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PROVISIONS OF CIVIL DEFENCE TRAINING IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA – HISTORICAL CONSEQUENCES

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ABSTRACT

This article is a reflection of the research focuses on the period after the Czechoslovak Republic in 1918 to the time before World War II in 1939. The aim of the research is to explore the basic approaches to the implementation of education for statehood in terms of the creation of a new state in relation to civil defence education in Czechoslovakia. The comparative historical analysis will be utilized as the research method on the subject of education for statehood. The comparative historical analysis is used as a specific tool for qualitative research. This is a procedure which can be applied to the statehood issue of education to its basic elements, by which it will be possible to learn more about this phenomenon and subsequently explain it.

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1. PROVISIONS OF CIVIL DEFENCE TRAINING

Civic education was included in the system for the education of the population since 1919. Civic education and training on a higher national school level was to include some basic elements that were a clear precursor of military training. In addition to military training, a need was perceived to have in the state a group of prepared people who would, if necessary and if

the situation was not related to war, be ready to help the population during disasters, epidemics, internal disturbances, etc. Civics gave moral incentives for the cultivation of appropriate properties, understanding the needs of the state entity and love for the homeland. To these areas of education belonged (Skořepa, 1933):

- the fighting urge of boys to convert to morally-permissible forms and forms of defence,
- the development of physical abilities, hardiness, courage, fearlessness and strength,
- familiarization with information about the army and military institutions with emphasis on the defensive and educational nature of military service,
- information about war and new chemical and biological weapons, with the assumption that the civilian population will suffer to the same extent as soldiers,
- interest of the state in peace, the importance of the League of Nations.

In the first decade of the existence of the Czechoslovak Republic, the state did not pay specific attention to military training issues and military training had not been implemented at schools during this period. Initially, military training was developed on a club basis, first as an accompanying activity of sports associations and organizations, e.g. the Czechoslovak Sokol Organization, the scout movement, hiking, shooting clubs and auto clubs. However, these were mutually uncoordinated actions (Čapák, 1986).

Cultural and political events in Europe after 1930 stressed the need for direction and the necessity of introducing systematic preparation for civil defence training. Since 1932, cultural, sports and other organizations organized various activities through which they wanted to increase the civil defence ability of the population (Matula, 1937). It was first recommended to include the topic of military training and defensive national works in the higher classes of national schools so that young people could take part in the potential defence of the Republic (Pech, 1932). When teaching civil defence education and training, it was recommended to take into account the events of the period in relation to the nation's civil defence ability. It was necessary to include the issue into teaching in order to avoid various confusion and misinformation. Another reason was civil defence preparedness (Kočí, 1935).

1.1. LEGISLATIVE BASIS

However, it was not possible to achieve the required objective via random actions. Therefore, through a Decree of 1 February 1934, No. 141.026/33-II, the Ministry of Education and National Culture set out that civil defence education as a component of civil education is part of the educational and teaching work at middle schools and teacher training institutes. At higher levels of general schools, junior secondary schools and lower secondary schools there was a requirement to include themes about the army, its organization, its tasks and the main concepts that were important for the moral justification of civilian civil defence duties (Dolenský, 1935).

A Decree of the Ministry of Education dated 24 May 1935, No. 26.969/35-I, was issued for national schools. This Decree on the education of students of primary schools on civil defence required that attention be paid to the requirements of military training in everyday school practices. This meant the moral education of students – a conscious and selfless devotion to the state and determination to defend the country if necessary, civil reciprocity, discipline, courage and bravery. These ideas were to permeate all subjects at primary schools (Dolenský, 1937).

Legislative provisions and the direction of military training were also dealt with abroad, for example in Russia, Germany and Italy. On this basis, the Act on Military Training (Act No. 184/1937 Coll.) was adopted in the Czechoslovak Republic. During this period military training was seen as a deepening of civic education.

The purpose of military training was characterized as “cultivating in the population of the Czechoslovak Republic according to age, education and profession / employment, the moral qualities, physical fitness, knowledge and skills that are needed for national defence” (Section 2, Act No. 184/1937 Coll.). Educational care and military training education were expanded via the Act on Military Training, to which Czechoslovak citizens were subject, regardless of gender, from the day when their school attendance began until the end of the year in which they reached the age of 30. Even older persons up to the age of 50 were subject to training assignments in civilian air raid protection. If the interests of national defence required as such, training could also be implemented by a government decree for people up to the age of 60. Participation in civil defence education was a civic duty and there was no financial compensation for its fulfilment.

Military training components consisted of (Section 3, Act No. 184/1937 Coll.):

- moral, doctrinal and physical civil defence preparation,
- training in assistance and protective services, in particular training in civilian air raid protection tasks,
- civil defence training.

Military training of pupils and students of public schools of all types and levels took place in schools. Military training was provided for the rest of the population in clubs, institutes, departments and military training centres.

According to the Act, military training matters at schools belonged, according to the type of school, to the field of competences of the Ministry of Education and National Culture, or the Ministry of Agriculture (Section 6, Act No. 184/1937 Coll.). These ministries issued general regulations on military training matters in agreement with the Ministry of National Defence, and with regard to physical military training, also in agreement with the Ministry of Public Health and Physical Education. If military training was also provided at schools, the Ministry of Education and National Culture or the Ministry of Agriculture also proceeded in agreement with the Ministry of National Defence, and with regard to assistance and protection services training, also in agreement with the Ministry of the Interior and with their cooperation.

The Act scaled military training of youths according to age (Act No. 184/1937 Coll.):

- students aged 6–14 completed basic educational training; an educational task,
- youths aged 14–17 took part in assistance and protection services preparation; a civic task,
- members of the population aged 17–21 took part in civil defence training; a military task.

The educational task mainly consisted of sensory and habit-forming training which evolved into knowledge adoption and culminated in moral and social education. It is worth noting that military training that was already fairly elaborated and applied in 1938 was not inclined toward such a conceptualization that was based on uniformity, the use of different designations, ranks, etc. Such an approach shows that patriotism, bravery and discipline were perceived as real education.

Military training matters outside of schools belong to the field of competences of the Ministry of National Defence, which cooperates in civil defence moral and doctrinal training in agreement with the Ministry of Education and National Culture, in physical civil defence training in agreement with the Ministry of Public Health and physical education assistance and protection services training in agreement with the Ministry of the Interior and other participating ministries. However, civil defence, moral, doctrinal and physical preparation offered in physical education associations belongs to the field of competences of the Ministry of Public Health and Physical Education which proceeds in agreement with the Ministry of National Defence, and in terms of civil defence, moral and doctrinal preparation, also in cooperation with the Ministry of Education and National Culture (Section 6, Act No. 184/1937 Coll.).

To discuss military training matters related to several branches of public administration, an inter-ministerial military training association was established at the Ministry of National Defence as a subsidiary body, which consisted of representatives of the participating ministries, to whose field of competences military training belonged, and with representatives of the Ministry of Finance and other ministries involved in the matter (Section 7, Act No. 184/1937 Coll.). A military/Unit and district military training authorities were established for individual units, as well as for individual military training precincts into which the area of units was divided (Section 8, Act No. 184/1937 Coll.).

The following committees cooperated in securing the cooperation of professional and interest groups in military training (Section 9, Act No. 184/1937 Coll., Matula, 1937):

- The Central Civil Defence Committee of the Ministry of National Defence for Matters of National Importance,
- Provincial civil defence committees for military training matters in provinces (Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia) at provincial offices,
- District civil defence committees for military training matters in districts at district offices.

The Military training bodies specified in the Act are (Section 8, paragraph 3 a 4, Act No. 184/1937 Coll.):

- Army bodies for military training that organize and manage military training belonging to the competences of the Ministry of National Defence and supervise it; they cooperate in the organization and imple-

- mentation of military training and in supervising it if this training belongs to the competence of other ministries,
- Ministry of Education and National Culture bodies and bodies of offices subordinated thereto with regard to military training at schools (with the exception of agricultural schools),
 - Ministry of Agriculture bodies with regard to military training at agricultural schools,
 - Ministry of Public Health and Physical Education bodies with regard to moral, doctrinal and physical civil defence preparation in physical education associations authorized to provide military training,
 - Bodies of the Ministry of the Interior with regard to training in civilian air raid protection tasks.

Military training was mandatory for pupils and students of public schools of all types and degrees in the following scope (Section 11, Act No. 184/1937 Coll.):

- moral, doctrinal and physical civil defence preparation as of the date when their obligation to attend school began,
- assistance and protection services training from 1 September of the year in which a pupil (students) reaches the age of 14,
- civil defence training from 1 September of the year in which a pupil – student reaches the age of 17, with the exception of girls, who are not subject to civil defence training.

1.2. STATE CIVILIAN AIR RAID PROTECTION SCHOOL

The Act on Civilian Air Raid Protection (Act No. 82/1935) and implementing decrees set out the legislative basis and obligation in the area of protecting the population against air attacks, which was only preceded by a regulation with fulfilment on a voluntary basis. From the beginning there were some perceived gaps, in particular a lack of trained staff and trained units. Efforts to come up with solutions were realized by the issuing framework directives, but these were insufficient. The situation thus led to the issuing of numerous guides and manuals that were not uniform and often contradictory. Cities and towns themselves organized courses, in which the lecturers involved military officers, fire-fighters, doctors and members of the Czechoslovak Red Cross. Partial unification of themes of civil protection was also achieved thanks to the publishing of the periodicals “Magazine for Civic Education and Training”, which was renamed to

the “Magazine for Civic Education and Military Training and Protection of the Population” in 1936 (Zatočil, 1937).

Active work in the field of professional preparation and training of members of air raid protection facilities in Hradec Králové brought results in terms of the intention to build the first Civilian Air Raid Protection State School in the Czechoslovak Republic. The School was built by the Ministry of the Interior, and the city of Hradec Králové donated land plots free of charge. The school was to have two purposes (Zatočil, 1937):

- training and education of instructors who were appointed to carry out training in civilian air raid protection tasks at military training centres, training and education of commanders and executive civilian air raid protection units in municipalities,
- carrying out research activities in terms of the application of all findings for the practical purposes of civilian air raid protection.

Trainees of the School underwent practical and theoretical training under simulated, almost real conditions and the actions of the individual services and their management were practiced. Observatories were designed for the warning service for training observation and command posts and different types of shelters were located in the school. The school was also included a first aid station, infirmary, decontamination area – washing and disinfection station for the sanitation service. The equipment was to serve both for demonstrations for trainees and for the practical needs of training. The training also included practice with a protective mask, familiarization with the function and efficiency of a filter and protective clothing.

The first courses at the new school began on 14 December 1937 via a course for trainers of military training civilian air raid protection tasks. This was an eight-day course. Civilian air raid protection schools were perceived as a necessity (Zatočil, 1937).

1.3. CIVIL DEFENCE TRAINING SPECIFICS

Education is to secure good people for society and good citizens for the state. Raising children must be done with love and life (Štorch, 1929). Providing military training for schoolchildren who were taught privately was determined by a government decree. Private schools were obliged to ensure the military training of children who attended the school in the same manner as public schools. Schoolchildren who were allowed to be taught at home under the law (Section 2, Act No. 72/1936) were not ex-

empt from school attendance with regard to physical education lessons, in which physical civil defence preparation was incorporated. These children were obliged to participate in this training together with children who went to the schools, with the only exception being exemption from physical education pursuant to the relevant school regulations. Regarding moral and doctrinal civil defence preparation of the relevant degree incorporated into individual teaching subjects, "children absolved of attending school were to be tested on these teaching subjects during an examination at the end of the year" (Section 7, Government Decree No. 109/1938).

Military training purposes were also duly taken into account in the selection of books for school libraries. In particular, the libraries were not allowed to have books that downplayed military training or were directed against it. Students of universities where military training was not implemented either at all, or not in its entirety, underwent military training wholly, or in those components which were not implemented at school. The teaching staff at universities were to ensure that military training was provided at universities properly and in all of its components; for military training matters, the professoriate could choose a special officer from among its ranks (paragraph 3, Section 4, Government Decree 109/1938).

The law (Section 12, Act No. 184/1937 Coll.) set out that the elements of moral and doctrinal civil defence preparation pervade individuals being taught, where appropriate, separate teaching and test subjects can also be implemented. Physical civil defence preparation was provided by physical training lessons, from which the required number of hours were spent on practicing in wild areas. The Board of Education established the extent and in what manner, possibly for several schools together, physical civil defence preparation was to be provided at those schools where teaching physical education was not a compulsory subject at that time.

Pupils and students underwent assistance and protection services training and civil defence training at schools in appropriate teaching subjects. Military training (Section 24, Act No. 184/1937 Coll.) was carried out by military training trainers who have been appointed for for this training. These trainers may be appointed to provide all or only some components of military training. In addition to military training trainers, when carrying out military training, it was also possible to cooperate with other competent persons. If this task cannot be taken care of in individual components in whole or in part by the staff established by the Board of Educa-

tion, military training trainers at schools are appointed, upon the request of the school authority, by the relevant district military training headquarters (Section 13, Government Decree No. 109/1938). In the agreement with the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of National Defence sets out the principles according to which reimbursement of cash expenses can be granted to military training trainers and other persons specified in the previous text.

The issuing of detailed regulations on military training at schools was secured by the Ministry of Education and National Culture, or by the Ministry of Agriculture for the schools they administered upon agreement with the Ministry of National Defence, in physical civil defence preparation matters also in cooperation with the Ministry of Public Health and Physical Education, and in assistance and protection services training matters upon agreement with the Ministry of the Interior.

The Act on Military Training had a far greater impact than the Act on Civic Education. The essential difference lay in the fact that extracurricular participation of the population in civic education was voluntary; the obligation merely consisted of organizing civic education courses, while participation in military training was compulsory. The Act on Military Training primarily emphasized physical education, assistance and protection services training and military training before moral and educational training.

When comparing the ratio of civil and military training, Section 1 of the Act on Military Training (Act No. 184/1937) should be taken into consideration, which stated: “Public care for education and training is expanded by military training”. Civic education was expanded and supplemented by military education. Moral, doctrinal and physical military training at schools up to 17 years of age was called civil defence preparation by the law. There was no requirement set out that military training dominates in education and teaching. This was an intention to naturally incorporate military training in civic education. Military training taught individuals and society to protect life and its underlying conditions from violence and enemy attack. Military training was included in the educational process as an integral part alongside moral, social, aesthetic and technical education. Due to social development, in particular in neighbouring Germany and its tendency towards fascism, an extraordinary surge of interest was devoted to military training.

Collective military training supplemented individually-carried out moral education in strengthening social and national solidarity; it created a civil defence spirit on the basis of feeling, supported awareness of shared responsibility and collective will. Initiative in military training was based on civil liberties and civic responsibility, and it was therefore also assumed that good military training was not possible without good civic education – there can be no quality whole without a quality part (Dolenský, 1938). This was the education of pupils and the entire population so that the necessity and effectiveness of defensive measures – even those that were unpleasant, such as tax burden, restrictions under the law on national defence, etc. – was understood.

1.4. CIVIL DEFENCE TRAINING IN SOVIET RUSSIA AND SOVIET UNION

Brief characteristics of the development of Soviet military training are presented so that a comparison can be made with developments in Czechoslovakia and other countries, but in particular given the significant impact on the development of military training and subsequent civil defence in Czechoslovakia from 1948 to 1989. The Soviets put high emphasis on preparing the population, particularly youths in the area of military training. The beginning of a systematic approach can be found at universities, where military training was mandatory from 1925. Every year, university students had to undergo three months in military training camps. This followed the preparation at secondary, junior secondary and primary schools. Attention was devoted to shooting and rifle corps consisted of not only boys, but also existed at girls' schools (Soukup, 1932).

In the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, all pre- and post-military training was concentrated in the Osoaviachim national organization. This was is an acronym of the Russian word “ОСОАВИАХИМ” (Общество содействия обороне, авиационному и химическому строительству) – Association for the Support of Defence and Aviation and Chemical Construction, which focused on the organization of anti-aircraft and chemical defence from 1927 to 1948. Education and training was carried out at schools, factories and even in places of residence or employment, in special clubs and courses and at schools and camps. It included all of the components of training and employment that had a relationship to the defence of the state. University students underwent so-called top-level pre-military education outside the army which was equivalent to full-time military ser-

vice and was controlled by members of the army. It had a theoretical part at universities and a practical part with the units of the Red Army or at training camps. At some colleges, so-called top-level military-production preparation was established (Machník, 1936).

Other organizations became involved in civil defence preparation in Russia. At the beginning of the building of the military training system, one such organization was “Авиахим”, pronounced *Aviaxim*, (Общество друзей авиационной и химической обороны и промышленности) – Association for Air and Chemical Protection and Defence of Industry from 1925 to 1927 (Nikonova, 2010).

The “ВСЕВОБУЧ”, pronounced *Vsevobuch* (Всеобщее военное обучение) – General Military Teaching organization was formed in 1918, which the government accommodated in the use of training grounds, gyms and clubrooms. In 1923 the state took over the control of military preparation and made the Supreme Committee for Physical Culture responsible for it. Via the Decree of 1 August 1923, military training was determined as an integral part of school education. Each school formed a military unit and conducted military exercises.

The Decree prescribed the following (Soukup, 1932):

- formation of military units and instruction on the basic principles of war,
- infantryman and gunner training,
- theory of firing automatic rifles and pistols,
- knowledge of service regulations,
- training with a machine gun and hand grenades,
- theoretical instruction on war gases and protecting against them,
- instruction on the Air Force and its significance,
- theory of class struggle and civil war,
- field exercises, trench training using modern trench warfare equipment.

Training of students of middle schools and universities was to be at such a level so that if necessary, school battalions could be immediately sent to the battlefield. Communist youths underwent three stages during military training. The first stage was focused on physical education and ended at age 16. The second stage lasted from age 16 to 18, and in addition to physical education, emphasis was placed on strengthening the so-called revolutionary and military spirit. The third stage was implemented as special training for certain types of weapons. Particular attention was paid to children who were organized, in particular Komsomol members. A School for Naval and Higher Military Education was established for preparing

trainers. The military-scientific society was founded in 1924, which later transformed into military-science clubs at universities and factories.

CONCLUSION

Statehood education and military preparation primarily focused on awakening love for country, nation, state, and of instilling a sense of duty thereto and encouraging efforts for protecting one's home. The aim was to focus mental and physical strengths to defend the state. Primarily, civil defence education in the broader sense and military training was to be emphasized and deepened at schools. Civil defence education is clearly seen as a certain foundation and a precursor to military education. School training was to support the subsequent physical fitness of the army, and its spirit. The foundation for defence training and education of the entire nation from childhood was thus laid out. The basic idea was that advanced military abilities can avert a war, or at least reduce its negative consequences.

A nation that considered to be safe was the one that educated the population to carry out creative activities with the same care as that used for education in defensive awareness. Civil defence education was the vital interest of the national unit itself, and its level was a contemporary measure of security. Civil defence involved a sense of responsibility, duty, order and discipline, and it was also an expression of patriotism and civic solidarity (Kováčová, 2013; Marcinek, 2014). The aim was to support civil defence for the entire population, regardless of age and whether they were subject to military duty.

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