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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20505

11 May 1977

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MEMORANDUM FOR: The Director of Central Intelligence
FROM : William W. Wells
Deputy Director for Operations
SUBJECT : MILITARY THOUGHT (USSR): Soviet Naval
Art in the Great Patriotic War

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 is a review of a book published in 1963 which deals with Soviet naval art in the period 1941-1945. The reviewer finds the book useful in that it breaks naval art down into problems, among them strategic employment of the navy, joint operations with ground forces, independent naval operations and amphibious landings. His criticisms include the lack of specific examples of control and failure to treat wartime naval rear services operations. This article appeared in Issue No. 2 (72) for 1964.

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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

[Redacted]

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William W. Wells

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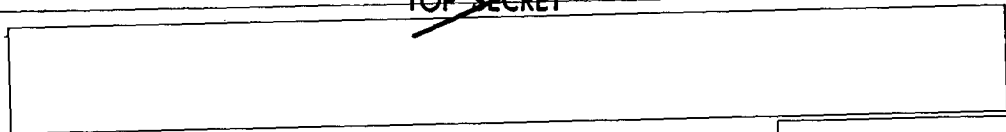
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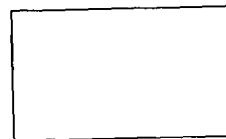
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Intelligence Information Special Report

Page 3 of 10 Pages

COUNTRY USSR

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SUBJECT

MILITARY THOUGHT (USSR): Soviet Naval Art in the Great Patriotic War

SOURCE Documentary

Summary:

The following report is a translation from Russian of an article which appeared in Issue No. 2 (72) for 1964 of the SECRET USSR Ministry of Defense publication Collection of Articles of the Journal 'Military Thought'. The author of this article is Colonel N. Mazunin. This article is a review of a book published in 1963 which deals with Soviet naval art in the period 1941-1945. The reviewer finds the book useful in that it breaks naval art down into problems, among them strategic employment of the navy, joint operations with ground forces, independent naval operations and amphibious landings. His criticisms include the lack of specific examples of control and failure to treat wartime naval rear services operations.

End of Summary

[Redacted] Comment:

Colonel N. Mazunin is now retired. He wrote an article on the history of the cruiser Varyag in the Naval Collection, No. 2, 1974. 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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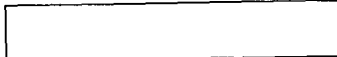
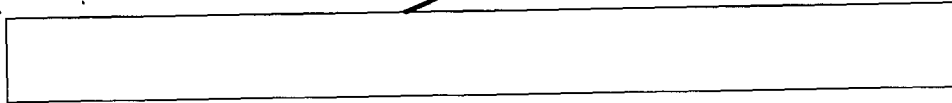
Soviet Naval Art in the Great Patriotic War
by
Colonel N. Mazunin

A number of works recently have come out on the history of the development of Soviet naval art in the Great Patriotic War. In 1959-1962 a major work, The Navy of the Soviet Union in the Great Patriotic War, 1941-1945, was published. It thoroughly describes the combat actions of our fleets and flotillas in the past war, and offers several conclusions concerning the development of naval art and, in particular, concerning the conduct of amphibious landing operations, the defense of naval bases, and combat on the sea lanes. Another fundamental work, Soviet Military Art in the Great Patriotic War, 1941-1945, prepared by the Military Science Directorate of the General Staff and published in 1962, examines mainly the employment of the navy in strategic operations conducted by the ground forces on coastal axes. The matters of preparing and conducting independent naval operations are treated very briefly in this work.

The fourth volume of the textbook, published in 1962, on the history of naval art for the higher naval schools sets forth in chronological sequence the combat actions of Soviet naval forces on our seas and in the basins of large rivers and lakes, and formulates certain conclusions concerning the development of Soviet naval art in the period of the Great Patriotic War. It is perfectly natural that a textbook intended for the cadets of the schools devotes its main attention to the development of tactical methods of combat at sea.

In the five volumes of The History of the Great Patriotic War of the Soviet Union, 1941-1945 that have come out, there are many pages devoted to the activity of our navy and the skill of Soviet naval seamen. There are also classified and unclassified books, brochures, and magazine articles which discuss certain problems of the employment of the navy in the last war.

However, in all the published books and articles, basically only the individual matters of tactics, operational art, and the strategic employment of the navy in the Great Patriotic War have been treated. There was no synthesizing work in which all the basic problems of the development of Soviet naval art were examined and in which its constituent parts were



shown in unity and interrelation. Therefore, the appearance of the work Soviet Naval Art in the Great Patriotic War, 1941-1945* substantially fills this gap.

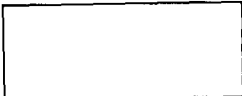
The work is based on numerous printed materials and archival documents, many of them being introduced into scientific circulation for the first time. In content and purpose it differs usefully from works published earlier, since in it the authors examine the development of naval art according to problems, devoting the main attention to operational art, and to the planning, preparation, and conduct of joint and independent naval operations. Much operational-statistical material is presented in the book in the form of summary tables as well as of diagrams which greatly contribute to the clarification of principles being set forth.

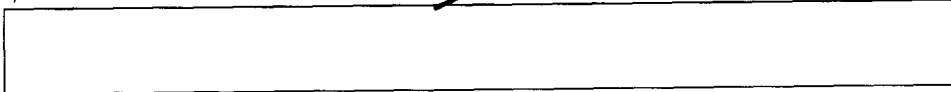
The work devotes considerable space to party political work in the navy during the Great Patriotic War. A special chapter synthesizes the rich experience of the activity of party and komsomol organizations, political organs, and the command in the preparation and conduct of amphibious landing operations, on submarines during their actions in enemy sea lanes, on surface ships during actions to defend our own sea lanes, and also under conditions of naval combat activity.

In examining the strategic employment of the navy of the USSR in the Great Patriotic War, the authors correctly emphasize that it was determined by the political and strategic goals of the war, the operational and combat capabilities of the navy, the nature of armed combat on coastal axes, the importance and intensity of the maritime shipping of the warring sides on this or that sea, and also by the conditions under which our fleets were operating.

As is well known, a distinctive feature of the employment of our navy in the last war was the fact that its main efforts were directed toward assisting the troops of the Soviet Army, who were accomplishing the main task of defeating fascist Germany and its armed forces in the land theaters of military operations. In keeping with this, the basic strategic task which was accomplished by our fleets and flotillas was to participate in defensive and offensive operations on coastal axes and in areas along lakes and rivers by covering the flanks of our troops against enemy attacks from the sea, by landing amphibious landing forces, and by providing artillery and air support to our troops.

* Soviet Naval Art in the Great Patriotic War, 1941-1945, Main Staff of the Navy of the USSR. Moscow: Military Publishing House, 1963, 468 pages.





Simultaneously with this, the navy carried out independent operations to protect our sea lanes and to disrupt enemy maritime shipping.

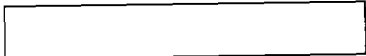
The authors of this work note that the strategic employment of the navy was also characterized by the prior organization of new flotillas in accordance with the situation that was developing and the tasks that were arising relative to assisting the ground forces; by the improvement of the organization of the multiple-arm forces of the navy in conformity with the tasks to be accomplished; by the improvement of the methods of cooperation among the naval forces, ground forces, and air forces; and by the aggressive nature of the tasks to be accomplished by the navy and the decisive methods of fulfilling them. (p. 73).

The work sets forth the questions of controlling the navy and planning its strategic employment in the course of a war. The authors correctly indicate that, as one of the branches of the armed forces, it was controlled by the General Headquarters of the Supreme High Command, and that the fleets and flotillas were controlled by the commanders of the coastal fronts under whose operational subordination they were placed during specific periods of the war. The planning of independent actions of fleets was done by the Main Naval Staff.

However, all these propositions are insufficiently argued and they are not supported by concrete examples. It should have been shown in more detail how the General Headquarters controlled the activity of the fleets at any one stage, in what manner was this control manifested, when and what instructions were given to the naval command, in specifically which plans for campaigns, as well as for separate defensive and offensive operations, were the tasks of the fleets defined (p. 75). Regrettably, the authors did not exploit even certain published materials, as was done, for example, in the book Soviet Military Art in the Great Patriotic War, 1941-1945 (Vol. 1, p. 288, Vol. 3, pp. 292, 294, 296). Also poorly examined in the work was the activity of the Main Naval Staff as the organ engaged in planning the naval operations and in synthesizing the experience of military actions at sea.

On the whole, the authors have only made an attempt to synthesize the material on the problem of the strategic employment of our navy in the last war. In our opinion, this could have been accomplished more completely within the framework of this book, since its scope, nature, and orientation would have made it possible for this most important constituent part of Soviet naval art to have been treated comprehensively and in detail, rather than being limited to merely setting forth the strategic employment of the





navy "only in the most general terms".

Three chapters in the book are allotted to a discussion of the questions of the employment of the navy in joint defensive and offensive operations of the Soviet Army on coastal axes. These chapters examine in detail such important questions as the defense of naval bases, evacuation of the garrisons of these bases, naval artillery and air support of the ground forces during operations on coastal axes, covering of the flanks of the ground forces against enemy attacks from the sea, assistance of our own troops in the destruction of enemy groupings pressed to the sea, and the use of river flotillas.

Of especially great interest to readers are the questions of the preparation and landing of amphibious landing forces (pp. 185-232). A special chapter and a large table attached at the end of the book (pp. 422-465) contain extremely valuable factual and statistical material, on the basis of which the conclusions about the preparation and conduct of amphibious landing operations were formulated.

From Tables 5 and 6 (pp. 187, 188) it can be seen that during the Great Patriotic War 114 amphibious landings were carried out (32 in the first period, 12 in the second, and 70 in the third). These data indicate that the majority of the amphibious landings (up to 72 percent) fell within the second and third periods of the war, when our troops were conducting a strategic offensive. In this case, the special characteristic of most of the amphibious landings employed at this time was the fact that they were carried out in support of offensive operations of the ground forces for the purpose of assisting them in breaking through the enemy's tactical defense on coastal axes and in routing his coastal groupings. The authors show that the gradual increase in the number of amphibious landings employed, especially in the last period of the war, was an indication of the growing capabilities of our armed forces and also of the growth in skill and level of combat training of our soldiers, sailors, officers, generals, and admirals.

The book also portrays well the actions of our amphibious landing forces under the very difficult conditions of retreat and defense (1941-1942). Most of the amphibious landing forces of that period, as the authors emphasize, in spite of their limited numerical strength, deficient armament, and lack of special landing means, were landed with decisive objectives -- to assist the ground forces in improving the positions occupied by them, to divert the enemy's forces and slow down his rates of advance in the interests of enabling our troops to establish new lines of



defense on coastal axes. This was the case in the Kerch-Feodosiya landing operation in December 1941, when the landing force was given the task of disrupting the enemy's plan to take Sevastopol, of destroying his Kerch grouping, and of seizing a beachhead for the subsequent development of the offensive into the depths of the Crimea. And even though, as we know, the objective was not achieved completely, a beachhead on the Crimea was seized and the enemy advance on Sevastopol was halted.

The experience examined by the authors of landing amphibious landing forces on coastal axes under the conditions of a situation that has developed unfavorably is very distinctive and unique and is indisputably valuable.

It should be said that the book not only covers the positive experience of the actions of amphibious landing forces, but that it also analyzes the shortcomings and blunders committed in their preparation for landing, especially in the first period of the war. The authors point out the inadequate attention paid to the planning for the employment of a series of tactical landings and to matters of support, especially such support as emergency rescue and navigational-hydrographic support; they also point out the poor reconnaissance of the antilanding defense and note the deficiencies of camouflage, the unsatisfactory materiel-technical support, the poor operation of communications means, and the failure to observe the principle of unity of command and decentralized control of the forces. All this led to great losses during a landing and sometimes to the breakdown of operations; out of 31 tactical landings carried out in the first period of the war, 18 (approximately 60 percent) were unsuccessful.

In our military literature to this day there is no coherence in the classification of the amphibious landings carried out during the war, especially on the question of which of the landings are to be classed as operational. Thus, the authors of the work Soviet Military Art in the Great Patriotic War, 1941-1945 consider that four landing operations were conducted for operational purposes: the Kerch-Feodosiya operation in December 1941, the one in the area of Yuzhnaya Ozereyko-Stanichka in February 1943, the Novorossiysk operation in September 1943, and the Kerch-Eltigen operation in November 1943.*

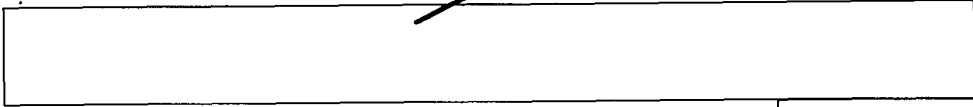
* Soviet Military Art in the Great Patriotic War, 1941-1945, Military Publishing House, 1962. Vol. 1, p. 606, Vol. 2, pp. 309-318, Vol. 3, p. 432.

In the work The Navy of the Soviet Union in the Great Patriotic War, 1941-1945 (Vol. 3, p. 515) and in the textbook History of Naval Art (Vol. 4, p. 420) it is said that during the course of the Great Patriotic War our navy carried out over 106 landings of various scales, including several operational ones, for instance, in the areas of Kerch-Feodosiya, Yuzhnaya Ozereyko-Stanichka, and Novorossiysk.

The work under review offers a new list of operational landings. On pages 187-189 the Kerch-Feodosiya, Kerch-Eltigen, and Moonzund operations are included among them. In addition to these three operational landings, in the opinion of the authors, the landing of five large tactical landing forces in the areas of Yuzhnaya Ozereyko-Stanichka (February 1943), Novorossiysk (September 1943), the Tuloksa River (June 1944), the west bank of the Dneestr estuary (August 1944), and the island of Shumushu (August 1945) were also carried out by the landing operation method.

It appears to us that, according to their objectives, tasks, and allocated forces, the four landing operations carried out by the Black Sea Fleet in the areas of Kerch-Feodosiya (1941), Yuzhnaya Stanichka-Ozereyko (February 1943), Novorossiysk (September 1943), and Kerch-Eltigen (November 1943) should be classed as operational landings. The remaining landings, including those carried out during the seizure of the Moonzund Archipelago, should, because of their scale, be classed as tactical landings.

It is well known that the main efforts of our navy in the years of the last war were directed toward assisting the ground forces in their operations on coastal axes. Nevertheless, the accomplishment of independent tasks at sea by the navy, and especially the conduct of complex, fierce, daily combat on the sea lanes, was of great importance in the achievement of victory. The work gives a detailed description of the sea lanes of Germany and the USSR at that time, it makes an appraisal of the training of our navy to disrupt enemy shipping and to protect our own sea lanes, it sets forth the operating methods of aviation, submarines, and surface ships on the enemy lanes and depicts the development and improvement of these methods during the war, and it also examines in detail the actions of our navy to protect our own sea lanes. The use by the authors, along with much previously known material from documents on maritime shipping of the former Military Transportation Service Directorate of the Main Naval Staff has made it possible to show more fully the condition and development of our maritime transport means and their use, to present a well-rounded analysis of convoy navigation, and to show the results of sea and river shipping by theaters in the different periods. Tables 7 and 8, shown on pages 258-259, are of great interest.



To speak of the work as a whole, there is no doubt that it deserves a positive evaluation. The authors have done much work, producing a necessary, useful and, on the whole, good book on the history of Soviet naval art in the Great Patriotic War. However, the book is not without shortcomings. It was found that, in essence, such an important matter as the organization and work of the operational rear services of the navy was not dealt with. And, surely, it is well known to everyone what enormous significance the materiel-technical support of operations and combat actions had in the last war.

It further seems to us that those authors who, in books on the history of military and naval art in the Great Patriotic War, do not reveal the immediate bearers and creators of new, progressive methods of conducting armed combat, the talented military and naval commanders and leaders and the brave heroes who have made enormous contributions to the development of military art, are not acting entirely correctly. Thus, in the three-volume publication, Soviet Military Art in the Great Patriotic War, 1941-1945, not one name is mentioned. And the authors of the work under review have done the same. In only one place, on page 406, are the names of three Heroes of the Soviet Union, sailors of the civilian transport fleet, mentioned.

It should also be noted that, during the preparation and publication of the work, carelessness was shown in the scientific format of the book. In citations of archival sources (pp. 34, 104, 290, 298, 302, 320, 323-329, 336, 388, 464), the authors do not indicate where these documents are kept.

In referencing printed editions, in most cases it is not stated by whom and when this or that book was published.

