Leavenworth Papers

No. 7



August Storm: The Soviet 1945 Strategic Offensive in Manchuria

by LTC David M. Glantz

Combat Studies Institute
U.S. Army Command and General Staff College
Fort Leavenworth, Kansas 66027

February 1983

FOREWORD

Too often soldiers fall victim to their preconceptions about potential adversaries' patterns of behavior. A popular notion among U.S. officers is that military history in the Soviet Union consists of little but propaganda broadsides to justify Soviet actions. On too few occasions do U.S. officers critically analyze the past campaigns of potential adversaries. In particular, the rich vein of military history in Russian language military periodicals and literature has been neglected. The language barrier, time constraints, and changing Army requirements combine to hinder the type of in-depth historical research that affords penetrating insights into Soviet military planning, operations, and tactics.

LTC David M. Glantz, a Russian linguist at the Combat Studies Institute, has, using a wide variety of Soviet sources, reconstructed a comprehensive two-part account of the 1945 Soviet Manchurian campaign. This *Leavenworth Paper* offers an operational overview of the campaign, while *Leavenworth Paper* no. 8 expands the general campaign analysis in eight case studies that highlight Soviet tactical doctrine and operations in Manchuria. In both papers, LTC Glantz has also used Japanese accounts of the campaign to check the veracity of the Soviet version. For these reasons, I believe that these two *Leavenworth Papers* will become the standard works in the English language on the campaign.

Two features of Soviet war-making stand out in the Manchurian campaign: (1) meticulous planning at all levels; (2) initiative and flexibility in the execution of assigned missions. For those who dismiss the campaign as a walkover of an already defeated enemy, LTC Glantz presents overwhelming evidence of tenacious, often suicidal, Japanese resistance. The sophistication of Soviet operations made an admittedly inferior Japanese Kwantung Army appear even more feeble than it actually was. Reminiscent of the lightning German victory in northwest Europe in May 1940, surprise, bold maneuver, deep penetrations, rapid rates of advance, and crossing terrain the defender thought impassable enabled the attacker to rupture vital command and control networks of the defenders and to hurl defending forces into disarray. In 1945 the Soviets demonstrated their mastery of combined arms warfare that four blood-soaked years of fighting against the Germans had perfected. As LTC Glantz observes, the Manchurian campaign was the postgraduate exercise for Soviet combined arms.

Finally, this operational level account drawn almost exclusively from Soviet sources gives the U.S. Army officer an insight into how the Soviets interpret the Manchurian campaign, the lessons they draw from it, and how they relate their Manchurian experience to Soviet military art. Indeed, much truth lies in Ovid's words, "It is right to be taught, even by an enemy."

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ii No. 7

Contents



Illustrations v
Tables vii
Abbreviations ix
Symbols xi
Preface xiii
Introduction xvii
1. Preparations for the Manchurian Strategic Offensive 1
2. Area of Operations 5
3. The Opposition: Japanese Forces and Operational Planning 25
4. Soviet Organization for Combat and Force Structure 37
5. Soviet Offensive Military Theory on the Eve of the Manchurian Offensive 57
6. Conduct of the Offensive: Far East Command Plan 71
7. Conduct of the Offensive: Trans-Baikal Front 79
8. Conduct of the Offensive: 1st Far Eastern Front 109
9. Conduct of the Offensive: 2d Far Eastern Front 139
10. Analysis of the Offensive 153
11. Conclusions 173
Appendix 1. Kwantung Army Order of Battle, 30 July 1945 179
Appendix 2. Soviet Far East Command Order of Battle, August 1945 .. 189
Appendix 3. Operational Statistics 205
Notes 207
Bibliography 221

Illustrations

Maps

1. Manchuria: Regions and Terrain 7
2. Size Comparison 9
3. Manchuria: Road and Railroad Networks, 1945 10-11
4. Manchuria: Waterways 12
5. Manchuria: Temperature 14
6. Manchuria: Rainfall 15
7. Manchuria: Trafficability 22
8. Kwantung Army Dispositions 27
9. Japanese First Area Army Dispositions 29
10. Japanese Third Area Army Dispositions 30
11. Japanese 4th Separate Army Dispositions 31
12. Kwantung Army Defense Plan 34
13. First Area Army Defense Plan 35
14. Third Area Army Defense Plan 36
15. Soviet Far East Command Dispositions 38
16. Opposing Force Densities and Distribution 72
17. Soviet Far East Command Plan and Operations 74-75
18. Japanese Fortified Positions in Western Manchuria 82
19. Japanese 44th Army Defense Area 83
20. Japanese 4th Separate Army Defense Area in Northwest Manchuria 84
21. Soviet Trans-Baikal Front Operations, 9—19 August 1945 85
22. Soviet 6th Guards Tank Army Advance, 9 August 1945 235
23. Soviet 39th Army Advance, 9—13 August 1945 88
24. Soviet 36th Army Advance to Hailar and Yakoshih, 9—12 August 1945 90
25. Soviet 36th Army Advance from Yakoshih to Chalantun, 12—18 August 1945 101

26. Japanese Fortified Positions in Eastern Manchuria 110
27. Japanese 5th Army Defense Area 111
28. Japanese 3d Army Defense Area 112
29. Soviet 1st Far Eastern Front Operations, 9—20 August 1945 113
30. Soviet 5th Army Main Attack Sector, 0001—0830, 9 August 1945 .. 114
31. Soviet 5th Army Advance, 9—10 August 1945 117
32. Soviet 5th Army Advance to Mutanchiang, 9—12 August 1945 119
33. Soviet 1st Red Banner Army, 5th Army, and 25th Army Operations to Linkou, Mutanchiang, and Wangching, 9—18 August 1945 236
34. Soviet 35th Army Advance to Mishan, 9—15 August 1945 126
35. Soviet 25th Army Advance to Wangching and Yenchi, 9—17 August 1945 131
36. Japanese Tungning Fortifications 237
37. Japanese 134th Infantry Division Fortifications in the Chiamussu Region 140
38. Japanese 4th Separate Army Defenses in the Aihun-Sunwu Region 142
39. Soviet 2d Far Eastern Front Operations, 9—18 August 1945 144
40. Soviet 15th Army Advance to Chiamussu, 9—17 August 1945 145
41. Soviet 2d Red Banner Army Operations, 9—15 August 1945 149

Figures

1. Soviet Typical Offensive Combat Formation: Combined Arms Army 61
2. Soviet Typical Offensive Combat Formation: Rifle Division 62
3. Soviet Echelonment of Forces in Manchuria 162
4. Soviet Assault Group Configuration 164
5. March Column Formation: 6th Guards Tank Army 167
6. March Column Formation: 10th Mechanized Corps..... 168
7. March Column Formation: 22d Rifle Division 169

Tables

1. Composition of Forces Facing the Soviets in the Far East 28
2. Japanese Infantry Division TO&E, 1945 32
3. Soviet Far East Command Composition 42
4. Trans-Baikal Front Composition 43
5. 1st Far Eastern Front Composition 44
6. 2d Far Eastern Front Composition 45
7. Soviet Combined Arms Army TO&E, 1945 47
8. Soviet Combined Arms Armies in Manchuria and the Terrain over Which They Operated 48
9. Soviet Rifle Corps TO&E, 1945 49
10. Soviet Rifle Corps in Manchuria and the Terrain over Which They Operated 50
11. Soviet Rifle Division TO&E, 1945 50
12. Soviet Rifle Divisions in Manchuria and the Terrain over Which They Operated 51
13. Soviet Tank Army TO&E, 1945 52
14. Soviet Tank Corps TO&E, 1945 53
15. Soviet Mechanized Corps TO&E, 1945 54
16. Soviet Tank Brigade TO&E, 1945 54
17. Major Artillery Units in the Soviet Army Force Structure, 1945 55
18. Types of Soviet Forward Detachments in Manchuria 159
19. Time-Phased Commitment of Forces to Battle (1st Far Eastern Front) 165

Abbreviations

Soviet Forces

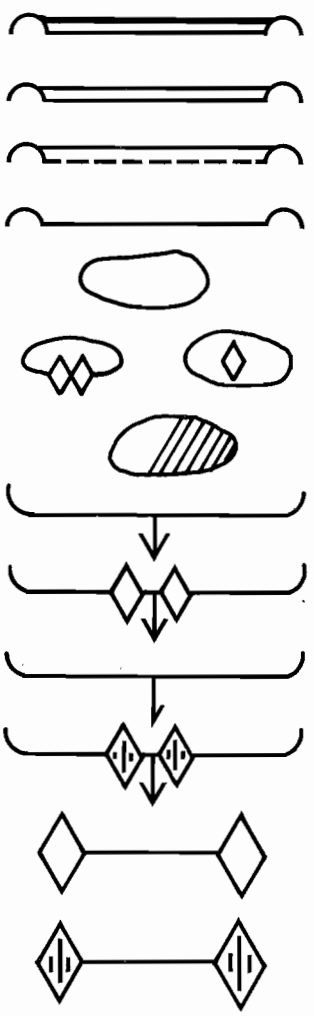
A	Army
AEB	Assault engineer-sapper brigade
BGBn	Border guards battalion
Cav-Mech Gp	Cavalry-mechanized group
CD	Cavalry division
FD	Forward detachment
FFR	Field fortified region
FR	Fortified region
G	Guards
HSPR	Heavy self-propelled artillery regiment
MB	Mechanized brigade
MC	Mechanized corps
MnRR	Mountain rifle regiment
MRD	Motorized rifle division
RBA	Red Banner Army
RBn	Rifle battalion
RC	Rifle corps
RD	Rifle division
RR	Rifle regiment
TA	Tank army
TB	Tank brigade
TC	Tank corps
TD	Tank division

Japanese Forces

BGU	Border guards unit
IB	Independent mixed brigade
ID	Infantry division

Symbols

Soviet



Front boundary

Army boundary

Corps boundary

Division/brigade boundary

Infantry unit assembly area

Tank/mechanized unit assembly area

Cavalry unit assembly area

Infantry unit deployed or moving

Tank/mechanized unit deployed or moving

Cavalry unit deployed or moving

Self-propelled artillery unit deployed or moving

Tanks in firing positions

Self-propelled guns in firing position

Japanese



Field fortifications, defensive positions



Fortified region, permanent



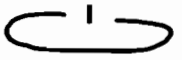
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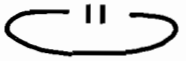
Squad position



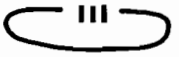
Platoon position



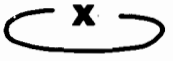
Company position



Battalion position



Regiment position



Brigade position



Division position



Division boundary



Army boundary



Area army boundary



Kwantung Army boundary

Preface



This critical examination of the final Soviet strategic offensive operation during World War II seeks to chip away at two generally inaccurate pictures many Westerners have of the war. Specifically, Westerners seem to think that only geography, climate, and sheer numbers negated German military skill and competency on the eastern front, a view that relegates Soviet military accomplishments to oblivion. Moreover, Westerners have concluded that little worthy of meaningful study occurred in the Asian theaters of war. These impressions reflect a distinct German bias in the analyses of operations on the eastern front and an anti-Asian front bias concerning World War II in general. Both impressions are false. Yet, over the decades since World War II, they have perpetuated an inaccurate view of the war, particularly of Soviet performance in that war. This Western misconception perverts history, and that perversion, in turn, warps contemporary attitudes and thus current assessments of Soviet military capabilities—past, present, and future.

Our view of the war in the east derives from the German experiences of 1941 and 1942, when blitzkrieg exploited the benefits of surprise against a desperate and crudely fashioned Soviet defense. It is the view of a Guderian, a Mellenthin, a Balck, and a Manstein, all heroes of Western military history, but heroes whose operational and tactical successes partially blinded them to strategic realities. By 1943—44, their "glorious" experiences had ceased. As their operational feats dried up after 1942, the Germans had to settle for tactical victories set against a background of strategic disasters. Yet the views of the 1941 conquerors, their early impressions generalized to characterize the nature of the entire war in the east, remain the accepted views. The successors to these men, the Schoeners, the Heinricis, the defenders of 1944 and 1945, those who presided over impending disaster, wrote no memoirs of widespread notoriety, for their experiences were neither memorable nor glorious. Their impressions and those of countless field grade officers who faced the realities of 1944—45 are all but lost.

This imbalanced view of German operations in the east imparts a reassuring, though inaccurate, image of the Soviets. We have gazed in awe

at the exploits of those Germans who later wrote their personal apologies, and in doing so we have forgotten the larger truth: their nation lost the war—and lost it primarily in the east against what they portrayed as the "artless" Soviets.

Our second bias, so conspicuous in our historical neglect of the Pacific theater of World War II, has combined with our acceptance of the German interpretation of the eastern front so as to blind us to what was the preeminent Soviet military effort in World War II—the Soviet strategic offensive of 1945 in Manchuria.

For the Soviets, the Manchurian offensive was the logical by-product of their war experience, a surgically conducted offensive with almost predestined results. The fact that Japan was a seriously weakened nation by the summer of 1945 was clear. What was not clear was the prospect of an immediate Japanese surrender. The likelihood of a Japanese *Götterdämmerung* on the scale of Germany's loomed large in the eyes of American and Soviet planners. The potential cost in Allied manpower of reducing Japan could be deduced from the fanatical Japanese resistance on Okinawa as late as April—June 1945, when more than 49,000 (12,500 dead) Americans fell in battle against about 117,000 Japanese troops. And the Home Islands still had more than 2.3 million Japanese soldiers; Manchuria, more than 1 million. So Allied planners expected the worst and designed operations in deadly earnest for what they believed would be prolonged, complicated campaigns against the remaining Japanese strongholds.

Based on proven capabilities of the Japanese High Command and the individual Japanese soldier, Soviet plans were as innovative as any in the war. Superb execution of those plans produced victory in only two weeks of combat. Although Soviet planners had overestimated the capabilities of the Japanese High Command, the tenacious Japanese soldier met Soviet expectations. He lived up to his reputation as a brave, self-sacrificing samurai who, though poorly employed, inflicted 32,000 casualties on the Soviets and won their grudging respect. Had Japanese planners been bolder—and Soviet planners less audacious—the price of Soviet victory could well have been significantly higher.

Scope, magnitude, complexity, timing, and marked success have made the Manchurian offensive a continuing topic of study for the Soviets, who see it as a textbook case of how to begin war and quickly bring it to a successful conclusion. They pay attention to the Manchurian offensive because it was an impressive and decisive campaign.

Our neglect of Soviet operations in World War II, in general—and in Manchuria, in particular—testifies not only to our apathy toward history and the past in general, but also to our particular blindness to the Soviet experience. That blindness, born of the biases we bring to the study of World War II, is a dangerous phenomenon. How can we learn if we refuse to see the lessons of our past for our future?

Introduction



Shortly after midnight on 9 August 1945, assault parties of Soviet troops crossed the Soviet-Manchurian border and attacked Japanese positions in Manchuria. This was the vanguard of a force of more than 1.5 million men that was to advance along multiple axes on a frontage of more than 4,400 kilometers, traversing in its course virtually every type of terrain from the deserts of Inner Mongolia to the shores of the Sea of Japan. Thus began one of the most significant campaigns of World War II.

For the Soviets, the Manchurian offensive marked the culmination of four years of bitter conflict with Germany in the west and a similar period of worried attentiveness to Japanese intentions in the east. The Soviets had absorbed the potent attacks of the Germans in 1941, 1942, and 1943 and had rebounded with their own 1944 and 1945 offensives, which finally crushed the military machine of Germany. While the Soviets waged a war of survival with the Germans, precious Soviet units remained in the Far East to forestall a possible Japanese attack in support of its Axis partner. Because of the combination of Soviet victories in the west and Japanese defeats in the Pacific, the potential for Japanese attack on the Soviet Far East diminished. Conversely, as Allied victory over Germany approached in 1945, Allied leaders continued to press Stalin to commit his forces against Japan in order to complete the destruction of the Axis combination.[1]

Moved by Allied appeals for support and wishing to cement the Soviet Union's postwar position in the Far East, Soviet leaders began planning a final campaign to wrest from Japan Manchuria, northern Korea, southern Sakhalin Island and the Kurile Islands. The enormity of the task of conquering the vast expanse of Manchuria before a Japanese surrender rivaled the challenges of earlier operations. More than 10,000 kilometers separated Manchuria from the main area of Soviet operations in Europe. Forces and equipment destined for deployment to Manchuria had to move along a transportation network limited in capacity and fragile in its composition. Soviet estimates of force requirements necessary to undertake such an extensive campaign were correspondingly large. Thus, the anticipated campaign involved extensive planning and preparations stretching over a five-month period from April to August 1945. The results of the campaign attested to

the success of the planning and the thoroughness of preparations. In nine days Soviet forces penetrated from 500 to 950 kilometers into Manchuria, secured major population centers, and forced the Japanese Kwantung Army and its Manchukuoan and Inner Mongolian auxiliaries to surrender. Thus, Soviet forces achieved their territorial objectives within a limited period of time, despite severe terrain obstacles and significant Japanese resistance. The campaign validated the experience Soviet forces had gained in the war against Germany. The Red Army applied the advanced tactical and operational techniques it had learned in the brutal school of war in the west. It also displayed the requisite degree of audacious leadership Soviet commanders had laboriously developed during the western campaigns. The Manchurian campaign represented the highest state of military art in Soviet World War II operations. Contemporary officers and any serious student of twentieth century warfare can benefit greatly from an understanding of the nature of this campaign.

Concentrating on Soviet ground operations in Manchuria proper, this study provides general information on the strategic context of the campaign, a detailed account of the operational techniques of armies, corps, and divisions, and the tactical employment of regiments, brigades, and lower echelon units. It also includes information concerning initial planning for the operation, redeployment of forces, high level organization for combat, and the essentials of front planning. It analyzes Soviet force structure and the published tactical doctrine governing the use of those forces in 1945, highlighting the tactical innovations and demonstrating the adjustments in force structure that contributed to Soviet victory. An assessment of the utility of those tactical and structural innovations and their implications for the future completes the study.

Volume two, Leavenworth Paper no. 8, relates the conduct of battle in a limited number of sectors representative of the wide range of operations the campaign encompassed. The following eight detailed case studies from the Manchurian campaign focus on Soviet small unit tactics and how the Soviets tailored forces to achieve success: the attack by the Soviet 5th Army on the Japanese Volynsk and Suifenho Fortified Areas (9—11 August), the 39th Army advance to Wangyemiao (9—15 August), the 300th Rifle Division advance to Pamientung (9—10 August), the 35th Army advance east of Lake Khanka (9—10 August), the 36th Army advance to Hailar (9—12 August), the battle of Mutanchiang (14—16 August), the 35th Army reduction of Hutou Fortified Zone (9—18 August), and 15th Army operations to Chiamussu.

This study is based primarily on Soviet secondary sources, supplemented with Japanese materials. Soviet literature on the Manchurian campaign is extensive, and coverage has intensified in recent years. Many of the participants in the campaign have written memoirs or shorter commentaries on operations in Manchuria. The Far East commander, Marshal A. M. Vasilevsky, front commanders and chiefs of staff, army commanders, service

commanders, and military historians have contributed their accounts of operations, many in book form. Numerous articles have appeared in *Voenno-Istoricheskii Zhurnal* [Military history journal] on specific aspects of the operation. Japanese sources are rarer, in large part because the Soviets captured the records of the Kwantung Army during the campaign. The Japanese monograph series on operations in Manchuria, published in the early 1950s, provides a sketchy account reconstructed from the memories of Japanese officers who served in Manchuria. Unfortunately, no monographs exist for some of the most heavily engaged Japanese units, and the few memoirs written on limited aspects of the operations are of marginal value.

In contrast to Japanese sources, Soviet sources are complete and accurate in their generalizations and in much of their operational detail. They freely discuss operational difficulties, although they sometimes exaggerate the scale of individual victories or denigrate the impact of local defeats. Often the Soviets simply gloss over unpleasant events. This study compares Soviet accounts with accounts contained in the Japanese monographs and other Japanese studies, notes where details match, and highlights some differences in interpretation and emphasis.

I give special thanks to Dr. Edward J. Drea of the Combat Studies Institute for his assistance with Japanese sources. Throughout this study all Japanese personal names appear in the Japanese manner, surname preceding given name.

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Preparations for the Manchurian Strategic Offensive

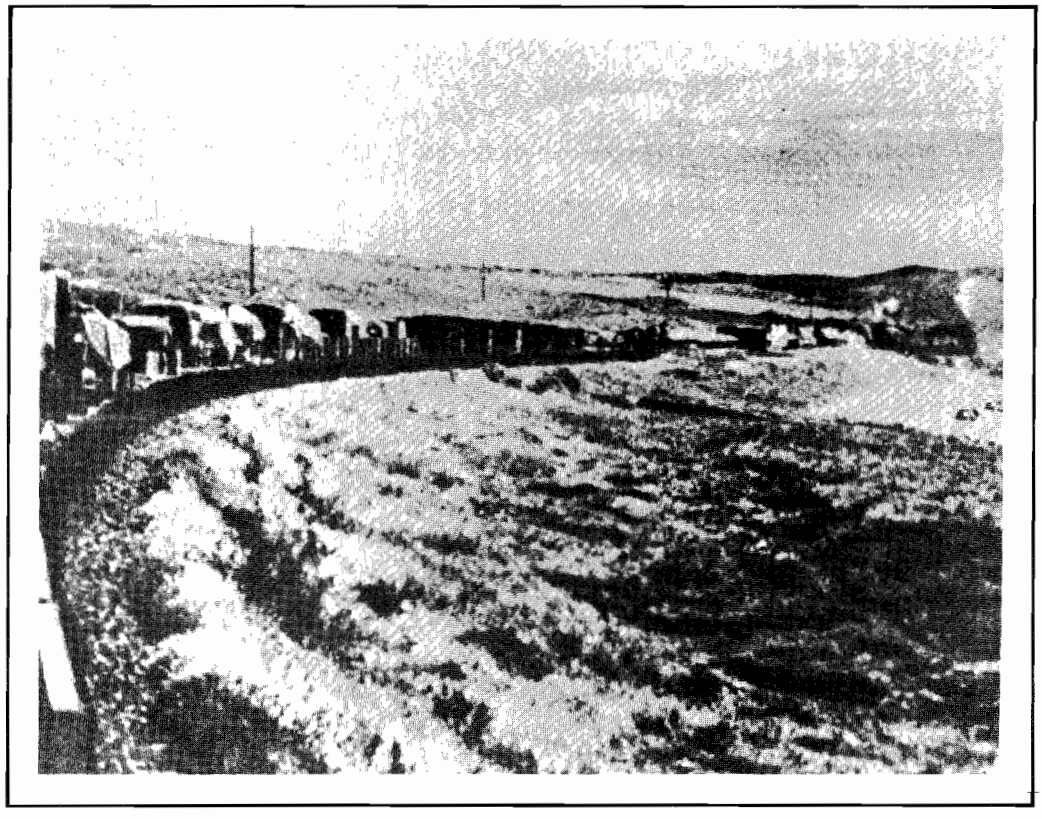
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Soviet planning for the Manchurian campaign began in March 1945, when operations in the west were in their final phase. Shifting of men, materiel, and equipment to the Far East began in April 1945. In general, the Soviets transferred combat units and their equipment separately. Thus, at first they stockpiled equipment in the Far East and reequipped units already located in that region.[1]

Massive regrouping of forces to the east occurred from May through July of 1945, with units still arriving when the campaign opened in August. To provide command and control for the expanded forces, the Soviet High Command shifted experienced headquarters staffs from eastern Europe to the Far East and Trans-Baikal areas. Two front headquarters (the Karelian Front and 2d Ukrainian Front) and four army headquarters (5th, 39th, 53d, and 6th Guards Tank) provided this leavening of combat experience. The 39th and 5th Armies moved from the Königsberg area in East Prussia; the 6th Guards Tank Army and 53d Army, from the Prague region.[2] The High Command decided to move those units whose past experience suited them to the peculiarities of planned operations. Thus, the 39th Army, experienced in fighting for the heavily fortified area of Königsberg, would deploy to attack the Halung-Arshaan Fortified Region of Manchuria. The 5th Army, also engaged in reducing Königsberg, would conduct attacks in the heavily fortified Japanese defensive zone in eastern Manchuria. The 6th Guards Tank Army, fresh from fighting its way through the Carpathian Mountains, would traverse the Grand Khingan Mountains of western Manchuria. The 53d Army, also experienced in the Carpathian campaign, would engage Japanese forces in the mountains of western Manchuria.

In addition to these major headquarters, the High Command shifted many separate tank, artillery, and engineer units eastward to provide the support necessary for operations in the varied terrain of Manchuria. Redeployment of forces had the cumulative effect of doubling the strength of Soviet forces in the Far East from forty to more than eighty divisions.[3] The volume of rail traffic involved in the move best illustrates the complexity and magnitude of the redeployment. For the 9,000- to 12,000-kilometer move, the Soviets used 136,000 rail cars. In June and July of 1945,

twenty-two to thirty trains used the Trans-Siberian railroad each day.[4] Units also made extensive use of roads to reach final deployment areas. For example, the Trans-Baikal Front* deployed from the main line of the Trans-Siberian railroad to Choibalsan, Mongolia, a distance of some 500 to 600 kilometers, by both rail and road. Extensive redeployment also took place among units already within the Far East and Trans-Baikal region. From May to June 1945, thirty divisions moved to new locations, a shift involving about one million men.[5]



Trains moving east along the Trans-Siberian Railroad

The High Command also transferred to the Far East selected new commanders to organize and lead Soviet forces in the campaign. Again, experience and performance were primary criteria for selection. Two front commanders, Marshals R. Ya. Malinovsky and K. A. Meretskov, two front chiefs of staff, Generals M. V. Zakharov and A. N. Krutikov, and four army

*A front is equivalent to an army group.

commanders, Generals A. P. Beloborodov, I. M. Chistyakov, N. D. Zakhvatayev, and A. A. Luchinsky, received postings to the Far East. General I. A. Pliyev received command of the joint Soviet-Mongolian Cavalry-Mechanized Group.[6] Most of these commanders either had experience in the region or were associated with major headquarters that moved east. In June 1945, Marshal A. M. Vasilevsky became coordinator of overall operations in the Far East and Trans-Baikal regions. Vasilevsky's major qualification for the position was excellent service as representative of the *STAVKA* (headquarters of the Supreme High Command) and as coordinator of major successful operations in the west. It soon became apparent, however, that the scope of operations in Manchuria was too great for mere coordination. Consequently, on 30 July 1945 the Soviets created the Far East Command under Vasilevsky, backed by a full staff.[7] In effect the Far East Command was a full-fledged theater of military operations* headquarters, the first of its kind in the Soviet World War II command experience.**



Commander of Soviet forces in the Far East, Marshal A. M. Vasilevsky

**teatr voennykh deistvii:* TVD.

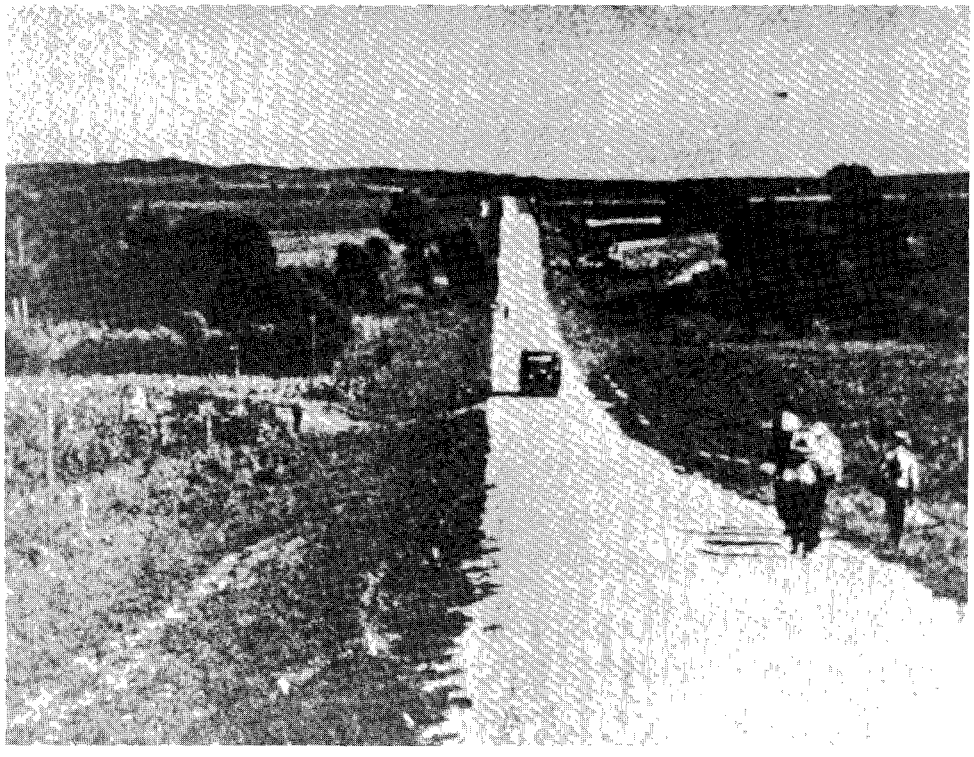
**The Soviets had unsuccessfully experimented with a theater command structure in the summer of 1941 when German forces thrust into the Soviet Union.

The movement of men and materiel eastward involved constant use of screening, cover, and secrecy. The Soviets relied heavily on night movement to deceive the Japanese as to the grand scale of redeployment. Use of assembly areas remote from the border masked attack intentions, but ultimately required units to move to the attack in August over a considerable distance. Many high ranking commanders moved into the theater under assumed names and wearing the rank of junior officers.[8] While the sheer size of Soviet movements made them impossible to mask, deceptive measures obscured the scale of Soviet redeployments and caused the Japanese to underestimate the Soviet ability to attack. Most Japanese believed that the Soviets would be able to launch an attack only in the fall of 1945 or in the spring of 1946. Few saw August as a possibility. By 25 July, Soviet force deployments to the Far East were virtually complete. The Soviets had only to set the date to start the operations.

2

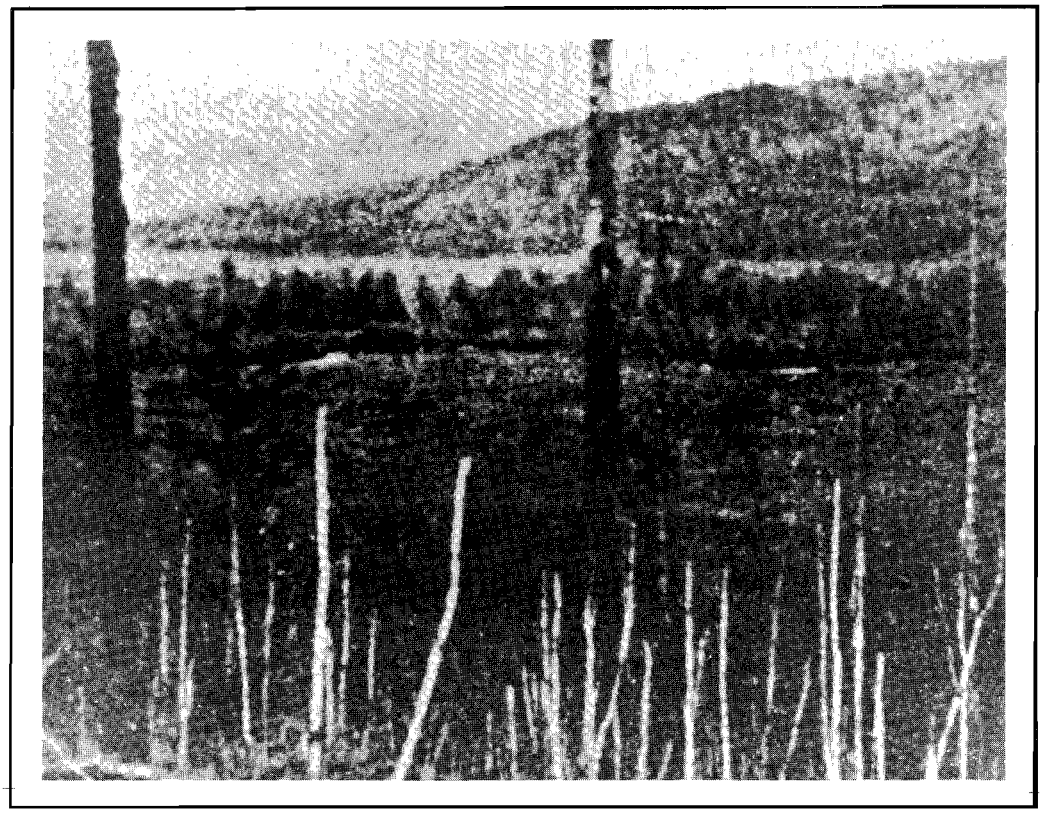
Area of Operations

Manchuria covers 1.5 million square kilometers bounded on the south by Korea, the Liaotung Gulf, and China, on the east and north by the Soviet Far Eastern province and Siberia, and on the west by Outer Mongolia and Inner Mongolia. By virtue of its geographic location, its natural resources, and its population, Manchuria is an area of considerable strategic



Highway from Changchun to Kirin, near Changchun

value. Its fertile central regions are both industrially and agriculturally important. Its geographical location gives to it a dominant position vis-à-vis China and the Soviet Far East. For this reason, the major powers of the region, China, Russia, and Japan, have long sought possession of Manchuria.

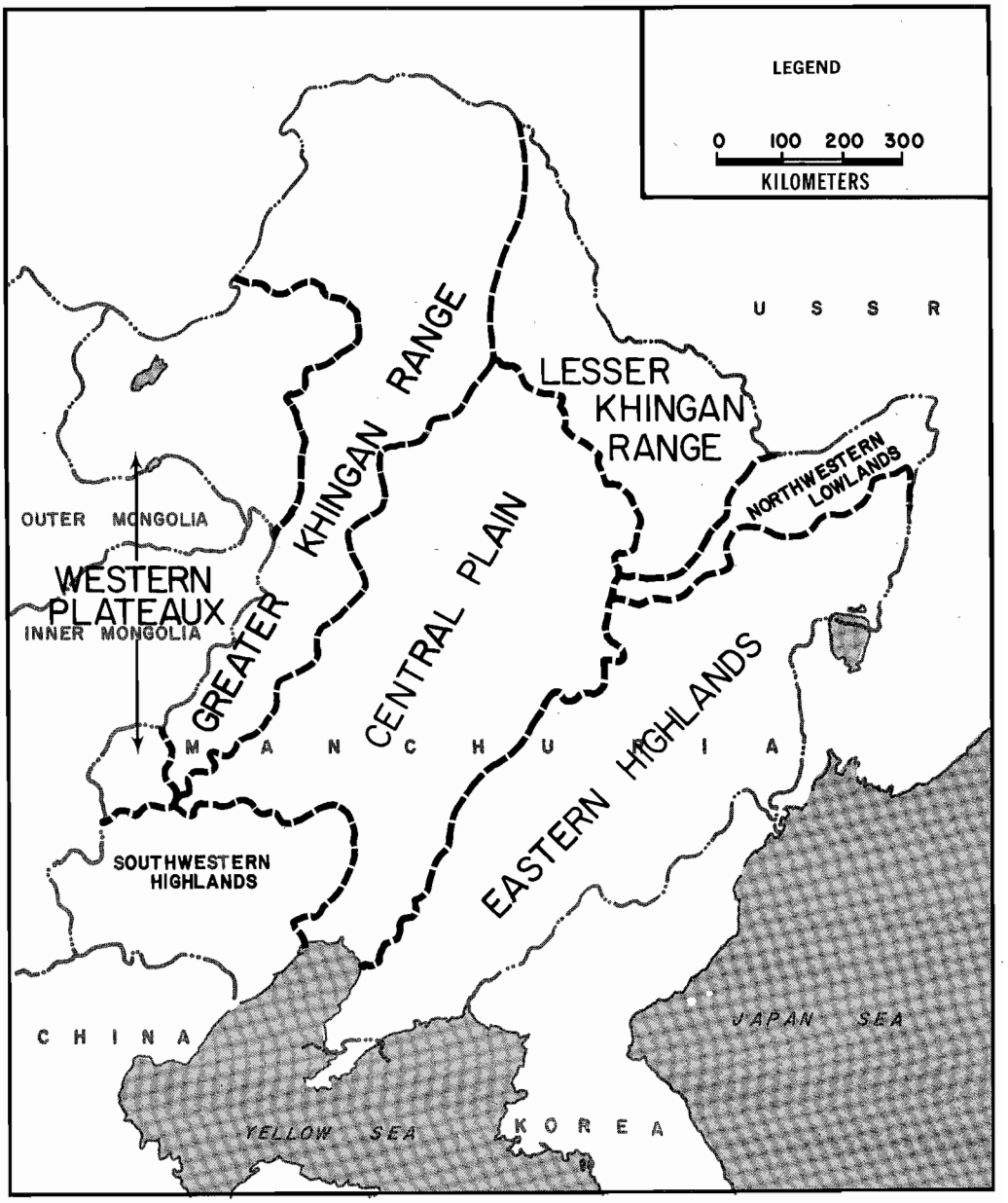


Northern and central Grand Khingan Mountains

Because of its large size and its geographical and climatic diversity (see maps 1—6), Manchuria can best be described as a series of concentric circles. The inner circle contains the heartland of Manchuria, the large central valley. Around the valley runs another large circle of mountains of various size and ruggedness, protecting the central valley from the west, north, east, and southeast. To the south, this circle opens onto the Liaotung Gulf. Beyond this circle of mountains is a peripheral area abutting Mongolia, Siberia, and the Soviet Far East.

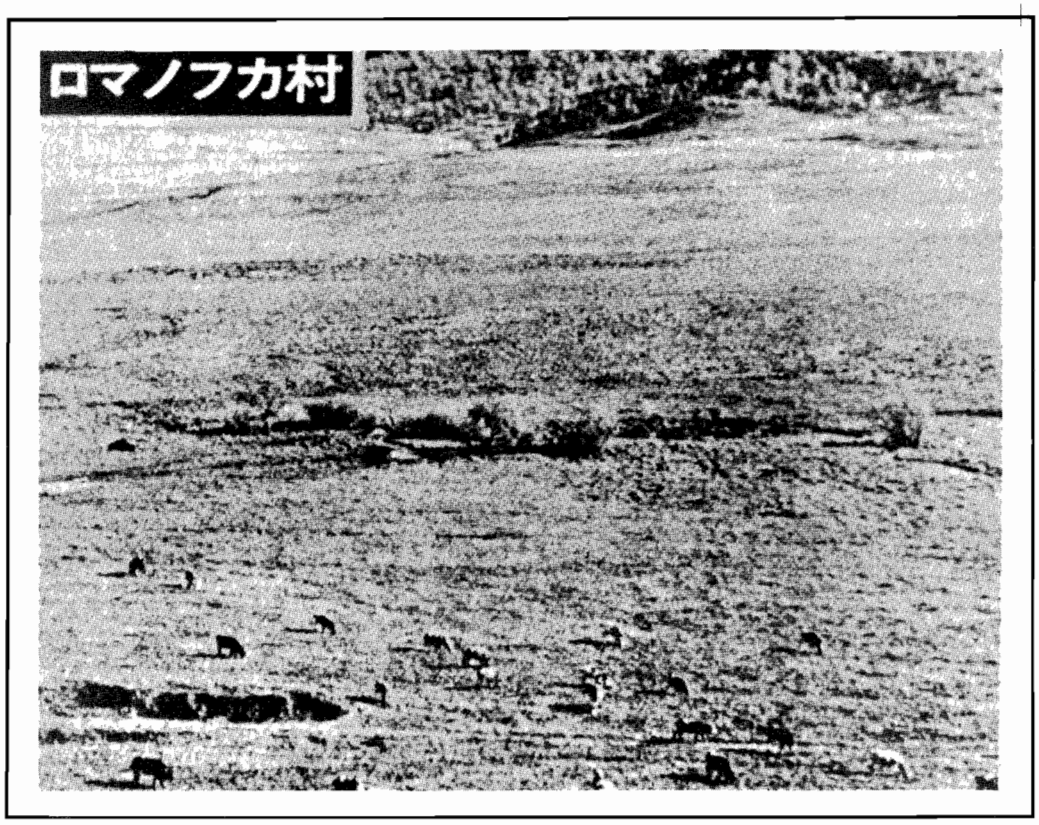
The central valley of Manchuria, containing the basins of the Liao, Sungari, Nen, Hsiliao, Choerh, and other rivers, extends 1,000 kilometers from north to south and 400 to 500 kilometers from east to west. In 1945 a

well-developed road and rail network traversed the region, connecting the major industrial cities of Mukden, Changchun, Harbin, and Tsitsihar. Terrain in the central valley is generally flat, and cultivated areas predominate.



Map 1. Manchuria: Regions and Terrain

West of the central valley is the Grand Khingan mountain range. Running from north to south, this range extends from the Amur River region of northern Manchuria southward to a junction with the mountains of northern China. The mountains vary in height from 1,800 meters in the north, to 1,500 meters in the central region, and finally to 1,900 meters in the south. From the west the mountains rise less steeply than from the east. Land west of the mountains averages from 1,000 to 1,200 meters in altitude,



East slope of northern Grand Khingan Mountains near Pokotu

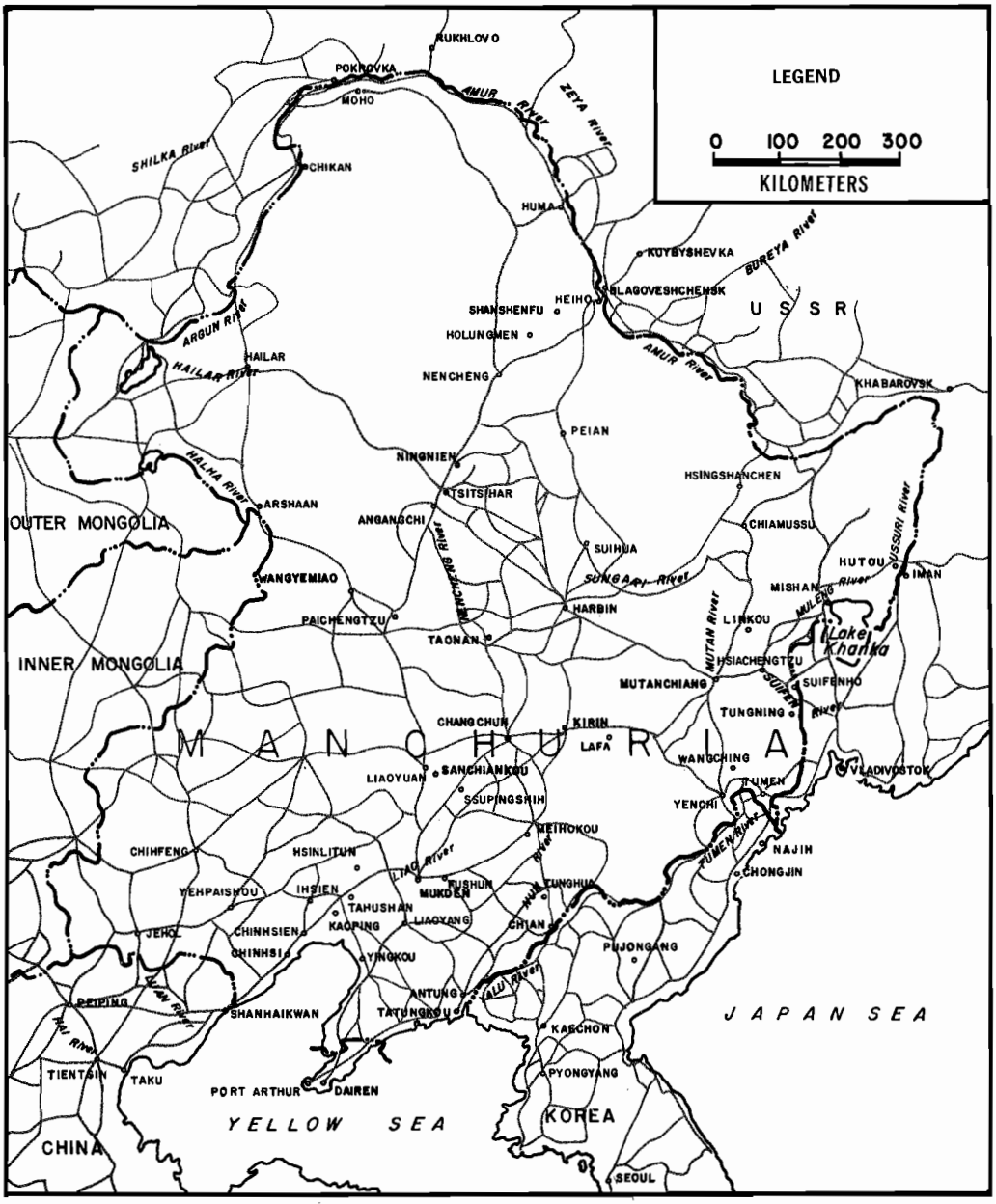
thus the mountains rise from 300 to 900 meters. Land east of the mountains averages from 500 to 700 meters, thus the mountains loom at greater heights. The Grand Khingans form a belt of dissected mountains and broad swampy valleys varying in width from 500 kilometers in the north to eighty kilometers in the south. The mountains are heavily forested in the north, but these forests decrease in density to the south, finally giving way to brush and scrub grass. Of several passes and narrow valleys that traverse

the Grand Khingans, in 1945 the two principal passes contained the railroad lines from Yakoshih to Pokotu and from Halung-Arshaan to Solun. Poor roads paralleled these rail lines, and elsewhere numerous pack and cart trails traversed the mountain range.



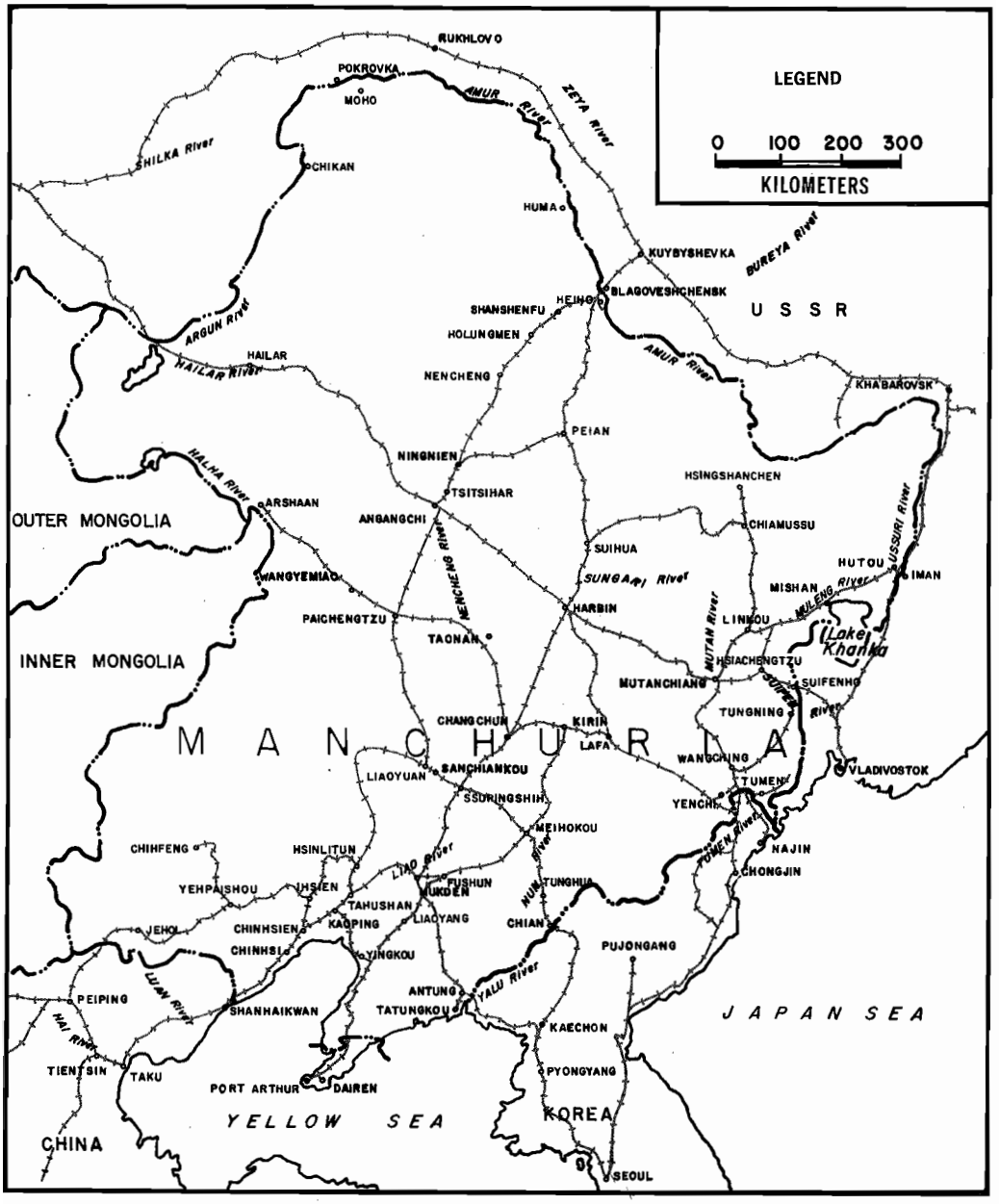
Map 2. Size Comparisor

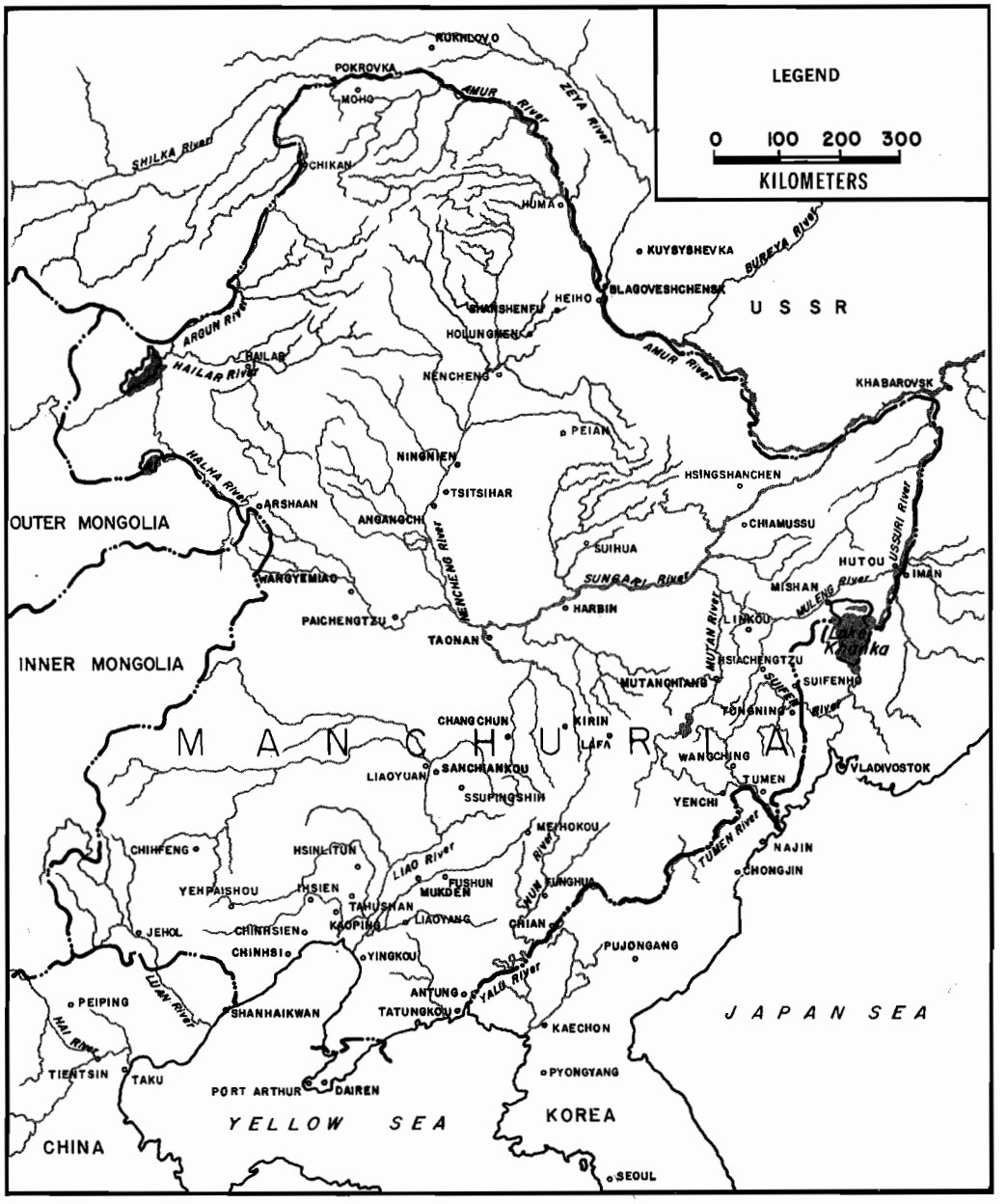
Bounding the northern portion of the central valley of Manchuria, the Lesser Khingan Mountains extend from northwest to southeast for a distance of 600 kilometers, with an average width from 100 to 300 kilometers. These mountains, a series of heavily wooded rounded hills, conical summits, and open valleys, range in elevation from 700 to 1,300 meters. In 1945, the main passages through the mountains contained the rail lines from Tsitsihar and Harbin to Aihun on the Amur River.



Map 3. Manchuria: Road (left) and Railroad (right) Networks, 1945

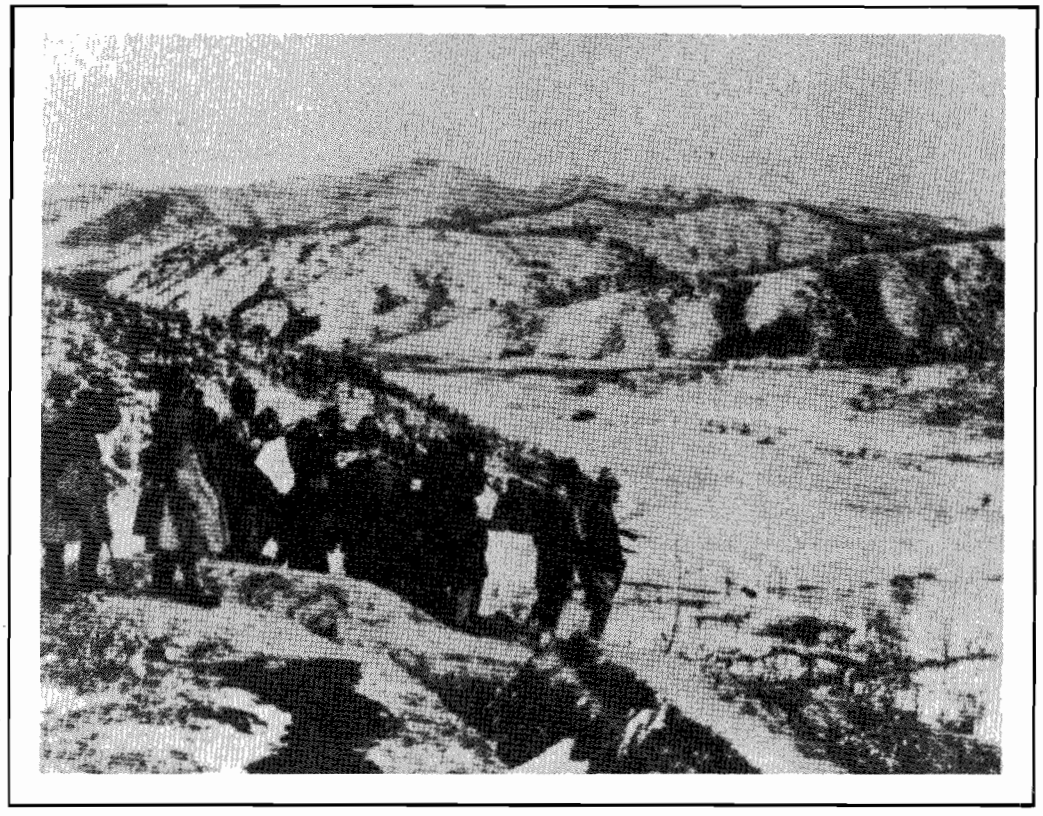
East of the central valley are the Eastern Highlands, extending for 1,500 kilometers from the Liaotung Peninsula in the south to the junction of the Amur and Ussuri rivers. These highlands, at places almost 350 kilometers wide, separate the Central Lowlands from the Soviet Far Eastern provinces. In the south, the Tunghua Mountains average 500 to 1,300 meters in elevation. Farther to the north near Mutanchiang, elevations run





Map 4. Manchuria: Waterways

from 900 to 1,500 meters, while south of the Sungari River elevations average 700 to 1,000 meters. In 1945, rail lines and roads traversed the Eastern Highlands from Changchun via Kirin to Tumen; from Harbin via Mutanchiang to Ussurysk; and from Harbin via Mutanchiang and Mishan to Iman on the Ussuri River. Less important military railroad lines ran from Tungning to Wangching and parallel to the Soviet border from Liaoheishan to Suiyang.



Eastern Manchurian Highlands

Heavy forests cover the Eastern Manchurian Highlands in the south, and dense thickets of small trees and brush cover the central and northern portions. The valley of the Sungari River, running northeast from Harbin to Chiamussu, separates the Eastern Highlands and Lesser Khingan Mountains. Before 1945, the Japanese built several military roads through the Eastern Highlands to provide communications between adjacent units and rear installations.

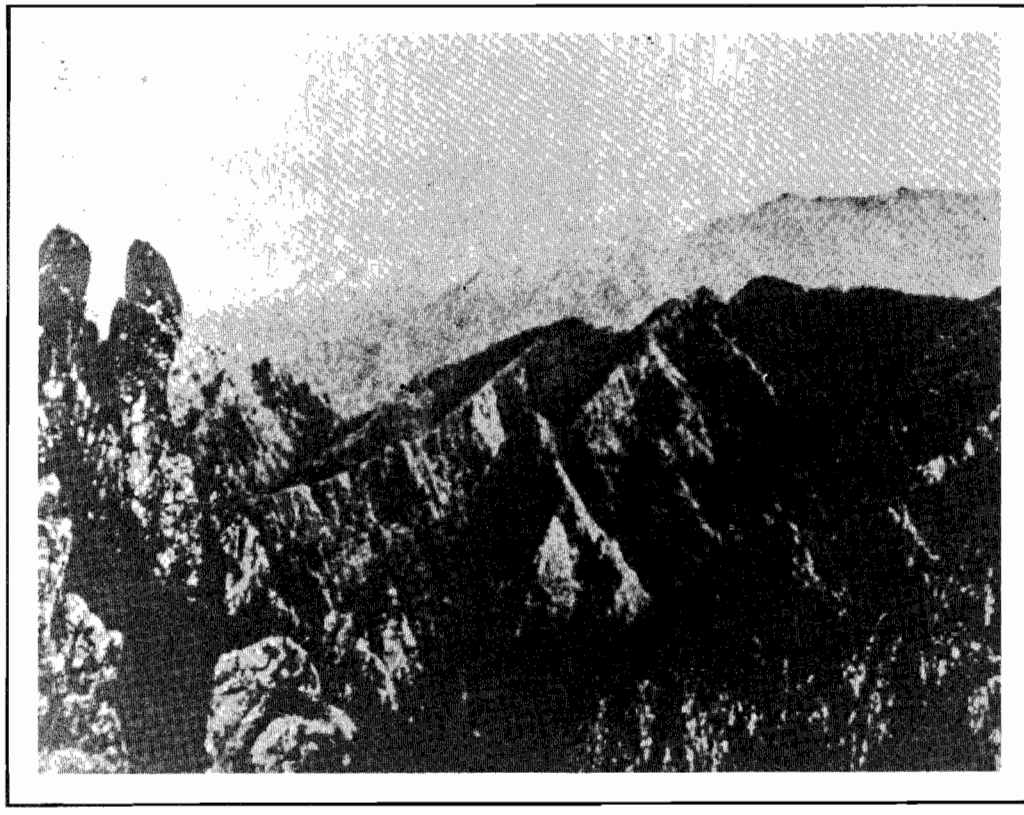


Map 5. Manchuria: Temperature



Map 6. Manchuria: Rainfall

Beyond the circle of mountains encasing the central valley are regions on the periphery of Manchuria. In the west the deserts of Inner Mongolia extend from the Grand Khingan Mountains to the Outer Mongolian border, and the Barga Plateau stretches from the northern Grand Khingans to Mongolia and the Argun river border between Manchuria and Siberia. Northeast and east of the Eastern Highlands are marshy lowlands along the Ussuri River and at the junction of the Ussuri, Amur, and Sungari rivers.



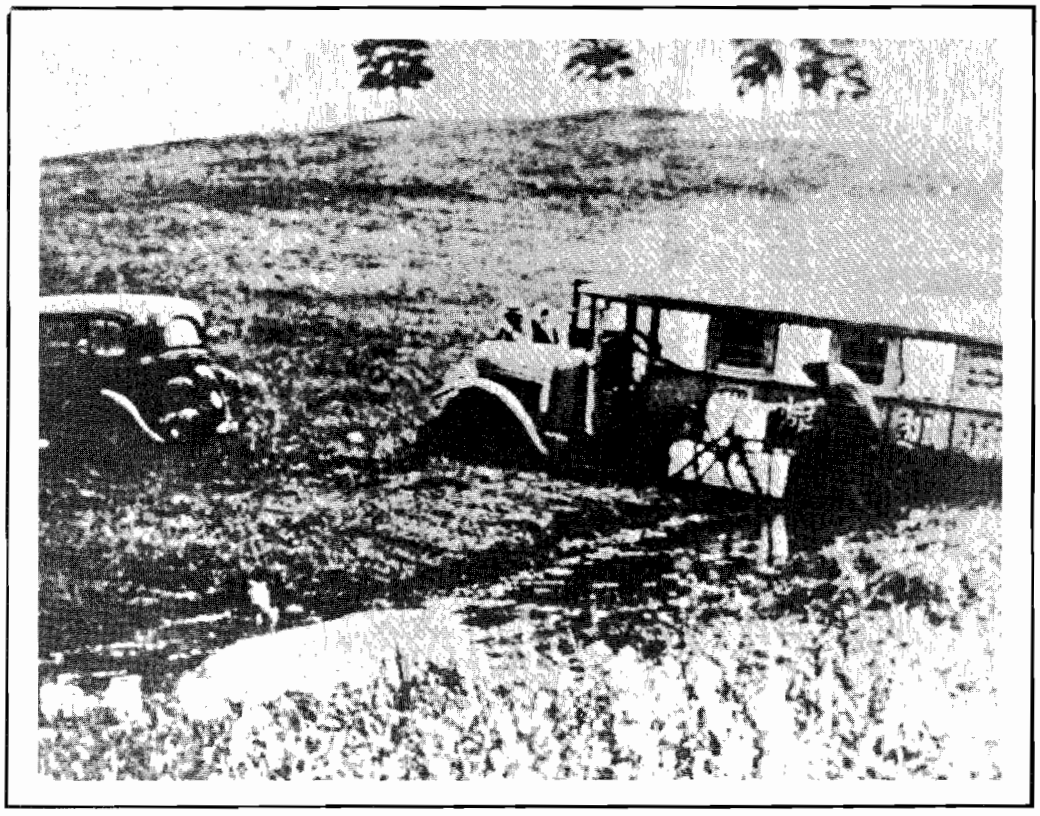
The Tunghua Mountains along the Korean border

The arid deserts of Inner Mongolia (the Dalai Plateau, an eastern extension of the Gobi Desert) extend west from the Grand Khingan Mountains into Mongolia. The distance from the mountains to the Mongolian border varies from 200 kilometers in the north to 400 kilometers in the south (the Linhsi area). This region of high plateau (1,000 to 1,200 meters) contains



Sand dunes and brush of the southern Barga Plateau

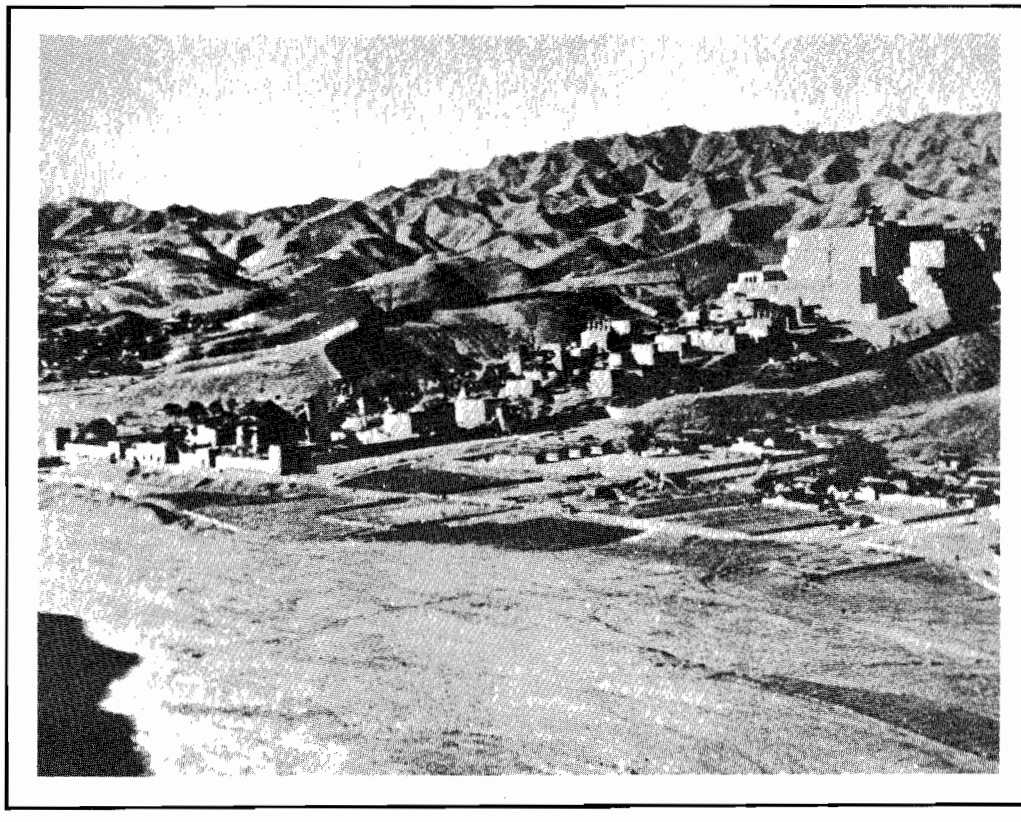
numerous sand dunes, some small hills of 100 to 150 meters, dry stream beds, and occasional saline lakes. Water is in scarce supply. Farther to the north, the Barga Plateau stretches west of the Grand Khingans from the Yakoshih area to the Argun River and the Soviet Outer Mongolian border. Sand dunes, numerous shallow depressions, and wide rock mesas make up the plateau of 600 to 800 meters, with isolated hills rising an additional 200 meters. The Hailar River meanders from east to west across the plateau, and in the west are two large saline lakes, the Dali Nuur and the Buyr Nuur. Numerous small tracks, but no hard-surfaced roads, traversed the Dalai Plateau in 1945. Running from Manchouli in northwest Manchuria to the Grand Khingan mountain passes at Yakoshih, the historic single-track Chinese Eastern Railroad bisected the Barga Plateau. A third class road paralleled the railroad, and other similar roads radiated from north and south of Hailar.



Marshy valley near Hailar on Barga and Dalai plateaus

In northeastern Manchuria a vast, flat, marshy lowland averaging thirty to 100 meters in elevation covers the region where the Amur, Ussuri, and Sungari rivers converge. The Sungari River cuts through the region from southwest to northeast. The flat, undulating region contains the Sungari River valley proper (thirty-five kilometers wide) and occasional hills. The lowland extends across the Amur River into Siberia. The entire region is swampy and usually flooded during the months of July and August. At the time of the campaign, overland routes consisted of third and fourth rate roads and trails, the most important of which extended from the Amur River at Lopei and Tungchiang along both banks of the Sungari to the city of Chiamussu.

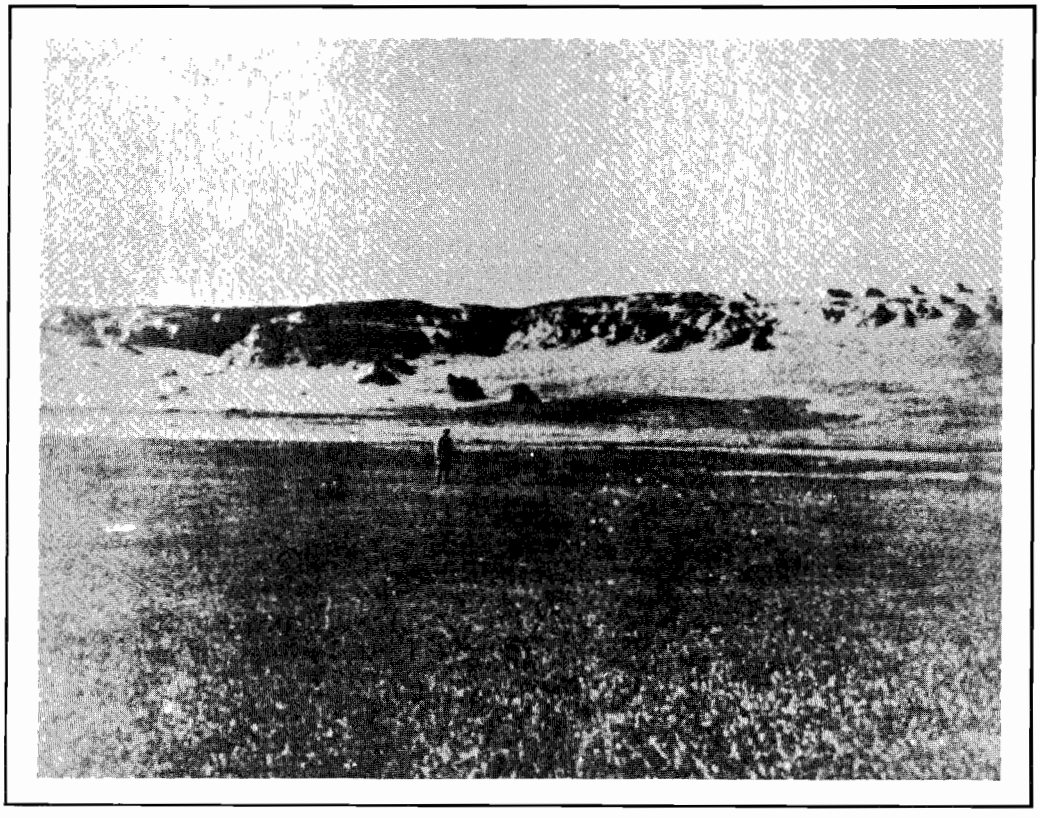
Climatic differences parallel geographic differences: the more temperate coastal area clashes with the extreme temperature and rainfall ranges of the interior. In the interior, winter brings extremely low temperatures. Temperatures decrease to the west of the Grand Khingan Mountains. Also, the interior generally lacks rainfall in winter. Summer is the season of heavy rains in most of Manchuria. The monsoon drift of moist warm maritime



Dolonnor region

air from the southeast crosses central Manchuria, bringing with it widespread low overcasts and heavy rains. Most of the year's precipitation occurs during July and August. Rainfall is heaviest in the east, while the summer months also bring rains as far west as the Grand Khingan Mountains and the Barga Plateau. The highest temperatures are in July and August with the severest temperatures recorded in the desert regions of the west.

Spring and fall are transitional periods with limited rainfall and moderate temperatures. Autumn (September to November) is the best season for military operations. Heavy rains stop, temperatures moderate, and high winds and dust storms subside.



Grassy plains and bluffs on the Barga and Dalai plateaus near Hailar

Militarily, the key to Manchuria is the central valley region. With its high population densities, its agricultural and industrial value, and its strategic position, control of the valley means control of Manchuria as a whole. Thus, defense of the central valley is a critical issue for any occupying power. In order to control any central valley, an occupying force must deny enemy access to the area by establishing adequate defenses in mountainous regions surrounding the central valley and by controlling potential avenues of approach.

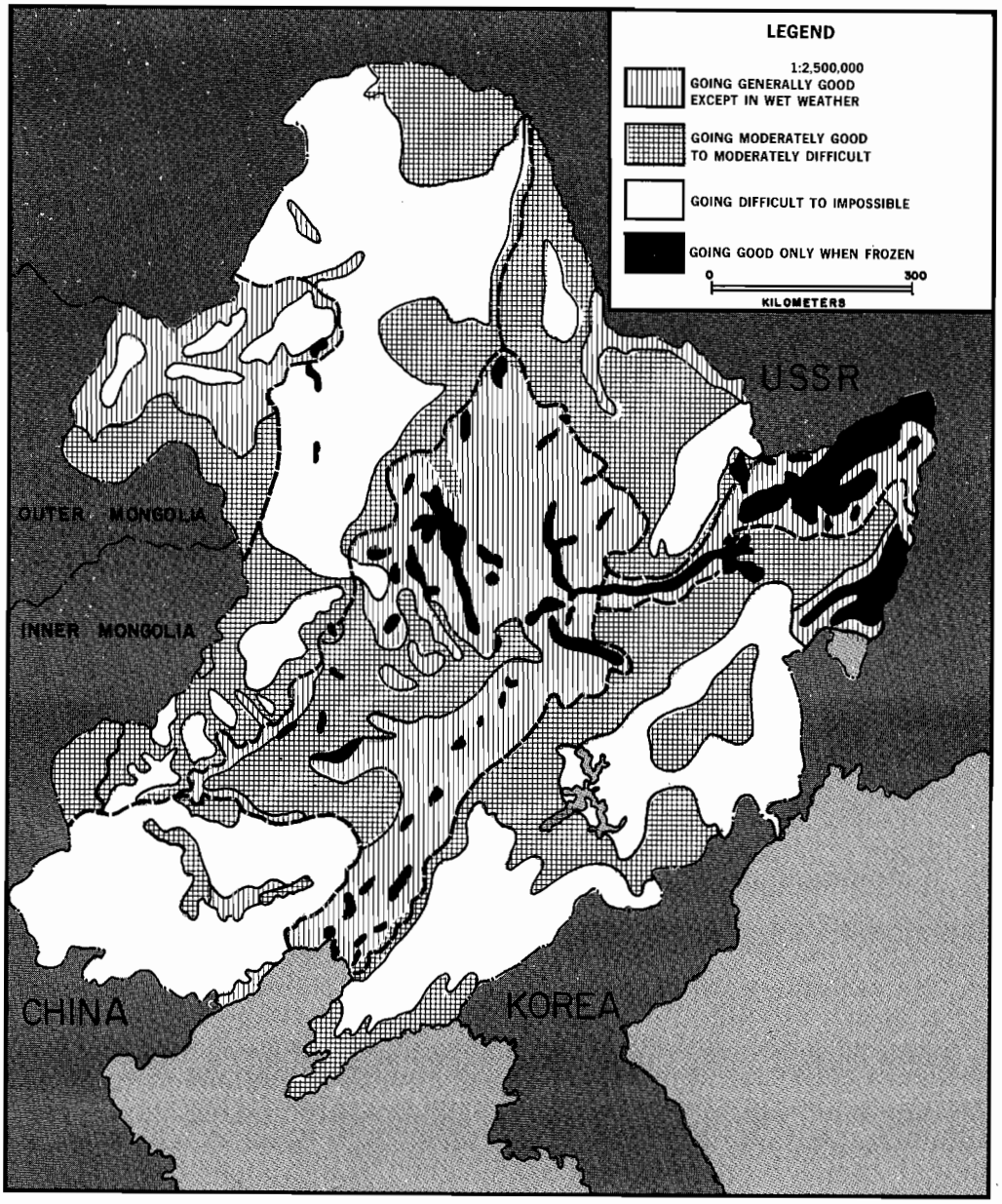
Good avenues of approach into Manchuria were at a premium in 1945 (see map 7). At first glance, a map of Manchuria in 1945 might seem to indicate that rail lines traversed the best avenues, but even these avenues were often restrictive. For example, the Chinese Eastern Railroad, running



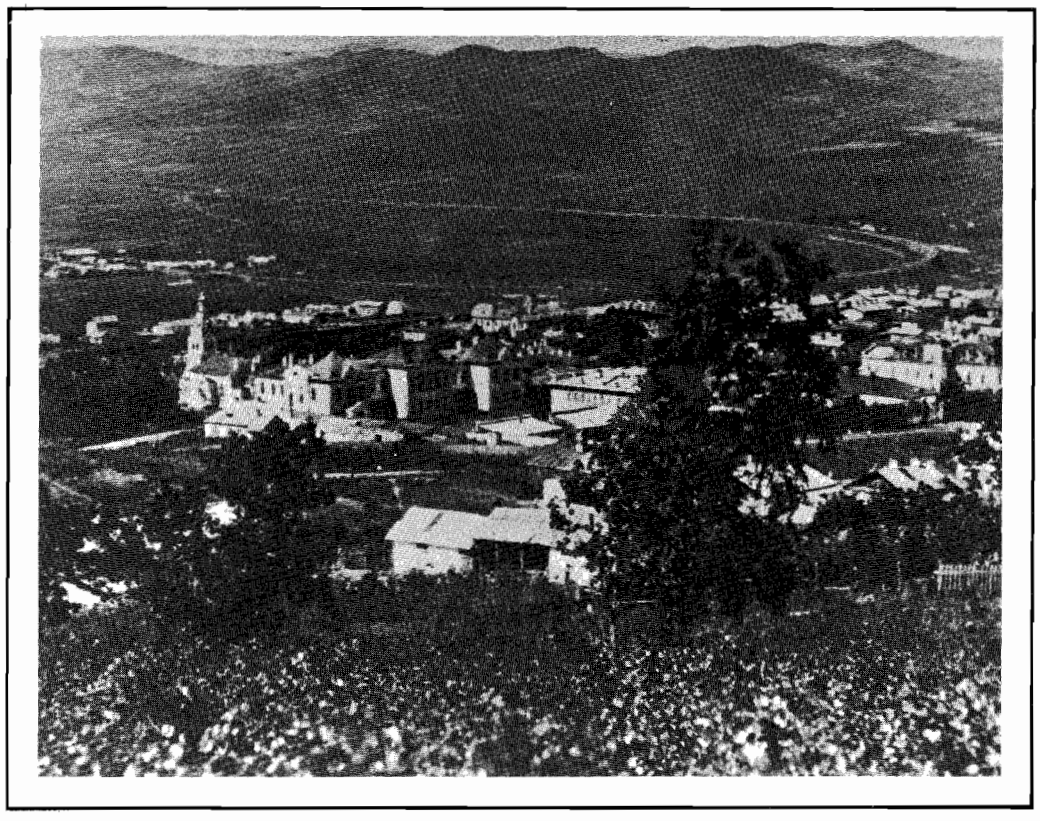
A cultivated river plain near Chiamussu

from Manchouli across the Barga Plateau and hence across the Grand Khingans from Yakoshih to Pokotu, did offer limited space for a military advance, but roads paralleling the rail lines were poor and prone to deterioration in bad weather. The branch rail line from the Halung-Arshaan region near the Mongolian border to Solun, Wangyemaio, and Taonan suffered from the same restrictions. The Grand Khingans could be crossed farther south through a number of narrow passes, but a force crossing these passes must first cross hundreds of kilometers of trackless desert waste. The actual height and slopes of the Grand Khingans do not prohibit military operations by mechanized forces. The major limiting factors are absence of good roads, lack of water, and rough terrain, which inhibits rapid movement.

Two potential avenues of approach traverse the Lesser Khingans. The first, south and southwest from Sunwu, involves crossing hilly, wooded terrain on poor roads. The second, along the Sungari River by way of Chiamussu, involves mastery of swamplands, also traversed by poor roads. The Sungari River, however, offers an excellent arena for amphibious advance.



Map 7. Manchuria: Trafficability



Suifenho

Eastern Manchuria offers a variety of avenues of approach, none particularly good. The better avenues follow the rail lines, rivers, or major roads of the region. The Iman-Hutou-Mishan axis is limited by marshlands, which are virtually inundated in the rainy months of July and August. The roads into eastern Manchuria south of Lake Khanka by way of Suifenho and Tungning offer restricted corridors of advance across hilly, brushy terrain. The roads themselves lack hard surfaces. In the southeast a force could advance along the Tumen River by way of Hungchun, Tumen, Yenchi, or Tunhoa, but as in other areas, the advance would be hindered by water obstacles, bottlenecks, and poor roads. On all of these potential axes of advance (Halung-Arshaan, Hailar, Yakoshih, Sunwu, the Sungari River, and those of eastern Manchuria), the Japanese built obstacles to block passage of military forces. These obstacles were often concrete and steel fortifications with extensive field fortifications extending across the avenues of approach. Those major passes through the Grand Khingan Mountains containing major rail lines or roads were fortified in depth. Passes lacking major roads were not fortified. Other areas not considered feasible avenues of approach (that is, those lacking roads) also had no fortifications.



Railroad line through the Laoyehling Mountains

In view of the paucity of good avenues of approach through the barrier mountains into central Manchuria, any military force would have to rely on its imagination and resourcefulness to create avenues either by overcoming terrain obstacles or by mastering the problems of operations in remote regions.

The Opposition: Japanese Forces and Operational Planning

3



Opposing the Soviet Far East Command were the Japanese Kwantung Army and its Manchukuoan and Inner Mongolian auxiliaries. The Kwantung Army was a venerable force whose name for years had evoked the respect of prospective foes. Formed in 1919 to defend Kwantung territory, and responsible for all of Manchuria after the Japanese seizure of the region in 1931, the Kwantung Army had grown into a formidable force of one million men by 1941. Most military authorities considered the army the most prestigious and powerful unit of the Japanese Army. The army's primary mission was to lend substance to the Manchukuoan government and to provide security from and perhaps offensive potential against the Soviet Union, should the need arise. In the 1930s the Soviets experienced numerous border incidents with the Kwantung Army. More significant confrontations took place at Lake Khasan in 1938 and at Khalkhin-Gol (Nomonhan) in 1939.*

The Kwantung Army figured heavily in Soviet concerns after the German invasion of the Soviet Union in 1941. While confronting the German threat, the Soviets had to keep a sharp eye on Germany's partner, Japan, lest the Kwantung Army undertake offensive operations against the Soviet Far East. These concerns caused the Soviet Union to retain a major force of about forty divisions (including two tank and two motorized rifle) in the Far East and the Trans-Baikal areas throughout the war years.[1] Those forces could have been well used to help counter the German threat in the west. The Soviet-Japanese Neutrality Pact of 1941 provided the Soviets a measure of security. Japanese preoccupation with events in China and the Pacific reinforced that feeling of security. Yet, the Kwantung Army remained a major concern right up to the hour of the Soviet attack in August 1945.

*For details on the Khalkhin-Gol conflict, see Edward J. Drea, *Nomonhan: Japanese-Soviet Tactical Combat, 1939,* Leavenworth Paper no. 2 (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Institute, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, 1981).

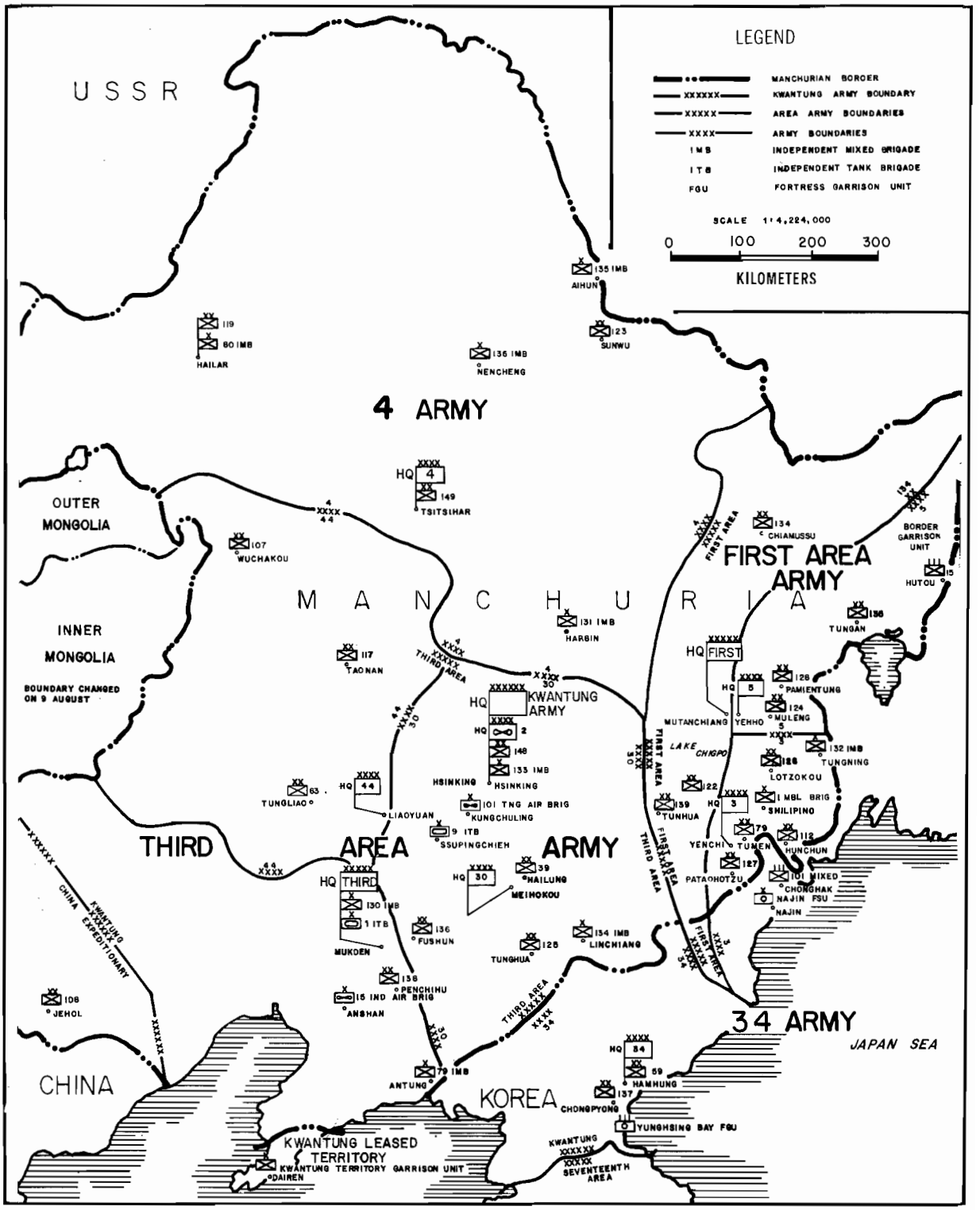
Before 9 August 1945, the Japanese Kwantung Army, commanded by General Yamada Otozo, consisted of two area armies (army groups) and a separate combined army, supported by one air army and the Sungarian Naval Flotilla (see app. 1 and map 8).[6] The First Area Army of General Kita Seiichi consisted of the 3d Army and the 5th Army, each made up of three infantry divisions. Under First Area Army control were four infantry divisions and one independent mixed brigade. The First Area Army was responsible for eastern Manchuria and numbered 222,157 men (see map 9).[7]

The Third Area Army of General Ushiroku Jun consisted of the 30th Army with four infantry divisions, one independent mixed brigade, and one tank brigade, and the 44th Army with three infantry divisions, one independent mixed brigade, and one tank brigade. Under direct Third Area Army control were one infantry division and two independent mixed brigades. Encompassing central and western Manchuria from the Amur River to the Liaotung Peninsula, the Third Area Army numbered 180,971 men (see map 10).[8]

The 4th Separate Army, under Lt. Gen. Uemura Mikio and headquartered at Tsitsihar, was responsible for north central and northwestern Manchuria. It consisted of three infantry divisions and four independent mixed brigades and numbered 95,464 men (see map 11).[9] In addition, the 125th Infantry Division at Tunghua was directly subordinate to Kwantung Army headquarters.

At the outbreak of hostilities, the Imperial High Command reassigned the 34th Army and Seventeenth Area Army to the Kwantung Army. The 34th Army headquartered at Hamhung in northern Korea consisted of the 59th Infantry Division at Hamhung and the 137th Infantry Division at Chongpyong, and had 50,104 men.[10] In southern Korea, the Seventeenth Area Army consisted of seven infantry divisions and two independent mixed brigades.

The basic building block of the Japanese force structure was the infantry division. Japanese infantry divisions were organizationally stronger in manpower than the Soviet rifle divisions. Even in their reduced 1945 state, most Japanese divisions still outmanned their Soviet equivalents. In weaponry, however, the Japanese division was weaker than its Soviet counterpart, and few Japanese divisions actually possessed all the weapons they were authorized. Two types of infantry divisions existed in the Japanese force structure. The normal and more numerous type was the triangular division configured for tactical operations. Such a division originally contained 20,000 men, but by 1945 numbered from 12,000 to 16,000 men (a few had as many as 18,000, and some had as few as 9,000 men).[11] The 1945 triangular division (see table 2) consisted of three infantry regiments of three battalions each, a raiding battalion, an artillery regiment with three battalions (thirty-six guns total), an engineer regiment, a transport regiment, a signal company, and support units.[12]



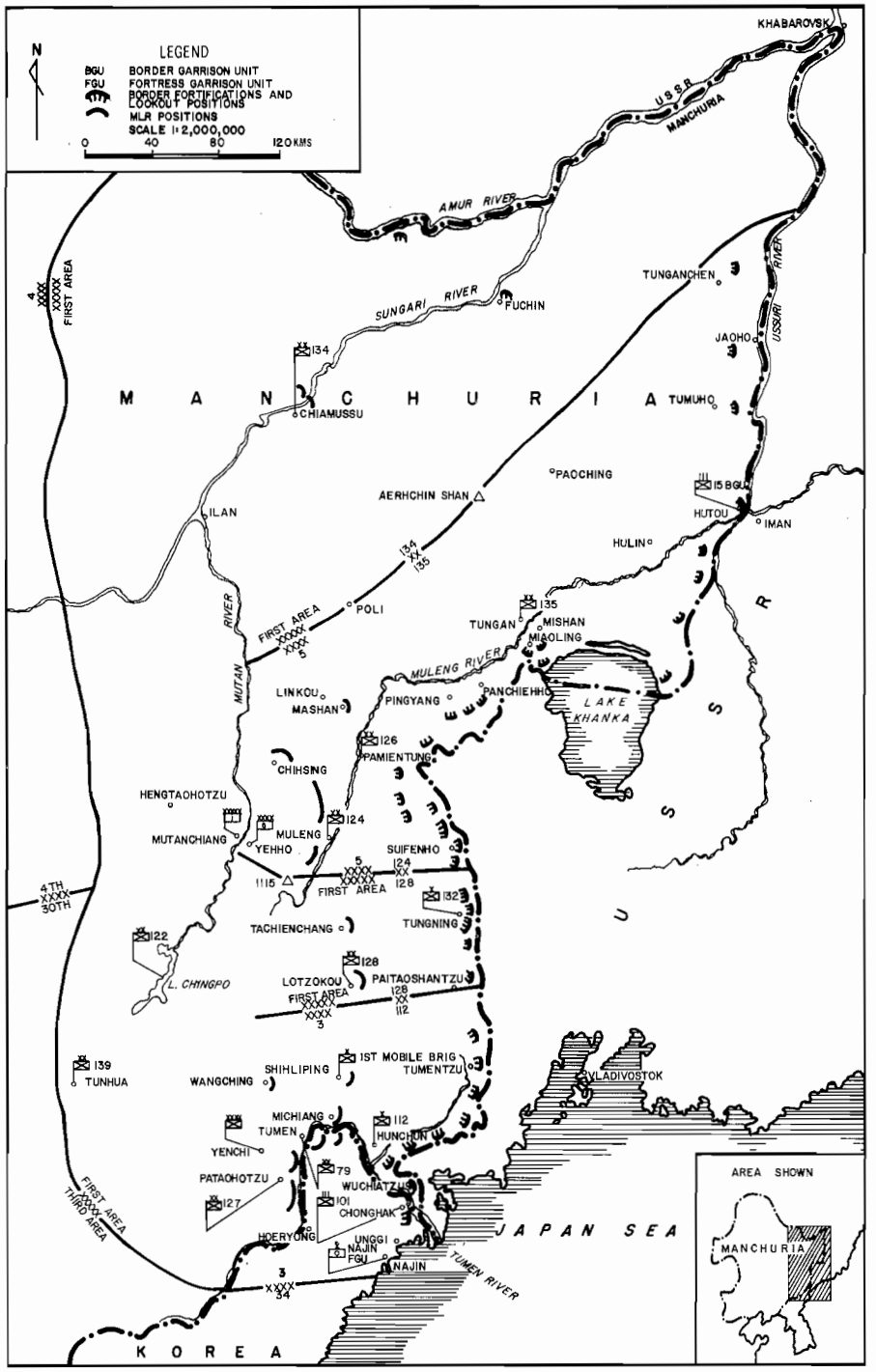
Map 8. Kwantung Army Dispositions

During the Pacific and China wars, the Kwantung Army eroded in strength and quality as the requirements of other theaters drew off its assets.[2] Many experienced units were siphoned off and replaced by units formed from draft levies, reservists, and cannibalized smaller units. According to Soviet estimates, in August 1945 the Kwantung Army (including forces in Korea) numbered thirty-one infantry divisions, nine infantry brigades, two tank brigades, and one special purpose brigade formed into three area armies (army groups), a separate combined army, one air army, and the Sungarian Naval Flotilla.[3] The Soviets assert that this force contained 1,155 tanks, 5,360 guns, and 1,800 aircraft. Added to these was the army of Manchukuo, numbering eight infantry and seven cavalry divisions, with fourteen infantry and cavalry brigades. On southern Sakhalin Island and in the Kurile Islands were three infantry divisions and one infantry brigade of the Fifth Area Army subordinate to the Japanese Imperial High Command. The strength of the entire force numbered 1.2 million men, of which more than one million were Japanese (see table 1).[4] Discounting forces in southern Korea, southern Sakhalin, and the Kuriles, Japanese sources place the number of Japanese troops in Manchuria at 713,724 men.[5] Thus, the overall ratio of Soviet to Japanese forces with auxiliaries was 1.2:1. Counting only the Japanese in Manchuria proper, the ratio was 2.2:1. In tanks and artillery, the ratio was 4.8:1; and in aviation assets, about 2:1.

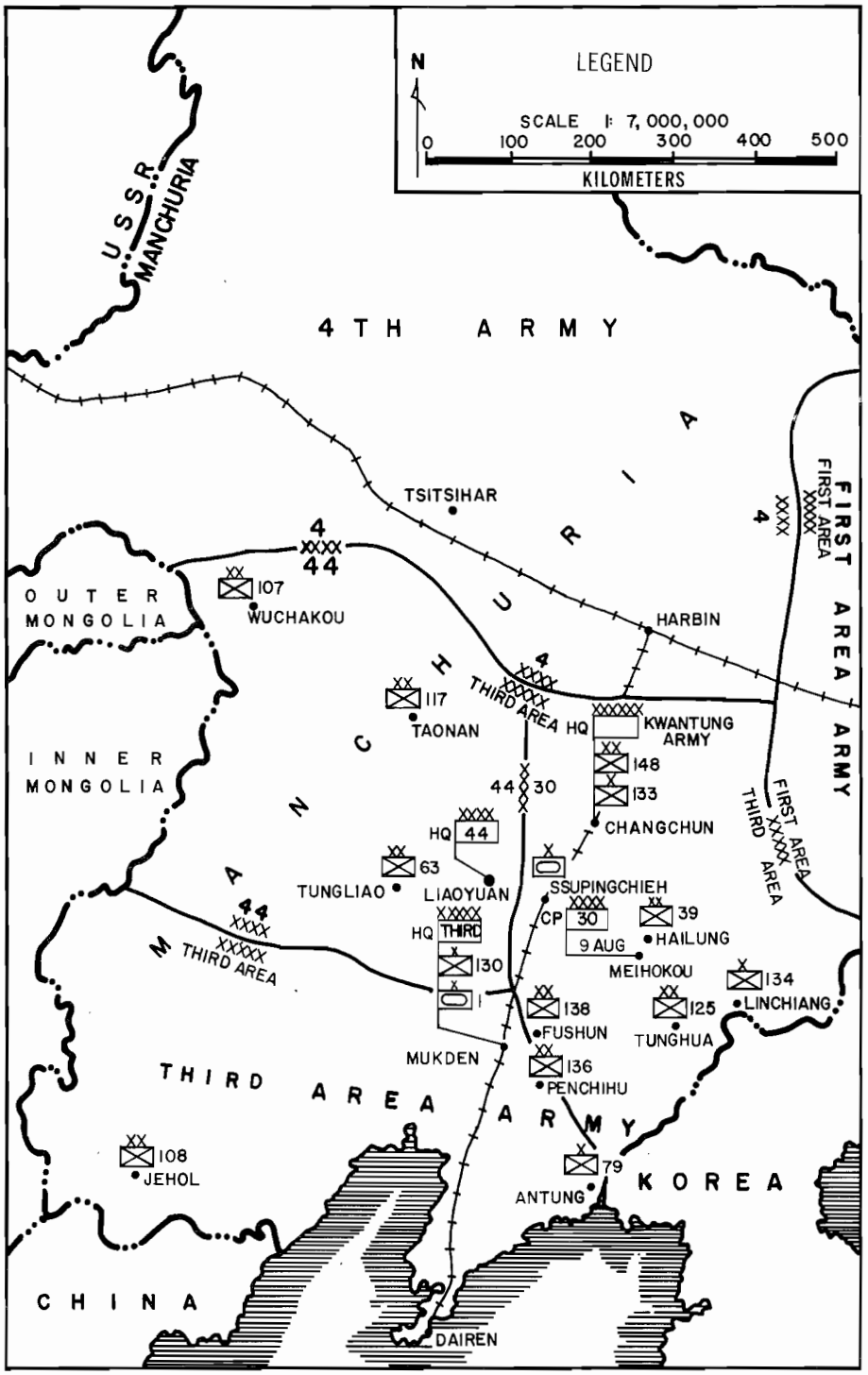
Table 1. Composition of Forces Facing the Soviets in the Far East

Strength	Personnel: 1,217,000 Weapons: Tanks 1,155 Guns 5,360 Aircraft 1,800			
Forces	Japanese — 993,000		Auxiliary — 214,000	
	Manchuria (Kwantung Army) 713,000	Southern Korea, Sakhalin, Kuriles 280,000	Manchukuoan Army 170,000	Inner-Mongolian Forces 44,000
Subunits	2 area armies 6 armies 24 infantry divisions 9 infantry brigades 2 tank brigades	1 area army 10 infantry divisions 3 infantry brigades	8 infantry divisions 7 cavalry divisions 14 infantry/cavalry brigades	5—6 cavalry divisions/brigades

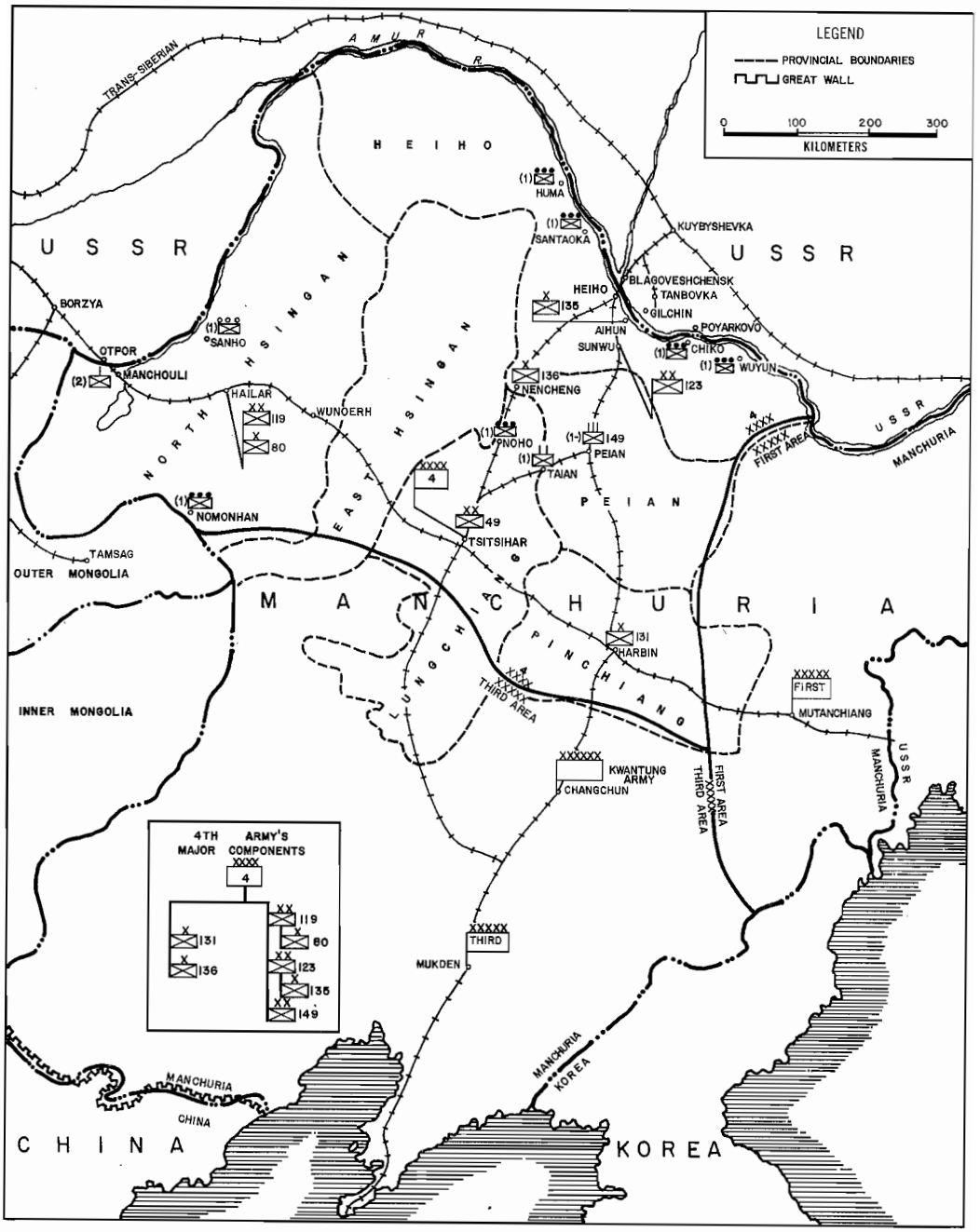
Sources: "Kampaniia sovetskikh vooruzhennikh sil na dal'nem vostoke v 1945g (facti i tsifry)" [The campaign of the Soviet armed forces in the Far East in 1945: Facts and figures], *Voenno-istoricheskii Zhurnal* [Military history journal], August 1965; L. N. Vnotchenko, *Pobeda na dal'nem vostoke* [Victory in the Far East] (Moskva: Voennoe Izdatel'stvo, 1971); U.S. Army Forces Far East, Military History Section, Japanese Monograph no. 155: *Record of Operations Against Soviet Russia — On Northern and Western Fronts of Manchuria and in Northern Korea (August 1945)* (Tokyo, 1954), table 1.



Map 9. Japanese First Area Army Dispositions



Map 10. Japanese Third Area Army Dispositions



Map 11. Japanese 4th Separate Army Dispositions

The second type was the square division, a light infantry division originally organized for garrison duty in China. The square division (see table 2) consisted of two infantry brigades, each with four infantry battalions, an engineer battalion, a signal company, and support units.[13] Because of its garrison mission, the square division had neither artillery nor antitank support. Thus, higher commands had to attach artillery and antitank units

to the divisions before they could perform field service. The 63d and 117th Infantry Divisions were square divisions; all of the remaining divisions were triangular. The infantry divisions were armed with rifles, machine guns, mortars, and artillery pieces, but had no submachine guns, antitank rifles, or rocket artillery. Antitank capability was provided by a battalion of sixteen 37-mm antitank guns, weapons ineffective against modern World War II medium and heavy tanks.

Table 2. Japanese Infantry Division TO&E, 1945

Type	△	□
Average Personnel Strength	13,500	13,500
Organization	3 infantry regiments 3 infantry battalions 1 artillery regiment 2 artillery battalions 1 antitank battalion, 16 × 37mm 1 engineer regiment 1 raiding battalion 1 transport regiment 1 signal company	2 infantry brigades 4 infantry battalions 1 engineer battalion 1 signal company

Source: U.S. Army Forces Far East, Military History Section, Japanese Monograph no. 155: *Record of Operations Against Soviet Russia — On Northern and Western Fronts of Manchuria and in Northern Korea (August 1945)* (Tokyo, 1954), charts 1, 2.

The independent mixed brigade was a small division, normally comprising five battalions with separate support and supply units and averaging 5,300 men.[14] Above division level, the Kwantung Army also suffered from a deficiency of weaponry, particularly armor. Tanks carried only 57-mm guns and machine guns. In addition to being outgunned, these tanks had less armor than the Soviet T-34s.

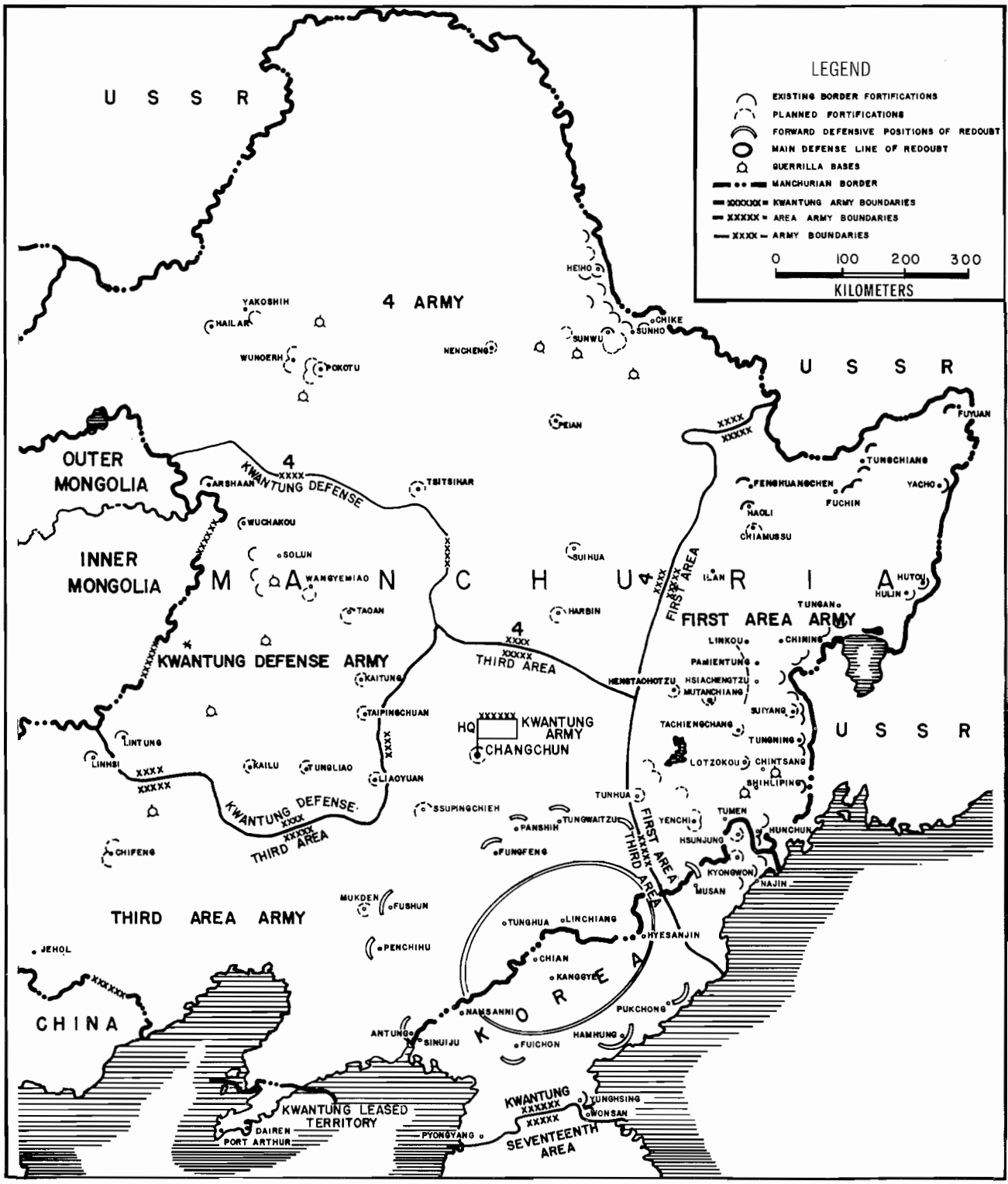
Despite its numerical strength, the Kwantung Army lacked quality. The Japanese Imperial High Command had transferred most veteran Japanese divisions from Manchuria before the summer of 1945. Hence, most remaining divisions were newly formed from reservists or from cannibalized smaller units. In fact, only the 119th, 107th, 108th, 117th, 63d, and 39th Infantry Divisions had existed before January 1945.[15] Training was limited in all units, and equipment and materiel shortages plagued the Kwantung Army at every level. The Japanese considered none of the Kwantung Army divisions combat ready and some divisions only 15 percent ready.[16]

The Japanese High Command's difficulty in maintaining the strength and readiness posture of its force structure had a significant impact on Japanese strategic and operational planning. As the Kwantung Army weakened, planning shifted from the offense (before 1944) to realistic defense (in September 1944) and ultimately to acceptance of the need to delay on the borders and defend deeper in Manchuria (in 1945). Japanese acquiescence in a new strategy of delay followed by defense became apparent in May 1945. Kwantung Army headquarters drafted new plans incorporating Fabian tactics and distributed those plans to area armies in June 1945.[17]

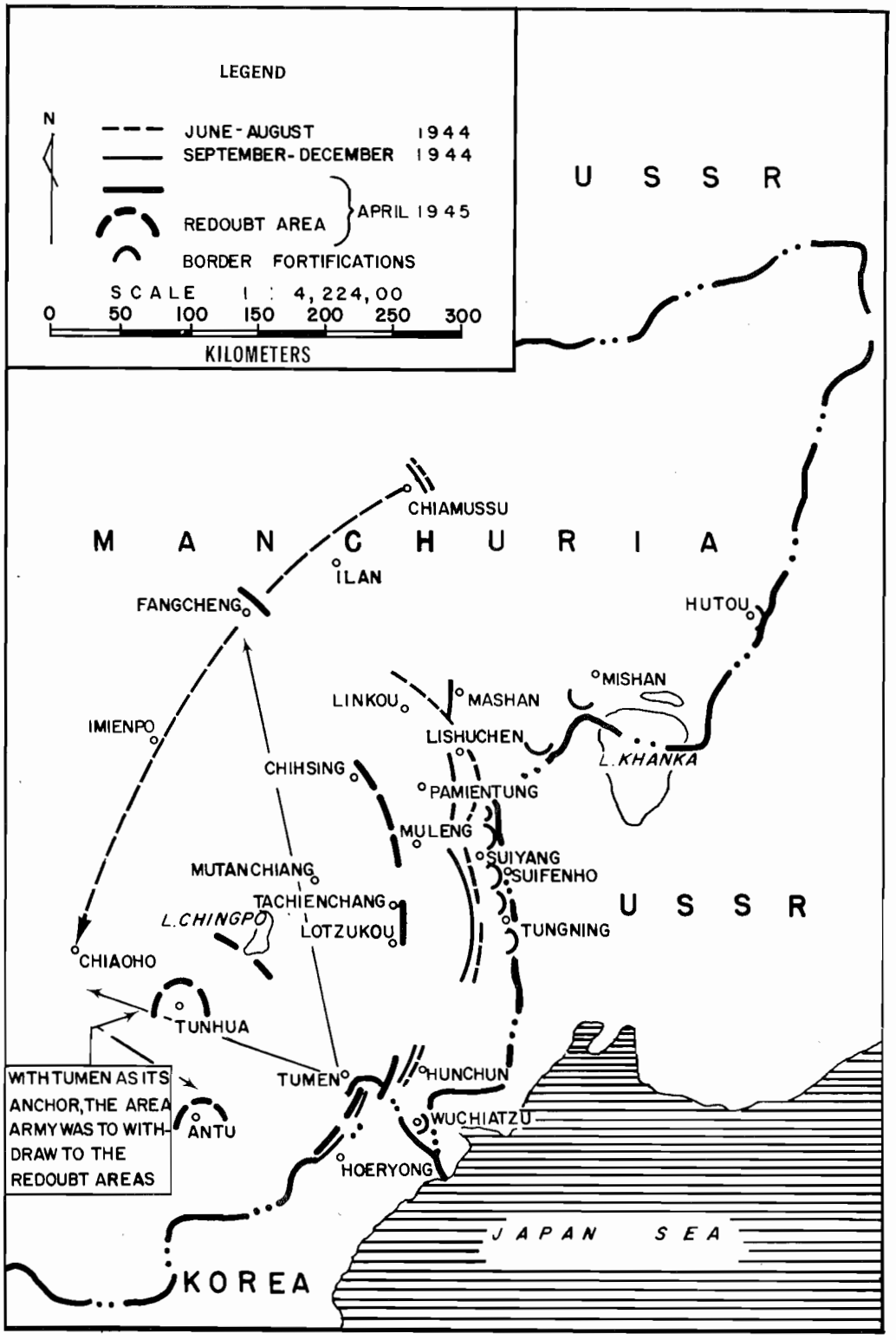
The May-June plans provided for delay at the borders and subsequent defense of successive positions, culminating in a final defense in a redoubt stronghold constructed in the Tunghua area (see map 12). According to this plan, the First Area Army would delay with platoon- to battalion-size elements occupying fortifications on the eastern border. The main force of divisions and brigades would occupy defensive positions forty to seventy kilometers to the rear, in the vicinity of the cities of Fangcheng, Chihsing, Tachienchang, Lotzokou, and Tumen. The plan provided for main force units to withdraw to new positions at Tunghua and Antu before they became decisively engaged (see map 13).

The Third Area Army would use companies and battalions to delay the Soviet advance through the fortified zone running from Handagai to Wuchakou on the western border. Main force divisions would avoid decisive battle by withdrawing eastward through a series of defensive positions. The first defensive line stretched from Mukden to Changchun, and the final position extended from Huanjen through Hsinpin to Chinchuan in the redoubt area of Tunghua. The 4th Separate Army planned to delay at the border fortifications in northwest Manchuria and along the rail line through the Grand Khingan Mountains, to defend a line from Pokotu through Nencheng to Peian, and ultimately to withdraw to Tsitsihar and Harbin to join the main Kwantung Army forces (see map 14).

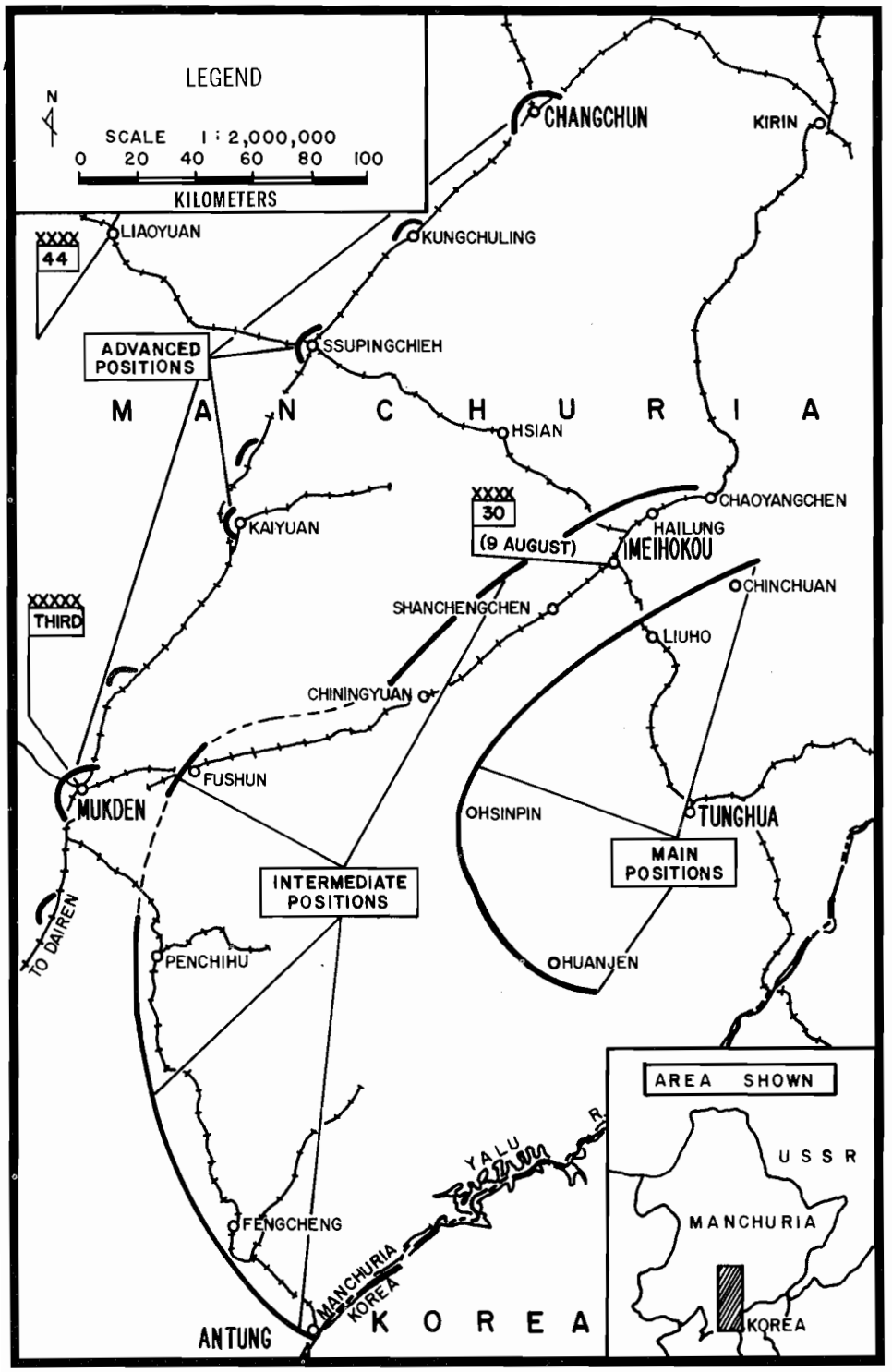
According to these plans, roughly one-third of the Japanese force would deploy in the border region with the remaining two-thirds concentrated in operational depth to create the series of defensive lines. The Japanese hoped that rough terrain, long distances, and determined opposition would take their toll on the Soviets, eroding Soviet strength to the point of exhaustion by the time they reached the redoubt area, where the Japanese could check the Soviet advance and perhaps even counterattack. The immediate problem for the Japanese in the summer of 1945 was to effect the unit redeployments needed to implement the plan, and to complete the required fortification and construction program. Both the redeployment and the fortification programs were still incomplete when the Soviet offensive began.



Map 12. Kwantung Army Defense Plan



Map 13. First Area Army Defense Plan



Map 14. Third Area Army Defense Plan

Soviet Organization for Combat and Force Structure

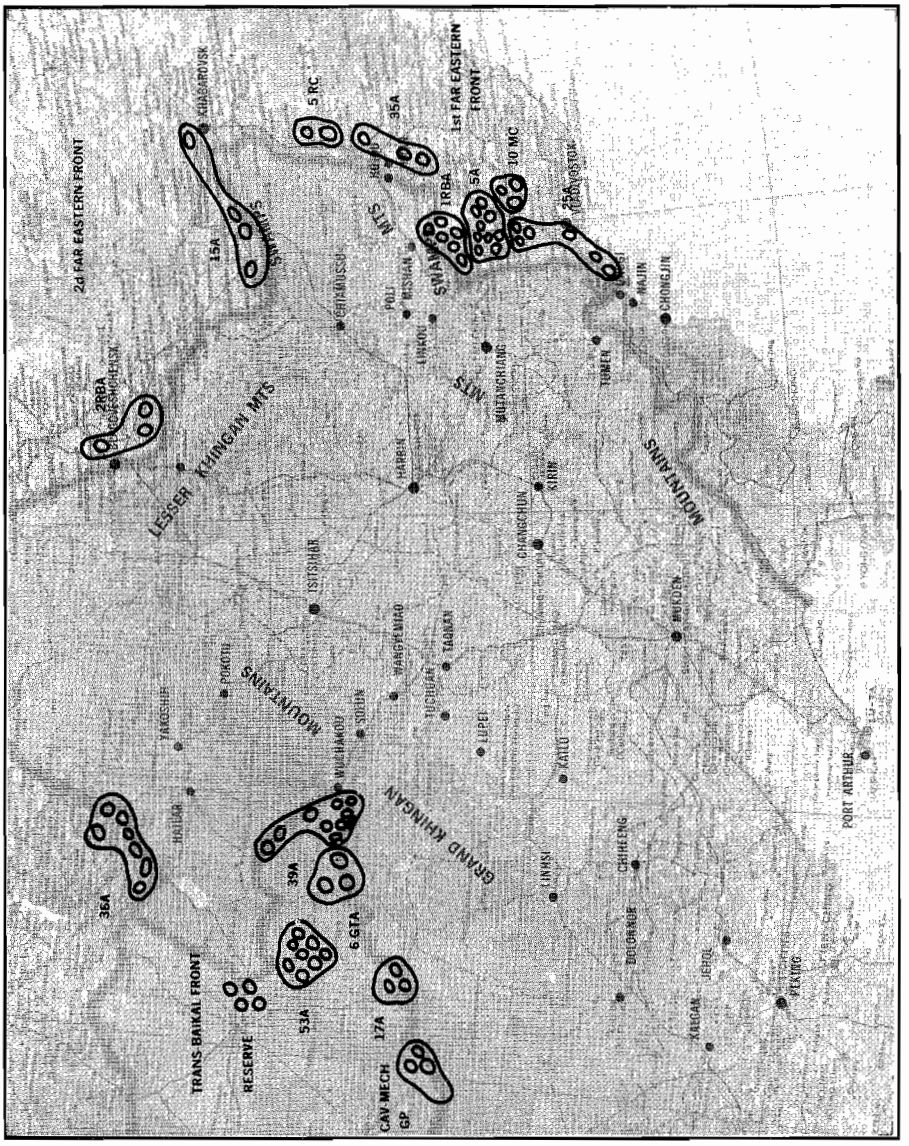
4

The Soviet High Command organized its forces in the Far East and Trans-Baikal regions into a unified command. The complexity of terrain in Manchuria, the vastness of the area of operations, and the necessity for a well-coordinated, timed operation required such unity. The resulting Far East theater headquarters under Marshal A. M. Vasilevsky was a structure unique to 1945. It was more formal in its composition and more precise in its functions than earlier theater command and control arrangements. The position of *STAVKA* coordinator used earlier in the war to plan and control multifront operations was ad hoc, with limited power and a negligible staff. Marshals Vasilevsky and Zhukov had performed the role of *STAVKA* coordinator successfully on numerous occasions. By contrast, the new Far East theater commander had considerable power to plan, coordinate, and execute and had a full staff to support him in these functions. The Far East Command had responsibility for all land, sea, and air operations in the Far East and Trans-Baikal regions (see app. 2 and map 15).

Subordinate to the Far East Command were three front headquarters (see tables 3—6): the Trans-Baikal Front of Marshal R. Ya. Malinovsky, the 1st Far Eastern Front of Marshal K. A. Meretskov, and the 2d Far Eastern Front of General M. A. Purkayev.

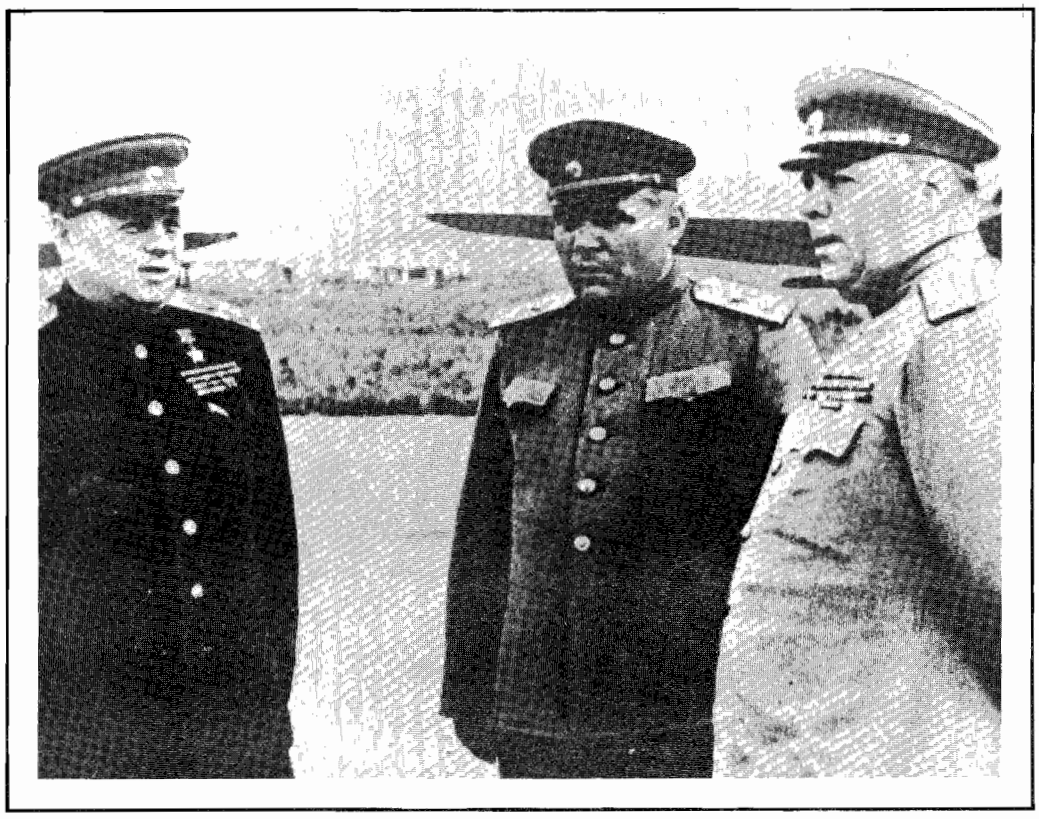
The Trans-Baikal Front consisted of one tank army (6th Guards), four combined arms armies (53d, 39th, 17th, 36th), a Soviet-Mongolian Cavalry-Mechanized Group, an air army (12th), and a small reserve. The front comprised 654,040 men organized into thirty rifle divisions, five cavalry divisions, two tank divisions, ten tank brigades, eight mechanized, motorized rifle, or motorized armored brigades, and numerous support units. It contained 41.4 percent of the total Soviet force in the Far East, and its total operational frontage extended 2,300 kilometers.[1]

The 1st Far Eastern Front consisted of four combined arms armies (5th Guards, 1st Red Banner, 35th, and 25th), one mechanized corps (10th), an operational group (Chuguevsk), an air army (9th), and a reserve. The front



Map 15. Soviet Far East Command Dispositions

numbered 586,589 men organized into thirty-one rifle divisions, one cavalry division, twelve tank brigades, two mechanized brigades, and support units. Operating on a frontage of only 700 kilometers, the front had 37.2 percent of the total Soviet force.[2]



From right to left: Commander of the Far East Command, Marshal A. M. Vasilevsky; Commander of the Trans-Baikal Front, Marshal R. Ya. Malinovsky; and Commander of the 1st Far Eastern Front, Marshal K. A. Meretskov.

Vasilevsky, Aleksandr Mikhailovich (1895—?), Far East Command

1915—joined Russian Army; Alekseev Military School; junior officer, Novokhopersk Regiment; 103d Infantry Division, company, battalion commander.
1918—joined Red Army; assistant platoon commander, company commander, detachment commander.
1919—(Oct) battalion commander; commander, 5th Rifle Regiment, 2d Tula Rifle Division; regimental commander, 48th Rifle Division; regimental commander, 11th Petrograd Rifle Division (Russo-Polish War).
1920—assistant regimental commander, 48th Rifle Division; chief of staff, division school; regimental commander, 48th Rifle Division.
1931—Training Administration, RKKA (Workers and Peasants Red Army).
1934—Training Department, Volga Military District.
1936—general staff officer, RKKA.
1936—General Staff Academy.
1940—(May) assistant chief, Operations Division, General Staff.
1941—(Aug) assistant chief of General Staff; chief, Operations Division, General Staff.
1942—(May) chief of General Staff.
1942—(Oct) assistant commissar of defense, USSR; representative of the *STAVKA* at Stalingrad, Ostrogosh-Rossosh, Kursk, Donbas, Krivoi-rog, Nikopol, and Belorussian operations.
1945—(Feb) commander, 3d Belorussian Front (E. Prussia operation).
1945—(Jun) supreme commander, Soviet Forces Far East.
1946—chief of General Staff, deputy minister of the armed forces.
1948—(Nov) 1st deputy minister of the armed forces.

1949—(Mar) minister of the armed forces.
1953—first deputy minister of defense.
1956—deputy minister of defense for military science.
1959—(Jan) general inspector, General Inspectors Group, Ministry of Defense.

Malinovsky, Rodion Yakovlevich (1898—1967), Trans-Baikal Front

1916—joined Russian Army; service in Russia and France.
1918—joined Red Army; with 27th Rifle Division on eastern front.
1920—commander, machine gun platoon; commander, machine gun command; assistant battalion commander; battalion commander.
1930—Frunze Academy.
1930—chief of staff, cavalry regiment, 10th Cavalry Division; on staff of North Caucasus and Belorussian Military Districts; chief of staff, 3d Cavalry Corps.
1937—service in Spain.
1939—instructor, Frunze Academy.
1941—(Mar) commander, 48th Rifle Corps (border battles).
1941—(Aug) commander, 6th Army.
1941—(Dec) commander, Southern Front.
1942—(Aug) commander, 66th Army.
1942—(Oct) commander, Voronezh Front.
1943—(Feb) commander, Southern Front.
1943—(Mar) commander, Southwestern Front (Oct 1943 renamed 3d Ukrainian Front) (Donbas, Right Bank of Ukraine, Odessa operations).
1944—(Mar) commander, 2d Ukrainian Front (Iassy-Kishinev, Debrecen, Budapest, Vienna operations).
1945—(Jul) commander, Trans-Baikal Front.
1945-47—commander, Trans-Baikal-Amur Military District.
1947—commander of forces in the Far East.
1953—commander of Far East Military District.
1956—(Mar) first deputy minister of defense and commander of ground forces.
1957—(Oct) minister of defense.

Meretskov, Kirill Afanas'evich (1897—1968), 1st Far Eastern Front

1918—joined Red Army.
1919—detachment commander; brigade chief of staff; division chief of staff.
1921—RKKA Military Academy.
1922—chief of staff, 1st Tomsk Siberian Cavalry Division; assistant chief of staff, 15th Rifle Corps; chief of staff, 9th Don Rifle Division.
1924—chief, Mobilization Department, Moscow Military District; assistant chief of staff, Moscow Military District.
1930—commander, 14th Rifle Division.
1931—chief of staff, Moscow and Belorussian Military Districts.
1935—chief of staff, Special Red Banner Far Eastern Army.
1936—service in Spain.
1937—assistant chief of General Staff.
1938—(Sep) commander, Volga and Leningrad Military Districts; commander, 7th Army (Finnish War).
1940—(Aug) chief of General Staff.
1941—(Jan) assistant commissar of defense.
1941—(Jun) representative of *STAVKA* to Northwest and Karelian Fronts.
1941—(Sep) commander, 7th Separate Army.
1941—(Nov) commander, 4th Army (Tikvin Operation).
1941—(Dec) commander, Volkov Front.
1942—(May) commander, 33d Army.
1942—(Jun) commander, Volkov Front.
1944—(Feb) commander, Karelian Front.
1945—(Apr) commander, Maritime Army (Far East).
1945—(Aug) commander, 1st Far Eastern Front.
1945—commander, Maritime, Moscow, White Sea, and Northern Military Districts; chief of *Vystrel* Course.
1955—assistant minister of defense for higher military schools.
1964—(Apr) General Inspectors Group, Central Inspectorate, Ministry of Defense.

The 2d Far Eastern Front included three combined arms armies (15th, 16th, 2d Red Banner), one separate rifle corps (5th), an operational group (Kuriles), an air army (10th), and a reserve. The front's 337,096 men operated on an extended frontage of 2,130 kilometers.[3] This, the smallest of the three fronts, had about 21.4 percent of the total force. Thus, the total Soviet force available for operations against the Japanese included more than 1.5 million men. More than 26,000 artillery pieces and 5,500 tanks and self-propelled guns provided firepower support for the Far East Command.[4]

The Soviets carefully tailored all units, from front through army, corps, division, brigade, and regiment down to battalion level, to accomplish precise missions. Tailoring reflected not only enemy strength and dispositions, but also the terrain over which the unit would operate and the desired speed of the operation. Each unit received requisite artillery, antitank, tank, air defense, and engineer support. Thus, the 1st Far Eastern Front received heavy artillery attachments to provide the firepower necessary to overcome heavily fortified Japanese positions. The Trans-Baikal Front received heavy vehicular and motorized rifle support so that it might conduct rapid, balanced combined arms operations over the broad expanse of western Manchuria and Inner Mongolia. Within each front, armies operating against strong enemy fortified zones possessed significantly greater artillery assets than other armies operating on more open axes of advance. Units operating over difficult terrain had extensive engineer support. At the lowest tactical levels, tailored forward detachments of rifle divisions and tank and mechanized corps, as well as the assault groups of rifle regiments and rifle battalions, provided the firepower and mobility necessary to conduct high speed operations.

Such imaginative tailoring required by the nature of the area of operations resulted in a force structure in Manchuria that differed considerably from unit TO&Es* and force structures used earlier in the war. Some of these adjustments proved constructive, and the Soviets in postwar years incorporated the changes into formal unit TO&Es. A careful investigation of Soviet forces before 1945 and during the Manchurian campaign illustrates the dynamic nature of Soviet force structuring.

The evolution of Soviet force structure during World War II is the story of an army adjusting to the realities of war. The Soviet Army weathered the beatings it took at the hands of the Germans in 1941 and scaled down its forces accordingly. As the tide of war turned in the Soviets' favor in late 1942 and 1943, so did the Soviet Army grow in complexity and strength. The Soviet Army of 1941 was massive. Its units were large and ponderous. Rifle units organized as armies, corps, divisions, and regiments were the backbone of the force structure. Armies were large, theoretically consisting of as many as three to four rifle corps, for a total of twelve to fifteen rifle divisions, and reinforced by mechanized, cavalry, tank, and artillery units.[5] Supplementing the rifle units and providing the mobile offensive punch were mechanized corps, with more than 1,000 tanks each, and separate cavalry corps.[6] In addition, the Soviet force structure had separate tank brigades, separate antitank brigades, artillery regiments, and airborne corps. This large and cumbersome force was difficult to control, required quantities of equipment not available in 1941, and demanded topflight leadership, also generally unavailable when the war began.

*Tables of organization and equipment.

Table 3. Soviet Far East Command Composition

	Total	Trans-Baikal Front	1st Far Eastern Front	2d Far Eastern Front
Personnel:				
Combat	1,058,982	416,000	404,056	238,926
Rear Service	518,743	238,040	182,533	98,170
Total	1,577,725	654,040	586,589	337,096
	100%	41.4%	37.2%	21.4%
Weapons:				
Guns/mortars	27,086	9,668	11,430	5,988
Multiple rocket launchers	1,171	583	516	72
Tanks/SP guns[a]	5,556	2,416	1,860	1,280
Aircraft	3,721	1,324	1,137	1,260
Vehicles	85,819	49,053	4,850	31,916
Frontage:	5,130 km	2,300 km	700 km	2,130 km

Organizations:[b]	Total	Comb Arms	Air	Tank	Cav-Mech	Rifle	Cavalry	Motorized Rifle/Mech	Arty	AAA	Engineer
Fronts	3	3									
Armies	15	11	3	1							
Groups	1				1						
Corps	24			1		19		3	1		
Divisions	89			2		72	6		2	7	
Brigades	113			30		4		12	47		20
Regiments	98			5[c]		5			72	16	
Fortified regions	21										

[a] 3,704 tanks, 1,852 SP guns total in Soviet Far East Command.

[b] See app. 2 for unit designations.

[c] Includes motorcycle regiment.

Sources: "Kampaniia sovetskikh vooruzhennikh sil na dal'nem vostoke v 1945g (facti i tsifry)" [The campaign of the Soviet armed forces in the Far East in 1945: Facts and figures], *Voenno-istoricheskii zhurnal* [Military history journal], August 1965:67; M. V. Zakharov, ed., *Final: istoriko-memuarny ocherk o razgrome imperialisticheskoi iapony v 1945 godu* [Finale: A historical memoir survey about the rout of imperialistic Japan in 1945] (Moskva: Izdatel'stvo "Nauka," 1969), 398—402.

Table 4. Trans-Baikal Front Composition

	Total	17th Army[d]	39th Army[d]	6th Guards Tank Army[d]	Cav-Mech Group[d]	36th Army[d]	53d Army[d]
Personnel:							
Combat	416,000						
Rear Service	238,040						
Total	654,040						
	41.4% of Far East Command						
Weapons:							
Guns/mortars	9,668	830	2,708	1,150	610		
Multiple rocket launchers	538	24					
Tanks/SP guns	2,416	137	502	1,019	403		
Aircraft	1,324						
Vehicles	49,053						
Frontage:	2,300 km						

Organizations:[e]	Total	Comb Arms	Air	Tank	Cav-Mech	Rifle	Cavalry	Motorized Rifle/ Mech	Arty	AAA	Engineer
Armies	6	4	1	1							
Groups	1				1						
Corps	12			1		8		2	1		
Divisions	43			2		30[a]	5		2	4	
Brigades	42			10[b]				10	12		10
Regiments	34			3[c]					24	7	
Fortified regions	2										

a. Includes 2 motorized rifle divisions.
b. Includes 1 motorized armored brigade.
c. Includes motorcycle regiments.
d. Only verifiable data included.
e. See app. 2 for unit designations.

Sources: "Kampaniia sovetskikh vooruzhennikh sil na dal'nem vostoke v 1945g (facti i tsifry)" [The campaign of the Soviet armed forces in the Far East in 1945: Facts and figures], *Voenno-istoricheskii zhurnal* [Military history journal], August 1965:67; M. V. Zakharov, ed., *Final: istoriko-memuarny ocherk o razgrome imperialisticheskoi iapony v 1945 godu* [Finale: A historical memoir survey about the rout of imperialistic Japan in 1945] (Moskva: Izdatel'stvo "Nauka," 1969), 398—99.

Table 5. 1st Far Eastern Front Composition

Personnel:	Total	1st Red Banner Army[c]	5th Army[c]	25th Army[c]	35th Army[c]
Combat	404,056				
Rear Service	182,533				
Total	586,589				
	37.2% of Far East Command				
Weapons:					
Guns/mortars	11,430		2,945	1,669	955
Multiple rocket launchers	516		432		
Tanks/SP guns	1,860	402	692	121	205
Aircraft	1,137				
Vehicles	4,850				
Frontage:	700 km				

Organizations:[a]	Total	Comb Arms	Air	Tank	Cav-Mech	Rifle	Cavalry	Motorized Rifle/Mech	Arty	AAA	Engineer
Armies	5	4	1								
Groups	1										
Corps	10					9		1			
Divisions	34					31	1			2	
Brigades	54			12				2	33		7
Regiments	29			2[b]					23	4	
Fortified regions	14										

[a] See app. 2 for unit designations.
[b] Includes 1 motorcycle regiment.
[c] Only verifiable data included.

Sources: "Kampaniia sovetskikh vooruzhennikh sil na dal'nem vostoke v 1945g (facti i tsifry)" [The campaign of the Soviet armed forces in the Far East in 1945: Facts and figures], *Voenno-istoricheskii zhurnal* [Military history journal], August 1965:67; M. V. Zakharov, ed., *Final: istoriko-memuarny ocherk o razgrome imperialisticheskoi iapony v 1945 godu* [Finale: A historical memoir survey about the rout of imperialistic Japan in 1945] (Moskva: Izdatel'stvo "Nauka," 1969), 401.

Table 6. 2d Far Eastern Front Composition

	Total	*2d Red Banner Army* [b]	*15th Army* [b]	*16th Army* [b]	*5th Separate Rifle Corps* [b]
Personnel:					
Combat	238,926				
Rear Service	98,170				
Total	337,096				
	21.4% of Far East Command				
Weapons:					
Guns/mortars	5,988	1,270	1,433		
Multiple rocket launchers	72				
Tanks/SP guns	1,280	240	164		
Aircraft	1,260				
Vehicles	31,916				
Frontage:	2,130 km				

Organizations: [a]	*Total*	*Comb Arms*	*Air*	*Tank*	*Cav-Mech*	*Rifle*	*Cavalry*	*Motorized Rifle/Mech*	*Arty*	*AAA*	*Engineer*
Armies	4	3	1								
Groups	0										
Corps	2					2					
Divisions	12					11				1	
Brigades	17			8		4			2		3
Regiments	35					5			25	5	
Fortified regions	5										

[a] See app. 2 for unit designations.
[b] Only verifiable data included.

Sources: "Kampaniia sovetskikh vooruzhennikh sil na dal'nem vostoke v 1945g (facti i tsifry)" [The campaign of the Soviet armed forces in the Far East in 1945: Facts and figures], *Voenno-istoricheskii zhurnal* [Military history journal], August 1965:67; M. V. Zakharov, ed., *Final: istoriko-memuarny ocherk o razgrome imperialisticheskoi iapony v 1945 godu* [Finale: A historical memoir survey about the rout of imperialistic Japan in 1945] (Moskva: Izdatel'stvo "Nauka," 1969), 400.

Launched in surprise and characterized by audacious maneuvers to great depths, the German invasion of 1941 shattered this Soviet force structure. So the Soviets retrenched. Heavy losses in manpower and materiel at the hands of the Germans, and the relative inability of commanders to control large units, drove the Soviet leadership to truncate and simplify its forces. It scaled down the size of rifle armies, abolished the rifle corps level, and decreased the manpower and weaponry in rifle divisions. The Soviets abolished those mechanized corps not already destroyed by the Germans and in their place created tank brigades to provide necessary armor support to infantry units. The Soviets replaced destroyed rifle divisions with the smaller and more easily created and controlled rifle brigades. They disbanded the large, but incomplete, antitank brigades, pooled support weaponry in battalion and regimental strength at the high command reserve level, and parceled it out to armies and fronts as required.

The retrenchment program worked, and Soviet forces survived the harsh winter of 1941—42. During 1942 the Soviets slowly rebuilt their force structure, increased the strength of rifle forces, and rebuilt their offensively oriented tank and mechanized forces. Beginning in early 1942, the rifle corps link was gradually reintroduced. In April 1942, the first reorganized tank corps appeared, followed in September 1942 by mechanized corps. From May to June 1942 ad hoc tank armies were formed in time to help absorb the shock of the German summer offensive of 1942 and to participate in the hour of victory at Stalingrad. In January 1943, the Soviets created new tank armies on a common TO&E. Throughout 1944, the complexity and strength of Soviet forces grew. The number of tank corps, mechanized corps, and tank armies increased. Rifle corps links appeared in virtually every army, and the number and fire power of rifle divisions grew. Rifle brigades dwindled in number as the Soviets replaced them with streamlined rifle divisions. To provide combat support, the Soviets created a host of units of every type including artillery brigades, divisions, and corps; tank destroyer regiments and brigades; antiaircraft regiments and divisions; engineer sapper units from battalion to army size; guards mortar (multiple-rocket launcher) regiments, brigades, and divisions; self-propelled artillery battalions, regiments, and brigades; and antiaircraft divisions and regiments.

Soviet forces slowly developed a capability—absent in the first two years of the war—to fully implement Soviet doctrinal concepts prevalent from the 1930s. Deep operations again became possible, if at first costly. The growing maturity of doctrine and the education of Soviet forces in the art of mobile warfare gave rise to further sophistication in the force structure manifested by the changes of 1944—45. By 1945, the Soviet force structure had fully matured. Bloodied by heavy wartime losses, the Soviet Army turned to fire power, mobility, and machines to compensate for the scarcity of manpower. The Soviets blended new tactical techniques with a carefully

articulated force structure to achieve success. Nowhere was this more evident than in Manchuria, where the last adjustments were made to the force structure and its use before the postwar reforms.

In August 1945, the basic unit subordinate to the front was the combined arms army. The typical combined arms army of 1945 (see table 7) contained three rifle corps totaling seven to twelve rifle divisions, one or two gun artillery brigades, a tank destroyer brigade, an antiaircraft division, a mortar regiment, a signal regiment, an engineer-sapper brigade, two to three tank brigades or regiments, and a tank or mechanized corps. Support units from front level frequently augmented this structure. The army ranged in strength from 80,000 to 100,000 men, with 320 to 460 tanks, 1,900 to 2,500 guns and mortars, and 100 to 200 self-propelled guns.[7]

Table 7. Soviet Combined Arms Army TO&E, 1945

Subordinate Units	*Weapons*	*Personnel*
3 rifle corps 7—12 rifle divisions 1—2 artillery brigades 1 tank destroyer brigade 1 antiaircraft division 1 mortar regiment 1 signal regiment 1 engineer-sapper brigade 2—3 tank brigades/regiments 1 tank/mechanized corps	320—460 tanks 1,900—2,500 guns/mortars 100—200 SP guns	80,000—100,000

Sources: P. A. Kurochkin, ed., *Obshchevoiskovaia armiia v nastuplenii* [The combined arms army in the offensive] (Moskva: Voennoe Izdatel'stvo, 1966), 192; *Sovetskaia voennaia entsiklopediia* [Soviet military encyclopedia] (Moskva: Voennoe Izdatel'stvo, 1978), 1:256.

The experience in Manchuria demonstrated the increased Soviet tendency to tailor the size of armies to the concrete conditions they faced. In Manchuria, the largest armies deployed opposite the more heavily fortified sectors or main attack sectors, and they received massive amounts of firepower support. At the other end of the spectrum, smaller armies tailored to suit local conditions operated on secondary axes. Table 8 shows the composition of Soviet armies in Manchuria and the conditions that dictated the composition of each army.

This tendency to tailor army composition illustrates the maturity of Soviet force development and the flexibility resulting from four years of warfare. The Soviets retained many of the improvements in the army structure in the 1946 reorganization. Hence, the heavy tank and self-propelled gun regiment, the tank destroyer brigade, and the antiaircraft division attached to armies in Manchuria were incorporated into the combined arms army TO&E of the postwar years.[8]

Table 8. Soviet Combined Arms Armies in Manchuria and the Terrain Over Which They Operated

Army	*35th Army*	*15th Army*	*2d Red Banner Army*	*5th Army*	*39th Army*	*1st Red Banner Army*
Terrain	Swampy, marshy region with low fortified hills	Marshy, flood plain traversed by major rivers	Rolling, heavily fortified hills and mountains	Heavily fortified zone with rolling wood and brush covered hills	Fortified zone in mountainous arid area	Mountainous, heavily wooded taiga
Subunits	3 rifle divs 2 tank bdes 4 artillery bdes 1 antiaircraft regt 1 guards mortar regt	3 rifle divs 3 tank bdes 6 artillery regts 2 mortar regts 2 antitank regts 1 antitank bde 1 antiaircraft div 1 antiaircraft regt 2 guards mortar regts	3 rifle divs 3 tank bdes 5 artillery regts 2 mortar regts 1 antitank regt 1 antiaircraft regt 1 guards mortar regt	4 rifle corps 12 rifle divs 5 tank bdes 5 SP regts 12 SP bns 15 artillery bdes	3 rifle corps 9 rifle divs 1 tank div 2 tank bdes 3 SP regts 2 artillery divs 14 artillery bdes	2 rifle corps 6 rifle divs 3 tank bdes 3 SP regts 6 SP bns 1 heavy tank/SP gun regt 5 artillery bdes
Weapons	205 tanks/SP guns 955 guns/mortars	164 tanks/SP guns 1,433 guns/mortars	240 tanks/SP guns 1,270 guns/mortars	692 tanks/SP guns 2,945 guns/mortars 432 multiple rocket launchers	455 tanks/SP guns 2,586 guns/mortars	410 tanks/SP guns 1,413 guns/mortars

Sources: L. N. Vnotchenko, *Pobeda na dal'nem vostoke* [Victory in the Far East] (Moskva: Voennoe Izdatel'stvo, 1971), 88, 92, 94, 97; N. I. Krylov, N. I. Alekseev, and I. G. Dragan, *Navstrechu pobede: boevoi put 5-i armii, oktiabr 1941g—avgust 1945g* [Towards victory: The combat path of the 5th Army, October 1941—August 1945] (Moskva: Izdatel'stvo "Nauka," 1970), 426—27; M. Sidorov, "Boevoe primenenie artillerii" [The combat use of artillery], *Voenno-istoricheskii zhurnal* [Military history journal], September 1975:14; V. Ezhakov, "Boevoe primenenie tankov v gorno-taezhnoi mestnosti po opytu 1-go dal'nevostochnogo fronta" [Combat use of tanks in mountainous-taiga regions based on the experience of the 1st Far Eastern Front], *Voenno-istoricheskii zhurnal* [Military history journal], January 1974.

The structure of the rifle corps operating within the army was less defined than the structure of the army. Before 1945, a typical rifle corps (see table 9) consisted of three rifle divisions, an artillery brigade of two regiments, a self-propelled artillery regiment, a guards mortar regiment, and antiaircraft, sapper, and signal battalions totaling 300 to 400 guns and 450 to 500 mortars.[9] Tank corps acting as the mobile group of the army, or tank brigades and regiments supporting rifle divisions, provided tank support for the rifle corps. In Manchuria, rifle corps were either subordinate to the army or separate entities subordinate to the front. The Soviets flexibly structured each corps to the requirements of its operational sector. The rifle corps consisted of two to five rifle divisions (most often three) reinforced by one to two tank brigades, two self-propelled artillery regiments, and from two to four self-propelled artillery battalions. Most corps had additional tank and artillery reinforcement. Table 10 shows the composition of representative rifle corps and the characteristics of their areas of operations. In postwar years, the Soviets formalized their earlier ad hoc practice of attaching tanks and antitank weapons to the rifle corps by incorporating a mechanized division and an antitank regiment into the rifle corps TO&E structure.[10]

Table 9. Soviet Rifle Corps TO&E, 1945

Subordinate Units	Weapons
3 rifle divisions 1 artillery brigade 2 regiments 1 SP gun regiment 1 guards mortar regiment 1 antiaircraft battalion 1 sapper battalion 1 signal battalion	300—400 guns 450—500 mortars

Source: *Sovetskaia voennaia entsiklopediia* [Soviet military encyclopedia] (Moskva: Voennoe Izdatel'stvo, 1979), 7:571.

The rifle division was the basic fighting unit of the Soviet Army. Its structure underwent significant modification during the Manchurian operation. Validated in combat, these modifications were incorporated into the rifle division TO&E at war's end. According to the June 1945 TO&E, the rifle division (see table 11) consisted of three rifle regiments, each with a battery of four 76-mm guns; an artillery brigade of three regiments of guns, howitzers, and mortars; a self-propelled artillery, an antitank, a sapper, a signal, and a training battalion; and a reconnaissance company. The division had 11,780 men and was equipped with 16 self-propelled guns, 52 field artillery pieces, 136 mortars, 12 antiaircraft guns, and 66 antitank guns.[11]

Table 10. Soviet Rifle Corps in Manchuria and the Terrain Over Which They Operated

Corps	*72d Rifle Corps, 5th Army*	*5th Separate Rifle Corps*	*39th Rifle Corps, 25th Army*
Terrain	Heavily fortified, rolling wooded and brush covered hills	Fortified low hills with sparse vegetation	Heavily fortified, heavily wooded mountains with limited road net
Subunits	3 rifle divisions 2 tank brigades 2 heavy SP regiments 8 artillery brigades (2 high power) 4 artillery regiments 3 artillery battalions (2 high power) 2 mortar brigades 2 guards mortar brigades 2 guards mortar regiments 1 engineer-sapper brigade	2 rifle divisions 1 tank brigade 2 SP battalions 1 antitank brigade 1 antiaircraft regiment 2 antiaircraft battalions	5 rifle divisions 1 tank brigade 4 SP battalions
Weapons	undetermined	undetermined	121 tanks/SP guns 1,669 guns/mortars

NOTE: Most corps had 3 rifle divisions, 1—2 tank brigades, 2 SP regiments, and heavier than usual artillery.

Sources: L. N. Vnotchenko, *Pobeda na dal'nem vostoke* [Victory in the Far East] (Moskva: Voennoe Izdatel'stvo, 1971), 94, 109—10, 125; N. I. Krylov, N. I. Alekseev, and I. G. Dragan, *Navstrechu pobede: boevoi put 5-i armii, oktiabr 1941g—avgust 1945g* [Towards victory: The combat path of the 5th Army, October 1941—August 1945] (Moskva: Izdatel'stvo "Nauka," 1970), 436—37.

Table 11. Soviet Rifle Division TO&E, 1945

Subordinate Units	Weapons	Personnel
3 rifle regiments: 1 artillery battery (4×76mm) 1 artillery brigade* 1 gun artillery regiment (20×76mm) 1 howitzer artillery regiment (20×122mm) 1 mortar regiment (20×160mm) 1 SP battalion (16×SU-76 SP) 1 antiaircraft battalion 1 antitank battalion (57mm, 76mm) 1 sapper battalion 1 signal battalion 1 reconnaissance company 1 training battalion	16 SP guns 52 guns (field) 136 mortars 12 AA guns 66 AT guns	11,780

*Most had but one organic regiment.

Sources: A. I. Radzievsky, ed., *Taktika v boevykh primerakh (diviziia)* [Tactics by combat example: Division] (Moskva: Voennoe Izdatel'stvo, 1976), scheme 1; P. A. Kurochkin, ed., *Obshchevoiskovaia armiia v nastuplenii* [The combined arms army in the offensive] (Moskva: Voennoe Izdatel'stvo, 1966), 204.

Because of the lag time in implementing new TO&Es, most rifle divisions in Manchuria still had one artillery regiment (according to the older June 1943 TO&E) instead of the artillery brigade. The Soviets made major modifications to this structure in Manchuria by routinely attaching to the rifle division a wide array of supporting units. Table 12 shows the composition of selected rifle divisions.

Table 12. Soviet Rifle Divisions in Manchuria and the Terrain Over Which They Operated

Division	*300th Rifle Division, 1st Red Banner Army*	*363d Rifle Division, 35th Army*	*Main attack divisions 1st Red Banner Army & 5th Army*
Terrain	Lightly defended, heavily wooded mountains without roads	Swampy region punctuated by low, lightly fortified hills	Heavily fortified, rolling areas flanked by heavily wooded, brush covered mountains
Subunits	3 rifle regiments 1 artillery regiment 1 SP battalion (13×SU-76) 1 antitank battalion 1 signal battalion 1 sapper battalion 1 training battalion Attached: 1 howitzer regiment 1 heavy artillery regiment (–) (6×150mm) 1 heavy artillery regiment (8×240mm, 2×150mm) 1 howitzer artillery battalion (3×300mm) 1 tank company 1 sapper battalion 1 tank brigade (10 August)	3 rifle regiments 1 artillery regiment 1 SP battalion 1 antitank battalion 1 signal battalion 1 sapper battalion 1 training battalion Attached: 1 tank brigade 1 mortar brigade 1 antitank regiment 1 guards mortar regiment	1 rifle division (13×SU-76 SP) 1 tank brigade 1 heavy SP regiment
Weapons	undetermined	undetermined	65 tanks 34 SU-76 SP guns

Sources: A. A. Strokov, ed., *Istoriia voennogo iskusstva* [The history of military art] (Moskva: Voennoe Izdatel'stvo, 1966), 507; M. Zakharov, "Nekotorye voprosy voennogo iskusstva v sovetsko-iaponskoi voina 1945-goda" [Some questions of military art in the Soviet-Japanese War of 1945], *Voenno-istoricheskii zhurnal* [Military history journal], September 1969:20; S. Pechenenko, "363-ia strelkovaia diviziia v boyakh na Mishan'skom napravlenii" [The 363d Rifle Division in battles on Mishan direction], *Voenno-istoricheskii zhurnal* [Military history journal], July 1975:39; V. Timofeev, "300-ia strelkovaia diviziia v boyakh na Mudan'tsyanskom napravlenii" [The 300th Rifle Division in battles on the Mutanchiang direction], *Voenno-istoricheskii zhurnal* [Military history journal], August 1978:50.

The attachment of tank regiments or brigades to rifle divisions was a normal practice throughout the campaign in all regions of the theater. The Soviets formalized that ad hoc practice by including additional artillery, tanks, and self-propelled guns in the new rifle division of the postwar years. According to the rifle division TO&E of 1946, each rifle division incorporated a full artillery brigade and a medium tank and self-propelled gun regiment with fifty-two tanks and sixteen self-propelled guns.[12]

In the Soviet force structure of 1945, the tank army, the separate tank corps, and the separate mechanized corps provided the mobile offensive punch. The tank army of 1945 (see table 13) consisted of two tank corps; one mechanized corps; a motorcycle regiment; a light artillery brigade; two mortar regiments; two antiaircraft regiments; a light self-propelled artillery brigade; a guards mortar brigade; a motorized engineer brigade; and signal, transport, and logistical units. Its twenty-one tank battalions and fifteen motorized rifle battalions totaled 808 tanks and self-propelled guns.[13] Because most tank armies in 1944 and 1945 lacked the mechanized corps, their strength was lower and their ratio of tank to motorized rifle battalions was higher than the TO&E indicated.

Table 13. Soviet Tank Army TO&E, 1945

Subordinate Units	Weapons
2 tank corps	620 tanks
1 mechanized corps	188 SP guns
1 motorcycle regiment	
1 light artillery brigade	
2 regiments (76mm guns)	
1 regiment (100mm guns)	
2 mortar regiments	
2 antiaircraft regiments	
1 light SP brigade	
1 guards mortar regiment	
1 motorized engineer brigade	
1 signal regiment	
1 aviation communications regiment	
1 transport regiment	
2 repair reconstruction battalions	

Sources: I. Anan'ev, "Sozdanie tankovykh armii i sovershenstvovanie ikh organizatsionnoi struktury" [The creation of tank armies and the perfecting of their organizational structure], *Voenno-istoricheskii zhurnal* [Military history journal], October 1972:38—47; *Sovetskaia voennaia entsiklopediia* [Soviet military encyclopedia] (Moskva: Voennoe Izdatel'stvo, 1979), 660—61.

The 6th Guards Tank Army differed considerably from other tank armies and the TO&E model. Augmented with additional tank and motorized rifle forces because of the required scope of its operations, this army

consisted of two mechanized corps, one tank corps, two motorized rifle divisions (a remnant of the 1941 force structure), two self-propelled artillery brigades, two light artillery brigades, a motorcycle regiment, and other normal support units. This reconfiguration gave 6th Guards Tank Army a balance of twenty-five tank and forty-four motorized rifle battalions with 1,019 tanks and self-propelled guns.[14] This structure with its larger number of motorized rifle battalions resembled the 1946 mechanized army more than it did the 1945 standard tank army. The 1946 mechanized army consisted of twenty-eight tank battalions and thirty motorized rifle battalions with a strength of about 1,000 tanks and self-propelled guns.[15] Thus, the balance of tank and motorized forces in the tank army that the Soviets developed in Manchuria persisted into the postwar years in the makeup of the mechanized army. The tank corps within the tank army corresponded with TO&E requirements (see table 14). Its basic tactical units were three tank brigades and one motorized rifle brigade, and it included 270 tanks and self-propelled guns and 11,788 men.[16]

Table 14. Soviet Tank Corps TO&E, 1945

Subordinate Units	Weapons	Personnel
3 tank brigades 1 motorized rifle brigade 1 SP regiment (SU-76) 1 SP regiment (SU-100) 1 mortar regiment 1 antiaircraft regiment 1 light artillery regiment 1 heavy tank regiment 1 guards mortar battalion 1 motorcycle battalion 1 transport company	228 tanks 42 SP guns	11,788

Sources: A. I. Radzievsky, ed., *Taktika v boevykh primerakh (diviziia)* [Tactics by combat example: Division] (Moskva: Voennoe Izdatel'stvo, 1976), scheme 3; P. A. Kurochkin, ed., *Obshchevoiskovaia armiia v nastuplenii* [The combined arms army in the offensive] (Moskva: Voennoe Izdatel'stvo, 1966), 208.

The separate mechanized corps that operated in Manchuria did not vary significantly from the normal TO&E. The mechanized corps in 1945 (see table 15) consisted of three mechanized brigades, one tank brigade, three self-propelled artillery regiments, and other support units. Its strength was 16,314 men and 246 tanks and self-propelled guns.[17] The 10th Mechanized Corps, operating as the mobile group of the 1st Far Eastern Front, comprised two mechanized brigades (one fewer than normal), one tank brigade, and normal support units. The only attachments to TO&E were a motorcycle regiment for extended reconnaissance and a tank destroyer regiment. The 10th Mechanized Corps numbered 249 tanks and self-propelled guns.[18]

Table 15. Soviet Mechanized Corps TO&E, 1945		
Subordinate Units	**Weapons**	**Personnel**
3 mechanized brigades 1 tank brigade 3 SP regiments (light, medium, heavy) 1 mortar regiment 1 antiaircraft regiment 1 guards mortar battalion 1 motorcycle battalion 1 signal battalion 1 sapper battalion 1 medical battalion 1 transport company 1 repair reconstruction company	183 tanks 63 SP guns	16,314

Source: A. I. Radzievsky, ed., *Taktika v boevykh primerakh (diviziia)* [Tactics by combat example: Division] (Moskva: Voennoe Izdatel'stvo, 1976), scheme 2.

Lower echelon tank units also underwent changes that persisted into the postwar years. By TO&E, the tank brigades of the tank and mechanized corps and the separate tank brigade of 1945 (see table 16), designed to provide tank support for infantry and to lead an advance as a forward detachment, had by TO&E three tank battalions of two tank companies each, a motorized rifle battalion, and support units. The tank brigade's strength totaled sixty-five tanks.[19] In Manchuria the Soviets regularly reinforced tank brigades with a self-propelled artillery regiment or battalion, a guards mortar battalion, a light artillery regiment or battalion, and a sapper company or platoon. The Soviets abolished the separate tank brigade in 1946. Tank brigades of tank and mechanized corps became tank regiments of tank and mechanized divisions. These tank regiments consisted of three tank battalions, one motorized rifle battalion, and one self-propelled gun battalion.[20] Thus, even at this level, the changes introduced in Manchuria in 1945 were retained in the 1946 force structure.

Table 16. Soviet Tank Brigade TO&E, 1945		
Subordinate Units	**Weapons**	**Personnel**
3 medium tank battalions (21×T-34s) 1 motorized rifle battalion 1 antiaircraft machine gun company 1 antitank company 1 medical sanitary platoon	65 tanks	1,354

Source: P. A. Kurochkin, ed., *Obshchevoiskovaia armiia v nastuplenii* [The combined arms army in the offensive] (Moskva: Voennoe Izdatel'stvo, 1966), 206.

The Soviet force structure also included specialized tank and artillery units. The separate medium tank regiments (thirty-nine T-34 and T-70 tanks), the separate heavy tank regiments (twenty-one JS-2 tanks), the light self-propelled artillery brigades (SU-76), the medium self-propelled artillery brigades (SU-100), and heavy self-propelled artillery brigades (SU-152) provided fire support for rifle divisions or corps, tank corps and armies, and mechanized corps.[21] Need was the criterion for assignment, but virtually every large unit received the support of these tank and self-propelled gun

Table 17. Major Artillery Units in the Soviet Army Force Structure, 1945

Major Units	Subordinate Units	Weapons
Artillery breakthrough corps	2 artillery breakthrough divisions 1 guards mortar division	728—800 guns/mortars 864 multiple rocket launcher ramps
Artillery breakthrough division	1 light artillery brigade (48×76mm) 2 regiments 1 howitzer artillery brigade (84×122mm) 3 regiments 1 heavy gun artillery brigade (36×152mm) 2 regiments 1 heavy howitzer brigade (32×152mm) 4 battalions 1 high power howitzer brigade (24×203mm) 4 battalions 1 mortar brigade (108×120mm) 3 regiments 1 heavy mortar brigade (36×160mm) 4 battalions 1 guards mortar brigade (36×BM-31) 3 battalions	364—400 guns/mortars/rockets
Tank destroyer brigade (AT)	3 tank destroyer regiments 1 self-propelled gun regiment (SU-76) 1 self-propelled gun regiment (SU-85)	72 AT guns (57mm, 100mm)
Antiaircraft artillery division	1 medium antiaircraft artillery regiment (16×85mm) 3 light antiaircraft artillery regiments (16×37mm each)	64 AA guns

Sources: K. Malin'in, "Razvitie organizationnykh form sukhoputnykh voisk v Velikoi Otechestvennoi voine" [Development of the organizational forms of the ground forces in the Great Patriotic War], *Voenno-istoricheskii zhurnal* [Military history journal], August 1967:35—38; N. Popov, "Razvitie samokhodnoi artillerii" [The development of self-propelled artillery], *Voenno-istoricheskii zhurnal* [Military history journal], January 1977:28—31; *Sovetskaia voennaia entsiklopediia* [Soviet military encyclopedia] (Moskva: Voennoe Izdatel'stvo, 1976), 1:265, 269, 270.

units. That support proved useful, so in 1946 the Soviets incorporated tanks and self-propelled guns throughout the entire reformed force structure. The rifle corps by 1951 had received a heavy tank and self-propelled gun regiment; the 1946 rifle division, a medium tank and self-propelled gun regiment; and the 1946 tank and mechanized divisions, a heavy tank and self-propelled gun regiment.[22]

A wide variety of artillery units provided support for the combat units in the Soviet Army. Table 17 summarizes the strength of the most significant types of artillery units in the force structure. The Soviets attached these units to armies, corps, and divisions.

Soviet Offensive Military Theory on the Eve of the Manchurian Offensive

5



Just as Soviet force structure evolved, so, too, did operational art and tactics. The spirit of the offensive, born in the period of Marshal Mikhail N. Tukhachevsky and reflected in the field regulations and doctrinal debates of the 1930s, pervaded Soviet military thought throughout the war years.[1] Ironically, that spirit dominated even when Soviet military fortunes were at their lowest ebb. This fixation on the offensive and preoccupation with the conduct of deep operations inhibited development of sound defensive theory and reinforced Soviet unwillingness to go on the defensive. Thus, when the Germans overwhelmed the Soviets in 1941, the Soviets responded by trying to apply the offensive principles of the 1930s. One problem was that the military purges of the late 1930s deprived the Soviet Army of the leadership necessary to implement doctrine artfully and thus to stem the German tide. In general, the survivors of these purges could not imaginatively adapt Tukhachevsky's theories to the reality of a surprise attack employing massed armor and bold maneuver. In the anxious aftermath of the purges, a natural hesitancy to suggest innovation also inhibited Soviet commanders in their adjustment to the deadly, quick-developing German threat. In addition, Soviet industry, also hard hit by the purges, was unable to produce the weaponry needed to equip the massive new Soviet force structure.

While a new generation of confident and capable commanders emerged during the campaigns of 1941, 1942, and 1943, the spirit of the offensive was carried to the extreme, often with disastrous consequences. The usual pattern was that of the grasp exceeding the reach, of expectations surpassing realities; and the result was more often than not defeat or costly limited victory. This pattern occurred during the commitment of the fledgling mechanized corps in the border battles of 1941, in the counterattacks around Moscow in the winter of 1941—42, at Kharkov in May 1942, at Voronezh in June 1942, and in the campaigns of December 1942 to March 1943, when the Soviets sought to convert the major victory at Stalingrad into a total German rout. The reverses the Soviets suffered in the winter of 1942 and the spring of 1943 at the Chir River, at Tatsinskaya, and at Kharkov occurred at least within the context of a battlefront that was inexorably moving westward.

It was early 1943 when the Soviets applied a degree of restraint to their offensive operations, thereby allowing those operations to reap a major harvest. The decision to draw the Germans into the costly and disastrous attack at Kursk in July 1943 attested to the increased maturity of Soviet military art. At Kursk, Soviet use of a sophisticated defense as a prelude to a powerful counteroffensive yielded rich results. The Soviet offensives of July and August 1943 at Orel and Belgorod-Kharkov marked a turning point in Soviet offensive operations. The two counteroffensives occurred after an extremely short preparation period. The Orel offensive took place while the German assault at Kursk was developing to a climax. The Belgorod-Kharkov offensive occurred three weeks after the German offensive tide broke against the Soviet defenses.

At Belgorod-Kharkov—for the first time since Stalingrad—Soviet forces penetrated more than 100 kilometers deep before German mobile reserves halted them. Unlike the situation at Stalingrad, the Soviets were engaging only German troops and not the combined might of Germany and its east European partners. The five-day meeting engagement south of Bogodukhov and at Aktyrka, west of Kharkov, saw Soviet mobile forces duel German panzer divisions to a standstill. Soviet tactical education, begun in the difficult days of 1941 and characterized by crude experimentation in 1942, now, in 1943, began to pay real dividends. After August 1943 Soviet operational and tactical techniques matured as theory and practice converged. In late 1943, in 1944, and in 1945, the Soviets slowly realized the hopes and aspirations of Tukhachevsky. Operations were of grander scope, coordination of all arms more thorough, results more impressive. The Belorussian offensive of 1944, the Iassy-Kishenev offensive of 1944, and the Vistula-Oder offensive of 1945 exemplified this new maturity. Such offensives ended only when supply lines became overstretched and forces overextended. They resumed after units had been resupplied, depots replenished, and forces consolidated.

The Manchurian operation proved to be a logical climax to these developments. In Manchuria, the theories developed in Europe would be put to the test in a region whose geographical features would challenge the most capable planner, and under time constraints that would call for the greatest application of imagination and initiative.

In 1945, the basic Soviet guide for the conduct of offensive operations was the *Field Regulation* of 1944 and companion documents such as the *Regulation for the Breakthrough of Fortified Areas.*[2] These regulations, descendants in their offensive form of the regulations of 1936, 1939, and 1941, were more detailed than their predecessors. The Regulations of 1944 set forth the basic principles of offensive combat and delineated how the Soviets should conduct operations within a wide range of geographical conditions and tactical situations.

The 1944 field regulations reaffirmed the preeminence of the offense as the sole source of military victory, declaring that contemporary tactical actions were mobile in character and that achievement of success in combat required maximum reliance upon maneuver. As such, maneuver needed to be simple in concept, secret in execution, rapid, and unexpected. The regulations rejected the validity of the "shock-and-holding groups" concept of earlier regulations, whereby the shock group conducted offensive action, while holding groups protected the adjacent sectors and flanks. That method wasted precious combat power. In effect the new regulations called for active use of all forces on the offensive.

Clearly emphasizing the combined arms nature of combat, the 1944 regulations characterized contemporary combat as mass participation of all arms. Thus, the commander should seek to achieve the "maximum and simultaneous participation in battle of infantry and fire weapons from the beginning of battle to the end."[3] In order to bring all combat power to bear on the enemy, forces should be echeloned in depth with each echelon receiving a distinct mission. Normally, forces deployed in two echelons. The first echelon led in the offensive. The second echelon did not simply reinforce: it developed success. Small reserves at each level repelled counterattacks while consolidating and exploiting success.

The regulations declared surprise to be a key to victory. Surprise was achieved by secrecy in planning and execution, by confusing the enemy, by attacking unexpectedly, and by the use of new combat formations. A display of initiative on the part of commanders at all levels was also a key to success, as long as they exercised that initiative in consonance with the overall desires of the superior commander.

The regulations accorded to the infantry the primary combat role in the achievement of victory. Application of infantry power was the basic means of defeating the enemy. The regulations recognized artillery, armor, and air power as basic elements of the combat team, but their purpose was to compensate for the use—and hence loss—of manpower. Tanks had the specific function of battling enemy infantry instead of enemy tanks. Artillery and antitank weapons were to engage enemy tanks. Soviet tanks battled enemy tanks only if the Soviets possessed clear superiority. The principal mission of tank units was to support the infantry and to exploit success. In fulfilling those missions, tank unit commanders were to avoid fragmenting their units for any purpose at any level.

The regulations articulated specific constraints on the operations of tank units. Army commanders attached their separate tank brigades and tank regiments to the rifle divisions. At the rifle division level, the tank brigades and tank regiments coordinated closely with the infantry in destroying enemy infantry. Army commanders used heavy tank units to assault strongly fortified enemy positions in conjunction with infantry and engineers. The regulations forbade commanders to fragment tank brigades or tank

regiments. Tank corps were strategic tactical units subordinate to front or army. Their missions were to exploit success, to act against enemy flanks, to pursue the enemy, and to counterattack against mobile enemy units. Unlike smaller tank units, they could operate as separate brigades in support of infantry, should the need arise. Mechanized corps were also strategic tactical units subordinate to front or army. They were heavier in motorized infantry than the tank corps. Hence, they had the expanded missions of exploiting success, operating against enemy flanks, pursuing the enemy, holding captured positions in the strategic depth, executing a counterattack, and conducting independent operations. The regulations specifically prohibited breaking up a mechanized corps.

In the special case of offensive operations against a hasty enemy defense, tank corps and mechanized corps reinforced with artillery and engineers could carry out an independent mission involving penetration to the depths of the defense. Under no circumstances, however, could they attack fortified zones. Although not specifically mentioned in the 1944 regulations, the tank army was subordinate to the front. With the missions of completing a penetration and exploiting success, the tank army was the principal exploitation force at front level. Before August 1945, the Soviets seldom used a tank army in the first echelon of a front during the initial phases of an offensive operation.[4]

Because the artful use of a variety of tactical combat formations was one way to achieve surprise and hence victory, the 1944 regulations accorded considerable space to that subject. Although the regulations described typical formations, the assumption was that commanders could use different tactical formations either in accordance with concrete conditions the unit faced or to help deceive the enemy. Use of a standard or typical combat formation, however, facilitated swift concentration of forces in a decisive direction and enabled a force to shift the weight of an attack. The standard combat formation promoted effective use of all types of forces and facilitated the exploitation of terrain and the defense of vulnerable flanks.

At front level, forces could deploy in one or two echelons depending on the nature of the terrain, the strength of the enemy, and the desired speed of advance in the operation. In general, success in an attack against a strong defense required two echelons. Against a hasty defense deployed along a broad front in limited depth, a single echelon formation offered better chances for success, especially if an attacking unit sought a quick penetration and a rapid advance.

The army echeloned its forces in generally the same manner as the front (see fig. 1). On occasion it could deploy in three echelons, if enemy defenses were extremely strong and the sector of attack narrow. Normally, however, the army deployed in two echelons supported by artillery groups and tank and antitank reserve groups. The first echelon of the army contained about 60 percent of the force, usually two rifle corps abreast. The

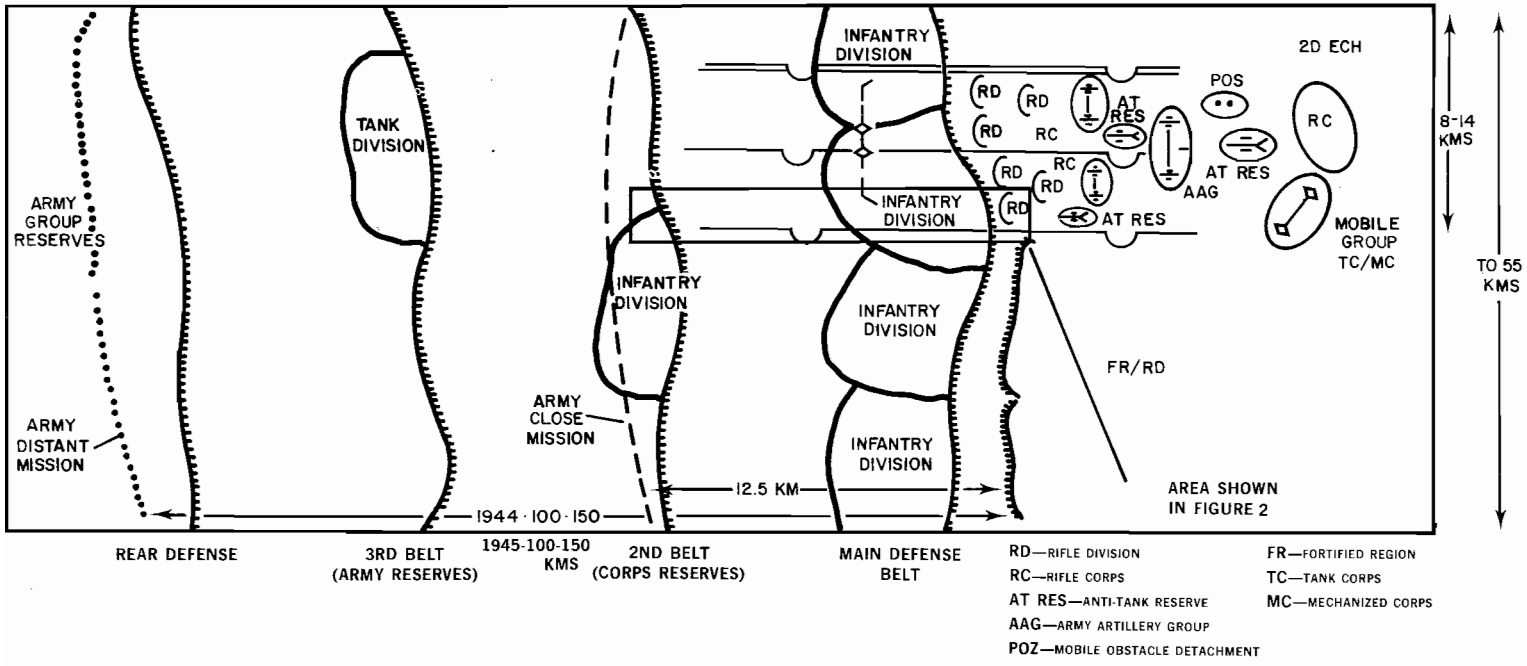


Figure 1. Soviet Typical Offensive Combat Formation: Combined Arms Army

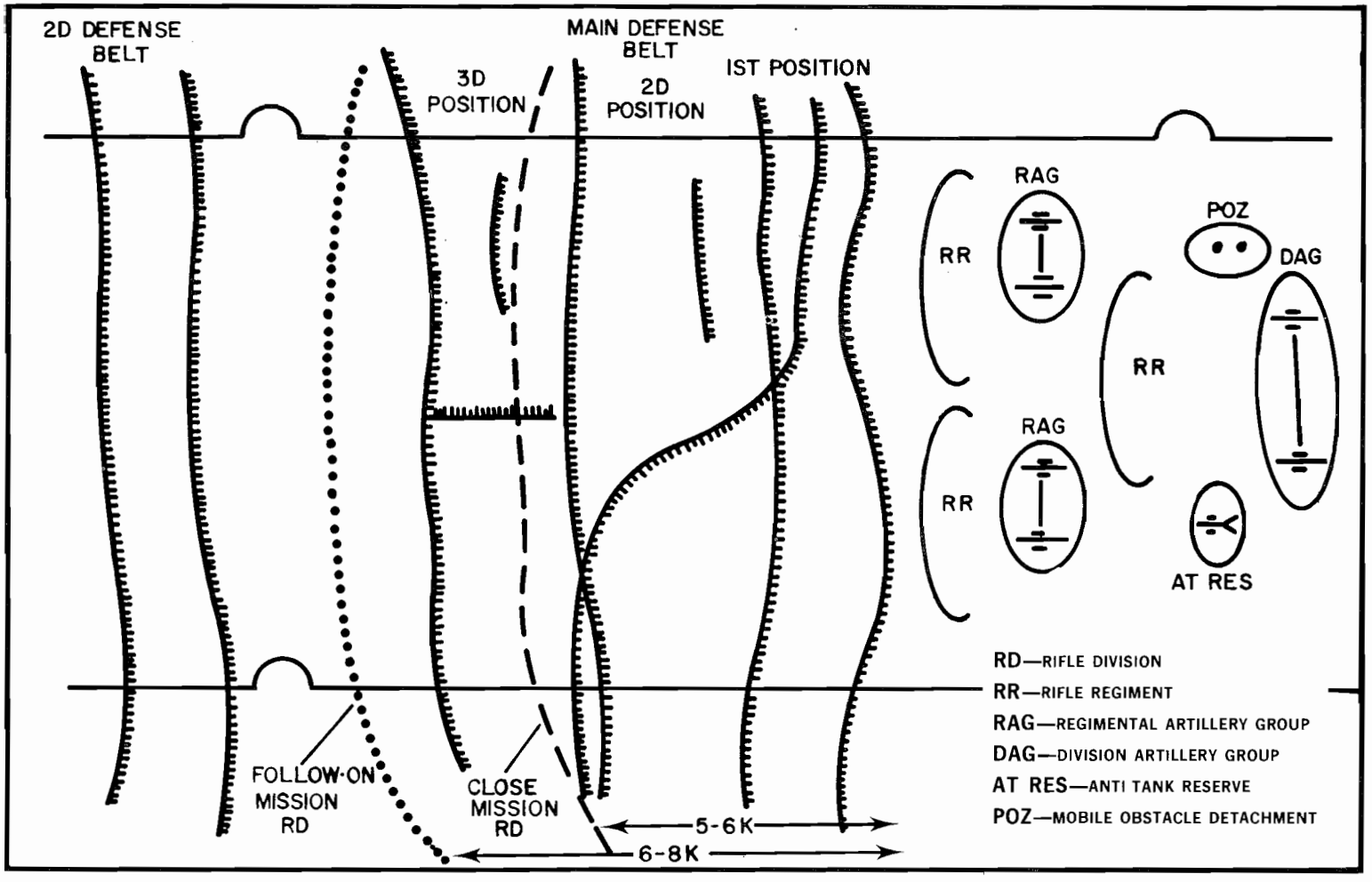


Figure 2. Soviet Typical Offensive Combat Formation: Rifle Division

second echelon, with 40 percent of the forces, normally included one rifle corps and mechanized forces functioning as the mobile group of the army. The second echelon increased the power and sustainability of the attacking force, added depth to the combat formation, and performed the missions of exploiting the penetration, consolidating gains, and maintaining the continuity of the attack. In general, the attacking force on a main direction (attack axis) was stronger and deeper and deployed on a narrower front than a force operating on a secondary attack axis. The rifle division normally deployed in two echelons of regiments, while a rifle brigade deployed in one echelon of battalions in either staggered or angled formation (see fig. 2).

Artillery groups, tank reserve groups, and antitank reserve groups provided support to tactical maneuver units. These task-organized armor and artillery assets existed at every level of command to fulfill specific missions. Within the rifle division, regimental artillery groups comprising division artillery assets provided artillery support to each rifle regiment. Divisional long-range artillery groups created from organic division artillery assets provided general fire support to the division. Corps and armies formed their high-powered and heavy howitzer artillery into long-range artillery groups and destruction artillery groups. These groups provided long-range fire for corps and armies or fire necessary to destroy those fortified enemy positions that disrupted the progress of offensive operations. Tank reserve groups and antitank reserve groups at division level and at virtually every echelon above division were a source of extra offensive power available to repel enemy counterattacks.

Just as the combat formation was important for the achievement of offensive aims, so also was the organization of the march formation. As Soviet offensive successes mounted in 1944 and 1945, the exploitation and pursuit phases of combat became more prevalent and important. Success in exploitation and pursuit depended to a great degree on the utility of the march formation and on the ability of the marching unit to react quickly to changing conditions. Ideally, proper march formation permitted rapid concentration of forces, efficient force deployment, successful maneuver, and sound defense of the march column when necessary. Good march formations improved a unit's chances for victory in a meeting engagement or when advancing to attack a hastily prepared defense that could be attacked from the march. The most rudimentary consideration of the march was the number of routes a unit used. Armies and corps, because of their large size, marched on several routes. Divisions used from one to three routes, depending on the width of the zone of eventual commitment and the nature of the terrain. Regiments marched on one route.

March formations consisted of distinct functional groupings, each with a particular mission. In order of march, these included the reconnaissance group, detachment, or patrol; the advanced party; the forward detachment; the advanced guard; the main body; and the flank guards or march out-

posts. The reconnaissance group, detachment, or patrol and the advanced party conducted reconnaissance and provided security for the march column. By 1945, the forward detachment had become a key element of the march formation. Its mission was to disrupt enemy dispositions, to secure terrain, and to assist the deployment of the advanced guard. Only units of brigade size and larger formed forward detachments. The advanced guard would attack and crush the enemy. If unable to overcome the enemy, it would cover the deployment of the main force. The basic fighting unit of the formation was the main force, which was supposed to use maneuver to engage and crush the enemy, if possible. Gun, antiaircraft, and antitank artillery was dispersed throughout the various subgroups of the march column or formation. Tanks operated together at the front or rear of columns or as separate columns. Tanks usually reinforced forward detachments and advanced guards.

Having emphasized the offensive as the sole source of military victory, the 1944 field regulations described in detail the purpose of the offensive and the methods of its conduct. Simply stated, offensive battle aimed to smash the enemy and to attack to the depths of the enemy defense. The three basic forms of offensive action were frontal attack, close envelopment, and wide envelopment. Frontal attack, the most frequently used, most costly, and hence the least preferred form of offensive action, sought penetration of the enemy defense. Close envelopment, preferred over the frontal attack, occurred either as a result of a frontal attack or after breaching enemy defenses. Its aim was ultimate encirclement of a portion of the enemy's forces. Wide envelopment, the most mobile form of offensive action, involved deep offensive operations against an enemy's flank or flanks, sometimes in concert with a frontal attack. It sought to encircle and destroy major portions of an enemy force.

The frontal attack required heavy concentration of forces in a narrow sector, hence artful task organization and coordination of forces. Requiring only limited maneuver, it was the simpler and thus the safer form of attack. The envelopment, particularly the wide envelopment, demanded careful organization and coordination of mobile forces before and during the attack. It also required mutual support by all types of forces to the depth of the enemy defense, a feat not easily achieved. It was risky in the sense that a successful wide envelopment could yield a great victory, yet a poorly executed one could result in disastrous defeat.

The 1944 field regulations described in detail the role of the various arms in the conduct of the frontal attack, the manner in which the frontal attack developed, and the prerequisites for its successful conduct. The force conducting the attack required superiority over the enemy, particularly on the main axis of attack. Infantry and tank units working closely together penetrated the defensive lines of the enemy. During the penetration, artillery and aircraft supported attacking forces to the depth of the defense. Tank and mechanized units operating as mobile groups of the army or front then

broke out from the initial penetration to conduct the exploitation. During the exploitation phase, the mobile groups and follow-on rifle units sought to break up enemy combat formations and to destroy them piecemeal. Throughout all phases of the frontal attack, various types of forces (airborne, deep reconnaissance, and partisan) would conduct diversionary operations in the enemy rear to sow confusion, to disrupt enemy command and control, and to block the movement of enemy reserves.

The form of the frontal attack varied. It could involve attack in one sector and subsequent development of the offensive in that sector, or attack in several sectors with simultaneous development in all sectors or in timed sequence sector by sector. The army or corps on the main direction of attack normally deployed in two echelons of rifle divisions. First echelon divisions led the attack, with main attack sectors from three to four kilometers in width (narrower than in earlier years). Second echelon divisions received a distinct combat mission and deployed at a depth of seven to twelve kilometers behind the first echelon divisions. During the attack, action was continuous and involved close coordination of infantry, artillery, tanks, and engineers.

The most difficult form of frontal attack was that designed to penetrate a fortified zone. Such an operation required detailed planning to destroy or neutralize enemy strongpoints, to effect penetration, and to develop exploitation. Regulations spelled out the necessary steps. Detailed reconnaissance was necessary up to the very hour of attack in order to permit planned operations against each enemy position. A thorough time-phased artillery preparation to the depths of the defense preceded the attack. Usually consisting of very heavy rolling barrages or fire on successive concentrations, the artillery preparation lasted one to four hours. While the preparation was in progress, assault detachments from first echelon infantry units led the attack against forward enemy positions. Reserve rifle battalions of first echelon rifle regiments provided the assault detachments in order to maintain the strength and structural integrity of first echelon battalions of those regiments. The assault detachments included infantry, machine gunners, and engineers and regimental artillery pieces, antitank guns, one or two heavy tanks, and flamethrowers. These carefully tailored assault detachments ranged in strength from platoon to reinforced company, depending on the strength of the positions they assaulted. Each assault detachment thoroughly rehearsed the attack on terrain models of the enemy position reconstructed on the basis of detailed reconnaissance.

Tanks, organized in two echelons, followed the assault groups. The first echelon of heavy tanks (or heavy self-propelled guns) from separate tank brigades or regiments accompanied the assault groups to destroy fortifications by direct fire, to support the infantry with covering fire and to help consolidate gains. The second echelon of medium tanks followed the assault groups (sometimes with the advanced rifle battalions of the rifle regiments)

to further consolidate the position and to repulse local enemy counterattacks. Lead rifle regiments followed the assault detachments in battalion formation with two rifle battalions in first echelon, each with three rifle companies on line, and one rifle battalion in second echelon. Artillery units continuously supported the attack.

Penetration of a hasty defense required different techniques. Above all, the attacking forces had to employ the proper march formation to allow for quick reaction to enemy deployments. Attacking forces had to act quickly and precisely in close coordination with neighboring units. Initiative was critical for success. In the attack on a hasty defense, offensive forces moved in march column, employing reconnaissance units to determine exact enemy dispositions and to cover the advance. When approaching the enemy positions, the army commander narrowed both his front and the zones of individual first echelon rifle divisions. Divisional artillery units accompanied the rifle regiments they were to support. The army (or corps) forward detachment engaged and disrupted enemy dispositions and secured terrain to ease the deployment of the advanced guard. The advanced guard of each lead rifle division engaged the enemy force to defeat it, if possible, and failing that, to facilitate deployment and maneuver of the main force. Employing maneuver to a maximum, the main force attacked the enemy main force and defeated it.

By virtue of their firepower and mobility, large tank and mechanized units were especially suited for use in a frontal attack against a hasty defense. Usually, a tank unit (brigade or battalion) formed the nucleus of a forward detachment. In addition, advanced guards received some tank support. Army commanders often committed their mobile groups (tank and mechanized corps) early against a hasty defense to complete the disruption begun by the forward detachments, advanced guards, and main forces. After penetrating the hasty defense, mobile groups would initiate the exploitation and pursuit.

The pursuit phase of the offensive operation followed the penetration achieved by frontal attack or envelopment. The field regulations of 1944 emphasized that pursuit must be relentless in order to forestall further enemy regrouping of forces. Commanders at every level made preparations for the pursuit before the actual penetration was achieved in order to insure that operations would be continuous. Initially, tank units and motorized infantry, reinforced by engineers and supported by long-range artillery, conducted the pursuit.

The most decisive pursuit would occur along routes parallel to the axis of withdrawal of enemy units on one or both of the enemy flanks. Large tank units and motorized units operated deep in the enemy rear to secure key road junctions or terrain in order to cut off and destroy the retreating enemy units piecemeal. Pursuing rifle divisions and rifle regiments performed deep missions as well. During the period 1942—43, the major Soviet

problem in conducting the pursuit had been keeping the advancing infantry and artillery within supporting distance of deeply operating tank and mechanized units. By 1944 the provision of adequate motorized infantry and mobile artillery to the tank and mechanized units had solved this problem.

Another basic variation of offensive combat that the field regulations of 1944 addressed was the meeting engagement, the most fluid form of combat and thus the form requiring the greatest initiative on the part of commanders. The meeting engagement normally occurred during the pursuit phase of an offensive operation, although the regulations admitted it could also occur at the initiation of hostilities. Simply stated, the meeting engagement occurred when two forces advanced on one another in march formation. The first force able to deploy and to hit the other before it fully deployed could achieve victory and rout the unprepared enemy. Thus, the meeting engagement involved preemption at a tactical level, which required efficient march formations, rapid deployment, and skillful maneuver.

When commanders anticipated a meeting engagement, regulations recommended they subdivide their march column into four segments, each with a precise composition and mission. The forward detachment spearheaded the formation (at brigade, division, or higher level). The forward detachment made up of tanks, artillery, and motorized rifle units disrupted enemy dispositions, secured key terrain, and assisted deployment of the advanced guard. Before the enemy could successfully deploy, the advanced guard (one battalion of a regiment, one regiment of a division, or one division of a corps), with the next higher level commander in attendance, attacked and crushed the enemy and then covered deployment of the main force. After deploying, the main force attacked the already disorganized enemy force and defeated it in detail, if possible by maneuver. Mobile groups extended the depth of the operation usually by conducting a deeper envelopment. Regulations stressed that a vigorous pursuit must follow the meeting engagement. Like the pursuit operation, the meeting engagement had taken on greater significance by 1944.

Having covered the offense in general, the regulations turned to the conduct of offensive battle under special climatic and geographical conditions. Derived from the experience of four years of war, these sections had considerable applicability to operations in Manchuria's varied terrain.

Night battle offered distinct advantages to the side that was capable of waging it and willing to conduct it. Night offensive action contributed to the achievement of surprise, and regulations admonished commanders to use it whenever possible in order to deny respite to a pressured enemy. In order for night battle to succeed, operational plans had to be simple. Units had to have limited missions and had to attack on straight, short attack axes. Night precluded the use of complicated maneuvers. Infantry played the chief role in the attack, and in order to guarantee surprise, commanders usually avoided artillery preparations. Tank units could operate at night

only on suitable terrain, although tank units sometimes formed an integral part of the infantry formation. The chief problem involved in the safe use of tanks and infantry was keeping the tanks and infantry separate without violating the requirements of mutual support.

The Soviets in World War II had to address the difficult problem of fighting in inhabited areas. By 1944, they had gained enough experience for concrete doctrine to emerge. Regulations advised units to bypass inhabited areas by maneuver whenever possible and to avoid frontal attack on such areas. If reduction of an inhabited area proved necessary, commanders were to tailor assault units from all types of forces and organize them for mutual support. Strong reserves at all levels were necessary to insure the continued effectiveness of the assault groups.

Offensive action in forested or marshy regions involved certain specific techniques. In such terrain, balanced combined arms forces usually attacked on separate axes. In order to insure necessary mobility, forward detachments led on each axis to preempt enemy deployment and to secure key terrain, in this case usually road junctions. Route control performed by traffic control units was critical as a means of preventing confusion among advancing units. Heavy engineer support was necessary to guarantee continued trafficability of march routes and, in some cases, to construct roads.

Combat in mountainous regions involved careful task organization and specific tactical techniques to achieve mobility. Spearheaded by forward detachments, attacking units advanced along valley floors and mountain defiles. Speed was essential to preempt the establishment of strong enemy bottlenecks or more extensive defenses. Forward detachments paved the way for the advance of larger mobile tank and mechanized units. Balanced forward detachments concentrated sufficient power to overcome small enemy detachments, to move rapidly, and to operate deep in enemy areas. Larger mobile tank and mechanized units followed to develop deep penetrations and to envelop wide areas. Forces operating in valleys used envelopment as the basic form of maneuver to secure ridge and mountain crests. In the wake of these mobile forces, follow-on forces secured important road junctions and key terrain in the rear. All units operating in mountainous terrain were task organized with strong artillery, engineer, and tank support.

Desert operations offered the prospect of deep operations, significant advance, greater freedom of maneuver, and attacks on enemy flanks. Units conducted desert operations on multiple axes with each force tailored to permit greater independence of action and survivability. With their inherent mobility, tank and motorized units were key to the success of maneuver. Yet all units required considerable artillery and engineer support. Of particular importance were logistical considerations, for sustained operations depended on water, fuel, ammunition, and food. Regulations emphasized that

logistical planning "must be detailed and accurate." Because logistical requirements remained the central focus of commanders throughout desert operations, water sources became key terrain features in those operations.

The 1944 regulations provided the tactical guidance for Soviet forces operating in Manchuria. The requirements the Manchurian region imposed on Soviet forces insured that virtually every operation discussed in the regulations would have to be performed. During the course of those operations, the Soviets essentially would follow the general guidance of the regulations, but would modify and adjust the guidance to changing conditions and the requirements of the Manchurian area of operations.

Conduct of the Offensive: Far East Command Plan

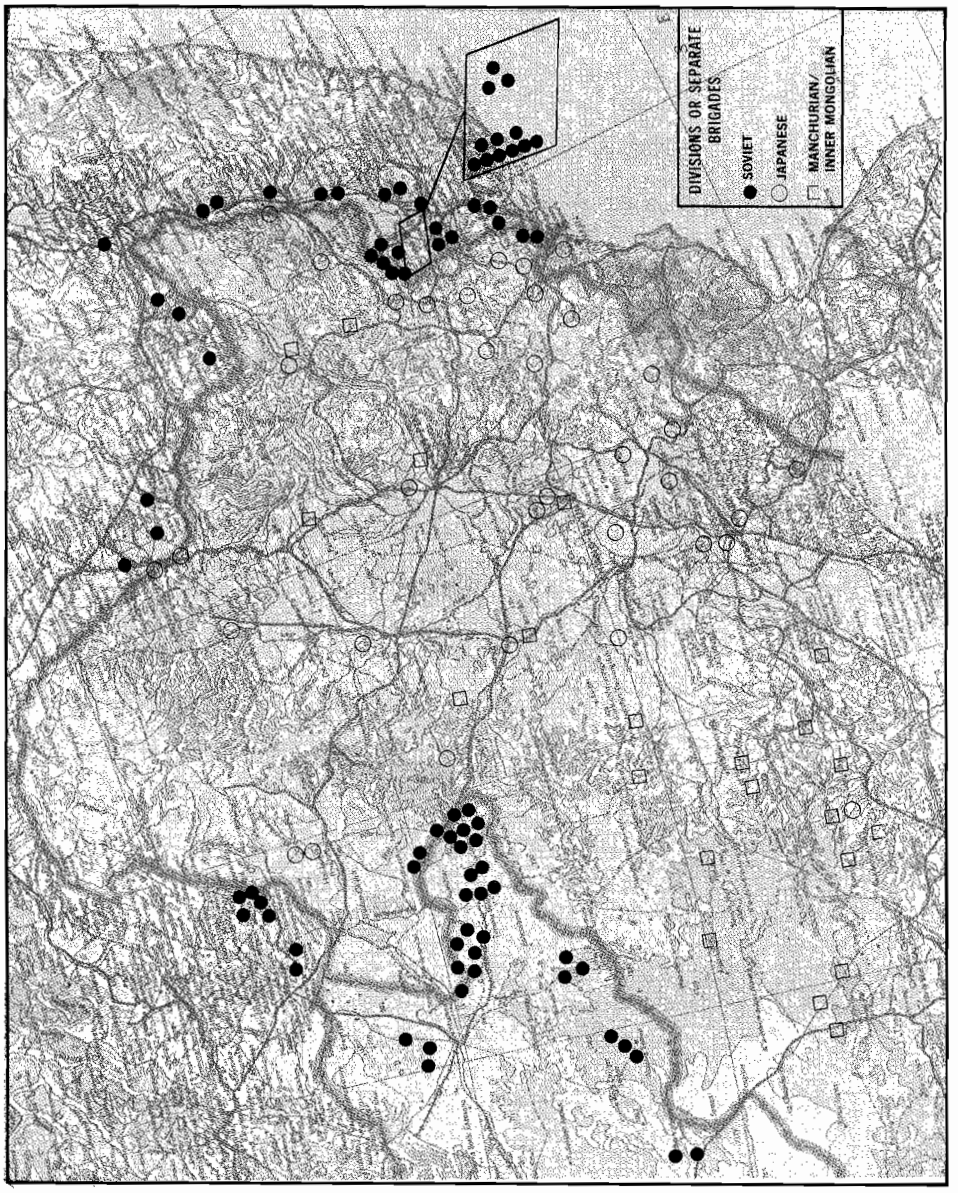
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The Far East Command plan for the conquest of Manchuria was simple in concept, but grand in scale and in expectations. Labeled a strategic cannae[1] by Soviet historians, the plan called for a strategic double envelopment conducted by Soviet forces along three axes. The objective was to secure Manchuria and to destroy a large portion of the Japanese Kwantung Army (see maps 16—17).

The Trans-Baikal Front would attack eastward into western Manchuria, while the 1st Far Eastern Front would attack westward into eastern Manchuria. These two attacks would converge in the Mukden, Changchun, Harbin, and Kirin areas of south central Manchuria. The 2d Far Eastern Front would conduct a supporting attack into northern Manchuria, driving southward to Harbin and Tsitsihar. Timing of on-order operations against southern Sakhalin Island and the Kuriles would depend on the progress of the main attacks.

Planning reflected the need for swift operations that would preempt Japanese defense plans, avoid a protracted war, and insure Soviet control over Manchuria before the Japanese surrendered to Allied powers in the Far East. Although the Far East Command had ordered units to be ready to attack by 25 July 1945, it made the final decision on the timing of the attack and the form it should take on 7 August, only two days before it launched the attack.[2] At that time the Far East Command decided to commit the Trans-Baikal and the 1st Far Eastern Fronts to a simultaneous attack. Earlier plans had the Trans-Baikal Front attacking before the 1st Far Eastern Front attacked, an arrangement objected to by several front commanders. Perhaps detonation of the atomic bomb on 6 August prompted the hasty decision and the short two-day period between the decision and the attack.[3]

The Far East Command accorded a major attack role to the Trans-Baikal Front, whose mission, as the first pincer of the strategic envelopment, was to secure objectives 350 kilometers into Manchuria by the tenth to the fifteenth day of the operation.[4] Two combined arms armies (17th and 39th) and one tank army (6th Guards) in front first echelon would



Map 16. Opposing Force Densities and Distribution

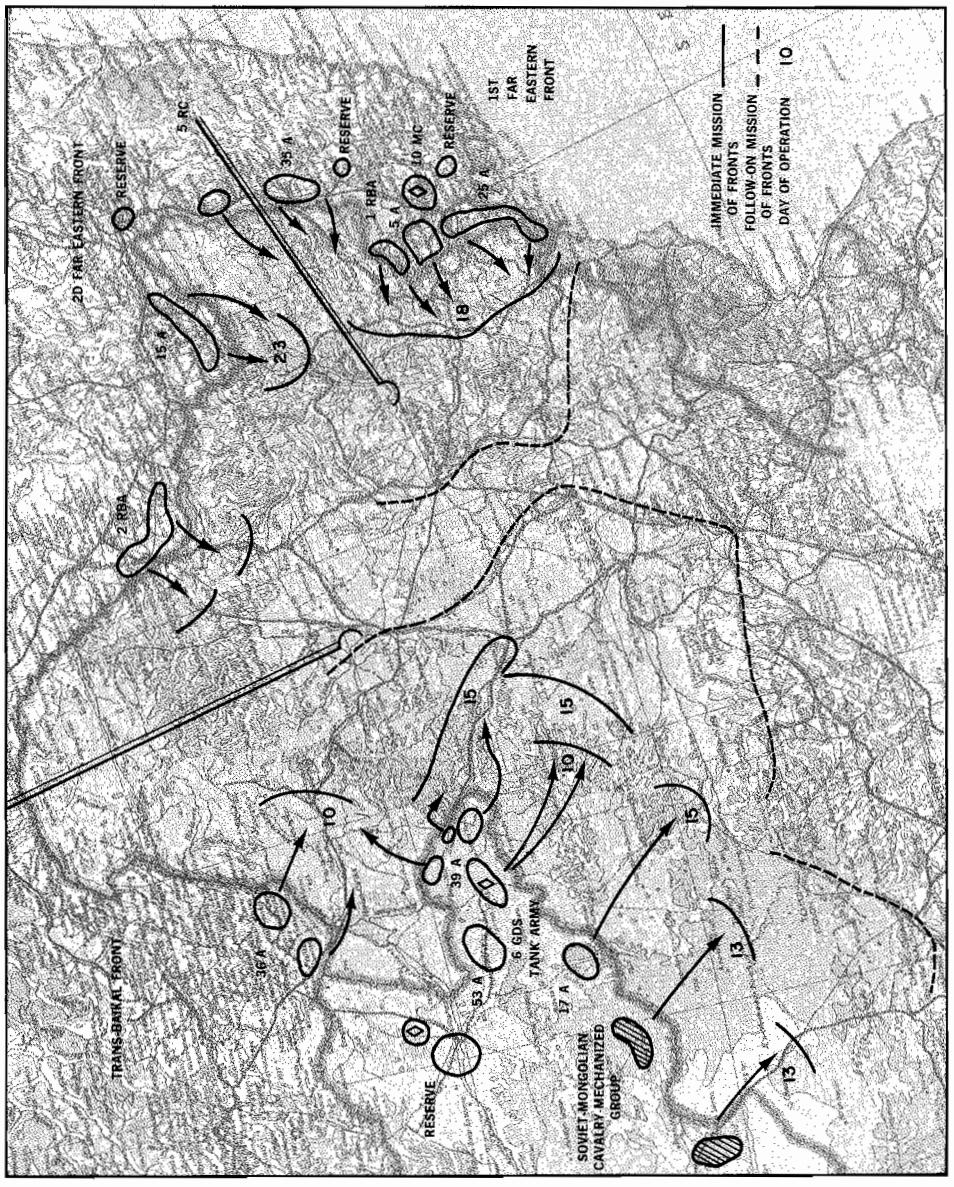
launch the main attack of the Trans-Baikal Front, bypass the Halung-Arshaan Fortified Region to the south, and advance toward Changchun. The immediate objectives of these forces were to crush the enemy in the border regions, to cross the Grand Khingan Mountains, and to occupy positions in the central Manchurian plain from Lupei to Solun by the tenth to the fifteenth day of the operation. Spearheading the front advance, the 6th Guards Tank Army was to cross the deserts of Inner Mongolia, secure the passes in the Grand Khingan Mountains, and occupy Lupei by the fifth day of the operation, a distance of 350 kilometers. Subsequently, the front would secure objectives along a line from Chihfeng through Mukden to Changchun in the heart of central Manchuria.

Two forces were to make supporting attacks on separate axes in the Trans-Baikal Front sector. The Soviet-Mongolian Cavalry-Mechanized Group was to attack across the Inner Mongolian desert and southern Grand Khingan Mountains to Kalgan and Dolonnor. The 36th Army was to attack from Duroy and Staro-Tsurukaytuy across the Argun River in order to secure Hailar by the tenth day of the operation and to prevent Japanese withdrawal through the Grand Khingan Mountains from northwestern Manchuria. Because of rough terrain and lack of contact between the two fronts, the Far East Command drew no demarcation line to separate the Trans-Baikal Front from the 2d Far Eastern Front on its left.

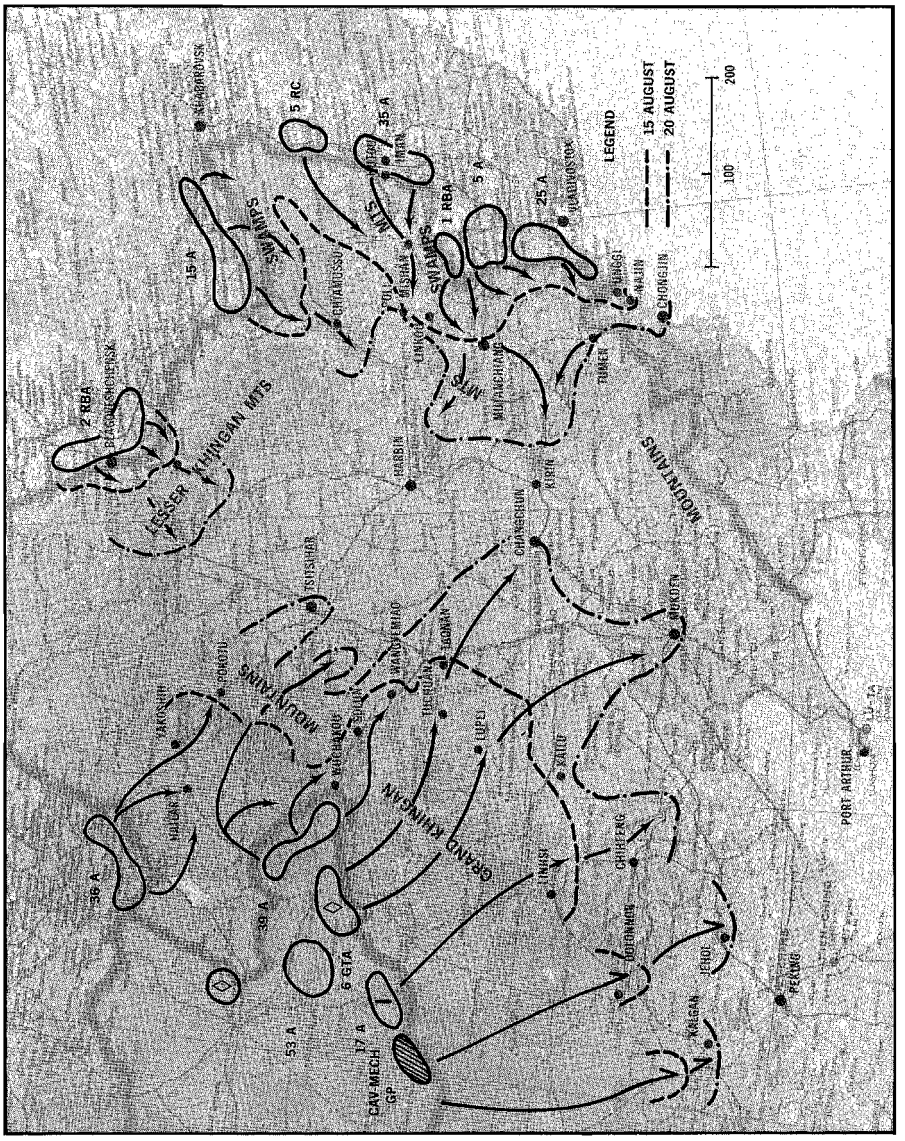
The second echelon of the Trans-Baikal Front consisted of the 53d Army, whose mission was to follow the 6th Guards Tank Army and, after crossing the Grand Khingan Mountains, to move into front first echelon. The front reserve comprised two rifle divisions (317th and 227th), one tank division (111th), and one tank brigade (201st).

The success of the Trans-Baikal Front operation depended on speed, surprise, and mobile forces in virtually every sector in order to preempt effective Japanese defense. For swiftness and surprise, tank formations operated in the first echelon of units at every level of command. The operation also called for tank-heavy forward detachments at every level of command, so the 6th Guards Tank Army would spearhead the front effort. A tank division would lead the advance of the 39th Army, as would tank brigades for first echelon corps and divisions. Planned rates of advance for the operation were high, twenty-three kilometers per day for combined arms units and seventy kilometers for tank units.

The operation involved risks. If Japanese units reacted quickly to the Soviet attack and if even nominal forces occupied positions in the Grand Khingan mountain passes, the Soviet advance could be severely slowed. In addition, the operation relied heavily on the ability of logistical units to supply the fast moving columns deep in Manchuria. The Soviets confidently took both risks.



Map 17. Soviet Far East Command Plan (left) and Operations (right)


LEGEND
15 AUGUST
20 AUGUST
100
200
2 RBA
BLAGOVESHCHENSK
LESSER KHINGAN MTS
15 A
NIKOLAYEVSK
5 RC
35 A
KHABAROVSK
SWAMPS
CHEGDOMYN
MTS
1 RBA
5 A
25 A
SWAMPS
MTS
MUTANCHIANG
HARBIN
KIRIN
MOUNTAINS
TSITSIHAR
PEKOTU
SUIHUA
HAILUN
36 A
39 A
6 GTA
17 A
CAV MECH GP
53 A
GRAND KHINGAN
LUPEI
TAHSI
ANTUNG
CHIHFENG
KALGAN
ISHUI
PEKING
PORT ARTHUR

The 1st Far Eastern Front was the second pincer of the strategic envelopment. The front's mission was to penetrate or to bypass Japanese frontier fortifications, to rout Japanese forces, and, by the fifteenth to eighteenth day of the operation, to secure objectives along a line running from Poli through Mutanchiang to Wangching.[5] Two combined arms armies (1st Red Banner and 5th) and one mechanized corps (10th) would launch the main attack of the front from the Grodekova area northwest of Vladivostok and advance toward Mutanchiang. The two armies and the mechanized corps were then to exploit and secure the subsequent objectives of Kirin, Changchun, and Harbin while linking up with Soviet forces from the Trans-Baikal Front.

Two armies were to launch attacks in support of the front's main effort. The 35th Army was to attack from the Lesozavodsk-Iman area north of Lake Khanka in order to occupy Mishan, Linkou, and Poli. The 25th Army was to attack from northwest of Ussurysk to secure the Tungning, Wangching, and Yenchi areas. The Army would then cut Japanese escape routes into Korea and exploit southward into the Korean peninsula.

The 1st Far Eastern Front deployed in single echelon formation to bring maximum pressure to bear on all Japanese positions in eastern Manchuria. The 10th Mechanized Corps, as the mobile group of the front, deployed for commitment in the 5th Army's zone. The front reserve consisted of the 87th Rifle Corps, the 88th Rifle Corps, and the 84th Cavalry Division. Despite dense Japanese defensive positions, the planned rate of advance for the front was eight to ten kilometers per day toward the immediate front objectives of Mutanchiang and Wangching.

After the 1st Far Eastern Front and the Trans-Baikal Front joined forces in the Changchun area, they would advance together to crush final Japanese resistance on the Liaotung Peninsula and to secure Port Arthur, the key naval base at the southern tip of the peninsula.

The 2d Far Eastern Front was to advance on a broad front across the Amur and Ussuri rivers from Blagoveshchensk to south of Khabarovsk. It was to bring maximum pressure to bear on Japanese forces in northern Manchuria in order to destroy them or to prevent their orderly withdrawal south to assist Japanese forces resisting the main Soviet attacks.[6] One combined arms army (15th), would launch the front's main attack across the Amur River in the Leninskoye area and would advance southward into the Sungari and Ruhe river regions. The 15th Army's immediate mission was to isolate or to crush the enemy fortified zones along the Amur and Sungari rivers and to clear the enemy from the salient formed by the Sungari, Amur, and Ussuri rivers. The 15th Army would then advance to secure the subsequent objective of Sansing and Harbin, where it would unite with forces of the 1st Far Eastern Front.

Two secondary attacks would support the front's main effort. The 2d Red Banner Army would attack on order across the Amur River from the Blagoveshchensk area to Sunwu and then exploit southward to Tsitsihar. The 5th Separate Rifle Corps, deployed along the Ussuri River south of Khabarovsk, would attack from Bikin to secure the immediate objective, Paoching. Then the corps would advance to Poli, there joining forces with units of the 1st Far Eastern Front.

The multifront plan of operation sought complete destruction of Kwantung Army units in Manchuria with maximum speed. Japanese troops would quickly be cut off from reinforcements from northern China or from Korea. The Soviets would force the Japanese to defend in all sectors by attacking in all sectors. These constant mobile attacks on the broadest of fronts would prevent the Japanese from shifting forces and lead to the utter collapse and piecemeal defeat of the Japanese.

The Far East Command launched the offensive on the morning of 9 August 1945. The ensuing campaign exceeded the expectations of Soviet planners. In the first phase of operations, first echelon armies of the three fronts penetrated Japanese defenses, destroyed first echelon Japanese units, and by 15 August had introduced forces into the central region of Manchuria. The second phase of the operation began on 15 August and was barely underway when Japanese forces capitulated.

Conduct of the Offensive: Trans-Baikal Front

7

Ten minutes after midnight on 9 August 1945, reconnaissance units, forward detachments, and advanced guard units of the Trans-Baikal Front crossed the border into Inner Mongolia and Manchuria. No artillery or air preparation preceded the attack. Initially, attacking units encountered resistance only in the 36th Army zone, where attack routes traversed fortified Japanese border installations. In other regions, assault units moved forward virtually unopposed. At 0430 main force units advanced on the heels of the assault units (see maps 18—21).[1]

On the right flank of the front, Col. Gen. I. A. Pliyev's Soviet-Mongolian Cavalry-Mechanized Group advanced in two march columns 200 kilometers apart. Forward detachments comprising the 25th Mechanized Brigade and the 43d Separate Tank Brigade led the columns.[2] By nightfall on 9 August the lead units of the two columns had penetrated fifty-five miles into the arid wastes of Inner Mongolia, southward toward Dolonnor and Kalgan, sweeping aside small detachments of Inner Mongolian cavalry. Farther east,



Pliyev, Issa Aleksandrovich (1903—?), Soviet-Mongolian Cavalry-Mechanized Group

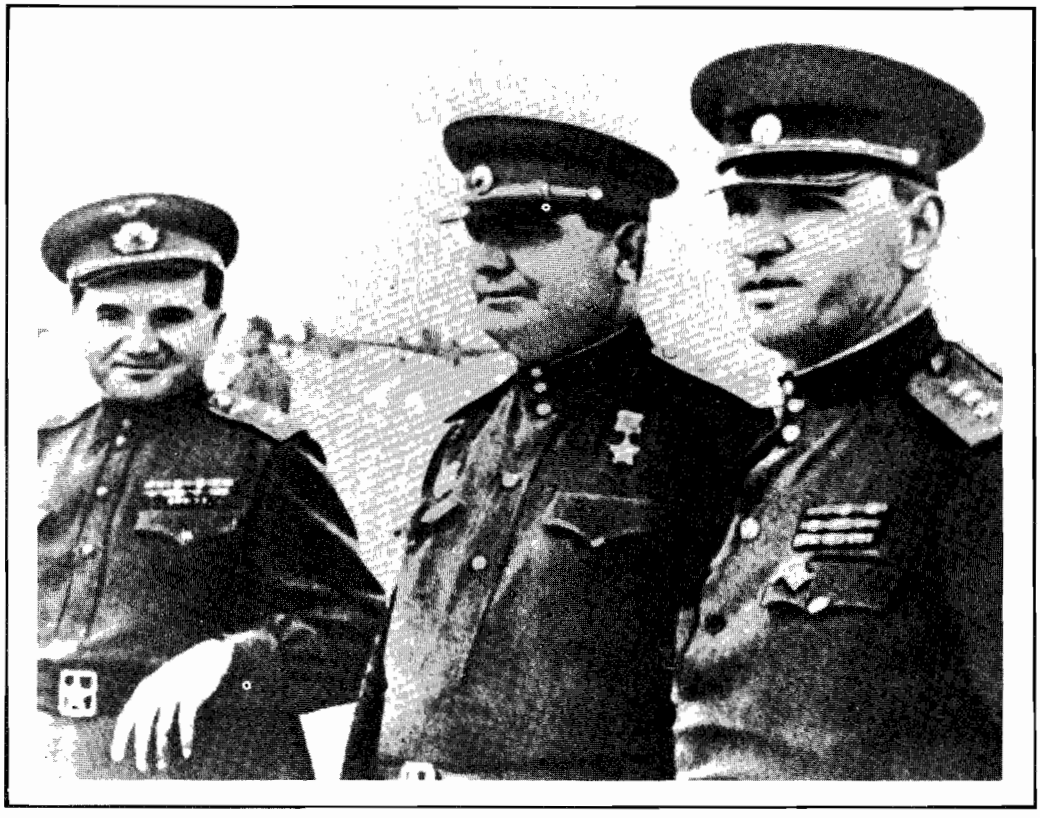
1922—joined Red Army.
1926—Leningrad Cavalry School.
1926—commander, Krasnodar Cavalry School.
1933—Frunze Academy.
1933-36—chief of Operations Department, 5th Cavalry Division.
1936-38—advisor, Mongolian Army.
1939—regimental commander, 6th Cavalry Division.
1941—General Staff Academy.
1941—(Jun) commander, 50th Cavalry Division (Nov 1941 renamed 3d Guards Cavalry Division) (Moscow operations).
1941—(Dec) commander, 2d Guards Cavalry Corps.
1942—(Apr) commander, 5th Guards Cavalry Corps; 3d Guards Cavalry Corps; 4th Guards Cavalry Corps (Stalingrad, Melitopol, Bereznagovatoe-Snegerevka, Odessa, Belorussia operations).
1944—(Nov) commander, 1st Cavalry-Mechanized Group (Budapest, Prague operations).
1945—commander, Soviet-Mongolian Cavalry-Mechanized Group.
1946—army commander.
1953—first deputy commander, North Caucasus Military District.
1958—commander, North Caucasus Military District.
1968—(Jun) inspector-advisor, General Inspector Group, Ministry of Defense.

the 17th Army of Lt. Gen. A. I. Danilov also entered Inner Mongolia virtually unopposed. Its forces advanced in two columns with the reinforced 70th and 82d Tank Battalions as forward detachments. By nightfall the 17th Army forward detachments had advanced some seventy kilometers, with the main columns trailing twenty kilometers to the rear.[3]



Danilov, Aleksei Il'ich (1897—?), 17th Army

1917—joined Russian Army; Alekseev Military School.
1918—joined Red Army; platoon, company commander (southwest, western fronts).
1920—company commander; chief of regimental school.
1924—*Vystrel* course.
1931—Frunze Academy.
1931—division chief of operations; chief of staff, 29th Rifle Division; chief of staff and commander, 49th Rifle Corps.
1940—(Jul) deputy commander, Kiev Military District's PVO (air defense) forces.
1941—(Jun) chief of PVO, Northwestern Front.
1941—(Oct) chief of staff, 21st Army (Kharkov operation).
1942—(Jun) commander, 21st Army.
1942—(Oct) chief of staff, 5th Tank Army (Stalingrad operations).
1943—(May) commander, 12th Army (Donbas, Left Bank of Ukraine, Zaporozh'e operations).
1943—(Nov) commander, 17th Army (Mongolia).
1946-68—army commander; chief of high academic courses at General Staff Academy; assistant commander of Trans-Baikal Military District.
1968—retired.



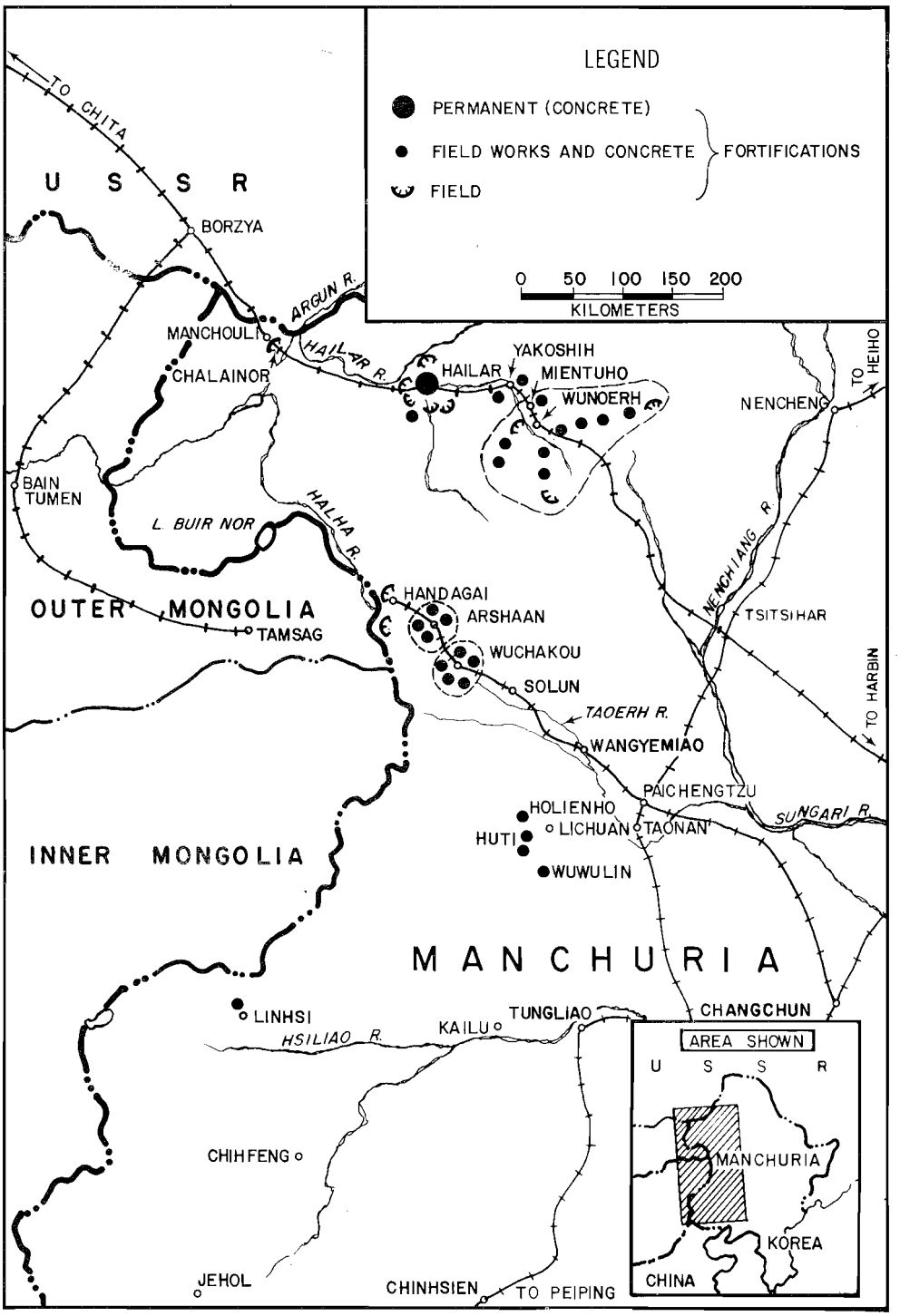
Commander of 6th Guards Tank Army, A. G. Kravchenko (center), accompanied by Commander of the 12th Air Army, S. A. Khudiakov (left), and Commander of Armored and Mechanized Forces of the Far East Command, M. D. Solomatin (right)

Kravchenko, Andrei Grigor'evich (1899—1963), 6th Guards Tank Army

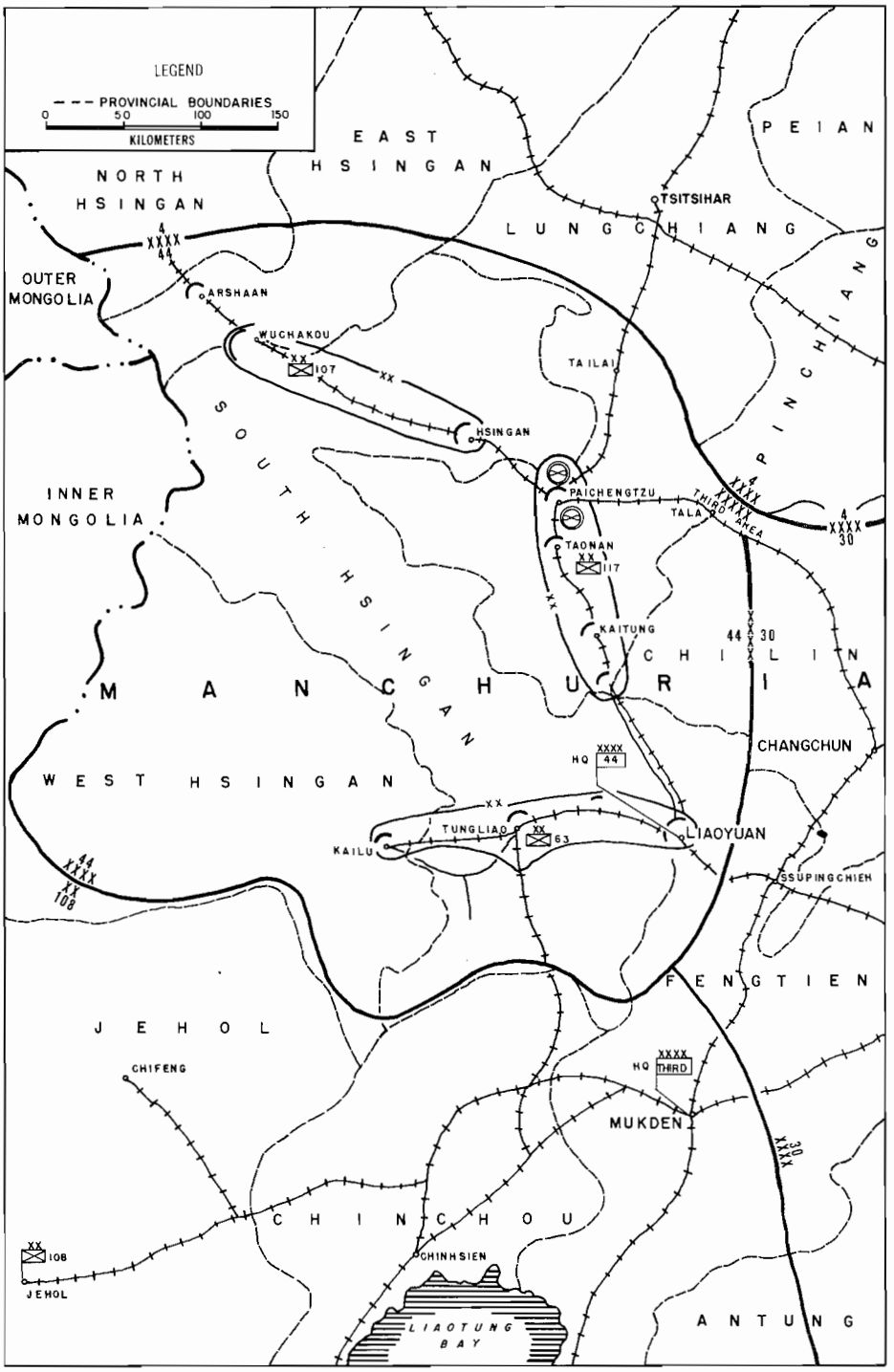
1918—joined Red Army, corporal.
1921—commander, rifle subunits; chief of staff, rifle regiment; instructor of tactics.
1923—Poltava Infantry School.
1928—Frunze Academy.
1939—(May) rifle division chief of staff; motorized rifle division chief of staff; tank division chief of staff (Finnish War).
1941—(Mar) chief of staff, 18th Mechanized Corps.
1941—(Sep) commander, separate tank brigade (Moscow operations).
1942—(Mar) chief of staff, 1st Tank Corps.
1942—(Jun) commander, 2d Tank Corps.
1942—(Oct) commander, 4th Tank Corps (5th Guards Tank Corps) (Stalingrad, Kursk, Dnepr, Right Bank of Ukraine operations).
1944—(Jan) commander, 6th Guards Tank Army (Korsun-Shevchenkovskii, Iassy-Kishinev, Hungary operations).
1946—army commander; commander of armored and mechanized forces in various military districts.
1954—(Jan) assistant commander of Far East Military District's tank forces.
1955—(Oct) in the reserves.

On the left of 17th Army, the 6th Guards Tank Army of Col. Gen. A. G. Kravchenko, the spearhead of the Trans-Baikal Front, advanced into Inner Mongolia in two columns of corps. The 9th Mechanized Corps advanced on the right, followed by the 5th Guards Tank Corps in second echelon. Seventy to eighty kilometers to the northeast marched the 7th Guards Mechanized Corps, also in column formation. Each corps column marched in four to six columns, thus forming a belt of armor fifteen to twenty kilometers wide. Forward detachments consisting of a rifle regiment, a tank brigade or regiment, and an artillery battalion preceded each corps column.[4] The 6th Guards Tank Army encountered limited opposition and therefore progressed rapidly. By nightfall the forward detachments had raced forward 150 kilometers and halted in the foothills of the Grand Khingan Mountains west and north of Khorokhon Pass (see map 22).

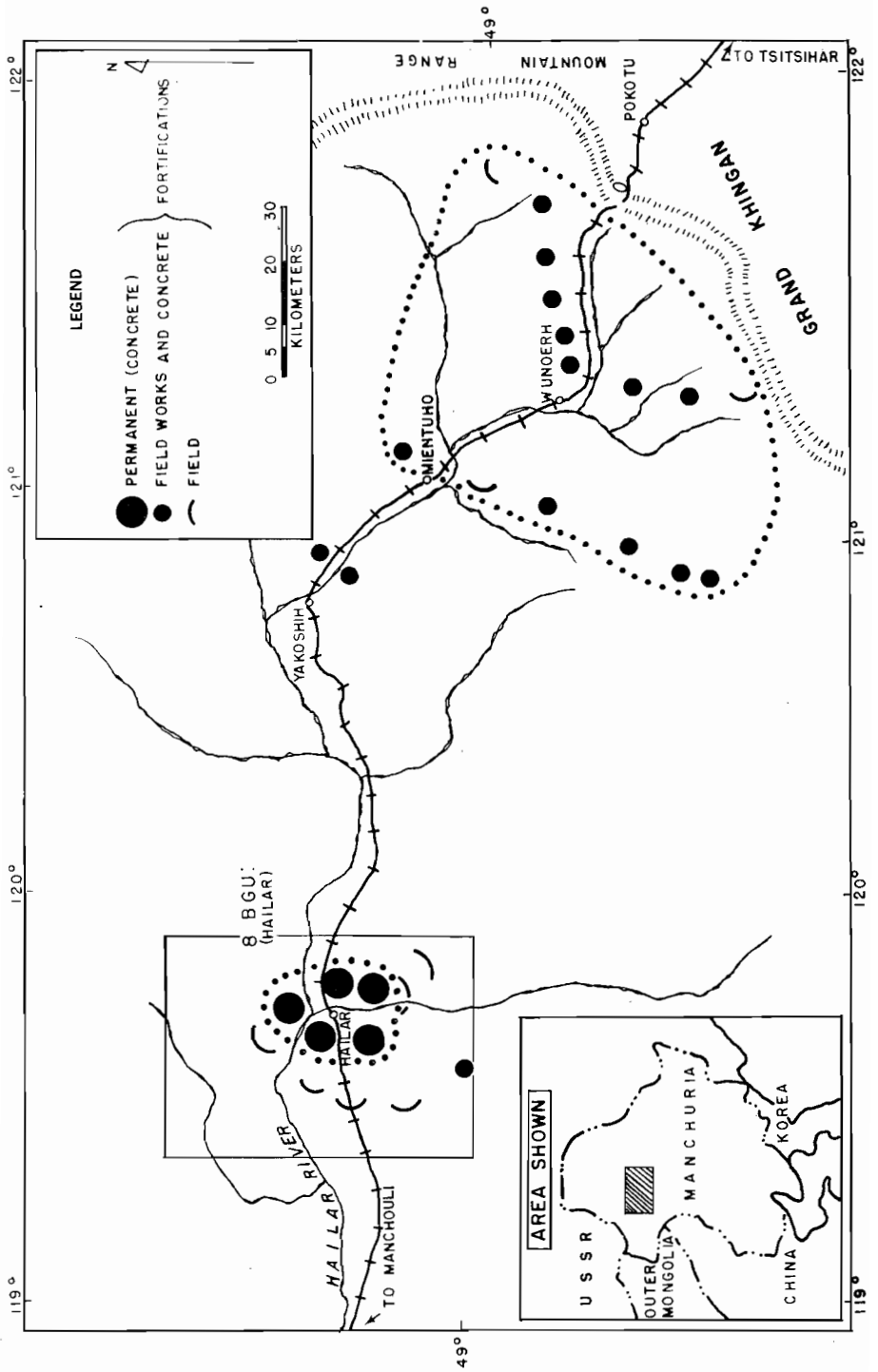
On the left of 6th Guards Tank Army, Col. Gen. I. N. Lyudnikov's 39th Army advanced along two divergent axes in a single echelon of rifle corps (see map 23).[5] On the main axes south of the Halung-Arshaan and Wuchakou Fortified Regions, defended by two regiments of the Japanese 107th Infantry Division, the 5th Guards Rifle Corps and the 113th Rifle Corps advanced behind their forward detachments, the 206th and 44th Tank Brigades. The army forward detachment, the 61st Tank Division, preceded the two corps and bypassed the fortified regions to the south. In addition, a forward detachment led each of the six rifle divisions of the two corps. Farther to the north, near the 1939 battlefield of Khalkhin-Gol, the 94th Rifle Corps struck northeastward with two rifle divisions abreast, driving toward the rear of the Hailar Fortified Region in support of elements of 36th Army, advancing toward Hailar from the north. Platoon-size Japanese opposition and local Manchurian cavalry units were swept away quickly. The 124th Rifle Division of 94th Rifle Corps occupied the gap along the border between the 94th Rifle Corps and the 5th Rifle Corps and prepared



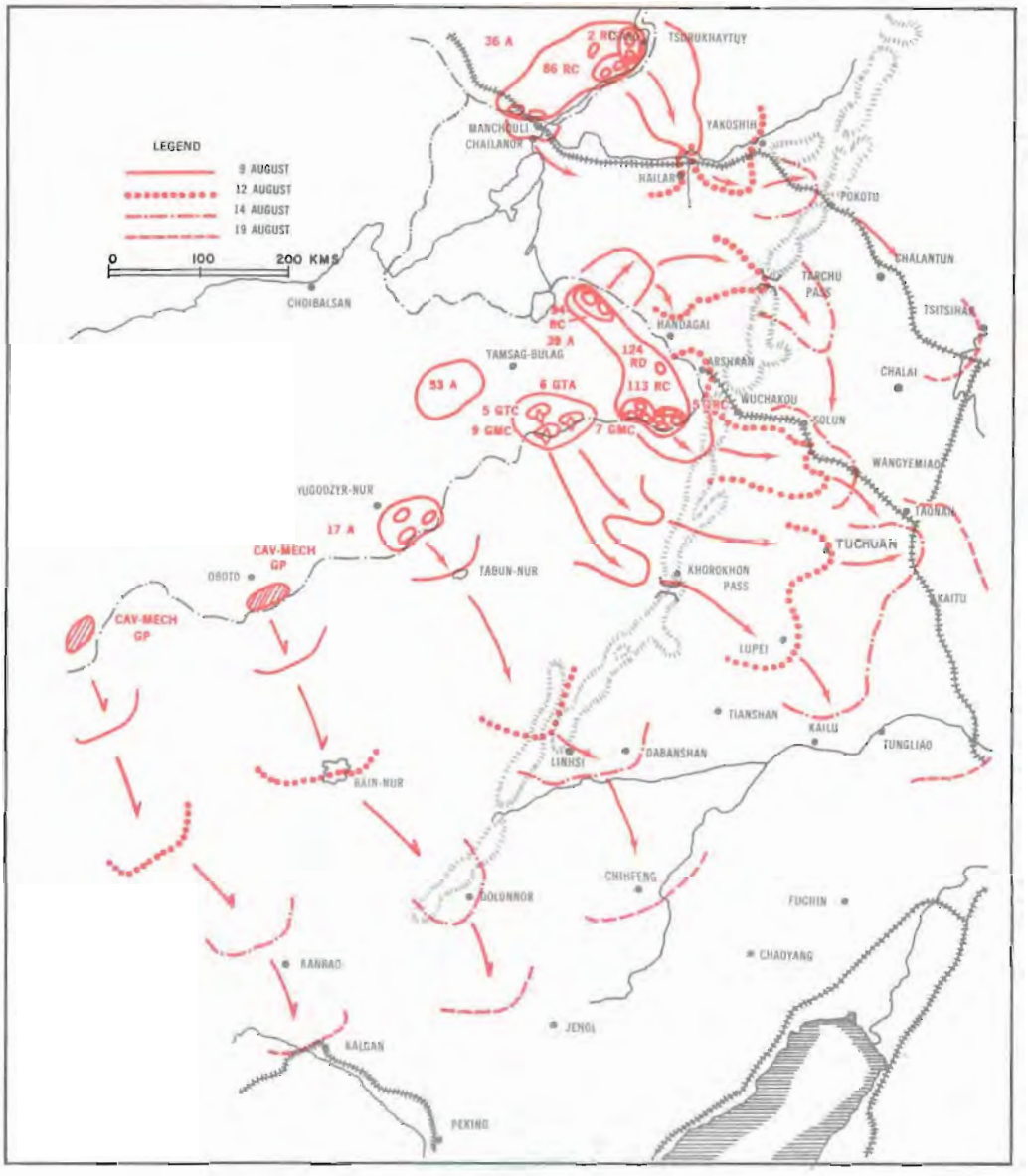
Map 18. Japanese Fortified Positions in Western Manchuria



Map 19. Japanese 44th Army Defense Area



Map 20. Japanese 4th Separate Army Defense Area in Northwest Manchuria



Map 21. Soviet Trans-Baikal Front Operations, 9—19 August 1945

to engage Japanese forces in the Halung-Arshaan Fortified Region. Initially on 9 August, 124th Rifle Division reconnaissance units probed the fortified region while main division elements prepared to advance on the tenth. The 39th Army forward units on the main advance axis bypassed Halung-Arshaan and gained sixty kilometers the first day of action. Because of the difficult terrain, however, division forward detachments lagged behind the advancing corps tank brigades and the army tank division. Consequently,



Lyudnikov, Ivan Il'ich (1902—76), 39th Army

1917—joined Red Guards.
1925—Infantry School; platoon, company commander, 13th Dagestan Rifle Division; battalion chief of staff, Vladivostok Infantry School.
1938—Frunze Academy.
1938—General Staff service.
1939—chief of Zhitomir Infantry School.
1941—(Mar) commander, 200th Rifle Division (Odessa).
1942—commander, 138th Rifle Division (Stalingrad).
1943—commander, 15th Rifle Corps (Kursk).
1944—(Mar) commander, 39th Army (Vitebsk, E. Prussia operations).
1946—army commander.
1949—deputy commander, Group of Soviet Forces, Germany.
1952—assistant, then first deputy commander, Odessa Military District.
1954—commander, Tavrich Military District.
1959—chief of *Vystrel* course.
1963—chief of faculty, General Staff Academy.
1968—retired.



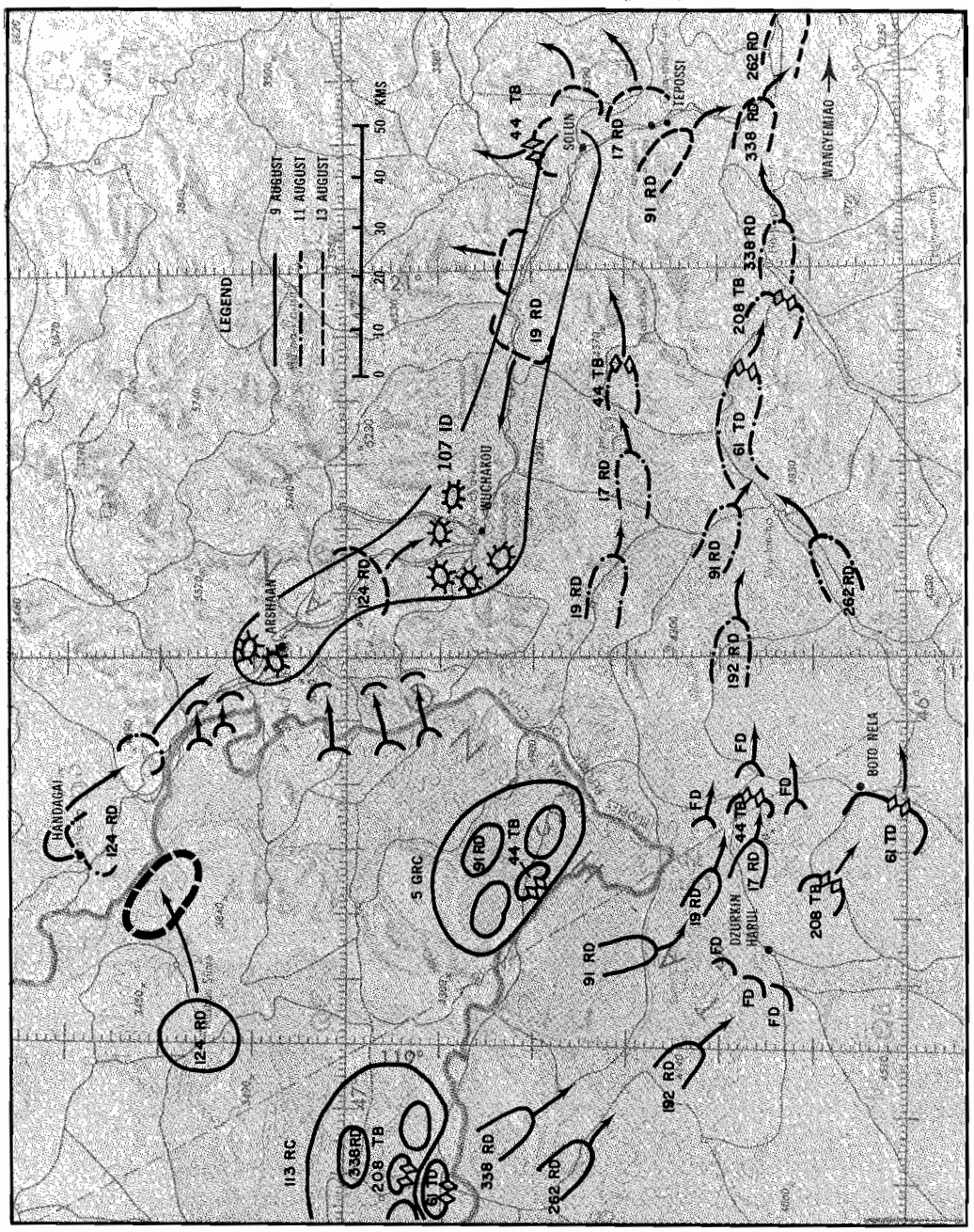
Reconnaissance units of 6th Guards Tank Army



6th Guards Tank Army approaching the Grand Khingans

the corps commanders formed new, more mobile forward detachments using the divisional self-propelled artillery battalions.[6] While two regiments of the Japanese 107th Infantry Division prepared to defend the Halung-Arshaan and Wuchakou fortified areas, the remaining regiment concentrated along the rail line from Wuchakou to Solun, uncertain as to where the main Soviet blow would strike.[7] Meanwhile, the main force of the Soviet 39th Army advanced through the rugged central region of the Grand Khingan Mountains eastward and southeastward toward Solun and Wangyemiao in order to cut the rail line and to isolate Japanese forces in the fortified regions.

Farther to the north, on the left flank of the Trans-Baikal Front, the 36th Army of Lt. Gen. A. A. Luchinsky advanced on two axes (see map 24).[8] The 86th Rifle Corps and 2d Rifle Corps launched the main attack at 0020 on 9 August in order to secure crossings over the rain-swollen Argun River between Staro-Tsurukhaytuy and Duroy. One rifle battalion of each first echelon rifle division acted as an initial assault force. In order to hasten the crossing, 2d Rifle Corps transported two rifle regiments across the river in thirty amphibious vehicles. By 0600, main forces had begun



Map 23. Soviet 39th Army Advance, 9—13 August 1945

crossing the river. These forces scattered the platoon- to company-size Japanese forces and auxiliaries defending the river. An army forward detachment organized around the 205th Tank Brigade raced toward Hailar, sixty kilometers to the south, to preempt Japanese defense of the fortified areas and to cut the main rail line from Manchouli to central Manchuria. The Japanese 80th Independent Mixed Brigade, consisting of five infantry battalions and support units, and the 119th Infantry Division defended Hailar and occupied the Hailar Fortified Region. Manchurian cavalry forces assisted the Japanese defenders.

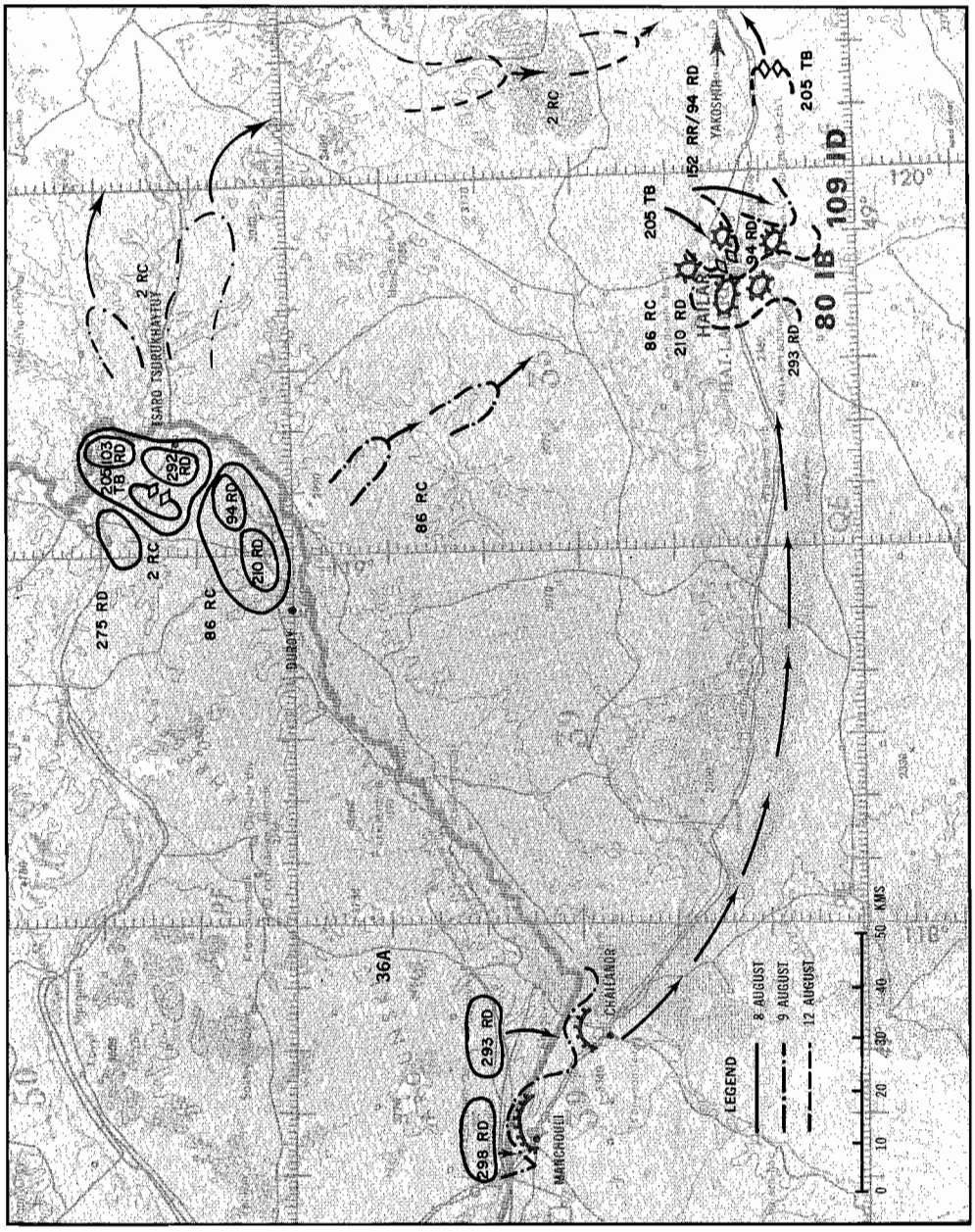


Luchinsky, Aleksandr Aleksandrovich (1900—?), 36th Army

1919—joined Red Army; company, squadron commander, 50th Taman Division; 14th Maikop Cavalry Division; squadron commander, cavalry division, Turkestan Front.
1936—regimental commander.
1937-38—service in China.
1940—Frunze Academy.
1940—chief of staff, rifle division.
1941—(Apr) commander, 83d Mountain Rifle Division (Caucasus).
1943—(May) commander, 3d Mountain Rifle Corps (Taman-Sevastopol).
1944—(May) commander, 28th Army (Belorussia, E. Prussia operations).
1945—(Jun) commander, 36th Army.
1946—army commander.
1949—deputy commander, Group of Soviet Forces, Germany.
1949—commander, Leningrad Military District.
1953—commander, Turkestan Military District.
1958—1st deputy chief inspector of Ministry of Defense.
1964—military inspector-advisor, Group of General Inspectors, Ministry of Defense.

By evening on 9 August, the 205th Tank Brigade had secured key bridges north of Hailar. The 36th Army commander, hoping to preempt the Japanese defenders at Hailar, ordered the 205th Tank Brigade to conduct a night attack southward to envelop and secure the city. The 205th Tank Brigade attacked from the northeast, and the 152d Rifle Regiment of the 94th Rifle Division circled to attack the city from the southeast. The attack was only partially successful. The 205th Tank Brigade seized the railroad station in the northern part of the city, and on the morning of the tenth, after a delay in getting into position, the 152d Rifle Regiment took the southern and eastern portions of the city.[9] Japanese defenders in the 80th Independent Mixed Brigade delayed the Soviet advance, prevented seizure of the city, and prepared to defend the fortified region northwest and southwest of the city. On 9 August the Japanese 119th Infantry Division moved eastward to set up defenses in the passes of the Grand Khingan Mountains from Yakoshih to Pokotu.[10]

On the 36th Army's right wing, an operational group of two rifle divisions and two artillery machine gun brigades attacked across the border and secured a foothold in the small fortified post at Manchouli, held by the Japanese in multicompany strength. Thus, by the evening of 9 August



Map 24. Soviet 36th Army Advance to Hailar and Yakoshih, 9—12 August 1945

the 36th Army had advanced sixty kilometers into Manchuria and had partially secured its initial objective of Hailar. Heavy fighting would occur before the stubborn defenders in the 80th Independent Mixed Brigade would relinquish their hold on the Hailar Fortified Region.



Tank units on a rest halt

The second echelon of the Trans-Baikal Front, the 53d Army under Col. Gen. I. M. Managarov, remained in assembly areas in Mongolia until 10 August, when it began crossing the border in the tracks of the now distant 6th Guards Tank Army. After 9 August, the Japanese ordered units that were not cut off to withdraw to Changchun and Dalay. General Ushiroku of the Japanese Third Area Army resolved to concentrate his forces and to defend north and south of Mukden in an effort to provide protection for the families of his soldiers. This unilateral decision of the area army commander, by conflicting with the plans of General Yamada to construct a defense farther to the rear, sowed further confusion in Japanese ranks.[11]



Manchouli

The Trans-Baikal Front continued its rapid advance on 10 August, employing whenever possible mobile forces as forward detachments. By the evening of the eleventh, the Soviet-Mongolian Cavalry-Mechanized Group, advancing rapidly towards Kalgan and Dolonnor, had reached the foothills of the Grand Khingan Mountains, 200 kilometers from its start point. Still encountering weak opposition, the 17th Army gained forty kilometers on the tenth and by the evening of the eleventh was approaching the western foothills of the Grand Khingan Mountains, about 180 kilometers from where it had begun its advance.

On the evening of 9 August, with his forward detachments in the western foothills of the Grand Khingan Mountains, and in the absence of any noticeable Japanese reaction, the commander of the 6th Guards Tank Army, General Kravchenko, made final plans for securing the mountain passes and conducting the difficult passage of the mountain chain. Because of the

good cross-country mobility of its tracked vehicles, General Kravchenko decided to shift the 5th Guards Tank Corps into the first echelon of his right wing march column. He pulled out the 9th Guards Mechanized Corps because of its wheeled vehicles and lack of sufficient fuel.* The shift occurred on the afternoon of the tenth. The crossing of the Grand Khingan Mountains would be along two axes. In the north, 7th Guards Mechanized Corps would cross near Mokotan using two roads (trails). In the south, 5th Guards Tank Corps with 9th Mechanized Corps in second echelon would cross east of Yukoto on one road. The 5th Guards Tank Corps began weaving its way through the mountains late on the afternoon of the tenth. The 7th Guards Mechanized Corps began crossing the next morning.



Managarov, Ivan Mefod'evich (1898—?), 53d Army

1917—(Apr) joined Red Guards; commander, Enakievsk Red Guards Detachment; regimental commander.
1923—Cavalry School.
1923—commander, cavalry subunits (Leningrad, Turkestan Military Districts).
1926—secretary of party bureau of cavalry regiment (Volga Military District).
1931—Military Political Academy.
1931—commissar, mechanized regiment; commissar, cavalry regiment.
1938—(Nov) commander, cavalry division.
1941—commander, 26th Rifle Corps (Far East).
1942—commander, 16th Cavalry Corps; 7th Cavalry Corps (Bryansk, Kalinin, and Northwest Fronts).
1942—(Dec) commander, 41st Army.
1943—(Mar) commander, 53d Army (Kursk, Belgorod-Kharkov, Uman-Botoshansk, Iassy-Kishinev, Budapest, Prague operations).
1946—army commander.
1949—service in PVO (air defense) forces.
1953—retired.

At 2300 on the tenth, the 5th Guards Tank Corps reached Tsagondabo, the highest point of passage through the Grand Khingans. In darkness and rain this corps continued to the eastern exits from the mountain pass. The 5th Guards Tank Corps traversed forty kilometers of pass in seven hours, a feat made possible by the fact that the column consisted only of tracked vehicles. Farther north, the 7th Guards Mechanized Corps, impeded by its large number of wheeled vehicles, completed passage of the mountains during the evening of the eleventh. Both columns entered the central Manchurian plain and continued rapidly eastward. On 11 August, the lead brigade of 5th Guards Tank Corps reached Lupei. The following day lead units of the 7th Guards Mechanized Corps reached Tuchuan. The 6th Guards Tank Army reached both objectives on the fourth day of an operation planned for five days.[12] There was no Japanese opposition.

*The 9th Guards Mechanized Corps was equipped with American Sherman tanks, whose mobility was more limited than the T-34 tank and whose fuel consumption was higher.



Hailar

Audacity had paid off. The speed of the advance surpassed Soviet expectations. The 6th Guards Tank Army covered 350 kilometers over difficult terrain in three days, preempting the ability of Japanese forces to react quickly enough to block the advance of the tank army. After 12 August, only logistical difficulties limited the Soviet advance. Pressure on other fronts and the collapse of the western sector would make it exceedingly difficult for the Japanese to restore a viable defensive line and to stave off total collapse.

Japanese opposition to the Soviet-Mongolian Cavalry-Mechanized Group, the 17th Army, and the 6th Guards Tank Army was limited or nonexistent. Small groups of Inner Mongolian horse cavalry from the 1st Cavalry Division stationed north of Kalgan outposted the border. Offering little resistance to the Soviet mechanized and horse cavalry advance, they fell back to their base. The Japanese 108th Infantry Division at Jehol had an infantry battalion at Chihfeng and a company at Linhsi in the zone of advance of the 17th Army. The Japanese 63d Infantry Division at Tunglaio had an

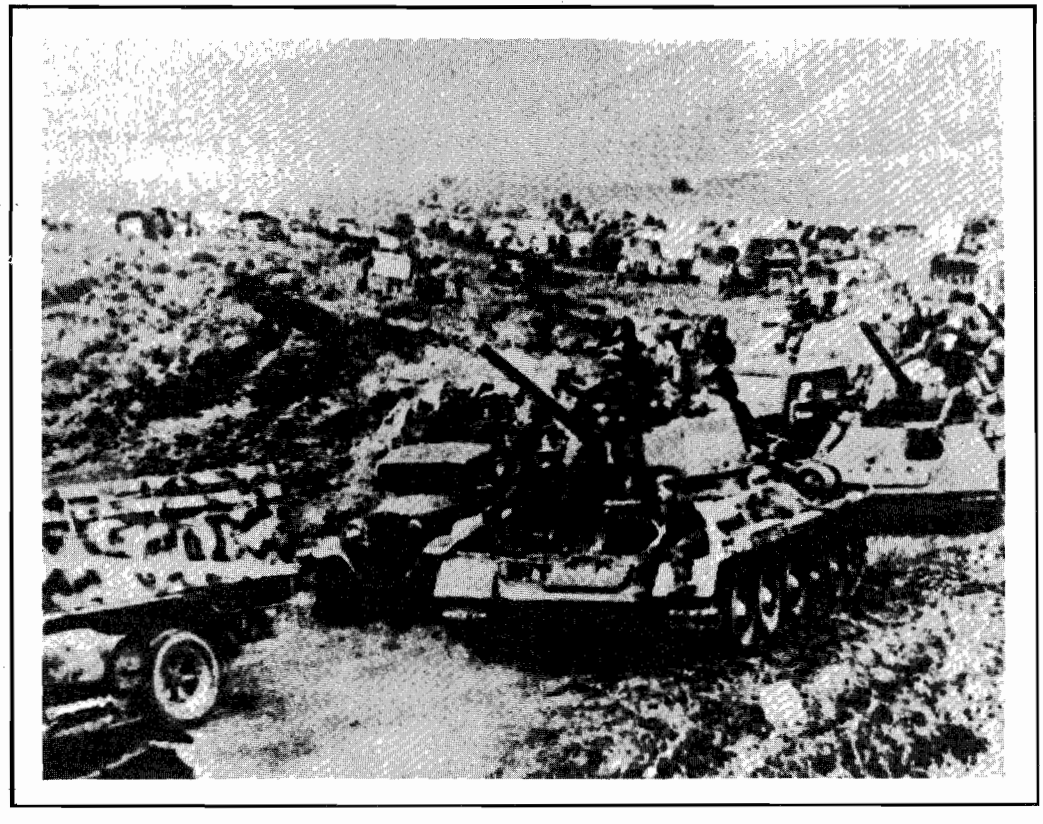
infantry battalion at Kailu, but no division units moved northwest to block 6th Guards Tank Army's advance. The 117th Infantry Division at Taonan dispatched one infantry battalion and an antitank battalion about thirty kilometers west on the Tuchuan road on 10 August to intercept advancing



6th Guards Tank Army tanks crossing the Grand Khingan Mountains

Soviet tank columns. On the same day, however, the Japanese 44th Army ordered both the 63d and the 117th Infantry Divisions to redeploy eastward to Mukden and Hsinking (Changchun), respectively. Neither division engaged Soviet forces in combat. Further resistance to the advance of the Soviet-Mongolian Cavalry-Mechanized Group, the 17th Army, and the 6th Guards Tank Army came only from Inner Mongolian forces operating out of Kalgan and from minor elements of the Japanese 108th Infantry Division. Other Japanese units in west central Manchuria withdrew eastward. In the zone of advance of the 39th Army, only the 107th Infantry Division, small elements of the 117th Infantry Division, and random unattached 44th Army units and local Manchurian forces resisted.[13] The story was different, however, in northwest Manchuria, where Japanese opposition severely hindered the advance of the Soviet 36th Army.

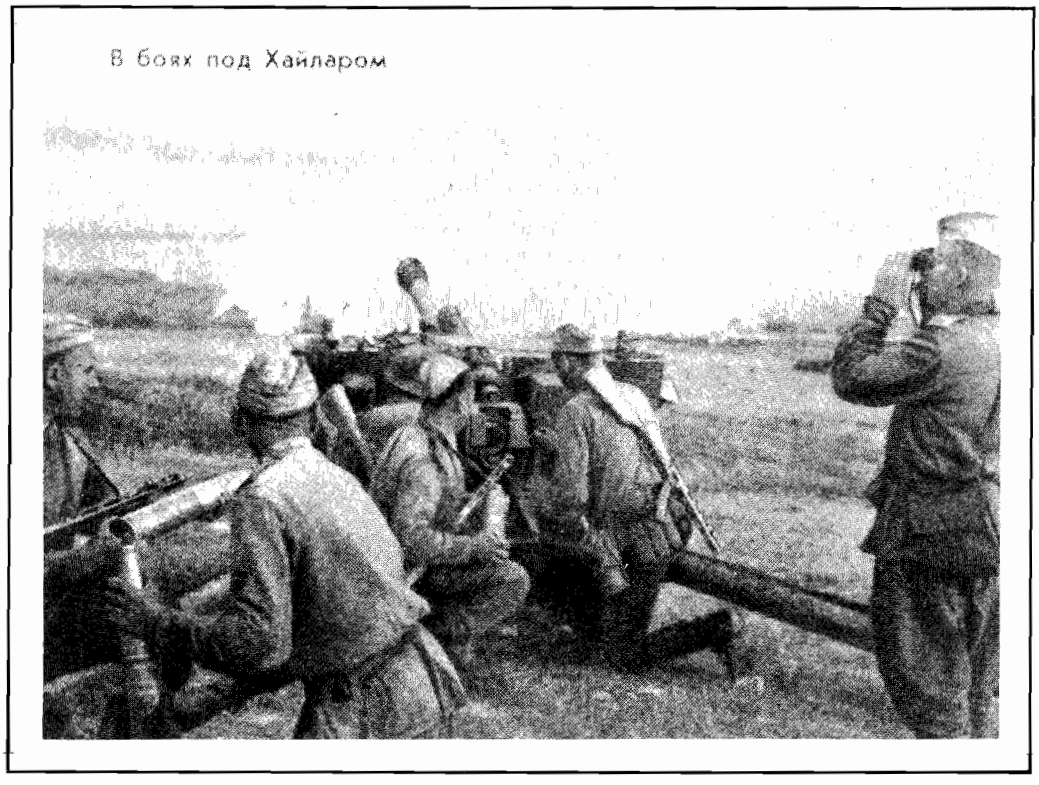
On the left flank of the 6th Guards Tank Army, the 39th Army continued to advance, with its main force bypassing portions of the Japanese 107th Infantry Division besieged in the Halung-Arshaan and Wuchakou Fortified Regions. The 5th Guards Rifle Corps moved eastward in a column of rifle divisions toward Solun and the railway station at Tepossi, meeting little opposition. The 113th Rifle Corps, also in a column of rifle divisions, advanced southeastward toward Wangyemiao, through the tortuously narrow, winding, and rain-swollen valley of the Wulan Ho. The 206th Tank Brigade and the 44th Tank Brigade led the advance of the two corps. On the afternoon of 12 August, 39th Army forces met the first Japanese opposition. Elements of the Japanese 107th Infantry Division withdrawing southeast



The 20th Tank Brigade (6th Guards Tank Army) enters the central Manchurian plain

along the railroad from Wuchakou ran into advanced elements of the 5th Guards Rifle Corps. The Soviets destroyed several train cars, dispersed the Japanese, and opened the road to Solun. Only natural obstacles of swamps and rivers slowed the Soviet advance.[14]

On the left flank of 39th Army, the 94th Rifle Corps advanced toward Hailar from the south. Because of the success of 36th Army operations against Hailar and because of stiff Japanese resistance at Halung-Arshaan to the 124th Rifle Division of 39th Army, General Lyudnikov, on the evening of 10 August, ordered the 94th Rifle Corps to turn its divisions southward and to rejoin the main force. The 221st Rifle Division received the surrender of General Houlin, commander of the Manchurian 10th Military District, and 1,000 of his men south of Hailar; it then marched eastward towards the Grand Khingan mountain pass at Tarchu. The 358th Rifle Division turned due south to join the 124th Rifle Division, which was engaged in reducing Japanese forces in the Halung-Arshaan Fortified Region.[15]



Soviet artillery firing on Japanese positions at Hailar

In the 36th Army's sector, the 205th Tank Brigade and 152d Rifle Regiment continued on 10 August to battle for the central and southwest part of Hailar city. Japanese positions on the high ground to the south and northwest poured heavy fire into attacking Soviet units. General Luchinsky, commander of 36th Army, shifted his forces to restore the momentum of

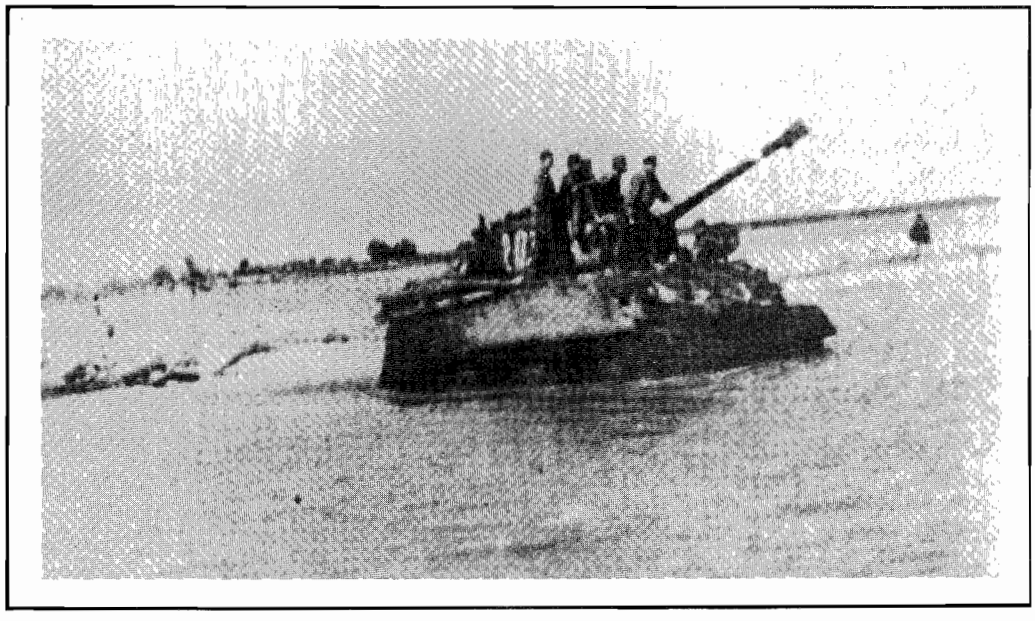
the advance beyond Hailar. He ordered the 205th Tank Brigade to withdraw from Hailar and to cooperate with the 2d Rifle Corps advancing east of Hailar. After the 2d Rifle Corps had completed its bypass of Hailar, it advanced with the 205th Tank Brigade along the railroad to Yakoshih. Units of the Japanese 119th Infantry Division defended in a series of fortified positions along the rail line from Yakoshih to Pokotu. The 36th Army commander also ordered the 94th Rifle Division of 86th Rifle Corps to replace the 205th Tank Brigade and to continue operations to secure Hailar. At 1400 on 11 August, the 94th Rifle Division, with air and artillery support, attacked and seized the southwest portion of Hailar city. Japanese units withdrew to the heavily fortified positions on the hills to the northwest and southwest. The 36th Army commander rushed the remainder of the 86th Rifle Corps forward to become part of a special group to reduce the Hailar forts.[16] On the same day, the Soviet operational group on the right flank of the 36th Army broke Japanese resistance at Manchouli and moved eastward along the rail line to join with the Soviet forces besieging Hailar.

On the fourth day of the offensive (12 August), the Soviet tide swept forward as Japanese forces defended in isolated outposts or withdrew to regroup and prepare to fight future battles. Soon the confusion of the chaotic withdrawal would be compounded by political confusion resulting from rumors of a Japanese call for a cease-fire.

Throughout 12 and 13 August on the Trans-Baikal Front's right flank, the Soviet-Mongolian formations of General Pliyev swept across the Inner Mongolian deserts towards Dolonnor and Kalgan at a rate of ninety to one hundred kilometers a day, rudely shunting aside local cavalry forces. Pliyev's principal concern was providing his forces in the vast desert wastes sufficient food, fuel, fodder, and water. On 14 August General Pliyev's left column overcame a small Manchurian cavalry force and entered Dolonnor at the east end of the pass across the southern Grand Khingan Mountains. The 17th Army also successfully crossed the Grand Khingan Mountains, and on the fourteenth its forward units captured Taopanshin.[17]

Progress of the 6th Guards Tank Army continued to be spectacular, although the task of resupplying the numerous armored vehicles was becoming a problem. After the 7th Guards Mechanized Corps had secured Tuchuan and the 5th Guards Tank Corps had taken Lupei, both units experienced severe fuel shortages. The 7th Guards Mechanized Corps had only half of its fuel supply, while the 5th Guards Tank Corps had only fourtenths of its fuel supply. Because the 9th Guards Mechanized Corps was short of fuel even before it crossed the Grand Khingan Mountains, it had no fuel when it arrived at Lupei.[18] The transportation network, which reached 700 kilometers to the rear, was badly overextended. When the campaign began, the 6th Guards Tank Army itself had 6,489 serviceable vehicles out of the 9,491 authorized by TO&E. Army automobile battalions had only 50 to 60 percent of their assigned vehicles; thus, they were capable of carrying only 500 tons of supplies. This vehicle attrition was primarily

the result of the harsh march from distant assembly areas. In order to augment the truck transportation assets of 6th Guards Tank Army, the Trans-Baikal Front attached to 6th Guards Tank Army the 47th Automobile Regiment of six battalions comprising more than 1,000 trucks. In order to transport critical supplies of fuel, the front attached to the army the 453d Aviation Battalion with 400 aircraft.[19] The tank army's rapid advance strained these resources to a breaking point. In order to increase fuel supplies to a level sufficient to maintain offensive momentum, the 6th Guards Tank Army began airlifting fuel to the two advanced corps on 11 August. While resorting to this expedient, the 6th Guards Tank Army commander halted his units for a two-day period (12—13 August).



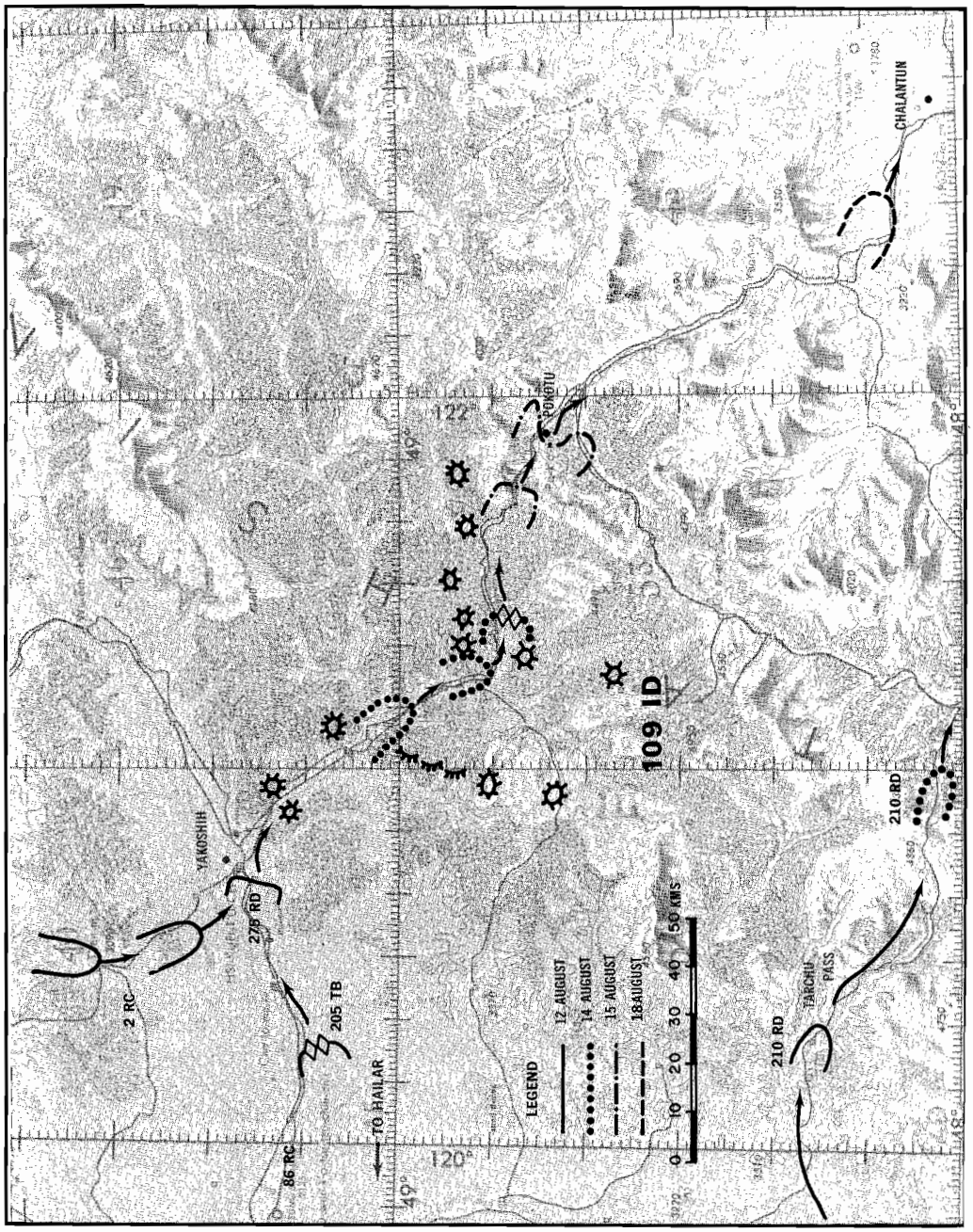
Tanks of the 46th Guards Tank Brigade, 9th Guards Mechanized Corps, conduct a river crossing

On 13 August this army resumed the offensive by pushing reconnaissance units towards Tungliao and Taonan. A reinforced tank or mechanized brigade from each corps followed the reconnaissance units as each corps's forward detachment. All available fuel in each corps was put at the disposal of these forward detachments. Other units remained in static positions awaiting fuel. At nightfall on the fourteenth, after a march hindered by wet weather and by Japanese kamikaze attacks, the forward detachment of the 7th Guards Mechanized Corps occupied Taonan, while that of the 9th Guards Mechanized Corps continued to drive southeastward toward Tungliao and Kailu.[20]

On 13 August, the 39th Army continued its attack to subdue Japanese units at Halung-Arshaan and Solun. During the afternoon, after a powerful artillery and air preparation, Solun fell to assaulting Soviet forces of the 17th Guards Rifle Division and the 44th Tank Brigade. The Soviets repelled several battalion-strength Japanese counterattacks the next day. The 91st and 17th Rifle Divisions of the 5th Guards Rifle Corps initiated the Soviet pursuit from Solun southeastward along the railroad towards Wangyemiao. The 44th Tank Brigade, acting as a forward detachment, spearheaded the attack in coordination with forward detachments from the corps first echelon rifle divisions. Fuel shortages in the 44th Tank Brigade forced the corps commander to create a new forward detachment consisting of the 735th Self-Propelled Artillery Regiment, one artillery battalion, an antitank battalion, and a self-propelled artillery battalion.[21] The march southeastward brought Soviet units into contact with Japanese artillery and infantry units of the 107th Infantry Division and the 2d Raiding Battalion at Tepossi.[22] A battle that night and the following day scattered the Japanese forces. The 19th Rifle Division of 5th Guards Rifle Corps advanced along the railroad west of Solun against Japanese units retreating from the Wuchakou area. These Japanese forces were caught between the 19th Rifle Division and the 124th Rifle Division advancing eastward from the Halung-Arshaan Fortified Region. Meanwhile, the 113th Rifle Corps, led by the 206th Tank Brigade, continued moving toward Wangyemiao. On 15 August, Soviet troops of the 113th Rifle Corps and the 61st Tank Division occupied Wangyemiao. Japanese units, after launching several unsuccessful counterattacks to regain the city, retreated into the hills north of Wangyemiao, where they continued to harass Soviet forces.

On the northern flank of the Trans-Baikal Front, the 36th Army continued its siege of the Hailar fortifications and its difficult advance through the Grand Khingan passes southeast of Yakoshih (see map 25). The 86th Rifle Corps used the 94th and 393d Rifle Divisions with heavy artillery support to continue reducing the Hailar fortifications. Meanwhile, on 12 August, the 2d Rifle Corps, with the 205th Tank Brigade in the lead, battled for and secured Yakoshih. The 275th Rifle Division advanced beyond Yakoshih, but was halted by Japanese forces entrenched near the railroad station at Wunoerh. The next two days (13 and 14 August), the Soviet 2d Rifle Corps battled with the Japanese 119th Infantry Division for possession of the Grand Khingan passes west of Pokotu. Japanese fortified positions lining the roads and railroads through the Grand Khingan passes to the open plain around Pokotu slowed the progress of Soviet units. The battle was intense, and gains were measured in meters.[23]

While the Soviet advance tore into the Kwantung Army, the Japanese government pondered a decision to surrender. The Soviet invasion of Manchuria and the U.S. employment of the atomic bomb were but new disasters



Map 25. Soviet 36th Army Advance from Yakoshih to Chalantun, 12—18 August 1945

heaped upon earlier Japanese defeats. On 14 August, the Japanese contacted the Allied powers and offered to accept the terms the Allies had offered them at Potsdam. The Japanese camp was confused as to the full meaning of the Allied offer. Despite this confusion, on the evening of 14 August the Japanese emperor issued a cease-fire order, which the High Command passed on to units in the field. General Yamada, however, contradicted the order, and the Soviets responded by ordering a continuation of hostilities, which in turn delayed transmission of the cease-fire order to the units. Compounding the communications problem was the fact that many Japanese felt that the call for a cease-fire conflicted with their personal oath of fidelity to the emperor. Concrete cease-fire negotiations with the Soviets opened on 19 August, only after the Imperial High Command had settled the issue of personal oaths.[24]

Amidst the confusion concerning Japanese intentions, the Soviet Far East Command decided to continue the offensive. The rationale was that individual Japanese units continued to resist actively, either in defiance of their government's orders or in ignorance of those orders.[25] While the partially implemented cease-fire order and the impact of the Soviet offensive paralyzed the Japanese Army, the Soviets moved to cement their control over all of Manchuria.

By 14 August, the Trans-Baikal Front had crossed the Grand Khingan Mountains in all sectors. The front now moved to secure the ultimate objectives of the campaign, the cities of Mukden and Changchun. On 15 August, Marshal Malinovsky announced the new objectives in orders that mandated front seizure of Kalgan, Chihfeng, Mukden, Changchun, and Tsitsihar by 23 August.[26] The advance resumed.

On 15 August, the Soviet-Mongolian Cavalry-Mechanized Group, still advancing in two columns on widely separate routes, ran into heavy opposition from the Inner Mongolian 3d, 5th, and 7th Cavalry Divisions at Kanbao. The 27th Motorized Rifle Brigade, forward detachment of the southern column, attempted to dislodge the Mongolians. After two days of heavy battle, General Pliyev's southern column concentrated its forces, defeated the Inner Mongolians, took 1,635 prisoners, and occupied the city.[27] On 18 August the Soviet-Mongolian forces reached the outskirts of Kalgan. Although the Japanese High Command had announced the capitulation of the Kwantung Army on the eighteenth, the defenders of the fortified region northwest of Kalgan did not end their resistance until 21 August. The Soviet-Mongolian Cavalry-Mechanized Group ceremoniously crossed the Great Wall of China and proceeded toward Peking, uniting on the march with units of the Communist Chinese 8th Route Army.*

*Communist Chinese forces had been operating in northern China against Japanese forces and against the Nationalist Chinese government of Chiang Kai-shek. After the Soviets had conquered Manchuria they turned captured Japanese equipment over to the Communist Chinese and provided the Communists a base from which to operate against the Nationalist government.

The 17th Army, marching toward Chihfeng, was hindered more by water shortage, intense heat, and sandy terrain conditions than by enemy opposition. After an arduous march, 17th Army units brushed aside light opposition by elements of the Japanese 108th Division and on 17 August occupied Chihfeng. During the following day, 17th Army moved toward the coast, occupying Pingchuan and Linguan and finally reaching the coast at Shanhaikuan opposite the Liaotung Peninsula.



Soviet tanks entering Changchun

On 15 August, the 53d Army, hitherto in second echelon following 6th Guards Tank Army, moved into the yawning gap between the 17th Army and the 6th Guards Tank Army. Its mission was to secure Kailu. The advance was unhindered, and on 1 September 53d Army units occupied Kailu, Chaoyang, Fuhsin, and Gushanbeitseifu. Forward detachments occupied the Chinchou area on the Gulf of Liaotung.

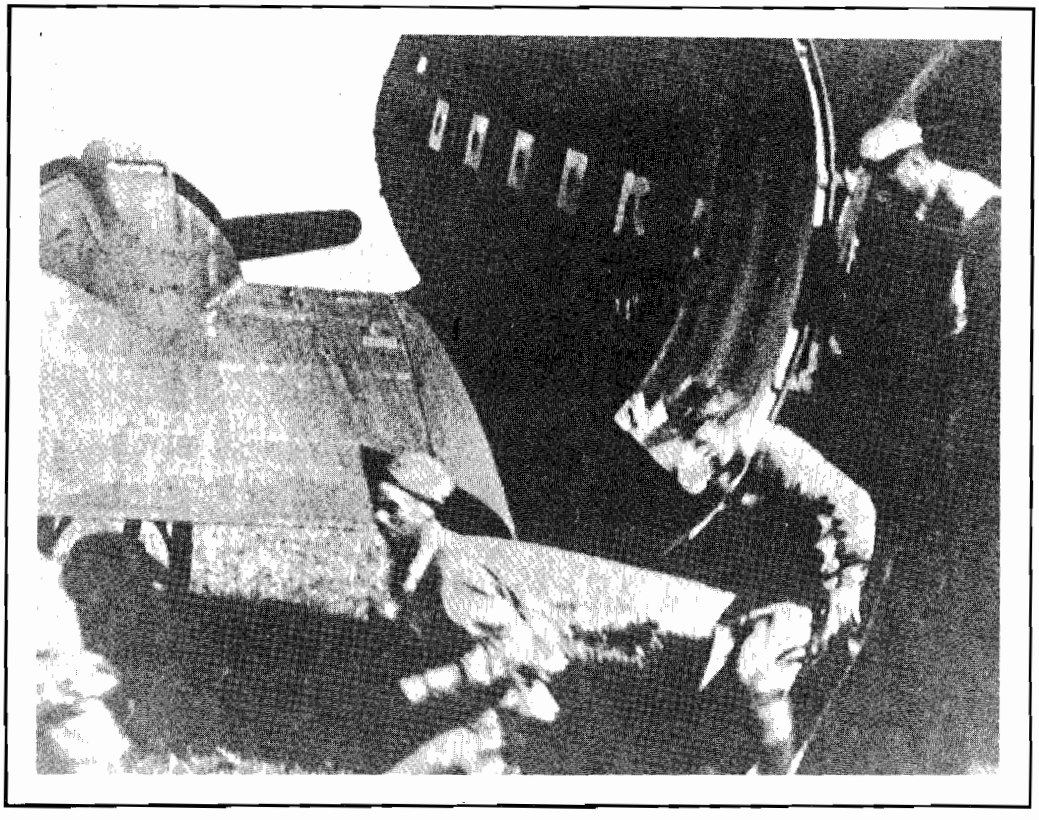
The 6th Guards Tank Army continued its march on 15 August along two axes opposed by decaying elements of the 63d and 117th Japanese Infantry Divisions and Manchurian cavalry forces. The 7th Guards Mechanized Corps moved east toward Changchun, while the 9th Guards Mechanized Corps and 5th Guards Tank Corps moved southeast toward Mukden.



Soviet troops board aircraft for trip to Port Arthur

The gap between the two units was more than 100 kilometers wide. Reconnaissance units (motorcycle battalions), assisted by flights of reconnaissance aircraft, operated between the corps. On 16 August the forward detachments of 5th Guards Tank Corps and 9th Guards Mechanized Corps secured Tungliao and Kaitung, respectively. On the nineteenth the main force closed in on the two cities. From Tungliao the 5th Guards Tank Corps and 9th Mechanized Corps marched in single column along the railroad bed in what was essentially an administrative march on Mukden. On 21 August 6th Guards Tank Army units occupied both Changchun and Mukden, two days after the arrival of Soviet air-landed detachments at both locations. Because of a shortage of fuel, further movement of the 6th Guards Tank Army to Port Arthur and Dalny was by rail.[28]

On 16 August, the 39th Army continued its advance along the railroad from Wangyemiao to Changchun. Significant elements of the army remained in positions along the lines of communications, cleaning up bypassed Japanese and Manchurian forces. Late in the day, the main force forward detachment of 39th Army reached and secured Taonan. Other Soviet forces engaged Japanese units on both sides of the route from Halung-Arshaan to Wangyemiao. A particularly heavy Japanese counterattack was repulsed northwest of Solun. By this time, both divisions of the 94th Rifle Corps had rejoined the army in its main area of operations. The 358th Rifle Division



The air landing at Mukden

of the corps participated in the reduction of the last isolated Japanese positions at Halung-Arshaan, and the 221st Rifle Division, having crossed the Grand Khingans at Tartu Pass, turned south and engaged elements of the Japanese 107th Infantry Division north of Wangyemiao. Main forces of the 39th Army concentrated at Taonan on 17 August, and, on the following day, the forces entrained for movement to Changchun and then to the Liaotung Peninsula. The 94th Rifle Corps, now responsible for mopping up Japanese resistance in the army rear area, reverted to front reserve with

headquarters near Wangyemiao. Remnants of the Japanese 107th Infantry Division continued to resist the 94th Rifle Corps through the remainder of August. On 30 August, the division commander finally surrendered his remaining 7,858 men to the 221st Rifle Division at Chalai, southwest of Tsitsihar.[29]

Heavy Japanese resistance continued in 36th Army sector, both at Hailar Fortified Region and along the road and rail line through the Grand Khingan Mountains to Pokotu. The Japanese 119th Infantry Division's defense of Pokotu in heavy rains held up Soviet forces of the 2d Rifle Corps from 15 to 17 August. After the fall of Pokotu on the seventeenth, Soviet units moved southward and occupied the railroad station at Chalantun. On 18 August Japanese forces began laying down their arms. The 36th Army took 8,438 prisoners at Pokotu and 985 at Chalantun. The 36th Army's movement from Chalantun to Tsitsihar was unopposed and largely administrative. The army occupied its ultimate objective of Tsitsihar on 19 August and took the surrender of 6,000 more Japanese troops.[30] In the rear of 36th Army, intense Japanese resistance continued at Hailar. Using heavy artillery, the 86th Rifle Corps units systematically reduced enemy strongholds in the hills northwest and southwest of the city. Position after position fell under heavy artillery, sapper, and infantry assault. The Soviets snuffed out final Japanese resistance at Hailar on 18 August, when the remaining garrison of 3,827 men surrendered.[31]

Thus, the offensive of the Trans-Baikal Front achieved its objectives well ahead of schedule. For all practical purposes, organized resistance ceased after 18 August. Activity from that time on involved collecting prisoners, disarming Japanese units, and administrative movements to occupy remaining areas of central and southern Manchuria. The success of the Trans-Baikal Front was due primarily to audacious Soviet movement and lackluster Japanese response. In western Manchuria the Japanese were least prepared and hence most surprised. Even after the Japanese had detected the attack by Soviet units, they chose to withdraw their units to central Manchuria and not to contest the Soviet advance. Units left in border regions, such as the 107th Infantry Division and the 80th Independent Mixed Brigade, were overwhelmed initially or isolated, bypassed, and ultimately destroyed. Their resistance, however, did tie up Soviet units. Japanese units that withdrew into Manchuria (117th Infantry Division) or those units already deployed in central Manchuria never significantly opposed the Soviets. By the time Soviet units had reached Taonan and Wangyemaio, cease-fires and prospects for Japanese surrender preempted further Japanese action.

Had Japanese units been positioned to defend in the difficult terrain the Soviets had to traverse, Japanese opposition could have been significant. Even small units deployed in the Khingan mountain passes west of Lupei could have caused severe disruption to the Soviet advance. In light of Soviet

fuel difficulties, units deployed to defend Lupei and Tuchuan could have interfered with the movement of 6th Guards Tank Army at a critical juncture. The resistance Japanese units offered the Soviets at Hailar and Halung-Arshaan showed what such resistance could accomplish. The tenacious 119th Infantry Division defense of the Khingan passes from Yakoshih to Pokotu demonstrated the potential value of resistance on or near the Grand Khingan mountain line. Although, in time, the overwhelming power of the Soviet advance undoubtedly would have prevailed, audacious offensive action by Soviet commanders and uncoordinated indecisive action of the Japanese High Command in the face of insubordination permitted the situation to degenerate rapidly and allowed the Soviets to beat their most optimistic timetable. Trans-Baikal Front action thus became the decisive action in Manchuria, and the scope of overall Soviet victory paralleled that of the Trans-Baikal Front.

Conduct of the Offensive: 1st Far Eastern Front

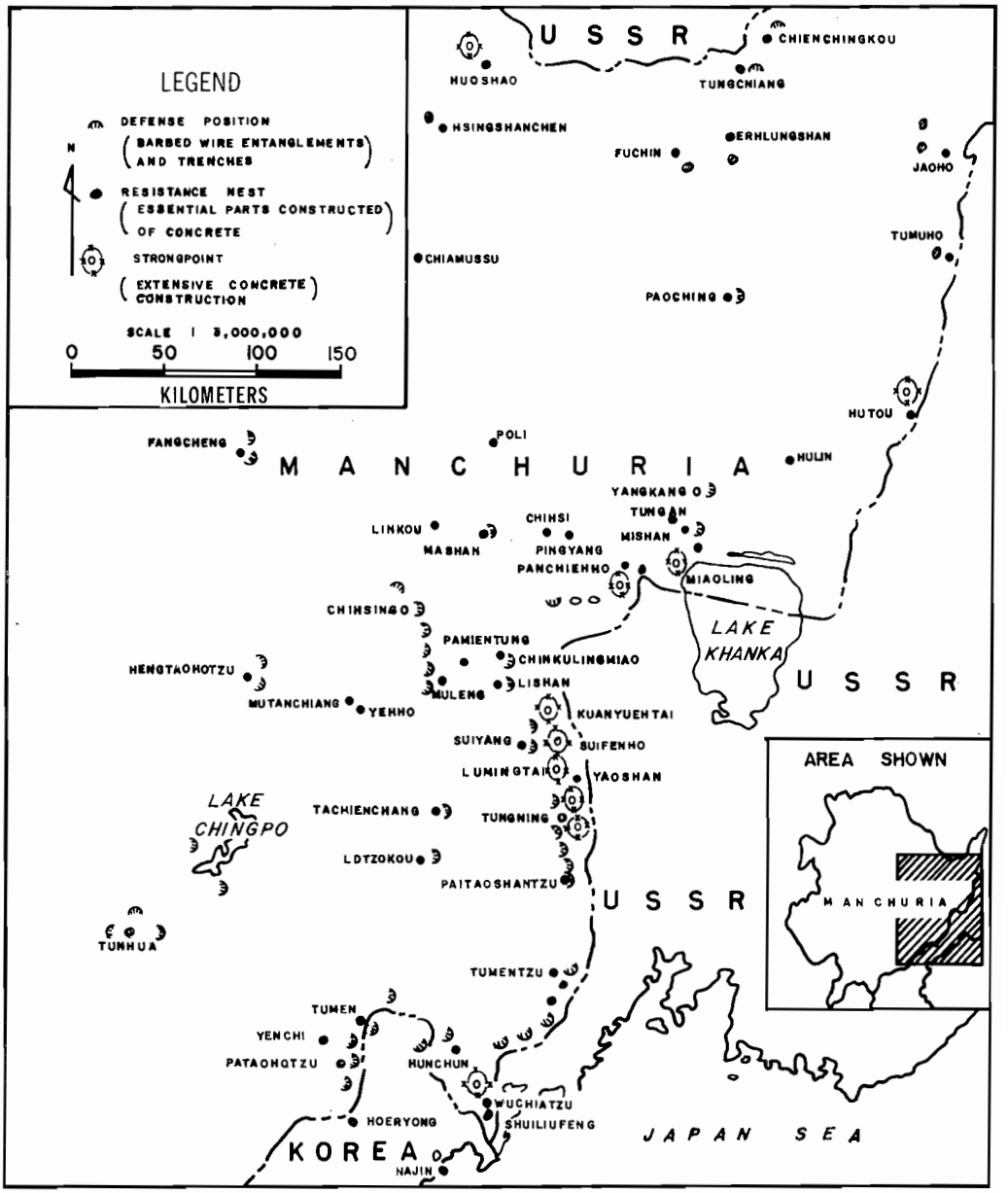
8

Marshal Meretskov's 1st Far Eastern Front faced conditions that differed significantly from those of the Trans-Baikal Front. The frontage of the 1st Far Eastern Front, running from the Ussuri River town of Iman, north of Lake Khanka, to the Sea of Japan, was shorter than that of the Trans-Baikal Front. The Japanese border districts of eastern Manchuria were more heavily fortified than those in the west. Some of the fortification complexes were large, sophisticated, reinforced concrete structures. Although lightly held, they covered virtually all good avenues of approach and routes of communication into eastern Manchuria by way of Jaoho, Hutou, Suifenhò, Tungning, and Hunchun. Japanese forces in eastern Manchuria held the border regions with small covering forces and planned to concentrate the bulk of their forces in defensive lines eighty kilometers west of the border (see maps 26—29).

Thus, the Soviet task was to penetrate the border regions quickly by traversing terrain the Japanese considered too difficult for large-scale movement, to bypass and isolate frontier fortifications, to drive deeply and quickly into eastern Manchuria, and to preempt Japanese establishment of a viable defense west of the border.

Soaked by inundating thunderstorms, 1st Far Eastern Front advanced in the worst of weather conditions in the dark of night. Along virtually the entire front, forces advanced under cover of rain without support of an artillery preparation except at Hutou, in the northern part of 35th Army sector. Rain persisted from after midnight till about 0600 on the ninth. The Soviet attack under such miserable conditions compounded the surprise of the Japanese and led to quick reduction of many unsuspecting Japanese border posts.

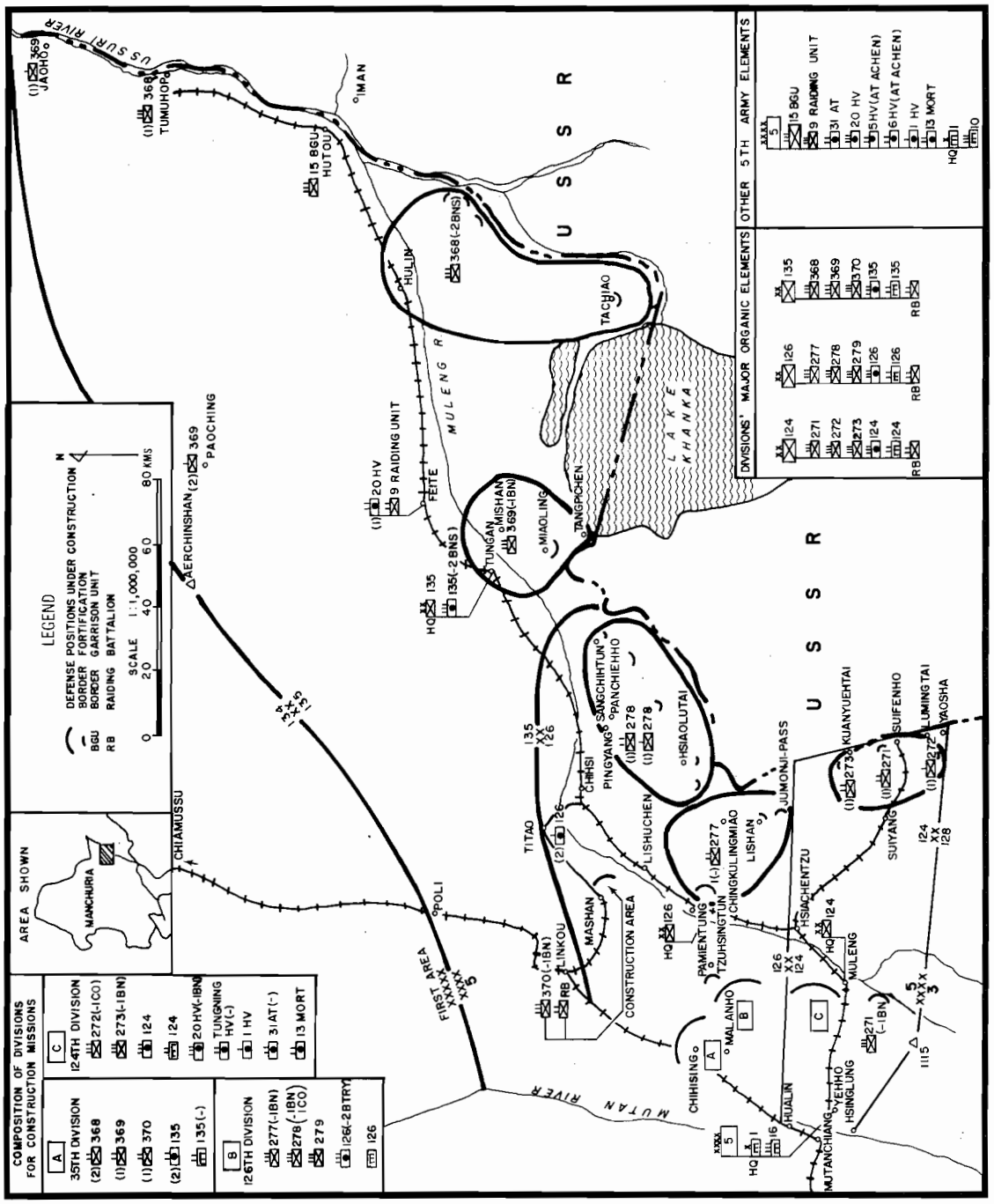
At 0030, front reconnaissance units began the advance across the border in heavy thunderstorms. Assault units and advanced battalions followed at 0100 to secure Japanese fortified strongpoints and outposts and to cut lanes through the obstacle belts for the main front forces. Main force regiments of each army led the main attack at 0830.



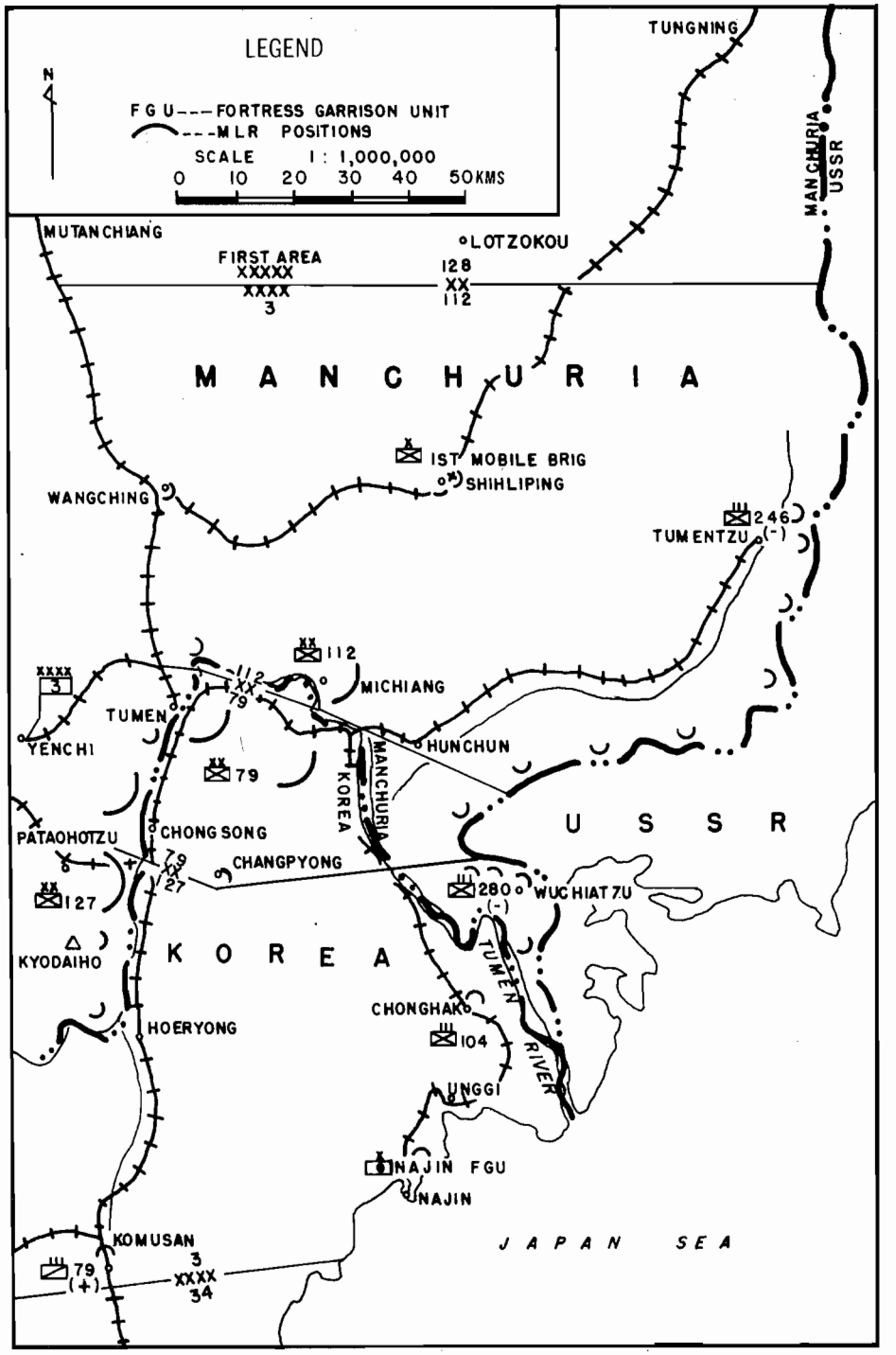
Map 26. Japanese Fortified Positions in Eastern Manchuria

The 5th Army of Col. Gen. N. I. Krylov launched the main attack of the 1st Far Eastern Front.[1] With three rifle corps abreast (17th Rifle Corps on the left, 72d Rifle Corps in the center, and 65th Rifle Corps on the right), the attack struck the front and northern flank of the Volynsk (Kuanyuehtai) center of resistance,* held by one battalion of the Japanese

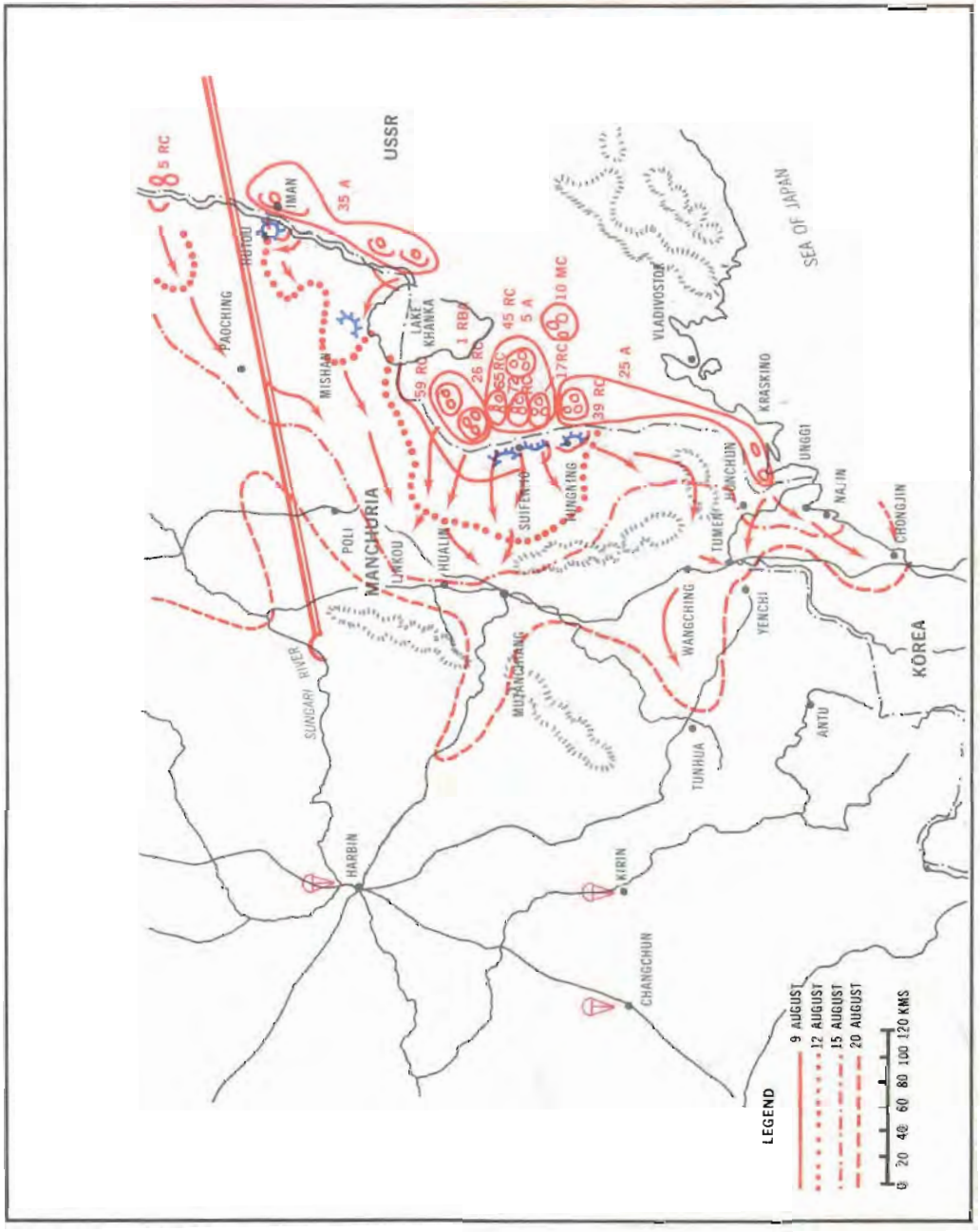
*By Soviet definition, a fortified region contained several centers of resistance. Each center of resistance consisted of fortified points, pillboxes, and trench systems.



Map 27. Japanese 5th Army Defense Area

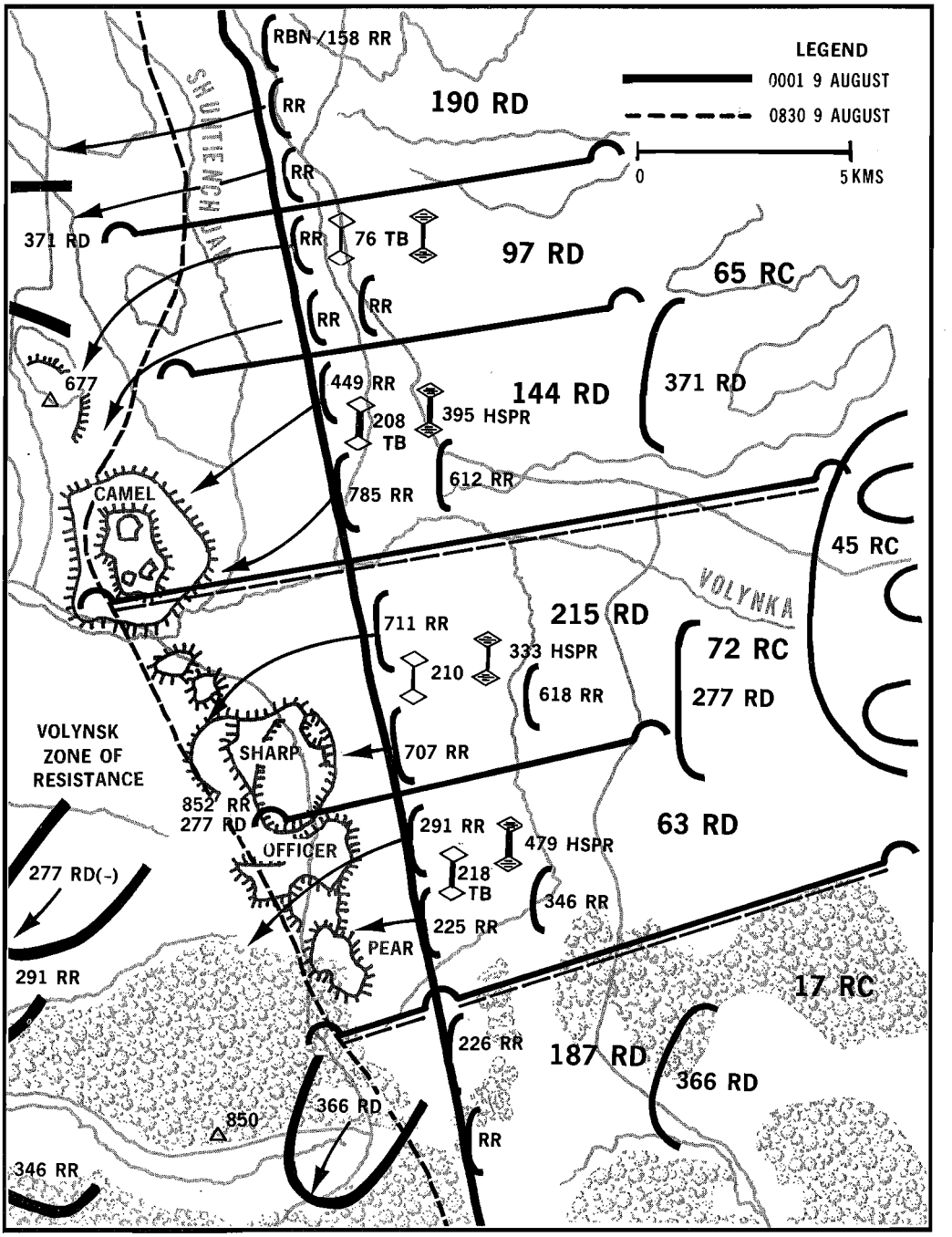


Map 28. Japanese 3d Army Defense Area



Map 29. Soviet 1st Far Eastern Front Operations, 9—20 August 1945

273d Infantry Regiment, 124th Infantry Division (see map 30). On the left flank of 5th Army, the 105th Fortified Region and assault engineer units struck the Suifenho center of resistance, defended by a battalion of the 371st Infantry Regiment, 124th Infantry Division. Assault and reconnais-



Map 30. Soviet 5th Army Main Attack Sector, 0001—0830, 9 August 1945

sance units from lead rifle regiments' advanced battalions attacked at 0100, and they disrupted Japanese forward defenses in four hours of combat. At 0830 first echelon rifle regiments followed the assault units into the attack. One tank brigade and one heavy self-propelled artillery regiment supported the first echelon regiments of each rifle division on the main axis of advance. The attack progressed quickly. The 72d Rifle Corps in 5th Army's center assaulted and secured some of the Volynsk fortifications. After leaving second echelon units to reduce remaining positions, the corps penetrated four to five kilometers beyond the fortified zone. At 1500, with a tank brigade in the lead, corps units pushed westward into the Japanese rear toward Laotsaiying (see map 31). The 65th Rifle Corps, on the right flank of 5th Army, enveloped the northern portion of the Volynsk center of resistance. Leaving isolated Japanese units in the rear for second echelon units to deal with, the corps, led by a tank brigade as forward detachment, advanced northwestward towards Machiacho station. The 17th Rifle Corps, on 5th Army's left flank, attacked through a weak sector of Japanese defenses and swung southwestward around the northernmost Japanese fortifications of the Suifenho center of resistance. Assault engineer units and fortified region units seized the critical railroad tunnels on the main rail line into Manchuria by way of Suifenho.[2]

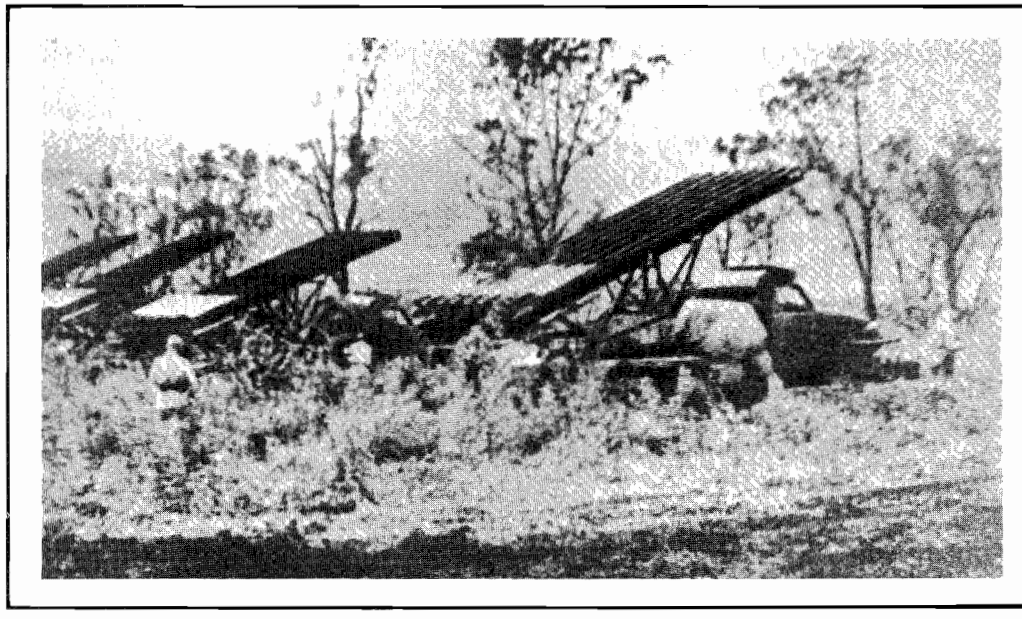


Krylov, Nicolai Ivanovich (1903—72), 5th Army

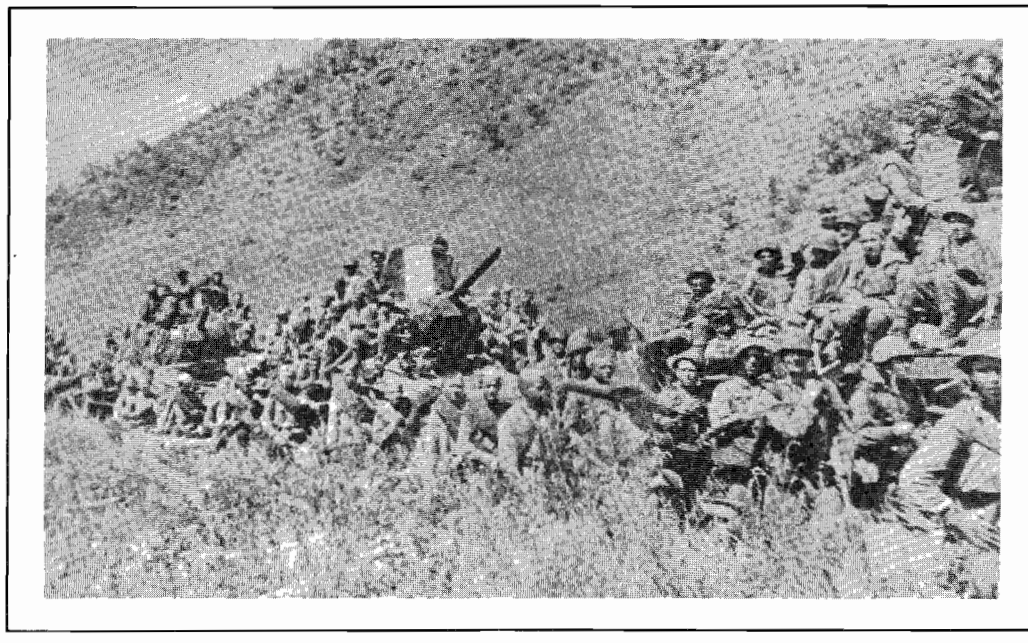
1919—joined Red Army; platoon and company commander (N. Caucasus). Battalion commander, 2d Trans-Baikal Rifle Division (Vladivostok).
1920—Infantry/Machine Gun Course of Red Commanders.
1920-40—staff and command positions (Far East).
1928—*Vystrel* course.
1941—chief of staff, Danube Fortified Region; chief, Operations Department; chief of staff, Maritime Army (Odessa, Sevastopol).
1942—(Sep) chief of staff, 62d Army (Stalingrad operation).
1943—(Apr) chief of staff, 8th Guards Army.
1943—(Jul) commander, 21st Army.
1943—(Oct) commander, 5th Army (Belorussia, E. Prussia operation).
1945—deputy commander, Maritime Military District.
1947—commander, Far East Military District.
1953—first deputy commander, Far East Military District.
1956—commander, Ural Military District.
1957—commander, Leningrad Military District.
1960—commander, Moscow Military District.
1963—(Mar) commander, strategic rocket forces and deputy minister of defense.

By nightfall on 9 August the three corps of 5th Army had torn a gaping hole thirty-five kilometers wide in the Japanese defensive lines and had advanced sixteen to twenty-two kilometers into the Japanese rear area. The 45th Rifle Corps in army second echelon followed the advancing units. Reinforced by sappers and self-propelled artillery, rifle regiments from the second echelon of each forward division reduced remaining Japanese strongpoints in the Volynsk, Suifenho, and Lumintai centers of resistance. Soviet

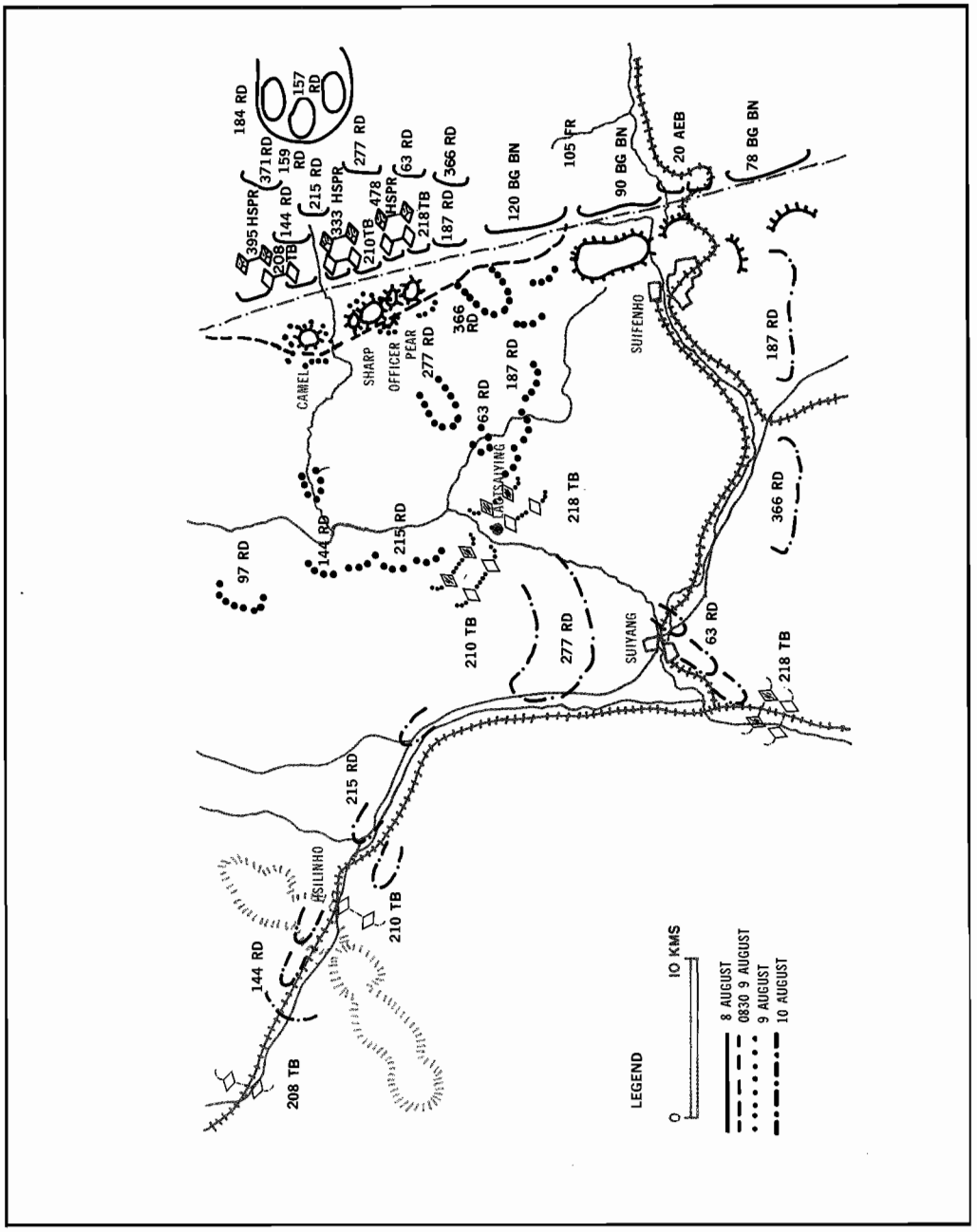
forces liquidated all such positions within three days. Japanese units at Suiyang, in the rear of the fortified zones, withdrew to the Muleng area to join the main forces of 124th Infantry Division in defensive positions.



"Katiushas" fire on Japanese positions

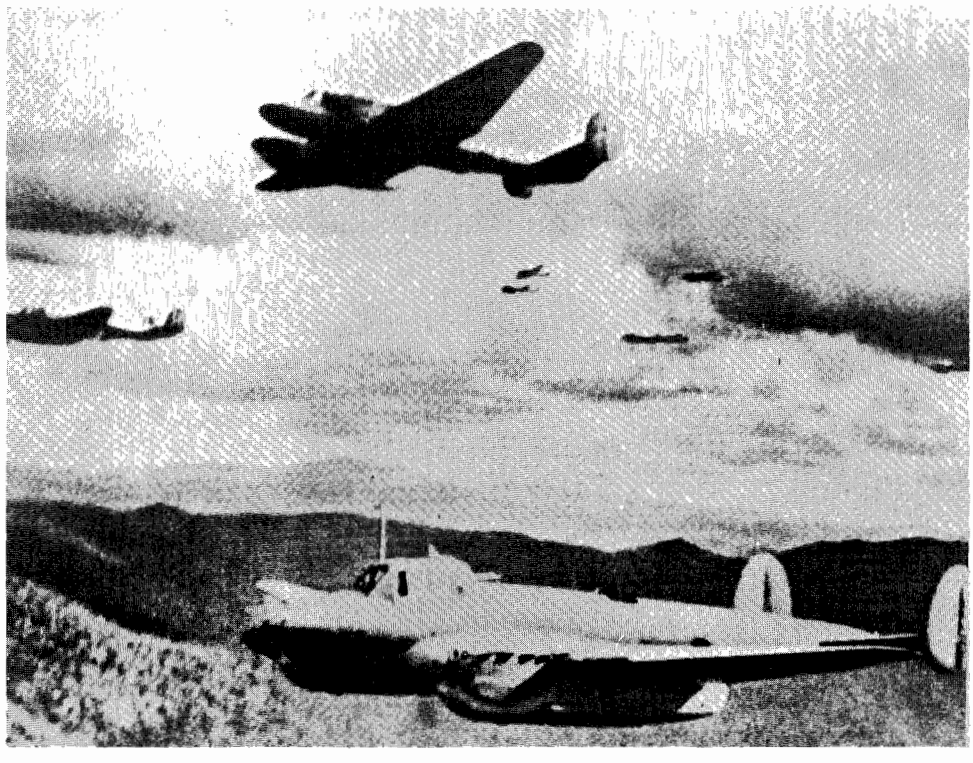


On the road to Mutanchiang



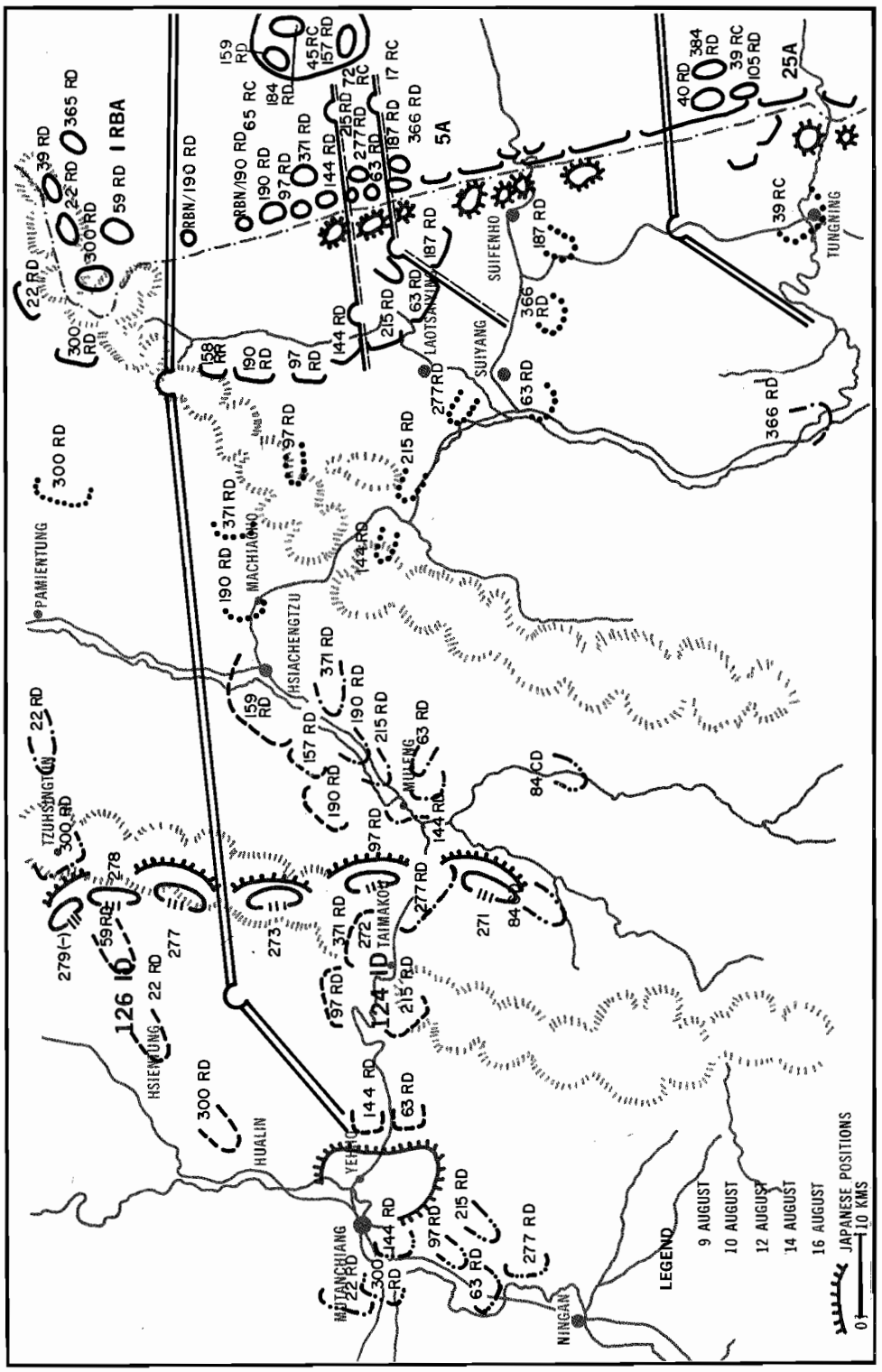
Map 31. Soviet 5th Army Advance, 9—10 August 1945

The following day, 5th Army units advanced rapidly westward and southward in the rear of other Japanese fortified regions in the area (see map 32). Japanese units initiated a general withdrawal to a north-south line west of Muleng. In these planned positions, the Japanese 124th Infantry Division prepared to defend against 5th Army.[3] Throughout 10 August, 5th Army units advanced eighteen to thirty kilometers and widened the zone of penetration to seventy-five kilometers. Main elements of 65th Rifle Corps,



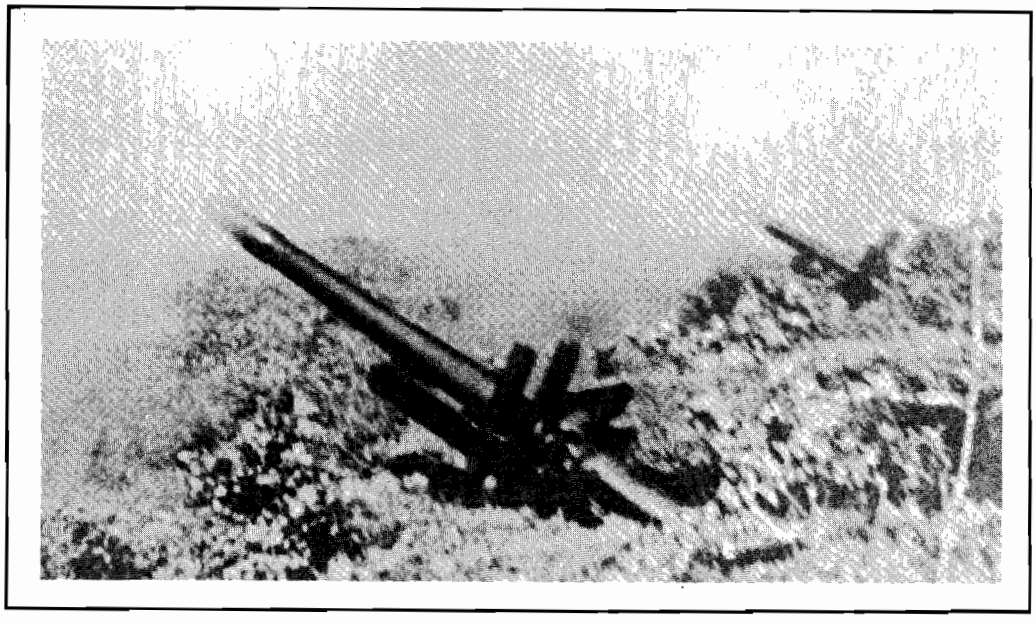
Soviet bombers over Manchuria

led by a tank brigade, marched in column northwestward toward Machiacho station. The 72d Rifle Corps, in a column of regiments also led by a tank brigade, advanced along the rail line northwestward toward Hsiachengtzu on the Muleng River, and the 17th Rifle Corps moved southward in the rear of the Lumintai center of resistance to join forces with 39th Rifle Corps units of 25th Army, operating farther south. The 63d Rifle Division of 72d Rifle Corps and a tank brigade swung southward and then northwestward toward Muleng in order to envelop withdrawing Japanese forces. At 1700 on the tenth, in a planned adjustment of his forces, the front commander, Marshal Meretskov, detached 17th Rifle Corps from 5th Army and subordinated it to 25th Army.[4]



Map 32. Soviet 5th Army Advance to Mutanchiang, 9—12 August 1945

The 5th Army advance continued on the eleventh, and reinforced forward detachments of the 65th and 72d Rifle Corps reached the Muleng River, an objective initially scheduled for the eighth day of the operation. Marshal Meretskov, impressed by the progress of 5th Army, ordered acceleration of the advance on Mutanchiang (an objective for the seventeenth day).[5] Responding to Meretskov's order, General Krylov of 5th Army created a strong army forward detachment made up of the 76th Tank Brigade, a heavy self-propelled artillery regiment, and two rifle battalions, and dispatched them in a dash along the road to Mutanchiang. The forward detachment advanced on the night of 11—12 August, and 5th Army divisions followed in march column. On the morning of the twelfth, heavy counterattacks by the Sasaki Detachment (two infantry battalions from the 135th Infantry Division), attached to the Japanese 124th Infantry Division, halted and inflicted heavy casualties on the Soviet forward detachment east of Taimakou.[6] Additional reinforcements arrived from the 144th and 97th Rifle Divisions, and after a thirty-minute artillery preparation, 5th Army units cut a four-kilometer swath through Japanese positions and continued their march toward Mutanchiang.



Heavy artillery pounds Japanese positions

On 13 August the advance continued thirty kilometers in a corridor five to seven kilometers wide along the road and rail line to Mutanchiang. The 144th and 63d Rifle Divisions, with tank brigades as forward detachments, led the advance. Other Soviet divisions stretched out sixty kilometers along the main road to the rear, clearing the area north and south of the highway. Battered and bypassed units of the Japanese 124th Infantry Division withdrew in some confusion into the hills north of the highway, later infiltrated southwest through the hills, and surrendered on 22 August to

Soviet forces at Ningen, southwest of Mutanchiang.[7] Meanwhile, the Japanese 126th Infantry Division and 135th Infantry Division (-), after withdrawing from positions north of 5th Army's zone of advance, moved to Mutanchiang, where they set up a defensive perimeter.



Commander of 1st Red Banner Army, Col. Gen. A. P. Beloborodov, observes pre-offensive exercises

Beloborodov, Afanasii Pavlant'evich (1903—?), 1st Red Banner Army

1919—(Nov) Uvarov Partisan Detachment in Irkutsk. Commanded rifle platoon.
1923—joined Red Army.
1923—Nizhnegorod Infantry School.
1929—F. Engels military political course.
1929—political oficer, rifle company, 197th Rifle Regiment (Far East).
1930—service in Far East.
1936—Frunze Academy.
1936-39—deputy commander, chief of operations, 66th Rifle Division (Separate Red Banner Far Eastern Army).
1939—(Mar) chief of operations, 31st Rifle Corps.
1939—(Jun) chief of staff, 43d Rifle Corps.
1941—(Jan) chief, Training Department, Far Eastern Front.
1941—(Jul) commander, 78th Rifle Division.
1941—(Nov) commander, 9th Guards Rifle Division (Moscow operations).
1942—(Sep) commander, 5th Guards Rifle Corps (Veliki-Luki operation).
1943—(Aug) commander, 2d Guards Rifle Corps (Nevel, Vitebsk operation).
1944—(May) commander, 43d Army (E. Prussia operations).
1945—(Jun) commander, 1st Red Banner Army.
1946-47—commander, Guards Army.
1947-53—commander, 39th Army (Port Arthur).
1953—chief, military training administration of ground forces; chief of *Vystrel* course; assistant commander, Central Group of Forces.
1955—commander, Voronezh Military District.
1957—chief, Main Cadre Administration, and Member of Kollegia of the Ministry of Defense.
1963—commander, Moscow Military District.
1968—inspector and advisor, Group of General Inspectors, Ministry of Defense.

At nightfall on 13 August, after repelling many Japanese platoon- to battalion-size harassing attacks, 5th Army units approached the outer fortifications of Mutanchiang, having widened their advance corridor to twelve or thirteen kilometers.[8] The stage was now set for one of the few multidivision set-piece battles in the Manchurian campaign.

The 1st Red Banner Army supported the 5th Army attack by advancing on its right (northern) flank (see map 33). The 1st Red Banner Army's zone of operation extended from the right flank of 5th Army, through the heavily forested mountain regions to the north and northwest and eastward across the open country bordering the Tigra River valley to Lake Khanka. Opposite 1st Red Banner Army, Japanese border units and elements of the 135th Infantry Division defended a string of platoon- to battalion-strength outposts. The easternmost outposts were heavily fortified southern extensions of the Mishan Fortified Region.[9] Col. Gen. Beloborodov, commander of the 1st Red Banner Army, concentrated his forces in two corps (26th Rifle Corps on the left, 59th Rifle Corps on the right) for a main attack in a sixteen-kilometer sector in the left half of the army zone. In the remainder of his army zone eastward to Lake Khanka, he deployed the reinforced 112th Fortified Region and the 6th Field Fortified Region.* The mission of the army main attack force was to penetrate the ten- to fifteen-kilometer, heavily forested, hilly region immediately facing the army sector and to continue the attack along two axes across relatively open country to secure Pamientung and Lishuchen on the Muleng River. The army would then continue the attack southwest toward Mutanchiang and northwest to Linkou. The fortified regions on the army's right flank would conduct small-scale supporting attacks on Japanese installations south of Mishan in concert with forces of 35th Army operating toward Mishan from the east. Eventually, 1st Red Banner Army would unite with 5th Army units at Mutanchiang and with 35th Army units at Mishan and Linkou.[10]

The 1st Red Banner Army's chief obstacle was the heavily wooded terrain now wet from heavy rains. Enemy opposition amounted to Japanese platoon and company outposts on the border and a few battalion-size positions in the more open country fifteen to twenty kilometers west of the border. Advancing Soviet rifle divisions would have to build roads through the forest as they advanced, so they needed heavy engineer support and a carefully organized march column formation. In 26th Rifle Corps zone, 300th Rifle Division and 22d Rifle Division led the advance, while in 59th Rifle Corps zone, 39th and 231st Rifle Divisions led. Tank brigades followed the advanced divisions of each corps to take the lead when each corps completed passage over the difficult terrain to the corps's immediate front. Two rifle divisions were in the corps second echelons.

*A field fortified region consisted of machinegun and artillery battalions (like a regular fortified region). Assigned vehicles permitted the field fortified region to undertake mobile tactical operations (unlike the fortified region).

The attack by 1st Red Banner Army coincided with the attack by 5th Army. Although heavy rains forced cancellation of an artillery preparation illuminated by searchlights, assault units led the attack at 0100 on 9 August. Advanced battalions of each lead rifle division and the division itself followed in multiple march columns (three march columns from the 300th Rifle Division, two from the 22d Rifle Division, and two from the 39th Rifle Division).* The columns constructed and widened the road as they advanced.[11] By nightfall on 9 August, forward divisional elements were five to six kilometers deep into Manchuria and had crossed the first obstacle, the Shitouho River, and half the forested region. During the night the main forces closed on the advanced elements, and the tank brigades prepared to take the lead.

On the morning of the tenth, road building continued, and by late morning all forces had broken through to open country. Now leading, the tank brigades pushed rapidly westward. In 26th Rifle Corps sector, the 257th Tank Brigade preceded the 300th Rifle Division and on its right the 22d Rifle Division. The 75th Tank Brigade preceded the 39th Rifle Division of 59th Rifle Corps, followed by the 365th Rifle Division. After a battle with elements of the 277th Infantry Regiment of the Japanese 126th Infantry Division, the Soviet 257th Tank Brigade, 300th Rifle Division, and 22d Rifle Division swept aside the opposition and at 2100 occupied portions of the city of Pamientung and the important bridge across the Muleng River.[12] The main force of 26th Rifle Corps arrived in Pamientung on the eleventh, after a gain of forty-five kilometers in three days. By the time the corps had seized the city, the 257th Tank Brigade and elements of the 300th Rifle Division were marching west and southwest in pursuit of withdrawing Japanese forces. To the north, 75th Tank Brigade duplicated the feat of 257th Tank Brigade by securing the bridge across the Muleng River at Lishuchen. The next morning, 39th Rifle Division arrived in Lishuchen, and the pursuit of Japanese forces began toward Linkou.

On 1st Red Banner Army's right flank, 112th Fortified Region and 6th Field Fortified Region forces, reinforced by a rifle regiment of 59th Rifle Corps, stormed several Japanese border positions held by elements of the 369th Infantry Regiment of the Japanese 135th Infantry Division and slowly advanced northward toward Mishan. At nightfall on 11 August the units crossed the Muleng River south of Mishan and in the ensuing days cooperated with 35th Army units in securing the Mishan Fortified Region.

Japanese 126th and 135th Infantry Divisions, responsible for the Pamientung-Mishan sectors, withdrew rapidly after the Soviet attack. The Japanese intent was to occupy planned defensive positions on a north-south line adjacent to the positions of 124th Infantry Division east of Mutanchiang. The 126th Infantry Division defended near Tzuhsingtun, and the

*No information available on the march configuration of the 231st Rifle Division.

135th Infantry Division occupied positions at Chihsing, thus covering the city of Mutanchiang from the north and northwest. The Japanese offered only token opposition to Soviet forces thrusting towards Linkou.[13]

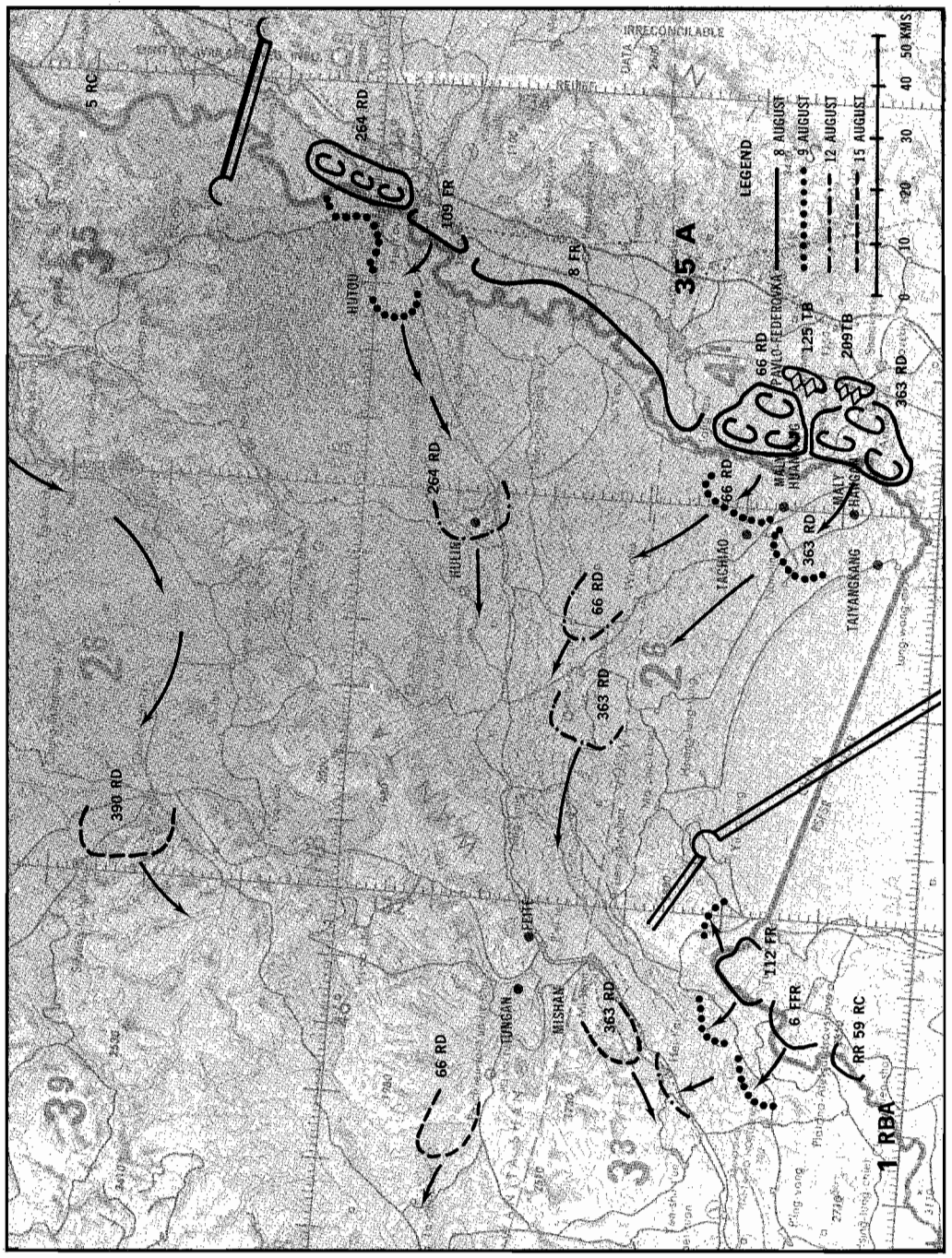
Having secured Lishuchen and Pamientung, Soviet 1st Red Banner Army forces relentlessly drove on, virtually preempting Japanese defensive designs. The 257th Tank Brigade with the 300th Rifle Division of 26th Rifle Corps encountered, enveloped, and bypassed units of the Japanese 126th Infantry Division at Tzuhsingtun and pushed on to Hsientung, where on the afternoon of the twelfth, they cut the Linkou-Mutanchiang railroad line and enveloped and drove off another Japanese unit. By this time the brigade was down to nineteen serviceable tanks.[14] In spite of its reduced strength, the unit moved on in an attempt to secure the rail bridge across the Mutan River at Hualin, some ten kilometers to the south. At 0500 on 13 August, the 257th Tank Brigade, from march formation, occupied the railroad station at Hualin. The critical railroad bridge was just two kilometers south of the station. The brigade dashed for the bridge, which blew up with a roar before the brigade could reach it. All day, against heavy opposition by the Takikawa Infantry Battalion of the 370th Regiment of the Japanese 135th Infantry Division, the brigade tried without success to secure crossing sites over the Mutan River.[15] During the battle, a train entering Hualin from the north carried the commander of the 135th Infantry Division, his staff, and elements of an infantry regiment. Although the 257th Tank Brigade destroyed much of the train, the Japanese general escaped on foot to the Japanese lines.[16] At 1800 on 13 August, the tank brigade withdrew to the outskirts of Hualin under heavy Japanese attack. During the night the unit broke out of a ring of Japanese troops, set up defenses on the hill northeast of Hualin, and waited for reinforcements. Other Soviet troops were marching southwest from Pamientung and Tzuhsingtun on two separate routes to assist the 257th Tank Brigade. The 300th Rifle Division and the 22d Rifle Division of the 26th Rifle Corps marched on the southern route, and the 77th Tank Brigade and the 59th Rifle Division followed on the northern route.

On the 1st Red Banner Army's right (northern) wing, the 75th Tank Brigade and the 39th Rifle Division of the 59th Rifle Corps reached and secured Linkou on 13 August. Elements of the 370th Infantry Regiment, 135th Japanese Infantry Division, and the division headquarters withdrew south towards Chihsing and Mutanchiang. The 369th Infantry Regiment remained north of Linkou and on 17 August retreated westward to Erhtaohotzu. The 75th Tank Brigade and the 39th Rifle Division turned south toward Mutanchiang, leaving the 365th Rifle Division to pursue the Japanese 369th Infantry Regiment from Linkou. On 14 August the stage was set for battle to begin at Mutanchiang. The Japanese 126th Infantry Division and major elements of the 135th Infantry Division were now positioned to defend against 1st Red Banner Army units advancing from the north and 5th Army units advancing from the east in an effort to seize the critical communications junction and headquarters of First Area Army.

The battle for Mutanchiang raged for two days.[17] The 22d and 300th Rifle Divisions of 1st Red Banner Army, supported by the 77th and 257th Tank Brigades, attacked the northern and eastern flanks of the city and the railroad station at Yehho on the east bank of the Mutan River. Striking the Japanese right flank at Ssutaoling and in the hills southeast of the city, 5th Army units supported the drive. Ultimately, 1st Red Banner Army units cleared the city by the evening of 16 August, and 5th Army units skirted south of the city to continue the advance southwestward toward Ningan. The Japanese 126th and 135th Infantry Divisions withdrew westward to Hengtaohotzu during the evening of 16 August. Elements of both divisions, in particular the 278th Infantry Regiment of the 126th Infantry Division and the Takikawa Battalion of the 135th Infantry Division, did not get the order to withdraw. The 278th Infantry Regiment was destroyed almost to a man in the Soviet capture of Mutanchiang. The Takikawa Battalion disbanded and infiltrated to the rear in small groups.[18]

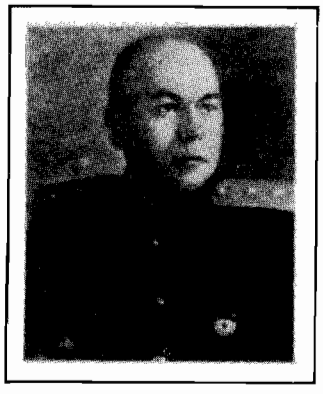
After the fall of Mutanchiang, 1st Red Banner Army units began an advance northwest of the city in the direction of Harbin. The 5th Army advanced southwestward toward Ningan, Tunghua, and Kirin. On 17 August, 1st Red Banner Army units covered fourteen kilometers, driving small enemy groups out of their path. The 72d Rifle Corps of 5th Army marched southward on the east bank of the Mutan River and unsuccessfully attempted to cross the river north of Ningan. On the night of 17—18 August the 277th Rifle Division conducted a successful night river crossing against heavy Japanese opposition. The next day the remainder of 72d Rifle Corps crossed the Mutan River. On the eighteenth, with the final announcement of Japanese capitulation, 1st Red Banner Army and 5th Army units deployed to receive and process surrendering Japanese units. On 20 August forward detachments of 1st Red Banner Army reached Harbin, where they united with Soviet air-landed forces and with amphibious forces of 15th Army, 2d Far Eastern Front.[19]

In the northern sector of the 1st Far Eastern Front, north of Lake Khanka and on the right of 1st Red Banner Army, 35th Army deployed to attack westward (see map 34). The conditions in this sector were quite different from those in other sectors. The 35th Army's mission was to secure the Hutou and Mishan Fortified Regions and the cities of Poli and Linkou. In order to secure those objectives, Soviet forces would have to negotiate the Ussuri and Sungacha rivers, cross the marshy regions between Lake Khanka and the Sungacha and Muleng rivers, and overcome the Hutou and Mishan Fortified Regions. The Japanese defended Hutou with the 15th Border Guard Unit and the 368th Infantry Regiment of the 135th Infantry Division deployed in strongpoints of company-strength along the western bank of the Sungacha River. The remainder of 135th Infantry Division was deployed near Tungan and Feite with company-size detachments to the north at Paoching and Jaoho.[20]



Map 34. Soviet 35th Army Advance to Mishan, 9—15 August 1945

Lt. Gen. Zakhvatayev, the 35th Army commander, determined to make his main attack across the Sungacha River in the southern part of the army zone. The 363d Rifle Division on the left and the 66th Rifle Division on the right would cross the river west of Pavlo-Federovka, overcome Japanese outposts east of Lake Khanka, and spearheaded by two tank brigades, advance through the marshy region north of Lake Khanka to secure Mishan and to cut Japanese communications lines to Hutou, thus isolating the fortress. On the north flank of 35th Army, the 264th Rifle Division and 109th Fortified Region would assault across the Ussuri River from Iman to south of Hutou, bypass and isolate the Hutou Fortified Region, advance to occupy Hulin, and ultimately link up with the left flank army divisions at Tungan. The reunited army would then advance on separate axes to Poli and Linkou. The 8th Fortified Region would conduct local attacks across the Ussuri from Lesozavodsk to south of Iman in the army center.[21]



Zakhvatayev, Nikanor Dmitrievich (1898—1963), 35th Army

1916—joined Russian Army.
1916—Warrant Officers School; commander, regimental machine gun command.
1918—joined Red Army.
1920—Artillery School; adjutant, artillery battalion.
1921—regimental chief of staff; RKKA Inspection Control Group (Military Training); regimental commander.
1930—*Vystrel* course.
1935—Frunze Academy.
1939—(Sep) senior tactics instructor, General Staff Academy.
1941—(Jun) assistant chief of Operations Department, Southwest Front.
1941—(Nov) chief of staff, 1st Shock Army (Moscow operations).
1942—(May) commander, 1st Guards Rifle Corps (Demiansk operation).
1942—(Dec) commander, 12th Guards Rifle Corps.
1944—(May) commander, 1st Shock Army.
1945—(Mar) commander, 4th Guards Army.
1945—(Jul) commander, 35th Army.
1946—army commander, chief of staff, Maritime Military District and Belorussian Military District.
1951—(Dec) commander, Don Military District.
1953—(Oct) first deputy commander, Belorussian Military District.
1955—(Apr) deputy chief of the General Staff.
1957—(Jun) chief military advisor of the Hungarian People's Army.
1960—retired.

At 0100 on 9 August, assault detachments of the Soviet 57th Border Guards Detachment crossed the Ussuri and Sungacha rivers on cutters and by 0200 had liquidated Japanese border outposts and secured a beachhead on the west bank of the Sungacha River. After a fifteen-minute artillery preparation, two advanced battalions of the 363d and the 66th Rifle Divisions crossed the river, encountering no enemy opposition.* Heavy rains and flooding, however, made the area virtually impassable. In order to construct roads, army headquarters provided extra engineer support to both divisions. The 66th Rifle Division penetrated deep into the swamps, advanced twelve kilometers, and reached a point two kilometers northwest of the village of Tachiao around 2000. The 363d Rifle Division finished crossing the Sungacha River at 0900 and, while crossing the swamps at 1100, ran into heavy opposition at Maly Huankang. A company of Japanese troops in

*Sources disagree as to whether a preparation was fired.

five strongpoints held out against repeated infantry assaults and direct fire from 76-mm regimental guns. At 1900, the 363d Rifle Division finally broke Japanese resistance and continued its advance, reaching the southwest edge of Tachiao at 2300.[22]

On 10 August, the 363d and 66th Rifle Divisions continued their advance northwestward. The advance was rapid, although fuel difficulties and poor terrain forced the tank brigades to withdraw.[23] The two rifle divisions continued: the 363d Rifle Division occupied Mishan late on 12 August, and the 66th Rifle Division occupied Tungan on the thirteenth, thus cutting the highway and railroad to Hutou. Japanese resistance melted away as 135th Infantry Division units received orders to withdraw to Linkou and then to defensive positions at Mutanchiang.



Artillery firing on Japanese positions

On the right flank of 35th Army, 264th Rifle Division and 109th Fortified Region prepared to assault Hutou. After a thirty- to fifty-minute artillery preparation, assault units crossed the Ussuri River south of Hutou. Soviet bombers then pounded the area for two hours and distracted the Japanese defenders. By nightfall on the ninth, the 264th Rifle Division had

outflanked Hutou to the south, captured the railroad depot, and cut the highway to Hulin. The following day the city of Hutou fell, leaving the Japanese isolated in the strong fortifications north and northwest of the city. The 1056th Rifle Regiment (of 264th Rifle Division) and the 109th Fortified Region, supported by heavy artillery units, prepared to reduce the fortress methodically, a difficult process only completed by 18 August. The Soviets claim that 3,000 Japanese perished in the bitter defense of Hutou.[24] Meanwhile, the main forces of the 264th Rifle Division moved westward along the railroad toward Hulin, covering thirty-five kilometers and securing the city by the afternoon of the twelfth. The 264th Rifle Division joined the remainder of 35th Army at Tungan and Mishan on 13 August.

After the thirteenth, the advance of the 35th Army accelerated against negligible opposition. The 66th Rifle Division, operating with a forward detachment on the Poli axis, dislodged light Japanese opposition, and on the evening of 15 August, the forward detachment occupied Poli. The main force of the 66th Rifle Division arrived on the seventeenth, followed on the nineteenth by units of 5th Separate Rifle Corps, 2d Far Eastern Front, which had crossed the mountains from Paoching. The 363d Rifle Division of 35th Army operated on the Linkou axis, employing the 125th Tank Brigade (railed from Pavlo-Federovka by way of Iman) as a forward detachment. The 363d Rifle Division passed through Chihsi on 17 August and arrived at Linkou 19—20 August, relieving forces of 1st Red Banner Army, which had arrived six days earlier. The 35th Army completed its active operations by 19 August and turned to the task of taking the surrender of Japanese units.

In the southern portion of the 1st Far Eastern Front sector of operations, 25th Army of Col. Gen. Chistyakov deployed for attack along two principal axes (see map 35). The 39th Rifle Corps (three rifle divisions) and the 259th Tank Brigade backed by the 72d Tank Brigade (shifted from 5th Army) prepared to attack in a sector north of Novogeorgievka station. The mission of 39th Rifle Corps was to secure or isolate the Tungning Fortified Region, to seize the city of Tungning, and to take the city of Wangching, thus cutting Japanese communications from Korea to Manchuria. On the army's left flank, border guards units and units of the 108th and 113th Fortified Regions would force the Hunchun and Tumen rivers to operate against Japanese defenses in Korea and at Hunchun, Manchuria. In the wide central sector between the 39th Rifle Corps and the 108th Fortified Region positions, the 106th, 109th, 110th, and 111th Fortified Regions would conduct attacks on local Japanese border installations. The 88th Rifle Corps of two divisions (front reserve) would prepare to conduct exploitation operations southward along the eastern coast of Korea to secure the ports of Unggi, Najin, and Chongjin.[25]

Japanese forces of First Area Army and 3d Army opposed the Soviet 25th Army. In First Area Army sector, the 132d Independent Mixed Brigade (four infantry battalions and one raider battalion) was stationed at Tung-

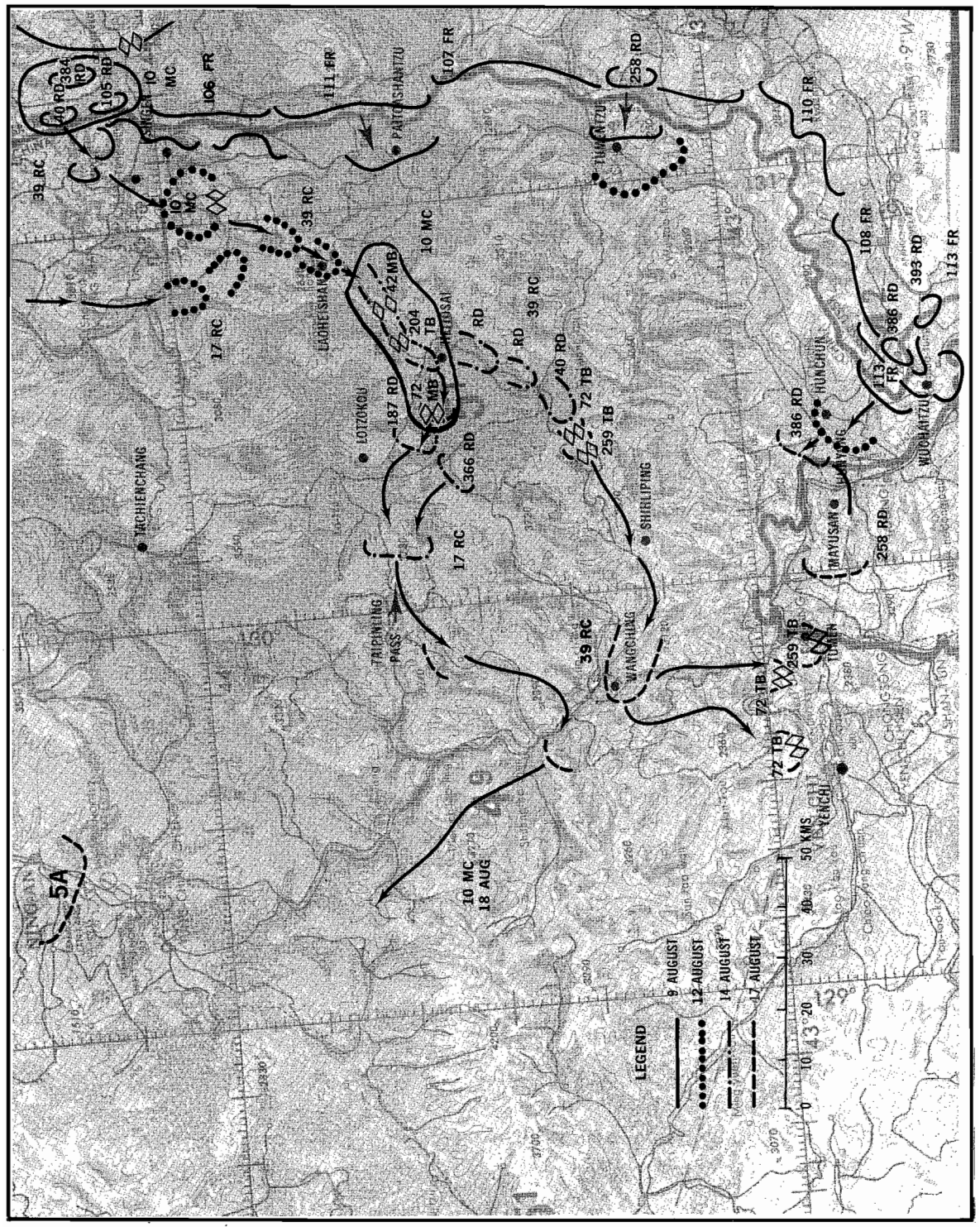
ning and garrisoned the Tungning Fortified Region, which stretched thirty kilometers north-south along the border east of the city of Tungning (see map 36). The 128th Infantry Division had its headquarters and two infantry regiments in the immediate area of Lotzokou, eighty kilometers southwest of Tungning. The third regiment was at Tachienchang, eighty kilometers due west of Tungning. Small Japanese border posts ran south along the border from Tungning to the Sea of Japan. The 3d Army zone contained three infantry divisions, a mobile brigade, and a separate infantry regiment. The 112th Infantry Division was deployed north of the Tumen River, west of Hunchun, with forward elements extending along the railroad to Tumentzu. The 79th Infantry Division was positioned in a sector southeast of Tumen, and the 127th Infantry Division defended west of the Tumen River and south of the 79th Infantry Division sector with advanced units of its 280th Infantry Regiment forward in a fortified zone on the border near Wuchaitzu. The 101st Separate Regiment was at Chongliak, north of Unggi, Korea. The 1st Mobile Brigade was stationed on the main rail line at Shihliping, east of Wangching, with advanced elements farther east at Tumentzu.[26]



Chistyakov, Ivan Mikhailovich (1900—1979), 25th Army

1919—joined Red Army; corporal, assistant platoon commander.
1920—machine gun school.
1921—platoon and battalion commander; assistant rifle regiment commander.
1927, 1930—*Vystrel* course.
1936—rifle regiment commander.
1936—rifle division commander.
1939—assistant rifle corps commander.
1940—commander, Vladivostok Infantry School.
1941—rifle corps commander.
1942—commander, 64th Rifle Brigade (Moscow operation); commander, 8th Guards Rifle Division; commander, 2d Guards Rifle Corps.
1942—(Oct) commander, 21st Army (Apr 1943 renamed 6th Guards Army) (Stalingrad, Kursk, Belgorod-Kharkov, Belorussia, Memel, Courland operations).
1945—commander, 25th Army.
1946—various command positions.
1954—first deputy commander, Trans-Baikal Military District.
1957—general inspector, Inspectorate of Ground Forces.
1968—retired.

In order to deceive the Japanese as to Soviet attack intentions, the 39th Rifle Corps of 25th Army occupied final attack positions as late as possible on the evening of 8 August. In consultation with his superiors and subordinates, General Chistyakov decided to begin the attack by employing assault detachments formed from the fortified regions and border guards units. He chose these units because they were familiar with the terrain and the individual Japanese positions opposing them and because they had been well trained on special training grounds in the Soviet rear. One advanced battalion from each lead rifle regiment would follow the assault group, and a tank brigade would follow to spearhead the advance after Soviet forces had penetrated Japanese positions.[27] In a further attempt to gain surprise, the 39th Rifle Corps would fire no artillery preparation.



Map 35. Soviet 25th Army Advance to Wangching and Yenchi, 9—17 August 1945

Assault groups and advanced battalions occupied jumping off positions at 2330, just as light rain began to fall. At 2400 sappers began cutting through the barbed wire along the border as the rain intensified. Shortly after midnight on the ninth, Marshal Meretskov, the front commander, gave the go-ahead for the attack, despite the torrential rains, which would continue falling until around 0600. Although the rain hindered movement, it also contributed to surprise, because the Japanese thought an attack in



Soviet assault forces occupy "Red" Hill (25th Army Sector)

such conditions was impossible. At 0100 on 9 August, sappers and assault units crossed the borders and hit enemy positions. Because Japanese defenders had heard little else but rainfall for almost an hour, their forward positions were taken by surprise and captured or quickly subdued.[28] By 0300 advanced battalions pushed forward on the path of the assault detachments. With the 259th Tank Brigade in the lead, main force units of the 40th and 105th Rifle Divisions advanced at 0830 on an axis westward along the Pad Sennaya River valley to the north of the principal fortified positions of the Tungning Fortified Region.

By day's end on 9 August, 39th Rifle Corps forces had advanced ten to twelve kilometers into the Japanese rear on the Pad Sennaya axis, and lead elements, reinforced by the 72d Tank Brigade, were beginning the struggle for the town of Tungning and the vital railroad line to Tumen. Other Soviet units from fortified regions advanced on Japanese positions along the border south of Tungning at Tsingen and farther south at Paitoashantzu and Tumentzu.

Soviet forces continued their advance on 10 August against stiffening Japanese resistance. General Onitake, commander of the 132d Independent Mixed Brigade, left units from his forward battalions in the fortified region and, with his remaining forces, withdrew towards the west.[29] On the afternoon of the tenth, lead elements of 259th Tank Brigade and 40th Rifle Division entered Tungning, while the second echelon division (384th) of 39th Rifle Corps fought to reduce the Tungning Fortified Region. Further assistance came from the north when 17th Rifle Corps, 5th Army, attacked southward in the rear of the Suifenho center of resistance, ultimately joining 39th Rifle Corps west of Tungning. At 1700 on 9 August, Marshal Meretskov subordinated 17th Rifle Corps, with its two rifle divisions, to 25th Army.

At this point, Marshal Meretskov reassessed the situation and determined that his best chance for successful exploitation in the front zone would be in the 25th Army area. Although 5th Army had won the border battles, it still faced the main force of the Japanese 124th, 126th, and 135th Infantry Divisions between Muleng and Mutanchiang. Consequently, Marshal Meretskov ordered attachment of 88th Rifle Corps (two rifle divisions) to 25th Army for operations in the southern portion of the army zone and indicated future commitment into the 25th Army zone of the front mobile group (the 10th Mechanized Corps), if 25th Army's progress warranted it.[30] Progress of 25th Army was promising. On 10 August, 39th Rifle Corps completed clearing enemy forces out of the Tungning area and began coordinating with 17th Rifle Corps for an advance west and southwest in pursuit of the withdrawing Japanese. On the eleventh, that coordinated advance began with the 17th and 30th Rifle Corps units moving along the road from Tungning toward Wangching, Tumen, Tunhua, and Kirin. By noon on the twelfth, the two corps had marched thirty to forty kilometers southwest. Pleased by the progress thus far, Marshal Meretskov ordered 10th Mechanized Corps to exploit through the 25th Army zone to Wangching and beyond.

On 13 and 14 August, 17th Rifle Corps, 39th Rifle Corps, and 10th Mechanized Corps advanced southwestward, sharing a single road along the military rail line through the mountainous, heavily wooded area from Laoheishan to Heitosai. Mine clearing, bridge repair, and road renovation required considerable engineer support. Because of the restricted movement along a single road, only reconnaissance units and forward detachments of the corps came into contact with the Japanese. By nightfall on the fourteenth, units had advanced some five to fifty kilometers, and march columns

extended a considerable distance to the rear. Japanese resistance was negligible. The 132d Independent Mixed Brigade completed its withdrawal westward to Tachienchang. The 128th Infantry Division prepared to defend in the Lotzokou area and in the Taipingling Pass farther to the west. The Japanese command had lost an opportunity to disrupt the Soviet advance as it maneuvered through the bottleneck between Laoheishan and Heitosai.[31]

At Heitosai the Soviet advance divided into two separate columns. The 17th Rifle Corps with elements of 10th Mechanized Corps, including 72d Mechanized Brigade acting as a forward detachment, drove westward from Heitosai towards the Taipingling Pass. The 39th Rifle Corps, with 257th Tank Brigade as forward detachment and elements of 10th Mechanized Corps with 72d Tank Brigade in the lead, marched southwestward from Heitosai toward Wangching. On 15 August, 17th Rifle Corps confronted elements of the 284th Infantry Regiment of the Japanese 128th Infantry Division at Lotzokou west of Heitosai. The 187th Rifle Division attacked the Japanese head on, while the 366th Rifle Division enveloped the defenders from the south. The forward detachment (72d Mechanized Brigade) bypassed the Japanese positions and drove westward to Taipingling Pass, where it battled 285th Infantry Regiment, 128th Infantry Division.[32] Meanwhile, farther south 72d Tank Brigade and 10th Mechanized Corps with 259th Tank Brigade of 39th Rifle Corps advanced toward Wangching. At Shihliping the forward detachment and 40th Rifle Division engaged elements of the Japanese 1st Mobile Brigade. After a brief, bitter fight, Soviet units drove off the Japanese and continued the march.[33] The forward detachment of 39th Rifle Corps secured Wangching at 1700 on 15 August. The remainder of 10th Mechanized Corps and 39th Rifle Corps stretched out along the road for 210 kilometers to the rear. Lead elements of the main body of 39th Rifle Corps reached Chintsang, thirty kilometers east of Wangching, with the main force still stretching well to the rear through Heitosai.

The offensive of 25th Army and 10th Mechanized Corps reached a climax the following day. Led by a forward detachment of 187th Rifle Division and 72d Mechanized Brigade, the 17th Rifle Corps fought for possession of the Taipingling Pass. In the evening, the combined efforts of 187th Rifle Division, 366th Rifle Division, and 72d Mechanized Brigade of 10th Mechanized Corps drove the Japanese from the area and secured the pass.[34] The same day, lead elements of the 257th Tank Brigade with small elements of 39th Rifle Corps advanced twenty kilometers southeast of Wangching toward Tumen, while main forces of the corps arrived in Wangching. The leading element of 10th Mechanized Corps, the 72d Tank Brigade, developed the attack twenty kilometers southwest of Wangching toward Yenchi.

In the southern portion of the army zone, the situation also developed favorably. On the first day of attack, advanced units of the 108th and 113th Fortified Regions captured Japanese positions across the Hunchun and Tumen rivers, securing a foothold in the Hunchun and Wuchaitzu Fortified Regions and a bridgehead over the Tumen River at Kyonghung, north of

the old 1938 battlefield at Lake Khasan. Soviet forces bypassed the Japanese 280th Infantry Regiment and left it isolated in positions at Shangchiaoshen, northwest of Wuchaitzu.[35] On 11 August the attack gained momentum when 25th Army committed an additional force to support the fortified regions in the attack. The 88th Rifle Corps (386th and 258th Rifle Divisions) advanced on the Hunchun-Tumen axis, while the 393d Rifle Division (minus the 541st Rifle Regiment) reinforced the 113th Fortified Region, fighting along the northeast coast of Korea.

Early on the morning of 12 August, the 393d Rifle Division conducted a truck-mounted attack through the lines of the 113th Fortified Region against the Japanese 101st Separate Regiment south of Chonghak. The 101st Regiment withdrew westward to Hoeryong, where it came under 127th Infantry Division control. Within three hours at 0900, advanced elements of 393d Rifle Division assisted a naval task force in securing the port of Unggi. Leaving one battalion as a garrison, the division continued to the port of Najin, which it occupied on 14 August. Active operations in Korea ended on 16 August, when the 393d Rifle Division battled for and secured a mountain pass twelve kilometers north of Chongjin and then at 1500 advanced to the city, where it united with the 355th Rifle Division, which had conducted a successful amphibious assault on the port city.[36]

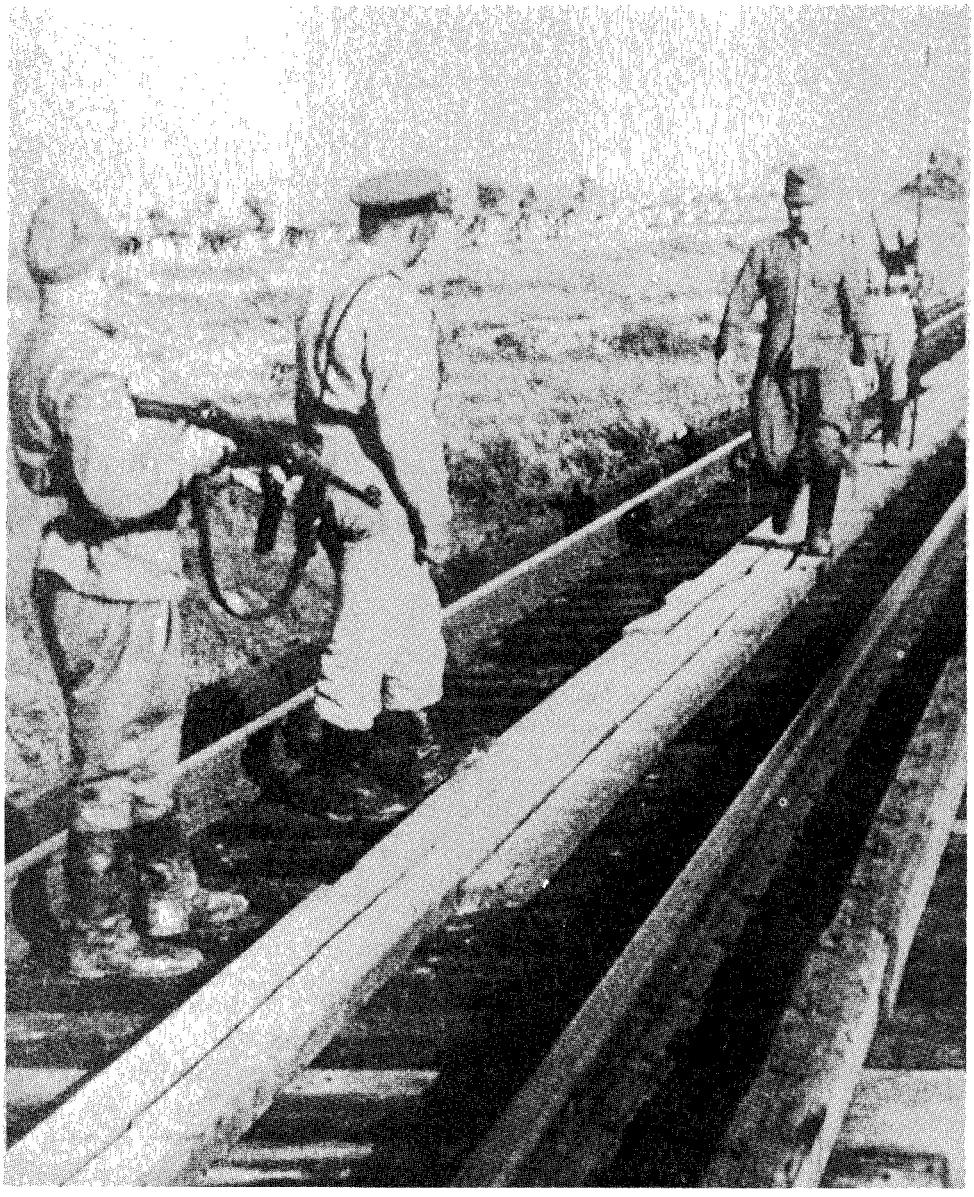
Farther north, on the Hunchun-Tumen axis, the 88th Rifle Corps joined the action in support of the 113th Fortified Region, whose forces by 14 August had secured Hunchun and had advanced toward the Inanho River ten kilometers to the northwest against heavy opposition from the Japanese 112th Infantry Division. On the fifteenth, 386th Rifle Division of 88th Rifle Corps, supported by the 209th Tank Brigade (detached from 35th Army on 10 August and sent southward to 25th Army), joined the 113th Fortified Region forces and drove across the Inanho River, where it ran into strongly entrenched Japanese forces of the 246th Infantry Regiment of the 112th Infantry Division. Several attempts to dislodge the Japanese failed. Thus, late in the day, the 258th Rifle Division from corps second echelon crossed the Tumen River at Hunyong to attack the Japanese right flank. Japanese positions south of the Tumen River ran along the heights from Unmupi to Mayusan, where four battalions of 291st Regiment, 79th Infantry Division, had dug in to defend. The Soviet attack sought to turn the flank of this Japanese force. The next day, 258th Rifle Division continued to drive westward, south of the Tumen River, against heavy opposition from Japanese forces holding the hills southwest of Mayusan. Other forces of the 113th Fortified Region extended their operations eastward on the right flank of 386th Rifle Division in an attempt to turn the left flank of the Japanese 112th Infantry Division. This maneuver brought Soviet forces into contact with the 247th and 248th Regiments of the 112th Infantry Division. Both Japanese units held their positions.[37] Thus, on the night of 17 August, Japanese forces in the Tumen-Yenchi area faced envelopment by 25th Army from north, east, and south, and confronted the possibility of total isolation from other Japanese forces in Korea and Manchuria.

Farther north in the 25th Army zone, Japanese defenses continued to crumble. The 17th Rifle Corps, with elements of the 10th Mechanized Corps, moved westward, pursuing fragments of the 128th Infantry Division from the Taipingling Pass. Advanced elements of 72d Tank Brigade, 10th Mechanized Corps, approached Yenchi from the north, while the main body of the corps approached Wangching. Lead elements of 39th Rifle Corps with 259th Tank Brigade approached Tumen from the north, while the corps main body moved slowly westward along the road to Wangching. Last, but not least, 88th Rifle Corps approached Tumen from the east. On the seventeenth the ring around the Japanese 112th and 79th Infantry Divisions closed. Forward elements of 10th Mechanized Corps moved sixty kilometers from Taipingling Pass and secured the critical rail and road junction at Tahsingkou (twenty kilometers north of Wangching). Other elements of 10th Mechanized Corps that were operating with 72d Tank Brigade south of Wangching battled the Japanese 127th Infantry Division forces at Nianyantsun, fourteen kilometers north of Yenchi. Forward units of 39th Rifle Corps operating with 259th Tank Brigade advanced southeast of Wangching, secured the important city of Tumen, and by so doing cut the escape routes of the Japanese 112th and 79th Infantry Divisions. On the seventeenth, 88th Rifle Corps pushed aside the 291st Infantry Regiment at Mayusan and occupied Onsang, ten kilometers east of Tumen.[38] Remaining Japanese units surrendered or fled into the hills south of the Tumen River.

With Japanese surrender pending, 25th Army units consolidated their hold on northeastern Korea on the eighteenth and sent the 10th Mechanized Corps westward toward its objectives at Tunhua and Kirin. Forward elements of the northern prong of 10th Mechanized Corps, followed by 17th Rifle Corps, drove almost thirty kilometers northwest to join units of 5th Army at Tungchingcheng, where the main rail lines from Mutanchiang and Wangching met. The 39th Rifle Corps and 88th Rifle Corps continued to clear northeastern Korea south of Yenchi and Tumen. On the nineteenth, 10th Mechanized Corps continued to advance westward, rapidly crossed the passes of the Laoilin Mountain range, and arrived at Tunhua at nightfall of the same day that Chongjin on the Korean coast fell to the 393d and 355th Rifle Divisions. The Kwantung Army's surrender, broadcast by radio to the Japanese units the day before, was beginning to take effect as individual Japanese units surrendered to the advanced formations of the Soviet 1st Far Eastern Front.

On the eighteenth Marshal Vasilevsky ordered all Soviet units in Manchuria (including the 1st Far Eastern Front zone and other front areas) to secure major population centers with special mobile units created from each major formation.[39] The 1st Far Eastern Front landed small detachments of troops at the airfields at Harbin and Kirin to arrange with Japanese authorities the surrender of Japanese garrisons.[40] By 20 August four forward detachments from advancing units of 1st Far Eastern Front had joined the air-landed units at the two cities. Elements of 15th Army, 2d Far Eastern Front, arrived in Harbin the same day on boats of the Amur River Flotilla.

In the southern region of 25th Army sector, units of 88th Rifle Corps and 10th Mechanized Corps moved southward into Korea, by the end of August reaching the 38th parallel, the line agreed upon by Soviet and American authorities for separating their occupation forces.



Capitulation of Japanese forces

The last organized Japanese resistance in the 1st Far Eastern Front sector was finally snuffed out on 26 August. Positions in the Tungning Fortified Region had held out since 9 August under constant pounding by units from 106th Fortified Region, supported by the 223d High Powered Separate Artillery Brigade, the 34th and 100th Special Powered Artillery Battalions, and aircraft. These units systematically reduced eighty-two strongpoints, the last of which, the Shiminzas strongpoint, fell on 25 August. At Tungning, 901 Japanese soldiers and auxiliaries became prisoners.[41] Other incidents occurred as Japanese units who did not receive, or who received but did not obey, the surrender order continued to engage Soviet troops.

The offensive of the 1st Far Eastern Front complemented well the audacious advance of the Trans-Baikal Front. By successfully tying down significant Japanese forces in eastern Manchuria, Japanese attention was distracted from the west. In the west, the Japanese could contemplate no action other than a withdrawal to interior defensive lines. By operating in strength in weather considered unsuitable for operations, by capitalizing on surprise, and by attacking on axes across terrain considered unfit for significant operations, the Soviets put massive pressure on Japanese units along the entire eastern front. That unrelenting pressure overwhelmed forward Japanese units and prevented consolidation of Japanese units on new defensive lines to the rear. Thus, the defense by the 135th, 126th, and 124th Infantry Divisions east of Mutanchiang, the defense by the 128th Infantry Division and 1st Mobile Brigade from Taipingling south, and the defense by the 112th and 79th Infantry Divisions east of Tumen proved unsuccessful. Here, as elsewhere in Manchuria, the mobility, firepower, and use of armor and artillery decided the issue. Forward detachments of reinforced tank brigades swept through and around Japanese defensive lines, preempting any systematic defense. Follow-on rifle forces crushed or bypassed any established defenses.

The fall of Mutanchiang and Wangching on 16 August assured Soviet success. The lack of armor and of antitank capability had an enormously negative effect on the Japanese, because they could not counter Soviet armored thrusts. In vain the Japanese relied on terrain, its impact on Soviet logistics, and suicidal expenditures of infantry to slow the Soviets. Japanese border fortified regions put up a tenacious, brave, yet meaningless, defense. At Hutou, at Tungning, and, to a lesser extent, at Suifenho, Japanese garrisons fought to the point of extermination or exhaustion. Yet, even their gallant defense of these areas did little to stem the Soviet tide that bypassed the fortified positions and swept on to seize objectives deep in the Japanese rear area. Here in eastern Manchuria, as in the west, the Japanese High Command had woefully underestimated Soviet offensive capability and maneuverability, and it cost the Japanese dearly.

Conduct of the Offensive: 2d Far Eastern Front

9

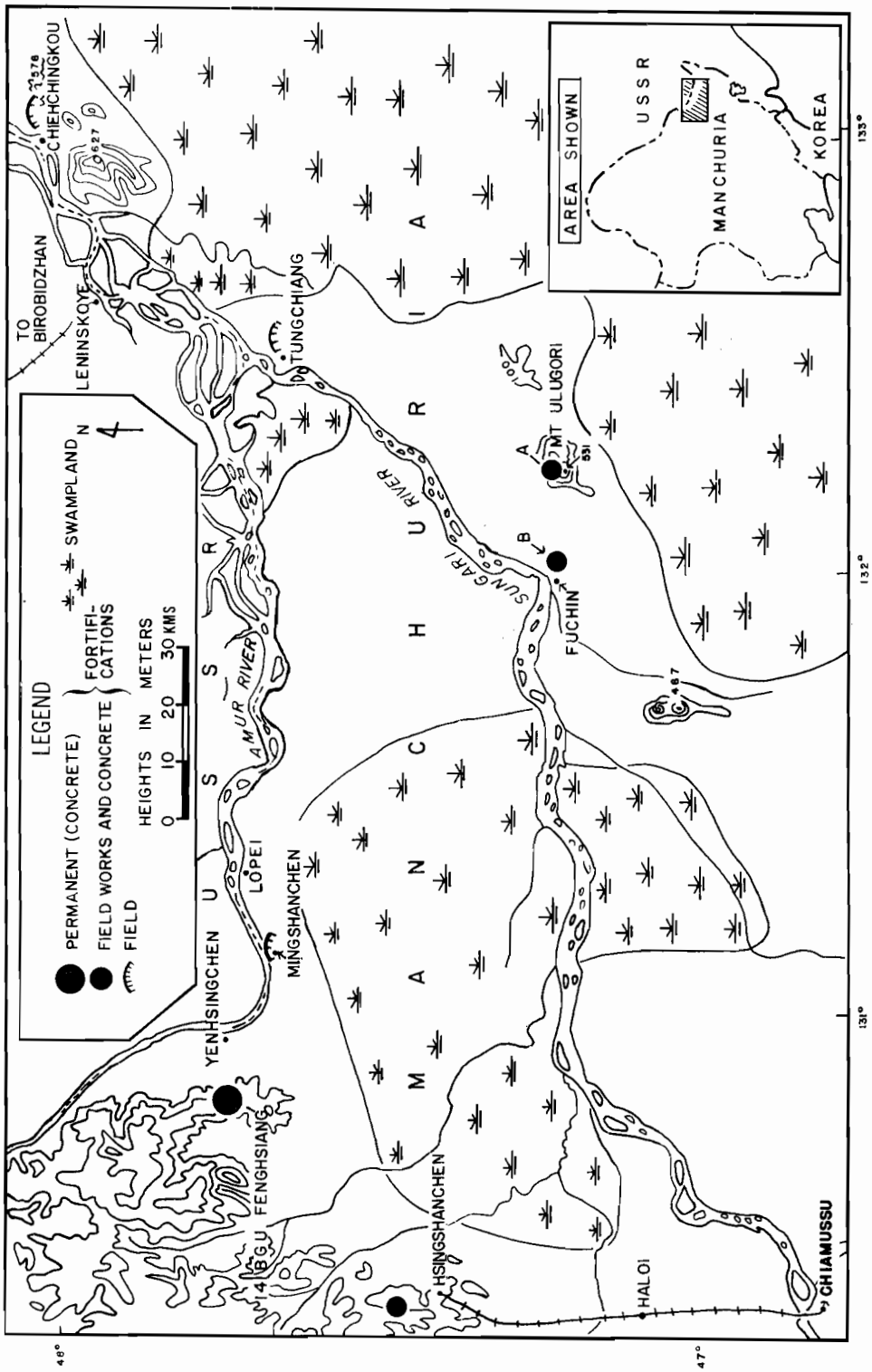
The operations of the 2d Far Eastern Front, although of secondary importance, took place on a broad front and involved complex operations over a wide variety of terrain. In addition, some of the most bitter fighting in Manchuria occurred as Japanese forces of the 134th Infantry Division, the 123d Infantry Division, and the 135th Independent Mixed Brigade resisted these secondary efforts (see maps 37—39).



Purkayev, Maksim Alekseevich (1894—1953), 2d Far Eastern Front

1916—Russian Army Warrant Officers School.
1917—member of regimental soldiers' committee; joined Red Army; company and battalion commander (eastern front).
1919—(Aug) regimental commander, 24th Samara Iron Division.
1923—*Vystrel* course.
1923—regimental commander and commissar; rifle division assistant chief of staff; department chief, deputy chief of staff of a military district.
1936—Frunze Academy.
1936—rifle division commander.
1938—chief of staff, Belorussian Military District.
1940—(Jul) chief of staff, Kiev Special Military District.
1941—(Jun) chief of staff, Southwest Front.
1941—(Jul) commander, 60th Army (Dec 1941 renamed 3d Shock Army) (Moscow, Toropetz operations).
1942—commander, Kalinin Front (Veliki-Luki operation).
1943—(Apr) commander, Far Eastern Front; commander, 2d Far Eastern Front.
1945—commander of Far East Military District.
1947—chief of staff and first deputy commander of Far East forces.
1952—(Jul) chief, Directorate of Higher Military Schools of Military Ministries.

Under General M. A. Purkayev, 2d Far Eastern Front deployed its forces in three separate sectors, each with separate axes of advance and distinct objectives. Plans called for Lt. Gen. S. K. Mamonov's 15th Army of three rifle divisions to make the main attack in the center of the front sector in these phases: cross the Amur River at several points near Leninskoye; overcome the enemy fortified regions at Hsingshanchen and Fuchin, near the confluence of the Amur, Ussuri, and Sungari rivers; advance along the Sungari River to Chiamussu, Sansing (Ilan), and Harbin; and unite with forces of the 1st Far Eastern Front. Lt. Gen. M. F. Terëkhin's 2d Red Banner Army of three rifle divisions and a separate mountain rifle regiment on the right (west) of 15th Army would conduct a supporting attack on order after 9 August from the Blagoveshchensk area in order to overcome the Aihun and Sunwu Fortified Regions and advance south through the



Map 37. Japanese 134th Infantry Division Fortifications in the Chiamussu Region

Lesser Khingan Mountains to Tsitsihar and Harbin. On the far left of the 2d Far Eastern Front, Maj. Gen. I. Z. Pashkov's 5th Separate Rifle Corps, consisting of two rifle divisions, would attack from Bikin across the Ussuri River to seize the fortified region at Jaoho and then march to secure Paoching and Poli, where the corps would unite with forces of the 35th Army of the 1st Far Eastern Front. All three armies used tank brigades as forward detachments and had more than ample artillery support. All armies also worked in close coordination with the Amur Naval Flotilla, upon whom they depended for initial crossings of the Amur and Ussuri rivers. The flotilla would provide an invaluable means of transport for movement of forces farther up the Sungari River to the army's objectives. The 2d Far Eastern Front also had 16th Army under its command. The 16th Army's principal unit, 56th Rifle Corps, was to conduct on-order operations against Japanese forces on southern Sakhalin Island.[1]

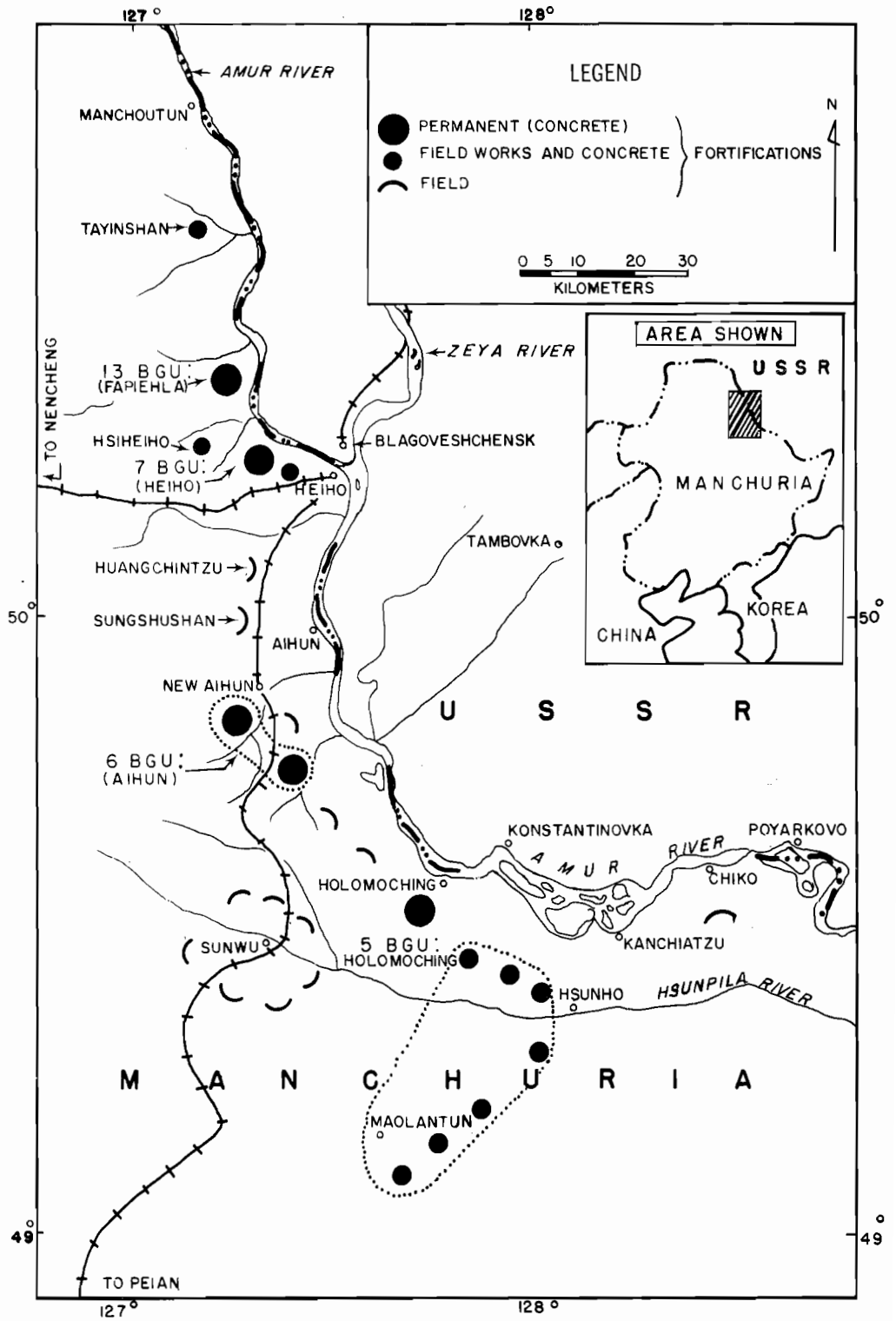


Mamonov, Stepan Kipillovich (1901—74), 15th Army

1924—platoon, company commander; chief of regimental school.
1932—regimental chief of staff; regimental commander; division chief of staff (Far East).
1938—commander, 22d Rifle Division; commander, 40th Rifle Division (Lake Khasan).
1942—(Jan) deputy commander, 25th Army (Far East).
1942—(Aug) commander, 39th Rifle Corps (Far East).
1942—(Oct) commander, 15th Army (Far East).
1947—rifle corps commander.
1950—assistant commander, Ural Military District.
1957—first deputy commander, Voronezh Military District.
1960—(Dec) in the reserves.

The 2d Far Eastern Front faced formidable terrain barriers. Up to 150 kilometers of terrain containing spurs of the Lesser Khingan Mountains and the marshy lands on both sides of the Amur River separated 15th Army from 2d Red Banner Army. About eighty kilometers of marshland between the Sungari River and the Haolino River separated 15th Army from 5th Separate Rifle Corps. Before reaching their objectives, all three forces would have to cross the Lesser Khingan Mountains.

Although 15th Army operated on a front of more than 300 kilometers, it concentrated its forces in three limited sectors (see map 40). The 361st Rifle Division and the 165th and 171st Tank Brigades deployed near Leninskoye in order to make the army main attack across the Amur River and south to Fuchin. At Voskresenskoye, about thirty kilometers east of Leninskoye, 388th Rifle Division deployed to secure Japanese strongpoints on the south bank of the Amur River on the left flank of 361st Rifle Division. At Blagoslovennoye, seventy kilometers west of Leninskoye, 34th Rifle Division and 203d Tank Brigade prepared to attack across the Amur to secure Lopei

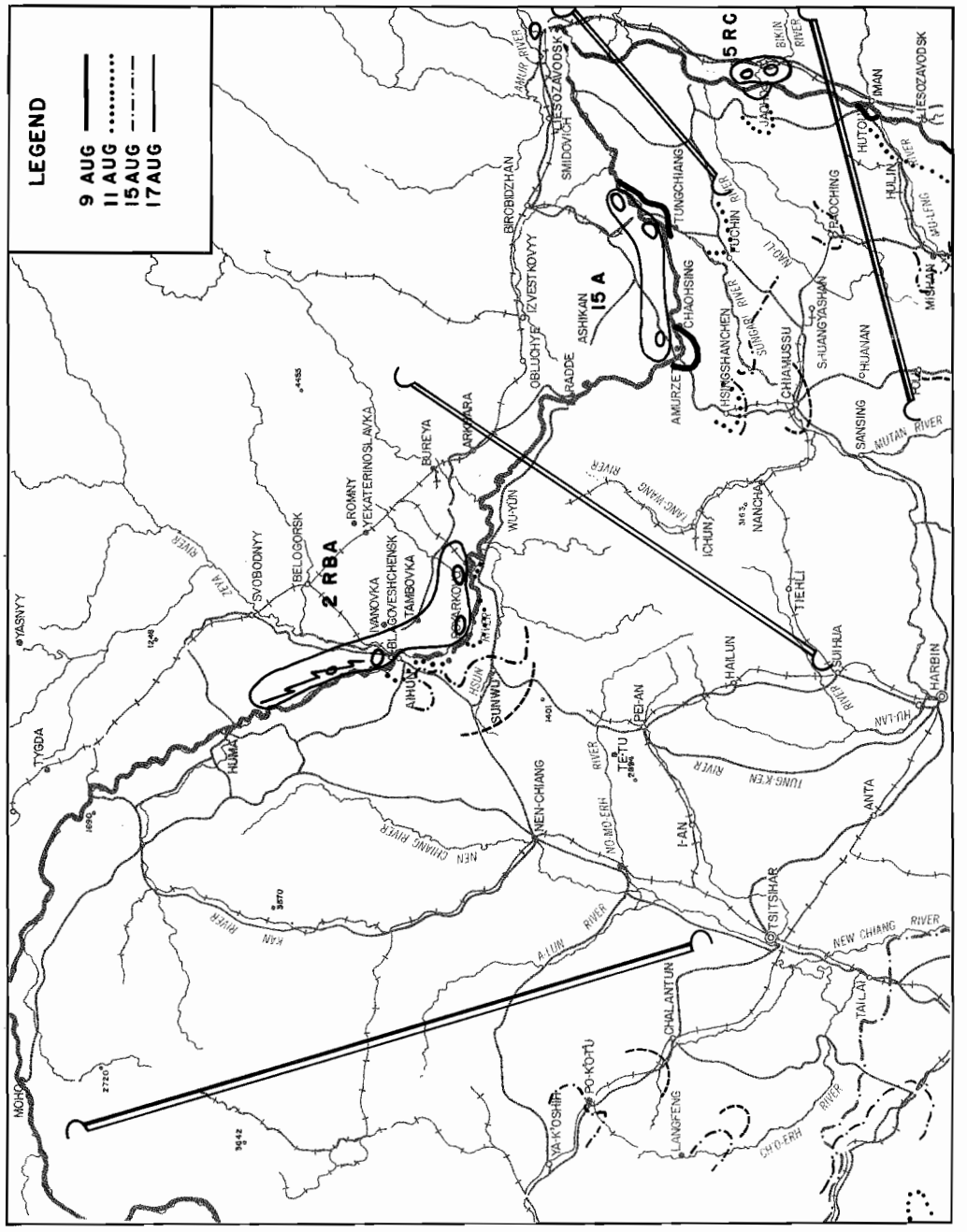


Map 38. Japanese 4th Separate Army Defenses in the Aihun-Sunwu Region

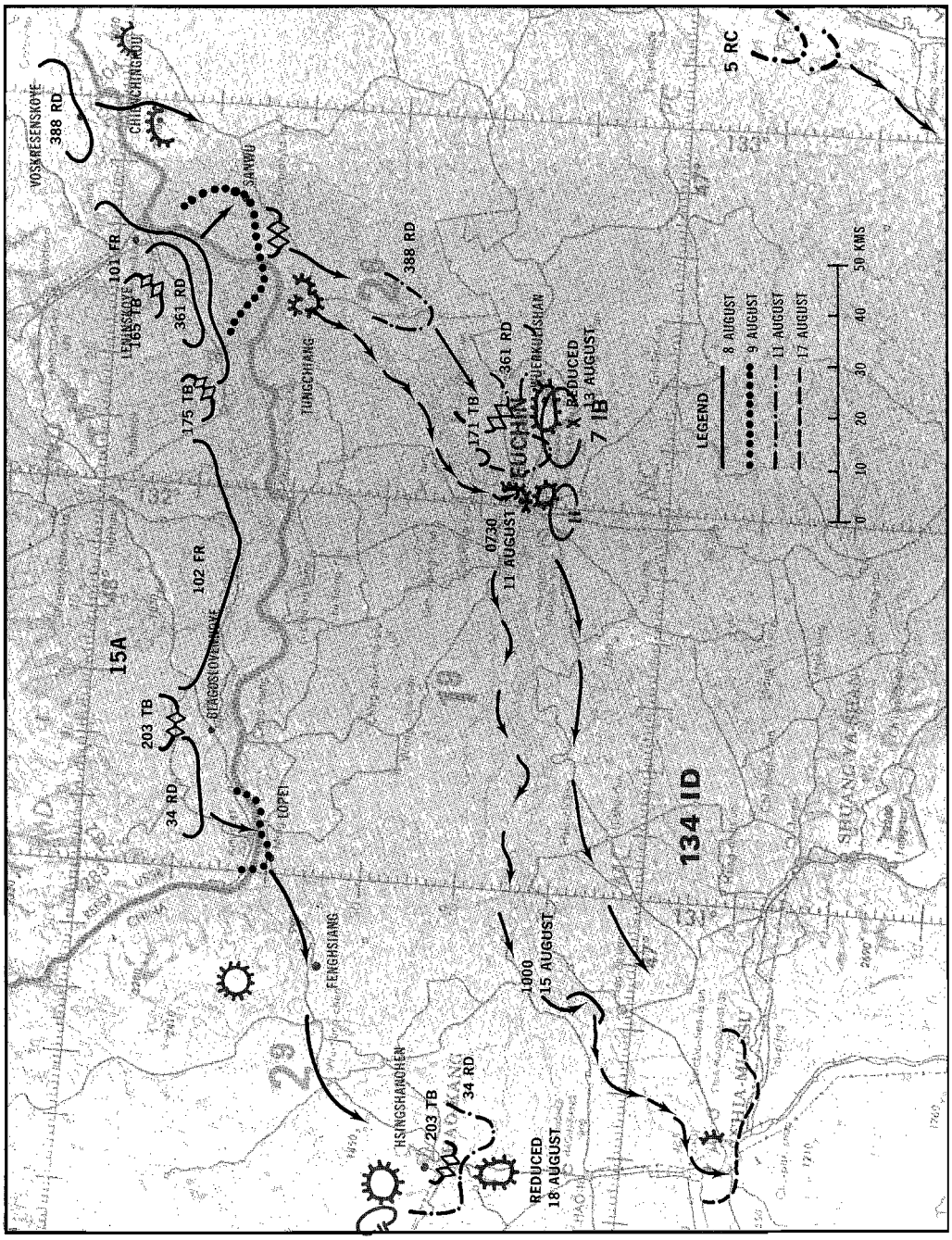
and the Hsingshanchen Fortified Region. The 34th, 361st, and 388th Rifle Divisions hoped to unite at Chiamussu on the Sungari River. The 102d Fortified Region protected the Amur River line between Leninskoye and Blagoslovennoye. Farther downriver, just west of Khabarovsk, the 630th Rifle Regiment prepared to cross the Amur and to secure the Japanese stronghold of Fuyuan. In the area immediately south of Khabarovsk, the 255th Rifle Division of 2d Far Eastern Front deployed to cover the city and to provide a potential reserve for 15th Army.[2] The area opposite 15th Army was defended by the Japanese 134th Infantry Division, based at Chiamussu. Subordinate units in battalion and company strength garrisoned the various strongpoints and fortified zones.[3]

At 0100 on 9 August, reconnaissance and advanced detachments of all forward divisions attacked without artillery preparation and secured major islands in the Amur River. During a heavy rainstorm, the advanced battalions of the 361st Rifle Division secured Tartar Island near the mouth of the Sungari River in coordination with the Amur Flotilla. The advanced battalions took virtually all major islands in the river, and during the remainder of the night, rifle divisions sent reconnaissance units across to the south bank of the river. Farther down the river, the 1st Battalion, 630th Rifle Regiment, and the 2d Brigade of the Amur Flotilla, assaulted and occupied Japanese positions at Fuyuan across the Amur from Nishne-Spasskoye. Fire from the Amur River gunboats covered the final assault. Fighting ended at Fuyuan at 0730 on 9 August. Throughout the remainder of the day, 15th Army reconnaissance units and advanced battalions consolidated their positions on the islands and the south bank of the river, while main forces concentrated to conduct a river crossing. All movement was difficult because of heavy rains, high water, and mud.[4]

Late in the evening of the ninth and on the morning of the tenth, 15th Army units began reconnaissance of major Japanese strongpoints south of the river, in particular the Tungchiang Fortified Region opposite Leninskoye and the Chienchingkou strongpoint across the Amur from Voskresenskoye. By the evening of 10 August, an advanced regiment from 34th Rifle Division had secured Lopei and conducted a reconnaissance of enemy strongpoints to the south. With reconnaissance completed by the night of 9—10 August, forward detachments of each first echelon division crossed the Amur, followed by main force units. Amur Flotilla ships rafted tanks across the swollen river in a painfully slow process. The combat elements of the 171st Tank Brigade crossed in thirty hours, while the rear service units took an additional two days to cross.[5] Thus, rear elements initially were 150 to 200 kilometers behind lead elements, a condition that hindered the sustainability of operations. Engineers divided their attention among the difficult tasks of conducting the river crossings, reconstructing roads, and reducing enemy fortifications. For example, in support of the Amur River crossing operation, the engineers provided eight bridging battalions. By day's end on 10 August, 15th Army units had driven all Japanese forces from the banks of the Amur in the area between the Sungari and the



Map 39. Soviet 2d Far Eastern Front Operations, 9—18 August 1945



Map 40. Soviet 15th Army Advance to Chiamussu, 9—17 August 1945

Ussuri rivers. The 34th Rifle Division and 203d Tank Brigade advanced from Lopei, bypassed the Hsingshanchen Fortified Region, and left a force to reduce it. Heavy artillery attacks during a three-day period broke the spirit of the defenders, who retreated to Chiamussu or into the mountains west of the fortified region.



1st Army troops disembark from Amur Flotilla ships along the Sungari River

Along the Sungari River on 10 August, ships of the Amur Flotilla and forces of the 361st Rifle Division approached Tungchiang. After a two-hour battle with a Japanese rear guard, the town fell.* Having secured Chienchingkou, 388th Rifle Division moved southwestward and joined the 361st Rifle Division near Tungchiang. The two divisions, with the 171st Tank Brigade and a rifle battalion as a forward detachment, moved south on the road to Fuchin. Amur Flotilla provided support for the advance. The 15th Army commander, General Mamonov, ordered the 345th and 364th Rifle Regiments each to load a battalion of infantry on board the ships for future use in amphibious landings designed to support the advance of the main

*Accounts vary concerning the degree of actual fighting.

ground force. The first of these battalions landed north of Fuchin on the evening of 10 August. At 0700 on the eleventh, the 1st Brigade of the Amur Flotilla bombarded Fuchin. Half an hour later, the flotilla assault landed an infantry company to secure a bridgehead in the city. At 0830 the 3d Battalion, 364th Rifle Regiment, landed to reinforce the bridgehead. The battalion made little progress against Japanese heavy fire and counterattacks. At 0900, however, the 171st Tank Brigade with forward elements of 361st Rifle Division reached the city, which fell in a coordinated assault. Japanese and Manchukuoan defenders surrendered or fled to the Fuchin Fortified Region south of the city or to the Wuerhkuli Shan Fortified Region east of the city.[6]

The fortified regions at Fuchin held out for two more days before surrendering on 13 August.[7] While the battle raged at Fuchin, 171st Tank Brigade led 15th Army units in an advance along the roads southwest towards Chiamussu. Poor, waterlogged roads and bad weather slowed the progress of the column. Meanwhile, strong Japanese resistance south of Hsingshanchen slowed the advance of the 34th Rifle Division on the Hsingshanchen-Chiamussu axis. This bottleneck broke up on 14 August, when the 1st Brigade of the Amur Flotilla landed elements of the 349th and 83d Regiments of the 361st and 34th Rifle Divisions near Sustun (Huachuan) on the east bank of the Sungari, forty kilometers north of Chiamussu. Outflanked Japanese units fell back on Chiamussu. On 16 August the 632d Rifle Regiment conducted an amphibious assault at Chiamussu. This force, in coordination with 1st and 2d Brigades of Amur Flotilla, and with the 171st Tank Brigade and the 361st and 388th Rifle Divisions advancing along the road from the northeast, broke Japanese resistance, received the surrender of the Manchukuoan 7th Infantry Brigade, and secured the city of Chiamussu.[8]

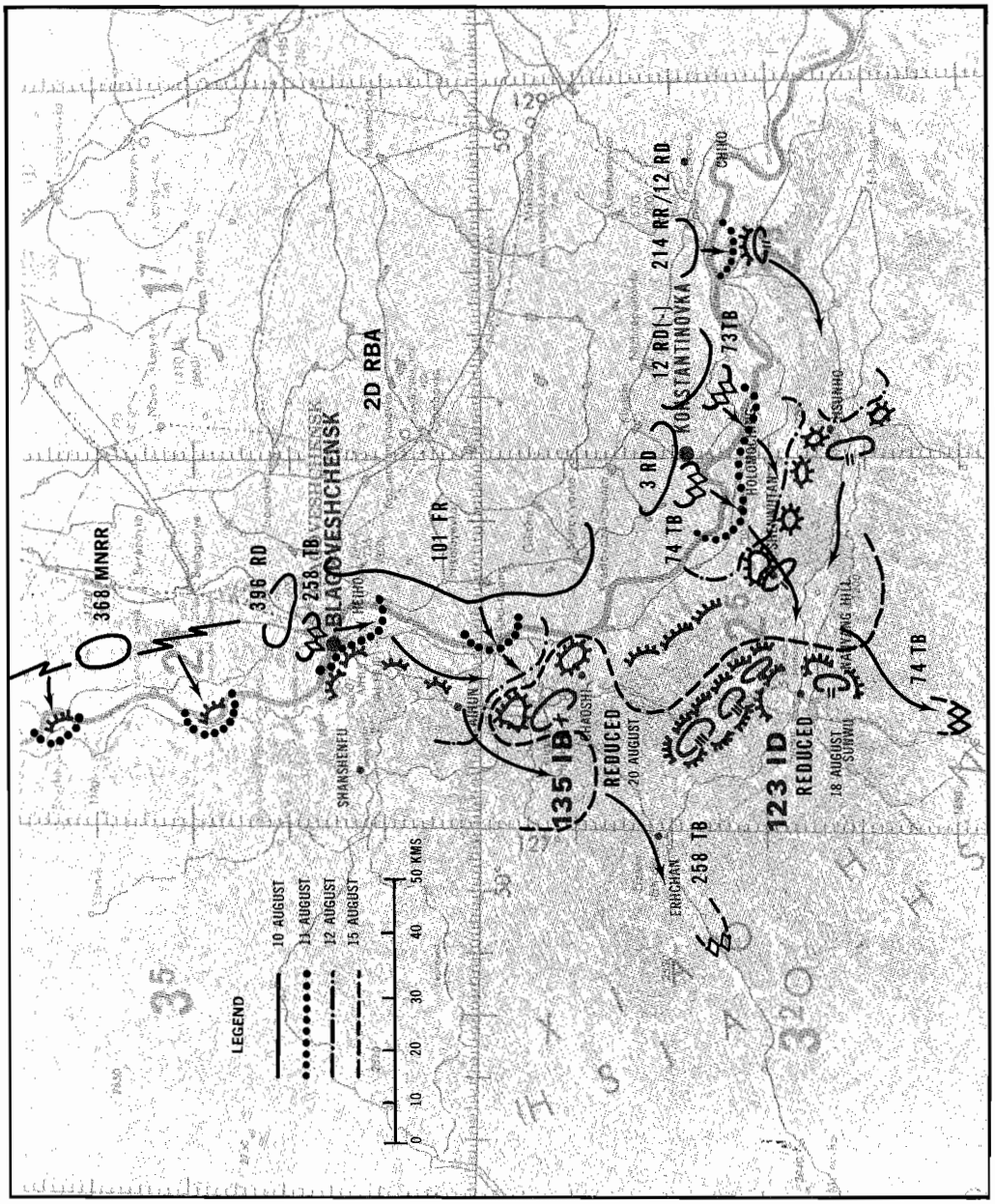
After the fall of Chiamussu, 15th Army forces pushed southward along the Sungari River toward Sansing. Armored cutters of the Amur Flotilla conducted reconnaissance along the river to Sansing, while the Amur Flotilla transported the 632d Rifle Regiment up the river as an assault force to take the city. On 19 August this force secured Sansing for 15th Army and began taking and processing prisoners from the many retreating Japanese units in the area.[9] The 15th Army pursuit continued along and aside the Sungari River until 21 August, when a forward detachment on board ships of the Amur Flotilla linked up with forces of 1st Far Eastern Front in Harbin, the culmination of the twelve-day campaign, which had covered 700 kilometers.

On the left of 15th Army, the 5th Separate Rifle Corps launched its offensive to secure Jaoho, Paoching, and Poli. The 390th Rifle Division and the 172d Tank Brigade led the assault, while the 35th Rifle Division was in second echelon. At 0100 on 9 August, assault units and reconnaissance detachments of the corps crossed the Ussuri River. The 3d Brigade of the

Amur Flotilla supported the assault landing. Facing the assault forces was a company from the 369th Infantry Regiment of the Japanese 135th Infantry Division, with two battalions of Manchurian auxiliaries in fortified positions around Jaoho.[10] On the morning of the ninth, forward units, covered by a thirty- to fifty-minute artillery preparation, followed assault units and secured a bridgehead on the west bank of the Ussuri north of Jaoho. Main force units followed later in the day. Using rafts, barges, steamship ferries, and boats, the Amur Flotilla transported the 172d Tank Brigade across the river in fifteen hours, in time to participate in operations on 10 August. On the tenth, 390th Rifle Division cleared the Japanese from the Jaoho Fortified Region and city, and on the following day, with the 172d Tank Brigade in the lead, the 5th Rifle Corps column set out southwestward toward Paoching. The march was difficult, primarily because of bad road conditions. On the fourteenth, the 172d Tank Brigade (reinforced) reached Paoching and, driving off its garrison, continued marching on Poli. Main elements of the 5th Rifle Corps followed in its wake. In a march against limited opposition, lead elements of the corps joined elements of 35th Army at Poli on 19 August. In the course of its march, the corps collected 2,786 prisoners of war.[11] For all practical purposes, the role of 5th Rifle Corps in the campaign ended with its arrival at Poli.

On the right (or west) flank of 2d Far Eastern Front, the 2d Red Banner Army deployed its forces opposite the Japanese fortified positions at Aihun and Sunwu (see map 41). In the center and left of the army zone, General Terëkhin deployed an operational group comprising the 3d and 12th Rifle Divisions and the 73d and 74th Tank Brigades. This group would attack southward across the Amur River from Konstantinovka in an effort to secure Sunwu and its associated fortified region; it would then march south on Peian and Harbin. A second operational group consisting of the 396th Rifle Division, the 368th Mountain Rifle Regiment, and the 258th Tank Brigade would deliver a supporting attack from Blagoveshchensk in order to secure the Aihun Fortified Region and advance south to Nencheng and eventually Tsitsihar. In the area between these two groups, the 101st Fortified Region prepared for local supporting attacks across the Amur River.[12]

Japanese forces opposing 2d Red Banner Army consisted of the 135th Independent Mixed Brigade and the 123d Infantry Division. The 135th Independent Mixed Brigade (five infantry battalions) had its main command post in the main fortified region at Aihun, a battalion at Shanshenfu, and two companies at Chaoshi. The 123d Infantry Division, with headquarters at Sunwu, had the bulk of its three regiments in the Sunwu Fortified Region north of the city, with battalion-size elements of the 269th Infantry Regiment covering main routes east of Sunwu and smaller elements covering potential river crossing sites. Unlike other Japanese units, both the 135th Independent Mixed Brigade and the 123d Infantry Division were at a high state of readiness in early August 1945, because their commanders had detected Soviet attack preparations and had acted accordingly.[13]



Map 41. Soviet 2d Red Banner Army Operations, 9—15 August 1945

The first two days of the Manchurian offensive passed, and 2d Red Banner Army remained on the defensive, awaiting word of success from other fronts. Between 9 and 11 August, 2d Red Banner Army forces limited their activities to reconnaissance, seizing Amur River islands, and harassing Japanese installations. Main forces remained concentrated from twenty to eighty kilometers to the rear. On 10 August, General Purkayev ordered his forces to conduct major operations commencing the morning of 11 August. The objective by the end of the first day was seizure of the cities of Aihun, Sunwu, and Hsunho, in concert with the Zey-Bureisk Brigade of the Amur River Flotilla. Late on 10 August forces moved forward into their attack positions.

Early in the morning of 11 August, forward units from the operational groups, under cover of an artillery preparation, landed at Heiho, Sakhalin, Aihun, and Holomoching, and engaged Japanese covering forces. Shortly after forward units had succeeded in establishing footholds on the Japanese Amur shores, the main forces began crossing. The 3d and 12th Rifle Divisions (minus one regiment) crossed west and east of Konstantinovka; the 396th Rifle Division and the 368th Mountain Rifle Regiment, near Blagoveshchensk; and the 101st Fortified Region, south of Blagoveshchensk.[14] Because of a scarcity of crossing equipment, it took five days (until 16 August) to transport all units across the river.[15] The slow crossing pace forced commanders to commit their units to combat piecemeal. Forward detachments and lead units engaged the Japanese advanced positions south of Holomoching and north of Aihun on 12 August, while additional units landed to reinforce those already engaged.

The following day, 13 August, sufficient forces were available to press the offensive. The 3d Rifle Division, with the 70th Rifle Regiment and tanks of the 74th Tank Brigade in the lead, penetrated Japanese positions of the Murakami Battalion of the 269th Infantry Regiment near Shenwutan on the heights northeast of Sunwu. East of Sunwu the 214th Rifle Regiment, 12th Rifle Division, crossed the Amur at Chiko and moved westward along the Sunwu road against the Japanese left flank, held by Major Hirama's 3d Battalion of the 269th Infantry Regiment. Meanwhile, the 396th Rifle Division, the 258th Tank Brigade, and the 368th Mountain Rifle Regiment pushed the 135th Independent Mixed Brigade force towards the main Aihun fortified region.[16] Small 2d Red Banner Army detachments crossed the Amur farther north at Huma and Santaoka, destroying small Japanese forces stationed there.

On 14 and 15 August bitter fighting took place for the main Japanese fortified regions. The 3d and 12th Rifle Divisions, supported by 73d Tank Brigade, broke through the Shenwutan position, scattered the Murakami detachment, forced the Hirami detachment back to Nanyang hill east of Sunwu, and attacked the main forces of the Japanese 123d Infantry Division in the Sunwu Fortified Region. While the division struggled with heavy

Japanese resistance, the 74th Tank Brigade, reinforced by one rifle company, an artillery battalion, and an antitank regiment, drove south, bypassing Sunwu on the road to Peian. The 396th Rifle Division and the 368th Mountain Rifle Regiment surrounded main elements of the 135th Independent Mixed Brigade in the Aihun Fortified Region. This operational group also sent out a forward detachment formed around the 258th Tank Brigade to pursue the Japanese southwest along the Nencheng road.[17] Elements of both operational groups turned over the task of reducing the Japanese fortified regions to the artillery and followed the forward detachments southward. Progress was slow on the bad roads, made worse by continuing bad weather. To facilitate movement, the army headquarters attached two engineer sapper battalions to support each of the advancing forward detachments. The two forces advanced southward, separated by a gap of more than 150 kilometers.

Japanese resistance in the Aihun and Sunwu Fortified Regions continued unabated for several days with the Japanese making frequent sorties against the Soviet besiegers. General Terëkhin committed heavy artillery assets to reduce the two areas, followed by a heavy aviation bombardment by the 18th Mixed Aviation Corps. Finally, on 17 and 18 August, resistance began to flag, and fortified areas surrendered or were destroyed. In all, 2d Red Banner Army took 17,061 soldiers and officers prisoner at Sunwu. The Aihun position continued resistance against the 614th Rifle Regiment (396th Rifle Division) and the 101st Fortified Region until 20 August, when the remaining Japanese force of 4,520 men surrendered.[18]

While the reduction of Aihun and Sunwu progressed, forward elements of 2d Red Banner Army continued their slow march to the south. On 20 and 21 August they secured Nencheng and Peian. After the surrender of Japanese forces, the march became administrative, and units continued on towards Tsitsihar and Harbin.

The 2d Far Eastern Front completed its mission, although not without difficulty. Operating on a 1,300-kilometer frontage comprising active sectors of 520 kilometers, the front had to contend with constant bad weather and difficult terrain as well as with more formidable opposition than that encountered in other sectors. The 15th Army surmounted its terrain problems by developing excellent cooperation between ground and naval forces. Amphibious landing operations played a major role in achieving operational success. In the 2d Red Banner Army sector, Soviet forces experienced Japanese resistance resembling that offered to 36th Army, Trans-Baikal Front. The Japanese 123d Infantry Division and 135th Independent Mixed Brigade performed in a manner similar to the 80th Independent Mixed Brigade and 119th Infantry Division. Fighting was severe in this sector, so combat progress did not live up to the Soviet front commander's expectations. This lack of progress was due in part to the warnings the Japanese had of the attack and in part to the difficulties 2d Red Banner Army had experienced in moving sufficient forces across the Amur River in the first few days of

the operation. The 2d Far Eastern Front clearly accomplished its mission: it tied up Japanese forces stationed in northern Manchuria and prevented those forces from rejoining main elements farther south. But as so often happens during a supporting attack, 2d Far Eastern Front forces experienced some of the harshest fighting in Manchuria.



Terëkhin, Makar Fomich (1896—1967), 2d Red Banner Army

1915—joined Russian Army, platoon commander.
1918—joined Red Army.
1920—Riazan Infantry School.
1921—company, battalion commander.
1925, 1931—*Vystrel* course.
1935—Mechanization and Motorization Course.
1935—(Oct) commander, mechanized regiment.
1937—(Jul) commander, mechanized brigade.
1939—(Mar) commander, 20th Tank Corps (Khalkhin-Gol, Finnish War).
1940—(Mar) commander, 19th Rifle Corps.
1940—(Jun) commander, 5th Mechanized Corps.
1941—(Apr) commander, 2d Red Banner Army (Far East).
1946—rifle corps commander.
1949—assistant commander, White Sea, then Northern Military District.
1954—(Aug) in the reserves.

10

Analysis of the Offensive



In the conduct of the Manchurian operation, the Soviets adhered to tactical concepts generally in concert with those contained in the field service regulations of 1944. The necessity for speed, the vast expanse of the area of operations, the diversity of terrain, and the nature of the opposition dictated the final nature and form of Soviet offensive tactics. In order to achieve requisite speed in the Manchurian environment, the Soviets made some adjustments to actions the regulations prescribed. Yet, the regulations themselves were flexible and recommended adjustment based on the concrete conditions that an attacking force confronted. Thus, they recommended using unique and varied tactical formations to surprise the enemy. They also stressed initiative as a key ingredient for achieving surprise and maintaining the momentum of an attack.

At every level in every sector, Soviet commanders in Manchuria took great risks, planned bold operations, and executed their plans with abandon. They demonstrated a flexibility exceeding that displayed in earlier operations, not only because of the particular demands in the theater of operations, but also because Soviet military leadership had matured. The war had produced a generation of experienced and competent army, corps, division, regimental, and brigade commanders, whose expertise was the product of up to four years of battle. This generation realized that the Manchurian operation was probably the last campaign of a long war, hence a campaign that had to be successful and short. The will to achieve peace provided the impetus for this last violent spasm of war. Soviet forces were surgical in their conduct of battle: in just eleven days the violence of war was over.

Studied against the panorama of years of battle in Europe and in Asia, the Manchurian operation reveals some noteworthy features. Most of these features reflect either the nature of the area of operations or the tactics Soviet forces used to conduct the campaign. The most singular feature of the campaign was the impact of geography on the Soviet command and control structure. In such a geographically diverse area, contiguous combat by adjacent units was impossible. The three Soviet fronts in the campaign operated on a 4,400-kilometer frontage with objectives 400 to 900 kilometers deep. Major and minor mountain ranges, lakes and rivers, marshes and

deserts, and sometimes simply space separated frontal sectors from one another. Thus a new type of command system was necessary, and the Soviets met the requirement by creating the Far East Command headquarters, a theater of military operations headquarters.

The same mountains, rivers, and deserts ran across frontal zones, and sometimes they bisected these zones. Just as terrain required fronts to operate on separate, noncontiguous axes without flank contact with adjacent fronts, terrain forced armies, corps, and divisions to operate in the same manner. Operations in such an environment required detailed planning, but most of all they required initiative on the part of unit commanders, who had to react independently to changing conditions. Higher commanders simply could not be everywhere at once, and the limitations of radio were obvious.[1]

The diversity of terrain in Manchuria gave rise to large-scale tailoring of forces on the basis of unit history and unit type. Thus, a unit's experience became a prime consideration in the assignment of specific tasks. This tailoring applied to headquarters subordinate to fronts, such as 6th Guards Tank Army, 5th Army, and 39th Army, as well as to lesser units. Thus, border guards units and fortified regions conducted assault operations against an enemy and on terrain they had faced for years and had come to know well. The Soviets also took care to tailor units to suit the demands of terrain. They gave ample engineer support to those units, like the 300th Rifle Division of 1st Red Banner Army, whose missions took them through heavily forested and hilly regions. They provided additional sapper and heavy artillery support to those units assaulting fortified positions. Forces crossing the major and minor rivers of Manchuria received additional bridging assets.[2] The Trans-Baikal Front assigned to 6th Guards Tank Army extra aviation assets to assist in the reconnaissance of areas the army could not cover on the ground and to establish communications betweeen units operating on widely separate axes of advance.[3]

The Soviets sought and achieved strategic surprise in the campaign. The relatively secret redeployment of forces on a grand scale to the Far East and within the Far East yielded strategic surprise. Security measures masked the scale of movements and the transfer of key command personnel to the area. Soviet movement to combat only at the last possible hour reinforced strategic surprise and yielded tactical surprise as well. Unit after unit deployed for attack from assembly areas twenty to eighty kilometers to the rear and entered from the march. The 6th Guards Tank Army conducted a major march and crossed the border without halting in final assembly areas.[4] Even when they attacked two days after the opening of hostilities on other fronts, 2d Red Banner Army forces moved up to attack from positions far to the rear.[5]

Attack planning was secretive and limited to a finite number of leaders. The general headquarters directive that ordered planning to begin ended with this warning:

> The Front commander, the member of the Military Council, the Front chief of staff, and the chief of the Front staff operations department are to be allowed to take full part in working out the plan of operations. Chiefs of the branches and services may be allowed to take part in working out their special sections of the plan without being informed of the Front's general objectives. The army commanders are to be told their objectives orally without passing on written Front directives. The plan for working out an army's plan of operation is to be the same as for the Front. All documents on troop plans and actions shall be kept in the personal safes of the commander of the Front and the commanders of armies.[6]

Soviet timing of preparations and of the operation itself improved chances for surprise. On 2 August the Far East Command assigned frontal designations to force groupings and told all forces to achieve full combat readiness by 9 August. At 1630 on 7 August, Far East Command made the final decision on timing for an attack that would occur less than two days later.

Japanese sources provide strong evidence of the degree of strategic surprise the Soviets attained. Most Kwantung Army intelligence agencies assessed that the Soviets would not conduct major operations until the fall of 1945, after the end of a rainy season, and perhaps even as late as the spring of 1946. Even the most pessimistic estimates insisted on the inability of the Soviets to attack on a large scale before September 1945.[7] Among the few relatively accurate assessments was that of the Japanese 4th Army commander, General Uemura, who warned of a Soviet attack occurring as early as August 1945 and had his subordinate units prepare for that eventuality.[8] Japanese complacency, however, smothered most warnings. Certainly, the Japanese reasoned, the Soviets were building up forces, but they were doing so at a rate that prohibited early attack.

Japanese actions reflected their faith in their estimates. Force redeployments mandated by the new Japanese defense plan were only partially complete. Resupply and reequipment of forward units were as yet unfinished, and in some cases had not yet even begun. On the night of the attack, high ranking commanders of units in the Japanese 5th Army were at a planning conference at Yehho and thus were absent from their posts on the morning of the attack. General Yamado, Kwantung Army commander, was also absent from his headquarters on a trip to Darien.[9] A certain casualness, if not haughtiness, prevailed in the Japanese camp, reflecting to a degree Japanese faith in their predictions and their capabilities to resist such an attack. Mixed with this casualness was perhaps a tendency to denigrate Soviet capabilities. As for the argument that the Japanese lethargy reflected the low quality of their troops and poor esprit de corps, the combat record of units in the ensuing campaign dismisses that charge.

While many units never saw combat, those that did acquitted themselves well. Japanese action or inaction in the summer of 1945 simply attests to the degree of strategic and tactical surprise the Soviets achieved.

The form and location of the Soviet attack at the strategic, operational, and tactical levels surprised the Japanese. The Soviet decision to attack with a two-front envelopment from both east and west contradicted Japanese expectations and deployments. Although the Japanese expected a Soviet attack from the west, they expected one of limited scale along well-defined axes of advance opposite Japanese fortified positions. They totally discounted the possibility of heavy attacks through the Grand Khingan Mountains, which they considered impenetrable. The logistical problems associated with movement and resupply of large bodies of troops to eastern Mongolia seemed to the Japanese to rule out large-scale Soviet deployments to that area. If the Soviets solved the logistical problems, then, in Japanese eyes, the problems of traversing wide desert expanses, of obtaining water to sustain a large force, and of surmounting the barrier of the Grand Khingan Mountains ruled out attack. The Japanese deployed their forces accordingly and concentrated their troops heavily in central and eastern Manchuria, with no real concentration in the west. Nor did they have a plan for emergency concentration there. The Japanese quickly forgot the lessons of Khalkhin-Gol in 1939; now, in 1945, they painfully relearned them.[10]

Soviet operational techniques surprised and confused the Japanese. In particular, the Soviet tendency to seek and achieve bypass of fortified positions befuddled Japanese commanders. Soviet units crossed terrain the Japanese considered impassable. The Japanese could not parry Soviet attacks that occurred on virtually every possible axis of advance. Soviet use of armor in first echelon—initially or shortly after the beginning of the attack—caught the Japanese off guard. They had discounted the threat of armor in such difficult terrain and hence were woefully incapable of dealing with it. Without adequate antitank guns, the Japanese had to resort to their only remaining antitank weapon: explosives strapped to soldiers who hurled themselves bodily at Soviet tanks—an enormously costly, but sometimes effective, expedient.

Tactically as well, the Soviets used methods unforeseen by the Japanese. The Soviet use of small, task-oriented assault groups with heavy engineer and firepower support clashed with the image of human waves of infantry in the assault. And the assault groups proved far harder to defend against than human waves. The Japanese learned of the Soviet tendency to rely on machines and explosives rather than expenditures of manpower. Perhaps focusing upon foreign (primarily Finnish and German) accounts of Soviet human wave tactics so prevalent in 1939, 1941, and 1942, the Japanese were not aware that the diminished source of manpower and the growing skill of Soviet commanders had led to the development of tactics relying on firepower and maneuver of tanks and assault guns. Thus, they fell victim

to the false image of Soviet clumsiness projected by the early years of the war—a stereotype that reality had shattered by 1945. Perhaps most distressing to Japanese commanders were the pesky Soviet forward detachments, constantly probing, bypassing, and attacking deeply. The detachments prevented establishment of coherent defenses and, when stopped or damaged, they simply reformed or were reconstituted. Most surprising to the Japanese was the Soviet commanders' new display of initiative at all levels. Nonexistent in 1941 and 1942, that initiative was evident in 1945, and it surprised and confused the Japanese.

Soviet emphasis on maneuver reinforced the beneficial effects of surprise. Following the recommendations of the 1944 field service regulations to the extreme, the Soviets practiced the art of maneuver at every command level and in almost every phase of the operation. The rewards they reaped were immense. The overall campaign plan relied on maneuver to envelop large segments of the Kwantung Army and to incapacitate the remainder. Nowhere were the benefits of maneuver more clearly evident than in the operations of the Trans-Baikal Front. The use of a tank army in first echelon across difficult terrain marked the Soviets' faith in maneuver and their confidence in its ultimate success. The wide, sweeping, deep marches by the Soviet-Mongolian Cavalry-Mechanized Group, the 17th Army, the 6th Guards Tank Army, and the 39th Army were the essence of bold maneuver. Soviet success in those sectors depended on successful maneuver. Operations of 1st Far Eastern Front, including the deep operations of 1st Red Banner Army, 25th Army, and 10th Mechanized Corps, relied on maneuver, although in that region its success was more limited.

Within fronts and armies the Soviets relied on maneuver to compensate for spatial separation between operating units. The inability of Japanese commanders to respond with maneuvers of their own multiplied Soviet effectiveness. The 36th Army's operations towards Hailar, its bypass of Hailar, and its movements through the fortified Grand Khingan mountain passes relied on maneuver, as did 39th Army's bypass of the Halung-Arshaan Fortified Region and subsequent operations southeast towards Solun. The joint operations of 15th Army and the Amur Flotilla brought a new dimension to maneuver: amphibious assault as part of an envelopment. At lower echelons, 205th Tank Brigade's bold strike at Hailar, 257th Tank Brigade's dash from Pamientung to Mutanchiang that preempted Japanese establishment of defensive lines, and the operations of 39th Rifle Corps and 10th Mechanized Corps on two axes into the Japanese rear at Wangching and Tumen exemplify imaginative uses of maneuver within army zones. Constant Soviet use of forward detachments to complete the penetration of defenses, to exploit, and to pursue to the depths of the defense capitalized on maneuver effects. In virtually every sector on virtually every axis, tank-heavy forward detachments with adequate combined arms support confounded and paralyzed local Japanese commanders.

Even at the lowest echelons of command during frontal attacks, the Soviets stressed maneuver. Thus, in the attacks on fortified Japanese positions in eastern Manchuria at Suifenho, Tungning, and Volynsk, Soviet forces infiltrated, bypassed, and isolated fortified positions. Whenever possible, they took the positions from the rear and flank before resorting to pulverizing artillery fires and direct assault. Shallow envelopments occurred, such as the Soviet envelopment of the main Tungning fortified position by an advance up the Pad Sennaya valley to the north and rear of the position, and the attack of 17th Rifle Corps on the flank and rear of the Suifenho Fortified Region.

These envelopments at small unit level mirrored the Soviet use of envelopment on a grander scale. At front and army level, the Soviets used envelopment as a principal form of maneuver, whether in the 36th and 39th Army sectors in the northwest or in the 35th Army sector in the east. Even in the limited space of eastern Manchuria, the Soviet 1st Red Banner Army and 5th Army managed to envelop and bypass the Japanese 124th Infantry Division, leaving that division to die on the vine.

Soviet emphasis on high-speed operations reinforced the effectiveness of maneuver and thus increased Japanese surprise. Speed was necessary to forestall Japanese establishment of a credible defense and to guarantee Soviet occupation of Manchuria, southern Sakhalin Island, and the Kurile Islands both before and after Japanese capitulation. The Soviets achieved rapid advance through the use of a disproportionate number of tank units in first echelon as major attack formations or as forward detachments. Thus, 6th Guards Tank Army advanced in first echelon of the Trans-Baikal Front to conduct a speedy passage of the Grand Khingan Mountains. The 6th Guards Tank Army received a large number of speedy, but older, BT tanks* to achieve speed in its advance. The 61st Tank Division performed a similar role in the sector of 39th Army.

Most illustrative of the Soviets' desire to attain high rates of advance was their use of forward detachments (see table 18). Throughout the campaign, forward detachments operated at greater depths (ten to fifty kilometers), in wider zones (twenty to eighty kilometers apart), and with greater freedom of action than in earlier campaigns. At front level, 6th Guards Tank Army was a virtual forward detachment of the Trans-Baikal Front. The Soviets used army level forward detachments frequently during the campaign to achieve speed in the advance. The 61st Tank Division, 39th Army, spearheaded the advance south of the Halung-Arshaan Fortified Region, and the 76th Tank Brigade (reinforced) led the 5th Army dash from Muleng to Mutanchiang, though not without difficulty. The 205th Tank Brigade (reinforced) cut the path to Hailar and beyond for 36th Army. The 15th Army used the 171st Tank Brigade to lead the ground advance on

**bystrokhodnyi-tanki:* fast-moving tanks

Table 18. Types of Soviet Forward Detachments in Manchuria

Command Level at Which the Forward Detachment Operates

	Army		*Corps*		*Division*
36th Army	205th Tank Bde 152d Motorized Rifle Regt 97th Artillery Regt 491st SP Bn 465th Antiaircraft Regt 32d Guards Mortar Regt (1 battalion) 1 sapper co 1 mortar bn 158th Antitank Bn				
39th Army	61st Tank Div 53d Antitank Bde 1st Howitzer Bde 11th Guards Mortar Bde 203d Engineer Sapper Bde		44th Tank Bde (+)	206th Tank Bde (+)	1 rifle bn 1 SP bn 1—2 artillery bn 1 antitank bn 1 guards mortar bn
25th Army	259th Tank Bde (+)				
15th Army	171st Tank Bde 1 rifle bn				
2d Red Banner Army	74th Tank Bde 1 rifle co 1 artillery bn 1 antitank regt	258th Tank Bde 1 rifle bn 1 mortar regt			
5th Separate Rifle Corps			172d Tank Bde 1 rifle bn 1 antitank regt 1 sapper co/bn		
17th Army	70th Tank Bn 56th Antitank Bde Training Bn, 209th Rifle Div	82d Tank Bn 482d SP Bn			
Cavalry-Mechanized Group	25th Mechanized Bde 43d Tank Bde 267th Tank Regt	27th Motorized Rifle Bde 7th Armored Car Bde 30th Motorcycle Regt			
6th Guards Tank Army	1 tank bn 1 rifle regt 1 artillery bn	1 tank regt 1 rifle regt 1 artillery bn			
	1 tank bn 1 rifle regt 1 SP bn				
1st Red Banner Army			1 tank bde 1 SP btry 1 sapper plt		1 rifle bn with 5 T-34s 2 automatic weapons co 1 sapper plt
5th Army	76th Tank Bde 478th Heavy SP Regt 2 rifle bn				1 tank bde 1 heavy SP regt 1 rifle regt/bn 1 antitank btry 1 sapper co
10th Mechanized Corps			72d Mechanized Bde 1419th SP Regt 2d Guards Mortar Bn	72d Tank Bde 2d Motorcycle Regt	

Fuchin and Chiamussu. The 10th Mechanized Corps, with two forward detachments, exploited the 25th Army attack to Wangching and beyond. In that instance, the forward detachments were the only forces in constant contact with the enemy. The 2d Red Banner Army used two forward detachments in its advance past Aihun and Sunwu southwards towards Nencheng and Peian.

At corps level a similar pattern emerged. Usually a corps used a reinforced tank brigade as a forward detachment. This was the case in the 5th Guards Rifle Corps and 113th Rifle Corps of 39th Army, in the 26th Rifle Corps and 59th Rifle Corps of 1st Red Banner Army, in 5th Separate Rifle Corps, and in both columns of 10th Mechanized Corps. Each corps of 6th Guards Tank Army used a reinforced tank regiment or battalion as a forward detachment. Rifle divisions also used forward detachments. On main attack axes of 5th Army, each rifle division received in support a tank brigade and a heavy self-propelled artillery regiment. After penetration of enemy defenses, these units performed the function of forward detachments and moved deeper into the rear of the enemy defenses.

Forward detachments operated in great number at every level with great effect. They perpetuated the momentum of initial assaults, created a momentum of their own, and imparted that momentum to army and front operations as a whole.

Soviet commanders used natural environmental conditions to achieve surprise, just as the 1944 regulations recommended. They had exploited terrain before, though not with such good effect. In particular, the Soviets conducted operations in adverse weather and in darkness, initially and throughout the campaign. The initial assault of the 1st Far Eastern Front units occurred during heavy thunderstorms in the dark of night. The merciless weather prevented both the firing of any artillery preparations and the planned use of searchlights to support the advance of 300th Rifle Division in its zone of operations (reminiscent of the use of searchlights in the Berlin campaign).[11] Particularly near large and small rivers, the weather impeded the advance of units, but it also had the beneficial effect of lulling the Japanese into a deeper sense of security. Several Japanese commanders, in debriefings after their surrender, noted their disbelief when the attacks occurred during such miserable weather.[12] Soviet initial attacks in darkness and bad weather were major successes due largely to the complete surprise they achieved.

Units of the Trans-Baikal Front and the 2d Far Eastern Front also operated in difficult weather. Under rain-laden skies, 6th Guards Tank Army crossed the Grand Khingan Mountains in the dark. The 5th Guards Rifle Corps and 113th Rifle Corps of 39th Army advanced in miserable weather conditions after 15 August. The 15th Army's assault battalions took Amur River islands at night during heavy rains.

Even in clear weather units used darkness to mask advances. Much of the initial deployment for attack occurred at night, as did initial assaults. The attack of the 205th Tank Brigade and the 152d Rifle Regiment on Hailar involved an attack from the march by the tank brigade and an envelopment operation by the rifle regiment during the hours of darkness. The 76th Tank Brigade conducted its costly march down the road toward Mutanchiang on the night of 11—12 August. This willingness to use the cover of night and to operate with total disregard for weather conditions caused some difficulties for Soviet unit commanders. But it paid even greater dividends in terms of the surprise achieved and the continued, unexpected pressure placed on Japanese defenders.

The 1944 regulations recommended varied use of tactical formations tailored to mission, terrain, and enemy in order to achieve surprise and to confuse the enemy. To one who would oversimplify or stereotype Soviet combat echelonment, Manchuria should stand as a corrective lesson, representative of Soviet practices late in the war. Combat formations by that time were flexible and varied. As stated in the regulations, the primary determinant of formations was the set of various concrete conditions a unit had to overcome. That flexibility was evident in Manchuria. The general rule Soviet commanders at every echelon followed was the stronger the defense, the deeper the echelonment (see fig. 3).

The Trans-Baikal Front deployed in two echelons of armies weighted heavily forward to bring maximum pressure on the entire front and project power rapidly forward to great depths. The first echelon had four combined arms armies and one tank army, while the second echelon had but one combined arms army. The front retained a reserve of two rifle divisions, one tank division, and one tank brigade. Trans-Baikal Front armies likewise tailored their formations to concrete conditions. The 36th and 39th Armies each deployed in one echelon of three rifle corps (or operational groups) abreast. The 17th Army formed in a single echelon of three rifle divisions, while the 6th Guards Tank Army, with its requirement to sustain operations to a great depth, deployed in two echelons of tank and mechanized corps. Rifle corps confronting fortified zones deployed in two echelons of divisions. Those facing limited opposition deployed in one echelon of divisions (e.g., 94th Rifle Corps and the operational group of 36th Army). Virtually all tank forces of the Trans-Baikal Front, whether tank armies, tank divisions, or separate tank brigades, were in first echelon in order to increase speed.

The four armies of 1st Far Eastern Front deployed in single echelon to bring maximum pressure to bear on the Japanese throughout the entire zone. The 10th Mechanized Corps served as the front mobile group for exploitation, while the 88th Rifle Corps and the 84th Cavalry Division were in reserve. Most front armies used single echelon formations consistent with the front commander's plan to advance on as many axes as possible. The 25th Army formed one echelon of a rifle corps, a rifle division, and several

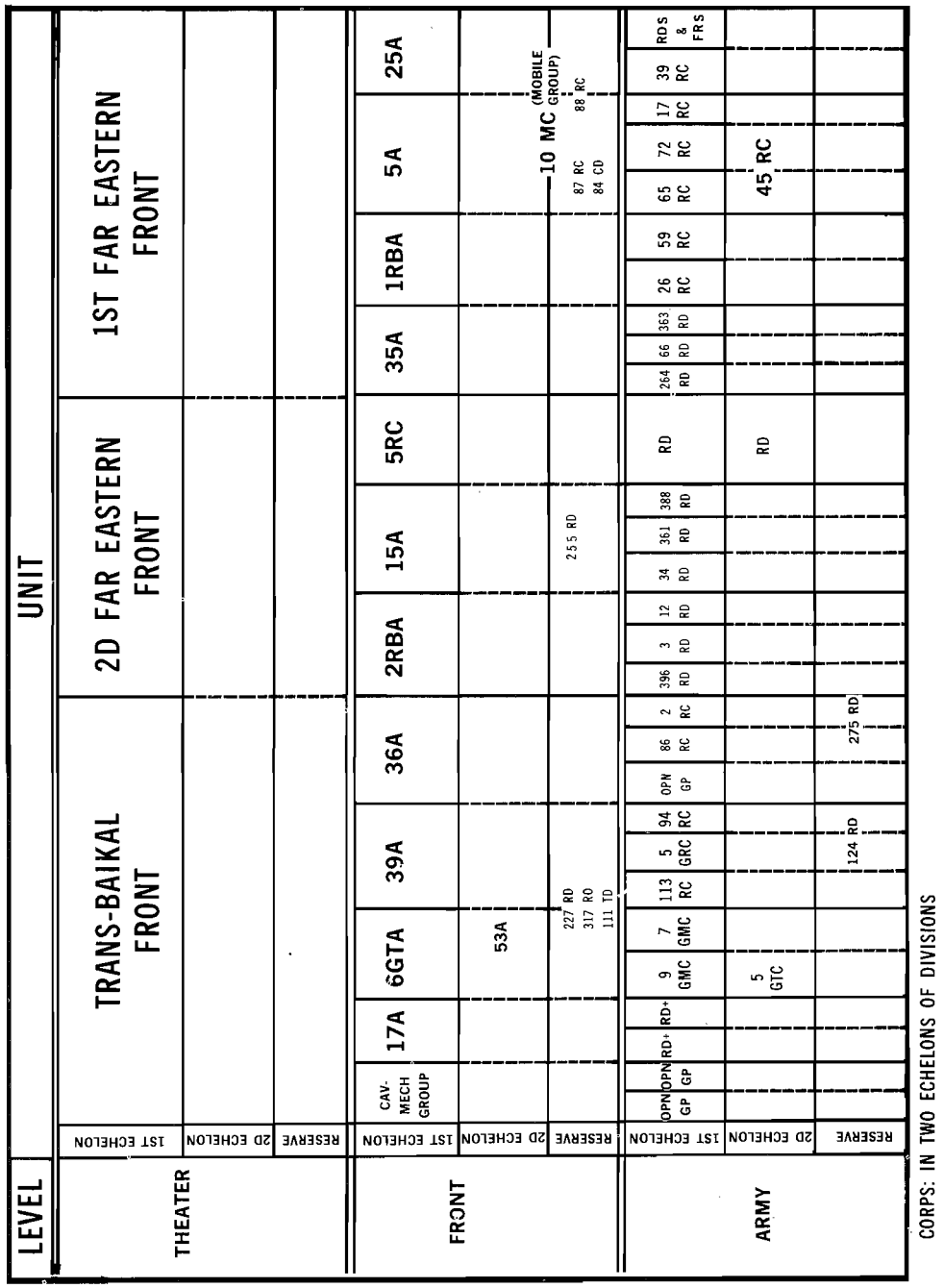


Figure 3. Soviet Echelonment of Forces in Manchuria

fortified regions. The 35th Army arrayed its forces in a single echelon of three rifle divisions; the 1st Red Banner Army, in one echelon of two rifle corps. The 5th Army, facing the extensive fortifications in Volynsk and Suifenho, deployed in two echelons of rifle corps. The two leading rifle corps of 5th Army and 39th Rifle Corps of 25th Army, which faced those fortifications, formed two echelons of rifle divisions. The only exception was 17th Rifle Corps of 5th Army, which placed its two rifle divisions in a single echelon, because its mission was to attack through a relatively lightly held zone against the northern flank and rear of the Suifenho center of resistance.

The 2d Far Eastern Front, with forces operating on an extremely wide frontage in support of the theater main effort, deployed in a single echelon of two armies and one rifle corps operating on widely separate axes. The 15th Army used a single echelon of three rifle divisions for the attack and retained only an extremely small reserve. The 2d Red Banner Army also deployed its three rifle divisions in single echelon. The 5th Separate Rifle Corps of two rifle divisions, operating on a narrow and lightly defended front, employed a single echelon formation. In all areas of Manchuria, rifle divisions employed their rifle regiments in two echelons. Thus, echelonment patterns varied to match terrain and enemy resistance. These tactical formations were yet another element adding to the surprise of the Japanese.

In addition to their use of maneuver in all weather conditions and flexible tactical formations to confound their opponents, the Soviets used other noteworthy tactical techniques. During the opening phases of the operation, in several sectors of the front, the Soviets had to conduct frontal assaults on fortified zones. In so doing they adhered fairly closely to the field regulations of 1944. They made maximum use of bypass and neutralization by fire. If assault proved unavoidable, commanders paid considerable attention to the tailoring of forces to insure that they precisely suited the mission. They committed forces to combat in a carefully timed buildup of combat power in a given sector in order to accomplish missions with as little loss of manpower as possible. Operations of the 5th Army and the 39th Rifle Corps of 25th Army demonstrated the preciseness of formations and the state of tactical skill evident in Soviet forces by 1945. Both units deployed in narrower than usual sectors with rifle corps on a 4.5—5-kilometer frontage and rifle divisions on a 2.5—3-kilometer frontage. Division assault elements operated on even narrower frontages. Extremely heavy densities of fire supported the assault forces. A frontal attack on a fortified position required 200 guns and mortars per kilometer for support, and thirty to forty tanks and self-propelled guns per kilometer, integrated into attack formations.[13] Even in such frontal attacks, the Soviets used envelopment to isolate the fort, instead of using frontal mass attacks to batter it. Massed firepower permitted economies of manpower.

Assault groups of about 100 men each from first echelon advanced rifle battalions led the attack. These assault groups had maneuver elements, support elements, sappers, flame throwers, antitank guns, automatic weapons, and two or three tanks or heavy self-propelled guns (see fig. 4). Assault groups comprised forces from regular divisional rifle battalions (in the case of 5th Army) or from border guards units or fortified regions (in the case of 39th Rifle Corps and 25th Army).[14] The main force of first echelon rifle

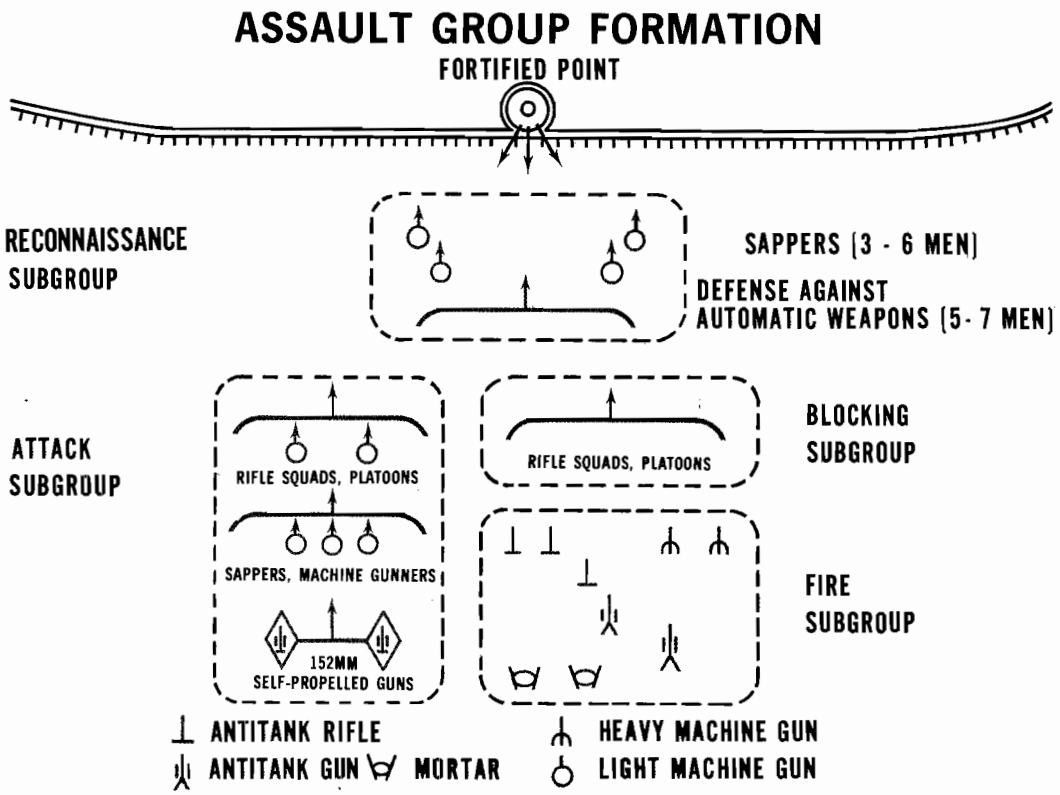


Figure 4. Soviet Assault Group Configuration

divisions, led by advanced rifle battalions from second echelon rifle regiments, followed the assault groups (see table 19). Rifle divisions attacked in two echelons with two rifle regiments in first echelon. First echelon rifle regiments had two rifle battalions forward, each deployed with three rifle companies on line. First echelon rifle battalions of first echelon rifle regiments had tank brigades and self-propelled artillery regiments attached to provide direct fire support. In 5th Army, a tank brigade and a heavy self-propelled artillery regiment comprising eighty-six tanks and self-propelled guns supported each first echelon rifle division. If fortified points resisted too stoutly, the main force maneuvered around their flanks to bypass the obstacle and left a second echelon rifle regiment from the division to reduce the fortified point. This stay-behind regiment cooperated in the task with follow-on units from the local fortified region. Normally, the army or

corps commander attached a self-propelled artillery battalion, a sapper battalion, and a heavy artillery battery or battalion to the regiment. Reduction of the obstacle occurred under the direct fire of heavy and light artillery and air bombardment, if available. This pattern occurred at Hutou, Suifenho, Volynsk, Tungning, Sunwu, Fuchin, Hailar, and Halung-Arshaan. In a few instances, where Japanese resistance was strong or fortifications extensive, full second echelon rifle divisions accomplished the reduction mission.

Table 19. Time-phased Commitment of Forces to Battle (1st Far Eastern Front)

Units	*Time of Attack*
Assault unit (platoon/company), 100+ men (TO&E or border guards units)	0010—0100 H
Advanced battalion (1 per regiment) with tank company (first echelon tank brigade)	0300—0830 H
Division main (2 regiments) force with tank brigade	0830 H
Division second echelon (1 regiment)	0930—1100 H
Corps second echelon (1 division)	1600+ H

While second echelon rifle regiments subdued strongpoints, main forces initiated pursuit. Forward detachments made up of separate tank brigades, reinforced by a rifle battalion and sapper and artillery battalions, led the pursuit on the basis of one forward detachment per rifle division or one per rifle corps. Soviet commanders designated the makeup of the forward detachment before the conduct of the frontal assault. Armies attacking fortified zones throughout Manchuria followed this assault pattern with minor variations. In areas where armies or corps made frontal attacks against lighter opposition, reconnaissance groups led the attack, followed by advanced rifle battalions (one per regiment), usually with engineer, tank, and artillery support. Advanced battalions in fact acted as forward detachments of rifle regiments during the assault phase of combat. Those Soviet units not involved in frontal attacks on heavy fortifications or not advancing in march column formation used the advanced battalion technique with marked success. Notable examples were the 300th Rifle Division of 1st Red Banner Army in its advance toward Pamientung, the 363d Rifle Division of 35th Army attacking across the Sungacha River, and the lead rifle divisions of 36th Army in their crossing of the Argun River.

Pursuit operations invariably followed completion of the frontal attacks. Successful pursuit had been a long-term problem for Soviet forces. Soviets had learned by harrowing experience the mixture of forces required to conduct a successful pursuit and to survive in the depth of the enemy defense. They also had developed an appreciation of the amount of support required to sustain pursuit operations. By late 1943 and early 1944, the Soviets had

successfully mastered the art of task organizing their units for survival in a pursuit. As late as 1945, however, Soviet pursuit operations were still suffering from a lack of logistical support. In Manchuria, pursuit generally required small units to travel great distances. The extensive use of forward detachments followed by a great number of divisions in march columns strained the Soviet command and control and logistical systems to the extreme. The initiative shown by Soviet commanders added to this pressure. In general, the Soviets devoted greater than normal efforts to supporting successful pursuit. They provided additional engineer and bridging units to rapidly moving forces and used imaginative measures to give support. For example, engineer bridging units attached to the 66th Rifle Division and the 175th Tank Brigade of 35th Army used inverted pontoons to transport fuel across flooded open country in order to facilitate the advance of units in their sectors.[15] Aerial reconnaissance provided to the 6th Guards Tank Army gave an added measure of support to rapid pursuit in that sector.

If the scope of pursuit operations was unique to Soviet operations in Manchuria, so was the degree of Soviet reliance on an advance in march formations throughout the operation. In fact, most units spent the bulk of the time during the campaign in march formation. The success of Soviet units in battle and their survivability depended in large measure on how well the commanders organized those columns for mutual support, for defense, and for the ability to deploy quickly (see figs. 5—7).

Trans-Baikal Front conducted most of its operations in march formation. The 6th Guards Tank Army, the 17th Army, and the Soviet-Mongolian Cavalry-Mechanized Group scarcely deployed for combat. Even the crossing of the Grand Khingan Mountains was in constricted march formation. The 39th Army, aside from the siege of Halung-Arshaan and the attacks at Solun and Wangyemiao, constantly moved in column. On its march to Hailar and to the Grand Khingan passes at Yakoshih, 36th Army used column formation. In the restricted area of 1st Far Eastern Front, 5th Army was in column formation from its breakout from the border fortifications to Mutanchiang, as was 1st Red Banner Army from the border to Pamientung and from Pamientung to Mutanchiang. The 25th Army and 10th Mechanized Corps advance from Tungning to Wangching, except for limited deployments in engagements at Heitosai and Taipingling, was in march column. The 35th Army units advancing from Hutou to Mishan and Linkou spent little time in deployed formation. Such was the case in the 2d Far Eastern Front area, except where enemy resistance made column movement less feasible, as it did for 2d Red Banner Army. The excessive time spent in march column is explained not only by the limited opposition, but also by the effectiveness of the column organization. Forward detachments and advanced guards generally dealt with enemy resistance before the columns had to deploy in order to accelerate the Soviet advance.

Figure 5. March Column Formation: 6th Guards Tank Army

6TH GUARDS TANK ARMY: MARCH FORMATION

1ST ECHELON

RIGHT COLUMN

9TH GDS MECH CORPS: MR BNS—19
TANKS—295 (T26-11, BT-100)
SP GUNS—86
GUNS/MORTARS—595

2D ECHELON

5TH GDS TANK CORPS: MR BNS—6
TANKS—208
SP GUNS—21
GUNS/MORTARS—173

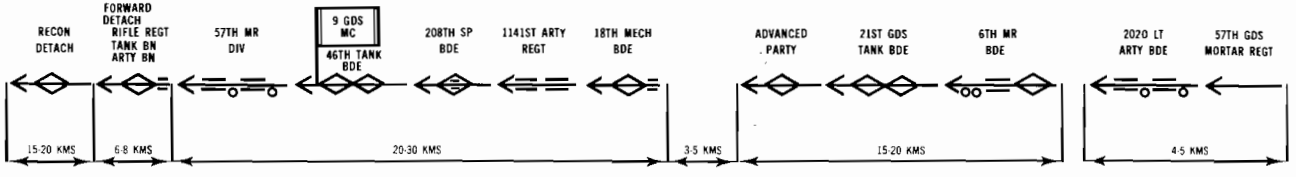
RESERVE

202D LT ARTY BDE TANKS—10
40TH MOTORCYCLE REGT GUNS—64
57TH GDS MORTAR REGT



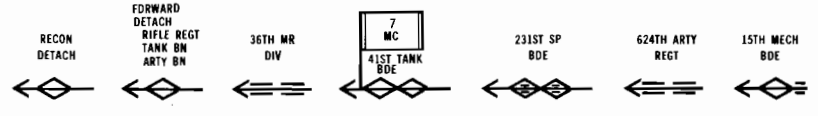
9TH GDS MECH CORPS

5TH GDS TANK CORPS



LEFT COLUMN

7TH GDS MECH CORPS: MR BNS—19
TANKS—296 (T26-11, BT-100)
SP GUNS—86
GUNS/MORTARS—595



7TH MECH CORPS



GROUPING OF FORCES

FORCES	MAIN DIRECTION INCLUDING RESERVES	SECONDARY DIRECTION	TOTAL
MOTORIZED RIFLE AND RIFLE BATTALIONS	25	19	44
TANKS	527	299	826
SP GUNS	107	86	193
GUNS/MORTARS (LESS AA AND MRL)	837	595	1432

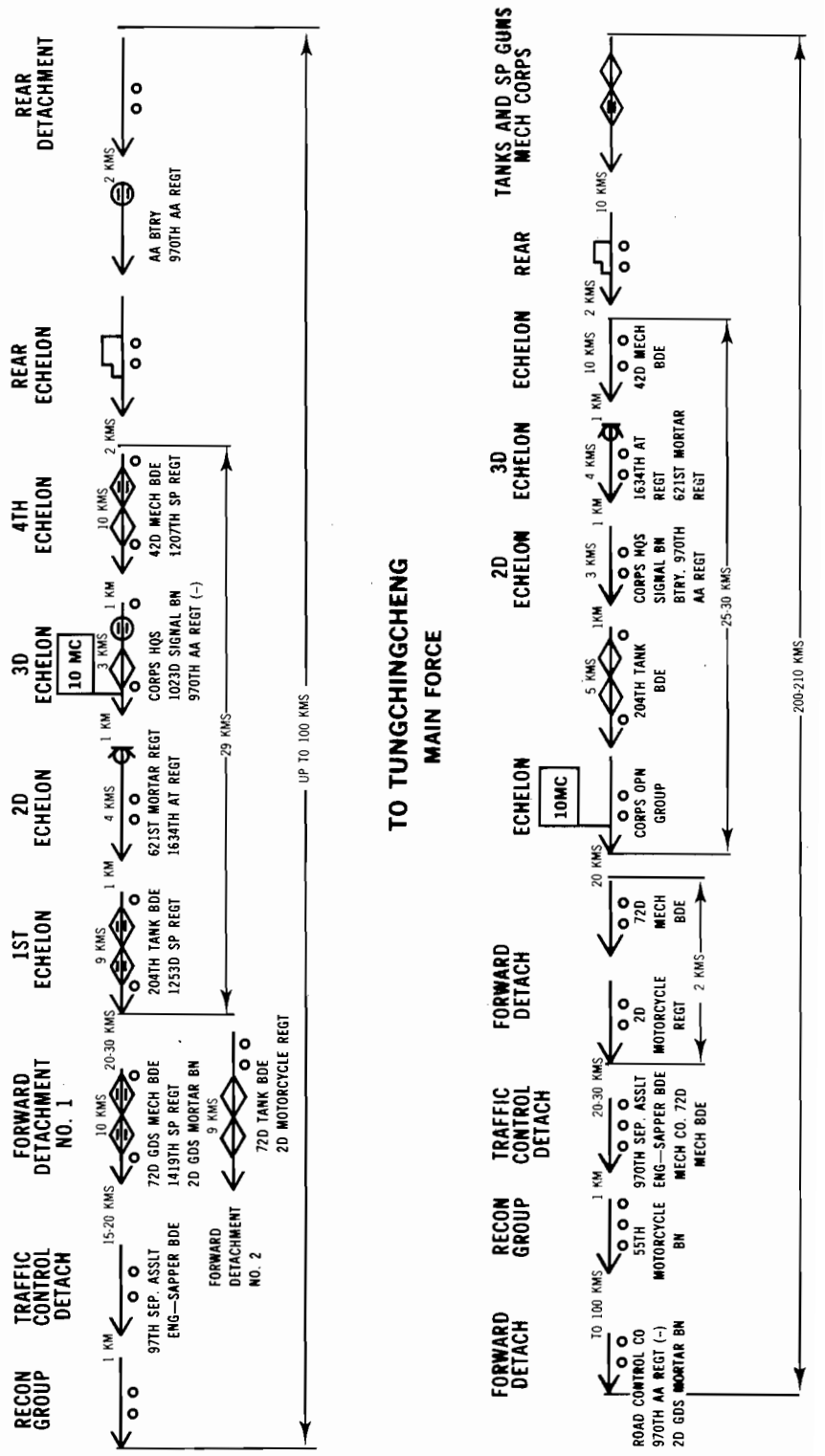


Figure 6. March Column Formation: 10th Mechanized Corps

MARCH ORDER 22D RIFLE DIVISION, 26TH RIFLE CORPS, 1ST RBA

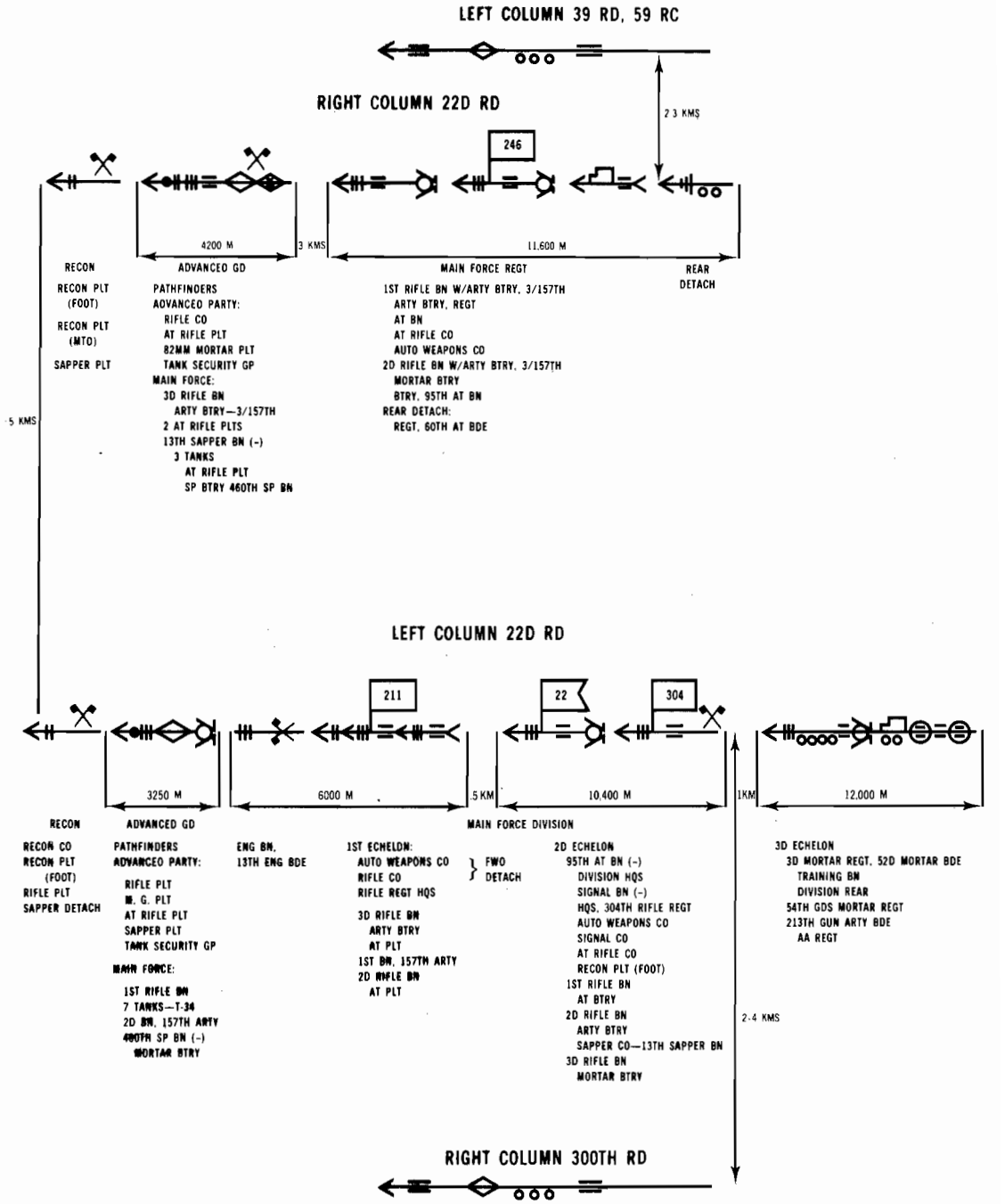


Figure 7. March Column Formation: 22d Rifle Division

Soviets tailored their march columns to conduct successful combat and to sustain the momentum of operations. In this venture they were successful, though on occasion a column would run into difficulty. Careful task organization and balanced mixtures of combat elements for mutual support and all-around defense characterized Soviet march column composition. Columns contained field, antiaircraft, and antitank artillery interspersed throughout their length. Tank units led and were often interspersed throughout the columns so that any portion of the column could operate on its own as a balanced force.

The Soviets also paid considerable attention to mixing engineer support throughout the columns, particularly in the case of units traversing difficult terrain. The 6th Guards Tank Army in its desert and mountain crossing, 25th Army and 1st Red Banner Army in their crossing of mountainous taiga terrain, and 35th Army in its crossing of the marshy area north of Lake Khanka all received considerable engineer support artfully woven into the fabric of the march column. The attention the Soviets paid to forming viable march columns in part explains their ability to achieve rapid movement successfully throughout the campaign.

Close coordination among Soviet naval, air, and ground forces also helped the Soviets achieve tactical success. Creation of a theater of military operations command, under which all services operated, virtually assured close coordination at the highest levels. Air support primarily involved bombing cities and towns, reducing fortifications, providing some tactical air support, and performing basic reconnaissance and logistical services. At the end of the operation, the air forces landed small air assault detachments in the major cities where Japanese headquarters were located.[16]

Naval-ground force cooperation was notable, and in fact critical in a number of sectors. For 15th Army of 2d Far Eastern Front, the Amur Flotilla provided the transportation and fire support the army needed to fulfill its mission. For 2d Red Banner Army and 5th Separate Rifle Corps, naval forces provided river crossing assault means and ferrying capability. Operations against Korean ports and against southern Sakhalin Island and the Kuriles depended for their success on close cooperation with the navy.

If these aspects of Soviet tactical operations in Manchuria resulted in success, they also produced some difficulties. Generally, the difficulties were products of audacious movement and offensive abandon. Soviet attempts to surmount all terrain obstacles and to achieve high speed in all sectors led to some limited operational failures. In some cases, units became overextended and vulnerable to enemy attack. In other cases, the terrain simply turned out to be insurmountable. In the 25th Army sector of operations, the Soviets committed the 10th Mechanized Corps in an area almost totally lacking roads. The congestion of 10th Mechanized Corps units on the two available roads was so bad that the corps ultimately stretched a distance of 200 kilometers west from Wangching to the rear.[17] The long march

column and limited space for deployment meant that only the forward detachments maintained contact with the withdrawing enemy. And when the enemy resisted, only the forward detachments could bring their forces to bear. The same sort of problem occurred on a minor scale in the operations of 15th Army on its march to Chiamussu. Often the length of march columns and the overextension of units prevented full concentration of artillery firepower. Such was the case in 39th Army sector, where heavy artillery units lagged behind advancing rifle and tank units.

In some instances, overextended forward detachments were forced to operate outside the supporting distance of follow-on units. The 76th Tank Brigade advance on the road to Mutanchiang was just such a case. Until additional Soviet units came to its support, the brigade was rebuffed by the Japanese 124th Infantry Division. The 257th Tank Brigade, leading by a considerable distance the march of the 300th Rifle Division of 1st Red Banner Army from Pamientung to Mutanchiang, attempted to secure the rail bridge at Hualin. The Japanese repulsed the unsupported attacks of 257th Tank Brigade repeatedly, and Japanese counterattacks forced the brigade to withdraw to defensive positions north of Hualin until the Soviets reinforced the tank brigade.

Terrain disrupted the Soviet plans on a few occasions. In the southern portion of the 35th Army sector, the 209th and 125th Tank Brigades had the mission of leading the 66th and 363d Rifle Divisions on their march to Mishan. The flooded marshlands proved too great an obstacle for the tanks and for fuel resupply. Even the field expedience of using inverted pontoons as fuel carriers failed. So both brigades were withdrawn and redeployed to other areas on the front.[18]

In at least one instance, a unit crossing barren terrain simply got lost. On 11 August, the 192d Rifle Division of 113th Rifle Corps of 39th Army lost its way while crossing the Grand Khingan Mountains. For two days the unit floundered in the mountains until an army reconnaissance aircraft sent to retrieve it put it back on its correct route. The general absence of good maps led to disorientation of some units. The ensuing reversal of direction and false starts had a negative impact on fuel consumption and strained logistics.[19]

The most serious difficulties the Soviets encountered were in the realm of logistics. The Soviets had foreseen problems and done all in their power to alleviate them. The logistical factor was simply part of the risk the Soviets took. Fuel shortages headed the list of problems. Even before it crossed the Grand Khingan Mountains, the 6th Guards Tank Army was low on fuel. After the crossing, the chronic problem persisted until the day the unit arrived in Mukden. Any resolute—or even token—Japanese resistance could have compounded 6th Guards Tank Army's difficulty regarding fuel and ammunition resupply. Other units, including the 39th Army and 35th Army, experienced similar problems on a lesser scale.

Problems also surfaced regarding the supply of river crossing and ferrying equipment in 2d Red Banner Army, 15th Army, and 5th Separate Rifle Corps. Shortage of such equipment led to lengthy crossing times and piecemeal commitment of forces to battle.

Yet, when all was said and done, the problems resulted from Soviet action—not inaction. And the Japanese did little to capitalize on the problems. Vulnerabilities are only valid if someone takes advantage of them. In this case the Japanese did not. That negligence magnifies the scope of the Soviet victory.

11 Conclusions

The Soviet High Command projected that operations in Manchuria would last about one month and prepared accordingly. Preparations for a short, victorious campaign involved massive redeployments of forces in limited time under conditions of secrecy. Carefully selected commanders manned a unified command structure to control the massive forces operating on such a wide front. Commanders at all levels selected strategic, operational, and tactical objectives and tailored their forces to secure them in the shortest possible time. A vast array of support units of all types prepared to support the combat forces. As planned, operations exploited terrain and dynamically used all elements of combat power, especially armor. Flexibility and audacity characterized the operation. Commanders at all levels displayed initiative to achieve success.

Challenging the Soviets in Manchuria were stringent time requirements, terrain obstacles, and Japanese resistance. The Soviet Army met the first two challenges itself, while Japanese dispositions and plans helped it meet the third. Essentially, the Soviets completed the operation in seven days (by 16 August). Subsequent engagements and movements were pro forma. The Soviets exceeded their timetable by three weeks, suffered light casualties, and overwhelmed the Kwantung Army.[1]

Why the Soviet victory? In essence, ultimate Soviet victory was inevitable. The preponderance of Soviet forces, the crumbling Japanese strategic posture in the western Pacific, the devastating bombing offensive against Japan (including the atomic bomb), and the weakened condition of the Kwantung Army all spelled inevitable defeat for Japan. So the real question then becomes why did the Soviet victory come so quickly? Although it is convenient to use the oversimplifications cited above, they mask other reasons for quick Japanese defeat.

The Soviets expected a difficult campaign when they entered Manchuria, so they prepared accordingly. The result was a bold plan of operations. The Soviets respected the prowess, at least in name, of the Kwantung Army; they had, after all, battled the Japanese forces before and knew the

individual strength and bravery of the Japanese soldier. Even the knowledge that the Kwantung Army of 1945 was not the same as the one of 1941 did not measurably lessen that respect. The Soviets apparently had a fairly good knowledge of Japanese defensive plans and adjusted forces accordingly. Nevertheless, they probably overassessed the strength of Japanese covering units on the border, hence the massiveness of initial Soviet attacks. The Soviets also expected greater Japanese resistance in the redoubt area of southern Manchuria. Soviet planning reflected this overestimation in several decisions: to gain the central Manchurian plain, to inflict piecemeal defeat on Japanese forces, and to divide them before they could consolidate. Thus, the attack occurred on many axes, including the thrusts into Korea. But even Soviet commanders were surprised at the scope and speed of their own successes.

In terms of leadership, equipment, and manpower, the Kwantung Army of 1945 certainly was not the same army as it was in 1941, but it was also not so ineffective as some analysts have claimed. In many instances, the marginal replacements of 1945 performed well on the battlefield, whenever they were permitted to fight. Even in reduced state, Japanese divisions outmanned their Soviet equivalents and fought well. Thus, the Japanese 80th Independent Mixed Brigade and the 119th Infantry Division did a remarkable job at Hailar and on the road through the Grand Khingan Mountains to Pokotu. The 135th Independent Mixed Brigade and the 123d Infantry Division acquitted themselves well at Aihun and Sunwu. Many border garrisons, holed up in fortified regions against overwhelming numbers, performed heroic defenses and earned the respect of their adversaries, who perhaps thought of similar Soviet sacrifices at Brest and Sevastopol. The Soviets viewed with awe the Japanese "death units," which threw their explosive-laden bodies at Soviet tanks.[2] In fact, where Japanese forces stood and fought under competent leadership, they did a credible job and gave the Soviets the opposition they had expected. In reality, it was the higher echelon leadership of the Kwantung Army who engineered the army's overall mediocre performance.

Unquestionably, the cease-fire rumors and the ultimate surrender decision disrupted Japanese operations and forestalled possibly greater Japanese resistance in southern Manchuria. Yet much of the damage had already been done and could not be undone. Setting aside Soviet actions, the Japanese High Command reacted sloppily and indecisively, whether because of overconfidence, complacency, confusion, or pessimism. Japanese overconfidence and complacency regarding the Soviets had persisted for years, if not decades, before the Manchurian campaign. The Khalkhin-Gol defeat at the hands of the Soviets was surprising to Japanese commanders in 1939, but even more surprising was how little they had learned from it. Perhaps the Soviet defeats of 1939 and 1940 in Finland and in 1941 at the hands of the Germans gave rebirth to that Japanese complacency and overconfidence. Yet, five years later, by 1945, little had been done to modernize the Japanese infantry division to make it capable of engaging a modern

Soviet rifle division, much less a tank or mechanized unit. Antitank weapons were lacking, and although the division was heavy in manpower, it was lighter in firepower than the Soviet equivalent. In mechanized and tank forces, the Japanese also compared badly: they had no tank comparable to the Soviet medium T-34. The Kwantung Army was scarcely better equipped to conduct mobile war in 1945 than it had been in 1939. At least in part, this deficiency was a measure of complacency and overconfidence. Japanese plans forgot or ignored another lesson from 1939: the Soviets had a penchant for doing the seemingly impossible, such as using the arid wastes of eastern Mongolia as a launching pad for a major invasion of Manchuria. Whether through complacency or overconfidence, the Japanese demonstrated a traditional tendency to underestimate the Soviets. That underestimation spelled doom for the Kwantung Army. For whatever reasons, Japanese commanders failed their army. Confusion reigned at the top, and area army and army orders conflicted. Thus, many units withdrew from combat, while others were swallowed up by it.

Compounding the Japanese difficulties was the nature of the Soviet offensive. Japanese plans might have succeeded to a greater degree against a lesser foe. Unfortunately, the Japanese High Command faced a highly professional force led by the cream of the Soviet officer corps, blooded and educated in four years of war. Far East Command units were among the best in the Soviet Army, and their equipment had been tested against the best weaponry European arsenals could produce. For the Soviet Army, this was the last campaign in a long war, quite literally one last opportunity to excel. And excel it did. The Manchurian operation qualified as a postgraduate exercise for Soviet forces, the culmination of a rigorous quality education in combat begun in western Russia in June 1941.

Historians must exercise care when projecting lessons from the study of any military campaign, for the value of such a study derives from viewing that campaign against the concrete conditions that affected its conduct. The Manchurian campaign may hold tactical lessons to be learned and applied in similar contemporary situations, basic techniques that transcend the technological changes that have occurred since 1945. If in fact such constants, or tactical techniques derived from battle that apply to any period, do exist, then Manchuria is worthy of study.

The concrete conditions Soviet forces faced in Manchuria presented Soviet planners a unique set of problems associated with how to attack and win quickly in the beginning period of war. The Soviets adopted techniques formulated to solve those precise problems. For example, speedy advance would preempt initial or subsequent Japanese establishment of a solid defense and would secure strategically critical territory before the Japanese could decide to abandon the war effort. Speedy advance, of course, required the Soviets to crush any opposition that might threaten their ability to adhere to that timetable.

Thus, the Soviets structured their forces to squelch the opposition and to generate the requisite speed. They also adopted tactical methods to maintain that momentum. Using cover and deception, they assembled and deployed their forces in secret. These precautions bolstered the effectiveness of other combat techniques. Soviet forces attacked on multiple axes—in fact along every possible axis—with a majority of forces well forward in the first echelon as a means of bringing maximum pressure to bear on an already overextended foe. On each axis, the Soviets massed at the critical point and artfully maneuvered those massed forces over terrain considered impassable, much less suitable for maneuver.

In order to generate initial success and to maintain offensive momentum, the Soviets carefully timed application of their offensive power by attacking with assault units, advanced units, and then main force elements. Consequently, from the very beginning, Japanese forces were off balance, and they remained off balance throughout the short campaign. These creative Soviet methods sowed confusion in the Japanese command structure, and that, in turn, ruled out effective Japanese response.

In order to exploit these initial efforts and to preempt Japanese plans, the Soviets used armor-heavy forward detachments of every size to drive deep into Japanese positions. With limited combat power forward, Soviet main force units could advance almost unhindered. Each detachment worked in a manner similar to an awl, boring a hole into hard wood and preparing the wood for subsequent penetration by a screw. Punctured in numerous sectors, the Japanese defense lost all coherence and never regained it. Soviet main force units and the forward detachments were tailored combined arms entities suited to the terrain over which they operated. They tore into the disrupted defense, fragmented it, left it paralyzed, and raced on to their next objective. Soviet success in the campaign underscored the effectiveness of their strategic, operational, and tactical techniques.

Recent Soviet studies on the beginning period of war and the concrete nature of combat have emphasized certain of these techniques. Deception has never lost its attractiveness and currency, nor has the necessity for creating self-sustaining balanced combined arms entities at all levels. Three other techniques the Soviets used in Manchuria are still relevant on today's battlefield:

- **Echelon forces imaginatively, especially against a defense that may take time to gel.** In Manchuria, single echelon formation at theater, front, and army level operating on multiple axes across a broad front collapsed and fragmented the Japanese defense before that defense could effectively establish itself. Today, applying pressure all along a broad front could rupture a partially formed defense.

• **Commit forces to battle in timed phases.** In Manchuria, steady, relentless hammering destroyed Japanese equilibrium and accelerated Japanese collapse. In a contemporary context, multiple penetrations and the resultant intermingling of forces would also make it difficult for defenders to use tactical nuclear weapons discriminately.

• **Lead with forward detachments at every command level.** In 1945, probing forward detachments perpetuated confusion in the defense and carried the battle to tactical and operational depths, thus preempting effective defense. Besides producing similar offensive successes, forward detachments today could also attack a defense's tactical nuclear weapons delivery systems.

A concrete legacy of the Manchurian campaign, these three techniques offer prospects for success against even a relatively prepared enemy defense. Against an unprepared or partially prepared opponent, the use of these techniques could be devastating. The techniques worked in 1945, when mobility was in its infancy (or adolescence). So they certainly apply today, when mobility extends to virtually every aspect of a force. And they may even prohibit any rational use of tactical nuclear weapons. What is certain is that these techniques are of more than simple historical interest to Soviet tactical writers. They should be of more than historical interest to U.S. tacticians as well.

Appendix 1

Kwantung Army Order of Battle 30 July 1945*

Commander in Chief, General Yamada Otozo

KWANTUNG ARMY HEADQUARTERS

1st Mobile Brigade

1st Independent Balloon Company

1st Armored Train Unit
2d Armored Train Unit

Kwantung Army 1st Noncommissioned Officer Candidate Infantry Unit
Kwantung Army 2d Noncommissioned Officer Candidate Infantry Unit
Kwantung Army 1st Cadre's Infantry Training Unit
Kwantung Army 2d Cadre's Infantry Training Unit
Kwantung Army Noncommissioned Officer Candidate Cavalry Unit
Kwantung Army Noncommissioned Officer Candidate Artillery Unit
Kwantung Army Noncommissioned Officer Candidate Antiaircraft Artillery Unit
Kwantung Army Noncommissioned Officer Candidate Engineer Unit
Kwantung Army Noncommissioned Officer Candidate Transport Unit

FIRST AREA ARMY: General Kita Seiichi

First Area Army Headquarters

122d Division: Lt. Gen. Akashika Tadashi
134th Division: Lt. Gen. Izeki Jin

*By the time of the Soviet Invasion at 0001 on 9 August, no major changes had been made in the order of battle. Effective at 0600 on 10 August, however, the entire Seventeenth Area Army was assigned to the Kwantung Army.

603d Specially Established Guard Battalion (B)
627th Specially Established Guard Company
139th Division: Lt. Gen. Tominaga Kyoji
Kwantung Army 2d Special Garrison Unit
12th Independent Engineer Regiment
17th Signal Regiment
620th Specially Established Guard Company
621st Specially Established Guard Company
622d Specially Established Guard Company
624th Specially Established Guard Company
636th Specially Established Guard Company
613th Specially Established Guard Engineer Unit

3d Army: Lt. Gen. Murakami Keisaku

3d Army Headquarters

132d Independent Mixed Brigade
101st Mixed Regiment
2d Heavy Artillery Regiment (A)
3d Heavy Artillery Regiment (A)
Tungning Heavy Artillery Regiment
2d Independent Heavy Artillery Company (A)
1st Independent Heavy Mortar Company
55th Signal Regiment
Najin Fortress Garrison
Najin Fortress Artillery Unit
460th Specially Established Guard Battalion (A)
623d Specially Established Guard Company
651st Specially Established Guard Company

79th Division: Lt. Gen. Ota Teisho
112th Division: Lt. Gen. Nakamura Jikizo
127th Division: Lt. Gen. Koga Ryutaro
128th Division: Lt. Gen. Mizuhara Yoshishige

5th Army: Lt. Gen. Shimizu Noritsune

5th Army Headquarters

15th Border Garrison Unit
9th Raiding Unit
31st Independent Antitank Battalion
20th Heavy Field Artillery Regiment (A)
5th Independent Heavy Artillery Battalion (D)
8th Independent Heavy Artillery Battalion (D)
1st Independent Heavy Artillery Battalion (E)
13th Mortar Battalion

1st Engineer Unit Headquarters
18th Independent Engineer Regiment (road bridge construction)
3d Field Fortification Unit
46th Signal Regiment
628th Specially Established Guard Company
629th Specially Established Guard Company
630th Specially Established Guard Company
641st Specially Established Guard Company

124th Division: Lt. Gen. Shiina Masatake
126th Division: Lt. Gen. Nomizo Kazuhiko
135th Division: Lt. Gen. Hitomi Yoichi

THIRD AREA ARMY: General Ushiroku Jun

Third Area Army Headquarters

108th Division: Lt. Gen. Iwai Torajiro
171st Cavalry Regiment
610th Specially Established Guard Battalion (B)
606th Specially Established Guard Company
615th Specially Established Guard Company
616th Specially Established Guard Company
617th Specially Established Guard Company
618th Specially Established Guard Company
649th Specially Established Guard Company
650th Specially Established Guard Company
611th Specially Established Guard Engineer Unit
612th Specially Established Guard Engineer Unit

136th Division: Lt. Gen. Makamura Toru

Fushun Guard Unit

602d Specially Established Guard Company
603d Specially Established Guard Engineer Unit

Penchihu Guard Unit

603d Specially Established Guard Company
604th Specially Established Guard Engineer Unit

Anshan Guard Unit

601st Specially Established Guard Company
605th Specially Established Guard Company

79th Independent Mixed Brigade
130th Independent Mixed Brigade
134th Independent Mixed Brigade
1st Independent Tank Brigade
Kwantung Army 1st Special Garrison Unit
11th Raiding Unit
Kwantung Territory Garrison Unit

61st Independent Heavy Fortress Artillery Battery
171st Antiaircraft Artillery Regiment
651st Specially Established Guard Battalion (A)
607th Specially Established Guard Engineer Unit
611th Specially Established Guard Battalion (B)
612th Specially Established Guard Battalion (B)
613th Specially Established Guard Battalion (B)
614th Specially Established Guard Battalion (B)
615th Specially Established Guard Battalion (B)
616th Specially Established Guard Battalion (B)
608th Specially Established Guard Company
609th Specially Established Guard Company
610th Specially Established Guard Company

22d Field Antiaircraft Artillery Unit

26th Antiaircraft Artillery Regiment
85th Field Antiaircraft Artillery Battalion
88th Field Antiaircraft Artillery Battalion
90th Field Antiaircraft Artillery Battalion
91st Field Antiaircraft Artillery Battalion
92d Field Antiaircraft Artillery Battalion
100th Field Antiaircraft Artillery Battalion
65th Independent Field Antiaircraft Artillery Battery
1st Field Searchlight Battalion
6th Field Searchlight Battalion
7th Field Searchlight Battalion
14th Independent Field Searchlight Company
68th Field Machine Cannon Company
69th Field Machine Cannon Company
70th Field Machine Cannon Company
71st Field Machine Cannon Company
72d Field Machine Cannon Company
73d Field Machine Cannon Company
74th Field Machine Cannon Company
75th Field Machine Cannon Company
76th Field Machine Cannon Company
77th Field Machine Cannon Company
85th Field Machine Cannon Company
54th Signal Regiment

656th Specially Established Guard Battalion (A)
653d Specially Established Guard Battalion (A)
602d Specially Established Guard Engineer Unit
606th Specially Established Guard Engineer Unit
607th Specially Established Guard Battalion (B)
608th Specially Established Guard Battalion (B)
611th Specially Established Guard Company
612th Specially Established Guard Company
613th Specially Established Guard Company
609th Specially Established Guard Engineer Unit
610th Specially Established Guard Engineer Unit

30th Army: Lt. Gen. Iida Shojiro

30th Army Headquarters

21st Independent Heavy Field Artillery Battalion (A)
27th Independent Heavy Mortar Battalion
1st Heavy Artillery Regiment (A)
19th Heavy Artillery Regiment (A)
7th Independent Heavy Artillery Battalion (D)
2d Engineer Unit Headquarters
40th Independent Engineer Regiment
601st Specially Established Guard Battalion (B)
604th Specially Established Guard Battalion (B)
609th Specially Established Guard Battalion (B)
614th Specially Established Guard Company
638th Specially Established Guard Company
639th Specially Established Guard Company
640th Specially Established Guard Company
642d Specially Established Guard Company
601st Specially Established Guard Engineer Unit

39th Division: Lt. Gen. Sasa Shinnosuke
125th Division: Lt. Gen. Imari Tatsuo
138th Division: Lt. Gen. Yamamoto Tsutomu
148th Division: Lt. Gen. Suemitsu Motohiro

44th Army: Lt. Gen. Hongo Yoshio

44th Army Headquarters

9th Independent Tank Brigade
2d Raiding Unit
29th Independent Antitank Battalion
17th Heavy Field Artillery Regiment (A)
30th Heavy Field Artillery Regiment (B)
6th Independent Heavy Artillery Battery

31st Signal Regiment
605th Specially Established Guard Company
607th Specially Established Guard Company
112th Independent Motor Transport Battalion
73d Independent Transport Company
40th Construction Duty Company
619th Specially Established Guard Company
643d Specially Established Guard Company
644th Specially Established Guard Company
648th Specially Established Guard Company

63d Division: Lt. Gen. Kishikawa Kenichi
107th Division: Lt. Gen. Abe Koichi
117th Division: Lt. Gen. Suzuki Hiraku

4th Army: Lt. Gen. Uemura Mikio

4th Army Headquarters

131st Independent Mixed Brigade
135th Independent Mixed Brigade
136th Independent Mixed Brigade

57th Reconnaissance Regiment

Kwantung Army 3d Special Garrison Unit
12th Raiding Unit
30th Antitank Battalion
10th Independent Field Artillery Battalion
17th Mortar Battalion
29th Independent Engineer Regiment (road bridge construction)
42d Signal Regiment
102d Guard Unit Headquarters
654th Specially Established Guard Battalion (A)
625th Specially Established Guard Company
626th Specially Established Guard Company
631st Specially Established Guard Company
632d Specially Established Guard Company
633d Specially Established Guard Company
634th Specially Established Guard Company
635th Specially Established Guard Company
637th Specially Established Guard Company
645th Specially Established Guard Company
646th Specially Established Guard Company
647th Specially Established Guard Company
608th Specially Established Guard Engineer Unit
614th Specially Established Guard Engineer Unit

119th Division: Lt. Gen. Shiozawa Kiyonobu

80th Independent Mixed Brigade
606th Specially Established Guard Battalion (B)

123d Division: Lt. Gen. Kitazawa Teijiro
149th Division: Lt. Gen. Sasaki Toichi

34th Army: Lt. Gen. Kushibuchi Senichi

34th Army Headquarters

133d Independent Mixed Brigade
11th Independent Field Artillery Battalion
Mutanchiang Heavy Artillery Regiment
15th Mortar Battalion
Yunghsing Bay Fortress Garrison

Yunghsing Bay Fortress Artillery Unit
462d Specially Established Guard Battalion (A)

56th Signal Regiment

59th Division: Lt. Gen. Fujita Shigeru
137th Division: Lt. Gen. Akiyama Yoshisuke

Source: U.S. Army Forces Far East, Military History Section, Japanese Monograph no. 155: *Record of Operations Against Soviet Russia — On Northern and Western Fronts of Manchuria and in Northern Korea (August 1945),* Tokyo, 1954.

Kwantung Army Units Deployed Against Trans-Baikal Front

Division/Brigade	Date Organized	Strength Relative to 12th Infantry Division, 1937
119th Division	11 Oct 44	70%
80th Independent Mixed Brigade	Jan 45	15%
107th Division	16 May 44	60%
108th Division[a]	12 Sep 44	65%
117th Division[b]	Jul 44	15%
63d Division[b]	30 Jun 43	15%
133d Independent Mixed Brigade	Jul 45	15%
148th Division[c]	10 Jul 45	15%
9th Armored Brigade		
125th Division	16 Jan 45	20%
138th Division[d]	10 Jul 45	15%
39th Division[e]	30 Jun 39	80%
1st Armored Brigade		
130th Independent Mixed Brigade	Jul 45	15%
136th Division	10 Jul 45	15%
79th Independent Mixed Brigade	Jan 45	15%

[a]108th Division was part of China Expeditionary Army.

[b]117th and 63d Divisions were garrison divisions with two brigades of four battalions each. Both divisions had no more than eighteen mountain artillery pieces as opposed to a TO&E figure of twenty-four guns.

[c]148th Division had almost no small arms for its regiments.

[d]138th Division was in the midst of mobilization and did not exceed 2,000 effectives.

[e]39th Division came from central China, but lacked artillery weapons.

Kwantung Army Units Deployed Against 2d Far Eastern Front

Division/Brigade	Date Organized	Strength Relative to 12th Infantry Division, 1937
135th Independent Mixed Brigade	Jul 45	15%
123d Division[a]	16 Jan 45	35%
136th Independent Mixed Brigade	Jul 45	15%
134th Independent Mixed Brigade	Jul 45	15%
134th Division	10 Jul 45	15%
149th Division[b]	10 Jul 45	15%

[a]123d Division artillery lacked mobility.
[b]149th Division had no artillery.

Kwantung Army Units Deployed Against 1st Far Eastern Front

Division/Brigade	Date Organized	Strength Relative to 12th Infantry Division, 1937
15th Border Guards Unit (Regt)[a]	20 Jul 45	
135th Division	10 Jul 45	15%
126th Division	16 Jan 45	20%
124th Division	16 Jan 45	35%
132d Independent Mixed Brigade	Jul 45	15%
128th Division[b]	16 Jan 45	20%
112th Division	10 Jul 44	35%
1st Mobile Brigade		
79th Division	6 Feb 45	15%
127th Division	20 Mar 45	20%
122d Division	16 Jan 45	35%
139th Division	10 Jul 45	15%
134th Independent Mixed Brigade	Jul 45	15%
59th Division	2 Feb 42	
137th Division	10 Jul 45	15%

[a]15th BGU was authorized twelve infantry companies and three artillery batteries, but its actual strength was four infantry companies and one battery.
[b]Of 128th Division's authorized 23,000 men, only 14,000 were available, and they lacked training.

Appendix 2

Soviet Far East Command Order of Battle August 1945

Commander in Chief, Marshal A. M. Vasilevsky

Chief of Staff, Col. Gen. S. P. Ivanov

Member of Military Soviet, Lt. Gen. I. V. Shikin

TRANS-BAIKAL FRONT: Commander in Chief, Marshal R. Malinovsky
Chief of Staff, General M. V. Zakharov
Member of Military Soviet, Lt. Gen. A. N. Tevchenkov

17th Army: Lt. Gen. A. I. Danilov

209th Rifle Division
278th Rifle Division
284th Rifle Division
70th Separate Tank Battalion
82d Separate Tank Battalion
56th Tank Destroyer Artillery Brigade
185th Gun Artillery Regiment
413th Howitzer Artillery Regiment
1910th Tank Destroyer Regiment
178th Mortar Regiment
39th Guards Mortar Regiment
1916th Antiaircraft Artillery Regiment
66th Separate Antiaircraft Artillery Battalion
282d Separate Antiaircraft Artillery Battalion
67th Mortar Brigade

36th Army: Lt. Gen. A. A. Luchinsky

2d Rifle Corps: Lt. Gen. A. I. Lopatin
- 103d Rifle Division
- 275th Rifle Division
- 292d Rifle Division

86th Rifle Corps: Maj. Gen. G. V. Revunenkov
- 94th Rifle Division
- 210th Rifle Division

Operational Group
- 293d Rifle Division
- 298th Rifle Division
- 31st Fortified Region
- 32d Fortified Region

205th Tank Brigade
33d Separate Tank Battalion
35th Separate Tank Battalion
68th Separate Armored Train
69th Separate Armored Train
259th Howitzer Artillery Regiment
267th Gun Artillery Regiment
1233d Gun Artillery Regiment
1146th High Power Howitzer Artillery Regiment
1912th Tank Destroyer Artillery Regiment
32d Guards Mortar Regiment
176th Mortar Regiment
177th Mortar Regiment
190th Mortar Regiment
7th Antiaircraft Artillery Division
- 465th Antiaircraft Artillery Regiment
- 474th Antiaircraft Artillery Regiment
- 602d Antiaircraft Artillery Regiment
- 632d Antiaircraft Artillery Regiment

120th Separate Antiaircraft Artillery Battalion
405th Separate Antiaircraft Artillery Battalion
68th Engineer Sapper Brigade

39th Army: Col. Gen. I. I. Lyudnikov

5th Guards Rifle Corps: Lt. Gen. I. S. Bezugly
- 17th Guards Rifle Division
- 19th Guards Rifle Division
- 91st Guards Rifle Division

94th Rifle Corps: Maj. Gen. I. I. Popov
- 124th Rifle Division
- 221st Rifle Division
- 358th Rifle Division

113th Rifle Corps: Lt. Gen. N. N. Oleshev
- 192d Rifle Division
- 262d Rifle Division
- 338th Rifle Division

61st Tank Division
44th Tank Brigade
206th Tank Brigade
735th SP Artillery Regiment
927th SP Artillery Regiment
1197th SP Artillery Regiment
5th Artillery Breakthrough Corps: Maj. Gen. L. N. Alekseev
- 3d Guards Artillery Breakthrough Division
  - 8th Guards Howitzer Artillery Brigade
  - 22d Guards Gun Artillery Brigade
  - 99th Heavy Howitzer Artillery Brigade
  - 43d Mortar Brigade
  - 50th Heavy Mortar Brigade
  - 14th Guards Mortar Brigade

6th Guards Artillery Breakthrough Division
- 29th Guards Gun Artillery Brigade
- 69th Light Artillery Brigade
- 87th Heavy Howitzer Brigade
- 134th Howitzer Artillery Brigade
- 4th Mortar Brigade
- 10th Guards Mortar Brigade

139th Gun Artillery Brigade
55th Tank Destroyer Artillery Brigade
390th Gun Artillery Regiment
1142d Gun Artillery Regiment
1143d Gun Artillery Regiment
629th Artillery Regiment
610th Tank Destroyer Regiment
555th Mortar Regiment
24th Guards Mortar Brigade
34th Guards Mortar Regiment
46th Guards Mortar Regiment
64th Guards Mortar Regiment
14th Antiaircraft Artillery Division
- 715th Antiaircraft Artillery Regiment
- 718th Antiaircraft Artillery Regiment
- 721st Antiaircraft Artillery Regiment
- 2013th Antiaircraft Artillery Regiment

621st Antiaircraft Artillery Regiment
63d Separate Antiaircraft Artillery Battalion
32d Engineer Sapper Brigade

53d Army: Col. Gen. I. M. Managarov

18th Guards Rifle Corps: Lt. Gen. I. M. Afonin
- 1st Guards Airborne Division
- 109th Guards Rifle Division
- 110th Guards Rifle Division

49th Rifle Corps: Lt. Gen. G. N. Terent'ev
- 6th Rifle Division
- 243d Rifle Division

57th Rifle Corps: Lt. Gen. G. B. Safiulin
- 52d Rifle Division
- 203d Rifle Division

152d Gun Artillery Brigade
1316th Tank Destroyer Artillery Brigade
461st Mortar Regiment
52d Guards Mortar Regiment
53d Guards Mortar Regiment
239th Separate Antiaircraft Artillery Battalion
376th Separate Antiaircraft Artillery Battalion
17th Antiaircraft Artillery Division
- 1267th Antiaircraft Artillery Regiment
- 1276th Antiaircraft Artillery Regiment
- 1279th Antiaircraft Artillery Regiment
- 2014th Antiaircraft Artillery Regiment

54th Engineer Sapper Brigade

6th Guards Tank Army: Col. Gen. A. G. Kravchenko

5th Guards Tank Corps: Lt. Gen. M. I. Savel'ev
- 20th Guards Tank Brigade
- 21st Guards Tank Brigade
- 22d Guards Tank Brigade
- 6th Guards Motorized Rifle Brigade
- 390th SP Artillery Regiment
- 15th Guards Motorcycle Battalion
- 301st Light Artillery Regiment
- 454th Guards Mortar Regiment
- 127th Guards Mortar Battalion
- 392d Guards Antiaircraft Artillery Regiment

9th Guards Mechanized Corps: Lt. Gen. M. V. Volkov
- 18th Guards Mechanized Brigade
- 30th Guards Mechanized Brigade
- 31st Guards Mechanized Brigade
- 46th Guards Tank Brigade
- 389th Guards SP Artillery Regiment
- 14th Guards Motorcycle Battalion

458th Guards Mortar Regiment
35th Guards Mortar Battalion
388th Guards Antiaircraft Artillery Regiment
7th Guards Mechanized Corps: Lt. Gen. F. G. Katkov
16th Mechanized Brigade
63d Mechanized Brigade
64th Mechanized Brigade
41st Guards Tank Brigade
1289th SP Artillery Regiment
94th Motorcycle Battalion
614th Mortar Regiment
40th Guards Mortar Battalion
1713th Antiaircraft Artillery Regiment
36th Motorized Rifle Division
57th Motorized Rifle Division
208th SP Artillery Brigade
231st SP Artillery Brigade
4th Guards Motorcycle Regiment
1st Separate Tank Battalion
2d Separate Tank Battalion
3d Separate Tank Battalion
4th Separate Tank Battalion
275th Separate Special Purpose Battalion
202d Light Artillery Brigade
870th Gun Artillery Regiment
1324th Light Artillery Regiment
1426th Light Artillery Regiment
624th Howitzer Artillery Regiment
1141st Gun Artillery Regiment
57th Guards Mortar Regiment
30th Antiaircraft Artillery Division
1361st Antiaircraft Artillery Regiment
1367th Antiaircraft Artillery Regiment
1373d Antiaircraft Artillery Regiment
1375th Antiaircraft Artillery Regiment
8th Motorized Engineer Brigade
22d Motorized Engineer Brigade

Cavalry-Mechanized Group: Col. Gen. I. A. Pliyev

85th Rifle Corps Headquarters
59th Cavalry Division
25th Mechanized Brigade
27th Motorized Rifle Brigade
43d Tank Brigade
30th Motorcycle Regiment
5th Mongolian Cavalry Division

6th Mongolian Cavalry Division
7th Mongolian Cavalry Division
8th Mongolian Cavalry Division
7th Motorized Armored Brigade (Mongolian)
3d Separate Tank Regiment (Mongolian)
35th Tank Destroyer Artillery Brigade
1914th Antiaircraft Artillery Regiment
1917th Antiaircraft Artillery Regiment
60th Guards Mortar Regiment
3d Artillery Regiment (Mongolian)

Front Units:

227th Rifle Division
317th Rifle Division
1st Parachute Battalion
2d Parachute Battalion
111th Tank Division
201st Tank Brigade
67th Separate Armored Train
70th Separate Armored Train
79th Separate Armored Train

Added to the front on 16 August:

3d Guards Mechanized Corps: Lt. Gen. V. T. Obukhov
- 7th Guards Mechanized Brigade
- 8th Guards Mechanized Brigade
- 9th Guards Mechanized Brigade
- 35th Guards Tank Brigade
- 1st Guards Motorcycle Battalion
- 129th Mortar Regiment
- 1705th Antiaircraft Artillery Regiment
- 743d Separate Tank Destroyer Artillery Battalion
- 334th Separate Guards Mortar Battalion

12th Air Army: Marshal S. A. Khudiakov

6th Bomber Aviation Corps: Maj. Gen. I. P. Skok
- 326th Bomber Aviation Division
- 334th Bomber Aviation Division

7th Bomber Aviation Corps: Lt. Gen. V. A. Ushakov
- 113th Bomber Aviation Division
- 179th Bomber Aviation Division

30th Bomber Aviation Division
247th Bomber Aviation Division
248th Assault Aviation Division
316th Assault Aviation Division

190th Fighter Aviation Division
245th Fighter Aviation Division
246th Fighter Aviation Division
21st Guards Transport Aviation Division
54th Transport Aviation Division
12th Reconnaissance Aviation Regiment
368th Fighter Aviation Regiment
541st Bomber Aviation Regiment
257th Transport Aviation Regiment
23d Separate Heavy Bomber Aviation Squadron

2d FAR EASTERN FRONT: Commander in Chief, General M. A. Purkayev
Chief of Staff, Lt. Gen. F. I. Shevchenko
Member of Military Soviet, Lt. Gen. D. S. Leonov

2d Red Banner Army: Lt. Gen. M. F. Terëkhin

3d Rifle Division
12th Rifle Division
396th Rifle Division
368th Separate Mountain Rifle Regiment
101st Fortified Region
73d Tank Brigade
74th Tank Brigade
258th Tank Brigade
1st Separate Armored Train
2d Separate Armored Train
3d Separate Armored Train
40th Separate Armored Train
66th Separate Armored Train
77th Separate Armored Train
5th Separate Armored Trolley Battalion
42d Gun Artillery Regiment
388th Gun Artillery Regiment
1140th Gun Artillery Regiment
147th Howitzer Artillery Regiment
1129th Howitzer Artillery Regiment
1628th Tank Destroyer Artillery Regiment
181st Mortar Regiment
465th Mortar Regiment
310th Guards Mortar Regiment
1589th Antiaircraft Artillery Regiment
9th Separate Antiaircraft Artillery Battalion
42d Separate Antiaircraft Artillery Battalion
10th Separate Pontoon Bridge Battalion
277th Separate Engineer Battalion

15th Army: Lt. Gen. S. K. Mamonov

- 34th Rifle Division
- 255th Rifle Division (initially in front reserve)
- 361st Rifle Division
- 388th Rifle Division
- 4th Fortified Region
- 102d Fortified Region
- 165th Tank Brigade
- 171st Tank Brigade
- 203d Tank Brigade
- 21st Tank Destroyer Brigade
- 52d Gun Artillery Regiment
- 145th Gun Artillery Regiment
- 1120th Gun Artillery Regiment
- 1121st Gun Artillery Regiment
- 1637th Gun Artillery Regiment
- 424th Howitzer Artillery Regiment
- 1632d Tank Destroyer Artillery Regiment
- 1633d Tank Destroyer Artillery Regiment
- 183d Mortar Regiment
- 470th Mortar Regiment
- 85th Guards Mortar Regiment
- 99th Guards Mortar Regiment
- 73d Antiaircraft Artillery Division
  - 205th Antiaircraft Artillery Regiment
  - 402d Antiaircraft Artillery Regiment
  - 430th Antiaircraft Artillery Regiment
  - 442d Antiaircraft Artillery Regiment
- 1648th Antiaircraft Artillery Regiment
- 29th Separate Antiaircraft Artillery Battalion
- 46th Separate Antiaircraft Artillery Battalion
- 302d Separate Antiaircraft Artillery Battalion
- 505th Separate Antiaircraft Artillery Battalion
- 10th Pontoon Bridge Brigade
- 21st Motorized Assault Engineer Sapper Brigade
- 101st Separate Engineer Battalion
- 129th Separate Engineer Battalion

16th Army: Maj. Gen. L. G. Cheremisov

- 56th Rifle Corps: Maj. Gen. A. A. D'iakonov
  - 79th Rifle Division
  - 2d Rifle Brigade
  - Separate Sakhalin Rifle Regiment
  - 6th Separate Rifle Battalion
- 103d Fortified Region
- 104th Fortified Region

5th Rifle Brigade
113th Rifle Brigade
432d Separate Rifle Regiment
540th Separate Rifle Regiment
206th Separate Rifle Battalion
214th Tank Brigade
178th Separate Tank Battalion
678th Separate Tank Battalion
433d Gun Artillery Battalion
82d Separate Artillery Battalion
428th Separate Artillery Battalion
221st Separate Antiaircraft Battalion

Front Units:

5th Rifle Corps: Maj. Gen. I. Z. Pashkov
- 35th Rifle Division
- 390th Rifle Division
- 172d Tank Brigade

88th Rifle Brigade
Kamchatka Defense Region: Maj. Gen. A. P. Gnechko
- 101st Rifle Division
- 198th Separate Rifle Regiment
- 5th Separate Rifle Battalion
- 7th Separate Rifle Battalion

26th Separate Armored Train
76th Separate Armored Train
14th Tank Destroyer Artillery Brigade
76th Gun Artillery Regiment
177th Howitzer Artillery Regiment
428th Howitzer Artillery Regiment
1604th Antiaircraft Artillery Regiment
1649th Antiaircraft Artillery Regiment
1685th Antiaircraft Artillery Regiment
183d Separate Antiaircraft Artillery Battalion
622d Separate Antiaircraft Artillery Battalion
726th Separate Antiaircraft Artillery Battalion
47th Motorized Engineer Brigade

10th Air Army: Col. Gen. P. F. Zhigarev

18th Mixed Aviation Corps: Lt. Gen. V. F. Niukhtilin
- 96th Assault Aviation Division
- 296th Fighter Aviation Division

83d Bomber Aviation Division
128th Mixed Aviation Division
255th Mixed Aviation Division
253d Assault Aviation Division

29th Fighter Aviation Division
254th Fighter Aviation Division
7th Reconnaissance Aviation Regiment
411th Reconnaissance Correction Aviation Regiment
344th Transport Aviation Regiment

1st FAR EASTERN FRONT: Commander in Chief, Marshal K. A. Meretskov
Chief of Staff, Lt. Gen. A. N. Krutikov
Member of Military Soviet, Col. Gen. T. F. Shtykov

1st Red Banner Army: Col. Gen. A. P. Beloborodov

26th Rifle Corps: Maj. Gen. A. V. Skvortsov
- 22d Rifle Division
- 59th Rifle Division
- 300th Rifle Division

59th Rifle Corps: Lt. Gen. A. S. Ksenofontov; Lt. Gen. G. I. Khetagurov, after 12 August 1945
- 39th Rifle Division
- 231st Rifle Division
- 365th Rifle Division

6th Fortified Region
112th Fortified Region
75th Tank Brigade
77th Tank Brigade
257th Tank Brigade
48th Separate Tank Regiment
335th Guards SP Artillery Regiment
338th Guards SP Artillery Regment
339th Guards SP Artillery Regiment
213th Gun Artillery Brigade
216th Corps Artillery Brigade
217th Corps Artillery Brigade
60th Tank Destroyer Artillery Brigade
52d Mortar Brigade
33d Guards Mortar Regiment
54th Guards Mortar Regiment
33d Antiaircraft Artillery Division
- 1378th Antiaircraft Artillery Regiment
- 1710th Antiaircraft Artillery Regiment
- 1715th Antiaircraft Artillery Regiment
- 1718th Antiaircraft Artillery Regiment

115th Separate Antiaircraft Artillery Battalion
455th Separate Antiaircraft Artillery Battalion
721st Separate Antiaircraft Artillery Battalion
12th Engineer Sapper Brigade
27th Engineer Sapper Brigade

5th Army: Col. Gen. N. I. Krylov

17th Rifle Corps: Lt. Gen. N. A. Nikitin
- 187th Rifle Division
- 366th Rifle Division

45th Rifle Corps: Maj. Gen. N. I. Ivanov
- 157th Rifle Division
- 159th Rifle Division
- 184th Rifle Division

65th Rifle Corps: Maj. Gen. G. H. Perekrestov
- 97th Rifle Division
- 144th Rifle Division
- 190th Rifle Division
- 371st Rifle Division

72d Rifle Corps: Maj. Gen. A. I. Kazartsev
- 63d Rifle Division
- 215th Rifle Division
- 277th Rifle Division

105th Fortified Region
72d Tank Brigade
76th Tank Brigade
208th Tank Brigade
210th Tank Brigade
218th Tank Brigade
333d Guards SP Artillery Regiment
378th Guards SP Artillery Regiment
395th Guards SP Artillery Regiment
478th Guards SP Artillery Regiment
479th Guards SP Artillery Regiment
480th Guards SP Artillery Regiment
78th Separate Armored Train
15th Guards Gun Artillery Brigade
225th Gun Artillery Brigade
226th Gun Artillery Brigade
227th Gun Artillery Brigade
236th Gun Artillery Brigade
107th High Power Howitzer Artillery Brigade
119th High Power Howitzer Artillery Brigade
223d High Power Howitzer Artillery Brigade
218th Corps Artillery Brigade
219th Corps Artillery Brigade
220th Corps Artillery Brigade

222d Corps Artillery Brigade
237th Howitzer Artillery Brigade
238th Howitzer Artillery Brigade
61st Tank Destroyer Artillery Brigade
20th Special Power Gun Artillery Regiment
32d Special Power Separate Artillery Battalion
34th Special Power Separate Artillery Battalion
696th Tank Destroyer Artillery Regiment
53d Mortar Brigade
55th Mortar Brigade
56th Mortar Brigade
57th Mortar Brigade
283d Guards Mortar Regiment (nonrocket)
17th Guards Mortar Brigade
20th Guards Mortar Brigade
26th Guards Mortar Brigade
2d Guards Mortar Regiment
26th Guards Mortar Regiment
42d Guards Mortar Regiment
72d Guards Mortar Regiment
74th Guards Mortar Regiment
307th Guards Mortar Regiment
48th Antiaircraft Artillery Division
    231st Guards Antiaircraft Artillery Regiment
    1277th Antiaircraft Artillery Regiment
    1278th Antiaircraft Artillery Regiment
    2011th Antiaircraft Artillery Regiment
726th Antiaircraft Artillery Regiment
129th Separate Antiaircraft Artillery Battalion
300th Separate Antiaircraft Artillery Battalion
461st Separate Antiaircraft Artillery Battalion
20th Motorized Assault Engineer Sapper Brigade
23d Engineer Sapper Brigade
63d Engineer Sapper Brigade
46th Motorized Engineer Brigade
55th Separate Pontoon Bridge Battalion

25th Army: Col. Gen. I. M. Chistyakov

39th Rifle Corps: Maj. Gen. A. M. Morozov
    40th Rifle Division
    384th Rifle Division
    386th Rifle Division
393d Rifle Division
7th Fortified Region
106th Fortified Region
107th Fortified Region

108th Fortified Region
110th Fortified Region
111th Fortified Region
113th Fortified Region
259th Tank Brigade
28th Separate Armored Train
214th Gun Artillery Brigade
221st Corps Artillery Brigade
100th Special Power Artillery Battalion
1631st Tank Destroyer Artillery Regiment
1590th Antiaircraft Artillery Regiment
22d Separate Antiaircraft Artillery Battalion
24th Separate Antiaircraft Artillery Battalion
100th Separate Engineer Battalion
222d Separate Engineer Battalion
143d Separate Sapper Battalion

35th Army: Lt. Gen. N. D. Zakhvatayev

66th Rifle Division
264th Rifle Division
363d Rifle Division
8th Fortified Region
109th Fortified Region
125th Tank Brigade
209th Tank Brigade
9th Separate Armored Train
13th Separate Armored Train
215th Gun Artillery Brigade
224th High Power Howitzer Artillery Brigade
62d Tank Destroyer Artillery Brigade
54th Mortar Brigade
67th Guards Mortar Regiment
1647th Antiaircraft Artillery Regiment
43d Separate Antiaircraft Artillery Battalion
110th Separate Antiaircraft Artillery Battalion
355th Separate Antiaircraft Artillery Battalion
280th Separate Engineer Battalion

Chuguevsk Operational Group: Maj. Gen. V. A. Zaitsev

335th Rifle Division
355th Rifle Division
150th Fortified Region
162d Fortified Region

Front Units:

87th Rifle Corps: Lt. Gen. G. I. Khetagurov; Lt. Gen. A. S. Ksenofontov, after 12 August 1945
- 342d Rifle Division
- 345th Rifle Division

88th Rifle Corps: Lt. Gen. P. E. Loviagin
- 105th Rifle Division
- 258th Rifle Division
- 84th Cavalry Division

10th Mechanized Corps: Lt. Gen. I. D. Vasil'ev
- 42d Mechanized Brigade
- 72d Mechanized Brigade
- 204th Tank Brigade
- 1207th SP Artillery Regiment
- 1253d SP Artillery Regiment
- 1419th SP Artillery Regiment
- 55th Motorcycle Battalion
- 621st Mortar Regiment
- 2d Guards Mortar Battalion
- 970th Antiaircraft Artillery Regiment
- 2d Guards Motorcycle Regiment
- 1634th Tank Destroyer Artillery Regiment
- 1588th Antiaircraft Artillery Regiment
- 28th Separate Antiaircraft Artillery Battalion
- 613th Separate Antiaircraft Artillery Battalion
- 758th Separate Antiaircraft Artillery Battalion
- 11th Pontoon Bridge Brigade
- 5th Separate Pontoon Bridge Battalion
- 30th Separate Pontoon Bridge Battalion

9th Air Army: Col. Gen. I. M. Sokolov
- 19th Bomber Aviation Corps: Lt. Gen. N. A. Volkov
  - 33d Bomber Aviation Division
  - 55th Bomber Aviation Division
- 34th Bomber Aviation Division
- 251st Assault Aviation Division
- 252d Assault Aviation Division
- 32d Fighter Aviation Division
- 249th Fighter Aviation Division
- 250th Fighter Aviation Division
- 6th Reconnaissance Aviation Regiment
- 799th Reconnaissance Aviation Regiment
- 464th Reconnaissance Correction Aviation Regiment
- 81st Medical Aviation Regiment
- 281st Transport Aviation Regiment

AMUR FLOTILLA: Commander, Rear Adm. N. V. Antonov
Chief of Staff, Capt. 1st Rank A. M. Gushchin
Member of Soviet, Rear Adm. M. G. Iakovenko

1st Brigade (River Ships)
2d Brigade (River Ships)
3d Brigade (River Ships)
4th Zee-Bureisk Brigade (River Ships)
Sretensk Separate Battalion (River Ships)
1st Separate Battalion of Gunboats
2d Separate Battalion of Gunboats
3d Separate Battalion of Gunboats
1st Separate Battalion of Armored Cutters
2d Separate Battalion of Armored Cutters
3d Separate Battalion of Armored Cutters
Ussuri Separate Detachment of Armored Cutters
Khanka Separate Detachment of Armored Cutters
5th Separate Special Reconnaissance Naval Detachment
71st Separate Special Reconnaissance Naval Detachment
45th Separate Fighter Aviation Regiment
67th Separate Antiaircraft Artillery Battalion
94th Separate Antiaircraft Artillery Battalion
115th Separate Antiaircraft Artillery Battalion

Source: M. V. Zakharov, ed., *Final: istoriko-memuarny ocherk o razgrome imperialisticheskoi iapony v 1945 godu* [Finale: A historical memoir survey about the rout of imperialistic Japan in 1945] (Moskva: Izdatel'stvo "Nauka," 1969), 382—404.

Appendix 3

Operational Statistics

Soviet Far East Command Frontages: Widths, Depths, & Tempos

Army	*Width of Attack Frontage (km)*	*Depth of Advance (km)*	*Tempo of Advance (km/day)*
Trans-Baikal Front: 2300-km front, 1500-km active sector			
6th Guards Tank Army	100	820	82
39th Army	120	380	38
17th Army	90	450	45
36th Army	20	450	45
Cav-Mech Group	250	420—550	42—55
1st Far Eastern Front: 700-km front			
1st Red Banner Army	135	300	30
5th Army	65	300	30
35th Army	215	250	25
25th Army	285	200	20
2d Far Eastern Front: 1610-km front, 500-km active sector*			
15th Army	330	300	30
2d Red Banner Army	150	200	20

*Other sources cite frontage of 2300 km.

Source: "Kampaniia sovetskikh vooruzhennikh sil na dal'nem vostoke v 1945g (facti i tsifry)" [The campaign of the Soviet armed forces in the Far East in 1945: Facts and figures], *Voenno-istoricheskii zhurnal* [Military history journal], August 1965, table 6.

Front Logistical Stocks, 9 August 1945

	Trans-Baikal	*1st Far Eastern*	*2d Far Eastern*	*Far East Command*
Ammunition (sets, basic loads)				
Rifle	4.0	4.6	4.0	4.2
AA Arty, 45mm, 76mm	6.5	7.9	6.5	7.2
122mm, 152mm	17.0	7.9	18.0	14.3
Mortar	11.0	8.4	10.0	9.8
Aviation	60	76	60	65
Fuel (refills)				
High quality benzine	4.7	1.9	2.0	
Benzine KB 70	6.9	2.0	0.7	
Autobenzine	4.3	1.7	2.0	
Diesel oil	4.0	1.5	2.6	
Weight of one refill (tons)	8,100	7,800	3,250	19,150
Food and fodder (days of supply)				
Flour and groats	33.4	65.4	122	
Meat products	35.7	64.9	73	
Sugar	72	67.4	237	
Fodder	6.3	7	25	
Weight of one day's supply (tons)	1,273	903	553	2,729

Source: "Kampaniia sovetskikh vooruzhennikh sil na dal'nem vostoke v 1945g (facti i tsifry)" [The campaign of the Soviet armed forces in the Far East in 1945: Facts and figures], *Voenno-istoricheskii zhurnal* [Military history journal], August 1965, table 6.

Notes

In citing works in the notes, short titles have generally been used. Works frequently cited have been identified by the following abbreviations:

VIZh - *Voenno-istoricheskii zhurnal* [Military history journal].

IVOVSS - *Istoriia velikoi otechestvennoi voiny Sovetskogo Soiuza 1941—1945* [History of the Great Patriotic War of the Soviet Union, 1941—1945].

IVMV - *Istoriia vtoroi mirovoi voiny 1939—1945* [History of the Second World War, 1939—45].

JM 138 - U.S. Army Forces Far East, Military History Section, Japanese Monograph no. 138, *Japanese Preparations for Operations in Manchuria, January 1943—August 1945.*

JM 154 - _____, Japanese Monograph no. 154, *Record of Operations Against Soviet Army on Eastern Front (August 1945).*

JM 155 - _____, Japanese Monograph no. 155, *Record of Operations Against Soviet Russia - On Northern and Western Fronts of Manchuria and in Northern Korea (August 1945).*

SVE - *Sovetskaia voennaia entsiklopediia* [Soviet military encyclopedia].

IRP 9520 - U.S. Department of the Army, Office, Assistant Chief of Staff, Intelligence, Intelligence Research Project no. 9520, *New Soviet Wartime Divisional TO&E.*

PU-1944 - *Polevoi ustav krasnoi armii 1944* [Field regulation of the Red Army 1944].

Introduction

1. Herbert Feis, *The Atomic Bomb and the End of World War II* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1966); Charles L. Mee, Jr., *Meeting at Potsdam* (New York: M. Evans, 1975); *IVOVSS,* 5:530—42. The Allies had urged Soviet participation in the war against Japan since the Teheran conference of 1943.

Chapter 1

1. *IVMV,* 11:187—88. For example, the Soviets dispatched new T-34 tanks eastward to reequip one battalion of each tank brigade and one regiment of each of the two tank divisions in the Far East. They stockpiled additional tanks to outfit a tank army destined for transfer from the western theater of operations. The U.S. shipped Lend Lease equipment (vehicles and tanks) to the Port of Vladivostok.

2. Ibid., 191—92.

3. *IVOVSS,* 5:551; more detail is in *IVMV,* 11:191—97.

4. M. V. Zakharov et al., eds., *Finale* (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1972), 71; see also *IVMV,* 11:189.

5. Zakharov, *Finale,* 72—73; see also I. V. Kovalev, *Transport v velikoi otechestvennoi voine (1941—1945gg)* [Transport in the Great Patriotic War, 1941—1945] (Moskva: Izdatel'stvo "Nauka," 1981), 384—402.

6. S. M. Shtemenko, *The Soviet General Staff at War 1941—1945* (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1974), 327—28; S. Shtemenko, "Iz istorii razgroma kvantunskoi armii" [From the history of the rout of the Kwantung Army], *VIZh,* pt. 1, April 1967:57—58.

7. *IVMV,* 11:193—94.

8. Shtemenko, *Soviet General Staff,* 341—42; K. A. Meretskov, *Serving the People* (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1971), 337—38; I. M. Chistyakov, *Sluzhim otchizne* [In the service of the fatherland] (Moskva: Voennoe Izdatel'stvo, 1975), 271—73.

Chapter 2

1. Information in this chapter is drawn from U.S. Army, The Armor School, *Organization of a Combat Command for Operations in Manchuria* (Fort Knox, KY, May 1952), 12—77, confidential regraded unclassified 12 April 1974; L. N. Vnotchenko, *Pobeda na dal'nem vostoke* [Victory in the Far East] (Moskva: Voennoe Izdatel'stvo, 1971), 29—38.

Chapter 3

1. *IVMV,* 11:183.

2. JM 138.

3. This figure includes the Seventeenth Area Army of seven infantry divisions and two independent mixed brigades based in Korea and subordinated to the Kwantung Army on 10 August 1945.

4. "Kampaniia sovetskikh vooruzhennikh sil na dal'nem vostoke v 1945g (facti i tsifry)" [The campaign of the Soviet armed forces in the Far East in 1945: Facts and figures], *VIZh,* August 1945, lists Japanese (and their auxiliary) strength as follows:

Kwantung Army (including Korea)	1,040,000
Manchukuoan Army	170,000
Inner Mongolian Army	44,000
Suyan Army Group	66,000
South Sakhalin forces	20,000
Kuriles forces	80,000
Total	1,420,000

An earlier Japanese source, Saburo Hayashi and Alvin Coox, *Kogun: The Japanese Army in the Pacific War* (Quantico, VA: The Marine Corps Association, 1959), cites Japanese strength as follows:

Manchuria (including North Korea)	780,000
South Korea	260,000
Total	1,040,000

JM 155 lists Japanese Army strength in Manchuria and northern Korea as 713,724 men.

The more recent Soviet source, Vnotchenko, *Pobeda,* scales down estimates of Japanese strength. Vnotchenko credits Japan and its partners with fielding slightly more than 1,200,000 men in the Far East (including southern Sakhalin and the Kurile Islands). Subtracting Manchukuoan and Inner Mongolian forces and Japanese forces in South Korea, southern Sakhalin, and the Kuriles would leave the Kwantung Army a strength of about 700,000 men, a figure that agrees with the Japanese monograph totals. Confusion over figures resulted from the inclusion into Japanese forces after war began of more than 100,000 paramilitary personnel, including reservists, farmer militiamen, and even civilians who threw in their lot with Japanese forces.

The Soviet figure for Japanese armor strength is far higher than the Japanese figure. Even Soviet sources claim that only 369 tanks were captured and that few were destroyed in combat. In addition, most Japanese tanks and aircraft were too antiquated to be of any use in combat.

5. JM 155, 266—67, table 1.

6. Vnotchenko, *Pobeda,* 43—45; JM 138, app. 6, i—xvi.

7. JM 155, table 1, 266. The 3d Army at Yenchi, responsible for the southern portion of the area, comprised the 79th Infantry Division with headquarters at Tumen, the 112th Infantry Division at Hunchun, and the 127th Infantry Division farther to the interior of Manchuria at Pataiohotzu. The 3d Army commander was Lt. Gen. Murakami Keisaku. Responsible for the area encompassing Hutou, Tungan, Linkou, Pamientung, and Muleng, the 5th Army at Yehho included the 124th Infantry Division with headquarters at Muleng, the 126th Infantry Division at Pamientung, and the 135th Infantry Division at Tungan. The 5th Army commander was Lt. Gen. Shimizu Noritsune. Units directly subordinate to the First Area Army were the 122d Infantry Division at Lake Chingpo, the 128th Infantry Division at Lotzokou, the 134th Infantry Division at Chiamussu, the 139th Infantry Division at Tunhua, and the 132d Independent Mixed Brigade at Tungning.

8. Ibid., 266—67. Responsible for south central Manchuria and headquartered at Meihokou, 30th Army consisted of the 39th Infantry Division at Hailung, the 107th Infantry Division at Wuchakou, the 117th Infantry Division at Taonan, the 148th Infantry Division and 133d Independent Mixed Brigade at Changchun, and the 9th Tank Brigade at Ssupingchien. Lt. Gen. Iida Shojiro commanded the 30th Army. The 44th Army at Liaoyuan, responsible for west central Manchuria, comprised the 63d Infantry Division at Tungliao, the 108th Infantry Division at Jehol, the 136th Infantry Division at Penchihu, and the 130th Independent Mixed Brigade and 1st Tank Brigade at Mukden. The 44th Army commander was Lt. Gen. Hongo Yoshio. Under direct control of the Third Area Army were the 138th Infantry Division at Fushun, the 79th Independent Mixed Brigade at Antung, and the 134th Independent Mixed Brigade at Lingliang.

9. Ibid., 267. The 119th Infantry Division and the 80th Independent Mixed Brigade were at Hailar; the 123d Infantry Division was at Sunwu; the 149th Infantry Division, at Tsitsihar; the 131st Independent Mixed Brigade, at Harbin; the 135th Independent Mixed Brigade, at Aihun; and the 136th Independent Mixed Brigade, at Nencheng.

10. Ibid.

11. Ibid., 166—67. The average strength of divisions that engaged in active combat was 15,361 men (79th, 107th, 112th, 119th, 123d, 124th, 126th, 128th, 134th, and 135th Infantry Divisions). See also Vnotchenko, *Pobeda,* 46.

12. JM 155, chart 1.

13. Ibid., chart 2.

14. Ibid., 266—67; Vnotchenko, *Pobeda,* 46.

15. JM 138.

16. Ibid., 161, gives Japanese assessment of division readiness (see app. A).

17. Ibid., 90—110, 141—51; cf. Vnotchenko, *Pobeda,* 39—43.

Chapter 4

1. *IVMV,* 195.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid., 196.

4. Three basic Soviet sources cite differing figures. Compare

	Vnotchenko, *Pobeda,* 66	*IVOVSS,* 551	*IVMV,* 197*
Men	1,577,725	1,577,725	1,747,465
Guns/mortars	26,137	26,137	29,835
Tanks	5,556	5,556	5,250
Aircraft	3,800	3,446	5,171

**IVMV* includes the fleet in its calculations.

5. *IVOVSS,* 1:444; P. A. Kurochkin, ed., *Obshchevoiskovaia armiia v nastuplenii* [The combined arms army in the offense] (Moskva: Voennoe Izdatel'stvo, 1966), 12, gives a higher theoretical figure of four to five rifle corps of fourteen to eighteen rifle divisions.

6. *SVE,* 5:271.

7. *SVE,* 1:256; *IVOVSS,* 6:226; Kurochkin, *Obshchevoiskovaia,* 192, cites a more comprehensive range of 3 to 5 rifle corps of 9 to 14 rifle divisions, 1 to 2 tank/mechanized corps, 1,500 to 2,650 guns and mortars, 48 to 497 multiple rocket launchers, and 330 to 825 tanks and self-propelled guns.

8. A. Dunnin, "Razvitie sukhoputnykh voisk v poslevoennii period" [Development of ground forces in the postwar period], *VIZh,* May 1978:34.

9. *SVE,* 7:571. The standard rifle corps included one artillery regiment. A guards rifle corps contained an artillery brigade of two artillery regiments.

10. Dunnin, "Razvitie," 34.

11. A. I. Radzievsky, ed., *Taktika v boevykh primerakh (diviziia)* [Tactics by combat example: division] (Moskva: Voennoe Izdatel'stvo, 1976), scheme 1; Kurochkin, *Obshchevoiskovaia,* 204.

12. Dunnin, "Razvitie," 34; *SVE,* 7:568; IRP 9520, 1—6, with charts.

13. *SVE,* 7:660—61; M. V. Zakharov et al., eds., *50 let vooruzhennykh sil SSSP* [50 years of the Soviet armed forces] (Moskva: Voennoe Izdatel'stvo, 1968), 334—35, 391; I. Anan'ev, "Sozdanie tankovykh armii i sovershenstvovanie ikh organizatsionnoi struktury" [The creation of tank armies and the perfecting of their organizational structure], *VIZh,* October 1972:38—47.

14. Vnotchenko, *Pobeda,* 87; Zakharov, *Finale,* 83. A detailed order of battle appears in M. V. Zakharov, ed., *Final: istoriko-memuarny ocherk o razgrome imperialisticheskoi iapony v 1945 godu* [Finale: A historical memoir survey about the rout of imperialistic Japan in 1945] (Moskva: Izdatel'stvo "Nauka," 1969), 398—99.

15. Dunnin, "Razvitie," 34—35; IRP 9520, 1—6.

16. Radzievsky, *Taktika (diviziia),* scheme 3; Kurochkin, *Obshchevoiskovaia,* 208.

17. Radzievsky, *Taktika (diviziia),* scheme 2.

18. Vnotchenko, *Pobeda,* 75; Zakharov, *Final: istoriko,* 402.

19. Kurochkin, *Obshchevoiskovaia,* 206.

20. IRP 9520, 2.

21. *SVE,* 7:674; N. Popov, "Razvitie samokhodnoi artillerii" [The development of self-propelled artillery], *VIZh,* January 1977:27—31.

22. Dunnin, "Razvitie," 34; U.S. Army, Office, Chief of Army Field Forces, *Handbook of Foreign Military Forces, vol. 2, USSR, pt. 1: The Soviet Army* (FATM-11-1-0), regraded unclassified (Fort Monroe, VA, 1952), 74, 86, 90.

Chapter 5

1. Mikhail Tukhachevsky was a leading Soviet military leader and theoretician from 1918 to 1938: commander of the Soviet Western Front in the Russo-Polish War of 1920—21; chief of staff of the Red Army from 1925 through 1928; an assistant in the People's Commissariat of Defense after 1934; and commander of the Pre-Volga Military District in 1937. He contributed to the modernization of Soviet armament and Army force structure in the 1920s and 1930s and was instrumental in the creation of aviation, mechanized, and airborne forces. As a theoretician, he was a driving force behind Soviet development of the theory of deep operations. Accused of treason and shot during the military purges of 1937—38, Tukhachevsky (rather, his reputation) was "rehabilitated" in the 1960s. For a frank treatment of the affair, see Lev Nikulin, *Tukhachevsky: Biograficheskii ocherk* [Tukhachevsky: A biographical essay] (Moskva: Voennoe Izdatel'stvo, 1964), 189—97.

2. This analysis of Soviet tactics is derived from PU 1944; *Nastavlenie po proryvu pozitsionnoi oborony* (proekt) [Instructions on the penetration of a positional defense (draft)] (Moskva: Voenizdat, 1944), translated by Directorate of Military Intelligence, Army Headquarters, Ottawa, Canada.

3. PU 1944, introduction and paragraph 1.

4. I. E. Krupchenko, "Nekotorye osobennosti sovetskogo voennogo iskusstva" [Some characteristics of Soviet military art], *VIZh,* August 1975:22. Notable exceptions were the Stalingrad offensive, the Korsun-Shevchenkovskii operation, and the Iassy-Kishenev operation. In the first instance, 5th Tank Army in first echelon was a composite unit containing rifle divisions. In the other two operations, both tank armies had heavy rifle division reinforcements.

Chapter 6

1. Zakharov, *Finale,* 64.

2. Vnotchenko, *Pobeda,* 69; cf. Zakharov, *Finale,* 88—89; Shtemenko, *Soviet General Staff,* 348—49. The most definitive account is in A. Vasilevsky, "Pobeda na dal'nem vostoke" [Victory in the Far East], pt. 1, *VIZh,* August 1970:8—10.

3. Shtemenko, *Iz istorii razgroma,* 65—66; Shtemenko, *Soviet General Staff,* 338—49; Zakharov, *Finale,* 83—85. According to Shtemenko, the original attack date was between 20 and 25 August.

4. Vnotchenko, *Pobeda,* 69—70, 85—90; *IVMV,* 11:201—2; Zakharov, *Finale,* 82—89.

5. Vnotchenko, *Pobeda,* 70—71; *IVMV,* 11:202—3; Zakharov, *Finale,* 89—92.

6. Vnotchenko, *Pobeda,* 71—72; *IVMV,* 11:203—4; Zakharov, *Finale,* 93—94.

Chapter 7

1. Vnotchenko, *Pobeda,* 174.

2. I. A. Pliyev, *Konets kvantunskoi armii* [The end of the Kwantung Army] (Ordzhonikidze: Izdatel'stvo "IR" Ordzhonikidze, 1969), 54.

3. Zakharov, *Finale,* 86.

4. I. E. Krupchenko, ed., *Sovetskie tankovie voiska 1941—45* [Soviet tank forces, 1941—45] (Moskva: Voennoe Izdatel'stvo, 1973), 312—13; Vnotchenko, *Pobeda,* 175—76.

5. I. I. Lyudnikov, *Cherez bol'shoi khingan* [Across the Grand Khingan] (Moskva: Voennoe Izdatel'stvo, 1967), 50—53.

6. Vnotchenko, *Pobeda,* 177.

7. JM 155, 83, 86, 104.

8. A. A. Luchinsky, "Zabaikal'tsy na sopkakh Man'chzhurii" [Trans-Baikal troops in the hills of Manchuria], *VIZh,* August 1971:70—71; Vnotchenko, *Pobeda,* 177—78.

9. Luchinsky, "Zabaikal'tsy," 70.

10. JM 155, 185.

11. JM 154, 10—18.

12. Vnotchenko, *Pobeda,* 184—87; transportation and maintenance problems during the 6th Guards Tank Army's passage through the Grand Khingan Mountains are covered in N. Kireev and A. Syropyatov, "Tekhnicheskoe obespechenie 6-i gvardeiskoi tankovoi armii v Khingano-Mukdenskoi operatsii" [Technical maintenance of the 6th Guards Tank Army in the Khingan-Mukden operation], *VIZh,* March 1977:36—40. The most thorough accounts of the 6th Guards Tank Army's exploits are in I. E. Krupchenko, "6-ia gvardeiskaia tankovaia armiia v Khingano-Mukdenskoi operatsii" [The 6th Guards Tank Army in the Khingan-Mukden operation], *VIZh,* December 1962, and G. T. Zavizion and P. A. Kornyushin, *I na Tikham Okeane . . .* [And to the Pacific Ocean] (Moskva: Voennoe Izdatel'stvo, 1967).

13. JM 155, (pt. A) map 1, (pt. F) map 2, 102—9.

14. Lyudnikov, *Cherez,* 59; Vnotchenko, *Pobeda,* 176—77, 188.

15. Lyudnikov, *Cherez,* 74.

16. Luchinsky, "Zabaikal'tsy," 70—72; Vnotchenko, *Pobeda,* 190; *IVMV,* 11:224; I. V. Shikin and B. G. Sapozhnikov, *Podvig na dal'nem-vostochnykh rubezhakh* [Victory on the far eastern borders] (Moskva: Voennoe Izdatel'stvo, 1975), 128—31.

17. Pliyev, *Konets,* 91—100; Vnotchenko, *Pobeda,* 192—94.

18. Vnotchenko, *Pobeda,* 194—95.

19. Ibid.

20. Ibid. Aviation support of 6th Guards Tank Army is covered in I. Sykhomlin, "Osobennosti vzaimodeistviia 6-i gvardeiskoi tankovoi armii s aviatsiei v Man'chzhurskoi operatsii" [Characteristics of the cooperation of the 6th Guards Tank Army with aviation in the Manchurian operation], *VIZh,* April 1972:85—91.

21. Lyudnikov, *Cherez,* 63; Vnotchenko, *Pobeda,* 196—97.

22. Lyudnikov, *Cherez,* 63; JM 155, 108.

23. Luchinsky, "Zabaikal'tsy," 72; Vnotchenko, *Pobeda,* 197—98.

24. Shtemenko, "Iz istorii razgroma," 56—60; Vnotchenko, *Pobeda,* 242—44, 277—78; Zakharov, *Finale,* 145—46, 153; *IVMV,* 11:247—53; cf. JM 154, 18—25.

25. Vnotchenko, *Pobeda,* 279.

26. Ibid., 245—46.

27. Ibid.; I. A. Pliyev, *Cherez Gobi i Khingan* [Across the Gobi and Khingan] (Moskva: Voennoe Izdatel'stvo, 1965), 106—15.

28. Vnotchenko, *Pobeda,* 280—81.

29. Lyudnikov, *Cherez,* 101.

30. Vnotchenko, *Pobeda,* 218; Luchinsky, "Zabaikal'tsy."

31. Vnotchenko, *Pobeda,* 281.

Chapter 8

1. Vnotchenko, *Pobeda,* 200—203, 207—11. For a detailed view of the first two days of attack, see N. I. Krylov, N. I. Alekseev, and I. G. Dragan, *Navstrechu pobede: boevoi put 5-i armii, oktiabr 1941g-avgust 1945g* [Towards victory: The combat path of 5th Army, October 1941—August 1945] (Moskva: Izdatel'stvo "Nauka," 1970), 433—45; and P. Tsygankov, "Nekotorye osobennosti boevykh deistvii 5-i armii v Kharbino-Girinskoi operatsii" [Some characteristics of the combat action of 5th Army in the Harbin-Kirin operation], *VIZh,* August 1975:83—89.

2. D. Khrenov, "Wartime Operations: Engineer Operations in the Far East," *USSR Report: Military Affairs no. 1545* (20 November 1980):81—97, JPRS 76847, translated by the Foreign Broadcast Information Service from the Russian article in *Znamya* [Banner], August 1980.

3. JM 154, 184—85, 233—34.

4. Vnotchenko, *Pobeda,* 222.

5. Ibid., 220; Krylov et al., *Navstrechu,* 442—43.

6. Vnotchenko, *Pobeda,* 220—21. Japanese sources are contradictory. The 124th Infantry Division account credits the Sasaki Detachment with limited success. JM 154, 236. The 5th Army account claims that Soviet tank units "easily broke through" the Sasaki Detachment, but were held up by the Kobayashi Detachment on the afternoon of 12 August. JM 154, 197. Soviet accounts support the 124th Infantry Division version, although they also mention continued Japanese resistance during the remainder of the twelfth.

7. JM 154, 238—44.

8. Japanese forces delaying 5th Army included the Kobayashi Detachment, composed of officer candidates from two Kwantung Army schools.

9. JM 154, (pt. F) map 3, 250—53, 287.

10. A. Beloborodov, "Na sopkakh Man'chzhurii" [In the hills of Manchuria], pt. 1, *VIZh,* December 1980:34—35.

11. Vnotchenko, *Pobeda,* 205—7, supplements 5, 6.

12. Vnotchenko, *Pobeda,* 216—17. Japanese accounts in JM 154, 154, 186, 256—59, say that the attack commenced at 1600 on 10 August and that the town fell at noon on 11 August. Beloborodov, "Na sopkakh Man'chzhurii," pt. 2, *VIZh,* January 1981:45, states that the 257th Tank Brigade had secured the bridge and railyards at Pamientung by evening but that the town itself was cleared of Japanese on the eleventh. The Soviets estimated 400 Japanese dead, the Japanese estimated 500.

13. JM 154, 187—90, 199—201, 260—62, 289—92.

14. Beloborodov, "Na sopkakh Man'chzhurii," pt. 2, 45—46; Vnotchenko, *Pobeda,* 218.

15. Beloborodov, "Na sopkakh Man'chzhurii," pt. 2, 46—47; Vnotchenko, *Pobeda,* 218—19; JM 154, 207—8, 292—94.

16. Vnotchenko, *Pobeda,* 218—19; JM 154, 200—201, 297—98; V. Ezhakov, "Boevoe primenenie tankov v gorno-taezhnoi mestnosti po opytu 1-go Dal'nevostochnogo fronta" [Combat use of tanks in mountainous-taiga regions based on the experience of the 1st Far Eastern Front], *VIZh,* January 1974:80.

17. Vnotchenko, *Pobeda,* 253—60; Beloborodov, "Na sopkakh Man'chzhurii," pt. 2, 47—51; Krylov et al., *Navstrechu,* 445—47; V. Timofeev, "300-ia Strelkovaia diviziia v boyakh na Mudan'tsyanskom napravlenii" [The 300th Rifle Division in battles on the Mutanchiang direction], *VIZh,* August 1978:53—55; JM 154, 202—8, 263—73, 292—97.

18. JM 154, 212, 272.

19. Airlanded forces came from 20th Motorized Assault Engineer-Sapper Brigade. See D. S. Sykhorukov, ed., *Sovetskie vozdushno-desantyne* [Soviet air landing forces] (Moskva: Voennoe Izdatel'stvo, 1980), 253—54; Khrenov, "Wartime Operations," 94—96.

20. JM 154, 274—76, 281, 287.

21. S. Pechenenko, "Armeiskaia nastupatel'naia operatsiia v usloviiakh dal'nevostochnogo teatra voennykh deistvii" [An army offensive operation in the conditions of the Far Eastern Theater of Military Operations], *VIZh,* August 1978:44—45; S. Pechenenko, "363-ia strelkovaia diviziia v boyakh na Mishan'skom napravlenii" [The 363d Rifle Division in battles on the Mishan direction], *VIZh,* July 1975:38—40; Vnotchenko, *Pobeda,* 203—4.

22. Pechenenko, "Armeiskaia," 45; Pechenenko, "363-ia strelkovaia diviziia," 42—44.

23. Ibid., 47.

24. Vnotchenko, *Pobeda,* 285—86.

25. Chistyakov, *Sluzhim,* 278; Vnotchenko, *Pobeda,* 94—95.

26. JM 154, 85—86, 118—21, 140—43.

27. Chistyakov, *Sluzhim,* 280—82; Khrenov, "Wartime Operations," 92—93.

28. Chistyakov, *Sluzhim,* 286—91.

29. JM 154, 334—38.

30. Vnotchenko, *Pobeda,* 222.

31. Ibid., 225; Chistyakov, *Sluzhim,* 295.

32. Vnotchenko, *Pobeda,* 261—62; Chistyakov, *Sluzhim,* 295—96; JM 154, 317—22.

33. M. Sidorov, "Boevoe primenenie artillerii" [The combat use of artillery], *VIZh,* September 1975:20.

34. Vnotchenko, *Pobeda,* 262, 263; JM 154, 320—22, 325—28, claims that the 128th Infantry Division stood firm throughout 16 August at Taipingling until surrender was negotiated.

35. Zakharov, *Finale,* 159; Chistyakov, *Sluzhim,* 300; JM 154, 94—95, 145—46.

36. Vnotchenko, *Pobeda,* 223, 263; JM 154, 97, 146.

37. Vnotchenko, *Pobeda,* 261—62; JM 154, 98—100, 125—33.

38. Vnotchenko, *Pobeda,* 264; JM 154, 131—32.

39. Vnotchenko, *Pobeda,* 279—80.

40. Sykhorukov, *Sovetskie,* 253—54; G. Shelakhov, "S vozdushnym desantam v Kharbin" [With the airlanding at Harbin], *VIZh,* August 1970:67—71.

41. M. Sidorov, "Boevoe," 19; K. P. Kazakhov, *Vsegda s pekhotoi, vsegda s tankami* [Always with the infantry, always with the tanks] (Moskva: Voennoe Izdatel'stvo, 1973), translated by Leo Kanner Associates for the U.S. Army Foreign Science and Technology Center, 5 February 1975, 396—97; Vnotchenko, *Pobeda,* 286.

Chapter 9

1. Vnotchenko, *Pobeda,* 96—98; *IVMV,* 203—4; V. N. Bagrov and N. F. Sungorkin, *Krasnoznamennaia amurskaia flotiliia* [The Red Banner Amur Flotilla] (Moskva: Voennoe Izdatel'stvo, 1976), 145—53.

2. Vnotchenko, *Pobeda,* 209.

3. JM 154, 61.

4. *IVMV,* 234—36.

5. Vnotchenko, *Pobeda,* 231—32.

6. Ibid., 233—34. The garrison consisted of two marine battalions of the Sungarian Naval Flotilla, the 23d Security Battalion, and Manchurian units.

7. Shikin and Sapozhnikov, *Podvig,* 137—38; Zakharov, *Finale,* 143—44.

8. Vnotchenko, *Pobeda,* 235.

9. Ibid., 266—67. Initially, the Soviets took 3,900 prisoners at Sansing.

10. Ibid., 236; JM 155, 176—77.

11. Vnotchenko, *Pobeda,* 232, 267; *IVMV,* 236.

12. Vnotchenko, *Pobeda,* 236—38; *IVMV,* 235, contains river crossing data.

13. JM 155, 199—205, 219—20.

14. Vnotchenko, *Pobeda,* 238.

15. Ibid.

16. Ibid.; Krupchenko, *Sovetskie,* 319; JM 155, 205—9, 221—22.

17. Vnotchenko, *Pobeda,* 238—39; JM 155, 210—12, 222—23; Krupchenko, *Sovetskie,* 319.

18. Vnotchenko, *Pobeda,* 268.

Chapter 10

1. Vnotchenko, *Pobeda,* 360—64.

2. Ibid., 344—58; Khrenov, "Wartime Operations," 81—97.

3. Sykhomlin, "Osobennosti," 87—91.

4. Zakharov, "Nekotorye voprosy voennogo iskusstva v sovetsko-iaponskoi voine 1945-goda" [Some questions of military art in the Soviet-Japanese War of 1945], *VIZh,* September 1969:17.

5. Vnotchenko, *Pobeda,* 237.

6. Shtemenko, *Soviet General Staff,* 343.

7. JM 154, 155.

8. Bōeichō Bōei Kenshūjō Senchishitsu [Japan Self Defense Forces, National Defense College Military History Department], *Senshi sōsho: Kantogun* (2) [Military History Series: The Kwantung Army, vol. 2] (Tokyo: Asagumio Shinbunsha, 1974), 440.

9. JM 154, 3, 179—80.

10. At Khalkhin-Gol in August 1939, future Marshal Zhukov and a force of more than 50,000 men thoroughly outmaneuvered and destroyed two Japanese divisions in a remote area of Eastern Mongolia. Here also, Japanese commanders underestimated Soviet capabilities. Later the French and Americans would also make a similar error and fall victim to the curse of an enemy operating over "inhibiting terrain" in the Ardennes in 1940 and 1944 respectively.

11. Khrenov, "Wartime Operations," 90; K. A. Meretskov, "Dorogami srazhenii" [By the roads of battle], *Voprosy istorii* [Questions of history], February 1965:107. Vnotchenko, *Pobeda,* 107, and Zakharov, *Finale,* 96, claim that no artillery preparation was planned.

12. Chistyakov, *Sluzhim,* 288.

13. A. A. Strokov, ed., *Istoriia voennogo iskusstva* [The history of military art] (Moskva: Voennoe Izdatel'stvo, 1966), 516; Vnotchenko, *Pobeda,* 101, 108, 125.

14. Khrenov, "Wartime Operations," 91—92; Vnotchenko, *Pobeda,* 131—33. See Chistyakov, *Sluzhim,* 280—81, for 25th Army use of border guards in assault detachments. Border guards operations are surveyed in V. Platonov and A. Bulatov, "Pogranichnie voiska perekhodiat v nastuplenie" [Border troops go over to the offensive], *VIZh,* October 1965:11—16.

15. Vnotchenko, *Pobeda,* 214; Pechenenko, "Armeiskaia," 47.

16. Vnotchenko, *Pobeda,* 338—44.

17. Ibid., 386.

18. The 125th Tank Brigade redeployed within the army area. The 1st Far Eastern Front transferred the 209th Tank Brigade to 25th Army control. See Krupchenko, *Sovetskie,* 321; Pechenenko, "Armeiskaia," 47.

19. Lyudnikov, *Cherez,* 80—82.

Chapter 11

1. The marked difference between Soviet and Japanese sources regarding combat losses in the campaign is understandable, considering the fragmented nature of the fighting, the variety of participants, and Japan's loss of all of the records of the Kwantung Army.

	Japanese losses			*Soviet losses*		
Estimates	Killed	Wounded	Prisoners	Killed	Wounded	Total
Soviet	84,000		594,000	8,000	24,000	32,000
Japanese	21,000*			----------	----------	10,000

*1st Demobilization Bureau figures. Unit battle accounts show heavier casualties. This figure ignores the large number of missing Japanese soldiers and does not include Manchukuoan and Inner Mongolian casualties, mobilized Japanese reservists, or Japanese civilians caught up in the fighting.

The Soviet estimates fall short of the total strength Japan claimed in Manchuria and Northern Korea (713,000). Soviet figures include Manchukuoan casualties, which accounted for a significant portion of the losses in some regions (Tuchuan, Chiamussu, Solun). They also include an indeterminate number of Japanese reservists and civilians who joined the garrisons of fortified regions to fight alongside Japanese soldiers, as well as missing Japanese who continued resistance long after Japan's formal surrender.

Japanese official accounts are limited to regular soldiers and cannot include large numbers of Japanese missing or casualties among Manchukuoan and Inner Mongolian auxiliaries. Even at that, those who wrote battle accounts of individual Japanese divisions tended to describe higher casualties. In light of this, the Soviet figures are probably valid and may even be conservative.

Soviet casualties are also disputed. The Japanese estimate is low, as Soviet figures show.

2. Meretskov, *Serving the People,* 353; Beloborodov, "Na sopkakh Man'chzhurii," pt. 2, 46, 48, 49.

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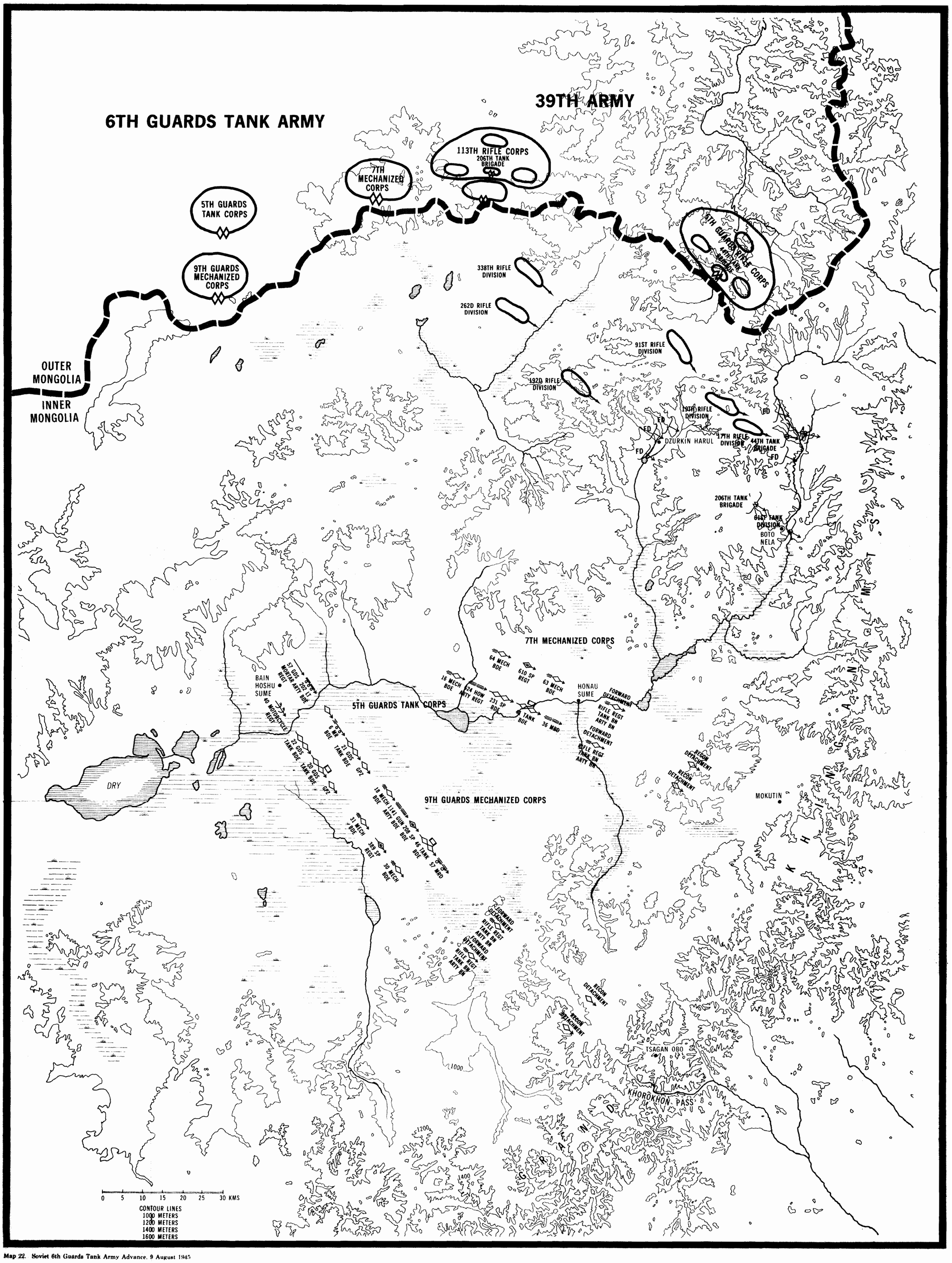
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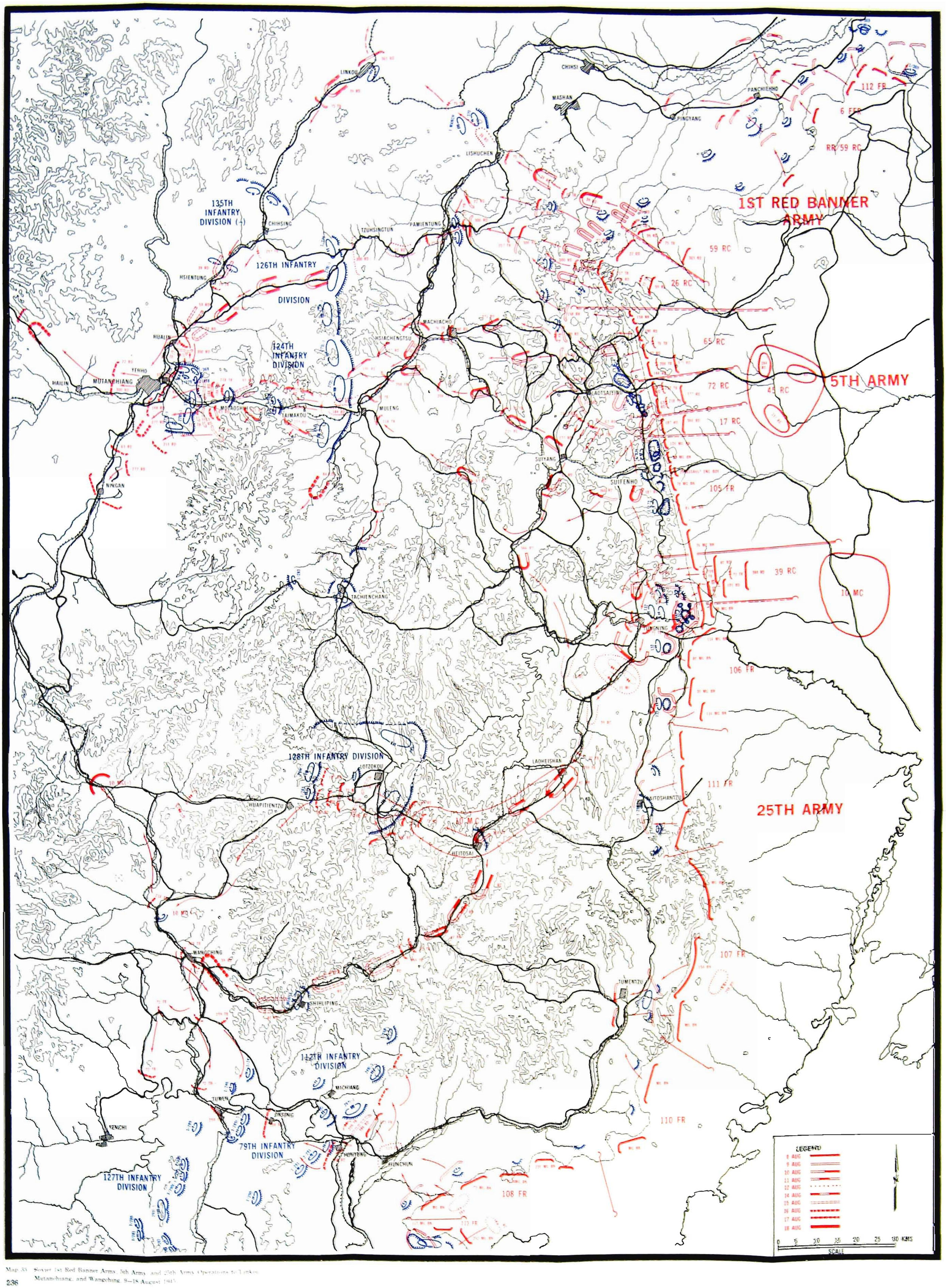
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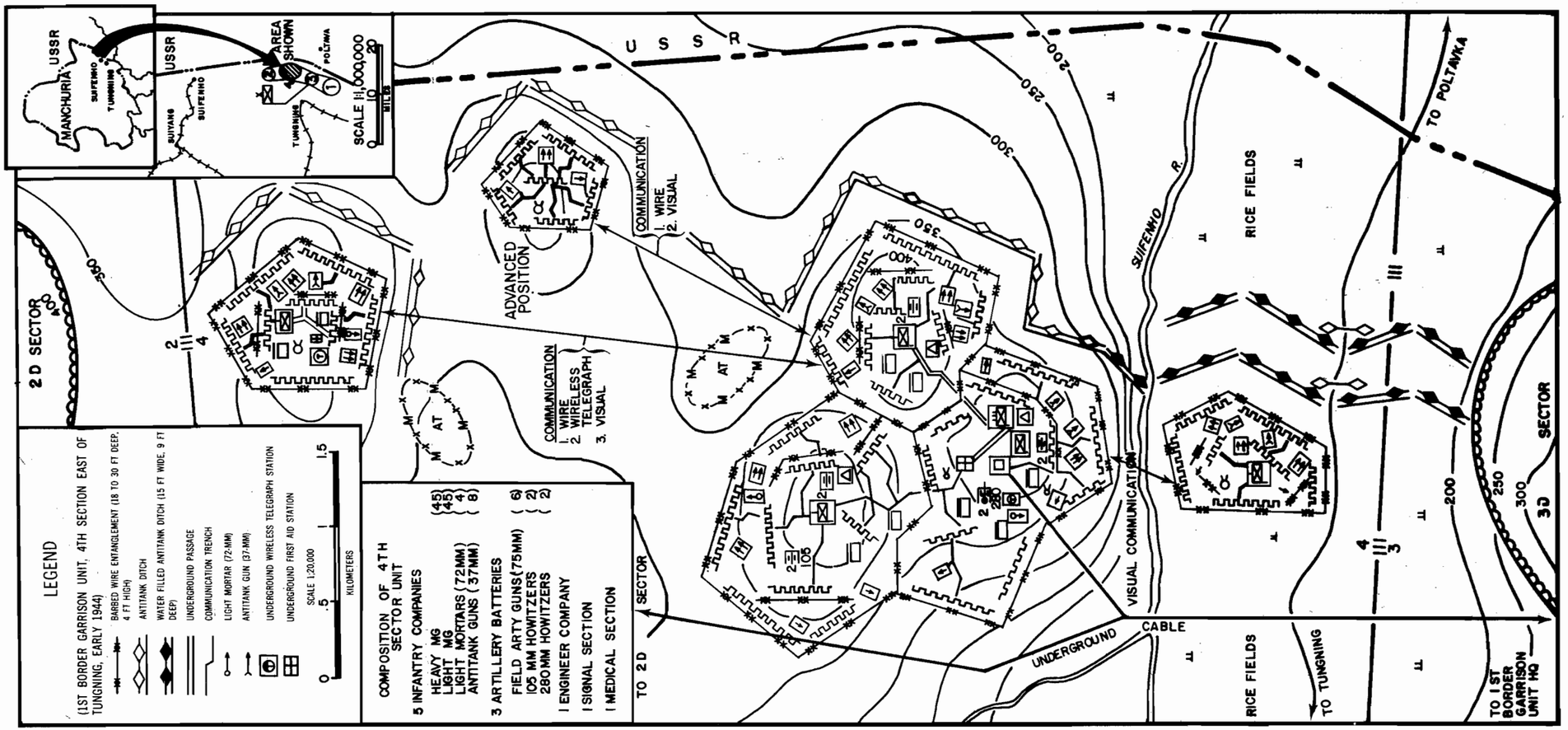
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Map 22. Soviet 6th Guards Tank Army Advance, 9 August 1945



Map 33 Soviet 1st Red Banner Army, 5th Army, and 25th Army Operations to Linkou, Mutanchiang, and Wangching, 9–18 August 1945



Map 36. Japanese Tungning Fortifications

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SYNOPSIS OF LEAVENWORTH PAPER 7

In August 1945, only three months after the rumble of gunfire had subsided in Europe, Soviet armies launched massive attacks on Japanese forces in Manchuria. In a lightning campaign that lasted but ten days, Soviet forces ruptured Japanese defenses on a 4,000-kilometer front, paralyzed Japanese command and control, and plunged through 450 kilometers of forbidding terrain into the heartland of Manchuria. Effective Soviet cover and deception masked the scale of offensive preparations and produced strategic surprise. Imaginative tailoring of units to terrain, flexible combat formations, and bold maneuvers by armor-heavy, task-organized forward detachments and mobile groups produced operational and tactical surprise and, ultimately, rapid and total Soviet victory.

For the Soviet Army, the Manchurian offensive was a true postgraduate combat exercise. The Soviets had to display all the operational and tactical techniques they had learned in four years of bitter fighting in the west. Though the offensive culminated an education, it also emerged as a clear case study of how a nation successfully begins a war in a race against the clock and not only against an enemy, but also against hindering terrain.

Soviet military historians and theorists have recently focused on the Manchurian offensive, a theater case study characterized by deep mobile operations on a broad front designed to preempt and overcome defenses. Because these characteristics appear relevant to current theater operations, the Soviets study the more prominent operational and tactical techniques used in Manchuria in 1945. What is of obvious interest to the Soviet military professional should be of interest to the U.S. officer as well.

