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**RELOCATION OF SERVICEMEN WITHIN THE COMMONWEALTH  
OF INDEPENDENT STATES (1991 – 1994)**

**Abstract.** *The aim of the research is to elucidate the significance of stabilization of the military and political situation in Ukraine in the interstate relocation of servicemen during the period of 1991 – 1994 within the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) from the standpoint of Ukrainocentrism; to study the relocation of officers and ensigns who expressed their desire to continue military service in the Armed Forces of Ukraine; to analyze the detachment conditions of servicemen from Ukraine to other state formations. The research methodology is based on a number of interdisciplinary methods of cognition (history, national and international law, political science), due to which the author made a retrospective reconstruction of the Ukrainian officer corps formation at the beginning of the 90s of the twentieth century. The scientific novelty is to highlight the conditions of interstate relocation (secondment) of servicemen within the CIS (1991 – 1994) and to clarify the place of this phenomenon in the formation of the Armed Forces of Ukraine. The Conclusions.* The relocation of servicemen

of the former Soviet Army within the post-Soviet states was carried out on the basis of democratic principles and made it possible to use the CIS status to solve an important social and military problems in Ukraine, to avoid the Russian attempts to use the CIS as a military instrument against the post-Soviet states. It allowed the Ukrainian authorities to stabilize the military and political situation and prevent a split in the officer corps, to involve officers who returned to Ukraine into the development of its Armed Forces according to the national interests, to complete recruitment of command staff, rear and technical services at middle and senior levels during the creation of the Armed Forces of Ukraine.

**Key words:** Ukraine, Commonwealth of Independent States, servicemen, officers, ensigns, military formations, post-Soviet states, political and legal principles, oath.

## ПЕРЕМІЩЕННЯ ВІЙСЬКОВОСЛУЖБОВЦІВ У МЕЖАХ СПІВДРУЖНОСТІ НЕЗАЛЕЖНИХ ДЕРЖАВ (1991 – 1994)

**Анотація. Мета дослідження** – розкрити значення міждержавного переміщення військовослужбовців 1991 – 1994 рр. у стабілізації військово-політичної ситуації в Україні. З'ясувати політико-правові підстави та заходи державного та військового керівництва України щодо переміщення офіцерів, прапорщиків, які висловили бажання повернутися на батьківщину і продовжити військову службу у Збройних Силах України. Відзначити умови відкомандирування військовослужбовців з України в інші пострадянські державні утворення. **Методологія дослідження** ґрунтується на низці міждисциплінарних методів пізнання (історії, правознавства, політології), завдяки яким здійснено ретроспективну реконструкцію поповнення офіцерського корпусу на етапі становлення Збройних Сил України. **Наукова новизна** полягає у висвітленні умов міждержавного переміщення (відкомандирування) військовослужбовців у межах СНД у 1991 – 1994 рр. та з'ясування значення цього явища у становленні Збройних Сил України. **Висновки.** Переміщення у межах пострадянських державних утворень військовослужбовців, що належали до фрагментів Радянської армії, здійснювалося на добровільних засадах, демократичних принципах і дало можливість використати статус СНД для розв'язання важливої соціальної і військової проблеми, уникнути намагань Російської Федерації скористатися СНД як прямим засобом військового впливу на пострадянські держави. Добровільне переміщення військовослужбовців допомогло українській владі стабілізувати військово-політичну ситуацію у військах і не допустити розколу в офіцерському корпусі; офіцерів, що повернулися в Україну, включити у розбудову збройних сил, завдяки їх переміщенню вдалося завершити комплектування командно-штабних, тилових та технічних посад у середній та вищій ланках на етапі створення основи Збройних Сил України.

**Ключові слова:** Україна, Співдружність Незалежних Держав, військовослужбовці, офіцери, прапорщики, військові формування, пострадянські держави, політико-правові засади, присяга, переміщення (відкомандирування).

**The Problem Statement.** The collapse of the Soviet Union resulted in the proclamation of 15 independent post-Soviet states, the majority of which declared the creation of their own national armed forces. Their intentions necessitated the solution of an important military and political task – to ensure the interstate relocation of servicemen of the Soviet military formations within the Commonwealth of Independent States established in December of 1991 (further – the CIS). As a result of the collapse of the Soviet army, each of the proclaimed states inherited the part of weapons and military equipment. A certain part of the personnel of the Soviet armed forces continued to be located on the territory of independent states. The creation of national armed forces required the re-subordination of the Soviet military units to the authorities of the newly created independent states. In addition, the collapse of the Military Organization of the USSR caused tensions among the military due to difficult social situation of the military personnel and uncertainty in their service future.

**The Analysis of Recent Research.** It should be noted that the issue of the military personnel relocation due to the collapse of the Soviet army is elucidated in researches in a rather limited

way. In the generalizing research devoted to creation and development of the General Staff of the Ukrainian Armed Forces, and servicemen's return to their Homeland, natives of Ukraine, those issues were elucidated only in the context of the interstate relocation completion of military personnel (Kyrychenko, 2007, pp. 9–10). The authors of the historical essay on the military personnel of the Ukrainian Armed Forces singled out the authorities engaged in the return of servicemen from the CIS countries to Ukraine (Dibrova, 2009, pp. 8–20). In his memoirs A. Lopata, Colonel-General, who at the first stage of the Armed Forces formation held the post of Chief of the General Staff (from 1994) of the Ukrainian Armed Forces and was directly involved into the relocation of servicemen to Ukraine, wrote that the efforts of the Ukrainian authorities were focused primarily on the return of soldiers, officers, and ensigns from the post-Soviet states where armed conflicts were taking place. He noted the difficulties that accompanied the servicemen and their families in moving to Ukraine (Lopata, 2002, pp. 67–87). Relocation solving was complicated by financial and material problems, lack of housing. Servicemen's children, who before returning to Ukraine went to the Russian-language schools only, faced considerable problems and it was difficult for them to enter the Ukrainian higher educational institutions.

After Ukraine's independence proclamation and the decision to form its own armed forces, thousands of reports, inquiries, collective and personal appeals began to be received by the state and military leadership of Ukraine from officers and ensigns abroad to help them move to Ukraine in order to continue their military service in the Ukrainian Armed Forces. In the sources there is mentioned a different number of officers, natives of Ukraine, who served in the Soviet Army during the collapse of the USSR. H. Perepelytsia states that the Ministry for Defense of the USSR kept more than 150 thousand cases of the Ukrainian officers (Perepelytsia, 2001, p. 552). A. Rusnachenko writes about the number of 300 000 officers, natives of Ukraine (Rusnachenko, 2001, p. 40). The Minister for Defense of Ukraine reported to the leadership of the Verkhovna Rada that at the end of March of 1992, about 153 000 servicemen served abroad, the majority of them – officers (Sectoral State Archive of the Ministry for Defense of Ukraine (SSAMDU), f. 3697, d. 34747, c. 5, p. 126).

Meanwhile, it was proven that thousands of officers, who belonged to the Ukrainian ethnic group, graduated from military schools, and the Soviet personnel sent them to serve far beyond their native place. For political reasons, the Soviet-communist system of government was afraid to leave the military, natives of Ukraine, in their ethnic territory, and therefore sent them to military units located in different regions of the former Soviet Union.

Analyzing the first formation stage of the Ukrainian Armed Forces, O. Pokotylo focused on the legal framework, which provided for the transfer of officers and ensigns from the CIS countries to Ukraine to serve in its Armed Forces (Pokotylo, 2010, pp. 42–48). O. Dashkevych, analyzing the formation process of the officer corps of the Ukrainian Armed Forces, elucidated the activities of personnel bodies that studied reports and appeals of servicemen on their transfer to Ukraine (Dashkevych, 2015). In his memoirs, M. Lopatin, Lieutenant General mentioned the surnames of generals and officers who returned to Ukraine on their own initiative and participated in the development of the Ukrainian Armed Forces actively. In general, according to the information of the former military leader, in 1992 – 1993, about 5 000 generals and officers arrived in Ukraine from the CIS countries and were appointed to command posts in the Air Force of the Ukrainian Armed Forces (Lopatin, 2003, pp. 88–89).

The purpose of the article is to elucidate the importance of the interstate relocation of servicemen in 1991 – 1994 in stabilizing the military and political situation in Ukraine and

to find out the political and legal grounds and measures of the state and military leadership of Ukraine on the relocation of officers, ensigns who expressed a desire to return home and continue military service in the Ukrainian Armed Forces.

**The Main Material Statement.** Ukraine, having embarked on the path of an independent development, with its resolutions consolidated the basic position on the creation of its own armed forces and began to consider it as a priority state task. On July 16, 1990, the Verkhovna Rada of the Ukrainian SSR adopted the “Declaration of State Sovereignty”, which stated that Ukraine had the right to form its own armed forces. On August 24, 1991, taking the first steps in the realization of the state sovereignty, the Verkhovna Rada proclaimed the independence of Ukraine and the creation of an independent Ukrainian State. Along with this historic act, the Verkhovna Rada adopted the resolution “On Military Formations in Ukraine”. By this resolution, the highest legislative body of Ukraine took under its jurisdiction and subordination the military formations of the armed forces of the former Soviet Union located on the territory of the Ukrainian Republic (*Zakonodavstvo Ukrainy z pytan viiskovoi sfery*, 2003). The Government of Ukraine undertook to start the formation of the Armed Forces and to approve the Ministry for Defense of Ukraine. These resolutions initiated the formation of the Ukrainian Armed Forces as an important institution of the state and an integral element of its military organization.

On the post-Soviet territories outside Ukraine, associations of the Ukrainian servicemen were formed, which set themselves the goal of returning to their Homeland. In particular, on January 17, 1992, in Moscow, the general meeting of the Society of the Ukrainian Officers appealed to the Verkhovna Rada and the Government of Ukraine to take under its protection officers, natives of Ukraine, who served in the regions of Russia, immediately recall them for further service in the Ukrainian Armed Forces. The society proposed to create an interstate Ukrainian-Russian personnel commission to determine the term and procedure for mutual exchange of officers. The appeal also referred to the legal and social protection of not only officers but also cadets who studied in the academies and military schools of the former republics, and to guarantee them the opportunity to return to Ukraine (SSAMDU, f. 3697, d. 34747, c. 2, p. 197).

In its address to the Government of Ukraine, Baku Regional Union of the Military Ukrainians “For Return to the Homeland”, which included representatives of 15 military units, schools and a military hospital, stated: “We will not swear to any state, except our Ukraine, because our Motherland is one, like one mother who gave birth to us” (SSAMDU, f. 3697, d. 34747, c. 10, p. 137). 350 officers, the Ukrainians, serving at the Baikonur Cosmodrome announced their intention to return to Ukraine. By correspondence, servicemen of Unit 51947 in Yakutsk found out the procedure for obtaining the Ukrainian citizenship, the possibility of a military service in the Ukrainian Armed Forces, pensions accrual and housing (SSAMDU, f. 3697, d. 34747, c. 22, pp. 2–3).

As of April 18, 1992, reports on transfers of 18 000 officers, the Ukrainians, from the former Soviet Army to Ukraine came from various regions of the former Soviet Union. Among them there were 1 656 platoon commanders, 1 422 squadrons, 380 battalions, 243 commanders and deputy commanders of regiments, 46 brigade commanders (Perepelytsia, 2001, p. 552).

In a civilized way Ukraine inherited from the former Soviet army one of the largest military groups in Europe. In terms of a human potential and number of servicemen, it occupied the second place, the first one was occupied by the Russian troops and the American military contingent in Europe. At the beginning of 1992, the total number of servicemen who joined the Ukrainian Armed Forces was 726 536 servicemen and 180 000 employees. Of this number, 410

were generals (admirals) (0.056%); 186 598 – officers (25.68%); 93 253 – ensigns (midshipmen) (12.72%); 470 622 – sergeants and soldiers (54.86%). The given data illustrate the following percentage: from the total number of military personnel generals and officers there were 187 thousand people and it was 25.73% of servicemen (Dibrova, 2009, pp. 20–21).

However, the Soviet military group, which became the part of Ukraine, was an unsystematic combination of individual elements of the former Soviet military machine. There was a need to bring the structure and size of the armed forces in line with Ukraine's defense needs and national interests. The young state was faced with an urgent task of transferring subordinate military formations to the service of the people of independent Ukraine, to accept and provide adequate social protection to servicemen – the natives of Ukraine, who were in the CIS countries, and in the development of the Ukrainian army to rely primarily on the experience and aspirations of nationally conscious officers and generals.

Despite a rather large corps of officers in the troops belonging to Ukraine, from the first days of the creation of the armed forces there was the shortage of military personnel at an operational and strategic level, which made it difficult to form posts of military administration. As of May 1992, out of 170 posts in the established military administration bodies, among posts that were to be occupied by specialists with higher education diplomas of operational and strategic level, only 35 people (21%) corresponded to such requirements (Dashkevych, 2015, pp. 176–177). During the Ukrainian army formation, the number of servicemen in the ranks of colonels, who were appointed to posts of senior officers, increased. Therefore, the relocation of military specialists to Ukraine, especially at the operational and strategic level, was very important at that time.

The first legislative acts of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine had a positive effect on the desire of servicemen who served outside Ukraine to move to an independent state and continue their service in its armed forces on building a legal, democratic state, the procedure for military service by the Ukrainian citizens. Under the Ukrainian law, servicemen had far more rights and guarantees from the state than under the Soviet law. The Ukrainian legislation enshrined the voluntary entry into military service, regulated the procedure for military service, relocation and promotion.

For the first time, servicemen had the right to form their own public associations, the right to challenge in court the illegal actions of military officials and leadership. The military had the right to be elected to the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, and after the end of their parliamentary powers, the law guaranteed them the right to continue serving in posts not lower than those they had held before being elected deputies. Soldiers of the Ukrainian Armed Forces obtained the same right as all citizens to visit foreign countries. Among the social rights, the military obtained a guarantee of freedom of scientific, technical and artistic creativity. Soldiers, other than those who had served in the military, could not be discharged from military service without the right to a retirement pension. The Law of Ukraine of October 8, 1991 on Citizenship of Ukraine provided that persons serving in the military or studying outside Ukraine, and before that service resided on its territory permanently, were not citizens of other states, had to belong to the citizens of Ukraine.

The creation of its own armies in the newly created post-Soviet states ran counter to Russia's desire to establish military control over the post-Soviet space, and the Russian leadership began to actively interfere in the emergence of national armed forces in the former republics actively. On July 25, 1991, the President of the USSR Mykhailo Gorbachev issued a decree banning the creation of their own armed groups in the republics, citing the Soviet law, and already formed

military formations demanded to dissolve, and to hand over the weapon to law enforcement agencies. In January of 1992, the President of the Russian Federation Borys Yeltsyn issued a decree to take under the Russian jurisdiction all the armed forces of the former Soviet Union (Perepelytsia, 2015). Precisely because of a certain conservatism, corporatism of the army and the navy, which are typical of the state institutions, the armed forces were considered as a guarantor of the preservation and reproduction of the Soviet Union by many Russian politicians. Lieutenant-General H. Zhyvytsia, characterizing the views of Russia's top military leadership, stated that in September of 1991, the Russian Central Military Department was of the opinion that although military units and ministries for defense were formed in the former republics, "the unified armed forces and the unified General Staff, of course, in Moscow, must remain under all circumstances" (Zhyvytsia, 2001, pp. 72–77).

With the formation of the CIS, the Russian leadership began to consider it as a means of maintaining its influence in the former Soviet Union. Moreover, in Ukraine and abroad, the pro-Russian forces began to spread the idea that the armed forces created in the post-Soviet republics should be united and used for joint defense against an imaginary "external enemy". Taking advantage of the gaps and drawbacks in the post-Soviet states legislation system, the Russian military command began to organize an oath of allegiance to the CIS in the military units. This process was especially significant in January of 1992 in the military units of the Black Sea Fleet. Admiral V. Chernavin, Commander-in-Chief of the Russian Navy, arrived in Sevastopol to intensify the oath of allegiance to the CIS. For the Russian command, the Black Sea Fleet became a means of inciting the pro-Russian sentiment in the Crimea. At the same time, officers and sailors who had sworn allegiance to Ukraine were persecuted: they were discharged from military service, sent to service at shore, and subjected to various forms of pressure. The Russian command classified the oath content of allegiance to the people of Ukraine as secret documents, and declared the military, who made an independent decision to serve the Ukrainian people, – "villains", "nationalists", and "traitors".

For Ukraine, the CIS became the most acceptable way of "a civilized divorce" in the military sphere. The state leadership consistently rejected all attempts by Russia to transform the CIS into a supranational formation with intergovernmental functions. On December 20, 1991, the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine adopted a special statement denying the possibility of transforming the CIS into a state entity. It was emphasized that Ukraine avoided the creation of institutions capable of transforming the Commonwealth of Independent States into a supranational formation. In May of 1992, Ukraine did not sign the Tashkent Agreement on Collective Security of the CIS member states, and in January of 1993 it ignored the CIS Charter, which provided for the establishment of supranational bodies and a joint army (Smolii, 2016, p. 192). In February of 1992, at the insistence of the Ukrainian side, representatives of the CIS countries agreed that servicemen should be recognized as citizens of the country from territory of which they were called up for a military service. In April of 1992, the Minister for Defense of Ukraine and the Commander-in-Chief of the Joint Forces of the CIS signed a protocol – agreement on the organization of training of officers and the procedure for relocation (secondment) of officers, ensigns and midshipmen from the CIS countries (Lopata, 2002, p. 67).

Political and legal grounds for servicemen's return, citizens of Ukraine, who as a result of the collapse of the Soviet Union were on service in the newly created post-Soviet states, were: the Act of State Independence of Ukraine and the Resolution of the Verkhovna Rada "On Military Formations in Ukraine", by which the military units of the Soviet Army

stationed on the territory of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic were subordinated to the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine. In general, in 1991 – 1992, a solid legal framework was formed in Ukraine, which created the basis for the practical formation of the military organization of an independent state. By the end of 1991, the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine adopted more than 70 legal documents on the issues of military formation, laying the legal foundations for it (Yakymovych, 1996, p. 257).

At the meeting on December 30, 1991, in Minsk, the leaders of the CIS member states acknowledged that Ukraine had a proper legal basis for the creation of its own armed forces and could begin this process at the beginning of next year. Sovereign Ukraine became the first republic of the former USSR to legislate the ways to create the national armed forces. On the last day of December of 1991, a coded telegramme from the Minister for Defense of Ukraine was sent to the troops instructing them to take the voluntary oath of allegiance to the people of Ukraine by servicemen of military formations stationed on the territory of Ukraine.

According to the order of the Minister for Defense of January 3, 1992, the personnel in the troops stationed on the territory of Ukraine began to take the oath of allegiance to the people of Ukraine voluntarily. The text of the military oath was adopted by the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine on December 6, 1991. The President of Ukraine L. Kravchuk called on the servicemen “to make personal choices and decide on further military service calmly and prudently”. The Minister for Defense of Ukraine demanded to prevent a split in military units based on political beliefs and national origin. He ordered the commanders of the military units to ensure “taking the oath only on a voluntary basis”. The leaders of the Central Office of the Ministry for Defense of Ukraine were the first ones to take the oath of allegiance to the people of Ukraine. By January 20, 1992, 270 000 servicemen had sworn allegiance to the people of Ukraine, and by July of the same year taking the oath had been almost completed. In some period of time, the Minister for Defense of Ukraine K. Morozov noted that “beginning in January of 1992, an oath of allegiance to the people of Ukraine was introduced in the army, and three months later we already had more than 80% of the personnel, who were legally determined to belong to the Ukrainian State” (Morozov, 1996, pp. 418–427). At that time, the oath was not taken by the personnel of the troops that were the part of the CIS Strategic Forces. Taking the oath by the military finally removed the issue of Ukraine’s participation in the so-called joint armed forces, the creation of which was imposed on the CIS states by the leadership of the Russian Federation.

Ukraine’s top state and military leadership, based on legal principles, took political and organizational measures to ensure the conditions for the voluntary relocation of the Ukrainian servicemen to their Homeland. Decrees of the President of Ukraine were important in solving this problem, on the basis of which the state and military structures responsible for the return of servicemen to Ukraine were determined. On March 24, 1992, the President of Ukraine issued Decree “On the return to Ukraine for service of the Ukrainian servicemen from military units stationed in Azerbaijan, Armenia and Moldova”. The state and military structures were to coordinate the return of servicemen to Ukraine with the leadership of the CIS countries. In December of 1992, a decree was issued by the President of Ukraine, which obliged the state authorities to ensure the return of officers, ensigns and conscripts from Georgia and Tajikistan in due time, taking into account their desire to serve in the army of their country (SSAMDU, f. 3697, d. 34747, c. 13, p. 162).

Based on the order of the Minister for Defense of Ukraine, during the period of 1992 – 1994 an operational group of the Ministry for Defense of Ukraine worked to coordinate the

process of returning military personnel to Ukraine. The work on the return of servicemen to Ukraine was significantly intensified with the establishment of the Personnel Department of the Ministry for Defense in January of 1992. In June of 1992, in the Permanent Mission of Ukraine to Moscow, a temporary post was opened – the Commissioner of the Government of Ukraine, who dealt with the return of servicemen to their Homeland. This task was performed by Lieutenant General B. Sharykov, who previously worked as an assistant to the President of Ukraine on military issues.

In connection with the active relocation of servicemen within the Department of Mobilization and Staffing of the General (since 1994 – General) Staff, the Department of Formation and Development of the Armed Forces of Ukraine was established, headed by Colonel D. Umanets (since August of 2001 – Lieutenant General). The Department was entrusted with the task of accounting for the number of servicemen and the deployment of associations, formations and units of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, working out proposals for their organizational and staffing structures and their replacement by servicemen, taking into account the arrived officers, preparation and working out of directives of the Minister for Defense and the Chief of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine on organizational formation issues of the domestic armed forces.

The return of servicemen was decided, as a rule, on a mutual interstate contractual basis. For the first time between the Ministry for Defense of Ukraine and the Ministry for Defense of Belarus on December 17, 1992 the Protocol was signed on the transfer and dismissal of officers, ensigns and midshipmen, which provided for the order and procedure of a mutual transfer of servicemen. The Ministries for Defense of Ukraine and Belarus undertook to recognize the validity of military ranks, diplomas and documents on military service in the army of the former Soviet Union. The agreement stated that the military agencies would not interfere with the relocation of servicemen to their Homeland, would provide appropriate posts in the army, and would “facilitate the exchange of housing among the families of servicemen”.

Influential socio-political associations of Ukraine took an active pro-Ukrainian position on the return of servicemen to their Homeland. In particular, the Union of Officers of Ukraine, which consistently defended the need for Ukraine’s own armed forces, and in July of 1991 at its first congress addressed to the officers of the Ukrainian origin, who served abroad, with a call to consolidate, to return and participate in the development of the Ukrainian army. At the same time, there was expressed confidence that their problems and their families problems would find a better and faster solution in Ukraine.

Activists of the Union of Officers of Ukraine travelled to the military units of the CIS countries, where they explained the Ukrainian legislation on the formation of the Ukrainian Army, legal and social protection of servicemen and members of their families; participated in the work of attestation commissions, which analyzed reports and appeals of the military, which contained a request to send them to Ukraine, to serve in its armed forces. At the third congress of the Union of Officers of Ukraine in April of 1992, the head of the personnel department of the Ministry for Defense of Ukraine, General O. Ihnatenko, informed about the state of officers’ return to Ukraine and the availability of vacancies. At the same time, attention was focused on the return to Ukraine not only of staff officers, cadets who studied in military educational institutions outside their country (Rusnachenko, 2001, p. 40).

A wide range of issues related to the secondment of servicemen to Ukraine were raised by the primary organizations of the Union of Officers of Ukraine (hereinafter – UOU), which were established in many cities and towns of the former Soviet republics, where there were located

the military units of the Soviet army. During the second half of 1991 and at the beginning of 1992, the primary UOU organizations were established by the Ukrainian officers in military units stationed in Azerbaijan, Armenia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. The primary UOU organizations were also founded in Murmansk, Kirov, Volhograd, Irkutsk, Arkhanhelsk, and Sakhalin regions of Russia. The Ufa Higher Helicopter School of Pilots had a primary organization of the UOU, founded by students of the school from Ukraine, which numbered 50 cadets (Shevchuk, 2018, pp. 36–40).

Participants of the primary organizations of the UOU held conferences, organized the study of the Ukrainian legislation on social and legal protection of servicemen, they were interested in the socio-political situation in Ukraine, raised before their command the possibility issue of leaving for their Homeland, which was busy forming its independence and its own army.

On August 23 – 24, 1991, the Second Congress of the Union of Soldiers' Mothers supported the Act of State Independence of Ukraine and called on the Verkhovna Rada to adopt a resolution to return the Ukrainian soldiers and sergeants during the termed period for them to be able to continue their military service in Ukraine. Soldiers' mothers demanded the establishment of a Committee in Ukraine for the social and legal protection of servicemen and members of their families. The Congress also called on the Ukrainian authorities to assist the military, who come from other republics, in their desire to return to the newly created state formations. On February 12, 1992, the Union of Soldiers' Mothers addressed the President of Ukraine with the request: "We, women, mothers, want one thing – to see our sons alive and unharmed" (SSAMDU, f. 3697, d. 34747, c. 2, p. 151).

Priority efforts by the state and military authorities focused on the return to Ukraine of troops stationed in areas of armed conflict. The events in the Caucasus, where armed conflicts with the use of military forces took place, caused special concern in the Ukrainian society. In 1992, 1 136 soldiers and sergeants and 1 087 officers of the Soviet military units were to be sent to Ukraine from this region. About 2 100 soldiers and sergeants and 2 000 officers were to be relocated from the Transcaucasian border troops area. In the middle of April 1992, officials of the Ministry for Defense of Ukraine went to military units stationed in Azerbaijan and Armenia. They made clear the possibility of returning to Ukraine soldiers and officers who were in military units there. The delegation, with officers from the Ministry for Defense, included members of the Committee for the Protection of Soldiers and activists of the Union of Soldiers' Mothers.

Clarification of the situation directly in the military units showed that obstacles were created in the Transcaucasian Military District regarding the voluntary relocation of soldiers, ensigns and officers to Ukraine. The pro-Russian command of the district reacted negatively to the decision of the Ukrainian leadership to return its citizens to the Homeland, describing it as "a purposeful attempt to weaken the Russian army and strengthen the Ukrainian armed forces" (SSAMDU, f. 3697, d. 34747, c. 13, pp. 210–218). Disinformation was spread in the military units of the district, aimed at intimidating the military with social problems that awaited them in Ukraine. Soldiers were deprived of vacations, delayed payment of salaries, and were not given any documents that could be used to move to Ukraine. Letters from Ukraine were perustrated, and the insistence of the servicemen to grant permission to return to Ukraine was regarded as desertion.

The available sources and recollections of the officers show that the process of servicemen's relocation from the CIS countries to Ukraine was slow and with considerable difficulties. They were due to the lack of stable legislation between the newly created states, the imperfection of temporal agreements between the post-Soviet states, the socio-economic crisis, which

significantly limited the state's ability to provide the military and their families with proper housing and living conditions. In January of 1992, about 80 000 families of servicemen and people discharged from military service in reserve or retired were registered in housing fund of the Armed Forces of Ukraine. Housing was needed for the families of servicemen whose military units were withdrawn from Eastern European countries in 1992 – 1994 and began to be stationed in Ukraine. 130 000 Soviet servicemen and 31 000 of their families were withdrawn from Germany, of whom 7.2% began to be stationed in Ukraine. They needed proper living conditions. Ukraine's extremely limited ability to provide servicemen and their families with housing proved to be the factor, which hindered the process of soldiers' returning to Ukraine, though they had a desire to return (Avtushenko, 2019, pp. 232, 237).

There were difficulties in transporting the families of servicemen. The Minister for Defense issued an order on financial support for the transportation of families and property of servicemen to Ukraine by rail, freight vehicles, and even military transport aircraft. However, due to extremely limited funding, transportation was carried out mainly at the own expense of officers and ensigns. From the remote regions (the Far East, Arctic, Siberia, Transbaikalia, Central Asia, Caucasus) servicemen were not able to transport family property to Ukraine at all and had to leave it in the places of a former military service and move to their Homeland only with a hand luggage.

The vast majority of officers, returning to Ukraine, wanted to serve in its Armed Forces. However, with the reduction of the Ukrainian army, their intentions were not always satisfied. As of April 1, 1993, the number of the Armed Forces of Ukraine was reduced from 726 000 to 525 000. There was set the tendency of reducing the Armed Forces of Ukraine, the pace of which had no analogues in European practice. K. Morozov, the Minister for Defense of Ukraine reported to L. Kuchma, the Prime Minister of Ukraine, that on November 19, 1992, lists of requests on 18 718 officers were sent to the personnel bodies of the military structures of the CIS countries for their relocation to the Armed Forces of Ukraine, but there were no real opportunities to place almost all the officers who arrived in the relevant posts in the Ukrainian army (SSAMDU, f. 3697, d. 34747, c. 36, pp. 3–4).

The return of the Ukrainian officers to their Homeland was hampered by reactionary and conservative forces that occupied command positions and were located in Ukraine. At the initiative of the political bodies of the military districts, there was launched a campaign of condemnation and “debunking” of the supporters of the creation of Ukraine's own armed forces. The Pro-Ukrainian officers were persecuted, threatened with dismissal, and accused of “stretching the army to national apartments”. Accordingly, the political bodies worked under the slogans “Let's Defend the Socialist Choice”, “No to Deprivation of the Army of the Party Ideology”. There were accusations against the democratic forces (the Union of Officers of Ukraine, the People's Movement of Ukraine) of intending to create their own military formations in opposition to the existing units of the Soviet Army stationed in Ukraine. The Soviet military press, which reacted very negatively to the creation of the Ukrainian National Army, became an aid in the propaganda pressure on servicemen (Scheda, 2012, pp. 299–300).

At the same time, some pro-Russian officers who were determined to leave for Russia facilitated the illegal export of weapons, equipment, real estate, and even military libraries from Ukraine.

The military, who decided to give up military service in Ukraine and move to the chosen CIS countries, were created all the conditions in accordance with the Ukrainian law by the Ukrainian authorities and the military administration. Soldiers and sergeants who were the

natives of other other republics and served in Ukraine left Ukraine by July of 1992. In turn, from the autumn of 1991, the recruitment of the Ukrainian army by personnel began to take place exclusively by conscripts from Ukraine.

Lieutenant General Ya. Skalko recalls that the procedure for relocating officers from Ukraine was insufficiently worked out. However, some commanders made the right decision: to facilitate the relocation of personnel who expressed a desire to continue serving in the newly independent countries that emerged in the former Soviet Union. At the airfields in Dubno, Rivne region, Cherliany, Lviv region, there was a ritual of seeing off officers to their Homeland: "We said goodbye in a human way, in an officer's way. Those who decided to leave Ukraine were provided with planes to transport personal belongings, and farewell ceremonies with units and battle flags were organized at airfields. Music conducted by military orchestra was played" (Hedz, 2004, pp. 14–15).

The interstate relocation (secondment) of servicemen within the CIS took place from 1991 to 1994. During this period of time, about 38 000 officers and ensigns were relocated from Ukraine to other CIS states. More than 33 000 servicemen, including 27 982 officers, returned to Ukraine (Kyrychenko, 2007, p. 14). The majority of them took the oath of allegiance to the people of Ukraine and continued their military service in the Armed Forces of Ukraine.

**The Conclusion.** The collapse of the Soviet Union and its military organization necessitated the relocation of servicemen of the former Soviet army within the Commonwealth of Independent States formed in December of 1991. The relocation of troops belonging to fragments of the Soviet army within post-Soviet state formations showed that at the first stage the CIS was a very effective mechanism for solving an important social and military issues. Contrary to Russia's attempts to turn the CIS into a means of its political and military influence on the post-Soviet states, Ukraine, by forming its own Armed Forces, concluded agreements with the military departments of the CIS countries on mutual relocation of servicemen, in which democratic principles were declared, which required mandatory consideration of a serviceman's personal desire in choosing the country to continue his military service and place of residence. The Ukrainian authorities also created conditions for the relocation of those soldiers who decided to return to the countries they chose.

With the collapse of the Soviet army, officers of various military ranks underwent tangible ideological challenges related to determining their attitude towards Ukraine's independence and creating its own army. The relocation of the military from Ukraine who wanted to move to other CIS countries allowed the Ukrainian authorities to ensure a relatively stable military and political situation and prevent a split in the officer corps during a critical period of the country's independent development. Officers who returned to Ukraine enlarged the officer corps and joined the development of the Ukrainian army. Due to this, the military units became more Ukrainianized and able to fight. The return to Ukraine of a significant number of officers, including senior officers, allowed to complete the staffing of command, rear and technical posts in the middle and top ranks at the stage of creating the basis of the Armed Forces of Ukraine.

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