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THE PARTY AND THE ARMY - V

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INTRODUCTION

Between the death of Stalin in March 1953 and the disgrace of Marshal Zhukov in October 1957, the Soviet Army, personified by its World War II commander and most popular leader, seemed well on its way towards the peak of political power; in the two years since Khrushchev's victory over the anti-Party group, with the support of the Marshals in the Central Committee, all illusions concerning the relative power positions of the First secretary of the Central Committee, i.e. the Party and the Minister of Defense, i.e. the Army have been irreparably shattered. Although the exact details have not been documented, it can be assumed that in June 1957 Khrushchev exploited Zhukov in the intra Party struggle in order to establish his personal domination and used the Army as an instrument against his Party political opposition. Only 4 months later the First secretary was able to order his apparatchiks -- in the Party as well as in the Army -- to stifle any political pretensions which had arisen from Marshal Zhukov's fateful intervention in the struggle for power in the Presidium. Today, as the Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers, Khrushchev, a former political commissar in World War II, prepares for his visit to President Dwight Eisenhower, the career officer who commanded the Allied troops in Western Europe, the role of the Army in Soviet politics has been reduced to a minimum; in the words of a recent broadcast, the "Army is not a political force that sways the destinies of the State."¹

The methods employed to ensure that the abortive attempt to introduce a variation of military "revisionism" by Zhukov will not be repeated are simple in concept and direct in implementation. Since the publication of extracts from instructions of the CC, CPSU² and the adaptations issued jointly by the Komsomol and the Main Political Administration,³ stress on increased ideological indoctrination has been maintained at a constantly high level. This Agit-Prop work, however, has been supplemented by strengthening the authority and stepping up the activities of the Party's control and supervisory organs at all levels of the military apparatus. As in all previous periods when such political indoctrination is allocated a relatively greater role, the perennial problem of the relationships between political officers and the military commanders is inevitably posed. Despite continuous reaffirmation that the principle of "one man command" remains unimpaired, the reality of deeper Party penetration and ever more frequent intervention in operational matters -- called "assistance" to the unit commander -- is readily apparent. The standard formulation for the desired relationship is as follows:

¹ Radio Moscow, in English for North America, 17 July 1959.

² Krasnaya Zvezda, 25 May 1958.

³ Krasnaya Zvezda, 2 August 1958. See also Background Information, 7 November 1958, for text of article on same theme by Col. General (now Army General) F. Golikov, Chief of the Main Political Administration.

"The commander of a regiment, ship, or subunit who is a member of the CPSU relies in his work on the Party organization and directs its activity for the successful fulfillment of combat assignments, of plans for combat and political training, and for strengthening of military discipline. The commander...who is not a member relies on the Party organization for implementation of these assignments."⁴

In practise it is, of course, not simple to maintain the distinction between permitting Communist officers to "direct" and insisting that non-Communist commanders "rely on" the Party organization in any unit. No more clearly than in the factory, where the most recent innovation is the establishment of Party control committees, can the line between the authority of the single responsible functionary and the Party watchdogs be drawn. Thus, the delineation between command sectors and Party functions remains as ill-defined in the barracks and camps as in the shops and offices, although the intent is identical and unmistakable. Particularly when reduced to such a simple and direct formula as the following, there can be no doubt that, for every commander, the Party organization and the political officers represent an unavoidable dilution of power:

"Experience has shown that the authority of the one man commander is high where Party work is well organized."⁵

Models of the manner in which the approved combination is to be obtained appear as regular features in the military press. An interesting new note which fits perfectly into Khrushchev's concepts of appropriate cadre qualifications, in industry⁶ as well as in the Army, is also now being mentioned as a factor to be considered in the selection of political functionaries:

"It is true that we have some comrades in the cadre organs who assess the military professional maturity of a polit-worker only by a single, formal scale: If a person has graduated from a higher teaching institution and has received a diploma he is worthy of advancement in service; if he has no diploma, there can be no talk of such advancement.

"The error of such an assessment is obvious. The polit-worker Sanin has no higher military education. He excelled, however, in skillful party-political work, in his excellent knowledge of aviation technology, and his first-rate qualities as a pilot. He was promoted to a commander's post. Combat officer, navigator, Pilot Second Class Major Altunin, also, has only a secondary military education but he was assigned to politwork. We made no mistake by these appointments."⁷

⁴ Krasnaya Zvezda, 25 May 1958.

⁵ Col. General F. Golikov, Pravda, 29 August 1958.

⁶ V. Storozhev, Partinaya Zhizn, #9, 1954.

⁷ See below p. 10; Maj. General I. Bochenko, 1st Deputy Chief of the Political Administration of the Northern Military District, "Several Questions of Military Training of Politworkers," Krasnaya Zvezda, 9 July 1959.

This promotion of "proletarian" cadres into the ranks of the professional officers is, to be sure, hardly a mass phenomenon; it is, nevertheless, a meaningful indicator that Khrushchev's tested methods of Party control are being applied in the Army as well as in the ministerial and industrial bureaucracies. For all sectors of the State apparatus where yedinonachaliye is accepted in principle, it is applied in reality as follows:

"One man command is realized in the Soviet Armed Forces on a Party basis. The chief trait of the Soviet officer is his profound Party spirit (Partiinost) which is based on his ideological conviction and his boundless devotion to the people, the motherland, the Communist Party and the cause of communism."⁸

In the determination of the lists for promotion the present head of the Political Administration has stated that

"The political agencies must considerably step up their participation in the recruitment, placement and certification of officers, generals and admirals."⁹

To direct this work in its next phase Maj. General N. R. Mironov, an unknown political general has been promoted to replace the old Politruk, Col. General A. S. Zheltov,¹⁰ as head of a Department of the Central Committee.¹¹ The listing in which this identification was revealed places Mironov -- despite his grade -- immediately after Marshal Malinovsky and ahead of a senior political officer, Col. General P. I. Yefimov, 1st Deputy Chief of the Main Political Administration, as well as in front of a career officer, Marshal K. S. Mosrallenko, commander of the Moscow Military District. Assignment to Party work in the Central Committee, obviously, results in a change of protocol status which accurately reflects the relative importance of the organizations involved. In the early years of Khrushchev's one man rule over the Party State bureaucracy, the problem of one man command in the Army has been solved along familiar Party lines.

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⁸ Army General F. Golikov, Raise Party Political Work to the Level of Today's Tasks, Krasnaya Zvezda, 27 May 1959.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Head of the Lenin Military Academy, Pravda, 1 August 1959.

¹¹ Pravda, 8 August 1959. Mironov was a member of the Bureau of the Leningrad Obkom, and was presumably Chief of the Political Administration of the Leningrad Military District.

THE REDUCTIONS IN THE SOVIET ARMED FORCES

Bulletin of the Institute for the Study of the USSR

May 1959

by Nikolai Galay

On January 31, 1959, the Soviet newagency Tass announced that the Soviet armed forces had been reduced by 300,000 by January 1, 1959. It was further pointed out that this reduction, which was carried out in accordance with a Soviet government decree of December 21, 1957, was the third such cut. The first, a cut of 640,000 had been carried out by December 15, 1955, while the second, one of 1,200,000 had taken place over the period May 5, 1956 through May 1, 1957.¹ The Soviet armed forces have thus, at least according to official Soviet reports, been reduced by 2,140,000 men since 1955. Here, two obvious questions arise: (1) To what extent are these reports true, and (2) to what extent is the figure of 2,140,000 accurate. That there have been cuts in the Soviet armed forces since December 1955 is confirmed by reports in the satellite and Western presses. On June 20, 1956, the East German newsagency ADN carried a report on a farewell ceremony held at Brandenburg Airfield for the 200th Soviet Air Division, which was being disbanded and its officers and men demobilized.² The American and West European press reports further stated that representatives of the American, British and French armed forces had attended the ceremony.³ A little earlier, on June 14, 1956, ADN broadcast an interview with Commander in Chief of the Soviet Forces in Germany Marshal Grechko on the withdrawal from East Germany at the end of 1955 of 20 Soviet battalions, as part of the first reduction, and of "other units", a total of 20,000 men, who were later demobilized in the USSR. Grechko also referred to the forthcoming disbandment of three air divisions, artillery, armored, and other units in Germany, a total of 35,000 men.⁴ Reports are further available that three battleships have been scrapped and some obsolete small warships mothballed.⁵ Furthermore, the Western military press has published data that Soviet ground forces have been cut from 175-180 divisions in 1955 to 140 in 1958.⁶

Composition of the Soviet Armed Forces in 1955 and 1958

GROUND FORCES

1955	1958
175-180 Divisions (including 55-60 Armored)	140 Divisions (including 70 Armored)
40-45 Artillery Divisions	40 Artillery Divisions (including some Tactical Missile Units)
5-6 Cavalry Divisions	Unknown Number of Cavalry Divisions
Several Hundred Independent Brigades	Unknown Number of Independent Brigades
	130 Cadre Divisions

¹ Izvestia, January 31, 1959.

² Archiv der Gegenwart, Bonn, June 20, 1956.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ The Naval Records, New York, Vol. XVI, No. 1 (46), p. 111.

Flottentaschenbuch Weyers, "UdSSR," Munich, 1953, p. 140; 1958, p. 170.

⁶ Wehrwissenschaftliche Rundschau, Darmstadt, No. 1 (1958) pp. 55-56.

NAVY	
1955	1958
4 Battleships (1 Shore Defense)	10 Cruisers
10 cruisers (old Type)	20 Light Cruisers (Sverdlov Type)
18 Light Cruisers (Sverdlov Type)	150 Destroyers
150 Destroyers	550 Submarines
400-50 Submarines	500 Torpedo Boats
Several Hundred Smaller Vessels	1,000 Smaller Vessels

AIR FORCE	
70-80 Air Divisions (Comprising 350-400 Air Regiments and 20,000 Aircraft)	400 Air Regiments 19,000 Aircraft including 10,000 Tactical Air Force 3,500 Air Defense ⁺ 3,500 Naval Air Force ⁺ 1,500 Long Range 500 Transport

STRATEGIC MISSILE UNITS

None

Number Unknown

ANTIAIRCRAFT DEFENSE UNITS

Made a separate arm in 1955. Comprises Antiaircraft Artillery Units, Fighter Aircraft, Radar Defense System, Civil Air Defense Organization (MPVO). Much attention paid to this arm in 1955-1958. At least three antiaircraft defense districts in existence in 1956: Moscow, Leningrad, Baku.

⁺Air Defense and Naval Air Force Units, although attached to Antiaircraft Defense and the Navy, respectively, are nevertheless subordinate administratively to the Air Force High Command.

Sources: Neue Zürcher Zeitung, May 26, 1954 and May 18, 1956; Jane's Fighting Ships, 1954-55, London, 1955, pp. 300-332; Flotten-taschenbuch Wyers "UdSSR", Munich, 1953, pp. 140-57 and 241-56; 1958, pp. 170-184; Raymond L. Garthoff, Soviet Strategy in the Nuclear Age, New York, 1958, p. 57.

The Soviet figure of 2,140,000 is, however, extremely questionable, since it would imply a reduction of about 50%. As is known, of the 1954 total of 4,700,000 to 4,900,000 men, ground forces accounted for 2,600,000 to 2,700,000 of this figure; the Air Force for 800,000; the Navy for 600,000; and the MVD troops and the KGB Border Units for 700,000 to 800,000.⁷ The reductions announced obviously did not affect the latter very much, if only because the Soviet Union is a police state and the border troops are intended to isolate the country from the outside world. Hence, such a large reduction of 2,140,000 could only have been made at the expense of the armed forces proper. The figures in the preceding table on the composition of the Soviet armed forces in 1955 and 1958, that is, before and after two cuts of 640,000 and 1,200,000, show the disparity between the large-scale reductions announced and the negligible number of major units disbanded:

As the table shows, the reductions have taken place mainly in the ground forces and Navy. The Air Force has remained more or less

⁷Army Combat Forces Journal, Washington, No 3 (1954).

untouched. The period 1957-58, has, however, seen the appearance on the scene of new strategic units, namely units equipped with long- and intermediate-range missiles, intended to supplement long-range aviation. In addition, there has been an increase in the number of large tactical units: 130 cadre, or "skeleton", divisions have been formed in the ground forces; the number of submarine flotillas increased, with a corresponding extension in the number of shore bases, while the antiaircraft defense system has been introduced and extended.

Despite the lack of any details whatsoever about some branches of the Soviet armed forces in the above table, it is hardly likely that the number of large tactical units presently in existence has been affected very much by the reductions. Furthermore, the reduction has been compensated for in part by the creation of new tactical units. If the 50% reduction were true, it would in turn imply a considerable cut in the size of Soviet divisions and brigades. The latter is hardly likely. Soviet ground and air units have always been numerically much smaller than their counterparts in the West, particularly American units, something like 70% in fact, although they have about the same fire power. The American and British cuts were mainly at the expense of the service troops. Soviet divisions have, on the other hand, always had very small service units.

The answer as to what form the reduction took and just how large it was, is in spite of Soviet secrecy, provided by the 20th and 21st Party Congresses and the Twelfth and Thirteenth Komsomol Congresses. The Twelfth Komsomol Congress was held in March 1954, prior to the first cut; the 20th Congress in February 1956 at about the same time as the cut of 640,000; the Thirteenth Komsomol Congress in April 1958, after the second reduction of 1,200,000; and the 21st Party Congress in January 1959, after the announcement of the latest reduction of 300,000. A knowledge of the number of military delegates at these congresses, will enable one to calculate reasonably accurately the number of Party and Komsomol members in the armed forces prior to the first and after the third, and to date, most recent cut. A knowledge of the number of Party and Komsomol members in the Army in relation to its overall strength will enable one to establish the approximate size of the Soviet armed forces before and after the reductions. In 1954, before the first reduction, there were 1,334 delegates representing 18,825,327 Komsomol members at the Twelfth Komsomol Congress, that is, one delegate per 14,000 and not 15,000 members as laid down in the regulations. According to calculations by the Congress Credentials Commission there were 218 military delegates at the Congress;⁸ hence they represented about 3,050,000 Komsomol members in the armed forces.

The 20th Party Congress was attended by 116 military delegates, elected in accordance with the general system of one delegate for every 5,000 Party members and candidate members. They thus represented 580,000 Party members in the armed forces.⁹ In the period

⁸ Komsomolskaya Pravda, March 23, 1954.

⁹ Krasnaya zvezda, February 24, 1956; Bulletin, Munich, No. 4, (1956), pp. 3-11.

from 1954 down to the beginning of 1956, the total number of Party and Komsomol members in the Soviet armed forces was 3,600,000 to 3,700,000. According to a statement by Molotov, Party and Komsomol members comprised in February 1955 77% of the total armed forces.¹⁰ The latter must accordingly have amounted to 4,700,000 to 4,800,000 at the beginning of the cuts. These calculations coincide with estimates made by Western specialists as to the size of the Soviet armed forces at the beginning of 1955. The Thirteenth Komsomol Congress was held in April 1958 after two reductions allegedly involving 1,840,000 men. The Credentials Commission reported that each delegate represented 15,000 Komsomol members.¹¹ There were between 149 and 153 military delegates at the Congress. An exact figure cannot be given since 4 delegates were absent for various reasons.¹² The military delegates accordingly represented between 2,250,000 and 2,300,000 Komsomol members in the armed forces. Hence the latter had dropped by 750,000 to 800,000 in comparison with 1954. There had been two reductions over the period 1954-1958, 640,000 and 1,200,000, while a third had, according to the Soviets, been going on since the beginning of 1958. These cuts were to have totaled 2,000,000 by April 1958. In 1954, Komsomol members comprised about 65% of the armed forces, 3,050,000 out of 4,700,000. A reduction of 2,000,000 would have meant a corresponding drop in Komsomol membership by 1,300,000, presuming that the percentage relationship had not altered. By April 1958, the figure of 65% had probably not altered, since the mass defection from the Komsomol under the influence of the "thaw" of 1956-57 had been compensated for by April 1958 by the Party's half-yearly work "to step up the Party's influence in the armed forces," which took the form of intensified recruitment into the youth organization a result of the Party Central Committee decree of November 3, 1957.

The reductions in the Soviet armed forces up to April 1958 thus totaled in all probability not 2,000,000, as the Soviets insist, but at most, 1,100,000 to 1,200,000 men. If Soviet reports on the rush to join the Army Komsomol organizations after November 1957 are believed, then Komsomol members probably comprise more than 65% of the total, thus making the cuts even smaller. On the basis of these calculations the assertion can be made that the Soviet forces, including the MVD and KGB troops, amounted in April 1958 to 4,800,000 less 1,150,000 that is, to 3,650,000. The third reduction continued from April 1958 to January 1, 1959, amounting to a further 150,000 to 200,000. If it was really carried out, the present figure would be about 3,500,000. The three reductions thus amounted not to 2,140,000 but to 1,200,000 to 1,300,000. These figures are indirectly confirmed by the number of military delegates present at the 21st Party Congress in 1959. The Congress revealed quite clearly that primarily officers and non-commissioned officers who did not belong to the Party had been demobilized or transferred to the reserve. According to the Credentials Commission, there were 91 military delegates at the Congress, elected on the basis of one delegate for every 6,000 Party members.¹³

¹⁰ Pravda, Feb. 9, 1955.

¹¹ Komsomolskaya Pravda, November 30, 1957.

¹² Ibid, April 17, 1958.

¹³ Pravda, January 30, 1959.

They represented 460,000 Party members in the armed forces. Such a negligible drop after three reductions, only 34,000 , or 6%, in comparison with the figure in 1956 prior to the first cut, makes a reduction of 2,140,000 extremely unlikely.

If one remembers that Party members in the Soviet armed forces represent all the senior command personnel, almost all the intermediate (up to battalion commander) a small number of junior officers, and most of the noncommissioned officers serving beyond their time, then, presuming that there was a major cut, as announced by the Soviets, an extremely abnormal situation has been created. The extremely small reduction in command personnel would make the Army top-heavy with senior- and intermediate-level officers. The probable cut, from 4,800,000 to 3,500,000 or 25%, and the extremely negligible reduction in the command personnel implies that the Army is actually well on the way to becoming a professional force. This process is emphasized further by the fact that, given their present strength of 3,500,000, the armed forces cannot possibly absorb the 2,000,000 young persons drafted annually, a figure which will remain reasonably constant down to 1961. Length of service is fixed at 2 years for the Army and MVD troops, 3 years for the KGB border unit and the Air Force, and 4 years for the Navy and Coastal Defense Units.¹⁴ The tendency to turn the Soviet Army into a professional body is fraught with extremely far-reaching military, political, and social consequences.

The recent reorganization of the Soviet armed forces is obviously intended to adapt them to the demands of the atomic age. This process can best be explained by an analysis of the present reorganization of Western armed forces, in particular those of the United States, which began in 1954. The development of atomic and nuclear weapons, of long-range air forces and ballistic missiles has led countries such as America and Great Britain to reduce and adjust their armed forces in keeping with the demands of modern warfare. The table below shows the recent and future planned reductions in the American armed forces:

Composition of the American Armed Forces, 1953-60.

	1953	1956	1960 (Plan)
Ground Forces	1,510,000	1,030,000	580,000
Navy	1,039,000	864,000	664,000
Air Force	958,000	916,000	820,000
Total	3,507,000	2,810,000	2,064,000

Source: The New York Times, July 15, 1956.

As the table shows, America is intending to cut its forces by as much as 40%. American ground forces are to be cut almost three fold by 1960, and armed in turn with atomic weapons and missiles. The Navy is to be reduced by about one third during the

¹⁴ Bolshaya sovetskaya entsiklopediya (The Large Soviet Encyclopedia), BSE, Moscow, 2nd ed. 1951, IX, 307.

process of rearmament with new types of weapons. Emphasis is being placed on the Air Force, the planned reduction being very insignificant. By way of comparison, the Soviets cuts have taken the form of an overall reduction of about 25% in the period 1956-1958. Most affected were the ground forces - line divisions being reduced by one-quarter and the "independent" brigades even more. Despite the increase in the number of submarines, the Navy cannot have made up the reductions carried out - ships mothballed or scrapped, coastal units cut, and so on. As far as the Air Force is concerned, there have not been any major changes in the number of tactical units, air regiments, hence personnel cannot have been reduced.

On the basis of this data an attempt can be made to give some idea of the size of the individual branches of the Soviet armed forces. The Air Force, including here the Strategic Air Force and guided missile units, although their development is the concern of the Artillery Command, has retained its earlier numbers of about 800,000. The Navy has apparently been cut down to about 500,000. The KGB border units were reduced somewhat, since the USSR is protected by a number of buffer states - the satellites and China. Hence together with the MVD troops, they amount to about 600,000. The Army comprises the remainder, about 1,700,000 giving a grand total of 3,500,000.⁺

The main reason for the reorganization of the Western and Soviet military systems is the recognition by the countries concerned of the fact that their armed forces must be put on a new footing in order to meet the demands of the atomic age. At this point, however, any further similarity in the Soviet and American approach to the problem ends. America has recently embarked on a policy of building up strategic units armed with atomic weapons as a means of countering any large-scale Communist aggression. Various economic and political factors have compelled both America and Great Britain to abandon the simultaneous development of conventional ground forces and to relegate them to second place in their military systems. By 1960 American ground forces are to be reduced almost threefold, and a country with a population of 173,000,000 presently possesses only about 20 Army divisions. Although American ground forces are now equipped with tactical atomic weapons, which considerably increase their fire power, and have a maneuverable strategic reserve of 4 divisions, which can be rapidly moved about by air, such a small number of divisions dispersed throughout the world can at most only play a purely defensive role. The American armed forces would be able to wage a full-scale war in which the main roles would be played by the Strategic Air Force and Navy, but they would be at a considerable disadvantage in small-scale or localized conflicts, where the use of strategic atomic and nuclear weapons is impossible or senseless and large ground forces are needed.

The Soviet leaders have approached the problem of the reorganization and reduction of their forces from a different standpoint. The development of the Strategic Air Force and of long-range missiles and the fact that Soviet submarines are equipped with intermediate-range missiles all point to the Soviets' desire to be prepared for an all-out nuclear war. Moscow is further endeavoring to use this development and the strategic forces at its

⁺Includes the antiaircraft defense, which comprises units from all branches of the services, about 200,000 men in all.

disposal as a means of exerting psychological pressure on the non-Communist world. These forces are intended to paralyze American forces by the creation of a "statemate" in the field of strategic atomic weapons. At the same time, the Soviets have preserved their enormous ground forces. The latter still comprise almost 50% of the peacetime armed forces. In addition, the Army has considerable reserves in the form of the KGB border units and the MVD troops, which can be used to supplement the ordinary ground forces, as was the case during World War II. Although the cuts have been mainly at the expense of the Army, a reduction of 1,000,000 in comparison with 1955, it still has an extremely large number of units, that is, divisions. Furthermore, the creation of 130 cadre divisions is intended to offset the reductions made. This system enables the Soviets to increase the strength of the armed forces simply by drafting reservists to bring the cadre divisions and other units up to full strength at any time, without a general mobilization. This method was employed in the years 1939-41, prior to the commencement of hostilities against Germany, when the number of Soviet infantry divisions, which had totaled 113 on September 1, 1939, was unobtrusively increased to 245 by the beginning of June 1941. The German General Staff did not realize the extent of the mobilization and underestimated the strength of the Soviet infantry by about 60 divisions.¹⁵

The USSR and the Communist Camp are obviously exploiting to the full their main advantage over the non-Communist world-manpower resources. The military revolution, however, as expressed in the development of strategic atomic weapons and the means of transporting the, and of tactical atomic weapons, that is, of weapons which can be used on the battlefield, has to a considerable extent reduced this Soviet advantage as a military factor. The USSR's enormous ground forces could obviously be used much more effectively were atomic weapons to be abolished completely. This fact explains in turn the efforts made by the Kremlin in the foreign political field to have them abolished in order to prevent their use by either side. The Soviets' plan for the Communization of the world envisage the annexation not of countries which have been devastated by a full-scale atomic war, but of flourishing states, whose populations and resources can be exploited - either by successive minor wars or by coups carried out with the aid of the Soviet Army. Those basic theses of Communist theory which state that it is the Soviet Union's task to support the "oppressed peoples" of other countries were formulated by Lenin and Stalin,¹⁶ and, in spite of revisionism, have remained unaltered to date. Uprisings against the capitalists are still to be fomented, and, should the need arise, military force is to be employed against the exploiting classes and their governments. The vast Soviet armies are thus primarily intended for the waging of small-scale, localized wars. One obstacle in the way of Soviet attempts to unleash such wars for purposes of Communist expansion is presently not only the threat of retaliation by America and NATO with strategic atomic weapons, but also the availability of tactical atomic weapons which increase the strength of the numerically small Western armies.

¹⁵ Calculated by the author on the basis of the following materials : Von Teppelskirch, *Geschichte des Zweiten Weltkrieges*, Bonn, 1951, pp. 20(-209; Merkblatt, *Ic-Unterlage Ost, Geheim- Truppenübersicht und Kriegsgliederung Rote Armee, Abteilung Fremde Heere Ost, IIc* Stand 30.8.1944.

¹⁶ J. V. Stalin, *Voprosy leninizma* (Problems of Leninism), Moscow, 4th ed., 1947, p. 102.

In 1957 Marshal Zhukov pointed out in answer to the question as to whether atomic and nuclear weapons would be used in possible future wars:

Yes, of course, since the introduction of these weapons into the armed forces has gone too far and has influenced organization,... tactics,... and doctrines governing strategy and operations... Tactical atomic weapons, if not banned within the next few years, will be introduced... in the place of conventional weapons.¹⁷

Zhukov's fall from power has not altered the situation. In a speech at the Frunze Military Academy Marshal Malinovsky blamed Zhukov both for neglecting political work in the armed forces and for not paying enough attention to the need to master atomic weapons properly.¹⁸ Tactical atomic weapons will enable the Soviets to wage localized wars, since they are presently hampered by the fact that American ground forces are equipped with such weapons and are able to answer any aggression. Furthermore, if the numerically superior Soviet forces are equipped with atomic weapons, Soviet foreign policy will be able to exert more pressure in the cold war. Soviet diplomacy will be in a position to maneuver considerably more than is the case at present. The Berlin question is a good example of Moscow's maneuverability on the diplomatic front.

However, the task of harmonizing the reorganization of ground forces to meet the demands of the atomic epoch with the demands of Soviet military theory that large ground forces be preserved is an extremely difficult one. The economic, organizational, technological, and psychological problems involved have compelled America, for example, to embark on a one-sided development of its armed forces, with ground forces being pushed into second place. The USSR has decided to approach this problem in its own way. Information available in the West on the reorganization of the Soviet ground forces suggests that it is based on the following principles:¹⁹

1. Atomic weapons do not form part of the normal armament of Soviet divisions, but are at the disposal of the higher Army echelons, should the need to use them arise. This policy is based on the fact that tactical atomic weapons have a much greater range of action than individual divisions, 150-300 kilometers, as opposed to a division front of at most 30-40 kilometers.

2. The reorganization of the structure of divisions is aiming at ensuring that they are capable of acting without atomic weapons, that is, with conventional weapons.

3. By no means all the line divisions in the Soviet armed forces have been affected by the reorganization. Only a small

The Soviets are thus aiming at equality with NATO as regards the number of units equipped for an atomic war, at preserving their superiority in the field of conventional weapons and number of divisions. Despite the problems involved, the Soviets have more or less achieved this aim, hence the renewal of the cold war.

In the light of these facts, the official Soviet reasons for the reductions in their forces - the desire to ease international tension and to take the initiative in disarmament in spite of the West's "aggressive intentions"²⁰ - can simply be dismissed. The propaganda aim of the announcement as to the size of the cuts becomes clear enough when one remembers that the actual reductions were somewhat smaller. Moscow obviously hopes to strengthen its position at the disarmament talks by boasting about the "major" reductions in the size of its armed forces.

²⁰Izvestia, May 15, 1956, and Jan. 31, 1959.

SEVERAL QUESTIONS OF MILITARY TRAINING OF POLITWORKERS

Maj. Gen. I. Bochenko, first deputy
chief of the Political Administration
of the Northern Military Okrug
Krasnaya Zvezda
July 9, 1959

(Excerpts) Lieutenant Colonel Veselov, the secretary of the party bureau of the N-unit, finds it difficult to stay in his office. His main working places are the field, the artillery pool, his lecture class, or the range. The soldiers, sergeants, and officers regard him as a competent assistant of the commander and as a convinced propagandist of everything that is new and progressive in troop training.

All these are not accidental events. Lieutenant Colonel Veselov is about to graduate from the military academy by correspondence course study, and the officer approaches this task in a thoughtful and profound manner, studying contemporary warfare, the possibilities of the most modern weapons and technical equipment and ways to use them.

It is not necessary to list other examples which show the importance of systematic military training for politworkers. We have many of them among the troops of our okrug. There are also, however, entries on the other side of the ledger, cases in which some politworkers cease to improve their knowledge, lag behind, and lose the professional qualities of a party leader.

Such a fate befell politworker Comrade Ivanovsky. Having received his diploma from the military-political academy, he decided that he had reached the summit. The officer hardly studies the newest aviation technology, shows little interest in the flight manuals, rarely visits the air field or the training classes, and fails to note shortcomings in the training and education of the air force men. Ivanovsky has put himself in a position where it is difficult for him to stay in a leading post.

Politworker Captain Posandeyev acted successfully for 10 months as the commander of the cadet detachments. Due to his skillful leadership of the training and education of the personnel, the cadets passed the control exams with excellent and good marks in all subjects of military and political training. Many politworkers have grown considerably in the military profession by individual study within the commanders training system and by passing unassembled examinations at teaching institutions.

They have become qualified specialists and have learned to lead party-political work among the troops in a concrete, professional manner. The military soviet and the political administration of the okrug values these cadres of practiced

officers even though they have no academic training. Their high military skill acquired by seat and blood outside the walls of institutions not only helps them to accomplish tasks of education concretely but also determines their further advancement in service.

It is true that we have some comrades in the cadre organs who assess the military professional maturity of a politworker only by a single, formal scale: If a person has graduated from a higher teaching institution and has received a diploma he is worthy of advancement in service; if he has no diploma, there can be no talk of such advancement.

The error of such an assessment is obvious. The politworker Sanin has no higher military education. He excelled, however, in skillful party-political work, in his excellent knowledge of aviation technology, and his first-rate qualities as a pilot. He was promoted to a commander's post. Combat officer, navigator, Pilot Second Class Major Altunin, also, has only a secondary military education but he was assigned to politwork. We made no mistake by these appointments. They are both performing well.

Politworker Comrade Tsufelin once passed the unassembled examinations of the teaching institution, but did not confine himself to it. He studied closely the material and combat possibilities of antiaircraft artillery and mastered the art of directing the fire of a battery. In the course of one year in which Comrade Tsufelin commanded a subdetachment, he achieved good and excellent marks in firing training. Now he has been appointed to the post of battalion politofficer.

Among the politworkers of our okrug there are many comrades who have advanced in service thanks to resolute, independent studies. We could mention the former air force flight commander Captain Tovkun; the former air force technicians Kozyurov, Davodov, and Kotov; and the battery commander Kulebin. They all have rich experiences in work and are well versed in questions of Marxist-Leninist theory.

The cadres of politworkers who raise their military education outside the teaching institutions should be treated more attentively and their value not wasted. Their knowledge, skill, and practical experience, which they acquired directly among the troops by means of independent study of military-technical equipment and weapons, is a most important indication of the maturity of the politworkers. Without a higher education they are capable of successfully training and educating the troops.

It is opportune now to dwell on a number of manifestations which hamper further improvement in the quality of the training of politworkers among the troops. Only recently several comrades argued for the establishment of groups for commanders training of politworkers separately from the other officers. To enter this road means to create the prerequisites for simplification and slackening in training of politworkers, to subject them to a sort of different measurement. The military soviet and the political administration resolutely rejected such attempts. We are adopting all measures possible resolutely to improve the military training of politworkers, to liquidate the well-known gap between the commanders and politworkers in the field of military knowledge.

The independent study of politworkers also causes concern. Some of them, after having attended the prescribed scheduled training courses, fail to look into the military literature, rarely take weapons, rules, and regulations for study prior to the regular training courses. The planning of the working-day schedule leaves also much to be desired. The point is that politworkers should deal with the soldiers in the evening and on their off-days. The chiefs of politorgans, however, do not care to assign additional time to independent training of the politworkers.

The lack of a serious attitude toward the military training of politworkers and noninterference in this field is one of the causes for shortcomings in party-political work. Lacking the knowledge of the peculiarities of contemporary warfare, of the tactical-technical data of weapons and equipment, causes the officers sometimes to get lost in a complicated situation, to fail to find their place in the struggle against all kinds of simplifications in the military training of the troops, and to be afraid to delve profoundly into the training of personnel.

What else could explain the difficult situation in which the politworker Tikhonov found himself? Jointly with a group of officers under him, he studied the situation in N-unit for a long time and failed to detect serious simplifications in artillery firing training. In his opinion everything was going well. Suddenly, however, during checks many officers showed low marks. Comrade Tikhonov could do nothing but helplessly wring his hands.

Serious obstacles in the path of raising the military-technical mastery of politworkers are in our opinion the outdated rules for passing qualification examinations. In several units, for example, officers from the technical staff are assigned to politwork but cannot pass qualification exams. According to the rules only those persons are admitted to these examinations who deal directly with technical equipment. It would be necessary to revise this rule.

The regulations for the selection of candidates for the unassembled departments of higher teaching institutions also require essential corrections. In our opinion it is necessary to expand considerably the chances for younger or older officers to pursue unassembled studies at the V. I. Lenin Military-Political Academy. The point is that only very few officers are enrolled in the unassembled department of this academy. It is even more difficult for politworkers to enter the unassembled departments of the academies for the various branches of service.