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MEMORANDUM FOR: The Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT : MILITARY THOUGHT (TOP SECRET): "Problems of the Strategic Deployment of Armed Forces in Modern Warfare", by Major-General Kh. Dzhelaukhov

1. Enclosed is a verbatim translation of an article which appeared in the TOP SECRET Special Collection of Articles of the Journal "Military Thought" ("Voyennaya Mysl") published by the Ministry of Defense, USSR, and distributed down to the level of Army Commander.

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Richard Helms

Richard Helms
Deputy Director (Plans)

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Enclosure

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APPROVED FOR RELEASE

30 JUN 1992

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Original: The Director of Central Intelligence

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COUNTRY : USSR

SUBJECT : MILITARY THOUGHT (TOP SECRET): "Problems of the Strategic Deployment of Armed Forces in Modern Warfare" by Major-General Kh. Dzhelaukhov

DATE OF INFO : December 1961

APPRAISAL OF CONTENT : Documentary

SOURCE : A reliable source (B).

Following is a verbatim translation of an article entitled "Problems of the Strategic Deployment of Armed Forces in Modern Warfare", by Major-General Kh. Dzhelaukhov.

This article appeared in the 1962 First Issue of a special version of the Soviet military journal Voyennaya Mysl (Military Thought). This journal is published irregularly and is classified TOP SECRET by the Soviets. The 1962 First Issue went to press on 29 December 1961.

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

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Problems of the Strategic Deployment of Armed Forces

In Modern Warfare

by

Major-General Kh. Dzhelaukhov


Our press has devoted adequate attention to the problems of strategic deployment as an important element of the preparedness of the armed forces for war.¹ The publication of a work entitled "The Strategic Deployment of Armed Forces in a Modern War", by a group of authors under the direction of Lieutenant-General K. F. Skorobogatkin, represents a continuation of efforts to study the problems mentioned.² With its appearance, the large gap which existed in the complete scientific elaboration of one of the most important sections of Soviet military strategy - the theory of strategic deployment - has been filled.

The book consists of an introduction and ten chapters.

The first chapter is devoted to an analysis of the strategic deployment of armed forces in the 2nd World War. In it are examined the strategic deployment of both sides in the German-Polish War of 1939, on the western frontier in 1939-1940, and the strategic deployment of the German-Fascist troops and of the Soviet armed forces in 1941, to which the main attention is devoted.

One of the important conditions in the strategic deployment of the German-Fascist Army, arising from the aggressive nature of German imperialism, was the camouflage by all possible means of military preparation for aggression, and

1. Collection of Articles of the Journal "Military Thought" No. 1 (45), 5 (49), 6 (50) in 1959; No. 3 (53) in 1960 and "Military-Historical Journal" No. 12, 1959.
2. "The Strategic Deployment of Armed Forces in Modern War" Editor-in-chief: Lieutenant-General K. F. Skorobogatkin. Military Publishing House, Moscow, 308 pages, 3 diagrams, 1961.


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the protraction of the process of strategic deployment. For example, the strategic deployment of German-Fascist troops on the German-Polish border continued for about two months, while in the west, against France, and in the east, against the Soviet Union, it continued for 5 to 6 months.

The build-up of the German-Fascist troops on our border was carried out gradually. Troops destined for the offensive on the first day of the war were brought up in four echelons (from 4 February to the beginning of June 1941). Movement was carried out exclusively at night, with the strict observance of camouflage measures. By 21 June, the German-Fascist troops were ready to take up the offensive.

Thus, a new factor in strategic deployment during the 2nd World War was represented by its protraction over an extended period.

In speaking of the shortcomings in the Soviet Army's strategic deployment in the summer of 1941, the authors make a number of most valuable critical comments, which are useful even today. The reality of the threat to the Soviet Union posed by Fascist Germany called for the adoption of appropriate measures to strengthen our defense. This was all the more true, since, when "... German-Fascist troops were brought into Rumania and Finland, as early, that is, as Autumn 1940, our country found itself in a threatened position. The enemy was able to forestall us in strategic deployment and to catch us unprepared to ward off a sudden blow. Yet, decisive measures to bring our armed forces to combat readiness were not taken. Instead of a full, planned and concealed mobilization of large units and units, which could have been carried out in different military districts at various times for the sake of camouflage, we began hastily to call up those who were registered (pripisnoy sostav) in the internal military districts in May 1941 and to transport to theaters of military operations divisions which were not yet cohesive, which were inadequately prepared for combat operations, and which were without rear services and transport..." (page 41). Further on, on pages 42 to 56, the



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authors examine the basic shortcomings in the strategic and operational deployment of our border military districts on the western border and evaluate the condition of the types of armed forces, the extent to which they were equipped, and the degree of their combat readiness. From this, the conclusion is drawn that: "The experience gained from strategic deployment of our armed forces in 1941 shows that deployment has acquired decisive importance under modern conditions and has become a most complex and crucial measure for the State." (page 56).

It should be noted that the lamentable experience of the preparation and deployment of our armed forces in 1941 is fully taken into consideration by the Central Committee of our Party and by the Soviet Government. "The tragedy of the first months of the 2nd World War, when Hitler attacked the USSR after assuring himself of superiority in combat equipment, is too fresh in people's minds for this to be permitted now", — states the Declaration of the Soviet Government of 31 August 1961. Therefore, in view of the reinforcement of the armed forces of the U.S.A. and of its partners in NATO in Europe, and the performance of other hostile actions in response to the proposal of the Soviet Union for the conclusion of a peace treaty with both German nations, our Government was obliged to undertake a number of grave measures to reinforce the security of the USSR and to heighten the combat readiness of the armed forces. This found concrete expression in the temporary retention in the army of some contingents due for discharge in the autumn of 1961, in a partial call-up for service from the reserve, in the reinforcement of troops of the border military districts (groups of forces), in the conduct of maneuvers participated in by all arms of troops, including troops of the countries participating in the Warsaw Pact, and in the resumption of experimental nuclear explosions.

The second chapter is devoted to a brief study of the nature of a future war and of the probable deployment of the types of armed forces of the imperialist aggressive blocs in the respective theaters of military operations. Naturally, the contents of this chapter are of a conjectural nature, since the real plans of the imperialist blocs are kept in


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strict secrecy, while the numerical composition of the armed forces in the various theaters changes periodically. Nevertheless, a correct orientation is given on the major theaters of military operations, on the probable forces and means deployed in them, and on the possible nature of armed combat by the enemy during the period of strategic deployment.

The third chapter, "The Essentials of Strategic Deployment", is, in our opinion, the main chapter in the book. Its value lies in the fact that it reveals the content and essence of the modern concept of strategic deployment, based on criticism of concepts of strategic deployment which have grown up historically.

The author's point of view can be summarized by the statement that "... strategic deployment is the process of the setting up--by the beginning of a war, of strategic groupings of armed forces, including their concealment, mobilization, concentration and deployment" (page 91). In principle, such a definition characterizes quite completely the content and essence of strategic deployment. It emphasizes that strategic deployment represents the single process of setting up groupings of armed forces, by the beginning of a war, in which there are separate, individual elements which are closely interconnected.

In the view of the authors, the entire process of setting up strategic groupings under modern conditions presupposes, in the first place, that part of the peacetime armed forces is at full combat readiness and is capable of repulsing a sudden attack by the enemy, of delivering an immediate strike and of conducting the first operations, and, in the second place, that full mobilization, transport (concentration), and deployment of new contingents of the armed forces in the theaters of military operations are carried out in accordance with the operational plan for the war.

The relationship which should exist between regular troops, ready for immediate operations, and those troops which are being mobilized and transported to the theaters


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of military operations can be debated. But the nature of this relationship will not change the essence and content of the strategic deployment itself. Whatever the conditions (here we are thinking of a modern world war) it is not possible to reject the carrying out of mobilization entirely or, consequently, the need to transport and concentrate troops into various theaters of military operations and to set up the groupings necessary for the performance of strategic tasks.

The objection can be made that under modern conditions strategic deployment will not always be carried out according to the proposed plan.

There are regular large units of various types of armed forces which are maintained above strength or at war-time strength in peacetime and ready for immediate operations. Consequently, the process of mobilized deployment does not, in essence, apply to these troops. This can be explained as follows: in the first place, the regular troops mentioned comprise only a part of the first strategic echelon deployed in accordance with the operation plan; in the second place, even these completely combat-ready troops will, in some cases, need the supplementary mobilization of some rear units, establishments, communications or service units and subunits etc.; in the third place, the mobilized deployment of the regular large units mentioned has actually been carried out in good time, i.e., long before the time for the strategic deployment of our main armed forces. Thus, the presence of regular, combat-ready large units and formations of types of armed forces actually deployed in theaters of military operations and in the depth of the country, does not contradict the definition of strategic deployment given by the authors in their book.

In our opinion, greater emphasis should have been given to the dual nature of the process of strategic deployment, which includes on the one hand the deployed forces and means of groups of forces, of border military districts and of the other regular formations in the country which are ready for immediate operations; and on the other hand,


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of the mobilization and formation of new large units and units, of their transportation and concentration in theaters of military operations, and of their combat deployment independently or within the composition of regular troops already there. This, essentially, is the first strategic echelon of the armed forces.

The whole process of creating strategic groupings occupies a secondary position, and it must not be transformed into something self-contained, equatable with a plan of war, as was done by Professor Melikov in his work "Strategic Deployment".¹ Strategic deployment is planned and carried out on the basis of the general plan for strategic operations, which are the direct expression of the military-political goals for the initial period of war in any given theater of military operations. Its content is decisively influenced by the nature of a future war, by the military doctrine which has been adopted in a given country, and by the plan for impending strategic operations. Strategic deployment is the concluding act of peace and the initial act of a war.

The essence of the operational plan is shown in the boldest relief by the nature of strategic deployment. Thus, from the very beginning of a war, the plan finds its material expression in the deployment, which, in turn, is carried out in the name of those strategic operations which are provided for in the operational plan. In this sense, although strategic deployment is one of the most important elements in the preparation of the armed forces for war, it occupies a dependent, subordinate position in the theory of strategy, as well as in its practical realization. Nevertheless, elaboration of the problem of strategic deployment under the conditions of modern warfare is extremely urgent, and the value of the book under review lies precisely in the fact that the authors have elaborated this little-studied topic with sufficient fullness and have

1. Professor V. A. Melikov, Division Commander, "Strategic Deployment, 1st World War 1914-1918" Volume 1, Military Publishing House, 1939.



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presented their views on all the basic questions of the theory of strategic deployment.

The experience of recent wars shows that, as a rule, an operational plan undergoes changes during the course of its realization. An example of this is represented by the operational plan of the Polish command in 1939, and by our own plan, which underwent a radical change after the beginning of the war.

From this it follows that, under certain circumstances, strategic deployment, as a derivative of an operational plan (the plan for the first operations), can exert a substantial influence on the realization of the plan itself. It is possible to possess an ideal operational plan and yet to suffer defeat, if the armed forces delay in completing their strategic deployment.

It is known that in a modern war it may be necessary to mobilize a second, and possibly even a third, strategic echelon to reinforce existing strategic groupings or to set up new ones.

The experience of the world wars shows that strategic deployment in new theaters of military operations took place during the course of these wars (the deployment of the German-Fascist armed forces first against Poland, then against the West, and, finally, against us; our deployment in the west and, in the summer of 1945, in the Far East against Japan). Such a phenomenon is defined by the authors as a successive strategic deployment during a new war (page 92). This is, in essence, a new deployment in a new theater of military operations during the course of a major war. One cannot but agree with such a definition. In this connection, this is an appropriate place to examine the concept of mobilization and to elaborate upon the definition of strategic deployment.

A careful comparison between the concept of mobilization (page 96) and the formulation of the concept of strategic deployment (page 91) reveals a certain discrepancy.



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It is envisaged that strategic groupings will be created by the beginning of a war or at its outbreak, while the concept of mobilization includes various measures which are connected not only with strategic deployment (for example, the creation of reserve troops for the replacement of losses and the establishment of new units to fill out existing strategic groupings). From what has been said, it follows that mobilization is a more protracted process than strategic deployment. The authors themselves take this point of view and give a stage-by-stage account of the entire process of mobilization. The reference to Professor Mikhnevich (page 90), stating that strategic deployment consists of the mobilization of an army and of its concentration in a theater of war, provides only a relative explanation of the thesis advanced by the authors that mobilization is an element of strategic deployment, since such a definition is justified to a certain degree only when related to the past. It is necessary, therefore, to emphasize that mobilization is a composite element of strategic deployment in its initial stage, i.e., while strategic groupings are being set up in accordance with the operational war plan. However, mobilization cannot be entirely incorporated in strategic deployment since the latter is a relatively short-term measure for the initial period of a given war.

Mobilization occupies a special place in a country's system of preparation for war. Since it provides for the bringing up to their authorized wartime strength of large units, units and establishments existing in peacetime and for the creation of new formations, intended to replenish and reinforce the groupings of the armed forces which perform tasks in the opening operations, this part of mobilization is to this extent a component element of strategic deployment. However, as we know, mobilization continues further. If we are not to take the point of view of "permanent mobilization", that is, of measures for mobilization carried out throughout the entire course of the war, then we must concede that mobilization can certainly not be enclosed within the framework of strategic deployment in terms of time and of the measures being


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carried out. In this connection, the authors should have elaborated upon the formulation of the concept of strategic deployment and its elements. In our opinion, when listing the elements of strategic deployment, instead of referring to "the mobilization of the armed forces", or simply to "mobilization", one should speak of "mobilizational deployment"; understanding by this all measures for mobilization taken at the beginning of a war, in order to ensure the deployment of strategic groupings in accordance with the operational war plan.

As regards the mobilization and deployment of the second and subsequent echelons carried out during the course of the war, the latter will be intended for the reinforcement of strategic groupings already in existence. If the strategic echelons mentioned are intended to open a new front of armed combat, one can clearly speak of deployment in a new theater of military operations against a new enemy and, essentially, in a new war (during the course of a world war). Thus, the concept of strategic deployment as the creation of groupings by the beginning of a war is justified in this instance also.

In the fourth chapter, fairly detailed examination is given to the problems of the preparation for and planning of strategic deployment; of the preparation of a nation's territory for strategic deployment, and of the deployment of types of armed forces and of the rear services.

Chapter five reveals the elements of cover, which are understood as actions by a unit of the armed forces at a high degree of combat readiness to support mobilization, concentration and deployment in the event of a sudden attack by the enemy from the air, land or sea.

In past wars, cover was effected by large units which were especially assigned for this purpose. The tasks of cover became extremely complicated with the development of military technology, the appearance on a mass scale of air forces, of tank and motorized large units, of naval submarine forces and of airborne landing troops. Along


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with cover from land and sea there arose the necessity for cover from the air as well. By the 2nd World War it had already outgrown operational boundaries and had extended to a considerable depth into the territory of a country within the range of the bomber aircraft which existed at the time. Under these conditions, cover changed from something of local importance, intended to create a favorable setting for the deployment of troops in shallow zones of theaters of military operations, and acquired the significance of an important strategic measure throughout the entire country, especially for countries with small territories. Cover has become all the more complicated in the age of nuclear/missile weapons. It has become an important component of a country's defense. At the same time, cover, by performing specific functions to support the complete mobilization, concentration and deployment of troops, forms a constituent of strategic deployment. This dual nature of cover leads certain comrades into confusion: to negation of the particular functions of cover and to its equation with national defense as a whole.

It seems to us that in defining the concept of cover, the authors have, intentionally or not, expanded its functions. This is particularly noticeable in the section in which cover from the air is examined. Here a full picture is given of the cover (defense) of the entire territory by the antiair defense troops of the country in cooperation with other forces and means, but no emphasis is given to the special nature of cover, which is carried out to help strategic deployment in the overall defense system of the nation. This should have been done, since incorrect views exist equating cover from the air with antiair defense in general, and cover on land and sea with the defense of troops in the appropriate theaters of military operations.

The fact is that, as an operation by a unit of the armed forces intended to support mobilization, concentration and deployment, cover has a specific purpose-- to support the deployment of one's own armed forces and, also, to create operational-strategic groupings for military operations in


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the depth of the country, in accordance with the operational plan. Upon the conclusion of strategic deployment, cover is discontinued and the troops detailed for this purpose go over to the performance of other tasks specified in the operational plan. In this sense, cover is a temporary military operation: it begins in the period of threat (ugrozhayemyy period) and ends when the major groupings of the armed forces go over to the performance of their tasks in an operation. It should also be noted that in various theaters of military operations and for different types of armed forces the boundaries of space (territory) and time and the forces and means for cover will vary. Because of this, the tasks of cover will be performed differently. Along those axes of a theater of military operations on which offensive operations by ground forces are planned in the initial period of war, the tasks of cover will be performed by a part of the forces carrying out the offensive operation: periods for the fulfillment of tasks of cover will, obviously, not be of great duration. In those theaters of military operations and on those strategic axes where it is intended to organize strategic defense during the initial period of the war, the basic forces for cover will, as a rule, be the same troops as are charged with the conduct of defense.

Tasks for cover in naval theaters of operations will be performed in a similar manner.

Cover from the air is being performed on a continuing basis during peacetime. At the outset of military operations the troops of the antiair defense of the country will perform specific tasks with part of their forces to cover the mobilization, concentration and deployment of the armed forces at the same time as they are carrying out the tasks of covering the territory of the whole nation from air strikes. A significant proportion of the forces and means of the antiair defense troops will also be used for cover from the air.

The fundamental principles of the mobilization of armed forces are elaborated in chapter six. The authors


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regard it as the deployment of the armed forces to a strength which ensures the achievement of the political purposes of the war, and which includes bringing peacetime large units and units up to wartime strength; the formation of new large units, units and establishments based on concealed cadres; the creation of a large troop reserve to replenish large units who have lost their combat effectiveness and for the formation of new units.

In chapter seven, the authors make a detailed examination of the concentration of troops as one of the important elements of strategic deployment. Concentration is understood as the assembly of forces and means in theaters of military operations in order to bring the groupings of armed forces already there up to the required strength and to ensure their rapid deployment.

The concentration of troops in theaters of military operations from disposition areas or from areas of completed mobilization will be carried out by available facilities (svoim khodom) in organic truck transport and through the mass transport of formations and large units by railroad. When navigable rivers are available, and in coastal theaters, river (sea) transport can also be used. The authors emphasize that as a result of major destruction of transport from strikes by nuclear weapons and aircraft, strategic concentration under modern conditions is an extremely difficult and complex matter.

The process of concentration (transport and movement) is closely linked with full mobilization, with the preparedness of the troops for transport, and with the general concept of the initial operations — the idea of strategic deployment.

The implementation of transport, therefore, depends not only on technical conditions and on the degree of destruction of transport facilities, or the need to transport a large quantity of troops in a short period of time, but also on the preparedness of the troops for transportation and on those changes in strategic deployment which are unavoidable under modern conditions. The major problem of concentration is preservation of the viability of transport and the skillful


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use of all its categories. The experience of past wars, the modern state of transport, and the various measures destined to strengthen our armed forces, show that the most probable procedure for carrying out strategic concentration will be a mixed one, by which concentration of a part of the armed forces can be accomplished before the beginning of hostilities, and of the rest when hostilities begin. It is clear that when a threatening situation arises (or even before this) a part of the armed forces will be fully mobilized in secret and brought to the theaters of military actions. Sometimes, the concentration of troops can also be carried out openly, with the aim of exerting pressure on the enemy, in order to force him to give up aggressive operations which he is undertaking.

In any event, it is necessary to keep in mind the fact that a secret, slow concentration is not an end in itself. The international situation and the conditions under which a war breaks out can compel one to carry out transportation openly in the shortest possible time and in a massive flow, in order to forestall the enemy in the deployment of his basic strategic groupings.

In view of the need for the extensive and comprehensive use of all types of transport to achieve the prompt concentration of troops, the decision to concentrate the use of all types of transport, including trucks, in the hands of the Central Directorate for Military Communication, with unified planning as a basis, the decision, in other words, to have a single military transport center, seems to us a correct one.

Chapter eight of the book is devoted to the combat deployment of the armed forces.

The main substance of combat deployment is the creation, in theaters of military operations and in the depth of the country, of appropriate groupings of the armed forces, the assembly of strategic and operational formations and their occupation of departure areas in readiness to perform the tasks assigned by the operational plan in the opening operations


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of the initial period of the war.

On pages 99-100 and in chapter eight (pages 229-255), the authors have introduced the concept of "combat deployment" ("boyevoye razvertyvaniye"), investing it with a wider connotation than that of operational deployment. "Combat deployment (as an element of strategic deployment) should be taken as meaning the creation of a specific assembly of forces and their occupation of an initial position for the conduct of combat operations of differing scales" (page 100). One could accept or dispute this definition. The one thing which is clear is that strategic deployment can only be considered complete when it has been brought to the stage of operational-tactical deployment and of the creation of groupings of troops for the performance of impending tasks.

We agree with the authors when, basing themselves on the principle of deep-echeloned strategic deployment, they divide the armed forces deployed in a main theater of military operations into two operational echelons. It has already been stated above that the first strategic echelon of the armed forces should consist of a number of operational echelons. It is natural that the first operational echelon should incorporate all the regular large units of the strategic missile troops, groups of forces, border military districts and naval forces, and of the anti-air defense troops, which are at constant combat readiness. The formations and large units which are deployed closer to national boundaries will be made up of covering troops, while the troops located deep in the theaters of military operations will be made up of the main forces of the first operational echelon. The second operational echelon will be composed of formations and large units of the internal military districts and of some large units of the border military districts which need to complete their mobilization. Irrespective of the availability of troops comprising the first and second operational echelons, strategic reserves of all types, subordinate to the High Command, may be deployed in the theaters of military operations.

Depending on the plan proposed for impending operations, combat deployment must support the conduct of any and all operations. At the same time, combat deployment and the



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creation of operational-strategic groupings must be sufficiently flexible to permit rapid transition to an alternate deployment plan conforming to new conditions at the beginning of a war if the proposed plans are nullified. The complexity of such a supplementary or new deployment is confirmed by the experience of the 2nd World War. It will be even harder to accomplish under modern conditions.

A theater of military operations, particularly one in a zone in which deployment is impending, must be prepared ahead of time so that combat deployment can be carried out in a compressed time period and in order that one's own armed forces may be used as effectively as possible at the beginning of operations. Missile troops, artillery, aviation, and combined-arms large units intended for an opening strike must have the advantage of being assured of deployment in good time (in engineering, communications and material-technical respects).

In chapter eight, the authors examine specific problems of the combat deployment of types of armed forces on the basis of experience from the 2nd World War, from postwar exercises, and from an analysis of the possible nature of deployment in a future war.

A great virtue of the book under review is that the collective authors constantly bear in mind the importance of material-technical support and of the rear area in strategic deployment. These problems are also examined in a special, ninth chapter "The Deployment of the Rear Area of Armed Forces".

By deployment of the rear area of the armed forces is meant the full mobilization of rear services large units, units and establishments, their concentration and deployment in the theaters of military operations for materiel, technical and medical support of the troops. It is explained that the deployment of the rear area should correspond to the concept of the operations planned, to the grouping of forces and to the degree of combat readiness of the large units and formations.


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Thus, there should be a minimum of prepared units and establishments of the rear services in each border military district (group of forces) so that support can be given to the large units and formations in their opening operations, pending the complete deployment of the rear areas in the particular theater of military operations.

The tenth and last chapter is devoted to the problems of the control of armed forces in the period of strategic deployment.

As the authors correctly point out, the complexity of the control of armed forces in the period of strategic deployment lies in the fact that powerful nuclear/missile strikes will probably be being delivered and the formations of types of armed forces which are at constant readiness will probably be conducting the opening operations simultaneously with the full mobilization, concentration and deployment of the troops. During this period control must be exercised on the basis of plans drawn up in peacetime, taking into consideration the actual developments of the situation at the beginning of a war. Major difficulties in the control of deployment can arise because of great destruction of transport, or an abrupt change in the military-political and strategic situation. The operational plan in individual theaters of military operations may therefore be partially changed, and consequently the introduction of changes into the plans for concentration and deployment may also be required.

Thus, the entire system of control must be as stable as possible, in order to withstand strikes by modern means of armed combat and to preserve continuity at all levels in the complex situation of the initial period of a nuclear/missile war.

In conclusion, it should be noted that the book is written from the vantage point of Marxist-Leninist teaching on war, in the light of the requirements of the Central Committee of the CPSU and of our Party documents, and reflects modern views on the problems of strategic deployment in a future war with complete correctness.



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