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## THE SYSTEM OF PROFESSIONAL TRAINING OF MILITARY PERSONNEL IN FRANCE

**Abstract:** this article reveals the system of training military personnel and the development of the military organization of France, as well as the system of initial and professional training of military personnel of the French army.

**Keywords:** military reform, organization, voluntary principle, military personnel system, recruitment, foreign legion, education, specialists, peacekeeping forces, professional training, course, officer.

The experience of building a military organization in France is interesting in terms of studying the integrity and sustainability of the military personnel system. It is in this model of professional training of military personnel that special importance is attached to maintaining the continuity of the choice of a military profession, training officers on more stable ideological positions, on a more solid social platform.

Before revealing the features of the professional training of personnel of the armed forces of France, we will highlight the fundamental features of the development of the military organization of the country.

Firstly, since 1996, military reform has been carried out in France, the purpose of which is to improve the qualitative component of the military organization, implying the optimization of military expenditures and increasing the level of professionalism of military personnel in connection with the new requirements of the development of society, the emergence of a global social threat in the form of international terrorism, new trends in the field of military development and interstate relations. The formula once formed by President de Gaulle – “big politics with small means” - remains relevant to this day.

The transformations in the military organization of France consist of:

1) a complete transition to a voluntary principle of staffing; 2) a reduction in the military budget; 3) preparation for future challenges to national security, new risks and threats.

The transition to voluntary staffing of the armed forces began in 1996 with the official statement of Jacques Chirac that France no longer needs conscription, since universal military service is unfair, and it has not been universal for a long time. In 1997, the French parliament passed a law on military reform, which outlined a complete and consistent transition to a professional army and the restructuring of the country's entire defense industry by 2015. The law provides for a reduction in the number of military personnel and, conversely, an increase in the number of civilian specialists involved in various areas of military construction (from 12 to 20%). In addition, it is planned to create a specialized structure that will allow, if necessary, to deploy a military contingent of 50 thousand people mainly to participate in peacekeeping operations outside France [1].

The French Ministry of Defence's report “Preparing for Future Challenges 2035”, published in 2007, identified nine main tasks that the country's armed forces are responsible for:

- participating in armed conflicts independently and, in accordance with international agreements, jointly with other states;
- participating in operations to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, including preventive measures: reconnaissance, interception of dangerous goods, introduction of embargoes,

delivery of preventive strikes and military interventions in accordance with UN Security Council resolutions;

- participating in anti-terrorist operations, including outside France;
- participating in reconstruction and peacekeeping operations;
- ensuring the protection of its citizens, citizens of the EU or allied states;
- protecting economic interests (strategic and natural resources);
- conducting rescue operations in the event of natural and man-made disasters;
- providing military and civil assistance to foreign governments, including in the event of their introduction of martial law in the country.

As can be seen, it is assumed that the armed forces will be actively used in solving France's foreign policy tasks, and that a strong and dynamic military-political course will be pursued both in the interests of the country and in the interests of international security. The issue of optimizing the professional training of military personnel in terms of significant social tasks, which are designated in the report as the most pressing, is quite obvious. However, comparing the degree of manifestation of France's foreign policy activity with the USA and Great Britain, it should be noted that it is more restrained and focused on international cooperation, which cannot but affect the functioning of the French army model.

Secondly, the most important feature of the development of the military organization of France is the implementation of social integration of "new" and "old" servicemen with their differences in value systems and professional motivation. Sociological studies conducted in the French army since 1996 show that there are serious differences between contract servicemen and "old" servicemen (career and conscription). "The general orientation of contract soldiers, their requirements for living conditions, their much more materially oriented motivation indicate that their entry into service was more calculated and less susceptible to the influence of military romance" [2].

As the results of social surveys have shown, pre-reform servicemen, especially junior officers, have difficulties in perceiving the army reform: they feel insufficiently qualified, they have a feeling of disdain for seniority both as a universal value and as an operational quality. This indicates a difficult social situation and problematic moments in the formation of a socio-psychological microclimate in military units, which the military leadership will need to address, along with preparation for new challenges and threats in terms of professionalization.

Thirdly, an important feature of the development of the modern French army is the change in attitude in society and the state to the mission of the armed forces. We are talking about strengthening the vector of international participation of the military in solving humanitarian and peacekeeping tasks, eliminating social risks and threats on a larger scale than the domestic one. An analysis of public opinion allows French sociologists to conclude that "the most legitimate missions of the military are those that are least associated with battles and the use of force". The French are not indifferent to their army. Currently, there are positive assessments of the introduction of contract service, which contributes to the improvement of the professionalism of military personnel; personal and professional qualities of the military (their dedication to the interests of the state, the presence of ideals in professional activity, the ability to adapt to modern life) receive high marks. The French still feel pride in their army, despite strong anti-militaristic sentiments, but to a greater extent this is due, as studies show, to the implementation of international peacekeeping and humanitarian missions [3].

Thus, the modern French army is characterized by: a voluntary principle of recruitment of personnel; the presence of internal transformation processes associated with the integration of the "old" and "new" generations of military personnel into a single socio-cultural field of the military organization; strengthening the interstate component in the areas of practical use of the armed forces; maintaining a positive image of military people and the military profession in public opinion in France. At the same

time, the preservation and strengthening of positive assessments of the French army indicates the presence of favorable trends in interaction with society for the development of the military organization. This is due to the positive results of the military reforms carried out in the country.

Let us analyze the procedure for voluntary military service that existed in France before 1996. It should be noted that even under the conscription system, the procedure for military service was not strict and largely resembled "ordinary work". After four months of special training, conducted with recruits in multi-day hikes and forced marches, young men were sent to military units to serve. It was not necessary for military personnel to live in barracks, and upon completion of their "working time", if the barracks were located in the same city where the military lived, they could be free until the morning and the beginning of service. Beginning with the third month of service, soldiers could receive a 13-day leave. Leave was also granted for exams and for family reasons. For military service, soldiers were paid a monthly salary of 600 francs (\$1000). Off-duty time, a soldier could do some civilian work and receive remuneration for it. Soldiers were paid for their train travel home and back (10-15 trips). As for the manifestations of "hazing", it was not presented as a problem at all. With the transition to a contract system, the conditions of service changed for the better. Despite the reduction of the military budget from 36 to 30 billion dollars, the articles calculated for the maintenance of personnel and the payment of pensions did not change.

At the moment, both young men and women aged 18-26 can serve as volunteers, concluding a contract for 5 years with the right to renew it. The maximum term of service is 22 years. Volunteer service takes place both in France and abroad as part of the UN and NATO peacekeeping forces. The salary of ordinary soldiers is 800 dollars per month, which is significantly less than in the US and UK troops.

With the transition to a voluntary recruitment system, such a social phenomenon of the French army as the Foreign Legion has been preserved. Such a unit is staffed by foreign legionnaires under the command of French officers. The task of this unit is to carry out military operations outside France. And despite the fact that the foreign legion is the most actively fighting unit of France, mercenaries are subject to fairly strict restrictions on personal and property rights (prohibition of starting a family and acquiring real estate and a car), the competition for a legionnaire's place is 40 people, and 60% of those who have served their contract are hired again. It seems that such a social situation in the French army can be characterized as more or less favorable - both in terms of the content of internal social processes and in terms of relationships with society [4].

Of interest is the professional training of military personnel taking into account the conditions of the modern development of the French armed forces. In the system of professional training of officers, the following main levels can be distinguished:

- training in military preparatory institutions (military lyceums);
- training in military schools of basic training;
- specialized training in practical schools of the branches of the armed forces;
- retraining and advanced training in refresher courses;
- training in higher military educational institutions for senior officers.

In the system of initial military professional training of officers, there are two principles of candidate selection:

- direct - admission to military schools of basic training of graduates of military lyceums and civilian youth;
- semi-direct - admission to the above-mentioned schools of military personnel from among privates and non-commissioned officers.

We emphasize that in the French education system, the lyceum is the final link in obtaining secondary education and at the same time a transitional stage to higher education. Three-year education at the lyceum provides for specialization of general education and places high demands on obtaining a

certificate of secondary education with a bachelor's degree. In France, about 80% of graduates graduate from lycées, which gives them the opportunity to study in higher education institutions. Military lycées implement the same general education programs in full as civilian ones, but with a military specialization. Young men and women enter military lycées on a competitive basis, with preference given to children from families of career military personnel and employees of the Ministry of Defense (MoD). Parents are charged for the accommodation and meals of their children, and 25% of the costs can be reimbursed by the Ministry of Defense for certain categories of students.

Education at military lycées is very prestigious, since along with a high level of general education, it gives students the opportunity to build a military career - to become students of higher military schools and form the officer elite of the French army. It is especially important to emphasize the fact that the head of the lycée is personally responsible for the quality of training and education of the lycée students, which speaks of a very serious attitude to basic military education and the high status of military lycées in the military organization system.

Of paramount importance for those lycée students who have decided to build a military career are the two-year preparatory courses organized at the lycées for admission to military schools. Completion of these courses gives graduates the preferential right to enter elite military schools for training officers.

As stated above, training in military schools of general training is the next level of military professional education in France after military lycées. Of the 10 schools of basic military training, 4 are the most privileged: Saint-Cyr, Polytechnic, Flight and Naval. It is there that graduates of military lycées have the preferential right to enter. On average, the competition for military schools, which is 4-5 people per place, speaks of the prestige of the universities and the high requirements for applicants [5].

Let us consider the process of professional training of French officers using the example of the Saint-Cyr Special Military School, the oldest military educational institution in France. Thus, selection to this educational institution is carried out among the following categories of applicants: civilian youth, graduates of lycées who have completed two-year preparatory classes for admission to military schools at universities, who have a bachelor's degree; graduates of military lycées; civilian youth and non-commissioned officers who have diplomas of general university and scientific and technical university education.

The training period depends on the level of initial education, but on average it is 3 years. The purpose of training is individual combat training, including moral and psychological training and the study of tactical techniques; the formation of command skills, obtaining general officer training (study of military disciplines, the basics of socio-political knowledge). It is noteworthy that cadets with master's degrees and an engineering specialty study only 2 semesters devoted exclusively to military professional training.

In accordance with the concept of the military educational process at the Saint-Cyr School, this educational institution must ensure the formation of the following qualities in cadets:

- high cultural level;
- high level of civic responsibility;
- fortitude and endurance in any conditions;
- confident possession of team skills.

Professional training of school cadets includes training in three areas: military-professional (study of the theoretical foundations of military affairs, its value-normative, ethical basis), military-sports (obtaining basic knowledge in the field of military strategy and tactics, developing skills in handling various types of weapons, mastering military-applied sports); academic (development of worldview, general level of culture, and comprehensive knowledge). The most important component of training at

the Saint-Cyr School is an internship in the troops in various regions, climatic conditions, and branches of the armed forces after each of the 6 academic semesters. The objective of the educational process is to form a deep understanding of the essence of the military profession, a clear awareness by cadets of the business, the specialty to which they dedicate their lives, and the difficulties they must overcome [6].

Conceptually, the content of the training is structured in such a way as to form a holistic personality, highly motivated for future professional activity, capable of independent work on oneself, respecting military traditions (and the traditions of their military school, among other things). They are trained to be officers who could become authoritative leaders for their subordinates. Therefore, the first year of study is entirely devoted to basic military training, including a seven-month internship in the troops, the next two years are devoted to general education, improving military knowledge, studying history, sociology, foreign languages (at the level of a military translator of English), computer technology, etc. In general, humanitarian disciplines in the second and third years of study take up 60% of the study time. Cadets are taught methods of commanding units in various conditions, applying military knowledge, knowledge of psychology and pedagogy. During this time, they undergo airborne training, four weeks of training at the training center of the reconnaissance and sabotage unit "commandos", participating in at least three camps, one of which is organized on the basis of a combat division; they undergo "survival" courses in the tropical jungles of French Guiana. This practical training not only improves acquired military knowledge and develops practical skills, but also ensures psychological readiness for future military service as unit commanders.

To summarize the above, we would like to emphasize that training at the Saint-Cyr Military School (one of 10 military schools of general training operating in France) is aimed at developing the following model of a military specialist:

- high professional motivation and identification;
- patriotism, loyalty to military traditions, traditions of one's military institution;
- knowledge of the basics of military affairs: mandatory rules of conduct for military personnel, drill training, possession of various types of weapons;
- possession of modern combat skills;
- military-theoretical readiness: knowledge of military history, basic concepts and doctrines that determine modern political relations between states;
- developed command skills in various combat conditions;
- developed managerial qualities: the ability to gain authority, apply psychological knowledge in managing subordinates;
- proficiency in military-applied sports: parachuting, swimming, overcoming water obstacles, etc.;
- proficiency in a foreign language at the level of a military translator;
- a high general level of culture, broad education in the field of humanitarian knowledge.

As we can see, the organization of the educational process is aimed at forming the following image of an officer of the 21st century: this is a person who "selflessly serves the interests of the state; an initiative specialist with deep and comprehensive knowledge; a commander who is able to make informed decisions, lead, relying on his own skills, mobilize their strength and energy to accomplish assigned tasks".

However, completing a military school and receiving the first officer rank is only the completion of the initial level of professional education and receiving basic general military training. In the future, graduates receive specialized military training in accordance with the direction to a specific branch of the armed forces for appointment to an officer position. Training in a practical school of a branch of the armed forces (infantry, armored troops, signal troops, pilots, navigators) lasts for one year, ends

with the assignment of the officer rank of lieutenant and direction to a combat unit to occupy the position of platoon commander.

It should be noted that subsequent career growth, assignment of subsequent ranks to officers and promotion to a position are necessarily accompanied by training in retraining and advanced training courses at higher military schools of the armed forces, etc. On average, the command and technical staff of the French army have to undergo various training cycles every 3-4 years.

These facts indicate that the professionalism of the French army is ensured by the system of continuous education of military personnel. The promotion of officers in the service is directly dependent on the degree of acquired qualifications and the quality of professional knowledge.

As for specialized military training of ordinary specialists, a network of military training centers in the branches of the armed forces has been created for its effective implementation.

These centers provide fire training for military personnel - individually and as part of units, aimed at training military personnel in collective actions as part of units. The centers are equipped with simulation simulators, training grounds, shooting ranges, computer equipment, ensuring the conduct of virtual combat exercises.

Thus, the process of professional training of military personnel of the French army is largely focused on deep practical training of military specialists: in combat units with real equipment and weapons, in various service and combat conditions. Officers undergo, along with intensive practical training, deep theoretical training as a unit commander - widely educated, capable of demonstrating leadership and leadership qualities, highly motivated to undergo military service.

The general formula for the formation of the personnel of the French army is the following: effectively educated practical training in the troops plus high-quality basic general military training and continuous professional development of the officer corps. An important aspect of the formation of the personnel of the French army is the social protection system that supports the professional motivation of military personnel. This system provides for 3 areas of social security for military personnel:

- 1) medical care;
- 2) pension payments;
- 3) employment after service.

Military personnel and their family members have the right to treatment in military medical institutions: the costs of treatment, pregnancy and childbirth are covered by the state. There are 2 types of pensions for military personnel: for length of service and for disability. The right to receive a pension is granted to military personnel who have served for at least 15 years, while the amount of pension payments is 60-80% of the basic salary. A network of state and public associations has been created to organize retraining, and the work also covers family members of retiring military personnel [7].

It is interesting that shortly before dismissal, a military man can undergo professional retraining. Such retraining is carried out:

- at four-day courses organized by the Association for Social Adaptation of Dismissed Officers and Non-Commissioned Officers, where they provide general guidance on the chosen specialty;
- at three- or five-month retraining courses for officers completing their service;
- at special retraining courses for non-commissioned officers and volunteers in the last six months of their service;
- during industrial training directly at the enterprise where the serviceman will work after discharge.

The courses are financed by the Ministry of Defense, which pays the students their full salary.

In addition, a serviceman has the right to take a two-month leave to study in a civilian specialty, and during the last six months of service, non-commissioned officers and persons who have concluded

short-term contracts can attend special courses where they undergo professional retraining as civilian specialists.

Thus, summing up the study of the system of professional training of military personnel in France, it is necessary to highlight its distinctive features:

- 1) reducing military expenditures, the leadership of the military organization focuses on improving the quality of military education of the officer corps and improving the operational and combat training of privates and non-commissioned officers in the training centers of the armed forces;
- 2) high professional motivation of the officer corps is largely maintained by providing preferential rights to enter military educational institutions for children of military personnel and employees of the Ministry of Defense, who have a clearer and more stable professional orientation;
- 3) the quality of training of the officer corps is ensured by a multi-level and multi-stage organization of military education (starting with military lyceums and ending with higher military institutions), in which the most important importance is given to the presence of a high level of combat and general educational training, achieved by an optimal combination of theoretical training in universities and practical training in the troops;
- 4) a sufficiently high level of social well-being in the French army is ensured by a careful attitude towards military traditions and military history, a favorable climate in relations between the army and society; a well-thought-out social policy towards military personnel;
- 5) maintaining respect for the military profession, supporting the prestige of military education and forming a positive image of military personnel in society, is ensured by the active participation of French troops in humanitarian and peacekeeping actions, anti-terrorist activities as the leading tasks of the armed forces [8].

Summarizing the study of the conceptual foundations of the formation of the personality of a serviceman in military organizations of the leading European countries, we note the following:

1. In each of the countries, the concept of the formation of professional and personal qualities of servicemen is determined by the specifics of the construction of a military organization, depending on the direction of the country's foreign policy, historical experience, cultural traditions and mentality of the people, fundamental social values and the peculiarities of the course of social processes that characterize the modern stage of development of a particular society. The specificity of the German model of functioning of the military organization is the close interaction of the army and civil society, clear legal regulation of military-professional activity in accordance with the principles of a democratic, legal and social state. The ideal type of a German serviceman is a "soldier-citizen" - responsible, conscientious, executive, full of respect for himself as an individual, a military man, a professional who has the right to a decent attitude towards himself on the part of the state, military leadership and colleagues. The personal component of military-service relations is formed based on the principle of personal dignity, supported by a carefully regulated social policy. Working with people, forming a team, and a preventive approach to interpersonal relations of servicemen are the basis of the management activities of unit commanders. The professionalism of servicemen is formed through effective organized practical professional training.
2. The specificity of the British model of military organization is the approach to the army as an effectively organized production that brings in profits corresponding to financial investments. The main item of military expenditure is ensuring a high technological level of functioning of the armed forces in accordance with and in line with the achievements of scientific and technical progress in the military sphere. The ideal type of British serviceman is a "universal warrior" prepared for military actions in various regions and climatic conditions. The formation of corporate unity is carried out at the regiment level - a significant combat unit, which, on the one hand, helps to preserve the cultural and combat traditions of individual military units (regiments), maintains a respectful attitude towards

one's regiment with its history, value-normative attitudes, and on the other hand, does not contribute to the development of collectivism as the leading social characteristic of a military unit.

3. A feature of the French model of training military personnel is the achievement of the stability of the military-professional orientations of the officer corps due to the preferential selection of children of military personnel and employees of the Ministry of Defense in military educational institutions. The military profession becomes a succession for half of the officer corps, which, along with the preservation and respect for the military traditions of France, creates stability in the personnel. The professionalism of the officer corps is achieved due to high demands on students in military lyceums and military schools, as well as a combination of thorough theoretical and general educational training with practical training in the troops. The professional training of enlisted personnel is conceptually similar to the training of British military personnel based on the principle of "universality" in the development of service and combat qualities.

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