Soviet Operational Deception: The Red Cloak

by
Lieutenant Colonel Richard N. Armstrong



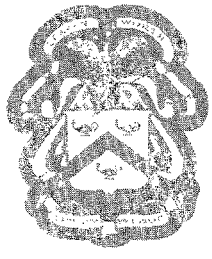
FOREWORD

The U.S. Army believes that deception is a vital part of military operations. Field Manual 100—5, *Operations*, acknowledges that the Soviet Army mastered operational deception in World War II. While its success is widely recognized, there are few published Western assessments of Soviet operational deception.

Soviet Operational Deception: The Red Cloak, by Lieutenant Colonel Richard N. Armstrong, examines the role of operational deception in the Red Army's World War II victories. This Combat Studies Institute special study focuses on operational-level deception planning, allocation of resources, and deception measures used during battle in the Lvov-Sandomierz operation of July 1944. Lieutenant Colonel Armstrong's insightful study demonstrates the clear connection between the wise use of deception and Soviet battlefield success.

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RICHARD M. SWAIN
Colonel, Field Artillery
Director, Combat Studies Institute



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by
Lieutenant Colonel Richard N. Armstrong

U.S. Army Command and General Staff College
Fort Leavenworth, Kansas 66027-6900



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Abbreviations

A	army
CMG	cavalry mechanized group
GA	guards army
GCC	guards cavalry corps
GMC	guards mechanized corps
GTA	guards tank army
GTB	guards tank brigade
GTC	guards tank corps
ID	infantry division
Pz	panzer
TA	tank army
TC	tank corps

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In order to perform illusions greater than a sleight of hand, the magician often uses a cloak. The creation of illusions is not magical, or mystical, but is a hint of suggestion, an understanding of human nature, relatively simple technical manipulations, and the fulfillment of carefully planted expectations. Despite this fundamental awareness, one is awed by the magician's illusions of objects disappearing and appearing. Similarly, on the battlefield, the application of deception depends on the same nonmystical elements but is potentially fatal for the one awed and surprised. The Red Army learned and practiced the art of deception at all levels of warfare during World War II. By cloaking various force groupings and activities, Soviet military leadership, particularly in the latter stages of the war, created operational-level deceptions that surprised German intelligence and commanders. This aspect of combat on the Eastern Front remains relatively unexplored in Western writings.[1] The Soviets, on the other hand, have published significant studies that remain largely unexploited by Western military analysts and historians.[2] Through their empirically structured military science, Soviet researchers and doctrine writers have applied deception to the tactical, operational, and strategic levels of war.

Deception at the tactical level is conducted by corps and below and has the goal of hiding activities associated with battle preparation.[3] Exploiting time of day or night, terrain, weather, and specific camouflage and mock-up devices, tactical units seek to conceal their activities and formations by using feints, ruses, demonstrations, or other tactical actions.

Operational-level deception is conducted at the Front (equivalent to a U.S. army group) and army levels of command so battle preparations can be conducted secretly.

At this level, deception is achieved by maintaining radio silence; concealing command and control and troop regroupings; disseminating false information to the enemy; camouflaging the assembly areas of supporting units; and creating dummy troop concentrations, command posts, and defensive installations. Operational-level deception is achieved only by strictly observing the tactical deception measures.[4]

Strategic-level deception is carried out by commands higher than Front and includes measures for maintaining secrecy in the preparation of strategic-level operations and campaigns. These actions disorient enemy estimates and conceal the true intentions and operations of the armed forces.[5]

Soviet military writers use the term *maskirovka*, which partially aligns with the Western concept of deception. However, the definition of *maskirovka* in its full sense encompasses camouflage, concealment, cover, misinformation, and operations security, as well as deception. For clarity, this study uses the Western term "deception" and specifically states the other aspects of *maskirovka* when appropriate.

While operational-level deception promotes the achievement of operational surprise, its practice provides a number of collateral effects, such as masking force ratios, delaying enemy decisions, and misdirecting the enemy's attention and commitment of forces. In 1943–45, Soviet operations were consistently successful and offer historical lessons concerning operational-level deception. A review of these lessons and a close look at the Red Army's improved capability to produce battlefield illusions during an operation

in the summer of 1944 is instructive and may prove useful to current U.S. Army initiatives exploring battlefield deception.

Senior Red Army commanders understood the fundamentals of the art of deception, and their efforts are chronicled in their memoirs. "The mission of operational deception," wrote Marshal Georgi K. Zhukov, "is to disguise operations preparations and mislead the enemy about the intentions and character of impending actions. . . ."[6] Further, in offensive operations, operational-level deception protected forces and their assets from direct influence by enemy ground and air forces and resulted in the premature use of all forms of enemy reserves.[7] Marshal Ivan S. Konev observed that this was very important "because precisely such a disruption of the integrity of the enemy's forces and of the system of their control is a *sine qua non* for successfully developing an operation to a great depth."[8]

Antecedents for successful Soviet deception existed before World War II. As the Soviets sought to codify their theoretical developments of the 1920s and 1930s, the Red Army Field Service Regulations of 1936 reveal a reiterated belief that "surprise actions depend on concealment . . . achieved by . . . secret concentration of forces, concealed preparation of artillery concentrations . . . and the use of night, smoke screens and radio silence."[9] The 1939 draft regulation "obliged superiors of all grades without awaiting special instructions to undertake all measures of deception. . . ."[10]

On the eve of World War II, the Red Army at Khalkhin Gol, commanded by General Zhukov, developed an elaborate deception plan against the Japanese forces in a major Manchurian border battle in August 1939. After a significant

border incursion and clash, Zhukov's deception measures "were aimed at creating the impression that we were making no preparations for an offensive operation."[11] Consequently, troop concentrations and redeployments were done at night, radios and telephones were used to pass false information, and attack groups were moved to their jumping-off positions shortly before the attack. Deception efforts and diversionary attacks served to cloud the Japanese estimate of Soviet activities and keep the Japanese assessment off-balance. The Soviets therefore achieved operational surprise when Red Army forces swiftly surrounded the awed Japanese forces and completely destroyed their units. According to the Kwantung Army command, "We had no prior clue from intelligence at any level, from the front to army headquarters, to lead us to expect there would be an offensive on such a scale at this time."[12]

Despite the Red Army's impressive example of deception against the Japanese in late 1939, Soviet forces were surprised by the German invasion in the summer of 1941. The ramifications of Joseph Stalin's purging the top military leadership who had drafted the progressive regulations of the 1930s, combined with confusing military experiences in Manchuria, Poland, and Finland, placed in question the general competency of the Red Army in modern warfare. Consequently, in the early fighting on the Eastern Front, a disparity between the Soviets' theoretical concepts and their practical applications existed.

During the initial period of the war, Red Army forces rarely resorted to operational-level deception, which was limited to launching a series of diversionary attacks across a wide front, complemented by intensified reconnaissance activity. At the tactical level, division and lower units used

only camouflage as a passive means of keeping manpower and equipment hidden from German aerial reconnaissance, and they did not concentrate on planning and executing other deception techniques.[13]

On 29 September 1941, the *Stavka* (Supreme High Command) issued a directive cautioning commanders to conceal their personal reconnaissances and to hide their forces' attack preparations.[14] The Soviets learned quickly that success in counterattacks depended on surprise and thus were rediscovering the links between surprise and deception. Red Army commanders learned, too, that passive deception measures had to be supplemented by active measures to deceive the Germans successfully. Nonetheless, from June 1941 to November 1942, during the first period of the war, Soviet unit commanders learned little more than the necessities about camouflaging equipment, troops, and weapons at the tactical level and conducting some diversionary actions.[15] Red Army planners had much to learn about balancing techniques between defensive and offensive battles and coordinating the numerous combat and combat support functions at the operational level of war.

During the second period of the war, November 1942 to December 1943, the role of operational-level deception increased significantly as the Red Army changed to a strategic offensive. The concealment of counteroffensive preparations received considerable attention early in the war. Clever regrouping of forces became an instrumental method of executing operational-level deception.

The Soviets regrouped forces in order to reinforce existing forces or to create new groupings for repelling enemy offensives, developing successful attacks, and transferring

forces to new directions.[16] These forces gathered and moved only at night and under strictly observed and enforced camouflage discipline. The Department of Research Into and Application of Wartime Experience, General Staff of the Red Army, which had the responsibility of determining lessons learned and producing studies of war experience, emphasized the value of regroupings. During the preparations of the Southwest Front offensive in December 1942, one such study noted that "the secrecy of regrouping is one of the factors deciding the success of an offensive operation."[17]

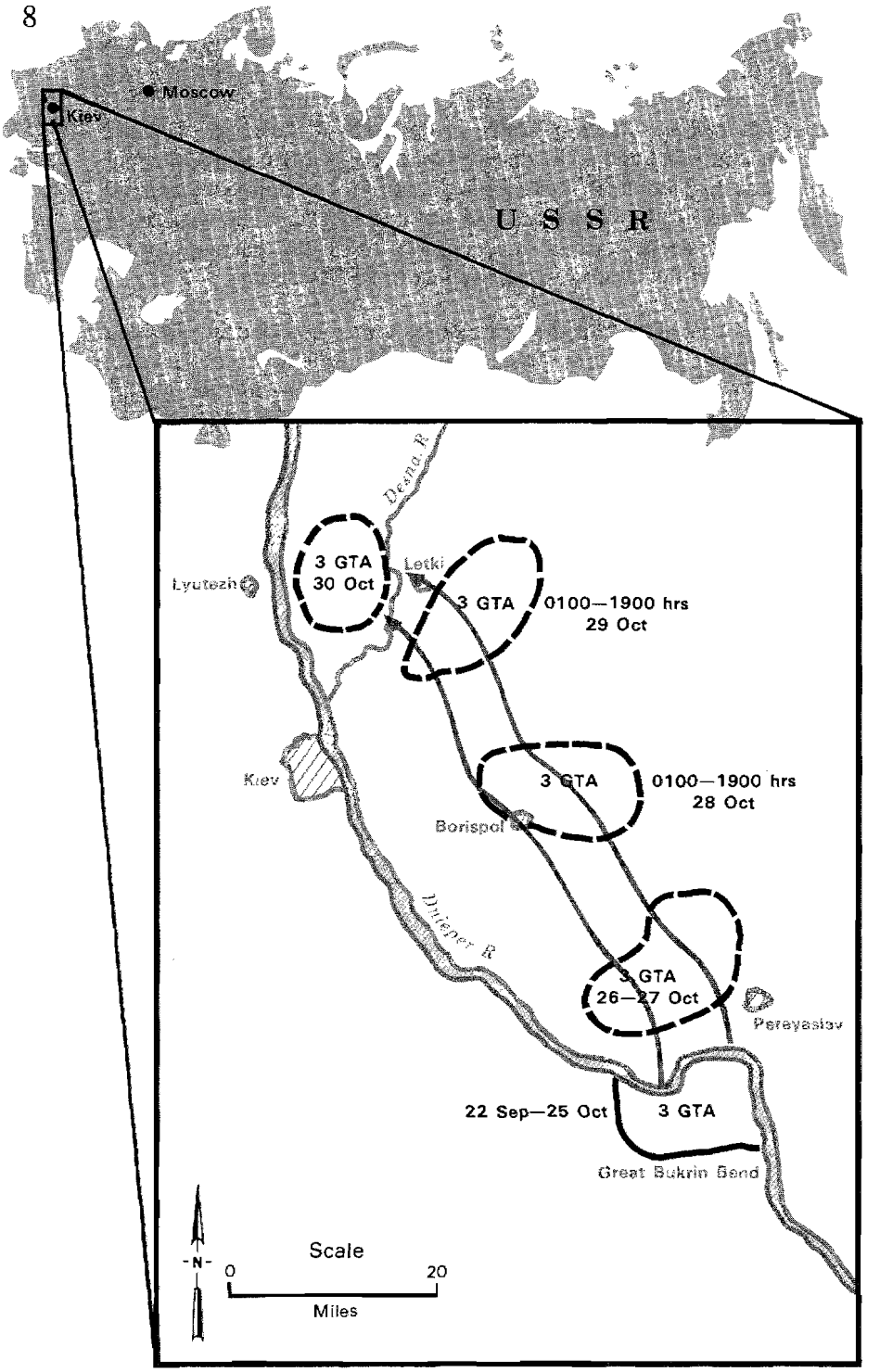
In another study on the war experience from the Battle of Stalingrad, the following points were noted on the regrouping of the 5th Tank Army:

> For purposes of masking, the areas of concentration of the 5th Tank Army were 30–60 km from the front line. The movements of the troops were carried out exclusively at night. The masking of the areas of concentration was obligatory. All radio traffic was forbidden. In spite of the fact that in taking up the jump-off positions for the offensive the troops had to cross to the south banks of the Don River, the deployment of the main forces of the army was in the main a surprise for the enemy, even though enemy air reconnaissance noticed the presence of new units (especially cavalry units) on the south banks of the Don. From 10 November enemy aviation subjected the inhabited localities, the areas of concentration of the units and the crossings to regular aerial bombardment; however, the scale of concentration was not revealed to the enemy.
>
> For the purposes of masking the regrouping of the forces we carried out the following measures: Before the front deployment of the 47th Guards and 119th Rifle Divisions, taking over sectors from the 14th Guards Division, previously on the defensive, we left combat security from this division.
>
> In carrying out all the preparations and planning of the operation we observed the strictest secrecy. The commanding personnel was informed of the plan of operations only within the limits

> of their missions and functions. Thus, the preliminary decision of the commander of the 26th Tank Corps was known only to the commanders of the brigades, their assistants for the political units and the chiefs of staffs; in the staff of the corps the only ones knowing about the decision were the deputy commander of the corps, the chief of staff, his deputy for the political unit, and the chief of the operations and training section. The mission of the tank corps was not made known to all the personnel until the eve of the attack, on the evening of 18 November.
>
> As a result of all these measures one succeeded in effecting complete strategic surprise. From the statements of "control prisoners" we found out the amount of information the enemy had concerning preparations for the offensive; but the grouping of our forces, the direction of the main blow and the time of the attack were not known to the enemy. In addition to this, the enemy apparently was too late in obtaining information pertaining to the preparation of the offensive, and hence, he did not have the time for regrouping his forces and taking countermeasures.[18]

While regrouping actions allowed the concealment of additional forces for offensives at Stalingrad and repelling German offensives at Kursk, regroupings that transferred forces to new directions or sectors dramatically affected Soviet operations from the middle of 1943 to the end of the war. The regrouping of the 3d Guards Tank Army (GTA) in the battles for the Dnieper River in October 1943 is a second-period example that foreshadows the operational dexterity and manipulation of forces by the Red Army battlefield magicians.

Toward the end of September 1943, forces of the Voronezh Front (redesignated the 1st Ukrainian Front on 20 October 1943) seized a number of bridgeheads across the Dnieper River. The Front initially achieved a bridgehead in the area of the Great Bukrin Bend south of Kiev (see map 1). Twice in October, unsuccessful attempts by 1st Ukrainian Front forces—40th Army and 3d GTA—to generate



Map 1. The 3d Guards Tank Army regrouping, October 1943

a successful offensive from the bridgehead toward the old Russian capital, Kiev, frustrated the Soviet leadership.

In late September and early October, troops of the 38th Army, 1st Ukrainian Front, operating north of Kiev, secured a bridgehead in the area of Lyutezh. This second major bridgehead offered the opportunity to concentrate a major force for a different offensive approach to Kiev. On 24 October, the *Stavka* ordered the Front forces, to include the 3d GTA, to regroup so they could conduct an offensive from the Lyutezh bridgehead.

By 1830 on 25 October, the Front commander assigned the 3d GTA the three-stage mission of withdrawing from the Bukrin bridgehead, marching north, and occupying jump-off positions for an offensive north of Kiev. While the tank army was only 50 percent of its authorized strength, it had a significant number of combat vehicles and equipment to move. Among its major combat vehicles, the 3d GTA had over 300 tanks and self-propelled assault guns, hundreds of guns and mortars, and armored personnel and wheeled vehicles. The routes of march were 200 kilometers along the front with crossings over the Desna and Dnieper Rivers.

The 3d GTA used deception to conceal its withdrawal from the bridgehead. Inoperable and destroyed tanks, along with dummy tanks and self-propelled assault guns, were left in vacated positions. Army and corps command posts continued routine radio transmissions.

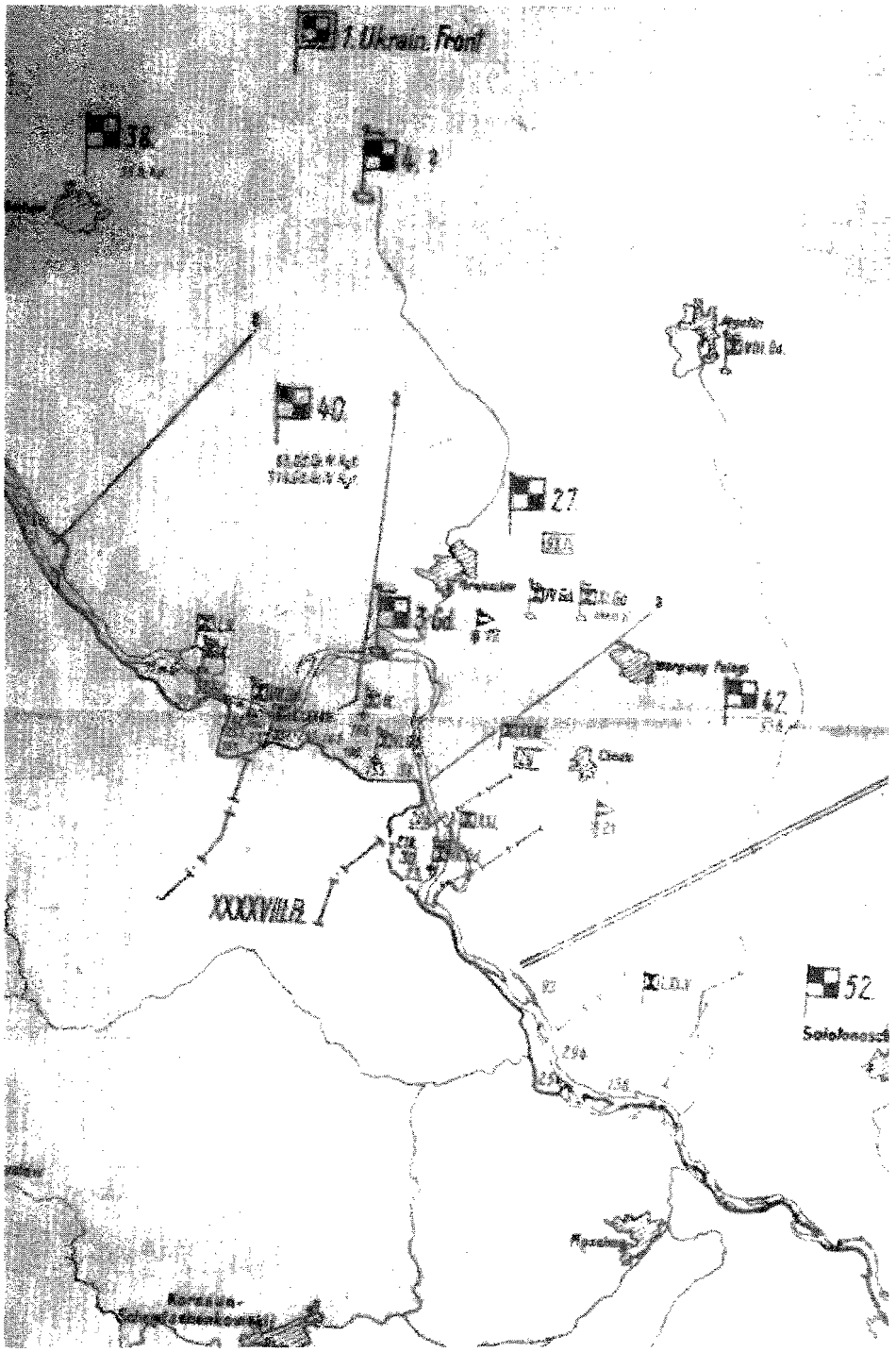
The 3d GTA cleared the bridgehead by 28 October; moved to assembly areas north of Kiev by 30 and 31 October, a day or two behind the planned movement scheme depicted on map 1; and quickly restored itself to about 70 percent of its authorized strength.

On 30 October, the Front commander assembled the army, corps, and brigade commanders for a short meeting and announced:

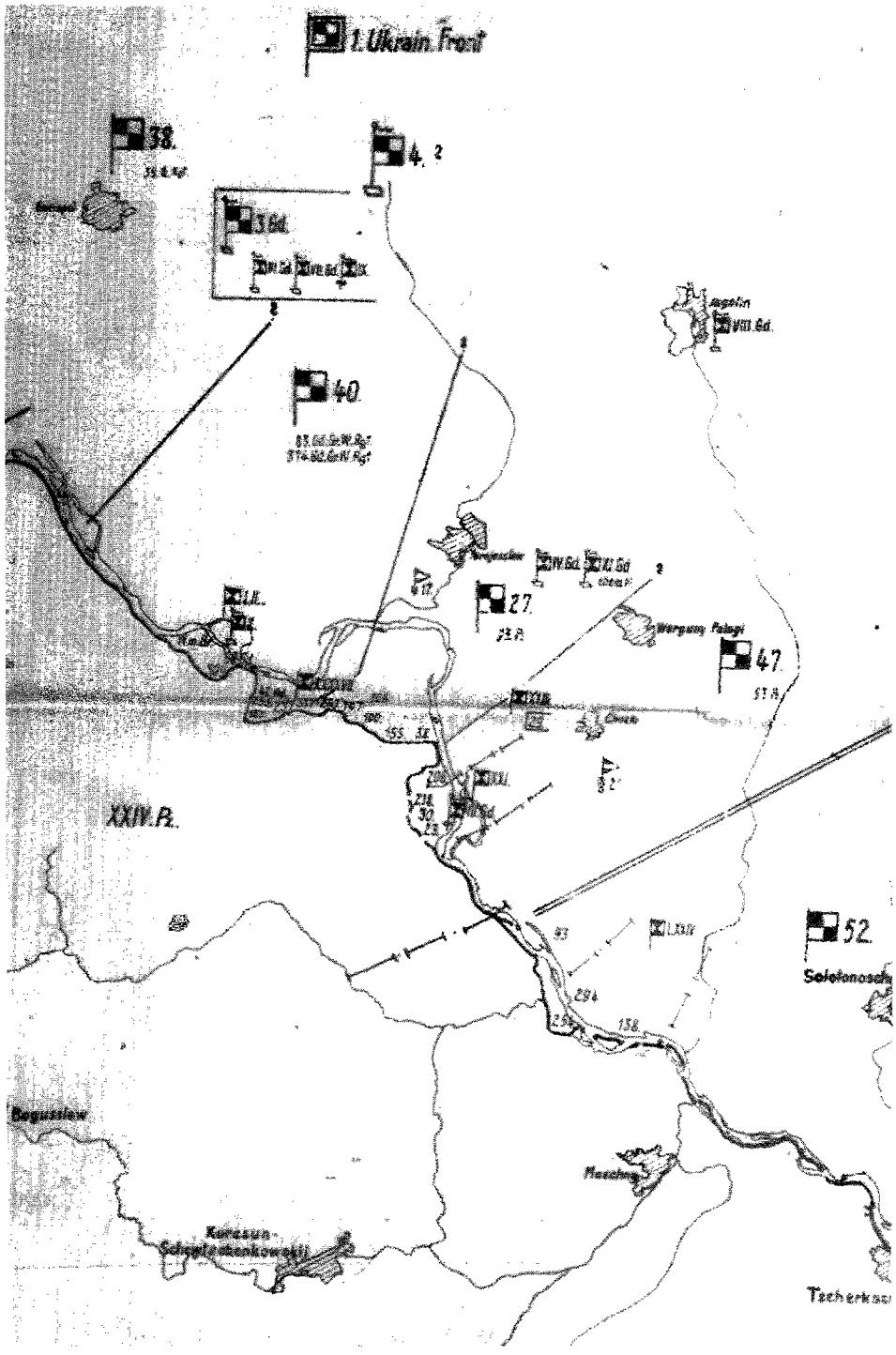
> In the morning the day after tomorrow an offensive in the Bukrin bridgehead will begin with forces of the 27th and 40th armies, as far as the enemy believes, your 3d [Guards] Tank Army. According to our information the enemy does not know that you tankers are already here. And when the enemy throws all of his reserves against the troops attacking in Bukrin, we will make the main strike here north of Kiev. . . .[19]

The German Eighth Army intelligence situation maps for 30 October located the 3d GTA in the Bukrin bridgehead (see map 2).[20] On the 31 October to 6 November situation maps, the 3d GTA was depicted outside the Bukrin Bend on the east side of the Dnieper River southwest of Borispol.[21] The German Fourth Panzer Army situation map for 3 November showed the 3d GTA on the east side of the Dnieper opposite the Lyutezh bridgehead, but German intelligence was four days behind in accurately tracking the 3d GTA (see map 3).[22] The 1st Ukrainian Front commander could almost count on the German commanders not knowing that the 3d GTA was in the Lyutezh bridgehead. The 3d GTA's attack was a complete surprise to the defending German forces, and they were quickly overwhelmed.

In his memoirs, *Lost Victories*, Field Marshal Erich von Manstein, commander of Army Group South, where the Bukrin and Lyutezh bridgeheads were located, describes the battles for the Dnieper River. His account on the holding battles in October 1943 against the Bukrin bridgehead notes, "By the end of the month it had more than five armies (one of which was entirely armoured) in there. . . ."[23] After some description of the fighting farther south, he describes the



Map 2. Eighth Army location of 3d Guards Tank Army, 30 October 1943



Map 3. Eighth Army location of 3d Guards Tank Army, 31 October—6 November 1943

Lyutezh bridgehead fight: "At the beginning of November the enemy again attacked the northern wing of the Army Group, Fourth Panzer Army's Dnieper front, with strong forces. . . . It soon becomes evident that the formations of the Fourth Panzer Army would be unable to hold the Dnieper against the far stronger Russians. . . ."[24] Manstein leaves the impression that the Red Army maintained strong forces all along the Dnieper, particularly in the bridgehead areas. And, for whatever reason, he fails to identify or acknowledge the 1st Ukrainian Front's major regrouping of the 3d GTA and other forces that made the breakout from the Lyutezh bridgehead possible.

The Soviets were still learning about deception during the second period of the war. As the scope and scale of deception efforts increased, the Red Army experienced inconsistent results because not all branches of service, particularly the engineers, participated in the planning and execution of deception operations. Also, poor radio security repeatedly compromised deception efforts.

Nonetheless, through the use of reconnaissance-in-force operations, the Red Army began to understand how a suggestion could be planted in the Germans' minds. When the Soviets coordinated all their deception measures, the battlefield became a stage for producing illusions for the Germans, who were closely monitoring all Soviet actions.

The most important measures for operational-level deception were to be included in the general Front or army operations plan. Under the guidance of the Front or army chief of staff, representatives from all branches of troops and services developed the deception plan. Based on the commander's decisions for his impending operation and his

consideration of neighboring unit actions, the operational deception plan indicated the general intention of deception measures, forces and resources for their implementation, and execution times. In addition, the deception plan specifically indicated who would control the operation, when it would take place, and how it would be executed.[25] This plan was essential to the commander's decision-making process and the operations plan.

For example, in the smoke support portion of the deception plan for an assault crossing on the Dnieper in October 1943, smoke generation for the 65th Army was carefully planned and successfully executed simultaneously in thirteen sectors across thirty kilometers of the army front.[26] The plan specified the purpose and location of the smoke screens, the expenditures of smoke resources, their readiness, and those responsible for executing the smoke operation. These smoke screens were used to blind German observation points, cover crossing sectors, and act as feigned points of attack. Previous Red Army combat experience in crossing water obstacles revealed the necessity for creating smoke screens at dummy crossing sites. But in order to successfully attract German attention, it was also necessary to increase troop activity and antiaircraft artillery fire at the dummy crossings. In the 65th Army's operation, a German rifle division attacked in the false smoke screen areas.

Total smoke support for the 65th Army included using 5,500 smoke pots, 2,000 smoke hand grenades, 2 tons of smoke-producing compound, and improvised smoke means (coniferous branches, damp brushwood, hay, and straw).[27] The chiefs of chemical services for the rifle corps assumed responsibility for the execution of the smoke plan. The corps commanders indicated the placement of the smoke screens

and their ignition times. As noted by General Pavel Ivanovich Batov, commander of the 65th Army, "This experience became a fine base for successfully overcoming many subsequent rivers, especially those like the Narev, Vistula and Oder."[28]

An important aspect in the operational deception plan was deception maneuver—a set of actual and false combat actions conducted by specified Front and army forces and resources intended to compel German commanders to transfer their basic forces to an advantageous position for Red Army forces.[29] Deception maneuver had to be simple, executed quickly, and, most important, a surprise to the enemy. Regrouping and maneuvering combat power often became the crux of the deception plan.

The deception plan outlined each step of the operation, including measures for the preparation period. Usually, the plan consisted of one copy of the plan in table form and a special map marked with Front force deception maneuver for all stages of the operation.[30] Interestingly, Soviet officers outlined their plans and decisions by drawing directly on their maps with colored pencils. Commanders, demonstrating their involvement and responsibility for the plan, marked "approved" in the upper margin of the map and signed their names.

In planning the deception activities that were to be seen by or hidden from German reconnaissance, the Soviets understood well what actions German intelligence had to notice and that these actions had to be executed convincingly and smoothly if the false operations were to be believed by the Germans. Correspondingly, in conjunction with deception maneuver, the Soviets practiced what today is called

operations security, which they applied in preparing the actual operation. To enhance surprise, a cloak of deception had to hide key indicators of the operation.

Red Army operational-level deception during the second period of World War II improved from issuing isolated instructions and measures to developing serious deception plans and creating ad hoc planning staffs. Even though the Red Army conducted some unsuccessful deception operations, it was learning and learning well. Like the magician on stage, Soviet commanders and their units on the battlefield had to be well practiced in the smallest details of the illusion.

By the summer of 1944, in the third period of the war, the Red Army had become more sophisticated in its application of deception. Simultaneous deception actions of several Fronts dramatically increased the scope and employment of coordinated deception measures at the operational level. Soviet lessons learned continued to reinforce the idea that careful preparation and active execution strictly and centrally controlled by Front and army staffs produced the best results. Necessary resource allocations generally involved 10 percent of the equipment and weaponry for each type of mock-up and for the "animation" of assembly areas with dummy equipment.[31] The combination of rigorous planning and the allocation of indispensable combat power were essential to successful deception operations. From the Soviets' war experience, the following rule of thumb for forces necessary for deception at the tactical level was formulated: for displaying a rifle or tank division, the Soviets required 1 rifle or tank company, 100 mock-up tanks and self-propelled assault guns, 1 battery and 20 to 30 mock-up guns, 10 vehicles, 60 to 80 mock-up vehicles, and 10 to 12 mock-up field kitchens.[32]

At the operational level, to display corps- and army-level units and the resources for tactical units and operational-level support, corps and army radio stations and communication centers had to transmit radio signals that were well known to the enemy.[33] Imitating sounds with loudspeakers also enhanced Soviet efforts. Coordination between the engineers and the signal units was very important.

A revealing example of Soviet operational-level deception in the third period of the war occurred in the Lvov-Sandomierz operation in July 1944. This one Front operation offers a useful look at the Soviets' depth of planning, allocation of resources, and measures practiced in conducting deception during the battle.

The Soviets' main objective in the summer of 1944 was to destroy the German groupings in the Belorussian and Northern Ukrainian areas. Major Red Army offensives on the Eastern Front would also preclude significant transfers of German forces to the Western Front to counter the Allied Normandy invasion.

During April and May, the Eastern Front was relatively quiet as it had been during the previous muddy, thawing seasons. The disposition of opposing forces created the "Belorussian balcony," which was occupied by the German Army Group Center, with Army Group Northern Ukraine in the south. In concerned anticipation, German intelligence began estimating the contours of possible Soviet summer offensives. While the German Armed Forces High Command (*Oberkommando der Wehrmacht* [*OKW*]) and the Army High Command (*Oberkommando des Heeres* [*OKH*]) disagreed on the Red Army's objectives (the Balkans versus the Baltic), they were convinced that the Soviets' main effort would be

against Army Group Northern Ukraine.[34] By early May, the Germans expected a large offensive in the direction of Lvov-Lublin, with a possible swing to the north to cut off the Belorussian balcony. This estimate reflected how the Germans would have attacked the problem themselves.[35]

In preparing for the main effort, the Belorussian operation, the Soviet High Command wanted to create a posture that suggested to the Germans that the Red Army's main attacks would indeed be launched in the south as well as in the Baltic areas in the north. To implement these major diversions, the Red Army's strategic deception plan tasked the 3d Ukrainian and 3d Baltic Fronts to deceive the enemy by creating large concentrations of troops, tanks, artillery, antiaircraft, and other units. These efforts, particularly in the south, attracted German air reconnaissance. Invaluable to the strategic deception was the decision to leave a large concentration of three tank armies in the 1st Ukrainian Front sector as "a kind of bluff."[36] Correspondingly, commanders of the 1st Baltic and the 1st, 2d, and Belorussian Fronts took the strictest measures to protect the actual preparations of the Belorussian operation.

Late in May, the Germans began to detect some activity opposite Army Group Center in Belorussia; however, these Red Army activities did not meet German expectations. Earl F. Ziemke, a military historian, concluded from his review of *OKH,* Army Group Center, and Ninth Army operations and intelligence records, "To a Soviet deception, the German command added an almost hypnotic self-induced delusion: the main offensive would come against Army Group Northern Ukraine because that was where they were ready to meet it."[37] Strategically, hints, German predispositions, and

expectations were coming together to conceal the Soviets' main summer offensive.

Unfortunately for Marshal Ivan S. Konev, the 1st Ukrainian Front commander, the strategic deception focused German attention and expectations on his sector. The Soviet High Command directed the 1st Ukrainian Front to liberate the western regions of the Ukraine and southeastern Poland. Because of increased scrutiny and preparations by German forces in the Front's area of operation, an operational deception effort was critical to Konev's successful accomplishment of his assigned objectives.

In anticipation of the impending Red Army offensive, the German Army Group Northern Ukraine command created a well-prepared and in-depth defense in the Lvov sector. As noted in a postwar study:

> The main battle position was mined in depth up to 15 miles to the rear. Prior to the major offensive the area east of Lvov during the summer of 1944, the sector where the main attack thrust was expected, was mined with 160,000 antipersonnel and 200,000 antitank mines within the zone defense. This was the first time that the Germans applied zone defense tactics of this type described in this study.[38]

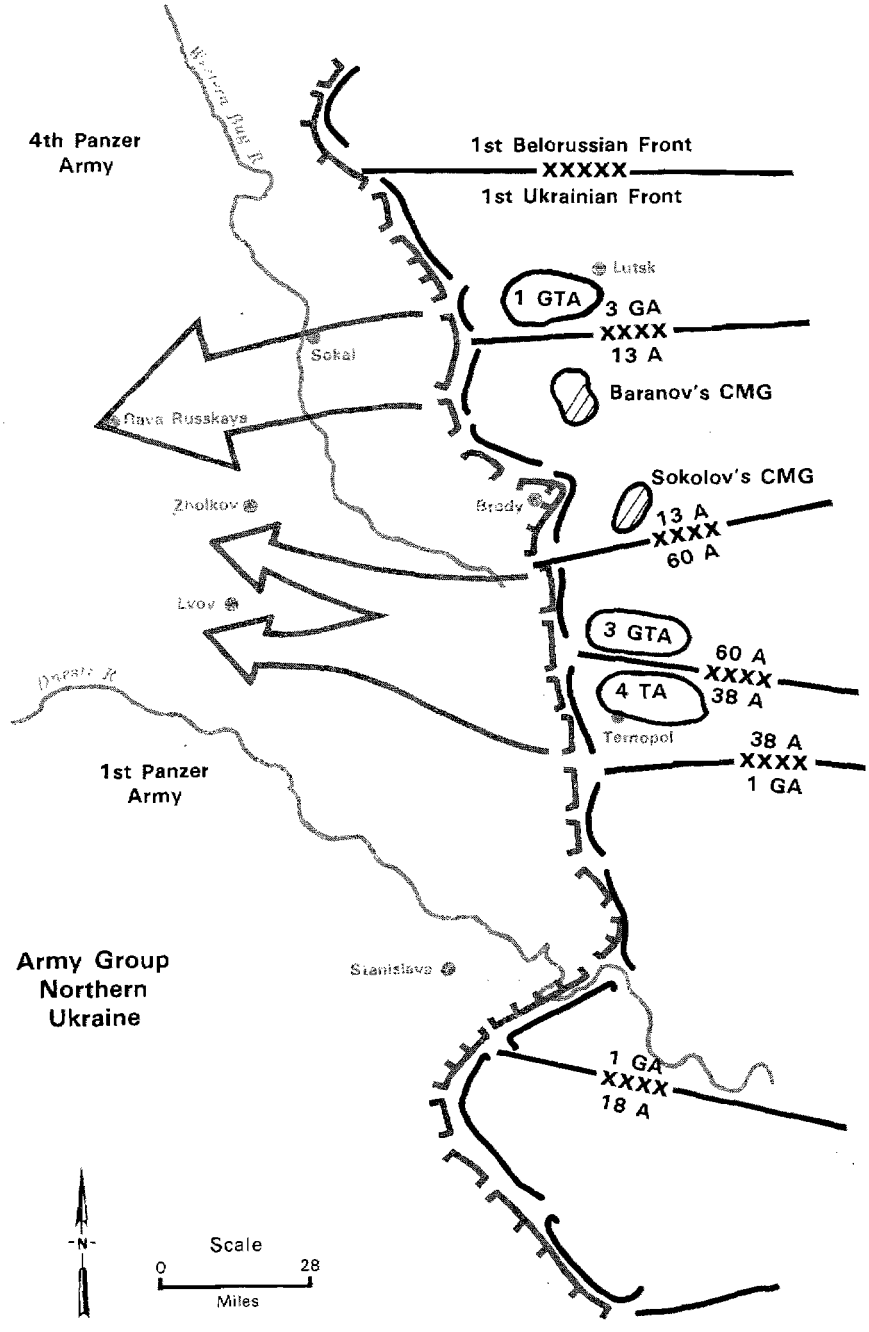
In addition to the mines, the Germans prepared successive trench lines. Moreover, the sector that had been the sight of major fighting during World War I and early fighting in 1941 was swampy terrain that severely channelized maneuver.

Faced with these difficulties, Konev and his staff devised an aggressive plan to establish two powerful striking forces that would penetrate the German defense from two separate directions. The first strike group, consisting of two rifle and two tank armies, would launch its attack from the Ternopol

area in the general direction of Lvov. Simultaneously, sixty to seventy kilometers to the north, a second group, consisting of one tank and two rifle armies and a cavalry mechanized group (CMG), would attack from the area west of Lutsk in the direction of Sokal and Rava Russkaya (see map 4). After some serious disagreements with the General Staff and Stalin, the supreme high commander (who favored attack on a single main axis), Konev's plan was accepted. However, Konev remembered what Stalin had said: "You are really very stubborn. Fine, pursue your plan and carry it out on your responsibility."[39] Konev heeded Stalin's warning and realized the added pressure he had for succeeding in his operation.

Konev's most important preliminary task was to regroup his forces significantly, since the main Front forces were on the left flank too far south. Three tank armies with nearly 1,300 tanks and self-propelled assault guns, 1,900 guns and mortars, and more than 700 vehicles, plus a rifle army and other corps, divisions, and reinforcing arms had to be shifted north to the center and right flank.

Konev's actions illustrated the scope and scale that Red Army operational-level deception routinely encompassed by 1944. His deception maneuver resulted from an ambitious plan to hide the preparations of main strike groups on the right flank and center of the Front while demonstrating armored concentrations on the left flank. In magician's jargon, Konev's Front was to perform a misdirection: it would direct the Germans' attention, or even their thought process, away from the main efforts. The intended result of the misdirection was misperception. Illusionists have long known that, if a person sees something that was not there before, it is human nature for that person to automatically look at it.



Map 4. Plan and situation, 1st Ukrainian Front, 12 July 1944

Consequently, Konev's Front appeared to have a major strike group on its left flank in the direction of Stanislava rather than in the direction of Lvov and Rava Russkaya. Opposite Stanislava, the 1st Ukrainian Front simulated the concentration of a tank army and a tank corps behind the 1st Guards Army (GA) and a tank army behind the 18th Army.

Simultaneously, behind a cloak of stringently enforced security measures, other forces regrouped and moved to the Ternopol and Lutsk areas. In a conditioned response learned from previous experiences, such as those of the 3d GTA at the Dnieper River, the shifting forces regrouped for the offensive, adhering to strict radio silence and a definite schedule of using other communications means. Movements were predominately conducted at night, which was the most effective cloak in the days before infrared and thermal detection warfare.

As understood by General A. A. Grechko, commander, 1st GA, 1st Ukranian Front, and later the minister of defense, the German command had correctly surmised the direction of the Front's intended attack. The objective of the deception was to confuse the Germans about the probable directions of the Front attacks, to conceal the time of the offensive, and to hide the forces in the main strike groups.[40]

General Grechko's part of the deception plan was to portray false concentrations of a tank army and a tank corps, which he decided to place in the Chertov and Kopachynites areas respectively. Then, his staff planned to construct a false unloading area for the fictitious tank army from 3 to 10 July, to create the appearance of the movement of a tank column from the unloading area to the assembly area, and to simulate

the placement of a tank army and corps into final jumping-off positions from 17 to 20 July.[41]

To implement these deception measures, 1st GA allocated a significant force that included 4 combat engineer battalions, 2 rifle regiments, 2 artillery battalions, 1 antiaircraft company, 150 disassembled T-34 tank mock-ups, 2 powerful loudspeaker units, 3 radio battalion stations, and 8 vehicles.[42] The combat engineers set up false materiel, the rifle and artillery units provided movement in the simulated troop concentrations and false positions, and the tanks and tractors made tracks in the areas where mock-ups were set up and made motor noises near the German front lines. In isolated cases, the tanks fired on the Germans. Antiaircraft weapons covered the unloading points and assembly areas. False radio traffic to simulate the unloading and movement forward of the units was conducted according to a special program devised by the Front.

The personnel from the deception platoons, detached from the Front's deception company (see table 1), provided the technical expertise for the illusions, were used as technical instructors for work with the collapsible tank mock-ups, and accompanied the units with mock-ups. Teams of camouflage specialists dressed as tankers provided a technically qualified cadre to advise and assist other troops.

At this point in the war, the Soviets had formed operational groups composed of representatives of the various branches of troops and services in the armies to organize and control the activities and resources dedicated to the deception effort. General Grechko's operational group was headed by an engineer colonel who directed 1st GA's deception planning and execution. Interestingly, a major from the Front

Table 1. The 1st Guards Army Deception Plan Extract

Plan of Operational Camouflage Measures in Zone of Operations of Troops of 1st Guards Army in Lvov-Sandomierz Operation (4–20 July 1944)

Date	Simulation in regions of unloading: Vygnanka station, Vorvulintsa station	Date	Simulation in regions of concentration: forest east of Byaly Potok; forest southeast of Yagel'nitsy; forest east of Slobudka Koshylovetska, Repushintsa, Kolyanka, Korolyuvka, Rashkov	Date	Simulation in regions of initial positions on boundaries: Slobudka Dzhuryn'ska, Polovtse; Voronov, Gavrilyak
1	2	3	4	5	6
7–10 Jul	1. Unloading of arriving echelons with tank mock-ups in army rear, transfer of mock-ups to simulation regions of unloading for demonstration of false disposition of tank units (subunits of 22d Detached Camouflage Company, infantry platoon).	7–10 Jul	1. Assembly and setup of mock-ups of tanks, fuel trucks, and vehicles; equipping of fuel and lubricant base (2 in each region).	19 Jul	1. Reconnaissance of forward edge in zone of divisions of 30th Rifle Corps and 18th Guards Rifle Corps (1 group from division).
	2. Sound simulation of unloading of tanks using loudspeaker units.		2. Staking out of march routes from unloading station to regions of concentration (5 groups each of 5 tankers and 15 combat engineers).		2. Reconnaissance of initial positions (3 groups of 7 to 8 men each).
	3. Covering of regions of unloading with smoke.	12–15 Jul	3. Simulation of movement of tanks into region of concentration; show of "lagging" tanks on march route.		3. Building of march routes from region of concentration to initial positions.
	4. Antiaircraft artillery covering of unloading regions (2 batteries of 47th Rifle Corps).	12 Jul 0800–1900 12–15 Jul	4. Sound simulation of tank movement with loudspeaker units.		4. Show of "lagging" tank mock-ups on march routes.
	5. "Animation" of unloading regions:		5. Commander's reconnaissance of populated areas.		5. Placement of tank mock-ups in initial positions.
			6. Simulation of repair of materiel.		6. Preparation of smoke screen on a 6- to 8-km front.
				17–19 Jul	7. Demonstration of increased transport of ammunition into regions of

a. Daily shifting of mock-ups to simulate arrival and departure of tanks. b. Conducting intense fire with tracer bullets from small arms on appearance of enemy aircraft. c. Daily shifting of tanks and tractors (platoon of T-34 tanks, 2 tractors from rear staff of 1st Guards Army).	15 Jul 0600–2000	7. Demonstration of increased vehicle movement on basic march routes in daytime. 8. Demonstration of concentration of artillery and its advance into position regions in the 30th Rifle Corps sector. 9. Conduct of at least 2 searches for taking prisoners daily in the zone of each division (according to orders on reconnaissance of corps' reconnaissance departments). 10. Conduct of reconnaissance in force in regions of Stadnitsa, Trybukhovtse, Khatymnyva, Gubina, Luka, Bogordychina, Intela. 11. Railroad operations: a. Construction of network of graded roads of light type – Chertkov, Tluszcz; Byaly Potok, Rydodyby, Slobudka Dzhuryn'ska; Yagel'nitsa, Polovtse; Marylyuvka, Slobudka Koshylovetska; Koshilovtse. b. Preparation of light bridges and paving on creeks and rivers that will be crossed by graded roads. c. Equipping of roads with markers and road signs.	18–19 Jul 0800–1900	combat disposition of infantry and to artillery firing positions. 8. Adjusting fire of guns according to plans of commanders of artillery corps.
	13–20 Jul			
	10–14 Jul			

Forces and Equipment

Engineer battalion of the 6th Combat Engineer Brigade
Two combat engineer battalions of the 47th Rifle Corps
Road construction battalion of army road department
Two platoons of the 22d Detached Camouflage Company from the Front staff
Two chemical protection companies of the 47th Rifle Corps
Two antiaircraft batteries of the 25th Antiaircraft Artillery Division

Battalion radio stations 3
Vehicles 40
Tractors 8
Fuel and lubricants . . . . . as per request
Smoke cannisters 20,000
T-34 tanks 6
Rifle cartridges (tracer) 40,000
Powerful loudspeakers 2

Source: Matsulenko, OMV, 189–93.

staff was also included in the 1st GA's and 18th Army's operational groups to provide advice on the operation and to ensure close conformance with the Front's plan.[43] The allocation of this Front staff officer indicated the Red Army's emphasis on planning and coordinating every detail in executing the deception.

An officer was appointed to each simulated assembly area and point of deception activity where he was responsible for conducting specific deception measures. The operational group coordinated the actions of all the various branches of troops and in all the regions where simulations were being conducted. Communications were maintained only via messengers and liaison officers. Table 1 shows the 1st GA's scheduled events from 4 to 20 July that were to be monitored by the operational group.[44]

The dummy equipment, which was assembled by 16 July, included 154 prefabricated tanks, 299 mock-up tanks, and 568 mock-up guns hammered together from improvised materials, along with 68 other dummy vehicles. Thirty field kitchens and six fuel resupply points were also laid out.[45]

Trains carrying mock-up tanks arrived at the designated unloading points and were driven onto a siding or a roadway excavation far from the station. These unloading points were carefully guarded. Unloading the trains, which was accompanied by the noise of tractors, tanks, or loudspeakers, was completed in one and one-half hours. When German aircraft appeared in the skies, the chemical protection companies covered the area with smoke screens. Simultaneously, simulations of infantry and motorized infantry motor columns were created near the assembly areas. At night, the vehicles moved with flashing headlights, and in the

daytime, they moved with crowns of trees fastened to their sides to create great dust clouds.[46]

In addition to the normal 25-kilometer exclusion zone for the local populace behind the front line, the Soviets took extra measures to deceive German agents or reconnaissance patrols. Groups of Red Army officers in tankers uniforms simulated the work of billeting party members by systematically visiting populated areas in the troops' path.

The army intelligence staff planned and conducted reconnaissance in force at thirteen points to simulate the preparation of breaches in the area where German defensive positions were located. Since the September 1941 *Stavka* directive, the Soviets had been perfecting reconnaissance-in-force operations in concert with deception and operations security practices. Additionally, army and corps combat engineers made gaps in the forward minefields.

German reconnaissance efforts were drawn to the left flank. Soviet forces at this point in the war knew very well the signs by which German intelligence "discovered" preparations for operations. The Germans watched for major indicators, such as regrouping activities, movement in assembly areas, evacuation of patients and materiel to the rear, reinforcing aviation, increased reconnaissance and intelligence collection, and many other signs of increased activity.[47] Thus, since the Soviets had anticipated German actions, they manipulated their forces accordingly.

As a result of the deception measures, the Soviets claimed that sixty-eight flights of German reconnaissance aircraft flew over the false assembly areas. The number of German aerial reconnaissance assets by 1944 was inadequate for covering the Eastern Front.[48] At a given time, their air reconnaissance

could cover only relatively small sectors of suspected importance, and any diversion of these limited assets caused a loss in observation and important intelligence.

The Germans repeatedly dispatched scouts and dropped agents at night into the 1st GA's zone of operation. Nonetheless, the Soviets estimated that German artillery expended some 2,900 shells against bogus targets. Prior to 16 July, the Germans had not changed their forces' groupings opposite the 1st GA sector, although by 9 July, a considerable portion of the forces from the lst Ukrainian Front forces had moved laterally from the left to the center and right flanks.[49]

From 4 through 20 July, the 18th Army contributed to operational deception by simulating the concentration of a tank army in its rear area in the vicinity of Ostrowiec, Zabolotov, and Gankovtsy. Under the army's chief of staff and operational group of eight staff officers, headed by the deputy chief of operations, the 18th Army conducted its deception operations similar to the 1st GA's.

The 18th Army timed its daytime activities for when German reconnaissance aircraft flew over in the mornings. At night, a column of specially designated vehicles with headlights on moved toward the assembly areas. The following describes a ploy that deceived German night aerial reconnaissance:

> To intensify the light effect, two teams of 15 men each were allocated, equipped with flashlights. The soldiers, dispersed at 30–50 meter intervals, moved along the route to assembly areas, turning on the flashlights from time to time. With the appearance of a German aircraft, all lights were lit. After the aircraft passed, the team boarded its vehicle and moved forward 5–10 kilometers, where it continued its work.[50]

In addition, collapsible tank mock-ups were set up on the march routes at night so the Germans could detect the movement of combat vehicles in case they used illumination flares. For sound effects, the Soviets used loudspeaker systems or moved self-propelled guns.

During deception preparations, Soviet troop units maintained radio silence, and any broadcasting of misinformation was conducted cautiously. Radio stations established communications for the first time on 8 July and conducted a daily communications check from 9 July through 11 July; they did not broadcast. Only after 13 July, following the beginning of the attack on the Rava Russkaya sector, did they begin to transmit.

Even though the 1st Ukrainian Front offensive began on 13–14 July, the 18th Army's deception efforts continued. On 18 July, after the troops had been concentrated in assembly areas and moved into the jump-off positions, the corps radio stations sent common-coded texts with typical Soviet five-digit groups, compiled at random by the officer operators. Cipher clerks provided the beginning of the text address and the end registration number in accordance with the Red Army's existing code. The number of groups in each text was always different. The wireless sets were operated in normal sequence: changes in call signs, communications checks, and password rotations were conducted every twenty-four hours, and the frequency was changed twice during the radio demonstrations.[51]

At the same time that operational deception was being conducted in the 18th Army rear area, an offensive with a limited objective was undertaken on 13 July that coincided with the attack in the Rava Russkaya sector. The limited

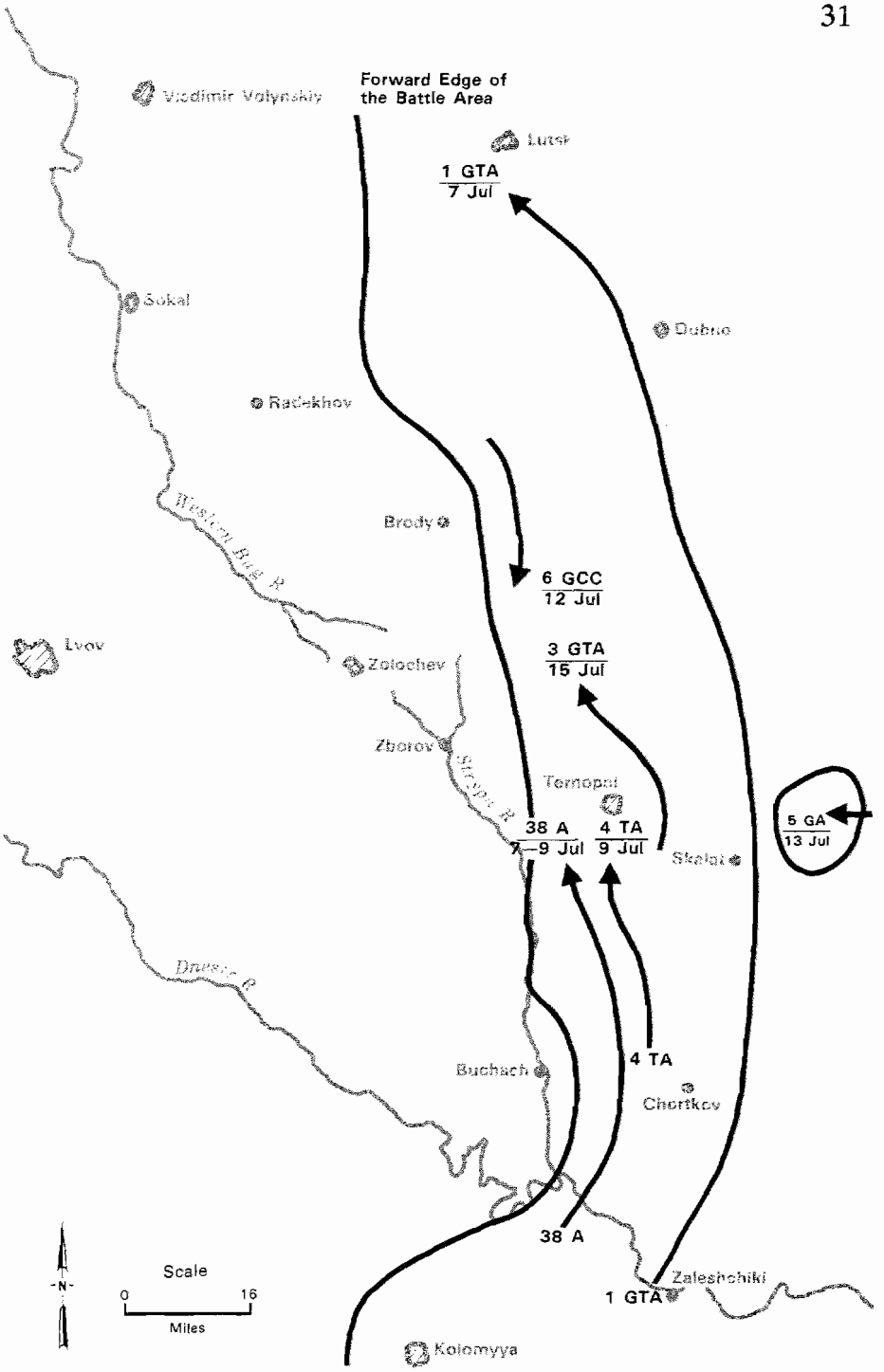
tactical objective and timing attempted to deceive the Germans as to the true intent and scale of the Front's operational plan. The Soviets wanted the Germans to hesitate. The 11th Rifle Corps, 18th Army, 18th Guards Rifle Corps, and 1st GA attacked in the direction of Stanislava.[52]

While the 1st GA and 18th Army produced false troop assembly areas and tank concentrations, the regrouped forces moved to take their starting attack positions. In early July, the Front had a significant amount of lateral motion from south to north (see map 5).

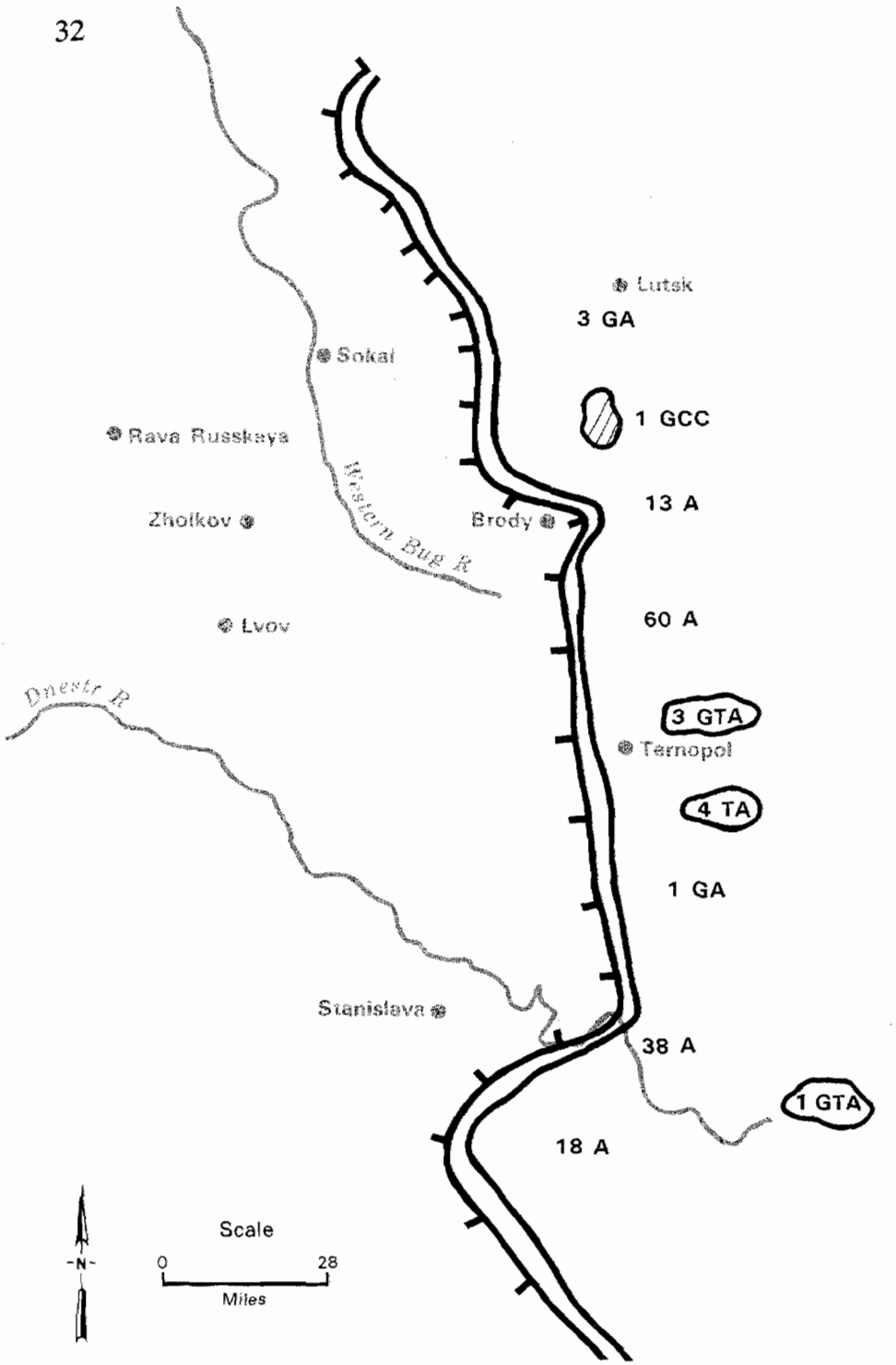
After the preparation phase, the combatants did not believe they had been very effective in deception. In his memoirs, Marshal Konev wrote that everything we did "with regret was not fully successful in deceiving the enemy, in spite of the deception measures taken. However, the regrouping of the 1st Guards Tank Army in the area of Lutsk and 4th Tank Army in the area of Ternopol all remained hidden, which was very important for the operation."[53] However, Konev was more successful than he thought.

The *OKH* situation maps showed the German's perception of the situation (see map 6). While German intelligence personnel did not fall for the false assembly areas behind the 1st GA and 18th Army, they failed to detect the regrouping of some army-size units from the left flank. Major General F. W. von Mellenthin, chief of staff for the XXXXVIII Panzer Corps that sat astride the Lvov sector, noted, "Wireless intercept and interrogation of prisoners produced most contradictory reports. . . . Only second rate Russian formations were identified in the front line. . . ."[54]

The XXXXVIII Panzer Corps did not detect the 38th Army's shift north opposite its sector in front of Lvov as the



Map 5. Regrouping of 1st Ukrainian Front



Map 6. German estimate of 1st Ukrainian Front armies

1st Ukrainian Front's first echelon until two days before the attack.[55] The panzer corps had captured 38th Army engineers making preparations for the attack. The 38th Army did not appear on the *OKH* situation map in the vicinity of Ternopol until 17 July, and even then, the map was marked with a question mark.[56]

Concerning the armored forces of the Front mobile groups for attacking into the operational depth of the German defense, the *OKH* situation maps for 12 and 13 July showed the correct location for the tank and cavalry corps of General Baranov's CMG that would operate in the northern attack sector. Of General Sokolov's CMG that would fight in the center sector opposite Lvov, the Germans located its tank corps but depicted its cavalry corps with a question mark in the wrong location.[57] In the case of both CMGs, there is no indication that the Germans understood at any time during the operation that the combinations of these tank and cavalry corps created CMGs.

On the German situation maps, the 3d GTA and 4th Tank Army were located too far south prior to the operation. The XXXXVIII Panzer Corps intelligence records reflect no forewarning of the tank armies by specific unit designation.[58] However, as a sector of main attack, the panzer corps command watched the developing battle for the commitment of Russian tanks. At 0555, 14 July, after the attack had begun in the Lvov direction, General von Mellenthin remarked to the corps operations officer: "I think it's a main attack. The barrage fire was less than expected. The enemy tanks will probably first appear when the infantry breaks some holes."[59]

At 0900, 15 July, General Hermann Balck, commander of the XXXXVIII Panzer Corps, in a telephone conversation

with the First Panzer Army commander, Colonel General Erhaud Raus, summarized the situation, indicating his belief that a Soviet tank corps was in the fighting.[60] With the initiation of the attack on 14 July, elements of the 3d GTA began to move forward from their assembly areas to attack positions on the east bank of the Seret River by evening. To strengthen the first-echelon rifle army strike for a quick breakthrough of the Germans' tactical defense zone, two brigades—one mechanized and one tank—from the 3d GTA were committed as forward detachments to the battle early on 15 July. General Balck's enemy "tank corps" was actually the forward detachments of the 3d GTA.

During the operation, German intelligence concerning the 4th Tank Army lagged behind in revealing its movement and commitment. The tank army was forced to redirect its line of commitment because a XXXXVIII Panzer Corps counter-attack with two panzer divisions stopped and pushed back the 38th Army's attack in the 4th Tank Army's original area of commitment. The 4th was not correctly located on *OKH* situation maps until 19 July.[61] Swiftly altering its direction and following the 3d GTA through a narrow, four- to six-kilometer-wide gap, the Germans did not recognize the 4th Tank Army until it was operating in their operational rear and threatening Lvov from the south side.

German intelligence did not identify units in the vicinities of the 1st GA's and 18th Army's false tank concentrations. The scale and amount of activity may have been enough to plant enough doubt in the German analysis to hold the two tank armies too far south.

The Germans did not detect the 5th GA that formed the 1st Ukrainian Front reserve, but this was understandable

considering the distance the army trailed behind the front line. However, the 5th GA previously had shifted from Romania where German intelligence tracked it until late July. This reserve army was a key unit in seizing crucial Vistula River crossings later in August.

The regrouping of the 1st GTA was absolute battlefield magic. Its units moved at a distance of 100 kilometers behind the front line to assembly areas 80 to 120 kilometers from the front line during hours of darkness. The Germans completely failed to discover this regrouping and mislocated it in the south on their situation maps.[62] This omission had serious consequences for the German defensive fight in the north.

Evidence from German maps and captured unit records indicates that German commanders did not know enough about the disposition of the Red Army forces opposite the Rava Russkaya sector to correctly assess the situation and adequately conduct their defensive operation.[63] The Fourth Panzer Army and XXXXII Army Corps were totally surprised when the 1st GTA appeared.

From 24 June to 7 July, the 1st GTA moved from the Front's left flank opposite Stanislava to the right flank south of Lutsk, a distance of some 225 kilometers. The tank army consisted of the 11th Guards Tank Corps and 8th Guards Mechanized Corps (GMC), with approximately 346 tanks and self-propelled assault guns. The armored vehicles moved at night along carefully concealed march routes according to a strict time schedule. The routes were used for night marches so that, during the day, everything could be covered and camouflaged. Throughout the march, staff officers continuously moved along the columns to ensure swift movement.[64]

Despite having closed south of Lutsk between 5–7 July, the 1st GTA appeared on the Germans' situation map as late as 10 July in the south opposite of Stanislava.[65]

When the 1st Ukrainian Front offensive began on 13 July, the 1st GTA and the Front commander took no chances in revealing 1st GTA's location to the Germans. During the course of its operation, the 1st GTA continued its deception operations. This stage of the operation provides not only insight into the impact of the Front's operational deception and success with the 1st GTA but also a rare glimpse at how the Soviets conducted deception.

The main objective of deception operations is to force the enemy to use his reserves prematurely and to force him into a sector that is advantageous to friendly forces. Even though little consideration has been given to deception operations beyond the preparation phase, a number of significant deception measures exist that can be taken in subsequent stages of an operation. Some of them are demonstrating a false axis of the main attack; concealing the true composition of the attacking force; demonstrating the presence of an operational reserve and misleading the enemy on its intended use and direction; creating dummy reserves and resources on secondary axes; displaying bogus movement of forces advancing to the flanks and rear of the enemy; creating a false situation on the inner and outer fronts of an encirclement; demonstrating the movement of false columns and forces to increase the scope of the pursuit, as well as convincing the enemy that his basic forces have been bypassed; and convincing the enemy that he has made a mistake in assessing the situation.[66]

A close look at 1st GTA's commitment reveals some of these deception measures used after the preparatory phase. Through a series of misdirections, the 1st GTA adroitly maneuvered itself beyond the Germans' tactical defense and then well into their operational depths. Through this artful illusion, the defending Germans faced the harsh reality of battle.

In the early morning hours of 13 July, specially detailed detachments of the forward rifle units of the 3d GA and 13th Army on the Rava Russkaya sector conducted a reconnaissance in force. The only resistance they met was from the German 291st Infantry Division, which was to have been withdrawn on 14 July. Apparently, the rest of the XXXXII Army Corps had been withdrawn to a second line of defense in anticipation of a preattack artillery preparation. Within a few hours, the reconnaissance-in-force units reached a depth of seven to eight kilometers, prompting the Red Army command to commit the additional forces of the 3d GA and 13th Army, which then advanced to a depth of twelve to fifteen kilometers.

With Red Army dispositions showing no operational depth, the German command committed the 16th and 17th Panzer Divisions to the heavy fighting early. The 16th was committed opposite the 3d GA in the vicinity of Ozeptsy, and the 17th reinforced the 291st Infantry Division defensive positions at Gorokhov.

On the night of 14–15 July, the 1st Guards Tank Brigade (GTB), 8th GMC, as the forward detachment of the 1st GTA, joined the battle and was committed in the direction of Porytsk.[67] Yet this was not the direction the 1st GTA followed.

While German intelligence sources did not identify the forward detachment of the 1st GTA immediately, they located and overestimated the size of the commitment. The *OKH* situation maps showed 100 tanks for a unit normally half that strength.[68] While this erroneous estimate remained on the *OKH* situation map until 16 July, the XXXXII Army Corps took prisoners in the fighting on the 15th. By 2000, 15 July, the chief of staff of XXXXII Army Corps reported to Fourth Panzer Army "that the enemy committed elements of the 8th GMC against the front of the corps."[69] At that time, the German corps expected the 8th GMC to commit more elements, estimating its strength at ninety-two tanks. The panzer army's daily war journal indicated that the presence of the 8th GMC raised the potential for the Soviets to commit a tank army: "We must expect the rapid commitment of enemy operational reserves. Their movement to commitment has not been detected yet, however."[70]

On 15 July, the 3d GA and 13th Army committed their second-echelon corps. The German Fourth Panzer Army believed that the sector on 15 July "is now under contro1."[71] But, in the next twenty-four to thirty-six hours of fighting, the Soviets created a ten- to twelve-kilometer gap south of Gorokhov in the 13th Army sector, well south of the 1st GTB's commitment in the 3d GA fight.

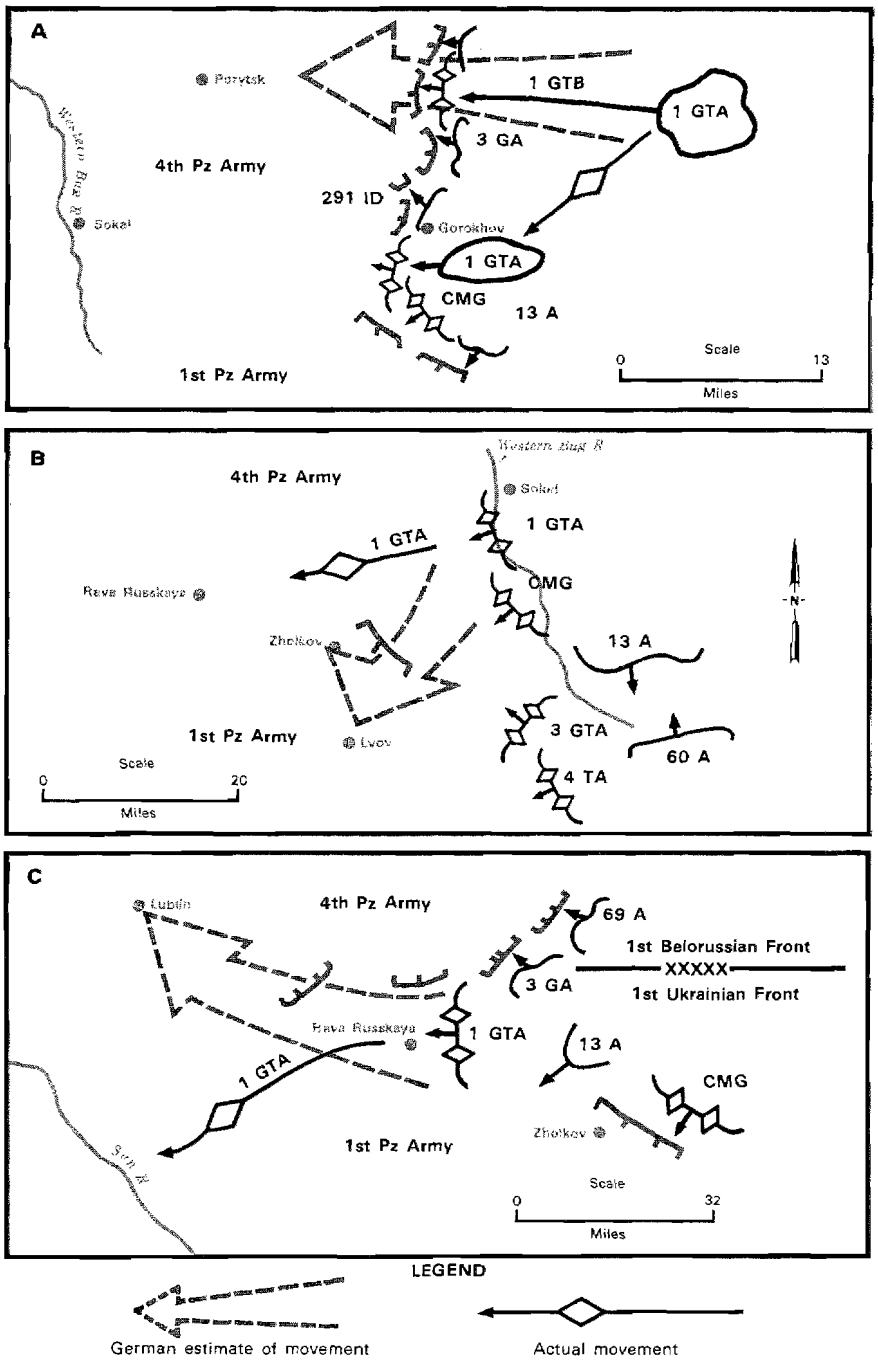
General V. K. Baranov's CMG, consisting of the 1st Guards Cavalry Corps and 25th Tank Corps (TC), began moving through the breach made by 13th Army on 16 July. These corps, while identified as separate entities early on *OKH* situation maps, were never depicted as moving until 19 July.[72] The Germans failed to identify the formation of cavalry mechanized groups in this operation. As Baranov's CMG moved into the gap, the Germans were confused by

reports of the 25th Tank Corps, mingled with identification of other armored forces.

During the afternoon of 16 July, after the CMG had moved, the 1st GTA began moving toward the gap. The 1st GTB, with reinforcements, continued to fight actively in the 3d GA sector toward Porytsk (see map 7A). Based on the level of activity and the firm evidence of the presence of the 8th GMC, the deputy commander of Army Group Northern Ukraine shared his opinion with Fourth Panzer Army "that indicators for the commitment of the 1st Soviet Tank Army are on hand."[73]

By 17 July, the German estimate of the situation in the area of the 1st GTB was reduced to a more realistic forty tanks,[74] and German intelligence identified other tank brigade-size forces moving into the widening breach, now southeast of Sokal. However, the Germans, after five days of combat with the 1st Ukrainian Front in the northern sector, had not identified Baranov's CMG or moved its corps on their maps. The 1st GTA remained unidentified on *OKH's* situation maps.[75] The Fourth Panzer Army identified the 25th Tank Corps in contact but had not linked it to a CMG configuration. Also, the Fourth Panzer Army had not positively identified 1st GTA in its sector.

On 17 July, following the movement of Baranov's CMG southeast toward Lvov to assist in the encirclement of German forces at Brody, 1st GTA began moving through the breach. The 11th Guards Tank Corps, with two reinforced tank brigades in the first echelon, met no resistance and was followed quickly by the 8th GMC, minus the 1st GTB. The 8th GMC, which was screening the 1st GTA's right flank, repelled counterattacks by the 17th Panzer Division and 291st



Map 7. The 1st Guards Tank Army commitment in the Rava Russkaya direction

Infantry Division. By 1200, the 1st GTA advanced into the operational depth of the German defense. The German command failed to identify and prevent the commitment of two Soviet mobile groups through the breach.

On 18 July, the 1st GTA finally appeared on the German *OKH* situation maps and had been placed correctly in the breach.[76] However, by the end of the day, the 1st GTA forced the Western Bug River against relatively unprepared opposition—the tank army was on the loose in the German rear. The 1st Ukrainian Front's operation in the Rava Russkaya sector progressed better than the strike toward Lvov. Konev's creation of two major Front efforts paid off. The widening fracture in the north, combined with the solid thrust in the Front's center sector, crumbled the German defense.

In the Lvov sector, despite great difficulties from hard fighting and constrained maneuver, the 3d GTA and 4th Tank Army advanced through the four- to six-kilometer-wide "Koltov Corridor." In the area southwest of Brody, units of the 3d GTA began to encircle a large German grouping of seven to eight divisions. Baranov's CMG eventually closed the northern half of the encirclement.

The command of the Army Group Northern Ukraine concluded that Lvov was the Front's objective. They believed that the 1st GTA would strike south across Zholkov and, in conjunction with the two tank armies attacking directly from the east, conduct a three-prong attack on Lvov (see map 7B).

In its assessment of the situation on 18 July, the Fourth Panzer Army concluded that "it is to be expected that the enemy will concentrate the mass of his armored forces (11th GTC and 25th TC) under concealment oriented to the west

so that he may thrust through Zholkov and Lvov."[77] The assessment also illustrates the Germans' inability to separate Baranov's tank corps from the 1st GTA. The German defenders simply could not read through the riddle of battlefield confusion and realize that two operational entities were moving through the breach in two different directions.

On 19 July, the Fourth Panzer Army committed the 16th Panzer Division and the 20th Motorized and 168th Infantry Divisions in the vicinity of Zholkov to block the 1st GTA's advance toward Lvov.[78] But the 1st GTA, meeting no serious resistance, continued west and did not turn south where the Germans were waiting. By the end of the day, the tank army's forward detachment had advanced to a depth of thirty-five to forty kilometers and was approaching Rava Russkaya.

At the same time, the 1st Belorussian Front forces participating in the Belorussian operation to the north provided additional alternatives for the Germans to consider. The Germans could see a potential for the 3d GA and 1st GTA to move northwest and complement the 1st Belorussian Front's drive for Lublin and Brest that had begun on 18 July. Such a course of action conformed with the Germans' original assessment of how the Soviets would deal with the Belorussian balcony (see map 7C).

Still confused by the Soviet order of battle, the Fourth Panzer Army assessed the situation on 19 July: "Employing elements of the 1st Tank Army (11th TC, apparently also the mass of 8th GMC, and probably one additional tank corps) supported by 5–6 rifle divisions, the enemy succeeded in crossing the Bug between Krystynopol and Ulvovsk and gaining ground to the west and northwest in our army right

flank."[79] Even on 19 July, the divergent paths of Baranov's CMG and the 1st GTA were not evident to the Germans.

Instead of moving as the Germans predicted, the 1st GTA advanced southwest to Yaroslava and forced the San River. Continuously moving on a westward path, the 1st GTA, by 30 July, secured important crossings over the Vistula River in the vicinity of Sandomierz, a sustained deep operation of nearly 400 kilometers.

The 1st Ukrainian Front succeeded in clearing German forces from the Ukraine and gained an invaluable foothold in southeastern Poland across the Vistula River. The success of this startingly swift operation owed much to operational-level deception. Despite an unwanted strategic focus and an initially poorly disposed force, Konev veiled the scope of his intentions and the scale of his operation. Putting into practice three years of war experience against the German Army, the Red Army forces, as exemplified by the 1944 operations, and in particular the Lvov-Sandomierz operation, ushered in an instrumental dimension to warfare at the operational level. Their capabilities and practice in deception set the stage for the final year of the war.

In 1945, Red Army operational deception was marked by plausibility, greater scope, diversity of methods and forms, and the participation of the staffs of the various branches of troops at all levels. Deception culminated in the European theater for Red Army operations such as the Vistula-Oder and the Berlin offensives. In August 1945, in their Far Eastern theater, the Soviets achieved a lightning success against the Japanese Kwantung Army in Manchuria through a massive and intensive strategic and operational deception effort.

World War II left the Soviet military with a vast reservoir of experience. From their analysis of lessons learned, Soviet researchers in deception have identified the following important requirements for effective deception:

- Evaluate enemy intelligence collection and devise counteractions.
- Develop deception expectations for operations, ensuring that operational deception measures conform to the friendly forces' ability to conduct them.
- Plan all deception measures in detail and centralize their execution.
- Systematize deception activities and maintain their credibility, continuity, and diversity.
- Use initiative and creativity in organizing and executing deception measures.[80]

While Red Army deception never totally eliminated all indicators of impending offensive operations, by cloaking its forces behind stringent concealment measures and deceptive maneuvers, it seriously skewed German intelligence estimates. The Soviets' depiction of false forces in false directions and activities, combined with concealed regroupings, confused the situation. This confusion often suspended or misdirected German actions. The Red Army's artful illusions surprised German commanders as to the intent, scale, and location of the operational battlefields. By the final stage of the war, the Red Army had achieved not only the physical but also the psychological initiative, which resulted in self-defeating German actions and reactions, smashed defensive lines, and catastrophic encirclements of major German forces—forces held spellbound by the red cloak of deception.

Notes

1. Charles Cruickshank, *Deception in World War II* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979), covers very generally only strategic deception in support of Allied Western Front requirements for the Soviets. Earle F. Ziemke, "Stalingrad and Belorussia: Soviet Deception in World War II," in *Strategic Military Deception,* edited by Donald C. Daniel and Katherine L. Herbig (New York: Pergamon Press, 1982), 243–76, examines Red Army operational deception but only for the Stalingrad and Belorussian operations. The most comprehensive review has been Colonel David M. Glantz' "The Red Mask: The Nature and Legacy of Soviet Military Deception in the Second World War," *Intelligence and National Security* 2 (July 1987):175–259.

2. See V. A. Matsulenko, *Operativnaya maskirovka voisk* [Operational deception of force] (Moscow: Voenizdat, 1975), hereafter cited as Matsulenko, *OMV*; M. M. Kir'yan, *Vnezapnost' v nastupatel'nykh operatsiyakh velikoi otechestvennoi voiny* [Surprise in offensive operations of the Great Patriotic War] (Moscow: Nauka, 1986); V. A. Matsulenko, "Operativnaya maskirovka sovetskikh voisk v pervom i vtorom periodakh voiny" [Operational deception of Soviet forces in the first and second periods of the war], *Voyenno istoricheskii zhurnal* [Military history journal], January 1972:11–20; this journal is hereafter cited as *Vizh*. Also see V. A. Matsulenko, "Operativnaya maskirovka voisk v tret'em periode voiny" [Operational deception of forces in the third period of the war], *Vizh*, June 1972:29–40; Georgii Konstantinovich Zhukov, "Organizatsiya operativnoi maskirovka" [Organizing operational deception], *Vizh*, May 1977:48–56; Ya. Dashevskii, "Organizatsiya i provedenie operativnoi maskirovki" [Organizing and conducting operational deception], *Vizh*, April 1980:46–52; P. Mel'nikov, "Operativnaya maskirovka" [Operational deception], *Vizh*, April 1982:18–26. *Vizh* has a number of other articles on specific operations and services regarding operational deception.

3. V. A. Efimov and S. G. Chermashentsev, "maskirovka" [Deception], *Sovetskaya Voennaya Entsiklopediya* [Soviet military encyclopedia] (Moscow: Voenizdat, 1978), 5:175.

4. Ibid.

5. Ibid.

6. Zhukov, "Organizatsiya," 48.

7. Dashevskii, "Organizatsiya," 47.

8. I. S. Konev, *Sorok pyatyi* [Forty-Five] (Moscow: Voenizdat, 1966), 106.

9. Soviet Union (1923– U.S.S.R.), Peoples Commissariat of Defense, *Field Service Regulations, Soviet Army, 1936 (Tentative)* (Moscow: Soviet Military Publications Division, Commissariat of Defense, 1937), translated by Staff Sergeant Charles Berman, Translation Section, U.S. Army War College, Washington, DC, September–October 1937.

10. Matsulenko, *OMV*, 2.

11. Georgii Konstantinovich Zhukov, *Reminiscences and Reflections* (Moscow: Progress, 1985), 1:187.

12. Japan, Kantogun [The Kwantung Army], Sanbobu [Headquarters], Dai-l Ka [1st Operations Section], "Nomonhan jiken kimitsu sakusen nisshi" [Nomonhan incident secret operations diary], vol. 1, prepared by Hattori Takushiro after the Nomonhan incident, quoted in Alvin D. Coox, *Nomonhan: Japan Against Russia, 1939* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1986), vol. 1.

13. Matsulenko, *OMV*, 8.

14. Matsulenko, "Operativnaya maskirovka sovetskikh," 12.

15. Soviet historiography of the Great Patriotic War divides the war into three periods: first, June 1941 to November 1942; second, November 1942 to December 1943; and third, January 1944 to May 1945 for Europe and August 1945 for Manchuria.

16. "Peregruppirovka voisk" [Regrouping forces], *Voennyi Entsiklopedicheskii Slovar'* [Military encyclopedic dictionary] (Moscow: Voenizdat, 1986), 546–47.

17. *Sbornik Materialov po Izucheniyu Opyta Voiny, No. 8, Avgust–Oktyabr' 1943* [Collection of materials for the study of war experience, no. 8, August–October 1943] (Moscow: Voenizdat, 1943), 64, translation by

Directorate of Military Intelligence, Army Headquarters, Ottawa, Canada.

18. *Sbornik Materialov po Izucheniyu Opyta Voiny, No. 6, Aprel'–Mai 1943* [Collection of materials for the study of war experience, no. 6, April–May 1943] (Moscow: Voenizdat, 1943), 96–97, translated by the U.S. Department of the Army.

19. A. M. Zvartsev, *3-ya gvardeiskaya tankovaya* [3d Guards Tank] (Moscow: Voenizdat, 1982), 116.

20. Germany, Army, Eighth Army, Intelligence records, Situation maps, microfilm series T-312, roll 58, frame 7573794, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, DC.

21. Ibid., frames 7573801–4.

22. Lieutenant Colonel David M. Glantz, "The Kiev Operation, an Overview," 19, in *1985 Art of War Symposium—From the Dnepr to the Vistula: Soviet Offensive Operations, November 1943–August 1944, Transcript of Proceedings [Held] 29 April–3 May 1985*, edited by Colonel David M. Glantz (Carlisle Barracks, PA: Center for Land Warfare, U.S. Army War College, August 1985). The symposium proceedings are cited hereafter as *1985 AWS*.

23. Erich von Manstein, *Lost Victories* (Novato, CA: Presidio Press, 1982), 481.

24. Ibid., 486.

25. Matsulenko, *OMV,* 60.

26. Mel'nikov, "Operativnaya maskirovka," 21.

27. V. E. Yakubov, "Primenenie dymovykh sredstv v nastupatel'nykh operatsiyakh Velikoi Otechestvennoi voiny" [The application of smoke means in offensive operations of the Great Patriotic War], *Vizh*, May 1987:31.

28. P. I. Batov, *Forsirovaniye rek 1942–1945 gg.* [Forcing rivers 1942–1945], (Moscow: Voenizdat, 1986), 60.

29. Dashevskii, "Organizatsiya," 48.

30. Zhukov, "Organizatsiya," 54.

31. Matsulenko, *OMV*, 138.

32. Zhukov, "Organizatsiya," 54.

33. Ibid.

34. Colonel H. van Nes, "'BAGRATION': Study of the Destruction of Army Group Centre During the Summer of 1944 as Seen From the Point of View of Military Intelligence," 248, in *1985 AWS.*

35. Earl F. Ziemke, *Stalingrad to Berlin: The German Defeat in the East*, Army Historical Series (Washington, DC: Office of the Chief of Military History, United States Army, 1968), 313.

36. S. M. Shtemenko, *The Soviet General Staff at War, 1941–1945* (Moscow: Progress, 1975), 228.

37. Ziemke, *Stalingrad to Berlin*, 316.

38. U.S. Department of the Army, Pamphlet no. 20–201, *Military Improvisations During the Russian Campaign* (Washington, DC, August 1951), 32.

39. I. S. Konev, *Zapiski Komanduyushchego frontom* [Writings of a Front commander] (Moscow: Voenizdat, 1981), 224.

40. A. Grechko, "Nekotorye voprosy voennogo iskusstva v L'vovsko-Sandomirskoi operatsii" [A few lessons of military art in the Lvov-Sandomierz operation], *Vizh,* February 1960:29.

41. Matsulenko, *OMV*, 109.

42. Ibid.

43. Ibid., 110.

44. Ibid., 189.

45. Ibid., 110.

46. Ibid.

47. Zhukov, "Organizatsiya," 49; and Richard Armstrong, "The Enemy Will Tell Us When," *Military Intelligence* 7 (April–June 1981):47–48.

48. D. Paul Deichmann, *German Air Force Operations in Support of the Army,* USAF Historical Study 101–163 (Maxwell Air Force Base, AL: Research Studies Institute, U.S. Air Force Historical Division, Air University, 1984), 161.

49. Matsulenko, *OMV*, 112.

50. Ibid., 116.

51. Ibid., 117.

52. *Vosemnadtsataya v srasheniyakh za Rodiny* [Eighteenth in the fight for the Motherland] (Moscow: Voenizdat, 1982), 390.

53. Konev, Zapiski, 223.

54. Friedrich Wilhelm von Mellenthin, *Panzer Battles* (New York: Ballantine, 1980), 338.

55. Germany, Army, XXXXVIII Panzer Corps, Intelligence records, microfilm series T-314, roll 1187, frames 309 and 322, National Archives; the corps is hereafter cited as XXXXVIII Panzer Corps.

56. Germany, Army, Oberkommando des Heeres [Headquarters, German Army High Command], Situation maps, microfilm series T-78, roll 136, frames 6065297–303, National Archives; the headquarters is hereafter cited as OKH.

57. Ibid., frame 6065300.

58. XXXXVIII Panzer Corps, Intelligence records, microfilm series T-314, roll 1187, frames 370–93.

59. XXXXVIII Panzer Corps, Operations records, Telephone log, microfilm series T-314, roll 1186, frame 159.

60. Ibid., frame 175.

61. OKH, Situation maps, microfilm series T-78, roll 136, frames 6065295–304.

62. Ibid., frames 6065300–301.

63. Ibid.; and B. Pakov and S. Anov, "K voprosu o proryve na rava-russkom napravlenii" [On the question of the breakthrough on the Rava Russkaya direction], *Vizh*, February 1970:94–99.

64. A. L. Getman, *Tanki idut na Berlin* [Tanks going on Berlin] (Moscow, Nauka, 1973), 206.

65. OKH, Situation maps, microfilm series T-78, roll 136, frame 6065303. The maps after 10 July had the portion cut off that showed 1st GTA's location. While 1st GTA was never shown in the north until 18 July, its exact location according to *OKH* maps from 10 to 13 July is undeveloped.

66. Zhukov, "Organizatsiya," 56.

67. S. Petrov, "Dostizhenie vnezapnosti v L'vovsko-Sandomirskoi operatsii" [Achieving surprise in the Lvov-Sandomierz operation], *Vizh*, July 1974:33.

68. OKH, Situation maps, microfilm series T-78, roll 136, frame 6065298.

69. Germany, Army, Fourth Panzer Army, Kriegstagebucher [Daily war journal], Operations records, microfilm series T-313, roll 409, frame 8701771, National Archives, hereafter cited as Fourth Panzer Army War Journal.

70. Ibid., frame 8701773.

71. Ibid.

72. OKH, Situation maps, microfilm series T-78, roll 136, frames 6065295–301.

73. Fourth Panzer Army War Journal, microfilm series T-313, roll 409, frame 8701778.

74. OKH, Situation maps, microfilm series T-78, roll 136, frame 6065297.

75. Ibid., frame 6065296; on the 21 July situation map, elements of Baranov's CMG are depicted behind Brody, northeast of Lvov, already linked with 3d GTA.

76. Ibid.

77. Fourth Panzer Army War Journal, microfilm series T-313, roll 409, frame 8701800.

78. OKH, Situation maps, microfilm series T-78, roll 136, frame 6065295; and Petrov, "Dostizhenic vnezapnosti," 36.

79. Fourth Panzer Army War Journal, microfilm series T-313, roll 409, frame 8701809.

80. Mel'nikov, "Operativnaya maskirovka," 26.

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LTC Richard M. Armstrong

Lieutenant Colonel Richard N. Armstrong is currently Assistant Chief of Staff for Intelligence, 1st Cavalry Division, Fort Hood, Texas. He received a B.A. in history from West Virginia University, an M.A. from Boston University, and is a graduate of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College. A military intelligence officer, he has served in Vietnam, West Germany, and Korea, and has held staff positions at various command levels, including service with the Deputy Chief of Staff for Intelligence, Headquarters, Department of the Army. Awarded the Additional Skill Identifier Historian in February 1988, his research and studies have focused on Soviet military history and affairs, and he has authored articles in such journals as *Military Review*, *Parameters*, and *Military Affairs*.

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