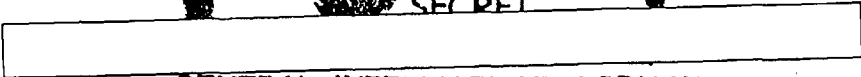


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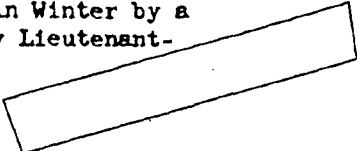
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IRONBARK

7 MAY 1962

MEMORANDUM FOR: The Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT : MILITARY NEWS: "A Percipitate Breakthrough of a Prepared Enemy Defense in Winter by a Motorized Rifle Division", by Lieutenant-General A. Baksov



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

2. For convenience of reference by USIB agencies, the codeword IRONBARK has been assigned to this series of TOP SECRET CSDB reports containing documentary Soviet material. The word IRONBARK is classified CONFIDENTIAL and is to be used only among persons authorized to read and handle this material.

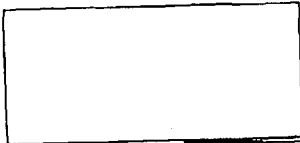
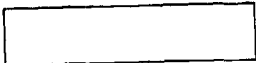
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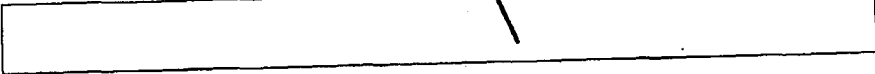
Richard Helms

Richard Helms
Deputy Director (Plans)

Enclosure



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Original: The Director of Central Intelligence

cc: The Director of Intelligence and Research,
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16 May 1962

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COUNTRY : USSR

SUBJECT : MILITARY NEWS: "A Precipitate Breakthrough of a Prepared Enemy Defense in Winter by a Motorized Rifle Division", by Lieutenant-General A. Baksov

DATE OF INFO: January 1961

APPRAISAL OF CONTENT : Documentary

SOURCE : A reliable source (B)

Following is a verbatim translation of an article entitled "A Precipitate Breakthrough of a Prepared Enemy Defense in Winter by a Motorized Rifle Division", by Lieutenant-General A. Baksov. This article appeared in Issue No. 34, 1961 of the Soviet military publication Collection of Articles of the Journal Military News (Voyenny Vestnik). This publication is classified SECRET by the Soviets and is published by the USSR Ministry of Defense.

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

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A Precipitate Breakthrough of a Prepared Enemy Defense
in Winter by a Motorized Rifle Division

by

Lieutenant-General A. Baksov

In February 1960 in the Moscow Military District, divisional exercises were carried out on the theme "A Precipitate Breakthrough of a Prepared Enemy Defense by a Motorized Rifle Division (msd), and the Development of an Offensive with the Forcing of a River Barrier in Coordination with an Airborne Force".

The operations were carried out under unfavorable meteorological conditions. Despite the sharply broken terrain, deep snow, a snow storm, ice-covered ground, and an insufficient number of roads, the rates of the offensive reached 85 km; but when one considers the distance covered by the division from the concentration area to the forward edge of the battle area, it was more than 100 km per calendar day.

Tactical missile batteries were employed for the first time in the exercises, and the commanders of the divisions acquired a certain experience in employing them. The advancing units of the division coordinated fully with the tactical airborne force.

The general situation, created by the directing staff at the commencement of the exercise (Sketch 1):

The 12th Army of the "Eastern Forces", having defeated the "Western Forces" [two words missing] continued to develop [about seven words missing] 14 February reached the line of the Lama River, Garutino, Ostashevo (not on the sketch). The attempts by the "Eastern Forces" to break through the "enemy" defense precipitately, using the

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forces of the previous grouping, were not successful. The commander of the 12th Army therefore decided to commit to battle the 23rd Motorized Rifle Division, which had been added to the army, and to drop the 10th Airborne Division (vdd) to capture the river crossings on the Volga River and prevent enemy reserves moving up from the west.

The 5th Army of the "Western Forces", after sustaining losses, had to withdraw to a previously prepared defense line, on which, with the units that had been withdrawn and then committed again to the battle, it managed to stop the offensive of the "Eastern Forces". To prevent the breakthrough of the "Eastern Forces" and to cover firmly the Rzhevsk axis, it was decided to move up from the depth the 26th Motorized Rifle Division, to the area of Staritsa, and the 17th Motorized Rifle Division, into the area of Afanasovo, Lebedki, and Gladkoye. The 114th Motorized Rifle Division, which had been added to the complement of the 5th Army and was located in the concentration area, was given the following task: to be ready by 16 February to carry out a march and occupy a defense line along the western bank of the Shosha River in the zone of Kashentsevo, Churilovo, Michkovo, and Plyusnikovo and prevent an enemy breakthrough in the direction of Dorozhayevo and Staritsa.

Thus, the "Eastern Forces" endeavored to destroy the Lotoshinsk grouping of the "Western Forces" by using atomic weapons and bringing fresh forces into the battle and endeavored to develop the offensive on the Rzhevsk axis. The "Western Forces", on the other hand, tried to strengthen their defense by using reserves and to inflict losses on the "Eastern Forces" and prevent a breakthrough by using atomic strikes.

The commander of the 23rd Motorized Rifle Division of the "Eastern Forces", in compliance with the task laid down, decided to breakthrough the defense precipitately in the sector of Garutino and Afanasovo, destroy the opposing enemy, and capture the line of Abushkovo, Frolovskoye, and Novomikhaylovskoye; then, precipitately

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break through the second zone of the defense, destroy the "enemy" reserves moving up, and capture the line of Stepurino - (env.) Dorofeyevo; then, further, by bringing the second echelon into the battle, force the Volga River precipitately and, in coordination with the 10th Airborne Division, by the morning of 17 February capture the line of (env.) Pankovo, Staritsa Station, and Ilinskoye in readiness to develop an offensive in the direction of Kushnikovo and Ostashkovo (not on the sketch).

Besides the four atomic warheads from army resources earmarked for delivering a strike against the enemy in the zone of the offensive of the division, the 23rd Motorized Rifle Division also possessed its own three atomic warheads. The division commander decided to use them in the battle in the depth--the first when breaking through the second defense zone, the second when repulsing possible enemy counterattacks, and the third when forcing the Volga River and holding the bridgehead.

The main strike was carried out in the direction of Lvovo, Kornevskoye, Oremovo, and Staritsa. The combat formation of the division was made up of two echelons; in the first - three regiments (the 73rd Motorized Rifle Regiment, the 290th Tank Regiment (tp) and the 406th Motorized Rifle Regiment); in the second - the 404th Motorized Rifle Regiment.

Such an arrangement of the combat formation permitted a larger part of the divisional forces to deliver a strike against the enemy on a wide front. The operations of the tank regiment in the first echelon made it possible to take rapid advantage of the results of the atomic strikes. The increase of effort in the depth and in the development of the offensive at a fast tempo were ensured by the second echelon of the division.

Special features of the employment of the second echelon of the division in the exercise consist of the fact that [6 lines missing] Bashmakovo, and Novotroitskoye (not on the sketch) and ensure the forcing of the river with the main forces of the division. Such employment of a regiment of the second echelon of the division in the given

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conditions of the situation can be considered as sound. It would also be correct to assign it two possible lines for commitment into combat (the first at a depth of 30 km, and the second 46 km from the forward edge of the enemy defense), because during the offensive the situation may suddenly change, and with the increase of the general depth of the combat it would be more difficult to anticipate such changes as far as time and lines are concerned.

The organization of a precipitate breakthrough of an enemy defense. The work of the commander and the staff of the division, as well as of the commanders of the units and subunits, on the organization of a precipitate breakthrough of a defense was carried out in a limited period of time. From the time of receipt of the combat order (at 1400 hours on 14 February) until the time of readiness for the offensive (at 2400 hours on 15 February), less than one and a half calendar days (34 hours) was available. This time was allotted as follows: reaching a decision on the map and having it formulated by the staff of the division - three hours (1400 to 1700 hours on 14 February); the assignment of the tasks on the map to the commanders of the units - one hour (1700 to 1800 hours on 14 February); reconnaissance to clarify the details of the situation and the decision reached on the map, and also to determine in greater detail on the terrain the unit tasks and . . . the organization of coordination - two hours (0730 to 0930 hours on 15 February).

Under this work procedure, most of the time was allotted to the commanders and the staffs of the units. Coordination was organized on the terrain during the reconnaissance. The main problems of coordination with schedules (s raschetami), as well as the sequence of units and subunits moving forward for commitment to combat, were shown on the division commander's map of decisions (karta-resheniye). A planning table (sketch) for coordination was not worked out separately.

For the work of the division commander on the terrain, besides the map of decisions, a small plan was prepared which gave the times of the work and a list of the basic problems requiring solution.

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During the reconnaissance the division commander, taking into account the conditions of the terrain, established the departure line at a distance of 5 to 8 km from the forward edge of the concentration area; the control line (this is also the line of deployment from regimental into battalion columns) at a distance of 15 to 20 km from the departure line; and the line of deployment for the assault: for motorized rifle subunits - 800 to 1000 m and for tanks - $1\frac{1}{2}$ to 2 km from the forward edge of the enemy defense.

The commanders of the motorized rifle regiments established the lines of deployment of the battalion columns into company columns at a distance of up to 3 km, and the companies into platoon columns up to $1\frac{1}{2}$ to 2 km, from the forward edge. The battalion commanders designated the places for the infantry to dismount (speshivaniye) and fit on skis, as well as the places for the armored personnel carriers.

Movement of the division for the precipitate attack.
Experience has shown that it is most advisable to select the concentration area for a division 30 to 50 km from the forward edge of the enemy defense. In our exercise, the concentration area for the 23rd Motorized Rifle Division of the "Eastern Forces" was 40 km away. This ensured rapid movement and deployment of the units for combat and, at the same time, made it difficult for the enemy to oppose the advancing troops in an organized and effective manner.

The 23rd Motorized Rifle Division began moving out from the concentration area at night by four routes: along route No. 1 - the 73rd Motorized Rifle Regiment (less tank battalion), rear directorate of the division; along route No. 2 - the tank battalion of the 73rd Motorized Rifle Regiment and the 290th Tank Regiment (tp) (less a tank battalion); along route No. 3 - the tank battalion of the 406th Motorized Rifle Regiment, a tank battalion of the 290th Tank Regiment, the tank battalion of the 404th Motorized Rifle Regiment; along route No. 4 - the 406th Motorized Rifle Regiment (less tank battalion), the 404th Motorized Rifle Regiment (less tank battalion). At 0300 hours on 16 February the heads of the columns of the regiments of the first echelon passed the departure line.

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The motorized rifle regiments without their tank battalions proceeded on the routes along the flanks, the majority of which followed highways suitable for wheeled vehicles.

The tank regiment of the division moved along two central routes which followed dirt roads. In front of it came the tank battalions of the motorized rifle regiments of the first echelon of the division, which, by the beginning of the deployment into precombat formations had moved to the offensive zones of their own regiments.

This march formation of the division was caused by the tank subunits' and units' not being permitted during the exercises to use the better roads on the outer routes (Nos. 1 and 4). The presence of the tank grouping in the center of the division, although creating the best conditions to exploit the results of our own atomic strikes, did at the same time expose it to the danger of suffering heavy losses in tanks from an enemy atomic attack. Besides this, the movement of the tank battalions of the motorized rifle regiments along the routes of the tank regiment required additional regrouping when deploying the units for battle.

We consider that when assigning four routes for the division, it is most advisable that the motorized rifle regiment with all its subunits should move in a column, having, as a rule, at the head of the column the tank battalion and artillery. This will permit the unit to deploy rapidly when the enemy is met, attack him with tanks, and also provide the attacking subunits with timely artillery support. The tactical missile battery of the division should move by a separate route or along the route of the main forces, but at a distance from them that lessens the likelihood of the destruction of the battery in the event of an enemy atomic attack.

The division moved from the concentration area at an average speed of 14 kph. Taking into account the night

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conditions, falling snow changing to ice, the large number of small rivers and streams with steep banks that were encountered along the route, as well as antitank obstacles, this speed can be considered normal.

Each column of the 23rd Motorized Rifle Division had its own equipment for road construction and clearing. For this purpose bulldozer-primers (BAT), tank-mounted snow ploughs (STU), and bulldozers were employed, and the armored personnel carriers and motor vehicles were equipped with previously prepared treadway bridges, anti-skid chains, tow ropes, and other equipment to increase passability.

The infantry dismounted at the line of deployment of the battalion columns into company columns, because any further movement of the wheeled armored carriers in company and platoon columns was impossible owing to deep snow, and no time and means were available for the preparation of cross-country routes. Having dismounted from the armored carriers, the infantry continued the movement and deployment on skis while the armored carriers were left near the movement routes in areas with natural cover.

The division commander controlled the units moving forward and deploying from a forward command post situated 2 km from the forward edge of the enemy defense.

At 0732 hours on 16 February, an atomic strike was carried out against the "West" defense. With the commencement of fire preparation, the infantry located on the reverse slopes of the heights under natural cover began to move out on skis to the line of deployment for the attack in company columns with subsequent deployment into platoons and then into combat formation. Six to eight km from the forward edge the tank battalions began reforming into company columns, and at 3 km the companies deployed into platoon columns and after that into combat order. The troops, therefore, were moving out into combat order at the commencement and during the fire preparation which, in the situation that had taken shape, was most advisable.

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To take part in the fire preparation and in support of the offensive by the units of the division, in addition to the atomic weapons, two regimental artillery groups and the divisional artillery group were brought in from the 8th Motorized Rifle Division, engaged in a defensive role in front, as well as a subgroup of the army artillery group.

A feature of the fire preparation at these exercises consisted of the artillery's opening fire at the same time as the delivery of the atomic strike. As a result, the gap between the atomic strike and the beginning of the artillery fire onslaught was eliminated, and surprise and the simultaneity of enemy destruction were achieved. But, for this purpose, it was necessary to place the artillery in firing positions at a safe distance from the ground zero of our own atomic bursts, i.e., 5 to 6 km from the forward edge of the "enemy" defense.

The tactical missile battery did not participate in the fire preparation because, in the zone of the division, offensive atomic strikes with four warheads were planned and carried out by the army weapons in the areas of Khanévo, Aleksandrovskoye, Dryzlovo, and Monoseino. In a number of cases, however, when atomic strikes are not carried out against the enemy by the army weapons, or when these weapons are insufficient to ensure a successful precipitate breakthrough, the battery can be brought in for strikes before the division goes over to the offensive.

The precipitate breakthrough of the defense (Sketch 2). As a result of employing atomic weapons and artillery fire the "enemy" losses in manpower and equipment were more than 60 percent, and this also predetermined the success of the precipitate breakthrough of his defense.

At 0800 hours, the tanks and infantry of the regiments of the first echelon of the division deployed into combat formation and attacked the enemy, trying to exploit the results of the atomic strikes rapidly. The infantry attacked on skis.

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As a result of the swift and concerted attack, the division units quickly broke through the first position. True, the "Western Forces" managed to take up defensive positions and close the breach created by the "East" atomic strike by the timely maneuver of the tank subunits and the antitank reserves. This, however, was insufficient.

After the breakthrough of the first position, the "East" motorized rifle subunits continued their movement on armored carriers and riding on tanks.

The personnel boarded the armored personnel carriers during the battle when they were being formed up into battalion columns. This was caused by the impossibility in the conditions of deep snow and snow storms of building and maintaining in workable condition a large number of the cross-country routes.

In this connection, the experience of a number of tactical exercises carried out in the military district shows that it is most advisable to carry out in the following manner the boarding by the infantry of the armored carriers in the course of the offensive. On signals from the battalion commanders the armored personnel carriers are driven up to the combat formations of the subunits. The motorized rifle subunits, while continuing the offensive, close up from their combat formations to platoon columns. The armored personnel carriers drive up to their platoons and during brief stops the boarding of the personnel is carried out.

With the "Eastern Forces" going over to the offensive, the 114th Motorized Rifle Division of the "Western Forces" was given the task of immediately moving out of the concentration area to the line of Kashentsevo and Churilovo, with the task of taking up a defensive position on this line and preventing any further advance of the "Eastern Forces".

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However, owing to the swift offensive of the "Eastern Forces" the division was unable to move to this line. At 1130 hours on 16 February in the area of Kovrigin, the reconnaissance subunits of the 23rd Motorized Rifle Division of the "Eastern Forces" and the 114th Motorized Rifle Division of the "Western Forces" met and later on the line of Terpnikovo, Korshikovo, and Kalachevo a meeting engagement began between these divisions.

Consequently, the 23rd Motorized Rifle Division entered the meeting engagement during the development of the offensive after the breakthrough of the first zone, when its units were deployed along the front and in the depth and conducted battles with the retreating enemy subunits, while the 114th Motorized Rifle Division was forced to enter the meeting engagement from the line of march. Such a case of the beginning of a meeting engagement can be considered as typical.

At 1400 hours on 16 February, the 23rd Motorized Rifle Division, after the delivery of two atomic strikes, attacked the enemy and by 1530 hours moved forward on the left flank to a depth of up to 6 km. At the same time, the 114th Motorized Rifle Division, taking advantage of the results of the atomic strike, pressed the "Eastern Forces" on its left flank, but nevertheless found itself in a worse position because the units of the 23rd and the 8th Motorized Rifle Divisions of the "Eastern Forces" were already advancing into its rear. Besides, by this time an "East" airborne force had landed and was in operation on the western bank of the Volga River in the area of Staritsa. The commander of the "West" 5th Army was forced to give the order for the 114th Motorized Rifle Division to disengage from the battle and withdraw to the western bank of the Volga River. Under the cover of rear guard action, the main forces of the 114th Motorized Rifle Division had crossed over to the western bank of the Volga River by 2230 hours, where they began to take up defensive positions and, in conjunction with the 26th Motorized Rifle Division, to prepare for a counterattack.

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As mentioned before, each division had a tactical missile battery consisting of a command platoon and two firing platoons (two launching mounts). The transport platoon for the missiles was not formed. Unfortunately, it was impossible in the exercise to master and check in practice the whole range of problems of the combat employment of this battery, including the sequence of its preparation for fire. Certain experience was obtained, however, in planning the combat use of tactical missiles, the movement of the battery during the battle, and carrying out topographic work in getting fixes on elements of its combat formation.

The battery of the 23rd Motorized Rifle Division of the "Eastern Forces" was moved out to the siting (standby) area two hours before the delivery of atomic strikes against the "enemy". In the siting area, 8 km from the forward edge of the enemy defense, an area for the primary launch sites and two areas for alternate sites were selected.

Planning the movement of the battery was based first of all on the necessity for its continuous readiness to deliver an atomic strike. Taking into account the depth of the division combat task and the capability of the battery, it was intended to move it three times during combat. The first time the battery moved was after the capture of the enemy second position, into an area which ensured it the delivery of a strike against the second zone of defense, and for repulsing the counterstrike by enemy army reserves. The second and third moves were carried out according to the developing situation, the tasks of the division units, and the rates of their advance.

The battery moved as a whole in bounds of 20 to 25 km, which, on the average, required about two hours, as follows: for dismantling fire positions--5 to 10 minutes; move to a new area--80 to 90 minutes; battle deployment--5 minutes; preparation for firing--15 to 20 minutes.

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The experience of the exercises has shown that for communication of the division commander with the battery it is necessary to issue the forward command post (PKP) radio sets with a greater range than those held by artillery units at present.

The problems of employment of the tactical missile battery were provided for in the general artillery plan for combat operations, and the promotion of topographic work was provided for in the reconnaissance plan and in the combat order of the artillery staff of the division for reconnaissance.

The landing and combat operations of the airborne force. The 10th Airborne Division (actually one battalion) landed immediately on the airhead (platsdarm) in an area where there were no large enemy forces. The depth of the drop consisted of up to 80 km. After destroying the enemy in the landing area and capturing the airhead, the 10th Airborne Division took up a defensive position on a wide front, holding separate sectors of the terrain useful from the tactical point of view and covering the most important axes, organizing aggressive operations by diversionary groups, independent ambush subunits, and counterattacks along the flanks and rear area of the enemy:

The Airborne Division defense front was up to 45 km along the perimeter, of which 27 km were in sectors of the terrain difficult of access along the Volga River, with its steep banks, and in the wooded roadless sector between Ramenye and Ledinnikovo, where the defense was built up by separate company and platoon strong points with big gaps between them. These gaps were protected by fire, observation, patrols, log obstacles in wooded sectors, and mine fields. (minno-vzryvnoye zagrazhdeniye).

The limited road network, deep snow, and snowfall considerably lowered the maneuvering capabilities of the enemy and at the same time increased the stability of

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the airhead defense. These conditions, however, to an equal extent also hampered the maneuver of the defending subunits and units of the airborne force.

Of special significance during the capture and the holding of the airhead was the well thought-out and precise coordination between the airborne force and the troops advancing from the front. The operations of the 23rd Motorized Rifle Division were exactly coordinated with the operations of the airborne force. So, when the troops of the "East" 12th Army were approaching the river, the coordination was directed toward ensuring a quick joining of the offensive units with the airborne force, and at the airhead, toward ensuring joint operations to repulse an 'enemy' counterstrike and to develop the offensive.

By holding the captured airhead, the airborne force assisted the units of the 23rd Motorized Rifle Division in successfully forcing the river precipitately. The commander of the 23rd Motorized Rifle Division, in his turn, for a more rapid joining with the airborne force, sent out a forward detachment which strengthened the troops at the airhead and ensured that an "enemy" attack would be successfully beaten off.

When it became possible, the artillery of the 23rd Motorized Rifle Division supported the combat operations of the airborne force with its fire. Moreover, the artillery staffs of both divisions determined the allocation of the firing tasks in greater detail between themselves.

The successful precipitate forcing of the river by the main forces of the 23rd Motorized Rifle Division decisively strengthened the defense of the airhead and made it possible, by the joint efforts of the 23rd Motorized Rifle Division and the 10th Airborne Division, to repulse the counterstrike of the 26th and the 114th Motorized Rifle Divisions of the "West". During the development of the offensive from the airhead, the 10th Airborne Division secured the flanks of the 23rd Motorized Rifle Division.

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The problems of coordination were decided specifically and fully due to a meeting of the 23rd Motorized Rifle Division and the 10th Airborne Division commanders, and to the continuous exchange of information between the staffs of the divisions. The meeting of the commanders of the divisions took place immediately before the commencement of the drop.

It is worth noting that although such a meeting of the commanders of the divisions in the present situation was possible and undoubtedly useful, in other circumstances it might not take place owing to the considerable distance to the disposition area of the airborne division. Besides this, in a number of cases, taking into account the possibility of enemy use of nuclear/missile weapons and sharp changes in the situation during the offensive, it will not be possible to determine precisely in advance which division of the offensive army will be entering the area of the drop. Therefore, the main problems of coordination must be determined first of all by the army commander.

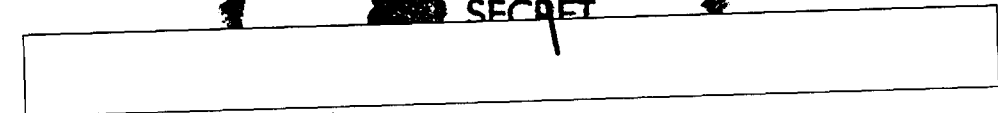
Coordinating communications (svyaz vzaimodeystviya) of the airborne force units with the units entering the area of the drop were carried out on the coordinating radio net of the 12th Army, including in the net the commanders of large units and units of both divisions, using radio sets R-105 and R-115. The coordinating radio net included the radio stations of the staff of the 12th Army, the staffs of the divisions, and regiments of both the coordinating divisions. The communications of the staff of the airborne division with the staff of the 12th Army and the staff of the division entering the airhead were also maintained by R-104 and R-105 radio sets of the front. With the move of the troops of the 12th Army to the line of Stepurino and Yurkino, a radio-relay system of communications was established between the staffs of both divisions, using R-401 sets.

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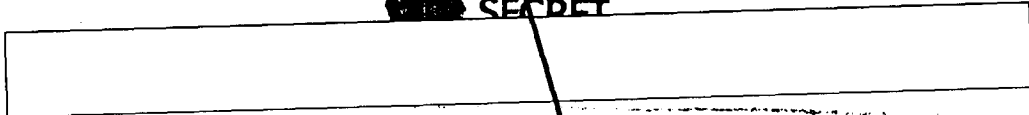


Precipitate forcing of the river. The operations of the airborne force, and primarily their capture of the airhead and the river crossings, decisively assisted the motorized rifle division in the successful precipitate forcing of the Volga River. The crossing points along the line of advance were reconnoitered by the combat engineers of the airborne force, and this made it possible for the units of the 23rd Motorized Rifle Division on reaching the river to cross over to the opposite bank without delay. Moreover, it made it possible to get tanks across immediately on reaching the river.

From the experience of the exercise, the conclusion can be drawn that if the airborne force captures a river crossing suitable for tanks it is advisable in many cases to assign to the forward detachments not only motorized rifle units and subunits but also tank subunits and units. This will allow troops to move more rapidly to the river, join up with the airborne force, get over the tanks of the main forces of the division, and develop the offensive more decisively from the airhead. The enemy will not be in a position to offer organized resistance.

When organizing the forcing of a water barrier in winter, the thickness of the ice should be considered. If it reaches 20 to 30 cm, then the infantry and loads up to 5 tons should be sent over the ice on a wide front. However, with this method special attention should be paid to the organization of a rescue service. For each crossing over the ice a rescue team is appointed on amphibious vehicles equipped with life jackets, ropes, boathooks, and other equipment. Prime movers with hawsers long enough to cover the entire width of the river must be available here to tow out vehicles that have got stuck or have sunk.

For getting across tanks and heavy loads, self-propelled ferries, ferries from pontoon parks, floating bridges, and bridges on rigid supports are employed. The chief difficulty when using this river crossing



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[REDACTED]

equipment is the preparation of channels in the ice by means of explosives or breaking the ice manually into separate blocks of a definite shape ("cards"--"karty").

In the exercise conducted, electric saws were used together with other means for breaking up the ice. Experience in their use will, of course, require further improvement. On the whole, electric saws increase the efficiency of the work in preparing a channel in the ice.

The 23rd Motorized Rifle Division of the "Eastern Forces" began forcing the river during the pursuit of the withdrawing units of the 114th Motorized Rifle Division of the "Western Forces". At 1800 hours on 16 February, the reconnaissance subunits reached the river, and then the forward detachment of the division, consisting of the 404th Motorized Rifle Regiment. With the forward detachment, river crossing equipment was brought up to the river, as well as the 60th Pontoon Bridging Regiment, which began building a heavy 50-ton bridge in the area of Staritsa. The width of the river in the sector of the crossing reached 130 to 140 m. In this specific situation the channel through the ice was prepared in 4½ hours. With the existence of the channel through the ice, a bridge extending 136 m was completed in 1 hour and 50 minutes, and a total of three floating bridges were built by the pontoon bridging regiment.

The work on building bridges was carried out on a wide front by an assembly line method (potochnyy metod).

One pontoon company unloaded 6 pontoon sections, cast them off, joined them into half-rafts (poluparom), and took them out into the line of the bridge from the side of the opposite bank. The same company prepared the abutment span on lattice supports. Subsequently, the personnel of this company were switched to installing flooring, fastenings (zapozhillivaniye), and railings.

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After the first six pontoon sections another subunit unloaded the next six sections, dropped the anchors, and placed the equipment on the decks of the pontoons. The next subunit moved these sections into the main channel in the ice.

Six teams of pontoon personnel closed up the sections, assembled the half-rafts and passed them on to other pontoon personnel who carried out the joining of the half-rafts.

Thus, the work was carried out simultaneously in six sectors: No. 1--the construction of a trestle at the departure bank; No. 2--bringing up vehicles for unloading at the departure bank; No. 3--the unloading of vehicles into the shore channel; No. 4--moving the pontoon sections into the main channel in the ice; No. 5--the joining of sections and the assembly of the half-rafts in the main channel; No. 6--joining of the half-rafts, the laying of the flooring, and installing railings and fastenings.

The extension of the area of the work was assisted by the creation on the river of shore channels ("feelers"--"usy") besides the main channel.

The exercise that was held has shown that a motorized rifle division of modern organization is capable of conducting precipitate offensive at high rates even in winter conditions, without roads, and in a deep covering of snow. It has been confirmed in practice that with the use of nuclear/missile weapons the rates of an offensive can reach up to 100 km per calendar day and more.

Under modern conditions the success of a precipitate breakthrough of the enemy defense and the swift development of the offensive are ensured by the reliable destruction of the enemy by the nuclear/missile weapons of the front, army, and division.

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A precipitate breakthrough requires thorough organization of combat operations and, in particular, clear planning and carrying out of the movement of the troops to the line of deployment for the attack and their deployment into combat formations.

The division commander, having at his disposal an organic (*royzkovaya*) missile battery and using nuclear/missile weapons at the beginning of a breakthrough, as well as during an offensive, is in a more decisive position than previously to influence the course of combat operations, sharply altering the correlation of forces on the decisive axes in his own favor.

The employment of an airborne force, when forcing a river precipitately, considerably increases the tempo of the crossing and creates favorable conditions for further development of the offensive from the airhead. At the same time, to carry out the task successfully, it is necessary to have reliable support for the operations of the airborne force and clear-cut coordination of it with the advancing troops of the front.

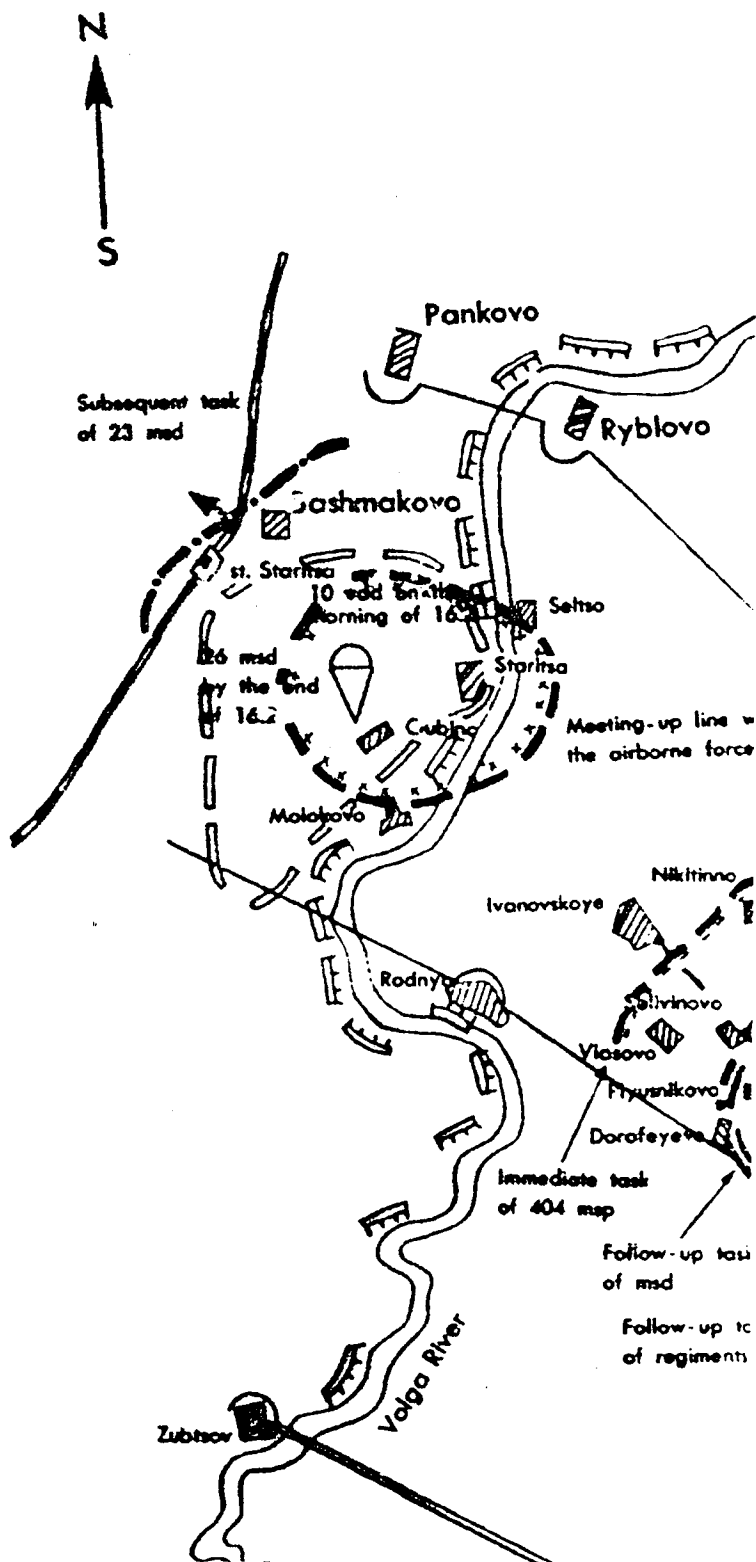
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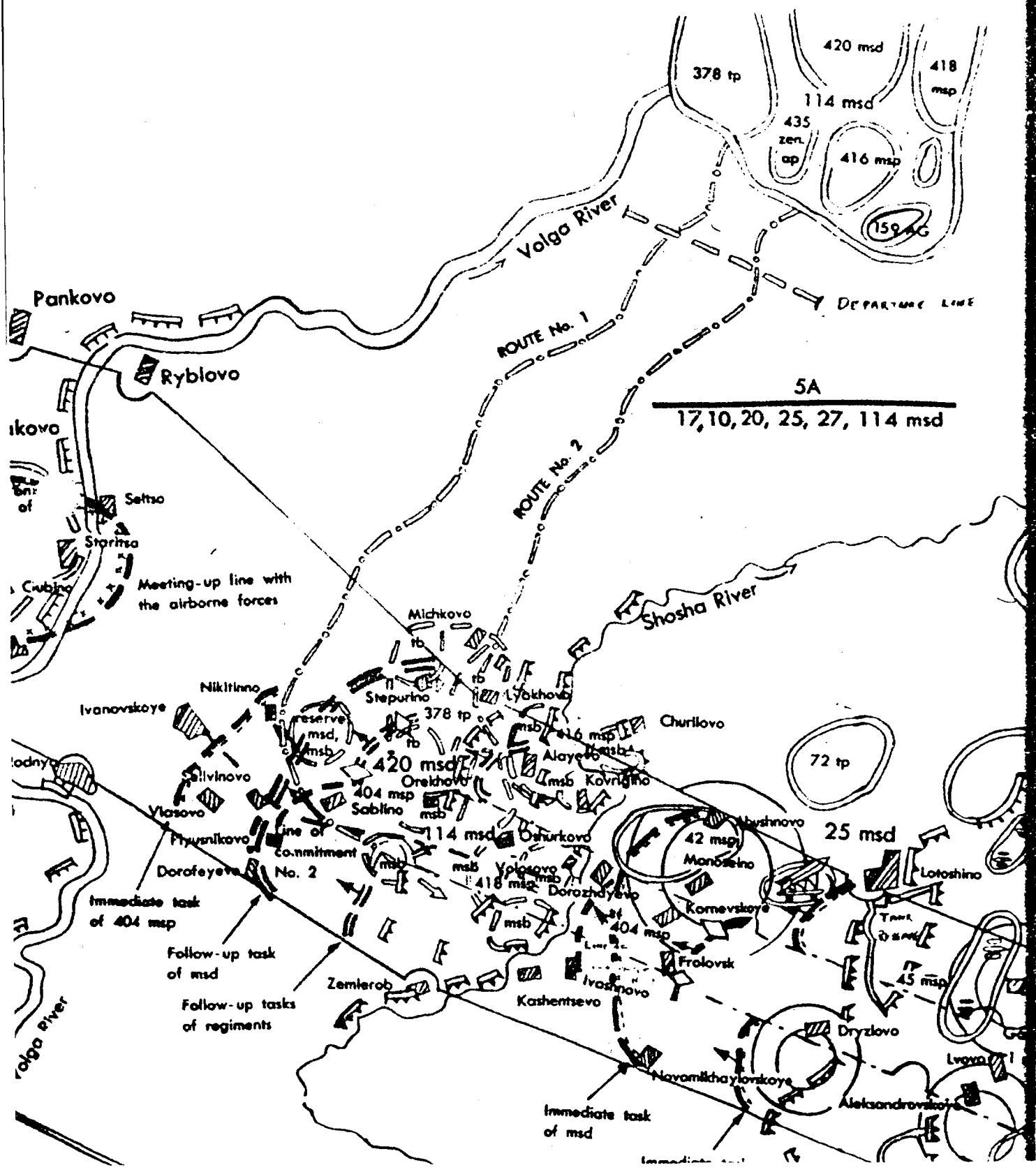
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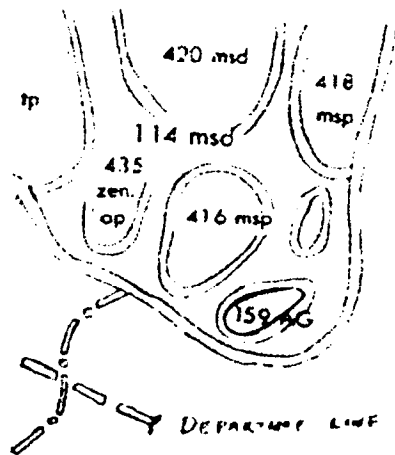
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DIAGRAM 1. THE INITIAL SITUATION AND THE DECIS



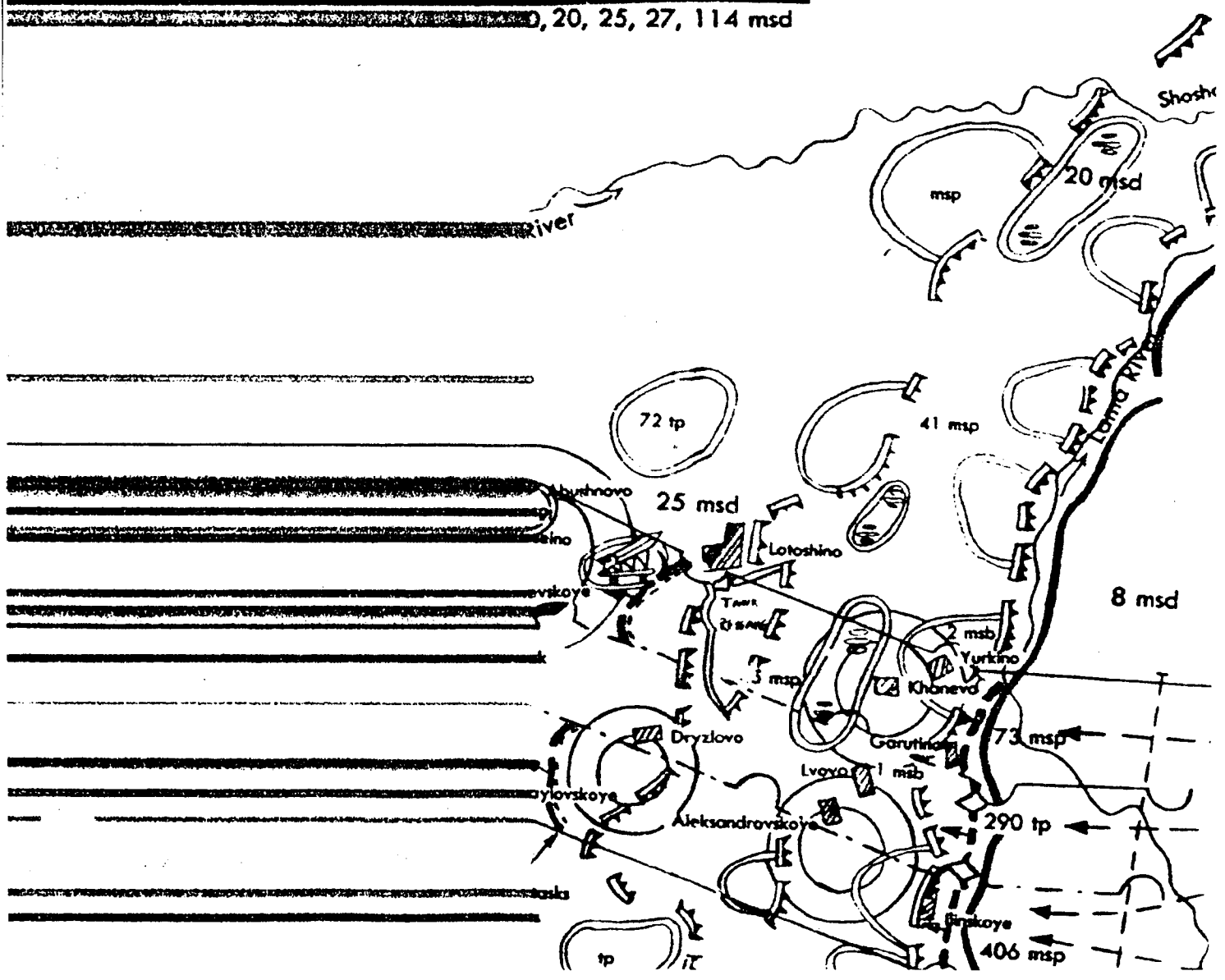
THE SITUATION AND THE DECISIONS OF THE TWO SIDES

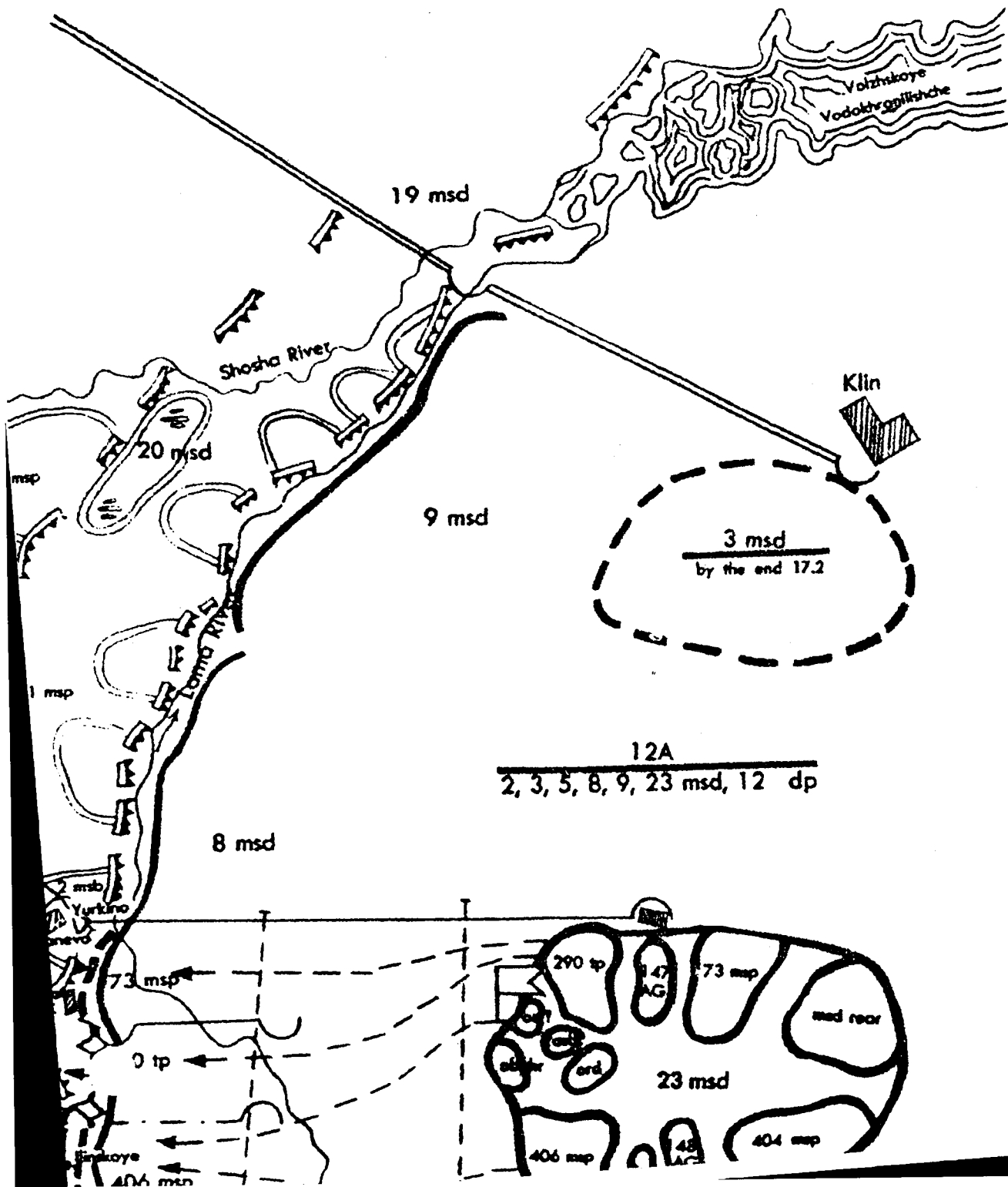




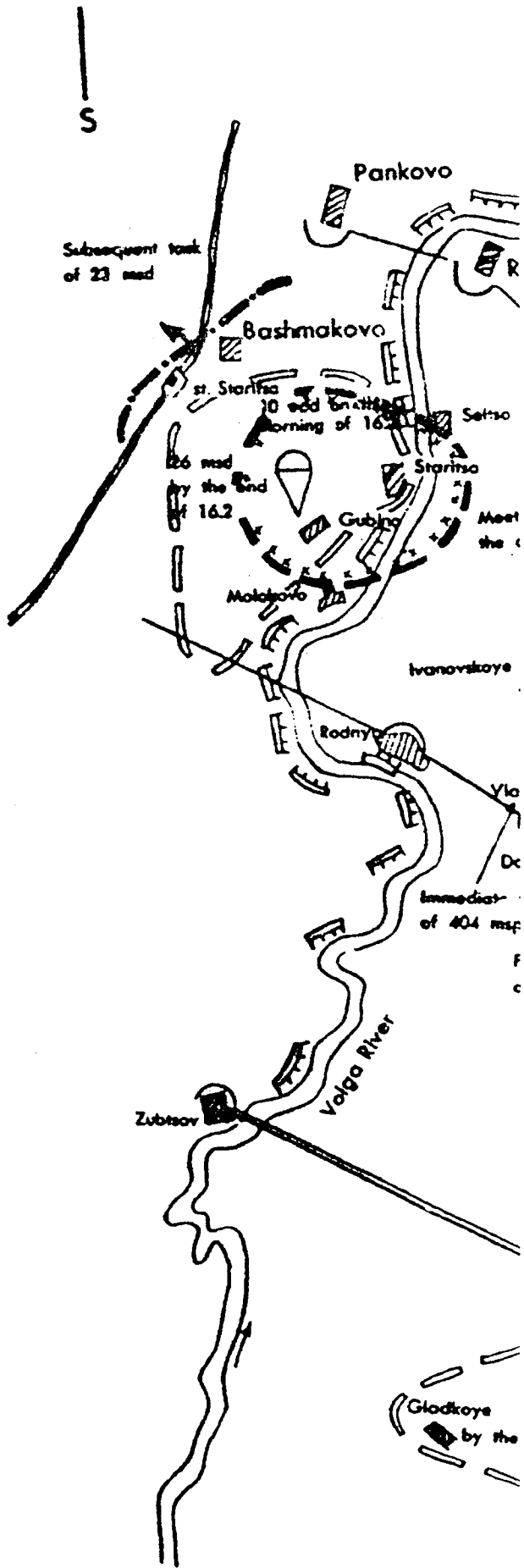
5A

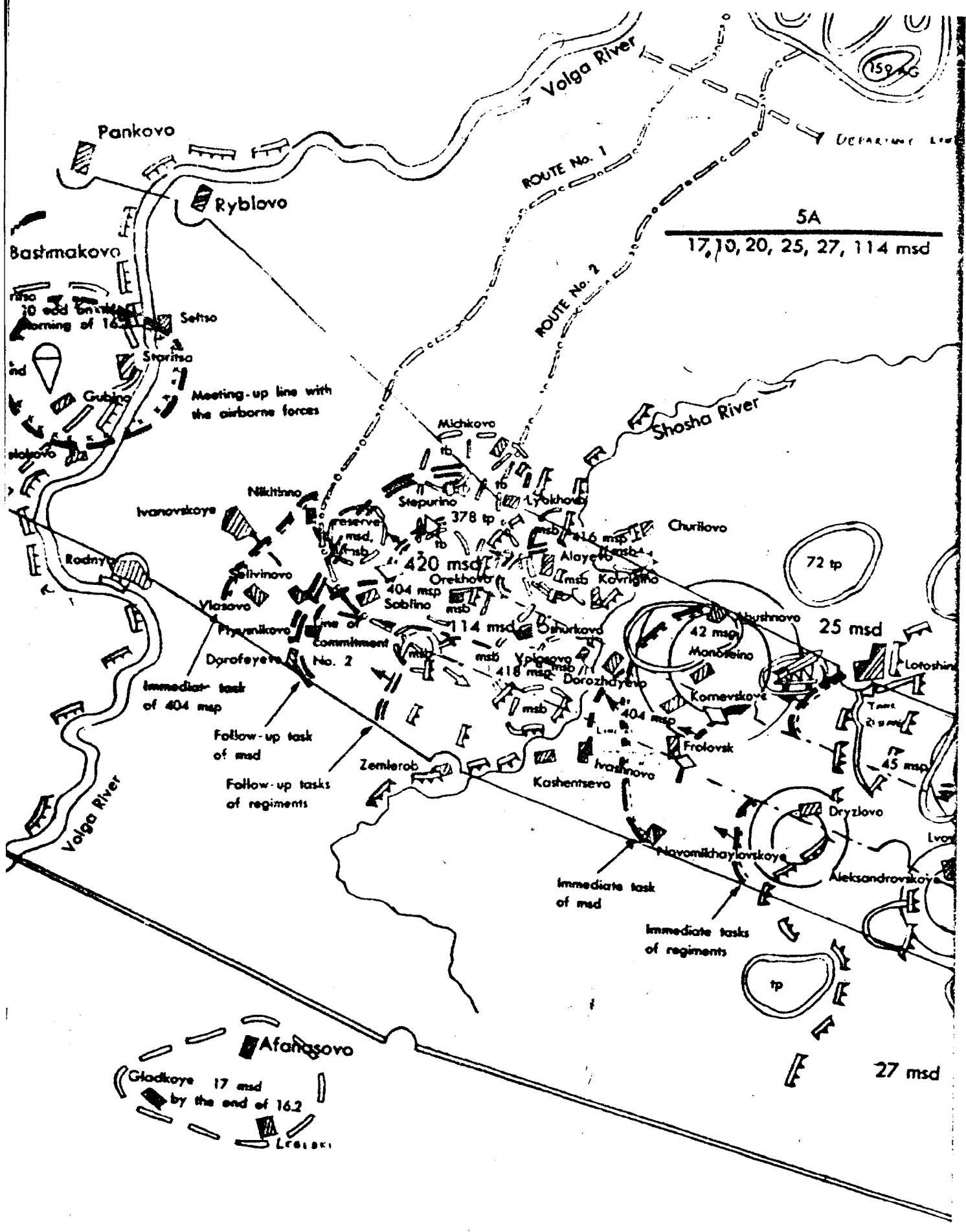
0, 20, 25, 27, 114 msd





zhakoye
hrspilshche





Pankovo

Ryblovo

Basimakovo

Setso

Staritsa

Meeting-up line with the airborne forces

Ivanovskoye

Nikitino

Stepurino

420 msd

404 msp

Sablino

Line of Commitment No. 2

Vlasovo

Plyanikovo

Dorofeyev

Immediate task of 404 msp

Follow-up task of msd

Follow-up tasks of regiments

Zemlerob

Kashentsevo

Immediate task of msd

Immediate tasks of regiments

Afanasovo

Gladkoye 17 msd by the end of 16.2

Lolaki

Volga River

ROUTE No. 1

ROUTE No. 2

5A

17, 10, 20, 25, 27, 114 msd

Shosha River

Michkovo

Stepurino

378 tp

Orekhovo

404 msp

Sablino

114 msd

msb

418 msp

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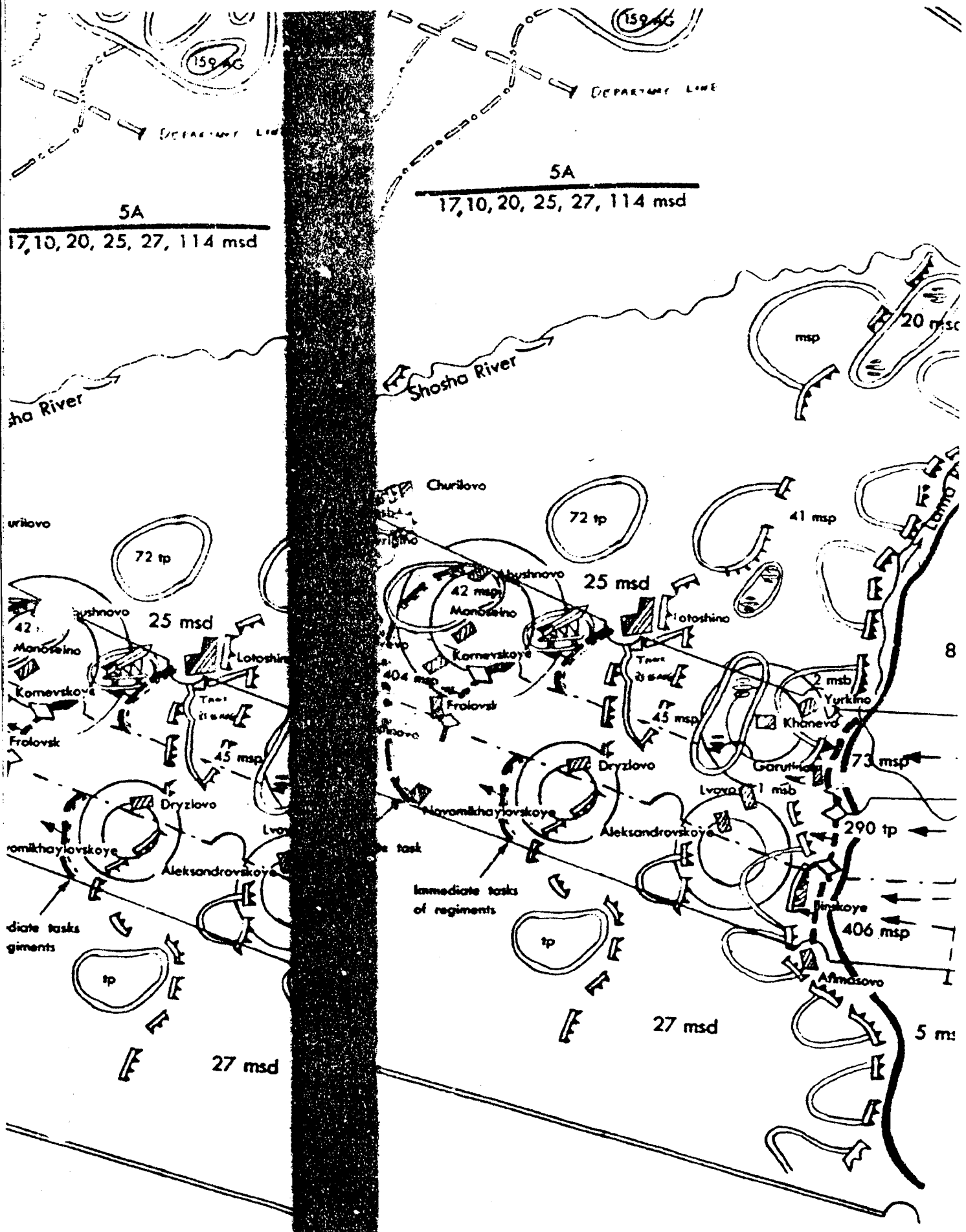
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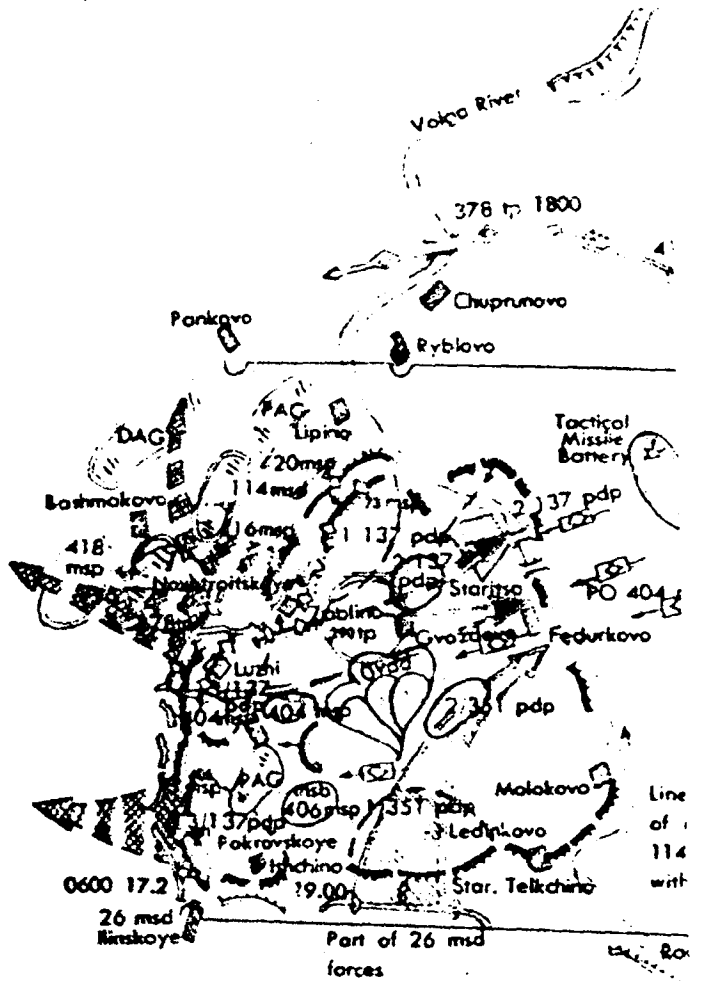
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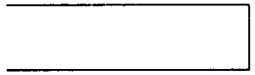
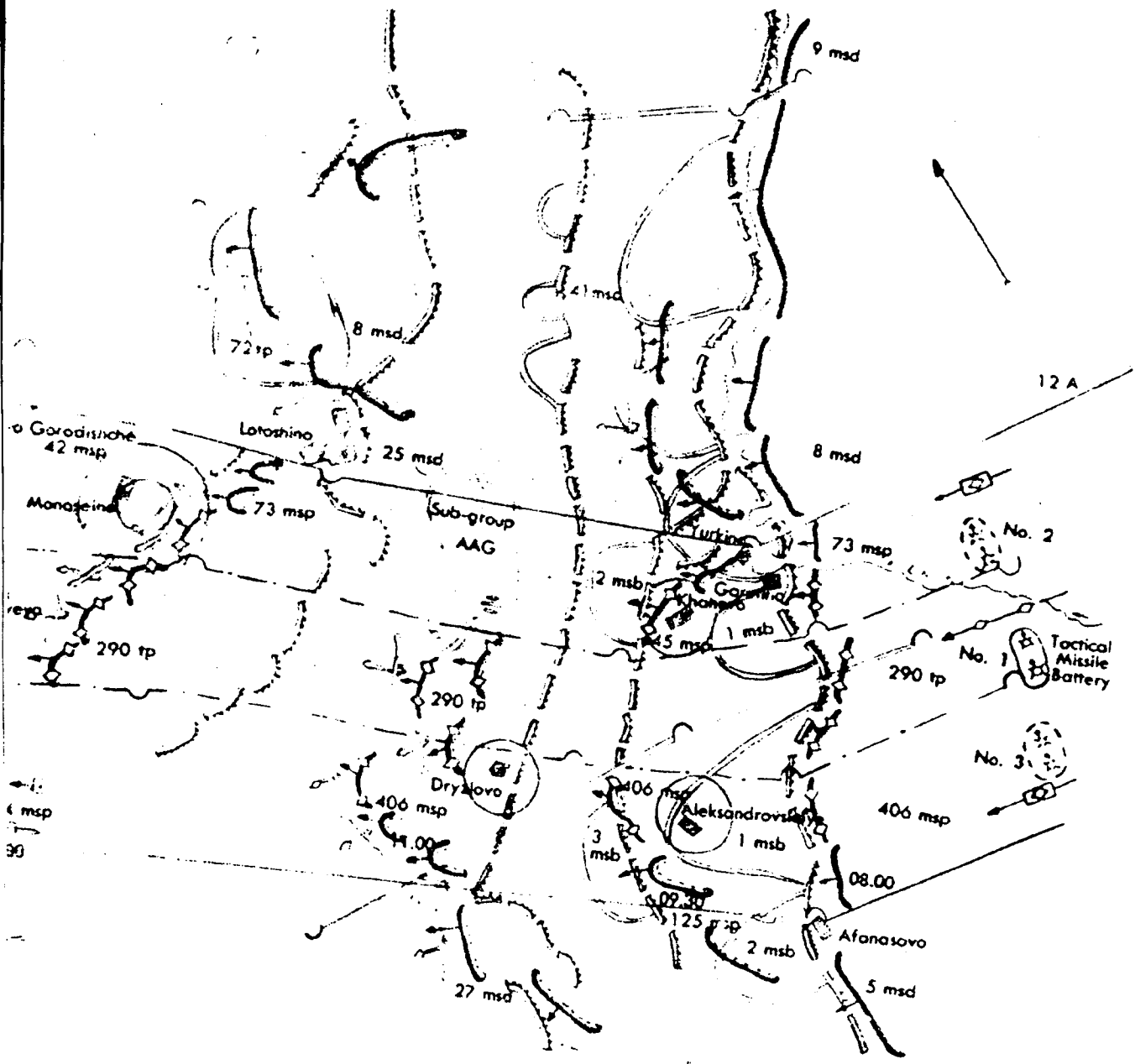
CONVENTIONAL SIGNS



The counterattack of the 26 msd of the "Western Forces" was marked tentatively.

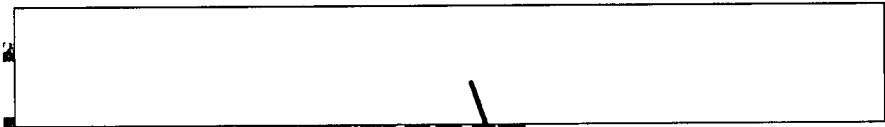
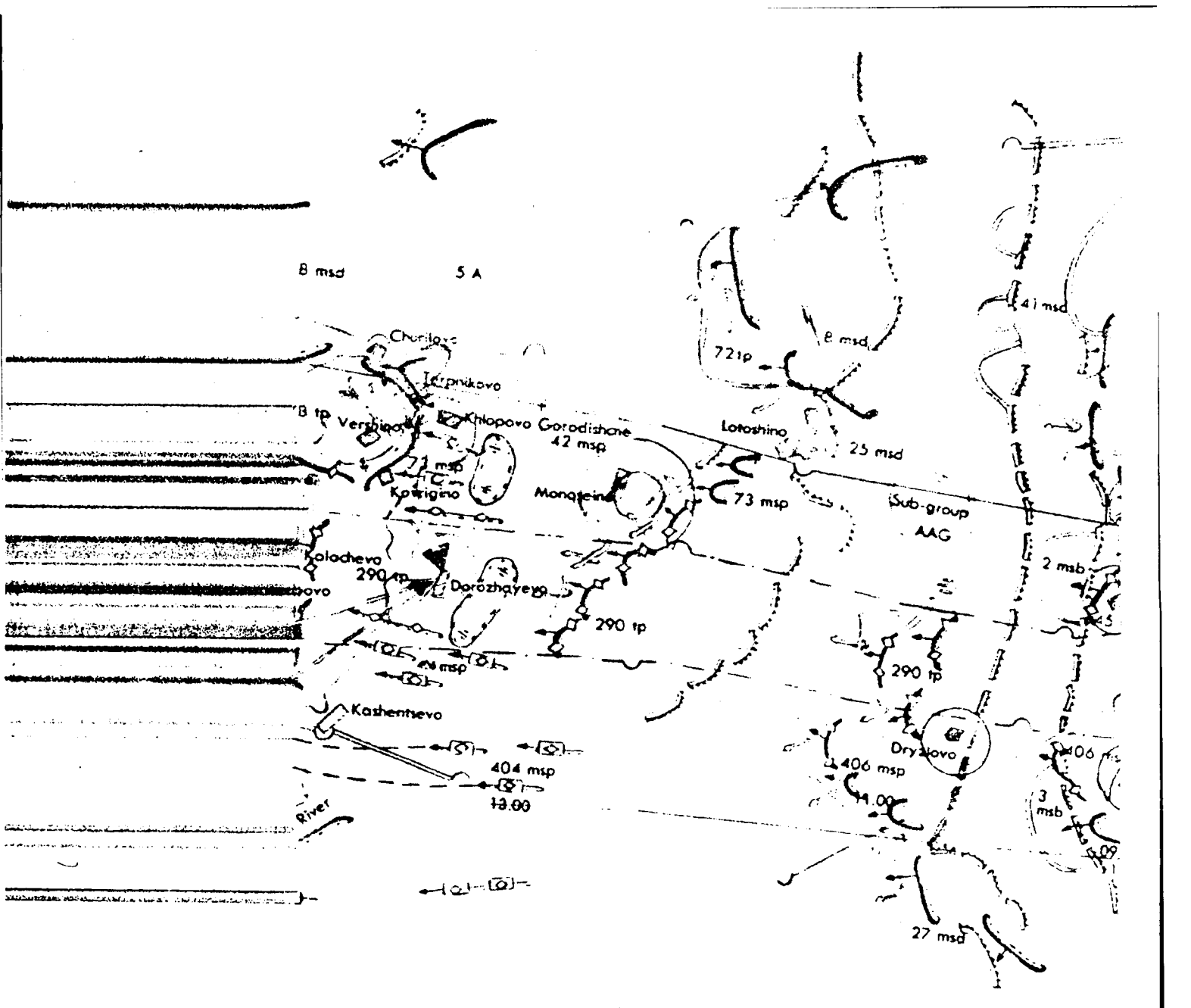
Position of Troops

	at 0800 16.2		at 1600 16.2
	at 0930 16.2		at 1800 16.2
	at 1100 16.2		at 1900 16.2
	at 1300 16.2		at 0600 17.2



B msd

5 A



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