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THE SOLDIER OF THE ARMED FORCES OF THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC FOR THE 21st CENTURY

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ABSTRACT: *The authors of the article handle an interesting and very up-to-date problem related to characterizing a new perspective of training professional soldiers for the tasks of the armed forces in the 21st century. The keystone for this step are the qualitative changes of security situation in the world and in Europe and their influence on the rise of new, qualitatively different, national and international professional armed forces.*

KEY WORDS: *limiting factors of the new security situation, professionalization of the army, national and international armed forces, professional soldier.*

1. INTRODUCTION

In order to characterise the new view on the training of the 21st century soldier it is necessary to take into consideration the fact that the Armed Forces of the Slovak Republic and the whole society will gradually have to come to terms with the impact of both qualitative and quantitative changes in the security situation in Europe and the world after the year 1989. The change in the implementation of the external mission of the armed forces can be seen as a crucial influence.

Up to 1989, armed forces were designed as the means of deterring the clearly defined and identified enemy and were rarely deployed in reality (except for the USA and SU armed forces). Since 1989, armed forces have been designed as the means of combat deployment against asymmetric, and to a greater extent, not clearly identified enemy.

The service in such armed forces will be performed in two phases:

- *the phase outside the combat deployment* (the time prior to deployment - the training for deployment and the time after deployment - rest and recuperation),
- *the phase in combat deployment* (direct combat deployment and recuperation, but in the area of deployment)

2. THE SECURITY AREA AND THE ARMED FORCES OF THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC

The struggle of an individual to meet the basic human need - hunger (survival), has always made a man subjugate the nature. Unless this struggle develops into the coexistence of a man and nature, the mankind will face a kind of *fate of the endangered*, [4, p.54] which a man gets born into, but has no control of.

The coexistence of a man and nature necessitates the shift from one way (a man - an initiator) to *a complex understanding of the interaction*. [13, p.23; 14; 15]

The process which results in the new global threat to mankind is called globalisation [7], the integral part of which, apart from integration, unification and balancing, also combines spatial and social segregation, separation and exclusion (so called time-spatial compression) [1, p.9; 2; 5; 6;]. It can be argued that it is a set of problems of a major transition implemented by current global society.

It involves the understanding of the adaptation of mankind (individual, social group and society) to constant and complex changes with a high level of uncertainty. The complexity of this transition stems from mutually connected issues of current society, namely: 1. disarmament, 2. energy shortage, 3. global warming, 4. growing poverty of the third world countries and 5. unbalanced wealth distribution in the current world. [17; 18] The idea of creating one super civilisation has proved unreal. One ethnocentricity may not be substituted by a different one and thus create a balanced global world. Each culture and civilisation must be viewed as a unique value which must take an adequate place in the new globalised world order. This approach makes the world we live in a system of subsystems, in which the new synthesis must stem from identifying and developing common values [7].

The antipole of globalisation is localisation, which can be simply understood as the process of introducing law and order. If it is to succeed set against globalisation, it must gradually outgrow the current national boundaries (locality). The process which is aimed at preventing chaos, which develops in line with the gradual diminishing of communication between more global and extra-territorial elites and the more "localised" majority is known as the process of introducing new order [16, p.109]. Arranging a part of the world has always meant founding a state. Only a global and extraterritorial - a multinational state, can compete successfully with global and extraterritorial elite in the

future. The local elite (local leaders) must gradually develop into new local elite - multinational elite, which will be able to implement local ideas and manipulate the newly born disorder. The global management and its part, the new local elite, faces demanding intellectual, moral, political, economic and security challenges, concerning the mankind not missing the global ethical challenge and not getting drifted by the whirl of global (world) revolution. The global revolution comprising conflicts in different parts of the world is developing spontaneously, uncontrolled, as if having no internal connections and the resulting ideological basis.

Founding a state (sovereign or multinational) necessitates suppressing state forming ambitions of a wide range of smaller nations and nationalities, or, handing over a portion of sovereignty for the benefit of the whole. The global scene is changing. It is no longer the theatre of international politics, focused on setting and securing borders dividing and providing the territory of legislative and executive sovereignty of each state, but is changing into global politics. That will eventually lead to global democracy providing the share and responsibility of national states, making up multinational social system, for the creation of new norms, traditions and culture, not suppressing national norms, traditions or culture. It must be said that it also applies to the forming of EU - implementing the new order in Europe.

3. THE TRAINING OF THE SOLDIER OF THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

The qualitative change in the security situation in Europe and the world and the process of full professionalization of armed forces will require from both armed forces and society the transformation of current military training, education from military activities only to the training of a soldier taking part in dealing with global problems.

We assume that the change of European security environment will have probably been



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undermining the change of national armed forces up to 2020, when two crucial factors will have to be taken into consideration:

a) *The European Constitution*, which, since 1.12.2009, has been initiating the creation of EU institutions, as well as European armed forces. Their formation will not be instant, but will follow the gradual process of several phases:

- the first phase, which, in fact, has already started and is marked by forming battle groups (2 to 3 countries) following quota principle (selection of agreed number of soldiers from the number of national armed forces),
- the second phase will probably be marked by quota principle of contribution of individual EU member countries into European armed forces as well, but it will involve individuals whose appointment will be set and trained by EU,
- the third phase will most likely be marked by doing away with the quota principle and the contribution into European armed forces will be conducted by recruitment of „Euro citizens“ who will meet the given admission conditions for joining European armed forces and will be funded by the EU (national countries will contribute into security by set percentage of GDP).

b) *The existence of national countries with limited sovereignty* (voluntary handover of the portion of national sovereignty to the EU), which will have a substantial impact upon the quality and the totals of national armed forces. Those can be formed on:

- professional basis, when the need of the integration of these forces with the police force, immigration and highway

police as well as rescue and fire squads will arise. Such an integration of national armed forces will lead to the need to establish an integrated type of ministry – which might be the ministry of defence and security,

- militia basis, established as militia or national guard,
- the basis of active reserves.

Therefore, it will be necessary, at least until 2020, for the managements of EU member armed forces, as well as the management of the Armed Forces of the Slovak Republic, to develop and design a qualitatively new, compatible system of comprehensive, but also differentiated training of professional personnel of the following possible categories:

- *a professional soldier of European armed forces* (but not international), who will evolve from a national force soldier, but will not be trained or funded by a national state (funding of the training will be provided by means of EU member country contributions to defence),
- *a professional soldier of integrated national armed forces*, who will be trained and funded by the national state and will serve and be deployed to defence only within the territory of the national state,
- *a voluntary soldier* (a militia or national guard member, not active reserves), who will only enjoy the benefits of a national state and whose service and training will be unpaid and limited to the territory of a national state,
- *a member of active reserves*, who will be recruited from all the above mentioned categories of soldiers, especially from the category of professional personnel after having completed active service and been dismissed as reserves.

This system of comprehensive training of soldiers, being divided into particular categories, will necessitate further subdividing according to particular socio-professional groups, namely into the ones of training: *professional staff and NCOs, warrant officers, COs and generals*.

It is necessary to bear in mind the fact that providing the training of professional personnel should follow the individual phases of professionalism of an individual (preparation and development phase), as well as the phases of military unit life cycle (combat deployment training, combat deployment and rest and recuperation).

The newly created system of training of soldiers will have to be focused on two basic categories of soldiers in particular: *contracted professional soldiers* – so called military semi-professionals (military service up to 6 years), comprising the staff and NCOs and only exceptionally COs-specialists and *military professionals* (military service of over 10 years, which can be considered military career), comprising mainly career officers (military managers – commanders). Only in exceptional cases this category will comprise warrant officers and NCOs – highly specialised experts. This differentiation of armed forces personnel corresponds with the differentiation of armed forces into: the so called *professional core* (military professionals) and the *periphery* or *networks* (contract staff or outsourced services). [10]

The newly created system of soldier training for the 21st century is an integral part of military reform and the transfer of military education. It is aimed at improving the training of professional commander staff in particular (career officers) for the 21st century. The training of military professional personnel must therefore be in line with the growing complexity of conditions of military activity conduct, and the combat readiness of troops, as well. Apart from this, it must stem from the new understanding of the position and role of soldier training in the process of lifelong education of a citizen, not only in general, but also in a given society. It is based on the shift from traditional encyclopaedic, memorising and directive-matter education to the

education providing creative humane education focusing on activity and personal responsibility and the power to create one's own progressive and creative way of being in the new millennium.

The professionalism of armed forces [12] has involved and will involve higher demands on the quality of the training of military professionals, namely career officers. Military education facilities provide the most comprehensive and focused and the highest quality training. The high military authorities therefore are paying great attention to the transformation of military education currently. The new concept of training is being developed, capable of responding to challenges the armed forces face. [11] It must be in line with the concept of the reform and modernisation effort. Its objective is to promote the changes which will provide putting the training of military professionals in line with the trends in the development of military science and modern military thinking, and promote the process of the preparation of the EU armed forces to join NATO and the merge of national forces with the EU armed forces.

Military education [8], must provide the entry level training of military professionals, their lifelong education and also the training of citizens working in public and government administration in the areas of security, defence of the state. Great attention must be paid to the transformation of military education that will provide military-specialist training and general education of military personnel, which would be part of their lifelong education and would also make the core of socio-scientific research in the areas of military, security and defence.

The process of lifelong education in the information (learning) society is according to the international documents based on four fundamental pillars: 1. learning to learn, 2. learning to act, 3. learning to co-exist, and 4. learning to exist (to be). Lifelong education covers all areas of society and military. The views identifying with the education and value structure represent great danger of slowing the process of lifelong education in the military down. These views seriously hamper the career of military personnel and bear a strong



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demotivation value. Ideally, education must be linked with an appointment, and a rank with the echelon of leadership.

Forming of military professionals must provide and develop not only their military-specialist skills, but also their general skills, unique for each member of a given society. Thus, two extremes must be avoided. *The first one* is a very narrow specialisation of military professionals to combat deployment (the example of units trained for mission deployment). *The second one* is the general training of military professionals just for a potential deterrence (so called peace service only). The most ideal model of a professional soldier in peace time would be a „uniformed citizen“, who would be ready to meet the deterrence function immediately, and, having completed a short-term intensive specialised training, would be capable of combat deployment (mission). That applies to armed forces only. A professional soldier capable of combat deployment must be considered for multinational and international armed forces .

The main objective of comprehensive training of professional military personnel for the 21st century is developing effective subsystem of lifelong education, which alongside with the subsystem of military education will provide quality performance of military service of all categories of soldiers of both national and multinational forces and enable smooth and troublefree integration of a former soldier into society.

The implementation of the changes is not going to be easy, as it will lead to military education representing a modern educational, learning and training system, based on relatively independent, yet closely connected three echelons of soldier training. The three-echelon differentiation of military education is determined by its mission, objectives and the following set of tasks:

- *the primary area* will comprise training units aimed at training a professional soldier at the echelon of staff and NCOs (their entry and specialised training),
- *the secondary area* will comprise specialised NCO schools aimed at development training and the basic training of warrant officers and recruited COs ,
- *the tertiary area* will comprise a military college(university) aimed at implementing higher and career education of COs and warrant officers (exceptionally NCOs-experts), of mostly national armed forces.

It follows from the echelon based system of military education that the training of a soldier at particular echelons will be provided by the subjects of military education. Each of them will provide the education of the specific target group of specific area of study, education and training.

Experience has proved that the given innovation process in the area of training of professional soldiers is the process of constant and dynamic changes, that is why the main strategic concepts, objectives and the principles of the development of comprehensive professional military personnel (soldiers and staff) training must be developed. That means it is necessary to pay great attention to some social aspects of junior military professional training.

4. CONCLUSION

It follows from the above mentioned, that such an important change, as the transfer to fully professional armed forces is and which to a great extent alters the way of meeting the objective of defence function, brings about in all specific national armed forces, as well as the society itself, the change

in relation to a newly-created category of its members, professional soldiers

We draw from the fact that a military professional gets developed throughout the whole period of professional military service. But only the preparation phase offers the basic conditions to acquire the necessary qualities and skills of the military professional for the 21st century, which include the following:

- the ability of analytical and swift thinking, logical evaluation of the given combat situation., drawing justified conclusions and creative decision making,
- the ability to fulfil the tasks within crisis management and peace operations,
- good language skills,
- the ability to control one's own activities and everyday activities of troops,
- readiness for managerial, personnel, educational and social work.

The fore-mentioned qualities make up only the basic conditions to create the potential necessary for armed forces to be able to face new security challenges (both military and non military) and be capable of common cooperation at national (armed forces along with other segments of security area), international (national armed forces along with other national armed forces or cooperation within a coalition) and also at the fore-mentioned multinational levels. In the transition of armed forces to fully professional ones, the symmetric efficiency of deployment of professional soldiers must be taken into account in every category. The system of military education, being the part of armed forces of the country in question, plays the crucial role in meeting this objective (providing the quality of human potential). Only the military education system understood in this way will provide not only the entry level training of a professional soldier, but also personal development into a military professional, as well as the reintegration into common life. It will provide the training and development of not only the military sector staff, but also civil and government administration personnel, dealing with national security, protection and defence issues.

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