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**EVERDAY LIFE ISSUES OF THE DISABLED WAR VETERANS
IN THE POST-WAR UKRAINIAN SSR**

Abstract. *The purpose of the research* is to elucidate the content of the disabled war veterans' everyday life in the Soviet reality of the first post-war years, based on the archival documents of the official origin. *The methodology of the research* is based on the combination of study techniques from various scientific disciplines within the framework of an everyday life history. There have been used diverse concepts from the theory of the Soviet everyday life. *The scientific novelty* of the research consists in the problem under research formulation, the means and methods of its solution, the research conclusions, and the specificity of the references. **Conclusions.** The Soviet mentality, in particular its continued existence, is considered to be the problem of modern Ukrainian society. The “Sovietism” hinders the civilizational development of independent Ukraine and is a dangerous factor under the conditions of the Russo-Ukrainian War. Due to a thorough study on the Soviet society using modern techniques of historical research, in particular methods of an everyday life history, it is feasible to solve the above-mentioned problem. There emerged a large social group of veterans with disabilities in the Ukrainian SSR after the end of World War II. A full-fledged historical reconstruction of the

post-war everyday life of the Soviet society is impossible without studying the life of this contingent of the war veterans. During the Third Famine in Ukraine, the party and government leadership of the Republic initiated a campaign to reduce the number of veterans with disabilities by manipulating medical and labour check-ups and examinations in order to avoid the deficit in the social security budget. The front-line soldiers with the disabilities were forced to put in a great deal of effort to have their status recognized as “the Disabled of the Patriotic War”, since the status gave the right to the social protection. The administrative pressure was aimed at reducing the percentage of the disabled veterans of Group 2, which caused a typical Soviet everyday life phenomenon – “blat” (favourism and bribes). The survival strategies used by some disabled war veterans also included deception in order to obtain deficit benefits. Numerous disabled war veterans faced a lack of empathy by the society and neglect by the civil servants of their direct duties to provide assistance to veterans in everyday life.

Key words: everyday life, disabled war veterans, disability group, favourism, social protection.

ЕЛЕМЕНТИ ПОВСЯКДЕННЯ ВЕТЕРАНІВ ВІЙНИ З ІНВАЛІДНІСТЮ У ПОВОЄННІЙ УКРАЇНСЬКІЙ РСР

Анотація. Мета статті полягає у тому, щоб на основі архівних документів офіційного походження розкрити зміст окремих структур повсякденності ветеранів війни з інвалідністю у радянській дійсності перших повоєнних років. **Методологічну** базу роботи становить поєднання технік дослідження різних наукових дисциплін у рамках історії повсякденності. Використано низку понять з теорії радянської повсякденності. **Наукова новизна** матеріалу полягає в постановці проблеми, засобах і способах її розв’язання, дослідницьких висновках, специфіці використаних джерел. **Висновки.** Тяглість існування важливих рис радянської ментальності є проблемою нинішнього українського суспільства. “Радянськість” гальмує цивілізаційний розвиток незалежної України і є небезпечним чинником в умовах російсько-української війни. Розв’язання цієї проблеми можливе завдяки ґрунтовному вивченню радянського суспільства з допомогою сучасних технік історичного дослідження, зокрема, методів історії повсякденності. Після закінчення Другої світової війни в УРСР з’явилася численна соціальна група ветеранів з інвалідністю. Повноцінна історична реконструкція повоєнного повсякдення радянського суспільства неможлива без вивчення побуту цього контингенту ветеранів війни. Під час Третього голоду в Україні партійно-урядове керівництво республіки для уникнення дефіциту бюджету соціального забезпечення ініціювало кампанію скорочення числа ветеранів з інвалідністю шляхом маніпуляцій з лікарсько-трудовою експертизою. Фронтовики з інвалідністю вимушені були багато сил витратити задля визнання за ними статусу “Інвалід Вітчизняної війни”, оскільки він надавав право на соціальний захист. Адміністративний тиск, спрямований на скорочення відсотка фронтовиків з інвалідністю другої групи, зумовив видтворення в цій сфері типової радянської структури повсякдення – “блату”. Стратегії виживання, які застосовували деякі ветерани війни з інвалідністю, передбачали й використання обману задля отримання дефіцитних благ. У повсякденному житті багато інвалідів війни стикалися з відсутністю емпатії з боку суспільства і нехтуванням державними службовцями своїми прямими обов’язками щодо надання допомоги фронтовикам.

Ключові слова: повсякденність, ветерани війни з інвалідністю, група інвалідності, блат, соціальний захист.

Problem Statement. Among other problems the Ukrainian society is currently forced to solve the problem of the long-term existence of the Soviet person mentality components, which experts tend to nominate by the terms “Sovietism” or “Sovietness”. These mental structures could be seen not only in the older people’s behaviour, but also in the thinking and actions of a significant number of representatives of independent Ukraine generation. The “Sovietism” embeded in everyday practices slows down the civilizational progress of our society and is quite pernicious under the conditions of the full-scale war with the existential enemy – the Russian imperial regime. The continuity of the existence of the

“Soviet” worldview was due to, among other things, insufficient understanding of the Soviet history, superficial reflection of the past on the basis of the traditional historiography. The methodology and methods of the everyday life history give much more opportunities for the in-depth research of the post-war Ukrainian society, in particular for the historical science.

One of the severe consequences of World War II for the Ukrainian people was a large number of the veterans with disabilities of various degrees. The Soviet system of the social protection (social security) was unprepared for this. There was no complete, holistic scientific concept of the social support, social accompaniment of this category people during the post-war period. The state authorities that were called upon to take care of the demobilized servicemen with the disabilities only began the process of forming an appropriate policy, developing and implementing a system of elementary social support measures at the end of the World War II and in the first years after its end. The sluggish, bureaucratized social security system in the Ukrainian SSR (the Ministry for Social Security of the Ukrainian SSR was under the republican subordination) often did not help the veterans, but tried to abdicate responsibility for them, and even worsened their living and working conditions. The everyday life of the disabled veterans in these difficult times is a relevant topic for the research, since the current full-scale war with the Russian aggressor is accompanied by the significant irreversible losses. The coverage of the everyday life of World War II disabled veterans (the then official name of this contingent was “The Disabled Veterans of the Patriotic War”) enhances the scientific image of the Soviet reality during this difficult period of our past significantly. The life facts obtained by the historians about the everyday life of the disabled war veterans in Soviet Ukraine are necessary in order to prevent the reproduction of the “Sovietism” in the current system of the social protection and support for the disabled veterans of the Russo-Ukrainian War.

Review of Recent Research and Publications. The Post-war Soviet everyday life has been studied over the past decades quite actively. The American historian, S. Fitzpatrick made a significant contribution to the development of its issues (Fitzpatrick, 2005). The conclusions made by the scholar were of utmost importance for understanding the Soviet everyday life regarding the ways and means of adapting the population of the USSR to the totalitarian regime, as well as the formation of a special social type of “homo soveticus”, i.e. a person for whom the Soviet system became a natural environment for existence.

The domestic historians specializing in the post-war period of our history use the modern research technologies of new social history and history of everyday life increasingly. It is worth highlighting the following scholars among them as O. Udod (Udod, 2010), O. Koliastruk (Koliastruk, 2012), V. Krupyna (Krupyna, 2010), N. Khomenko (Khomenko, 2009), T. Vronska and T. Pastushenko (Vronska, Pastushenko, 2010), V. Hordienko and H. Hordienko (Hordiyenko, Hordiyenko, 2022). Our historians are involved in the process of improving the methodology and methods of studying the everyday life. The history of everyday life is being institutionalized in Ukraine; the Centre for History of Soviet Everyday Life has been established, and an All-Ukrainian Scientific and Theoretical Seminar on this topic has been implemented. The scholars research everyday life of various social groups of the Soviet society, in particular, the party nomenklatura, the intelligentsia, the students, the peasants, the workers, as well as the marginal communities. The issue on the Soviet regime’s attitude towards the disabled war veterans during the post-war period is being developed. At the same time, there should be carried out a more detailed study on the everyday life of the above-mentioned social group. The scholars also point out that we should abandon

the “Victory” myth and the heroic narrative nowadays and focus on “... the victims and tragedies of World War II, and other socio-humanitarian, political dimensions of this global confrontation” (Hrytsiuk, 2024, p. 18).

The purpose of the research is to elucidate the content of the disabled war veterans’ everyday life in the Soviet reality of the first post-war years, based on the archival documents of the official origin.

Research Results. There were officially registered about 650 000 war veterans with groups of disabilities in Ukraine in 1944 – 1946 (CSAPAU, f. 1, d. 23, c. 5181, p. 104; CSASBPGU, f. 1, d. 23, c. 1841, p. 126). The above-mentioned contingent of the social security sphere was heterogeneous. There were more than 50 000 officers among front-line soldiers with disabilities, all the rest – belonged to the contingent of rank-and-file and sergeants. The demobilized military personnel with the disabilities were divided into those, who lived in cities and those, who returned to villages – there were more of them. Furthermore, the veterans were divided into disabled people of Groups 1, 2 and 3, according to the conclusions of the Medical and Labour Expert Commissions (LTEKs), depending on the degree of working ability loss. All of the above-mentioned groups of the disabled veterans had a single official status of “The Disabled of the Patriotic War”, but received different amounts of a social support from the state. After demobilization, the vast majority of them found themselves under difficult conditions of the post-war hardship and were forced to integrate into the everyday life of that time, showing willpower and ability to survive. This aspect should be the subject of a thorough scientific analysis. According to a historian O. Udod: “... the history of everyday life is, first of all, the process of humanizing everyday life, psychologizing everyday life, a person’s attitude to the everyday issues, to the authorities, the state and society as a whole through the prism of a personal reception of living conditions” (Udod, 2010, p. 20).

In spite of the official nature of the Soviet government institutions’ archival documents, there is still a certain amount of information regarding the daily life of the disabled war veterans in the first post-war years. Due to perusing of these materials, it was feasible to determine that a lot of energy was taken up by the bureaucratic red tape regarding confirmation of their status – the status of “The Disabled of the Patriotic War” in the daily life of the front-line soldiers. The scholars V. Hordienko and H. Hordienko proved that the budget deficit arose in the Ministry for Social Security of the Ukrainian SSR during the Third Famine in Ukraine; due to a sharp increase in the number of the registered disabled war veterans, there was a lack of funds for the pension payments to these front-line soldiers (Hordiyenko, 2022, p. 150). In this situation, the party and government leadership of the Republic, led by M. Khrushchev and D. Korotchenko, decided to reduce the number of pensioners instead of demanding additional subsidies from the union government (Hordiyenko, Hordiyenko, 2021, p. 150). There was used the so-called “deep medical and labour examination” in order to implement the above-mentioned, i.e. the expert manipulations during regular examinations of the front-line soldiers. The leadership of the Ukrainian SSR deprived more than 116 thousand veterans of the status of “The Disabled of the Patriotic War” owing to the help of the large-scale examinations in the local LTEKs in 1946 – 1948 (CSASBPGU, f. 42, d. 27, c. 3, p. 70). In addition, tens of thousands of veterans were transferred from the second disability group to the third, which meant the abolition of pensions for the front-line soldiers from the countryside, and a significant reduction in their size for the veterans from cities and towns. There were transferred 84,032 front-line soldiers to disability Group 3 as a result of a medical

checkup in 1947 (CSASBPGU, f. 348, d. 3, c. 234, p. 12). The most serious consequence of the transfer from the second to the third disability Group was the resumption of subordination to the severe Soviet labour legislation. The front-line soldiers with severe injuries, as well as the other citizens, lost 25% of their monthly pay the first time they were late for work by more than ten minutes, 50% – the second time, and for the third time – they could even go to prison for 3 years (Haliv, 2023, p. 9). There were not only any positive results by the command-and-administrative means, but also they worsened the veterans' condition as in other industries significantly (Molotkina, 2021, c. 263).

The campaign, which was initiated by the party and government leadership of the Ukrainian SSR and which, using the official style of the Soviet bureaucracy, can be called the "struggle to reduce the number of war invalids," began after September 16, 1946. There was held a meeting of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Ukraine (Bolsheviks) on the issues of the work of the Ministry of Social Security of the Ukrainian SSR and a corresponding resolution was adopted on that day (CSAPAU, f. 1, d. 6, c. 945, p. 11–20). The front-line soldiers had to undergo a re-examination at the district or city LTEK four times a year (once a quarter) before the start of this campaign. It was a rather burdensome and somewhat humiliating procedure for the veterans, especially the rural ones – having to travel to the district centre four times a year to confirm the presence of wounds, injuries and damages. The social security workers and LTEK doctors realized this over time and achieved a reduction in the number of re-examinations at least for the war invalids of Group 1, i.e. for the veterans with the greatest physical injuries. They were allowed to undergo a re-examination only twice a year. The government "gave the go-ahead" for a lifelong disability of this category veterans over time.

There were several disabled veterans usually in each village in the first post-war years. The authorities required the rural community to provide them with the assistance (Maliarchuk, 2021, p. 89). When the time came for a re-examination, the Head of the collective farm would provide them with a horse-drawn vehicle to go to the district centre. The front-line soldiers often had to travel to the city on their own for a re-examination. It should be kept in mind that local doctors (a therapist, surgeon, neurologist) were involved in the work of the LTEKs. The Head of the District or City Social Security Department (social security) was the LTEK member. The final decision of the LTEK regarding the disability of a front-line soldier was to be approved not by a doctor, but by the Head of social security. Motivation for his approval or denial of the LTEK conclusion was determined not by medical indicators, but by financial calculations. Everything depended on him whether the disability of a front-line soldier would be confirmed, whether he would receive the second disability Group 2 instead of Group 1, Group 3 instead of Group 2, or whether he would lose it altogether and be declared as having fully "recovered". In particular, the transfer from disability Group 2 to Group 3 was accompanied by a sharp decrease in pension, on average, from 120 rubles to 90 rubles (Hordiyenko, 2019, p. 245). The rural veterans with Group 3 disabilities generally lost the right to a state pension.

As a rule, during a month, in Ukraine the local LTEK held 8/9 meetings, during which 250 – 300 war invalids were examined. The commission could work for a short time – two hours a day. During this period, 25-30 veterans had to be examined (CSASBPGU, f. 348, d. 3, c. 216, p. 27). Each specialist doctor – a member of the commission had to examine a front-line soldier separately. In order to do this, a veteran had to undress, and after the examination – dress. It should be noted that for many disabled veterans this

everyday activity was quite difficult. Hence, there were given no more than 5 minutes for the examination of a front-line soldier. According to the archival document, there were the following conditions for the veterans to undergo a quarterly examination. The instructor of the Military Department of Vinnytsia Regional Committee of the CP (b) U wrote in the "Reference" to his immediate superior – the Head of the Military Department of the Regional Committee Porotikov: "The established LTEKs work extremely poorly in the districts. There are often cases when, due to the doctors' fault, the work of the LTEKs breaks down and disabled people, who lived 20–25 km away for an examination, are forced to return without any results" (SAVR, f. P-136, d. 27, c. 23, p. 42). Due to the message, it was possible to recreate the unpleasant picture of an uncomfortable ride on a cart to the district centre and then a long wait for the front-line soldiers in a shabby hospital, where, as always, and especially in the difficult post-war years, there was little furniture and no devices to facilitate movement. If the meeting of the LTEK was cancelled, then the war invalids had to get to the district centre again in a few days. Therefore, if there were veterans, who did not arrive for a check-up at the LTEK without good reason, the local social security department (sotszabez) cancelled their pensions.

The veterans, who were dissatisfied with the decisions of local LTEKs to cancel disability or lower the disability Group had the opportunity to complain to the so-called "conflict" LTEKs and undergo an additional check-up in the regional centre. When the campaign "to fight for reducing the number of war invalids" or "to fight against inflated indicators of disability of Group 2" began, the indignation of veterans was extinguished with the help of "conflict" LTEKs at the regional level. The initiator of the creation of such institutions was the People's Commissariat of State Control of the Ukrainian SSR. The Head of this Commissariat signed Resolution No. 3778/19 "On the Creation of a "Conflict" LTEK in Kyiv Region" on July 21 of 1945. Based on this document, Kyiv Executive Committee of the Council of Workers' Deputies on September 24, 1945 adopted its own resolution "On the Creation of a Regional Conflict Medical and Labour Expert Commission to resolve conflict cases of the disabled people living in Kyiv region". There were numerous war veterans, who disagreed to the decisions of the local LTEKs back in 1945 regarding their disability was so significant that there was a need to create a special structure at the regional level to verify the correctness of the diagnosis and decision of the primary LTEK. The regional "conflict" LTEKs soon appeared in some other regions of Ukraine, where there were the largest number of the veterans with the disabilities. From September of 1946 and during the most active phase of the increase of the number of the veterans, whose disabilities were not recognized or were reduced from Group 2 to Group 3 by district and city LTEKs, "conflict" LTEKs were established in all regions of the Ukrainian SSR (CSASBPGU, f. 348, d. 3, c. 215, p. 6). There were made only the general remarks as for the results of the activities of the "conflict" LTEKs. They were designed to make it appear as though there were the signs of legality and justice. It was not easy for the veterans with disabilities to get to the district for the next examination, and one can only imagine the difficulties a veteran faced when it was necessary to go to the regional centre to confirm his disability. Due to the above-mentioned, most of those, who were declared completely "healthy" did not even write statements to protest the abolition of their disability status. According to the indirect data, which indicated that the "conflict" LTEKs could only take a veteran's side in some exceptional cases. It was also facilitated by the review procedure in the "conflicted" LTEK: a veteran was not immediately informed of the

doctors' final verdict, but the corresponding decision was sent to his home by mail. It was done so that an outraged veteran would not use crutches against the experts immediately after such a result was announced to him directly. It should be noted that all documentation of the activities of the "conflict" LTEKs is missing from the archives. It seems that all these materials (veterans' statements, minutes of meetings, resolutions on each statement, medical and expert justifications, correspondence, lists of members of "conflict" LTEKs, etc.) were carefully "cleaned up" by the authorities later in order to hide another "dark issue" of the Soviet regime.

During the period of "fighting against the excessive number of disabled people of Group 2 of the Patriotic War" (the Ministry for Social Security of the Ukrainian SSR was given a task to reduce the percentage of the disabled people of Group 2, as in the RSFSR, to 23%), the status of a war veteran with a disability of Group 2 acquired the meaning of a "deficit benefit". The status gave a veteran, in addition to a slightly increased pension, the right not to work, or rather, the right to choose the type of labour activity for himself independently. It was vital under the conditions of the "Soviet neo-serfdom" (Hulay, 2022, c. 50). A veteran, who was given the status of Group 2 disability, was exempted from the harsh labour legislation of that time. In addition, disability Group 2 provided some tax benefits to the disabled veterans, who lived in the countryside. Therefore, the granting of Group 2 "by blat" (favourism) became a common phenomenon. According to S. Fitzpatrick: "... Blat, an informal system of mutual appreciation, owing to which citizens received scarce goods and services, is another pre-war practice that continued to flourish after the war" (Fitzpatrick, 2005, p. 284). Those people, who continue to believe in the vaunted "Stalinist order" should pay attention to the following fact. There was made a decision to conduct a check-up of the disabled veterans of the Patriotic War, who held high positions, i.e. belonged to the party nomenklatura in Dnipropetrovsk region in 1949. There were 31 veterans out of 87 veterans of this category, who had disability Group 2, had to be transferred to Group 3, and of 167 former front-line soldiers and current nomenklatura members, 64 had their disability cancelled altogether. It turned out that many of them received a disability, not only without any injury, but also without even being wounded (CSASBPGU, f. 348, d. 3, c. 383, p. 47). Ternopil Regional Social Security Chief Solodov stated at a meeting at the ministry: "The analysis shows that Group 2 is obtained as a result of giving bribes, primarily to doctors, responsible employees, and district leaders" (CSASBPGU, f. 348, d. 3, c. 585, p. 151). The local party nomenklatura had many levers of influence over the Heads of Social Security institutions, who after 1946 belonged to it, in order to obtain (often illegal) disability and the status of "Disabled of the Patriotic War". It was necessary to abolish the status of the disabled from a veteran who had a real disability in order to grant a strictly limited disability of Group 2 to some significant party functionary.

Veterans, along with the red tape regarding the disability, were forced to adapt to the difficult living conditions in post-war Ukraine. O. Rabenchuk, the historian, in particular, noted the following "... faced with the problem of survival, with the need to decide their fate independently, especially in the years of 1946 – 1947, the hunger years, many resorted to illegal and immoral actions. This tendency was preserved in society in subsequent years. The level of the crime rate was a vivid example of social issues in the post-war society. Hence, the slogan "if you don't steal, you won't live" was used by tens of thousands of people: from the officials to ordinary citizens, with whom law enforcement agencies fought actively" (Rabenchuk, 2010, p. 5). One can agree with S. Fitzpatrick, who claimed

that one of the embodiments of the “real Soviet Man” was the literary hero Ostap Bender (Fitzpatrick, 2005, p. 300). After all, only a swindler, who absorbed the entire spirit of the Soviet reality with all the fibers of his soul, could adapt to the unbearable conditions of the totalitarian regime quite successfully. It should be noted that the disabled veterans often were not into fraudulent ingenuity in certain cases. Here is a striking example. There functioned a boarding school for the disabled war and labourers at the end of the war in the village of Stryzhavka in Vinnytsia region. The front-line soldiers got used to the living conditions quickly in this institution and even began to oppress the disabled labourers. The veterans found a way to get moonshine from the local peasants, when there were brought new blankets to the boarding school. Two front-line soldiers with new blankets went secretly to a neighbouring village to the renowned moonshine distillery in the district, and two more of their colleagues followed them. A hospitable peasant woman, owing to such deficit and valuable thing as blankets, poured the front-line soldiers several liters of vodka, with which they headed home as quickly as possible. The same invalids, who walked around would enter the house of the moonshine distillery and raise a fuss: “Where are the new blankets? This is state property! Hiding stolen property from the boarding school is a criminal case!” The frightened peasant woman would immediately give back the blankets she had just taken, and the “strict” guards of the state property would return to the boarding school, completely satisfied (CSASBPGU, f. 348, d. 3, c. 7, p. 28). Taking into consideration the above-mentioned, we can come to the conclusion that there were not people oppressed by their disability and the authorities, but men from the front who, with evil glee, asserted themselves in the civilian life. It should be mentioned that due to the contempt of former soldiers for the civil order and neglect of discipline, soon the authorities had to close all boarding schools for the war invalids.

The moral callousness, the phenomenon of getting used to the pictures of injustice and ruthlessness was another feature of the everyday life of society, the vast majority of which simply survived under extreme conditions. There were numerous disabled front-line soldiers in the Soviet reality that they were almost ignored. Vinnytsia Head of the Regional Social Security at a meeting in the Ministry told about one case that occurred in the town of Tulchyn in September of 1946. Moiseenko, an instructor of the Military Department of Vinnytsia Regional Party Committee, arrived there with the task to check the party and government resolutions implementation regarding the care of the disabled war veterans. He found a severely disabled front-line soldier (without the lower limbs) Pylypchuk, who had been sleeping there all night in the morning, near the building of the District Party Committee and the Executive Committee of the District Council in the very centre of the town. The indignant instructor immediately determined that the veteran had been brought to the town the previous day and dropped off at the District Committee by the school Principal from the neighboring village of Palanka Kaminskyi. The instructor also found out that the veteran had arrived in Tulchyn to ask the district administration to provide financial assistance to his family in order to purchase clothes and shoes for the school-age children. The veteran failed to reach the high offices.

The collision described by the Regional Party functionary clearly shows the dark side of the everyday life of the war invalids during those difficult years. First of all, we can conclude that the veteran with a severe disability did not have any of the simplest means of transportation (a wheelchair, a cart, etc.). Obviously, people were constantly near the District Party Committee – they entered and left the premises and could not help but

notice the front-line soldier, who, by the way, was an order bearer (the Order of the Battle Red Banner). Apparently, no one dared to carry the veteran in his arms inside the District Committee building. Kaminskyi (the school head) limited himself to only delivering the veteran to the town. All the party functionaries and employees of the District Committee and District Executive Committee went home in the evening, bypassing the disabled person. The guards of the District Committee building, knowing that the September night was quite cold, followed their authorities and did not stir a finger to help the front-line soldier in any way (SAVR, f. P-136, d. 27, c. 52, p. 36).

Another detail emerges from the story of the Head of Vinnytsia Social Security. When Moiseenko asked the party district leader Tkachuk how this could happen to the veteran in the centre of the town, the secretary began to be indignant, but not at the indifference of his numerous subordinates, but at the actions of the school principal Kaminskyi, who brought the veteran from the village. That is, if the veteran had sat quietly at home, this disgrace would not have happened. On the other hand, it can be stated that the sight of war veterans with serious injuries on the streets of cities was so commonplace that it no longer aroused in the population a sense of empathy and a desire to support, to provide at least some assistance. It is also necessary to take into account the time when the incident occurred. The tragedy of the Third Famine began in Ukraine; the local party nomenclature was accused by the Kremlin leaders of disrupting the implementation of the state grain procurement plan. The “survival strategy” of the party nomenclature these days ruled out doubts about the effectiveness of the party and government policies, including those regarding veterans (Popp, Medvid, 2024, p. 107). In the general atmosphere of fear, the feeling of approaching disaster, of course, there was no room for elementary attention to the disabled veterans among both the officials and the ordinary citizens.

Conclusions. For the vast majority of veterans with the disabilities, the post-war everyday life was filled with additional difficulties, overcoming which required significant efforts and the will to survive. It was not only burdensome, but also humiliating for many front-line soldiers from the countryside quarterly reviews in LTEKs. During the Third Famine, the party and government leadership of the Ukrainian SSR initiated a campaign to deprive more than 116 thousand front-line soldiers of the status of “The Disabled of the Patriotic War” and transfer tens of thousands from disability Group 2 to Group 3. The veterans spent a lot of energy on attempts to cancel the unfair decisions of local LTEKs. However, “conflict LTEKs”, as a rule, confirmed the conclusions of the local LTEK. The purely Soviet phenomenon of “blat” also manifested itself in the field of medical and labour expertise. Since disability Group 2 exempted a person from the harsh Soviet labour legislation, and the number of disabled veterans of Group 2 was not to exceed 23%, this Group of disabilities acquired the traditional form of “deficit” for the Soviet reality, i.e. a certain “benefit” that could be thanked, or even traded. It is no coincidence that disability Group 2 was often illegally received by representatives of the authorities – the party nomenclature. Because of this, in order to comply with the percentages strictly determined from above, the veterans with serious injuries were transferred to disability Group 3. The veterans with disabilities, like all Soviet people, were ready to break the law, and sometimes even use fraudulent methods, in order to survive and receive the necessary benefits. It was the only possible form of resistance to the pressure of the totalitarian regime. During the Third Famine in Ukraine, most disabled veterans had to experience the callousness of the Soviet bureaucracy and the levelling of the ability to empathize, typical of the Ukrainians.

Further study of the everyday life of war veterans with disabilities in the difficult first post-war years should focus on such issues as the government's differentiated approach to different groups of veterans, in particular officers and rank-and-file, the existence of informal groups of veterans and specifics of their communication, family relationships in veterans' families, and marginalization of some war invalids.

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