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**SPECIAL ANTIGUERRILLAS PORTUGUESE COLONIAL WARS**

**IN ANGOLA AND MOZAMBIQUE 1970 -1974**

**Summary.** The reasons of appearance and the aspects of the special antipartisanunions actions in Portuguese Empire during the colonial wars in 1970-1974 in Angola and Mozambique are explored in the article. The author reveals all the special union of the cognate ancestry, specifies their number, the direction and the principles of the actions. The importance and necessity of various special antipartisanunions’creations is highlighted and also the experience influence of their actions on the analogous patterns in the South Rhodesia is revealed.

**Key Words:** the colonial war, national-liberation motion, antipartisan union, military-political organizations, military forces.

Long lasting internal force conflicts in the South of the African Continent in 1970s were poorly researched in the modern Ukrainian historiography in general and in separate points because of political problem’s irrelevance.As for the last ones, it is about the creation, the structure, the activity and the efficiency of specially created units for fighting the partisan unions operations.

1970s is a period of final stage in national-liberation and anticolonial wars, including the South of Africa. Exactly this time there are the last colonial wars in the Portuguese Empire (all the names are traditional as for the soviet and Ukrainian historiography – auth.): the National-liberation war of the Angolan people against Portuguese colonizers (February 1961 – August 1974) and the National-liberation war of Mozambique people against Portuguese colonizers (September 1964 – September 1974) [1].

The feature of so-called force conflicts was the situation on the periphery of ‘’The Cold War’’, i.e. the great states for various reasons were not interested in them [2]. Because of it the national-liberation forces were relatively poorly equipped and mostly with the small arms weapon for a long period of time. Meanwhile the great poorly inhabited areas of Angola, Mozambique territory mostly covered with Bush and the total armed rebelssupport of black population contributed active management the partisan war. And a geopolitical situation in general in African continent, which in 1960 – 1970s has drastically changed, gave partisans extra opportunities to get a weapon including heavy weapon. All this in conjunction with the steady increase of partisan squad population and real, financial aid from the socialist countries, qualitatively increased their force opportunities [3].

Facing steady increasing population and the partisan unions level of equipment, Portuguese colonial state and the military command of the country quickly understood that massive and active usage of regular forced arms parts and the police during the fight against the partisan won’t cause an acceptable result. That’s why in the end of 1960s and beginning of 1970s Portuguese policies and military concluded the necessity of organization special antipartisan squads or reorientation exclusively for antipartisan actions already existing regular parts. The last ones were committed in holding of according special preparation and equipping these parts with weapon and technics, what has positively established itself in the fight against partisans [4].

A small European state – the Portuguese republic was holding 3 colonial wars at once since beginning of 1960s (except Angola and Mozambique still in Portuguese Guinea). That’s why the country with its population 8 million people had 220 thousand armed forces in 1960s – the first half of 1970s [5]. Among them at least 80 thousand soldiers were in Angola and about 70 thousand were in Mozambique (there were approximately 30 thousand in Portuguese Guinea) [6]. Moreover Portugal as a NATO country had to hold a hard burden in the central part of the country (and also in southern Italy during the regular military exercises) the entire motorized infantry division and pretty modern aircraft power.

In such a conditions ( in conditions of executing the block nature duties and the permanent antipartisan war in three conflict areas at once) the special value for the Portuguese military command had highly mobilized and professionally prepared units, which could be sent from one crisis area to another one.That’s why in fact the first special Portuguese antipartisan units became its Marine Brigade units (2 battalions) and 2 command groups (each one strength of a company in composition of naval forces), the units of a separate squad of a special purpose (composing ground forces (about 3 battalions)) and a parachute-waterborne unit (according to air forces). Nevertheless these military subdivisions first of all were created for the military action within the confines of NATO and that’s why they were required in Europe. They were thrown to Africa episodically. That’s why almost all the time during 1960s Portuguese staked not a number but high qualitatively trained subdivisions of foreign mercenaries as Belgians had done earlier in Congo. Because of a source lack it was almost impossible to identify their total number and structure. However according to our calculations at least one or two companies acted in each conflict area apart from foreigners, first of all among them were American trainers in units of colonial armies of Portugal. The maneuvers platoons and companies of mercenaries from Angola and Mozambique are unknown for us.

And foreigners subdivision’s effectiveness in comparison with the financial burden for their maintenance turned up low enough, that disappointed Portuguese generals (hereinafter the statesof southern Rhodesia and Republic of South Africadidn’t stake foreign mercenaries).

However since the conditions of exposed enough, but big as to the territory of south African conflict theatre, the aviation meaning increased permanently [7], so just parachute – landing units of air forces became the first specially created antipartisan units of Portugal colonial Empire.

In 1970 the entire 21 parachute – landing regiment of Portugal air forces (Regimento Casadores Paraque - distas 21) was consigned for executing just antipartisan functions, one of the most elite military units in the country, which was deduced from the NATO staffs subordination. The union counted approximately 1000 soldiers (2 complete battalions) and was constantly thrown from Angola to Mozambique and from there for example to Portugal or Italy and back to Angola. Exactly because of such a tension it was impossible to act all the scale antipartisan missions. Because of it the Portugal military governance in the colonies began to create the special air force groups from the military professionals (Grupo Espesiales Paraque - distas – GEP), each one numbering approximately one company, which had the main target to fight against just partisans in Angola or Mozambique. The number of such groups by April 1974 composed 6 units – 4 of them in Angola and 2 in Mozambique [8].

At the same time the special conditions in fighting against the partisan groupings encouraged to life another one special subdivision, also numbering the reinforced company, which was created in the end of 1972 also by Portuguese in Angola – the air forced subdivision of in-depth prospecting “Flechas”. This unit was being formed solely of ex-partisans, who were trained and oriented for gathering strategically important information and for the physical destruction of Angolan partisan squad leaders under the guidance of Portuguese and foreign (American and Western European) trainers. Judging by the available information we have, the last ‘’Flechas’’ mission has been left unexecuted, first of all because by 1972 all antiportuguese rebel Angolan organizations – MPLA, **UNITA,** FNLA had extremely battle worthy regular units, qualitatively camouflaged bases on Angolan, Zaire and Zambian areas and already had received the special help from the leading world countries. However the activity of ‘’Flechas’’ as reconnaissance subdivision was efficient enough, which is testified by the productive combat actions of the Portugal aviation in Angola, right at the final stage of this war. Only prospectors, who knew very well where and how in specific conditions to do it, could obtain qualitative and strategic information for the pilots [9].

Still it Is impossible to prove effectiveness of GEP, Portugal paratroopers, marines and marine commandoes because of complete straight source lack. However the 21 parachute – landing regiment and marine infantry development of Portugal by-testifies these subdivisions coped with their tactical targets in concrete missions during the war time. Meanwhile considering the specifics of developmentat least of Angolan conflict, its usage for operational purposes, not saying about the strategic operations, wasn’t expected and should be admitted as the Portugal command mistake.

The experience of creating special military units for fighting against partisans and reorientation towards purposes of regular army and aviation subdivisions completely used the government of the South Rhodesia. There was fierce armed conflict between white state of Yan Smith, separatist from the point of view of the international law, and black rebels from the ZANU and ZAPU organizations. The special and the specially created antipartisan unit for concrete enemy ‘’The Selus prospect’’ [10] and the most powerful antipartisansouthrhodesian aviation [11] in the war history of the Western world had brightly expressed itself right in this conflict.

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**Поспелов А.С. Специальные анти партизанские формирования Португалии в колониальных войнах в Анголе и Мозамбике 1970 -1974 годах. – Статья.**

**Аннотация.** В статье исследуются причины появления и аспекты деятельности специальных анти партизанских формирований Португальской империи в колониальных войнах 1970-74 гг. в Анголе и Мозамбике. Автор выявляет все специальные формирования такого рода, определяет их численность, направленность и принципы деятельности. Подчеркивается важность и необходимость создания различных специальных анти партизанских формирований, а также указывается на влияние опыта их деятельности на аналогичные структуры в Южной Родезии.

**Ключевые слова**: колониальная война, национально-освободительное движение, анти партизанские формирования, военно-политические организации, вооруженные силы.

**Анотація.**В статті досліджуються причини появи та аспекти діяльності спеціальних анти партизанських формувань Португальської імперії в колоніальних війнах 1970-74 рр. в Анголі та Мозамбіку. Автор виявляє всі спеціальні формування такого роду, зазначає їх чисельність, спрямованість та принципи діяльності. Підкреслюється важливість і необхідність створення різноманітних спеціальних анти партизанських формувань, а також вказується на вплив досвіду їх діяльності на аналогічні структури в Південній Родезії.

**Ключові слова:** колоніальна війна, національно-визвольний рух, анти партизанські формування, військово-політичні організації, збройні сили.