

Personality of a Life Convict as a Condition of Effective Operative-search Prevention

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Abstract: The article reveals the psychological characteristics of various spheres of the personality of those sentenced to life imprisonment, identified by the results of an empirical study conducted by the Research Institute of the Federal Penitentiary Service of Russia in 2020 in institutions where this category of persons is kept. The purpose of the study was to identify the personal characteristics of prisoners sentenced to life imprisonment, which can be used in the implementation of operational-search activities. As the tasks assigned to the authors, we can single out: the development of a questionnaire, research, processing and analysis of its results. The methodological basis of the work was based on sociological research methods. In particular, the questionnaire method was used. The study was carried out in all institutions where prisoners sentenced to life imprisonment are kept. Based on the results of the study, the main features of various spheres of the personality of those sentenced to life imprisonment were revealed, the knowledge of which will increase the efficiency of operational-search and preventive work with them.

1 INTRODUCTION

The most important task of the operational divisions of institutions and bodies of the penal system (hereinafter – PS) is the identification, prevention, suppression and disclosure of crimes and violations of the established order of serving a sentence (Article 84 of the Criminal Executive Code of the Russian Federation). So, one of the main tasks facing operational officers is not only strengthening law and order and preventing the growth of crime in the penitentiary system, ensuring the personal safety of convicts, personnel of these institutions and other persons, but also increasing the efficiency of operational search activities (hereinafter – OSA) in general, where one of the most important elements is operational-search prevention. Specialists such as S.S. Galakhov (2016), K.K. Goryainov (2018), Z.V. Znikin (2014), A.A. Krymov (2013), V.N. Omelin (2020), G.S. Shkabin (2020) and others were engaged in the issues of operational and investigative activities in the penal system.

Operative-search prevention in correctional institutions is a control and preventive influence on persons and the situation in order to prevent criminal activity, identify and neutralize the causes and conditions conducive to its commission, using overt and covert operative-search forces, means and methods. At the same time, prevention is a holistic and complex system. At the same time, effective operational-search prevention is impossible without taking into account the personality of the convict himself. Studying only the materials of the criminal case, the circumstances and nature of the committed criminal offense is insufficient to create a complete picture of the personality of the convicted person. The personality of the criminal is one of the main links in the mechanism of criminal behavior, due to which its characteristics, which determine such behavior, should be the direct object of preventive action (Antonyan Yu.M., 1997).

Delving into the personality of the criminal, there is a great importance of his life path, hobbies, needs, motives, needs, fate and the specifics of his

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psychological characteristics (Chufarovskiy Yu.V., 2020). As V.E. Yuzhanin notes, the danger of the criminal's personality comes from the characteristic features, as well as his behavior habits (V.E. Yuzhanin, 2016).

In recent years, interest in the psychological aspects of crime and criminality has become more and more stable. This circumstance is connected, first of all, with the humanization of the penal system and the following requirement related to the differentiation and individualization of criminal punishment, the process of correcting convicts and carrying out preventive work.

Knowledge of the psychological characteristics of the personality of convicts, the use of this knowledge in the process of operational-search prevention facilitates the employee's professional activities, helps him in the most constructive way to build relationships with convicts and other employees of the institution, correctly assess its results, predict the consequences, and timely influence the operational situation.

The activities of employees of the operational department is work with people, which includes the study and assessment of people's behavior, the establishment of psychological contact with them and etc. The presence of psychological knowledge among operational employees now becomes not a recommendation, but a necessity that affects the effectiveness of professional activities, reducing the risk of professional mistakes.

At present, the training of operational employees is continuous and is not limited only to their professional training in a higher educational institution of the Federal Penitentiary Service of Russia.

Order of the Ministry of Justice of the Russian Federation of August 27, 2012 No. 169 «On Approval of the Manual on the Organization of Professional Training of Employees of the Penitentiary System» regulates the organization of professional training of employees of the penitentiary system. Professional training includes the following types: training of cadets and students during the period of study in educational institutions of higher professional education of the Federal Penitentiary Service of Russia; special initial training; professional retraining, advanced training; on-the-job training.

At the same time, the training of both future and current employees must be carried out taking into account the conditions and the regime in which the service is supposed to be. Undoubtedly, the content of the operation-search activities conducted in a colony-settlement or in correctional colonies of

general and strict regimes is qualitatively different from that which exists in correctional colonies of a special regime, where convicts are kept, representing an increased social danger to modern society. In particular, we will talk about convicts serving life imprisonment for especially grave crimes, which is the main difference between this category of convicts from others. Many researchers, both in Russia and in other countries, have been and continue to deal with life imprisonment problems (Liu L., O'Donnell P., Sullivan R., Katalinic A., Moser EC, de Boer A., Meunier F., 2016) These include A.R. Bardou (2004), A.N. Balamut (Balamut A.N., Pozdnyakov V.M., 2018; Balamut A.N., Starikova A.E., 2018), B.G. Bovin (Bovin B.G., Slavinskaya Yu.V., 2011, 2014), S.A. Borovikov (Borovikov S.A., Shishigina S.N., Amandykova S.K., Dolzhnikov P.K., 2019), D.A. Dobryakov (Dobryakov D.A., Minyazeva T.F., Pozdnyakov V.M., 2020), F. Zimbardo (Zimbardo F., Boyd J., 2010), A.V. Kokurin (Ekimova V.I., Kokurina I.V., Kokurin A.V., 2014), A.S. Knyazkov (2015), L. Labardini (2005), V.A. Plaksina (2020), V.M. Pozdnyakov (2019), Yu.V. Slavinskaya (Slavinskaya Yu.V. Bovin B.G., 2011; Slavinskaya Yu.V., 2018), D. Van Zyl Smit (D., & Ashworth, A., 2004, Van Zyl Smit, D. 1992, 2005, 2006), E.F. Stefan (2018).

In a number of countries the life imprisonment is appointed without the possibility of parole. In the Russian Federation a convicted person is deprived of such an opportunity only if he has committed a crime while serving his sentence.

As of September 1, 2020, a total of 1983 people are serving life sentences in the Russian Federation. This category of convicts is serving sentences in 6 correctional facilities and in 1 isolated section of a special regime correctional colony for keeping convicts to life imprisonment. Also, this category of convicts can serve part of the sentence in prison, in isolation from other categories of convicts, in cases where the court appointed a life imprisonment with serving part of the sentence in prison, or if the convicted person committed violations of the established order of serving the sentence during the period of serving the sentence and was transferred to prison or committed crime while serving a sentence.

In this article we will consider in detail the various spheres of the personality of sentenced to life imprisonment and reveal the role of this knowledge in increasing the efficiency of operational work with this category of persons.

The purpose of our study was to identify the psychological characteristics of sentenced to life imprisonment, which can be used in the

implementation of operational-search activities in relation to them.

To achieve this goal, we solved the following tasks: we developed a questionnaire for employees of institutions, conducted a survey and processed its results. We assumed that knowledge of the psychological characteristics of life-sentenced prisoners would improve the efficiency of operational work with them.

2 MATERIALS AND METHODS

An empirical study was carried out by the Research Institute of the Federal Penitentiary Service of Russia in 2020 in all institutions where life-sentenced prisoners are held using the questionnaire survey method. To conduct the study, we developed a questionnaire, which was filled out by employees of the institutions participating in the study.

Information about the psychological state of the inmates was filled out according to the materials of psychodiagnostics carried out by the staff on a regular basis.

3 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

An analysis of the results of an empirical study carried out by the Research Institute of the Federal Penitentiary Service of Russia made it possible to compile a generalized description of those convicted to the life imprisonment. Thus, a life-sentenced person is an productive man of 40-49 years old with a secondary complete general education, who, before conviction, lived in an urban area, has work experience, is not married, is Orthodox. At the time of the study, he had served from 15 to 20 years. He does not work in the correctional facility due to lack of work, if he does work, he treats his work in bad faith, including refusing to work, and has several disciplinary sanctions.

Most of the convicts in this category are convicted of crimes against the person, have a first conviction. This type of punishment is the main type of punishment; as an additional punishment can be assigned compensation for the caused damage (presence of a claim).

In addition, other features were identified regarding the relationship with the administration. Thus, a typical convict to life imprisonment is characterized negatively by the administration of the institution, is kept in strict conditions, is on the

preventive record as prone to attacking representatives of the administration and other law enforcement officers, and may be on the preventive record as prone to suicide and self-harm.

Many authors recognize the fact that this category of convicts is the most difficult in the context of providing them with psychological and pedagogical influence, and this, in turn, can affect the effectiveness of operational-search prevention.

As Deacon Kirill Markovsky who has been working for many years with prisoners sentenced to life imprisonment writes in his book, that they have no past, no present and no future, there was no happy childhood or youth. Their life in the present is more like existence. Society despises them. In terms of their future, those sentenced to life imprisonment mostly do not harbor illusions (Markovskiy K., 2017).

Prolonged stay in conditions of isolation from society, strict regime requirements, lack of life prospects – all this has a negative impact on the convicts. In addition, the unlikely prospect of their parole, which deprives them of the incentive for correction, has a negative impact on the law-abiding behavior of prisoners sentenced to life imprisonment (Kapustin K.V., 2014).

V.M. Pozdnyakov draws attention to the fact that while serving a sentence, life-sentenced prisoners become more withdrawn, uncommunicative, they develop a feeling of alienation and increase over time, self-esteem decreases, self-doubt and anxiety appear, and frequent being in a frustrated state can lead to more frequent manifestation of discontent, aggression, anger, impulsive, thoughtless actions (Pozdnyakov V.M., 2019).

K. Markovsky believes that a life-sentenced person inevitably begins to fade away mentally and physically. Over time, he can completely escape from reality and lock himself in an illusory inner world, ceasing to communicate, take care of himself, completely losing interest in the environment. This may be preceded by a state of extreme anger – the convicted person can behave aggressively, constantly use foul language, curse everything and everyone (Markovsky K., 2017).

In addition, against the background of the dominance of regime restrictions and the inadequacy of conditions for convicts to manifest prosocial subjectivity for life, they may develop a syndrome of «personal helplessness» (Pozdnyakov V.M., 2019), «prison autism» (Mukhina V.S., 2015).

An analysis of the results of an empirical study conducted by the Research Institute of the Federal Penitentiary Service of Russia made it possible to

compile a generalized psychological characteristics of persons sentenced to life imprisonment (Bovin B.G., Buntina V.Yu., Grigoriev V.N., Dikopoltsev D.E., Kryazheva S.G., Lebedev M.V., Moskvitina M.M., Pimenova O.P., Sorokin V.P., Vasiliev M.G., 2020), including a description of emotional-strong-willed, moral, intellectual, communicative spheres and personality traits.

3.1 Emotional-Volitional Sphere of Convicts to Life Imprisonment

Most of sentenced to life imprisonment are characterized by a lack of self-control, will, the ability to restrain anxiety and internal conflicts in their ideas about themselves. In this regard they may experience uncontrollable emotional outbursts. In a provocative situation a decrease in self-control is possible. In a stressful situation, impulsive reactions are possible. Impulsive behavior is due to a decrease in the ability of the individual to plan and judge. Convicts may feel insufficiently fit. Extremely sensitive, easily upset, succumb to feelings and occasional mood swings. They often react painfully to «small», minor problems. The direct realization of the arising impulses and the underdevelopment of reflection lead to the absence of anxiety and fear of potential punishment. The combination of these factors can lead to suicide.

K. Markovsky also notes that the word «suicide» among those convicted to the life imprisonment is from a number of everyday life. Every prisoner has thought about suicide at least once. It can be said about some convicts that they live with a noose around their necks, constantly thinking about leaving life. Some have made more than one attempt to commit suicide. Some of them could not be saved (Markovsky K., 2017). So, for example, in 2020, 3 facts of suicides were recorded among life-sentenced prisoners, in 2019 there were no such facts, and in 2018 – 4. Let the actual number 3 seem insignificantly small, while in 2020 in the institutions of the Federal Penitentiary Service of Russia there were In total, 287 suicides were committed by suspects, accused and convicted persons, but in the context of calculating per 1000 people, the suicide rate among those sentenced to life imprisonment is 1.5. It is worth noting that in the pre-trial detention center it is 1.1, in the correctional facilities – 0.4, in hospitals – 0.6. Only in prisons is the level the same high – 1.5 (Bovin B.G., Kozin M.N., Buntina V.Yu., Kryazheva S.G., Moskvitina M.M., Matveeva I.A., 2021. In this case, the factor of single-cell content can also be considered a factor of suicidal risk.

3.2 Moral and Moral Qualities of Convicts to Life Imprisonment

Life-sentenced prisoners are characterized by: insufficient acceptance of moral standards, independence, disregard for rules. They demonstrate complete freedom from the influence of the group, an insufficiently serious attitude to morality can lead to socially disapproving actions, but sometimes it can manifest itself positively as innovation in solving certain issues. However, an extremely low level of moral consciousness can be a worrying symptom, since such people will not be bothered to help others resolve the dispute; may thrive in disarray and filth and generally have little interest in social standards. There is a serious lack of internal standards and therefore a tendency towards sociopathy. Low scores are positively correlated with delinquency and antisocial behavior.

3.3 Intellectual Sphere of Convicts to Life Imprisonment

For convicted to life imprisonment are characteristic concreteness of thinking, low intelligence, low general thinking abilities, poor ability to solve abstract problems, a tendency to be disorganized, poor judgment, reduced efficiency of thinking, insufficient level of general verbal culture.

3.4 Communicative Sphere of Convicts to Life Imprisonment

Most of sentenced to life imprisonment maintain a psychological distance, avoid close interpersonal interaction. Such convicts are distrustful, suspicious, care little for other people, and do not always work well in a group. In interpersonal relationships, they are distinguished by a superficial attitude towards other people. Such convicts rarely develop a sense of deep attachment and identification with the environment. They build their interaction with the people around them on manipulation for the sake of satisfying their own desires.

Some convicts tend to demonstrate strict adherence to any, even the most insignificant and of no significant value, social norms and rules, to emphasize the «correctness» of their behavior.

3.5 Personal Characteristics of Prisoners Sentenced to Life Imprisonment

The activities of prisoners sentenced to life imprisonment are often not well-ordered: they often get lost, act unevenly, do not know how to organize their time and the order of doing things. In this regard, they often leave things unfinished and without completing what they have begun to the end they take up another task.

Self-esteem is adequate with a tendency to overestimate. Insulting personal interests and dignity, as a rule, is not forgotten for a long time and is not forgiven. They are sensitive to true or perceived injustice, and have a negative attitude to criticism addressed to them. In this regard, others often characterize them as vindictive and revengeful people.

The convictions are notable for sufficient firmness and are comparable to the convictions of the «fighter for the idea». Strong logical arguments are needed to change their point of view. They are driven not so much by the motivation of strength and authority as by the desire «not to be weak» to avoid possible infringements on the part of the stronger and more influential. Hence – the envy of the success of others. At the same time, there is a negative concept of one's own personality. There is a great desire to draw the attention of others to their misfortunes, to achieve sympathy and understanding, sometimes assessed from an external position as «blackmail», «hysterical protrusion of difficulties». The impossibility of constructive planning for the future.

Knowledge about the personality traits of convicts to the life imprisonment makes it possible to effectively plan and implement operational-search preventive work, which includes:

1) Identification and registration of persons prone to committing unlawful acts, as well as leaders of the criminal environment, members and active members of negative groups, registering them as preventive measures, distributing them to cells, planning and developing effective tactics for applying preventive measures to them.

2) Studying the characteristics of the personality of convicts, their way of life before conviction, social environment, nature, motives and goals of the crime committed, attitude to the deed, admission of guilt etc. Studying the personality of the convict is a purposeful process of collecting, accumulating, systematizing and analyzing information about significant from the point of view of the tactics of

using the methods of the independent reconnaissance patrol, the peculiarities of the convicts.

3) Predicting the behavior of convicts, planning, developing tactics and carrying out complex individual preventive measures.

Operative-search prophylaxis is a constant process, starting from the first day of a convict's stay in a correctional facility and continuing at all stages of his stay in an institution.

Often, difficulties in operational-search prevention can be caused by communication barriers between the operational officer and the convict, which are social, psychological, political, religious and other differences that can give rise to misunderstanding, different interpretations of the same events.

An integral feature that influences the efficiency of an operative in this activity is his charisma. Not possessing this quality in due measure, the operative employee will not be able to fully establish productive psychological contact.

In addition, other conditions also affect the process of interaction between the operational officer and the convict, for example, the very specific nature of the detention of convicts to the life imprisonment, which provides for their long-term stay in a confined space, as well as in their constant communication with a narrow circle of persons (both convicts and employees). This circumstance allows, on the one hand, to study as much as possible the characteristics of the convict, his inclinations, habits, strengths and weaknesses, values and needs, to determine his informal status in the criminal environment, to reveal the degree of his criminal infection (Yakovets E.N., 2009), but, on the other hand, the low turnover of convicts and the long stay of the same convicts in a correctional facilities can lead to the opposite effect, the effect of a «blurred eye», when, due to routine and constantly repetitive actions, operational officers stop looking at things critically, look for alternatives. There is a firm belief in unconditional control over the situation in the institution, in the thorough knowledge of everyone who is serving a sentence in the institution.

This circumstance can lead to the following consequences:

- formalism in the performance of their professional activities;
- inattention to incoming information;
- weakening of attention to the elements of the operational environment;
- excessive self-confidence in the correctness of their actions;
- non-criticality to new information;

- the appearance of signs of professional burnout and professional deformation;
- failure to comply with safety requirements;
- entering into off-duty communications, etc.

4 CONCLUSIONS

Thus, the foregoing necessitates special training of officials carrying out operational-investigative activities, serving in correctional colonies where convicts to life imprisonment are kept. The characteristics of the crimes committed by them, the personality traits of the convicts themselves require that employees have special education and psychological stability, they regularly attend advanced training courses.

At the same time, knowing the psychological characteristics of those sentenced to life imprisonment, operational (and other) employees will be able to work more effectively with this category of persons.

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