The concentration of intellectual and material wealth: Development of the military and barrack infrastructure of the St. Petersburg Military District in 1864-1917

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Abstract. The article is devoted to the Russian military construction on the example of the St. Petersburg Military District in the period from 1864 to 1917. Without taking into account the military factor, it is impossible to reconstruct the socio-economic development of our country's regions. The scale and priority of military construction affect the long-term goals of the state. “Strategic” motives could both give an impetus to the economic growth of some regions, and on the contrary significantly restrain the development of others. St. Petersburg contains the results of many years of headquarters work such as all plans for mobilization and the sequence of replenishment, loss and restoration of the armed forces, stocks of maps. The main gunpowder, cannon and shell factories were located near St. Petersburg, while pipe, cartridge and mine factories are located in St. Petersburg itself. In St. Petersburg are stored the vast reserves of the State Bank, the Mint, the treasures of the Hermitage, the incalculable capitals of private financial enterprises, the money reserves of the State Treasury. The conditions of quartering significantly determine the combat training of troops in peacetime and, accordingly, their combat qualities in military conditions.

1. Introduction

The diverse impact of wars on the development of the Russian state is a factor that cannot be overestimated. A comprehensive analysis of this influence is necessary for both historical science and the public. A respectful and unbiased understanding of the combat past can enrich the national consciousness with many valuable conclusions. The problems of interaction between the state and military leadership, the continuity of military experience, and the relationship between military construction in peaceful conditions and combat work in war are particularly in need of broad analysis, coverage, and articulation.

By the beginning of the XX century, the Army and Navy in Russia were of great importance. Concerns about increasing the rate of mobilization played an important role in railway construction. The construction of a balanced Navy in Alexander III and Nicholas II time supported the development of heavy industry. The life of the troops and the population of Russia were closely intertwined in the cultural and social spheres, contributing to the formation of common behavioral models and skills.
The regional aspect of military construction should also be highlighted [1]. The role of the deployment of troops in peacetime is great, and the conditions of quartering largely determine the combat training of troops. The geographical location of military units has a significant impact on military plans [2]. Finally, the presence or absence of garrisons in a given region significantly affects the economic life in it. After all, garrisons are large customers of products and materials, sources of contract work, and possible tenants of real estate. Military personnel, especially officers, are buyers for local trade.

“Strategic” motives could both give an impetus to the economic growth of some regions (construction of the TRANS-Siberian railway, strategic railways to the Western border), and on the contrary significantly restrain the development of others (restriction even of private railway construction on the left Bank of the Visla River, prohibition to arrange crossings over the Visla River above Ivangorod or below Novogorgevsk, keep (for defense) the off-road areas to the north of the Narev River, etc.). Military significance clearly prevailed over commercial means for all railways leading from the center of Russia to the Western border. A number of such highways connected small settlements, cutting through sparsely populated forests and swamps for hundreds of miles. Almost all Russian strategic highways were located in Poland, as an advanced theater.

Without taking into account the military factor, it is impossible to create a complete picture of the socio-economic development of our country's regions. The scale and priority of military construction have a decisive influence on national consciousness and on the long-term goals of the state. This article is devoted to military construction on the example of a large territorial all-arms administration – the St. Petersburg Military District in the period from 1864 to 1917.

2. Materials and methods

The used approach cover three levels: general scientific, general historical and concrete historical methods. During the research, the following general scientific methods of cognition were used: induction and deduction, going from abstract to concrete, analysis and synthesis, description, measuring, explanation, analogy, comparison. All of them were used as concrete means of cognition. At the general scientific level, the leading methods were the methods of historism and objectiveness. It was tried to avoid the equation of the past and the future; the object was put into the historical context; special attention was paid to determining the cause-and-effect links of the events and processes. In the research, the following concrete historical methods were used: historical-genetic (as the basic one), historical-comparative and historical-systematic. All dates are given in the old style (Julian calendar).

3. Results

The St. Petersburg Military District was formed in August 1864 with its headquarters in St. Petersburg. From 1867 to 1917, it was headed by the commander-in-chief (in 1864-1867, 1876-1878, 1880-1884 commander) of the Guard and the St. Petersburg Military District.

In 1870, most of the territory of the abolished Riga Military District was added to the St. Petersburg Military District, and in 1905 the entire territory of the liquidated Finnish Military District was added. Since that time, the composition of the St. Petersburg district included the provinces of St. Petersburg, Novgorod, Pskov, Estland, Livonia (without the Riga district), Olonets, Arkhangelsk, and the Finnish General government: ABO-Bjorneborg, Vazas, Vyborg, Kuopio, Newland, St. Michael, Tavastgus, and Oleoborg. The district also included a number of counties in the province of Central Russia: Vologda, Gryaznovetsky, and Kadnikovsky from Vologda Gubernia; Poshekonsky, Molosky, Lyubimsky, and Danilovsky from Yaroslav Gubernia; Vesegonsky, Vyshnevolotsky, Ostashkovsky, Bezhtsky, Kalyazinsky, and Kashinsky from Tver Gubernia; Porechensky, Belsky, Dukhovshchinsky, Sychevsky, and Dorogobuzhsky from Smolensk Gubernia; Lyutsynsky, Sebezhsky, and Nevelsky from Vitebsk Gubernia [3].

The area of the district contained 1485,475 square versts. As of 1912, the population of the district was 14.94 million people. Of these, 3.14 million people-residents of eight Finnish provinces, since 1901 were not subject to military service, as they were hostile to Russia.
The district was a border area and mostly coastal, washed by the waters of the Arctic ocean and the Baltic sea. The land border is mainly the polar border with Sweden and Norway. The area of the district was divided by military and political significance into three parts: the territory South of lake Ladoga and the Gulf of Finland, Finland, Olonets and Arkhangelsk provinces.

In the first part there was the capital of the state Saint Petersburg which played the role of center of Russia's intellectual and material wealth and the location of Imperator residences as well as the Central Office of the Military and Naval ministries and other government agencies [4, 5]. In 1912, the famous shipbuilder A. N. Krylov prepared a convincing reference for the State Duma: "The main task of the Baltic fleet is the defense of the capital St. Petersburg is of paramount importance to the state not only as the center of all government institutions, but also as the seat of the boards of most banks, railways, joint-stock companies, and other commercial and financial enterprises [6].

In direct military terms, St. Petersburg contains the results of many years of headquarters work such as all plans for mobilization and the sequence of replenishment, loss and restoration of the armed forces, stocks of maps, topographic plans, tablets and boards for printing them. The main gunpowder, cannon and shell factories were located near St. Petersburg, while pipe, cartridge and mine factories are located in St. Petersburg itself.

In St. Petersburg are stored the vast reserves of the State Bank, the Mint, the treasures of the Hermitage, the incalculable capitals of private financial enterprises, the money reserves of the State Treasury, and, finally, even the Expedition for the preparation of state papers is located in St. Petersburg.

From this it becomes clear that the occupation of St. Petersburg by the enemy will not only end the war in its favor, but even pays for it, for the imposition of sequestration on all state and public capital will bring such a hefty indemnity, before which the 500 million rubles currently requested for the fleet appear to be an insignificant amount."

In Saint Petersburg and its environs were all higher and most of the secondary military educational institutions created mainly before the establishment of the military district itself: Nikolaevskaya Academy of the General Staff, Mikhailovskaya Artillery Academy, Nikolaevskaya Engineering Academy, Military Law Academy, since 1877 Nikolaevskaya Naval Academy, since 1911 Quartermaster Academy, a number of (rifle, cavalry, artillery, since 1894 electrical engineering, etc.) officer schools and officer classes (since 1874 mine, since 1905 diving, etc.), Corps of Pages, Marine Corps, Marine Engineering School, Pavlovsky and Konstantinovsky (since 1894 artillery) Schools, Mikhailovskoy Artillery School, Nikolaevsky Cavalry School, Engineering School, Military Topographical School, 1st and 2nd (Emperor Peter the Great) St. Petersburg, Alexander (Emperor Alexander II), since 1878 Nikolaevsky Cadet Corps (before 1882 military high schools). In 1868-1878, a Military Law School operated in Saint Petersburg. In Pskov - since 1876 Pskov Military Gymnasium (since 1882 cadet corps) [7].

The St. Petersburg industrial district was the largest and most technically equipped in Russia, producing almost the entire range of military equipment and weapons. The territory has long been the cradle of the Russian Navy, housing the largest and best part of the naval forces with shipyards, boathouses and major shipyards.

The southern coast of the Gulf of Finland could become a theater of military operations only in the event of an enemy landing. However, given the inevitably small number of landings, the operation would most likely have been a demonstration to hold the district's troops to cover the capital. The number of Railways is sufficient for counter-measures to the landing, but the terrain to the west of the Narova River did not allow the landing party to quickly advance on St. Petersburg. The landing of the enemy to the east of the Narova River was considered incredible, both in local conditions and because of the location of the Russian fleet. The area is poor in funds, all the supply of troops had to be based on transportation. Localities: farms, mansions, individual households are inconvenient for quartering troops. The climate is cold and humid, softened by the sea. There are a lot of local highways with a narrow roadbed. Five lines of Railways with seven tracks both connected Saint Petersburg with the inner provinces of the Empire, and provided the defense of the coast.
The second part of the St. Petersburg Military District was Finland. "It removed the border of the Empire 600 km from the River Sister to the River Torneo, providing cover for the capital from the North. The territory is covered with rows of rocky hills with small flat hills, cut by deep depressions, filled with water (lakes) and covered with forests. The landscape is a series of water and forest defiles (narrow passage ways) with limited shooting perspectives. Hindering the maneuvering of troops, the terrain is generally more convenient for defense. Coastal plains are more suitable for action by significant forces. The territory is poor in all types of funds, so the supply is possible only by transportation. Cantonment of troops is difficult and inconvenient due to the scattering of small villages. The climate is cold, but more temperate than in the same latitudes in Russia, with short summers and snowy winters. The network of unpaved roads is well developed, and the granite subsoil gives them the character of highways. The main way is the railway of St. Petersburg-Tavastgus-Torneo with branches to the most important ports and into Finland."

The third part of the district considered as the least important was the Olonets and Arkhangelsk provinces which military significance was recognized for several points on the Murmansk coast and the Arkhangelsk port. For the defense of last one from a small landing, a narrow-gauge railway from Vologda was considered sufficient.

Even before the formation of the military district, St. Petersburg housed divisions of the guards, which were re-United into the Guards Corps in 1874. The district's troops, including the guards, fought in the Russian-Turkish war of 1877-1878. In 1877, the 1st army corps was formed in St. Petersburg, in 1892 in Yuriev (now Tartu) - the 18th army corps (by 1914, the corps headquarters was located in St. Petersburg) from the 23rd infantry division (separated from the 1st army corps) and the 24th infantry division (transferred from the Finnish Military District). Instead of last ones, four reserve battalions were moved and converted there into four rifle regiments, making up the Finnish rifle brigade.

In September 1893, the 49th infantry reserve brigade (Alexander Nevsky, Svirsky and Izhorsky reserve battalions) was formed in the St. Petersburg Military District. In March 1894, these battalions were re-formed into reserve infantry regiments of the same name, with numbers assigned, respectively: 200, 204 and 210. In May 1899, the reserve brigade changed its number from the 49th to the 50th with the change of numbers, and included in it regiments received numbers 198, 199 and 200.

The 1st District of the Separate Border Guard Corps centered in Saint Petersburg included the 1st Saint Petersburg (since 1914 1st Petrograd) of Emperor Alexander III (Saint Petersburg), the 2nd Revel, the 3rd Arensburg, the 4th Riga border brigades and the Special White Sea detachment (Arkhangelsk).

The 1st army corps (22nd and 37th infantry divisions) was sent to the theater of the Russian-Japanese War. Instead of regular artillery, it was assigned the 7th artillery brigade from the Warsaw Military District and the 43rd artillery brigade from Vilna. The corps arrived in Manchuria, near Liaoyang between August 17 and September 4, 1904. In 1906, the compound was returned to the district.

In January-May 1905, the troops stationed in Saint Petersburg were subordinate to Major-General D. F. Trepov, who held the temporarily established position of Saint Petersburg Governor-General. Parts of the District actively participated in the suppression of the revolutionary movement of 1905-1906 both on the territory of the District and outside it, for example, in Moscow.

In 1905, after the liquidation of the Finnish District, the administration of the 22nd army corps was subordinated to the Petersburgh District, which united the 1st and 2nd Finnish rifle brigades, the 55th dragoon Finnish regiment, and the Orenburg cossack division.

In 1910, the 50th infantry reserve brigade and fortress infantry units were abolished in the St. Petersburgh Military District, but the 50th infantry division was formed on their basis. At the same time, the 3rd Finnish rifle brigade was formed. In 1911, the district had a list of 132,004 soldiers. Since 1913, the building of the Sea fortress of Emperor Peter the Great was carried out on the Nargen island (now Naissaar) - Porkkala-Udd Peninsula line and near Revel. At the beginning of 1914, the 4th Finnish rifle brigade was formed under the "Great Military Program of 1913". For 1914 by state, the
district consisted of 145 generals, 864 staff officers, and 4,203 chief officers. The staff of the War Ministry consisted of 191 general officers, 499 staff officers and 279 chief officers.

By the beginning of World War I, the Petersburg Military District was home to the guards corps (1st and 2nd guards infantry divisions, Guards rifle brigade, 1st and 2nd guards cavalry divisions), 1st army corps (22nd and 24th infantry divisions), 18th army corps (23rd, 37th and 50th infantry divisions), and 22nd army corps (1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th Finnish rifle brigades), his Imperial Majesty's own railway regiment, St. Petersburg (3 local teams) and Vologda (13 teams) local brigades.

The district contained the bases of the Baltic Fleet and exclusively the seaside fortresses of Kronstadt, Sveaborg, Vyborg, and Petropavlovsk (in Saint Petersburg)[8].

The largest military garrisons were: Saint Petersburg, Revel (now Tallinn), Pskov, Yuriev (now Tartu), Tsarskoe Selo, Stary Peterhof, Novy Peterhof, Novgorod, Staraya Russa, Arakcheev barracks, Gruzino village (Novgorod province), Narva, Yamburg (now Kingissepp), Oranienbaum, Vologda, Helsingfors (now Helsinki), Vyborg, Tavastgus, Abo, Ekeness, St. Michael, Friedrichsgam, Wilmanstrand, Lahti, Kouvola, Nikolaishtds, Tammorflus.

On July 18, 1914, the mobilization deployment of the troops of the St. Petersburg Military District and the formation of three second-line infantry divisions began: the 67th (in Novgorod), the 74th (in St. Petersburg) and the 68th (in Pskov). The latter left in August 1914 at Tilsit to join the 1st army, the rest were active at the front from the beginning of 1915.

On July 19, 1914, on the basis of the district headquarters, the department of the separate 6th army was formed, which received the task of defending the coast of the Gulf of Finland. All four corps of the District in August 1914 left for the front in Poland: the Guards and the 18th army were included in the 9th army, the 1st army-in the 2nd, and the 22nd army-in the 10th [9, 10]. The 6th army initially included all three formed by the Petersburg District and the 55th (arrived from Moscow) infantry divisions of the 2nd line, the Orenburg cossack division, which also consisted of regiments of the 2nd line. The 55th infantry and Orenburg cossack divisions left for the front in November 1914. In December 1916, the administration of the 6th army was transferred to Romania, and its units were subordinated to the Northern Front.

Since July 19, 1914, the District was assigned to district offices in the theater of military operations and was headed by the General Chief until 6.2.1917, when the former position of commander was restored. In August 18, 1914 Petersburg was renamed Petrograd, and the Military District was renamed Petrogradsky, which had been the rear area of the Northern Front since August 1915 [11].

During the First World War, the 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th Peterhof, 1st and 2nd Oranienbaum Ensign Schools were formed in the district, as well as the Petrograd Engineering School. In May 1916, temporary schools were opened for each of the four cadet corps in the district [12].

By October 15, 1914, the 1st and 2nd guards, 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, and 176th infantry reserve battalions formed in the district were sent to the active army. Also in the fall of 1914, "additional" infantry reserve battalions were formed and placed in the district: 171st, 172nd, 175th, 177th-182nd, in August 1915-284th [13]. By April 1916, the 172nd battalion was stationed in Lahti, Nyuland Province. In May-June 1916, infantry reserve battalions were deployed to regiments of the same numbers. Each guards regiment operating at the front had its own reserve battalion in Petrograd [14]. On December 7, 1916 spare regiments of the County consisted of 236,154 people, in September 15, 1917 – 54,706 people [15].

In the autumn of 1914, the 15th brigade of the state militia was deployed in Vologda, consisting of the 85th – 90th Vologda foot militia squads of 1000 people each.

The number of conscripts to the Russian Army by September 1, 1917 in the rural areas of the provinces (of all residents mobilized) of the district was: in Petrograd – 77,800 people (9.8%), in Novgorod – 183,900 (12.2%), in Olonets – 51,700 (12.8%), in Arkhangelsk – 41,800 (10.8%), in Vologda – 205,200 (12.7%), in Yaroslavl – 133,000 (11.9%), in Tver – 201,700 (10.1%), in Smolensk – 187,800 (10.4%), in Vitebsk – 178,600 (13%), in Pskov – 164,300, in Estonia – 23,500, in Livonia – 91,700 [16]. The data on the percentage of those mobilized in the last three provinces are absent.
By August 1, 1914, the Baltic fleet had 4 ships of line battleships (battleships), 6 ironclads and 4 light cruisers, 21 destroyers (including only one newest "Novik"), several dozen obsolete destroyers, 6 minelayers, 6 gunboats, 13 submarines, etc. At the end of 1914, the fleet was replenished with 4 Gangut - type battleships (dreadnoughts) that entered service, and in 1915 - 2 destroyers and 3 submarines. Before the end of the war, the fleet received 17 more destroyers and 18 submarines. The existing coastal batteries were reinforced and new ones were built. In combat operations, the battleship Slava, the cruiser Pallada, four destroyers: Grom, Kazanets, Okhotnik and Dobrovolets, 5 destroyers, the gunboats Koreets and Sea Lion, five submarines: Bars, Cheetah, Lioness, Shark, AG-14, etc. were lost.

There were under construction in Petrograd, but were never completed 4 Ismail-class battlecruisers, 2 Svetlana-class light cruisers and 3 destroyers, while Revel has 2 light cruisers of the same type and 5 destroyers [17].

By September 1917, the Petrograd Military District contained 61,795 prisoners of war, of which 22,000 were on front-line work, the rest worked in the rear.

March 7 (20), 1918 The Petrograd Military District was disbanded with the creation of the Red Army Military District of the same name, headed by the Collegium.

4. Conclusion

Continuity is the most valuable social resource that must be carefully preserved and creatively developed. Unfortunately, our country does not always follow the principle: "it is not the one who is in a hurry who does it quickly and well, but the one who does not redo what has already been done." Unsolved on time national tasks necessarily turn into repeated, involving much more difficult public efforts.

The assessment of the consequences of extending military approaches to peacetime should be comprehensive and dispassionate. There are many examples when adequate advance "tension", thoughtful military construction in peacetime eliminated the threat of war.

In military construction, it is advisable to pay attention to ensuring the continuity of military traditions, their maintenance and restoration. It make sense to organize the Soviet heritage in the field of names of military formations and units and think about combining it with the system of names of pre-revolutionary regiments. The latter is especially appropriate outside the ground forces, in relatively young branches of the armed forces. Taking into account the historical experience it is good to think carefully about all the organizational changes, instilling the exact calculation, the spiritual and material thrift. We suggest the need to assign the army part of the responsibility for preserving historical sites: barracks, military towns, military equipment, etc. while ensuring universal access to them.

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