MARSHAL N.V. OGARKOV
AND THE TRANSFORMATION IN SOVIET MILITARY AFFAIRS

BY

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A Thesis
Submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## ABSTRACT

INTRODUCTION

## I SOVIET MILITARY DOCTRINE: 1917–1977

- Soviet Military Doctrine
- Marx and Lenin
- The Influence of Clausewitz
- Lasting Impressions: The Imperial Army
- Stalin’s Permanently Operating Factors
- Early Formulations
- The Introduction of Nuclear Weapons: Changes to Doctrine
- The Second Revolution in Military Affairs
- Enter Andrei Grechko
- Circumstances Surrounding the Appointment of Grechko
- The Return of Conventional Forces
- Changes to Force Structure
- Protecting the Military Budget
- Arms Control

## II - THE DIALECTICS AND DEFINITIONS OF MILITARY DOCTRINE

- Introducing N.V. Ogarkov
- The Dialectics of Military Doctrine
- The Law of Unity and Struggle of Opposites
- The Law of Passage from Quantitative to Qualitative Change
- The Law of the Negation of the Negation
- The Definition of Military Doctrine
- Soviet Military Science
- Soviet Military Strategy
- Theory of Operations
- The Superiority of Soviet Military Doctrine


- Circumstances Surrounding the Appointment of Ogarkov
- Ogarkov on Arms Control and Detente
- The New Revolution in Soviet Military Affairs
- Strategic Parity and Military Superiority
- Limited War
- Changes to Soviet Operations and Force Structure
- The Rise of Conventional Forces
- Assessing the Evidence of Change
- Summary

## IV - CONCLUSION

- Ogarkov’s Transfer to “Other Duties”
- Closing Observations
The purpose of this paper is to provide an overview and explanation of Marshal N.V. Ogarkov’s interpretation of and contribution to Soviet military doctrine during his tenure as Chief of the General Staff of the Soviet Armed Forces which lasted from 1977-1984. Throughout the discussion, emphasis will be placed on substantiating the claim that the sophistication of his ideas and the application of them to the problems he faced was rare, if not unique, for an officer of the Soviet High Command. Moreover, an attempt will be made to demonstrate the influence his ideas carried both within the military and among members of the political leadership by outlining some of the most significant and far-reaching changes that took place in military doctrine and Soviet force structure during his tenure as Chief of the General Staff. Ogarkov’s articulate understanding of the various concepts and tasks at hand and his ability to provide them with theoretical justification will be shown to have been a primary factor earning him the title of chief architect of a transformation that was widely regarded as a revolution in Soviet military affairs. In general, it will become clear that Ogarkov’s role in shaping doctrine and in bringing about corresponding changes in force structure and planning surpassed those of his predecessors and was unmatched by his successors.
INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this paper is to provide an overview and explanation of Marshal N.V. Ogarkov’s interpretation of and contribution to Soviet military doctrine during his tenure as Chief of the General Staff of the Soviet Armed Forces which lasted from 1977-1984. Throughout the discussion, emphasis will be placed on substantiating the claim that the sophistication of his ideas and the application of them to the problems he faced was rare, if not unique, for an officer of the Soviet High Command. Moreover, an attempt will be made to demonstrate the influence his ideas carried both within the military and among members of the political leadership by outlining some of the most significant and far-reaching changes that took place in military doctrine and Soviet force structure during his tenure as Chief of the General Staff. Ogarkov’s articulate understanding of the various concepts and tasks at hand and his ability to provide them with theoretical justification will be shown to have been a primary factor earning him the title of chief architect of a transformation that was widely regarded as a revolution in Soviet military affairs. In general, it will become clear that Ogarkov’s role in shaping doctrine and in bringing about corresponding changes in force structure and planning surpassed those of his predecessors and was unmatched by his successors.

To establish an informed and appropriate setting for the discussion, an overview of the foundations of Soviet military doctrine will be provided. In addition to describing some of the basic concepts involved, some of the enduring influences on the development of military thought in the Soviet Union leading up to the nuclear era will be identified.

The second chapter will begin with an analysis of the arrival of nuclear weapons and initial efforts to incorporate them into military doctrine. The discussion will include an explanation of how General Secretary Nikita Khrushchev utilized the emerging Strategic
Rocket Forces in a campaign of bluff and deception aimed at the West in an attempt offset reductions in military power he initiated in other areas, notably the army. This will set the stage for the arrival of Andrei Antonovich Grechko as Defence Minister in 1967. The discussion of his views and the degrees to which he was able to bring about the changes he advocated will establish a basis for comparison with those of Marshal Ogarkov as discussed in later chapters. Of particular interest in this section will be the ways in which Grechko approached relations with his political bosses, how he attempted to influence the military budgeting process, and his perspectives on arms control and détente. Also of interest will be Grechko's views on the political and military utility of nuclear weapons, and the impact they had on Soviet force structure and planning.

The third and fourth chapters will be most central to the discussion at hand as they deal almost exclusively with Ogarkov and an analysis of the concepts and arguments presented in his two books, *Always in Readiness to Defend the Homeland* (1982) and *History Teaches Vigilance* (1985), as well as those presented in the numerous articles he wrote during his career as a Soviet military officer. The first of these chapters will examine some of the key theoretical questions Ogarkov faced, and how he invoked the teachings of Marx and Lenin in providing answers to them. Specifically, an explanation of how Ogarkov made use of dialectical materialism, and its application to history, historical materialism, in articulating the finer points of Soviet military doctrine will be provided. A review of Ogarkov's definitions of military doctrine, military science, strategy and operational art will follow.

The second Ogarkov chapter will begin by describing the circumstances surrounding Ogarkov's appointment to the position of Chief of the General Staff. Notably, the significance of the political leaderships' decision to break with tradition and appoint a civilian to the position of Minister of Defence and how this affected the role Ogarkov would eventually play within the Soviet military will be examined. The discussion will proceed
from this point to an explanation and analysis of Ogarkov’s views on specific issues such as arms control and détente. Finally, an analysis of the content and significance of the “new revolution in military affairs,” and Ogarkov’s role in it will be provided. In this respect, it will be shown that Ogarkov clearly recognized the declining utility of nuclear weapons, acknowledged the existence of parity and the reality of assured destruction, and accordingly, became one of the strongest advocates for incorporating the latest technological developments in the sphere of conventional weaponry and weapons based on “new physical principles” into Soviet military doctrine and strategy.

The concluding chapter will summarize the significance and circumstances surrounding Ogarkov’s transfer to the Western TVD (Theatre of Military Operations) and his eventual removal from a position of power within the Soviet High Command.
I – SOVIET MILITARY DOCTRINE: 1917 - 1977

Soviet Military Doctrine

When the Bolsheviks seized power in 1917 they at once faced the entanglements of a world war and the inevitable prospect of a civil war. Accordingly, efforts to formulate a military doctrine specific to the special needs of the Soviet Union began almost immediately. Initially, these formulations were based on the views of Lenin regarding the nature of war and his interpretation of the laws of historical development as identified by Marx. Later, military doctrine was formulated by Stalin predicated on what he called a set of “permanently operating factors.” Despite the fact that they failed to take into account any consideration of nuclear weapons and the element of surprise, Stalin’s permanently operating factors guided military doctrine until his death in 1953. During the years that followed, military leaders were gradually able to exert greater influence on military doctrine but continued to be frustrated by limitations imposed upon them by their political masters. The discussion that follows is intended to identify some of the lasting influences and enduring concepts of Soviet military doctrine. These will serve as reference points and form a basis for comparison during subsequent chapters, particularly those dealing with Ogarkov.

Marx and Lenin

Marx’s contribution to Soviet military doctrine was in large measure limited to determining the social and political conditions which were said to underlie the causes of war, and the implications different types of war would hold for revolution. For Marx, war was the inevitable consequence of the class struggle. In their attempts to secure trade and access to resources, enabling continued exploitation of the masses, capitalists would be driven towards territorial aggrandizement and eventually to war.¹

Following Marx, Lenin’s primary contribution to Soviet military doctrine was the “inevitably of war thesis” he developed on the basis of the laws of historical development. Specifically, Lenin proclaimed the impossibility of prolonged coexistence of socialism and capitalism. According to Lenin, competition between capitalist countries would result in an uneven economic balance, and inevitably lead to wars. These wars would ultimately take the form of world wars, into which socialist countries would be drawn as unwilling participants. At the 8th Party Congress in 1919, Lenin asserted:

We are living not only in a state but in a system of states, and the existence of the Soviet republic side by side with imperialist states for a prolonged period is unthinkable. At the end, either one or the other will win. And before this happens a series of the most frightful collisions between the Soviet republic and bourgeois states is inevitable.3

Lenin’s inevitability of war thesis proved to be a considerable source of tension throughout the history of the Soviet Union both within the military, in that there were disagreements as to its implications for strategy, and in relations between the military and political leaders who were often charged with abandoning it through arms control and détente. Indeed, Ogarkov, a dedicated Leninist, found difficulty in reconciling the concept that war was inevitable given his increasing awareness of the destructiveness of nuclear war.

The Influence of Clausewitz

Clausewitz’s famous work, On War, was read by Marx, Engels and Lenin and eventually came to be one of the most widely read military works in the Soviet Union.4 Marx noted that On War was “very good”, Engels suggested that Clausewitz was “a chap with a common sense bordering on brilliance”, and Lenin added that a reading of Clausewitz was an

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2 Ibid., p.42
3 Ibid.
"indispensable acquisition of every thinking person". Marx and Lenin lauded Clausewitz for his elaboration of military philosophy. Engels was clearly more interested in Clausewitz’s insights with respect to the art of war and the conduct of military operations.

Perhaps the most enduring derivative of Clausewitz in Soviet military doctrine was his famous dictum that war was the continuation of policy by other means. More specifically, Clausewitz argued that,

...war is simply a continuation of political discourse, with the addition of other means. We deliberately use the phrase “with the addition of other means” because we also want to make it clear that war in itself does not suspend political intercourse or change it into something completely different. In essence that intercourse continues irrespective of the means it employs. The main lines along which military events progress, and to which they are restricted, are political lines that continue throughout the war into the subsequent peace. How could it be otherwise? Do political relations between peoples and their governments stop when diplomatic notes are no longer exchanged? Is war not just another expression of their thoughts, another form of speech or writing?

Lenin agreed with Clausewitz asserting that “Marxists have always rightly regarded this thesis as the theoretical basis of views on the significance of any war”.

Another indication of links between Clausewitz and Soviet military thought involves the claim that war is an instrument of policy. Lenin upheld this claim asserting that war was but one of many means to achieve political objectives; a tool to be used at the discretion of its wielder. Accordingly, he viewed military action as a “planned and controlled segment of the fundamental political strategy”.

There are several opinions with respect to the nature and extent of influence Clausewitz had on the formulation of Soviet military doctrine. Some Western authors have suggested that

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5 Ibid. p.55


we need only look to Clausewitz to understand the Soviet view of war. Others are careful to note that the mere convergence of ideas does not always indicate one having influenced the other. In *Makers of Modern Strategy*, for example, Peter Paret explained,

The search for Clausewitz’s influence has been confused and inconclusive. That one or two sentences from *On War* have entered common usage, or that some of its arguments have been misinterpreted to support the military fashions of the day, scarcely proves that the ideas have had a genuine impact...Reading Clausewitz seems to have helped Marx, Engels and Lenin to clarify their ideas on the political nature of war, but it is far from certain that their encounters with Clausewitz work were essential to the development of their thought. Nor is it clear whether other political figures gained insights from *On War* that they might not have gained elsewhere. Points of view may agree without one having influenced the other.  

While Paret seems to have a grasp on the nature of influence, and the difficulties one might encounter in attempting to identify it, we do know that Clausewitz was widely read in the Soviet Union and that the connection he made between politics and war appeared in a similar fashion in much of the Soviet military literature for decades after Lenin had introduced it. The question of whether war was a continuation and tool of policy and the implications thereof frequently provided a common frame of reference for discussions of military doctrine in the Soviet Union; one which often led to concern and confusion in the West.

In the 1970s, Ogarkov took his turn at answering the questions raised by Clausewitz’s famous dictum. He advised, as did others of his time, that the potential destructiveness of nuclear weapons had rendered war an irrational tool of policy and therefore one that could not be used to achieve political ends. While the “imperialists” may have continued to view war as an instrument of policy despite the grim realities of nuclear war, for Ogarkov, the Soviet Union clearly could no longer afford to do so.

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In raising the Red Army, Lenin and his comrades initially found it difficult to find qualified soldiers to fill the ranks. As a result they were forced to recruit many of their generals from the ranks of the defunct Imperial Army. The decision to admit former Imperial Officers to the Red Army generated considerable confusion and controversy. Lenin had, after all, declared that once the revolution had taken place Czarist institutions would be destroyed and those of the dictatorship of the proletariat erected in their place. Among the institutions given the highest priority for destruction was the Imperial Army. Lenin explained:

As Marx and Engels have frequently insisted, the first commandment for those who would carry out a successful revolution is to bring about the destruction and disintegration of the old army and its replacement by a new one. A new class of society, taking over the reins of government for the first time, can never obtain power and consolidate it without the disintegration of the old army, without enduring of necessity a difficult and painful transition stage without any army at all.12

Clearly, Lenin's subsequent encouragement of Imperial Officers to join the Red Army, as high-ranking officers no less, was troublesome. Several attempts were made to justify their inclusion. Those supporting the use of Imperial Officers claimed that they were Bolsheviks at heart, and deserved their rightful place in revolution.

While it is true that many soldiers of the Imperial Army had been drawn from the working class and peasantry, those occupying the higher ranks were not. Most were recruited from the upper-middle class. Accordingly, many of them joined the counter-revolutionary White forces in the civil war. Those that did choose to join the Red Army likely did so to accommodate the perception that a Red victory was inevitable. Joining what would be the winning side, therefore, was simply a means of survival and not due to some sort of Bolshevik awakening.

The idea of letting Imperial Officers serve as members of the Red Army was opposed for two key reasons. First, the Imperial army had always been viewed as the primary instrument of capitalist exploitation and state control. Granting its officers admission to the Red Army, therefore, failed to satisfy the perceived need for retribution. Second, recruiting Imperial Officers on the basis of necessity (i.e. to tap the expertise of experienced officers) implied that Marxism fell short of supplying the answers to the military questions of the day and in a larger sense was not the all-encompassing science many claimed it was.

Leon Trotsky was one of the most outspoken figures in the debate over the universality of Marxism and the recruitment of Imperial Officers. He suggested that something other than Marxism was needed to understand the practical aspects of war. For this, there was a science apart from Marxism, a military science that had to be learned. Trotsky argued, “We must have teachers who know something about the science of war”.¹³ Eventually, Lenin agreed with Trotsky and negotiated the assimilation of Imperial Officers into the Red Army.

Despite having given in to Lenin and Trotsky, many members of the Communist Party continued to urge caution. To accommodate this faction of the party, which incidentally included Stalin, the Soviets created an administrative body of Commissars to watch over, and whenever necessary, guide the thoughts and actions of the Imperial Officers toward compliance with Marxism.

The influence of Imperial officers on the character of Soviet military thought carried on for many years. In 1920, 48,409 former Imperial Officers were serving in the armed forces of the Soviet Union. The military operations manual, issued in 1914 under the Czar, was used extensively by the Red Army and remained in effect until 1929. At that time the first such Soviet manual was issued in its place. Although it was technically a Soviet accomplishment, seventy nine of the one hundred contributing authors were former Imperial officers.¹⁴ All were

¹³ Garboff, How Russia Makes War, op. cit., p.43
¹⁴ Ibid., p.48
educated in Imperial doctrine, strategy, and tactics, the greater substance of which came from Germany and Clausewitz.\textsuperscript{15}

Stalin’s Permanently Operating Factors

Stalin’s most significant and lasting contribution to military doctrine was his claim that there existed a set of “permanently operating factors” which influenced the outcome of wars. The permanently operating factors he described were: the stability of the rear; the morale of the army; the quantity and quality of divisions; the armament of the army; and the organizing ability of the command personnel.\textsuperscript{16}

The experience of the Great Patriotic War provided Stalin with the impetus to deepen his convictions to the permanently operating factors. Case in point was the battle of Stalingrad. After he reviewed the circumstances and events of the battle, and, on the basis of what were judged to be the factors enabling the Red Army to repel the advancing German Army, he proclaimed the “permanently operating factors” to be absolute and unchallengeable.\textsuperscript{17} The morale of the army factor, for example, was deemed decisive in that the Soviets kept fighting despite extremely high levels of casualties and the very real possibility of defeat. Similarly, the quantity and quality of divisions factor was validated in that a huge numbers of troops and tanks were used toward the achievement of victory.

Stalin distinguished between the “permanently operating factors” and those which he considered to be only temporary or transitory. The only temporary factor Stalin discussed was the element of surprise. Unlike the “permanently operating factors,” Stalin argued that surprise

\textsuperscript{15} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{16} Bluth, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 88

was not a decisive factor in the outcome of a war. As evidence of the indecisive nature of surprise, Stalin cited Germany’s failure to turn its surprise attack on Russia in World War II into victory.

When the Americans ended World War II with the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, a re-evaluation of surprise was undertaken. Although Stalin maintained that it could not be a decisive element in the outcome of war, he began to accept that it could have decisive qualities in the initial stages of a campaign.

Several reasons account for Stalin’s unwillingness to grant surprise the status of a permanently operating factor. First, from a political perspective, he could not admit that surprise was decisive because only the U.S. had the means to make it so given their capability to deliver a surprise nuclear strike. Until the Soviets developed their own capability for a decisive surprise attack it would have been imprudent to make any substantial alterations to doctrine.

Second, the Soviets knew from experience how much surprise could hurt, so they played down its significance in much the same way a small boy is advised to deal with a school yard bully. They ignored him and hoped to avoid him as long as it would take to complete their body-building course and stand up to him. More specifically, until they had a means to deliver a crushing surprise attack of their own, there was little to be gained from raising it to the status of a permanently operating factor.

Apart from negative political consequences, the Soviets were slow to incorporate nuclear weapons into the “permanently operating factors,” because they simply did not fit within the existing strategic and tactical aspects of doctrine. Soviet air power had traditionally been thought necessary only to support the advance of troops on the ground during battle. Given that aircraft were the primary means for the delivery of nuclear weapons at the time the role assigned them in military doctrine remained minimal.

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18 Bluth, op. cit., p.87-91
Another factor which provided justification for attempts to deny the value of both surprise and nuclear weapons was Marxism-Leninism. Since the basis of doctrine at the time was the inevitability of war thesis which incorporated the assumption of communist victory, recognizing that an imperialist power had the capability for decisive surprise strikes through the use of nuclear weapons would have contradicted the theory. The domestic-political consequences for the regime were obvious.

Despite never having publicly revised military doctrine to account for nuclear weapons and the implications they presented with respect to altering the decisiveness of surprise in the outcome of battle, the evidence suggests that there was behind the scenes an appreciation of their utility. John Van Oudenaren explains:

In retrospect,...it became clear that Stalin had fully appreciated the significance of the atomic bomb and had ordered feverish efforts to be made to break the American monopoly. According to defectors and various other corroborating sources, not only did Stalin seek an atomic bomb, but as early as 1947 he had approved programs designed to give the Soviet Union a capability to deliver the weapon against U.S. territory.\(^{20}\)

Nonetheless, even after the Soviet Union had developed a limited nuclear capability, nuclear weapons failed to alter the fundamental principles of military doctrine.

Generally speaking, Soviet military doctrine under Stalin underwent minimal change, failing as it did to expand much beyond the permanently operating factors. In the post-Stalin era, the discussion of military doctrine widened considerably. In part this was due to the death of Stalin, but more significantly, perhaps, was the increasing presence of nuclear weapons in the arsenals of the Soviet Union and the United States.

Early Formulations

Perhaps the most fundamental and widely accepted assertions throughout the period up to and beyond the death of Stalin was that military doctrine, properly considered, would consist of two components: the military-political and the military technical side. Appearing in Soviet military thought shortly after the revolution in 1917, this distinction survived the era of the permanently operating factors, the Cold War, and Gorbachev’s perestroika.

In early formulations, the military-political component was said to “disclose the social and political essence of war, the character of the political goals and strategic tasks of the state in the war and its influence on military structuring.” The military-technical side was said to encompass the “ways, means, and methods of the fulfilment of the Armed Forces of the USSR of the military political task placed before them.” According to M. V. Frunze, a civil war hero and theorist who was later appointed to the position of Commissar for Military and Naval Affairs (1925), the two sides taken together would comprise a unified doctrine which he described as,

a teaching adopted by the army of a particular state establishing the nature of armed forces development, the methods of troop combat training, and the methods of troop management, based on the state’s prevailing views on the nature of military missions lying before it and the means for executing them, which are dependent on the class nature of the state and are defined by the level to which the country’s productive forces have developed.

In subsequent chapters, it will be shown that there was both difficulty in defining the two components and in reconciling them into coherent doctrine. It was also frequently the source of conflict between the Soviet High Command and the political leadership.

The Introduction of Nuclear Weapons: Changes to doctrine

After the death of Stalin, Lavrenti Beria of the secret police, Georgi Malenkov, Chairman of the Council of Ministers (or head of government), and Nikita Khrushchev, General

32 Ibid.
Secretary of the CPSU, agreed to form a leadership coalition to govern the Soviet Union. Almost immediately each of the three leaders attempted to consolidate his position at the cost of the other two. Beria was the first to be eliminated from the competition. Accused of attempting to plot a coup against the coalition, Beria was arrested and subsequently executed. Malenkov was the next to go. His decision to resign his post in 1955 was based on an inability to resolve a disagreement with Khrushchev with respect to relationship between the military and foreign policy. Malenkov’s downfall related to his views on the implications nuclear weapons had on the inevitability of war thesis, and by extension, on military doctrine. In 1954, Malenkov became the first high ranking Soviet official to denounce the inevitability of war thesis, suggesting that Soviet military doctrine should recognize that nuclear war was not winnable by either side. He argued that a nuclear exchange between the two sides would have catastrophic consequences, ultimately leading to the end of civilization. In this sense, Malenkov claimed that war with the capitalist nations could not further the progress of revolution, contrary to the assertions of both Lenin and Marx, but instead compromise the revolutionary gains socialism had already made. In later years, Marshal Ogarkov would pick up on this point as he recommended changes in Soviet military doctrine and force structure that aimed for reduced reliance on nuclear weapons and increased attention to high-technology conventional weapons development.

In an effort likely geared toward securing the support of the military, Khrushchev disagreed with Malenkov. He maintained that war was inevitable and that the Soviet Union had the means to fight and win, even if nuclear weapons were involved. Realizing that he could not achieve absolute leadership without support from the military, Malenkov announced his

Consequently, Khrushchev was able to assume the dual position of leader of the party and the government, just as his predecessors, Lenin and Stalin, had done.

In 1956, at the 20th Party Congress, Khrushchev delivered his famous secret speech during which he unveiled a policy of "de-stalinization" aimed at correcting many of the "wrongs" characteristic of the Stalin era. Of particular significance to military doctrine, Khrushchev announced that war between the two worlds of capitalism and socialism was no longer inevitable, thereby adopting the position held by his former political adversary, Malenkov. He explained that the international situation had changed due to the growth of socialism in the world, and the increased ability of its adherents to repel the aggressive impulses of imperialism. Khrushchev explained:

As long as capitalism survives in the world, the reactionary forces representing the interests of the capitalist monopolies will continue their drive towards military gambles and aggression, and may try to unleash war. But war is not fatalistically inevitable. Today there are mighty social and political forces possessing formidable means to prevent the imperialists from unleashing war and if they actually try to start it, to give a smashing rebuff to the aggressors and frustrate their adventurist plans.27

Implicit in Khrushchev's statement is an increased awareness of the military as well as political power of nuclear weapons. His subsequent reliance on them proved to be unmatched.

While it seemed as though the military was on the verge of asserting itself to a greater extent in the formulation of doctrine when Khrushchev assumed power, their influence did not proceed much beyond that which was evident during the Stalin era. In 1959, Khrushchev asserted that he did "not trust appraisals of generals on questions of strategic importance"28 Consequently, Khrushchev, like Stalin, took matters of doctrine into his own hands.

Among Khrushchev's most notable contributions to military doctrine were his views on appropriate force structure and the effect these views ultimately had on the Soviet Armed Forces. Contrary to the traditional combined arms approach, and the recommendations of the military,

27 Ibid., p.94
Khrushchev down played the importance of conventional ground forces in favour of an increased reliance in nuclear forces. Similarly, he refuted the Marxist-Leninist argument and the advice of his generals that “in numbers there is strength,” declaring instead that the Soviet Union needed firepower more than it needed manpower. Khrushchev’s chosen method of delivering firepower was the Inter-Continental Ballistic Missile (ICBM). In this way, he was able to justify massive cuts in the allocation of resources to conventional forces, most notably the infantry, in order to pay for the new technology.

Complimenting Khrushchev’s policy on force-structure were his attempts to capitalize on the political benefits of nuclear weapons. In so doing, he frequently exaggerated Soviet nuclear capabilities. In fact, from 1957 to 1961, Khrushchev successfully created the impression in the West that there existed a “missile gap” favouring the Soviet Union. Shortly after the successful development of a Soviet ICBM in 1957, Khrushchev announced that the Soviet Union possessed a formidable array of “rockets” of all types in an attempt to give the impression that the balance of power had shifted in favour of the Soviet Union. Later, in 1959, Khrushchev declared,

“When we say that we have organized the serial production of intercontinental ballistic missiles, it is not just to hear ourselves talk...We have now stockpiled so many rockets, so many atomic and hydrogen warheads, that, if we are attacked, we would wipe from the face of the earth all of our probable opponents.”

Khrushchev’s reliance on rockets became even more evident when he announced that bombers had become “obsolete.” In 1961 however, when the Soviets shot down an American pilot in his U2 spy plane, Khrushchev toned down his exaggerations considerably. Apparently he realized that the Americans could “see” what they had, so it was no longer practical to distort the truth, at least to the extent previously thought.

29 Quoted in Bluth, op. cit.
30 Ibid., p.54
31 Freedman, op. cit., p.263
Khrushchev’s preference for the development of nuclear, as opposed to conventional forces may be explained, in part, in terms of the re-evaluation of the role of surprise in determining the outcome of war evident in discussions of military doctrine in the mid-fifties. As was mentioned earlier, the element of surprise during the Stalin era was not considered to be a decisive factor in the outcome of a war. During the Khrushchev era, the decisiveness of surprise was upgraded substantially. Garthoff explains,

In 1955, in a rejuvenation and re-evaluation of Soviet military doctrine undertaken after Stalin’s death, the Soviet military concluded that a surprise initial nuclear attack could decisively cripple an enemy’s retaliatory capability and prevent his victory... The change in doctrine did not conclude that a surprise attack would necessarily be decisive; but the failure by the side attacked to take measures to prevent its success could make it so.12

The Soviets were careful to explain that increased emphasis on the possibility of surprise as a decisive factor did not signal an intention to initiate war by launching a surprise attack on Western targets. Rather, they claimed that they were only interested in incorporating surprise into their doctrine to enable a more effective response in the event that surprise was used against them. The ideal response in the event of a surprise attack was subsequently determined to be pre-emptive action. As Marshal Rotmistrov explained in 1955,

The duty of the Soviet Armed forces is not to permit surprise attack by the enemy on our country, and in case an attempt is made, not only to repulse the attack successfully, but also to deal to the enemy simultaneous or even pre-emptive surprise blows of terrible crushing power.33

With respect to the concept of pre-emption Rotmistrov made it very clear that,

...the concept of pre-emptive action was not a euphemism for a surprise first strike or “preventative war”, but a last-minute seizure of the initiative from an enemy already attempting a surprise attack on the Soviet Union.34

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32 Garthoff, Deterrence and the Revolution in Soviet Military Doctrine, op. cit., p.42
33 Quoted in Garthoff, op. cit., p.43,44
34 Ibid., p.43
The incorporation of pre-emption into military doctrine in 1955 was not a first for the Soviet Union. The U.S. Strategic Air Command had adopted a policy of pre-emption at least seven years earlier. The decision to incorporate pre-emption into military doctrine was due, in part, to the recognition that surprise attack could be a decisive factor. A more significant reason however, was the fact that Soviet nuclear capability was inferior to that of the United States. As Garthoff points out,

> From 1955 until the late 1960s, when the Soviet strategic nuclear capability was weak and vulnerable, pre-emption seemed the most desirable option...

While it may have been the most desirable option, pre-emption proved to be difficult for the Soviets to prepare for. It required that Soviet missiles be ready to launch at all times. Unfortunately, the technology at the time did not allow for extended holding periods. Due to the properties of the fuel being used to launch their missiles, the Soviets could only hold them on alert for a limited period of time before they became inoperational. This may have contributed to Khrushchev's decision to place medium range nuclear missiles in Cuba. By decreasing the time of flight, more time would have been available to prepare missiles for launch against American targets.

Another interesting development in military doctrine during the Khrushchev era was the change in the way the Armed forces were trained. More specifically there was a marked shift from preparations based on the anticipation of conducting a conventional war to preparations based on the anticipation of conducting a nuclear war. The Soviets held the view that if a war broke out it would inevitably involve the use of nuclear weapons. It was argued that such a war could be won provided the troops were properly prepared for it. Accordingly, military training

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36 Ibid., p. 45
37 Bluth, op. cit.
38 Garthoff, *Deterrence and Revolution in Soviet Military Doctrine*, op. cit., p. 70
included instructions on what could be expected on the nuclear battlefield. Soldiers were told, for example, that they would have to prepare for the possibility of mass confusion and psychological disorientation. It was thought that training of this nature would reduce panic and enable soldiers to execute their orders effectively.

In terms of the missions and goals assigned the Red Army in the event nuclear war, various techniques aimed at minimalizing damage and ensuring survival were discussed. Among those most notable was the “hugging technique”. According to this procedure, the army would advance towards enemy troops in Western Europe as quickly as possible. It was proposed that once they were close enough to enemy forces, Western powers would have to avoid the use of nuclear weapons as there would be a heightened possibility of hitting their own troops. A similar theme emerged in the early 1970s when the theory of deep operations was reintroduced. More significantly however, by refusing to subscribe to the fatalistic view of inevitable destruction, morale could be maintained and continue to exert its presence as a decisive factor in military doctrine.

To be sure, Khrushchev had an enormous impact on the direction of military doctrine during his tenure. Missile diplomacy and a staunch reliance on bluff and deception confused the West considerably, and displeased the military immensely. In general, the Soviet High Command resented his input and eventually was able to engineer his ouster in 1964. When Brezhnev took over, the military began to assert itself to a much greater extent.

The Second Revolution in Military Affairs

While triggered by the arrival of the nuclear age, the death of Stalin brought to light what is commonly referred to as the second revolution in military affairs (the first relating to the

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39 Freedman, op. cit., p.111
40 Garthoff, op. cit.
41 Freedman, op. cit., p.269
invention of gunpowder). Released from the constraints of Stalinism, military theorists began their consideration of nuclear weapons and the effect they had on the outcome of war. Military journals turned their attention to articles and discussions focused on the implications of nuclear weapons with increasing frequency.\(^4^2\) The implications for doctrine were significant. “By 1959, the missile, equipped with a nuclear warhead and guided to its target by sophisticated instruments, was labelled the decisive weapon. A new military doctrine was formulated, calling for the Soviet Armed Forces to be superior in nuclear missile weapons. In December of that year the Strategic Rocket Forces were formed.”\(^4^3\) It was at this juncture that near complete reliance on nuclear weapons began.

This signalled a significant departure from traditional military thought. Previously, a combined arms approach was required in military doctrine. Given the desire to overcome the pitfalls of positional warfare evident throughout WWI, the conclusion was drawn that a strategy incorporating the use of a balanced force comprised of tanks, artillery, and aircraft would make breaking through the enemy’s lines of defence and ultimately, victory, a greater possibility.

At the 22\(^{nd}\) Part Congress in October 1961, Soviet Minister of Defence, Marshal Rodion Malinovski explained the new military doctrine:

One of the most important positions of this doctrine is that a world war, if it nevertheless is unleashed by the imperialist aggressors, will inevitably take the form of a nuclear rocket war, that is such a war in which the main means of striking will be the nuclear weapon and the basic means of delivery to the target will be the rocket. In connection with this, war will also begin differently than before and will be conducted in a different way.

The use of atomic and thermonuclear weapons, with unlimited possibilities for their delivery to any target in calculated minutes with the aid of rockets, permits the achievement of decisive military results in the shortest period of time at any distance and over enormous territory. As objects of crushing nuclear strikes, along with groupings of the enemy armed forces, will be industrial and vital centres, communications junctions, everything that feeds war.


\(^{4^3}\) Ibid., p.178
Malinovski added that a future world war would take on an “unprecedentedly destructive character,” leading to the deaths of hundreds of millions of people, and would leave whole countries nothing more than “lifeless deserts covered with ashes.”

The new doctrine also predicted that in a future war a decisive place would belong to the “nuclear rocket weapon” but that final victory over an aggressor could only be achieved as a result of the joint actions of all services of the armed forces.

Continuing his discussion of the new doctrine with an evaluation of contemporary circumstances, Malinovski suggested that the Soviet Union would be wise to take into consideration the fact that, “the imperialists are preparing a surprise nuclear attack against the USSR and other socialist countries.” Accordingly, the conclusion was drawn that the new military doctrine would consider constant readiness to repulse a surprise attack one of its paramount tasks. As he explained,

The most important, the main and paramount task of the Armed Forces is to be in constant readiness for the reliable repulse of a surprise attack of the enemy and to frustrate his criminal plans. The fact is that in contemporary circumstances, any armed conflict will inevitably escalate into general nuclear rocket war if the nuclear powers are involved in it. Thus we must prepare our Armed Forces, the country and all the people for nuclear war.

Our country is big and wide. It is less vulnerable than capitalist countries. But we clearly recognize that this would be for us an exceptionally severe war. We are deeply convinced that in this war, if the imperialists thrust it on us, the socialist camp will win and capitalism will be destroyed forever."

This new doctrine was echoed in Marshal V.D. Sokolovski’s 1962 and 1963 versions of Military Strategy to which several participants at the 1961 conference contributed. Despite the apparent recognition of the destructive potential of nuclear war, the Soviet military elite continued to assert that if they were to be involved in one, they had the means to win it. It was not until the 1970s and the arrival of Ogarkov that this approach to nuclear weapons and war would begin to change. More specifically, it was

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44 Quoted in Scott, op. cit., p.180
45 Ibid.
not until the Ogarkov era that an appreciation of the destructiveness of nuclear weapons would lead to the rejection of claims that there could be victory in nuclear war.

Reliance on the nuclear arm of the Soviet Armed Forces in military doctrine continued well into the late-1960s. Many western observers had hoped that the close of the Khrushchev era would bring an end to Soviet nuclearism in military doctrine, but the Brezhnev era began in much the same way as its predecessor had left off. As Harriet Fast Scott explains:

The ouster of Nikita Khrushchev in October 1964 was heralded by the press in the United States as marking an end to Soviet nuclear madness. Although Leonid Brezhnev and Aleksei Kosygin may have displayed a different style, there was, however, no change in military doctrine [from that declared by Malinovski in 1961].

In her discussion, Scott went on to note that many military publications in the early days of the Brezhnev era were no more than re-prints of articles and books written during the final years of the Khrushchev period, the only significant changes being the elimination of references to the former General Secretary. Soviet military doctrine continued to define future wars between the two worlds of capitalism and socialism in terms of all-out nuclear exchanges. Military exercises reflected this definition as they frequently began and ended with the use of nuclear weapons, with little or no involvement of conventional forces.

By 1966, Soviet nuclear capability had grown considerably. At the 23rd Party Congress, Brezhnev used the phrase dostatochnyi (sufficient) in describing the Armed Forces:

The armaments of the Soviet forces are at the level of contemporary demands, and their growing striking force and fire power are fully sufficient to destroy any aggressor.

The improvements in Soviet nuclear capability, both in terms of missile technology and command and control procedures, began to increase the flexibility of warfighting strategy.

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46 Ibid., p.181
47 Ibid., p.183
Coupled with a growing appreciation of the destructive potential of nuclear weapons, the Soviets found themselves favourably positioned to revive traditional efforts to develop a combined arms strategy. As Harriet Scott points out, military writers began the call for an increased ability to fight a conventional war in order to compliment the “sufficiency” of the SRF in nuclear war.48

Enter Andrei Grechko

In 1967 Andrei Grechko was appointed Minster of Defence. He had served the Soviet Armed forces as Deputy Minister of Defence and commander, Joint Armed Forces of the Warsaw Pact since 1960 and was thus well acquainted with recent and probable trends in military doctrine. His military service began at age 16 when he joined the Eleventh cavalry division of the First Horse army as an ammunition carrier. At age 18 he became a member of the Komsomol. In 1936, he graduated from the prestigious Fritze Command and Staff Academy, and from the Voroshilov General Staff Academy in 1941, just three days before German tanks would roll across the frontiers of the country he had been trained to defend. A tenacious soldier with a stated preference for being in the throws of battle, the culminating point of Grechko’s military career during WWII was his command of the Eighteenth Army, which he assumed on 19 October 1942. Charged with the unenviable task of defending the city of Novorossiisk, Grechko was able to lead his army to victory against the German onslaught.

By the end of 1942 the 18th Army was pinning down fourteen German divisions. Soviet writers credit this with setting the stage for a massive counter-attack. The Red Army had blunted the enemy’s drive to capture the Caucasus, a development which had an important bearing on the subsequent course of the war.49

48 Scott, op. cit., p.183

By the end of 1943, Grechko, having assumed command of the Fifty-sixth Army, had routed the Germans out of the Caucasus all together.\textsuperscript{50}

Grechko’s post-war accomplishments were equally impressive. He held the top post in the Kiev District, the Group of Soviet Forces in Germany, and in 1957, the Soviet Ground Forces. Promoted to Marshal in 1955, Grechko became First Deputy Minister of Defence and Commander of the Warsaw Pact by 1960. In 1967 he was appointed Minister of Defence.

In summarizing Grechko’s military career, Dale Herspring makes a number of observations:

First, he was clearly intelligent. Soviet military academies are demanding institutions, and he reportedly did extremely well. According to one author, while serving as Commander in Chief of the Soviet Ground Forces, Grechko gained recognition as a “talented military thinker... Grechko was responsible for developing tactical doctrine for the infantry and new weapons and equipment.”\textsuperscript{51} Second, his loyalty to the system was never in doubt. He joined the Red Army at an early age, and there is no sign that he was ever anything but loyal to his political superiors. Third, Grechko, an infantry and cavalry officer, understood the intricacies of combined operations. He was certain to be skeptical – if not openly opposed – to simplistic solutions, especially ones that attempted to provide single-variable answers to the problems facing the Soviet Army. Yet, in the key area of warfighting strategy, that was exactly what the military faced: Khrushchev had declared that nuclear weapons were a panacea to the country’s military problems and used them to justify his plans for major cutbacks in non-nuclear forces. Finally, the “can-do” attitude of Grechko exhibited during the war suggests a man who is a leader, one who influences events rather than being influenced by them.\textsuperscript{52}

Circumstances Surrounding the Appointment of Grechko

Grechko’s appointment to Minster of Defence made sense to many observers. He had been Brezhnev’s comrade in WWII (Brezhnev was Grechko’s main political commissar during his command of the 18\textsuperscript{th} Army), he was not seen as a political competitor, with which Brezhnev had many to deal, and perhaps most significantly in terms of doctrine, his interests in


\textsuperscript{51} Monks, op. cit., p.214

\textsuperscript{52} Herspring, op. cit.
strengthening conventional forces and in developing a combined arms strategy coincided with those of the High Command. Brezhnev therefore perceived Grechko to be a man who would get along with the High Command while at the same time ensure that the directions of the political leadership would be followed.

The Return of Conventional Forces

Although Grechko acknowledged the validity of arguments made in the years leading up to his appointment in 1967 with respect to the increasing importance of conventional weapons in modern warfare, he opened his term as Defence Minister with continued assertions that the Strategic Rocket Forces were the bedrock of Soviet military power. In part, this stemmed from his belief that no matter how a conflict might begin between the superpowers, it would inevitably escalate to all out nuclear war.

Despite continuing assumptions regarding the inevitability of conflict escalation, the Grechko era marked the beginning of the end to all-nuclear military exercises. During the Khrushchev era, military exercises typically began with a very short and insignificant conventional phase prior to incorporating the simulated use of nuclear weapons (in many cases there was no conventional phase at all). This was precisely the case in two substantial military exercises undertaken prior to the appointment of Grechko. In 1965 and 1966, October Storm and Vlatva, respectively, began with short conventional phases that rapidly escalated to the use of nuclear weapons.

In the first major military exercise after Grechko’s appointment, known as Dnepr, the focus of training seemed to have moved substantially in favour of conventional forces. Whereas October Storm and Vlatva had quickly moved from a short conventional phase to a nuclear exchange, Dnepr appeared to be an all conventional exercise:

53 Ibid., p.53
Whereas both *October Storm* and *Vlatva* had included a conventional phase, each had quickly escalated to the use of nuclear weapons. This time, however, the exercise was entirely conventional. Given the Soviet penchant for making military exercises as realistic as possible, this suggests that the idea of conventional operations without any necessary involvement of nuclear weapons was taking on increasing operational importance, in marked contrast to the Khrushchev era with its overwhelming emphasis on nuclear weapons.54

While Herspring is correct in his analysis that *Dnepr* signalled a shift in emphasis away from all-nuclear exercises to accommodate the increasing importance of conventional forces, Harriet Fast Scott was keen to point out that nuclear weapons were in fact incorporated at its very end.55

Nonetheless, the delay between the conventional and nuclear phases in *Dnepr* had expanded significantly beyond those of previous exercises to the point where enough substance was accorded the conventional component to generate recognition of a change. Clearly then, *Dnepr* indicated the start of a conventional trend in military doctrine – one that would later be picked up by Marshal Ogarkov and subsequent Chiefs of the General Staff in the years to come.

It is interesting to note that despite the apparent willingness to consider all-conventional conflict, and growing appreciation of the potential destructiveness of nuclear weapons, major military training establishments, notably the Voroshilov and Frunze academies, continued to engage Soviet Officers in the study of how to fight and win a nuclear war well into the 1970s. It was not until the influence of Marshal Ogarkov began to assert itself would any substantial changes to course content be made to military training in this respect.

Changes to Force Structure

The nuclearization of the Khrushchev era had diminished both the status and effectiveness of Soviet conventional forces. In 1964, the tragedy of the ground forces came to a head. As Herspring explains:

54 Herspring, op. cit.
55 Scott, op. cit.
In September 1964 the post of ground forces chief had been abolished, and these forces had been subordinated to the Ministry of Defence. This had both emphasized the importance of the nuclear factor and left the ground forces in an awkward situation: they were now symbolically and bureaucratically inferior to the other four services – with obvious implications for the struggle over funds as well as for their role in Soviet military strategy, not to mention problems that would now arise in recruiting new officers and NCOs.\(^5^6\)

Grechko was highly critical of the single variant approach and argued vigorously against what he called such “simplistic” views. In one of his first initiatives relative to changes in force structure, Grechko, in September 1967, reinstated the ground forces as a separate command of the Soviet military. The subordination of the ground forces to other branches of the military also ended as they were elevated in rank to a position second only to the SRF.

During this time, Soviet strategic growth would increasingly be matched by a corresponding development in conventional capability. Between 1967 and 1969, at a time when the Soviets were producing an average of three hundred intercontinental ballistic missile silos per year, many new and improved conventional weapons were being added to the battlefield.

The T-62 main battle tank was introduced as were the Armoured Personnel Carriers (BMP), an infantry combat vehicle, mobile antiaircraft weapons and modified tactical missile launchers. A motorized rifle division was added to each tank army, air defences were strengthened, and the number of conventional artillery pieces was increased. In addition, improvements were made in logistics; airpower, particularly airlift, was expanded; and other systems were replaced with the MIG-21 and SU-7. The navy was also given attention. Air and submarine arms were modernized and expanded, helicopter carriers and other surface ships were constructed, and an amphibious capability, including some twelve thousand naval infantry, were added.\(^5^7\)

Similar improvements continued into the 1970s with the addition of the more robust T-64 battle tank to replace the T-62, enhancements to air defences and artillery, and an increased role for attack helicopters. The navy was also affected with improvements in submarine capabilities and a substantial resizing of its battle cruisers. Finally, dual capable medium range missiles were

\(^{56}\) Herspring, op. cit., p. 63

\(^{57}\) Ibid.
being developed, lending further credence to the idea that the Soviets were considering the possibility of an entirely conventional East-West conflict.

These modifications to force structure signalled a clear commitment to the changes in military doctrine initiated in the late 1960s. More specifically, they demonstrated that an active search was under way for greater flexibility in warfighting strategy and that changes in the traditional Soviet image of future war were on the horizon. Although on the declaratory front Grechko continued to emphasize the primacy of the SRF in Soviet strategy, the changes he initiated suggest a soldier increasingly preparing to fight a conventional war, or, at least, entertaining the possibility of a substantially longer conventional phase in what would eventually become a nuclear war.

Of course the changes to force structure meant that there would be corresponding changes to operational procedure. Whereas it was previously thought possible for the various branches of the military to act independently of one another in battle, “the introduction of modern technology was leading to a demand for closer integration between the services.” In his 1975 book, *The Soviet Armed Forces and Military Science*, Grechko made several references to this fact of modern warfare.

Soviet military science believes that if imperialist reaction should unleash a modern war, it will include active and decisive operations by all services of the armed forces, coordinated as to goal, time and place. Each service of the armed forces and each branch, in fulfilling the missions peculiar to it, will bend its efforts to achieve the overall goals of the war... Like scientific theory, strategy is one, because war is not carried out somehow by one branch of service, but by their united efforts.59

Apart from his emphasis on coordinated integration, it is significant that Grechko ascribed “decisive” qualities to “all services” of the armed forces as opposed to restricting the ascription to nuclear weapons. His thinking on this point was in line with the efforts of many Soviet

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58 Ibid., p.87
military theorists who showed interest in designing battlefield strategies that would reduce the chances of a conflict escalating to nuclear war.

Another significant modification to doctrine brought about by the emerging technologies and the associated move toward conventional options was the resurrection in the early to mid-1970s of the "deep operation." The concept had its origins with Marshal Mikhail Tukhachevski who wrote about it before meeting his fate in Stalin’s purges of the 1930s. After suffering devastating defeats in the initial campaigns of World War II, Soviet generals were able to convince Stalin of the military value in conducting deep operations and eventually translated the concept into successes on the battlefield.

Essentially, the theory of deep operations involved simultaneous attacks on the whole of the enemy’s forces as opposed to fighting "front line" battles. In penetrating the entire depth of the enemy’s defences, the goal of the deep operation was to destroy an adversary’s will and ability to fight. In Grechko’s time, the potential for conducting such "deep operations" was rapidly becoming a reality. Modern technology was making finely tuned deep strikes, both conventional and nuclear, considerably more feasible than they had been in Tukhachevski’s day.

As Herspring explained:

"Instead of one single massive thrust against one single position, it would now be possible to undertake several, closely coordinated attacks at various points. This idea had particular relevance for a conventional war. Rather than losing time and major resources in trying to overwhelm the defensive positions prepared by the enemy, Soviet forces would attack in a variety of areas; upon determining where the weak point was located, second-echelon forces would seek to exploit it with highly mechanized forces."

Another significant development was the resurrection of the concept of Teatr voynykh deistvii (TVD), or, Theatre of Military Action (also translated as Theatre of Military Operations, or TMO). Essentially, the TVD envisioned a command structure in which several large units would be subordinated to one single commander. Although Grechko and Kulikov both endorsed

\[60\hspace{1cm}Herspring, op. cit., p.89\]
the idea, and spoke at length about the importance of modernizing command and control in light of new technologies to accommodate it, it was Ogarkov who would ultimately provide the TVD with the most sophisticated theoretical justification.

In practical terms, the deep operation, and revisions to Soviet command structures, were intended to accommodate a strategy that envisioned the destruction of NATO’s capability and will to fight a nuclear war. More specifically, with a tightly coordinated command structure, highly mobile and rapid forces would rush across the Western frontier targeting NATO’s nuclear arsenal and command and control apparatus. “The primary goal would be to put NATO into a situation where it would have to use nuclear weapons on its own territory in order to stop a Pact offensive…” If enough damage could be done in a short period of time, it was thought, NATO would be forced to consider forgoing escalation all together.

In sum, Grechko had considerable success in bringing about changes in Soviet force structure and in defining the command and control apparatus to support it. The primacy of the SRF in military doctrine evident prior to his appointment as Defence Minister was compromised significantly as a result of the widespread modifications and improvements to the conventional forces he presided over.

Protecting the Military Budget

Throughout his tenure as Minister of Defence, Grechko consistently argued for an expanded military budget. Initially, this accorded well with the political leadership in that his views were in line with the reality of the general arms build-up that had been initiated at both the conventional and nuclear levels prior to his appointment. It also put him in good stead with his Chief of the General Staff, Zakharov, and later Kulikov, and the rest of the High Command who had been pressing for increased spending, particularly in the high-tech conventional sphere, since the later years of the Khrushchev era.
Part of the reasoning behind the push for continued increases in military spending stemmed from the emergence of new and expensive technologies and the need to develop them to keep pace with similar developments in the West. Grechko asserted that in order to accommodate the growing need for these complex technologies, strong links between the civilian and military economy were required. Ideally, subordination of the former to the latter would be best for Soviet security. Indeed, in the late 1960s such subordination did not seem that far off. In contrast to his political competitors who advocated a greater allocation of resources to the civilian sector, Brezhnev consistently approved increases in the military budget thereby meeting the needs of emerging technologies while at the same time satisfying the demands of the General Staff.

As the 1960s drew to a close however, it was becoming increasingly apparent that Brezhnev would have to turn his attention to the ailing Soviet economy and to identifying strategies to increase the production of consumer goods. This would inevitably bring pressure upon the military budget and put strain on what had been a fairly good working relationship between the political leadership and the Soviet High Command.

From Brezhnev's perspective, a shift in priorities away from strengthening the armed forces towards increased resource allocation to the civilian sector could be justified on several grounds. In terms of international prestige, the military build-up during the previous five years had earned the respect in military terms the Soviets had been looking for in the West. Such respect became increasingly apparent as acknowledgements of Soviet power had widened considerably by this time. Additional evidence that the Soviet build-up had been politically successful related to reports that the West was interested in exploring the possibility of reducing tensions. Given these developments, engaging the idea of détente, and perhaps arms control, offered a chance to acquire the "breathing space" thought necessary in order to refocus policy on the Soviet civilian economy.

61 Ibid., p.90
For Brezhnev, an important part of this development was the improvement of civilian technology, now beginning to fall uncomfortably behind the Western world. Not only would the "breathing space" associated with reduced East-West tensions provide the funds necessary for the improvements, Brezhnev believed that better relations with the West would present opportunities to widen the pool of available technological resources the Soviet Union could draw upon in its quest for modernization. Arms control would naturally supplement the effort.

While Grechko agreed that the level of Soviet technology was far from where it should be in the civilian sector, he did not believe cuts in military spending were the answer. Instead, he asserted that security was the only way to bring about economic prosperity and that in order to maintain security continued investment in military technology was required. Investment in civilian technology was deemed appropriate only insofar as it could be linked with, and contribute significantly to, the armed forces thus enhancing the overall security of the nation. If no such connection could be made in any given endeavour it was to be abandoned. Brezhnev, on the other hand, had more faith in civilian technology to deliver the military dividend and was evidently less concerned about making concrete connections at the outset, concerning himself more with the end result.

As the trend toward arms control and détente gained momentum, Grechko embarked on a reinvigorated campaign for sustaining the build-up of Soviet power.

In 1970, Grechko equated the defence budget with the construction of Communism itself, observing that "the Leninist party sees the question of strengthening the combat power of the armed services to be an important prerequisite for the successful construction of communism in our country;" in another article he maintained that current tasks facing the military "demand uninterrupted modernization and development of our military strength." Grechko clearly intended to keep the political leadership's feet to the fire as to funding for the military. Not only did he use an external threat to justify Soviet defence expenditures, he also attempted to make willingness to fund the military a test of Marxist-Leninist manhood. The implication was that those who argued against sustained military build-up were undermining the country's defences and probably soft on capitalism as well.
Although there had been progress in relations with the West by the mid-1970s (notably through SALT and the ABM), Grechko maintained that high levels of defence spending were vital to the security of the state. In 1974, he noted that,

The party teaches us to evaluate the international situation realistically. To take into account the factors that oppose peace. The forces of imperialism and reaction have not laid down their arms. They are striving to poison the international atmosphere...endeavouring to increase the allocations for war purposes and to promote the arms race... We must preserve a high degree of vigilance, maintain the defence capacity of our state at a proper level and intensify its defences.63

Grechko had the support of his Chief of the General Staff, Viktor Kulikov, who in 1976 pointed to the fact that the Soviet Union could not relinquish its drive for increased security vis-a-vis maintenance of the military budget at a time when American defence spending was on the rise.64

If emerging weapons technologies were to be mastered and incorporated successfully, there would have to be a corresponding commitment of funds. In his 1975 book, Grechko suggested:

The production of new weapons models and combat equipment is placing greater demands upon the country’s economy. In order to manufacture these weapons and equipment it is not enough to make use of only the old branches of industry. It is necessary to develop, long-range branches, capable of producing qualitatively different materials, which would also include such unique materials as those possessing a high degree of mechanical strength, heat resistance, purity of combustion, and other properties.65

In general, Grechko had little faith in the prospect that short term sacrifices in military spending would lead to long term gains for both the economy and security. “He not only found such ideas strange, but he did not trust the politicians to deliver. To his mind, once the funds were given away they would be lost forever.” The strategy he adhered to throughout his tenure

62 Quoted in Herspring, op. cit., p.74
64 Herspring, op. cit., p.105
65 Grechko, The Armed Forces of the Soviet State, op. cit., p.156
as Defence Minister, therefore, was to consistently oppose improvements in East-West relations "while at the same time refusing to agree to any cuts in the military budget."66

Despite the interests of the political leadership in arms control and détente, and a widening involvement of civilian analysts with similar interests and views, Grechko had some success in securing funds for the armed forces. Although he failed to get the increases he wanted, from 1967 to 1975 there were no cuts to the military budget. It was not until 1976, when he had been struck by an illness that would ultimately end his life, that his political masters were able to get a cut to the budget past him.67

Arms Control

From the outset, Grechko was deeply opposed to the process of arms control and détente. The intensity of his opposition grew over the years, eventually hammering a wedge between himself and General Secretary Brezhnev whose "peace offensive" of the late 1960s and early 1970s he openly criticized. In his article "25 Years Ago" written in 1966, a year before he had become Defence Minister, Grechko lamented the notion of international agreements, drawing attention to the 1939 non-aggression pact with Germany. He suggested that the Nazi deal had contributed to the illusion that if the country could make agreements to avoid conflict there would be room to save on defence. Such thinking, he argued, was directly responsible for the disastrous defeats suffered by the Soviets at the beginning of the Second World War.68

As Herspring and others have noted, Grechko consistently allied himself with opponents of the arms control process. During the SALT negotiations, participants reported that Grechko was extremely "difficult". According to one Soviet writer present during the negotiations,

66 Herspring, op. cit., p.79
67 Ibid.
68 Ibid., p.75
Grechko was the most outspoken of opponents to the process in the higher echelons of the Soviet political-military leadership. In his recollection of events, Arkady Shevchenko explained:

Defence Minister Grechko remained permanently apoplectic during SALT. His incurable distrust of and violent opposition to all of us involved in the negotiations, affected even the more realistic and sophisticated Generals in a negative way. Grechko would repeatedly and irrelevantly launch into admonitory lectures on the aggressive nature of imperialism, which, he assured us, had not changed. There was no guarantee against a new world war except a continued build-up of Soviet armed might.69

According to the characterizations of Shevchenko, Grechko’s efforts to oppose SALT were best described as a “guerrilla campaign” aimed at stalling the process, or indeed, halting it all together.70

Although Grechko did not convey his thoughts as openly in his public statements, it was made clear that his ultimate acceptance of SALT would be highly reluctant. In a published speech given 1968, Grechko warned of the dangers of imperialism and advised vigilance in dealing with the Americans. In 1969, he criticized Western interference in the international affairs of other countries, and in 1970, he “warned that the imperialists had no respect for international law when it came to matters of war and peace,” and again compared the situation facing the Kremlin to that which existed prior to the Second World War.71

Grechko’s suspicion of arms control was firmly grounded in his belief that the key to security was a strong military. These views were in large measure consistent with much of the High Command. Peace and security “would be assured not by diplomatic agreements but by the strength of the Soviet military.”

Diplomatic manoeuvring was fine, but it clearly took second place to Moscow’s efforts to build up its armed forces. Furthermore, there was the question of ideology. If the West was as evil as Soviet officers and soldiers had been led to believe, and if the military was expected to be prepared to defend the country in

70 Ibid.
71 Herspring, op. cit., p.75
the event of a conflict, how could one justify deals with the capitalist devil? If nothing else, such a course of action could lead to moral disarmament.\textsuperscript{72}

The concerns of the High Command were compounded by the perception that there was much to be done to fill the gap that existed in military technology with the West. A slow down in weapons development and production, it was thought, threatened to irreversibly widen the gap. Additionally, Soviet officers expressed concern that the re-balancing and modernizing of forces initiated in the mid-1960s was far from complete. “Conventional forces were still being rebuilt, a blue-water navy was still under construction, and dual-systems were still being developed.”\textsuperscript{73}

By the 1970s Grechko’s problems with the political elite were escalating. Brezhnev’s campaign for the increased production of consumer goods and development of civilian technology was gaining momentum, which, for Grechko and the High Command, meant that cuts in military spending could not be far off. It was also around this time, as the SALT negotiations were about to open, that Grechko was faced with another source of frustration. Civilians were becoming increasingly involved in matters of international affairs and were demanding access to sensitive information which had previously been the well guarded preserve of the Soviet military. Various configurations of civilian advisors and analysts were being asked by the political elite to consider the security problems of the day. To the dismay of Grechko and the High Command, many took opposing views on arms control and détente suggesting that the Soviet Union would be best served by encouraging its military to soften its positions. Not only did this development threaten to weaken the military’s voice in arms control negotiations, it also meant that the longstanding tradition of bluff and deception in communicating Soviet capabilities to the rest of the world was at stake. Loosening restrictions on the flow of information then, was perceived to strengthen the hand of the enemy, and therefore, a blow to Soviet security.

\textsuperscript{72} Ibid., p.77

\textsuperscript{73} Ibid.
Just prior to Brezhnev’s announcement of a “peace offensive” at the 24th Party Congress in 1971, Grechko published an article in Izvestiya in which he reiterated his distrust of the West by accusing the imperialists of conducting an active campaign aimed at destroying socialism, “...of engaging in military provocations, and of accelerating the arms race.” He charged that Washington’s use of “political pressure” and “military threats” were “straining international relations” and that “the preparations of the imperialists of the U.S. for aggression have not ceased and continue at an undiminished tempo.”

In a subsequent article, published in Kommunist later in 1971, Grechko appeared to back off from his dispute with the political leadership over arms control as he gave praise to the recently concluded non-proliferation agreement and the Seabed Treaty. Nonetheless, he continued his assault on imperialism claiming that it would “commit any crime for the sake of its mercenary interests,” and warned that “the aggressive essence of imperialism” had not changed as a result of the agreements but instead that it was employing “refined” tactics to achieve its ultimate goals. As Herspring has noted, several of Grechko’s comments are noteworthy:

First, his reference to the unchanging nature of imperialism was directed at Brezhnev, who had argued that it was possible to do business with those in the West who had a more realistic understanding of the danger of nuclear war and recognized the utility of improved relations for both sides. Second, coming at a time when the USSR was engaged in delicate negotiations with the West on a strategic arms limitation agreement, Grechko’s reference to “most refined” Western methods could be read as a warning to the political leadership not to be taken in, not to sacrifice the country’s vital interests on the altar of improved East-West relations.

Viktor Kulikov, having been promoted to Chief of the General Staff in September of 1971, followed the example of his predecessor, Zakharov, in holding the Grechko line. In 1972,

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75 Ibid.
76 Andrei Grechko, “KPSS i Vooruzhennye sil” (“The CPSU and the Armed Forces”), Kommunist, No. 4, March 1971, p.42
77 Herspring, op. cit., p.108
he echoed the warnings of his boss about the inherent aggressive and untrustworthy nature of the imperialists who were described as having an overt predisposition to use military force in pursuit of their goals. The American involvement in Vietnam was frequently described by Grechko, Zakharov, Kulikov, and other officers of the High Command, as tangible evidence of such predispositions.\textsuperscript{78}

Ultimately, Grechko and his Chief of Staff accepted the principles of the SALT treaties. In their writing and speeches it became clear that both men realized limiting strategic arms could “serve the interests of both countries,” by reducing the danger of nuclear war. Nonetheless, there were careful qualifications to their endorsements as it was noted that while nuclear danger may have been reduced, the threat of war remained high.

By 1973, as if to neutralize the peace process, Grechko began to identify “reactionary circles” and “militarist” camps in the West, to which he ascribed aspirations geared toward the destruction of the Soviet Union. He warned his listeners, many of them Soviet arms agreement negotiators, that the potential influence these “reactionaries” and “militarists” had on Western peacemakers could not be underestimated. In his article, “On Guard over Peace and Socialism” published in the May issue of Kommunist, Grechko suggested that “the change from the cold war to détente is taking place in the world. But the reaction and militarism still have not been neutralized.”

Events of recent years clearly show that as before, the policy of imperialism remains reactionary and aggressive, regardless of whether the power of militarism has decreased. Under those circumstances the aggressiveness of international reaction is aimed at the socialist states and above all against the Soviet Union.\textsuperscript{79}

As Herspring points out, this kind of statement did not fit well with those of the political leadership. Brezhnev and his supporters had by this time devoted considerable time and effort toward the improvement of East-West relations making it “one of the main pillars of their

\textsuperscript{78} cf Herspring, p.108 ff

\textsuperscript{79}
foreign policy. At the same time, the frequency of promising statements on détente had increased and public debate on such matters was widening. There was a growing appreciation of the devastation of nuclear war and the need for “rational” thinking in international relations with the West. The seemingly confrontational and antagonistic attitudes of the Defence Minister and his Chief of Staff to the process and its prospects therefore, were becoming increasingly outdated.

Nevertheless, Grechko was promoted in 1973 to full member of the Politburo. Kremlin watchers suspected Brezhnev had reasoned that doing so would bring Grechko and his followers in line with the new directions in Soviet foreign policy. To some extent this was true.Shortly after his promotion, Grechko was quoted as saying that “positive progress on the world situation” had been made and that “peaceful coexistence” deserved the attention of Soviet policy.

Grechko’s conversion was short-lived however. Within six months, his assault on imperialism had returned. In the military’s most widely read journal, Red Star, Grechko again warned of the dangers of imperialism.

Imperialism is still carrying out material preparations for war, expanding its production of military equipment and weaponry, and insistently perfecting its gigantic military machine...The danger of war remains a stern reality of our time.

Seemingly unimpressed with the results of the visit with the U.S. President, Grechko continued to urge caution a week later.

Despite a certain thaw in the international climate, there is still a real military threat from imperialism. It was and remains the main bearer of military danger.

Of course this contrasted sharply with Brezhnev’s outlook following the visit which was characterized by calls for “constructive relations” and a “deepening of détente.”

80 Herspring, op. cit., p.110
81 Andrei Grechko, op. cit.
Ultimately, the proponents of arms control won out over Grechko and his followers in the High Command. Facing the prospect of being labelled a political outcast and perhaps removed from his post, he reluctantly chose to endorse SALT, ABM, and the very difficult Vladovostok accords. Generally speaking, Grechko was never comfortable with the idea that security could be enhanced by giving up certain weapons systems in exchange for similar concessions by the enemy. In the first instance, he did not trust the imperialists to deliver on the promises they made regardless of the issue in question. Second, security, he believed, was best achieved through the achievement of a preponderance of military capability in absolute not relative terms. Arms control and détente were therefore a dangerous enterprise.

Grechko’s Definition of Doctrine

In 1974, Grechko restated the official definition of doctrine. He described it as a system of views on the nature of war and methods of waging it, and on the preparation of the country and army for war, officially adopted in a given state and in its armed forces. And for the first time, the questions doctrine should answer were succinctly formulated. They were:

1. What enemy will have to be faced in a possible war?
2. What is the nature of the war in which the state and its armed forces will have to take part and what goals and missions might they be faced with in such a war?
3. What armed forces are needed to perform the assigned missions, and in what direction must military developments be carried out?
4. How are preparations for war to be implemented?
5. What methods must be used to wage war?

In later years, Ogarkov would reiterate these questions and elaborate answers to them in his own formulation of military doctrine. The following chapter will introduce Ogarkov and begin the discussion of his approach to doctrine.

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84 Herspring, op. cit., p.111
85 Scott, op. cit., p.185
86 Ibid.
Introducing Nikolai Vasil’evich Ogarkov

Nikolai Vasil’evich Ogarkov was born in October 1917 to a peasant family living in the Kalinin Oblast. He began his training as an engineer at the Workers Power Engineering School in the mid-1930s. He went on to the Kuibyshev Military Engineering Academy in Moscow where he graduated in 1941. From 1957-59 he attended the prestigious Voroshilov General Staff Academy, widely regarded as the premier training ground for those seeking top positions in the Soviet military.

Ogarkov joined the Red Army in 1938 beginning a long career of military service. Between 1941 and 1942 he served as Regimental Engineer in the 17th, 61st, and 289th Rifle Divisions, and on the Karelian Front, as Chief Engineer for the Construction of Military Defences with the Department of Engineering Administration. From 1942-45, he held various posts including Assistant to Chief of Staff, Engineering Troops, 32nd Army; Deputy Chief of Staff of Operations, Division of Engineering Troops; and Division Engineer on the 2nd and 3rd Ukrainian Fronts.

Ogarkov’s postwar career was equally impressive. Beginning in 1945, he held senior posts on the Staff of Engineering Troops of the Carpathian Military District and in the Engineering Administration of the Maritime Military District. From 1948-53 Ogarkov filled the post of Chief at various sections of Operations Administration and the Staff of Commanders in the Far East Military District, where by 1955, he had been promoted to Chief of Administration and Deputy Chief of Staff. In 1959, he took command of a motorized infantry division in the Group of Soviet Forces in Germany and, in 1961, moved to the Belorussian Military District where he held the positions of Chief of Staff, and First Deputy Commander. From 1965-68 Ogarkov was Commander of the Volga Military District. While there, he was elevated to First Deputy Chief of General Staff of the Armed Forces.
In 1973 Ogarkov was promoted to Army General and, in 1977, to Marshal of the Soviet Union. During the same year he began his tenure as Chief of the General Staff and First Deputy Minister of Defence. In 1984, Ogarkov was transferred to the post of Commander-in-Chief in the Western Theatre of Operations (TVD) where he served until 1988. He concluded his military career as a member of the Soviet Army’s Main Inspectorate.

On the political front, Ogarkov joined the Communist Party in 1945. From 1963-67 he served as Deputy Belorussian SSR of the Supreme Soviet. He became a Deputy of the Council of the Union and Council of Nationalities, USSR Supreme Soviet, in 1966. In the same year, he became Candidate Member of the Central Committee of the CPSU reaching full membership status in 1971.

Ogarkov’s numerous medals and awards include Hero of the Soviet Union, Order of Lenin, Order of the Red Banner of Labour, 2 Orders of Red Star, 2 Orders of Patriotic War (1st and 2nd Class), Order “For Service to the Fatherland in the USSR Armed Forces” (3rd Class), and the Lenin Prize. Ogarkov also received several foreign orders and medals for his many accomplishments.

With respect to his published works, Ogarkov contributed more than fifty articles to Soviet military journals from 1970-85 and wrote two major books, *Always in Readiness to Defend the Fatherland* (1982) and *History Teaches Vigilance* (1985), both of which were required reading for the High Command, and studied extensively by officers in training.

**The Dialectics of Military Doctrine**

Marshal Ogarkov’s use and understanding of Marxist-Leninist theory and science was unprecedented for a Soviet military officer. Ogarkov possessed a sophistication of thought which often led him to frame his discussions of military doctrine in the complex language of historical and materialist dialectics. Specifically, he focused on three dialectical laws: the law of the negation of the negation; the law of passage from quantitative to
qualitative change; and the law of unity and struggle of opposites. Each of these laws were given consideration in his two books and referred to in many of his articles, beginning as early as 1971.

Ogarkov’s use of dialectics in his analyses of military doctrine has its roots in dialectical and historical materialism. Both of these concepts are said to be derived from the use of Hegelian dialectics by Marx in his philosophy of history. Briefly, the Hegelian dialectic may be explained as an interpretive method relating specific entities or events to an absolute idea in which an assertible proposition, or thesis, is opposed by an equally assertible contradictory proposition, or anti-thesis. Ultimately, this contradiction is resolved on a higher level of understanding or truth, by a third proposition, or synthesis. Materialism is the philosophical theory that regards matter and its motions as constituting the universe, and all phenomena including those of the mind as due to material agencies.

Marx developed an application of dialectical materialism into what is now known as historical materialism, a method of studying history that combines analyses of the historical process and social causation. More specifically, historical materialism suggests that all forms of thought and all institutions, such as the family or the state, develop as a superstructure founded on an economic base that reflects the character of economic relations and are altered or modified as a result of class struggles. According to the theory, every ruling class necessarily produces the class that will destroy, or replace it. For Marx, historical materialism uncovered the dialectical necessity which forecasted the disappearance of the state and the establishment of a classless society.

As one would expect, these themes were picked up by Lenin and tailored to suit the needs of the revolution. Later, they were used by descendants of Marxism-Leninism, frequently in order to justify the existence of the “dictatorship of the proletariat”. Although a firm understanding and ability to apply dialectics in theoretical discussions would have been the recommendation for all who would consider philosophy or history, Marx and Lenin
surely would have been impressed, if not surprised, to witness a military officer, a technical engineer no less, apply these principles and concepts to military doctrine as fully and eloquently as Ogarkov was able to.

In a May 1978 Kommunist article entitled, “Military Science and Defence of the Socialist Fatherland,” Ogarkov first explained each of the three dialectical laws and their application to military affairs. In his opening remarks, Ogarkov described the dialectical materialism of Marxism-Leninism as the “initial methodological base” for progressive military theory. He suggested,

The use of its laws in military-scientific knowledge, and the consideration of all phenomena of a war in their inter-relationship and interdependence make it possible to determine and establish the specific types of contradictions, forms of struggle between opposites, conversion of quantitative into qualitative changes, and interrelations between old and new, thus properly approaching the determination of the specific characteristics of the laws of war and military affairs.86

Ogarkov advised that failure to understand these interrelationships and interdependencies would lead to “one sided judgements,” and in terms of military preparations, “the exaggeration of the role of one or another branch of the armed forces or form of strategic operations to the detriment of the others.”87 In the 1970s, Ogarkov’s comments were likely intended to overcome remnants of the nuclear-mindedness characteristic of the Khrushchev era. Later, the focus of his comments would increasingly be directed toward those who failed to appreciate the impact of high technology conventional weapons on doctrine, and to recognize the vital role of dialectical materialism in substantiating the conclusions drawn with respect to future developments in military affairs.

87 Ibid.
Ogarkov’s belief in the relevance of dialectical materialism and its applicability to military affairs remained unshaken throughout his tenure as Chief of the General Staff. In his second book, History Teaches Vigilance, published in 1985, Ogarkov confirmed that:

The general law of materialist dialectics is that various articles, phenomena and processes, both in nature and in society do not exist in isolation, in and of themselves. They are organically linked and constantly interact, and are in constant development. “In order to truly know a subject,” wrote Lenin, “it is necessary to comprehend and study all of its aspects, all its relationships and instrumentalities” and to approach each phenomenon from the point of view of how and under what conditions it arose in the past, what it is in the present and what it will become in the future. Military affairs are no exception. Their development convincingly confirms the action of this general law of dialectics.88

It was precisely this type of linkage, between Lenin, dialectics, and military affairs that seemed to distinguish Ogarkov from the average military thinker.

The Law of Unity and Struggle of Opposites

In one of his earliest formulations of this law, Ogarkov characterized the unity and struggle of opposites as the “basic idea of the dialectic understanding of the development of military affairs and, consequently, of military science…” In his 1978 Kommunist article he explained that the struggle of opposites constituted the source of development of the armed struggle and of war as a whole. Given the attention this subject was given throughout Ogarkov’s work, the following passage is worth quoting at length:

By its very nature the armed struggle is contradictory. Contradictions within the armed struggle represent, above all, contradictions between the enemies and their strategic objectives, offence and defence, concentration of the forces and means of limited areas in order to establish superiority in the direction of the strikes and the possibility of a strike against them, the need of the armed forces for expensive weapons and equipment and the economic possibilities of the state...

The history of war convincingly proves, for example, the existence of the permanent contradiction between the means of attack and defence. The appearance of new means of attack has always led to the creation of corresponding themes for counteraction. In the final account, this has led to finding new means for waging battles and combats, and conduct of

88 Ogarkov, Nikolai Vasil’evich. Istoria Uchit Bditelnosti (History Teaches Vigilance), Moscow, 1985 (translation: Foreign Broadcast Information Service; Washington, 1985).
operations. Thus, with the fast development of tanks, aviation, and submarines, anti-tank, anti-aircraft, anti-submarine weapons and corresponding defence methods were developed.

This fully applies to nuclear missiles whose fast development motivated military-scientific thinking and practice actively to develop ways and means to counter them. In turn, the appearance of new means for defence against mass destruction weapons gave a new impetus to improving means of nuclear missile attack. All of this confirms the conclusion that the age-old duel between attack and defence weapons is one of the reasons for the development of means for struggle and, with them, ways for the conduct of military operations.69

In subsequent years, Ogarkov would suggest that in the context of nuclear weapons development, it was possible for an entity to reach its inner dialectical limits, or permanent balance. The implications of this line of reasoning were explained in greater detail in Ogarkov's discussion of the law of the negation of the negation, but in general they presented the possibility that nuclear weapons had negated themselves, and by extension, nuclear war. As Fitzgerald explained in her interpretation of Ogarkov's arguments, "In Marxist-Leninist terms, nuclear means of attack and defence have negated each other: the earlier struggle of opposites has been replaced by an impasse."90

In his 1982 book, Ogarkov emphasized the "complex and contradictory" nature of armed combat. At its core, he wrote, are a multitude of:

...interrelationships and conflicts between the opposing sides, their political and strategic aims; between offence and defence; between concentration of men and weapons in limited areas in order to establish the requisite superiority on the axes of advance and the capability to destroy them with fires, and today nuclear fires as well; between armed forces need of modern weapons and combat equipment and the economic capabilities of nations to produce them.91

Ogarkov advised that the discovery and resolution of the contradictions inherent in military affairs was "a most important condition for the scientific advance of military

90 Mary C. Fitzgerald, Changing Soviet Doctrine on Nuclear War, (Centre For Foreign Policy Studies, Dalhousie University, 1986) p.21
91 N. V. Ogarkov, Viyegda v Gorovnosti K Zashchite Otechestva (Always in Readiness to Defend the Fatherland), Moscow, 1982 (translation: Foreign Broadcast Information Service; Washington, 1982) p.25
He believed that the duty of a military theorist was to make these identifications promptly and accurately and to utilize the knowledge gained toward devising effective resolutions to them.

In *History Teaches Vigilance*, the message was essentially the same. He again referred to the universality of the law of unity and struggle of opposites to all phenomena, describing it as an “especially important” element of dialectical materialism. He added that theoretical research that adhered to its principles and methods would itself provide impetus, or “an internal impulse,” to the actual development of military affairs.

Perhaps the most detailed and pervasive analysis of the law of unity and struggle of opposites at work Ogarkov provided involved its applicability to the historical contradiction between means of attack and defence. A clear instance of classic Hegelian dialectics where theses are replaced by anti-theses, the historical struggle between offensive and defensive weapons and modes of conflict is easily traceable. Ogarkov cited many examples of these conflicts and how they were resolved for limited moments in time only to be exposed to further contradictions as new developments gradually took hold.

In *History Teaches Vigilance*, Ogarkov’s words regarding the importance of the unity and struggle of opposites had developed an increased sense of urgency. Given the rapid advance of new weapons technologies and the need to incorporate them into modern strategy, Ogarkov wanted to make sure that those responsible for deciding the outcome of Soviet military affairs would utilize, and consequently benefit from the answers this dialectical law could provide. In summarizing his discussion of this aspect of dialectics Ogarkov wrote:

The appearance of new means of attack always unavoidably led to the creation of corresponding countermeasures, and in the end to the development of new methods of conducting battles, engagements, operations and war as a whole. Therefore, under present-day conditions, when active change from one

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92 Ibid., p.27
93 Ogarkov, *History Teaches Vigilance*, op cit., p.30
generation of weapons to another is taking place [in this case from nuclear to high-technology conventional weapons], it is extremely important that military cadres approach the examination of all aspects of the development of military affairs not in a one-sided way but in an all-round manner, on the basis of thorough understanding of the basic law, the core of dialectics – the law of unity and the struggle of opposites. Thorough study, inquiry and knowledge of the optimal methods of solving the contradictions of military activity is a most important condition for the successful management of the complex and contradictory processes in the field of military construction and military art.  

Indeed, Soviet theorists had long applied this law to their understanding of military affairs, and as Fitzgerald explained in 1986, "...this dialectic has proved crucial in shaping long-term Soviet programs of force development." While from 1965 to 1976, proponents of nuclear force deployment were able to hold the line on further developments of Soviet nuclear capability through reference to the open-ended nature of the dialectic of arms development, Ogarkov ultimately facilitated a new understanding in later years. He suggested that because of the quantitative and qualitative proliferation of nuclear weapons that had occurred, an "inner dialectical limit" of arms development had been reached. Related to the existence of parity at the strategic level, Ogarkov would eventually argue that nuclear weapons had in effect negated themselves, rendering void previous claims that "methods of active and passive defence against these weapons and their carriers will be perfected." 

The Law of Passage From Quantitative to Qualitative Change

Ogarkov suggested that in order to understand the limitations and realize the potential for making improvements in the armed forces and the means for conducting military operations one would have to utilize a military science based on the dialectical law of the conversion of quantitative changes into qualitative changes. In so doing, the sources and mechanisms of change would be revealed, thereby enabling accurate predictions with respect

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81 Ibid., p.31
83 Fitzgerald, op. cit., p.15
to the course and outcome of developments in military affairs. As he explained in “Military Science and Defence of the Socialist Fatherland,”

This law teaches us that the development of all phenomena takes place through the gradual accumulation of quantitative changes and their conversion, at a given stage, into basic qualitative changes. The effect of this law in military affairs is manifested with particular clarity in the development of the methods for conducting the armed struggle.

The development of new weapons and military equipment... entails the reorganization of methods for the conduct of military operations. However, this does not occur immediately following the appearance of new weapons but only when they begin to be applied in quantities leading to qualitative changes. As long as new weapons and combat materiel are used in limited amounts, they most frequently adapt themselves to the existing means of the armed struggle or, at best, introduce in such means a few partial changes.

We know, for example, that tanks and airplanes appeared as early as World War I. However, by virtue of their insignificant number and imperfection, they were unable to bring about qualitative changes in the nature of combat operations. Subsequently, when on the eve of and during World War II, the mass production of tanks and airplanes was organized and carried out, and when new branches and arms were created within the armed forces — the air force and tank troops — the nature of the organization and conduct of battle and of operations changed drastically, qualitatively above all. This led to the appearance of new ways and means of combat operations and substantially influenced their course and outcome.⁹⁶

In his 1982 book, Always in Readiness to Defend the Fatherland, Ogarkov again described the importance of the dialectical law of passage from quantitative to qualitative change stressing the totality of its application to “all objects and phenomena of nature, society and intellectual process.” He explained that the gradual accumulation of quantitative changes often leads to their transformation into “radical qualitative changes.” Along the path to these radical transformations, partial korrektivy, or amendments, to existing modes of combat frequently occur.⁹⁷

Ogarkov suggested that the law of passage from quantitative to qualitative change was clearly reflected in the theory of the operation in depth. Quantitative changes in the

⁹⁶ Ogarkov, "Military Science and Defence of the Socialist Fatherland," op. cit., p.139
⁹⁷ Ogarkov, Always in Readiness to Defend the Fatherland, op. cit., p.27
number of tanks and aircraft and their qualitative improvement in the interwar years led to qualitative changes in the character of military operations in World War II.

In the course of the Great Patriotic War the theory and practice of the operation in depth, both as a whole and individual elements, were being continuously improved and developed. In particular, quantitative growth of air forces made it possible substantially to expand the missions of aviation in offensive operations. Aviation, just as artillery, transitioned from sporadic support to continuous support of ground troops in the offence. Employment of aviation acquired the form of the air offensive [aviatsionnogo nastupleniya], which included preliminary and immediate preparation for the assault phase [predvartitel'nuyu i neposredstvennyu podgotovku ataki] and close support of infantry and tanks during combat deep in the enemy’s defensive positions. Ogarkov added that these developments continued into the postwar period with the advent of jet propulsion, which ultimately replaced the piston engine, and improvements in airborne armaments which enabled strikes at considerably greater depth than had been the case in the past.

Among the most radical qualitative changes Ogarkov discussed were those relating to the introduction of nuclear weapons. In Always in Readiness to Defend the Fatherland, he suggested that the dialectical law of transition from quantitative to qualitative change was “manifested in full measure” in the evolution of views regarding the use of nuclear weapons. In the 1950s, he said, when only limited quantities of nuclear weapons existed, and aircraft were the primary means of delivery, they were viewed “only as a weapon capable of sharply increasing the firepower of combat troops.” One will recall, for example, that Soviet views regarding the utility of nuclear weapons were initially influenced by the fact that they did not possess them, and later, by the fact that they possessed them only in limited numbers and with limited capabilities. Further downgrading of nuclear weapons potential continued in light of the fact that airpower, the principal means of delivery, had not yet been fully incorporated into Soviet doctrine in its own right. As the quantities and capabilities of both

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86 Ibid., p.28
87 Ibid., p.29
nuclear weapons and aircraft increased, their effect on operational planning and military
document became obvious. As Ogarkov explained:

An effort was made to adapt these weapons to existing forms and modes of
military operations, primarily strategic. In connection with this, the principal
role in accomplishing combat missions continued to be played by the troops
engaged in combat directly on the battlefield.

Subsequently the rapid quantitative growth of nuclear weapons of
various yield and their extensive adoption in all branches [vidy] of the USSR
Armed Forces and the development of rockets, including intercontinental, as
a means of delivering nuclear weapons to the target, led to a radical revision
of the role of these weapons and an abrupt change in former views on the
place and significance of each military service in war and on modes of
conduct of the battle, operation, and a war as a whole.\textsuperscript{103}

Similarly, in his 1985 book, \textit{History Teaches Vigilance}, Ogarkov, having again
reviewed examples of the law at work with respect to the introduction of machine guns,
tanks, and aircraft, referred to the development of views on the utility of nuclear weapons as a
"vivid manifestation of the dialectical law of the transition of gradual quantitative change into
fundamental, qualitative changes...\textsuperscript{101}

In the 1950s and 1960s, when nuclear weapons were still few, they were viewed
merely as a means capable of sharply increasing the firepower of the troops.
Every effort was made to adapt nuclear weapons to existing forms and methods
of conducting military operations, and in the first place to accomplishing
strategic missions. Later, in the 1970s and 1980s, the rapid quantitative
increase in nuclear weapons of various yields, development of numerous long
range and highly accurate delivery means and their widespread introduction into
the troops and naval forces led to a fundamental re-examination of the role of
these weapons and to overturning former views on their place and significance
in war; on the methods of waging battles and operations; and even on the
overall possibility of conducting war with the use of nuclear weapons.\textsuperscript{102}

An analysis of Ogarkov’s work shows that he consistently viewed the law of quantitative to
qualitative change as an integral part of sound theoretical research. In 1985, he advised that,

\textit{Under modern conditions only comprehensive theoretical and practical research
permits the most reliable determination of the optimal correlations between
quantitative and qualitative indices of various systems of weapons and military

\textsuperscript{100} Ogarkov, \textit{Always in Readiness to Defend the Fatherland}, \textit{op cit.}, p.29
\textsuperscript{101} Ogarkov, \textit{History Teaches Vigilance}, \textit{op cit.}, p.32
\textsuperscript{102} Ibid.
equipment, as well as of the groupings of armed forces in theatres of military operations, and can introduce timely necessary adjustments to the existing forms and methods of military operations.103

In subsequent chapters, Ogarkov’s application of the law of passage from quantitative to qualitative change to developments in military affairs which took place during his tenure as Chief of the General Staff will be explored in more detail.

The law of the negation of the negation

Another component of sound theoretical and practical research Ogarkov advocated involved the dialectical law of the negation of the negation. In conjunction with the laws of quantitative to qualitative change and the unity and struggle of opposites, he believed important correlations and trends in the development of military affairs could be revealed through the dialectical law of the negation of the negation. In explaining the importance and method of applying this law, Ogarkov often began with the teachings of Lenin. Accordingly, he suggested that negation of the negation does not represent “simple negation” but rather a negation as an “aspect of ties” in which the positive elements of an entity are retained so long as they are useful, and the obsolete discarded. Quoting Lenin, he wrote that dialectical negation is “not naked negation... but negation as a moment of linkage, a moment of development, with retention of the positive.” He added that negation reflects the progressive nature of development and is a vital part of achieving a dialectical understanding of development processes in any area of inquiry.

Ogarkov suggested that the law of negation is frequently manifested in military affairs. In general, he stated that the extent of negation often differs from one example to the next but has nonetheless been present “generation after generation.” In his 1978 Kommunist

103 Ibid., p.33
104 Ibid.
article, Ogarkov explained that the organizational structure of troops was one of the clearest examples of negation whereby the positive elements of an entity were retained while the obsolete discarded:

As we know, organizational units such as regiments, divisions, and corps, were developed long ago and still exist. Their organizational structure has been subjected to constant improvements depending on the development of the means of armed struggle through the negation of obsolete elements in the forms of organization in order to promote the fuller and more effective utilization of the combat qualities of the new weapons and military equipment while retaining the foundations of the original structure. Thus, a modern motorized infantry division, while retaining the overall base of a divisional structure of the period of the Great Patriotic War, is radically different from it through its combat possibilities.

Ogarkov’s interest in this aspect of negation was particularly keen. In later years, he assumed the leading role in changes that were made to the organizational structure of Soviet troops. In accordance with the dialectical laws guiding his perceptions, these changes were facilitated in large measure by taking proper account of the quantitative and qualitative changes occurring with respect to the downgraded utility of nuclear weapons and their replacement with high technology conventional arms.

As an example of a more thorough negation whereby a fundamentally new basis for an entity replaced that which could no longer be modified or improved upon, Ogarkov referred to the 19th century replacement of smooth-bore weapons by threaded, or rifled, firearms. In this case, he suggested, one weapon negated another by virtue of its vast superiority over its predecessor. The dialectical chain of negations continued, explained Ogarkov, with the post-World War II adoption of smooth bore technology in jet systems and guided missiles thus presenting another possibility for a negation of the negation. In both cases, the dialectical process of negation was governed by law of passage from quantitative to qualitative change. More specifically, smooth-bore firearms were replaced by rifled firearms only after they appeared in sufficient quantities to establish their superiority on the battlefield.
To further demonstrate the dialectical law of negation, Ogarkov referred to the evolution and ultimate replacement of cavalry with mechanized troops. He explained:

[T]he main striking force of the feudal armies of the European countries were the mounted knights in which the riders wore armour while the horses were protected by metal. Following the invention of firearms when, to use Engels' graphic expression, "the bullets of Burger weapons pierced the knights' armour," this cavalry lost its striking force and was negated.

It was replaced by cavalry deprived of heavy protection. It became more mobile and flexible and the existence of firearms enabled it to fight both as cavalry and infantry. In World War I and, particularly, in the civil war, it was extensively used in mounting successful offensives, for defence counter-strikes, and for actions in the enemy rear and the destruction of enemy communications. However, following the appearance of rapid fire automatic weapons and with the tempestuous development of aeroplanes and tanks, the role of cavalry began to decline sharply. In World War II it could no longer display its former qualities. As an arm cavalry had exhausted its possibilities. Therefore, it was entirely natural that it was replaced by a new arm—armoured tank and mechanized troops operating on a qualitatively different technical basis and possessing strong firepower, armour, and high maneuverability. In other words, a negation of the negation took place. However, naturally, the negation process does not end with this. As we know, today corresponding means for anti-tank struggle are being tempestuously developed.106

In addition to organizational structure, rifled weapons, tanks and cavalry, Ogarkov included examples from the history of development of the navy and air force as evidence of negation at work. With respect to the navy for example, he traced the dialectical chain of negations that began with the replacement of oars by sails, their replacement by the steam engine, and its replacement by diesel engines. Finally, though not yet complete, he anticipated the ultimate replacement of diesel by nuclear powered ships.

In terms of contemporary developments, Ogarkov increasingly referred to negation as it applied to nuclear weapons and, in particular, to the diminishing utility of nuclear war. As Mary Fitzgerald explained in her essay, "Marshal Ogarkov on Modern War," his assertions in this regard became more explicit over time. She noted that while his discussion of the law of negation of the negation in military affairs in his 1985 History Teaches Vigilance followed "previous discussions practically verbatim," in terms of common examples such as those

106 Ogarkov, "Military Science and Defence of the Socialist Fatherland," op. cit. p.140
relating to rifled weapons. Ogarkov's discussion of nuclear weapons introduced the possibility that their quantitative and qualitative growth could have the effect of negating war itself.\textsuperscript{107}

While the idea of war being susceptible to the law of negation is not new to Marxist-Leninists, who have long envisioned the disappearance of war as a social activity, Ogarkov's explanation of the negation of war was set in the context of "evolving military technology rather than evolving socialism." Fitzgerald quoted the following passage from Ogarkov to demonstrate her point:

The law of the negation of the negation, the birth of the new and the extinction of the old, is of a universal nature. But this law is manifested, like all of the other laws of the dialectic, in different ways: In nature, involuntarily, in society and consequently military affairs, as a tendency and necessarily through the activities of people. The leaps from old to new are also not standardized in terms of time. For the barley grain sown in the soil, the negation comes in the fruiting spikes of the new harvest after several months; while wars, appearing at the dawn of class society, have been blazing for a millennium and still have not died out. But this by no means indicates the eternity of wars, as bourgeois historians and politicians claim. No. They are also subject to the action of this dialectical law of development. And the law of negation of the negation underscores precisely this thought: both in military theory and in the practical experience of military affairs, one must not absolutize.\textsuperscript{108}

Fitzgerald suggested that this line of thinking coincided with the resurrection of a school of thought in military affairs that initially emerged in the 1960s but was swiftly closed by the strength of opposing views. Proponents of the school she referred to as the "Nikol'skyites," so named after one of its principle members, N.M. Nikol'skiy, argued that "nuclear war had reached its inner dialectical limits and had thus negated itself, that there were no prospects for defending against nuclear weapons, and that the ensuing universal destruction would therefore be so great as to make the concept of victory meaningless."\textsuperscript{109}

\textsuperscript{107} Ibid., p.141

\textsuperscript{108} Mary C. Fitzgerald, "Marshal Ogarkov on Modern War," (Center for Naval Analyses; Alexandria, Virginia, 1986) p.14

\textsuperscript{109} Ogarkov, History Teaches Vigilance, op. cit., p.59

\textsuperscript{109} Mary C. Fitzgerald, "Marshal Ogarkov On Modern War: 1977 – 1985," Center For Naval Analyses; Alexandria, Virginia,
The argument proceeded to suggest that by virtue of improvements in missile technology and increased yields of nuclear warheads they had begun to negate themselves, and by extension, to negate war as an means of resolving political problems.

The opposing school of thought argued that war had not negated itself, suggesting instead that "the present balance of weapons systems was only a moment in the inner dialectic of the military technological process, and a means of defence would be developed against nuclear weapons." Although Nikol’skiy continued his attempts to convince his opponents of the self-negation of nuclear war, opposing views and the development of nuclear options remained unfettered well into the 1970s.

By the time Brezhnev gave his famous speech at Tula in 1977 however, the arguments of the "Nikol’skyites" began to re-emerge. Indeed, as Fitzgerald pointed out, Nikol’skiy himself participated in the debate with a fresh publication in which he once again asserted that "nuclear war had reached its inner dialectical limits in the material-technological, economic, and political senses, and had therefore negated itself." Ogarkov, having been appointed to Chief of the General Staff in the same year, was obviously taking note of these developments, although it would be a number of years before he explicitly acknowledged their validity in his public statements.

In summarizing the process of the negation of the negation, Ogarkov concluded:

The process of development of military affairs offers an innumerable number of various examples of the manifestation of dialectical laws. The content of this process includes surmounting what is old and obsolete and asserting the new, the accumulation of the positive experience, and its critical processing in accordance with changed circumstances. Based on the law of negation of the negation, military science must consider each process as a link within the chain of the progressive development of military affairs and determine the ways for the reorganization of current facilities accordingly.

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1986, p.11

110 Ibid., p.12

111 Ibid., p.13

112 Ogarkov, "Military Science and Defence of the Socialist Fatherland," op. cit, p.142
Ogarkov's repeated emphasis on the importance of dialectical links, interrelationships, and contradictions may not have been entirely unique for a Soviet theorist, but for an officer of the Soviet High Command it was, at the very least, unusual. In 1986, Mary Fitzgerald noted that, "Marshall Ogarkov is the only senior Soviet Military leader in recent years who has discussed the operation of all three of the dialectical laws in military affairs."13 The ability to do so earned Ogarkov distinction and respect among his colleagues and the political leadership. To be sure, the theoretical justification he offered for his policy recommendations often made rebuttal difficult for his opponents.

The Definition of Military Doctrine

Ogarkov was generally consistent in his definition of military doctrine throughout his tenure as Chief of the General Staff. In Always in Readiness to Defend the Fatherland, for example, he gave the following definition of military doctrine:

Military doctrine is defined as the system of views adopted in a given country for a given (specific) time, on the objectives and character of a potential future war, on preparation of the country and its armed forces for such a war, and on the modes of its conduct. The military doctrine of any nation answers the following fundamental questions: what is the degree of probability of a future war, and with what adversary will one be dealing? What character may be assumed by a war which a country and its armed forces would be fighting [predstoit vesti]? What goals and tasks can be assigned to the armed forces in anticipation [predvidenii] of such a war and what armed forces must the country possess in order to achieve the stated goals? Proceeding from this, how should one accomplish military organizational development and prepare the army and country for war? Finally, if a war breaks out, by what modes and methods [spсобами] should it be fought?

As evident from the above, a nation's military doctrine contains two closely interlinked and interdependent aspects – the sociopolitical, and the military technical aspect. The sociopolitical aspect encompasses questions pertaining to the methodological, economic, social and legal foundations of the political objectives of a war. It is determining and possesses the greatest stability, since it reflects the class essence and political goals of a given nation, which are relatively constant during an extended period of time. The military – technical aspect, in conformity with the political goals, includes questions pertaining to direct accomplishment of military organizational development, technical equipping and training of the armed forces, and determination of the forms and modes of conduct of operations and a war as

13 Fitzgerald, Changing Soviet Doctrine on Nuclear War, op cit., p. 19
a whole. The political and military – technical views expressed in military doctrine are not permanent. As the international situation changes and as society and military affairs evolve, they are periodically refined.\textsuperscript{114}

Ogarkov’s belief that the socio-political aspect of doctrine was its driving force was evident throughout his work. He repeatedly argued that it occupied the “leading and determining position” in doctrine. Indeed, his emphasis on the primacy of the socio-political side of doctrine went much further than his predecessors’. In a sense it seemed odd for a military officer whose job it was to maintain the strength of the armed forces to be so concerned with social and political matters. One would have guessed that such words would have been left to the political leadership as they had been for the most part in the past. Adding to his understanding and application of dialectical law, Ogarkov’s keen attention to the socio-political aspect of doctrine further demonstrated his uniqueness. Unlike many of those that had gone before him, Ogarkov appeared both willing and able to grasp the complex interdependencies most could only pay lip service to.

\textbf{Military Science}

In his 1978 \textit{Kommunist} article, Ogarkov explained that Soviet military science, a determining factor of military doctrine, had its roots in “Leninist conclusions and concepts” drawn from the experiences of the October revolution. He also noted the contributions of civil war hero, M.V. Frunze, whom he described as an “outstanding proletarian leader and military theorist” responsible for the successful military reforms of 1924-25.\textsuperscript{115} In the 1983 edition of \textit{Voyennyy Entsiklopedicheskiy Slovar}, or “Soviet Military Encyclopedic Dictionary,” also called the “Ogarkov” edition, named after its editor, Marshal Ogarkov defined military science as:

The system of knowledge on the character of and laws governing war, preparation of a country and its armed forces for war, and modes of its conduct.

\textsuperscript{114} Ogarkov, \textit{Always in Readiness to Defend the Fatherland}, op cit., p.39
\textsuperscript{115} Ogarkov, “Military Science and Defence of the Socialist Fatherland,” op cit, p.132
Military science studies the dependence of the course and outcome of war on politics, economics, correlation of the moral-political, scientific-technological and military capabilities of the belligerents, as well as modes of military-technical training and conduct of a war, dictated by its scale, the composition of the parties involved, and means of warfare; the principal subject of military science is armed struggle in war. In conformity with this, following are the most important component parts of Soviet military science: theory of the art of warfare; theory of military organizational development; theory of military training and indoctrination; theory of military economics and armed forces rear services.116

Guided by the principles of “general theory,” Ogarkov suggested there existed a bi-directional relationship between military science and military policy and doctrine. More specifically, the content and direction of military science were to be decided by military policy and doctrine which would in turn be affected by the data produced by military science in subsequent formulations.117

The superiority of Soviet military science over its imperialist counterparts, Ogarkov wrote, was established by virtue of its anchorage in Marxist-Leninist teachings. He explained that such grounding permitted a “progressive” science with an ability to “achieve deep cognition of the objective laws governing war and the art of warfare...” In this way, Soviet military science was better situated to predict the development of military affairs and to decipher the correct “directions of improvement.”118 Indeed, Ogarkov was very specific in making the distinction between Soviet and imperialist military science clear:

Military science is of a class character. The existence of socialist and capitalist societal systems has dictated the existence of two different military sciences — socialist and bourgeois. Their root difference lies in differing ideological and methodological foundations, and particularly in the fact that socialist military science elaborates problems connected with defending the achievements of socialism, while the efforts of bourgeois military science are aimed at

117 Ibid., p.27
118 Ibid.
substantiating the aggressive schemes of the imperialist countries and at finding modes of waging aggressive wars.\textsuperscript{119}

As proof of the superiority of Soviet military science, Ogarkov frequently referred to the World War II victories over Germany. The great battles at Stalingrad and Moscow were of particular significance in his review of the evidence, as he argued that despite an “approximate parity of forces and equipment,” Soviet troops prevailed.\textsuperscript{120} In contemporary times, with the rapid appearance of new methods and modes of conduct, and increasingly complex social and political relations, Ogarkov argued that the need for, and role of, military science had grown considerably.\textsuperscript{121} As early as 1979 he wrote:

In conditions of rapid scientific and technical progress it is becoming an increasingly active force and an effective means of constantly improving combat and operational training and the system of instructing and educating troops.\textsuperscript{122}

Ogarkov’s emphasis on the meaning and importance of military science was elaborated further in both of his 1982 and 1985 books. The message remained that in order to determine the future course and outcome of military developments and to understand and incorporate them into military doctrine, careful attention to the concepts and methodology of Marxist-Leninist military science was required.

Soviet Military Strategy

Closely related in content, and inseparably linked with Soviet military doctrine, Ogarkov described military strategy as the highest area of military art. He added that strategy was strictly subordinated to military doctrine and that it reflected the national defence policy of the Communist Party and the Soviet Government. Furthermore, strategy was said to

\textsuperscript{119}Ogarkov, Military Encyclopedic Dictionary, op cit., p.27


\textsuperscript{121}N. V. Ogarkov, “The Defence of the Socialist Fatherland is a Matter for All the People,” \textit{Krasnaya Zvezda}, 27 October 1977
derive from the tasks set out for the armed forces in the Constitution of the USSR toward the defence of socialist accomplishments. In *History Teaches Vigilance*, Ogarkov explained:

Soviet military strategy derives from the objective laws of war revealed by the founders of scientific Communism, formulates on their basis the principles of preparing for and carrying out strategic operations, the construction of the armed forces and leadership of them, and is constantly improved under the influence of changing political, economic, scientific-technical, military and other factors. It is involved in working out and implementing measures for preparing the armed forces, theatres of military operations, the economy and the country’s population for possible war, and for planning the war and strategic operations. It is also involved in organizing the deployment of the armed forces and command and control of them when conducting strategic operations, as well as for solving questions related to defining under specific wartime conditions the strategic tasks of the army and navy and the forces and resources necessary for accomplishing them, taking into account the capabilities of the probable enemy for waging war and conducting operations. In military art, strategy occupies the dominant position with respect to operational art and tactics, and in turn relies upon their capabilities in accomplishing its tasks.123

In an attempt to stress the defensive nature of Soviet strategy, Ogarkov reiterated its connection to the “peace-loving” nature of military doctrine and accordingly, indicated that in its “most general aspect” the concept of predatory war had always been rejected. Rather, the purpose of Soviet strategy was limited to defending, “with full resolve, actively and uncompromisingly, that which belongs to the Soviet people and was created by its labour.”124

**Theory of Operations**

The Soviet theory of operations, also referred to as military or operational art, was another concept of military doctrine Ogarkov dealt with at length. This aspect of doctrine addressed its military-technical component. It took into account changes in the availability and capability of weapons, and developed plans for their most effective use. The basis of operational art was said to be a combined arms approach to the conduct of military action.

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124 Ogarkov, *History Teaches Vigilance*, op cit., p.52
125 Ibid.
An example of the theory of operations at work was the operation in-depth (glubokiy), or deep operation. Prompted by the availability of longer range weapons with increased firepower, and following the principles of Soviet military science, the operation in-depth entailed “a fundamentally new method of conducting active offensive operations using massed, technically equipped armies.” This discovery, traced by Ogarkov to the early 1930s, permitted the Soviet Union to be the first country in the world to create major formations of tank troops in the form of mechanized corps. Due to the tragic misuse of military science however, Ogarkov explained that mistakes were made before the theory was successfully put into practice:

...because of a number of objective and subjective factors, incorrect conclusions were drawn, based solely on limited experience of the use of tanks in Spain. As a result, in 1939 the corps which had been created were disbanded, and it was again proposed to use cavalry as the exploitation echelon in operations. This tenet was subsequently corrected, and by 1942 we had created not only tank corps, but tank armies, though it would have been better to have had them before the start of the war.

The significance of this passage is considerable. Taking note of the fact that the Soviets had made a “miscalculation” in military planning was certainly unique especially for an officer of the High Command. Ogarkov set himself apart from others in this respect, as most theorists of the time were careful to limit their discussion of military history to Soviet successes. Ogarkov realized however, that drawing out the failures would lend credence to the role and importance of military science he advocated so vigorously. The fact that he chose the opening of the Great Patriotic War, when the Soviets suffered their most substantial losses, as his example, effectively demonstrated the urgency of his message.

126 Ibid.
127 Ibid.
Ogarkov's most detailed discussion of the operation in depth, or "deep battle," appeared in the 1976 edition of Sovetskaya Voyennaya Entsiklopediya (the Soviet Military Encyclopedia). There he explained that in 1941 the concept of the deep battle was established in Soviet regulations as a combined arms battle that utilized surprise, the rapid movement of troops, and the "firm and continuous coordination of all branches of arms and special troops participating in the battle or accomplishing missions in its support."128 Describing it as a qualitative leap in the development of military art, Ogarkov characterized the essence of the deep operation as consisting of:

...the simultaneous suppression of the enemy defence by means of destruction to its whole depth and the breakthrough of its tactical zone on a selected axis with subsequent swift development of tactical successes into operational by committing to the battle an echelon for the development of success and the landing of airborne assaults for the most rapid achievement of the assigned mission.129

Subsequent elaboration of the theory of operations, and its key example, eventually led to the conclusion that the deep operation need not be limited to one front. Ultimately, it was decided that "several frontal formations" were possible, each of which would include contributions from all services. Of course, the goals of these formations would be highly coordinated, as Ogarkov said, effectively acting as an "operational-strategic formation."130

Ogarkov added that the successful and continued development of the deep operation was made possible by the positive socio-economic progress of the Soviet Union, "the advanced nature of Soviet military science," improvements in weaponry, and combat experience.

The relevance of Ogarkov's discussion of the operation in depth in contemporary Western analyses of Soviet military doctrine is well established. It is interesting to note that

129 Ibid., p.37
130 Ibid.

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as late as 1986, two years after Ogarkov had been retired from his position as Chief of the General Staff to take command of the Western TVD, the United States government considered the discussion relevant enough to have his 1976 entry in the Soviet Military Encyclopedia re-published through the JPRS information service. The meaning and applicability of the operation in depth in the context of modern weaponry, notably nuclear weapons and high technology conventional weapons, obviously carried significant weight in the West.

Over the course of his work, Ogarkov also provided definitions of the theories of military organizational development, military training and indoctrination, and military economics. Each of these had their place in military doctrine and were said to be critical components determining its ultimate course and outcome.

The Superiority of Soviet Military Doctrine

Ogarkov invested considerable effort toward explaining the ways in which Soviet military doctrine was superior to its imperialist counterparts (the same arguments were applied to "fascist," and "bourgeois" doctrine and also encompassed military science, operational art, military theory). The premise of his argument rested on the belief that the strength of Marxist-Leninist teachings provided Soviet theorists with a superior methodology for understanding military problems. The Marxist-Leninist edge was thought to give Soviet theorists higher morale and perseverance in their approach to deciphering answers to the questions of military doctrine.

Following from this, Ogarkov described the failure of imperialism to distinguish between the socio-political and military technical components of military doctrine. Similarly, he suggested that imperialism failed to make appropriate distinctions among the relevant concepts. For example, Ogarkov noted that imperialists often combined the notion of military doctrine with military strategy leading them to arrive at only "partial conceptions"
such as "naval doctrine," "tank doctrine," or "nuclear doctrine." Other mistaken conceptions included "grand strategy" and "national strategy," all of which were considered to be no more than "veiled expressions" of inherently aggressive military-political objectives. All of these failed to take into account the interdependencies and contradictions of military affairs that dialectical materialism explained so well.\textsuperscript{131}

Circumstances Surrounding the Appointment of Ogarkov

The death of Andrei Grechko in 1976 presented Brezhnev with new opportunities for putting the finishing touches on the consolidation of his power. Within months of Grechko’s passing, Brezhnev had engineered his own appointment to Chair of the Defence Council and had “earned” the distinction of Marshal of the Soviet Union. Around the same time, numerous other military-related honours in the form of medals and citations for bravery in war were bestowed on him. These events, it is believed, were staged with the intention of sending a clear message to military leaders that the era of uncomfortable tolerance for conflict between the High Command and the political leadership over issues such as arms control and the budget had come to a close. The efforts to centralize control were also intended to bring an end to remaining parochialisms among the services that had inhibited development of the unified, combined arms strategy both Grechko and Brezhnev had long advocated.

Further evidence of Brezhnev’s attempt to regain political control over the military involved the appointment of a civilian, Dmitrii Fedorovich Ustinov, to the position of Minister of Defence. Not since 1955, when Nikolai Bulganin resigned as Defence Minister to assume the role of Prime Minister, had a civilian occupied the top military-political post. Indeed, this was a significant change, and moreover, a surprise to many in the West, who, although recognizing the potential of Ustinov, had placed him much further down the list of contenders for the job. But as Herspring explained, the fact that Ustinov was appointed instantly, as compared to the seventeen-day lapse between death of Malinovski and appointment of Grechko, seems to have suggested that Brezhnev may have had him in mind for some time. The fact that Ustinov was promoted to full membership in the Politburo a
month before Grechko’s death further indicates that the lines of succession had been drawn in advance.  

Prior to his appointment, Ustinov had served the Soviet government as Minister of the Defence Industry. There he was responsible for overseeing the development and production of Soviet weapons systems. During this time, he earned a reputation as a capable manager and administrator. He was perceived as someone who would understand the problems associated with military spending and be able to “rationalize” the process effectively. Ustinov had also been supportive of Brezhnev’s peace initiatives prior to his appointment, suggesting that he would be willing to concentrate his efforts on implementing political directives rather than frustrating them. For these reasons he must have seemed an attractive choice for General Secretary Brezhnev.

At the time, many would have thought that the Chief of the General Staff, Kulikov, would have succeeded Grechko. In many ways he seemed the logical choice. He had been Chief of Staff since 1971 and had developed a strong working relationship within the upper ranks of the Soviet military. He had also been an ardent supporter of his Minister, which indicated a respect for the chain of command. For Brezhnev, however, Kulikov represented the continuance of challenges issued to the political leadership by Grechko. Although he had made a number of positive comments on recent arms control efforts and the possibilities of détente, Kulikov was generally against arms control given his underlying suspicion of the West. Certainly, this would have been hard to reconcile with the policy direction Brezhnev had embarked on and seemed intent on continuing.

Instead of the seemingly natural promotion to Minister, Kulikov was instead relieved of his duties as Chief of the General Staff and transferred to the post of Commander of the Western TVD. As Herspring explained:

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133 Ibid., p.122
Having appointed Ustinov, Brezhnev had the option of letting Kulikov remain as chief of staff. However, the naming of a civilian as defence minister put Kulikov, as the top professional soldier, in an even more important position: it would now be up to him to maintain support among the professional officer corps for Brezhnev and his policies as to arms control and the budget. Kulikov was not likely to carry out this task with much enthusiasm, and his acerbic personality left open the possibility that he might end up creating dissension within the upper ranks of the armed forces. In addition, Brezhnev needed someone who had sufficient intellectual capacity to justify conceptually what he was doing while at the same time ensuring that the Soviet military was moving efficiently and effectively to make the best use of available resources.\(^\text{124}\)

The political leadership evidently recognized the sort of intellect they were looking for in Nikolai Ogarkov. Consequently, he was appointed Chief of the General Staff in January of 1977, almost immediately following Kulikov’s departure in the same month.

The pairing of Ustinov and Ogarkov differed from that of Grechko and Kulikov in a number of ways. As already mentioned, Ustinov had earned a reputation as an able manager, which fitted well with Brezhnev’s desire to bring military spending under control. In contrast, Grechko seemed most interested in managing political pressure to make cuts to the military budget. This sort of success was not something Brezhnev was looking to have repeated by his new Defence Minister.

Ogarkov also had considerable experience in administrative matters, having held prominent positions in technical supply services and various engineering operations during World War II. He was able to add to these skills in his post-war career, occupying several high-ranking administrative military posts throughout the Soviet Union.

The key difference between Ogarkov and Kulikov related to their apparent stance on arms control and détente. Kulikov generally followed the lines laid down by Grechko opposing arms control whenever possible, offering qualified concessions only when sufficient political pressure made them expedient.

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\(^{124}\) Ibid., p.123
Ogarkov, on the other hand, demonstrated on numerous occasions prior to his appointment an ability to justify the arms control efforts of the political leadership in terms that made sense from a military perspective. Writing in the early 1970s, for example, Ogarkov noted improvements in the international climate, advances in possibilities for controlling the arms race, and in 1975 stated, “In recent years the positions of peace have been strengthened, and a shift is relentlessly taking place toward a relaxation of tensions.” And in May of 1976, Ogarkov made one of his strongest pre-appointment statements on détente suggesting that “the trend toward easing tension and toward organizing comprehensive mutually beneficial cooperation among states with different social systems has begun to dominate international life.” While it is true that Grechko and Kulikov had made similar statements regarding “positive trends,” the permanency they assigned to them was far less significant than was the case with Ogarkov.

Indeed, in making such statements, Ogarkov had often found himself in open disagreement with his Minister and Chief of Staff. The significance in terms of understanding his appointment and in recognizing his uniqueness as an officer of the High Command is considerable:

Ogarkov’s willingness to disagree openly with his military superiors suggests that Brezhnev and perhaps Ustinov as well had supported him for some time. A review of statements on arms control made over the past twenty years by senior Soviet military officers at the four-star level and above suggests that on international issues they almost always repeat whatever their defence minister says. They may be creative on doctrinal questions, but this is almost never the case when it comes to foreign relations. In this light, Ogarkov’s behaviour seems, at a minimum, unusual.

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135 N. V. Ogarkov, “Ovety na voprosy redaktiskly gazety ‘Krasnaya Zvezda,’” (“Answers to Questions from the Editors of the Newspaper ‘Red Star’), Krasnaya Zvezda, 10 July 1973


138 Herspring, op. cit., p.123
During the SALT I negotiations, Ogarkov again distinguished himself as a military officer cognizant of the intricacies of military-political affairs, demonstrating a “formidable grasp the details of the various complex weapons systems” and making “a strong impression on his Western counterparts.” As Raymond Garlhoff noted in 1985, in comparison to Grechko or Kulikov, Ogarkov seemed “better able to consider such matters as strategic arms limitations in a broader context,” an ability Ogarkov eventually became famous for in the Soviet Union and in the West. Conversely, Grechko, failing to recognize the relevant interdependencies, consistently took the narrow view that arms control on any level threatened to undermine Soviet capabilities for reliable defence.

Generally speaking then, the appointment of the civilian manager, Ustinov, was unique in that it represented a significant departure from Soviet tradition and signaled the strengthened determination of the political leadership to tame the High Command’s resistance to new trends in foreign policy and budgetary issues. With respect to Ogarkov, similar considerations were likely taken into account but the significance of his appointment is perhaps more far-reaching and multi-dimensional. He was a theoretically inclined, technical officer, essentially free of ties to one or another of the line services, with the confidence to speak his mind regardless of the views taken by his superiors. These factors alone clearly set him apart from his predecessors. Subsequently, the ideas and propositions he raised, and policies that flowed from them during his tenure as Chief of the General Staff, pushed him even further away from past Chiefs, and ultimately set a standard none of his successors could match.

Ogarkov on Arms Control and Détente

Ogarkov’s views on détente and arms control were initially positive. In 1977, he stated that “the climate of international relations has warmed considerably, and there has been
a move away from the cold war toward a relaxation of tension. Thanks to the vigorous activity of the Soviet Union, the socialist community countries, and all progressive forces, the dangers of a new world war has receded. Peace has become more reliable and durable.\textsuperscript{340}

Indeed, Ogarkov had been a constructive participant in the recent SALT talks during which he earned distinction as a rational and skilled negotiator. As the 1970s drew to a close however, Ogarkov became increasingly pessimistic and began to cite the dangers of imperialism with increasing frequency. Although he continued to acknowledge the merits of and need for détente in principle, he advised that despite the peaceful efforts of the Soviet Union “hostile circles” in the West remained and were making progress difficult. As Herspring explained, two new themes began to emerge in Ogarkov’s public statements:

First he dug up an old Soviet propaganda line that he had avoided in the past: that the US, the UK, and other capitalist countries “pinned great hopes on Hitler’s Germany as a shock force in the struggle against the land of the Soviets and gave it generous aid in restoring its military industrial potential and developing and technically reequipping its army of many millions.” He further charged that the West had encouraged the Germans to move against the USSR in the hope that Berlin and Moscow would destroy each other. Second, Ogarkov began contrasting the 1970s – a period for “relaxation of tensions” – with the more “complex” situation brought by the West “at the turn of the eighties”. As Ogarkov put it in a speech to military personnel on June 3, 1980: “the situation at the start of the 1980s has become noticeably more complicated and is presently characterized by extreme instability, unexpected turnabouts, and a distinct tendency toward intensification of the aggressive aspirations of the imperialists countries and China.” Thus, by the end of 1980 Ogarkov’s public stance on détente had evolved from one of ardent support to one of skepticism and pessimism.\textsuperscript{341}

In his 1978 Izvestiya article, “The Soviet People’s Great Exploit,” Ogarkov described recent trends in international relations:

An outstanding contribution to the drawing up and implementation of the program for the continued struggle for peace and international cooperation and for the freedom and independence of peoples has been and is being made by L.I. Brezhnev... In his speeches in the Pacific Ocean fleet and at the 18th Komsomol Congress and in his interview with the weekly Vorwaerts he put

\textsuperscript{139} Ibid.
forward new proposals and new initiatives from the Soviet Union aimed not only at arms limitation but also at the total cessation of the further quantitative and qualitative growth in the arms and armed forces of the states possessing a major military potential.

Aggressive circles in the West are operating in a different direction. The positive processes taking place in the world are not to their liking. They are continuing to galvanize the arms race, devising new types of weapons and mass destruction, building up military budgets and trying to revive an atmosphere of brinkmanship in international relations. New types and systems of weapons (cruise missiles, neutron weapons, Trident submarines and others) are being hastily developed. Work on the development of weapons based on new physical principles is being conducted intensively.\(^{12}\)

Ogarkov reinforced the arguments made in his 1978 *Izvestiya* article in “Guarding the Soviet Motherland’s Interests,” which appeared in *Partynaya Zhizn* in 1979. Having attributed the post-war peace of the preceding thirty five years to the CPSU’s “Leninist foreign policy”, its struggle for peace and the prevention of war, and a shift in the “correlation of world forces” that had occurred in favour of socialism, Ogarkov proceeded to identify “reactionary circles” in the West which he claimed were aspiring to upset the international peace movement headed by the Soviet Union.

Influential imperialist and reactionary forces seeking to prevent the deepening of détente in international relations and to cast mankind back to cold war times exist and are active in the world. Under these conditions the danger of war from imperialism cannot be underestimated. On the contrary, it is necessary to display the greatest political vigilance.\(^{13}\)

Ogarkov’s views on the possibility of lasting détente were further spelled out in both *Always in Readiness to Defend the Homeland* and *History Teaches Vigilance*. The first chapter of his 1982 book, entitled “Imperialism: The source of Military Danger,” attacked what he perceived to be the continuing aggressiveness of the West and, in particular, the United States. “The principal goal and content of the policy of the imperialist circles, especially the United States,” he explained, “is the achievement of world supremacy, and their main aspiration is to halt the world revolutionary process, to strangle the revolutionary


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worker and national liberation movement, to wipe socialism off the face of the earth, and to regain for themselves the role of arbiter of the destiny of the peoples.\textsuperscript{144}

As evidence of the aggressive nature of imperialism, Ogarkov cited three significant developments in the United States. First, he spoke of emerging American criticism of existing arms control agreements especially in the area of strategic arms limitations (SALT) but also including those relating to anti-missile defence systems (ABM). This, he believed, signaled a lack of enthusiasm in the U.S. Administration for these agreements and served as evidence that future agreements would be difficult. For example, Ogarkov argued that the U.S. had repeatedly ignored Soviet arms control proposals, and in particular, had been “dragging its feet” in agreeing to talks on limiting medium range nuclear weapons in Europe. He suspected that the rejected proposals and delays were the consequence of a desire to “gain time for additional deployments” in Europe prior to entering such negotiations.\textsuperscript{145}

The second element of evidence justifying the charge of the continued aggressiveness and danger of imperialism involved what Ogarkov perceived to be a Western quest for superiority over the Soviet Union. Focussing his criticism on the United States, Ogarkov argued that U.S. policy had become “particularly dangerous in connection with actions by the Reagan Administration aimed at direct and comprehensive preparations for war.”

Confirmation of this is the substantial increase in U.S. Budget appropriations for the development and execution of new weapons programs, the forming of new military contingents, rapid deployment forces in particular, and plans calling for “additional arming” of NATO with nuclear missiles and stepped-up military preparations in the various regions of the world.\textsuperscript{146}

Ogarkov continued his discussion of the American quest for superiority taking note of the substantial growth of U.S. military spending in preceding years, the development of new and

\textsuperscript{144} Ogarkov, “Guarding the Soviet Motherland’s Interests,” \textit{op. cit.}, p.5

\textsuperscript{145} Ogarkov, \textit{Always in Readiness to Defend the Fatherland}, \textit{op. cit.}, p.4

\textsuperscript{146} Ibid., p.11
improved weapons systems, including the Ohio class submarine, the B1 and B2 bombers, cruise missile improvements and expanded deployments, and the increasing numbers of U.S. troops stationed throughout the world.

The third argument Ogarkov put forward in *Always in Readiness to Defend the Homeland* as justification for his claim that imperialism continued to threaten world peace related to increasing American intervention in the domestic affairs of other countries. As he suggested,

> The United States has elevated to the status of national policy brazen interference in the internal affairs of sovereign nations and aggressive struggle against national liberation movements.147

Ogarkov criticized American intervention in El Salvador, the “threads of conspiracy” and “subversive actions” in Nicaragua, and the “arms deliveries to the military junta” in Guatemala. Furthermore, he explained: “To achieve its aggressive aims in Latin America, Washington is attempting to establish so-called inter-american forces, consisting of subunits and units of regular troops of the United States and countries with anti-popular police regimes — Guatemala, Honduras, Paraguay, Uruguay and Chile.”148 Cuba, Mexico, Angola, Mozambique, and Namibia were also added to the list. Even greater emphasis was placed on the dangers of U.S involvement in the affairs of the Middle East.

Arming Israel at an accelerated pace and encouraging its aggressive piratical actions, the United States is making every effort to escalate tension in the [Middle] East. In the 1970s the Americans supplied Tel Aviv with more than 8.5 billion dollars worth of weapons and military equipment. It was repeatedly announced in Washington that U.S. military aid to Israel will reach an annual figure in excess of 2 billion dollars.149

Lastly, Ogarkov criticized the U.S. for its discovery of a “worthy partner” in the “Chinese hegemonists.” By providing China with various forms of assistance, including

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147 *Ibid.*, p.15
149 Ogarkov, *Always in Readiness to Defend the Fatherland*, op cit., p.16
military assistance, Ogarkov claimed the U.S. was trying to perfect its failed attempt to turn Germany into an “anti-Soviet shock force” during World War II. By ensuring Chinese antagonism against the Soviet Union, Ogarkov argued, the United States hoped to strengthen its reactionary efforts against the progressive forces of communism in Asia. Similar concerns were raised relative to increasing ties between Japan and the United States. On these points Ogarkov concluded with a stern warning:

Apparently the strategists across the ocean as well as certain Western European strategists have forgotten those fatal consequences to which the actions of their countries’ ruling circles led on the eve of World War II. Such a policy can boomerang in present-day conditions as well, striking precisely and primarily those who have undertaken and are playing this dangerous game.150

Not surprisingly, the following chapter was dedicated to a discussion of how well prepared the Soviet Union and its armed forces were to deal with the dangers of imperialism and any future war it might unleash.

In Ogarkov’s 1985 book, *History Teaches Vigilance*, the message became even more explicit. Once again the titles he chose for his chapters were telling. He began with, “The Exploitative System is the Source of Wars,” wherein he described the urgency of the present-day international situation. Reflecting on the first four years of the Reagan Administration, during which time the U.S. embarked on an unprecedented build-up of its armed forces, Ogarkov explained that “the imperialism of the United States and other countries of the aggressive NATO bloc is causing deep concern in ever wider circles of mankind.”151 These concerns, he suggested, were once again raising the question of the causes of war. With the aid of a number of historical case studies, Ogarkov invoked the classic rendition of the theory of imperialism in an effort to prove that wars began with the appearance of private property and the division of society into antagonistic classes leading to the emergence of “exploiters”

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150 Ibid., p.17
151 Ogarkov, *History Teaches Vigilance*, op cit., p.3
and "the exploited."

In contemporary times, Ogarkov was concerned with the contradictions between socialism and capitalism and the potential for them to lead to war:

The modern era, which constitutes primarily the transition from capitalism to socialism, called forth a complex network of contradictions and the interweaving of various social and political relations. The main contradiction of the modern era is that between socialism and imperialism. One of its sharpest manifestations is the aggressiveness of imperialism with respect to socialism. Imperialism hopes by the force of arms to turn back the objective course of history, suffocate the workers' authority and return to its past global supremacy.

Ogarkov concluded his discussion of the aggressive nature and present danger of imperialism by drawing comparisons between “the two political policies on the world arena.” He described that of the Soviet Union and other socialist countries as inherently peace-loving, striving for the prevention of war and confirmation of “peaceful coexistence of states with opposing social and political systems.” He compared this with the “aggressive policy of the United States of America, aimed at whipping up the arms race, promoting military tension and preparing for a new world war.”

In the second chapter of History Teaches Vigilance, Ogarkov expanded on his comparison of the two political policies of socialism and imperialism. There he focussed almost entirely on the United States, drawing examples of its “exploitative”, “aggressive”, and “militaristic” foreign policy undertakings dating back as far as 1853 and the U.S. “colonial adventures” in Korea and the Indonesian islands. He wrote of the annexation of the Hawaiian Islands, and in 1904, of President Roosevelt’s well know statement, “Speak softly and carry a big stick – then you will achieve success.” Describing how the “list of bloody adventures by American imperialism in the post-war years,” had significantly expanded, he concluded that Roosevelt’s recommendation continued to serve as a predictive guide to

152 Ibid., p.3
153 Ibid., p.6
154 Ibid., p.8
contemporary American foreign policy. Clearly by 1985 then, Ogarkov’s initial optimism for détente had all but disappeared. His enthusiasm for arms control had become even less evident.

It is interesting to note that six days following the release of Ogarkov’s Always in Readiness to Defend the Fatherland, Ustinov sent to press his 127-page monograph entitled, We Serve the Fatherland, The Cause of Communism. Whereas it took six weeks for Ogarkov’s book to be published, Ustinov’s was produced in only two, suggesting the Minister may have perceived the need to provide a timely answer to his Chief. Although both men spoke of the aggressiveness and danger of imperialism, and criticized the United States and the West for its massive buildup of military forces, Ustinov appeared to have Ogarkov in mind when he claimed that there existed “rational forces” within the imperialist camp who were capable of influencing Western policies in the direction of peaceful coexistence. On this note, Ustinov was able to identify reasons for optimism in contemporary international affairs. Ogarkov, on the other hand, made no mention of such forces and instead argued that the aggressiveness of imperialism had increased. As Herspring explained:

Ogarkov’s solution to the international problems facing the USSR was to call again for increased reliance on the Soviet Union’s military might. For example,... he took on those who put faith in political relationships by quoting Lenin, “Our efforts toward peace should be accompanied by intensifying our military preparedness, certainly not by the disarming of our army. Our army is the real guarantee that not the smallest effort nor the smallest encroachment by imperialist powers will be successful.” Once again, it was military force and not détente that was the key to the USSR’s security.

Conversely, Ustinov did not discuss the need for strengthened military forces until a third of the way through his book, “well after he had made his pitch for détente.” Ustinov differed

155 Ogarkov, History Teaches Vigilance, op cit., p.14
157 Ibid., p.207
158 Ibid.
from Ogarkov in another sense in that he made it clear that there were tools apart from the Soviet armed forces that could protect the interests of the Soviet Union.\textsuperscript{159}

Ogarkov’s views regarding the possibility of détente with the West were further strengthened as a result of his experiences with respect to arms control negotiations that had taken place in the early 1980s. Referring to the MBFR and START negotiations of 1981 for example, Ogarkov described the repeated rejection of proposals set forth by the Soviet Union and his reaction to U.S. counter-proposals:

According to its so-called “zero” option the Soviet Union was to eliminate all of its intermediate range missiles, not only in the European part, but also in the eastern part of the USSR, which had no relationship to the MBFR negotiations. We were “permitted” to retain only 465 bombers. In this case the NATO bloc, agreeing not to deploy missiles in Europe, would retain all of its 857 nuclear weapons and thereby gain a twofold superiority over the USSR in launchers, and almost a threefold superiority in warheads. It is true that according to the so-called “interim” American variant the USSR, with U.S. agreement was “permitted” to retain a certain number of its missiles, but given the mandatory deployment of the same number of American missiles in Europe. And in this case NATO again would gain a twofold superiority. The American side had a similar unconstructive approach at the START negotiations. Moreover, contrary to the good sense and the will of millions of people, in November 1983 the U.S. began deploying its first strike nuclear missiles in Western Europe. Under these circumstances the negotiations lost all meaning.\textsuperscript{160}

Despite his pessimism, Ogarkov continued to stress that Soviet Union aimed to prevent wars and favoured “regulating relations among the nuclear powers by a system of definite norms.”\textsuperscript{161} In this sense, he was in step with the political leadership who despite the difficulties of MBFR and START had resurrected the idea of “realistic” forces in the West that shared Soviet recognition of the need to prevent war and the desire for peace.\textsuperscript{162}

In summarizing Ogarkov’s accomplishments with respect to arms control, Herspring offered the following explanation:

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\textsuperscript{159} Ibid.
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\textsuperscript{160} Ogarkov, History Teaches Vigilance, op cit., p.23
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\textsuperscript{162} Ibid.
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There was a certain irony in the position Ogarkov had achieved on arms control by September 1984. Having started out as the military’s leading advocate of the process, he was now one of its strongest dissenters. Indeed, one of his most important successes during the last four years he spent as Chief of the General Staff was a negative one: he had helped persuade the political leadership not to compromise the military’s interests on the altar of improved East-West relations in Europe.\textsuperscript{163}

As was the case with Grechko having achieved a “negative” success by preventing substantial cuts to the military budget, Ogarkov succeeded in preventing arms control agreements he believed unfavourable to the Soviet Union from being adopted by the political leadership.

The New Revolution in Soviet Military Affairs

In 1977, Brezhnev gave his famous speech at Tula marking what many later referred to as the beginning of a new revolution in Soviet military affairs. The essence of Brezhnev’s Tula speech was the downgrading of nuclear options prompted by the view that military superiority was unattainable in the nuclear age, and by extension that victory in nuclear war was unachievable given the destructive capabilities of nuclear weapons. As Mary Fitzgerald explained, Tula “closed the door on a debate that had lasted for over a decade in Soviet military thought.”

From 1964 to 1976, a large segment of the Soviet military had clung to the premise that the dialectic of arms development would eventually generate a means of defence against nuclear weapons. Since Tula, however, Soviet officials have maintained that the historical struggle between weapons of offence and weapons of defence will henceforth be tilted in favour of weapons of offence.\textsuperscript{164}

A key feature of this line of argument was the growing acceptance of the Western concepts of mutual assured destruction (MAD) and nuclear deterrence. Up until this point, the majority of Soviet military thought had adhered to the home-grown concept of SANE, or

\textsuperscript{163} Herspring, op. cit., p.210

\textsuperscript{164} Ibid., p.211
“survival and nuclear existence,” and thus the development of nuclear warfighting strategies characteristic of the Khrushchev era. The persistent rejection of mutual destruction hinged on at least two points. First, relinquishing the possibility of victory in any war against imperialism amounted to treason against the teachings of Marxism-Leninism, which foretold of the historical inevitability of communist victory. Second, from a military point of view, it was difficult for any reputable general to accept the prospect that victory was unattainable. After all, how could one plan for war knowing that, ultimately, the effort would be futile.

Also following from Tula, and related to the acceptance of MAD was the rejection of limited nuclear war. While the Soviets had always insisted that keeping a superpower conflict limited was an impossibility, their conceptions of limited war were increasingly fine-tuned after Tula. For example, Grechko had always maintained the escalation potential of superpower conflict to be very high. He claimed that if the imperialists were to unleash a war against the Soviet Union it would inevitably escalate to general war. Although he presided over changes in Soviet force structure that seemed to indicate the willingness to extend the conventional phase of a war, and to assign it certain decisive qualities, there is evidence to suggest that he believed the entire nuclear arsenals of both sides would ultimately be used.

By the late 1970s however, the formula had changed somewhat. Owing to the rapid development of high technology conventional weapons, in the West in particular, the Soviets increasingly implied a willingness to consider limited engagements using only conventional weapons. The impossibility of keeping a nuclear war limited, however, was left intact. Once employed, there could be no turning back from a general nuclear war.

Brezhnev’s speech also introduced the need to prevent war into Soviet military doctrine. As he stated:

Our military power is directed at avoiding not only a first strike but also a second strike, and at preventing a nuclear war itself. We can sum up our ideas on this problem in the following way. The defence potential of the Soviet

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Union must be sufficient so that no one should risk threatening our peaceful life. No aspect of our policy aims at superiority in armaments. Our policy aims at reducing military power and at lowering the possibility of military confrontation.\textsuperscript{165}

Less than a month following Brezhnev's speech, Ogarkov began his first endorsements of the lines laid down in Tula. Ultimately, he became the chief architect of the changes in military doctrine that would follow his elaboration of the concepts involved.

Strategic Parity and Military Superiority

Ogarkov made numerous references to the existence of parity at the strategic level. In his 1978 article, "The Soviet People's Great Exploit," for example, he quoted Brezhnev's criticism of the West's refusal to "reconcile themselves to the approximate balance that has come about in the correlation of the sides' military forces..." In her paper, "Changing Soviet Doctrine on Nuclear War," Mary Fitzgerald pointed out several other references to parity made by Ogarkov as evidence that he accepted and understood the concept:

Marshal Ogarkov has consistently referred to the fact of parity: "the existing, approximate equality in medium-range nuclear means in Europe" (1980); "parity between the U.S. and USSR in the quantitative correlation of strategic arms" (1982); "the balance of forces on a regional, European, and global scale" (1983); and "the approximate equality in nuclear arms between the U.S. and USSR (1985).\textsuperscript{166}

Similarly, Herspring noted that in \textit{Always in Readiness to Defend the Fatherland,} Ogarkov "spoke openly of the existence of parity" and became increasingly explicit in his discussion of its consequences.\textsuperscript{167}

The arsenal of various kinds of nuclear warheads and means of delivery stockpiled in the world runs to many tens of thousands. These quantitative changes have led to qualitative changes: that which could have been achieved

\textsuperscript{165} L.I. Brezhnev, "Vydaushchisia podvig zaschitnikov Tuly" ("The OutstandingFeat of the Defenders of Tula"), \textit{Pravda,} 17 January 1977

\textsuperscript{166} Fitzgerald, "Changing Soviet Doctrine on Nuclear War," \textit{op. cit.}, p. 3

\textsuperscript{167} Herspring, \textit{The Soviet High Command,} 1967 - 1989, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 172
by nuclear weapons twenty to thirty years ago is impossible for an aggressor now. A crushing retaliatory nuclear strike awaits him.\(^{148}\)

A similar evolution of thought can be said to have occurred with respect to Ogarkov’s view of military superiority. From 1977 onward, Ogarkov advised with increasing frequency that it would be impossible for either side to achieve a level of strategic superiority that would enable a disarming surprise first strike. His rejection of superiority was founded on his belief in the destructive potential of modern nuclear weapons. In *History Teaches Vigilance*, Ogarkov explained:

> The appearance in 1945 and the rapid subsequent improvement of nuclear weapons which have unbelievable destructive force, raised the question anew about the utility of war as a means of achieving a political objective. Only having totally taken leave of one’s senses is it possible to try to find arguments and to find a goal which would justify unleashing a world nuclear war and thereby threaten total destruction of human civilization. This leads to the indisputable conclusion that it is criminal to view thermonuclear war as a rational and practically “lawful” means of the continuation of policies.\(^{169}\)

Ogarkov further noted that “one need not be a military specialist in order to understand that further stockpiling of nuclear weapons is becoming simply senseless."\(^{180}\)

Over time, Ogarkov became more explicit in his views regarding mutual vulnerability to nuclear destruction. Since Tula, he repeatedly echoed formulas of nuclear conflict that incorporated phrases such as “the extinction of all mankind” and “the annihilation of civilization” to make his point.\(^{171}\) Notably, he shared these views with the majority of the Soviet political leadership which had grown equally explicit in its assessments of assured destruction.\(^{172}\)

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\(^{169}\) Ogarkov, *History Teaches Vigilance*, op. cit., p. 58

\(^{170}\) Ibid.

\(^{171}\) Mary C. Fitzgerald, “The Soviet Leadership on Nuclear War,” (Centre For Naval Analyses; Alexandria, Virginia, 1987) p.8

\(^{172}\) Fitzgerald, “Marshal Ogarkov on Modern War,” op. cit., p.9

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Of course, this had implications for the traditional view of war as a continuation of politics. As Mary Fitzgerald pointed out, Soviet discussions on this issue were frequently debated but rarely understood in the West. For Ogarkov, the issue was clear. While war continued to be understood as a continuation of politics, a theoretical distinction was made between war as a continuation, and war as an instrument of policy. More specifically, war, in its nature and essence was properly understood to be a continuation of policy. A world nuclear war, in his view, would be the result of the continuation of imperialism’s aggressive politics since the Soviets would never start one. Given its aggressive nature, he suggested, imperialism continued to view such war as an instrument of policy. Conversely, Ogarkov did not:

> With present day development of the weapons of mass destruction, war can lead to the end of civilization, and so war can no longer be a means of attaining the political goals of states and must be eliminated from society’s life.

Ogarkov argued that while nuclear war would in its essence be a continuation of policy, the Soviet position was that it was no longer rational to consider it as an instrument to achieve political objectives. Nuclear war, he warned, had lost its rationality in the Leninist sense. Owing to its inability to reach the levels of Soviet military science however, imperialism continued to view war as both a continuation and instrument of policy. The threat of nuclear war, therefore, remained high.

Ogarkov summarized his arguments relative to parity and the possibility of achieving superiority by suggesting that the quantitative and qualitative development of nuclear weapons had given rise to a paradox in military affairs.

> On the one hand, seemingly a process is underway giving a nuclear power a steadily increasing capability for destroying the enemy, and on the other hand the capability for an aggressor to make a so-called “pre-emptive” strike on his main opponent is being reduced just as steadily and, perhaps still more sharply.

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173 Ibid., p.15

174 N. V. Ogarkov, “An Exploit With No Equal in History,” _Zarubezhnoye Voennoye Obzorenie_, 4 April 1989, p.4
The fact is that given the quantity and variety of nuclear missile weapons which have been achieved, it is simply impossible for an aggressor to completely destroy the analogous weapons on the other side with a single strike. And an immediate crushing response even by a limited number of nuclear weapons which the defender has remaining— a response which deprives the aggressor of the capability of waging not only the war thereafter but also any sort of serious operations— is becoming inevitable under modern conditions.175

It is interesting to note that much of Ogarkov’s discussion was at the theoretical level. Although he made numerous references to the dangers of imperialism unleashing a war against the Soviet Union and its allies, when he discussed the issue of parity, superiority, and deterrence it was frequently in generic terms. This demonstrated that he was able to understand and discuss the various concepts involved apart from their political, or real-world, applications.

**Limited War**

Ogarkov first considered the notion of limited war in 1983 in response to the development of Western strategies geared toward fighting a limited nuclear war in Europe. Quite simply stated, Ogarkov rejected the possibility that nuclear war could be limited once it had broken out. In this respect, he was consistent with Grechko who also described the escalation potential of a nuclear confrontation between the superpowers to be inevitable. As Ogarkov explained in 1985:

As for the hopes of U.S. strategists for the possibility of waging a “limited” nuclear war, today these hopes are completely unjustified and are meant for simpletons. To restrain nuclear war which has begun within some limited framework will be virtually impossible. No matter how limited the use of nuclear weapons may be, it will inevitably lead to the immediate use of the entire nuclear arsenal of both sides. This is the harsh logic of war. The dreams of the Pentagon about the possibility of a so-called, “mild limited” nuclear strike on the main centres and control points of the enemy are even more unfounded. Such adventurous and militarily incompetent views are entirely groundless. It is necessary to uncover those who hold such ignorant views. They are dangerous.176

175 Ogarkov, History Teaches Vigilance, op cit., p.58
176 Ibid., p.59
As was the case with much Soviet military literature, the message Ogarkov was sending was intended for a wide audience. To the West, he wanted to make it clear that ventures such as limited nuclear war would be met with grave consequences. The fact of parity and assured destruction guaranteed this. To the High Command and the rest of the Soviet military, it can be argued that the message was the same; limited nuclear war would lead to catastrophe for both sides. Rooting out and correcting the thoughts of those who considered such possibilities was likely an objective Ogarkov had in mind when he discussed this issue.

As for the possibility of keeping a conflict limited in the sense that only conventional weapons would be used, the facts are less clear. For instance, while it is true that the statements of Ogarkov and the High Command hinted at a preference for keeping a conflict conventional, there is no evidence to suggest that there was complete comfort in the prospect that a conflict between the superpowers would remain limited in such a way. The strongest statement Ogarkov made on the subject was that a conventional conflict between the superpowers “might” go nuclear. It was frequently stated that the losing side in a conventional war would ultimately resort to the use of nuclear weapons to avoid defeat. Doing so would inevitably extend the conflict to all-out nuclear war. Of course, in most discussions of this nature, the West was cast in the role of “loser” which permitted continued adherence to Soviet declarations of a no-first-use policy for nuclear weapons.

Changes to Soviet Operations and Force Structure

In the early years of his tenure, Ogarkov’s efforts were primarily concentrated on enforcing a combined arms approach on the conduct of military affairs. As Herspring noted, his success in doing so “became one of the hallmarks of Ogarkov’s tenure as chief of the
General Staff.”177 Anchoring his explanation to a dialectical understanding of universal relations and to proven successes of the Red Army, Ogarkov explained that:

Military operations in different areas (on the ground, the air, and the sea) are conducted through the joint efforts of all the branches of the armed forces in the interests of achieving a single objective — victory over a possible enemy. Dialectically, neglecting this requirement could lead to one-sided judgements and conclusions and to the exaggeration of the role of one or another branch of the armed forces or form of strategic operations to the detriment of the others.178

Although Grechko expressed the need for combined arms during his tenure as Defence Minister, Ogarkov’s actions spoke much louder than did Grechko’s. For example, while Grechko consistently affirmed that conventional weapons development could not be overlooked and needed to be improved upon, he never swayed from his belief that it was the Strategic Rocket Forces that were the bedrock of Soviet warfighting capability. As a result he was unable to arrive at the conclusion that “further stockpiling” of nuclear weapons was pointless. Ogarkov, recognizing this fact, took the issue one step further. While he acknowledged the importance of the Soviet nuclear arsenal, he explained it, in the first instance, in terms of that which would restrain or deter the enemy from attack, and only in the second, and less desirable instance, as a tool of warfighting. For such purposes, conventional forces were gradually assigned more importance, as they were, in Ogarkov’s words, “the wave of the future,” picking up, as it were, where nuclear weapons had left off.

Although he faced considerable opposition from within the upper ranks of the separate services who continued to press for independent operations, Ogarkov made a number of key changes that would ensure the combined arms approach he advocated. As Herspring explains:

Under Grechko, the SRF had been considered special — the “heart” or “basis” of Soviet military power — despite the increasing importance of the other services. Ogarkov, however, decided that this had to change: the SRF had to lose its privileged position. To begin with, in contrast to his predecessor, during the


178 Ogarkov, “Military Science and Defence of the Socialist Fatherland,” op. cit., p.137
late 1970s Ogarkov stopped ranking the various military services. Instead he utilized the term “strategic nuclear forces” to describe the Kremlin’s strategic nuclear arsenal. As he put it in his 1978 Kommunist article, “Following the creation of strategic nuclear forces, for the first time in the entire history of war, the strategic command acquired at its disposal means which could immediately hit the aggressor with a powerful counterstrike anywhere in the world.” Thus, as early as 1978, Ogarkov clearly considered all three of the services having strategic nuclear weapons (the SRF, the navy and the air force) to be playing important, if not equally important, roles in this area.\(^79\)

Ultimately, Ogarkov was able to bring the service chiefs around to his way of thinking. Each of them eventually offered endorsements of the relevant concepts in their public statements.\(^80\)

Also undertaken in the early stages of Ogarkov’s tenure as Chief of the General Staff were efforts to ensure coordination at the theatre level. Ogarkov believed that such coordination would be crucial in the age of rapid moving and highly mobile forces. This coordination would extend to all branches of the armed forces, including the navy which would be assigned various tasks aimed at contributing to the success of the operation. To ensure theatre level coordination, Ogarkov advocated modifications to existing command structures that would entail the creation of an intermediate command between theatres of military action and the High Command. A commander in such a post would oversee the actions of all services in a given theatre of operations and would report directly to the High Command.

To further ensure implementation of a comprehensive combined arms approach, Ogarkov introduced a number of significant operational changes. Beginning in 1978, Ogarkov ordered the subordination of Soviet air defences, including fixed-wing aircraft, to the army front commander. This it was believed would ensure better support of ground forces at the level of the front and would enable a more confident defence from the air attack

\(^79\) Herspring, *op. cit.*, p.133

\(^80\) Ibid., p.137
expected by ground force commanders in the modern age. As Herspring explained, however, while Ogarkov may have presided over these changes, the forces required to support them had been in production years earlier.

In retrospect, the buildup in frontal aviation had been underway for some time. For example, from 1967 to 1977 frontal aviation aircraft had “increased by about 50 percent its inventory of tactical aircraft.” Indeed, by 1977 “over 60 percent of the fighters in Frontal Aviation were those that had entered production after 1969.” Finally, a potent assault helicopter was added, and the Soviets began to conduct training exercises designed to “weld tank, motorized rifle, and attack helicopter units into mutually-supporting combat teams.” Helicopters not only provided a way of inserting troops near the front but were also equipped with a wide variety of ordnance to support Soviet ground forces.\(^{181}\)

Another change Ogarkov presided over in his early years involved granting greater control of artillery to the front commander. Such control was accompanied by considerable increases in the number of artillery pieces available in a given theatre of military action. For example, in comparison with 1965, in 1978 the number of artillery pieces in a motorized rifle division had increased from 122 to 202, and in a tank division, from 68 to 112. The number of self-propelled guns and their capabilities to strike harder and deeper also increased sharply in 1978.

Taken together the modifications in aviation and artillery meant that the front commander- who must make instantaneous decisions - would now be better able to concentrate fire and forces where he believed it would do the most good: he would not have to wait for a service chief in Moscow or the General Staff to give him permission to use these weapons.\(^{182}\)

Ogarkov also initiated changes in air assault operations. In the late 1970s, air assault brigades were created with the intention of improving capabilities for landing troops deep behind enemy lines with a view to disrupting their command, control, and communication

\(^{181}\) Ibid., p.143

\(^{182}\) Ibid.
facilities. As was the case with aviation and artillery, these new brigades were also subordinated to the front commander.\textsuperscript{183}

In an attempt to further ensure a coordinated war effort, Ogarkov, in 1979, facilitated the acceptance of an agreement with Warsaw Pact states that resulted in dramatically increased subordination of their troops to the Soviet High Command. In a document known as the “Statute of the Joint Armed Forces and Their Organs in Wartime,” East European forces were for all intents and purposes “almost completely subordinated to the control of the Soviet High Command during wartime.” This agreement was highly significant in that it effectively permitted the Soviets to bypass national command authorities and deal directly with military commanders on the battlefield during crisis situations.\textsuperscript{184} Ogarkov’s skill in bringing this about was certainly a noteworthy accomplishment for the Soviet military, and indeed, for a Chief of the General Staff.

The desire to ensure coordination was also evident in Ogarkov’s rethinking of traditional geographic divisions in war. In the late 1970s he presided over attempts to define relevant theatres of military action, or TVDs, to accommodate modern capabilities and to work out the difficulties associated with national command authorities within the Warsaw Pact. By the mid-1980s five TVDs, each with a single commander, had been identified around the periphery of the USSR: the Northwestern (Scandinavia), the Western (Central and Western Europe), the South Western (the Balkans), the Southern (the Middle East), and the Far Eastern. Within each of the TVDs were defined a number of “operational directions” which determined the geographical thrust of operations, many of which would involve several fronts.\textsuperscript{185}


\textsuperscript{184} Herspring, op. cit., p.144

\textsuperscript{185} Ibid., p.182
The Rise of Conventional Forces

Ogarkov's views on declining utility of nuclear weapons and the corresponding rise in the importance of high technology conventional weapons development became increasingly clear during the latter half of his tenure as Chief of the General Staff. His ability to interrelate the two developments, draw well-reasoned conclusions from them, and make rational recommendations for changes in force structure and planning, operational procedures, training and education set him far apart from his predecessors. The eloquence and sophistication with which he attacked these concepts earned him considerable admiration and respect within the Soviet military, and indeed, in the West as well. Ultimately, many of his views and recommendations were paralleled by those of General Secretary Gorbachev whose "new thinking" led to the creation of a revised military doctrine based on "reasonable sufficiency" for defence.

In his 1983 *Isvesitya* article, "Reliable Defence for Peace," Ogarkov delivered the message of changes in military doctrine that were increasingly solidifying nuclear weapons into the role of deterrence. Although he described the recently combined Soviet nuclear arsenal as the main component of the Soviet Armed Forces' combat might, he also identified the Strategic Nuclear Forces as the "the basic factor for deterring the aggressor."

Ogarkov also raised the issue of arms reductions, though he continued to be skeptical about the possibility of détente. Prefacing discussions of the grave implications associated with the qualitative and quantitative proliferation of nuclear weapons, he called for immediate reductions on both sides:

The unbridled development and accumulation of nuclear weapons by the United States presents an even greater threat to peace. Its available reserves have already exceeded many times over any military requirements. And continuation of the race is not only completely senseless but dangerous as well...

At a start, freeze the nuclear arms of both sides at existing levels without lengthy talks. This would permit both the United States and the

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186 N. V. Ogarkov, "Reliable Defence For Peace." *Isvesitya*, 23 September 1983, p.8
Soviet Union to release considerable funds, practically billions, and create favourable conditions for a subsequent reduction of arms and armed forces.\textsuperscript{187}

While such calls for arms control had been issued on several occasions in the past, Ogarkov’s approach was unique. Given his acknowledgement of the existence of parity, or more specifically, his awareness that the nuclear arsenal of the Soviet Union had reached similar proportions to those of the United States, he was in effect describing his own nuclear forces as excessive. It would be difficult to imagine that he did not make such a connection and indeed, that he did not intend the message to be taken to the Soviet heart.

Ogarkov also described the coordination efforts he initiated during the first half of his tenure as Chief of the General Staff. Essentially, the message was that the planned coordination of troops and operations was on track. The interesting point, however, was that he focused almost entirely on the combat capabilities of conventional weapons and the potential of emerging technologies. As he explained,

\begin{quote}
All branches of the Soviet Armed Forces are developing harmoniously. Motorized infantry and tank divisions of the Ground Forces now have hundreds of modern tanks, infantry combat vehicles, and armoured carriers, and a sufficient quantity of self-propelled artillery and combat helicopters. They have the potential to conduct combat operations independently at a high pace and to rapidly exploit success in depth \textit{[razvit v uspekh v glubinu]}. The firepower and strike power of the Ground Forces consists of tactical and operational-tactical missile and artillery systems capable of hitting targets at distances from tens to hundreds of kilometres. They include highly mobile airborne landing troops.

Particular attention is devoted to the elaboration of means of conducting combat operations in conditions where the enemy is using highly accurate combat complexes, new means of reconnaissance and electronic warfare, and automated systems for controlling weapons and troops.\textsuperscript{188}
\end{quote}

The importance Ogarkov attached to these developments continued throughout his career as a military officer.

\textsuperscript{187} N.V. Ogarkov, “Ogarkov Gives Army, Navy Day Anniversary Address.” Moscow Television Service; Moscow, 23 February 1984, p.V4 (FBIS)

\textsuperscript{188} Ogarkov, “Reliable Defence for Peace,” \textit{op. cit.}, p.V5,6
In a widely read *Red Star* interview, published in February 1984, Ogarkov was asked to describe the basic changes taking place with respect to military affairs in contemporary times. In his response, he suggested that there were essentially three categories of change. The first related to the quantitative and qualitative proliferation of nuclear weapons:

[T]he quantitative accumulation of nuclear weapons, which has continued over several decades, has led to radical qualitative changes in the conditions and potential for the use of these weapons. The stockpiles of nuclear ammunition and various means of delivery that the sides have created have reached such a size and quality that they are sufficient to destroy all the important targets on enemy territory many times over in a short space of time.

As a result, a paradox arises: On the one hand it would seem, a process of steadily increasing potential for the nuclear powers to destroy the enemy is taking place while on the other there is an equally steady and, I would say, even steeper reduction in the potential for an aggressor to inflict a so-called “disarming strike” on his main enemy. The point is, with the quantity and diversity of nuclear missiles already achieved, it becomes impossible to destroy the enemy’s systems with a single strike. A crushing retaliatory strike against the aggressor, even by the limited quantity of nuclear weapons remaining to the defender – a strike inflicting unacceptable damage – becomes inevitable in present conditions.\(^{189}\)

Ogarkov’s explanation on this point left little to the imagination. Clearly, he was convinced that victory in its traditional sense could not be achieved in nuclear war. Not only were such statements highly uncharacteristic of the High Command in previous years, as the rejection of victory in any war was perceived as demoralizing, the manner in which they were expressed made Ogarkov stand out as one of the most clear thinking generals in Soviet history. More specifically, although Ogarkov was known to invoke anti-imperialist sentiment with considerable frequency, the terms of his discussion with respect to the exchange of nuclear weapons often excluded the names and faces. Instead, he pursued a road less traveled as he attempted to foster a generic understanding of the consequences of military engagements involving the use of nuclear weapons.

With respect to the second set of changes, and arguably, the necessary corollary of the first, Ogarkov summarized his views on the rising importance of conventional weapons and their effect on the conduct of military affairs.

[R]apid changes in the development of conventional means of destruction and the emergence in the developed countries of automated reconnaissance-and-strike complexes, long-range high-accuracy terminally guided combat systems, unmanned flying machines, and qualitatively new electronic control systems make many types of weapons global and make it possible to sharply increase the destructive potential of conventional weapons, bringing them closer, so to speak, to weapons of mass destruction in terms of effectiveness. The sharply increased range of conventional weapons makes it possible to immediately extend active combat operations not just to the border regions, but to the whole country's territory, which was not possible in past wars. This qualitative leap in the development of conventional means of destruction will inevitably entail a change in the nature of the preparation and conduct of operations, which will in turn predetermine the possibility of conducting military operations using conventional systems in qualitatively new, incomparably more destructive forms than before.\(^{190}\)

A review of Ogarkov's work since the early 1970s suggests that he had long held these views. As he neared the end of his tenure as Chief of the General Staff however, his arguments became increasingly persuasive and the level of urgency he attached to them became unmistakable.

The third element of change Ogarkov discussed in his Red Star interview involving contemporary developments in military affairs related to advances in science and technology and what he perceived to be the pressing need to devote adequate resources to achieving the fullest exploitation of them. He explained that such developments had created "real preconditions for the emergence in the very near future of even more destructive and previously unknown types of weapons based on new physical principles."\(^{191}\)

Work on these new types of weapons is already in progress in a number of countries, for example, in the United States. Their development is a reality of the very near future, and it would be a serious mistake not to consider it right

\(^{190}\) Ibid.
\(^{191}\) Ibid.
now. This, in turn, cannot fail to change established notions of the methods and forms of armed struggle and even of the military might of the state.\textsuperscript{192}

His description of this aspect of development is particularly striking in that he appeared to have conceded an advantage to the enemy in his reference to the United States. To be sure, acknowledging American advances with respect to the technology he discussed, while simultaneously warning of the dangers of falling behind, introduced an element of realism in Soviet military affairs that differed substantially from the propaganda laden utterances of the past which were typically characterized by the rejection of any idea that threatened to undermine the invincibility of the Soviet Armed Forces.

The arguments Ogarkov raised in his Red Star interview were discussed at further length in his 1985 book. Somewhat reduced, however, were the political constraints he faced in his role as Chief of the General Staff. In summarizing his view of contemporary developments, he again drew attention to the rising importance of conventional means of war.

A profound and, in the full sense of the word, revolutionary change in military affairs is continuing in our day in connection with the further development and qualitative improvement of nuclear weapons, rapid development of electronics, and in connection with the significant qualitative improvement of conventional means and methods of armed conflict. This, in turn, has a decisive influence on all other aspects of military affairs, most of all on the development and improvement of forms and methods of military operations and, consequently, on the organizational structure of troop units and naval forces and improvement of control systems and organs (emphasis added).\textsuperscript{193}

It is interesting to note that Ogarkov’s view of the new revolution was consistently depicted against the backdrop of developments in the United States. In particular, he increasingly drew attention to growing American capabilities to engage in a protracted conflict over multiple theatres of action with the use of only conventional means. In 1985, Ogarkov charged that the Americans’ relentless pursuit of military superiority, notably accelerated during the Reagan Administration, had given them the capability to engage in

\textsuperscript{192}Ibid., p.R20

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such actions “anywhere in the world.” The need for vigilance in military preparations, therefore, was never greater.194

The operational implications of Ogarkov’s views on the importance of conventional weapons were far-reaching. In particular, while Ogarkov had previously assigned the possibility of “decisive success” to conventional means, the fact that this could now occur in the initial stages was significant. Never before had conventional means been so important in military doctrine. As Mary Fitzgerald pointed out, there was increasing discussion of using conventional forces to defeat the enemy not only in the first, but also in the second, third and rear echelons in the initial, and notably non-nuclear, period of a future war.195 Assigning a strategic role to conventional weapons was arguably the epitome of the new revolution in military affairs.

Assessing the Evidence of Change

In 1983, Peterson and Hines wrote that the Soviets had already expanded and adjusted the structure of their armed forces to accommodate operational concepts that supported the conventional offensive. “The extent of these structural changes suggests that this latest phase in the evolution of Soviet strategy is already quite mature.196

Similarly, in a post transfer article examining the locus of power within the Soviet military following the departure of Ogarkov, Charles Cutshaw identified tangible evidence of change that had taken place during the Ogarkov era. He noted that when Ogarkov was appointed to Chief of the General Staff in 1977, “few Western analysts predicted he would oversee one of the greatest military transformations in history.”

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193 Ogarkov, History Teaches Vigilance, op cit., p.25
196 Fitzgerald, “Marshal Ogarkov on Modern War,” op. cit., p.52
In the brief span of eight years, the Soviet Union changed its military power base from one heavily dependent on nuclear weapons to a broadly capable combined arms force. During this time the Soviet General Staff assured its operational control of all Soviet military forces. The ground forces were completely reorganized, the air forces were restructured, and the navy underwent dramatic development... The architect of this transformation was Ogarkov.197

In terms of operational changes, Cutshaw described the most notable to include the resurrection and modification of the World War II mobile group concept, known in contemporary times as the operational maneuver group (OMG). According to Hines and Peterson’s analysis of the development of the Warsaw Pact strategic offensive,

At army level, an OMG would probably consist of at least one tank division or motorized rifle division, whereas at the front level it would be somewhat larger, possibly a tank or combined-arms corps of two or more divisions, or even an entire army. The most likely reinforcements to the OMG would include: 1) airborne or heliborne assault forces; 2) an aviation element (especially helicopters); 3) additional engineer elements (especially river-crossing and road-clearing support); 4) special logistic support including resupply by air; and 5) additional air defence support.198

Further changes Cutshaw identified included the Soviet addition of a new air assault brigade, which he suggested rounded out the Soviet ground force deep-strike capability.199 In summarizing recent Soviet force developments, Cutshaw explained:

All Soviet Army divisions, both motor rifle and tank, have been transformed into highly mobile combined arms forces, in keeping with the new Soviet emphasis on mobility and independent operation. Further, there has been increased mechanization of the airborne forces, and integration of helicopters and fixed wing aircraft into the combined-arms team, and an integration of naval forces into the theatre offensive.200

197 Charles Q. Cutshaw, "Who's In Charge?" Proceedings, April 1986, p.79


199 Cutshaw, op cit, p.79

200 Ibid.
Western forecasts with respect the character of war the Soviets were preparing to fight had also changed considerably.

Rather than movement in division columns as before, the latest doctrine calls for cross-country movement by battalions and regiments, thereby presenting NATO forces with too many moving targets to engage effectively. Whether or not this new maneuver will be effective remains to be seen, but NATO will no longer be able to count on finding the Soviets in vulnerable road-bound division columns. By all these new force alignments and operational changes, the Soviets are building a military that they believe capable of conducting deep strategic encirclement operations to occupy Western Europe in a new "lightning war" and thus fight and win against NATO without resorting to nuclear weapons.201

Clearly, under Ogarkov, the High Command's stated preference for conventional as opposed to nuclear war had been translated into tangible changes in the art of Soviet warfare and were becoming increasingly apparent to Western observers.

Accordingly, in 1987, Mary Fitzgerald described the essence of the new revolution in Soviet military affairs as "an independent conventional war that excludes the nuclear forces of the superpowers."202 Its most vocal proponent, she added, was Marshal Ogarkov. She explained that increasing evidence of these changes was being documented by Western analysts and that the conclusions they adopted confirmed a revolution in the sphere of Soviet conventional weaponry. As she explained:

By the time Marshal Ogarkov had published his revised description of the modern theatre operation, the Soviets had already deployed a new generation of precision, enhanced-range, dual capable SRBMs in the Central European TVD. As Dennis Gormley noted in Orbis in late 1985, improvements in missile accuracy and conventional warhead effectiveness of these SRBMs "foreshadow the capacity to furnish conventional solutions for nuclear problems" in a future war. International Defence Review reported in 1984 that at least some of those missiles are already deployed with conventional payloads. The 1986 edition of Soviet Military Power confirms that with conventional warheads and guidance systems, Soviet long-range cruise missiles such as the SS-NX-24 "would pose a significant non-nuclear threat to U.S. and Eurasian airfields and nuclear weapons." Advances in warhead capabilities, accuracy, and reliability are

201 Ibid., p.81
likewise expected in the Soviet SRBM force. Combined arms commanders would then have “enhanced non-nuclear targeting options, and more flexible and survivable SRBMs.” The new generation of Soviet SRINF missiles can likewise be employed effectively with conventional warheads, which will give the Soviets “a formidable conventional deep strike system.”

Dale Herspring described further evidence that Ogarkov’s contributions to military doctrine had been translated into observable changes in force structure. With respect to aviation, for example, he noted that Ogarkov had presided over changes that saw dramatic increases in the number of fixed wing aircraft available for an initial strike, ostensibly to be used toward the destruction of enemy air and air-defence assets, nuclear resources, and associated command, control, and communication centres. In 1984, these changes included improvements in the form of the MIG-27, the Flogger, and the SU24 bomber. The numbers and quality of heliborne aircraft, and anti-helicopter weapons were also increased substantially. The roles assigned to them in terms of ground support, troop and supply transport expanded accordingly.

Armour and artillery received similar upgrades. New deployments included the T-80 with its compound armour thought capable of effectively countering western anti-tank weapons, and the T-72 newly fitted with rubber composition side plates designed to deflect anti-tank missiles. With respect to artillery, regiments normally consisting of two battalions of 130mm field guns and one battalion of 152 howitzers had been converted to artillery brigades, equipped with two battalions each of field guns and howitzers.

Some battalions had reportedly had their strength increased from eighteen to twenty-four guns, and the Soviets were making greater use of computers in their fire control system. Furthermore, BM-21 multiple-rocket launchers were now integrated into artillery regiments, and the T-64 replaced the obsolete PT-76.

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203 Ibid., p.16
204 Herspring, op. cit., p. 184
207 Herspring, op. cit., p.185
The decision to improve upon short-range ballistic missiles was another key change in Soviet force structure during the Ogarkov era. According to Herspring, the appearance of the dual-capable tactical missile was “almost certainly encouraged, if not instigated by Ogarkov.” Previously assigned to nuclear weapons or aircraft, the new systems provided the Soviets with the capability to engage and destroy Western targets with conventional warheads.

Air defence forces were another area of intense improvement under Ogarkov. In protecting Moscow and other vital city and supply centres, “the number of tactical and surface-to-air-missiles and antiaircraft artillery was increased, and work was well underway on fourth generation fighters, including the MIG-29 and SU-27.” Both planes were reportedly equipped with “look-down, shoot-down radars,” enabling Soviet fighters to “engage enemy aircraft despite ground clutter.”

The results of extensive development in the area of airborne warning and control systems were also added to the Soviet arsenal. As Herspring explained,

When he spoke about reconnaissance strike complexes, Ogarkov had Western battle management systems in mind. These are complexes which coordinate aerial and ground-based systems in order to ensure that targets deep behind enemy lines are destroyed. The Israelis had shown how such a system could work when they inflicted such one-sided casualties on the Syrians. From Ogarkov’s standpoint, the most effective counters to Western AWACS and related systems were fighter aircraft or perhaps a long-range antiradiation missile. Two new models, the AS-11 and AS-12, entered service in the early 1980s... Meanwhile, Ogarkov had the Soviet military working on an AWACs aircraft of its own.209

A final observable change brought about by the new revolution in military affairs related to logistics. Ogarkov had always maintained their importance in the age of modern warfare. Accordingly, the stocks of fuel and ammunition in forward staging areas and vehicle repair facilities, for example, were substantially increased. This, is was thought,

"enhanced the commanders' flexibility and made them less dependent on long supply lines subject to interdiction by the other side."²¹⁰

Summary

Coinciding with Brezhnev's famous speech at Tula and the elevation of Marshal Ogarkov to Chief of the General Staff, the new revolution in military affairs led to significant modifications in Soviet military doctrine. With respect to Ogarkov's contributions, his ability to elaborate the concepts and relate them to recommendations for changes in force structure and operations earned him the label of "vanguard" and "architect" of the new revolution. Essentially, the revolution consisted of downgrading nuclear options in light of the acceptance of parity and the impossibility of achieving nuclear superiority, and the corresponding rise in the importance of high technology conventional weaponry and weapons based on "new physical principles." The consequence of these developments was a return to, and fine-tuning of, the strategic deep operation and the operational maneuver group, and in general, the development of long-range plans to fight and win an all-conventional war with the West.

Given that the trend toward conventional options had began under Grechko, and other developments such as a combined-arms approach preceded Ogarkov, it is difficult to say without reservation that Ogarkov was entirely responsible for all of the changes that took place during his tenure as Chief of the General Staff with respect to the new revolution in military affairs. It is clear however, that Ogarkov was considerably more convincing in explaining the significance of his ideas than were his predecessors, most notably Grechko and Kulikov. More importantly, perhaps, he was ultimately more successful in being able to turn these ideas into considerably more tangible realities. In sum, while there is "no indication

²¹⁰ Herspring, op. cit., p.187

²¹⁰ Ibid., p.185
that Ogarkov reversed the overall orientation of Soviet strategy," he did provide it with clear
direction and effectively "introduced a sense of urgency into its development."211
IV – CONCLUSION

Ogarkov’s Transfer to “Other Duties”

In September of 1984, Ogarkov was transferred from his post as Chief of the General Staff to take command of the Western TVD as was his predecessor Kulikov. In 1988, he was relieved of these duties and assigned a high-ranking position within the Main Inspectorate of the Soviet Armed Forces, a group of generals with an advisory function who were often given “difficult political tasks” to resolve. During this time he also held a teaching assignment at the General Staff Academy in Moscow, where he lectured on operational training.\(^{212}\)

The circumstances surrounding Ogarkov’s departure from his top military post generated considerable debate in the West. Some viewed his removal as punishment for his outspokenness on politically sensitive issues, while others viewed the transfer as a promotion to a position where he would have the greatest success in implementing his doctrinal reformulations.\(^{213}\)

In analyzing the event, one must necessarily begin with a review of Ogarkov’s position on military doctrine. Accordingly, as Brian Davenport suggested, most analysts would agree that four points adequately summarize the core of Ogarkov’s views: Rejection of a military doctrine that relies on nuclear weapons for victory; acceptance of the western notion of assured destruction; rejection of limited nuclear options in combat; and the assertion that nuclear weapons constitute the ultimate dialectical negation of warfare because of their sheer destructiveness.\(^{214}\)

\(^{212}\) International Defence Review, No. 11, 1988


\(^{214}\) Ibid., p.130
On these fundamental points, it is not difficult to see that his views were shared with the majority of the political leadership. Indeed, Gorbachev himself confirmed these views in his own discussions of "reasonable sufficiency" in military doctrine.

Given that the core of Ogarkov's views seemed for the most part to be in line with recent developments in political affairs then, one is led to examine the periphery for evidence that would explain his unusual removal. On this note, a number of plausible categories of explanation emerge. These include, most notably, identifiable differences on matters of the budget and structuring of the economy, his views on arms control and détente, the issue of political prestige, and the political power struggle that took place following the death of Brezhnev and as a result of Gorbachev's efforts to gain control of it.

To begin with, Ogarkov's repeated calls for strengthening military links to the civilian economy in an effort to accommodate the growth of technological requirements by the Soviet armed forces likely made the political leadership uneasy. The focus, after all, was increasingly turning to strategies aimed at raising the production of consumer goods. Moreover, as Davenport explained,

In asking for significant funding to restructure Soviet forces along "high tech" lines, Ogarkov was proposing to mortgage a considerable part of the Soviet's future economic growth in the interest of developing modern weapons programs.215

Ogarkov's replacement, Sergei Feforovich Akhromeyev, although widely recognized as his protégé, was by comparison was far less confrontational in his dealings with the political leadership on these questions. When it came to questions of military involvement in economic planning and national security decision making, Akhromeyev was comparatively silent, and seemed to demonstrate a substantially greater willingness to follow the lines laid down by the political leadership. While privately he may have retained some of the same

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215 Ibid., p.132
budgetary concerns as Ogarkov, his views never approached the open advocacy of his predecessor. 216

Almost as if to prevent the rise of another "Ogarkov," the 27th Party Congress in 1986 affirmed that the subservience of the military to political direction was inextricably linked to the potential success of economic regeneration. Instead of spin-offs from the military to the civilian economy for example, the relationship advocated by Ogarkov was reversed. In line with the "new thinking" of Gorbachev, "spin-ons" from the civilian sector to the military economy was the charted course for development. 217

In later years, the cuts that took place to accommodate the concepts of "reasonable sufficiency" and "defensive defence" led Ogarkov to show disdain for the civilian-led doctrinal revisions. In his opinion, these efforts served only to "sap the armed forces of their operational mobility for theatre combat." 218

The argument can also be made that Ogarkov was perceived as an obstacle to improved relations with the West. As one will recall, by the time Ogarkov published his second book in 1985, he had all but abandoned the possibility of détente, reflected in part by the fact that his references to the aggressiveness of imperialism had become increasingly harsh. Akhromeyev on the other hand, seemed more willing to work with the political leadership on these matters, and in contrast to Ogarkov, was far "more supportive of a political dialogue with the West." 219

Another plausible explanation for Ogarkov's removal involved the level of power and prestige he had attained during his years as the top Soviet General. Most analysts would agree that Ogarkov had become the most dominant figure in the Soviet military during the

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216 Davenport, op. cit., p.139
217 Ibid., p.140
218 Ibid., p.143
219 Ibid., p.139

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early 1980s, and indeed, many have argued that the dominance and influence he achieved as Chief of the General Staff was unrivalled in the history of the Soviet armed forces.

Herspring argued that Ogarkov may have fallen victim to the succession struggle that ensued following the death of Brezhnev and lasted until the arrival of Gorbachev. Those in positions of power within the political leadership wanted to ensure that the influential general was removed from a policy making position (although the post of Chief of the General Staff was not intended to be, under Ogarkov it certainly appeared to be so on several occasions). Transferring Ogarkov to the Western TVD was perhaps an appropriate compromise or midpoint that would enable the Soviet military and political leadership to continue to tap his expertise without exposing themselves to the threat of having their policies undermined by a vocal, influential, and highly capable critic. By comparison, the more passive and agreeable Akhromeyev seemed a more fitting choice for seeing the directives of the political leadership through without question.

Closing Observations
Ogarkov’s dominance and centrality within the Soviet military establishment during his tenure as Chief of the General Staff is difficult to dispute. The sophistication of his ideas and application of them to the problems he faced was rare if not unique for an officer of the Soviet High Command. His articulate understanding of the various concepts and tasks at hand and his ability to provide them with theoretical justification using the complex language of Marxist-Leninist dialectics surpassed those of his predecessors and was certainly unmatched by his successors.

With respect to military-technical issues such as warfighting strategy, Ogarkov was undeniably “the primary architect of Soviet policy.” Under the heading of a new revolution in military affairs, Ogarkov repeatedly asserted the need to downgrade nuclear options, to acknowledge the existence of parity and the impossibility of achieving nuclear superiority,
and to recognize the corresponding rise in the importance of high technology conventional weaponry. His success in facilitating the consequential developments of his views, in particular, a return to, and fine-tuning of, the strategic deep operation and the operational maneuver group, and in general, the development of long-range plans to fight and win an all-conventional war with the West was perhaps the hallmark of his career as a military officer. Because of his ability to provide intellectually sound justification for his policy recommendations, he stood out from someone like Grechko who tended to approach such matters in a “piecemeal fashion.” As Herspring concluded, in contrast to Grechko therefore, “Ogarkov was not aloof from the doctrinal process – he dominated it.”

His ability to do so was due in part to the background of the Defence Minister under which he served. As was explained earlier, the appointment of Ustinov broke with tradition in that he was not a professional soldier. Instead, he was a civilian with experience as a manager and administrator. This, it can be argued, supplemented Ogarkov’s intellectual abilities in that it permitted him greater latitude to express his thoughts, especially on military-technical issues, and to push the relevant policies through. This is not to suggest that Ustinov was fooled by his Chief of Staff. Rather, as Herspring explained,

Ustinov, for his part, decided early on that issues of military management were for the professional military to work out – and Ogarkov, as the army’s top professional soldier, appears to have been given a relatively free hand in diagnosing the military’s problems in this area.

Of course Ustinov may not have guessed that Ogarkov would extend his dominance in the military-technical area to those previously uncharted by a Chief of Staff. In particular, Ogarkov stood out from his predecessors and successors in that he did not shy away from pursuing a confrontational approach on politically sensitive issues such as arms control and

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210 Herspring, op. cit., p.212
211 Ibid.
212 Ibid.
détente. His attempts to become involved and influence the economic decision-making process were no less striking in this respect.

Despite the indelible mark he left on Soviet military doctrine, Ogarkov’s passing in 1994 was largely ignored in both the Soviet and Western press. Viewed in the Soviet Union as an “official silence,” the omission did not go unnoticed. A group of former senior Soviet officers collaborated on an article entitled, “Vengeance Through Silence: Is this the Way to Bid Farewell to the Saviours of the Fatherland on Their Last Voyage” where they condemned what was described as a “continuation of the discreditation of the armed forces, of merited military chiefs, and of veterans of the Great Patriotic War who saved the world from fascism.”\textsuperscript{223} Clearly, they surmised, Ogarkov had been buried long before he had died.

In the West however, perestroika and glasnost provided the opportunity to re-examine the assertions of the past relative to Ogarkov and Soviet military doctrine. Time and time again, they proved that he was indeed a unique figure in Soviet history. The sophistication of his ideas, intellectual prowess, political skills, and his overall dominance within the Soviet military establishment during his tenure as Chief of the General Staff is now and forever unquestionable.
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