Activities of Ukraine law enforcement agencies to ensure the rights and freedoms of citizens during martial law

Діяльність правоохоронних органів України щодо забезпечення прав і свобод громадян під час воєнного стану

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Abstract

The purpose of the study is to determine the peculiarities of the implementation of law enforcement functions, in particular, regarding the protection of the rights and freedoms of citizens in the conditions of the legal regime of martial law by the relevant state authorities of Ukraine.

The goal of the article was achieved thanks to the use of a complex of general scientific, special and statistical methods. In particular, such as the method of system analysis, logical, methods of induction and deduction, analysis and synthesis, and a set of static methods.

Based on the results of the research, it was determined that during the period of the legal regime of martial law in Ukraine, there were changes in substantive and procedural law, and the legal statuses of representatives of individual law enforcement agencies were revised. Some of them, in particular the police, were given additional powers. The dynamic character is also inherent in both criminal and criminal procedural legislation. The normative and legal amendments aimed at creating a safe environment in society, in particular regarding the protection of the rights and freedoms of citizens, ensuring the proper

An annotation

Metoю дослідження є визначення особливостей реалізації правоохоронних функцій, зокрема, щодо захисту прав і свобод громадян в умовах правового режиму воєнного стану відповідними органами державної влади України.

Мета статті була досягнута завдяки використанню комплексу загальнонаукових, спеціальних і статистичних методів. Зокрема, таких як метод системного аналізу, логічного, методів індукції та дедукції, аналізу і синтезу та сукупності статичних методів.

За результатами дослідження визначено, що за період дії правового режиму воєнного стану в Україні відбулися зміни у матеріальному та процесуальному праві, переглянуто було й правові статуси представників окремих правоохоронних органів. Деякі з них, зокрема поліцейські, були наділені додатковими повноваженнями. Динамічний характер притаманний також і кримінальному, і кримінальному процедурному законодавстві. Прийнятні та введені в дію нормативно-правові новели, спрямовані на створення в суспільстві безпечного середовища, зокрема щодо захисту прав і

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state of public order and public safety, were adopted and put into effect. It has been established that the task of countering war crimes, eliminating gaps in the current legislation, developing and establishing effective interaction of law enforcement agencies with other enterprises, institutions, and organizations is currently being updated.

Keywords: rights and interests of citizens, law enforcement agency, legal regime of martial law, judicial authorities, administrative proceedings, criminal proceedings.

Introduction

The armed invasion of the territory of Ukraine necessitated the introduction of a legal regime of martial law on its territory. The legal regime of martial law should be understood as a special legal regime introduced in Ukraine or in some of its localities in the event of armed aggression or a threat of attack, danger to the state independence of Ukraine, its territorial integrity, and provides for the provision of appropriate state authorities, military command, military administrations and to local self-government bodies, the powers necessary to avert the threat, repulse armed aggression and ensure national security, eliminate the threat of danger to the state independence of Ukraine, its territorial integrity, as well as temporary, due to the threat, restriction of the constitutional rights and freedoms of a person and a citizen and the rights and legitimate interests of legal persons with an indication of the period of validity of these restrictions (Law of Ukraine No. 389-VIII, 2015).

As a result of the listed threats, there is a need to limit the constitutional rights and freedoms of natural persons - citizens of Ukraine, foreigners, stateless persons, as well as the rights and legitimate interests of legal entities, with an indication of the period of validity of the relevant restrictions. To a certain extent, this also affects the activities of law enforcement agencies, the main purpose of which is to protect the rights and freedoms of the aforementioned participants in legal relations, as well as the procedure for their performance of law enforcement functions, the implementation of law enforcement powers, etc. They, in particular, had to perform additional tasks, some were given additional powers, and the activities of others were complicated by a combination of factors determined by the mentioned legal regime.

At the same time, the Basic Law of Ukraine - the Constitution of Ukraine defines that its provisions are norms of direct effect, and the rights and freedoms of a person and a citizen are not subject to restrictions, with the exception of martial law or a state of emergency (Law of Ukraine No. 254к96-VR, 1996).

Based on the analysis of the provisions of the Constitution of Ukraine and the Law of Ukraine "On the Legal Regime of Martial Law", we come to the conclusion that the rights and freedoms of a person and a citizen, provided for by the Second Section of the Constitution of Ukraine, may be limited. Among them, in particular, the following: the right to inviolability of housing (Article 30); the right to confidentiality of correspondence, telegraphic and other correspondence (Article 31); the right to freedom from interference in his personal and family life (Article 32); the right to freedom of movement, free choice of place of residence, the right to freely leave the territory of Ukraine (Article 33); the right to freedom of thought and speech, to free expression of one's views and beliefs (Article 34); the right to participate in the management of state affairs, in all-Ukrainian and local referendums, to freely elect and be elected to state authorities and local self-government bodies (Article 38); the right to assemble peacefully, without weapons, and to hold meetings, rallies, marches and demonstrations, about which the executive power bodies or local self-government bodies are notified in advance (Article 39); the right to own, use and dispose of one's property, the results of one's intellectual and creative activity (Article 41); right to entrepreneurial activity (Article 42); the right to work, which includes the opportunity to earn a living by work that he freely chooses or freely agrees to (Article 43); the right to strike to protect one's economic and social interests (Article 44); the right to education (Article 53).
As of March 2023, the state of war on the territory of Ukraine has lasted for more than a year. During this period, the legislative body - the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine - adopted a number of laws, which definitely led to the reorientation of the usual order of activity of state authorities and local self-government. In the context of our research, the normative novelties and certain problematic aspects of the activity of law enforcement agencies related to the provision of law enforcement agencies with their main duties due to them will be analyzed. The relevance of this study is because such principles as legality and the rule of law are mandatory for compliance (Morska, 2022). At the same time, a person, his life and health, honor and dignity, inviolability and security are recognized as the highest social value. Therefore, the implementation of law enforcement functions, under such conditions, should be carried out in a balanced way, so that no body and its employee allow violation of human rights and freedoms, as well as excess of powers or abuse of them. We believe that the current task should be to study the peculiarities of the activities of law enforcement agencies of Ukraine in the context of ensuring the rights and freedoms of citizens under the conditions of the legal regime of martial law, preventing their violation and restoring those rights and legitimate interests that have already suffered illegal encroachments.

Methodology

The purpose of the study is to determine the peculiarities of the implementation of law enforcement functions by the relevant state bodies of Ukraine in the context of the protection of the rights and freedoms of citizens under the conditions of the legal regime of martial law. This goal was achieved thanks to the application of a complex of general scientific and special methods. Systematic approach in the application of these methods made it possible to study the raised problems in their dynamics and interrelationship.

The methods of induction, deduction, systematic analysis of normative and legal provisions made it possible to reveal changes due to the introduction of the legal regime of martial law, which reformatted the order of their activity. The same methods contributed to the identification of problematic issues arising in the practical activities of law enforcement agencies, as well as the search for alternative ways of solving them.

Statistical methods were used during the study of statistical reports, materials of criminal proceedings. The logical method and the method of generalization were used to form the conclusions of the study.

Literature Review

A significant number of scientific works have been devoted to the study of the peculiarities of ensuring the rights and freedoms of a person and a citizen. The subject of research by Ukrainian scientists remains the peculiarities of limiting the constitutional rights of a person and a citizen under martial law (Panasiuk et al., 2022).

The scope of scientific research periodically includes the problems of identifying certain fundamental changes in criminal and criminal procedural legislation, due to the current legal regime of martial law. It is they, as scientists point out, who currently embody the dynamics of criminal law and process, and highlight the directions of their further development (Balobanova et al., 2022).

Scientists have not overlooked the peculiarities of the investigation of crimes against humanity committed in the context of military conflicts (Myroshnychenko et al., 2022), because given the circumstances taking place in the world, this problem is one of the most relevant. Scientists pay great attention to the study of the peculiarities of the investigation of certain types of crimes under martial law. Thus, the specifics of investigating corruption crimes, innovations in anti-corruption legislation, and changes in criminal procedural legislation were subject to a separate study (Listysyna et al., 2022). Scientists were also engaged in the study of innovative technical forensic tools, which can be recognized as alternative means of increasing the effectiveness of criminal justice in Ukraine, in particular, in the conditions of the legal regime of martial law (Husieva et al., 2022).

Scientific searches in the context of possible ways of solving issues related to the restoration of violated rights are gaining relevance, in particular in connection with causing property (material) damage due to damage to the property of citizens (Gramatskyy et al., 2022). Separate studies are devoted to the investigation of crimes of general criminal orientation (Husieva, 2022), and even the protection of individual rights in executive proceedings under martial law (Prytuliak et al., 2022).
In this way, the work of scientists is quite thorough, but the problems of the law enforcement agencies of Ukraine regarding the protection of the rights and freedoms of a person and a citizen under the conditions of the legal regime of martial law have not yet been comprehensively investigated. Given that such practical activity is complex and subject to constant regulatory changes, we consider it appropriate to investigate the problematic issues that arise during its implementation under the mentioned conditions.

Results and discussion

Law enforcement agencies of Ukraine have been at the stage of reform for a long time, this has led to the fact that their unified system has not yet been formed. In various normative and legal sources, different approaches of the legislator to the interpretation of which state bodies belong to the category of law enforcement are reflected. So according to Art. 2 of the Law of Ukraine “About the State Protection of Court Employees and Law Enforcement Bodies”, they include the prosecutor's office, the National Police, the security service, the Military Law and Order Service of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, the National Anti-Corruption Bureau of Ukraine, state border protection authorities, the Bureau of Economic Security of Ukraine, bodies and institutions for the execution of punishments, pretrial detention facilities, bodies of state financial control, fisheries protection, state forest protection, other bodies that perform law enforcement or law enforcement functions (Law of Ukraine No. 3781-XII, 1993).

The Law of Ukraine "About the National Security of Ukraine" states that law enforcement agencies belong to the system of the security and defense sector of Ukraine, as well as state bodies of special purpose with law enforcement functions, but exhaustive lists of such bodies are not given (Law of Ukraine No. 2469-VIII, 2018). That is why, in addition to those defined above, some scientists include the court, the National Asset Recovery Agency, the Foreign Intelligence Service of Ukraine, customs authorities, the State Security Office of Ukraine, etc., in the category of these bodies. Thus, the system of law enforcement agencies of Ukraine is constantly changing, which is due to the formation, liquidation, reorganization of certain agencies. Considering that one of the urgent issues is the development of modern mechanisms for ensuring the functioning of the security and defense sector, its constituent elements, during the performance of the tasks assigned to them under the conditions of the legal regime of martial law, we consider it appropriate to determine the specifics of the activities of those of them, the main task of which is to ensure human rights and freedoms.

Such bodies definitely include the bodies of the National Police of Ukraine, the activities of which, due to the introduction of the legal regime of martial law, underwent certain changes defined by the Law of Ukraine "On Amending the Laws of Ukraine "On the National Police" and "On the Disciplinary Statute of the National Police of Ukraine" in order to optimize their activities of the police, including during martial law” dated March 15, 2022 No. 2123-IX. The latter, in particular, were given additional powers in order to create appropriate conditions for countering internal threats of martial law. As for direct powers, among them, in particular, the following:

- a police officer, upon written request, receives from state bodies, local self-government bodies, legal entities of state ownership information necessary for the performance of tasks and powers of the police, in particular about prisoners of war;
- escorting persons detained on suspicion of committing a criminal offense, taken into custody, accused or sentenced to imprisonment, as well as guarding them in the courtroom;
- a police officer can detain in temporary detention centers persons detained for committing criminal or administrative offenses, persons for whom detention has been applied as a preventive measure, persons subject to administrative arrest, as well as accused and convicted persons;
- the implementation of operational demining by the police: detection, neutralization and destruction of explosive objects;
- technical and forensic support for inspection of the scene of the event (in particular, related to fires) and special explosive engineering work following the facts of explosions, receipt of reports on the discovery of suspicious explosive objects, the threat of an explosion;
- representation and fulfillment of obligations of Ukraine in the International Criminal Police Organization - Interpol;
- cooperation with the European Police Office (Europol);
- collection of biometric data of persons by fingerprinting;
- implementation of administrative supervision in accordance with the law
(Law of Ukraine No. 2123-IX, 2022). We consider it appropriate to emphasize that most of these additional powers are of an operational nature, some measures are of a preventive and prophylactic nature, however, as O. Bezpalova correctly noted, all of them are aimed at ensuring the proper state of public order and ensuring the rights of citizens (Bezpalova, 2022, p. 17).

During martial law, if it is necessary to repulse an attack or when arresting a person who has committed an offense and is resisting a police officer, he has the right to use both coercive measures and improvised means. In particular, it is allowed to use coercive measures without warning, to strike with special means without restrictions on the location of their application, as well as to use firearms. Regarding the expanded powers of the police, special discussions were caused by the possibility of using improvised means within the scope of coercive measures. We believe that a significant legal gap, taking into account the principle of imperativeness, in this aspect is the absence of a normatively established definition of the concept of "at hand means". This can lead to arbitrariness on the part of representatives of law enforcement agencies, as well as complicate the process of providing a legal assessment of the actions of police officers, including, regarding the qualification of their actions under Article 365 of the Criminal Code of Ukraine "Exceeding authority or official powers by an employee of a law enforcement agency" (Law of Ukraine No. 2341-III, 2001).

They do not lose their relevance, but on the contrary, their significance increases, especially in the conditions of the legal regime of martial law, the performance by the National Police bodies of the tasks assigned to them, defined in Article 2 of the Law of Ukraine "On the National Police". Such tasks are the provision of police services in the following areas: 1) ensuring public safety and order; 2) protection of human rights and freedoms, as well as the interests of society and the state; 3) combating crime; 4) providing, within the limits defined by law, assistance services to persons who, for personal, economic, social reasons or as a result of emergency situations, need such assistance (Law of Ukraine No. 580-VIII, 2015). Their significant relevance is due to current crime rates. Therefore, we propose to determine the peculiarities of the activities of the National Police bodies in ensuring the rights and freedoms of citizens, taking into account the existing trends in society and criminogenic factors.

As a rule, the largest specific gravity among registered criminal offenses is those that encroach on property. So, for example, the number of fraud proceedings in 2022 increased by 34% compared to the previous year. Currently, the most frequent reasons for misleading citizens are proposals to carry out a pseudo-evacuation, as well as to collect money or other material assets for the needs of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, in order to provide humanitarian aid to representatives of society in need.

Advertisements about the organization of passive income are growing on the Internet, which Ukrainians who have lost their jobs due to hostilities or are forced to look for alternative ways to increase their earnings are quite actively responding to them. Common methods of misleading are offers to invest in securities (stocks, bonds, futures, options) or cryptocurrency. Thus, at the end of 2022, representatives of the Cyber Police Department of Ukraine, together with the Main Investigative Department of the National Police of Ukraine, the Office of the Prosecutor General of Ukraine, representatives of Europol and Eurojust exposed five citizens of Ukraine who were participants in a large-scale international criminal scheme (Cyber Police Department of Ukraine, 2022). Such events, due to their transnational nature, actualize the task of strengthening international cooperation to develop mutual approaches to the development of universal standards and instructions for the implementation of cybercrime documentation, as well as the recognition of certain illegal acts as crimes in national legislation (Pohoretskyi et al., 2022).

As for other criminal offenses against property, the commission of which causes material damage to citizens, they currently contain new qualifying features - increased criminal liability for their commission "under conditions of war or a state of emergency" (Articles 185-187, 189, 191 of the Criminal Code of Ukraine). The purpose of such innovations was to protect the property of citizens from looting, because many houses, apartments and other immovable and movable property were left unattended by the legal owners, taking into account the need to preserve their own life and health, as well as ensure personal safety. Regarding the definition of the specifics of law enforcement agencies, this led to a decrease in the number of criminal misdemeanors registered, but additionally overloaded the pretrial investigation bodies of the National Police, because under such conditions, these criminal offenses belong to the
categories of serious or especially serious crimes, depending on the sanctions of the article.

The criminalization of some acts, in particular those related to economic activity, introduced by the legislator, affected the specifics of the activities of the pre-trial investigation bodies of the National Police. During the period of martial law, the volunteer movement began to develop rapidly. In 2022, 2,383 people were registered in the Register of Volunteers, which is 8.4 times more than during the entire period of its existence. By 2022, only 320 Ukrainians were registered in it. The activity of volunteer organizations, in particular for the provision of humanitarian aid, charitable donations, etc., is an opportunity provided and guaranteed by international law to ensure the natural human rights to life, health, a decent standard of living, etc. The Geneva Conventions of 1949 and their additional protocols stipulate that every democratic state governed by the rule of law must ensure the right of its citizens to an adequate standard of living. The same normative legal documents define measures aimed at protecting those people who do not take part in military operations, including: civilians, health care workers, humanitarian workers (Commissioner for Human Rights of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, 1949). As rightly pointed out in the legal literature, this is the basis of humanitarian law (Danielsson & Polasek, 2020). Taking into account the abuse of certain representatives of society, there was a need to criminalize illegal actions related to the illegal use for the purpose of obtaining profit from humanitarian aid, charitable donations or free aid (Article 201-2 of the Criminal Code of Ukraine). As a rule, this criminal offense occurs due to the presence of two factors: 1) the donor organization can work and mostly works abroad and does not always have the opportunity to have its representative physically present during the "distribution" of humanitarian aid; 2) due to the lack of a system of supervision, which is the basis for the corruption of local officials. After all, the practice of involving local authorities and local self-government, and sometimes even police officers themselves in this process is quite common.

Although the criminalization of this illegal act took place relatively recently, according to the statistics of the Office of the Prosecutor General, in 2022 (as of March 24) 384 facts of illegal use for profit of humanitarian aid, charitable donations or free aid were registered. At the same time, only 58 (over 15%) reports of suspicion were served, and only 25 (6.5%) criminal proceedings were sent to court with an indictment. The latency of this criminal offense should also be emphasized. The given facts and indicators, obtained as a result of the summarization of the materials of investigative and judicial bodies, allow us to state the need to increase the efficiency and activation of the activities of law enforcement officers and representatives of the public in this direction, because it is unacceptable to violate the norms of humanitarian law.

Other factors also led to the overloading of investigative bodies of the National Police. Thus, they are entrusted with the duty to respond to the statements and reports of citizens, in particular, to send police forces and equipment necessary for the protection of human rights and freedoms, guaranteed by the Constitution and laws of Ukraine, as well as international treaties of Ukraine, to the places of events, consent to the obligation the binding nature of which is granted by the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, and assistance in their implementation. It is enshrined in the Instruction on the Organization of Response to Statements and Notifications of Criminal, Administrative Offenses or Events and Operational Information in Bodies (Units) of the National Police of Ukraine: approved by the Order of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine dated April 27, 2020 No. 357. Because of these provisions, investigators who serve in areas of hostilities, carry out visits based on the fact of damage to the homes of citizens, conduct there based on Part 3 of Art. 214 of the Criminal Procedure Code of Ukraine inspects the scene of the incident based on such facts, as well as implement other measures provided for by the Law of Ukraine "On the National Police". In fact, under such conditions, the investigators of the National Police form the primary material that testifies to the commission of a criminal offense provided for in Art. 438 "Violation of the laws and customs of war", after which a pre-trial investigation begins, and the prosecutor's office based on Art. 216 of the Criminal Procedure Code of Ukraine determine the jurisdiction of these criminal offenses by the security authorities (Law of Ukraine No. 4651-VI, 2012).

Relevant legislative changes should be accompanied by appropriate scientific support and taken into account when organizing the professional activities of law enforcement officers. In this regard, the proposal to develop a strategy for training personnel for the police is considered appropriate. For example, the Personnel Policy Strategy of the National Police of Ukraine. A Plan of measures for its
implementation must be developed before it. At the same time, it should provide for the task of introducing, within the framework of the initial professional training of police officers, service training and post-graduate training courses in special pre-medical training, the rules of conduct under the conditions of hostilities (Ivanytsia et al., 2022).

It has undergone corresponding changes during the period of the wartime legal regime and the activity of security agencies - the Security Service of Ukraine. The performance of this special purpose state body with law enforcement functions, which ensures the state security of Ukraine, among other things, is entrusted with the task of protecting the legitimate interests of the state and the rights of citizens from the intelligence and subversive activities of foreign special services, encroachments by individual organizations, groups and individuals. Moreover, the investigation of many war crimes belongs to the powers of investigative security agencies. In this aspect, the dynamic character of the criminal law of Ukraine should be noted, in particular, in the part of issues of criminal responsibility for crimes against the foundations of national security of Ukraine, which is inherent in the period of martial law. Yes, in Art. Art. 111-1 "Collaborative activity", 111-2 "Assistance to the aggressor state". 114-2 "Unauthorized dissemination of information about the transfer, transfer of weapons, armaments and military supplies to Ukraine, the movement, transfer or placement of the Armed Forces of Ukraine or others formed accordingly to the laws of Ukraine of military formations, committed in conditions of war or state of emergency” criminalized new illegal acts. Many articles of the Criminal Code of Ukraine have been revised, including: Article 111 "Treason", 113 "Sabotage", military criminal offenses, because the article appeared. 435-1 "Insulting the honor and dignity of a serviceman, threatening a serviceman." Supplemented with a separate article Chapter XX "Criminal offenses against peace, security of humanity and international legal order" – article 436-2 "Justification, recognition as legitimate, denial of armed aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine, glorification of its participants."

In this regard, the employees of the Security Service of Ukraine, in the conditions of a shortage of scientifically based recommendations regarding the investigation of many criminal offenses, under the conditions of wartime, threats to their own lives and health, are forced to fulfill their professional powers.

In order to observe and implement the principle of protection of the highest social value - human life and health, the legislator made significant changes to the criminal procedural legislation. In particular, the amendment of the current Criminal Procedure Code of Ukraine with section IX-1 "Special regime of pre-trial investigation, trial under martial law” was a significant amendment. As rightly emphasized in the legal literature, these changes are designed to minimize the need for direct participation of citizens in the implementation of procedural actions (Balobanova et al., 2022). An example in this aspect can be the provisions of Part 11 of Art. 615 of the Criminal Procedure Code of Ukraine, according to which statements obtained during the interrogation of a witness, victim, including the simultaneous interrogation of two or more already interrogated persons, in criminal proceedings carried out under martial law, can be used as evidence in court exclusively in case the course and results of such an interrogation were recorded using available technical means of video recording. This approach is significantly different from the general procedure, due to which pre-trial depositions that have not been deposited, obtained in criminal proceedings during the period of martial law, can be used as a source of evidence in court proceedings, if the conditions specified in Art. 615 of the Criminal Procedure Code of Ukraine and the restrictions provided for by Art. 87 of this Code.

Conclusion

The activities of law enforcement agencies of Ukraine, which have been in the reform stage for a long time, have undergone certain changes. This is due to the introduction of the legal regime of martial law. The existing state of affairs actualized the need to establish as a priority area of activity of these bodies - maintaining the proper state of the safety environment for the population. This led to the need to grant certain law enforcement agencies additional powers during the period of martial law, criminalization of certain social relations, and changes to material and procedural law.

Over the past year, many normative and legal novelties have been enshrined in the Criminal Code of Ukraine, the Criminal Procedural Code of Ukraine, the Laws of Ukraine "On the National Police", "On the Security Service of Ukraine", as well as in a number of secondary legal acts. All of them are aimed at ensuring the ability of law enforcement agencies to exercise their professional powers in the direction of protecting the rights and freedoms of citizens,
ensuring the proper state of public order and public safety.

At the same time, under the conditions of the current legal regime, the task of countering war crimes has been updated. This concerns the investigation of war crimes, as well as criminal offenses of a general criminal orientation, which under modern conditions have not become less common, but on the contrary, have changed both their quantitative and qualitative indicators. In addition, they have undergone corresponding changes in terms of both legal qualifications, methods of execution, reasons and conditions that contribute to the realization of criminal intent, etc.

The conducted analysis of regulatory and legal changes confirmed that appropriate reforms have taken place in the usual order of activity of law enforcement agencies due to the introduction of martial law. Taking into account this, as well as statistical indicators of crime, promising areas of scientific research are determined. They are peculiarities of the interaction of law enforcement agencies with state authorities, military administrations, local self-government bodies, public representatives, journalists, volunteers and international organizations in the field of protection and protection of the rights of citizens who are in the zone of active hostilities, in occupied and de-occupied territories.

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