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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20505

30 September 1975

MEMORANDUM FOR: The Director of Central Intelligence
SUBJECT : MILITARY THOUGHT (USSR): Combat with Enemy
Tactical Means of Nuclear Attack

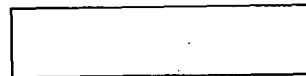
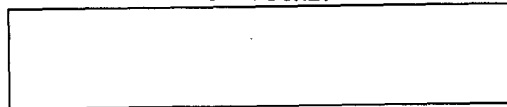
1. The enclosed Intelligence Information Special Report is part of a series now in preparation based on the SECRET USSR Ministry of Defense publication Collection of Articles of the Journal "Military Thought". This article presents comments on a previous article concerning preemptive destruction of tactical nuclear weapons. Although agreeing in principle with that article, the author argues that it is important to destroy the warheads themselves, and the forward Hawk batteries, in addition to the tactical launchers. This article appeared in Issue No. 3 (82) for 1967.

2. Because the source of this report is extremely sensitive, this document should be handled on a strict need-to-know basis within recipient agencies. For ease of reference, reports from this publication have been assigned

William E. Nelson
Deputy Director for Operations

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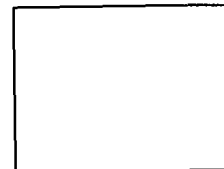
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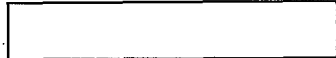
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Intelligence Information Special Report

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COUNTRY USSR



DATE OF INFO. Late 1967

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SUBJECT

MILITARY THOUGHT (USSR): Combat with Enemy Tactical Means of Nuclear Attack

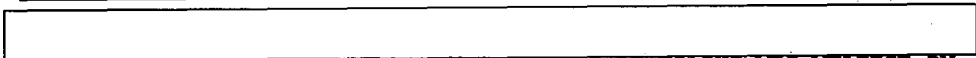
SOURCE Documentary

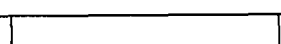
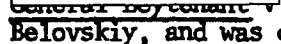
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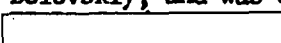
The following report is a translation from Russian of an article which appeared in Issue No. 3 (82) for 1967 of the SECRET USSR Ministry of Defense publication Collection of Articles of the Journal 'Military Thought'. The author of this article is Colonel A. Khorenkov. This article presents comments on a previous article concerning preemptive destruction of tactical nuclear weapons. Although agreeing in principle with that article, the author argues that it is important to destroy the warheads themselves, and the forward Hawk batteries, in addition to the tactical launchers.

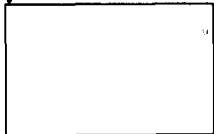
End of Summary

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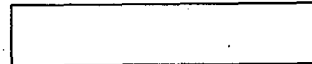
 the article to which it refers was written by General  v. Petrenko, Colonel V. Ryabchuk and Colonel M. Belovskiy, and was disseminated in the English language as

 the SECRET version of Military Thought was published three times annually and was distributed down to the level of division commander. It reportedly ceased publication at the end of 1970.



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Combat with Enemy Tactical Means of Nuclear Attack

by
Colonel A. Khorenkov

In the article "Combat with Enemy Tactical Means of Nuclear Attack in Offensive Operations,"* the authors suggest an interesting and useful method of organizing this combat. Sharing in principle the point of view set forth there, we should like to express a few observations conducive, in our view, to a more effective solution of this important problem.

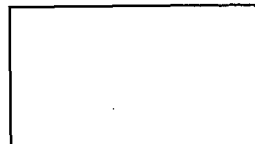
The authors correctly note that the substantial increase in the quantity of tactical nuclear means has made them a factor of operational significance. Such an appraisal of these weapons in operations is necessary above all because, as shown by the experience of many exercises conducted by the probable enemy in the course of recent years, from 40 to 70 percent of the nuclear warheads allocated to an army group and a field army of the US are warheads with a yield of one to ten kilotons. In a US field army, 85 percent of the nuclear warheads are allotted to missiles and artillery (even without counting warheads for the Davy Crockett recoilless rifle). Consequently, the conclusion about enemy tactical nuclear weapons being transformed into a factor of operational significance is even more convincing and completely valid.

The large number and variety of tactical nuclear means greatly complicates the organization of combat with them, since it is not possible to establish precisely which enemy subunits will deliver strikes with nuclear-armed missiles. For example, not every battery, much less every gun of the nuclear artillery, will employ nuclear warheads even though they have the potential capabilities for this. To destroy all or even a large part of the enemy tactical nuclear means in an operation by use of the means of a front, army, and divisions will not succeed.

However, in addition to destroying launchers and guns as the means of delivering warheads to a target directly, there is another method of combat with tactical nuclear weapons. It consists of destroying the nuclear warheads themselves.

*Collection of Articles of the Journal "Military Thought," No. 1 (80) for 1967.

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We shall clarify this thought, having examined the system of supplying the US ground forces with nuclear weapons. The artillery-technical (close support) special weapons supply companies are one of the basic subunits in the US army. One such company is assigned to each army corps and field army. During combat operations it deploys two mobile field points for supply of nuclear weapons units and a repair point. The company can service and store on vehicles a varying number of nuclear warheads depending on the function of the company. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

For support of nuclear weapons units of US NATO allies, special organs, the artillery nuclear warhead support groups, have been set up (on the basis of one group to one or two army corps). A group consists of an artillery-technical special weapons supply company, and four to ten specialized artillery detachments for supplying warheads. During combat operations the company deploys in the corps rear areas one or two mobile field supply points, each of which may be located in any of two or three locations. The artillery detachment, though, usually deploys one or two mobile field points for special warheads storage near the deployment areas of the nuclear weapons unit it serves.

Consequently, if reconnaissance efforts are directed to establishing the locations of the above-mentioned nuclear warheads supply and storage points, and then delivering strikes against them, then it is possible to destroy a significant number of nuclear warheads. Obviously, this must become a paramount task of all forms of reconnaissance in operations.

The importance of solving the problem of destroying nuclear warheads becomes even greater in an operation which begins with conventional means but which is under constant threat of the employment of nuclear weapons. Evidently, in such a situation, the principal portion of the nuclear warheads will be located in depots and at supply and storage points. Timely destruction of these important targets with conventional weapons, especially before the distribution of nuclear warheads to the troops, will significantly reduce the enemy's capabilities and have a decisive influence on the attainment of such necessary superiority over him.

The problem we have been looking at will be resolved much more effectively if along with enemy tactical nuclear weapons his forward Hawk surface-to-air missile batteries are also destroyed. They usually are located 10 to 12 kilometers from the line of contact of the troops. As is

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known, the Hawk surface-to-air missiles can employ [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] But it is also known that Hawk surface-to-air missiles are able to destroy air targets at a slant range of up to 35 kilometers (at an altitude range of from 10,000 to 18,000 meters).

It is natural that forward Hawk surface-to-air missile batteries will often try to destroy air targets while they are still over the location of our troops (at distances of 10 to 20 kilometers from the line of contact between sides). The enemy in this way will acquire the capability to carry out two tasks at one time: to destroy an air target and at the same time (especially in firing at low-flying aircraft), to a certain degree, ground targets which happen to be below the air nuclear burst. Is it right to give the enemy such a favorable opportunity? We think not.

Consequently, to the authors' conclusion about the need to detect and destroy tactical nuclear means of the Honest John type before large units of the first echelon close to within 30 to 35 kilometers of the enemy, it is imperative to add the advice to destroy in that period the forward Hawk surface-to-air missile batteries as well. This will let us avoid the accompanying destruction of advancing troops during enemy fire of surface-to-air missiles against air targets, and it will also greatly support the operations of our aviation in combat with his tactical nuclear weapons.

Thus, destruction of depots and of supply and storage points of special warheads and also the destruction of forward Hawk surface-to-air missile batteries are important elements in the overall system of combat with enemy tactical means of nuclear attack in offensive operations.

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