

Recommendations for Preparing for Military Action Based on the Analysis of Armed Conflicts in Urban Settings

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Abstract

The ongoing socio-demographic processes in the modern world determine a high probability, and the features of modern military conflicts confirm the facts that modern military operations are mainly carried out in populated areas. Therefore, in order to develop the theory of organizing armed struggle in such conditions, we carried out an analysis, based on the results of which, the article presents practical recommendations for organizing armed struggle in populated areas.

Keywords: city, locality, conditions, armed struggle, conflict, military operations, regular troops, irregular formations, analysis, international experience.

Introduction

Our analysis shows that many modern cities have lost their former boundaries, absorbed the adjacent districts, connecting them with a variety of transport communications. In different regions of the world, megalopolises are emerging, in which the most active part of the population, military-political authorities and various important objects of various importance are concentrated.

Cities are of great political, socio-economic and cultural importance. They act, in fact, as the "centers of gravity" of society and the state, and their capture becomes fundamentally important for achieving success in war. Control of the city provides corresponding advantages that can have a decisive impact on the entire course of the crisis or the outcome of the conflict. In many cases, for example, control of a few critical cities means control of all the national resources of a state. In the final analysis, without the capture of populated areas, it is impossible to achieve the final goals of the military conflict.

At the same time, an analysis of the history of wars and military conflicts shows that urban conditions create an ideal environment for guerrilla (insurrectionary) operations by irregular armed formations, since the superiority of regular armed forces, primarily technical, is significantly reduced when operating in cities.

A militarily underdeveloped party, as a rule, strives to neutralize the advantages and superiority of a strong enemy in every possible way. At the same time, the conditions of settlements are suitable for achieving this goal [1].

Modern settlements, unlike urban conditions in the past, generally do not provide for the conduct of hostilities in them. In this regard, in wartime, the settlement turns into a special "battlefield", which creates a sufficient number of problems and difficulties for regular troops.

The main criterion that must be taken into account when conducting military operations in populated areas is the presence of the local population and its attitude towards the parties to the conflict. In addition, it is consistent to take into account the cultural (civilizational) and demographic characteristics of the settlement.

An analysis of international experience shows that armed struggle in populated areas is characterized by increased psychological stress and moral stress. As a rule, innocent civilians (women and children) from the local population die in front of the combatants, who are mainly used as "human shields" or "suicide bombers". It must be remembered that danger will constantly await every serviceman day and night from everywhere, including from above and below.

A study of the views of foreign military experts on armed struggle in populated areas shows that modern processes of globalization inevitably affect the conditions and nature of modern military operations. Conflicts of the past, when the belligerents avoided direct confrontation and sought to "go out into the open", are receding into the so-called oblivion.

For example, in the modern legal documents of many foreign armies it is indicated that "cities and settlements" are becoming the most likely area for modern armed struggle" [2,3].

Studies of the chronology of modern military conflicts of varying intensity have shown that in a conflict in a populated area, military formations will have to simultaneously conduct three types of operations: intense hostilities against regular enemy troops, specific combat operations against irregular formations, and operations to restore the legal regime. In addition, a settlement can be imagined as a system of three interrelated elements: terrain, population and infrastructure. At the same time, in contrast to the plane view of the classical area of armed struggle, combat operations in settlements are conducted in spatial dimensions, since altitude and depth are added to the usual measurements. Also, such conditions should additionally include: airspace over the city; roofs of buildings and structures; internal premises of buildings and structures; the surface of the land, streets, squares and the surface of water bodies; underground and underwater structures and categorized objects.

Thus, having analyzed this problem, it can be noted with confidence that at present it is necessary to revise the essence of the training of military formations for operations in populated areas, taking into account their readiness and ability to conduct combat operations in specific conditions, i.e. in a complex system of urban architectural and engineering structures of various types, many of which can be destroyed, as well as among a large number of civilians.

In addition, such specific conditions require military formations to be independent in their actions. Particular attention should be paid to a high level of professional training and personal decisive skills in close combat or hand-to-hand combat, taking into account the distribution of roles of each serviceman, clear interaction between them and mutual assistance to each other [4].

In order to effectively train personnel for combat work in populated areas, it is necessary to focus on the standards and requirements adopted for special operations forces with an emphasis on anti-sniper warfare, mine blast training, as well as sabotage actions.

The conditions of settlements require high-quality interaction between infantry and armored combat vehicles. The actions of such equipment in similar conditions without the support of infantry leads to its loss. At the same time, independent actions of the infantry without direct fire support and armored protection may be ineffective.

In combat operations in populated areas, a constant and multi-tiered reconnaissance of the forces and intentions of the opposing side, the nature of the destruction and the terrain as a whole plays an essential role.

International experience shows that in populated areas there can be errors in the identification of their personnel and the enemy. For example, during the assault on the interior of buildings and due to the specifics of close combat, which requires an instant response to any potential threat, losses from one's own fire weapons are inevitable. In this regard, it is necessary to have clearly distinguishable identification marks or individual electronic identification devices [5].

Conflicts in populated areas are accompanied by a high level of losses in personnel and combat vehicles, not only from enemy fire, but also from the widespread use of minefields by the opposing sides, as well as from fragments of collapsing buildings, fires, rubble, etc. both combatants and civilians.

Engineering support is traditionally very important in the course of hostilities in a populated area. The formations will have to perform tasks in conditions of continuous ruins, rubble, complex engineering obstacles. Without the appropriate engineering equipment, in particular, armored bulldozers, overcoming such obstacles can be an impossible task. In addition, the success of combat missions is largely determined by the availability of engineering means of mine and mine warfare.

Types of logistical support for military formations when performing combat missions in populated areas must be planned according to increased needs. Logistical support of active formations when operating in the absence of a front line, flanks and rear will require the use of armored protection for the equipment of the military rear.

Each commander (chief) must remember the following rules when performing combat missions in populated areas: small arms and grenade launchers play a crucial role; artillery is used mainly for direct fire; there is an increased consumption of ammunition for all systems of small arms and artillery weapons, and the availability of ammunition of various types will also be required; high-precision weapons are not essential in the conduct of combat operations, however, the role and importance of snipers is sharply increasing; armored fighting vehicles become easily vulnerable targets and cannot operate independently without infantry support; armor, the protection of existing combat and special vehicles in urban combat conditions cannot provide the required all-round protection and protection from above and below; Wheeled combat and special equipment when operating in populated areas has advantages over tracked combat vehicles, but in the presence of extensive zones of destruction, tracked vehicles are preferable; reliable and secure communication is the most important requirement for the command and control system of troops

operating in isolated directions; if the enemy has light portable air defense systems, the use of helicopters may not be appropriate.

Studies carried out at the Department of Armament and Shooting of the Academy have shown that the use of weapons and military equipment in the conditions of settlements has its own certain limitations, due to the presence of the civilian population in the combat zone and the corresponding ones, including various categorized objects. In such conditions, the use of non-lethal weapons is considered optimal¹. Already today it is necessary to develop effective means and methods of protection against such weapons.

In combat operations in populated areas, military robotic systems are widely used, which effectively perform the tasks of collecting intelligence data, target designation and destroying detected enemy targets, demining, etc. This must be taken into account when developing organizations and staffing appropriate military formations [6].

In the course of armed struggle in populated areas, an important element is the use of special thermal, sound and biochemical sensors to determine the location of the enemy in three-dimensional space [7].

Thus, the widespread introduction of military robotic systems into the organization of troops is very relevant today.

In conclusion, it should be noted that an increase in the scale of equipping troops with "nanoweapons" may lead to a gradual change in the essence and nature of combat operations, when physical destruction will be replaced by the concept of physical, psychological, and intellectual incapacitation. The danger lies in the fact that the armed forces, relying on traditional ideas about combat operations, may not be ready to operate in the innovative conditions of populated areas.

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¹ Non-lethal weapons are designed to temporarily disable manpower, weapons, equipment and infrastructure facilities. It is based on kinetic, biological, acoustic, physicochemical, radiation, electroshock effects and is a product of high technology.