

RECORD COPY



FOREIGN DOCUMENTS DIVISION

TRANSLATION

Number 966

23 August 1966

SELECTED TRANSLATIONS FROM "VOYENNAYA MYSL'."

No 1, January 1966

OFFICE OF CENTRAL REFERENCE  
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

Voyennaya Mysl' (Military Thought) is a monthly organ of the USSR Ministry of Defense, printed by the ministry's Military Publishing House, Moscow. The articles translated below are from Issue No 1, January 1966 which was signed for the press 25 December 1965.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
The Marxist-Leninist Theory of Knowledge and Its Significance In Soviet Military Science and Practice, by Maj Gen N. Sushko and Capt 2d Rank V. Puzik	1
Essence and Phenomenon in Military Affairs, by Col I. Grudinin	17
Combat Operations by Tank Units Against Operational Defense Reserves, by Lt Gen (Res) B. Arushanyan	29
Factors Influencing the Organizational Structure of Ground Forces, by Col M. Kir'yan	36
Logistical Support for Troop Regroupings, by Maj Gen A. Skovoroda	45
A New Edition of a Scholarly Work on War and the Army	51
A Necessary Book for Generals and Officers	59

COMBAT OPERATIONS BY TANK UNITS AGAINST  
OPERATIONAL DEFENSE RESERVES

by Lt Gen (Res) Rsrv B. Arushanyan

CPYRGHT

In resolving the problem of combat operations against operational defense reserves along with problems dealing with the use of nuclear weapons and several others, of great interest is the utilization of tank assault groups. Moving ahead of the main forces and at a considerable distance from them, tank soyedineniya will be the first of the advancing ground forces to engage in combat with the tactical reserves of the defensive forces. The latter may differ in composition and designation. Initially they will be neighboring reserves -- as a rule consisting of several individual soyedineniya or unified into a single unit type such as an army corps, and subsequently deep reserves, represented most frequently by individual infantry or tank soyedineniya, possibly having been less exposed to strikes and retaining their combat capability to a relatively greater degree. Airborne troops may also be dropped in the path of advancing forces in order to hold important installations and key positions. Naturally the defending forces will attempt to unify in a single plan the employment in a given area of all their tactical reserves, putting them into action chiefly with the aim of striking from various directions, immediately following nuclear strikes by missiles and aircraft and supported by conventional weapons.

All defense reserves, in the interest of maintaining a high rate of advance, gaining time and attaining the objectives of an offensive operation in a short period of time, should definitely be destroyed preferably as they are detected, or upon their approach and deployment. In principle the nuclear firepower of the advancing forces enables them to carry out such assignments even if the total forces of all troops engaged in combat and deploying reserves are superior to the tank group operating out in front. Obviously this is possible in practice only if the advancing forces possess the requisite quantity of nuclear warheads and reliable means of delivering them to the target. It is most probable that it will be necessary to destroy reserves subsequently, concentrating the main efforts on defeating the strongest and most dangerous reserve groupings at a given time. Air strikes and airborne assaults as well as soyedineniya advancing directly behind the tank group can be directed against other reserves. In this situation an important condition for successful operations against defense reserves is to take care of them by chastis. This in turn depends on the skilled employment of nuclear weapons and on taking swift advantage of the results of strikes. Of great importance is a rapid rate of tank advance. The more rapid the rate of advance, the less manpower and weapons will be required in

principle to carry out a given assignment of taking care of enemy reserves. With an overall high rate of advance, actions not only by the tank group as a whole but by individual chasti can be extremely effective. Advancing on the heels of nuclear strikes, they are capable of consistently handling considerably superior defense forces.

CPYRGHT

Even if the defending forces have been able to deploy and simultaneously bring large reserves into action, it will of course not be advisable to employ against these reserves the entire force of the tank group, thus creating the threat of becoming involved in a protracted engagement. To take care of such forces it is desirable to use primarily mass destruction weapons and minimum forces from the tank group, using the rest of the tank forces to advance deep into enemy lines. In order quickly to complete the elimination of enemy reserves, sometimes part of the forces from the second echelon or senior command reserves can be moved up. Thus in order to wipe out defense force reserves joined into various groupings, under modern conditions as a rule one should not employ the main forces of the tank groups operating out in front. These groups should push their rapid advance deep into enemy lines in the interests of carrying out their main assignment -- rapid attainment of the objectives of the operation. In order for part of the tank group forces to handle the assignment of taking care of the defense reserves, first of all continuous reconnaissance will be required, timely annihilation of nuclear defense weapons, skilled utilization of the results of offensive nuclear strikes, close coordination between advancing tank soyedineniya, attack aircraft and airborne assaults, as well as reliable air cover for the tank troops. In addition it is essential to provide ahead of time the execution of all preparatory measures connected with support for successful tank group operations separated great distances from the remaining advancing forces. These measures include engineer support for traversing zones of destruction and radioactive contamination deep in enemy defense, the crossing of a number of water barriers and other types of support.

In order to achieve a high rate of advance and to create the requisite conditions for putting defense reserves out of action, in a number of cases airborne troops will be required, as well as air drops of units of the advancing forces, which are capable of anticipating defending forces in taking action, seizing and holding important installations and areas until the tank forces arrive (airfields, port facilities, primary crossing points over major water boundaries, mountain passes, road junctions, etc.), as well as delaying the deployment of certain reserve columns until others are put out of action and securing the flanks of the advancing tank forces.

Tank units operating far ahead of the rest of the advancing forces can take care of operational defense reserves in a meeting engagement, an advance against reserves temporarily on the defensive, by

CPYRGHT

pinning down reserves with part of the forces and subsequent or simultaneous strikes by the main forces.

Considerable attention has been devoted to problems of the meeting engagement in military literature. Therefore we should like to examine only a few features of the meeting engagement, which a tank group can conduct simultaneously with several soyedineniya of tactical reserves operating from different directions. In this situation the nuclear weapons at the disposal of the tank group, as well as a certain quantity of nuclear warheads from the larger unit, will be concentrated against the primary grouping of defending forces which are the most heavily equipped with nuclear weapons and which present a serious threat to the advancing forces in the forthcoming meeting engagement. Air power will be directed toward wiping out intact combat chast'i and podrazdeleniya of those defensive forces against which nuclear strikes were launched. If air power potential at a given moment is somewhat limited, air strikes should be directed against the most dangerous grouping of defense reserves not yet struck by nuclear weapons, approaching the area of the meeting engagement.

Systematic strikes against troops in narrow spots, road junctions, destruction of bridges and crossings over major water barriers even with conventional weapons may delay reserves significantly and cause heavy losses. This is attested to by the experience of the Great Fatherland War. We have examples of successful actions by Soviet air power in delaying German tactical reserves, particularly during the counter-offensive toward Belgorod and Khar'kov. In this operation, as a result of strikes by the 8th and 17th Air armies and long-range bombers, followed by soyedineniya of the 2nd and 5th Air armies, a large group of enemy tank forces which were being shifted from the Donbass to the Khar'kov area sustained heavy losses. What is most important, the tanks were unable to arrive on time at the designated areas to prepare countermeasures (Istoriya Velikoy Otechestvennoy vojny Sovetskogo Soyuza 1941-1945 [History of the Great Fatherland War of the Soviet Union 1941-1945], Vol 3, Voenizdat, 1964, page 287).

Air strikes against approaching reserve columns will increase as they approach the deployment area and reach maximum at the initial moment of the meeting engagement. At this time nuclear strikes can be most effective. In all cases one should attempt to reach a position in order to launch nuclear-missile strikes or air strikes with nuclear or conventional warheads against spotted reserves before they are able to employ their nuclear weapons. With this objective in mind it will be necessary to increase the intensity of aerial reconnaissance in the interests of the tank group. Reconnaissance should be conducted continuously far out in front, as well as on the flanks of the tank group. The highest demands are placed on night reconnaissance and reconnaissance under poor visibility conditions along probable reserve approach routes.

Under these conditions it is particularly important to determine the direction of movement of enemy columns as rapidly as possible, to discover the primary concentration of enemy reserves and determine the location of nuclear weapons which can be utilized by the defending forces against the advancing units. This will make it possible to determine the plan for utilization of reserves and provide enough time to prepare for employing missiles and nuclear weapons, to assign missions to the aircraft and troops designated to destroy the enemy reserves in a meeting engagement.

The form of combat operations by a tank group in a meeting engagement with dispersed march and battle formations will most frequently constitute tactically intercoordinated strikes from various directions, launched in coordination with nuclear strikes, as well as advance and frontal shift by some of the forces in a new direction. In the latter case there will of course be no time for a complicated maneuver. Therefore before turning the front of some of the advancing forces toward the flank, of particular significance is anticipating the enemy in launching mass nuclear strikes at all newly spotted elements and at their nuclear weapons. Under these conditions the nuclear weapons of the higher command will have to be brought in to supplement strikes by local tactical weapons. Of particular significance also are bold and decisive actions by individual units of the tank group. The remaining tank forces should continue to advance rapidly in the main direction.

The elimination of tactical reserves can take place in a situation whereby they have been able partially or completely to shift to temporary defense with the aim of repelling the strike by the advancing tank forces, to weaken and delay their advance, to win time in order to regroup their own forces and prepare a new counterstrike.

If as a result of a successful meeting engagement a shift to the defensive has taken place along an unprepared line, it can usually be crossed and the defending forces taken care of while advancing, and if necessary immediately following nuclear strikes from the air. In case of an early shift of operational reserves to defense along a prepared line, in order to push across and wipe out the enemy it may be necessary to direct nuclear strikes and order a brief conventional artillery softening-up. Under these conditions of particular significance is preparation of the strike at such a time that would enable our forces to prevent the enemy, which has shifted to the defensive, from using nuclear weapons. In principle this becomes attainable only if combat against enemy nuclear weapons is waged continuously. In other words, it would be wrong to time the use of all weapons to the initial moment of artillery softening-up. Action against enemy nuclear weapons should be conducted continuously up to the preliminary artillery barrage, during and after it, as well as during the period of support of the advancing forces.

PYRGHT

The advancing forces can drop airborne troops to the rear of the reserves shifting to defensive actions. Also designated for seizing and holding important areas and lines along the approach routes of reserves further to the rear, with the aim of preventing reinforcement of the existing defense forces. The paratroop drop, in spite of the fact that the tank group is operating far ahead of the remaining advancing forces, will be set up and carried out by the higher command. As in a meeting engagement, the main forces of the tank group should not become involved in extended battle with the defense reserves, but should continue the advance. In order to wipe out the defending reserves it is advisable to utilize only part of the tank forces coming into direct contact with them, as well as newly-arrived soyedineniya of the main forces of the higher command.

In some cases a tank group out of physical contact with the remaining advancing forces will have to use part of its forces temporarily to pin down enemy reserves, shifting to defensive actions on a tactical scale at one point, with subsequent or simultaneous strikes by the main forces in another area. For example, this may occur with the necessity of delaying one group of defense reserves launching a counter-strike from different directions until the defeat of another, more dangerous group.

Temporary defense may also be employed if in any area the defense forces have succeeded in being first to launch nuclear strikes and the advancing forces need time to regain order. Part of the forces may shift to temporary defense as a result of an unsuccessful meeting engagement in any given area. Under these conditions a special feature of operations by tank forces will consist in the fact that organization of the fire system, the laying of tank traps in the most tank-vulnerable areas and digging-in actions by podrazdeleniya for repulsing the attack of the main forces of the approaching defense reserves will have to be done simultaneously with combat against engaged reserves. In this type of situation it is important not to scatter personnel and weapons in attempting to wipe out several enemy troop elements all at one time, but rather the most important should be chosen, the most dangerous to the advancing forces. We believe that in order successfully to repulse an enemy in direct contact it is advisable to employ the massed firepower of artillery and tanks along with nuclear strikes. The main efforts of the advancing forces, and primarily nuclear weapons and aircraft, should be directed toward destroying the approaching enemy reserves, enemy nuclear weapons and aircraft from the ground.

Renewed advance by that part of the tank forces temporarily shifting to the defensive will be organized while repulsing the enemy, with the approach of troops pulled from other areas, and the preparation of missiles, nuclear weapons and air power. The primary operations of the tank forces and newly-arrived soyedineniya and chasti from the advancing forces develop as soon as possible after mass nuclear strikes,

Approved For Release 2000/08/09 : CIA-RDP85T00875R000300090023-1  
on the flank and to the rear of the main group of operational defense re-  
serves and striking a counterstrike, with the objective of totally wiping  
them out.

A favorable result from the operations of a tank group in combat with operational defense reserves depends to a great extent on effective and continuous fighter aircraft and antiaircraft missile cover of its marching columns and combat formations. The seizure and holding of airfields and landing strips deep within enemy defenses aid the aircraft supporting the tank group.

Success in actions by tank groups against tactical defense reserves exerts a decisive effect on the outcome of the entire offensive. Therefore the high command must constantly be particularly concerned with keeping its forces at a proper degree of combat capability and with timely support of the combat operations of these groups deep inside enemy defenses, and it must be concerned with supporting these forces with needed missiles, nuclear weapons, fuel and ammunition, aircraft and anti-aircraft weapons. The organization and maintenance of continuous cooperation between neighboring tank groups also constitutes one of the major concerns of the higher command and its headquarters.

In conclusion we shall touch briefly on a few characteristics of combat by tank groups against operational defense reserves when advancing without the employment of nuclear weapons. Under conditions whereby both sides possess these weapons, each side, fearing a sudden nuclear strike by the other, will be compelled to maintain troop protective gear and their own weapons in constant readiness to launch an immediate retaliatory strike. Thus the threat of nuclear attack as well as other means and methods of conducting an offensive operation will leave their imprint on the combat operations of tank forces, including actions involving the annihilation of operational defense reserves. Speaking of conducting an offensive without nuclear weapons, one should bear in mind the immense changes which have occurred since the war in the development of conventional weapons and in troop organization. In view of these changes alone there can be no simple repeat of the techniques and forms of warfare employed in the last war. During the threat of nuclear attack the operational structure of defense and advancing troops will be preserved in almost the same form we see for nuclear war conditions. The defending forces will place their operational reserves in scattered and concealed staging areas, realizing the danger of nuclear strikes. The advancing forces, in order to overcome the resistance of defense reserves, will be compelled to concentrate considerable artillery firepower in the most important areas, will have to call in air power and possibly a preliminary artillery barrage. The rate of advance even of tank groups under these conditions will be slower than during an advance with nuclear weapons utilization. This will make it considerably easier for the defending forces to maneuver their operational reserves and organize in short

CPYRGHT



order (considering the threat of nuclear strikes) large counter-strike groups of these reserves. Under these conditions conventionally armed aircraft become much more important.

CPYRGHT

It will nevertheless be insufficiently effective to inflict losses on tactical defense reserves in areas of concentration and on the march by air power and artillery. As a result of this the reserves may approach the lines of deployment for launching a counterattack with greater combat capability than when nuclear weapons are employed. Under these conditions heavy forces will be required to stop a counterattack by the defending forces. Sometimes advancing ground forces will shift to temporary defense in order to repel a counterattack, with subsequent strikes and offensive movement once again with the aim of wiping out the counter-attacking elements.

Since conventional weapons will not be enough to assure simultaneous coverage of the entire depth of primary defenses, it will be necessary to successively eliminate initially nearby and subsequently deep tactical and strategic defense reserves. The primary role in destroying reserves and frustrating their counterattack will be tank troops in coordination with airborne troops, heavily supported by air power, particularly jet aircraft, and artillery.

We have examined only a few of what we believe to be the most vital problems in this area, and we do not claim to have dealt with them exhaustively. A further study of all aspects of the problem of engaging tactical defense reserves during an offensive constitutes one of the urgent tasks of Soviet military-scientific thought.