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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20505

22 December 1978

MEMORANDUM FOR: The Director of Central Intelligence

FROM : John N. McMahon
Deputy Director for Operations

SUBJECT : MILITARY THOUGHT (USSR): The Commitment
of a tank Army to the Engagement During a
Front Offensive Operation

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 discusses the employment of a tank army in the first operation of a front, dwelling exclusively on its commitment to battle immediately following nuclear strikes for the purpose of exploiting the results of these strikes. In this context it touches upon the time and space factors involved, the possible effects of enemy nuclear means, the halts for preparation and rest during the march from the interior of the country, the procedures for committing the army from the march; the planning, cooperation, and coordination required; the nuclear missile support; and the control, command, and staff activities that are appropriate. This article appeared in Issue No. 2 (69) for 1963.

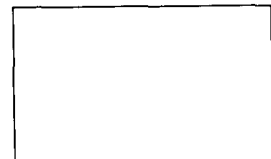
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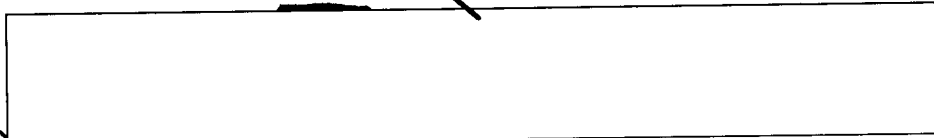
John N. McMahon



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Intelligence Information Special Report

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COUNTRYUSSR



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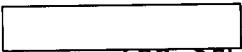
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SUBJECT

MILITARY THOUGHT (USSR): The Commitment of a Tank Army to the Engagement During a Front Offensive Operation

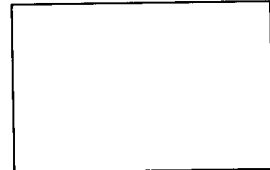
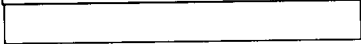
SOURCE Documentary
Summary:

The following report is a translation from Russian of an article which appeared in Issue No. 2 (69) for 1963 of the SECRET USSR Ministry of Defense publication Collection of Articles of the Journal "Military Thought". The author of this article is Colonel A. Kurkov. This article discusses the employment of a tank army in the first operation of a front, dwelling exclusively on its commitment to battle immediately following nuclear strikes for the purpose of exploiting the results of these strikes. In this context it touches upon the time and space factors involved, the possible effects of enemy nuclear means, the halts for preparation and rest during the march from the interior of the country, the procedures for committing the army from the march; the planning, cooperation, and coordination required; the nuclear missile support; and the control, command, and staff activities that are appropriate. End of Summary



Comment:

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.





The Commitment of a Tank Army to the Engagement
During a Front Offensive Operation

by

Colonel A. KURKOV

A tank army, as we know, plays a key role during the conduct of a modern front offensive operation. Accordingly, it is most advisable to use it as part of the first operational echelon of the front. This arises from the fact that the first operations of fronts formed from border military districts (groups of forces) are conducted with available forces, that is, with the fronts operationally disposed in a single echelon and with reserves available.

There may, of course, be exceptions when, due to terrain conditions and other circumstances, it will be inadvisable in a first operation to use the tank army in the front's first operational echelon. In particular, this is characteristic of mountain and desert areas. But here, by the beginning of the first operations, there may not even be a tank army in the complement of a front since there is no sense holding back a considerable amount of strike forces upon the outbreak of war.

At the same time, one cannot, in our opinion, completely exclude the possibility of committing a tank army to the engagement during the course of a front offensive operation.

In this article we shall try to examine the characteristic conditions of such use of a tank army (mainly in a front's first offensive operation), the salient features of committing it to the engagement, the procedure for using nuclear weapons as this is done, and also the matters of cooperation with other front formations and of troop control.

The feasibility of committing a tank or combined-arms army to the engagement is determined by the nature of a modern front offensive operation. For instance, the nuclear means and troops





of the front's first echelon may sustain heavy losses, as a result of which the front's available forces may prove to be insufficient to conduct an operation at high speeds to the entire depth of the theater of military operations. In addition, during an operation a new operational axis may develop requiring the commitment to the engagement and the actions of the tank (or combined-arms) army as an independent operational grouping of forces having the appropriate nuclear means.

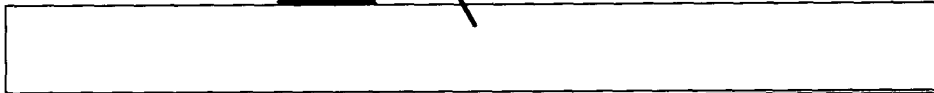
Finally, encounter attacks by large-scale enemy groupings during the operation may also necessitate allocating considerable front forces to parry (repel) them. In all these cases it will not always be possible to get along with only the available reserves, bearing in mind moreover the necessity of simultaneously developing the offensive.

We should like to stress here that it will hardly be correct to draw a sharp distinction between tank and combined-arms armies and try to substantiate which of them can more advantageously be received by a front as an addition to its strength. However, it should be borne in mind that a tank army is nevertheless more maneuverable and also more resistant with respect to enemy nuclear strikes. Therefore, if it is a matter of the need to decisively intensify efforts during a front operation with the aim of sharply increasing the rates of advance and of completing the operation as quickly as possible, the commitment of a tank army to the engagement is, we would say, more desirable than the commitment of a combined-arms army. This results from the fact that in a nuclear war, the idea is to conduct the first front operations in the shortest periods of time.

Speaking of the commitment of a tank army to the engagement, we do not, of course, have in mind using it as the second echelon of a front upon the start of the front's first operation, since such a possibility is most often out of the question. We can commit to the engagement an army that had arrived in the course of the first operation from the interior of the country or from other operational axes (theaters of military operations) to form part of the front.

And first of all, of course, the front in the main theater of operations will be reinforced. At this time a tank army may already be in its complement and in action. Consequently, the





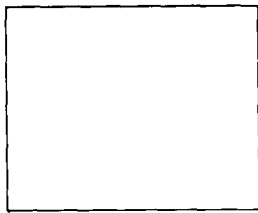
commitment to the engagement of a tank army that has newly arrived to form part of the front gives rise in this case to a unique tank grouping (group of tank armies). This, along with the massed employment of nuclear weapons, will, in our opinion, be one of the determining factors that promote speeding up the defeat of the enemy and shortening the length of time it takes to conduct a front operation.

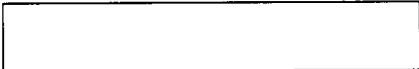
It should be kept in mind that a tank army can move up from the interior of the country not only independently but also in the complement of a reserve front. And, in a number of cases, it will arrive in the combat actions area ahead of the combined-arms armies of this front and will enter the engagement before they arrive. In the appropriate situation, it will sometimes be advisable to resubordinate it to the front that is already in action.

During the first offensive operation we cannot rule out the possibility of forming a tank army out of the available tank divisions and the separate tank divisions that arrive to form part of the front. A field headquarters for the army in these cases can also be newly created on the basis of the existing headquarters of the divisions (corps) in the complement of the front or it can come from the interior of the country. As the front commander decides, separate tank corps can also be created.

During the conduct of the war, if it is not concluded by the front's first operations, some front formations will be forced to conduct subsequent operations. In this case, a tank army operating in the complement of a front may, after finishing the first operation, be withdrawn to be brought up to full strength and then shifted to another axis for commitment to the engagement during the subsequent operation of the front. However, such cases, under conditions of a nuclear war, will, to our way of thinking, be less typical in comparison with those which provide for the arrival of a tank army in the complement of an active front from the interior of the country.

The question may arise whether it is not more correct to designate a tank army that arrives in the complement of a front during an operation as a reserve and not a second echelon, thus providing for the possibility of using it piecemeal.



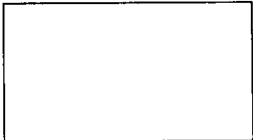


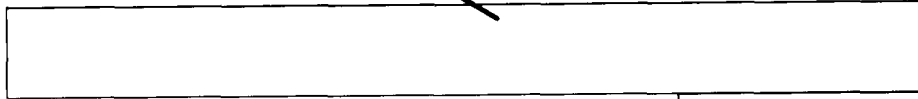
Some people really believe that, with the drastic and fast changes of the situation in modern operations it is impossible to determine beforehand the tasks for the troops located in the depth of a front's operational disposition as used to be done in the past with respect to operational second echelons. Therefore, at present such groupings supposedly take on the nature and meaning of reserves and not second echelons.

It seems that such views on the tank army are not convincing. It is not advisable to use it piecemeal to accomplish tasks that suddenly arise and have to be accomplished by the front's reserve divisions. A tank army is meant to operate on the main axis of a front, independently fulfilling in the interests of the front operation those tasks that primarily exploit the success of the offensive. On being committed to the engagement, a tank army will conduct its own army offensive operation, and this independently of the time of its commitment, to the full depth of the front operation. Therefore, it must in no way be designated as the reserve of a front.

The specific situation upon commitment of a tank army to the engagement during a front offensive operation, as the experience of exercises has shown, will in all cases be characterized by exceptional complexity. There is no doubt, for instance, that during their movement up to the front line the army's troops will be repeatedly subjected to the effects of ballistic, operational-tactical, and tactical missiles, chemical weapons, aviation, and other enemy means. The most intensive effects of these means should be expected in a zone that is up to 500 kilometers from the area where combat actions are already in progress. Here calculations show that, at a distance of 150 to 500 kilometers, the enemy may use for the delivery of strikes around 20 percent of the most powerful operational-tactical nuclear means available in the complement of the army group and armies. The remaining 80 percent of them, being tactical, may be used in immediate proximity to the front line, at a distance of 15 to 30 kilometers.

It is also known that the tank army, while moving up, especially before and during deployment, will inevitably encounter massive destruction and extensive areas of radioactively contaminated terrain, since it must be assumed that the army will be committed to the engagement on that terrain





on which both sides have already delivered strikes before this.

Finally, the situation will be complicated because of the losses which the army's large units and units will sustain to a varying degree as a result of enemy action.

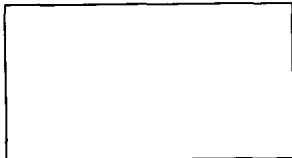
Immediately upon the commitment of the tank army to the engagement, the situation will be most complicated where the enemy steps up his actions by using fire means and committing approaching reserves to the engagement. Therefore, the troops of the army will have to overcome not only zones of destruction but also enemy resistance and also conduct meeting battles from the march. They will have to simultaneously destroy his fire means and above all his nuclear means and use part of their forces to combat airborne landing forces and sabotage groups.

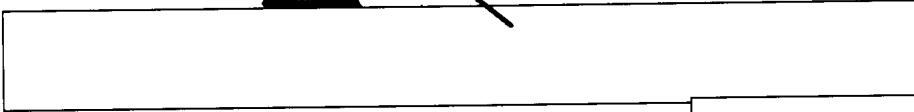
From what has been said it follows that under modern conditions, the movement and deployment of the tank army will require especially careful organization and all-round support in order to maximally preserve its combat effectiveness when it is committed to the engagement. In contrast with the past, these measures obviously will be carried out not only by the means of the front but also by those of the General Headquarters of the Supreme High Command, and for example, by the air defense forces of the country, strategic reconnaissance, etc.

The problems of the immediate commitment of the army to the engagement have to be solved in a new way, discovering the most expedient methods of troop actions.

Nevertheless, during operational training, as Minister of Defense Marshal of the Soviet Union R. Ya. MALINOVSKIY indicated in the critique of the BURYA [STORM] command-staff exercise, attempts are still made to organize the commitment to the engagement of second echelons and reserves of fronts according to the old principles worked out during the Great Patriotic War.

Considered especially unacceptable today is the still current practice of halting the troops of a front's second-echelon tank (combined-arms) army before committing it to the engagement, of attempting to deploy its large units into a battle formation, and of planning and conducting preparatory





fire. And support for the commitment is, without sound reason, charged to the first-echelon troops in action up forward,

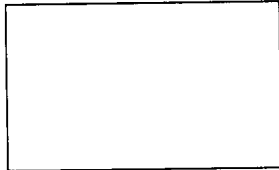
The reason for such obsolete actions, in all probability, must be sought in the fact that as yet not everyone has an accurate picture of those radical changes that have come about both in the situational conditions and in the methods of organizing and carrying out the commitment of operational second echelons to the engagement.

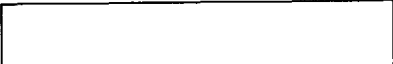
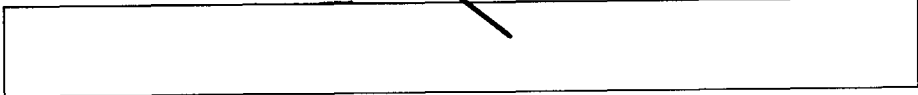
The commitment of tank armies into a breach in the last war was most frequently carried out to a limited depth, within the confines of the enemy's tactical zone of defense, usually by leapfrogging the deployed battle formations of the large units of the combined-arms armies that had advanced. In so doing, each tank army was committed to the breach from one common line in solid battle formations and in a relatively narrow zone of attack with its actions supported by the forces and means of the front's first-echelon troops.

At present a front offensive operation at the beginning of a war will not begin with a breach of the defense in its former sense, but with the delivery of a powerful first nuclear strike to the entire depth of the theater of military operations. Instead of the defense being breached by the troops themselves in narrow sectors of the front, its break-in will be accomplished by nuclear weapons with the destruction of the enemy being completed by the decisive attack of the troops of the first operational echelon. And as is known, we do not contemplate having the troops attack in a solid battle formation, but on a wide front on separate axes, at high speeds and to a great depth, and extensively exploiting the breaches and gaps made in the combat disposition of the enemy troops.

Under these conditions, a tank army will be committed, not into a breach as in the past, but to an engagement in the operational depth, based on its arrival to form part of the front, which may occur several days after the start of the operation. The commitment itself, in our opinion, must take the following shape.

First, one should strive to accomplish it from the march, without any halts right on the lines of commitment of the



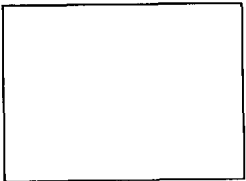


advancing tank large units, by having them deploy and go over to the attack without pausing.

Second, it is most advisable to commit the army to the engagement simultaneously with the delivery of nuclear strikes against the enemy using means of the General Headquarters of the Supreme High Command, the front, and the army itself. With this, it is not mandatory and not even desirable to deploy the troops in battle formations. Exploiting the results of our nuclear strikes, they must, without getting involved in battles, move swiftly forward not only in approach march formations but also in march columns, sending out forward detachments and security organs.

Third, it is not obligatory to always strive to commit the army to the engagement simultaneously at full strength from the same common line. The experience of exercises has shown that it is now more important to gain time so as to quickly develop success in the wake of the nuclear strikes. Therefore, the best result in exercises was achieved by committing the army's large units as they arrived and were ready, in succession, without waiting for them to concentrate all of their forces. Consequently, for the immediate commitment of the tank army to the engagement, in actual practice several lines (areas) will be assigned to each division, and not the same common line as was done in the past. Also, these lines can be at different depths, depending on the locations of our troops and the enemy troops, and usually on different axes.

The choice of the moment to commit the tank army to the engagement must obviously be approached differently. The swiftness of combat actions will no longer permit, as was done in the last war, delaying the army for a considerable time, halting it and waiting until favorable conditions for its commitment had been developed. Nor will the terrain and time of day have a determining effect on the decision whether or not to commit the army to the engagement. If a tank army has already gotten to the combat actions area, then it must be committed, endeavoring to sharply increase the rates of advance of the troops and to quickly complete the operation. It is not a matter of choosing the moment of commitment in its former sense, but of synchronizing the actions of the army troops with the nuclear strikes to be delivered against the enemy.





Under these conditions, in our opinion, there will be no need to begin and conduct simultaneous preparatory fire on an army scale. If it is necessary, then, obviously, it will be within the framework of divisions (regiments) and only on those axes where the enemy has not been destroyed by nuclear weapons and is offering resistance.

It is desirable to commit the approaching divisions of the tank army in the gaps between the attacking divisions (regiments) of the armies of the front's first echelon and not by leapfrogging over the latter's battle formations as was done formerly. In the last war it was almost impossible to avoid such leapfrogging, since the attack was carried out in solid battle formations. Moreover, there was no special danger in this because of the absence of powerful nuclear means and the considerable difference in mobility of the rifle and tank large units.

Under modern conditions, when a front's troops are attacking along separate axes, the commitment of tank divisions through the battle formations, let alone through the approach march formations, of already advancing large units can cause an excessive oversaturation of forces and means, intermixing of troops, and occurrence of traffic jams, which in turn will lead to confusion, losses, and a considerable reduction in the rates of advance. So this must be avoided.

There are also significant features in the methods of organizing the commitment of a tank army to the engagement. For instance, in view of the fact that there may not even be a front second-echelon army (tank or combined-arms) in the complement of the front before the start of the first operation, the front commander and his staff will not be able to organize and prepare its commitment to the engagement while they are engaged in planning and preparing the operation as was done in the years of the Great Patriotic War. They will get busy with this when the army is already moving up, when it becomes known that it is to join the front. Consequently, the tasks of the second-echelon army will be assigned, not at the same time that they are assigned to the rocket troops and the first-echelon armies, but during the conduct of the front's first operation.



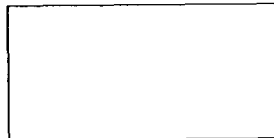


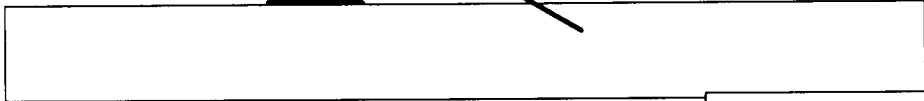
Thus, under the conditions being examined, the matters of committing the tank army of the front's second echelon to the engagement cannot be set forth fully in the overall plan for the operation; these matters will be included in the plan as a supplement while the operation is under way.

In the years of the last war, the commander of a tank army, based on the front commander's orders during the preparation of the front offensive operation, would carefully coordinate the procedure for actions personally with the commanders of the combined-arms armies and the large units of front subordination. Now he has to decide these matters during the conduct of the operation, i.e., in a more complex situation and, obviously, not in such detail as used to be done. He will not always be able to coordinate the procedure for actions personally with the commanders of the front first-echelon armies, to say nothing of carrying out reconnaissance on the ground.

Actual combat and operational training shows that a tank army must be assigned the task concerning the commitment to the engagement not later than one or two days' march before the commitment in order to allow the army commander and his staff more time to become personally familiar with the situation and the front's operation plan and also to organize and plan the army's impending operation. Therefore, we believe that the tank army commander with an operations group from his staff must, right at the beginning of the movement of his troops, go to the front commander to receive the tasks and orders on the commitment to the engagement. Subsequently, immediately before the commitment, this task may be refined in line with the changing situation and the condition of the army's troops as they arrive. In individual cases, the task for the commitment to the engagement may be transmitted to the tank army commander in a general form over technical means of communications or an officer of the front staff will personally hand him the operational directive for the operation.

In contrast to the past, the commitment of a tank army to the engagement in a modern front operation includes not only the commitment of the tank divisions, but above all, the delivery of nuclear strikes, independently of whether the enemy is on the defense or on the offense. Nuclear weapons, under these conditions, are the main means of destroying the enemy and



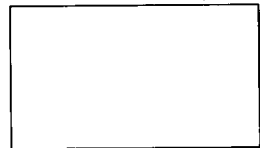


achieving the goals of the operation and not a means of fire support and protection as, for instance, artillery was in the years of the last war. Therefore, a tank army can achieve greatest success if the actions of its large units entering into battle are timed to coincide with the delivery of a massed nuclear strike. And the beginning of the commitment of a tank army now should be considered to be not the deployment and going over to the offensive by its divisions, but the delivery of nuclear strikes by the army missile brigade and by those nuclear means with which the army has been reinforced.

It will be especially advantageous if, before the commitment of the tank army to the engagement, nuclear strikes are delivered by front means and even by those of the General Headquarters of the Supreme High Command against the most important enemy targets. Moreover, the experience of exercises has shown that immediately before the commitment of the tank army to the engagement, it is necessary to hit with nuclear weapons not only the enemy's means of nuclear attack, but also his ground forces groupings, especially those which are taking aggressive offensive actions.

The tank army's divisions being committed to the engagement must act swiftly to penetrate as deeply as possible into the enemy's disposition in order to exploit most effectively the results of the nuclear strikes delivered against him.

As for using the army missile brigade, it is obviously most advantageous to move it up beforehand into siting areas and bring it to readiness for launching missiles even before the arrival and deployment of the tank divisions. Here the front commander will determine, depending on the situation and the course of development of the front operation, the time for the delivery of nuclear strikes by the brigade. In our opinion, it is absolutely unnecessary to delay the delivery of nuclear strikes while waiting for the approach of the tank divisions. For instance, if they are delivered a little bit early, no great harm will be done, since the front commander will direct divisions of the first-echelon armies already in action to exploit the results of the strikes. These armies, as well as front rocket troops, will obviously be given orders on the delivery of nuclear strikes against the enemy. But delay in delivering nuclear strikes, when they are carried out after the commitment of the tank divisions,





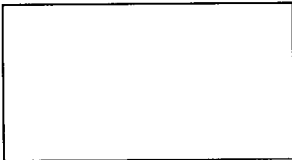
in our opinion, should be considered a disadvantageous and untypical occurrence.

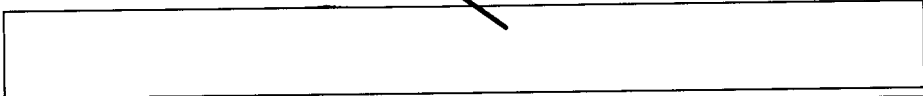
Nor can we rule out the case where a tank army to be moved up from the interior of the country will not have in its complement a sufficient number of missile units. For instance, the missile brigade designated for inclusion in the army may be moved up to join the front beforehand, perhaps even by the beginning of the first operation, in order to participate in the first nuclear strike. Under such conditions, upon the arrival of the army to join the front, this or some other missile brigade will be subordinated to it. Sometimes the army will have to be given even more nuclear means, especially when it is designated to engage in action on a newly opened operational axis.

But if the army is committed to the engagement with a missile brigade in its complement, it is advisable for the latter to occupy siting areas as close as possible to the front line so that it does not have to relocate once more, especially during the successful development of the offensive.

The experience of exercises has shown that if the initiative is on the side of the operating front, the distance of the siting areas of the missile brigade is limited to 40 to 50 kilometers. This distance, if one keeps in mind that it takes 1.5 to two hours to ready a brigade to launch missiles, will ensure timely delivery of nuclear strikes even if the missile battalions could not be moved into the siting areas ahead of time. The forward detachments under whose cover the brigade will move will cover 40 to 50 kilometers in these 1.5 to two hours and, the moment they enter combat, just then can nuclear strikes be delivered against the enemy.

But in case the enemy has managed to seize the initiative on the army's axis of commitment to the engagement, then the distance of the siting areas of the army's missile brigade can be greater. Under these conditions, to deliver nuclear strikes when committing the tank divisions, we can also call upon their missile battalions (with part of their forces or in full strength), which must move up together with the forward detachments and deploy to occupy launching positions so as to ensure the missiles are launched the moment the forward detachments initiate action.





In the commitment of a tank army to the engagement, special importance is given to matters of cooperation, which, in comparison with the past and by their nature, are changing significantly owing to the increase in the number of cooperating forces and means and the necessity of resolving in a different way all matters of the coordination of troop efforts.

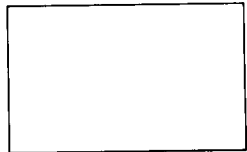
The tank army's commitment to the engagement must above all be coordinated according to tasks, time, and place with the nuclear strikes delivered by front means.

During the commitment to the engagement, as during the movement of the tank army, it is necessary to maintain cooperation with the front air defense troops and the air defense forces of the country as well as with the aviation covering the advancing troops against enemy air raids. The front commander decides all of these matters. This being the case, it is very important to distribute tasks and targets correctly among the front and army missile brigades and also the front aviation.

Based on the time of delivery of nuclear strikes by the front means, the tank army commander (on the basis of the orders of the front commander) will assign appropriate tasks to the army missile brigade and determine the time and axis of attack of each division. It is very important to resolve in good time matters of cooperation between the tank army to be committed to the engagement and the first-echelon armies of the front. For this purpose, representatives of the tank army staff should be sent to the staffs of the armies already engaged with the task of precisely ascertaining the position of our own troops and of the enemy troops, the nature of the actions in the army's zone of commitment and on the flanks, the procedure of organizing reconnaissance and control, etc.

The main concern of the tank army commander and his staff will be to coordinate matters of cooperation with the commander and staff of the tank army already operating as part of the front (if there is one), since these armies will obviously have to operate as a single tank grouping.

As for the joint actions of the tank divisions being committed with the large units of the first-echelon armies of the front, these are coordinated mainly with respect to axes of





attack.

Here, we consider that transferring divisions already operating in the zone of commitment over to the complement of the tank army is not at all obligatory, although, as the experience of exercises has shown, this has almost become the rule. Such a transfer is characteristic of those conditions where a combined-arms army, but not a tank army, is committed to the engagement. Why, for instance, resubordinate to a tank army the motorized rifle divisions of combined-arms armies that are in action if, being already weakened before this, they will, after a short time, lag behind the fresh divisions being committed? It is clear that such subordination will only burden the tank army. If there are tank divisions in action in the zone of commitment, they can sometimes be resubordinated to the tank army being committed to create a stronger tank grouping.

The organization of cooperation also involves deciding questions about the use of routes in the army's zone of commitment, especially when its troops traverse different kinds of defiles, crossings, etc. Here it is important to give the tank army the opportunity of moving up without hindrance towards the axes of impending actions. In organizing cooperation when committing a tank army to the engagement, it is also important to coordinate its actions with any operational airborne landing force to be dropped by decision of the General Headquarters of the Supreme High Command. In this case, it is necessary for the tank divisions to develop the offensive as swiftly as possible from the very start of their commitment so that they can join the landing force units as soon as possible.

We would like to direct attention to the fact that, under modern conditions, the movement, deployment, and commitment of a tank army to the engagement as though a single process, are sometimes understood as non-stop actions over hundreds of kilometers. This is a frequent practice in exercises.

But in reality the army, in the course of moving up, will necessarily have to stop in areas for day halts or night rest. In our opinion, it should also be halted (though only for a short time) after completing the march from the interior of the country to put its materiel in working order, fuel up, and afford its personnel a short rest. Such a halt will not require more than

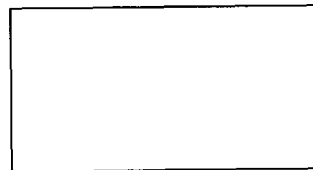




six to eight hours. And it is best done not closer than 40 to 50 kilometers to the front line so that the army's troops are not within range of the enemy's tactical means of nuclear attack. Even with such a distance, the tank army, to enter the engagement from the march, will have to complete a march up to 100 kilometers long, since during its halt the front's first echelon will have been able to move another 50 to 60 kilometers forward. But in a number of cases the army may make its last halt an even greater distance away, especially under conditions where the enemy is conducting aggressive offensive actions on the axis of its commitment. But under all conditions it is necessary to endeavor that the length of the army's march immediately before the commitment to the engagement is not over 100 kilometers. Otherwise it will be hard for the army troops to fulfil the task while maintaining in addition a rate of advance of up to 100 kilometers per day.

When committing a tank army to the engagement it will be difficult to control troops, which, having moved up on different kinds of transport, will be stretched out along the routes under conditions of demolitions, terrain contamination, and enemy actions.

Furthermore, during the combat actions of the front's first-echelon troops, the situation may change drastically, which will also substantially affect the actions of the tank army and, in particular, its troop control procedures. For instance, the army commander, after having made the decision for the operation and having assigned the tasks to the troops, will have to refine them repeatedly and sometimes even introduce substantial corrections. This matter receives insufficient attention in the conduct of exercises, and in actual practice it turns out that the decision to commit the army to the engagement, made while it is still moving up, is not refined because changes in the situation are not taken into consideration. We believe that, under modern conditions, this is an unwarranted conventionality and will do harm to the operational and combat training of the troops. Naturally, before putting them into effect, the army commander will report all refinements and changes to the front commander and even receive a number of additional orders from him. In our opinion, these matters should be more carefully worked out in exercises, war games, and even special short operational problems.

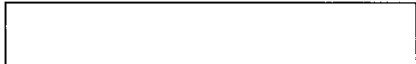


To control troops already in the process of moving up will require setting up the appropriate control posts. The experience of exercises has shown that the main posts under these conditions will be the command post, the forward command post, and the rear control post. This has already been discussed repeatedly in the pages of this Collection. By way of addition let us note that the army commander together with the operations group of the staff must be sure to locate themselves at the forward command post which is to be organized at the very beginning of movement in the area where it is anticipated the army will be committed to the engagement. There, obviously, the work of organizing and planning the impending army operation will be done. During the movement of troops, the command post will obviously have to be relocated by bounds, maintaining continuous communications with the large units and units and also with the forward command post and the rear control post.

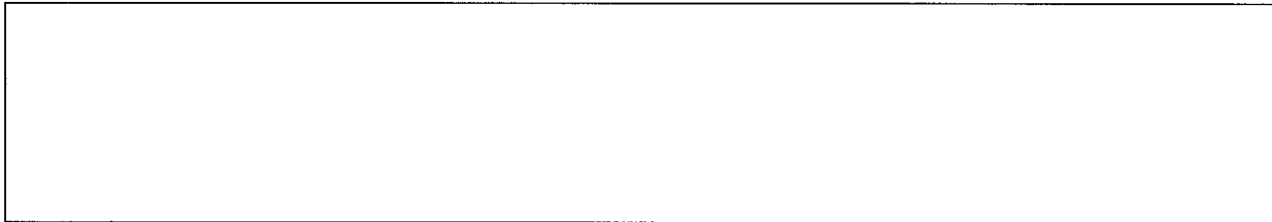
In the relocation of control posts both during the movement of troops and during the operation, the quick shifting of small operations groups in helicopters proved effective. This was the case, for instance, in the exercises in the Moscow Military District in 1962 where these groups were dropped to organize the command post (forward command post), get it set up, and provide communications with the troops beforehand.

In conclusion, let us note that the movement and commitment of a tank army of a front's second echelon to the engagement under modern conditions constitutes an involved process requiring careful organization and support. The main thing here consists in the effective use of nuclear weapons and the quick movement and decisive actions of the tank divisions called upon to exploit to the maximum the results of nuclear strikes for the purposes of rapidly completing the operation that is to be conducted to the entire depth of the theater of military operations.

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