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Universal Military Training in the Kazakh SSR in the Days of the Great Patriotic War, 1941–45

Abstract

The article attempts to eliminate historical gaps in the organization of universal military training in Kazakh SSR in the days of the Great Patriotic War. The Soviet historiography covered this problem insufficiently. The modern historiography draws on materials, which became available to researchers in the last decade. The source studies method has been used. As the Great Patriotic War began, the Red Army military reserve training became of mass proportions. The command staff was trained in military schools, junior officers were trained in reserve military units; there were schools of junior aviation specialists. Military departments of higher educational institutions trained officers, sergeants, and privates, while public organizations (Osoaviakhim, physical education societies, Red Cross) trained privates of their profile. There were certain requirements (entrance exams, schooling, health, etc.) for training in the above-mentioned fields. For training of the private corps in the Vsevobuch (general training program) only age mattered. The age requirement was from 16 for youth and up to 50 for reservists. Within the frameworks for implementation of the State Defense Committee resolution “On General Compulsory Military Training for Soviet Citizens” of September 1941, the organization of Vsevobuch in the Kazakh SSR during the Great Patriotic War is assessed. In the headquarters of the Central Asian, Ural, and South Ural military districts, responsible for the territory of the republic, there were established Vsevobuch departments for training of citizens under military commissariats of the Kazakh SSR. Vsevobuch was based on military training stations. In the initial period of the Great Patriotic War, it faced acute problems due to lack of combat experienced personnel to fill the posts of instructors and due to poor equipment. The study has permitted to assess the results of the Vsevobuch in the Kazakh SSR. The studied materials prompt conclusions on coordinated work of the leadership of the Kazakh SSR, Kazvoenkomt, and military districts in the organization of the Vsevobuch. In total, about two million Kazakhs were trained for the Red Army, which was a significant contribution of the republic to Soviet victory in the Great Patriotic War.

Keywords

Historical sources, archival documents, USSR, Kazakh SSR, Great Patriotic War, universal compulsory military training for citizens, Vsevobuch.

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