

Zrínyi Miklós National Defence University
Kossuth Lajos Department of Military Science
Doctoral School of Military Science

SUMMARY OF THE PhD THESYS

by

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**The Development Possibilities for Training, Preparation and Equipping the
Special Operations Battalion**

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Introduction

As a member of the Reconnaissance and Special Operations Unit of the ZMNDU¹ Special Operation Department I have long been dealing with the in-depth/special reconnaissance. I have published textbooks and articles and delivered lectures on this topic. In the Doctorate School and in my university work I had to pay special attention to the newly developing capability which was created in Szolnok based on the basis of the 34. Bercsényi László In-Depth Reconnaissance Battalion. The Special Operations Battalion was formed in September 2005 and its special operations capability is still being developed. It has to acquire full operational capability by 2010.

This thesis in accordance with the objectives of the leadership of the Hungarian Armed Forces aims at helping the development and implementation of the special operational capability, the definition of the tasks, the frames of employment and the level of ambition of the special operations force. To accomplish all these it is inevitable to define the operational framework, the phases and methods of the training and all the material (equipment) and immaterial assets required for the implementation.

I tried to analyse my subject from the point of view of different nations. This presented difficulties, as several countries, e.g. Russia were very secretive regarding this topic. Despite the information scarcity I tried to show all data available at each given chapter.

I must mention that there have been several researches done on the field of my topic, the study of which has given me immense expert help and lots of ideas. The following researchers provided me with great support in my work: Dr. Tibor Kőszegvári Maj Gen (Ret), Dr. József Boda Col, Dr. Imre Bánki Col (Ret), Dr. Attila Murinkó Lt Col, Dr. Csaba Kovács Lt Col, Imre Porkoláb Lt Col.

1. Description of the Topic

The countries and armed forces of the world have to answer the requirements of a new political, economic and military environment. Since the 9/11 terrorist attacks new security challenges, risks and threats have emerged. Until the end of the bi-polar world, during the cold war era, the task of the Hungarian armed forces as

¹ ZMNDU - Zrínyi Miklós National Defence University

the member of the Warsaw Pact was to exterminate, conquer and keep the territory of a well defined enemy. Since then the completely new situation has presented different tasks and challenges, that the Hungarian armed forces have never faced before and which they have to answer appropriately within the framework of NATO and EU. These new challenges brought about several changes in the perception, organisation and command of modern warfare. They influenced the military thinking, the development of the principles of warfare, which in turn had an effect on the principles of the structure and employment of the armed forces. The task is to create new military capabilities, which are ready to answer the changes in the security environment, the development of the warfare principles of opposing forces at any part of the world, and the changes in the nature of warfare.

In my thesis I analyse the structure of the special operations force with special emphasis on the 34. Bercsényi László Reconnaissance Battalion from the following aspects:

- How can it meet the requirements of the new challenges both in structure and in preparedness?
- How does it fit into the structure of the Hungarian armed forces?
- Is it ready to handle the different new military tasks?
- The nature of the effective training and of the preparation for definite tasks.
- The type of cutting edge equipment that enables the soldiers to handle the different new tasks.

2. Methods Employed

Among the methods employed equal importance was placed on studying the relevant literature, on the primary and secondary individual analysis of the compiled material and on conducting guided and unguided interviews. Besides, both directly and indirectly I processed the consequences of personal experience paying strict attention to objectivity.

Before starting to write my thesis I began compiling written and electronic literature. I studied the theories, practices and present legal control of the different special operations forces (NATO, EU, UNO, and the Hungarian Republic). I read Hungarian and international studies, articles and analyses relevant to my subject.

During my work I paid attention to the changes in the structure of the special operations force, especially on the training, the composition, the equipment and on the time of employment and readiness of the forces offered.

I participated in several lectures and courses, in special operations staff preparation and in the one-week SOLIC² Special Operations International Staff Preparation Special Seminar in Szolnok.

I am the member of the Special Operations Forces Section of the Branch Permanent Working Group.

I have given lectures and have written articles, studies and teaching material based on my research results, and views about the subject of my thesis.

I finished the research and the compilation of material serving as the basis of my thesis on 31st March 2009.

3. Structure

In Chapter 1:

I examine, analyse and present the capabilities and possibilities of the Hungarian special operations forces with respect to the new challenges.

I analyse the frame of employment and the tasks of the special operations forces of the Hungarian Armed Force in different periods.

I examine the levels of ambition of the Hungarian Republic regarding the employment of the special operations forces and I define the levels of readiness of these forces.

I introduce the tasks and the different phases of the employment of the special operations forces.

In Chapter 2:

Based on the result of my studies I outline the projected structure of the special operations force battalion and I introduce its main subunits.

² SOLIC - Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict

In Chapter 3:

I focus on the basic tasks of the training of the special operations battalion.

I examine the time to be spent on training, the different special trainings, the courses, and the basic questions regarding the combat preparation.

I introduce the methods and procedures that can enhance training effectiveness.

In Chapter 4:

I examine and give suggestions as to the equipping of the special operations forces, to their provision with different materiel and to their development possibilities.

4. Aim

1. I define the place, role, tasks and the necessary capabilities, and frames of employment of the special operations forces within the Hungarian Armed Forces in the changing security environment in military operations both in and outside war situations.
2. I examine if the name MH 34 Special Operations Battalion is appropriate to the role assumed by the battalion within the special operations system of the Hungarian Armed Forces.
3. I introduce and summarise the levels of ambition and readiness of the special operations forces and within that of the special operations battalion.
4. I examine the combat methods employed by the special operations forces in different situations, what strengths and means they can use to complete their tasks. My aim here is to write up all problems and challenges that face the special operations forces.
5. I outline my suggestion regarding the organisation of the MH 34 Special Operations Battalion
6. I examine the present training system and the training phases of the special operations battalion and I suggest a training method which I consider effective.
7. I examine the present clothing and equipment of the special operations battalion and I give my suggestions for choosing and for the development

possibilities of the clothing and the equipment appropriate for the employment tasks.

5. Conclusions of the Research

By answering the questions in the summary at the end of each chapter and based on my consultations with experts, on studying the international literature and on the results of my scientific research I draw up the following conclusions:

- The present profile of the international security challenges requires a new concept for the special operations capability based on effective and rapid connection, information operations, network enabled warfare, effect based operational approach, cooperation with intelligence systems, sustainability and deployability.
- According to researchers of military science and security experts the future possibility of a global war is minimal. Nevertheless there will be smaller regional crises, local and asymmetric conflicts. These can be most effectively addressed by special forces.
- Devising the theory and the practical employability of the special operations forces in Hungary is incomplete both in content and form thereby not being able to meet the requirements of a modern military force.
- Presently there is no concept for selection, training and preparation of special operations forces based on long term aims.
- The question if the present structure of the special operations battalion is appropriate needs further research.
- During my scientific research I identified cases, which do not comply with Hungarian law both civil and operational. Details cannot be disclosed for security reasons. Civil and military lawyers must urgently find solutions to these problems which have been reported several times by the special operations battalion, but have not been addressed yet, and which exist regardless of the fact that for different reasons no attention is paid to them. (*Technical Agreement, or Cooperation Agreement, Organizational and Operational Regulation of the special operations force completing task on operational area*).

- Based on the discussion with the soldiers of the special operations forces who returned from Afghanistan in June 2009 suggestions must be made to the superiors to incorporate their theoretical and practical experience when working out the effective structure, reforming the training system and appropriately changing the equipment. Superiors should accept these well based suggestions instead of rejecting them with fabricated excuses, or taking token measures, all the more so because the latter may result in casualties of our soldiers.

6. New Scientific Results

1. I proved the place, role and tasks of special operations and the necessary capabilities and frames of employment within the Hungarian armed forces, and in the changing security environment in military operations in different areas in or outside war. Within this I defined the different levels of ambition and readiness of the special operations battalion.
2. I specified the combat methods employed by the special operations forces in different situations, what strengths and means they can use to complete their tasks. Within this I wrote up all problems and challenges that may face the special operations forces.
3. Based on the results of my scientific research I worked out my suggestion as to the organisation and a more effective training system for the MH 34. Special Operations Battalion.
4. I prepared a suggestion in connection with the clothing and equipment of the special forces and recommended development possibilities for this materiel.

7. Recommendations

- My thesis can assist in enhancing the knowledge and information of the staff involved in selecting, training and preparing the Hungarian and the Hungarian based operations forces. It can also be useful in revising the training principles and concept of the special operations battalion and devising and implementing the appropriate training programme.
- It can be used as background material for enhancing the theoretical knowledge of experts and staff officers of the Hungarian Armed Forces, who

are interested in or work in the area of special operations forces. It can also be applied for in-house training, and preparation of these soldiers.

- Zrínyi Miklós National Defence University can use the thesis for teaching the subject "*The Bases of Special Operations I-II*", for enhancing the knowledge of the students in the Doctoral School, and in the Kinizsi Pál NCO School of the Hungarian Armed Forces.
- For civilians, members of partner armed forces and for soldiers it can be a reading to evoke further interest in the subject.

8. Bibliography of the theme

Articles

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2. Ejtőernyős kiképzés. – ZMNE, 2004.
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4. Ejtőernyős alapkiképzés a Magyar Honvédségben. DVD, (PPT, World, film). – ZMNE, 2008.
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Lectures

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2. Fő és tartalék ejtőernyők kezelésének szabályai, veszélyhelyzetek kialakulása és megoldásuk lehetőségei. (német nyelvű). - Magyar-osztrák cserekiképzés. Szentendre, Szolnok. 2003, 2004, 2005.
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9. Curriculum vitae

László Forray, Lieutenant-Colonel

Personal particulars:

Date of birth: August 8, 1959

Place of birth: Dombóvár

Mother's name: Anna Sziládi

Present place of employment: Zrínyi Miklós National Defence University, Military Science Faculty, Joint Institute, Department of Operations Supporting, Specialized Team of Reconnaissance and Special Operations

Assignment: university associate professor

Marital status: married

Child (her date of birth): Orsolya (1985)



Education:

2003-2006: Zrínyi Miklós National Defence University, Military Science Doctorate School (correspondence student)

- 1993: Bundeswehr – Innere Führungs Akademie – Koblenz, course
- 1988-1992: National Defence University (ASG/AON) – Warsaw, Army Faculty, Army-Staff Command Branch
- 1984-1985: intensive German language course – Eger
- 1977-1981: Kossuth Lajos Military College – Szentendre, Reconnaissance Commander Branch, Long range reconnaissance officer (Pedagogy college degree)
- 1973-1977: Kun Béla grammar school - Komló

Professional advancement, carrier:

- 1981-1982: 3rd platoon commander, HDF 42nd Independent Reconnaissance Battalion – Szombathely, 1st Reconnaissance Company
- 1982-1987: 1st platoon-commander, deputy company commander, HDF 42nd Independent Reconnaissance Battalion – Szombathely, Long range Reconnaissance Company
- 1987-1988: operations officer of long range reconnaissance
- 1992-1993: brigade long range reconnaissance officer-in charge, HDF 31st Hunyadi János Mechanized Rifle Brigade – Rétság
- 1993-1996: long range reconnaissance senior officer, HDF Military District Headquarters – Kaposvár, Reconnaissance Service
- 1996: chief of staff, HDF 42nd Baranya Reconnaissance Battalion – Pécs
- 1996-1997: 1st deputy commander, HDF 42nd Baranya Reconnaissance Battalion
- 1997-2001: senior instructor officer of long range reconnaissance, Specialized Training School and Dorm – Szentendre, Reconnaissance team
- 2001-2002: instructor, Zrínyi Miklós National Defence University
- 2002-2003: assistant lecturer, Zrínyi Miklós National Defence University
- 2003- associate professor, Zrínyi Miklós, National Defence university

Language skills:

- German: examination type “C”, intermediate level state language exam with military extension
- German: type “STANAG 4,3,5,3” advanced state language exam
- Polish: type “C” advanced state language exam with military extension

Awards:

1986: National Defence Service decoration bronze grade
1988: Service medal after 500 parachuting
1992: Officer service decoration 3rd grade after 10 years
2000: Service decoration 2nd grade
2002: Honour of the gold wreathed, top parachutist
2002: Officer service decoration 2nd grade after 20 years
2004: Service decoration silver grade
2007: Officer service decoration 3rd grade after 30 years
2008: Title of outstanding instructor
2008: Officer service decoration gold grade

Promotions:

20th August, 1981 Lieutenant
20th August, 1985 First Lieutenant
20th August, 1990 Captain
15th March, 1995 Major
1st April, 2009 Lieutenant-Colonel

Other qualifications:

From 1981 reconnaissance officer, primary school teacher
From 1982 long range reconnaissance officer
From 1992 operational-tactical officer
From 2002 gold wreathed top parachutist, parachutist instructor (990
military parachuting