

Marshal Ogarkov opens his wartime headquarters

by Konstantin George

The Soviet wartime "High Command, Strategic Direction West" responsible for winning the war against the NATO foe, and commanded since its September inception by Marshal of the Soviet Union Nikolai Ogarkov, now has a *functioning, secret wartime headquarters*. This fact singularly demonstrates that the Soviet Union is on a war footing, and is actively considering the exercise of military options against the United States and its European NATO allies as the response to the U.S. Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) and to the growing European support expressed for it.

West German defense-related sources have revealed to *EIR* that Ogarkov has established his wartime headquarters for an attack on Western Europe in Legnicza (Liegnitz), in southwest Poland near the Neisse River, which forms the East German-Polish border. Legnicza, was, until this past autumn, the headquarters for the Northern Group of Forces, as the Soviet forces stationed in Poland are called. These units were then moved into a new headquarters, 20 kilometers south of the Polish Baltic port of Gdansk (Danzig). Legnicza, meanwhile, was converted into the wartime High Command headquarters to direct the offensive that would tear through West Germany and reach the Atlantic Coast.

The establishment of a wartime headquarters is but one of the latest in a series of Soviet command reorganizations and combined troop and hardware war preparations documented by *EIR* (e.g., "Soviets Create a Wartime High Command," *EIR*, March 5). These command changes—without precedent in any previous non-wartime situation—are still ongoing, and have produced at least 12 new Military District commanders (out of a total of 20 Military Districts), the establishment of wartime High Commands for each "Strategic Direction," plus numerous other high-level changes—all within barely a year.

These preparations have made Marshal Ogarkov a very

busy man. Since his September promotion from chief of the General Staff to wartime commander, he has been regularly traveling in East Germany, Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Byelorussia. As one source stated: "Ogarkov is now regularly commuting between Zossen-Wünsdorf and Minsk." Minsk is the capital of Byelorussia and site of the headquarters for the Byelorussian Military District, which forms the heart of the Red Army's Second Echelon (the First Echelon being formed by the Soviet forces in East Germany, Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary) in any attack on Western Europe. Zossen-Wünsdorf, south of Berlin, is the headquarters for the Soviet ground and air forces stationed in East Germany.

Besides his "shuttle" between Zossen-Wünsdorf and Minsk, Ogarkov has been spending a lot of time in Eastern and Central Europe, "at the Front, so to speak, where it counts," as one source put it. In February, he was seen in both Czechoslovakia and Poland, and was present in East Germany for nearly the entire first half of the month, during the Warsaw Pact maneuvers which he oversaw. Ogarkov was again spotted in East Germany on Feb. 21. These are all part of the pre-Geneva deployments you never read about from the *New York Times* or the *Washington Post*.

It is now confirmed that the Warsaw pact maneuvers staged in East Germany Feb. 2-10 were rehearsing the function of, and the staff coordination of, an Operational Maneuver Group (OMG). The OMG is a *blitzkrieg* offensive task force, consisting of a core of motorized infantry and armored units, with added armor, artillery, and helicopter units, for maximum speed of advance and striking power. This combination is designed to maximize the speed and intensity of the breakthroughs required in the initial phase of war.

Sources report that the last two days of the maneuvers witnessed a rapid advance westward by combined Soviet, East German, and Polish forces, assembled west of Berlin,

to the Elbe River and across it to the Letzlinger Heide near the West German border. The advance featured a bridging of the Elbe at Herrenkrug under simulated combat conditions in only 45 minutes. In this operation, troops and combat engineers were lifted by helicopter to seize a west-bank bridgehead, and thus began bridge construction from both banks simultaneously.

Ogarkov directed some 20,000 troops drawn from the following units: the entire Soviet 21st Guards Motorized Rifle Division based at Perleberg, far to the northwest of Berlin, formed the core of the OMG; units from the East German 4th Motorized Rifle Division, based at Erfurt in Thuringia; and Polish armored units approximating regimental strength. Filling out the OMG were additional Russian helicopter, artillery, and combat engineer units.

A key feature of the maneuvers was that they were under exclusively Russian command at all levels higher than unit commander. Thus, despite the multinational unit composition of the OMG, the Russian higher command structure was the same as that in the large, exclusively Russian, *blitzkrieg* maneuvers of last summer—the largest Soviet maneuvers held since the Second World War.

New ultimatums to Washington

While Ogarkov oversees front-line war preparations, representatives from the Soviet General Staff have fanned out on missions to Western countries to convey pre-Geneva-conference ultimatums concerning the SDI. The Strategic Defense Initiative is intolerable to the Russian Empire, as it holds the promise of stopping cold their pretensions to global domination.

Soviet Politburo member Vladimir Shcherbitskii, Ukrainian Party boss, noted for his close ties to former KGB boss and General Secretary Yuri Andropov, arrived in the United States at the beginning of March for a 10-day tour, as head of a 10-man Supreme Soviet delegation. The tour featured meetings with President Reagan, Secretary of State Shultz, congressmen, and corporate and banking leaders in New York, San Francisco, and Texas. The delegation is profiling the U.S. factional situation, probing for levers against the SDI. Shcherbitskii is the first Politburo member, aside from Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko, to set foot in the United States since 1973.

Accompanying Shcherbitskii was Col. Gen. Nikolai Chervov of the General Staff. In a discussion with *Washington Post* editors, Chervov issued the following threats, covered front-page by the *Post*: "As a representative of our General Staff, I can tell you that we'll certainly find a way to respond to that kind of a situation, and that response will not at all be to enhance the security of the United States. . . . We're not going to sit on our hands and wait. . . . We'll start to perfect our strategic forces before that time. You develop one system. We are going to develop another system to counter it."

On March 5, another representative of the Soviet General

Staff; Adm. Nikolai Amelko, deputy chief of the General Staff and deputy head of the Staff's Main Operational Directorate, held talks in Paris with French Rear-Admiral Brusson, a deputy chief of the French General Staff, which discussed, according to Radio Moscow, "preventing the militarization of space."

And General of the Army Mikhail Zaitsev, commander in chief of the Soviet forces in East Germany and one of Ogarkov's main subordinate commanders, is quoted in the latest issue of the East German defense ministry publication *Volksarmee* reiterating that the Soviet position in the Geneva talks is "to not permit the militarization of space."

Buy time, prepare for war

Ogarkov's policy was clearly laid out in January, in an address to the conference of the Komsomol of the Armed Forces in Zossen-Wünsdorf. He hammered on the theme that this is a pre-war period, in which the priority political task for the Soviet Union is to buy time, while preparing for war. That theme, then only covered on the military station Radio Volga, is now openly stated in an article written by Marshal Sergei Akhromeyev, Ogarkov's former deputy and now chief of the General Staff, in the latest issue (no. 3, 1985) of the civilian party journal, *Kommunist*.

Akhromeyev's article hailed the wartime command role of Josef Stalin. It also announced that the demands made by Ogarkov during his tenure as chief of the General Staff, as necessary to bring the Soviet Union to war readiness, are being or have already been implemented. This is done through a description of the first weeks and months after the Nazi invasion of Russia in 1941, with the conclusion that although "a lot was done,"

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the demands of modern war. . . . History left us too little time."

be allowed to develop in which "not everything was favorable"
structure of the forces,"
and the "mobilized readiness of the forces."

Akhromeyev underlined Ogarkov's emphasis on establishing a war command structure *before* war breaks out: a *Stavka* (Supreme Command), which defines "Strategic Directions"—each
cise "Strategic Directions"
concentration of troops and weapons (e.g., the concentration of forces facing West Germany). In a pointed message regarding the Soviet military command's wartime reorganization, Akhromeyev singled out for praise Ogarkov's forerunners as *Stavka* representatives at the Front, citing "the military talent, organizational capabilities and excellent leadership qualities of the *Stavka* representatives at the Fronts, G.K. Zhukov, A.M. Vasilevski, and S.K. Timoshenko."

Akhromeyev concludes ominously that the United States will never be permitted to "hide behind a space shield. . . . We will keep our powder dry."