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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

6 JUN 1962

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MEMORANDUM FOR: The Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT : MILITARY THOUGHT (SECRET): "Considering Participation of Army Missile Weapons in the Initial Nuclear Strike", by Major-General N. Stashek

1. Enclosed is a verbatim translation of an article from the SECRET Collection of the Journal "Military Thought" published by the Ministry of Defense, USSR, and distributed down to the level of division commander.

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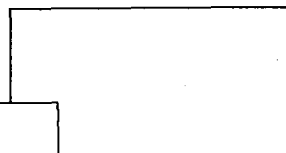
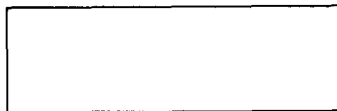
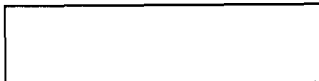


Richard Helms

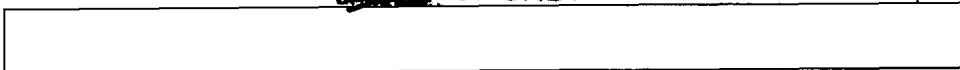
Richard Helms
Deputy Director (Plans)

Enclosure

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COUNTRY : USSR

SUBJECT : MILITARY THOUGHT (SECRET): "Considering Participation of Army Missile Weapons in the Initial Nuclear Strike", by Major-General N. Stashek

DATE OF INFO: December 1961

APPRAISAL OF CONTENT : Documentary

SOURCE : A reliable source (B).

Following is a verbatim translation of an article entitled "Considering Participation of Army Missile Weapons in the Initial Nuclear Strike", by Major-General N. Stashek. This article appeared in Issue 6(61) of 1961 of a special version of the Soviet journal Military Thought which is classified SECRET by the Soviets and is published irregularly.

Issue 6(61) was sent to press on 7 December 1961.

[REDACTED] Comment: "Military Thought" is published by the USSR Ministry of Defense in three versions, classified RESTRICTED, SECRET, and TOP SECRET. The RESTRICTED version is issued monthly and has existed since 1937. The SECRET version is issued irregularly. By the end of 1961, 61 issues had been published, 6 of them during 1961. The TOP SECRET version was initiated in early 1960 and is also issued irregularly.

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Considering Participation of Army Missile Weapons
in the Initial Nuclear Strike

by

Major-General N. Stashek

There has been some talk lately in the military press to the effect that there is no sense in bringing in missile weapons of combined-arms and tank armies of border military districts (groups of troops) to participate in delivering the initial nuclear strike against the enemy at the start of war. The reasons given are that with the existing numerical strength of army missile weapons and their limited capabilities of making repeated launchings, the army may find itself in an unfavorable position: it will be unable to exert the necessary force with its missile/nuclear weapons against those enemy objectives which survive the initial strikes and which would impede the successful advance of our troops.

This indeed is a weighty argument. However, it is considerably worse to keep in reserve a large number of missile troops during the initial strike, because this may cause a considerable reduction of its power and effectiveness.

There is no doubt that the predominant role in delivering the initial nuclear strike against the enemy will belong to strategic nuclear weapons, and primarily to missile troops of strategic designation. However, strikes with these weapons will be delivered mainly against enemy strategic objectives, usually found at a considerable depth. As such objectives one must consider intercontinental missile launch sites, depots of nuclear warheads, air and naval bases, administrative and political centers, industrial and economic areas, important railroad junctions, etc.

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Aside from the objectives of strategic significance, it is also advisable to destroy enemy operational and tactical objectives by the initial nuclear strike. After all, following the initial nuclear strike and utilizing its results, operations will be started by ground troops, which will be subjected first of all to the effect of enemy operational and tactical weapons. Unquestionably, it is more advantageous to destroy as large as possible an amount of such enemy weapons during the initial strike, and in this way deny him the possibility of their unhindered use against our troops.

The organizational structure and experience drawn from exercises of foreign armies show that there will be a great amount of enemy operational and tactical objectives in the zone of advance of the combined-arms (tank) army, and especially of a front. To this category belong operational-tactical nuclear weapons, groupings of combined-arms large units with their tactical nuclear weapons, tactical aviation, land army and aircraft control points, and other objectives.

On the basis of the experience of combat and operational training of troops and staffs, it is considered perfectly normal when a combined-arms army conducts an offensive operation during the initial period of a war in a zone 120 to 150 km wide, and in some cases even wider. In such a zone, according to the views of our probable enemies, there may be in operation on their side as much as one field army consisting of two or three army corps (10 to 12 divisions), two or three "Corporal" battalions, and a group of "Redstone" missile mounts. Besides this, it is necessary to take into account the presence in the divisions of "Honest John" organic batteries and batteries of 203.2 mm howitzers, as well as the possible reinforcing of a field army by nuclear weapons - up to 12 battalions of "Lacrosse" and "Honest John", up to 6 battalions of

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203.2 mm howitzers, and one battalion of 280 mm guns. Depending on the number of army corps in the first army echelon, the means of reinforcement may even be more substantial.

All the above-mentioned means may have the most direct influence upon the course and the outcome of the initial army offensive operation. There is no doubt about the need to destroy them first of all. However, a very substantial number of nuclear/missile strikes will be necessary to accomplish this.

Front missile troops and aircraft, naturally, will participate in the initial strike jointly with nuclear weapons of strategic designation. But, as figures show, they are totally inadequate for the simultaneous or even a successive destruction of even the basic operational-tactical enemy objectives within the zone of the front offensive. Besides front nuclear weapons, this circumstance also makes it necessary to bring in army missile troops to participate in the initial strike.

By delivering nuclear/missile strikes against the enemy in its own offensive zone, army missile weapons thus fulfil missions which are of direct interest to the forthcoming army offensive operation. At the same time, one does not have to fear a sharp reduction of the army's capabilities after the initial missile launch. Action against the enemy will continue by means of missile mounts assigned to the army reserve, by certain amounts of front nuclear weapons, and also by artillery fire onslaughts and aircraft strikes - using ammunition with conventional and chemical charges. Besides this, sometime after the initial strike, contact with the enemy will be made by the advancing army large units which have shifted to the offensive... and which will also be able to deliver nuclear/missile strikes.

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The most important mission of army missile troops in delivering the initial nuclear/missile strikes is destruction of enemy operational-tactical and tactical nuclear means within the zone of the army advance. Together with this, the successful development of the offensive by army troops during the initial operation will be furthered to a large degree by the destruction of enemy combined-arms large units (tank and infantry divisions).

When speaking of the need to deliver nuclear strikes against enemy combined-arms large units, here we have in mind the destruction not only of motorized infantry, tanks, artillery, and other arms of troops, but mainly of the nuclear weapons of these large units. As is known, the complement of a US Army division includes two free rocket mounts of the "Honest John" type and four 203.2 mm howitzers. These nuclear weapons can be destroyed simultaneously with the nuclear strikes delivered against combined-arms large units.

By destroying enemy combined-arms large units and units, in this way we prevent him from realizing the results of his own nuclear strikes. This means that even in case the enemy does succeed in delivering strikes using his remaining nuclear weapons, he will not have available sufficient forces of ground troops to launch an attack or establish a stable defense. It must also be taken into account that enemy combined-arms large units and units, during combat operations, provide cover for siting areas of nuclear weapons. Therefore, prior to penetrating these areas for the final destruction or capture of missile mounts, nuclear warhead depots, and other nuclear means, the advancing army troops must destroy the enemy covering units.

As regards the use of nuclear weapons to destroy enemy combined-arms large units, there is a directive of the Minister of Defense of the USSR, Marshal of the Soviet Union R. Ya. Malinovskiy,

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which demands that when planning and conducting a battle and an operation the main efforts of front, army, and divisional nuclear/missile means be aimed not only at the immediate destruction of nuclear weapons, but also at the destruction of enemy tank and infantry divisions, so as to create conditions favorable for capturing or destroying enemy means of nuclear attack by swift operations by our own tank and motorized rifle large units.

What then is the practical resolution of the problem of getting army missile troops of border military districts (groups of troops) to participate in the initial nuclear strike, taking into account the comparatively short range of operation of army missiles and the various distances of areas of peacetime disposition from the border?

It seems to us that missile troops of border military district armies (groups of troops) assigned to cover the State border, and for operations in the first echelon of the front, must be kept in a degree of combat readiness which would allow them to participate in the delivery of the initial nuclear strikes. For this purpose, missions for army, as well as front, missile troops must be designated beforehand, even in peacetime. Targets must be selected for each army missile large unit, and unremitting observation of these targets must be established even before the beginning of hostilities, and especially during the period of threat (if it exists).

To ensure the successful fulfilment of missions by army missile troops, it is necessary to carry out, also in advance, all the preparatory measures. These are, first of all, the secret preparation of siting areas and launch sites, routes of approaches to them, and control points. Siting areas for missile troops of those armies which provide cover for the border and are assigned for operations in the first echelon

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of the front must be prepared at least in the topographical-geodetical sense, taking into account the possibility of the maximum use of the greatest effective range of missile mounts, so that the initial strikes could be delivered against the most distantly located enemy objectives. In doing this, at least two positions must be prepared for each launch battery. The distance of these positions from the border may be between 30 and 40 km, and from the areas of permanent disposition of missile large units, it has to be such as to ensure the occupation of positions within the shortest possible time and at the same time ensure the safety of missile troops during the delivery of enemy nuclear strikes against the disposition areas.

When the launch sites of army missile weapons are 30 to 40 km from the border, they will be able to deliver the initial nuclear strikes to a depth of 100 to 140 km from the border. As is known, within this depth is located a large number of those objectives which are liable to destruction first of all (missile mounts of the "Corporal" type, tactical aviation airfields, combined-arms large units, control points, etc.).

As for the missile troops of the army comprising the second echelon of the front and located a large distance from the border, their use in the initial strike is considerably more complicated.

Figures show that even if the army missile troops are employed, the total number of launching mounts may be insufficient to perform the tasks when delivering the initial nuclear strikes. Therefore, in the initial strikes it is advisable to employ nuclear charges with the greatest yield, and this would lessen the need for launching mounts. The most important thing, however, is to increase at this time the capabilities of the combined-arms and tank armies to use nuclear weapons by increasing the number of their missile troops, and also by assigning for the support of each advancing army a

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large amount of bomber and fighter-bomber aircraft which will deliver nuclear strikes during the change of launch sites and while missile troops prepare for subsequent launchings. For the same reasons it is necessary to intensify scientific-research and design work in order to resolve as soon as possible the problem of increasing the maximum rate of fire and the maximum effective range of army missile weapons. All this will considerably increase the combat capabilities of army formations, and with thorough and comprehensive training of missile troops and their complete readiness even in peacetime, will allow them to fulfil successfully the complex missions of initial operations in the initial period of war.

As far as tactical missiles are concerned, their use in the initial strike is in all probability inadvisable. This is due to the following reasons.

Firstly, our probable enemies do not envisage the preparation of defense lines near the border and their occupation by troops in advance (even in case of a period of threat). Under these conditions the low maximum range of tactical missiles will disallow their use against comparatively distant enemy objectives.

Secondly, a future war will most likely start suddenly, without even the shortest period of threat, and the armies operating within the complement of a front will be committed to battle precipitately after they have been brought up from the depth. Consequently, tactical missiles cannot be brought to launch sites directly at the border and participate in the initial strike even if the enemy objectives are located within the border zone. On the other hand, bringing up missile troops of tactical designation to the border in advance would be completely inadvisable, because it would lead to a large concentration of nuclear weapons in the border zone and would create the danger of heavy losses from the initial enemy nuclear strikes.

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In view of the above, the use of tactical missiles must be carried out directly for the successful performance of the tasks by combined-arms large units of the army at the beginning and during the initial offensive operation.

Enemy tactical nuclear weapons and troops directly opposing the advancing army large units will be the primary objectives of missile battalions of motorized rifle and tank divisions during delivery of nuclear/missile strikes. This pertains especially to the tank divisions after their separation from the main forces of the army during the development of the offensive in the operational depth.

The participation of missile battalions of motorized rifle and tank divisions in the initial nuclear strike will become feasible with the increase of maximum range of tactical missiles and the increase of the number of launching mounts in battalions.

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