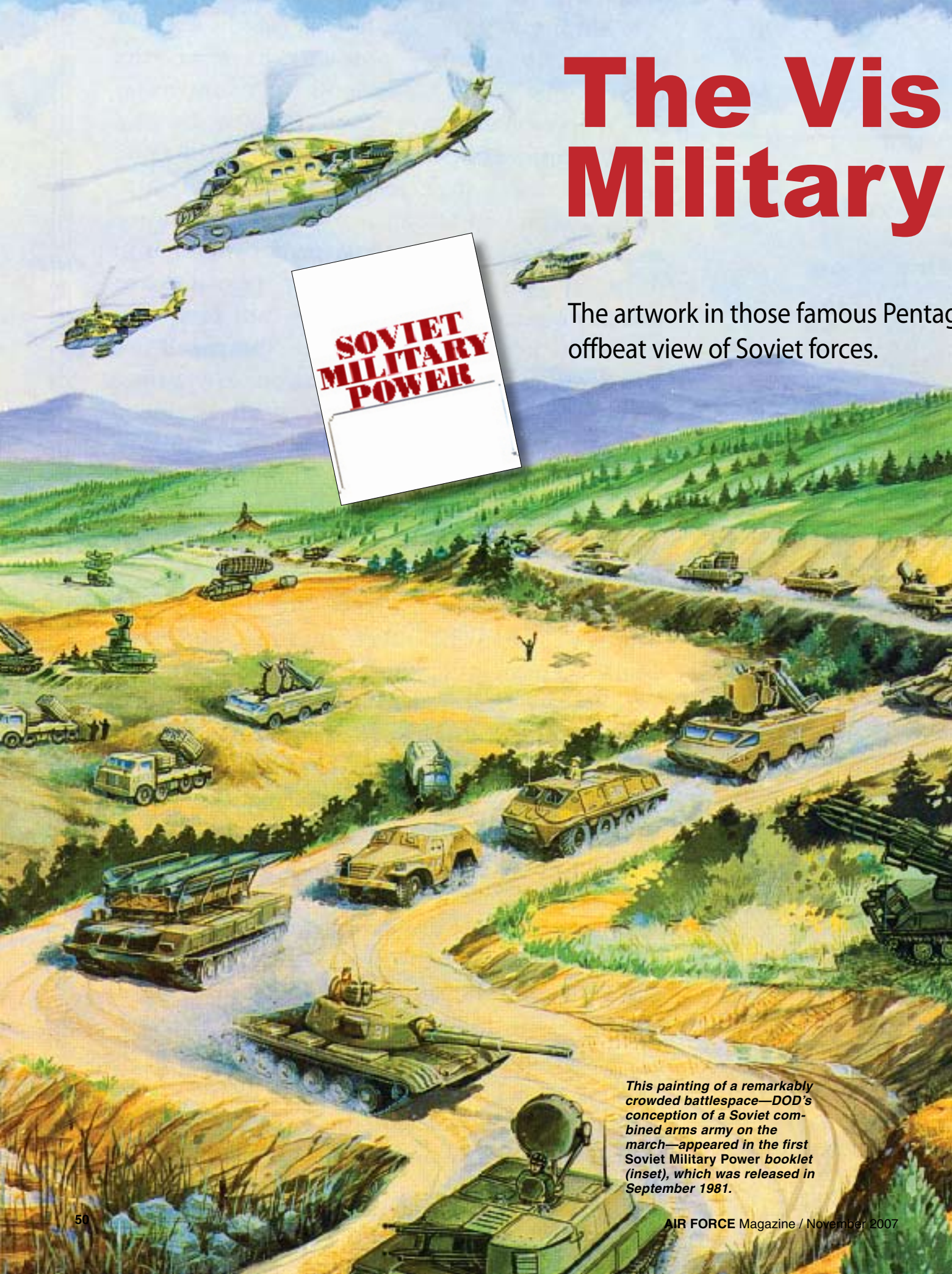


The Vis Military

The artwork in those famous Pentagon offbeat view of Soviet forces.



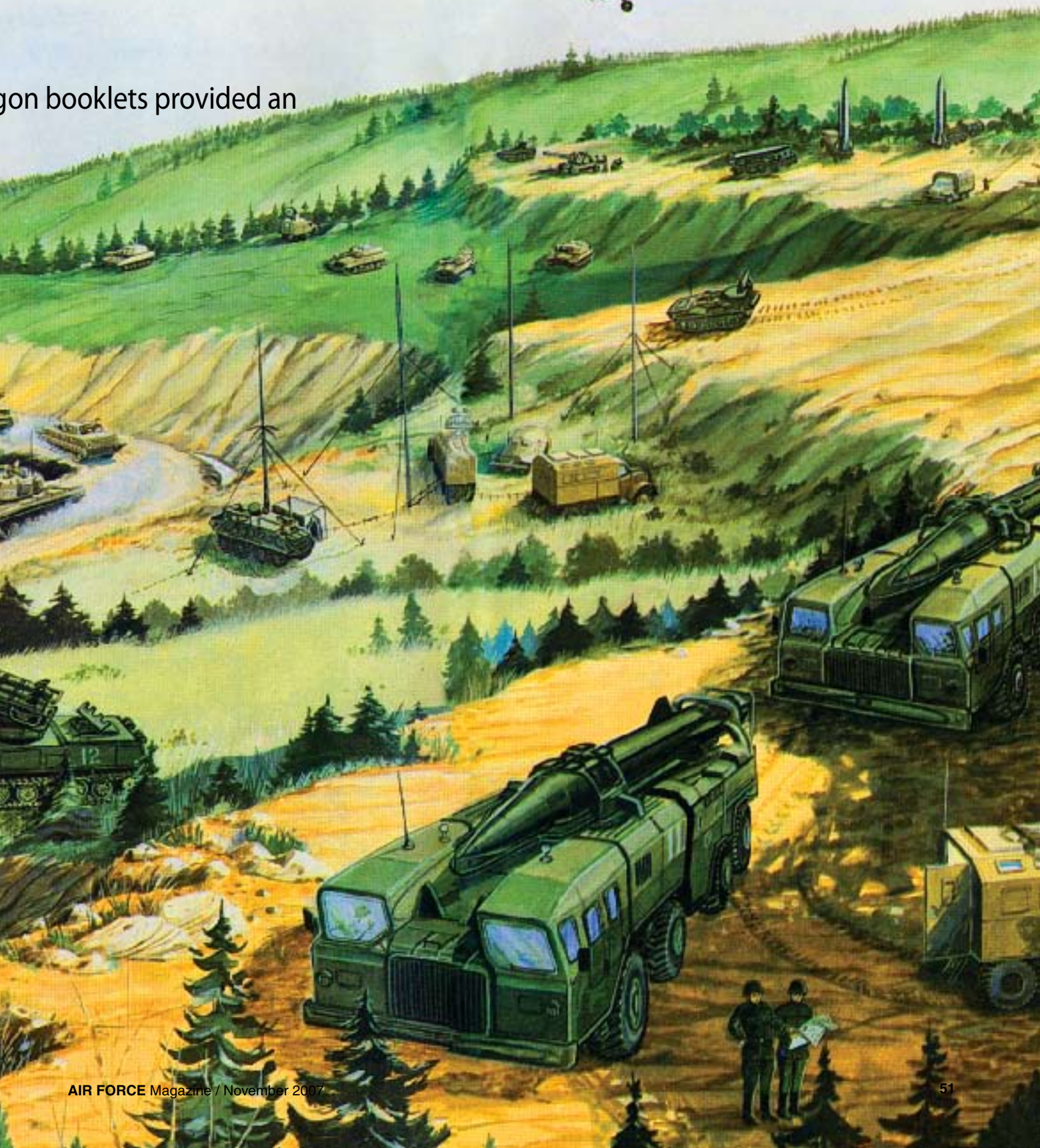
**SOVIET
MILITARY
POWER**



This painting of a remarkably crowded battlespace—DOD's conception of a Soviet combined arms army on the march—appeared in the first Soviet Military Power booklet (inset), which was released in September 1981.

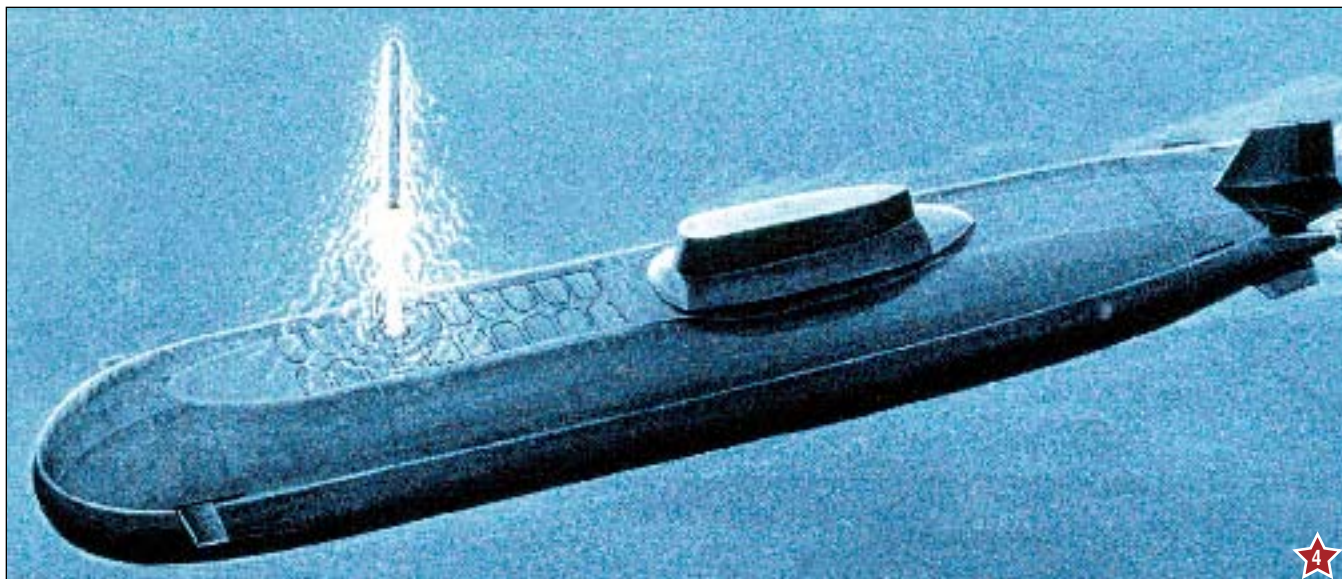
ions of “Soviet Power”

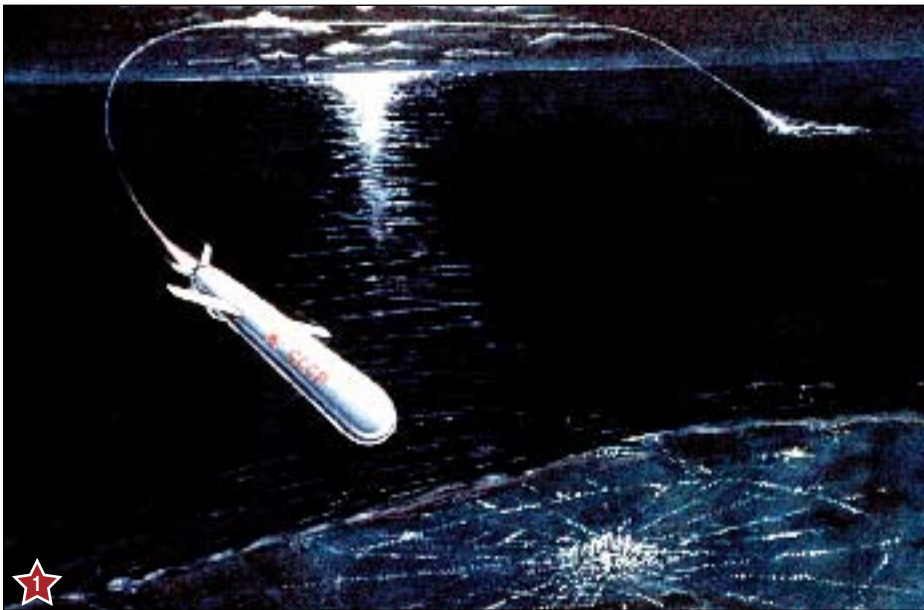
gon booklets provided an



On Sept. 29, 1981, Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger unveiled a 99-page booklet titled *Soviet Military Power*. The *Washington Post* noted it “paints an awesome portrait of the USSR as a military machine.” The *Post* was not just figuratively but also literally correct; SMP boasted actual paintings depicting Soviet weapons and forces. Many readers puzzled over these images; it was said that, to shield sensitive sources, DOD had doctored some of them. Whatever the truth, the colors, composition, and perspective did often impart an unusual feel to the paintings. We hereby offer a look at some of the images from the earliest years.

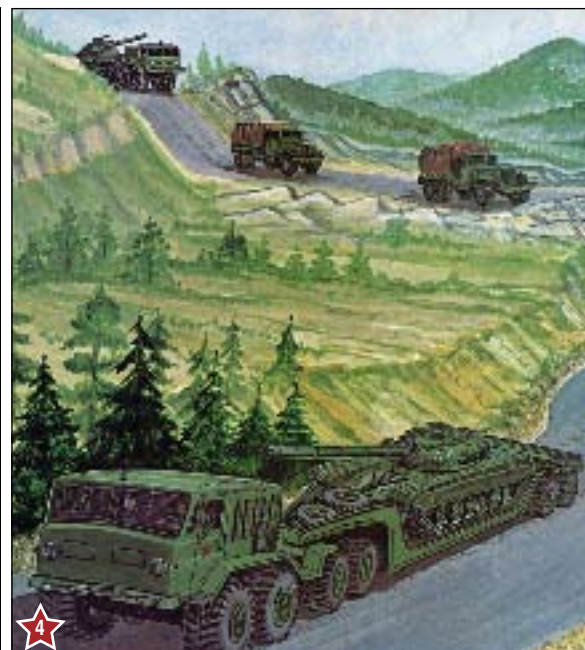
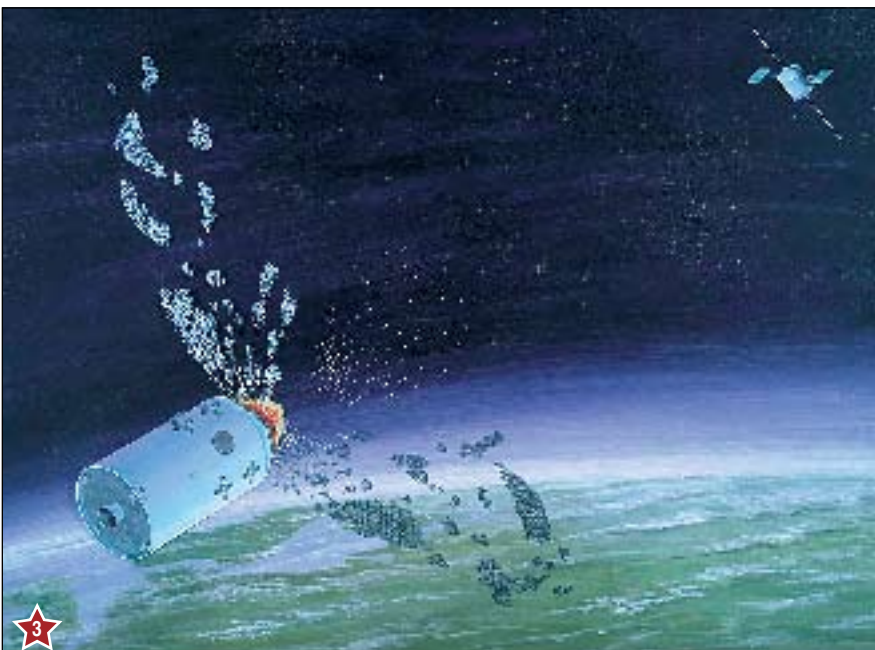
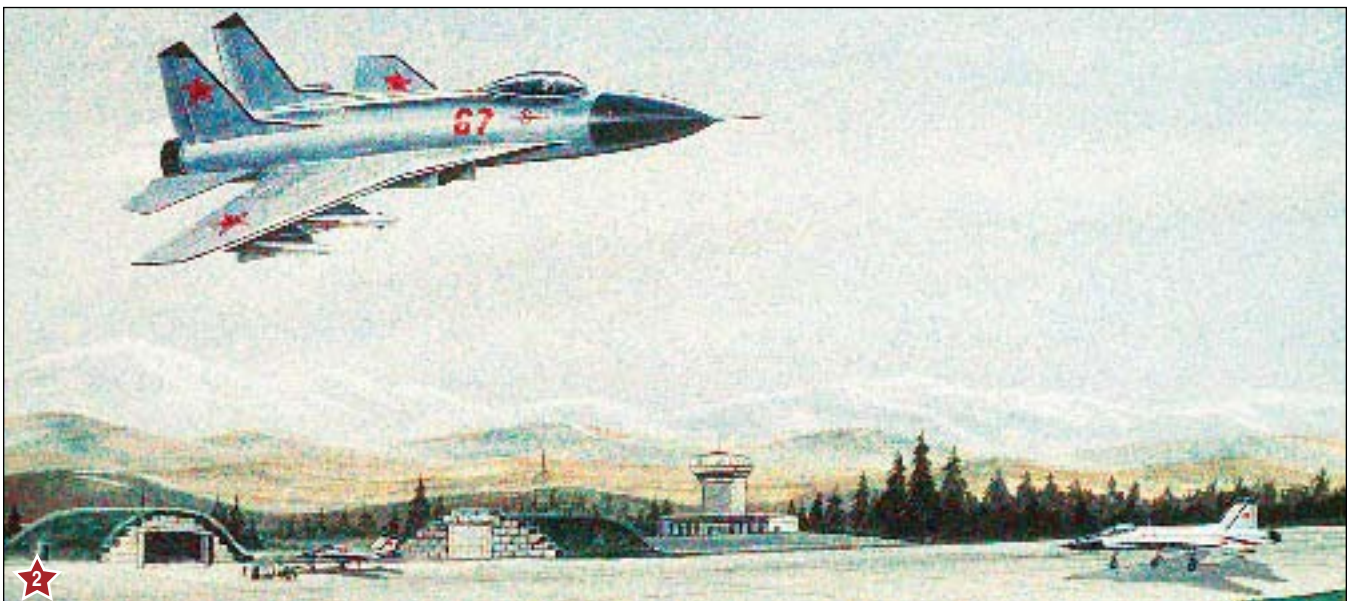
[1] Then-new Su-25 Frogfoot attack aircraft, equipped with 30 mm cannon, rockets, bombs, and missiles. [2] Postulated Soviet space shuttle preparing to deliver personnel and equipment to a manned space complex. [3] A 203 mm self-propelled gun capable of firing a nuclear round. [4] New 25,000-ton Typhoon strategic ballistic-missile-firing submarine.





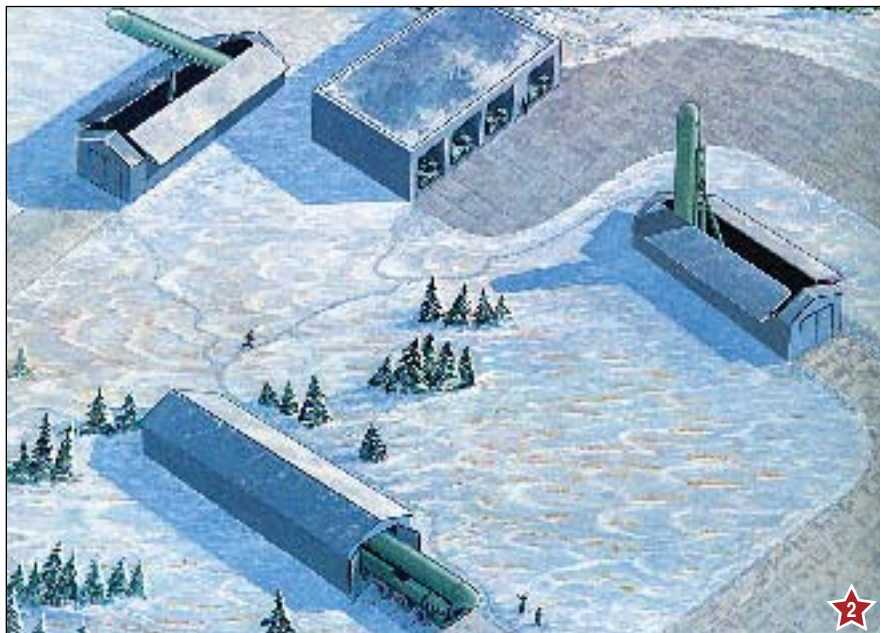
[1] Submarine-launched SS-N-21 nuclear cruise missile over what appears to be a city. **[2]** MiG-29 Fulcrum fighter (airborne) above Su-27 Flanker fighters on an austere Soviet base. **[3]** Orbital anti-satellite weapon attacking a space-based target with "a multipellet blast." **[4]** MAZ-537 heavy equipment transporters hauling main battle tanks to the front.

The distinctive paintings found in Soviet Military Power were produced by Defense Intelligence Agency artists using classified images, including satellite images, along with other data. DIA used the artwork for classified reports and official briefings. The artists produced about 150 paintings expressly for Soviet Military Power.



In the 1980s, DIA employed as many as five artists. They worked at DIA's Illustrations Department, located at Arlington Hall Station in Arlington, Va., a 10-minute drive from the Pentagon. In 1984, they moved to the Defense Intelligence Analysis Center at Bolling AFB, D.C.

[1] Future Tyuratam Space Assembly and Launch Complex, able to launch a space shuttle and heavy-lift and medium-lift vehicles. [2] Three mobile, single-warhead SS-25 ICBMs in their concealment sheds at a remote site. [3] Tanks riding on pontoon bridges and other river-crossing equipment. [4] New Gazelle anti-ballistic missile interceptor rising from silo in a defense complex. [5] A 10-warhead SS-18 ICBM blasting out of its underground launcher. [6] Pushkino anti-ballistic missile radar, a phased array sensor in a structure 120 feet high and 500 feet wide.





[1] A mobile, three-warhead SS-20 intermediate-range nuclear missile after launch from its transporter. [2] Il-76 Candid heavy airlifter trailing paratroops and air-dropped tanks. [3] "Orlan-class" wing-in-ground effect aircraft. [4] Tu-160 Blackjack strategic bomber after launch of a nuclear-tipped AS-15 cruise missile.

DIA has said that its artists and analysts would cooperate closely to produce a rendering of a particular weapon system. The paintings often reproduced a classified photograph that, because of security restrictions, could never be put in the public domain in its original form. Still, many of the paintings themselves were stamped "secret" and have only recently been declassified.

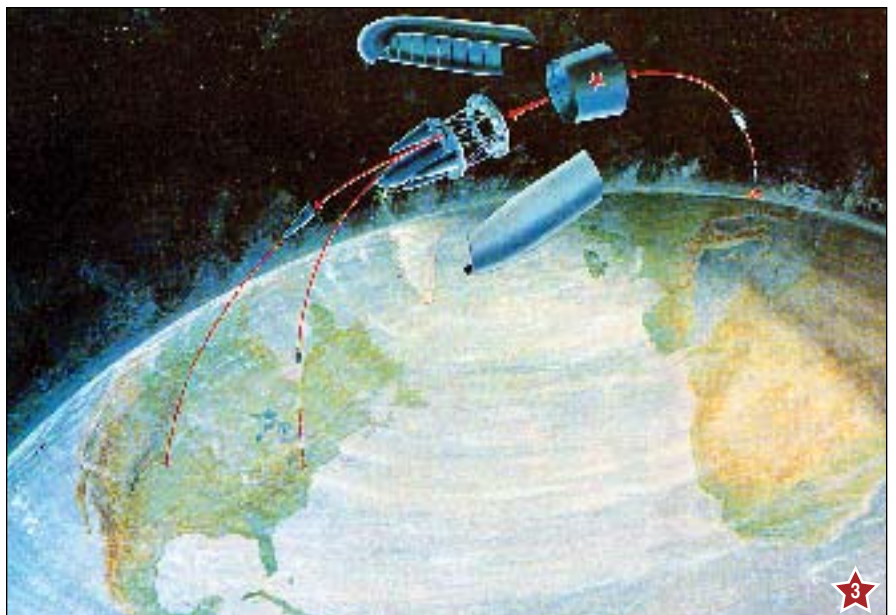
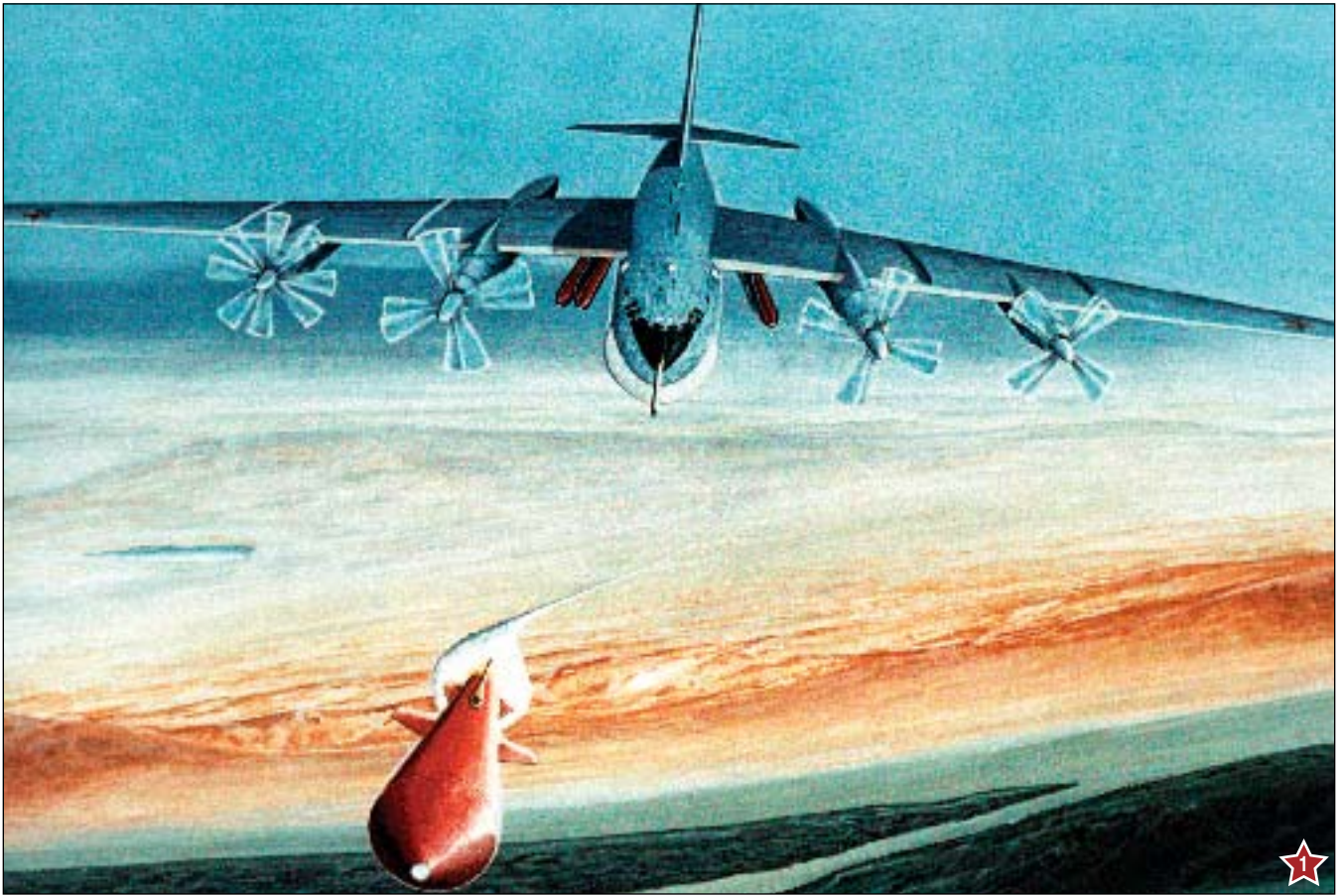




[1] Tu-22M Backfire theater bomber, a swing-wing, turbofan powered aircraft capable of conventional or nuclear attacks. **[2]** The Soviet Army's experimental T-80, said to be the third of a new class of tanks with "markedly improved firepower, armor, and mobility." **[3]** Two models of the Mi-28 Havoc, the USSR's newest attack helicopter. **[4]** Two An-124 Condor heavy-lift transport aircraft, largest airlifter in the world, operating from what appears to be a remote airfield.

The Pentagon each year printed about 200,000 copies of Soviet Military Power, providing a key outlet for DIA artists. By the 1990s, old-fashioned paintings had given way to computer-generated graphics.





[1] Tu-95 Bear H strategic bomber releasing one of its four underwing AS-15 nuclear-tipped cruise missiles. [2] Galosh anti-ballistic missile interceptor ascending from its fixed launch site near Moscow. [3] ICBM warhead separating and releasing its multiple, independently targetable re-entry vehicles toward US targets. [4] Theoretical Soviet space plane carrying out an offensive anti-satellite mission.

All of the more than 1,000 DIA paintings have been stored. They are now treated as historical artifacts and are maintained in the DIA's Military Art Collection. ■