



RESEARCH ON THE ROLE THE CATHOLIC CHURCH UNDERTAKES IN HUNGARIAN POLICE FORCES



LT. CSABA SZABO
Town Police, Sopron, Hungarian National Public Service University,
PhD Student Budapest

Abstract

This research aims to analyse action mechanisms influencing the emotional and moral identity of policemen serving in the Hungarian police forces and develop the professional methodology for processing those based on religious and pastoral grounds. The research highlights risk factors in personal and work life arising from the legal relation of professional policemen and entailing special emotional and moral pressure on the individual. In the following phases of the research it will be demonstrated that the significance of religious life and, consequently, the role of the Catholic Church, as well as the necessity of pastoral care will play an essential role in the future organizational structure of the Hungarian police.

PRESENTATION OF THE RESEARCH

People working in the police force, when implementing measures, as well as in the development of their social and personal relationships, are facing emotional and moral problems with personality-forming effects influencing the behavior of the individual. A sufficient degree of processing these problems of emotional and moral origin in the organisational unit's structure is not provided. The experience of the past few years has shown that not only soldiers, but also police officers live and work in particular circumstances, which justify that emerging problems of emotional origin be addressed accordingly.

The research conducted so far has revealed the significance and importance of religion and pastoral care and the possibility of their future integration in the law enforcement structure.¹

The Hungarian state requires unwavering fidelity and courageous standing from the professional staff of the bodies whose task is to protect the independence and legal order of Hungary as well as private and state property.² A professional service relationship involves a high degree of sacrifice on the part of police employees in performance of their duties. Practical experiences of the last decades have shown that the justification for existence, and the significance, of pastoral care have been present in the organizational structure of the Hungarian Defence Forces as an indispensable helper alternative. The primary purpose of the military chaplaincy is providing

(1) Szabo, C. (2012), "The role of religion in the formation of a single law enforcement structure in Hungary", *Felderítő Szemle (Intelligence Review)*. 2, 231-243.

(2) Act XLIII. of 1996 on the service of the professional members of the armed forces. (http://net.jogtar.hu/jr/gen/hjegy_doc.cgi?docid=99600043.TV download time: 03.04.2013)



the spiritual and moral support and care of soldiers. The Hungarian Police professionals take part in the implementation of peacekeeping and crisis management tasks of various purposes, kinds and time length.³ Those crises that require military or police intervention conducted on the basis of international cooperation to ensure peace enforcement and peace maintenance, depending on the changed local and international conditions, are increasingly becoming of policing nature. Therefore, the activities and tasks of the military chaplaincy service are also changing with changes in the personnel of the units participating in peacekeeping operations.

II. *Pope John Paul II 1986. IV. 21: The Apostolic Constitution *Spirituali Militum Curae* has arranged the matter of military chaplaincy adopting new rules to align with the new situation in the world, in which the great task is to build and maintain peace. Those performing military service should be seen as servants of the people's freedom and security because if they properly perform their service they can also really contribute to the stability of peace.⁴ In terms of their role, military chaplains take part in the Church's overall mission, evangelizing the world and disseminating information about the God's role, in the military world. Military chaplains mould the conscience of members of the military profession to enable them live their Christian vocation.⁵*

Government of Hungary and the historic churches, but especially the Roman Catholic Church, shall establish a service based on a common practical cooperation to assist police workers, care their emotional lives, alleviate bitterness caused by conflicts and restore the lost balance.

PHASES OF THE RESEARCH

Phase 1: To show that members of the police personnel not always can process emotional and moral problems arising from the special circumstances of their work. These problems affect the systems of workplace, family and social relationships, and the professional performance,

in the course of which a change occurs in the value orientation of helping behavior forms.

Phase 2: To show that the Catholic religion and pastoral care service, in collaboration with the science of psychology, are capable of creating an alternative methodology to help the police service performers.

Phase 3: It was demonstrated and proved through domain specific historical events of the 19th century and research papers that the central governing body of the Hungarian police was purposefully seeking to establish connections with the churches in the areas of moral standards, religion and religious life. This effort was primarily directed to issuing publications aimed at moral education and ensuring organised participation in the worships.

Phase 4: A representative questionnaire research was carried out in respect of personnel of the Hungarian police, in the evaluation of which we received a picture about the religiosity of the personnel, the need for pastoral care and formation of methodological structures.

Phase 5: It was demonstrated that the role undertaken by the Catholic Church in the pastoral care does not create a risk to national security at the police. Special attention should be paid to the preparation, training and national security background checks of clergy and police personnel undertaking service in the pastoral care of police forces.

FINDINGS OF THE RESEARCH

- The primary goal is to achieve that Hungary and the Holy See agree in the form of a bilateral agreement (*Modus Vivendi*) and, this way, arrange the provision of pastoral care at the Hungarian Police, on a permanent basis.
- Establishment of police pastoral care covering the entire territory of Hungary and accessible to all personnel of the Hungarian Police.

⁽³⁾ Benicsak, P. (2008), "Logistical support for police peacekeeping and crisis management missions", *Hadtudomány (Military Science)*, 3-4, p. 122.

⁽⁴⁾ Magyar Katolikus Lexikon, Tabori Ordinariatus. (Hungarian Catholic Encyclopedia, Military Ordinariate). (<http://lexikon.katolikus.hu/T/t%C3%A1bori%20ordinari%C3%A1tus.html> download time: 04.04.2013).

⁽⁵⁾ Conference of Army Chaplains at the Vatican (<http://www.taborilelkesz.hu/rovatok/hirek/katonai-lelkeszek-konferenciaja-a-vatikanban/?print> download time: 07.04.2013).



- On the basis of Modus Vivendi, development of organizational structure of pastoral care service. (Priests, permanent deacons, dual-status persons).
 - Development of a system of tasks for pastoral care service.
 - Communication with international partner organizations (the police, the Catholic Church) and institutions engaged in research on similar subjects, to analyze and share research findings.
 - Delivering lectures at conferences both nationally and internationally and continuing research and publication activities in order to determine the structural conditions of the methodology.
 - The methodology developed for the police may be successfully used to manage emotional and moral problems of the European Union's law enforcement officers performing service missions.
 - Emergence of religious values in a new field will create a possibility for increasing professional efficiency and communication effectiveness of the police, which in turn will lead to the reduction in the number of human tragedies resulting from inability to process emotional problems.
- need of pastoral care. The pastoral care together with, and not in opposition to, the science of psychology provides an assisting alternative for the individual person.
- In order to preserve and strengthen moral values of individuals serving in the professional staff of law enforcement agencies, the appropriate formation of family, workplace and social relations should be pursued. In these efforts and in preservation of a stable emotional and moral state, the pastoral care can provide inevitably outstanding support.
- Peacekeeping operations developed in response to international crises are increasingly becoming of policing nature. Military combat units are increasingly being replaced by law enforcement agencies, as due to the specifics of the areas of crises, order maintenance, crime prevention, traffic safety, investigation and communication activities are coming to the forefront. These changes should be addressed because persons involved in police work require different pastoral care as opposed to soldiers involved in combat activities. At the same time with changes in challenges and risks to security policy, the law enforcement agencies of the European Union shall become prepared for attacks by extreme (religious) groups focused to the interior of the Union. The pastoral care can provide help to the police, for the police experts to recognize the identity of persons engaged in extreme (religious) groups, and, this way, prevent the break-up of the democratic social structure.

CONCLUSION

The studies and research carried out so far have confirmed that the Hungarian Police has been in

REFERENCES

- Boda, J. (2006), *A rendvédelmi bekefenntartás kialakulása, fejlődése, helye es szerepe a XXI. században. (Formation, development, the place and role of peacekeeping operations performed by law enforcement agencies in the 21st century)*. Zrinyi Miklos National Defense University. Doctoral dissertation (PhD), pp. 21-29.
- Szabo, C. (2012), "The role of religion in the formation of a single law enforcement structure in Hungary", *Felderítő Szemle (Intelligence Review)*, 2, 231-243.
- Szabo, C. (2012), "Az Európai Unió es Magyarország biztonsági stratégiajának vizsgálata a szélsőséges vallási csoportok vonatkozásában. (Analysis of security strategy of the European Union and Hungary in relation to extremist religious groups.)", *Szakmai Szemle (Professional Review)*, 2, p. 85.

