonwealth. This role is based upon the longest historical path, the richest military-combat experience and the greatest combat potential among the other socialist armies.

The army's functions also derive from the class essence. Two of them have been historically determined: the internal and the external. Both of them are the product of the formation of the state and the splitting of society into classes. They are opposite in the exploiting and socialist societies. The **internal function** of a socialist army from the moment of its rise consists in suppressing the resistance of the overthrown exploiting classes and ends with their disappearance. The **external function** is caused by the necessity of repelling an imperialist invasion. Both functions undergo essential changes in the course of the world revolutionary process.

The internal function of the Armed Forces is of enormous significance in the victory of a socialist revolution. At present, the opportunities have broadened for the peaceful coming to power of the working class. But as before, at present it is impossible to maintain this without relying on the army. For example, the lamentable experience of Chile shows that a peaceful path of the revolution's development also requires support for it by armed force. The troops should be on the side of the victorious people.

It is impossible to imagine the withering away of the army's internal function as a momentary act and forget the possibility of employing violent means even at the rather high stages of socialism. The experience of history shows that the annihilation of exploiting classes as a social phenomenon does not yet mean the elimination of the agents of the ideology and psychology of private property relationships and which have been intensely utilized by the U.S. CIA and the other imperialist intelligence agencies. The experience of Hungary (1956), the CSSR (1968) and Poland (1980-1982) shows that the overthrow of exploiting classes does not immediately eliminate the base for counterrevolution. People remain who either have some small private property or have recently been deprived of it. Many of them move into the category of white collar personnel, the working class, the labor or "strong" individual peasantry, craftsmen and so forth. If there were not the brazen subversive impact of bourgeois propaganda and the intelligence-subversive services of imperialism, then their transition to the socialist way of life would obviously occur more rapidly and easily. But under the conditions of various sorts of interference, this process occurs with many difficulties. A significant portion of the representatives of the former exploiting classes and the elements siding with them for a long time comprises the social base of counterrevolution. For this reason the probability of employing armed forces against an externally inspired internal counterrevolution remains for some time even after the elimination of exploiting classes. The Polish experience (1980-1982) has particularly confirmed this.

In analyzing the evolution of the socialist army's internal function, recently much has been said about the enormous role played by military service in the socializing of the youth and in its moral and civil indoctrination and so forth. In actuality, it is hard to overestimate this role. But it should be remembered that this role has always been high and particularly important in the first years (and even in the first decade) that Soviet power existed while in the stage of developed socialism it has merely gained a new content.

An army of developed socialism fully maintains and develops its external function which includes several tasks which can also be termed particular functions. Their sense is disclosed only in light of a profound assessment of the existing situation in the world. A characteristic feature of the modern world, as was already pointed out, is the completely overt policy of American imperialism for global domination and for undermining the USSR, world socialism and all liberation movements. "Never," stated Comrade L. I. Brezhnev, "since World War II has the situation been so serious."⁴

The Reagan Administration has adopted a new military doctrine of "direct confrontation" with the USSR on global and regional scales. According to this doctrine, as has been pointed out by the member of the Politburo of the CPSU Central Committee and USSR Minister of Defense Mar SU D. F. Ustinov, "nuclear war is being turned by the United States into the category of the possible and under certain circumstances the advisable, and actual preparations for it are being carried out proceeding from the task of 'gaining the upper hand,' that is, to win a victory. Hence, particular emphasis is being placed on the creation of first-strike potential, on shortening the distance from which it is to be made as well as a desire to move back the nuclear danger arising from such a policy as far as possible from U.S. territory."^{4a} The production of modern types of weapons is being developed on an unprecedented scale. One must also consider the fact that presently in power in the leading imperialist state, and in no way accidentally (this always happens under the conditions of an exacerbation of crisis situations for imperialism) are people to whom are inherent irresponsibility and adventurism, an unreasoned and unrestrained desire for world domination combined with pathologic anticommunism and a disdain for mankind.

In this regard the tasks comprising in their aggregate the external function of the Soviet Armed Forces are perfectly clear.

In the first place, the Soviet Armed Forces are carrying out a task of world historical significance, acting as the basic obstacle on the path of the American and other maniacs working for world domination and an intensification of international tension. Under present-day conditions, the main task of the Soviet Armed Forces is to defend the victories of socialism and at the same time save mankind and civilization. For the latter could perish in the course of a world nuclear war and the threat of such a war has increased.

The army of developed socialism in the USSR is a fundamental element of the Warsaw Pact which is a defensive alliance designed to carry out two main political tasks, that is, to prevent a war and provide protection against external aggression. Both of these require not only the elaboration of an effective defensive concept, but also the availability of defensive forces which at least approximately correspond to the forces of a potential aggressor. These forces should help the aggressor realize the inevitable results for him if he still would try to make an attack.⁵ Not war, but rather **the**

prevention of it for the first time in history becomes the main function of the armed forces of developed socialism.

An important task for an army of developed socialism is also the reciprocal, mutual defense of the socialist victories against the most diverse aggressive actions which would include both local wars (Korea, Vietnam), internal subversive actions as well as other possible forms (the 1962 Cuban blockade and so forth).

The socialist states and their armed forces are not isolated from the military-political situation outside the socialist commonwealth. So they cannot be indifferent to the military events in the world, although these events may not be aimed directly at them. In the modern world there are wars in which the states or masses of people (Angola, Ethiopia, Afghanistan and elsewhere) are struggling for progressive social development. In this instance, the task of an army of a socialist state is to provide aid with all available means in accord with international law and at the request of these nations or peoples.

In addition, the Soviet Armed Forces carry out the task of restraining and preventing at the very outset various aggressive attempts by the imperialists or their supporters. Repeatedly a decisive statement by the Soviet government on the possibility of armed support for the victim of aggression has forced the aggressors to refrain from an attack or to call it off (Egypt in 1956, the Congo in 1960 and Cuba in 1962).

Development Patterns of a Socialist Army

The development of the armed forces of mature socialism is subordinate to the general development patterns of a socialist army with certain changes at each historic point. Due to the fact that the army of a state of all the people continues to carry out the external function of defending socialism under new conditions, the change in its development patterns involves chiefly the new, higher levels of the sources of might, the functioning and the qualitative improvement of its composition and control. But here the basic, essential indicators remain fixed.

The development patterns of an army of a developed socialist state are divided into two groups. In the first are the patterns reflecting **the social nature of the army, its ties with society and its place in the political superstructure**. In the second group are those which reflect **the development of the army's combat might as an implement of war**.

The initial pattern of a sociopolitical nature is the reflecting in the army of the socioclass relations of socialism and its class content. This pattern directly expresses the class nature of the army. Its effect operates differently at certain stages in the development of each army. It is felt particularly acutely in the period of the formation and development of the socialist state's army. The pattern of this content is disclosed in the above-given concepts on the class essence, traits and functions of an army.

In a developed socialist society, the army has begun to have a **general democratic nature**. This means, in the first place, that its internal function has disappeared and, secondly, the political content of the activities of the Soviet Armed Forces corresponds to the interests of all the Soviet people. The class unity of the army and the people

has reached a higher level. Thirdly, the Soviet Armed Forces are generally democratic in their social composition. In society no social forces remain which cannot be trusted with the defense of the fatherland.

The general democratic nature of the army of developed socialism does not contradict its class essence, but is the higher stage of its development.

A second most important sociopolitical pattern in the development of a socialist army is **the leadership of its organizational development and activities by a Marxist-Leninist party** and specifically in terms of the USSR Armed Forces, the leadership of the CPSU.

Our Armed Forces have developed on a sound economic and sociopolitical base. All the history of the Soviet nation has been the most vivid proof of the advantages of the Soviet military organization over the capitalist one and this has been determined by those objective factors which reside in the nature of our society.

In the leadership of the CPSU over the Soviet Armed Forces lies the crucial factor of their might and organization, of their loyalty to the goals of building socialism and communism, the source of the ongoing growth of their combat readiness and capability and the basic guarantee of its victories.

The necessity of party leadership over the army of developed socialism is caused primarily by the fact that the CPSU is the ruling party and the guiding force of all society of which the Armed Forces are an element. The leading role of the CPSU has also risen due to the fact that it is the carrier and main driving force for the development and dissemination of Marxist-Leninist teachings and these ensure the correct direction for theory and practice of military organizational development, the elaboration of military doctrine and the development of Soviet military science. No social organization can replace the party here. The stronger leading role of the CPSU in the army is related to the greater complexity of the processes of military organizational development under the conditions of the scientific-technical revolution, to the rapid development of military equipment as well as to the increased importance of the moral factor and the necessity of intensifying ideological and political indoctrination.

The increased leading role of the party in the army with developed socialism is also caused by the greater military threat from imperialism which was mentioned above. The party carries out enormous work to unmask this threat and organize a struggle against the ideological subversion of imperialism and aimed, in particular, at undermining the leading role of the CPSU. Bourgeois ideologists intensely propagandize the principle that the army should be outside of politics. However, the experience of history confirms that all the victories by our army were determined by able party leadership. For this reason, the main principle in Soviet military organizational development was formulated in the CPSU Program in the following manner: "The fundamental principle of military organizational development is the leadership of the Communist Party over the Armed Forces and the greater role and influence of the party organizations in the Army and Navy."⁶

From the above-named pattern stems another one which consists **in the constant growth of the political awareness and communist ideological loyalty of the personnel**. The basis of this growth is the development of a socialist type individual in our nation.

At the 25th Party Congress, Comrade L. I. Brezhnev pointed out that our most important achievement is the Soviet man "who has been able, having won his freedom, to defend it in the heaviest battles. A man who has built his future sparing no effort and making any sacrifices. A man who, in going through all hardships, himself has changed beyond recognition and has combined in himself ideological conviction and enormous vital energy, culture, knowledge and the ability to employ it. This is a man who, being an ardent patriot, has been and always will be a consistent internationalist."⁷

Finally, **the relationship and military cooperation among the socialist countries** is still another important pattern which arose with the founding of the defensive Warsaw Pact. The strengthening of this cooperation is an objective necessity without which in our times it would be impossible to successfully defend the socialist fatherland when confronted with the military threat of imperialism. The cooperation of the socialist armies envisages a pooling of their efforts aimed at military-technical equipping, the coordinating of preparatory and training plans and so forth. Continuous work to strengthen the ideological commonness of the armies and actually realize the principles of proletarian internationalism has also become particularly important.

The second group of patterns for an army of developed socialism concerns such essential internal relations of it as **the constant rise in the technical equipping on a new material-technical base, the achieving of a higher level of culture and combat skill for the personnel, the strengthening of one-man command and discipline and the improving of the army's organizational structure.**

The present-day situation places particularly high demands on the **strengthening of the material-technical base and the technical equipping of the Soviet Armed Forces.** The Soviet Union has sufficient strength to oppose the new strategy of the United States which is throwing down a direct challenge to our nation, creating modern weapons such as the MX missiles, the B-1 bombers, the Trident submarines, cruise missiles and medium-range missiles, in strengthening the navy, ground forces and so forth.

The economic base and the technical-industrial plant of developed socialism provide everything necessary to create a sufficiently powerful countersystem if it is impossible to prevent a new increase in the arms race. We do not want this, but if we are forced to do this, the Soviet Union is capable of putting its military might up against the military might of any aggressor. "...The economy, science and technology in our nation," commented the member of the Politburo of the CPSU Central Committee, the USSR Minister of Defense Mar SU D. F. Ustinov, "are presently on such a high level that we are capable within the shortest period of time of developing any type of weapon on which the enemies of peace may wager."⁸

The qualitatively higher level of combat training and readiness is also ensured by the significantly increased overall, technical and military level of all the personnel, from the private to the general, and on this basis a higher level of combat readiness and training is achieved for the Armed Forces as a whole. Thus, while in 1939, the personnel of our Army and Navy included 11.9 percent of persons with a higher and secondary education, 27.5 percent with an incomplete secondary education and 6.4 percent with a primary education, at present almost 100 percent of the Soviet military have at least an 8th-grade education while the share of servicemen with a higher and secondary education is around 80 percent.⁹ Here are some data on the combat training indicators. For example, in the Air Defense Troops 95 percent of the servicemen have a class rating, around 70 percent are high-class specialists and 40 percent are outstanding

rating, around 70 percent are high-class specialists and 40 percent are outstanding men in military and political training.¹⁰

The continuous improvement of the organizational structure of the USSR Armed Forces is an exceptionally important pattern in their development. This has been caused again by both internal and external factors. The internal ones consist in ensuring the optimum and most economic structure of the troops. The commissioning of new types of weapons and their supporting equipment, the appearance of new functional tasks (for example, in the area of radar support, defense against weapons of mass destruction and radio electronic countermeasures) require the incorporation of many new elements in the structure of all levels of military organisms (from the subunit up to the largest field force). The external factors are the ploy of the U.S. imperialists who have made surprise attack the basic provision of their new military doctrine of "direct confrontation." These require the maintaining of an organizational structure of troop command which would ensure the immediate thwarting of the attempts of any aggression. This is why there has been an increased tendency for the complicating of troop organization of all the branches and services.

The designated trend contradicts one of the basic principles of troop organization which has been tested by military history, namely the principle of simplicity. Hence, one of the basic patterns of military organizational development is **the creation of those troop organizational structures which would ensure the carrying out of all the modern diverse functions of the military organism and at the same time be maximally simple and make it possible to quickly and clearly control the troops.**

Among the patterns in the functioning of an army of developed socialism an important place is held by **one-man leadership.**

This pattern has its sociopolitical and technical-organizational aspects and is expressed in the corresponding principle of the army's organizational development. The increased technical equipping and the greater social uniformity of the army have provided firmer bases for one-man command in the Armed Forces. V. I. Lenin pointed out that one-man command and the presence of authoritative leadership are natural patterns in any and particularly a highly organized society. "Neither the railroads, nor transportation nor large machines and enterprises," he wrote, "generally could function correctly if there was no unity of will which linked all the involved workers into a single economic organ working with clock-like accuracy."¹¹ In the army one-man command is particularly essential for the military organization is strong and good "only because it is flexible and at the same time is able to give millions of people a single will."¹²

One-man leadership in our army is harmoniously combined with the leading role of the party, for **the party controls the army.**

Ways of Strengthening the Army Under the Conditions of a Developed Socialist Society

The enormous might of the nation depends upon an aggregate of potentials: economic, scientific-technical, social, moral-political and the specifically military which is formed on their basis. The core of the last factor is the combat potential of the USSR Armed Forces.

All the party's measures in the area of our nation's economic and sociopolitical development help to increase the state's defense capability as a whole and the combat

might and readiness of the Armed Forces in particular. As a result of carrying out the 10th Five-Year Plan, the combat might of the Soviet Army and Navy was increased. "At present, the Armed Forces possess everything necessary to deal a prompt and crushing rebuff to any aggression, no matter from whence it comes. The enormous destructive might of the nuclear missile weapons with which our Army and Navy are armed has been and remains a serious factor in restraining the fans of military adventures," pointed out the USSR Minister of Defense, Mar SU D. F. Ustinov.¹³ The high indicators achieved in the national economy serve as a basis for a further qualitative shift in our society's development in the 1980's. In 1981-1985, the growth of industrial product should be 26-28 percent, for agricultural product 12-14 percent, for capital investments 12-15 percent and so forth.¹⁴

At present, in accord with the views of Soviet military doctrine, the CPSU and the leading military bodies are doing everything necessary not to permit the imperialists to disrupt the presently existing approximate military equilibrium. The USSR proceeds from the view that the present level of armaments in the world greatly exceeds all reasonable defensive requirements of the opposing sides. Recently, the USSR has made a number of new constructive proposals aimed at halting the arms race and at disarmament and has announced a unilateral promise not to employ nuclear weapons first. However, militant imperialism has not responded in kind. Such a position of the aggressive circles has forced the Communist Party and the Soviet government to adopt the necessary response measures to further strengthen the defense of the Soviet state.

In speaking about the tasks involved in further increasing military skill, it is essential to bear in mind that the combat readiness of the Armed Forces is its highest indicator. On the eve of the 26th CPSU Congress, there was a socialist competition which brought significant achievements under the motto "For High Combat Readiness and Firm Military Order!" In the course of it the vanguard role of the communists and Komsomol members grew significantly. At present, a new stage in the socialist competition has commenced and this is devoted to properly celebrating the 60th anniversary of the formation of the USSR. As the First Secretary of the Komsomol Central Committee, Comrade B. N. Pastukhov, reported at the 19th Komsomol Congress, one out of every three Komsomol servicemen met their congress as an outstanding man in military and political training and one out of every two was a high-class specialist."¹⁵

The combat readiness of the armed forces is a state whereby they are able at any time and under any conditions to repel or thwart a surprise attack by aggressive forces from wherever it might originate and by whatever means it is carried out. It is to teach the troops what is essential in war, under conditions as close as possible to real combat, in ably combining a generalizing of historical experience with the forecasting of the possible future methods of military operations. Here it is also essential to pay attention to the role of **organization and discipline** which has increased under present-day conditions. V. I. Lenin repeatedly pointed to the importance of these factors. "In order to be victorious," he said, "it is essential to have the greatest struggle, it is essential to have iron, military discipline. The person who does not understand this has understood nothing under the conditions of maintaining worker power and brings...great harm to worker-peasant power itself."¹⁶

In the age of developed socialism conditions exist for further raising military discipline to an even greater height. The demands on discipline are also growing. At present,

the CPSU Central Committee and the USSR minister of defense are paying particular attention to this. In his report at the Sixth All-Army Conference of Primary Party Organization Secretaries, the USSR Minister of Defense, Mar SU D. F. Ustinov said: "...While the role of discipline has always been great in the past, at present it has grown immeasurably. During the age of nuclear weapons, of the unprecedented scope, dynamism and complexity of military operations and the unprecedented importance of the moral factor, the slightest disobedience of the requirements of military discipline can lead to the severest consequences." ¹⁷

This is why even the slightest deviations from proper order are unacceptable in the military collectives.

Military discipline in an army of developed socialism is closely tied to the third element of the combat potential of the Soviet Armed Forces, that is, their **high morale**. The fundamental changes which have occurred in society's social structure have had a positive impact on the moral qualities of the personnel and their political awareness and ideological conviction are growing. The instructions of the CPSU Central Committee on developing an activist position in life in each Soviet person as a builder of communism and a defender of the victories of socialism are being realized.

The core of the communist indoctrination of the men is the development in them of a scientific ideology, wholehearted dedication to the cause of the party and the cause of communism, love for the socialist fatherland and proletarian internationalism. The Decree of the CPSU Central Committee of 26 April 1979 points out the specific ways for further improving ideological and political indoctrination and decisively increasing its effectiveness.

In speaking at the Sixth All-Army Conference of Primary Party Organization Secretaries, the chief of the Main Political Directorate of the Soviet Army and Navy, Army Gen A. A. Yepishev said: "It is important that all ideological work ensure a clear understanding by the men of Lenin's ideas about the defense of the socialist fatherland, that it shape a conviction of the rightness and invincibility of socialism, that it respond effectively to the military actions of the imperialist states and their supporters and more fully consider the increased demands upon the moral-political and psychological training of the personnel." ¹⁸

In being guided by the party's instructions, the command, the political bodies, the party and Komsomol organizations are actively and steadily carrying out its ideas to increase the combat readiness of the Armed Forces and ensure dependable defense of the motherland's state interests. In his report at the May (1982) Plenum of the CPSU Central Committee, Comrade L. I. Brezhnev said: "In order that our creative plans be implemented, it is essential for us to keep the peace. For this reason we will maintain the nation's defense capability on the proper level...." ¹⁹

In approaching the 60th anniversary of the formation of the USSR, the men are steadily fighting to achieve new, higher goals in improving military skill, they are vigilantly watching the intrigues of the imperialist aggressors and along with the men of the Warsaw Pact countries are ready at any moment to come to the defense of peace and socialism.

FOOTNOTES

- 1 "Materialy XXVI s"yezda KPSS" [Materials of the 26th CPSU Congress], Moscow, Politizdat, 1981, p 52.
- 2 "Voyna i armiya" [War and the Army], Voenizdat, 1977, pp 359-360.
- 3 "Materialy XXVI s"yezda KPSS," p 66.
- 4 PRAVDA, 4 February 1982.
- 4a PRAVDA, 12 July 1982.
- 5 "Ugroza Yevrope" [The Threat to Europe], Moscow, Progress, 1981, p 9.
- 6 "Programma KPSS" [The CPSU Program], Moscow, Politizdat, 1975, p 112.
- 7 "Materialy XXV s"yezda" [Materials of the 25th CPSU Congress], Moscow, Politizdat, 1976, p 87.
- 8 D. F. Ustinov, "Izbrannyye rechi i stat'i" [Selected Speeches and Articles], Moscow, Politizdat, 1979, p 319.
- 9 K. A. Vorob'yev, "Vooruzhennyy sily razvitogo sotsialisticheskogo obshchestva" [The Armed Forces of a Developed Socialist Society], Voenizdat, 1980, pp 156, 158.
- 10 Ibid., p 164.
- 11 V. I. Lenin, PSS [Complete Collected Works], Vol 36, p 157.
- 12 Ibid., Vol 26, p 258.
- 13 PRAVDA, 22 June 1981.
- 14 "Materialy XXVI s"yezda KPSS," p 103.
- 15 KOMSOMOL'SKAYA PRAVDA, 19 May 1982.
- 16 V. I. Lenin, PSS, Vol 40, p 220.
- 17 KRASNAYA ZVEZDA, 12 May 1982.
- 18 Ibid.
- 19 PRAVDA, 25 May 1982.

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CSO: 8144/1871

WARTIME EXPERIENCE IN AIR DEFENSE OF NORTHERN SEA LANES

Moscow VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL in Russian No 8, Aug 82 (signed to press 26 Jul 82) pp 13-19

[Article published under the heading "The Soviet Art of War in the Great Patriotic War," by Docent and Candidate of Historical Sciences, Col I. Inozemtsev: "Airborne Defense for the Northern Naval Lines of Communications"]

[Text] One of the most important missions for Soviet aviation in the North during the years of the Great Patriotic War was the defense of the external and internal sea lanes. The internal ones linked the ports of Kolskiy Zaliv [Kola Bay], the White Sea and the Arctic. During the war years, 1,471 convoys crossed them comprising 2,568 transports and 3,617 naval vessels. Over the external sea lanes shipments were made from England, Canada and the United States to Murmansk and Arkhangelsk. The northern sea lanes were the most convenient of all the external ones of the Soviet Union since the cargo was delivered over the shortest time. The nonfreezing port of Murmansk ensured shipments year-round. During the war, 738 transports comprising 41 convoys arrived in the Northern Ports and 726 transports comprising 36 Allied convoys departed.¹

After the collapse of the plan to capture Murmansk, the Nazi Command from 1942 directed the basic efforts of the fleet and the aviation in the North to disrupting the sea lanes. For this it concentrated large forces of submarines and surface vessels at the bases in Northern Norway.² In February 1942, 135 aircraft were shifted to the airfields of Northern Norway and Finland and in October another 545. However, as a result of losses and the shifting of a portion of the forces to other sectors, the enemy aircraft fleet declined in April 1943 to 273 fighting aircraft. In the summer of the same year, it increased up to 370 and then again declined.³

The enemy fleet and aviation occupied an advantageous position and could operate against the Allied convoys along their entire crossing.⁴ Aviation had the missions of sinking transports and ships on the sea lanes from Jan Mayen Island to Kolskiy Zaliv and the mouth of the White Sea and to make bombing raids against the ports of Murmansk and Arkhangelsk, the airfields and naval bases. These operations were combined with the conducting of air reconnaissance.

A tragic fate befell Convoy PQ-17 which left Iceland on 27 June 1942 and consisted of 35 transports, 2 tankers and 24 escort vessels. Traveling toward it from Arkhangelsk and Murmansk was Convoy QP-13 which included 35 transports. Both were covered

by a large Royal Navy task force. The Soviet Command assigned large ship and air forces to protect them. However, the English Admiralty, having learned that a German squadron had set to sea and using the pretext of securing navigation in the Atlantic, on 4 July issued an order for the close escort ships (4 cruisers and 3 destroyers) and the escort squadrons to turn back, while the transports in Convoy PQ-17 were to spread out and travel independently to the Soviet ports. The convoy split up. Regardless of the fact that the command of the SF [Northern Fleet] dispatched virtually all ships and aviation to locate and cover the transports, nothing could rectify the fatal decision of the English Admiralty. The small groups and individual ships, being unprotected, became the victims of attacks by Nazi aircraft and submarines. Only due to the energetic actions of the Northern Fleet could a portion of them be saved. Along with the 23 transports and a salvage vessel, 3,350 motor vehicles, 430 tanks, 210 bombers and around 100,000 tons of other cargo went to the bottom.⁵ The catastrophe with Convoy PQ-17 was used by the Allies as a pretext for holding up the dispatch to the USSR of 4 or 5 convoys with military cargo so essential for our troops in the autumn of 1942 and the winter of 1942-1943.

All available ship and air forces of the Northern Fleet were employed for protecting the Allied convoys. During periods of intense convoy movements, the air units of the Karelian Front, the Murmansk Air Defense Troops and the long-range aviation [ADD] and the aviation of the Arkhangelsk Military District were used as well. But the main role was played by the Northern Fleet aviation.

The Soviet Command constantly strengthened the aviation in the North, sending there new bombers, torpedo planes, ground attack planes and fighters. The aircraft fleet of the Karelian Front Air Force and the 7th Air Army rose from 118 combat aircraft in January 1942 to 875 in June 1944.⁷ Also strengthened was the aviation of the National Air Defense Troops based beyond the Arctic Circle. The organizational structure of the air field forces and formations was improved and new airfields were built making it possible to broaden our aviation's operating range.

The combat employment of the Air Forces in defending the interior and exterior sea lanes was carried out by daily operations as well as by conducting operations to support the convoys.

Daily operations consisted in having our reconnaissance aviation provide systematic search for enemy submarines and mines on the sea lanes, chiefly the interior ones, following a previously elaborated plan, while fighter aviation covered the vessels at the roadsteads and under way. Antisubmarine defense of the convoys was carried out actively.

During the periods of the movement of Allied convoys, the fleet staff worked out operations plans for protecting them against enemy air and sea forces while the staff of the fleet air forces, on the basis of the battle order or the directives of the SF Military Council, worked out a plan for the combat employment of aviation for the operation. This plan was in fact an entire system of measures.

According to these plans, several days before the convoys left Murmansk and Arkhangelsk or the convoys traveling to our ports approached a meridian of 20° E. long., the following were carried out: a systematic search for the ships; the making of bombing raids against enemy airfields; the setting of mines on the approaches to

enemy naval bases in the aim of sealing off or impeding the setting to sea of surface vessels; the making of bombing and torpedo attacks against enemy ships at bases and in the sea lanes.

During the time the convoy crossed the Barents Sea, in addition to the designated measures, the following was also planned: the escorting of the convoys from the air within the range of the fighter aviation; the carrying out of antisubmarine defense in the sector from our ports to the meridian of 20°; the patrolling of long-range fighters on the cut-off lines in the aim of intercepting enemy bombers and torpedo planes; the making of strikes by bomber and torpedo aviation against enemy surface vessels in their approach to a convoy; the assigning of a fighter reserve for increasing the forces involved in covering the transports. Moreover, a significant portion of the torpedo planes and bombers was in a reserve and attacked enemy ships in the event they left their base.

Thus, the operation of ensuring the security of a convoy started even before it entered the operational zone of the Northern Fleet and continued until the vessels and ships were in this zone. The vessels at port were covered, in addition, by the air defense forces of Murmansk and Arkhangelsk and the aviation of the Karelian Front.

In the system of measures to ensure the security of Allied convoys, air reconnaissance was of exceptionally important significance. The crews of the reconnaissance aircraft detected the bases of enemy aviation, they searched for submarines, surface vessels and mines in a 30-mile zone along both sides of the planned movement of the convoy in the Barents Sea, they carried out antisubmarine defense, they determined the ice conditions in the sea and, finally, detected the location of the convoy itself and guided our aircraft to it. Air reconnaissance cooperated closely with naval reconnaissance. This was carried out basically by individual aircraft at altitudes from 3,000 to 7,000 m. The crews endeavored to approach enemy objectives covertly, as the latter were covered by strong air defense weapons. If the meteorological conditions allowed, the installations were photographed without fail. In conducting air reconnaissance, high courage and combat skill were shown by the Heroes of the Soviet Union, Officers M. K. Verbitskiy, L. I. Yel'kin, V. S. Strel'tsov, R. M. Suvorov, N. Ya. Turkov and others.

The ensuring of convoy security to an enormous degree depended upon the success of the struggle for air supremacy. This was carried out constantly, in increasing particularly in the course of the convoy defense operations.

Soviet aviation made raids against the major enemy airfields even before the convoy entered our zone. Because of the small number of aircraft in the Northern Fleet air forces, the aviation units of the Karelian Front, the ADD and the aviation of the National Air Defense Troops were widely involved in carrying out this mission. Thus, for escorting the Convoy PQ-16 which left Iceland on 21 May 1942 and consisted of 34 transports and 14 escort vessels, by an order of Hq SHC [Headquarters Supreme High Command], the task was set of attacking the enemy airfields in Bardufosse, Svartnesse, Tromso and Hammerfest systematically from 25 through 29 May. For this, the ADD commander Gen A. Ye. Golovanov, was ordered to assign 20 Il-4 aircraft from the 36th Air Division and to shift them to one of the airfields in the Arctic. During the same period, the order was given to systematically destroy the airfields in Kirkenes, Vadso, Salmijarvi, Luostari and Hebuktene and this was to involve the aviation of the Northern Fleet, the Karelian Front and Air Defense based in the region of Murmansk. Overall leadership and responsibility for the combat employment of the aviation in

the operation of protecting the convoy was entrusted to the commander of the Northern Fleet air forces, Maj Gen Avn A. A. Kuznetsov.⁸

There subsequently followed a series of orders from Hq SHC on the assigning of air force formations and units of the Karelian Front, the 7th Air Army, the ADD and the air defense aviation for attacking airfields and repelling raids on the ports of Murmansk and Arkhangelsk. Just the air units of the Karelian Front involved in supporting the convoys from 23 through 29 May, from 25 June through 10 August, from 1 September through 7 October 1942 and from 26 February through 10 April 1943, carried out 613 aircraft sorties in the aim of attacking enemy airfields (almost 40 percent of the total aircraft sorties during their operational subordination to the air force commander of the Northern Fleet).⁹ As a total during the war years, the air forces of the front and the 7th Air Army destroyed 354 aircraft at enemy airfields.¹⁰ The ADD destroyed 73 enemy aircraft at airfields in the Arctic.¹¹

Raids against enemy airfields were also made by the Northern Fleet air forces although more rarely than the frontal [tactical] and long-range aviation. As the aviation of the fleet was reinforced, it began to employ this method of fighting for air supremacy more often and during the war years destroyed 121 aircraft at enemy airfields.¹²

Regardless of the effectiveness of the strikes against the airfields, the basic method of protecting the convoys and ports against air attack and as a whole the winning of air supremacy remained their direct coverage and the destroying of enemy aviation in air battles. Coverage was provided only in daylight hours by the simultaneous patrolling of two or three groups of four-six and sometimes eight fighters which circled in the area of the convoy in two or three zones in such a manner as to protect it on all sides. In the event of an air battle, pursuit was permitted only for a portion of the patrolling fighters. Most often, special groups were assigned for this purpose.

A number of fighter aviation subunits was at the airfields ready to repel an enemy air attack against the convoys or to reinforce the patrol groups.

Of exceptionally great significance was the organizing of control for the cover fighter aviation and its cooperation with the convoy ships. On the basis of an order of the air forces commander of the Northern Fleet, the staffs of the air formations and units worked out the necessary combat documents: the operational order, the planning table, a diagram and schedule for patrolling and shifts over the convoy. The basic documents for the interaction of the cover fighters with the convoy were the identification and signal tables worked out and issued ahead of time to the staff of the Northern Fleet air forces by the English Command.

But the cooperation of fighter aviation with the convoy, and primarily with the naval anti-aircraft artillery, was not sufficiently worked out, particularly at the start of the war. In the aim of secrecy, radio contact was not established between the convoy and the air forces staff of the Northern Fleet as well as between the cover fighter aviation and the ships. The transmitting of visual signals from the ships for target designation and for guiding the fighters to the air enemy was not employed.

The fighter cover was controlled by radio from the command post of the air division or regiment, but here as well strict limitations were imposed on its use in order not to give away the convoy. The control and guidance of the fighters improved significantly in 1943, when radar began to be more widely employed in the Northern Theater.

As a rule, intense air engagements were carried out in escorting the convoys. For example, for destroying the Convoy PQ-16, enemy aviation on 30 May 1942 made 330 airplane passes. All its attacks were driven off by the Northern Fleet fighters. Only 6 Ju-88 succeeded in breaking through to the caravan of ships. Here the Nazi pilots were forced to release their bombs without aiming. On the same day, in air engagements our pilots shot down 9 aircraft, losing 3 of our own. On 18 August 1943, in the area of the convoy an air engagement started up with the increasing of forces on both sides. As a total 32 Soviet and 64 enemy aircraft were involved in the engagement. As a result, 12 enemy aircraft and 5 of our own were shot down.¹³

The dependability of the air cover for the convoys grew with each passing year. This is explained by the reinforcing of Soviet aviation in the North, by the improved organization of the cover, by the acquiring of combat experience and skill by the pilots and by their high moral-political and combat qualities. Of great importance was the winning of strategic air supremacy by our aviation in the summer of 1943.

In order to prevent the enemy bomber and torpedo aviation from attacking a convoy, the air force's command of the Northern Fleet, along with other measures to ensure its safety, prevented enemy aviation from taking off. As a rule, this was carried out by the patrolling of a pair of fighters on the cut-off positions which were set depending upon from what airfields and by what routes (according to the data of our air reconnaissance) the enemy was to make the raids on the convoys. Of course, it was impossible to fully carry out the mission of preventing the enemy aircraft from reaching the convoy area by this method. However, by their surprise attacks our fighters disrupted the formation of the enemy aircraft group and often forced them to return to their base.

Enemy submarines represented a major threat to the vessels and the escort ships. It was very difficult to detect them. This mission was basically carried out by aviation. On the interior sea lanes the search for submarines which particularly intensified their operations in the eastern part of the Barents Sea and the Kara Sea in 1943, was carried out according to a plan almost daily in certain sectors. On the exterior sea lanes this was done basically in the course of escorting the Allied convoys. Some 2 or 3 days before the convoy's arrival in the support zone of the Northern Fleet, one or two of our aircraft at an altitude of 400-600 m began scanning the water surface in the area where the transports were to travel from the coast of the Kola Peninsula to a meridian of 20° E. long. In addition to carrying out this mission, they also searched for floating mines. During the war, the Northern Fleet aviation detected 34 enemy submarines, and 33 of them were attacked.¹⁴ Characteristically when the ASW aircraft were carrying out their missions, the enemy submarines, as a rule, did not attack the transports or escort ships of the Allied convoys.

The operational support for the sea lanes by making torpedo and bomber-strafting attacks on enemy ships was closely tied to the problem of disrupting the enemy sea lanes, but this goes beyond the topic and for this reason is not examined in the present article.

Thus, Soviet aviation successfully carried out the mission of defending the internal and external sea lanes against the actions of Nazi aviation and ships. For protecting the sea lanes the Northern Fleet air forces alone during the war made 22,108 sorties, or 33 percent of the total number. This included 8,922 sorties or 40 percent to cover the ships in moving at sea and for intercepting enemy aircraft; 6,641 or 30 percent

for air reconnaissance of enemy ships and airfields and the ice situation; 5,766, or 26.5 percent for searching for enemy submarines and ASW defense for the convoys; 653, or 3 percent, for attacking the airfields; 126, or 0.5 percent for laying mines.¹⁵

As a result, the losses of Allied convoys in the operational zone of the Northern Fleet were minimal. To the east of Bear Island, just 2 of the 77 transports were sunk and 11 were damaged. With individual ship movements (October 1942--January 1943) 9 out of 41 transports were lost, chiefly in areas almost beyond the reach of the Northern Fleet aviation and ships.¹⁶ The total losses of the ocean-going escorts over the war were 15 ships.¹⁷

Aviation also provided protection of the convoys during cargo working operations in our northern ports of Murmansk and Arkhangelsk.¹⁸

At the outset of the war, cooperation between the fighter aviation of the front and the fleet, and from the end of 1941, with the 104th and 122d Air Defense Fighter Division, was organized according to the principle of delimiting combat zones. Initially, the realizing of clear control and cooperation was impeded by the lack of transceivers on many fighter aircraft and the insufficient ability to use them. For this reason there were instances when a patrol group engaged superior enemy forces while our other fighters, in being in the same area, but outside of visual contact, did not support them.

From the end of 1942, as a consequence of the numerical growth and the qualitative strengthening of fighter aviation and air defense ground weapons as well as the improvement in the entire organization of air defense in the North, there was a change in the forms of fighter aviation control and the coordination of the fighter air formations and units between themselves and with the ground air defense forces. A plan was worked out and implemented for coordinating the fighter aviation of the Northern Fleet, the 122d Air Defense Fighter Division, the air forces of the 14th Army and the anti-aircraft weapons of the Murmansk Divisional Air Defense Area. In the Northern Fleet, joint command posts were organized for the cooperating aviation and ground air defense formations. The control of all air defense resources became centralized in repelling enemy air raids against the ports and towns in the Arctic.

In protecting the convoys from the air and in covering Murmansk and Arkhangelsk, the Soviet pilots acted decisively and boldly and, if need be, did not spare their lives. In covering Murmansk, Hero of the Soviet Union A. S. Klobystov made three air ramblings. Also fighting courageously in the Arctic skies were the twice Hero of the Soviet Union B. F. Safonov, Heroes of the Soviet Union V. S. Adonkin, I. V. Bochkov, L. A. Gal'chenko, A. A. Kovalenko, S. G. Kurzenkov, P. S. Kutakhov, P. I. Orlov, P. G. Sgibnev, Z. A. Sorokin, K. F. Fomchenkov and many others.

The experience acquired during the years of the Great Patriotic War in the combat employment of the Soviet Air Forces in providing air defense on the northern sea lanes has not lost its practical significance. This is explained primarily by the growing role of maritime shipments. For example, during the U.S. aggression in Vietnam, maritime transport handled up to 98 percent of the volume of cargo shipments and up to 35 percent of the troop movements.¹⁹ Under the conditions of the exacerbation of the international situation and the increased aggressive moves by the United States against the USSR, the problem of defending the northern sea lanes becomes evermore important and urgent.

An analysis of the combat operations of the Soviet Air Forces to defend the northern sea lanes during the years of the last war and a comparison of them with the combat employment of aviation in modern local wars started by the imperialist states, considering the development of the weapons used on the sea lanes and their defense, make it possible to draw definite conclusions. Under present-day conditions, the naval aviation, as before, must perform the entire range of measures to provide air protection for the sea lanes. At the same time, the role of the other Armed Services and particularly the Air Forces and Air Defense Troops will grow.

The involvement in defending the northern sea lanes of the air formations of the various Armed Services as well as the ships and ground forces of the Air Defense Troops has given particularly important significance to the questions of the control of aviation and the cooperation of all the resources participating in carrying out this overall task. The practice of the operational subordination of the air formations and units of the various Armed Services participating in the operations to defend the convoys to the air force's commander of the Northern Fleet, the elaboration of a unified plan for the coverage of Murmansk and other measures proved effective.

FOOTNOTES

- 1 "Boyevoy put' Sovetskogo Voenno-Morskogo Flota" [The Campaign Record of the Soviet Navy], 3d Supplemented Edition, Voenizdat, 1974, pp 206, 213.
- 2 For the effective force of the enemy fleet in the North, see: "Istoriya vtoroy mirovoy voyny 1939-1945" [History of World War II of 1939-1945], Vol 4, Voenizdat, 1975, p 330; Vol 6, 1976, p 151.
- 3 I. A. Kozlov and V. S. Shlomin, "Krasnoznamennyy Severnyy Flot" [The Red Banner Northern Fleet], Voenizdat, 1977, pp 136-137.
- 4 By agreement with Great Britain and the United States, the defense of the northern sea lanes up to the meridian of 20° E. long. (Tromsø) was provided by English naval vessels while to the east of this the convoys were escorted by the forces of the Northern Fleet.
- 5 D. Irving, "Razgrom konvoja PQ-17" [The Sinking of Convoy PQ-17], translated from the English, Voenizdat, 1971, p 352.
- 6 [Not in text.]
- 7 TsAMO [Central Archives of the Ministry of Defense], folio 214, inv. 1466, file 17, sheet 55; folio 7 VA, inv. 5440, file 179, sheet 4.
- 8 P. N. Ivanov, "Kryl'ya nad morem" [Wings Over the Sea], Voenizdat, 1973, p 238.
- 9 TsAMO, folio 342, inv. 5440, file 19, sheets 5-6.
- 10 Ibid., file 4, sheet 34.
- 11 Ibid., folio 1, gv. bak, inv. 388864, file 2, sheet 192.

- 12 TsVMA [Central Naval Archives], folio 12, inv. 1, file 75, sheet 121.
- 13 Ibid., sheets 16-17.
- 14 Ibid., sheet 14.
- 15 Ibid., file 81, sheet 35.
- 16 This does not include the losses of transports in Convoy PQ-17 which was abandoned by its English escort.
- 17 MORSKOY SBORNIK, No 5, 1978, pp 30-31.
- 18 For more details see VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL, No 1, 1972, pp 79-83; No 2, 1973, pp 92-97.
- 19 S. G. Gorshkov, "Morskaya moshch' gosudarstva" [The Sea Power of a State], Voenizdat, 1976, p 397.

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CSO: 8144/1871

WARTIME EXPERIENCE IN IMPROVING THE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

Moscow VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL in Russian No 8, Aug 82 (signed to press 26 Jul 82) pp 20-26

[Article published under the heading "The Art of Warfare in the Great Patriotic War," by Candidate of Military Sciences, Maj Gen Tech Trps N. Popov: "Improving the Transportation Support System During the War"]

[Text] The Communist Party and the Soviet government, in following Lenin's thesis that transportation is a most important material factor in a war,¹ during all the Great Patriotic War gave unflagging attention to the questions of transport support, including a range of measures which provided an opportunity for the uninterrupted operation of transport. These included: the preparation of all types of transport arteries, technical operations, technical coverage, the rebuilding of the lines of communications and pipelines as well as the assigning (distribution) and preparation of the means of transport for transporting the troops, for carrying materiel and for evacuation.

The Soviet Armed Forces during the years of the last war conducted more than 50 strategic operations, around 250 front-level ones and over 1,000 army-level operations. The preparation and execution of each of them required enormous effort by the command, the staffs, the rear bodies as well as intense operation of all types of transport, including rail, water, motor vehicle, cart, air and pipeline. The crucial role in ensuring all types of military shipments in the strategic and operational levels of the rear was played by rail transport while on the troop level it was motor vehicle and partially cart.

Under the conditions of the enormous length of the Soviet-German Front, intense battles and systematic enemy operations against the lines of communications, the rear bodies had to effectively rebuild the lines of communications and means of transport, provide security and defense for the installations, organize troop movements and continuously control them.

Even at the outset of the war, it was clear that the views established in the prewar years concerning the organization of rear troop support, including transport, did not fully meet the conditions for conducting fluid combat operations. The separateness

of the supply services and the transport services created serious obstacles in rear supply. In the central system, in the fronts and armies, each service carried out its tasks independently and in the strategic and operational elements there actually was no single body involved in coordinating the use of transport. The difficulty was, for example, that the Railroad Troops prior to the war were kept at peacetime TOE and were part of two people's commissariats, defense and railroads. There was no unified body in charge of motor transport. Its repair and supply with equipment was the concern of the Highway Department of the Directorate of the Rear and Supply of the General Staff as well as the Motor-Armored Directorate of the Red Army. The Road Troops were trained by two people's commissariats, defense and internal affairs. The Road Troops had only training and regular road operating regiments on the basis of which the road units were to be deployed both through the NKO [People's Commissariat of Defense] as well as through the Main Highway Administration of the NKVD [People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs].²

With the starting of the war against the USSR by Nazi Germany, the situation required an abrupt change in the operation of the rear bodies and, in particular, an improvement in the control of transport support. By an order of the People's Commissar of Defense in August 1941, the Red Army Main Rear Directorate was established as well as the rear headquarters of the fronts and armies. These included the transport services (military railroads and highway) and the supply services. The chiefs of the rear gained an opportunity to comprehensively resolve the questions of transport support and supply. **The experience acquired in the initial period of the war was employed for further improving the structure of the rear, the methods and forms of rear troop support as well as the preparation of the lines of communications.**

In the course of the war, the need arose of improving transport support also on the center--front level. The war demanded special concern for increasing the reliability of the transport arteries running to the fronts from the interior of the nation. The steady carrying out of shipments in the zones of the fronts depended largely upon the readiness of all types of transport to operate, and above rail and motor transport. The railroads were the basic type of communications in the front rear area and all the rear units and facilities were located and operated along them.

The operation of special stations was organized on the railroads of a front. These included: the rail head and unloading, supply stations, front dump and unloading (loading) stations, temporary transloading stations as well as distribution stations and their divisions. These stations performed the operations involved in the receiving, processing, forwarding, loading and unloading of the troop trains and transports. The dumps, depots, medical-evacuation, repair and other units and facilities were located close to them.

Waterways were also widely employed. These included the navigable rivers, lakes and canals and in operations on maritime sectors also the sea lanes. The responsibility for handling military shipments was entrusted by the USSR People's Commissariat of the River Fleet to the military departments of the navigation companies.

For relieving the rail lines and improving railroad operations, it was essential to divert a portion of the military freight to water transport. On the navigable waterways were opened unloading, piers, supply piers or ports and transloading ports the purpose of which was the same as the corresponding railroad stations. However, as a consequence

of the seasonal operation of water transport as well as the significant destruction caused to it by the enemy and the great difficulties of rebuilding the various hydraulic engineering structures and means of transport, the use of these arteries as the basic front lines of communications occurred only in individual instances.

For rapidly restoring traffic on the river basins liberated from the Nazis, at the end of 1942 and the beginning of 1943, military reconstruction administrations and detachments of the People's Commissariat of the River Fleet (NKRF) were created. However, due to their poor equipping and understaffing, in the summer of 1943 this task was entrusted to the Navy to the newly organized Directorate for Ship-Raising and Emergency Salvage Work in the River Basins. Over the war years, water transport handled a significant amount of military shipments: over 4.3 million men, 212,000 horses, over 64,000 tanks, guns and motor vehicles and more than 22 million tons of cargo.³

The deployment of the motor vehicle troops with the outbreak of the war was carried out under difficult conditions. The motor vehicle fleet was basically added to using civilian vehicles. Using these, by 1 August 1941, 120 motor transport units and formations (motor vehicle brigades, regiments, battalions and companies) had been newly formed.⁴ For improving the organization of repairs and technical maintenance on the motor vehicles, by an order of the NKO, at the beginning of 1943 the Main Motor Vehicle Directorate (GAVTU) was organized. This was also in charge of the questions of repairing and supplying motor vehicle and tractor equipment. By a decree of the GKO [State Defense Committee] in June 1943, the GAVTU, the motor vehicle administrations (departments) of the fronts (armies) were put under the corresponding chiefs of the rear. Thus, the creation of an ordered structure for the motor vehicle service was completed and all leadership of the motor vehicle units was concentrated in this.

By the end of the Great Patriotic War, the Soviet Armed Forces had 650,000 trucks. The total volume of shipments carried out by motor transport in the course of the war was 39 million carloads or 625.2 million tons of freight.⁵

The war showed the important role of roads in the troop transport support system. As is known, by the start of the war there were no regular road units. There was also no special vehicle fleet adopted for operating conditions in the various theaters of military operations. For this reason, the road support system developed in the course of the war. Road units were deployed which built, rebuilt and maintained military roads (VAD) in the troop rear.

The network of VAD included: the VAD of Hq SHC created for one or several fronts as well as connecting the fronts; the VAD of the front, that is, from the VAD of the Hq SHC, the front distribution stations and the dispositions of the basic front dumps deployed along the rear frontiers of the front down to the field army depots; the VAD of the armies which were from the VAD of the front and the field army depots (their head squads) down to the divisional dumps.

On the territory of the nation, central VAD were organized and these interconnected the major economic regions of the USSR as well as these regions with the theaters of military operations. On all the VAD a traffic control service was organized the tasks of which included traffic control and the servicing of small teams, individual motor vehicles and servicemen passing along the roads.

Air transport was a major support in the operation of rail and motor transport. It was ordinarily employed at the most critical moments, particularly in the muddy season, as well as when the troops had broken out into the operational space and the rear had not succeeded in moving up behind them.

In peacetime there were no special units of military air transport. With the start of the war, the Main Administration of the Civil Air Fleet (GVF) in operational terms was put under the NKO. The military air transport units were deployed from the civil air fleet. Thus, at the outset of the war, separate air groups and air detachments of the GVF were organized for the fronts, the fleets and Hq SHC. In November 1942, the group was reorganized into regiments and the detachments became separate squadrons. The Moscow special air group was transformed into the First Air Transport Division. The reorganization of the air groups into military air transport units introduced a definite order in the organization of air shipments.

Air transport was used to drop landing parties, to deliver materiel to the troops, to transport troops, sick and wounded, and support partisan combat operations. Air transport was used to deliver emergency freight to Leningrad, Stalingrad, Sevastopol and Odessa as well as for carrying out shipments of various scarce instruments and parts in the interests of the defense industry.

During the war years, air transport performed significant work. Just the units of military air transport transported more than 1.5 million men and around 140,000 tons of freight.⁶

Pipeline transport also did its bit to supply the troops. Oil was supplied through the Baku-Batumi pipeline to the oil refinery in Batumi and this provided fuel to the maritime group of the Transcaucasian Front and to the Black Sea Fleet. Due to the clear threat of a severing of the fuel transport routes from Baku to the center of the nation, in the summer of 1942, construction was commenced on the Astrakhan--Saratov--Kyubyshev pipeline along the left bank of the Volga. During the same year, a pipeline was built about 30 km long across Lake Ladoga and this provided fuel to blockaded Leningrad. Pipelines were also employed to pump fuel across water obstacles when the restoring of rail traffic had been held up as well as in large depots (dumps) for internal dump needs. Thus, with the advance of the troops of the Southern Front at the beginning of 1943, a 100-mm pipeline was laid across the bottom of the Don River at Rostov-na-Donu. On the Second Ukrainian Front in December 1943, at the temporary transloading area of Kremenchug--Kryukov, a pipeline was built across the Dnepr River for supplying fuel. This line was 2.7 km long and consisted of steel pipe welded into sections.

An important role in the delivering of materiel and evacuation, particularly in the troop rear, was also played by other types of transport, for example, cart and pack as well as the narrow-gauge railroads. Their work was not great in volume, but sometimes, for example with the muddy season, snow banks as well as in mountainous terrain and in the Far North was of essential significance. Thus, in the first and second periods of the war, the regimental transport (cart) companies and army cart transport were widely used for transporting and to a certain degree this compensated for the lack of motor transport. In the autumn of 1943, the road units of the Separate Maritime Army built a suspended cableway 4.5 km long for delivering materiel to the units operating on the Kerch bridgehead.

The deputy commanders for the rear, the rear staffs and the transport service bodies over the entire war comprehensively employed transport for supplying the troops with materiel, for transporting the troops and for evacuation transport. A vivid example of the integrated use of transport is its operation in supplying besieged Leningrad. Thus, extensive work was done to prepare the lines of communications over Lake Ladoga in the form of the construction of railroads, a pipeline, the ice road, accessways, ports, special devices for transporting railroad tank cars over water, the preparation of airfields and so forth. During the winter of 1941-1942, more than 360,000 tons of freight were delivered to Leningrad over the Lifeline, more than 550,000 persons were evacuated from the city⁷ and around 300,000 tons of industrial equipment and nonferrous metals were transported out. Some 32,600 tons of fuel were pumped through the pipeline laid across the bottom of Lake Ladoga.⁸ All the work involved in preparing the transport arteries and carrying out the shipments to the besieged city were done comprehensively according to a unified plan of the Leningrad Front Military Council.

The success of transport support for the operations during the war years depended largely upon the able organization of transport artery operations. Here measures were carried out to rationally place the operational bodies, to plan the production processes for the operation of railroad stations, sea and river ports (piers) and airfields, to organize the movement of trains, motor vehicle columns, ships, aircraft and pipeline operations as well as to maintain and repair all the equipment and means of transportation on the transport arteries.

The operation of the VAD in the first period of the war was carried out by the road operations regiments and the road commandant sections (by subunits of the separate road commandant company type). In the course of the war, it became apparent that there must be a further improvement in the VAD operating system. For this purpose in June 1943, on the basis of the regiments more advanced separate road operations battalions were organized and these remained up to the end of the war.

Under the conditions of enemy bombardment, **technical covering for the transport arteries was the main means for ensuring the uninterrupted operation of transport.** This was organized in the aim of rapidly restoring the destroyed transport installations and resuming the operation of the transport arteries for handling military and other shipments.

During the war years, the enemy employed 44 percent of all the bombs dropped on the Soviet German Front just for destroying railroad installations. However, due to the dependable technical cover, the average length of interruptions in train traffic was just about 6 hours. Only in individual instances did this interruption exceed 24 hours.⁹

With the going over of the Soviet Army to a counteroffensive, the rear bodies were confronted with the task of rebuilding the lines of communications on the liberated territory. This was carried out by the railroad and road troops involving special formations of the transport ministries, units of engineer troops and the local population.

The German invaders, in retreating, carried out enormous destruction of the lines of communications, and primarily the railroads. But there still had been no experience in organizing reconstruction on a large scale and in a short period of time. Materials and equipment were lacking, and leadership of the work was elementary. For this

reason, the reconstruction pace, for example, of railroads was just 2.5-3.5 km per day per railroad brigade.

The GKO decree of 3 January 1942 contributed largely to further improving transport support in the course of operations. Thus, according to the GKO decree all reconstruction and clearing work on the railroads of the fronts and in the rear of the nation was entrusted to the NKPS [People's Commissariat of Railroads] with the subordinate railroad troops. Within the fronts, the leadership over railroad reconstruction work was provided by the representatives of the NKPS which headed the military reconstruction headquarters of the fronts. The command of the fronts provided direct leadership over reconstruction work and also provided their ground and air cover.

In November 1942, a reconstruction service for river transport was organized. In the center this was the Central Military Reconstruction Administration of the NKRF and in the water basins the military reconstruction administrations. The reorganization of the road service in 1942-1943 made it possible to concentrate in the same hands the preparation, reconstruction and maintenance of the VAD of the center, the fronts and the armies. Road headquarters were created in the fronts and road departments in the armies. The road troops became a special branch of troops of the Soviet Army. The new structure of managing reconstruction work on rail and river transport as well as the VAD proved effective and remained with small changes up to the war's end.

For improving the operations of rail junctions, at many of them work was done to build connecting spurs. For example, in the autumn of 1941, the rail units built over 20 connecting spurs and over 27 of them were in the process of construction,¹⁰ and these could shift the trains from one direction to another in bypassing the large rail junctions and cities.

During the war years, the railroad troops and the special formations of the NKPS rebuilt around 120,000 km of railroad track, around 3,000 large- and medium-sized bridges and a large number of other installations. The road troops built, rebuilt and strengthened around 100,000 km of roads and more than 1,000 km of bridges.¹¹ Significant work was also done to rebuild and put the waterways into operation.

In the operational rear, an important role was played by organizing the transmitting of materiel across the obstruction points arising on the sections being rebuilt on the isolated rail lines. For this purpose temporary transloading areas were set up, for example: Aleksin (1941-1942), Barvenkovo-Lozovaya (1942), Kremenchug (1943), Mogilev-Podolskiy (1944), Torun, Warsaw, Baja (1945).

The increase in the carrying capacity of the front railroads in a comparatively short period of time (3-5 days) with low outlays of resources was resolved by partially carrying out the construction and reconstruction work or by carrying out special organizational and technical measures. These could include the use of uneven and packet train traffic schedules, "live" block-signaling, and the organizing of one-way or "caravan" train traffic.

One of the crucial elements in the transport support of operations was the preparation of the means of transport. Particular attention should be given to the experience of utilizing locomotives during the period of preparing and conducting offensive operations. For continuous operation of rail transport, steam locomotive columns

and steam locomotive repair trains (PRP) were organized. The steam locomotive columns (from 15 to 30 steam locomotives) were not assigned to definite depots. The use of the steam locomotive columns was effective both on the rear and front railroads. On the basis of this experience, in 1942 they began to set up a separate reserve of steam locomotive columns (ORPK). The converting of the columns to a militarized status, the housing of the locomotive crews in railroad cars with the locomotives made it possible to successfully settle the question of the permanent assigning of the crews to their own steam locomotives and thereby ensure their prompt preparation for work. The following figures very eloquently show the scale of employing the ORPK on the front and near-front railroads: over 500 steam locomotives of the ORPK were simultaneously involved in the operations to support the troop combat operations in the Battle of Stalingrad, while more than 600 were involved in the area of combat operations near Kursk.¹²

With an increase in the scope of operations, the size and technical equipping of the Soviet Armed Forces, the role of transport in the course of the Great Patriotic War increased constantly. The prompt delivery of fresh troops, military equipment and various materiel to the front was successfully carried out by the comprehensive use of all types of transport following a single plan and under unified leadership. The more mobile types of transport including motor vehicle, air and pipeline assumed ever-greater significance in the operational and partially the strategic element of the rear.

In the course of the war there was a continuous process of improving transport support. Combat practice showed that the best results in the operation of transport during the operations was achieved when the military shipments were carried out comprehensively using all types of transport. The rear bodies ensured continuous operation of transport only in those instances when measures were carried out comprehensively to prepare all types of the lines of communications and the means of transport, to organize the operation of the transport lines as well as to technically cover and rebuild the lines of communications.

The experience acquired by the rear bodies in the war years in improving the system of transport support, in bettering the control of all types of transport and in organizing cooperation with the transport bodies of the various people's commissariats has not lost its pertinence in our times.

FOOTNOTES

- 1 See V. I. Lenin, PSS [Complete Collected Works], Vol 38, p 400.
- 2 TsAMO, folio 90, inv. 123757, file 3, sheet 29.
- 3 "Tyl Sovetskoy Armii" [The Rear of the Soviet Army], Voenizdat, 1968, p 277.
- 4 "Tyl Sovetskikh Vooruzhennykh Sil v Velikoy Otechestvennoy Voiny 1941-1945 gg." [The Rear of the Soviet Armed Forces of the Great Patriotic War of 1941-1945], Voenizdat, 1977, p 262.
- 5 Ibid., p 494.
- 6 Ibid., p 495.

- 7 "Istoriya vtoroy mirovoy voyny 1939-1945" [The History of World War II of 1939-1945], Vol 4, Voenizdat, 1975, pp 139, 318; Vol 5, 1975, pp 233, 235.
- 8 "Tyl Sovetskoy Armii...", p 151.
- 9 "Tyl Sovetskikh Vooruzhennykh Sil...", p 227.
- 10 TsAMO, folio 16, inv. 29330, file 187, sheets 78, 79.
- 11 "Tyl Sovetskikh Vooruzhennykh Sil...", pp 243, 289.
- 12 VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL, No 6, 1961, p 85.

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BATTLE OF STALINGRAD: PREPARATORY PHASE DOCUMENTS

Moscow VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL in Russian No 8, Aug 82 (signed to press 26 Jul 82) pp 27-31

[Documents pertaining to the preparatory phase of the Battle of Stalingrad prepared for publication by Maj Gen V. Gurkin: "On the Eve of the Battle of Stalingrad"]

[Text] In the spring of 1942, a brief respite occurred on the Soviet-German Front. Both sides were preparing intensely for active combat operations.

The Soviet Supreme High Command, having assessed the strategic situation, proposed the probability of an enemy offensive not only on the central, but also on the southern sector of the Soviet-German Front. It adopted a number of measures to reinforce the defenses on the Stalingrad sector. For this purpose, reserve armies were organized and a portion of these were to be employed at Stalingrad (see Documents 1 and 2) and in addition construction was resumed on the defensive lines of the Stalingrad defensive perimeter (Document 3).

In the middle of June, the 7th Reserve Army was to move up to the Stalingrad area (Document 4), while the 5th Army was to move up to the eastern bank of the Don River (Document 5), where they were ordered to take up and prepare the defenses. The military councils of these field forces submitted defensive plans which Hq SHC approved with certain adjustments (Documents 6, 7 and 8). At the beginning of July 1942, the situation on the southern wing of the Soviet-German Front changed sharply in favor of the enemy. The Nazi troops broke through the defenses of the Soviet troops and by the middle of the month had reached the great bend in the Don, having deeply outflanked the troops of the Southwestern Front. A real threat of an enemy breakthrough to Stalingrad had arisen.

On 10 July, the 7th and 5th Reserve Armies were renamed, respectively, the 62d and 63d Armies, while the 1st Reserve Army became the 64th Army, with the order to move from the Tula area to Stalingrad (Documents 9 and 10).

In considering the definite independence of the Stalingrad sector, on 12 July the Stalingrad Front was created with the mission of preventing the enemy from breaking through to Stalingrad (Document 11). On 14 July 1942, the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet adopted a decision declaring martial law in Stalingrad Oblast (Document 12).

All of these measures carried out by the VKP(b) [All-Union Communist Party (Bolshevik)] Central Committee and Hq SHC played a major role both in organizing

secure defenses for our troops as well as in the general victory of the Soviet Armed Forces at Stalingrad in 1942-1943.

Document No 1

From the Directive of Hq SHC of 28 May 1942 on the formation of the 5th Reserve Army

Hq SHC orders:

1. By 10 July to organize the 5th Reserve Army in the area of Stalingrad. The location of the headquarters of the 5th Reserve Army is to be the city of Stalingrad.
2. The 5th Reserve Army will include: the 184th sd [rifle division]...the 181st sd...the 196th sd...the 1st sd...the 127th sd...the 153d sd...
3. The headquarters of the 5th Reserve Army is to be organized by instructions of the Chief of the General Staff and the Chief of the Glavuproform [Main Directorate for the Organization of Units]...

Hq SHC

I. Stalin

A. Vasilevskiy

(TsAMO SSSR [Central Archives of the USSR Ministry of Defense], folio 48A, inv. 2290, file 4, sheets 146, 147).

Document No 2

From the Directive of Hq SHC of 28 May 1942 on the Organization of the 7th Reserve Army

Hq SHC orders:

1. By 10 June 1942 to organize the 7th Reserve Army in the area of Morozovskiy. The disposition of the headquarters of the 7th Reserve Army is to be Morozovskiy.
2. The 7th Reserve Army is to include: the 147th sd...the 192d sd...the 15th Guards sd...the 9th Guards sd...the 197th sd...the 203d sd.... The forward units are to be on the northeastern bank of the Severnyy Donets River.
3. The headquarters of the 7th Reserve Army is to be formed by an order of the Chief of the General Staff and the Chief of Glavuproform...

Hq SHC

I. Stalin

A. Vasilevskiy

(TsAMO, folio 48A, inv. 2290, file 4, sheet 149)

Document No 3

From the Directive of Hq SHC of 10 June 1942 to the troop commanders of the Southern Front and the Stalingrad Military District and to the Chief of the Red Army Engineer Troops on the reconstruction and construction of defensive perimeters in the Stalingrad sector.

Hq SHC has ordered:

An immediate start on carrying out reconnaissance, construction and reconstruction of the defensive perimeters:

- a) A switch position along the line from the Severnyy Donets River, Nizhne-Teploye, Ushakovka, Petrovskiy, Voloshino, Rogalik, Tkachenko, Chertkovo; Bukarevskiy, Meskov, along the Tikhaya River to the Don River;
- b) The Stalingrad perimeter along the line from the Don River, Karazhenskiy, Yevstratovskiy, Kalmykov, Farm No 2 of Sovkhoz 83, Surovikino, Nizhniy Slonovskiy, Suvorovskiy to the Don River.

The organization and execution of reconnaissance are to be entrusted to the front commander and for this experienced commanders are to be assigned and scouts from the construction organizations to be involved.

The construction of the defensive perimeters is to be carried out by the forces of the combat engineer army and the UOS (defensive construction headquarters). The chief of the Red Army Engineer Troops is to ensure the quick shifting of the construction units and organizations to the designated perimeters.

The commander of the Stalingrad Military District is to provide the construction organizations with aid in the supply of local building materials and the fulfilling of the orders by local enterprises.

In construction attention is to be paid first to covering the major sectors.

The defensive perimeter is to be ready on 1 August 1942...

Under authorization of Headquarters
Chief of the Red Army General Staff,
Col Gen Vasilevskiy

(TsAMO, folio 48-A, inv. 1640, file 179, sheet 488)

Document No 4

From the Directive of Hq SHC of 4 June 1942 to the commander of the 7th Reserve Army on the occupying of defensive perimeters at Stalingrad.

Hq SHC orders:

1. The 7th Reserve Army with the arrival of the divisions in the concentration area is to take up good tactical perimeters on the Stalingrad defensive perimeter along

the line Lugovaya Proleyka, Ilovinskaya, Kachalinskaya, Kalach, Nizhnyaya Chirskaya and to the southeast with the task of strongly covering the Stalingrad area from the sectors Frolovo--Ilovinskaya, Perelazovskiy--Kachalinskaya, Chernyshevskaya--Kalach, Morozovskiy--Nizhnyaya Chirskaya. In accord with this, the entire defensive perimeter is to be reconnoitered as well as its rear perimeters up to the Volga River and a plan is to be drawn up for defending the perimeter by the army's forces.

The defensive works on the Stalingrad defensive perimeter destroyed over the winter and by the spring flooding of the rivers are to be rebuilt in the immediate future. Simultaneously, the army should be ready to destroy any enemy airborne landing in the event of the landing of the latter in the army's concentration areas.

2. From the first days of the concentration of the divisions, in all units planned combat and political training of the soldiers, commanders and small subunits is to commence, placing special emphasis on the tactical teamwork of the platoon, company and battalion as well as on (the training.--Ed.) of outstanding machine gunners, mortar troops, artillery troops, tank hunters, submachine gunners and scouts....

Hq SHC

I. Stalin
A. Vasilevskiy

(TsAMO, folio 132-A, inv. 2642, file 32, sheet 109).

Document No 5

From the Directive of Hq SHC of 7 June 1942 to the commander of the 5th Reserve Army on the occupying of the perimeter along the eastern bank of the Don River

Hq SHC orders:

1. The 5th Reserve Army, with the arrival of the divisions in the concentration area, with a portion of the forces is to take up good tactical perimeters along the eastern bank of the Don River on the front of Novaya Kalitva, and Novaya Grigoryevskaya with the task of solidly covering the sectors Boguchar--Kalach--Uryupinsk; Chertkovo--Novo-Annenskiy; Nizhne-Gorbatovo--Mikheylovskiy--Frolovo.

The defensive perimeters along the eastern bank of the Don River to the depth of the army area are to be reconnoitered and an army defensive plan is to be drawn up.

Simultaneously, the army should be ready to destroy any enemy airborne party in the event of the landing of the latter in the army's concentration areas.

2. From the first days of the concentration of the divisions, in all units planned combat and political training of the soldiers, commanders and small subunits is to commence, with particular emphasis on the tactical teamwork of the platoon, company, battalion and on (training.--Ed.) outstanding machine gunners, mortar troops, artillery troops, tank hunters, submachine gunners and scouts....

Upon authorization of Hq SHC

A. Vasilevskiy

(TsAMO, folio 48-A, inv. 1640, file 179, sheet 379)

Document No 6

From the Defensive Plan for the Stalingrad Defensive Perimeter by Troops of the 7th Reserve Army of 18 June 1942

Reporting:

...1. The line of the Stalingrad defensive perimeter of Lugovaya Proleyka, Ilovinskaya, Kachalinskaya, Kalach, Logovskiy, Gromoslavka, Abganerovo, Raygorod with a total length of 430 km encompasses the city of Stalingrad in a semicircle with a radius of 65-100 km....

2. For supporting the operational defensive depth, there is a second defensive perimeter (which should run along the line.--Ed.) Yertzovka, marker 151 which is 13 km to the northeast of Yertzovka (on a 100,000 map, elev. 150.8), Kotluban, Malaya Rossoshka, Novyy Alekseyevskiy, Karpovskaya, the Chervlennaya River, Ivanovka, Solyanka, Malye Chapurniki and the nameless elevation to the east of Tatyanka.... The total length of the front 145 km....

The third operational defensive perimeter is to be the line of the city belt of Rynok, Orlovka, Kamenny Buyarak, Gonchara, Peschanka, Staraya Otrada, with a total length of the front of 70 km....

Sequence of work:

First stage--To completely rebuild the Stalingrad defensive perimeter and carry out further reinforcing of it on the basic sectors.

Second stage--To complete the Stalingrad defensive perimeter; to build the second perimeter on the basic sectors with the field reinforcements and the building of the third perimeter (including the city belt) in the basic sectors without field reinforcement.

Third stage--Completion of all work...

Army Commander,
Maj Gen Kolpakchi

Member of Army Military Council
Brigade Commissar Vasil'yev

Chief of Staff Maj Gen Moskvina

(TsAMO, folio 343, inv. 5127, file 1, sheets 69-78).

Document No 7

From the Directive of Hq SHC of 2 July 1942 to the Commander of the 7th Reserve Army on approving the Stalingrad defensive plan

1. The Stalingrad defensive plan submitted to you is approved.*

* The plan is not published here.

2. The placement of the rifle divisions on the first perimeter is not disputed. The remaining three sd must be on the second perimeter, one of them in the area of Ivanovka, Krasnoarmeysk.

3. The support for the boundary area with the adjacent unit on the right (the 5th Reserve Army) up to Novogeorgiyevskaya is entrusted to you.

4. Provide measures which ensure the rapid shifting of the second echelon divisions to any of the sectors required by the situation.

5. For countering enemy airborne troops the entire army territory must be divided into divisional zones and in the divisions mobile reserves created from the available resources....

Upon authorization of Hq SHC

Vasilevskiy

(TsAMO, folio 48-A, inv. 1640, file 179, sheet 443).

Document No 8

From the Directive of Hq SHC of 2 July 1942 to the Commander of the 5th Reserve Army on approving the defensive plan for the eastern bank of the Don River

1. The army defensive plan submitted by you is approved.*

2. Consider that the divisions should, in preparing the defensive zones, systematically carry out combat training and for this in their disposition in the field they should not be scattered by battalions or lower.

3. Provide measures which ensure a more rapid shifting of the second echelon divisions to any required sector depending upon the situation....

Upon authorization of Hq SHC

Chief of the General Staff Vasilevskiy

(TsAMO, folio 48-A, inv. 1640, file 179, sheet 442).

Document No 9

From the Directive of Hq SHC of 9 July 1942 on the renaming of the reserve armies

Hq SHC has ordered:

From 1200 hours of 10 July, to rename: the 7th Reserve Army as the 62d Army; the 5th Reserve Army as the 63d Army and the 1st Reserve Army as the 64th Army.

Upon authorization of Hq SHC

Chief of the General Staff Vasilevskiy

(TsAMO, folio 48-A, inv. 1640, file 179, sheet 483).

* The plan is not published here.

Document No 10

From the Directive of Hq SHC of 12 July 1942 to the Commander of the 64th Army on redeployment to Stalingrad

Hq SHC has ordered:

1. To redeploy the 64th Army to the territory of the Stalingrad Military District. The redeployment is to be carried out by rail....

The unloading of all units is to be in the area of Stalingrad Station....

The troops being dispatched are to be supplied with the following: one unit of fire for ammunition, one or two fuelings, rations for 6 days traveling and, in addition, a 5-day unloading reserve.

...Air cover for the loading and unloading areas is to be by order of the national territory air defense commander.

By authorization of Hq SHC

Chief of the Red Army General Staff
A. Vasilevskiy

(TsAMO, folio 48-A, inv. 1, file 72, sheets 11-12).

Document No 11

From the Directive of Hq SHC of 12 July 1942 on the creation of the Stalingrad Front

Hq SHC orders:

1. In the aim of facilitating control over the troops of the Southwestern and Southern Fronts from a single center, the 28th, 38th, 57th and 9th Armies of the Southwestern Front effective at 0600 hours on 12 July are to become part of the Southern Front.

2. The Southwestern Front is to be renamed the Stalingrad Front. The Military Council of the Southwestern Front with the front headquarters is to immediately move to Stalingrad, having included in the Stalingrad Front the 63d Army (the former 5th Reserve Army), the 62d Army (the former 7th Reserve Army), the 64th Army (the former 1st Reserve Army) and the 21st Army....

3. ...The task of the Stalingrad Front, with the forces of the 62d and 64th Armies, 2 naval rifle brigades, 18 artillery-machine gun "urovskiy" battalions, and the cadets of 8 schools arriving from the Northern Caucasus, to firmly occupy the Stalingrad defensive perimeter to the west of the Don River and under no conditions permit the enemy to break through to the east of this line toward Stalingrad. The forces of the 63d Army are to defend the eastern shore of the Don River in the sector occupied by it and under no conditions allow the enemy to cross the Don. The 21st Army is to move into the area of Serafimovich and to the east of it on the northern bank of the Don River, with its right flank abutting the flank of the 63d Army and the left flank the flank of the 62d Army with the task in no instance of permitting the enemy

to cross the Don River in this sector and to firmly secure the boundaries of the 62d and 63d Armies.

Hq SHC
I. Stalin
A. Vasilevskiy

(TsAMO, folio 96-A, inv. 2011, file 26, sheets 146-150)

Document No 12

From the Ukase of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet of 14 July 1942

On the basis of Article 49, Point "p" of the USSR Constitution to declare martial law in Stalingrad Oblast.

Chairman of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet
Secretary of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet

M. Kalinin
A. Gorkin

(TsAMO, folio 48, inv. 1, file 69, sheet 140).

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CSO: 8144/1871

BATTLE OF STALINGRAD: FIGHTING FOR BRIDGEHEADS ON THE UPPER DON

Moscow VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL in Russian No 8, Aug 82 (signed to press 26 Jul 82) pp 32-39

[Article by Maj Gen (Ret) N. Shtykov: "In the Battles for Bridgeheads on the Upper Don"]

[Text] In the summer of 1942, the Nazi troops initiated an offensive in the southwestern sector of the Soviet-German Front. The enemy was rushing toward the Volga in the Stalingrad area, endeavoring to capture this important strategic point and major industrial center of the nation.

Considering the difficult situation of our troops in the Stalingrad sector in the summer of 1942, the enemy command felt that we would endeavor to securely reinforce and retain the occupied perimeters and there would be no opportunity of going over to an offensive.

Having encountered stubborn resistance, the Nazi Command began to shift its troops from other sectors into this one. Under these conditions, the Voronezh Front was given the task of tying down the enemy by energetic actions and preventing it from shifting forces to Stalingrad.

In carrying out this task, the 6th Army of the front, during the period from 6 through 17 August, conducted an operation to capture and widen a bridgehead on the right bank of the Don. It succeeded in capturing and holding on to two small bridgeheads to the north of the town of Korotoyak and these over the entire autumn represented a constant threat to the 2d Hungarian Army and this forced the enemy to maintain reserves there. It was precisely here that the Soviet troops were to go over to a counteroffensive.

The commander of the 6th Army, Maj Gen F. M. Kharitonov, endeavored to compensate for the lack of superiority over the enemy in men and equipment by achieving surprise, by careful preparation of the troops and clear organization of cooperation. This was achieved by the hard training of the subunits, units and staffs. In order to achieve surprise, the crossing of the Don was planned for the night.¹

The 25th Guards Rifle Division and the 24th Motorized Rifle Brigade which were to be used for operations in the main sector were deployed and prepared for the offensive deep in the army defensive zone. Where the crossing was being planned,

the subunits of the 53d Fortified Area and the several subunits attached to it from the 173d Army Reserve Rifle Regiment² under the command of Col A. G. Dashkevich put on a demonstration of intense work on the defensive positions. But they were actually preparing the jump-off position for the crossing.

The 25th Guards Rifle Division had extensive combat experience. For successful operations in the Battle of Moscow, it had received the honorary name of "Guards" while the feats of its men performed on the Northwestern Front from whence it had arrived on 22 July as part of the 6th Army had been recognized by an Order of the Red Banner.³ The glorious combat traditions had been widely used in carrying out party political work in the units and subunits where, upon the instructions of Div Commissar Ye. V. Bobrov, a meeting of the experienced men with the young recruits had been organized. Here particular attention was paid to the exchange of experience in nighttime operations and in crossing water obstacles.

In their speeches the veterans emphasized the most crucial moments, for example, the necessity of strict discipline and that at night all the orders of the commanders must be carried out noiselessly and the attack must be rapid and bold.

The division commander, Col P. M. Shafarenko, having made a detailed study of the area of the forthcoming crossing on the map and directly in the field, chose the jump-off area on the Bityug River not far from the town of Bobrov and organized training of subunits from all branches of troops for the forthcoming crossing of the Don. The training was carried out employing the crossing equipment to be used in crossing the river. Also worked out were the questions of coordination during the offensive on the opposite shore in the aim of broadening the bridgehead. Here the commanders of the cooperating rifle, artillery, tank and engineer subunits had become personally acquainted and had coordinated and trained in joint actions.

Four days were assigned to prepare for the crossing. Considering the complexity of the pending actions and the short period of time, the division staff headed by its chief, Lt Col I. A. Danilevich, planned all measures in detail.

The operations department of the division staff clearly assigned duties to the officers who were to exercise supervision and provide the necessary help to the units and subunits.

Particular attention was given to the commandant service, as it was to play the main role in observing camouflage discipline and ensuring prompt arrival in the concentration area and at the crossing sector. The division commander assigned supervision of the commandant service's work directly to I. A. Danilevich and the chief of the division political section, Maj P. I. Grechko. In the regiments this task was carried out by the deputy regimental commanders with the staff officers and political workers. Strict supervision over the movement of the units into the concentration areas and to the crossing sectors ensured their prompt and concealed arrival. During these days everyone was aware of the intense activities carried out by the regimental chief of the engineer service, Mil Engr 2d Rank M. A. Mikhaylichenko, the commander of the combat engineer battalion, Capt N. Ye. Dorokhov, the chief of the division's first rear department, Capt V. F. Pisarev, the divisional artillery staff officer, Capt A. S. Apakin and the Sr Political Leader V. I. Chernyshov who was killed in the crossing on 8 August. They did everything to supply the advancing troops with crossing equipment and then to organize a raft crossing.

For supporting the troops during the crossing and combat on the bridgehead, the 291st Air Ground Attack Division was assigned to the commander of the 6th Army. The division's commander, Col A. N. Vitruk, met repeatedly with the division commander P. M. Shafarenko as well as with the regimental commanders K. V. Bilyutin and F. G. Krivomlin. Together they worked out in detail the questions of cooperation in all stages of the battle.

In order to provide an opportunity for the regimental and subunit commanders to more clearly organize the actions of subordinates directly in the field, the taking up of the jump-off position for the offensive was carried out 24 hours before the start of the crossing, that is, during the night of 5 August. During the day of 5 August, reconnaissance⁴ was carried out in all elements and the tasks and questions of cooperation were clarified. Objectives in the enemy rear were marked where artillery attacks were to be planned in order to cause fires and thereby create markers for our troops.

In the interests of surprise, the artillery softening-up was to be brief, lasting 30 minutes. At the same time the ground attack planes of the 291st Air Division were to make bomb and strafing attacks against objectives deep in the enemy defenses.

The 25th Guards Rifle Division crossed the river in two regiments. Somewhat earlier its 73d Regiment had been shifted to the 174th Rifle Division. The actions of the 78th Guards Rifle Regiment supported the forward battalion (the 2d Rifle Battalion of Sr Lt G. L. Relin). Under the cover of artillery fire, it was to cross on available equipment and seize the enemy strongpoint at elev. 186.2 which prevailed over the terrain in the crossing area. Its capture would deprive the enemy of an opportunity to use small arms and machine gun fire against our subunits in the course of their crossing of the river.

As soon as the artillery troops, having securely neutralized the enemy on the forward edge, had shifted fire deep into the enemy defenses, the forward battalion, crossing on rafts, boats and other available equipment, attacked the Nazi trenches by surprise. The bold actions of the guardsmen stunned the Nazis and soon thereafter elev. 186.2 had been captured. Sr Lt G. L. Relin decided to benefit from the enemy's confusion and to continue the advance toward the southeastern edge of 1st Storozhevoye (Diagram 1).

The commander of the 78th Regiment, Lt Col K. V. Bilyutin, in having dependable contact with the forward battalion, with permission by the division commander immediately began to cross the river with the main forces of the regiment in order to reinforce and exploit the success of the 2d Battalion. It succeeded in crossing to the opposite bank quickly and without losses, but the enemy command was able to undertake a strong counterattack, forcing the regiment's subunits to go over to the defensive. Lt Col K. V. Bilyutin, in firmly controlling combat, sent out reconnaissance which reported the bringing up of enemy reserves from the region of Dovhalevka.

Having been informed of this, the divisional commander decided to hit the advancing reserves employing the ground attack planes of the 291st Air Division and after intense shelling by artillery and rocket launchers against the counterattacking enemy grouping, to resume the offensive by the forces of the division's first echelon and to shift to the opposite bank the 81st Guards Rifle Regiment of Maj F. G. Krivomlin for broadening

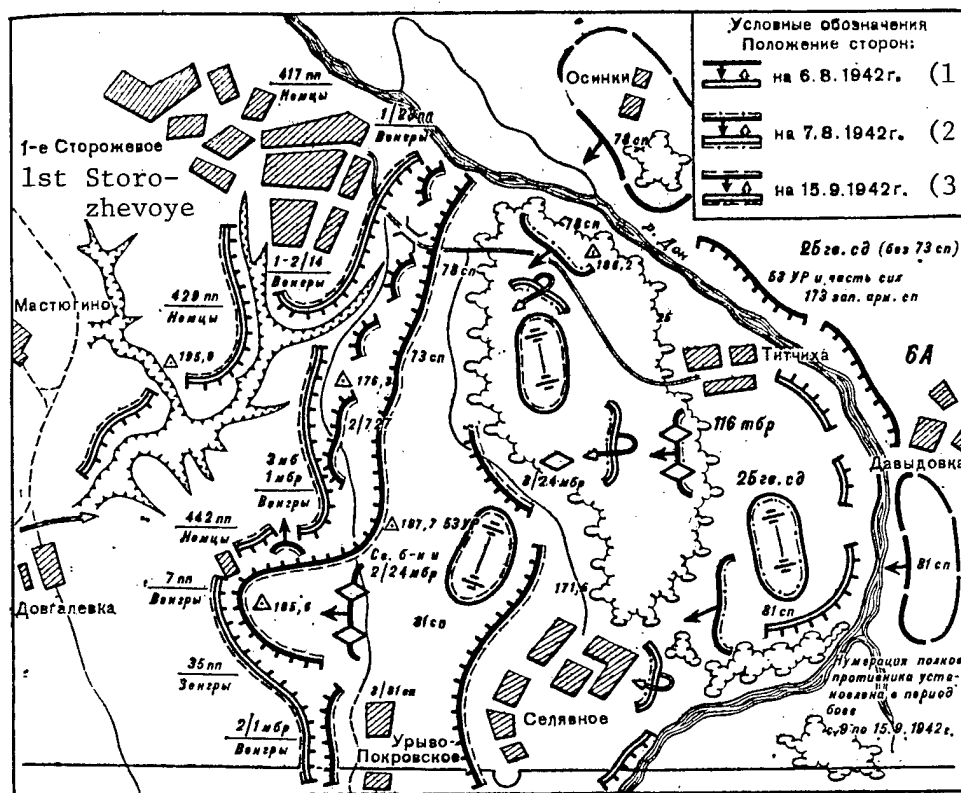


Diagram 1. The course of combat operations by the 25th Guards Rifle Division to capture the Storozhevoye bridgehead in August 1942

Key: 1--Position of sides on 6 August 1942; 2--On 7 August 1942; on 15 November 1942

and deepening the captured bridgehead. Lt Col K. V. Bilyutin ordered the battalions of G. L. Relin and M. I. Vasyukov to tie down the enemy on the front, while the 3d Battalion of Capt V. Ya. Trofimov, in outflanking 1st Storozhevoye to the southeast and coming out in the enemy rear, was to capture the important strongpoint on elev. 195.0.

With the start of the attack by the 3d Battalion, the 1st and 2d Battalions were also to go over to the offensive.

Firm and continuous control of the subunits and units as well as reliable communications between the control posts made it possible to quickly give the missions to the troops and clarify cooperation. Having resumed the offensive after the attack by the ground attack planes and artillery fire, the 78th Regiment without halting broke into Storozhevoye and captured it. Conditions were created for committing the 81st Regiment to combat. Committed at dawn, this regiment had the task, after a 5-minute intense shelling, to advance in the direction of elev. 187.7, cutting the enemy grouping in the bend of the Don into two parts. After capturing the elevation, its subunits began to rapidly advance into the rear of the 4th Infantry Regiment of the 9th Hungarian Infantry Division, the subunits of which, in abandoning their positions, began a disordered retreat.

During the second night, the 24th Motorized Rifle Brigade of Col V. L. Savchenko began to cross the Don. Without a halt it succeeded in capturing the village of Titchikha. The commander ordered the 25th Division and the brigade, in extending the offensive along convergent axes, to link up their bridgeheads into one.

Not relying on the Hungarian units, the German Command committed the 429th Infantry Regiment of the 168th German Infantry Division as well as around 50 tanks to the battle. The main thrust by the counterattacking enemy grouping, with air support and in addition to the German regiment involved units of the 9th and 20th Hungarian Infantry Divisions, was made against the units of the 25th Guards Division.⁵ Around a regiment of enemy infantry with tanks advanced just against the 3d Battalion of the 81st Guards Rifle Regiment. The division commander, in being at an observation point set up on the bridgehead 1.5 km from the forward edge, ordered the commander of the 29th Tank Killing Battalion, Maj L. I. Ostroukhov, to move up into the battalion's area and repel the tank attack. Due to the clear and decisive actions by the artillery troops, the enemy tanks were halted, but the infantry continued to advance. It reached our trenches in individual areas and here hand-to-hand clashes broke out. The regimental commander sent a machine gun company from the battalion of Maj V. G. Slonskiy to reinforce the 3d Battalion. But the division commander concentrated the fire of all artillery in front of the 81st Regiment. The army commander sent regiments of the 291st Air Division here as well. The increasing effort, particularly in the sector of the 3d Battalion, firm control of the companies by its commander, Sr Lt A. N. Agafonov, as well as the heroism and tenacity of the troops forced the enemy to abandon its plans. Its regiment pulled back to the initial position. Having recovered somewhat from the failure, on 9 August the Nazis undertook a series of counterattacks, but they were all driven off. By the end of the 10th, the situation had temporarily stabilized in the area of the 25th Division and the 24th Brigade.

On 8 August, the 174th Rifle Division commenced crossing the Don to the north of Korotoyak. Its energetic operations tied down a significant number of enemy forces, relieving the units fighting on the Storozhevoye bridgehead.

The division commander, Col S. M. Karapetyan, decided to cross this river simultaneously in two sectors, to rout the enemy on the opposite bank by a surprise attack and then capture the population points of Devitsa and Mostishchi and dig in on this line, having a battle formation of two echelons. The 73d Guards Rifle Regiment advanced along with the 174th Rifle Division on the axis of the main thrust. The regiment had been transferred to the division from the 25th Guards Rifle Division.⁶ Its actions during the period of crossing the river and in the defensive battles had an active and instructive nature, and to me, in subsequently commanding this regiment from the end of January 1943, it seems wise to briefly describe them (Diagram 2).

According to the plan of the regiment's commander, Maj A. S. Belov, the crossing of the water obstacle was to be started by the 2d Battalion of Capt I. N. Kotlyarenko reinforced by the company of submachine gunners of Sr Lt A. P. Golovin. The regiment had around 24 hours to prepare for combat. The commander of the 174th Division, Col S. N. Karapetyan, in endeavoring to ensure surprise, decided to commence actions of the forward battalion without artillery softening-up. However, the enemy detected the start of the battalion's crossing at the very moment that the crossing troops had reached the middle of the river and opened up with heavy fire. The surprise factor was lost, and the artillery softening-up planned for such a case had to be carried out. Under the cover of artillery fire, the forward battalion continued to land on

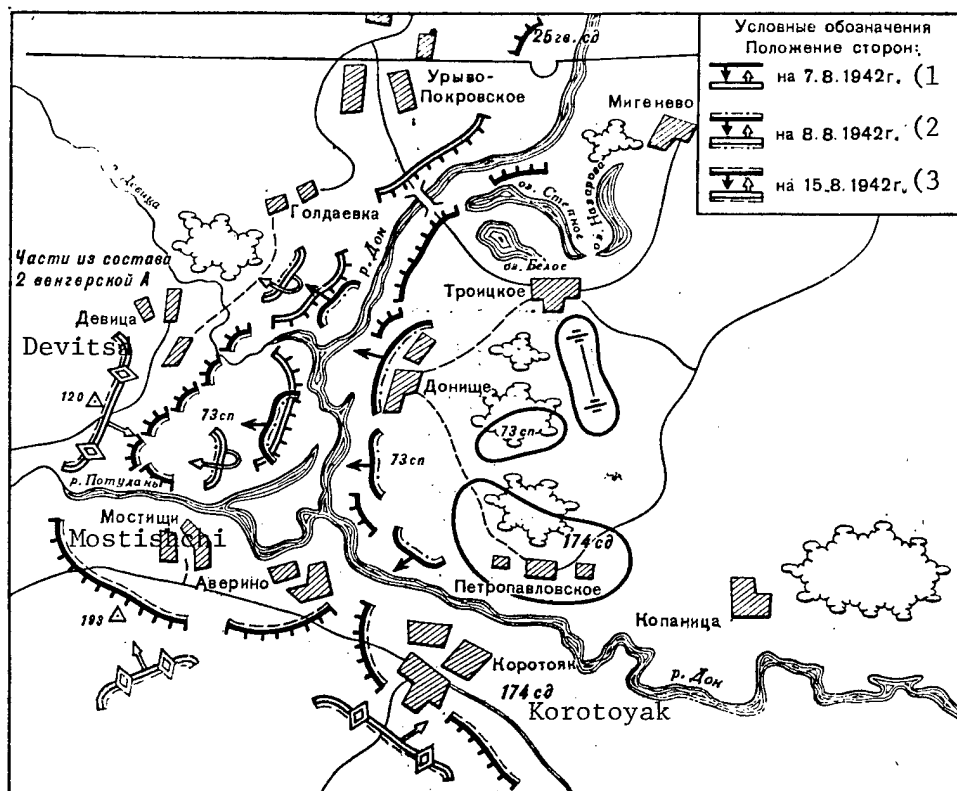


Diagram 2. Combat operations of the 174th Rifle Division and 73d Guards Rifle Regiment to the north of Korotoyak in August 1942

Key: 1—Position of sides on 7 August 1942; 2—On 8 August 1942; 3—On 15 August 1942

the bank while the main forces of the regiment began to cross the river. In crossing, by joint actions they threw back the Nazis against themselves and by dawn had succeeded in advancing several kilometers. In the morning, the enemy command brought up reserves and organized a counterattack by infantry and tanks reinforced by artillery and aviation. But the enemy's resources were insufficient for defeating the subunits which had crossed the river.

Having repelled a counterattack, the units of the 174th Rifle Division continued to advance, in deepening and widening the bridgehead. By the dawn of 9 August, the 73d Guards Rifle Regiment, having rushed forward, drove the Nazis out of the population points of Mostishchi and Averino. The divisional commander, S. A. Karapetyan, in committing his reserve to battle, at the same time reinforced and exploited the designated success, concentrating efforts on the Korotoyak axis. The rapid advance by the units of the division and the attached 73d Regiment deprived the enemy of an opportunity to organize defenses both on the approaches to the town and within it. It was taken without a halt. The battalion of Sr Lt A. Ya. Obukhov was the first to break into it. During this period particularly able actions were carried out by the artillery troops of Sr Lt I. A. Lokatsinin and the mortar troops of Sr Lt S. N. Petrichenko. Their subunits blocked the path of the German tanks and the

Hungarian infantrymen. Due to them and to all the fighters in the battalion, the enemy counterattacks were repelled and Korotoyak was liberated. During the battle for this bridgehead, examples of courage were shown by the regimental agitator, Sr Political Leader V. I. Chernyshev, Lts Ye. K. Lobanov and P. M. Britkov and the assistant regimental chief of staff Sr Lt V. Ya. Aristov. The antitank gunners of V. S. Karatayev and the infantrymen from the rifle squad of Sgt Yu. O. Lyubchenko fought to the last cartridge.

As a result of the decisive actions by the 174th Division and the 73d Regiment, a small bridgehead was captured close to the Storozhevnaye one and this diverted a portion of the enemy forces from the main sector.

The successful actions by the troops of the 6th Army sowed confusion in the enemy ranks. The underestimation of the forces which had captured the bridgehead became obvious.

Up to two divisions of Hungarian troops and two German infantry regiments, supported by tanks, resumed the attack against the Storozhevnaye bridgehead. But the enemy encountered stubborn resistance. The guardsmen stood fast. Fierce battles were waged there until 17 September. The enemy lost up to 9,000 soldiers and officers killed and wounded, 48 guns, 28 tanks, 4 aircraft as well as much other equipment and weapons.⁷

In utilizing the predominant superiority in men and equipment, the Nazi formations drove our units out of Korotoyak and Averino, they captured Storozhevnaye, however the main bridgehead, the Storozhevnaye, remained in our hands. The enemy's plans to drown us in the Don were unrealized.

At the end of November, Army Gen G. K. Zhukov arrived at the Storozhevnaye bridgehead. With great interest he questioned the division's commander, Gen P. M. Shafarenko on how the bridgehead was captured. After a complete report, the division commander said (according to Pavel Mendeleyevich [Shafarenko]): "Yes, the bridgehead is of primary importance for us."⁸

On 13 January 1943, our 25th Guards Division and other formations of the 40th Army of the Voronezh Front, in utilizing the Storozhevnaye bridgehead, commenced the Ostrogozhsk-Rossosh Operation.

The bridgeheads were held for 5 months and for 5 months bloody battles were carried out here, at one moment dying down and then resuming with new strength. The greatest tenacity, wholehearted dedication to the motherland, loyalty to duty and heroism were required in order to withstand the rabid enemy attacks. But the Soviet soldiers manifested these qualities daily. Here, on the Upper Don, 50 km to the south of Voronezh, on one of the sectors of the enormous Soviet-German Front, they carried out their feats.

In these battles, Sgt I. V. Panganis covered himself with immortal glory, and he is now entered in perpetuity on the roles of one of the units of the Sinelnikov-Budapest Orders of Suborov and Bogdan Khmel'nitskiy Division imeni V. I. Chapayev. In one of their numerous attacks, the Nazi infantry, with the support of 15 tanks, breached the defenses of the 1st Battalion of the 73d Guards Rifle Regiment. The battalion commander, Capt P. S. Karginov, did not have any reserves. Blocking the path of

the enemy tanks were only the 45-mm gun of Sgt I. V. Panganis and less than a company of infantrymen who were defending at the village of Averino. At a price of great losses and heroic effort, the enemy infantry was stopped, but its tanks continued the attack, trying to reach the battalion's rear and cut it off from the regiment's main forces. The Panganis crew destroyed two tanks, but the Nazi tank troops soon discovered his gun and concentrated all the fire of their cannons on it. The men fell one after another, hit by shrapnel of the enemy shells. The wounded sergeant remained alone by the gun. In disregarding the pain, he loaded the cannon, aimed at the base of the turret of the advancing tank and fired. Almost simultaneously a tank shell exploded with a roar quite nearby. The shrapnel burned his arm painfully and it hung against his body lifelessly. Regardless of the burning pain, Panganis rushed to the gun, but it had been damaged. The armored monsters, clanking and roaring and spitting fire, advanced on the position. One of the tanks came so close that it seemed that the cannon would be crushed along with its commander. But the path of the steel giant was blocked by the bloodied, but not conquered, man. At his belt was a string of grenades. Gathering his last strength, he threw himself under the tank. By an Ukase of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet, Sgt Igor' Vladimirovich Panganis was posthumously awarded the title of Hero of the Soviet Union.¹⁰

On 15 August 1942, the divisional newspaper STALINGRADSKAYA GVARDIYA wrote: "In fierce battles on the right bank of the Don, our glorious guardsmen have again confirmed their unshakable steadfastness and will for victory over the hated enemy. With exceptional stubbornness, the men have defended every meter of the homeland, driving off fierce enemy attacks and causing it enormous losses in personnel and equipment." The heroism and steadfastness of the men and the commanders, their military skill were one of the main factors ensuring the crossing of the river and the holding of the bridgeheads.

Also of great significance were the careful planning of troop operations, the constant training of the subunits to cross the water obstacle, the ensuring of surprise, the firm and continuous control of the troops as well as speed and prompt use and reinforcing of the results achieved by the forward battalions and by the main forces of the units and formations.

In addition, we must also point out the constant increase in effort by committing new forces to the bridgeheads. Thus, as the Storozhevnoye bridgehead was broadened, the army commander moved to it the 116th Tank Brigade of Col A. Yu. Novak and the 53d Fortified Area. The presence of a tank brigade on the bridgehead strengthened the antitank defenses of our troops and made it possible to rapidly prepare and carry out counterattacks. The fortified area, as a unit most suited for organizing and carrying out a static defense, undoubtedly contributed a great deal to retaining the bridgehead.

As our troops lacked superiority in men and equipment over the enemy, their success to a significant degree was ensured by the fact that the crossing was made in two areas. This split the rather limited operational reserves of the Nazi Command and did not allow it to effectively counter our formations. In considering the limited tasks of the 6th Army Troops (the tying down of enemy forces and not allowing them to be shifted to Stalingrad), it must be recognized that such actions were the most rational.

The combat experience of the 6th Army formations shows that for achieving success in immobilizing actions which, as a rule, are carried out with limited forces, it is very important that the troop operations be most active while the commanders, political workers and staffs should show a maximum of creativity.

FOOTNOTES

- 1 TsAMO, folio 25, gv. sd, inv. 9136, file 8, sheet 5.
- 2 The article's author at the described time was the deputy commander of this regiment.--Ed.
- 3 TsAMO, folio 25, gv. sd, inv. 9136, file 83, sheet 17.
- 4 Ibid., file 2, sheet 5.
- 5 Ibid., file 8, sheet 27.
- 6 Ibid., folio 73 gv. sp, inv. 773302, file 1, sheet 21.
- 7 Ibid., folio 836, inv. 1, file 4, sheet 108.
- 8 P. M. Shafarenko, "Na raznykh frontakh" [On Different Fronts], Voenizdat, 1978, p 100.
- 9 [Not in text].
- 10 TsAMO, folio 73 gv. sp, inv. 773302, file 1 (Ukase of 24 April 1945).

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CSO: 8144/1871

BATTLE OF STALINGRAD: COMBAT OPERATIONS OF THE 308TH RIFLE DIVISION

Moscow VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL in Russian No 8, Aug 82 (signed to press 26 Jul 82) pp 40-48

[Article by Col Yu. Loskutov: "Combat Operations of the 308th Rifle Division During 10-25 September 1942"]

[Text] On 23 August 1942, the XIV Tank Corps of the 6th Nazi Field Army broke through the defenses of our troops and by the end of the day had reached the Volga in the area of Rynok settlement to the north of Stalingrad, having cut off the 62d Army from the basic forces of the Stalingrad Front. This seriously complicated the city's defenses. Under the developing conditions, Hq SHC sent the Deputy Supreme Commander-in-Chief, Army Gen G. K. Zhukov, here to provide practical help to the fighting troops and to organize and carry out counterstrikes by the forces of the 1st Guards, the 24th and 66th Armies of the Stalingrad Front¹ in the flank of the enemy grouping which had broken through to the Volga.

In order to relieve the situation of the 62d Army which was on the defensive in Stalingrad, without waiting for the complete concentration of the personnel and equipment, the 1st Guards Army went over to the offensive on 3 September, the 24th and 66th Armies on 5 September. The 308th Rifle Division² (commander, Col L. N. Gurt'yev, Mil Commissar, Sr Btln Commissar A. M. Svirin, and Chief of Staff Col I. M. Tarasov) on 29 August 1942 was part of the 24th Army (commander, Maj Gen D. T. Kozlov). Having made a 300-km forced march from the region of the village of Kumalga in Saratov Oblast, its units and subunits on 6 September were concentrated 6 km to the east of Kotluban Sovkhoz in preparation for the offensive.³

The division reinforced by the 136th Army Mortar Regiment (commander, Maj S. I. Krashchenko) which consisted of five batteries of 120-mm mortars, was ordered by the staff of the 24th Army as follows: by 9 September to move up into the area 1-3 km to the southeast of Samofalovka and by 0300 hours of the next day to assume the jump-off position for an offensive. Then in the course of it, in cooperation with the 217th Tank Brigade and with the support of the 93d M-13 Rocket Regiment, the 1166th Cannon Artillery Regiment and four heavy rocket launcher battalions, to destroy the opposing enemy in the area of elevs. 133.4 and 143.8 and the farm of Borodkin. Subsequently, it was to advance in the direction of elev. 142.7 and Konnyy siding. The 221st Rifle Division was to advance on the right in the direction of the ancillary farm, and the 207th Rifle Division on the left in the direction of elev. 145.5.⁴

Having received the combat task, the division's commander familiarized the chief of staff, the commissar and chief of artillery, Lt Col P. S. Kosenko, with it and ordered the chief of staff to draw up a plan of primary measures for the organization and preparation of the offensive and to prepare the data necessary for adopting a plan. He also listened to the artillery chief and the commander of the 699th Separate Combat Engineer Battalion, S. S. Rivkin, on utilizing the artillery and engineer troops in the coming offensive.

Formed in Omsk in March-May 1942, the 308th Rifle Division by the start of combat operations did not have any combat experience and was to advance under extremely difficult conditions. There was virtually a complete absence of the necessary information on the size of the enemy, the nature and fire plan of its defenses, the locations of the boundary areas and flanks, the command and observation posts. The completely open terrain in the zone of advance provided no concealed approaches and points convenient for attack and for creating a flexible system of artillery observation. Artillery shells were lacking as the delivery of them had been impeded by the distance to the dumps and the decrepitness of the transport. Moreover, very little time (around 24 hours) had been assigned to prepare for the offensive. All of this significantly complicated the carrying out of the combat task.

In order not to act blindly, the divisional commander and the staff took measures, in as far as time permitted, to discover the enemy defenses as much as possible. On 9 September, Col L. N. Gurt'yev with the commanders of the attached regiments and the supporting resources conducted reconnaissance in the course of which the plan was adopted and the tasks set for the units and subunits.

At the same time, the scouts of the division and rifle regiments as well as the artillery troops and engineers continued to study the forward edge of enemy defenses running along a ridge of elevations prevailing over the terrain. This made it possible for the enemy to view our defenses to a depth of 6-8 km from its observation posts. This circumstance coupled with the superiority of enemy aviation in the sky impeded a concealed concentration, the occupying and equipping of the jump-off position for the advance by the formation's units and subunits.

The divisional commander's plan consisted in the following. Having formed up a battle formation in two echelons (the 339th and 351st Rifle Regiments in the first and the 347th in the second), the main thrust was to be made by the right flank in the direction of elev. 143.8 and the farm of Borodkin, the enemy defenses were to be breached, the enemy was to be surrounded and destroyed in the area of elev. 143.8, Borodkin farm and elev. 154.2 with the subsequent coming out in the area of elev. 143.3.

The units and subunits were given the following tasks: the 339th Rifle Regiment (commander, Lt Col K. I. Mikhalev) with two battalions of the 1011th Artillery Regiment (commander, Maj G. A. Fugenfilov) by 0300 hours was to take up the jump-off position for the attack on the northwestern slopes of elev. 133.4, in the course of the offensive to capture elevs. 133.4 and 143.8 and take the farm of Borodkin. Subsequently, it was to advance in the direction of the southwestern slopes of elev. 143.3.

The 351st Rifle Regiment (commander, Maj G. I. Savkin) with the 136th Mortar Regiment from the jump-off position of the trigonometric tower on the eastern slopes

of elev. 133.4 and the small ravine (1 km to the east of elev. 133.4) was to attack and destroy the Nazis on elev. 154.2, to come out in an area a half kilometer to the southeast of Borodkin farm and subsequently advance toward the northwestern slopes of elev. 143.3 and Konny siding.

The 347th Rifle Regiment (commander, Maj P. F. Barkovskiy) with a battalion from the 1011th Artillery Regiment was ordered to take up a jump-off position in the ravines a half kilometer to the east of Samofalovka and on the northern slopes of elev. 123.7 and to advance behind the 339th Rifle Regiment toward elevs. 133.4 and 143.8, Borodkin farm and the southwestern slopes of elev. 143.3.

In the reserve of the division's commander located a kilometer to the east of Samofalovka were a training battalion (commander, Sr Lt L. N. Chebanenko), a machine gun battalion (commander, Sr Lt I. M. Zorin) and the 430th Separate Tank Killing Battalion. The reserve was to advance behind the 347th Rifle Regiment ready to repel enemy tank and infantry counterattacks from elev. 143.8 and Borodkin farm.⁵

The start of the infantry attack was set for 0830 hours on 10 September and the artillery was to be ready to open fire at 0730 hours. The artillery had been given the task of destroying the wood and sod defensive works and observation posts, to neutralize the enemy personnel and firing points in the strongpoints on elevs. 143.8 and 154.2 and Borodkin farm as well as prevent the bringing up of enemy reserves from Konny siding and Borodkin farm.⁶ The 30-minute artillery softening-up was planned to start at 0800 hours. This consisted of a 10-minute intense shelling and a salvo of rocket launchers, during which the first echelon battalions of the rifle regiments were to open fire with all types of firearms and rise up to the attack.

The formation's staff, on the basis of the divisional commander's instructions, worked out a plan for engineer support encompassing the measures to be carried out during the preparations for and in the course of the offensive. Reconnaissance was given the task of determining the true configuration of the forward edge of the enemy defenses and establishing the presence, nature and location of defensive works, man-made obstacles and barriers. For this purpose, the commander of the 699th Separate Combat Engineer Battalion, Capt S. S. Rivkin, assigned two combat engineer squads which were included in the reconnaissance groups while two engineer observation posts recruited from the combat engineer platoons of the regiments were organized in each of the first echelon regiments.

The preparation of the jump-off area consisted in equipping the jump-off positions for the artillery and mortars as well as the command and observation posts. Due to the shortage of time, all this work could not be carried out completely and well.

In organizing cooperation, the divisional commander during reconnaissance gave specific instructions to the commanders of the reinforcement regiments and subunits as to who was to cooperate with whom and when; he also established the chain of command for reinforcements in combat. When the main forces of the formation had reached Borodkin farm, the division's second echelon was to be committed to battle. Uniform signals were established for cooperation, calling in and ceasing fire.

Antitank defenses were provided by the significant quantity of support weapons existing in the rifle battalions. The sectors exposed to tank attack were also to be covered

by the subunits of the 430th Separate Tank Killing Battalion (commander, Capt N. N. Ivanov).

Air defense for the division's battle formations was entrusted to the 278th Antiaircraft Artillery Regiment, the firing positions of which were in the area of elev. 113.9. It provided air cover for the jumping-off position for the advance of the units and subunits as well as the artillery firing positions and the division's command post. In each battalion, a rifle platoon with medium and light machine guns were assigned to combat enemy diving aircraft. Observation and warning of an air danger were provided by posts organized at the command posts of the formation and the units as well as by battalion and company air observers.

For precisely organizing troop control, the staff worked out communications, cooperation, target designation and identification tables. The command and observation posts of the divisional commander were to be moved as the immediate combat mission was carried out while the command and observation posts of the rifle regiment commanders were to be deployed and moved only upon instructions and with permission of the division's commander.

In party political work, basic attention was focused on increasing the offensive spirit of the troops. Over the more than 5 months of the division's existence, its commissar, Sr Btlm Commissar A. M. Svirin, had succeeded in creating strong party and Komsomol organizations. The division had over 740 communists and around 2,250 Komsomol members.

On 9 September, meetings of the company party and Komsomol organizations were held in all the subunits and here the party members and Komsomol members were given personal assignments to ensure the carrying out of the combat task. The company political leaders held talks on the methods of conducting offensive combat, on the use of weapons in combat, on mutual support and so forth.

The preparations of the 308th Rifle Division for the offensive did not remain unnoticed by the enemy. The entire night before the offensive the Nazis illuminated the terrain in front with rockets, they observed the moving up of our units to the jump-off position for the attack and fired on them with artillery and mortar fire. Thus, the element of surprise was excluded.

On 10 September at 0830 hours, simultaneously with a salvo of the rocket launchers, the troops rose up for the attack. Initially it was successfully carried out. In overcoming heavy enemy artillery-mortar and small arms-machine gun fire, the first echelon regiments, although with losses, advanced to the top of elev. 133.4. But as they reached the southern slopes of this elevation, Nazi resistance increased. Automatic cannons, mortars and medium machine guns positioned on the northern slopes of elevs. 133.8 and 154.2 carried out lethal fire against the advancing troops, forcing them to hit the dirt. Enemy aviation, in operating in groups of 30-40 aircraft, continuously bombed the battle formations of our troops.

In the second half of the day, after a comparatively weak artillery softening-up, the troops again rose up to the attack and by the end of the day the 339th Rifle Regiment had taken the southern slopes of elev. 133.4 while the 351st Rifle Regiment had captured the southeastern slopes of the same elevation.⁷ On the first day of battle,

the division had suffered heavy losses and was unable to carry out the combat mission. This was explained by a number of objective and subjective factors: by a shortage of time for organizing combat, by the lack of combat experience among the men, by the inability of the commanders to organize cooperation, particularly on the regiment--battalion level with the attached and supporting forces and by an ignorance of the enemy. Moreover, a lack of data on the disposition of the enemy artillery and mortar firing positions during the period of the artillery softening-up did not make it possible to neutralize the enemy weapons and support the infantry attack.

The battle for the strongpoint on elev. 133.4 took the entire day of 10 September. The units suffered great losses in personnel and consumed a large amount of ammunition, but advanced just 330-350 m. This was explained by the fact that the troops were attacking the strongpoint head on, without using the possible maneuver in the given situation in the aim of coming out in the rear and flank of the strongpoint; not all the might of the artillery and infantry fire was utilized.

On 11 September, the division continued to carry out the set mission. In overcoming strong enemy resistance, it advanced just 1 km. The shortcomings which had occurred in the combat of 10 September were repeated on the 11th.

In the course of the 2-day battles, the division's commander and staff gained some idea of the resources of the opposing enemy and its fire plan. The interrogating of captured prisoners established that in the zone of advance of the 308th Rifle Division were around two divisions of the 76th Infantry Division and the 60th Mechanized Division reinforced by artillery and tanks. The formation which had suffered great losses from artillery-mortar and small arms-machine gun fire and particularly from Nazi air strikes was significantly inferior in personnel and equipment to the Nazis.

For reducing losses from all types of enemy fire and primarily from air strikes as well as for achieving surprise, Col L. N. Gurt'yev adopted a decision by a night attack to capture elevs. 143.8 and 154.2 and then Borodkin farm and thereby carry out the division's immediate combat mission. For this purpose he assigned two detachments from the 347th Rifle Regiment (the division's second echelon) which by this time had suffered the least losses.⁸

Detachment No 1 (a rifle battalion reinforced by the 1st Battalion of the 1011th Artillery Regiment) was to operate in the sector of the 339th Rifle Regiment with the task of capturing elev. 143.8 which was defended by about a battalion of infantry reinforced by an artillery battalion and mortars. Detachment No 2 (a rifle battalion reinforced by the 2d Battalion of the 1011th Artillery Regiment) received the mission of attacking elev. 154.2 which had been turned into a strongpoint which, according to incomplete data, was defended by up to an infantry battalion reinforced with artillery and mortars. Overall leadership over the preparation of the detachments for night combat was entrusted to the commander of the 339th Rifle Regiment (Detachment No 1) and to the commander of the 351st Rifle Regiment (Detachment No 2).

In a short period of time, in just a day, the subunits were to be prepared for heavy battles under special conditions. The division's staff had worked out a concrete and simply conceived plan for the night advance of each detachment and this included reconnaissance of the attack sectors and the approaches to them, the axes and

objectives of the attacks, the tasks for the supporting reinforcements, the procedure for illuminating the terrain and moving up to the jump-off position for the attack as well as to the attack lines, measures to counter enemy counterattacks and reinforce the success, the securing and guarding of the flanks, the questions of control and so forth.

In the reconnaissance made in the first half of 12 September, the commanders of the rifle companies and the supporting subunits clarified the objectives and axes of the attack, the jump-off lines as well as the approaches to them. The artillery, mortars and rocket launchers were given the task, without delay, of opening fire upon request of the infantry against previously designated targets. Due to the lack of time it was not possible to fully carry out all the measures to prepare for combat and this significantly reduced its results.

The subunits had covertly assembled in the jump-off area by the designated time, but in moving up to the attack line, two companies of Detachment No 1 lost their direction and were detected. Using rockets the enemy illuminated the forward edge and met the attacking troops with strong small arms and machine gun fire. The fascists on elev. 154.2 were alerted. Having illuminated the approaches to it with rockets, they met the subunits of Detachment No 2, preparing for the attack, with dense fire from all types of weapons. Surprise was lost. The detachment commanders called in fire from supporting artillery, but by this time reconnaissance had not ascertained the precise coordinates of the enemy battery firing positions and for this reason firing was basically against areas without causing any particular damage to the Nazis. The men threw themselves into storming the strongpoints, but the rifle companies and platoons under heavy enemy fire were unable to reach the objectives of their attack and they hit the dirt. The attackers were unable to close with the enemy to throw grenades and engage in hand-to-hand combat on the elevations. Several times the fighters rose up to the attack, but each time the enemy opened up from constantly new firing points which had not been detected previously and a hail of lead again pressed the companies to the ground. The approaching dawn made these attempts absurd and upon orders from the division commander the detachments returned to their initial position without having carried out the task.

The basic reasons for the unsuccessful outcome of the night attacks were: a lack of time for organizing combat and training the personnel for nighttime combat operations and the poor carrying out of all types of reconnaissance. As a result of this, the enemy's fire plan was not promptly detected. The plan for cooperation between the infantry and artillery was not worked out and thought out carefully, to the last detail. Nor was there close cooperation between the directly attacking subunits. In addition to this, the soldiers and commanders were little trained in nighttime orientation. The division's staff did not sufficiently monitor the course and content of nighttime combat training in the subunits and so forth.

Regardless of the failure, Col L. N. Gurt'yev did not abandon the idea of capturing elevs. 143.8 and 154.2 by a nighttime attack. He ordered the commander of the 339th Rifle Regiment to assign a rifle battalion, reinforcing it with a battalion of the 1011th Artillery Regiment and a combat engineer platoon, for a nighttime attack on elev. 143.8. A battalion with the same reinforcements and a combat engineer platoon from the 347th Rifle Regiment received the task of taking elev. 154.2 by storm.⁹

The division's commander, in the presence of the chief of staff, in giving the missions to the commanders of the newly organized detachments critically analyzed the nighttime actions of the 347th Rifle Regiment and demanded that the mistakes be considered in organizing and conducting combat while making maximum use of the positive experience of this regiment's nighttime operations.

During the night of 14 September, the division with two detachments again attacked elevs. 143.8 and 154.2. By morning, it occupied their northern slopes and dug in there. By this time, the 308th Rifle Division, by order of the commander of the Stalingrad Front had been turned over to the 1st Guards Army and it received orders from the army staff to break off the offensive actions and hold on strongly to the occupied perimeters.

On 15 September, the commander of the 1st Guards Army, Maj Gen K. S. Moskalenko, ordered the 308th Rifle Division reinforced by the 62d Tank Brigade, the 7th Guards Artillery Regiment, the 48th Guards Mortar [Rocket Launcher] Regiment and the 659th Artillery Regiment, to breach the enemy defenses and capture elevs. 143.8 and 154.2. Subsequently, it was to come out on the line of elevs. 126.1 and 136.1 (not shown on the diagram). Readiness for the offensive was set for 17 September 1942, but additional orders moved it back to 18 September.

Thus, the division received 2 days to prepare for the offensive and during this time the commander set the missions for the rifle regiments and the new reinforcements and organized cooperation. The staff drew up and issued to the executors the plans for artillery softening-up, engineer support, logistics, antitank and air defense and worked out the planning table of combat. The units and subunits received additional fuel and ammunition.

The plan for the offensive envisaged an army-level artillery softening-up of 90 minutes. But 30 minutes before its start, the Nazi artillery bombarded the troops preparing for the attack as the Nazi spotters and aviation which as before was supreme in the air had detected the concentration areas previously.

Fierce battles ensued. In them many men distinguished themselves, showing courage and heroism. The communists and the Komsomol members were in the front ranks of the attackers, setting examples of valor and intrepidity. In the region of elev. 154.2 and Borodkin farm, the men of the 347th Rifle Regiment fought heroically, repelling a counterattack up to an infantry battalion reinforced with 30 tanks. The regimental commander skillfully positioned the antitank guns and medium machine guns and ordered the two remaining antitank cannons to fire with direct laying.

At the very outset of the battle, Maj P. F. Barkovskiy sustained fatal wounds. The command of the regiment was assumed by the regiment's chief of staff, Sr Lt I. I. Mirokhin. Firing his antitank rifle, he personally set four tanks on fire. The enemy infantry, in encountering heavy fire from the medium machine guns, hit the dirt. Later, when the tanks turned back, the infantry retreated with losses. In a duel with enemy tanks, communist I. I. Mirokhin perished, in completely carrying out his duty to the motherland. He posthumously was awarded the Order of Lenin.¹⁰

On 18 September, in repelling a counterattack of enemy infantry and tanks in the region of elev. 154.2, the assistant commander of a machine gun platoon of the 2d

Machine Gun Company of the 351st Rifle Regiment, Sr Sgt R. S. Borob'yev, acted heroically. Having used up all the ammunition, he picked up a string of grenades and threw himself under the tracks of the Nazi tank which was approaching the elevation. The courageous machine gunner was poethumously awarded the Order of the Red Star.¹¹

In the course of fierce battles of 18-25 September, the division's units captured elevs. 143.8, 154.2 and Borodkin farm and repelled a large number of counterattacks by superior enemy infantry and tank forces, destroying up to 3,500 soldiers and officers, 20 tanks and 3 aircraft.¹³ On 25 September, the division which had suffered great losses was put in the reserve of the Stalingrad Front and then sent to Stalingrad. Here as part of the 62d Army, it stubbornly went on the defensive in the area of the Barrikady and Silikat plants.

The total result of the offensive operations by the units and formations to the north of Stalingrad territorially was insignificant, but they distracted a portion of the enemy forces from the city, thereby easing the situation of its defenders.

On 12 September 1942, Army Gen G. K. Zhukov and the GKO [State Defense Committee] member G. M. Malenkov reported to the Supreme Commander-in-Chief I. V. Stalin at Hq SHC: "The formation with the Stalingraders did not succeed because we were weaker than the enemy in terms of artillery and aviation. Our 1st Guards Army which began the offensive first did not have a single artillery regiment of reinforcements or a single antitank or air defense regiment. The situation at Stalingrad forced the committing of the 24th and 66th Armies on 5 September without waiting for their complete concentration and the approach of artillery reinforcements. The rifle divisions entered battle directly after a 50-km march. Such commitment of the armies to battle piecemeal and without reinforcements did not allow us to break through the enemy defenses and link up with the Stalingraders, but on the other hand our rapid thrust forced the enemy to divert its main forces from Stalingrad opposite our grouping and this eased the situation of Stalingrad which without this thrust could have been taken by the enemy."¹⁴

This document corresponds to the true state of affairs. On the importance of the offensive to the north of the city for the defense of Stalingrad, one of its participants, Mar SU K. S. Moskalenko, has written: "The troops on the left wing of the Stalingrad Front actually did not succeed in breaking through the enemy defenses and linking up with the 62d Army. But they were able to carry out the main task of the offensive, that is, to draw away the main enemy forces to themselves, including eight crack divisions and a significant part of the artillery, tanks and aviation. Thus, its attack grouping aimed at capturing Stalingrad was significantly weakened. And time was gained to organize the city's defenses...."¹⁵

The 308th Rifle Division made a worthy contribution to carrying out this major task. Its soldiers and commanders of all levels during their first battles gained certain combat experience and this made it possible subsequently to fight skillfully and with small forces to achieve victories over superior enemy forces. The command and the staff firmly and constantly carried out the decisions and particularly in the concluding stage, prepared the formation successfully for the advance in a short period of time. The determination with which the men fought, regardless of the lack of combat experience, the bad terrain for the offensive and the strong enemy resistance,

helped them achieve their goals. The division's commander endeavored to compensate for the lack of resources by nighttime attacks, in endeavoring to conduct them by surprise and energetically and constantly concerned with creating superiority in the sector of the main thrust. Having critically analyzed the failure of the first nighttime engagement, he drew the correct conclusions and more successfully organized and conducted the second nighttime engagement.

The combat experience acquired by the men, the commanders and the political workers of the formation to a significant degree determined the further successful combat operations of the division in the defense of Stalingrad.

FOOTNOTES

- 1 "Istoriya vtoroy mirovoy voyny 1939-1945" [The History of World War II of 1939-1945], Vol 5, Voenizdat, 1975, p 175.
- 2 The division included the 339th, 347th and 351st Rifle Regiments, the 1011th Artillery Regiment, the 430th Separate Tank Killing Battalion, the 699th Separate Combat Engineer Battalion, the 899th Separate Signals Battalion, a training battalion and other subunits.
- 3 TsAMO [Central Archives of the Ministry of Defense], folio 1330, inv. 1, file 11, sheets 4-5.
- 4 Ibid., file 7, sheet 27.
- 5 Ibid.
- 6 Ibid.
- 7 Ibid., file 4, sheets 5-12.
- 8 Ibid.
- 9 Ibid.
- 10 Ibid., folio 33, inv. 682525, file 158, sheets 338-339.
- 11 Ibid., file 65, sheet 220; folio 1330, inv. 1, file 8, sheet 8.
- 12 [Not in text].
- 13 Ibid., folio 1330, inv. 1, file 11, sheets 4-5.
- 14 "Istoriya vtoroy mirovoy...", Vol 5, p 183.
- 15 K. S. Moskalenko, "Na Yugo-Zapadnom napravlenii" [On the Southwestern Sector], Book 1, Voenizdat, 1979, pp 306-307.

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CSO: 8144/1871

MULTINATIONALISM AS A TRADITION OF THE SOVIET ARMED FORCES

Moscow VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL in Russian No 8, Aug 82 (signed to press 26 Jul 82) pp 61-64

[Article published under the heading "Combat Traditions," by Docent and Candidate of Historical Sciences V. Plyashkevich: "Shoulder to Shoulder in the Fire of the Civil War"]

[Text] The friendship of Soviet peoples and a high feeling of international duty among the military are one of the remarkable traditions of the Soviet Armed Forces established after the victory of October. A new series of articles tells about its genesis and development during the years of the Civil and Great Patriotic Wars as well as in the postwar period.

In the Army and Navy the historically formed rules, customs and standards of conduct among servicemen both in combat and in daily service are passed on from generation to generation. In the Army and Navy traditions are to be found the great strength of an example for youth. They are a powerful means for shaping the high moral-political and combat qualities of the motherland's defenders. With every justification the Decree of the CPSU Central Committee "On the 60th Anniversary of the Formation of the USSR" emphasizes the need "to propagandize the revolutionary, combat and labor traditions of the Communist Party, the Soviet people and the heroic feats of the USSR Armed Forces...."¹

The social homogeneity and internal unity of the Soviet multinational society as well as the party's Leninist nationality policy have determined and do determine the nature and principles of organizational development in the new type army as an army that is truly of the people and expresses the interests of the workers of all Soviet nationalities and as an army of friendship and fraternity among free, equal peoples. They are the basis of the glorious internationalist traditions of the Soviet Army and Navy. How did these traditions arise and where are their sources?

The organizational development of the Red Army occurred under the conditions of an invasion by German imperialism and then military intervention and struggle against the internal counterrevolution. The developing situation **necessitated the unification of military-economic efforts to defend the victories of October.**

Lenin taught that the peoples who have set out on the path of socialism need a close military alliance without fail: "We say: a unity of military forces is essential and a deviation from this unity is unacceptable...division is a crime."² The Party and Soviet government urged the working people to unite to repel the enemy. The workers of the Soviet republics responded ardently to this appeal. The Second Congress of Soviets of the Western Oblast (Minsk, Mogilev, Vitebsk and Gomel gubernias [provinces], for example, on 13 April 1918 stated: "...The Belorussian proletarians do not stand apart from the great Federal Soviet Socialist Republic and from the workers and peasants of all the rest of Russia."³ The declaration published by the Soviet government of the Ukraine stated: "...We loudly voice our solidarity with the Soviet Russian Federal Republic...."⁴ We have the same political, economic and military tasks." These statements reflected the aspirations of the peoples of the Soviet republics. For example, even in the battles against the German troops in the area of Narva and Pskov, fighting side by side were Russians, Belorussians, Latvians, Estonians and even internationalist Hungarians. In the Ukraine, detachments under the command of P. V. Yegorov, R. F. Sivers, V. I. Kikvidze, G. I. Chudnovskiy, A. I. Ivanov, Yu. M. Kotsyubinskiy, V. M. Primakov and others fought unstintingly against the German invaders and the Petlyura followers [Ukrainian nationalists].

The Worker-Peasant Red Army [RKKA] from its very inception was founded as multinational armed forces. Within the same divisions and regiments fighting shoulder to shoulder against the common class enemies were representatives of many nationalities. According to data on 1 May 1920, in the Red Army were: 77 percent Russians, 13.7 Ukrainians, 1.9 percent Latvians, 1.7 percent Tatars, 1.4 percent Jews, 1 percent Poles and 2.7 percent others. This did not include information on the Turkestan Front and the Caucasian Red Army where the percentage of non-Russian fighters was even higher. Thus, the Turkestan Front included: 67.7 percent Russian, 6.3 percent Kirghiz, 5.6 percent Uzbeks, 3.3 percent Tatars and 15.1 percent others.⁵ In addition, the Red Army had national regiments and brigades, including: Kazakh, Bashkir, Tatar and others. After the expulsion of the German troops from Ukrainian, Belorussian and Baltic territories, the organizing of national formations was also started in the other fraternal republics.

During the years of the Civil War **the workers of other nations also showed a high feeling of international duty** to defend the world's first worker and peasant state. Their support consisted primarily in pressure on the capitalist governments in the aim of opposing interference into the affairs of Russia. In many nations the slogan "Hands Off Soviet Russia!" became a battle call. At the same time, fraternal class solidarity was expressed in an active struggle by the representatives of many states directly against the interventionists and White Guards. According to incomplete data, in 1918, around 50,000 internationalists joined the Red army.

Fighting wholeheartedly on the fronts of the Civil War were Toivo Antikainen, one of the founders of the Finnish Communist Party, Bela Kun, one of the founders of the Hungarian Communist Party, Albert Williams, an American writer, Jaroslav Gasek, a Czech communist writer and others. The Romanian revolutionary I. O. Dic-Diceascu, the Korean P. Kim-Stankevich, the German internationalist Fritz Schwartz, the prominent leader of the Austrian and international workers movement Johann Koplenig, the French communist Jeanne Laborbe, the famous commander of the Chinese detachment which had fought heroically in the ranks of the Red Army, Pau Tisang, and others made a substantial contribution in the struggle against the White Guards and the interventionists. Many of these people have been described in books and

songs, in films and in radio and TV broadcasts. The name of the legendary Civil War hero, the intrepid son of the Serbian people, Oleko Dundic, has been cut in gold letters on the Kremlin Wall in Moscow.

"The moral strength of the Russian worker was," commented V. I. Lenin, "that he knew, sensed and felt the aid and support in this struggle which was given him by the proletariat of all the leading nations in Europe.... Relying on this support, our proletariat, weak in its small number and beset by calamities and hardships, was victorious since it was strong in its moral force."⁶

The broad involvement of the peoples of our motherland in defending the victories of October, the multinational composition of the Red Army and the active aid from the workers of foreign nations in the fight against the counterrevolution on Russian territory--all of this **demande the internationalist indoctrination of the Red Army Personnel and primarily the inculcating of a feeling of friendship among peoples in the men.**

Under party leadership, in the units and subunits, the ideas of Marxist-Leninist teachings on the nationality question and party policy in the area of national relations were explained to the Red Armymen.

The political bodies and party organizations were concerned with developing in the personnel a class approach to any of the enemies of the Soviet nation. Indicative on this level is the circular from the political department of the 7th Army "To All Communists of the 2d Rifle Division." It, in particular, stated: "If Estonia does not refrain from...its duplicitous policy, then, while not seeking war with any of the powers attacking us, including Estonia, we upon the first battle cry will go over to a decisive offensive against Narva in order to wipe the White Guard bands from the face of the earth and force Estlandia to abandon the war against worker-peasant Russia. The revolutionary Estonian workers and peasants will give us their fraternal aid in this."⁷

Great work was conducted in the army to explain the reasons for the instigating of national hostility in Tsarist Russia, to eliminate illiteracy among the servicemen of various nationalities and to involve them in active social life. Agitators having a good knowledge of Russian and the national languages were recruited from among the Red Armymen. They helped many soldiers both in political studies as well as in studying small arms.

The indoctrinational work to unite the soldiers of different nationalities brought good results. It is impossible to read without being moved the political reports of those days, for example, those received from the units of the 16th Rifle Division imeni Kikvidze, where, as of 1 January 1921, 32 nationalities were represented. The political summary of 5 October 1919 stated: "Yesterday food was issued just once to the 137th Regiment. In the 138th, 62 men are barefoot and 65 are without coats and sweaters. The mood is good." Other political summaries commented: "In the 141st Regiment, talks have been held on the subject: The international situation, the situation on the fronts, the attitude toward the middle peasantry and on discipline in the Red Army. In the 139th Regiment, there have been talks...on Soviet construction and antisemitism. The talk was very lively.... In the 139th Regiment, one pound of bread, one pound of meat were issued and hot food distributed twice. There was no salt.... The mood of the Red Armymen was cheerful.... The political commissar of the 140th

Regiment reports that the soldiers are waiting for the offensive. In moving through the positions, virtually no complaints are heard...." ⁸

The Red Armymen of the various nationalities did not complain of the difficulties of frontline life. They entered battle boldly and fought tenaciously and courageously against the enemy, showing mass heroism in this. Thus, on the Western Front, a detachment of foot scouts from the 31st Rifle Regiment of the 4th Rifle Division during the night of 27 December 1919 carried out a bold raid on the village of Berzaki occupied by the White Guards. The regimental commissar Mikhail Afanas'yev who headed the detachment, the commander of the machine gun platoon Ivan Tran and the scout Gugo Mednis were the first to reach the house from which an enemy machine gun opened fire. In endeavoring to neutralize it, the commissar was wounded, but he continued to lead the battle. Gugo Mednis broke into the house and destroyed the machine gunner. Soon thereafter, under the pressure of superior forces, the scouts had to retreat. Ivan Tran carried the captured machine gun and the ammunition box. The Russian M. Afanas'yev, the Latvian G. Mednis and the Estonian I. Tran were awarded the Order of the Red Banner for bold and effective actions in Berzaki.⁹

Often in combat the soldiers of different nationalities helped one another in risking their own lives. On 17 February 1923, the Russian squadron political leader Maksim Papantsev in a clash with Basmach troops in the village of Sufi-Dekhkan boldly came to the aid of the Tatar commander of the 1st Bukhara Cavalry Regiment, Ibragim Bikzhanov, when his horse was shot out from under him. Papantsev succeeded in cutting down two Basmachi who had attacked the fallen horseman and saved the commander's life.

What provided the cheerful mood of the Red Armymen in the extremely difficult conditions of the Civil War, what filled them with a thirst for advance and what led them to a mass feat? There is one answer: the high revolutionary mood, an understanding of the historic importance of what was happening, a feeling of friendship among the Soviet peoples and an awareness of international duty.

The selfless aid to all nations and nationalities in establishing and strengthening Soviet power was a vivid manifestation of the high international responsibility and feeling of friendship among peoples by the men of the Red Army.

In analyzing the history of the Soviet multinational state over the 60 years, the CPSU Central Committee has commented that "the working class led the working masses, as V. I. Lenin predicted, to the Soviet system."¹⁰

The entire history of the establishing of Soviet power in the central and remote oblasts of Russia, in the Ukraine, in Belorussia, in the Transcaucasus, Kazakhstan and in Central Asia is a history of the struggle of the Red Army against the internal and external counterrevolution. Great tasks confronted it in providing international aid, for example, to the workers and peasants of Transcaucasia. Up to 1920, here survived the power of bourgeois nationalists supported by the Entente imperialists. In expressing the aspirations of the working masses, the Caucasian kray committee of the RKP(b) [Russian Communist Party (Bolshevik)] on 15 March 1920 on behalf of the peoples of Transcaucasia requested aid from the RSFSR government. "We do not want to remain slaves, particularly now when the free Russian proletariat stands next to us and with whom we desire to enter into a unified proletarian international family.... We are

firmly convinced that the Soviet worker-peasant Russia, the Communist International and the valorous Red Army...will actively help us escape from the rule of capital."¹

The required military aid was given. By the middle of May, Azerbaijan with active assistance from the workers was basically liberated from the Musavatist bands. The Armenian people had to experience many difficulties in the struggle against the Dashnaks, and the Georgians against the local Mensheviks. Both in Armenia and Georgia, due to the aid of the Red Army, Soviet power was triumphant. At the 8th All-Russian Congress of Soviets on 22 December 1920, M. I. Kalinin proudly pointed out that representatives from the remote North, the Don Cossacks, the Northern Caucasus and Kuban and Crimea were present among the delegates for the first time and that new fraternal Soviet republics had been organized beyond the Northern Caucasus.

During the Civil War years, all the nations and nationalities of our country were convinced that the Red Army defended their interests and that it was truly a part of the working people. Under the leadership of the Communist Party, unity and friendship of free peoples developed in the Red Army as they did in the nation as a whole. These relations are one of the greatest victories of socialism and a powerful source of the creativity of the workers of all Soviet nationalities.

FOOTNOTES

- 1 "O 60-y godovshchine obrazovaniya SSSR. Postanovleniye TsK KPSS ot 19 fevralya 1982 goda" [On the 60th Anniversary of the Formation of the USSR. Decree of the CPSU Central Committee of 19 February 1982], Moscow, Politizdat, 1982, p 30.
- 2 V. I. Lenin, PSS [Complete Collected Works], Vol 40, pp 99-100.
- 3 "Dokumenty po istorii grazhdanskoy voyny v SSSR" [Documents on the History of the Civil War in the USSR], Vol 1, Moscow, Politizdat, 1941, p 127.
- 4 "Istoriya Sovetskoy Konstitutsii. Sbornik dokumentov (1917-1957 gg.)" [The History of the Soviet Constitution. Collection of Documents (1917-1957)], Moscow, Izd. vo AN ASSR, 1957, p 107.
- 5 TsGASA [Central State Archives of the Soviet Army], folio 9, inv. 12, file 17, p 370.
- 6 V. I. Lenin, PSS, Vol 43, pp 134-135.
- 7 TsGASA, folio 1328, inv. 1, file 1, p 42.
- 8 Ibid., folio 1256, inv. 1, file 97, pp 98, 99, 106.
- 9 O. Poletayev and A. Nugis, "Ognennyye gody" [Fiery Years], Tallinn, Eesti Raamat, 1977, pp 283-284.
- 10 "O 60-y godovshchine....," p 4.

- 11 "Istoriya grazhdanskoy voyny v SSSR" [The History of the Civil War in the USSR], Vol 5, Moscow, Politizdat, 1960, p 219.

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CSO: 8144/1871

EMPLOYMENT OF HUMAN TORPEDOES BY JAPAN IN WORLD WAR II

Moscow VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL in Russian No 8, Aug 82 (signed to press 26 Jul 82) pp 65-68

[Article published under the heading "In Foreign Armies," by Candidate of Naval Sciences, Rear Adm A. Pushkin: "The Combat Employment of Human Torpedoes by Japan in World War II"]

[Text] In 1943, Japan, having lost supremacy at sea and in the air, was conducting extended battles to defend the Marshall and Mariana Islands, abandoning one by one the bases captured by it in 1941-1942. It was unable not only to defend the overextended external defensive lines, but even to hold the internal ones against breaching by Allied armed forces. Tankers were in short supply and the volume of maritime shipments did not satisfy the nation's minimal requirements. By July 1944, the ratio of naval forces in the Pacific was estimated to be 3:1 in favor of America.¹

At the end of 1944, an English squadron arrived in the Pacific consisting of 2 battleships, 4 carriers, 5 cruisers and 11 destroyers and these soon thereafter joined the operations against Japan.²

The given period was characterized by the carrying out of a number of Allied landing operations and antilanding ones by the Japanese. It must be pointed out that in the course of them each side made relatively little use of ground forces while the navy and aviation were widely involved. This caused the ever-increasing importance of naval forces.

Having lost a significant number of ships and aircraft, the Japanese Command was searching for a "decisive" weapon with which it could sink the enemy carriers, battleships and other ships and vessels participating in various operations. Following the experience of the Italians who in 1940-1943 had employed guided torpedoes, a decision was made to employ aircraft flown by suicide pilots ("kamikaze") and at sea, torpedoes also guided by suicide-committing soldiers ("kaiten").³ The question of the use of manned torpedoes by Japanese submarines in World War II has been little examined in our press and is of definite interest.

The plan for the first such manned torpedo was worked out in Japan at the end of 1943. Its authors were the Officers S. Nashina, H. Kuroki and H. Suzukawa who employed the Long Lance oxygen torpedo which had proven effective during the war. The advanced model was 14.75 m long, it had an explosive charge of 1,360 kg and a range of 40 miles at a speed of 40 knots. However, the plan was not adopted.

By this time, the situation in the theater of war had become more complex. The losses of Japanese submarines and surface vessels had become more tangible. The Japanese Command was forced to return to considering the plan of manned torpedoes. In February 1944, the Chief Naval Staff approved it, having proposed that a device be developed for rescuing the torpedo's operator (the device was developed, but never employed). The weapon was manufactured in deep secrecy. Some 200 volunteers commenced theoretical and practical exercises. They were convinced that in sacrificing themselves, each of them would destroy an American aircraft carrier or battleship. "The mathematics of such torpedo operators was simple: 100 'kaiten' would sink 100 American heavy ships and the Japanese Navy would regain supremacy at sea."⁴

The torpedoes were manufactured at a ship repair yard in Kure. In Hakari, Hirao and Ozujima, operator-training bases were organized. Each of these had six torpedoes mounted on blocks where 30 operators were trained simultaneously. In addition, each day 10-12 men trained on training torpedoes. A torpedo boat brought the torpedo with the operator to the middle of the bay where it was released. Basic attention was paid to the ability to maintain the set depth and to stay on course under water. The essence of maneuvering consisted in employing a periscope by which the operator could close with the object of the attack. It was permitted to surface to periscope depth for not more than 7 seconds.

The first graduating class of 12 officers was held on 7 November 1944. From the graduates a detachment was formed which was called the special purpose attack forces or "kikumiju." By this time, tactical procedures had also been worked out to utilize torpedoes against anchored ships.

On 8 November, the first modified submarines, the J-36, J-37 and J-47, each having taken on board four "kaiten," set out to attack the American ships anchored in the area of Ulithi (J-36 and J-37) and Palau (J-47) islands. However, the use of the manned torpedoes was ineffective. J-37 in approaching the designated area was attacked and sunk by a destroyer. On 20 November the J-36 and J-47, having information from a reconnaissance plane that over 100 Allied ships were concentrated around the Ulithi Islands, covertly took up a position for firing, but instead of the eight readied manned torpedoes launched only five (three were malfunctioning). As a result of their first employment, the tanker "Mississinua" with a load of aviation gasoline was blown up.⁵

From this time, the Japanese began to organize one after another detachment of submarines with manned torpedoes on board.

For providing greater secrecy of the attacks on ships at anchor, the carriers of the "kaiten," that is, the submarines, were also modified. The crew quarters located in the bow and stern compartments of the submarines were connected to the torpedoes and this made it possible for the operators to assume their places through a special hatch while submerged. Initially only two such torpedoes of the total number could be employed under water and later four of them could.

In January 1945, a detachment was organized under the name of "Kongo." It included 6 modified submarines, the J-36, J-47, J-48, J-53, J-56 and J-58. The objects of attack for this detachment were the ships standing at anchor off the Admiralty Islands, Guam, Palau and Ulithi. A total of 15 manned torpedoes were launched, 9 of them could not be employed due to accidents and various malfunctions while the remainder

were unable to hit the targets. Thus, the actions of the "kaiten" group "Kongo" did not produce the desired effect.

In February 1945, the "Tibaya" Detachment consisting of three submarines, the J-44, the J-368 and J-370, received an urgent assignment to attack ships in the area of Iwojima Island. The attack was unsuccessful. Not a single ship was damaged while two submarines, J-368 and J-370, were sunk. In March 1945, the "Amatake" Detachment consisting of four submarines, J-44, J-47, J-56 and J-58 each carrying six "kaiten," headed to the area of Okinawa. The J-44 and J-56 were sunk in moving into the battle station, the J-47 sustained damage and returned to the base while the J-58 for a week vainly endeavored to approach the anchorage, but the airplanes forced it to dive constantly without allowing it to recharge its batteries. Finally the sub was reassigned and returned to base without using its manned torpedoes.

It became clear to the Japanese staff of the United Fleet that the Allies in the aim of protecting their ships against the "kaiten," had begun to concentrate the basic ASW resources around the anchorages. In order to avoid further losses, the command decided to alter the tactics of employing (operating) the manned torpedoes, using them against ships and transports underway. For this, the existing torpedoes were modernized in order to give them greater seaworthiness and a more dependable propulsion unit. The submarines were refitted in such a manner that all the operators of the manned torpedoes could take up their positions while the sub was submerged. In attacks, it was planned that the position would be taken up for encountering the target some 400-500 m away from the enemy ship on a bow heading. The hitting of the target did not represent a difficulty since the torpedo's operator, in traveling at a speed of 40 knots, could use the periscope. Even if the manned torpedo were detected at a rather significant range, a ship having a speed up to 30 knots virtually could not escape from it.

At the end of April 1945, the "Tembu" Detachment consisting of two submarines, J-36 and J-47, attacked American ships at sea in the area between Ulithi and Okinawa Islands. As a result, six ships and vessels were sunk, including a cruiser and a destroyer⁶ (the American side after the war did not confirm the fact of a sinking of a single ship or vessel in the given period).

May and June 1945 were a time of organizing two detachments "Shimbu" (J-361 and J-367) and "Todoraki" (J-36, J-165 and J-363) for "kaiten" attacks on the sea lanes in the area of Okinawa Island. They sank only the transport "Canada Victory,"⁷ in losing two subs: J-36 and J-165.

The following detachment of Japanese subs named "Temon Unit" consisted of six subs (J-47, J-53, J-58, J-63, J-366 and J-367). J-47, J-363 and J-367 operated in an area to the east of Okinawa (approximately 300-400 miles) in July-August 1945. They only succeeded in damaging the troop transport "Marathon." The three other submarines were sent into the south of the Philippine Sea. Their operations were more successful. Thus, the J-53 with a manned torpedo sunk the destroyer "Underhill" which had mistaken the "kaiten" as a minisub and had tried to ram it.

Regardless of the successes of the "Temon Unit" Detachment, the situation of the Japanese Navy continued to deteriorate. The Japanese Command took a decision to scatter 100 manned torpedoes along the coast of Kyushu, Shikoku and Honshu Islands.

Of this number, six were stationed on Hachijojima Island which was 200 miles to the south of Tokyo in the aim of attacking American ships, preferably carriers, which in steaming in Tokyo Bay would inevitably pass by the island. Scattered in the coastal bays, the manned torpedoes⁸ represented significant potential forces for sinking scores of enemy ships.

The last detachment consisted of one submarine, J-159, which carried just two manned torpedoes. Its action zone was the Sea of Japan. With the end of the war, the J-159 returned to base and hence did not employ its "kaiten." For the same reason, the combined attack by "kamikaza" and "kaiten" on ships standing off of Okinawa was called off.

Thus ended the use of manned torpedoes by the Japanese. In the battles, 88 "kaiten" operators were killed and 15 of them in the course of training. Moreover, the Allies destroyed eight submarines which had been fitted out for carrying the manned torpedoes with more than 600 crew members.

Thus, the infatuation of the Japanese with sabotage devices did not justify their hopes. With dependable support they could only have complemented the operations of the basic naval forces. The combat employment of the Japanese manned torpedoes involved great losses of personnel and the achieved results were not effective enough so that other nations in the future would follow their example. The success of the combat employment of sabotage devices to a large degree depends upon their technical reliability. The Japanese "kaiten" had very low reliability. More than 50 percent of the equipment of the manned torpedoes failed before combat employment.

Quite understandably, the use of the manned torpedoes did not have any substantial impact on the course of the armed combat in the Pacific Theater of War. Their planned mass employment in the event of a landing by Allied troops on the islands of the Empire did not take place, as the defeat of the Kwantung Army by the Soviet Armed Forces forced Japan to surrender.

Under present-day conditions, the imperialist states are intensely exacerbating the situation and this is being accompanied by an arms race, by instilling a militant spirit by studying the heritage of previous wars and by extensively publicizing the high military skill and combat feats committed by the men of their armed forces. Japan as an imperialist state is no exception. "In its foreign policy negative aspects such as playing up to the dangerous plans of Washington and Beijing and a tendency toward militarization are growing stronger."⁹ Considering this it is essential to unmask the aggressive essence of imperialism and at the same time study the experience of the past.

FOOTNOTES

- 1 V. I. Lan, "SShA v voyennyye i poslevoyennyye gody" [The United States During the War and Postwar Years], Moscow, Nauka, 1978, p 71.
- 2 CURRENT HISTORY, July, 1944, p 17.
- 3 There are two interpretations of the word "kaiten": the path to paradise and a mystical force capable of changing the course of the war and bringing victory to Japan.

- 4 [W. Holmes], "Pobeda pod vodoy" [Undersea Victory], translated from the English, Voenizdat, 1968, p 404.
- 5 Ibid., p 407.
- 6 U.S. NAVAL INSTITUTE PROCEEDINGS, No 2, 1961, p 79.
- 7 OUR NAVY, No 3, 1963, p 48.
- 8 Ibid., p 49.
- 9 "Materialy XXVI s"yezda KPSS" [Materials of the 26th CPSU Congress], Moscow, Politizdat, 1981, p 25.

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CSO: 8144/1871

MILITARY SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT DURING 1937-1941

Moscow VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL in Russian No 8, Aug 82 (signed to press 26 Jul 82) pp 75-80

[Article published under the heading "Scientific Reports and Information," by Candidate of Historical Sciences, Lt Col (Res) A. Cheremnykh: "Development of Military Schools During the Prewar Period (1937-1941)*]

[Text] Because of the sharp exacerbation of the international situation at the end of the 1930's and the increased immediate threat of war against the USSR, the party and government efforts were focused on further increasing the combat might of the Soviet Armed Forces and strengthening national defenses. For this purpose, the military-industrial base of the USSR began to be rapidly developed and a changeover was completed to a cadre system for the organizational development of the RKKA [Worker-Peasant Red Army]. The size of the Armed Forces from 1937 through June 1941 increased by 3.5-fold and reached 5 million men.¹ All of this moved into the forefront the task of providing the troops with command, political and engineer-technical personnel as well as improving the organizational structure, educational and political-indoctrination work in the military academies, schools and courses.

Measures were undertaken to increase the capacity of the already-existing military schools as well as set up new ones. The training of military personnel in a number of specialties was turned over to civilian VUZes (military faculties were opened at some of them). While in 1936 there were 12 academies and 1 military institute with a total student body of 11,000, in 1939, command personnel was receiving a higher education in 14 academies and at 6 military faculties under the civilian VUZes. All in all, this represented 20,000 students being trained as full-time students and 15,000 in the correspondence and evening divisions.² In June 1941, the nation had in operation 19 military academies, 10 military faculties and 7 higher naval schools with a total of 37,000 students and officer candidates.³

* The given article continues the publishing of materials devoted to the development of the military schools of the USSR Armed Forces (see A. Yovlev, "The Establishing and Development of the Red Army Military Schools," VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL, No 9, 1974; by the same author, "Improving the Military Schools in 1921-1928," VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL, No 2, 1976; A. Yovlev and A. Cheremnykh, "The Development of Military Schools in 1929-1937," VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL, No 7, 1980).

The organizational reform also involved the secondary military schools. In 1937, the military schools involved with the training of middle-level command personnel were renamed military secondary schools and this made it possible to more clearly define their legal status among the specialized secondary schools. By an order of the NKO [People's Commissar of Defense] of 24 March 1938, these were converted to a 2-year period of instruction. The shortening of the period of instruction in the schools was dictated by the acute shortage of command personnel and by the increased general educational level of the youth entering them. From the autumn of 1938 the infantry schools accepted only persons with at least an 8th-grade education, while the artillery and flight schools accepted at least 10 grades of secondary school.

Work was also continued on increasing the quantity and size of the military schools. In the autumn of 1937, 13 new schools began to be organized in the Ground Forces. Then by an order of the NKO of 14 November 1939, another 28 military schools for 40,000 officer candidates was created.⁴ The organizing of the infantry, artillery and armored schools was carried out at particularly rapid pace. In 1937-1940, the number of infantry schools rose from 15 to 54, for artillery schools from 11 to 28 and for armored schools from 4 to 9. As a total by September 1940, the Ground Forces had 133 military schools⁵ and their number was continuing to grow.

Fundamental changes in the training of flight personnel for aviation were introduced by the Decree of the VKP(b) [All-Union Communist Party (Bolshevik)] Central Committee and the USSR SNK [Council of People's Commissars] of 25 February 1941 "On the Reorganization of the Red Army Air Forces." According to this document, instruction was to be carried out consecutively in three types of schools: the 4-month military air school for basic training which was filled with inductees, the 9-month military pilots school and a 2-year aviation school. The decree envisaged the opening of 6 new aviation schools for 5,000 officer candidates. The number of air force schools increased from 18 in 1937 to 32 in 1939 and 90 in 1941.⁶

The network of military political schools was substantially broadened. In 1938, they were already functioning in each military district (the capacity of a school was 75-125 officer candidates and the period of instruction was 1 year). These trained political leaders from the servicemen who were party members and candidate members with an education of at least 6-7 grades. In 1940, all these schools were converted to the retraining of political personnel not having the proper military education (such personnel comprised 61.6 percent of the total number of political workers in the troops). Five military-political schools which were newly opened in November 1939 began to train political leaders from the servicemen. The personnel of each of them consisted of 1,000 officer candidates with a period of instruction of 2 years. During the same year, a political school for 400 persons turning out propagandists was also organized.⁷ As a total, by the start of the Great Patriotic War, the political personnel was being trained in 26 military-political schools.

Courses for the advanced training of command personnel (KUKS) continued to undergo further development. These were concerned with the retraining of commanders who had been certified for promotion and they gave them broadened knowledge in the specialty and on new equipment. At the end of 1940, a uniform period of instruction of 6 months was established for the KUKS. For the basic military specialties, divisions or independent courses in the Far East were set up, including: a division of the "Vystrel" [Shot] marksmanship-tactical courses designed for 200 men, the artillery KUKS for

200 men (in Vladivostok), the signals KUKS for 100 men, the engineer KUKS for 100 and the chemical defense KUKS for 120 (in Khabarovsk). The total number of them reached 25 and 9,300 men could study there.⁸

Short courses were employed everywhere to eliminate the shortage of military personnel. These made it possible to quickly give the troops the necessary number of commanders, political workers and technical specialists by training the best prepared junior commanders in them. By the autumn of 1937, in all the military districts 4-month courses had been formed for junior lieutenants and junior military technicians. Here in 1938 the period of instruction was increased up to 6 months. In 1938-1939, 80,000 men underwent training in them. In 1939, 6-month courses for junior political leaders were set up in the military districts and separate armies. By the start of 1941, there were 18 of them with 6,000 students.⁹

The short courses became widespread in the training of reserve command personnel. Starting in 1937, on the basis of the district, corps and divisional training centers, 26 courses for the advanced training of reserve command personnel were organized for the retraining of 40,000 men; these had a training period of 2 months.¹⁰ In accord with the Decree of the Politburo of the VKP(b) Central Committee of 13 March 1940 "On Military Retraining and Recertification of Party Committee Workers and on the Procedure of Mobilizing Them into the RKKA," 14 courses were organized for the military retraining of party workers. In 1940, the number of courses had risen up to 93 while the number of students in comparison with 1937 had increased by 9-fold.¹¹

In the second half of 1940, under the leadership of the VKP(b) Central Committee, there was a reform in the military command bodies and a component part of this was the creating of main and central administrations in the People's Commissariat of Defense responsible for combat and mobilizational training of the corresponding branch of troops, its logistical support and the utilization of personnel. This made it possible on a broader basis to carry out the idea of concretizing the leadership of the military schools. The academies, schools and courses of the technical branches of troops from the end of 1940 were put under them. Only the infantry schools and courses remained under the UVUZ [Directorate for Institutions of Higher Learning].

The organizational measures aimed at increasing the number of military schools and their capacity, at shortening the period of instruction and improving their leadership significantly helped to solve the acutely arising task of providing the Armed Forces with military personnel. By the start of the Great Patriotic War the number of officer candidates and students studying in the academies, schools and courses exceeded 300,000 men. In the first half of 1941 alone, around 70,000 graduates were sent to the troops.

During the designated period, great attention was given to improving educational work. The major document for reorganizing it in the military academies was the Decree of the USSR SNK and the VKP(b) Central Committee of 23 June 1936 "On the Work of the Higher Institutions of Learning and the Leadership of the Higher School." Serious shortcomings were detected in the activities of the higher school: poor training facilities, a low level of preparation among the scientific and pedagogical personnel, the lack of stable curriculums, an excessive number of subjects, the use of obsolete methods in holding the exercises, and an insufficiently clear and well-thought-out system of production experience. The party and government provided a clear program for organizing all aspects of the life and activity of the institutions of higher learning.

In following the designated decree, the NKO in his order determined the basic specialty for training command personnel at each military academy and faculty as well as the ways of improving educational and scientific work. Scientific councils were set up in the academies and the role of the chair was increased in organizing the educational process. The time for studying the special disciplines was increased in the curriculums. The very educational process was reformed. Lectures and practical exercises became the basic type of exercise. The length of the tours of duties in the troops for the officer candidates was extended.

After the well-known decree of the USSR SNK and the VKP(b) Central Committee of 16 May 1934 on the teaching of history in schools, more attention began to be paid to this discipline also in the military schools. "In recent years, the science of military history has taken its suitable place in our military academies," commented VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL in those years. "There has been a sharp increase in the number of hours for studying military history; new military history chairs have been and are being set up and young talented historians are being attracted to them; new programs and aids have been worked out; fundamental textbooks on military history are being written....

"A study of military history is of exceptional significance for the RKKA."¹²

Great concern was also shown for improving the skills of the faculty. For studying and generalizing advanced experience in combat and political training, the instructors began to be sent more frequently to the troops and to take an active part in scientific research. In 1938 alone, 17 instructors and scientific workers of military academies were awarded the title of professor, 22 received the degree of doctor of sciences and 116 became candidates of sciences. In 1939, the academies already employed 6 academicians, 9 corresponding members, 12 honored scientists, more than 100 doctors of sciences and over 100 professors.¹³

The Decree of the USSR SNK and the VKP(b) Central Committee "On the Work of the Higher Institutions of Learning and the Leadership of the Higher School had a definite impact on revising educational work in the secondary military schools as well. This was reflected in a number of the directing NKO documents which demanded that the excessive number of subjects be eliminated in the military schools and concentration be focused on the study of military disciplines. Thus, by an order of the NKO of 3 November 1936, the military schools were confronted with the task of improving tactical, weapons and topographic training of the officer candidates, eliminating the seasonal factor in field training and providing each school with a winter camp. In April 1937, the NKO gave serious attention to improving the weapon and tactical skills of command personnel for the artillery. Great attention was given to military training in the military political schools. Thus, in the 1939-1940 academic year, 50-55 percent of the training time was assigned to study military disciplines.

In order to broaden the program of special military training, the study of general educational subjects with the exception of a foreign language was halted in the schools. Additional time for military subjects was sought out also by systematizing the work of the military schools (from 1939 the number of examination hours, the time for winter and summer holidays, for preparing for parades and other measures was reduced). The length of exercises was increased up to 8 hours a day and in the summer up to 9.¹⁴ This made it possible to bring the amount of educational time with 2-year periods of

instruction up to 4,415 hours,¹⁵ while in the 3-year military schools in 1939 this equaled 4,728 hours.¹⁶

In the spring of 1940, the system of military training and indoctrinational work underwent a fundamental revision. In being guided by the conclusions and instructions of the March (1940) Plenum of the VKP(b) Central Committee and the conference of Red Army military workers held in April 1940, where a profound and thorough analysis was given for the combat operations of our troops during the Soviet-Finnish War, the NKO in his order of 16 May 1940 "On Military and Political Training of the Troops for the 1940 Summer Period" set the task of revising the entire system of educational and indoctrinational work in the troops. The demand was raised of indoctrinating the troops in a spirit of the unswerving fulfillment of the military oath and a readiness to overcome the difficulties of modern combat. Exercises were to be conducted under difficult conditions, during the day and at night, in any weather.

The order set specific tasks for the military schools. They were to train commanders who had a perfect mastery of the procedures of modern combat, particularly close combat tactics, and able to control the battle formations in close cooperation with the supporting and attached weapons. Particular attention was paid to increasing the level of weapons training and on improving the educational skills of the graduates. "The entire system of training and indoctrinating the officer candidates," stated the order, "should be based upon the strictest fulfillment of the requirements of the Red Army manuals and regulations and ensure the training of a platoon commander who is cultivated, who has a perfect mastery of the theory and practice of military affairs, who is highly disciplined, with a developed commander's will, who is decisive, bold and dedicated to his motherland."¹⁷

The military schools revised the curriculums and syllabuses primarily in the interests of intensifying the studies. As a result, the number of field exercises was increased, the training fields and ranges were improved, the exercises began to be held in a situation close to actual combat, and a study of the combat experience of the Red Army in 1938-1940 started everywhere.

The curriculum in the armor schools underwent a certain adjustment in line with the commencing reorganization and rearming of the armored troops. During that period the KV and T-34 tanks were being introduced and new units and subunits were being created. In the summer of 1940, the first nine mechanized corps began to be organized and this had a substantial impact upon the tactics of tank combat employment.

The results of the activities of the military schools under the new conditions were summed up by the Deputy People's Commissar of Defense Mar SU S. M. Budenny, at procedural assemblies for the chiefs of the schools and their deputies for political affairs. These were held on 15-20 November 1940. Having noted the positive aspects of their activities, he at the same time pointed out that not all the schools had as yet sufficiently revised the system of officer candidate training and many chiefs continued working in the old manner. He ordered the leadership and faculty of the military schools to constantly continue the reform in the education and indoctrination of the officer candidates, to develop in them such qualities as endurance, initiative, decisiveness and discipline and work for excellent combat skills and high ideological-theoretical training."¹⁸

The new tasks posed by the Communist Party for the military schools in the anxious situation of the approaching military danger caused higher demands to be placed on party political work and on the activities of the political bodies, the party and Komsomol organizations. Overall leadership over political work in the military schools was provided by the RKKA Political Directorate. In line with the increase in their number and the necessity of considering their specific features, in 1938 a Department for the Leadership of Party Political Work in Military Schools was introduced in the Political Directorate. This department had a division of military academies and a division of military schools and KUKS.¹⁹

With the elimination of the institution of military commissars in 1940, military and political leadership in the military schools became the competence of the chiefs of the schools and courses while political work itself was entrusted to their deputies for political affairs. During the same year, the position of deputy company commander for political affairs was abolished in the schools. The presence of a sufficiently high party and Komsomol stratum among the officer candidates made it possible for the subunit commanders to provide overall leadership over party political work.²⁰

The political bodies, the party and Komsomol organizations gave great attention to increasing the level of ideological and political training of the students and officer candidates. Their work was based upon the Decree of the VKP(b) Central Committee "On the Organization of Party Propaganda in Light of the Publishing of the 'Short Course of VKP(b) History'." This demanded that all the communists profoundly study the theory of Marxism-Leninism and pointed to the need to improve the quality and ideological level of party propaganda. The political bodies and party organizations began to more closely direct the work of the socioeconomic chairs and series, exercising supervision over the quality of exercises in social subjects. The reports on the course of studying social disciplines were discussed at the party, Komsomol and general meetings, in the aktivs, bureaus as well as in the companies, training groups and faculties.

The socialist competition was an important means in mobilizing the students and officer candidates to improve the quality of studies. This encompassed all the personnel.

Thus, the military schools in 1937-1941 carried out great work in training military personnel for the Army and Navy. By their activities they helped in quickly eliminating the shortage of command, political and technical personnel in the troops. The experience of organizational development and the educational and political indoctrination work was of great significance for the subsequent development of the military schools during the years of the Great Patriotic War.

FOOTNOTES

- 1 "Velikaya Otechestvennaya voyna Sovetskogo Soyuza. Kratkaya istoriya" [The Great Patriotic War of the Soviet Union. Concise History], Voenizdat, 1970, p 53.
- 2 "Istoriya vtoroy mirovoy voyny" [The History of World War II], Vol 2, Voenizdat, 1974, p 205.
- 3 A. M. Iovlev, "Deyatel'nost' KPSS po podgotovke voynnykh kadrov" [Activities of the CPSU in Training Military Personnel], Voenizdat, 1976, p 152.

- 4 TsGASA [Central State Archives of the Soviet Army], folio 4, inv. 15, file 52, sheet 462.
- 5 Ibid., file 96, sheets 216-217.
- 6 "Aviatsiya i kosmonavtika SSSR" [Aviation and Cosmonautics of the USSR], Voenizdat, 1968, p 79; KOMMUNIST VOORUZHENNYKH SIL, No 4, 1968, p 14.
- 7 TsGASA, folio 4, inv. 15, file 92, sheets 430, 462; file 96, sheet 324.
- 8 Ibid., file 96, sheet 490.
- 9 Ibid., inv. 15, file 96, sheet 13.
- 10 Ibid., file 84, sheets 484, 487.
- 11 "KPSS i stroitel'stvo Sovetskikh Vooruzhennykh Sil" [The CPSU and the Organizational Development of the Soviet Armed Forces], Voenizdat, 1978, pp 203, 204.
- 12 VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL, No 1, 1939, pp 2-3.
- 13 "Istoriya vtoroy mirovoy...", Vol 2, p 205.
- 14 TsGASA, folio 4, inv. 15, file 92, sheets 473, 474.
- 15 Ibid., folio 62, inv. 2, file 1317, sheet 11.
- 16 "Rukovodstvo po podgotovke kursantov pekhotnykh shkol RKKA na 1932/33 uchebnyy god" [Manual for the Training of Officer Candidates in RKKA Infantry Schools for the 1932-33 Academic Year], Voenizdat, 1932, p 13.
- 17 TsGASA, folio 4, inv. 15, file 99, sheet 344.
- 18 Ibid., folio 62, inv. 2, file 1302, sheet 140.
- 19 Ibid., folio 4, inv. 15, file 85, sheet 315.
- 20 Ibid., file 96, sheet 243.

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CSO: 8144/1871

PARTY-POLITICAL WORK IN NAVAL AVIATION UNIT DURING WAR AGAINST JAPAN

Moscow VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL in Russian No 8, Aug 82 (signed to press 26 Jul 82) pp 80-83

[Article published under the heading "Scientific Reports and Information," by Docent and Candidate of Historical Sciences, Capt 1st Rank V. Sologub: "Party-Political Work in the 12th Assault Aviation Division of the Pacific Fleet Air Forces During the War Against Imperialist Japan"]

[Text] The 12th Assault Aviation Division [shad] made a worthy contribution to the combat operations of the Pacific Fleet [TOF] in defeating imperialist Japan. It was under the command of Col M. V. Bartashov, the chief of the political section was Maj A. I. Abanin and the chief of staff was Lt Col F. I. Sergutin. The formation included the 26th and 37th Assault and the 14th and 38th Fighter Air Regiments.¹

In accord with the plan of the Pacific Fleet Air Forces commander, Lt Gen Avn P. N. Lemesenko, starting on the night of 9 August, by systematic massed raids against the ports of Yuki, Rasin and Seisin which handled a significant portion of the important cargo destined for supplying the main assault force of the Japanese Ground Forces, the Kwantung Army, the naval aviation was to deprive the enemy of an opportunity of basing ships and vessels there and support the landing of amphibious forces in them.² The main role was assigned to the 12th shad.

During the period of preparing for combat operations, extensive party-political work was carried out in the formation's units. A particular feature of it was that it was carried out in such a manner as not to disclose the very fact of the pending strike against the enemy. The political workers and party aktiv explained to the personnel the aggressive essence of the plans of the Japanese imperialists and told about the heroes of the Civil War in the Far East, the battles in the region of Khasan and Khalkhin-Gol and about the feats of the Pacific Fleet sailors on the fronts of the Great Patriotic War and in the operational fleets. In the regiments, squadrons and flights talks and political information sessions were held on the subjects: "The Communist Party--The Inspirer and Organizer of Our Victories," "The Military Duty of Soviet Pilots," "The Successes of the Soviet Maritime Area in Socialist Construction," "Let Us Defeat the Japanese Militarists!" "The Atrocities of the Japanese Invaders in the Far East in 1918-1922" and others. Great work was done to strengthen the party and Komsomol organizations.

During the night of 9 August, the Declaration of the Soviet Government on the Entry of the USSR into War Against Japan, the appeal of the Pacific Fleet Military Council

and the combat order on the offensive were read to the aviators. The member of the TOF Military Council S. Ye. Zakharov explained these documents. The men of the 12th shad vowed to honorably carry out the combat mission.

The officers from the division's political section together with the workers from the operations group of the TOF political directorate helped organize and conduct conferences by the political workers in the units with the agenda "The Tasks and Practice of Party Political Work in Ensuring the Defeat of the Japanese Invaders" as well as party and Komsomol meetings at which the same questions were discussed. Immediately prior to the start of combat operations meetings were held in the regiments aimed at creating a high offensive elan among the flyers.

With the start of combat operations, agitation-propaganda work was actively carried out. Lectures "On the Current Moment" and "On the Necessity of Defeating Japan for Ensuring the Security of Our Motherland" were read for the personnel in the regiments and squadrons while talks were organized on the experience of the leading pilots, their feats and about vigilance. The chief of the political section of the 12th shad, Maj A. I. Abanin, his deputy Maj A. G. Larichev, the deputy commander for political affairs of the 26th shap [assault aviation regiment] Maj P. V. Yurinskiy, the deputy commander for political affairs of the 37th shap G. V. Boyev, the propagandist from the political section of the 12th shad Capt G. L. Ivanovskiy, the party organizer from the 14th iap [fighter aviation regiment] Capt I. I. Golubchenko, the party organizer of the 38th iap Sr Lt V. L. Zolotykh and others spoke before the personnel. The political section prepared five leaflets and several slogans and drew up 11 photomontages devoted to the division's best pilots.³

The editors of the divisional newspaper SOKOL PRIMOR'YA (Editor, Sr Lt Admin Serv A. Ya. Mitin) over the days of the war had turned out ten issues. The pages of the paper published essays, drawings and articles on the feats of Sr Lts I. A. Serov and V. F. Trushkin, Lt N. M. Kharybin, Jr Lts M. Ye. Yanko and F. A. Krapivnyy, articles on the advanced experience of the party and Komsomol organizations headed by Capts G. K. Piskunov, I. I. Golubchenko, Sr Lt V. L. Zolotykh, Lt A. F. Danilin, Sr Sgts A. K. Andreyev and A. L. Kochetov and Sgt V. L. Perov.

During the second and third 10-day periods of August, exercises on Marxist-Leninist training were organized in the formation. The political information sessions with the personnel were held daily. The division's political section during the second 10-day period of August 1945 held an instructional conference with the party bodies on the experience of the party organizations under combat conditions as well as two seminars with the TOE Komsomol organizers on the questions "The Experience of the Komsomol Organizations in the Formation During the First Days of the War" and "The Tasks of the Komsomol Organizations in Supporting the Movement of the Aircraft to the New Airfield." They significantly helped the commanders of the regiments and squadrons as well as the party and Komsomol organizations in mobilizing the flight personnel to carry out the combat missions in an exemplary manner.

Party-political work was well organized in the air units, particularly in the 37th shap where Maj G. V. Boyev was the zampolit [Deputy Commander for Political Affairs]. On the eve of the first combat sortie he spoke sincerely with each pilot and ascertained the mood and readiness for the sortie. The zampolit spoke about the feats of the aviators in the battles against the Nazi invaders and expressed the hope that the Pacific

Fleet aviators would add to the glorious combat traditions of the Northern Fleet, Baltic Fleet and Black Sea Fleet sailors. Then he checked how the leisure of the pilots had been organized.

Maj G. V. Boyev spoke with the technicians, mechanics and gunnery crews on how they had readied the aircraft for the sortie and reminded them of the importance of combat friendship with the pilots as this ensures success in carrying out the combat assignment and instills confidence in victory in them.

After the first combat sortie, the technicians, mechanics, equipment operators and everyone who was at the airfield organized a warm reception for the flyers. They were carried out of the aircraft, given flowers, embraced and had their hands shaken warmly and were congratulated on the first success. Not an hour had passed with the entire regiment knew the names of the outstanding crews which had attacked the enemy port of Yuki. The agitators conducted talks with the men about their combat deeds. In a prominent place posters were put up with the appeals: "Pilot Barbashinov Has Sunk an Enemy Transport. Assault Pilots, Equal the Pacesetters!" "That's the Way!" and many others which called for new combat successes.

From the very first day of the war in the regiment a stand was attractively made up showing the combat score of the squadrons and indicating the best flyers. Upon the instructions of the regiment's zampolit Maj G. V. Boyev, the Komsomol members headed by the regimental Komsomol organizer, Sgt V. L. Perov, worked industriously on the visual agitation. In the 37th shap, an exhibit was made up on "What They Write About Our Pilots." In it articles and photographs were regularly put up from the newspapers VOYEVAYA VAKHTA, TIKHOOKEANSKIY SOKOL and SOKOL PRIMO'YA devoted to the combat operations of the regiment's flyers.

The regimental zampolit before the flights systematically reminded the young pilots of the need for calmness and tenacity. "A pilot should always have a warm heart, but a cold head," Boyev said paternally.⁴

The party organizations organized the work skillfully. They sought a truly vanguard role for the communists in combat. All forms were devoted to this, including: meetings, individual and group talks, lectures, reports and visual agitation. Meetings were held in all the party organizations with the agenda "The Tasks of the Communists in Defeating the Japanese Invaders." The technicians discussed the question of the example set by the communists in readying the equipment for flights. Meetings were also devoted to the admission of the best pilots, technicians and mechanics to the party. The authority of the party organizations and their impact on all the personnel increased significantly. This can be seen from the fact that the number of applications requesting admission to the party increased significantly. Thus, just over the four days of August, as a whole for the division 49 persons were admitted to the party and this was 2-fold more than in the month preceding the start of combat operations.⁵

The division's Komsomol organizations also worked successfully under the leadership of the political section, the zampolits and the party organizations. They achieved a vanguard role for the Komsomol members in carrying out the orders of the commanders and in strengthening military discipline. They helped instill in each of them boldness and courage, intrepidity and steadfastness in the battles against the enemy. Various forms were employed for this including: Komsomol meetings, bureau sessions, oral

and printed popularization of the best subunits and individual aviators and their feats. An important role was played by the personal example set by the Komsomol members in carrying out the combat tasks.

Lectures were given for the men by the officers of the political section, the unit political workers, the party and Komsomol aktiv and talks were held with them on the following subjects: "The Order of a Commander is the Order of the Motherland," "Mutual Aid in Combat is an Inviolable Law of the Soviet Soldier," "Sergey Lazo--A Hero of the Civil War," "The Feat of Komsomol Member Yanko," "The Perfidious Methods of Japanese Intelligence," "High Vigilance--The Guarantee for Victory Over the Enemy" and others. Speaking to the aviators were the secretary-in-charge of the party commission, Maj B. Ya. Gubin, the chief of the party aktiv school, Capt A. G. Shmidt, the regimental party organizer Sr Lt A. A. Tsurikov, the Komsomol organizer of the 14th iap Lt A. F. Danilin, the party organizer of the 255th Air Base Capt G. K. Piskunov, the senior instructor from the division's political section for Komsomol affairs Lt G. M. Kharybin and others.

Eight men spoke at a Komsomol meeting in the 2d Air Squadron of the 37th shap devoted to the question "The Tasks of the Komsomol Members in Carrying Out the Motherland's Order to Defeat the Japanese Invaders." The attack plane pilot, Guards Jr Lt P. I. Chumachenko said: "The hour has come to settle the score with the Japanese invaders. We, the Komsomol members, should study our weapons even better and defeat the enemy for certain. I vow that I will spare no force or even my life for achieving a complete victory over the enemy." The meeting obliged each Komsomol member to set an example in combat, to strengthen military discipline and fight the enemy just as Capt Gastello had fought.⁶

The party political work helped the command strengthen discipline and high morale.

The 37th shap under the command of Maj M. N. Barbashinov distinguished itself in battles against the enemy. The pilots of this unit sunk 14 transports, 1 tanker, 1 destroyer, 1 patrol boat, they destroyed 3 antiaircraft batteries, 4 trains and much other military equipment and weapons.⁷ In the course of carrying out the combat missions, they demonstrated high skill, heroism, valor and wholehearted love for the motherland. Thus, on 10 August, the regiment consisting of 25 planes took off to make strafing attacks against the transports and ships in the Port of Rasin. When the group under the command of the squadron commander Capt I. F. Voronin appeared over the target, an enemy destroyer opened up heavy enemy aircraft fire against the airplanes. Voronin turned his Il-2 toward this ship and making a bombing run sank it. This facilitated the mission of the ground attack planes which were attacking the transports. But the enemy antiaircraft gunners still succeeded in hitting the aircraft of the Komsomol members, Jr Lt M. Ye. Yanko. The courageous pilot aimed the aircraft engulfed in flames toward a military installation. He could have saved himself by parachuting, but then he would have been taken prisoner by the enemy. The Komsomol member preferred death to infamous capture. By an Ukase of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet of 14 September 1945, Jr Lt M. Ye. Yanko was posthumously awarded the title of Hero of the Soviet Union.

The 26th shap also operated successfully. During combat it sunk 8 transports, destroyed 3 antiaircraft batteries, 2 field artillery batteries, hit 5 trains, blew up 3 ammunition dumps and a number of other military installations.⁸ The unit commander, Maj A.

M. Nikolayev, personally sank 2 transports. In addition he skillfully organized an attack on the enemy infantry and as a result of this 2 field batteries were destroyed and 800 soldiers and officers killed.⁹

The commander of the 12th shad, Col M. V. Bartashov, himself set an example of skill and heroism. On 10 August, he sank an enemy tanker with a tonnage of 6,000-8,000 tons and for this was awarded the Order of the Red Banner.¹⁰

The Komsomol members of the formation fought heroically. Guards Jr Lt P. I. Chumachenko sank a transport and was awarded the Order of the Patriotic War 1st Degree. The deputy Komsomol organizer of the 3d Air Squadron of the 37th shap, Jr Lt F. A. Krapivnyy sank 1 transport personally and 1 in a group. He was awarded the Order of the Red Banner. The Komsomol organizer from the 1st Air Squadron of this same regiment, Jr Lt Voronin, for successful strafing attacks on the enemy ships and anti-aircraft artillery was awarded the Order of the Red Star.

Good work was carried out by the Komsomol organizations of the 26th shap headed by the Komsomol organizations of the 26th shap headed by the Komsomol organizer Sr Sgt A. K. Andreyev, the 225th Air Base where Sr Sgt A. L. Kochetov was the Komsomol organizer, the 2d Air Squadron of the 14th iap headed by the Komsomol organizer and flight leader Lt N. A. Romanov and the 37th shap (Komsomol organizer, Sgt V. L. Perov). The senior instructor for Komsomol work in the political section of the 12th shad, Lt N. M. Kharybin, carried out great organizational and explanatory work among the Komsomol members and youth. He was awarded the Order of the Red Star.¹¹

Party-political work played an important role in the successful actions of the 12th shad. This unit by an Ukase of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet of 17 September 1945 was awarded the Order of the Red Banner. By an order of the Supreme Commander-in-Chief of 15 September of the same year, the division received the honorary name of "Rasin," and by an order of the People's Commissar of the Navy the 26th and 37th shap from this division became guards units.¹² Many aviators received orders and medals. The commander of the 37th Guards shap, Guards Maj M. N. Barbashinov, his deputy Guards Capt Ya. I. Matveyev, commander of the 1st Air Squadron, Guards Capt I. V. Voronin, the flight leaders Jr Lts F. A. Krapivnyy and M. Ya. Yanko, the commander of the 26th Guards shap Guards Maj A. M. Nikolayev and the commanders of the air squadrons from this regiment Guards Sr Lts I. A. Serov and V. F. Trushkin, by an Ukase of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet of 14 September 1945, received the high title of Hero of the Soviet Union.

FOOTNOTES

- 1 OTsVMA [?Section of the Central Naval Archives], folio 291, file 24086, sheet 41.
- 2 Ibid., file 25619, sheets 3, 4; file 25619, sheet 2; file 25621, sheet 6.
- 3 Ibid., file 24086, sheet 44.
- 4 Ibid., file 24085, sheet 29.

- 5 Ibid., file 24086, sheet 49.
- 6 Ibid., sheet 46.
- 7 Ibid., file 21086, sheet 42.
- 8 Ibid., sheets 42, 62.
- 9 Ibid., sheet 42.
- 10 Ibid.
- 11 TsVMA [Central Naval Archives], folio 3, inv. 1, file 1581, sheet 421.
- 12 S. Ye. Zakharov et al., "Krasnoznamennyy Tikhookeanskiy flot" [The Red Banner Pacific Fleet], Voenizdat, 1973, pp 296-298.

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CSO: 8144/1871

REVIEW OF BOOK ON BREZHNEV IN THE 18TH ARMY

Moscow VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL in Russian No 8, Aug 82 (signed to press 26 Jul 82) pp 84-88

[Review by Hero of the Soviet Union, Army Gen P. Lashchenko and Lt Col A. Sidorov of the book "Vosemnadtsataya v srazheniyakh za Rodinu. Boyevoy put' 18-y armii" (The 18th in the Battles for the Motherland. The Campaign Record of the 18th Army), Voenizdat, 1982, 528 pages with illustrations]

[Text] The book "Vosemnadtsataya v srazheniyakh za Rodinu. **Boyevo**y put' 18-y armii" which has been written by a collective of authors from the Military History Institute of the USSR Ministry of Defense and veterans of the 18th Army and published by Voenizdat is a new major contribution to the heroic chronicle of the Great Patriotic War. It brings out the history of one of the famous formations of the Soviet Armed Forces, it examines various aspects of operational art and tactics, it gives examples of generalized military experience in the preparation and conduct of operations, engagements and battles and brings out the purposefulness, continuity and activity of party political work, its forms and methods. The book convincingly and clearly describes the heroes of the war, the men of the army, who by their military accomplishments covered themselves in undying glory. Their heroic deeds, courage and valor, their wholehearted dedication to the Communist Party and the socialist fatherland and their loyalty to the ideals of communism will serve as an inspiring example for coming generations.

Over the years of the existence of Soviet power the Communist Party has produced precisely such people. All party political work in the Army and Navy during the war years was aimed precisely at this. Even during the most difficult times for the nation, the Soviet people and their military did not loose faith in the ultimate victory over the Nazi hordes. "Faith in victory inspired the men on the front...the Soviet workers in the rear," said the General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, Comrade L. I. Brezhnev. "Our party, our people did not waver."¹

L. I. Brezhnev himself, in being in the operational army from the first to the last day of the war, made a major contribution to the defeat of the enemy. A sensitive and considerate political worker who had the unbounded affection and trust of the men, he knew their needs and requests. Equally with the soldiers and commanders, Leonid Il'ich [Brezhnev] endured all the hardships of the war and was always in the midst of the men where success was determined. He repeatedly risked his life and by his ardent Bolshevik word and personal example inspired his fellow servicemen to perform seemingly impossible deeds.

The deputy chief of the Political Directorate of the Southern Front and later the Northern Caucasus and Black Sea groups, the chief of the Political Section of the 18th Army and chief of the front's political directorate--whatever the posts L. I. Brezhnev held he always showed his Leninist style in work, charming personality, generosity, simplicity, party principledness and high organizational abilities.

In the morning of 22 June 1941, the Nazi hordes treacherously attacked the Soviet Union. In the heavy defensive engagements of the first months of the war at Kamenets-Podolskiy and Yampol, on the Dnestr and Southern Bug, on the Dnepr and Ingulets, the units and formations of the 18th Army ably and in an organized manner fought against the superior enemy. Regardless of the extreme difficulties, the formation's troops actively conducted counterattacks and sometimes counterstrikes together with adjacent units and reserves of the front. The men and the commanders showed mass heroism and their fighting spirit not only was not broken but, on the contrary, grew stronger with every day. Hate for the invaders and a sense of responsibility for the destiny of the socialist motherland tempered their will for victory and strengthened their faith in the justness of the war.

In the middle of October 1941, the Nazi troops of the Army Group South continued to push toward the Donets Basin endeavoring as quickly as possible to capture this important industrial region of our nation. The Military Council of the Southern Front, in being perfectly aware of all the complexity of the situation and consequences stemming from it, adopted measures to strengthen the defenses. The 18th Army which was on the defensive in the center of the Southern Front on one of the most important sectors, continued to fight the advancing enemy. In the continuous battles for the Donets Basin, the personnel of all its formations and units showed exceptional tenacity and courage and the ability to hit the enemy under any conditions. Under the pressure of superior enemy forces, the formation's troops retreated to new lines and made tangible attacks against the enemy.

A glorious page at the army's campaign record is its involvement in the counteroffensive of the Southern Front troops at Rostov, the first major offensive operation by the Soviet Army conducted by the forces of one front (p 90). For the formation's commanders and soldiers, participation in the counteroffensive at Rostov was a good schooling in the organization and conduct of offensive engagements and battles, military skill and unshakable morale.

But the enemy was strong. Disregarding its losses, it pushed steadily toward the Caucasus and toward the Black Sea coast. Retreating under the blows of its superior forces, the troops of the 18th Army themselves went over to counterattacks and caused significant damage to the Nazis. This was the case in the defense of the eastern Donets Basin, in the steppes of the Don and the Kuban and in the defense of Tuapse. The crack Nazi troops trained specially for conducting combat operations in the mountains could not break the will and courage of the defenders of the Caucasus. In a letter home, one of the Nazi warriors complained: "I am an experienced soldier and have seen all sorts of things, but never anything like this. These Russians are seemingly made of armor.... Incidentally, when we say 'Russians' we should understand Russians, Ukrainians, Belorussians, Georgians, Armenians, Uzbeks, Azerbaijani and others. This chatter by Goebbels that the Russians are supported by no one will end up badly for us" (p 156).

In the course of the defensive engagements, the workers of the front's political directorate provided great aid to the commanders and political workers from the

formations. During these battles intrepidity and courage were repeatedly shown by the deputy chief of the front's political directorate Leonid Il'ich Brezhnev and for this he was awarded the Order of the Red Banner. The certificate of the front's military council read: "The members of the Military Council have personally observed the work of Comrade Brezhnev. In being in the 6th, 12th and 57th Armies, Comrade Brezhnev has often been in the battle formations of the troops, mobilizing the masses of Red Armymen, political workers and commanders to defeat the Nazis. Comrade Brezhnev is an intrepid combat political worker" (p 98).

Here is how the former commissar of a mortar battalion and now chairman of the veteran council of the 18th Army, A. N. Kopenkin, described a meeting with the deputy chief of the political directorate of the Black Sea group, L. I. Brezhnev: "Toward evening...the Nazis broke through to the battalion staff and then we called in fire from our own artillery on ourselves. There was no other way out!... At that very moment, I saw a tall, dark-haired commissar running through our trenches under fire and shouting to the soldiers: 'Hold on, comrades! Help will soon be here!' Thus, I met for the first time the brigade commissar L. I. Brezhnev. He arrived with a group of political workers in order to support the brigade during the most difficult hours. He requested that the command move up a battalion of rocket launchers and artillery here and these forces the Nazis to pull back from our trenches" (p 145).

The offensive elan of the Soviet military which embodied the experience of the previous battles and engagements was most strongly apparent in the operation to liberate Krasnodar. On 12 February 1943, the Soviet Informbyuro [Information Bureau] announced the liberation of the city by the troops of the 18th and 46th Armies.

During the offensive operations, the army destroyed around 2,500 Nazi soldiers and officers, it took several hundred prisoners and captured around 30 tanks, 180 artillery pieces, more than 300 motor vehicles and a large amount of ammunition and other military supplies (pp 171-172).

The men of the 18th Army and the sailors of the Black Sea Fleet covered themselves in immortal glory in the battle for Novorossiysk. The small piece of Black Sea coast which had been won away from the enemy and called by its defenders "Malaya Zemlya" [Small Land] has gone down in the chronicle of the Great Patriotic War as a symbol of the unbreakable courage of the Soviet people, where, as Comrade L. I. Brezhnev has written, "the earth burned, the rocks smoked, metal melted, concrete disintegrated, but the men, loyal to their oath, did not give up this land."²

In the aim of strengthening the command of the 18th Army, on 1 April 1943, Maj Gen S. Ye. Kolonin was appointed the member of the army military council. Previously he had been a member of the military council of the Black Sea Troop Group. Col L. I. Brezhnev was appointed the chief of the political section and previously he had been the deputy chief of the Political Directorate of the Black Sea Troop Group. They were experienced political workers who had high political and military training and great combat experience. Their arrival provided a new impetus in the activities of the commanders, staffs, political bodies, rear bodies, the party and Komsomol organizations. Somewhat earlier Lt Gen K. N. Leselidze had assumed command of the army.

Leonid Il'ich Brezhnev introduced his own style into the work of the army political section and the formation political sections. He knew how greatly the soldiers and

officers were influenced by the appearance of the commander and the political worker directly on the battlefield and their friendly talks with the men. Of particularly great moral significance was the presentation of party cards before a battle or during moments of calm directly in the troop battle formations. For this reason, from the very first days of assuming the position of the chief of the political section, Leonid Il'ich spent a large portion of the time in the troops, he spoke with the soldiers and officers and studied the combat situation, the needs and mood of the personnel.

With the arrival of L. I. Brezhnev, a majority of the workers from the army political section began to be constantly in the units and subunits, endeavoring to more specifically aid the political bodies and party organizations in developing mass political and party political work and in assigning the political cadres and communists. The main task of the political bodies and party workers, L. I. Brezhnev taught the political workers, was the greatest possible increase in the combat readiness and capability of each subunit, unit and formation and concern for maintaining high morale and a healthy moral state of the personnel. The political workers should always know whether the men of the subunit and unit had correctly understood the combat mission and ensure its successful execution by party methods and means and by personal example.

Regardless of all the efforts by the Nazis to throw the defenders off of Malaya Zemlya and destroy them by fire and metal, the occupied bridgehead was widened and played a crucial role in the defensive operation to liberate Novorossiysk and later the Taman Peninsula.

The brilliantly conducted Novorossiysk Operation showed the high combat skills of the troops, the naval forces and aviation and the increased operational and tactical ability of the command personnel. It enriched Soviet military art with valuable experience in a simultaneous attack from the sea and the land in the course of which the most heavily fortified center of resistance was eliminated and the main zone of the much vaunted blue line was broken. As a result of the fierce battles for each building, each street and block, the men of the 18th Army caused serious damage to the Nazi troops. The enemy lost more than 3,500 men killed and around 14,000 wounded (p 265).

The 40-day saga of the amphibious landing by the 18th Army on the Kerch land was unprecedented in terms of the intensity of combat, the courage and great steadfastness of its men. The landing completely carried out the tasks entrusted to it on the beachhead, it tied down significant enemy forces and ensured the landing of the basic forces of the front to the north of Kerch. The numerous enemy attempts to push back the Soviet troops into the sea by superior forces were driven off with great losses to the enemy.

During November-December 1943, fierce battles developed on the Kiev-Zhitomir sector. The Nazi troops were endeavoring to push the Soviet troops behind the Dnepr and recapture Kiev. Hq SHC adopted a plan to strengthen the First Ukrainian Front with a portion of the strategic reserves, including the 18th Army which had distinguished itself in the previous engagements in the Caucasus, in the liberation of Novorossiysk, Taman and in the Crimea. By the end of 8 December, the formation had taken up the defensive with two corps on the line of the Teterev and Zdvizh Rivers, securely covering the Kiev sector. On the eve of the new year of 1944, the 18th Army together with troops of the 1st Guards Army liberated Zhitomir and then Berdichev. In the

summer of 1944, the troops of the First Ukrainian Front were preparing to defeat the main forces of the Army Group Northern Ukraine in order to complete the liberation of the Ukraine and then develop the offensive toward the Vistula and the Carpathians, in aiding the Polish, Czechoslovak and Hungarian peoples. In the history of Soviet military art this operation has gone down under the name of the Lwow-Sandomierz. The 18th Army was fighting on the front's left wing. Its troops successfully broke through the deeply echeloned enemy defenses to the southeast of Stanislaw, they cut off the Stanislaw grouping to the south and southwest and together with the troops of the 1st Guards Army routed it, they liberated the towns of Mukachevo and Uzhgorod and reached the foothills of the Carpathians. During the 22 days of continuous battles, the army troops destroyed over 22,000 enemy soldiers and officers as well as a great deal of military equipment and weapons.

The men of the 18th Army, like all the men of the Soviet Armed Forces, showed themselves to be not only patriots, but also internationalists. In the course of the offensive operations, under the difficult conditions of a mountainous forested terrain, the formation's troops fought their way across the territory of Czechoslovakia and Poland, Romania and Hungary, bringing freedom and independence to the peoples enslaved by fascism.

The people of the liberated nations well remember the unstinting struggle of the Soviet people who carried out a great liberating mission. "We will never forget," said the General Secretary of the Czechoslovak Communist Party Central Committee G. Husak, "that we owe the national existence of our peoples and our liberation from the Nazi yoke to our most faithful friend and ally, the fraternal Soviet Union" (507). These sincere words of gratitude apply fully to the men of the famous 18th Army.

The campaign record of the army was difficult and complex. Over frontline roads and paths, across mountain passes and swamps, its men during the years of the Great Patriotic War fought their way some 3,500 km.

The book describes many feats of the soldiers and officers, starting from the first battle heroes. Even on 2 August 1941, the gunner and Komsomol member Ya. Kh. Kol'chak was awarded the title of Hero of the Soviet Union. He with direct laying of his gun at point-blank range knocked out three enemy tanks, demonstrating will, steadfastness, tenacity and high military skill.

Among the thousands of feats carried out by the men, no two are absolutely alike. Each of them is unique. And in fact, quite different were the feats of the Heroes of the Soviet Union, the regimental commander Maj G. V. Mikley and Pvt I. S. Fedorok, the political leader S. A. Zheleznyy and the medical instructor N. T. Gniletskaya, Sr Sgt N. M. Novitskiy and platoon commander Lt A. I. Koshkin, the heroes of Malaya Zemlya and the "fiery earth," the participants of the storming of Novorossiysk and the liberation of Taman, the engagements in the Western Ukraine and Eastern Carpathians all vividly described in the book. But these feats in their essence and importance are profoundly social and are determined by the entire Soviet way of life and by communist ideals.

Heroes are always patriots of the socialist fatherland. They have found the powerful strength for the feat in the spiritual treasures, in the revolutionary, military and labor traditions and in the heroic history of their people. The heroes of the 18th Army are

precisely such persons for the readers as they were dedicated to the cause of the party and the people, they were loyal to their patriotic and international duty and demonstrated the greatest examples of courage and self-sacrifice in defending the socialist fatherland. Their military feat was properly praised by the party and the Soviet government. Tens of thousands of men from the army were awarded orders and medals while over 90 of them received the title of Hero of the Soviet Union for valor and courage.

Orders also decorated the colors of the formations and units of the 18th Army and the honorary names of Novorossiysk, Taman, Anapa, Zhitomir, Berdichev, Mukachevo, Uzhgorod and Carpathians reflect its glorious campaign record.

The indefatigable labor of Leonid Il'ich Brezhnev was also properly recognized. For a great contribution to victory in the Great Patriotic War and for outstanding accomplishments in strengthening national defense capability he was four times awarded the title of Hero of the Soviet Union and the title Hero of Socialist Labor and received the highest military decoration, the Order of Victory. In leading the political bodies, he acquired great experience in political organizational work. He was always noted for his high sense of responsibility for the assigned job and enormous capacity for work. He participated fully in the leadership of the army's troops and together with the commander and members of the military council, the staff, the chiefs of the branches of troops and services he settled complex problems involving the elaboration of the operational plans and their implementation. He was concerned with the manning and organizing of the units and troop support, he directed party political work and in critical moments by his personal example inspired confidence in victory in the soldiers and commanders.

In the postwar period, no matter to what high and responsible position the party promoted Leonid Il'ich Brezhnev, he always achieved great successes in party, state and social activities with his inherent ebullient energy, party principledness, profound communist conviction and outstanding organizational abilities. For precisely this reason, the General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, the Chairman of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet Comrade L. I. Brezhnev, has won the affection and gratitude of the Soviet people and all progressive mankind. His unstinting labor during the war years and his titanic activities in the postwar years in the building of a communist society and in the struggle for peace throughout the world are an inspiring example of serving the motherland.

The publishing of a book on the campaign record of the 18th Army is simultaneously new fundamental research on the Great Patriotic War and a popular description of the combat operations of one of the famous formations of the Soviet Armed Forces. It undoubtedly will be received with interest by a broad range of readers. It remains to add that the numerous well executed and skillfully selected photographs, a portion of which is published for the first time, as well as the color diagrams excellently complement the book's text and make it possible to more clearly feel the heroics of bygone days. The book will be a good aid in the military-patriotic indoctrination of the present generation of the Soviet people and the men of the Soviet Armed Forces.

FOOTNOTES

- 1 L. I. Brezhnev, "Leninskim kursom. Rechi i stat'i" [By the Leninist Course. Speeches and Articles], Vol 1, Moscow, Politizdat, 1970, p 123.
- 2 L. I. Brezhnev, "Malaya zemlya. Vozrozhdeniye. Tselina" [Malaya Zemlya. Rebirth. Virgin Lands], Moscow, Izvestiya, 1981, p 26.

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