

## Behind The Lines!

March 2010

The military profession with its specialized terminology and stereotypical syntax possesses its own highly stylized argot much like that of any other technical field. This jargonized military idiom characterizes both the spoken and the written language among armed forces around the world. This issue of the newsletter begins a series to examine a variety of linguistic features that are characteristic of the Russian military idiom and views them in the context of their U.S. military analog.

### **Military Commands**

Military commands in Russian frequently are given in the infinitive form rather than as a standard imperative construction we encounter in conventional usage:

Examples: <Начать стрельбу!> → "Commence firing!"  
< Прекратить стрельбу/огонь!> → "Cease fire/firing!"

<К десантированию приступить!> → "Prepare for airdrop!"

<Оставить корабль!> → "Abandon ship!"

<Держать курс!> → "Steer the course!"; "Maintain course/heading!"

<Примкнуть штыки!> → "Fix bayonets!"

<Перископ поднять!> → "Up periscope!"

<Флаг спустить!> → "Lower the flag!"

<Докладывать глубину!> → "Report the depth!"

Urgent commands may be even more succinct:

<К бою!> → "Charge!" "To Battle!"

<В воздух!> → "Scramble aircraft!" (ground command to launch air defense fighter aircraft)

<К погружению!> → "Prepare to dive!" "Dive!"  
(submarine operations)

<Захват!> → "Lock on!" (radar)

<Пуск!> → "Launch!"; "Missile away!"

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