

Experiences in Defense Preparations of Selected Countries

Abstract:

The paper compares defense preparations of selected countries: Germany, Finland, the United Kingdom and Sweden. While discussing the differences, the author also points out the underlying, common basis for various administrative and legal solutions applied by the states: the need for ensuring the security of the population and the continued operation of the multi-level government apparatus.

Key words: defense preparations, international relations, security, administration

In order to lay the foundations for deliberations on the subject matter, it is necessary to define the concept of “defense preparations.”

According to *Mały słownik języka polskiego*, ‘essence’ is the “true, actual side, aspect of something; the fixed order of something, the crux of the matter.”¹ The word ‘preparations’ refers to “actions, efforts made in view of something that is to happen.”² The word ‘defensive’ means something that ‘defends against something.’³ Whereas ‘defense’ is ‘repulsing an attack, usually armed, safeguarding from danger, destruction’⁴ and “defending oneself.”⁵ The Polish word for defense, ‘obrona’, is directly connected to fighting. “It is etymologically identical to it. According to A. Brückner, ‘obrona’ (‘defense’) derives from ‘*borni*’ (*bornis*) and the

¹ *Mały słownik języka polskiego*, W. Doroszewski (ed.), PWN, Warszawa 1999, p. 271.

² See: *ibidem*, p. 749.

³ *Ibidem*, p. 527.

⁴ *Ibidem*.

⁵ *Słownik poprawnej polszczyzny*, PWN, Warszawa 1999, p. 543.

common root *bor-* which means: ‘to fight, strike, struggle.’ In Slavic languages it also meant ‘quarrel’ (*bornis*), ‘palisade surrounding a stronghold’ (Rus. *zaboralo*), and even ‘to hit’ (*borjan, bora, bor*).⁶

Defense preparations comprise a complex process aimed at creating conditions to counteract something which is difficult, or even impossible to accurately define. They are also characterized by another important trait: their quality is only measurable during hostilities. No one can afford to employ this method. Therefore in that regard a country must draw from the practice of other states, as well as from its own experiences, especially relatively recent ones when the state’s preparedness for war was tested. From the point of view of the subject matter, what is relevant is not the operation of armed forces but the way the state as a whole functions and the relationships between organizational assumptions and the effects of their applications.

The dynamics in the area of threat requires studies, for scientific cognition will allow for setting a proper direction of the necessary changes in the field of defense preparations and those changes that stem from the environment. Identifying defense preparations solely with the military sphere does not stand to the test of time. This approach entails a one-sided perception of the so-called “defense preparations of the state”: “It is impossible to separate military threats from non-military ones, mainly because they occur simultaneously, they supplement one another, and oftentimes the former cause the latter.”⁷ The results of these threats affect not only the civil population, but also the structures of government, administration and the territory.

All those components are included in defense preparations, which are usually undertaken by either the government or by administration. The presentation of defense preparations of selected countries is based on the

⁶ A. Skrabacz, *Samoobrona powszechna*, [in:] *Obrona cywilna (niemilitarna) w obronie narodowej III RP*, W. Kitler (ed.), AON, Warszawa 2001, p. 222.

⁷ W. Kitler, *Zagrożenia bezpieczeństwa narodowego*, [in:] *Obrona cywilna (niemilitarna) w obronie narodowej*, op. cit., p. 27.

results of the study of emergency management, conducted by the author for eight years. During the study, the issue of defense preparations seemed to surface spontaneously. The author believes that the experiences relayed below are most interesting from the point of view of competences. These are the solutions employed in Germany, Finland, the United Kingdom and Sweden.

Germany is a federal republic consisting of sixteen regional states, which have a high degree of autonomy.⁸ As it is in every federal country, Germany has three public administrations: federal, union, and local government.⁹

Germany's defense preparations comprise all the necessary constitutional aspects of the defense of the state: political, military and civil undertakings concerning the nation and allied states.

In the sphere of defense preparations, the most important parts are played by: federal president, federal chancellor, federal government, Federal Security Council.

“Federal Security Council is an inter-department committee of the federal government, operating under the chancellor. The members of the council include the ministers of: defense, foreign affairs, internal affairs, justice, finances and economy. Besides other ministers, the parties involved in the works of the Council may include: the chief of the President's Office, the chief of the Chancellery, the chief of the Press and Information Office, the general inspector of the Bundeswehr, the representative of the government for disarmament and arms control, chief of the secretariat and chief of protocol in the Chancellery, chief of the Chancellor's Bureau and a constant representative of the FRG at NATO. Federal Security Council... considers questions of security and coordinates the operation of all federal ministries in the field of common defense, decides on matters of military policy and the state's military preparations, as well as sets the ge-

⁸ *Nowa Encyklopedia Powszechna*, t. IV, PWN, Warszawa 1995, p. 457.

⁹ More: A. Borodo, *Samorząd terytorialny. System prawnofinansowy*, PWN, Warszawa 2000, p. 15.

neral guidelines of internal security, provided these issues do not fall onto the government. The Council is serviced by the Chancellery that, on behalf of the Chancellor, coordinates the issues of internal security... protecting the population, [organizing] civil defense, and, to an extent, economic defense.”¹⁰

In wartime, the federal chancellor assumes the role of commander-in-chief and head of civil defense. At the same time, federal government defines the policy in the field of defense and realizes its constitutional tasks which do not fall within the gestion of Federal Security Council (legislation, foreign policy, international agreements, directives in the national dimension).¹¹

The civil component of Germany’s defensive system, as part of defense preparations, undertakes actions of civil defense regarding expected operations during external threat to the security of the state and war. “It consists in preparations for:

- maintaining the continuity of the functions of the state and administration (legislation, legal care, functions of the state and administration, security and public order, public relations.) Colloquially this undertaking is known as »defending constitutional order «;
- defending the population – civil defense (self-defense, warning service, building defensive objects, evacuation, health care, defense of cultural property, extended protection in cases of catastrophes);
- delivering commodities and services – supplying the society with essential commodities and services (commodities and services in agriculture, forestry, food economy; in small-scale commodity economy; delivery of power and water, sewage disposal; safeguarding postal services and communication; safeguarding work

¹⁰ W. Kitler, *Zadania administracji publicznej z zakresu obrony narodowej wybranych państw europejskich*, [in:] *Administracja publiczna a bezpieczeństwo państwa*, Z. Piątek, B. Wiśniewski, A. Osierda (ed.), Wyższa Szkoła Administracji, Bielsko-Biała 2007, p. 163.

¹¹ See: *ibidem*.

efficiency; social insurance; financial and monetary insurance);

- supporting armed forces (of the state and its allies) – delivery of foodstuffs, power, supplementing and delivering means and transport services, communication services, preparing workforce, restoration services, securing road passage.”¹²

Finland is a republic with a three-level system of government.¹³ On the central level, the executive power is held by the government, consistent of the president, State Council and the prime minister’s cabinet. As far as the organization of institutional administration goes, the solutions applied in Finland are influenced by Sweden, because “until 1809, it was a part of Sweden, and after it came under the rule of tsarist Russia, as Grand Duchy of Finland, the old Swedish law was kept...”¹⁴ In the context of these deliberations, we should note that the president has the decisive role in matters of foreign policy and defense. Moreover, he or she serves as commander-in-chief and appoints the government, upon agreement from the parliament and high officials.

“Regional administration is divided into provincial and state administrative districts. As a result of the reform of 1996, Finland was divided into five big provinces and the Åland Islands which constitute an autonomous region. On the provincial level, executive power is held by the administration of a local government, that is a provincial government with its own administration, selected by civic centers; and by governmental administration that manages the ninety state administrative districts, which comprise, e.g., units of the police. Local government, consisting in 452 civic centers, is responsible for education, municipal service and health care.

¹² W. Kitler, *Obrona narodowa w wybranych państwach demokratycznych*, AON, Warszawa 2001, p. 146.

¹³ *Nowa Encyklopedia Powszechna*, op. cit., p. 363.

¹⁴ H. Izdebski, M. Kulesza, *Administracja publiczna. Zagadnienia ogólne*, Liber, Warszawa 2004, p. 52.

The highest executive power on the local level is held by the municipal committee elected by the city council.”¹⁵

Finland’s defense preparations, like their Swedish counterparts, are based on the concept of total defense. The Council of Defense is the body responsible for their coordination. It consists in: ministers directing departments of top importance for the security of the state; Chief of Defense; and Chief of Staff of Defense. “In order to ensure the cooperation between relatively independent ministries, within each of them a Director of Preparedness is appointed, whose job is to prepare a plan of reaction in emergency situations, detailing the competencies and responsibilities of particular offices and to maintain a proper level of readiness of any given office to react in such situations, as well as to ensure cooperation between various offices in this field. Main secretaries of particular ministries serve as Directors of Preparedness. Secretary-in-Chief of the Prime Minister Office is the head of the Chiefs of Preparedness, and the Prime Minister’s Office coordinates the process of planning in cases of special threats and defines such other undertakings that are not included in the legal system and are necessary under states of emergency. Moreover, within a few branches of the administration there are advisory and coordinative committees, like the National Board of Economic Defense) and Planning Commission for Defense Information.”¹⁶ On the regional level, defense preparations are coordinated by provincial governments. Whereas on the local level the responsibility for actions in this field falls to the appropriate mayor.

Defense preparations of public administration in Finland comprise: issues of ensuring the survival of the nation and support of the armed forces in situations of external threat to the state and war.

The United Kingdom¹⁷ is a hereditary constitutional monarchy. The Queen is the head of state, commander-in-chief and the head of the An-

¹⁵ W. Kitler, J. Prońko, B. Wiśniewski, *Zarządzanie kryzysowe w wybranych państwach*, [in:] *Administracja publiczna a bezpieczeństwo państwa*, op. cit., p. 96.

¹⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 97.

¹⁷ Based upon: W. Kitler, B. Wiśniewski, J. Prońko, *Problemy zarządzania kryzysowego w państwie. Studium*, AON, Warszawa 2000, p. 87–89; and the presentation of the British delegate Peter Tallentire in PCM-95 (NATO–Brussels) on 25th October 1995.

glican Church. The British parliament is comprised of the House of Commons and House of Lords. The United Kingdom consists of four countries, respectively divided into:

- England: 9 regions, 46 counties (including 7 metropolitan counties);
- Scotland: 12 regions, 32 administrative units (called counties);
- Wales: 3 cities, 9 counties, 10 municipal counties;
- Northern Ireland: 26 districts.

In the system of power the prime minister plays the unquestioned leading role. He or she is also the Minister of Civil Service.¹⁸ From the point of view of these deliberations, we should note that beginning in 1988, the reforms introduced by Margaret Thatcher have proved relevant, which “consist in separating from the ministries [those] government agencies [that were] subject to them, appointed to deal with precisely defined civil issues and managed with a degree of financial independence.”¹⁹

“The United Kingdom is a state in which observing certain leading rules is obligatory, rules that are in force when serving management functions, including during emergency situations. The first such rule is the collective responsibility for any decisions made, and the requirement of defending any decision that was made. Another rule is political control, conducted continually and on all levels... Coordination is yet another rule. It essentially requires representatives of the state to assume the same positions, in certain situations, in various forms of activity in an international forum (within such institutions as UN, NATO, EU, WEU, etc.). It calls for realizing various tasks in the field of coordination of activities (consulting, explaining) between the representatives of the state and various organizations on different levels of the government machine. Flexibility is a rule that demands the adjusting measures of reaction to match varied

¹⁸ H. Izdebski, M. Kulesza, *Administracja publiczna...*, op. cit., p. 33.

¹⁹ Ibidem.

circumstances...”²⁰ Units participating in the United Kingdom’s defense preparations are:²¹

- Foreign Affairs and the Commonwealth Office, responsible for shaping the policy of cooperation of the state with other countries;
- Ministry of Defence, responsible for armed forces and defense policy;
- The Cabinet, responsible for coordinating the policy of the government and three subcommittees:
 - Defence and Overseas Secretariat, responsible for publishing and comprehensively relaying decisions to proper implementations;
 - The Joint Intelligence Committee, responsible for coordinating the activities of intelligence agencies;
 - Civil Contingencies Unit, responsible for directing and coordinating the activities of specialized rescue services (concerns industrial accidents, floods, fires, etc.).

During the first Gulf War, besides permanent institutions for emergency management, others were appointed, the most important of which was the Defence and Overseas Policy Committee. During this crisis various crisis centers were established, e.g. the Joint Operations Centre of the Ministry of Defence (charged with informing military and civil employees of the current situation), Department for Dangerous Situations of Foreign Affairs and the Commonwealth Office (charged with coordinating diplomatic activities), Centre for Activities in Dangerous Situations (overseeing the activities of particular departments).²²

²⁰ W. Kitler, B. Wiśniewski, J. Prońko, *Problemy zarządzania kryzysowego...*, op. cit., p. 88.

²¹ See: *ibidem*.

²² *Ibidem*.

We should also note that the abovementioned solutions were supplemented by the activities of British civil defense, whose responsibilities include ensuring the necessary conditions for maintaining the continuity of operation of authorities and administration, safeguarding the effective functioning of the economy, defending crucial objects and devices, performing tasks pertaining to the protection of the population and gathering supplies.²³

In light of the analysis of the available literature, it is evident that the objective scope of the United Kingdom's defense preparations does not diverge from those discussed before.

Sweden²⁴ is a constitutional monarchy whose constitution is not a single legal act as it comprises four documents: the Instrument of Government, Freedom of the Press Act, the Act of Succession, and the Fundamental Law on Freedom of Expression.

In Sweden, executive power is wielded by the government. Public administration in Sweden is characterized by originality. "As far as central administration goes, the main feature of the Swedish model is the separation of the government from central administration... This separation results... in the scantiness of the ministry apparatus, as well as the focus on legislation in the operation of the ministries – they concentrate on drafting bills and administrative acts... Another Swedish tradition is the wide range of collegially made decisions."²⁵

Sweden adhered to the concept of total defense, which essentially means the coordination and cooperation between civil and military resources, enabling the increased efficiency and the defensiveness of the country in a broad sense of the term. "According to the intent of bill of Total De-

²³ More: *Obrona Cywilna Wielkiej Brytanii*, [in:] *Informator o obronie i ochronie cywilnej niektórych państw europejskich*, Urząd Szefa Obrony Cywilnej Kraju, Warszawa 1997, poz. 15.

²⁴ The part of this paper concerning Sweden does not include the changes in Swedish defense system which came into force in 2009. This was done deliberately for comparison and research purposes.

²⁵ H. Izdebski, M. Kulesza, *Administracja publiczna...*, op. cit., p. 52–53.

fense, amended in 1996, the crucial issues of the new approach toward this field are: reaffirming the rule of action of combining civil (non-military) defense with military defense (contrary to commonly maintained, erroneous opinion of their separation); ensuring a quick adaptability of total defense to the changing threats to security; a new and extended definition of security, including dangerous threats in the time of peace and a greater attention to international threats.²⁶

The abovementioned document defined the main task of total defense, that is opposing armed aggression which was assessed to be the biggest threat to Swedish security. It is notable that in Sweden defense (and not national defense) was viewed in a way similar to Polish, that is, as defense against armed aggression, maintaining independence and neutrality, ensuring political stability, protection from conflicts and preventing them, promoting peace and humanitarian help, participating in the international cooperation in the field of security (including defense), promoting the abilities and preparations to counteract various threats and war among the society (including external threats to the state's security). What should be underlined is the emphasis on objectives relating to security of people and citizens in all circumstances and states of operations of the country. These included, among others, protecting civil population from the results of military actions, safeguarding supplies (commodities necessary for the survival of the population), and supporting humanitarian missions. Undoubtedly, however, a "stiff" perspective on the state's defense and on building a defensive system strictly in military aspects was already gradually fading for a few years. It was evidenced, among others, by documents issued by the Swedish Agency for Civil Emergency Planning.²⁷

In Sweden's defense preparations, a particular role was played by defined coordination based on strict rules, the most important of which

²⁶ W. Kitler, J. Prońko, B. Wiśniewski, *Zarządzanie kryzysowe w wybranych...*, op. cit., p. 78 and next.

²⁷ *Robustness in the physical environment*, The Swedish Agency for Civil Emergency Planning, Stockholm 1999, p. 9.

resulted from “the preparedness of the state and the entire society to efficiently and economically use all resources in order to maintain independence and minimize the consequences of war. Therefore war is considered to be a special kind of challenge, defining the ability to keep national activity, for in a time like that all subjects of the state (regardless of their legal status) cooperate to ensure the survival of the society. Also in a time like that one of the most fundamental objectives of civil activity, that is the support for armed forces, gains particular importance.”²⁸ The Ministry of Defence remained the key, central office of the state, both for military and civil defense. It was divided into three fundamental elements: Department for Civil Affairs, Department for Military Affairs and Department for Security and International Affairs.²⁹ On the central level, situated lower in the hierarchy than Ministry of Defence, were: the Swedish Agency for Civil Emergency Planning, authorities responsible for certain functions in the civil sphere and commander-in-chief as well as the staff of the armed forces in military defense³⁰ that was aimed at counteracting conditions of external threat to the state’s security and war. The higher regional level comprised directors of regions for civil defense and commanders of combined commands. On the lower regional level the responsibility fell to governors of the counties (who represented government administration), county councils (who represented local government) and commanders of defense districts. The local level consisted in city and communal executive boards as well as military commanders.

The fundamental duties of the civil component of the state’s defense preparations include tasks in:

- protecting civil population in times of war;
- ensuring basic commodities in situations of external threat to the security of the state and war;

²⁸ W. Kitler, *Zadania administracji publicznej z zakresu obrony narodowej...*, op. cit., p. 130.

²⁹ Ibidem.

³⁰ See: W. Kitler, *Obrona narodowa w wybranych państwach demokratycznych*, AON, Warszawa 2001, p. 101–102.

- protecting objects relevant to the state's security;
- ensuring the continuity of operation of public services;
- supporting armed forces during operational deployment and hostilities.

To conclude these deliberations, we should state that in the many various, independent solutions regarding the issues of defense preparations, there are numerous similarities. It is noteworthy that in fulfilling tasks in the field of defense preparations, specific countries maintain their individual character that results from their history, tradition, geopolitical location, administrative division. These analogies concern mainly the fact that defense preparations are based on commonly applicable law of the highest rank; that public administration operates with the notion of executing power in the state's interest and in view of the values which are fundamental to the state as a whole; that responsibilities and competences of on any given level of administration are unequivocally defined; and that there are formulas for cooperation between particular bodies of government and public administration.

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