

SHORTHAND MINUTES  
From the 5<sup>th</sup> Session of  
THE SUPREME DEFENCE COUNCIL  
HELD ON 7. AUGUST 1992.

Session began at 1915 hours.

Attending: Academician Dobrica ĆOSIĆ - the President of SRJ /Federal Republic of Yugoslavia/ and the Supreme Council President; MS Momir BULATOVIĆ – the President of the Montenegro Presidency – member of the Supreme Council; Pavle BULATOVIĆ – Federal Minister of Interior; Colonel General Života PANIĆ –the Chief of the Yugoslav Army General Staff; Milo ĐUKANOVIĆ – Montenegro Prime Minister; Zoran SOKOLOVIĆ – Republic of Serbia Minister of Interior; Colonel General Pavle STRUGAR – Commander of the Yugoslav Army 2<sup>nd</sup> Army; Colonel Slavko KRIVOŠIJA – Supreme Defence Council Secretary.

(Session was recorded by Jordan ŽIVANOVIĆ, Chief of the Shorthand Writers Group, who, together with Senior Conference Shorthand Writer – Editor Stana GAPIĆ and Conference Shorthand Writer Dragan STAMBOLIĆ, wrote down the notes from the tape.)

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

MILOŠEVIĆ apologised. He cannot make it.  
Colonel, where is BOŽOVIĆ?

Slavko KRIVOŠIJA:

He was notified. Head of the Office /illegible/ would come.

Milo ĐUKANOVIĆ:

If that is the case – he won't come /illegible/, he is in Budva. I received a piece of information, /illegible/ with us.

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

All right. I propose to begin with work.

Session was convened at the initiative of Mr BULATOVIĆ.

I propose the following agenda for today's session.

## A G E N D A

1. Situation in Pljevlja

2. Situation in the country – the possibility of an attack and carrying out an armed intervention

Are there any propositions for the amendments to the agenda? (No.)

The motion has been carried.

With regard to the first item on the agenda, from what I know, the situation is very serious and dramatic. I don't know how much it has changed until today. I will ask Mr BULATOVIĆ to inform us about the situation.

I would like to hear your estimates about the possibilities of an attack on us and carrying out an armed intervention, which is announced by the West more unanimously than ever, as far as I know.

We will move on to the first item on the agenda:

1. Situation in Pljevlja

Go on.

/illegible/

Momir BULATOVIĆ:

Mr President,

I would like to thank you for accepting the initiative. I felt it to be my responsibility, considering last night's rather dramatic circumstances, to hold this session, because we devoted our previous conclusions to this matter and it was probably our insufficiently successful realisation of these conclusions that led to the complicating of problems in Pljevlja.

Impressions, which I bring directly from this region, are a little better. It seems to me that, after an escalation of serious discontent, the situation calmed last night. Unfortunately, in general, it is very difficult to assess how long this situation and that

calm will last, although we assumed certain, primarily political, actions and steps, in terms of public contacts and addresses of members of People's Party and Serb Radical Party. Major ČEKO, who was arrested yesterday and who can hardly be considered a normal person, was its /Serb Radical Party/ representative in talks with me. He will address the public indirectly, and guarantee that his party is for peace and that it doesn't aim to put anyone in danger. We perhaps did this part of political preparations in a satisfactory manner.

President of the Municipality, who you know as a humanist and a writer and who is very respected there by all political parties, took part in all talks. General DAMJANOVIĆ, Commander of the Podgorica Corps, also took part. He informed all our collocutors about the activities that the Yugoslav Army would assume for the purpose of securing the region.

Problem lies in the fact that we still don't have reliable information about that, nor do we have the mechanisms to stop the roaming of other paramilitary formations, crossing this region. It seems that in this region, it is not likely that people, who are acquaintances and connected to each other in a certain way, would cause significant conflicts and misunderstandings. But convoys with armed men are constantly passing through Pljevlja. For instance, a truck with two anti-aircraft guns was circling through Pljevlja yesterday, with no possibility of anyone stopping these people.

We have a problem that we have to solve, which is being solved at the moment – the problem within the Ministry of Interior. Namely, for a long time, this bordering territory had been used as an area where various formations crossed their paths and moved; mostly those that went towards the Serbian Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, with the help of the army and organised by it. The intensity of these activities is now slightly lower, but they are still underway. Yesterday we had a silent rebellion in the Ministry of Interior, so to speak, so that 22 employees received decisions on suspension today, because they didn't want to confront and defend the Constitution and the Law. They didn't want to stand up against the crowd that was in front.

We found a certain best solution last night. The man was released. Therefore, a space for political activities, actions, and subsequent analyses is open today.

It was established without a doubt that Pljevlja had been blocked from three directions yesterday. Barricades were placed but it is still not known how many people took part in that. Anyway, a huge number of people drew their weapons as a

reaction to the first critical situation in that town. There are paramilitary formations in Pljevlja.

I must first point out that I am surprised that we didn't find a single sentence about paramilitary formations in the piece of information that General PANIĆ gave us earlier - paramilitary formations, which are on our side, in a way – about “Bijeli Orlovi”, “Srpska Garda” and certain Chetniks organisations which are wandering around and acting unobstructed.

All our efforts to convince the world that we are in favour of peace are destroyed by the statements like the one by the self-proclaimed Colonel RADOVIĆ, who is a former officer of JNA, promoted by ŠEŠELJ into a colonel, who said in yesterday's show for the Montenegro Television that he had his forces, that they would kill all Muslims, and that their method of political fight was – the knife. It was only luck that the reporter did not play that. I think that we are simply getting into a situation in which we do not have control of the field or the territory; that self-proclaimed commanders and self-proclaimed formations are moving around and giving statements which have terrible impact on our international position; and that we definitely have no forces to cover that area.

There are currently 73 soldiers in Pljevlja. According to what I was informed, those 73 soldiers should cover positions along the borderline with Bosnia and Herzegovina. They cannot cover that borderline. Neither are there enough of them, nor can they do the job.

I know that General PANIĆ is completely right when he says that our army is like that, that they are young men, children who were very afraid yesterday. But we were on the brink of an inter-ethnic conflict yesterday in Pljevlja and all that negativity could have turned against Muslims. The fate and existence of Muslims could have ended that night. There is no need to explain what a catastrophe would that have been for our international position.

This might have been a little chaotic but that would essentially be a review of our current situation. I think that there are two still very important issues left if we want to, sort of, strengthen this political venture.

First issue is the support for these paramilitary formations. Howcome and why do they feel the right to constantly ask for protection, claiming that they are in the leadership of the army? That is the issue that we raised last time.

Second issue is the connection of these paramilitary formations with the Serbian Ministry of Interior. According to the information we have and which we

presented to you earlier, and now, according to the information that our MUP /Ministry of Interior/ submitted, and I think that the Minister BULATOVIĆ had been informed about that, we have the fact that approximately 350 rifles had been distributed to the citizens of Pljevlja, by the Republic of Serbia Ministry of Interior; that there are 8 or 9 state-of-the-art machine-guns; that members of these formations do not feel any obligation towards the authorities and organs of the Republic of Montenegro, nor towards military authorities. That is what I feel should be the subject of our discussion – how to implement our previous conclusions, conclusions from our last meeting, regarding this issue.

By the way, this Čeko, who is telling the truth or claiming that 80 men are coming today, 300 tomorrow and /illegible/ 50; he is asking for co-operation with the army, to let them pass, to go there to fight around Goražde.

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

What about that Colonel, who you talked about?

Momir BULATOVIĆ:

We established that he was a self-proclaimed colonel, who was once an active-duty officer. Let's be honest, we needed those paramilitary formations for a while. They are now a great burden and a problem. People now changed sides based on these previous activities. It is now, a sort of, ŠEŠELJ's army, his ranks.

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

Is it only ŠEŠELJ's? Do you have more thorough information? Are JOVIĆ's "Beli Orlovi" here, too?

Pavle BULATOVIĆ:

They are mostly ŠEŠELJ's.

Momir BULATOVIĆ:

There is one more issue. We cannot at all be sure who they belong to, because they don't recognise anyone. They only recognise themselves, their local power and their force.

This guy Čeko, who is considered to be a true Serb and a patriot, is in contact with 40-50 people; however, /illegible/ three days ago he went to Goražde with only two men. He cannot fight, he doesn't manage to move these people and at the same time /illegible/they are terrorising the area of Pljevlje.

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

Yes, they're the warriors in the rear.

I've got a precise question for you, and you /illegible/ amplify it with your point of view. Can you confirm that the Yugoslav Army, that is its officers and staffs, help paramilitary formations or co-operate with them in any way? (Addressing Colonel General Života PANIĆ)

Života PANIĆ:

Mr. President, I told you that several times here at the meeting and I stick to it. Not one officer or military unit supports paramilitary organisations in any way, neither organises nor transports them.

Last night we talked by phone and you told me that the Army was involved in the problem in Pljevlja, that a certain Colonel MILIĆ came and ordered the release of this guy from prison. I immediately ordered an investigation of everything. Our officer, the Deputy Head of Security, arrived today and we'll have a detailed report. However, before I came here, I talked to him and his impression is that 60% of police workers sided with Čeko and they all were down there in front of the Police Station and some of the loyal MUP /Ministry of the Interior/ members were in the building. /illegible/ came out several times, addressed the crowd, and returned inside the building. The closure happened because of personal fights between the MUP and Čeko. But, this is information that will be confirmed in writing and I'll have it delivered to you.

We have a small garrison in Pljevlja. I don't know where could we bring soldiers from, as our army has /illegible/ 48% of its strength – in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. We can use soldiers to provide security only to the facilities and borders, not completely, but as much as we have.

Last night you mentioned three buses leaving our facility in Bubanj Potok and going there. We affirm categorically that neither one bus, nor any army personnel left Bubanj Potok.

Therefore, our army has nothing to do with what has been going on in the area of Pljevlja. What we had agreed on here, and what you ordered afterwards, was completely respected through our orders and procedures.

We had agreed to have one of our officers, one Captain, join the Crisis Staff. The Captain was thrown out five times and called back in before they could agree about everything. This means that they don't trust us.

Momir BULATOVIĆ:

Who threw him out?

Života PANIĆ:

The Crisis Staff of Pljevlja, while they were discussing. It's true.

The Captain did everything possible. Our army was supposed to be on patrol with them. One day they wanted to be on patrol together and next day they didn't. Therefore, a true organisation was not established by MUP while the army observed everything.

We do not have older soldiers. Those are our young soldiers. If STRUGAR has better ones, he should send them. But we do not have better soldiers.

Next, under the Constitution, our army is ready or has been preparing to defend borders and, according to your order, to protect the constitutional and social system of Yugoslavia; and the MUP must do everything else. Regarding paramilitary units, they took charge of everything and they /illegible/ - they disarm and they arrest. We do not do that. The Army does not accept the responsibility for the organisation of paramilitary units in cities and towns, since it is within the means of the MUP to do something about it. They have been following it; they know the people involved in it. If some difficult situation or incident occurs then the army must be engaged, then a decision must be made by Supreme Council in order to engage us in that area.

I wouldn't like to hear mentioning and blaming the army for something for which it is not guilty. I can bring you all your orders; he received these orders as well and acted according to them within 24 hours.

Our officers have been carrying out research that allowed them to see the course of it.

That's all.

Momir BULATOVIĆ:

We have been caught in a vicious circle. When I talked to the Colonel in charge of the Security, today, he told me precisely that those three buses had not left Bubanj Potok, which I can accept, since I don't know their point of departure. However, he didn't deny that three buses passed by that spot.

Života PANIĆ:

Well, we do not carry out the traffic control of that area.

Momir BULATOVIĆ:

Those are armed people.

Života PANIĆ:

That is within the authority of the MUP.

Momir BULATOVIĆ:

Let's get this straight, today the representatives of the SDA /Party of Democratic Action/ and these Muslims who called themselves prominent, told me that they had their own surveillance service; that they were saving their lives, since they felt threatened. They made a list of licence plates of each vehicle that transported passengers: the JNA plates, the number of tanks that went by, they have everything.

Života PANIĆ:

How many tanks passed by?

Eleven tanks went through Pljevlje, they have each number /as written/. The man is Muslim, he used to work in the army with the intelligence, he is a retired colonel. He is now in SDA /Party of Democratic Action/. What they have, the international community has, too.

You are completely right to say that everybody now has JNA cars and vehicles. But, I am not accusing you, nor do I have the intention of doing so. We simply have a joint task to reduce this huge damage, because nobody knows about it. If the number plates are JNA, nobody can tell in which car are some paramilitaries, and in which are the Army of Federal Republic of Yugoslavia members. These are the facts from the field.



Života PANIĆ:

We have changed the plates and our plates now read: “Yugoslav Army”. We have erased the “JNA”, and there are many vehicles, which are being used as military vehicles.

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

Yes, but if the news that eleven tanks have passed is true, we must know where these tanks are coming from.

Života PANIĆ:

This is the first I have heard about these tanks.

Pavle STRUGAR:

I should know about it, but I really do not.

Života PANIĆ:

We know which tanks are ours. Where do you have tanks in Montenegro? In Titograd?

Pavle STRUGAR:

In Nikšić and in Titograd.

Života PANIĆ:

Nowhere else.

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

And what about the Užice Corps?

Života PANIĆ:

Well, the Užice Corps has tanks in Raška, Novi Pazar and Kraljevo, and nowhere else.

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

Mr BULATOVIĆ, is this man trustworthy? Is he not perhaps confusing all of us? Are we dealing with hallucinations and illusions?

Momir BULATOVIĆ:

I know that we were receiving information from our Ministry, when Minister Pavle BULATOVIĆ was in charge of the Republican Ministry, that these convoys were passing, and those were led by men who had valid documentation stating they were members of the Yugoslav People's Army. That was after that period of 19<sup>th</sup> May, when the order we received from Yugoslav Presidency expired.

Pavle STRUGAR:

It is possible they went before.

Života PANIĆ:

They were transporting them while ADŽIĆ was /as written/.

Pavle STRUGAR:

That happened before.

Momir BULATOVIĆ:

It was after 19<sup>th</sup> May. It was June.

Života PANIĆ:

If we believe the area of Pljevlje to be a critical place, we will send four Police armoured personnel carriers there within 24 hours, from Belgrade, we will put those under his command, and they will be there. But, let us be clear – MUP /Ministry of the Interior/ has to be reinforced to the maximum. The Army should not be engaged over the matters that could be solved by the MUP.

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

Yes, in civil matters.

Života PANIĆ:

That is very awkward. Your tanks are here too, in Belgrade I mean. We still cannot "clear our name" because of that, although none of the tanks was even carrying weapons. Tanks were used only to create fear.

Momir BULATOVIĆ:

No, it is not about creating fear. We request cutting off the flow of this information via the territory of Pljevlje. If volunteers and other paramilitary formations have to go to Bosnia and Herzegovina, because of some other plans and interests, which I do not wish to discuss, let them go and may luck follow them. Let whoever wants to do so organise them. We need your help and co-operation in keeping them from crossing this critical area, because war might break out there.

Života PANIĆ:

What can you do – checkpoints? (He addresses Colonel General Pavle STRUGAR).

Pavle STRUGAR:

We can make joint checkpoints.

Života PANIĆ:

Those had already been made. However, we could set up checkpoints on main roads and control everybody – any given civilian or military vehicle. Everything that does not belong to the Army's formations should be seized immediately. Let them follow.

Milo ĐUKANOVIĆ:

Mr President,

I would not be able to assert who is arming and helping these men, but it is quite certain that somebody is arming and helping them. These men are armed not only with long-barrelled infantry weapons, but even with more powerful ones.

They certainly claimed yesterday that the Yugoslav Army had armed them. I do not take it for granted, and I claim that they will obtain documentation for that car in a couple of hours. So, we are not talking about a personal conflict between MUP and these Chetniks, who appeared from God knows where, but about this man arresting a police officer, interrogating him, taking Pljevlje Coal Mine car, taking it to the frontline and leaving it there. Yesterday, he was finally arrested in a car belonging to an unknown person or persons. It is true that some policemen had aligned with the crowd that gathered last night, but they have already gone home today.

At this point in time, it is very difficult to separate areas of responsibility. I am aware of the rule that the Army guards the border, while the Police are in charge of the security. However, our problem was that men, JNA reservists, returning from the front were armed and were fooling around town. And later, those men had to be disarmed by the Ministry of the Interior. This piece of information, which I am about to tell you, and which can be confirmed by representatives of the Ministry of the Interior of Serbia, with whom I was talking that night, is what happened afterwards in the "Beograd" hotel in Bečići. Two or three days ago, one hundred and fifty men, all wearing uniforms, came to the beach in front of the "Beograd" hotel, jumped into the water in their boots and uniforms, came out and then turned salvoes at the beach, at the time when the beach was full. On the other hand, the people who told me this, and they are very responsible persons from the Ministry of the Interior of Serbia, could not determine, from where they were watching this, what insignia the men were wearing.

Therefore, it is really impossible to refer, in this case, to the strict peacetime responsibility on the border and in the country.

I think that it would be fair to reach an agreement on whether in Montenegro we can rely on the Army to help us in defence of the Republic, because in Pljevlje, which is a border municipality, we are dealing with Chetnik formations usurping a certain area and taking power in a part of the Montenegrin territory. Or is that impossible? If we cannot rely on them, we will choose to defend ourselves, either through the Ministry of the Interior, into which we will mobilise the persons we want, without asking anyone else about who we will mobilise, or we will keep our Territorial Defence and place it under our control. But, we have the responsibility to defend our Republic.

If this can be done in another way, then let us agree on how to do it. We do not have the right there anymore, and we certainly will not stay there, doing nothing, even for another second.

Last night, our Republic came under attack of paramilitary formations, Chetnik-oriented, which came and usurped the power, declared war on Montenegro and on its state bodies; and we will not allow it any longer.

Momir BULATOVIĆ:

I would like to add something here, in order to clarify things, since it has been mentioned that this is a personal conflict, that you got this information. /as written/

Života PANIĆ:

Yes.

Momir BULATOVIĆ:

Today I read this information before the security officer who informed you, and he said that everything was absolutely true. The point is that DAČEVIĆ, the famous one, came on 6. 08. to Pljevlje Security Centre and requested that his car should be returned, the car which was commandeered not from him, but from his personal escort. Otherwise, he would declare war on Pljevlje Security Centre, more precisely he would cause general conflict in the area of the town. He openly stated, on the official premises, that his threats would be carried out during the night of 6. August. Taking into consideration the aforementioned, Pljevlje Security Centre arrested him, and only then. They would be crazy to arrest him like that, without any preparations. But, the man threatened them and declared war on them.

At the same time, the former Defence Minister of the Army of SAO /Serbian Autonomous Region/ Hercegovina, Duško KORNJAČA, threatened that if he was not released, he would transfer his men there and let them make “chaos” and massacres in Pljevlje. This is a matter of state security.

Života PANIĆ:

I have to ask you. (He turns to Milo ĐUKANOVIĆ)

As the President of Montenegro, Ministry of the Interior is in your power, and it is your responsibility, along with the Ministry of the Interior, to ensure peace in the Republic. If you are incapable to do so, then you have to ask the Supreme Command to engage the Army.

Hence, let us agree now – either the Army will do it, or the Ministry.

Momir BULATOVIĆ:

We asked you to do that last night.

Života PANIĆ:

If the Army does it, everyone will condemn us. They cannot wait for the Army to start solving such tasks.

Therefore, my recommendation would be to help them reinforce the Ministry of the Interior, Special Task forces, and then they can do that job. We are not allowed to arrest anyone, and we are not prepared for it. We have the Army, which has regular training, which is not trained for this kind of war and completion of tasks. We do not prepare them for that.

If necessary and if you feel that the Centre and the Republic are being taken down in this inhabited place of Pljevlje, tomorrow we will transfer a Military Police Battalion to that area and it should come under command of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Army. You will co-ordinate among yourselves and we will see how to do it.

I agree with you that the situation there is difficult, but we have to look for another way – a way of taking power from paramilitary formations.

As for going away with weapons – we carried out five mobilisations, and only the fifth had response of 30%. All who came, SPO /Serbian Renewal Movement/, Radical Party, Democratic Party, they came, 90% took the weapons, and ran away with them. We are still running over the lists, SOKOLOVIĆ is here and he can confirm it, trying to get the weapons back. We returned 20,000 barrels, and 30,000 are still out. This is with Montenegro included, because the units that had been mobilised there also ran away with weapons, or they went to the front and came back.

Therefore, if such a decision is made, and it is my opinion that we should do something, Mr President, our units should be present in the territory of Pljevlje. We will issue the order during the night, and transfer one Light Battalion to that area, which will then be placed under the 2<sup>nd</sup> Army command. Since that is very difficult, as you said here, you have to form, not a Crisis Staff, but Command on the level of the Republic, which should operate as the 2<sup>nd</sup> Military District Staff. We will accomplish what you agree upon as regards the Army, except the employment.

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

I think that we can not make radical decisions until we hear Minister SOKOLOVIĆ's speech about the Serbian responsibility – if the Republic of Serbia was involved in activities of paramilitary formations, if it really happened, if it is still involved or not, if it is a political imagination that circulates within certain political circles.

Zoran SOKOLOVIĆ:

Mr President, please allow me to say that we have been working for one year, feeling a great danger, of those moments the General was talking about. It started to manifest last year – at this time, especially in August and September. At that time, a significant number of those who have been mobilised for various reasons – because of their party membership or something else, started to return home, armed.

We knew that those illegal weapons were the biggest threat to citizens of each country and to that country as well. We could not manage in the beginning, but working together with the Army and the leadership of the First and the Second Army, especially since the proclamation of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia helped a lot. We managed to establish control on borders and in the land. Of course, when I say that, I am aware of the fact that it is not possible to seal it hermetically. But, I will give you some more information.

I can deliver you the analysis that we have finished last night. We will send it to the Federal Ministry of the Interior and to the General Staff. There are close to 2,000 criminal charges. It is not a little.

As you know, we changed the Law on Weapons in March. You know which sentence the Law determined. I think that it helped a lot to minimise such a danger in the area. Of course, as the General said, it is very difficult to find each weapon but it is going to be our high-priority task.

One more thing: it is a very hard task for Police. We have some 14,500 regular police forces in the territory of the Republic of Serbia and between 6 and 10 thousands people in the reserve forces. There are some people who spent 6 months in uniforms and we have serious complaints about it. But, it is our high-priority task.

Regarding the help to paramilitary formations, I declare under the full responsibility that no help was given to paramilitary formations. Together with the Army, we helped volunteers, all those who were under the command of the Yugoslav People's Army.

Regarding things that Mr BULATOVIĆ mentioned, I think that it is not that important when I say: "I declare under the full responsibility..." /as stated/. That information should be forwarded to the Court. People should be prosecuted for that. I would like to tell you something – a person who armed 350 members of the paramilitary formation in Pljevlja should be sent to prison at once. That is my opinion.

I am not sure about others, but you say - "Responsible people from the Ministry made comments". As I understand, it is referring to the "Beograd" Hotel in Bečići.

Mr President, regarding the relations of the Republic of Serbia - I would like to assure you that it is the high-priority task for the Ministry, our policy and the way we act. We have people everywhere. Those things are against the Constitution, against the Law. It has to be documented and sent to the legal authorities.

Because of that, I would like to ask you to send before the Court all those who break the Constitution and the Law. Over 2,000 people were brought before the Court in the Republic of Serbia. It is a criminal act. It is not an offence. It is written in the Law that those who hold a weapon without a licence should be sentenced to 3 to 5 years of imprisonment.

That is what we did, Mr President. It is a short overview of the situation and our relation to it.

Pavle BULATOVIĆ:

This story is not of a recent date. It is probably three or four months old. According to my valuation, some activities /illegible/ like a boomerang, sooner or later. When war broke out, the number of people who responded to mobilisation was low. They used to receive everybody into volunteers units, regardless of their personal characteristics. When time went on, they became independent. They established their own units and separated from a command, the Army and the Ministry of the Interior. Now we have problems in the territory of the Serbian Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Arkan's people, Captain Dragan's units, units of some guy called Mauzer, some four or five groups are there. The Serb people are threatened by them. They are facing looting, rapes, arrests, imprisonment, etc.

They are trying to establish their paramilitary power. I am afraid that the same thing will happen in Serbia and Montenegro when they come back. That's one thing.

The other thing: it looks like we are accusing each other now when we talk about paramilitary formations. But we have to admit that they exist. We can not deny their existence. We can not deny that we have serious problems with them. Here, Pljevlja is the latest event that proves everything. They do not respect authorities, decisions of the Military Council, decisions of the Government, opinions of the Presidency. They are publicly declaring war to the state authorities.



The Commander of the “Bijeli orlovi” /White Eagles/ addressed President BULATOVIĆ with a letter published in the mass media. It was broadcast on radio, television, published in newspapers and it proves their existence. What is their composition and their number? I think the Ministry of the Interior has no precise data.

They also have their radical representatives, their supporters. We could see in the Pljevlja case that they have their supporters among employees of the Ministry of the Interior because they didn't want to confront them or prevent their action.

I think that the previous Presidency of SFRJ /Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia/ made a decision and issued the Order on the Disarming of Paramilitary Formations. The Army and the Ministry of the Interior were tasked to solve that problem. They were supposed to make a Plan on co-operation and realisation of the task.

Regarding things Minister SOKOLOVIĆ talked about - the action of disarmament, it is still in progress in Serbia and Montenegro. But, these actions are taken against individuals although its purpose is to disarm certain formations, namely certain units. Usually, it is conducted by routine traffic controls and we manage to find some weapons in cars, trains, etc. But I have no knowledge if we managed to find and disarm any paramilitary unit, squad or platoon in Montenegro. I am not sure about Serbia. I have received data from you regarding the answer to the representative's question on the number of weapons that has been taken away in the territory of the Republic of Serbia and the Republic of Montenegro. We have received some data from the Army as well. This data has been presented as the answer to the representative's question.

The thing you have said General, that 30,000 guns were out of control, whether these are the Army's or the Ministry of Interior's ones. That is a great firing power and an actual danger when no one is in command of them.

I am afraid of the fact that the state organs have to practically make a deal with some commanders in order to preserve peace in certain areas. I think that is a disgrace for the country, if you have to negotiate with people of dubious moral or any other characteristics, as with representatives, to beg them. Who is Čeko to blackmail Montenegro and the state of Yugoslavia and threaten with a war in Pljevlja? That is really an embarrassing position and in a position like that we cannot find an appropriate solution to stand up against this tyranny and relations like these.

I am a bit puzzled by this information regarding that Captain who is a member of the Operations Staff in Pljevlja, this is the first time I hear something like that, which doesn't mean that it is impossible that they removed him from the meeting in order to arrange some things. But, it is possible that it's along this line of sabotage, that is, relation of the Ministry employees to those people. We should try and look at things rationally here. People experience that emotionally which is normal, this conflict in the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina, that is, the suffering and agony of the Serbian people, and because of this fact people tend to probably give in to Čeko and others like that in order to help - over there.

I think we have to come to an understanding about one thing: it is a fact that assistance is necessary - over there. We are obliged to provide that assistance in an organised and prearranged way, that is in the way that will ensure protection of the reputation, proclaimed aims of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. We should try to help the Serbian people in the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina through an organised humanitarian or other kind of aid.

I am afraid there is some dispersion in that assistance, opening more than one channel; there is not enough co-ordination and agreement in order for this aid to be done in secrecy and in protection of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

You remember, some 7-8 days ago Priština TV broadcast a report in the news about the activities of the paramilitary formations in the area of Konjic where on a general level they talked to some senior officer who introduced himself by name and then he said where the soldiers were coming from. There is no greater embarrassment for the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia then the one we presented to the public. We don't have to be mad at the BBC, nor do they need to investigate something – it's enough that what we broadcast goes around the world and no one will believe us, about anything that the country is doing.

That's all I have to say.

Momir BULATOVIĆ:

Can you comment on this information? Do you have any information from the Montenegrin MUP regarding those weapons?

Pavle BULATOVIĆ:

Regarding these 350 pieces, I have information that the MUP of Serbia is responsible for that. It is now possible that someone is looking for an alibi in these

stories, just as they do in the General Staff. Čeko says he is going to get a permit for his vehicle, which was probably robbed and stolen somewhere in Bosnia, through the General Staff. It is possible that people are looking for an alibi. I showed two faxes to Minister SOKOLOVIĆ, where Tikveš and Ilok are mentioned, where a commander, a Montenegrin – Živojin IVANOVIĆ, as a commander of a Special Purposes Unit informs that a group of twenty armed people are permitted to move across the territory of Serbia and across the territory of Pljevlja. He signed as a Commander of some Special Unit, he has got a stamp, and he gives these authorisations to himself saying that his orders have to be executed. I asked Minister SOKOLOVIĆ if he knew who this was and he said he'd never heard of him. These people probably went across Montenegro with this permission and this story about these 350 pieces is probably along the same line – or from similar people.

We are going to have things like this happen as long as the weapons are not collected from the people and stored somewhere. But, I think it will not be possible to realise this in an efficient way for the next 15 years.

Also, it is correct that these three buses... when the two of us ended our conversation, I was informed that these three buses had gone through Pljevlja around midnight. The rush of people was still on and 150 people got off the bus, probably in a belligerent mood and joined these 1000 who were already there.

Života PANIĆ:

Yes, but this doesn't have to be the responsibility of the Army.

Pavle BULATOVIĆ:

No, I am not saying that, but they say they were equipped in the "4<sup>th</sup> July" barracks.

Života PANIĆ:

I know – "4<sup>th</sup> July" barracks and also "Bubanj Potok", but I guarantee that no one moved an inch from here.

Momir BULATOVIĆ:

Yesterday, for example, Priština TV filmed the whole incidence – and that is this Albanian, that is, Priština part. All the people who gathered there chanted: "Chetnik, Pljevlja is with you". As Minister BULATOVIĆ has just said, there is no

better proof for us that we really actively participate in conflicts in Bosnia and Herzegovina. There is no use now to quarrel about where these people crossed over from. Three buses crossed over, and that's OK, but what are we going to do tomorrow when another three come, the day after tomorrow – five of them etc? Can we reach an agreement about this?

Života PANIĆ:

I have got a specific proposal. You have got to reinforce your MUP special units' structures. Serbia and the Federal Republic can help you. We are going to send out Military Police, which is going to control the roads. Close the entrance to Pljevlja, put up a ramp, check every vehicle, we are going to confiscate every military vehicle that comes there. Check all that. That is a task for You. On Sunday you are going to have /illegible/ - down there. If you agree, I would not disturb the civilian life /illegible/ through Pljevlja, and if Pljevlja is the spot where the stability of Yugoslavia, not Montenegro, lies, then, Mister President, that is the way we have to do that work.

We are going to put together an order, I am responsible for that; You have already issued the general order, we are going to refer to it. We are going to do the work. On Sunday you will have all the exits and access roads to the city closed, we are going to have everything under control.

I would ask you that the MUP of Yugoslavia, MUP of Serbia and Montenegro carry out thorough control, that the weapons be collected. We must not give in Mister President, in no way. They have to be arrested, disarmed, disclosed.

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

General STRUGAR, I would ask You to give us your opinion about this problem.

Pavle STRUGAR:

Mister President, I do not have anything special to add after all General PANIĆ, President BULATOVIĆ and other comrades said. When You were up there, earlier, in this context I said: co-ordination – yes. It is necessary. It should have been expressed in a much stronger manner and much earlier. Division of labour, specifically, I do not want to repeat myself. The Army should do what it was trained for. On the contrary it will embarrass itself.

In the areas where there is scarcity or inefficiency of equipment, and the needs are to ask for and assist bodies of the Interior, that is what the former Yugoslavia had been doing before /as written/; therefore, these are the “outer rings” but all this is subtle, I have phrased it then as - and even now I think this is the proper expression – raid in search, that means in search for weapons, disarming, that is what bodies of the Interior have to do. Therefore, I addressed you, you were sitting with President BULATOVIĆ, I said that should be co-ordinated in that way because the thing that is happening in Pljevlje now was far larger during the previous period. I have spent a couple of months in Trebinje, Bileća; they were coming at us etc – various paramilitary organisations that were being brought through various channels, appetites, connections; they were simply imposing them on us, to take them in. I know these were “the White Eagles”, organised by the President of Herzegovina, VUČUROVIĆ; he even bragged about that, 50 – 150 at the time were coming; so I talked to one of those groups. But this is underground. I was lacking men on frontline then, so I wanted somewhat, since they were here, to dress them into the uniforms of Yugoslav soldiers, to give them our weapons. But these people are picky, starting from /asking for/ Motorolas, then wanting silencers etc., and are not willing to go to the front but we have to mop that up; I have chased them away – first, second and then the third group; there were 150 of them; I had problems with them.

The things Minister BULATOVIĆ was talking about were true – the troops were leaving the front; there were different motives – for leaving and going to the front; rampage was all around – in Nikšić, Podgorica and other places, that barely quietened down. However, those times are behind us, this has been put in order even though, a couple of evenings ago, shots were being heard again in Podgorica.

The same thing is happening in Plevlje now. I would not claim categorically where these people are from, they could be from anywhere; for the most part this channel goes to the Drina River and, probably, that channel is being used. The General knows, there we have the “R” unit, which admitted about 150 recruits – at this stage; the others are all military conscripts; with a part of these conscripts we have closed the border towards Herzegovina. Logically, I know through my own experience that when they arrive - their friends and acquaintances, KORNJAČA is among them, he conducts combat activities around Foča etc, he is a doctor /as written/. When you talk to him, he is a rather decent person, I have concluded that the man thinks good /illegible/ it is a self-proclaimed commander; he seeks in that ambient /illegible/ the Drina River, there is a special command, he especially

/illegible/ there towards Mostar and towards Nevesinje – there is another thing; /illegible/, again, is VUČUROVIĆ. So, it was like being at odds, from the very beginning, nothing has changed there.

I will tell you frankly, before General PANIĆ has come, during that time, I had tasks – I armed the people there, I provided them help; I used to give them artillery, ammunition, tanks, self-propelled guns, that is true. Part of the tanks and five self-propelled guns have come through Pljevlje because they could not come over this side. It is a period between two – three months ago.

Života PANIĆ:

You are saying that they have passed recently, these days?

Pavle STRUGAR:

I do not think so.

Momir BULATOVIĆ:

After the order, our order to withdraw.

Pavle STRUGAR:

I would not stick to the date because since the 19<sup>th</sup>, I was in deep troubles on the front; I withdrew it then – I could not have given anything then, even though I had the strict order not to give anything to anyone anymore; and since then I did not give /as written/. They have stopped coming now. I did not give them anything and I do not want to give.

Therefore, I issued /orders/, as soon as I have returned from the front and started carrying out other orders regarding the establishment of the Army and units, completely clear orders, in accordance with the basic orders, which I have received from the General Staff.

One of them was pertaining to the order and discipline, which was very precise, to introduce the patrolling and control in all the garrisons with the aim of: putting our troops into order, appearance, discipline; then to disarm and arrest all those who were behaving waywardly, were rampaging and were abusing the uniform. That took some effect – even in Podgorica, Primorje, Nikšić where it was very difficult; then, near Mojkovac. The 345<sup>th</sup> Mountain Brigade has come from Kranj and in Pljevlje, there was already one “R” unit – which means a destructive unit. So the

mingling of the troops took place there; even the guns were being sold but we have stopped that.

I have given the order to all commanders to conduct the disarmament of all armed troops pursuant to the restoration of order and discipline; by that I meant paramilitary units as well; if they are armed they are wearing uniforms; there are the officer patrols empowered and registered to conduct that. It was done very successfully. Why it has not been entirely carried out in Pljevlje, what are the reasons, I do not know; I think you could understand, it is a small garrison; I had to establish a battalion from Pljevlje; it is a battalion comprising mostly of military conscripts, which was deployed down on the border. Again, those were the military conscripts from that area; I do not have other troops.

Talking about that, we still have problems around Novi Pazar and around Sjenica and Tutin; that channel from Bijelo Polje stretched there, towards Tutin, we have taken measures there together; then Raška and Novi Pazar; I have informed Mister President that day in a short presentation, giving my appraisal during the visit /as written/. We need more co-ordination. By that I meant the following: many people were caught, they were handed over to regional bodies of the Interior, which are on these territories, but they are releasing them every chance they get. It is the view of the bodies from Nova Varoš too, and in Novi Pazar.

Things have been improving now; the co-ordination and co-operation on that territory are much better. Furthermore, according to the report of a commander, these days there are even 60 disarmed men. I think you have made a move there – for you have sent people, either here from Užice, or someone from the Republic, I do not know who has come and secured the co-ordination, until 20 days ago that co-ordination and work were rather inadequate. It is not that there is no will but there are no reliable, trustworthy men whom our officials and commanders could rely upon; these are local bodies of the Interior that are mostly Muslim. That is the essence.

Around Pljevlje, after what General PANIĆ has said, we need the Army there; for even if we mobilise the troops from Pljevlje we are not going to improve anything; therefore we need: regular forces to go in there; this can be solved. We had the same case in other places too; when the order is restored this will stop. And then, the other methods, what President BULATOVIĆ has already taken twice with you as well, last time, I think this will produce results among the Muslim population on a large scale as well, that the state really got involved in that; in my opinion it is necessary to stay on that course, co-ordinating functions of the Army and the Ministry of Interior.



What we have made, it was very much “dispersed” – these three centres in Montenegro. I think there has to be one staff on a superior level.

You are already familiar with the experiences from Kosovo; the aid there functioned flawlessly.

I think that some rivalry is in question here.

Momir BULATOVIĆ:

People are in panic.

Pavle STRUGAR:

We shall see about that, and correct it.

Momir BULATOVIĆ:

Barriers were put in place outside the barracks but there was a reason because they were afraid that they would take Čeko away from the barracks, by helicopter. They let the military convoy through, but only three people were at this barrier.

Pavle STRUGAR:

I think it would be interesting to say who this man is. This is not somebody you can trust; such people are bad luck.

Momir BULATOVIĆ:

According to those reports, even Duško KORNJAČA has banned him from Čajniče, because he had stolen from them, too.

Pavle STRUGAR:

We can solve this if we make the effort, but we need not dramatise. I think there would not be any chances, if one could call on those leaders, a few of them, and explain it to them because they are illiterate people, and without this roughness /as written/. One of them came up to me on the battlefield, asking me to give him written permission to carry a weapon; to bring 500 volunteers to the battlefield. In a conversation with BULATOVIĆ, he revealed this man's identity. He is a beast, whom nobody trusts. I was greedy back then. If I had had 500 soldiers, I would have been much stronger. So, there are many of them; they infatuate.



One should arrest them, unmask them, and explain whom these people are, who are causing so much damage to Yugoslavia's general policies.

This should be done by the people who work with information; meritorious and educated people, who know how to get it done.

Momir BULATOVIĆ:

Another brief explanation. To end this, I would like to make sure that our efforts have been perceived well and in the correct way. To be honest, I don't like the comparison that has been made, describing these efforts of ours, perhaps, as an inappropriate use of the Army. I do not believe that the military should defend any government. It is the state that has to be defended. Today Čeko told me, "we can wait until November, by all means, we are going to win in November." I told him, "in that case, Sir, you shall have my sincere congratulations."

One thing, however, and I think it is clear enough. For the sake of our state, at this point we must not let anything happen in that territory, which could contribute to the full discrediting of precisely this state. This is because, we were told, the Muslims are ready to collectively flee the municipality at the slightest wink or sign. There are not many of them left there anyway. Something like this would come as the greatest blow to us ahead of the International Conference on Yugoslavia. Of course, and I wish to emphasise this: like the rest of us sitting at this table, I am staunchly opposed to such political methods and to such policies, which are ineffective in preventing genocide or purges against another part of the population, in one of our territories, definitely none of us would participate in it. For example, to us, in our opinion, it would be the reason for us to say; we are not able to protect those people. Therefore, we do not deserve to hold power.

These intentions of ours are not aimed at keeping our positions here, but to defend the state, as such, such as we believe it should be.

Života PANIĆ:

In a conversation with him yesterday evening I realised that the Army was the one to blame the most. I also heard that you had said in a radio broadcast that the Army was quite guilty of those cases, if this is correct, if not, I apologise.

All we can do is help, but you will have to work out 90 percent of it with MUP. We shall help as much as we can, but not do anything more. I think it is realistic for us to conduct inspections. Every single military vehicle is to be thoroughly inspected, travel orders and the rest. Our vehicles are marked, VJ, meaning, the Yugoslav Army. We have changed everything. Every other vehicle, to the barracks; driver, out; if he is a reservist etc., it should be checked where he comes from, and how he goes /as written/.

We left behind thousands and thousands of military vehicles in the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina. These vehicles are probably moving along that direction. Every vehicle will be stopped and seized. You will receive such an order and act accordingly.

Pavle STRUGAR:

Those two died in such an action.

Života PANIĆ:

That action was planned. We arrested that battalion commander.

Pavle STRUGAR:

But I must say that many vehicles were being sent. That was a usual method – help from the region.

Života PANIĆ:

It is time now for that to be closed.

Pavle STRUGAR:

We closed it, I would say, 99%. But still, I'm telling you, you can't guarantee that. We have conscripts at the border. We don't have Yugoslav professional servicemen there.

Života PANIĆ:

Every problem, that needs to be solved by the authorities of Montenegro ... Army Commander has substantial authority, I don't need to tell you about that. He could have done everything by himself. If he does not have enough troops, we should assist him in a certain way, of course.

Pavle STRUGAR:

He doesn't have enough troops.

Života PANIĆ:

I know that. We will send a strengthened company, from here, from Belgrade - that is a little bit less than a battalion – with a special task. They will perform that task. DAMJANOVIĆ will receive them there on Sunday. They must be at these positions alongside MUP. Because we will control military vehicles and they will control civilian ones. If a collision occurs, they can defend themselves together. /Their/ Police has more experience than our police do. Therefore, we will solve this problem.

The second problem – I think that it should be under the jurisdiction of the Montenegro MUP – is the confrontation with the /illegible/ organisations. They should be captured and arrested. When /illegible/ is present in these regions, there will be no excesses like this – gathering of citizens, as it happened there.

We will protect the region with these kinds of actions and there will be no problems.

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

I will not say anything more significant than what you already said, nor will I propose anything more significant and specific than what you already proposed and what you know and understand as possibilities for more efficient actions within your departments and jurisdictions.

I would like to agree with you that the subject of our discussion is extremely, extremely important. This is not only about civil peace in Pljevlja or about the endangering of civil peace and the integrity of Montenegro. This is about the endangering of our whole state, about the fuse for the rebellion in Sandžak, about the motivation for the intervention. It is gaining extreme proportions these days and it is becoming a reality, which moves our approach to a much higher and more responsible level than the level of this discussion with all these assumptions.

The thing that is extremely complex in Pljevlja, which is a metaphor for our situation in general, is the fact that it is hard to make a distinction between patriotism and crime. Patriotism and crime are intertwined in such relations and such ways that everyone took part in that “muddled water” – the Serbian MUP, the Montenegrin

MUP and the Army. It will really take a lot of time to make a distinction between crime and patriotism, between a political army and a patriotic national one. That will be our problem as long as the war in Bosnia is going on, unless other circumstances burden us with more difficult problems.

Aside from all that you proposed and said, I would like to support all propositions which give the responsibility for solving this situation to the MUP organs of both republics and, of course, the federal factor.

I ask for the minimal use of the army in this case; to be used only in case of extreme need. That is the way I understand the gravity of our situation. Because, this is a precedent, we will then have to use the Army in Rožaje, Novi Pazar etc., later on. You know how many “fuses” are there, ready to be lit.

Do what you wanted with the Army, assist Montenegro in that, help Pavle BULATOVIĆ, Serbian MUP, but within the types of co-ordination we defined rather precisely at our last meeting. I am very sorry that our decision had not been implemented properly. I must say that I am surprised that such incidents are possible, like the one with the Captain, his elimination from taking part and being present, which is not of an unprincipled nature /as stated/. It is a question of confidence, a question of co-operation, which can someday be decisive in the defence of our territory, in much more difficult situations than the one in Pljevlja now.

Therefore, if we implement decisions from our last meeting accurately and properly, along with these new suggestions that you gave, and with such a strong engagement of the leadership of Montenegro, I think that we can keep things under our control here.

I would like to add another proposition to yours – the talks with political leaders, leaders of political parties, which are in command of paramilitary formations. These gentlemen are winning elections and making political careers with their armed followers. They will be inflicting political damage on us for a long time. They criminalized our lives in the big towns. This what’s happening is really very serious for a legal state.

I cannot make precise conclusions. I will not make conclusions. I agree with your views and propositions. You are the people most responsible for transferring this discussion into an increased activity, increased responsibility and co-ordination of efforts.

Momir, I don’t know what more could we have done. If you have more requests, just give them!

Momir BULATOVIĆ:

I agree with that completely.

Let's just define one issue.

PANIĆ's proposal is to operate in a such manner so that the Army in co-operation with our forces stops and controls the vehicles with the JNA registration plates at certain checkpoints and to assist in stopping and controlling larger groups of vehicles— two, three, five buses; because men who are armed and in uniforms are not easy to stop.

Života PANIĆ:

That is what I thought.

Momir BULATOVIĆ:

There is a large dilemma amongst the people. Yesterday when this one was arrested, the question why was a Serb arrested first was immediately raised in Pljevlja itself. What happened to our police? Our police were afraid that the Serbs would start shooting at each other, because the Muslims stood thrilled, on the sides showing the "V" sign.

I think that some principle of a legal state has to be defended. Those paramilitary formations are pushing us into great evil. Then they say to me, to comfort me: "We wouldn't insist on Serbs fighting against Serbs, but we would turn around and kill the Muslims together"; the catastrophe is even worse.

I am pleased with these proposals.

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

Fine, let's move to the second item of the agenda:

## 2. THE SITUATION IN THE COUNTRY – THE POSSIBILITY OF AN ATTACK AND EXECUTION OF A MILITARY INTERVENTION

Let me express to you an anxiety of mine, a concern. You don't have to declare yourselves in detail, but I would like to express to you this anxiety, to share it

with you so that you will be able to think about it yourselves and to reject it tomorrow if I am not right.

I have a feeling that our situation is becoming harder, more dramatic, more uncertain and it is becoming completely critical.

The issue is no longer putting efforts in removing the sanctions. The issue is now, whether we can avoid a military intervention. In my opinion, the motivation for a military intervention being created, the motives are being sought; causes are being staged, and the possibility for a military intervention is getting bigger.

We would be very politically immature not to take the following into account: Our foreign policy and many PANIC's acts /unintelligible/ haven't given great results. In my opinion, those results are humble. They are of a propaganda nature, they are of a media nature, they are not political or they are political but on a small scale, on the scale that is far from being decisive, determinant in the points of view and policies of great powers, EU, Security Council and especially of America.

Our efforts towards accelerated democratisation and transformation of the society, to achieve some results in that field, haven't given desired results and they didn't mean what we thought they would. It turned out that these excuses that it was all about national-Bolshevism in Serbia or "masked" communists, "pink" communists in power in Montenegro, that these were really excuses. That was not a serious accusation or a serious reason for such a bad international position of ours.

I don't know what else we could have done this month apart from what we are doing now: elections, Constitution, "round table", the laws we are preparing.

However, when you read the foreign press, when you look at the points of view – nothing important regarding us has changed significantly.

I have a private estimate – you immediately deny it – that the Muslims are establishing and determining the relation of the international community towards us, by their powerful sponsors and with an aggressive, unscrupulous, belligerent policy, which they implement with all their power on the international scene. The Muslims are fighting decisive battles for their concept, for their state, for their ideology, for their world in the Balkans and Europe. They have objective conditions to win that battle.

They would not be what they are if they could miss such opportunities that exist in the world to win the decisive battle against us the Serbs, Montenegro, and Yugoslavia. TUĐMAN has been tremendously entrenched now and as a national leader and a creator of the modern Croatian state he will use it to "ride on the Muslim

wave” in order to fulfil his goals in Bosnia and Herzegovina and neutralise us in Bosnia and Herzegovina and resolve the issue of Krajinas as well as the Serbian issue in Croatia.

My opinion is that this coalition, with the help of non-Islamic and American factors, is ready to beat us, to defeat us militarily, they want to defeat us in war. I cannot see any serious intentions there that they want peace through negotiations; they want to beat us. If they wanted peace through negotiations we could agree with them on the territory, on borders and on all so-called internal problems of the state of Bosnia and Herzegovina. You see that there will be nothing of it.

MILOŠEVIĆ and BULATOVIĆ are invited to Brussels next Friday with the presidents of all republics. I do not know if they will go, why are they going and should they go? That trip of theirs needs special discussion and we have to exchange opinions about it. I have a vision of my own, a personal proposal of mine, for which I am not sure if it is entirely reasonable and it is going to be necessary to check it.

So, our situation is rapidly deteriorating, the position of our state is deteriorating, and I have a feeling that we are acting inertly – regularly, as the situation is regular. It is an old power and superiority of ours /as written/ to act habitually in such circumstances.

I will be free to suggest a red alert to the Army. I see in your reports (talking to General PANIĆ) that you are trying to increase the level of combat readiness and it is a continuous effort. However, what I know – I may not know the very essence – it does not seem to me that you are preparing for the worse.

Života PANIĆ:

For the war?

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

For the war. I think you have to prepare for the worse,

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

For war. I think that you need to prepare yourselves for the worst, and what needs to be done in that worst situation should be discussed at the highest level and with the most competent people.

If you have the need, reasons or if you are certain that my concern is justified, tell me something, tell each other also; if not, we'll hold the State Council /meeting/on

Tuesday. Perhaps you were surprised at my proposal to constitute the State Council using a constitutional possibility. Please, believe me it was necessary. That forum consisting of the most responsible people will be necessary to formulate our immediate state policy, even more so considering the fact that we have to master the politics of the President and the Government, which is somewhat “loose”, led by one person. Our country is getting into an unfavourable position. A foreigner said to me today: “The London Conference on Yugoslavia can become a sort of an Islamic inquisition, if they succeed in bringing four Islamic countries, and all that supported by the factors of the American influence.”

I kindly ask you to prepare yourselves for the talks on Tuesday. I think that the decisions we pass on Tuesday oblige us all to operate as a whole at our workplaces. You proposed (addressing General PANIĆ) this meeting to be held in Karadordevo. Since we have a lot to do, and travel by night is not possible, I suggest that we pick a nearer spot – in Dobanovci.

Života PANIĆ:

In order to carry out an organised attack, as prepared by the “Westerners”, a lot of time needs to pass. They cannot go now.

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

Are you sure about the amount of time they spent on the preparations?

Života PANIĆ:

They have to carry out the preparations for bringing the units in.

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

Maybe those preparations have already been carried out?

Života PANIĆ:

No, they haven't, because we are following that. They can carry out an air strike on us, as a sort of warning, specifically on the units of the Serbian Army of BiH, and the vital facilities in Serbia and Montenegro, including the Podgorica Airport, all of our airports, military industry etc.

We have carried out certain preparations for that. We are following that. All of our PVO /Anti-Aircraft Defence/ units are on the increased level of combat readiness;



they are constantly asking for this readiness to be loosened but we won't do that. They can carry out an airborne assault on the Prevlaka Peninsula, and we are ready for that, and the airborne assault would be carried out by the units already prepared in Italy.

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

Yes, I know that.

Života PANIĆ:

The Croatian units have also been prepared. Croatia is also now engaged in liberating its territory on the Prevlaka Peninsula. Later on, the army of the European Community, the Americans and etc., would be involved. However, in order to do that, the Security Council must pass a unanimous decision for the forces to be engaged. I personally don't think that will happen.

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

The Security Council session is taking place tonight.

Života PANIĆ:

And it should; the Americans have the minority now. You saw that only six countries supported their proposal regarding human rights, which means that something's wrong.

BUSH is in a very awkward situation now. We are supporting his victory, because Yugoslavia is better off with BUSH than without him. That is certain. However, his entire activity will occur before the elections – September – October, when he is going to focus on propagation. By taking these measures, he wants to satisfy the public opinion, which is maximally prepared for the option of war.

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

Look at what happened with the camps, how they have been used!

Života PANIĆ:

Mr President, the worst thing is that we don't know what might happen tomorrow and what their plans are. They have struck on the camps now, they have distributed lists in the camps: 250, 370, 2000, 5000 etc.

Momir BULATOVIĆ:

They are broadcasting that on TV.

Života PANIĆ:

They are broadcasting what they have assembled.

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

What kind of a camp is Omarska?

Života PANIĆ:

They are keeping Muslim detainees in prisons. The prisons are temporary. Our men at least guard those people, whereas they are killing all of our people. Everyone trusts them, no one trusts us. That is the scenario. They have made that scenario and are following only that scenario, and they are ticking off only that net diagram /as written/.

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

Yes.

Života PANIĆ:

It has been slowed down a bit, and it has been seen that the public opinion in the world is changing, that the situation isn't right. THATCHER is immediately being engaged. MAJOR thinks that's wrong. The British Intelligence Service has the best information and gives the best estimations. Regard the information you hear on the radio given by the British all right. According to our findings, the Russians are showing inclination for those things. However, they shouldn't accept that and they will be the first to say "no". I believe in that.

Pavle BULATOVIĆ:

It is assumed that there are 6-7 thousand Italian soldiers in Albania.

Života PANIĆ:

Not assumed – they have been seen!

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

We won't expand the topic. We will talk about it on Tuesday. I used the opportunity to express that concern. I have been very disturbed and – to be honest – scared for two days.

Momir BULATOVIĆ:

Some things are beyond our power. Whether they will attack us or not depends on their interests. What really scares me is that we are losing time, that we are losing weeks and weeks, and that we haven't established the minimum of our state policy, which we really need to go to war for, if there are no other options.

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

That is essential.

Momir BULATOVIĆ:

Today I'll receive the invitation for the Conference in Brussels. We haven't had a chance to talk. I have experienced a very unpleasant surprise when I realised that our colleague and friend Vlatko JOVANOVIĆ, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, doesn't have the information we have dealt with here, and had a hard time at our Defence Council /meeting/. We need co-ordination. If our destiny is to be killed like our forefathers then we should at least know what we are being killed for.

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

That's right.

Momir BULATOVIĆ:

I think that we have lost one week needlessly. You'll remember that we had talked about the need for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to process something for us expertly. Vlatko JOVANOVIĆ told me that he couldn't process anything.

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

I gave him an order but too late.

Momir BULATOVIĆ:

He must be present during the project task. He can compile material from things we say, and then we can talk again.

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

Sometimes the President of the Government informs me, but that's not enough, whereas I don't get information about a number of actions and events. I'm talking about notes, letters, faxes regarding crucial issues. I agree that we have lost time, and we are still losing it. We have to find a better way for mutual relations and influence with the people from Bosnia. Our responsibility for them is growing and their responsibility to us must be greater.

I thank you for this meeting.

(Session finished at 21:00)