9A3.

SECRET

PIC 1200-260-26-79

Soviet Far East Sea and Airborne Landing Capabilities (U) SOLAC (U)

[redacted]

CONFIDENTIAL

DECEMBER 1979

Prepared by
INTELLIGENCE CENTER PACIFIC (IPAC)

(U) Soviet Airborne Assault

UNCLASSIFIED

WARNING
NATIONAL SECURITY INFORMATION
Unauthorized Disclosure Subject to Criminal Sanctions

NOT RELEASABLE TO FOREIGN NATIONALS

Classified by Multiple Sources
Review on 1 Jan 2009

NOFORN
SECRET

PREFACE

1. PURPOSE. This report analyzes Soviet capabilities for conducting landing operations in the Far East with threat emphasis directed against Japan. Amphibious, maritime, airborne, and heliborne employment options available to the USSR are viewed both singly and in combined arms contexts.

2. DOCUMENT CURRENCY. Information presented is current as of 1 Nov 79.

3. SUPERSESSION. This publication supersedes IPAC PIC 2070-260-16-JA-79, Landing Capabilities of Soviet Forces Against Japan (U), Mar 79, both in terms of expanded treatment of subject matter and currency of information.

4. PUBLICATION AUTHORITY. This product is non-recurring finished intelligence validated and registered for production in the Defense Intelligence Production Schedule (DIPS) in accordance with DIAM 57-1.

5. AUTHORS. This report was prepared by Mr. Robert J. Peterson and Mr. Thomas E. Talley, Targets Analysis Division, Intelligence Center Pacific. Research assistance was provided by SP5 Duane K. Guisti, also of Targets Analysis Division.

6. DISSEMINATION AND PRODUCTION REQUESTS. PACOM consumers who wish to receive IPAC products should forward requests through appropriate service command channels to CINCPAC (J24). DD Form 1142 will be used for "one-time" requests. Requests by non-PACOM consumers for IPAC products should be forwarded through service channels to DIA (RDS-3C). In case of operational urgency, requests should be forwarded by message to: COMIPAC, HONOLULU, HI (GENSER), or SSO IPAC (SI/SAO), with info copy to CINCPAC. All mail inquiries, and comments on format, contents, and operational utility should be forwarded to Commander, Intelligence Center Pacific, Box 38, Camp H.M. Smith, Hawaii 96861.

R. E. LITTLEFIELD
Colonel, USA
Commander

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

FIGURE

INTRODUCTION

(C) [redacted] strengths and weaknesses of the various force options are kept in continual focus as they bear on the probable success or failure of Soviet landing operations [redacted] In a final section, several attack scenarios are developed to illustrate likely Soviet courses of action.

SUMMARY

(S) Soviet ability to project sea and airborne offensive units against Pacific rim nations continues to grow [redacted]

(S) Improvements notwithstanding, major obstacles to decisive Soviet employment of sea and air units against friendly nations in the Pacific remain [redacted]

(S) [redacted]

I. AMPHIBIOUS CAPABILITIES

SOVIET NAVAL INFANTRY

(S) [redacted]

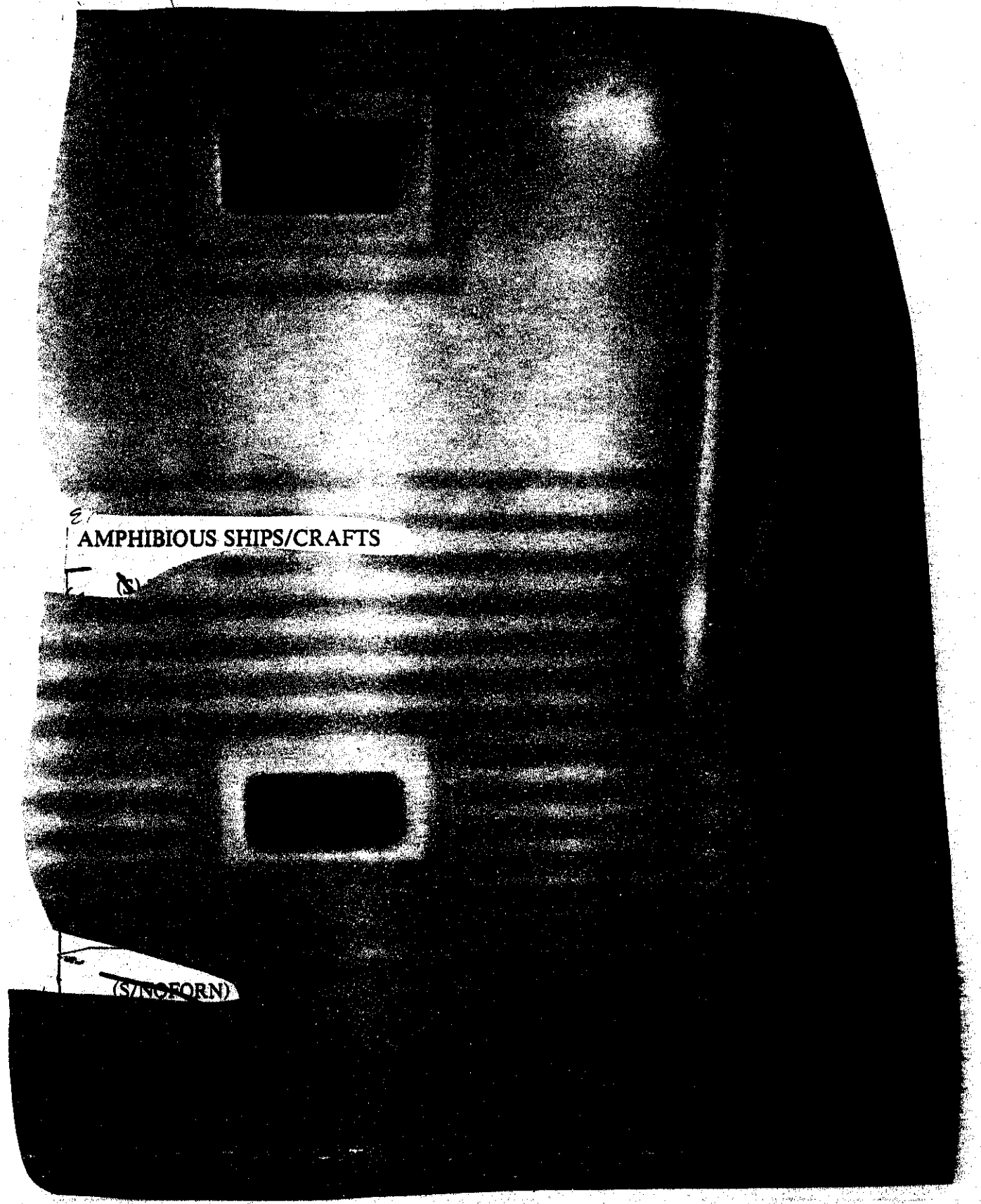
[redacted] The Division's organization and current peacetime strength are as follows:

[redacted]

(S) [redacted] The major pieces of equipment of a full strength naval rifle regiment are shown in Figure 1.

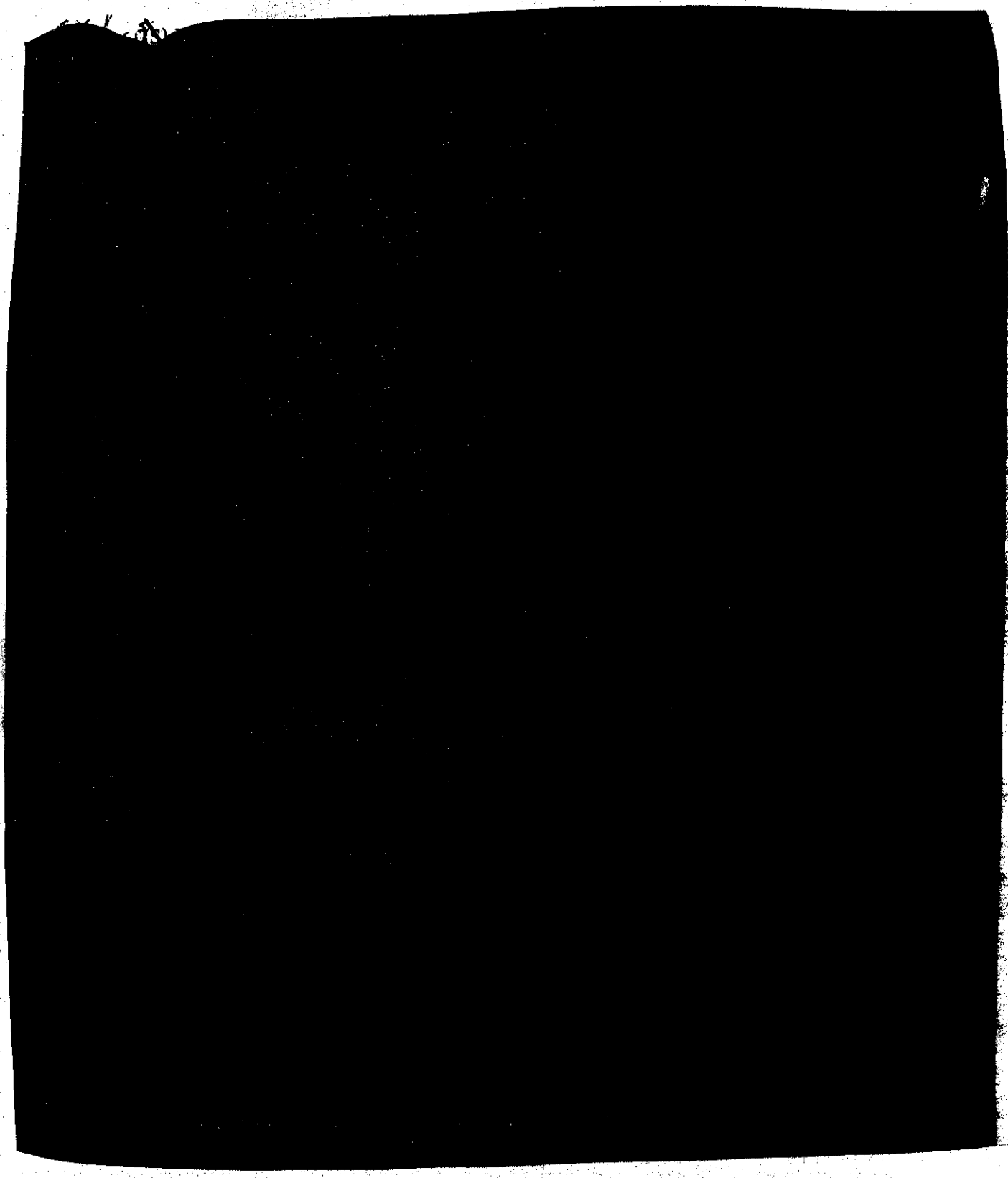
(S) Most of the naval infantry's armored vehicles are amphibious. [redacted]

(S) [redacted]



* page 7 denied in total

SOVIET NAVAL INFANTRY TACTICS



II. MARITIME CAPABILITIES

GROUND FORCES IN SEABORNE ASSAULT ROLE

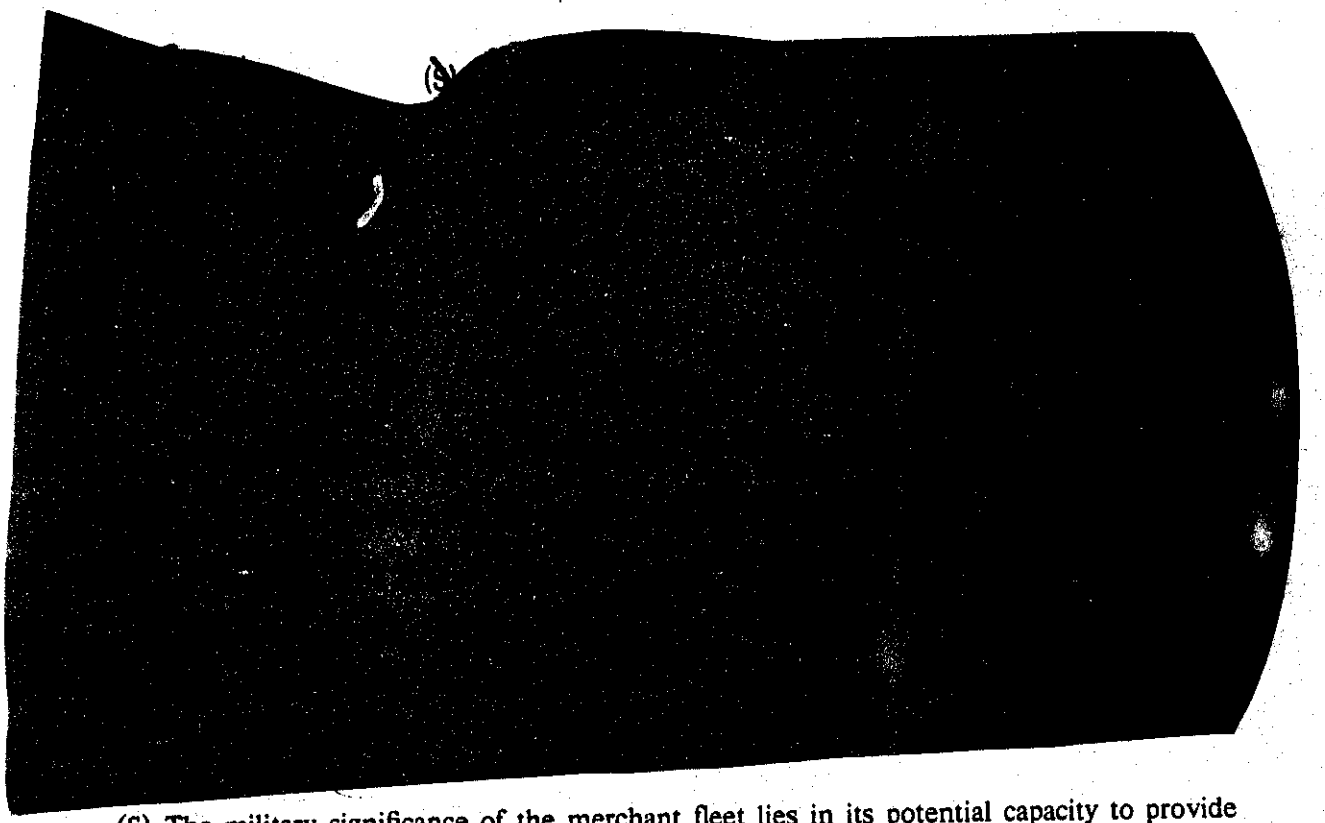
[redacted]

MERCHANT FLEET

(S) The Soviets have extensive civil maritime resources with a great potential for indirect as well as direct support of amphibious military operations (Figure 3). Currently, the USSR ranks fifth in number of ships and eighth in deadweight tonnage (DWT) among the world's oceangoing fleets. [redacted] The merchant marine inventory of 301 tankers has a carrying capacity of nearly 36.6 million barrels. The 70 Soviet passenger ships have a total normal capacity of nearly 27,600 passengers. [redacted] The many automated, large hatch/heavy-lift hoist cargo ships are particularly well-suited for extensive logistics support to deployed naval and ground forces during a limited war.

(S) Most of the new tonnage built at domestic and foreign shipyards for the merchant fleet continues to be general passenger and dry cargo ships under 16,000 DWT. [redacted] RO/RO ships have the advantage of unloading at any point along the coast where the water is deep enough for mooring, but the shore is close enough for unloading over a self-sustaining ramp. Use of RO/RO ships also reduces loading and discharge time, safeguards supplies and equipment, and conceals military-associated cargo. Moreover, the cargo-carrying capacity of the RO/RO units is about three times greater than that of a general cargo ship of the same tonnage for this type of

operation. The RO/FLOW units will have the capability to transport and launch landing craft and amphibious vehicles by ballasting down, similar to an LPD. The Soviets began employing RO/RO ships in military arms deliveries in early 1975.



(S) The military significance of the merchant fleet lies in its potential capacity to provide massive point-to-point lift for power projection operations and long-range logistic support. It also provides the Soviet navy with replenishment vessels. They could also resupply naval vessels engaged in the assault operations with fuel, ammunition, and other supplies. Soviet merchant ships have been used in resupply and prepositioning roles with no structural alterations, although the installation of armaments would be required if these vessels were to be effective participants in a hostile environment.

(S) The Soviets have an extensive oceangoing fishing fleet whose operations span the globe. In addition, the Soviet Union has the world's largest oceanographic fleet; it is subordinate to the naval, civilian, and fishing services (Figure 3).

{page 11 deleted in total
page 12 is blank

III. FIXED WING CAPABILITIES

AIRBORNE DIVISIONS

(S) [redacted] Soviet doctrine dictates that airborne operations are to be conducted by troops of the airborne (paratroop) division (VDV), a separate branch of the ground forces, whose personnel have the requisite training and skills for classic airdrop operations. Moreover, the transport aircraft of Soviet Military Transport Aviation (VTA or Voyenno-Transportnaya-Aviatsiya), have been configured specifically for deployment or redeployment of these airborne forces and their equipment [redacted]

(S) [redacted]

VTA AND AEROFLOT TRANSPORT PLANES

(S) [redacted]

(S) [redacted]

AIRBORNE LOGISTICS/TACTICS

(S) [redacted]

However, with use of an intermediate staging base and with a decision to air-land much of the division's heavy equipment, the assault elements of an airborne regiment could easily parachute to objectives in one airlift. Assuming assault objectives include an airfield, follow-on airlifts could bring in the remainder of the division, heavy equipment, and reinforcements [redacted]

(S) [redacted] The necessity for stopover points in long flights would tie up aircraft for several days before they could be recycled and used again. [redacted] Still to be resolved is whether one division would be sufficient to accomplish the invasion mission.

(S) [redacted]

{ page 15 denoted in total
page 16 is blank

IV. HELIBORNE CAPABILITY

HELICOPTER REGIMENTS AND HELIBORNE TROOPS

(S)

(S)

HELICOPTERS

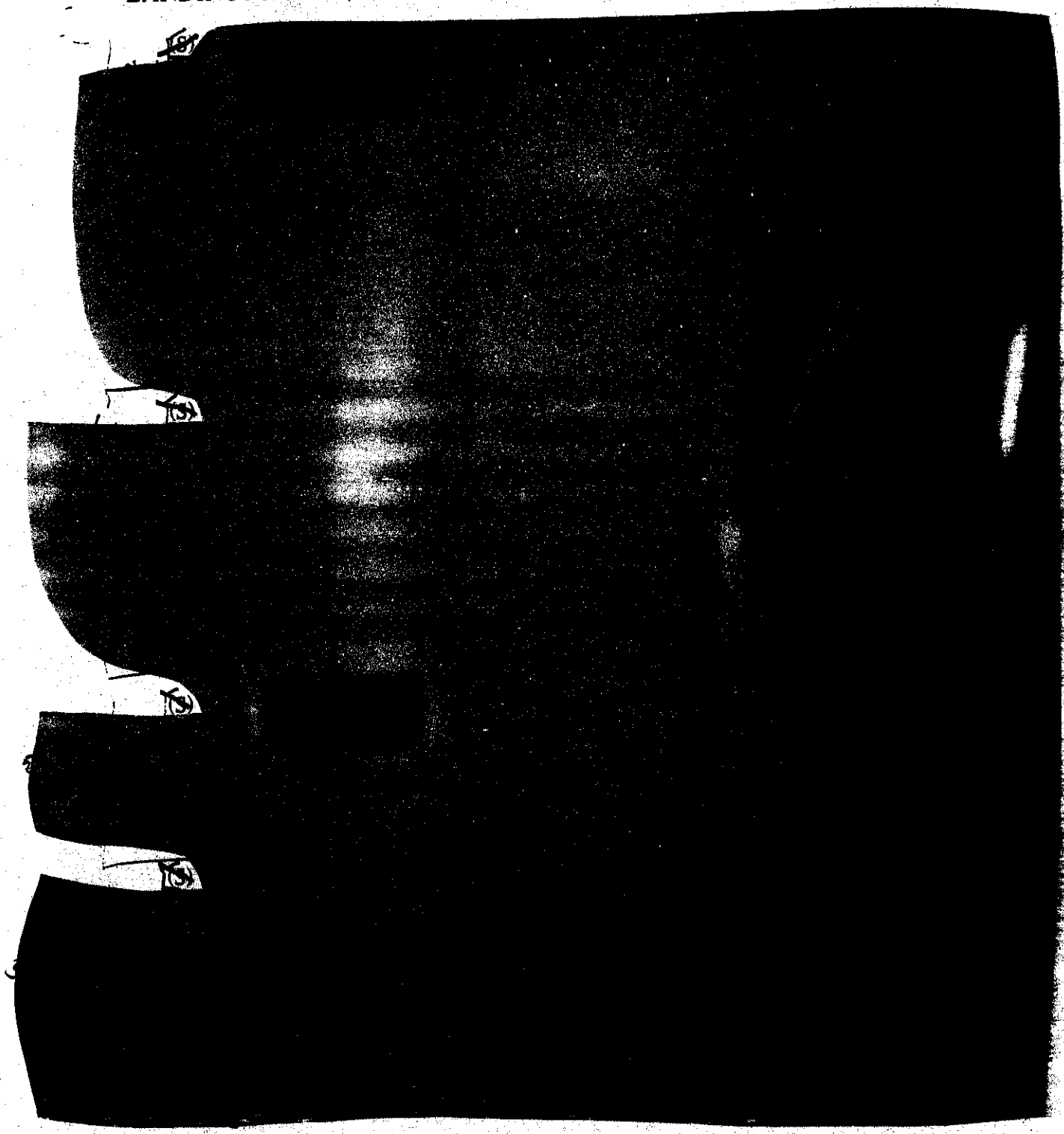
HELIBORNE TACTICS

(S)

[redacted] Such an attack probably would have to include joint operations and combined arms, plus preparatory naval and missile bombardment of the landing site to ensure success of the initial heliborne deployment.

V. FORCE EMPLOYMENT CONSIDERATIONS

LANDINGS AGAINST HOKKAIDO



{pages 20 + 21 denied in total

LANDINGS AGAINST CENTRAL JAPAN

(S) [redacted]

- Any assault by land-based helicopters can be ruled out because they lack the range and are too few in number. [redacted]

AIR/NAVAL ASSAULT AND BLOCKADE

(S) [redacted] In addition, Soviet forces have ballistic and cruise missiles for employment. Lastly, there are surface naval ships and submarines available as a blockading force.

{ pages 23-27 denied in total. Page 27 is last page