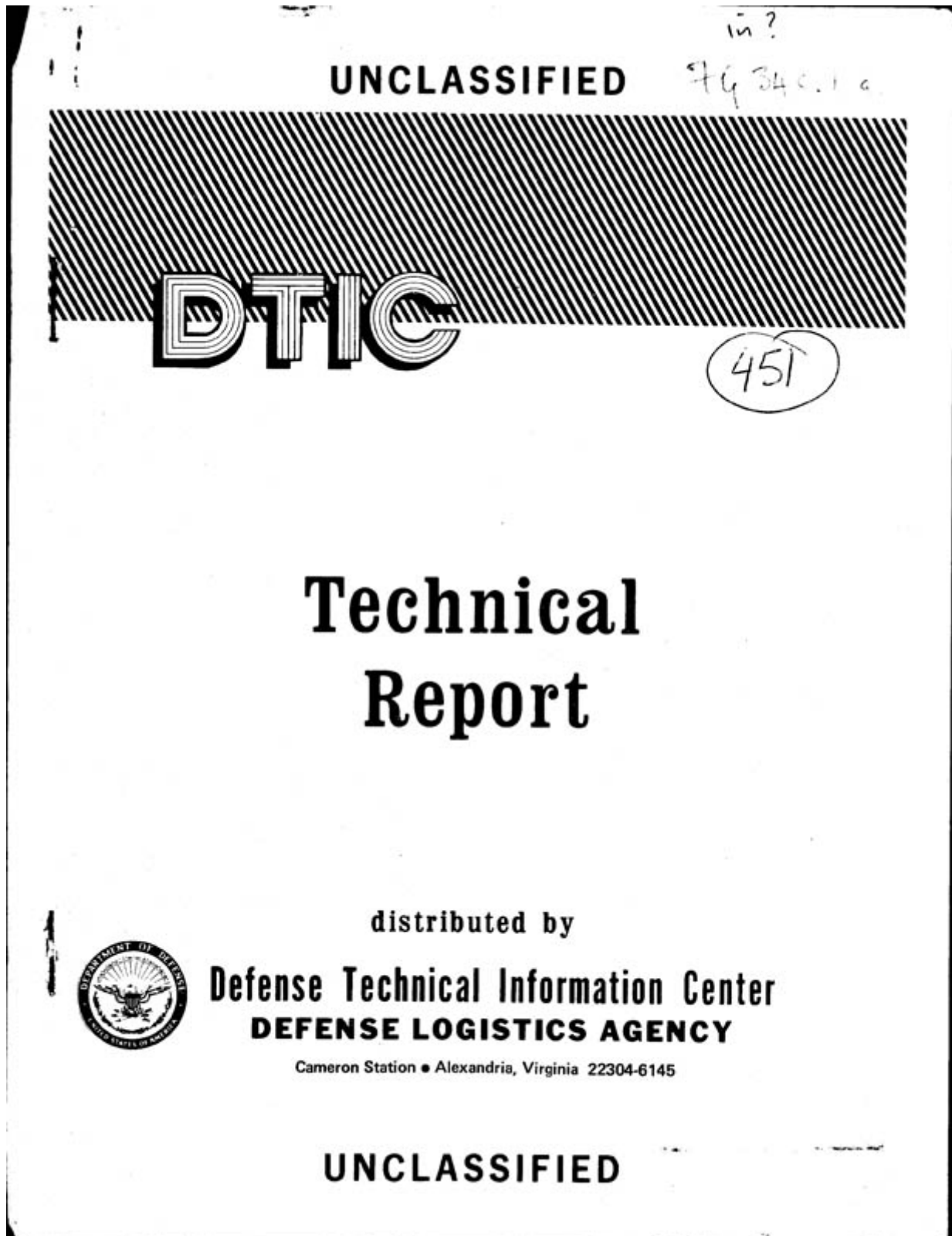


A Study of Breakthrough Operations



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A breakthrough operation is one in which attacking forces penetrate the enemy's main line of resistance, overrunning local reserves and maintaining sustained forward movement. The tensions of the Cold War and the threat of a possible nuclear attack required the U.S. military to be prepared to provide an efficient and effective counterattack. These breakthrough operations provide a model on which to build various options for U.S. troops in the event of an attack from the Soviets, China or any of their sympathizers.

This report examines twelve historical breakthrough operations in recent past wars by conventional forces. Issues covered include background, plans, operations, and exploitations. It also draws conclusions for each operation and provides qualitative and quantitative assessments, and considerations for tactical nuclear forces.

"There are no indications yet that the enemy is planning an attack. The assembly of strong air forces might be so interpreted, but these forces as yet have not appeared in action." (p 113)

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