

The creation of the armed forces of independent Ukraine: military and political background

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Abstract

The article studies the stages of creating the national army in Ukraine before the collapse of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) and during the first years of existence of the independent state of Ukraine. The civil society in Ukraine raised the issue of the formation of the national army driven by the sovereignty aspirations and the demands to do military service exclusively on the Ukrainian territory without involving in the Soviet Union conflicts. The military-political circumstances and their influence on the creation of the Armed Forces of Ukraine have been analysed. Certain similarities between the ways of creation of armed forces in the Baltic States and Ukraine, in particular the role of socio-political movements in this process have been studied. The authors have compared the main principles of the formation of armed forces in Ukraine, Moldova, Lithuania and disclosed the relation between the principles of their foundation and further territorial integrity.

Keywords: Armed Forces of Ukraine, anti-army social movements, Officers' Union of Ukraine, Popular Front of Estonia, legislative acts

Introduction

In the late 1980s, a discourse on the imminent dissolution of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) spread within the Ukrainian society. Hopes of post-disintegration independence became more intense among USSR peoples, including Ukrainians.

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The extraterritorial way of manning the Soviet army was a reason for sending representatives of the peoples of the USSR, mostly Russians, to Ukraine, while Ukrainians served mainly outside Ukraine. In particular, in 1990, up to 75% of the officers in the three military districts of Ukraine were Russians, and in the troops of the Ministry of Internal Affairs their amount even reached 80%. In 1990, 60% of the officers in the Far East and Transbaikalia districts were Ukrainians. In general, there were more than 40% Ukrainians in the officer corps of the Soviet Army.

When any crises emerged in the Soviet Union, the Soviet army was involved whether a large number of Ukrainians were obliged to participate in the military operations. As a result of such operations outside of the Ukrainian territories, there were losses among Ukrainians, which added the negative perception of the extraterritorial principle of the Soviet Army.

Social movements for the creation of national armed forces spread in the most of Soviet republics. One of the most powerful contingents of the Soviet Army, which was financed by the Soviet Union budget, was deployed on the territory of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic (Ukrainian SSR). The Soviet army became considered as an “imperial”, “occupying” and “totalitarian” due to its influence in certain events in Hungary (1956), Czechoslovakia (1968), and Afghanistan war. It resulted in a military opposition conducted in two ways: a) civil and political anti-military movements (the Baltic States); b) disarming the army elements, weapon plundering, the weaponization of civilians (Transcaucasia).

The creation of Ukraine’s army started according to the Baltic states’ scenario. This process was initiated by oppositional public and political organizations, namely the Ukrainian Helsinki Group, the People’s Movement of Ukraine (Rukh), the Officers’ Union of Ukraine (OUU), the Association of Soldiers’ Mothers of Ukraine (ASMU), etc. The demands towards Soviet authorities to provide Ukrainians with military service within the territory of Ukraine spread in the independent press. Spontaneous opposition took the form of public protests: picketing headquarters of military districts, military units, military commissariats, rejection of service in the Soviet army, unauthorized rallies calling: “Let Ukraine has its armed forces!”, “No occupational army!”.

Top party leaders relied on the army and used it to keep the integrity of the totalitarian government system. Using “laws and order” as a cover, the armed forces were used in national conflicts, which multiplied in the period of communist regime. Since 1989, Moscow had been involving military units to suppress democratic public speaking and to intimidate the civilian population in Georgia, Azerbaijan, and the Baltic states. The use of armed forces against Lithuanians at the beginning of 1991 resulted in bloody events in Vilnius. These factors influenced the formation of the social opinion in Ukraine towards the creation of the national armed forces.

There are two main concepts of creating a national army based on various principles: the evolutionary reform of military units or the creation of new armed forces after the dissolution of present military formations. The authors have studied

the experience of Ukraine and other European post-Soviet states, and made the relevant conclusions. The article is referred to the studies on military history, comparative history and institutional history.

The purpose of the article is to analyse the stages of creating the national army in Ukraine before the collapse of the USSR, and during the first years of Ukrainian independence. The authors have analysed military, political, social circumstances, and their impact on creating the Armed Forces of Ukraine.

The research has been based on historicism, objectivity and systematics. Furthermore, the authors have used interdisciplinary approaches, and outlined socio-political contexts through the chronological method. The analysis of the scientific researches concerning institutional and organizational aspects of creating the Armed Forces of Ukraine has been based on functional and structural approaches. The methods of historical chronology and comparative studies have made it possible to disclose the principles of creating the Armed Forces of Ukraine and other post-Soviet European states.

The article is divided into 7 sections. Following the Introduction, Section 1 reviews the essential studies, and describes military, political and social backgrounds. Besides, it includes the comparative analysis of creating armed forces in Ukraine, Moldova and Lithuania. Section 2 describes the role of political forces in transforming military institutions in Ukraine. The theoretical and legal base of creating the Ukrainian armed forces is presented in Section 3, while Section 4 displays the role of the Officers' Union of Ukraine as an agent of change. Section 5 reviews the development of the Armed Forces of Ukraine during the first years of Ukrainian independence. Finally, significant conclusions of the research are discussed in the Conclusions Section.

1. The armed forces are an attribute of statehood

A comprehensive understanding of the formation and development of the Armed Forces of Ukraine requires an acquaintance of the military and political background on the Ukrainian territories before the collapse of the Soviet Union.

The scientific work of Yakymovych (1996, p. 359) has concentrated on important historical knowledge of creating the Armed Forces of Ukraine. Yakymovych has outlined the periods of formation of the social idea of the armed forces creation. He has introduced the concept of “Ukrainian army renewal”, and proved that the formation of the real Armed Forces of Ukraine started on August 24, 1991, relying on the regulatory and legal framework.

Savchuk (1992, p. 160) has considered the statistics of non-combat losses in the USSR which was secret for the society for years. Based on the facts, the author has disclosed results of moral and physical abuses due to ethnic descent, while hundreds of Ukrainian young men called up for military service died.

Muravskiy (2008, pp. 81-89) has analysed students' protests of Ukrainian higher educational institutions concerning the military service in the Soviet army that took place at the end of the 1980s - beginning of the 1990s. The author has stated that the social movement for Ukrainian military units' resurgence started in October 1988. Herewith, Savchuk (1992) has referred to the "Hromada" Students' Union, which demanded leaders of the Communist Party of Ukraine to provide the Ukrainian SSR with economic independence, guarantee the state status of the Ukrainian language by law and allow the formation of Ukrainian military units.

Events of the second half of the 1980s in other USSR republics influenced the formation of social and political forces in Ukraine and their activity. Haran has revealed a great response in Ukraine to the events in the Baltic States connected to the commemoration of the "Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact" in 1987 and the anniversary of declarations on Estonian and Lithuanian independence in 1988. In April 1988, the idea of the National Front spread in Estonia and abroad, in turn, influencing the formation of the People's Movement for Reconstruction (Rukh) in Ukraine, in September 1988. The main statements and demands of national movements in the Ukrainian SSR were quite close to the demands of national movements in the Baltic States (Haran, 1993, p. 15).

Exploring the process of creation of civil organizations in 1985-1995, Levchuk (2009, p. 154) has studied the social activity of retired servicemen and servicewomen and has analysed the work of women's organizations struggling to return their sons to Ukraine to do military service in their native country. The author has highlighted the Association of soldiers' mothers of Ukraine (ASMU), which called on authorities to provide Ukrainian youth with military service within the territory of Ukraine. Rusnachenko has noted that, at the end of the 1980s – beginning of the 1990s, under the pressure of society, Ukrainian students and soldiers' mothers, the Parliament of Ukraine "Verkhovna Rada" (Supreme Council) adopted a range of declarations and decisions in defense of Ukrainian young men and announced the inadmissibility of their involvement in zones of international conflicts. However, the Parliament did not propose mechanisms of bringing those decisions to life (Rusnachenko, 1992, p. 72).

An analysis of historiographical sources on the establishment of the Ukrainian armed forces has been conducted by Pokotylo (2010, pp. 95-106). The author has studied the origins of regulatory and legal decisions that provided conditions for national army creation. Pokotylo has highlighted public organizations, public and political associations that discussed and defined the approaches to the creation of the armed forces in Ukraine. He has emphasized the activity of officers who objectively estimated the social and political situation in Ukraine and offered to form the armed forces based on Soviet army units situated on the Ukrainian territory at the time of the independence declaration.

It was in the mid-1980s when the ideational and organizational preparation of the Ukrainian army renaissance started. Muliava was one of the first chiefs of the

social and psychological service of the Armed Forces of Ukraine. In 1988, he developed and published the “Concept of Ukrainian Army creation by the peaceful transformation of the forces deployed in Ukraine into the Armed Forces of Ukraine and their further reformation” (Muliava, 1990, pp. 57-59).

The history of Ukraine's nuclear disarmament has been analysed in the works of Ukrainian and foreign researchers. Ukrainian researchers Perepelytsia and Kostenko have argued that Ukraine's adoption of the non-nuclear principles of defense has become an essential prerequisite for the international recognition of Ukraine's independence and the right to form its army (Perepelytsia, 1998, p. 108; Kostenko, 2015, p. 464).

The British researcher Charles Dick has stated that the key obstacle to the adoption of the military doctrine of Ukraine was the problem of nuclear weapons. He has referred to the fact that the draft law was submitted in early 1992. However, due to negotiations on nuclear disarmament, it entered into force only on October 19, 1993 (Dick, 1994, pp. 507-520). In the United States, particularly within the scientific society, there were different views on Ukraine's nuclear status. Mearsheimer has stressed that the Russians have already had a negative history of relations with Ukrainians and that Ukraine will not be able to defend itself from nuclear Russia through traditional weapons (Mearsheimer, 1993, pp. 50-66). However, the majority believed that to maintain stability in Europe, Ukraine should get rid of nuclear weapons as soon as possible.

At a meeting of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) leaders on November 30, 1991, the Chairman of the Parliament of Ukraine stated that the units and formations located on the territory of Ukraine would take the military oath of allegiance to the people of Ukraine voluntarily. The Black Sea fleet refused to take the oath. Therefore, Ukraine has created its fleet on its own. In 2014, the Russian Federation used the Black Sea Fleet for the illegal annexation of the Ukraine's Crimean Peninsula.

On the territory of the Republic of Moldova in Tiraspol, there was the 14th Field army, with the help of which the so-called the Pridnestrovian Moldavian Republic was created but has not been recognized by anyone in the world.

In Lithuania, the creation of the army went the other way. On March 11, 1990, the Parliament of the Lithuanian SSR decided to withdraw from the USSR. Moscow launched an economic blockade in April 1990. On January 8-9, 1991, the “Alpha” special unit of the KGB and the Pskov 76th airborne division entered the territory of Lithuania. At that time, several hundred thousand Lithuanians stood around the Parliament for several days, building barricades near it. Soviet troops did not storm the Lithuanian Parliament. Instead, on January 13, they seized the Vilnius TV centre, the TV tower, and television. The world community has condemned Moscow's actions. The parliaments of Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Moscow, and Leningrad city councils also expressed their indignation.

After the August coup, Moscow tried to maintain its military presence. However, the Baltic states and the UN General Assembly saw this as a manifestation of Russian imperialism. Therefore, the US Senate warned the Russian Federation that it would apply sanctions against the Russian Federation if it did not withdraw its troops. Russian troops withdrew from Lithuania in the summer of 1993. And the state created its own army of its citizens.

2. The role of political forces in the transformation of the armed contingent on the territory of the Ukrainian SSR into the Armed Forces of Ukraine

Using the Ukrainocentrism principle, Ukrainian researchers have highlighted an important influence of the democratic press on spreading ideas about the creation of Ukraine's own armed forces. Firstly, the information used to be popularized by the leaflets of non-official public organizations. These became the first printed materials addressed to the military officers in the Ukrainian language at the end of the 1980s (Seheda, 2012, p. 464). The Soviet Army was exclusively Russian speaking that is why those first steps became an important milestone in returning the Ukrainian language to the army.

The policy of publicity and liquidation of censorship proclaimed at the end of the 1980s – beginning of 1990s favoured the spreading of true information on the Soviet Army. Namely, the wide audience became aware of the statistics of death cases of Ukrainian military officers in zones of armed conflict and during their military service. According to Savchuk, in peaceful times in the Soviet Army on average 6600 young men of different nationalities died, and one out of four among them was from Ukraine (Savchuk, 1992, p. 160). Public disclosure via the press of such negative phenomena in the Soviet army caused the intensification of demands in Ukraine for creating its armed forces.

At the same time, demands for the reformation of the military sphere became more intense in Ukrainian society. Civil society insisted on entitling republics of the USSR to solve military and political issues independently. Ukrainian democratic political forces organized protests against army involvement in internal political and interethnic conflicts.

In December 1989, the Constitutive Congress of Ukrainian Students' Association (USA) with the participation of students from 14 educational institutions of Ukraine declared the necessity of demilitarization of higher educational institutions and demanded to "remove obligatory attendance of the classes in military training and civil defense" (Panibudlaska, 1997, p. 550).

In January 1990, following a meeting of representatives of Kyiv, Lviv, Rivne, Ternopil, Khmelnytskyi and Chernivtsi regional organizations of the Association of Independent Ukrainian Youth (AIUY), it was decided to start an all-republic campaign against sending Ukrainian youth outside the republic, for military service. On February 22-23, 1990 in many Ukrainian cities the protests took place under the

slogans: “Mothers! Whom do your sons serve?!”, “We are for the Ukrainian Insurgent Army! We are against the Soviet army!” (Kobzar, 2012, p. 265).

In February-March 1990, representatives of the most authoritative democratic organizations including the Ukrainian Helsinki Association (UHA), Rukh, AIUY and the Students’ Brotherhood held protest actions in Ukrainian cities against the use of Ukrainian soldiers in the bloody confrontation in Azerbaijan and Armenia.

Women’s organizations also expressed their position reflecting mothers’ concerns towards the service of young men in the Soviet army. In September 1990, the constitutional congress of Organization of Soldiers’ Mothers of Ukraine (OSMU) took place in the Ukrainian central region Zaporizhzhia. As a result of the event, OSMU declared the aim to promote the return of Ukrainian soldiers and sailors to serve on the territory of Ukraine. Performing constant civil control over the recruitment and military service in each garrison of Ukraine was also included into the goals of OSMU. In time OSMU extended its demands: the authorities were required to provide Ukrainian young men with military service on the territory of Ukraine, depoliticize the army, liquidate military construction units, provide social protection of servicemen (Levchuk, 2009, p. 154). The OSMU requirements were similar to the principles of the AIUY. In May 1991, the AIUY announced that the existence of professional armed forces is one of the main necessary conditions for getting and guaranteeing the independence of Ukraine (Muravskiy, 2008, pp. 80-89).

On July 30, 1990, due to the pressure of democratic youth associations and the OSMU, the Ukrainian Parliament adopted the Resolution on the inadmissibility of using Ukrainian servicemen or servicewomen, working for law enforcement agencies, in zones of conflict. The Resolution stated that citizens of Ukraine had to do military service on the territory of the republic as a rule. The resolution stipulated that all military and law enforcement personnel of the republic must return from foreign zones of conflict to the Ukrainian territory within one month (Verkhovna Rada of Ukrainian SSR, 1990). Nevertheless, no mechanism was proposed for creating the conditions for Ukrainian youth to fulfill their military service on the national territory.

In October 1990 participants of the students’ hunger strike in Kyiv called on the republic authorities to introduce vital changes. During the protest various other marches were held in solidarity with the students. The strikers were supported by many people’s deputies (members of the Parliament of Ukraine), intellectuals, students and lecturers of multiple higher educational institutions. The protesters asked the Ukrainian authorities to refuse the signing of the new Union Treaty and to relocate on the national territory the Ukrainian citizens that were doing compulsory military service outside the Ukrainian SSR. On October 17, 1990, answering the students’ demands, the Parliament of Ukraine adopted the Resolution “On consideration of the demands of students hunger-striking in the city of Kyiv since October 2, 1990” which stated the promise “to provide compulsory military service

of Ukrainian citizens outside of the republic only based on voluntary consent” (Verkhovna Rada of Ukrainian SSR, 1990).

The social idea on the necessity of creating its armed forces was formed in Ukraine and spread more and more among the military personnel and the Ukrainian society. This idea was based on the declarations and programs of public and political organizations, democratic parties and on the public awareness that the armed forces guaranteed the security of an independent state.

3. Theoretical and legal base for creating the Armed Forces of Ukraine

The Declaration of state sovereignty of Ukraine, adopted by the Parliament on July 16, 1990, became an important legal basis for creating the national armed forces (Verkhovna Rada of Ukrainian SSR, 1990). The Declaration stated the right of Ukraine to have its armed forces and established the principles of self-determination of the Ukrainian nation, rule of the people, citizenship of the Ukrainian SSR, economic independence, external and internal security, international relations, etc. After adopting the Declaration of state sovereignty of Ukraine, the Parliament gradually started to define and realize the independent policy in the military sphere relying on theoretical works of public and political organizations.

The People’s Movement of Ukraine “Rukh”, the largest and the most influential organization, conducted a lot of preparatory work for creating the Ukrainian armed forces. Rukh was founded by Ukrainian dissidents as a civil and political organization as there were no other political parties allowed in the Soviet Union except for the Communist party, and included members with different political orientations.

Rukh stated in its programs and decisions the need for the development of the Ukrainian army. In September 1989, the constitutive congress of Rukh adopted a declaration addressed to servicemen, servicewomen and law enforcement agencies on the territory of the Ukrainian SSR. This declaration expressed the idea of cooperation between Rukh, the Army, and law enforcement agencies for “the reliable state defense and security, reduction of criminality and liquidation of social reasons for it”. A common task requiring to unite the efforts on that stage was the liquidation of hazing and ill-treatment within the armed forces, and the improvement of the living conditions of servicemen (Literaturna Ukraina, 1989).

The statements that Ukraine has enough possibilities for creating its armed forces (educated human resources, powerful defense industry, availability of military commanders) dominated during the second Rukh congress in October 1990. The task to prepare social opinion to divide the Soviet army and its property between the republics was confirmed. The Rukh congress addressed all military men and women serving for the Soviet Army on the territory of Ukraine with a call for non-fulfilling commanders’ orders against the Ukrainian people. Rukh congress also declared an

aim to neutralize the Soviet party's influence within the armed forces. (Chasopys Tsentralnoho provodu, 1990, pp. 24-26).

At the beginning of December 1990 within the Rukh great council, several approaches to creating armed forces were proposed. The idea to create Ukrainian armed forces based on voluntary patriotic movements simultaneously with the dissolution of Soviet military units on the territory of Ukraine was proposed. Opponents of such an idea argued that it could create complicated military and political problems for Ukraine. This approach was criticized and strongly rejected by experienced officers and supporters of Rukh.

Representatives of the Association of Independent Ukrainian Youth declared their support for restoring the Ukrainian Insurgent Army and its transformation into a professional army. It was proposed to create military divisions from volunteers and to provide their training in Carpathian forests. Such ideas appeared when the commanders of the Soviet army on Ukrainian territory obeyed the Soviet centre in Moscow which opposed the formation of the Ukrainian armed forces. The suggestions of AIUY representatives were judged to be too radical, without proper consideration of the military and political situation in Ukraine and abroad at that time.

Most participants of the Rukh great council supported the idea that the Parliament had to gradually take and implement decisions aimed at transforming the Soviet army located on the territory of the Ukrainian republic into the Armed Forces of Ukraine. According to this approach, all armed forces situated on the territory of the republic had to be transferred under the jurisdiction of the Parliament of Ukraine together with their arms and equipment. Afterwards, the legislative conception of the Armed Forces of Ukraine was based on the mentioned propositions (Bryntseva, 2006, p. 8).

On February 2-3, 1990, participants of the research conference in the premises of the Writers' Association of Ukraine contributed to the development of theoretical principles for creating the Ukrainian army. Scientists and intellectuals, members of Parliament, military specialists, activists of Rukh took part in the event. Both supporters and opponents of a Ukrainian national army, and of Ukrainian independence, attended this conference. The results of discussions of the conference were reflected in the adopted resolution: "From the armed forces of the USSR to the Ukrainian army by peaceful parliamentary means" (Savchuk, 1992, p. 160). Conference's participants called on the Parliament of Ukraine to adopt the decree on creating the Ministry of Defense of Ukraine and to start the formation of the Ukrainian armed forces.

Several concepts were developed, based on different principles of creating the Ukrainian National Army: evolutionary reform of the units of the Soviet Army stationed on the territory of Ukraine; parallel creation of alternative Ukrainian military formations.

On February 7, 1990, the Ukrainian military committee was established in Lviv, and on June 20 of the same year, it was reorganized into the Lviv public

committee for the revival of the Ukrainian National Army. The committee popularized the idea of creating a Ukrainian army through publishing the newspaper “Kris” (Koshil, 2000, p. 115). One of the decisions of the committee noted that it is necessary to make every effort to provide the right to use the Ukrainian language in the Soviet troops on the territory of Ukraine during a transitional stage to the creation of the Ukrainian armed forces. Leaflets calling for disobedience to the command, even threats to the military, were used to spread these ideas. The materials of the leaflets were similar to newspaper articles published in A4 sheets. They were distributed to servicemen and military units. In addition, civilian newspapers became a platform for the dissemination of ideas for the creation of the Ukrainian National Army.

Four congresses of Ukrainian officers were also important for the formation of the armed forces. At the first congress on July 27, 1991, the Officers’ Union of Ukraine (OUU) was established. The OUU used the civil patriotic press, leaflets, and eventually the military press for spreading its ideas. The Union became the centre of national military development in Ukraine, although Ukraine had not yet gained political independence.

4. Officers’ Union of Ukraine as a factor in forming the Ukrainian army

The Officers’ Union of Ukraine (OUU), a public and political organization created in 1991, accelerated the process of establishing the Ukrainian armed forces.

In its early days, the OUU used and amplified the suggestions developed by the Kharkiv and Lviv regional military committees. These committees were formed in February-March, 1990 by active and reserve military officers who decided to make their voices heard in the political arena. In July 1991 the first OUU Congress addressed the Parliament with the demand to accelerate the creation of the Ukrainian army (Shevchuk, 2018, p. 36-40). Active officers, members of Parliament, leaders of Ukrainian political parties, and civil society activists took part in the Congress. Herewith, the OUU declared that the creation of the Ukrainian army must proceed exclusively from the legal framework generated by the resolutions of the Ukrainian Parliament. By such actions, the OUU Congress repulsed the statements of pro-Soviet activists who didn’t support the Ukrainian aspirations for independence.

The Officers’ Union of Ukraine had an essential influence on Ukrainian society due to the presence of locations and affiliates in many districts and cities. The OUU in cooperation with members of the Parliament conducted essential work for preparing the legislative drafts concerning military building in Ukraine (Koshil, 2000, pp. 245-250). The idea to establish OUU emerged in the western part of Ukraine, then it gained influence among officers in Kyiv, and afterward spread on whole Ukrainian territories. The OUU members were mostly conscious Ukrainian officers who enjoyed credibility among servicemen and held high positions.

In 1992, the OUU became a co-founder of the *Army of Ukraine* printed magazine. In November 1992, in the Kyiv military garrison, there were around 60 active OUU grass-roots organizations with a total amount of about 1100 officers. In January 1992, the Lviv regional organization of OUU included 1200 officers and non-commissioned officers.

In September 1991, the OUU affiliate was created in Sevastopol. Since its members were persecuted by the commanders of the Black Sea fleet, namely by admiral I. Kasatonov, the Sevastopol OUU organization was forced to act clandestinely.

At the stage of developing the legislative and regulatory base for the armed forces creation, the Ukrainian Parliament received various suggestions from local authorities, military specialists and scientists. For instance, the Donetsk Regional Council (located in the east of Ukraine) offered to include the military railway service, special forces, specialized higher educational institutions and civil defense bodies to the Armed Forces of Ukraine. Another Eastern region of Ukraine (Kharkiv City Council) recommended introducing the contract-based military service.

Some central regions of Ukraine recommended introducing into the Law on Defense of Ukraine the provision that the Armed Forces have to protect the constitutional order of the State. It was also proposed to reject political bodies in the army and to define by law new structures that would deal with the patriotic education of servicemen and servicewomen and keep in contact with their colleagues and families. Regional councils supported the idea to include in the Law on Defense the right of women to serve in the Ukrainian army.

The language issue in the Armed Forces of Ukraine was considered thoroughly. A central region Cherkasy believed it reasonable to define by the laws on the Armed Forces that the communication language in the army had to be Ukrainian. At the same time, the Dnipropetrovsk Regional Council which is located in south-central Ukraine believed that it would be appropriate for the transition period to use both Ukrainian and Russian in the army depending on the national composition of military units (TsDAVO, pp. 8-9).

Most of the mentioned suggestions were implemented into the Ukrainian legislation. For instance, Article 11 of the Law “On the Armed Forces of Ukraine” stipulates the use of the Ukrainian language. It regulates also the patriotic education of military personnel in accordance with the national traditions of the people of Ukraine and prohibits any political parties’ involvement in the Armed Forces of Ukraine (Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, 1991). Article 13 of the Law prescribes that the Ukrainian language shall be used for documentation, training and communication in the Armed Forces.

On April 28, 1991, the Parliament created the Committee for Defense and State Security, replacing the Permanent Committee for Foreign and National Security. Nevertheless, the members of the Committee (27 people’s deputies) had no common opinion on creating the Armed Forces in Ukraine. This disagreement

reflected on the content of draft laws and the way of their adoption. For instance, on May 14, 1991, different views on this issue emerged during the discussion on the new Ukrainian SSR Constitution draft.

For instance, the pro-Soviet member of the Ukrainian Parliament and Committee secretary O. Tarasenko believed that the defense and state security of Ukraine have to be provided within the general policy of the Soviet Union. Another member of Parliament O. Prychkin argued the rationality of military service of Ukrainians exclusively on the territory of Ukraine since the army deployment depended not on the territory, but on the international situation, military doctrine, and strategic plans. The member of Parliament O. Moroz recommended not hurrying up with creating the Ukrainian army.

On the other hand, member of Parliament V. Chervonii insisted on the provision in the draft Constitution concerning the creation of the Ukrainian armed forces and the Ministry of Defense. He stressed that Ukrainian citizens should do military service only on the territory of Ukraine (TsDAVO, pp. 8-9). The idea of serving exclusively on the Ukrainian territory served also as a strong reason for Ukrainian civil society to support the creation of its army. The civil society didn't want Ukrainian military personnel to be involved in the hotspots of the Soviet Union.

5. From the political will of citizens to the practical functioning of the Armed Forces of Ukraine

On August 19, 1991, the supporters of the Soviet totalitarian regime among high-level Soviet officials in Moscow organized a coup d'état and announced the creation of the State Committee of the State of Emergency (SCSE), which terminated the force of legislative acts of the highest bodies in other republics of the USSR by its decrees. Ukraine appeared under the pressure of the coup d'état supporters who threatened Ukrainian political leaders. During the August 1991 crisis, military emissaries of the SCSE demanded the imposition of the state of emergency in main Ukrainian regions. By their order, two assault airborne brigades besieged Kyiv, the capital of Ukraine, and two more were put on operational readiness in the Kirovohrad region and Kremenchuk city. An infantry regiment was deployed near the Odesa highway. An assault regiment from Brest was meant to land at Boryspil airport (Petrovskiy *et al.*, 2008, p. 45). The putschists were ready to use other military units against Ukraine to deprive it of state sovereignty.

Considering the actions of conservative forces, the crisis of the Soviet authority system, the Parliament of Ukrainian SSR adopted the Resolution of State Independence on August 24, 1991 (Verkhovna Rada of Ukrainian SSR, 1991). This legislative act established Ukraine's state independence. The Parliament ordered to take under its jurisdiction all military forces on the territory of the country, to establish the Ministry of defense of Ukraine and mandated the government to start forming the Armed Forces of Ukraine.

American politician Brzezinski has noted that thanks to the historic decision of the Ukrainian people in the referendum and the active position of many Ukrainian officers and political leaders, the Soviet army in Ukraine in 1992 within several weeks became the core of the new Ukrainian national army (Brzezinski, 1996, pp. 3-8). Gow has analyzed the key factors that influenced the formation of the Ukrainian defense concept and the development of the army: inadequately large armed forces, strained relations with neighboring countries, potential problems with national minorities, the possibility of local conflicts (Gow, 1992, pp. 253-261).

The French researcher Facon has outlined that Ukraine inherited from the Soviet Union both nuclear weapons and the second-largest army after Russia. In that time, the Ukrainian army amounted to about 800,000 trained and armed servicemen and roughly 30% of the military-industrial complex of the USSR. After gaining independence and inheriting a powerful military capability, Ukraine has committed itself to contribute to international security, including reducing its army to a “reasonably sufficient” size, not making territorial claims or initiating border revisions, etc. Thus, multi-vector and non-alignment policies have been gradually transformed into Euro-Atlantic integration (Facon, 2006, pp. 181-212).

The complicated military and political situation, conditioned by the collapse of the military organization of the Soviet Union, required a strong control over military units located in Ukraine. By order of the Chairman of Parliament of Ukraine on October 10, 1991, the posts of plenipotentiary representatives of the Parliament and the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine on Military Affairs were established.

To prevent emergencies during the transition period, such positions of plenipotentiary representatives on military affairs, delegated by the Parliament and the Cabinet of Ministers, were seconded to the commandant's offices of the military districts, the Black Sea fleet, military units of central and territorial subordination, commands of Odesa, Kyiv and Prykarpattia military districts. These plenipotentiary representatives were accountable to the Parliament commission on defense and state security, as well as to the state minister of defense, national security and emergencies of Ukraine. Creating these positions allowed to promptly resolve disputes that arose between the military command and the Ukrainian authorities (Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, 1991).

Responsibilities of the plenipotentiary representatives consisted of the control over the implementation of Ukrainian legislation concerning the transition of the Soviet forces to the jurisdiction of the Ukrainian authorities. They performed their duties while the Ministry of defense of Ukraine was in the process of formation. At the same time, plenipotentiary representatives did not interfere with the activities of military unit commanders.

Such a temporary measure remained in force until the military management bodies were formed. It allowed the transition to the direct subordination of military units on the territory of Ukraine to the Parliament (Chorny, 2009, p. 368).

Then, a new Presidential order was adopted which stipulated that only the Cabinet of ministers of Ukraine could decide on relocating military units on the territory of Ukraine or export of military hardware, armament systems and military equipment¹. To perform the decree of the President, the Minister of defense of Ukraine issued the order which obliged to investigate all facts connected to unauthorized removal of armament, operational hardware and military property from the Ukrainian territory. The Minister of defense of Ukraine warned that the commanders and commanding officers who did not follow the laws of Ukraine would be dismissed from their positions, which would be filled by officers and generals capable to perform the difficult tasks involved by the creation of the Armed Forces of Ukraine.

On October 9, 1991, the Cabinet of ministers submitted to the Parliament about ten draft laws on military development. The legislature adopted several resolutions (“On the conception of defense and forming the Armed Forces of Ukraine” and “On creating the defense council of Ukraine”) and laws (“On defense of Ukraine”, “On the Armed Forces of Ukraine”, “On social and legal protection of servicemen and servicewomen who serve on the territory of Ukraine”). The Conception of defense and forming the Armed Forces of Ukraine provided for the transition period of the presence in Ukraine of the Common strategic defense forces of the CIS, along with the Armed Forces of Ukraine.

The Parliament organized task groups to implement the creative approach to developing draft regulatory documents on military development. At the same time, the representatives of state committees of Ukraine, officers of military divisions and the Black Sea fleet, members of the Officers’ Union of Ukraine were involved in the preparation of the draft laws. The Department of defense, national security and emergencies of the Cabinet of ministers of Ukraine also made an important contribution to the development of the legal framework.

On November 9, 1991, the Cabinet approved the structure of the Central apparatus of the Ministry of defense of Ukraine (CAMD) which included 248 employees, 216 of which were servicemen and servicewomen. This document provided five positions of Deputy Ministers of Defense, defined the quantitative structure of the board of the Ministry of Defense, created the organizational kernels of each of CAMD elements, and appointed temporary heads and commanders.

On December 12, 1991, the President of Ukraine L. Kravchuk assumed the responsibility of Commander-In-Chief of the Armed Forces of Ukraine. Based on a Presidential order, the Minister of defense K. Morozov subordinated directly to the President and undertook the responsibilities of Commander of the armed forces. On December 23, 1991, the commandment of armed forces on the territory of Ukraine was placed under the jurisdiction of the Minister of defense.

¹ Haluzevyi derzhavnyi arkhiv Ministerstva oborony Ukrainy (HDAMOU) (Specialized state archive of the Ministry of defense of Ukraine), F. 3697 op. 34747, case 2, p. 11.

Among numerous problems connected to the formation of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, the relocation of officers from the Commonwealth of Independent States to Ukraine had an important role. After the declaration of independence of Ukraine and the decision on forming its armed forces, government and military leaders of Ukraine started to receive thousands of reports, requests, collective and individual applications from officers asking for assistance in their efforts to return to Ukraine².

On March 24, 1992, the President of Ukraine issued the Order providing organizational measures for the return to Ukraine of willing servicemen and servicewomen. On June 10, 1992, the Minister of defense signed the order which provided the creation of an operative group for the coordination of officers' return to Ukraine. Deputy minister of defense, lieutenant general Lopata, who headed the operative group, declared that during 1992-1994 more than 33 thousand servicemen and servicewomen (including 27892 officers) were to return to Ukraine from military units located in the CIS (Lopata, 2002, pp. 67-68). There were experienced generals and officers among them who joined the process of forming the armed forces of independent Ukraine. In the spring and summer of 1992, Ukrainian young men joined the Armed Forces of Ukraine for the first time in modern history.

When preparing the legislative basis, the experience of European countries in the sphere of military development was studied. At the beginning of 1992, military specialists, scientists, experts and people's deputies travelled to European countries for this purpose. They participated in international scientific conferences and seminars, visited various military institutions. Ukrainian scientists and military experts took part in workshops dealing with the organization of defense in democratic societies.

In Germany, they studied the constitutional principles of functioning of the armed forces, as well as military management and training. In Great Britain, they analyzed the structure of the armed forces, the sources of financing, the organization of military education, the system of civilian control over the army (TsDAVO)³. The experience of Hungary in reforming the armed forces was also studied.

Due to the international exchange of experiences, Ukrainian specialists noticed the openness of the state budget in democratic states, awareness of society on the armed forces, military deployment and its equipment, army strategic tasks, etc. Such transparency along with the civilian control provided a positive perception of the armed forces by citizens, a respectful attitude to servicemen and servicewomen. Studying the experiences of military reforms in European democratic states allowed Ukrainian legislators to use them considering the peculiarities of Ukrainian military traditions.

² Haluzevyi derzhavnyi arkhiv Ministerstva oborony Ukrainy (HDAMOU) (Specialized state archive of the Ministry of defense of Ukraine), F. 3697 op. 34747, case 2, p. 197.

³ Tsentralnyi derzhavnyi arkhiv vyshchyhk orhaniv vldy Ukrainy (TsDAVO), F. 1 Volume 22, collection 3780, p. 1316.

Conclusions

Thus, in the circumstances of publicity and liberalization of social life in the second half of the 1980s, the emergence of democratic forces in Ukraine contributed to the critical insight and evaluation of the role of the Soviet armed forces in the military and political life of the Soviet Union. As a result, it has been found out that in the conditions of state reorganization, the Communist party and high-level Soviet officials used the armed forces for the interests of saving the communist regime. In 1989 - mid 1990, the requirements to stop using the Soviet army for implementing political tasks started to spread in the Ukrainian society. Social and political movements became active with the demands to reform the Soviet military sphere and to provide Ukrainians with military service only on the territory of Ukraine. Students' organizations demanded to demilitarize the education process in higher educational institutions. During this interval, the idea of independent Ukraine and its armed forces reappeared and spread in Ukrainian society.

At the initial stages, creating the Armed Forces of Ukraine was mainly a society-driven process, rather than an elite-driven one. Thanks to the position of civil society including the Writers' Union of Ukraine, the Officers' Union of Ukraine, the Organization of Soldiers' Mothers, Rukh, etc. Ukraine gained its independence, and created its own military forces as an integral attribute of statehood. Due to the pressure of civil society, the Ukrainian authorities were required to accelerate the process of transition and implementation of the relevant legislation.

Between the second half of 1990 and 1991, the idea of creating the Armed Forces of Ukraine significantly extended and started to be implemented. At this stage, the ways and approaches to the armed forces' creation were determined. During the discussion, the leading political forces agreed that the Armed Forces of Ukraine had to be formed by peaceful means based on the Soviet army military units located on the territory of Ukraine at the moment of adopting the Declaration of independence. The Declaration of the state sovereignty of Ukraine provided the legal background for further development of the legislative base which became a critical requirement for creating the Armed Forces of Ukraine.

Ukraine and Moldova chose the evolutionary transformation of the Soviet military formations on their territories into the national armed forces. Lithuania, meanwhile, decided to dissolve the Soviet troops in order to create its own armed forces. Thus, both in Ukraine and Moldova certain military divisions refused to take the oath to the new independent states. As a result, the Russian Federation used its armed forces as a lever of influence on sovereign states. Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova failed to get rid of Russian military bases on their territories in time and the Russian Federation attempted to illegally annex these territories and created occupation administrations. Lithuania, on the other hand, thanks to the firm position of the national government and the support of the international community, mainly the United States, is a territorially integral state.

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