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STATE TERROR OF RUSSIA AGAINST UKRAINE

The question of the terrorist activities of the Russian Federation during the full-scale war against Ukraine aimed at destroying the country's economic potential and achieving the political objectives of this armed conflict is considered. An analysis of the main targets of attacks on strategic objects of Ukraine, the consequences of these attacks, and ways of countering terror on the part of the aggressor country has been carried out.

Keywords: *international terrorism, state terrorism, hybrid war, full-scale armed aggression, Russia's state terror against Ukraine, missile and bomb attacks, infrastructure object, genocide of the civilian population.*

Statement of the problem. International terrorism is socially dangerous acts of violence, carried out on a global or regional scale by terrorist organizations and groups in particular with the support of state bodies of individual countries, with the aim of achieving certain goals associated with the kidnapping, capture, murder of innocent people or threat to their life and health, destruction or threat of destruction of important national economic objects, life support systems, communications, use or threat of use of nuclear, chemical, biological and other weapons of mass destruction [1].

Unfortunately, we live in a far from ideal society and the cause of the majority of all human ills lies in the very nature of man. Such features as superiority, desire for enrichment, greed, cruelty, etc., give rise to conflicts between people and grow into confrontations between different social groups, religious communities, states and entire nations. Scientists claim that during the last 5.5 thousand years, humanity lived in peace for at most 300 years. Over the course of 55 centuries 14.500 wars took place on our planet (including two world wars) in which 3.6 billion people died. In the years that have passed since the end of the Second World War more than 250 wars have taken place in the world in which more than 90 states took part, and human losses amounted to more than 35 billion people [2]. Over time the methods of warfare were transformed and changed.

The classical, purely military confrontation is being replaced by a new type of conflict – a hybrid war. Such a war combines fundamentally different types and ways of waging war which are used in a coordinated manner to achieve the main goals. The typical components of a hybrid war which contribute to the emergence and deepening of internal conflicts in the state chosen for aggression are the following:

- creation of internal social contradictions through propaganda with its further development into an information war;
- creation of economic problems due to economic confrontation with the transition to economic war and opposition to the relations of the victim country with neighboring countries;
- support of separatism and terrorism, up to acts of state terrorism;
- construction of pseudo-state formations as a hybrid ideal project of state formation;
- promoting the creation of irregular armed formations (insurgents, partisans, etc.) and their equipment [3].

The use of means of hybrid warfare makes it possible to avoid widespread resonance in the world community and to achieve the set goal with minimal costs in economic, military and reputational terms. And now, when we are living in a state of war, we are beginning to understand that Russia has been using such methods against Ukraine since the first day after the collapse of the Soviet Union and our state's independence. The strategy of using one's own propaganda among a certain part of the citizens of Ukraine in addition to the involvement of soldiers without identification marks, their own special services and representatives of private military companies, led to the annexation of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea, the occupation of certain areas of the Donetsk and Lugansk regions. Such actions unfortunately did not cause a proper reaction of the world community and did not have fair consequences for the aggressor country.

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Therefore, it can be stated that the specified methods of conducting hybrid warfare have proven to be quite effective and can be used in future conflicts and the democratic world must develop and implement mechanisms and means of countering such challenges.

The purpose of the article is to analyze the terrorist attacks of the Russian Federation at the current stage of the war, as well as to find effective means of countering these attacks and minimizing their consequences for the population and the state in general.

Analysis of recent research and publications. Since the described events are taking place today and the military conflict is far from over, the main body of information is covered in domestic and international mass media, reports of specialized organizations and analytical centers such as the Kyiv School of Economics (KSE), Amnesty International, the Institute for the Study of War (ISW), the UN, Council of Europe, Unicef and many others.

The phenomenon of terrorism has been studied by many scientific fields in recent years. In political science this problem is actualized in the works of B. Antipenka, L. Bagrii-Shakhmatova, V. Vozniuka, Yu. Drozdov, O. Kolomoitsa, V. Lipkan, O. Polovka, I. Trunova and others.

Legal aspects of terrorism are investigated by V. Vereshchetina, V. Yemelyanov, A. Zhalinskyi, S. Kelin, V. Kubalskyi, V. Luneev, L. Novikova, I. Smaznov, K. Sheremet, and others; its philosophical and psychological foundations – A. Demenko, O. Veselytskyi, E. Kozhushko, D. Olshanskyi, M. Tseluiko and others.

D. Bell, R. Beisner, I. Wallerstein, A. Garfinkle, M. Glasius, S. Hook, P. Davis, B. Jenkins, A. Conte, S. Kupchan, D. Pipes, J. Spanier, J. Thorop, S. Huntington and others consider the phenomenon of terrorism in the context of world globalization processes in their works.

Scientific researches developments on countering terrorism in the context of international and national security problems are proposed in the works of I. Bidzyura, V. Butkevich, I. Varzar, Yu. Garmashov, V. Glushkov, V. Hlushchenko, M. Gutsalo, M. Holovaty, M. Dmytrenko, S. Dopilka, V. Yevtinova, I. Zvolinsky, Yu. Ivanov, I. Kresina, V. Krutov, I. Kuras, I. Lazarev, V. Lipkan, A. Matska, M. Senchenko, V. Tyhogo, I. Shkurat, H. Ferdman, I. Khizhnyak and others.

Summary of the main material. With the beginning of Russia's full-scale war against Ukraine there were attempts to inflict critical damage on the military potential of Ukraine, to establish control over the airspace, and within a few days to remove the political leadership of our country. To this end, on February 24, 2022, at 4:00 a.m. Kyiv time, cruise and ballistic missile strikes began on airfields, military headquarters, and warehouses almost throughout Ukraine. During the first day the enemy launched more than 160 missiles from air, sea and land-based carriers, after which they launched attacks by ground troops and aviation.

However, the plans of the aggressor country were not destined to be realized thanks to the skillful actions of the military leadership of Ukraine, the courage and heroism of the Armed Forces and representatives of all power structures of the state and territorial defense, the indomitability and unity of citizens in the fight against the invaders. Despite a significant advantage in technical support, quantitative and qualitative equipment the armed forces of the Russian Federation did not manage to completely destroy the air defense and aviation of Ukraine, and the courage and skill of the Ground Forces ensured the insane losses of the occupying troops in equipment and manpower which eventually forced the military-political leadership of Russia to abandon the initial plans, withdraw troops from Kyiv and change the strategy of conducting hostilities.

Practically since the first day of the full-scale invasion of Ukraine the armed forces of the Russian Federation in parallel with military operations have implemented tactics of terror and intimidation of the population of our country with the aim of sowing panic, undermining the morale and will of our people to resist which was supposed to induce the political leadership of the state to surrender. And on the way to this goal the occupying forces literally have shocked the whole world with their cruelty and inhumanity. It is not only against compliance with the norms of the Geneva Convention, but everything is much more terrible: representatives of the people, which for decades were considered "fraternal", staged a real total terror of our country and genocide of Ukrainians in the occupied territories [4].

Terrorist attacks in Ukraine, which fully fall under the definition of international terrorism in the conditions of a hybrid war, are carried out by almost all available means that the enemy had at his disposal. If on February 24 the targets of missile attacks were military facilities, airfields, warehouses with ammunition, then later the enemy began to direct their missiles and aerial bombs at civilian infrastructure and ordinary residential buildings [5].

However, the most egregious crimes against humanity were the genocide of the Ukrainian people which was committed and, unfortunately, is being committed by the occupying forces in the occupied territories of Ukraine.

During the occupation of the Kyiv region by russian troops, intensive battles took place in the cities of Bucha, Irpin, Gostomel and others which led to significant destruction. According to the mayor of Irpin, O. Markushin, 70 % of the city's buildings were damaged during the month of fierce fighting, and a large part of them has not been restored until now. In the captured towns and villages the occupying forces immediately turned off the Internet and communication, and as a result of the hostilities, electricity, water and gas supplies were cut off, grocery stores were destroyed or looted which put local residents on the edge of survival.

At the same time the occupying forces engaged in real terror of the civilian population of the captured territories. People were evicted from their homes, their homes were occupied, robbery and looting, acts of sexual violence, torture and torture were used. All those who resisted such actions or aroused suspicion were shot on the spot and harassed. More than 300 murdered civilians have been found on the streets of Buchi, mass graves have been also discovered: most of the people had their hands tied behind their backs, signs of torture and bullet holes in their heads.

The bodies of 1.346 local residents were found in the Kyiv region, approximately 90 % of them died as a result of shootings by the occupying forces, and another 300 people are considered missing. The russian military did not spare women, the elderly or children [6].

The situation in other regions of Ukraine, which were liberated from occupation, turned out to be no less dire. The situation is especially apocalyptic in Donbas where military operations have been taking place since 2014. Such cities as Lysychansk, Severodonetsk, Mariupol, Bahmut, Maryinka, Avdiyivka and many others were simply wiped off the face of the earth as a result of constant bombings and fierce battles.

In many settlements, where the entire infrastructure was destroyed, not a single resident has remained. A large part of the Donetsk and Lugansk regions has turned into an uninhabitable ruin, the restoration and demining of which will take years, and maybe even decades. The local population has been forced either to leave their homes and move to safer regions of Ukraine or to leave the Motherland and go abroad. Those who could not leave or decided to stay in these territories have been forced to survive in inhumane conditions.

The established and documented acts of atrocities by the occupying forces have shocked the entire world community, but the true scale of this genocide of the Ukrainian people is much greater. Currently, it is impossible to establish all the circumstances and facts of these war crimes, since a significant territory of our country remains occupied, and, unfortunately, inhuman acts continue to be committed even today.

International terrorism has dozens of classifications, including political, revolutionary, left, right, separatist, complex, criminal, pathological, etc. At the same time the goal of terrorists can be different: religious, political, economic. However, Ukraine faced a much more terrible form of terror as the military and political leadership of the enemy country aims to destroy our nation and erase our state from the world map. And on the way to achieving his goal, the enemy does not feel any moral, ethical, religious or general human limitations, has no "red lines" that are not allowed to be crossed, and is willing to do anything to satisfy his imperial ambitions. Rocket attacks on critical infrastructure, leading to man-made and ecological disasters and potentially causing nuclear danger, attacks on civilian infrastructure to deprive tens of millions of people of heat and light and put the population of one of the largest countries in Europe on the verge of survival.

Conducting hostilities without observing the norms of the Geneva Convention, shooting prisoners of war, neglecting international humanitarian law, namely: the use of prohibited means of warfare, chemical weapons, the use of torture and genocide against the civilian population, the abduction and deportation of children from the occupied territories – all this is inherent in military forces of the russian federation and is committed by them daily [7].

The only real way to stop these atrocities is to defeat the enemy on the battlefield and liberate the entire territory of Ukraine within the internationally recognized borders. On the way to this goal our state has made significant progress. The primary plans of the enemy to capture Kyiv were thwarted, enemy troops from Kyiv, Chernigiv, and Sumy regions were repulsed, and brilliant operations were carried out to liberate Kharkiv and part of Kherson regions. Thanks to the successful use of the domestic RK-360MC "Neptun" coastal missile system by the Naval Forces, units of the GUR and the SBU, the multi-purpose unmanned surface vehicle "SeaBaby", missile and unmanned weapons provided by partner countries, it was possible to destroy or disable a third of the Black Sea Fleet russian federation which made it possible to independently unblock shipping in the Black Sea. However, at the current stage of the war, the situation is extremely dangerous and threatens to tip the scales in favor of the aggressor.

According to the report of the Kyiv School of Economics (KSE) [8], as of the beginning of 2024 the amount of damage caused to the infrastructure of Ukraine during the two years of the war is 155 billion dollars, the lion's share of it falls on the country's housing stock. During the two years of the war over 250.000 residential buildings were damaged or destroyed by shelling and fighting including 222.000 private buildings and 28.000

high-rise buildings. The bloodiest air bombings were the bombing of residential buildings in Borodyanka and Chernigiv (more than 40 dead), the air strike on the Mariupol theater (at least 300 dead), the deliberate strike on the square in front of the railway station in Kramatorsk (61 dead), the hitting of a school in Beilgorivka (over 60 dead), a rocket attack on a residential building in Dnipro (46 dead), a rocket attack on the village of Groza in Kharkiv district (59 dead), etc. In parallel with the attacks on the civilian population in order to suppress the morale of the citizens the Russian troops are carrying out the task of destroying the infrastructure of our state and undermining the country's economic potential and financial sector. Strategic military enterprises, oil refineries and oil depots, ports and port infrastructure became the targets of Russian missiles.

The issue of the energy terror of our state by the occupiers deserves special attention, namely: constant efforts to destroy the energy system of Ukraine with powerful strikes on the generation, transport and distribution capacities of our state.

According to the Prime Minister of Ukraine D. Shmyhal, only for 2022 enemy forces carried out no less than 1,200 strikes on the Ukrainian energy system resulting in the failure of more than 40 % of its infrastructure. The brutality and cynicism of the top leadership of the aggressor state is striking because the command to destroy Ukraine's energy system was launched in the fall, on the eve of the beginning of the heating season, that is the purpose of such attacks is to deprive Ukrainians of heat and light in winter, to sow despair and fear in society. Starting from March 22, 2024 the Ukrainian energy system was subjected to another wave of targeted Russian attacks. This time the Russian Federation carried out the most massive use of means of destruction: 63 unmanned kamikaze drones "Shahed 136" and 88 missiles of various types as a result of which the air defense of our country which operates in the conditions of an insufficient number of air defense systems and the corresponding ammunition for them was unable to shoot down a significant number of targets which led to the shutdown of 10 thermal power plants and thermal power plants, the loss of 50 % of generation capacity, and the destruction of equipment at many power system facilities. The effects of this attack may take years to recover from.

It should be noted that the attack on the Dnipro hydroelectric power station, which was hit by 8 missiles, could also cause a man-made and ecological disaster because there was a risk of the dam collapsing. One gets the impression that there are no spiritual, moral, ethical or general human limitations for the terrorist state on the way to its goal because on June 6, 2023 the occupying forces of the Russian Federation already committed an act of ecocide – the planned undermining of the Kakhovskaya HPP dam. This war crime had catastrophic consequences for the entire region, the damage from which is estimated at almost 14 billion dollars. According to the report [9] submitted by the government of Ukraine and the United Nations, the breach of the Kakhovskaya hydroelectric power station dam caused the flooding of 620 square kilometers of territory which directly affected 100,000 residents of Ukraine. Significant damage was caused to housing, infrastructure, the environment and cultural objects (historical buildings, museums and places of worship).

In addition, energy supply, drinking water supply, irrigation of agricultural lands and operation of river transport in the South of Ukraine have been disrupted. It should be noted separately that the explosion of the Kakhovskaya hydroelectric power station could have provoked not only an environmental disaster of regional importance, but also without exaggeration a catastrophe of a planetary level, since the cooling system of the largest nuclear power plant in Europe and the third in the world in terms of total capacity the Zaporizhzhia hydroelectric power station (ZHPP) is directly connected with the water level in the Kakhov reservoir. The undermining of the dam could lead to the shallowing of the reservoir to critical levels which would under certain conditions threaten the safe operation of the ZNPP. It seems that the military command of the Russian Federation is either unwilling or unable to realize all the dangers that their irresponsible actions regarding the nuclear power plant can lead to.

The occupying forces turned the ZNPP itself into a military base where they have placed their military equipment. The Main Directorate of Intelligence has established the facts of the object being mined, constant missile attacks on the energy infrastructure and main electrical networks lead to the disconnection of the station from the country's energy system which endangers its safe functioning.

The missile terror of our country by the Russian Federation also endangers other nuclear facilities of Ukraine. Thus, on April 16, 2022, three cruise missiles flew over the site of the Southern Ukrainian NPP, and on June 5, 2022, video cameras of the Southern Ukrainian Nuclear Power Plant (NPP) recorded the flight of a Russian Kalibr cruise missile in the immediate vicinity of the plant units [10].

Another direction of the terrorist activity of the aggressor country was an attempt to establish complete control over the waters of the Black and Azov seas, to destroy Ukraine as a maritime state, to make shipping

and the functioning of our ports impossible, in particular for the transportation and sale of agricultural products around the world. For this reason from the beginning of hostilities, the enemy actively used the Black Sea fleet, organized large-scale mining of the Black Sea water area, and attempted to capture the strategically important Zmiiny Island.

Under the conditions of the occupation of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and a large part of the southern regions of Ukraine the Odesa region remains the main maritime hub which makes it a target for constant enemy attacks. First of all, the port and transport infrastructure is affected, and on September 25, 2023 a missile attack was carried out on one of the symbols of the city – the Odesa sea station. Since this is undoubtedly a civilian object we can once again conclude that the purpose of such cynical terrorist attacks is to intimidate the city's population and have a psychological impact on society.

From the beginning of 2024 the gas transportation system of Ukraine began to suffer missile strikes. Thus, on April 11, 2024 various types of missiles attacked the underground gas storage facilities of Naftogaz of Ukraine which indicates that the enemy is aiming to destroy the entire fuel and energy complex of our country [11].

In the conditions when the counteroffensive of 2023 did not give the desired results, the enemy's superiority in means of destruction, equipment, aviation, the number of shells, manpower, economic and military potential the initiative on the battlefield passed to the troops of the Russian Federation. Currently, given the available resources, the situation at the front is extremely difficult, and the Armed Forces of Ukraine are forced to restrain enemy attacks in order to prevent the capture of larger territories, and there is no talk of counteroffensive actions and the achievement of the goal of expelling enemy troops from our country at this stage. In the spring of 2024 the percentage of downed missiles and drones during massive enemy attacks decreased because at that time the Ukrainian air defense had an insufficient number of attack systems and ammunition for those that were available, and therefore the enemy managed to hit a significant number of military targets and infrastructure facilities, the restoration of which will require years and billions of dollars which endangers the existence of our state and its ability to defend itself and endure in this war with a terrible enemy. And the main reason why Ukraine found itself in such a difficult situation was the reduction or suspension of financial and military aid from our Western partners, and first of all the USA.

Currently, we can count on the help of the most powerful country in the world in terms of military and financial potential – the USA. The fate of our country largely depends on the provision of aid in the amount of 60 billion dollars, the vote for which has finally ended in the US Congress and is no longer the object of political bargaining and manipulation between the Democratic and Republican parties which on the eve of the presidential election seek to get the maximum dividends from this situation in the form of voters of electorate.

Conclusions

In parallel with the military operations the armed forces of the Russian Federation began to implement tactics of terror and intimidation of the population of our country with the aim of causing panic, undermining the morale and will of Ukrainians to resist which should eventually lead the political leadership of the country to surrender. Russia's policy of state terrorism against Ukraine as genocide of the Ukrainian people is carried out in different ways: missile and artillery strikes on civilian infrastructure and ordinary residential buildings; shooting by occupying forces of peaceful civilians; use of prohibited means of warfare, chemical weapons, use of torture; undermining the country's economic potential and financial sector; disruption of energy supply, supply of drinking water, irrigation of agricultural lands; undermining Kakhovskaya HPP; an attempt to establish complete control over the waters of the Black and Azov Seas and many others.

The current stage of the war can be called critical and decisive because despite sanctions pressure and international isolation the Russian Federation has managed to reposition its economy on military lines and is actively building up its military potential. At the same time as economic and military aid to Ukraine has significantly decreased. Under such circumstances one can only hope for the moderation and responsibility of the leaders of the world's leading democracies, whose determination (no exaggeration) depends on the fate of Europe's largest country.

NATO countries have hundreds of air defense systems and thousands of missiles for them, but prefer to keep them in warehouses, citing the need to ensure their own security. Production capacity for the production of artillery shells is currently not working at full capacity, and the initiative of the Czech Republic to transfer to Ukraine hundreds of thousands of already manufactured shells in countries that are not members of the European Union is being delayed for unknown reasons. The situation is similar with the provision of F-16 aircraft to our country which would strengthen our country's air defense and help our defenders on the

battlefield. However, the deadline for the transfer of combat aircraft from partners to us is constantly shifting, and the number of combat vehicles that Ukraine should receive this year, unfortunately, will not be able to significantly affect the course of the war.

Any political position is not worth thousands of human lives, and more than 500 children have been killed in Ukraine since the beginning of the war. Is the thirst for power stronger than democratic, Christian, universal values that distinguish the entire civilized world from such tyrannies as russia. We hope not. Ukraine stands, Ukraine holds on, our state does not surrender, but we really want, if not us, then our children to live in a world where good wins and tyranny is sure to be defeated. It is very difficult to watch war, death and human suffering on TV, but it is much more difficult to experience it yourself and see it with your own eyes every day, every night. Therefore, it is extremely important to do everything possible so that good will win evil and the long-awaited just peace will come.

The full-scale russian-Ukrainian war is ongoing, so an analysis of further events is absolutely necessary. In this context, in our opinion, the following areas are of scientific interest: assistance in the form of the supply of military equipment and weapons by world powers friendly to Ukraine with the aim of creating parity in this field on the battlefield, interception of a strategic initiative by Ukraine, military and diplomatic actions of our state and efforts to achieve victory for the Ukrainian people.

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ДЕРЖАВНИЙ ТЕРОР РОСІЇ ПРОТИ УКРАЇНИ

Розглянуто питання терористичної діяльності російської федерації в ході повномасштабної війни проти України, спрямованої на знищення економічного потенціалу країни та досягнення політичних завдань цього збройного конфлікту. Здійснено аналіз основних цілей ударів по стратегічних об'єктах України, наслідків цих атак, а також шляхів протидії терору з боку країни-агресора.

Терористична діяльність у сучасному світі набуває глобальних масштабів і стає ефективним інструментом впливу на просування своїх інтересів геополітичними гравцями різної ваги. Донедавна до терористичних актів вдавалися представники країн, які не могли відкрито протистояти державам, потужнішим за військовим та економічним потенціалом. Однак останніми десятиліттями спостерігається протилежна тенденція, і яскравим прикладом сьогодні є гібридна війна, яку веде росія проти України. Така тактика зумовлена насамперед тим, що в разі прямого оголошення війни країна-агресор буде засуджена світовою спільнотою за свої дії, що призведе до запровадження проти неї санкцій і низки правових наслідків.

***Ключові слова:** міжнародний тероризм, гібридна війна, повномасштабна збройна агресія, російський державний терор проти України, ракетно-бомбові удари, об'єкт інфраструктури, геноцид цивільного населення.*

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