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S. Bielai



O. Kernytskyi



Ya. Zinkov

PROBLEMS OF FORMING PSYCHOLOGICAL READINESS OF MILITARY PERSONNEL OF THE NATIONAL GUARD OF UKRAINE FOR POSSIBLE CAPTIVITY

This article summarizes theoretical and empirical materials on the specificity of forming the psychological readiness of servicemen to stay in conditions of forced isolation (captivity). The need to organise special psychological training for the servicemen concerning possible captivity is substantiated by the fact that the acquired knowledge and skills can help to save lives in situations of captivity and return from it.

It is noted that one of the main goals of psychological training for a captivity situation is to train the military personnel of the National Guard of Ukraine to exercise self-control and self-regulation under strong psychological pressure, to learn to control behaviour in extreme conditions, etc. The authors describe the main methods used by prison guards during interrogations to break the will of prisoners, achieve their complete obedience, and change their ideals and values. Specifying the approaches to the organisation of professional and psychological training of the military personnel of the National Guard of Ukraine, the experience of the anti-terrorist operation and the Joint Forces Operation, and the repulsion of the Russian Federation's attack on Ukraine have made it possible to generalise the approaches to the training for situations of forced isolation (captivity) and to formulate key recommendations.

Keywords: *military personnel of the National Guard of Ukraine, situations of captivity, psychological readiness, professional and psychological training.*

Statement of the problem. Today, the full-scale military aggression of the Russian Federation determines the increased requirements for professional and psychological readiness of the personnel of the military units and subdivisions of the National Guard of Ukraine (NGU). This also applies to military specialists of personnel management bodies who directly organise and provide moral and psychological support for the activities of the NGU units. Increasing requirements for such specialists highlight the importance of qualitative improvement of the process of their professionalisation aimed at achieving the required level of efficiency in the performance of official functions in their positions of appointment and creating the basis for further professional growth [1].

At the same time, the complexity and diversity of the professional tasks performed by these specialists of the NGU make it important to develop a significant amount of knowledge, skills, and personal qualities, among which the ability to comprehensively prepare subordinates for possible capture and detention is of particular importance.

Absolutely new approaches to combat operations in the context of the aggressive and brutal war with Russia require improvement and optimisation of the content, methods and means of psychological training of military specialists. Thus, there is a need to generalise theoretical and empirical materials on the specificity of forming the psychological readiness of military personnel to stay in conditions of forced isolation.

Shock conditions and experiences can traumatise the psyche of a healthy individual, so clear and strict adherence of the NGU military personnel to the requirements of professional and psychological training is the most important factor in preventing casualties among personnel in routine activities and extreme situations.

The analysis of modern scientific works, guiding documents and developments in the war with Russia have shown that the relevance of this study is determined by the following provisions:

– insufficient number of developments and scientific works on the formation of psychological readiness of military personnel to stay in forced isolation;

– high importance of psychological readiness for combat missions;

– an existing contradiction between the awareness of the role of psychological preparedness among military unit commands and the lack of an indicative model of its formation and practical recommendations for improving the psychological preparation of military personnel for captivity.

Thus, the above-mentioned provisions indicate the expediency of conducting research aimed at identifying the features of effective formation of psychological readiness of servicemen to stay in forced isolation (captivity).

Analysis of recent research and publications.

Today, psychological and pedagogical science has accumulated a certain potential for developing aspects of individual behaviour in captivity. Thus, some psychologists (namely: V. Apalkov, H. Filipova, V. Karpov, O. Khmiliar, and Yu. Shyrobokov) have conducted psychological studies of the problems of the peculiarities manifestation of military personnel being taken captive. Also of interest are the materials on the stay of civilians in conditions of forced isolation, presented by V. Frankl, V. Hlukhovskiy, N. Zaretska, A. Pobidash and other researchers.

The analysis of the identified contradictions, problems of the theory and practice of command and control, and issues related to the training of learners at the second (master's) level of higher education at the operational level of military education confirms the exceptional relevance of the problem of training NGU servicemen for possible captivity. This requires more thorough study and systematisation for specialists in speciality 254 "Support of Troops (Forces)" and speciality 251 "State Security".

The purpose of the article is to summarize theoretical and empirical materials on the specificity of forming the servicemen's psychological readiness to be held in conditions of forced isolation (captivity) and to formulate main recommendations for the organisation of professional and psychological training of servicemen of the National Guard of Ukraine for situations of captivity.

Summary of the main material. Almost every soldier is afraid of being taken captive, and the basis for this is created by the stories of released individuals about the torture they suffered in enemy captivity. According to scholars, during the Second World War, 11 % of American and British prisoners of war did not survive captivity (most of

them in Japanese captivity), 60 % of Soviet prisoners of war did not return from German camps, and 45 % of German soldiers did not survive Soviet captivity [2].

It was only in the sixteenth century (in 1550) that the Dominican friar Francisco de Vittorio noted that it was unacceptable to cause more evil in war than the aims of the war required. He preached a more humane treatment of prisoners of war, who should be ransomed. In the seventeenth century, this was supported by the lawyer Hugo Grotius (Huig de Groot). This pointed to gradual changes in the treatment of prisoners of war, who were increasingly kept alive for exchange after the war. The real shift came with the 1864 Geneva Convention and the establishment of the International Committee of the Red Cross. As a result, three more conventions were adopted in 1929 and 1949, which formally regulate the inhumane treatment of prisoners of war [3].

However, these documents did not completely solve the problem: in the Second World War, the USSR and Japan did not sign these conventions, and the Nazi Germany refused to comply with the Geneva Conventions regarding Soviet prisoners of war. As a result, many prisoners of war simply did not survive the conditions of forced isolation.

The need to organise special psychological training for servicemen to be ready for captivity is justified by the fact that the acquired knowledge and skills can help to save lives in situations of being held captive and returning from captivity. Usually, this training includes the following materials: studying the provisions of the Geneva Conventions, getting acquainted with the basic rules of conduct for survival in captivity, undergoing special training, etc. Such training helps to develop simple skills, and this contributes to better preparation of military personnel for possible capture and captivity.

Experts note that the most critical period is the moment of being taken captive and the initial time in captivity (the first 24–48 hours) because during this period the behaviour of the prisoner of war has a significant impact on his life and the attitude of the enemy. On the battlefield, everyone is under stress, and often affected, and therefore representatives of the surrendering party should try to negotiate the circumstances of captivity as accurately as possible. Therefore, one of the main goals of psychological training for captivity is to train NGU servicemen to exercise self-control and self-regulation under strong psychological pressure, control behaviour in extreme conditions,

use calming gestures, etc. It is extremely important that during the training, the "captured" serviceman understands that their primary goal is to survive and then to act according to the situation.

Scientists identify several phases during which different impressions and reactions of prisoners of war change (Miller, 1974) [4]:

– during the first 24 hours: a feeling of complete shock and trauma, a strong sense of helplessness, fear of death and panic anxiety due to the shock of thinking about the family's experience, the emergence of an unexpectedly strong instinct for self-survival, an attempt to take control of one's own emotions and feelings, and awareness of the inability to think clearly;

– 24–48 hours after the loss of freedom: calming of feelings and emotions and the first signs of adjustment to new circumstances, replaying recent events and one's values ("how could this have happened"), anxiety about the family, struggle with depression and feelings of helplessness and loneliness, bodily symptoms of headaches, frequent urination;

– after 48 hours or longer: tangible adaptation to the situation (if not subjected to tortures), an attempt to spiritually distance oneself from reality, thoughts about the value of life and freedom, and possible radical changes in one's scale of values.

Being held in captivity causes many traumas – living in inhumane conditions in cramped, unhygienic conditions, lack of food, water, sleep, possible exhaustion, torture, etc. Despite good training, physical endurance and mental stability, it is impossible to fully master resistance to torture. This was confirmed by the cases of abuse of Ukrainian prisoners of war of the Azov special forces detachment by Russian forces and the crime of execution of prisoners of war in Olenivka.

To date, the following scenario has been developed: it is recommended that every prisoner of war cooperates with the interrogators and tells them the information that is allowed to be told to the enemy. All soldiers must know the details of this scenario and follow it in case of capture.

In the case of torture, it is up to the individual to decide to what extent it makes sense to remain silent. However, in any case, it is important to withhold at least some information that may be of key importance to the enemy and the safety of the defence forces.

In addition, many prisoners of war feel very guilty after confessing because of what was done or said against their principles. The so-called "captivity survivor's guilt syndrome" emerges.

It has now been proven that the leaders of the regular troops of the Russian Federation hide Ukrainian prisoners of war from human rights organisations and humanitarian missions, and keep them in isolation.

One of the psychological problems of being in captivity is also identified as boredom. Scientific sources cite four different strategies (Deaton, 1977) to combat boredom used by American military pilots in Vietnam during their stay in solitary confinement [5]:

1) interaction between prisoners of war and guards (communication with guards, physical exercises, observing the behaviour of guards, humour, inventing different stories, planning an escape);

2) recreating the past (recalling events from the past, family events);

3) repetitive actions (resting in the cell, mental exercises, memorising facts, fantasising, observing insects, talking to oneself);

4) self-developmental actions (thinking about the future, inventing various objects and devices, acquiring new knowledge and skills, memorising stories, games, etc.).

It has been stated that establishing certain trusting relationships with guards can help to survive and alleviate suffering, provided that in such a situation, control over events still exists.

Another case of overt rapprochement with cell guards is the "Stockholm syndrome", which refers to the phenomenon of a complete loss of hostility and even outright sympathy towards prison guards. It was named after an incident in Stockholm in 1973, when, after a bank robbery, hostages showed signs of a strong emotional connection with the perpetrators. Today, the "Stockholm Syndrome" is an unconscious psychological defence mechanism characterised by the victim's attachment to the perpetrator. In the process of capture, abduction or the use (or threat of use) of violence, victims begin to sympathise with their captors, justify their actions and even identify with them, adopting their ideas [6].

The term is attributed to the criminologist Nils Bejerot, who coined it when analysing the situation in Stockholm during the hostage-taking in August 1973 [7]. Back then, two repeat offenders took four hostages (a man and three women) from a bank and threatened their lives for six days, but occasionally gave them some leniency. This lasted for five days, and all this time, the lives of the hostages hung in the balance. However, at the moment of their release, something unexpected happened: the victims sided with the perpetrators, trying to prevent the police from interfering. Later, when the conflict was successfully resolved and the perpetrators were put behind bars, the former victims suddenly began to ask for amnesty. They visited them in prison, and one of

the female hostages even divorced her husband to confess her love to the man who had held a gun to her temple for five days.

The characteristic set of signs of Stockholm syndrome is as follows.

1. Prisoners of war begin to identify with their captors. At least initially, this is a defence mechanism, often based on the unconscious idea that the perpetrator will not harm the victim if the actions are joint and perceived positively. The prisoner is almost sincerely trying to achieve care from the captor.

2. The victim often realises that the measures taken by their potential rescuers are likely to harm them. Rescue attempts can turn the situation around, and instead of being tolerable, it can become deadly.

3. A long stay in captivity leads to the victim getting to know the perpetrator as a person. His values, views, problems and character become known. This works especially well in political or ideological situations when the prisoner learns about the captor's views and resentment towards the authorities. The victim may then think that the perpetrator's position is the only correct one. At the same time, the hostage emotionally distances himself from the situation, does not believe that this has happened to him, and is as if in a dream (depersonalisation). Depending on the degree of identification with the perpetrator, the victim may believe that the potential rescuers, with their persistence, are really to blame for what is happening.

The Stockholm syndrome is considered a normal human reaction to a traumatic event, not a disorder, and is not included in any international classification system for psychiatric diseases. It is triggered by a defence mechanism in times of life-threatening danger and is characterised by a subconscious attempt to arouse the perpetrator's sympathy and thus save one's life.

Mostly, during interrogations, prisoners try to break the will of prisoners, achieve their complete obedience, change their ideals and values, etc.

They typically use methods [8] such as:

- threats (maintaining an atmosphere of anxiety and despair);
- periodic rewards (motivation to interact with oppressors);
- isolation (prevention of any social support for resistance and development of dependence on the jailer);
- induced deprivation and exhaustion (undermining the mental and physical abilities to resist: long-term deprivation of sleep, water, and food);

- demonstration of "omnipotence" and "omniscience";

- degradation of prisoners' motives;

- forming a habit of obedience.

Specifying the approaches to the organisation of professional and psychological training of servicemen of the NGU, the experience of the anti-terrorist operation and the Joint Forces Operation, and Russia's attack on Ukraine made it possible to summarise trends in the preparation of servicemen for forced isolation (captivity) and formulate the following provisions and recommendations.

1. NGU servicemen must know the basic concepts related to the status of a prisoner of war, the provisions of international humanitarian law, as well as the basic rules of conduct in captivity, etc.

2. Psychological research has shown that certain personality traits can make captivity easier to endure, and this should be taken into account during the psychological selection of candidates for special forces and other activities with a high degree of potential for captivity (extroverts, for example, can withstand pain better but need to be socialised; introverts can withstand solitary confinement more easily; people with developed self-control have a harder time, and people with a sense of humour can cope with situations of depression and frustration more easily). Character traits such as strong beliefs, optimism, flexibility of behaviour, a wide range of resources, faith and the search for positive aspects and meaning in life also help to withstand the harsh conditions of captivity.

3. In the course of psychological preparation for a possible situation of captivity, it is necessary to familiarise servicemen with the peculiarities of the situation of captivity, and in some units – to organise and conduct training exercises in which they will be placed in some of these situations. Such exercises can be conducted with those who have expressed a voluntary willingness to participate, with a preliminary assessment of their psychophysical characteristics.

4. In preparation for situations of captivity, it is necessary to develop the NGU servicemen's practical skills of self-regulation of the psychophysical state (practical exercises, breathing exercises, auto-training, various types of psychological protection, etc.). Such techniques have proven to be effective in improving the well-being of people in captivity, as well as in maintaining the desire to fight.

5. Psychological training should also include basic knowledge of the challenges that prisoners of war may face after release, as well as possible ways

to improve their mental health during the recovery and rehabilitation period.

6. All types of training are closely interconnected in terms of forming psychological readiness to perform specific service and combat tasks. They can focus on the main thing – preparation for the performance of tasks, as well as reduce negative thoughts about possible failures and dangers, the manifestation of negative emotional states, etc.

Conclusions

The article summarises theoretical and empirical materials on the peculiarities of forming the psychological readiness of servicemen to stay in conditions of forced isolation (captivity). It is noted that one of the main goals of psychological preparation for a captivity situation is to train the servicemen of the National Guard of Ukraine to exercise self-regulation and self-control under strong psychological pressure, to learn to control behaviour in extreme conditions, etc. The main methods have been described by which interrogators try to break the will of prisoners, achieve their complete obedience, and change their ideals and values. The authors summarise approaches to the organisation of professional and psychological training of servicemen of the National Guard of Ukraine for situations of forced isolation (captivity) and formulate relevant recommendations.

Further research will be directed to analyse the experience of training NATO special forces personnel for situations of possible capture.

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С. В. Бєлай, О. М. Керницький, Я. В. Зінков

ПРОБЛЕМИ ФОРМУВАННЯ ПСИХОЛОГІЧНОЇ ГОТОВНОСТІ ВІЙСЬКОВОСЛУЖБОВЦІВ НАЦІОНАЛЬНОЇ ГВАРДІЇ УКРАЇНИ ДО МОЖЛИВОГО ПОТРАПЛЯННЯ У ПОЛОН

Проведено узагальнення теоретичного й емпіричного матеріалів щодо особливостей формування психологічної готовності військовослужбовців до перебування в умовах вимушеної ізоляції (полону). Необхідність організації спеціальної психологічної підготовки військовослужбовців на випадок потрапляння у полон обґрунтовано тим, що набуті знання і навички можуть допомогти збереженню життя у ситуаціях потрапляння у полон та повернення з нього.

Зазначено, що одна з головних цілей психологічної підготовки до ситуації полону – це тренування у військовослужбовців Національної гвардії України самовладання і самоконтролю під сильним психологічним тиском, навчання контролю поведінки в екстремальних умовах тощо. Наведено основні методи, за допомогою яких на допитах тюремні наглядачі намагаються зламати волю полонених, домогтися їхньої повної покори, змінити їхні ідеали і цінності. Конкретизація підходів до організації професійно-психологічної підготовки військовослужбовців Національної гвардії України, досвід проведення антитерористичної операції та операції Об'єднаних сил, відсічі нападу росії на Україну дали змогу узагальнити підходи в їхній підготовці до ситуацій вимушеної ізоляції (полону) та сформулювати основні рекомендації.

***Ключові слова:** військовослужбовці Національної гвардії України, ситуації полону, психологічна готовність, професійно-психологічна підготовка.*

Bielai Serhii – Doctor of Sciences in Public Administration, Professor, Deputy Head of the Educational and Research Center for the Organization of the Educational Process – Head of the Scientific and Methodological Department of the National Academy of the National Guard of Ukraine
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0841-9522>

Kernytskyi Oleksandr – Candidate of Pedagogical Sciences, Associate Professor, Associate Professor of the Department of Personnel Management of the National Academy of the National Guard of Ukraine
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9067-3846>

Zinkov Yaroslav – Head of the Service Department of the National Academy of the National Guard of Ukraine
<https://orcid.org/0009-0004-4324-0087>