

Shorthand Notes

taken at the 6<sup>th</sup> Session of the Supreme Defence Council  
held on 9 December 1997/

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The session began at 1100 hrs.

It was attended by: Academic Dobrica ĆOSIĆ, /word illegible/ of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and President of the Council; /word illegible/ MILOŠEVIĆ, President of the Republic of Serbia, and Momir BULATOVIĆ, President of the Republic of Montenegro – members of the Council; /word illegible/ General Života PANIĆ, Chief of General Staff of the Yugoslav Army; Lieutenant General Rade POLIĆ, Chief of the Operations Department; Major General Radovan RADINOVIĆ, Chief of the Department of Strategic Studies and Defence Policy of the Ministry of Defence; Major General Risto MATOVIĆ, Chief of the Personnel Administration; and Colonel Slavko KRIVOŠIJA, Chief of the Military Cabinet and Secretary of the Supreme Council.

(Shorthand notes taken by Jordan ŽIVANOVIĆ, Head of the Stenographers' Group at the Cabinet of the President of the FRY /Federal Republic of Yugoslavia/.)

The session was presided over by Dobrica ĆOSIĆ, President of the Supreme Council.

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

I suggest that we start working. You received the proposal of the Agenda of today's session of the Supreme Council, which is as follows:

Agenda:

1. Preparation of the Yugoslav Army due to the threat of military intervention in Bosnia and Herzegovina, possible aggression of Croatia on the Republic of Serbian Krajina, and possible Albanian secessionist rebellion in Kosovo.
2. Situation in the Ministry of Defence and the General Staff of the Yugoslav Army caused by the candidature of Acting Minister of Defence Milan PANIĆ for the President of the Republic of Serbia.

3. Decrees on appointments and promotions of colonels and generals of the Yugoslav Army.
4. Invitation by VANCE and OWEN to General PANIĆ requesting him to come to Geneva on 9 December.

Are there any remarks or proposals of amendments to the proposed agenda?

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

I suggest that we discuss the situation in the Ministry of Defence and the General Staff under the second item of the Agenda, but I do not see any connection between that situation and the candidature of Milan PANIĆ for the President of the Republic of Serbia? I do not think that that is the matter which endangers the situation in the Army and the General Staff.

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

It does not endanger it, but we have to take a stand on this matter at least in principle.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

There are some other disputable issues that were discussed, and as far as I remember, they were related to the resignations of /names illegible/ and ŠAINOVIĆ who were topical even before his candidature. There are also similar consequences there.

I think that it is not a job of the Supreme Council to discuss the candidature of Milan PANIĆ.

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

I think that it is. Whether the Supreme Court and the Election Commission will approve the candidature of Milan PANIĆ for the President of the Republic of Serbia, that's something else. However, I consider the act of his candidature at this stage and level of politicisation to be incompatible with his present duty.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

Yes, but still, it is not a matter of concern for the Supreme Defence Council.

3.

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

I do not know whether it is the matter of concern for the Supreme Council. If not, then the Government should be dealing with it. The Government either has or does not have a point of view regarding it.

I spoke to Milan PANIĆ /word illegible/ him to withdraw and to resign. By such act /words illegible/ politicises the Army, causing a split in /words illegible/. He should resign from that duty, and appoint some members of the Government as /word illegible/ until the new elections take place and the new Government gets elected, in order to release the Army from political pressure. That is my opinion.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

I do not believe that his candidature has caused any split in the Army.

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

I would like to hear it also from Mr PANIĆ. I have a piece of information that there is a split.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

I read the statement of the Ministry's Board. It did not particularly refer to his candidature for the President of the Republic, but it referred to his overall activities.

Života PANIĆ:

When I was about to go on a trip, I held a meeting with the Board of the Ministry of Defence and the General Staff. According to the Constitution and the current Law on Army, the Chief of General Staff is the Deputy Minister of Defence until 31 December unless something changes.

We agreed that no process should be started before I come back because of the pre-election activities. That was the task issued at the Board's meeting. However, we agreed to write a statement and present our opinion on it to the Council of National Defence. I sent it to you and you read it through.

Since I came back from my trip last night only, I did not investigate it, but I heard something about it in a telephone conversation. Therefore, I cannot say precisely anything about it right now.

4.

As for the situation in the Ministry and the General Staff, I run both of them and I think that the situation is stable. As for the incident that just happened, /words illegible/ we will investigate it. There are no problems in the General Staff /words illegible/ issue; I think that the situation is satisfactory there, as well as in the Ministry /words illegible/. And, we will investigate and inform you about how it happened that they /words illegible/.

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

I talked with General DOMAZETOVIĆ and General DRAGOJEVIĆ about it, because you were not here and I wanted to get informed about the situation in the General Staff and the Ministry. That act met with significant response in the public and the response is not positive. It is the first time that a part of the Army or one of its institutions is acting like this.

While talking with DOMAZETOVIĆ and DRAGOJEVIĆ, I realised that the problem did exist. General DRAGOJEVIĆ is very much unsatisfied with the behaviour and activities of President PANIĆ, and his stepping forward on the political scene for elections made them react like that directly. I did not make it up.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

This is a complete reversal of arguments. I think that the public was irritated by the presence of a foreign group in the Government and not by somebody's candidature for some function. It was more serious than somebody's candidature.

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

Of course! I do not ignore it, but this is probably more important.

Radovan RADINOVIĆ:

Since I am a member of the Board who distanced himself from such actions, I would like to say a few sentences about it. It did cause a political damage. However, I

think that it has no influence on the relationship between the Ministry and the General Staff.

5.

Actually, our statement was disowned by the General Staff so that it did not get exposed /word illegible/ political scene.

We explained to President PANIĆ several times at /words illegible/ that take place each Friday, that such excesses of his affect the political /words illegible/. We begged him not to do that.

Since the Ministry of Defence is a hierarchical system, and the Supreme Defence Council is on the top of it, his /word illegible/ activity started jeopardising the hierarchical system and us as professionals. If he says for /word illegible/ of the Supreme Command that “he is a nobody”, I have to distance myself from it. It is a system that has to function regardless of political affiliations. It was our only motive for him to step forward. And as per whether it was politically correct or not, it depends on one's point of view.

This is not about anything else. This is not about disobeying him, but rather asking him not to do that as the Minister of Defence, because I think that he, being the Minister of Defence, cannot do that. He can do that as Milan PANIĆ only. I asked him to appoint a person who should replace him in that post during the elections, so that he would not jeopardise our political impartiality by his election activities.

Života PANIĆ:

He was told that he should not involve the Army in the pre-election activities, if he wanted to stand for election.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

No one can involve the Army in the pre-election activities.

If there is something that the Supreme Council should be concerned of, it is the same thing that drew the attention of the public and made some ministers resign from their posts even before his candidature. It is also the presence of the foreign group which has been treated as “a government” within the Government. It certainly

jeopardises certain security functions in the country. His candidature does not have such an importance.

6.

It is completely marginal in comparison with that fact. I do not see any reason why we should deal with this marginal fact rather than the main fact. This issue is clear.

When I read the statement containing the point of view of the Board /words illegible/, I understood that it was related to the overall situation, /words illegible/ candidature. As if his candidature is so important. /words illegible/ Captain Dragan, Jezda, etc. Everyone has the right to /words illegible/.

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

All right. We should not waste our time. As for the thing that /word illegible/ General RADINOVIĆ, my motive is the same as his. Of course, you are completely right about the motivation; the definition of issue that I proposed for the agenda was narrow, and it should be certainly extended to the other issue – the issue of his function which is related to the character of the duty that he performs. It was the same thing that I said at the General Staff meeting three months ago: there is an apparatus of civil servants in his office who are not our citizens or the people accountable to us. I tried to draw your attention to it, and the General Staff knows it.

If you think that we should not discuss it, and bearing in mind my current function, I gave myself the right to suggest him to withdraw.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

Please, let me clear this up. I do not want to be involved in anything related to the electoral activities of the President of the Republic of Serbia.

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

It does not affect you. Why do you care about it?

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

I do not want to be involved in the current activities related to the election of the President of the Republic of Serbia. I am the President of the Republic of Serbia and a candidate for the President of the Republic of Serbia. In no way, do I want to

discuss anybody's candidature for the President of the Republic within the Supreme Council.

7.

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

All right, you do not have to discuss it. /Words illegible/ of things, you can preserve your autonomy and neutrality /words illegible/, but I think differently. I think that /word illegible/ is not superfluous, as General RADINOVIĆ also /words illegible/. If most of you think that we should not discuss it any more, we will remove this item from the agenda.

Momir BULATOVIĆ:

Since this is a discussion related to the defining of the agenda, I agree that this formulation is too narrow. I think that it will be useful if we discuss under the second item the situation in the Ministry of Defence and the General Staff of the Yugoslav Army related to the pre-election activities and turmoil which resulted in many new occurrences. So, it should not be related to this single case, though we will pay attention to this case as well.

Života PANIĆ:

Today we cannot discuss the situation in the Ministry of Defence and the General Staff. I would suggest you to let us prepare thoroughly for it so that we can present this issue with arguments.

Momir BULATOVIĆ:

Let me explain the essence of this proposal. I did not want to make an analysis, but I treated the situation with regards to the current political turmoil, based on which we could establish several elementary principles, such as: the Yugoslav Army should not be involved in this political turmoil, it must not be manipulated by and subordinated to any programme, political figure, etc. I thought that we could improve the position of the Yugoslav Army by some decisions of the Defence Council. I did not mean that we should discuss whether someone is for one or another person. Still, it is illogical that the Minister of Defence, who is also the Prime Minister, be a candidate.

8.

The situation in the Ministry of Defence has nothing to do with the Defence Council but with the Government. In such way we are getting into many contradictory and parallel activities /words illegible/ has a political consequence.

I think that it would be good if we strengthened /word illegible/ principles, such as: place, position and role of the Yugoslav Army /words illegible/ our discussion.

I support your proposal (addressing President ĆOSIĆ). Maybe we could suggest the Prime Minister to resign from that post, appoint an acting minister, and decrease /word illegible/ that are present in the public.

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

I called him a few days ago and told him that he should do that necessarily. He generally intends to give statements just like that. He should in no case involve the Army in a politicisation which, I think, is neither constitutional nor based on civil principles.

All right, I will not insist on anything anymore. You can discuss it. Actually, you gave a statement (addressing General PANIĆ). I spoke with General DOMAZETOVIĆ.

Života PANIĆ:

We sent it to you!

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

Yes, you did. You warned me about it. It was a direct reason for me to talk to him immediately.

So, I suggest that we reformulate this item of the agenda. For instance, it can be something like this:

The Supreme Defence Council confirms or supports the principle of non-interference of the Yugoslav Army in the election campaign and current politicisation.

There should be no discussion about that if there is no reason for it. But, if we are to issue a statement from this meeting, I think that it will be useful to say it again.



9.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

Generally speaking, as for the issue of attitude of the Defence Council /words illegible/ elections, I think that the Defence Council has no reason to /words illegible/. I do not think that the Army is jeopardised by /word illegible/ campaign. The citizens should vote, and we haven't /words illegible/ that the Army is split because of the elections and /words illegible/ the combat readiness of the Army is called into question because /word illegible/ his candidature.

Života PANIĆ:

But, we should say that the Army is not politicised, does not support any party, etc. I heard RAKIĆ's statement this morning. It creates divisions. He assaults the Ministry, defends the General Staff, wants to replace the generals, etc.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

That is not within their authority.

Života PANIĆ:

It is not, but he gives such statements in public.

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

It disturbs people. It really gets to people.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

The Council can only condemn the statements of persons and members of the Government who interfere in any way into military issues which are not of their concern and which come within the competence of the Supreme Defence Council only.

Života PANIĆ:

I agree with it.

10.

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

All right. The discussion on this item is finished. Colonel KRIVOŠIJA will find an adequate /words illegible/. All right. Are there any other /words illegible/ or amendments to the agenda? (No.) All right. We shall move further to the first item of the agenda:

1. Preparation of the Yugoslav Army due to the threat of military intervention in Bosnia and Herzegovina, possible aggression of Croatia on the Republic of Serbian Krajina, and possible Albanian secessionist rebellion in Kosovo.

I think that I do not have to give any explanation to this forum why I proposed the discussion on this serious political, national and state problem which is our main responsibility - concern for the defence of the country.

As far as I understand the character of our Army and the character of functioning of the national defence system, each army in the world including our Army has and should have a developed defence system including the necessary assessment and idea of possible threats.

I have read lately in the reports which we received from the intelligence sphere that this country has received very serious threats from many different sides. Of course, these threats are part of a traditional media and political pressure which has been exerted ever since the fall of Yugoslavia and simultaneously with the fall of Yugoslavia. The pressure is being increased now due to our election campaign. However, there are also some new elements in the system and waves of pressures which keep warning us to be careful and get prepared to face all possible scenarios related to our independence and freedom.

11.

If you are interested in my personal opinion, what concerns me the most is the possible Islamic internationalisation of the Bosnian theatre of war. I am very much concerned about the Conference in /words illegible/ and about the pieces of information that I received and I still keep receiving /words illegible/ VANCE. I am also concerned about constant /words illegible/ NATO, some serious events in

Hungary that are related to /words illegible/ use of their airports and special forces /words illegible/. ... Security Council for new resolution on Bosnia /words illegible/ about which I was informed this morning by Minister ĐUKIĆ. Besides others things, the Resolution stipulates the possibility of energetic military action and shooting at any aircraft. Then, there was Edinburgh, and meetings of the European Community that are full of threats. I do not take all of them as completely realistic and achievable, since there are also some indications that our enemies, factors of the European Community and Security Council are ambivalent in their stands. We have many reasons to count with a rational attitude towards us and we have a right to believe that the intervention is not real. However, I am deeply convinced that a serious country should seriously take such threats and respond to them by preparing itself properly.

I would like to ask you as a competent forum to discuss it, present your opinion and take stands.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

There are numerous options that have been presented to us, which contain threats against us and which can be considered as some kind of military intervention against our country. I think that we should make constant assessments and analyses on chances that a planned and limited military intervention against our country takes place. It can certainly give us a clearer picture and assumptions based on which we should undertake some steps. However, it is always disputable, because we do not have enough elements, exactly as they do not have them at this moment, since they have not made any decision yet based on which we could foresee the future course of events.

Still, there is something that is not disputable. Regardless of how undefined it might be, we should draw only one conclusion out of all of it. The conclusion should speak about the necessity of preparedness and good dynamics of our armed forces who should be ready to react in any possible event.

12.

So, that is the element which is not disputable. /Words illegible/ what will happen if it happens – it is a matter of professional /word illegible/ of the Staff, development of those options. But, there are no /words illegible/ nor preparations if the Army is not

fully well /words illegible/ and well connected, well organised and ready /words illegible/ circumstances and options in a suitable manner. /Words illegible/

Therefore, the focus of our discussion /words illegible/ should be the creation of better conditions for the preparation of our /word illegible/ for any possible threat from the outside. It seems to me that we /words illegible/ since the very beginning. We have the obligation and the right to engage the Army only when it is to confront a possible threat from the outside. The Army should not be involved in internal affairs. Its only function is to protect the country. Therefore, it should be prepared as good as possible for the threat from the outside. Unfortunately, we can see that the competent organs in the Government are treating the issues related to the Army mostly by talking about pensions, accommodation-related issues, and salaries, instead of talking about the development of the Armed Forces, technical equipment and other things. I do not underestimate those other things either; they are important for the daily existence of the Army and its members, but we certainly cannot focus our discussions, especially the discussions of the Supreme Defence Council, on it.

Therefore, when talking about the first item of the agenda, we should not waste too much time on all possible assumptions, thinking about what could happen and in which way our country might be endangered. Rather than that, we should firstly think of the extent of readiness of our Army and we should figure out which measures we can undertake in order to ensure that the Army faces a possible threat in as good condition as possible. I think that it is the only approach that might be important at this moment.

If we have a good, prepared and capable Army with good support, then such an Army will be able to react in any possible case.

13.

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

I fully agree with you in principle. However, I think that the principle, which is completely indisputable, is not sufficient. It has to be extended so as to include some questions and answers /word illegible/, dangers, circumstances, or events.

Yesterday, I came to know in the Headquarters of the First Army that /words illegible/ border of the part of Krajina located in Slavonia, 130 Croatian /words

illegible/ for combat actions. We have information that the schools in Croatia /words illegible/ the school year by the end of March. We have internal /words illegible/ of Croatia, which clearly shows that they are ready to /words illegible/ each Serbian autonomy by their administrative division. /Words illegible/ statement of Butros GHALI to withdraw the “blue helmets” from Croatia.

These are the facts that indicate that the military intervention of Croatia in the Republic of Serbian Krajina is possible. We have to take a stand regarding that issue: whether we will fight for the Republic of Serbian Krajina, whether we can fight for it, and what we can expect as a result of that fight. I think that the Defence Council has to take a stand on it. At least I who hold this post, should know it. That is one thing. Also, we have to answer the question how the Yugoslav Army is going to behave in case of military intervention in Bosnia and Herzegovina: either we are going to fight for Republika Srpska or we will let them beat and kill? There is also the third question: possible rebellion in Kosovo and possible Albanian and Turkish intervention. How ready are we? What is our real chance to successfully defend ourselves? These are the real, main motives which made me suggest we discuss it.

I think that the three of us who are politically responsible cannot sleep peacefully if we do not know a very clear stand of the Army and the General Staff regarding those issues, a stand that should be worked out tactically and strategically. You know very well that the Army has strategic, tactical and other systems of defence that have been worked out. It has certain potentials for defence, but I do not know anything about it. If I am not informed due to the lack of curiosity or because I failed to conscientiously perform my duty, I wish to know now whether our General Staff is prepared and whether it has answers to those questions. That is what I am saying.

14.

Života PANIĆ:

As far as the assessment is concerned, it is /words illegible/; it is like this today, tomorrow is milder, and the day after tomorrow /words illegible/. Our assessments are not based on /words illegible/ news agencies, but on information that /words illegible/ from our intelligence services. Before I left to /words illegible/ I ordered and we installed some very good intelligence /words illegible/ our enterprises abroad, and they already /word illegible/ that we are getting much better information.

I would not talk about the assessment. I would rather leave this material related to the assessment /words illegible/ of the Supreme Council. I would like to say what I would suggest in case of aggression on the Republic of Serbian Krajina, Republika Srpska, Sandžak, Kosovo, etc. We anticipated the Supreme Defence Council to come and look into the war plan, and being the Supreme Commander (addressing President ĆOSIĆ), you should approve and sign it. It should happen during this week. Therefore, being the most accountable persons for these issues in the country, the three of you will be informed about the details. Afterwards, you will sign it and it will be valid then.

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

Do you have the answers to each of these three questions?

Života PANIĆ:

Yes, we have.

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

Is the General Staff going to present us the its point of view regarding our potentials, our real chances in that fight?

Života PANIĆ:

We will present everything. We prepared everything.

15.

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

Very well!

Života PANIĆ:

Here are the assessments. You know what are/words illegible/ with regards to all those issues; what are our stockpiles, etc. I would not talk about the external /words illegible/ now; you know it more or less.

We planned that the Yugoslav Army /words illegible/ 120 thousand /sic/; the supreme leadership approved it. We currently have 82 thousand /sic/. In order to improve the peacetime augmentation of manpower levels and bring them up to the

levels which would ensure the realisation of /word illegible/ tasks, we engaged 13 thousand men from the Reserve Force and we pay them now in order to ensure appropriate combat readiness of the Yugoslav Army. Due to poor interest for the call-up papers, we received only 5,700 soldiers under contract, though we anticipated 24,000 men. The wartime Army numbers 600 thousand men, and we are talking about a 95% augmentation. So, the mobilisation plans have been made.

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

Are the national minorities included in it?

Života PANIĆ:

Yes, except for Šiptari /derogatory for Kosovo Albanians/.

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

Are there any Hungarians?

Života PANIĆ:

Hungarians are excellent fighters. I cannot recall a single case of a Hungarian who fought badly. They fought better than Serbs. They never abandoned the battlefield. Many of them got killed. Those who escaped – they escaped.

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

You heard the Commander of the Novi Sad Corps yesterday? (Addressing General POLIĆ)

16.

Rade POLIĆ:

General BIORČEVIĆ said yesterday to the President that no Hungarian is interested to respond to the mobilisation.

Života PANIĆ:

That is not true!

We can go to Bačka Topola right now /word illegible/ Brigade; the Brigade would be brought up to the required levels 90%, and 73% of them would be the

Hungarians from that area. I served in Vojvodina for nine years. /Words illegible/ I was the Chief of the Corps and the Corps Commander. I was /words illegible/ of the First Army which was fighting in that area. /Words illegible/ got in from the Hungarian territory; mostly the Hungarians got killed, but they also repelled the attack of the Croats from the Hungarian territory.

I would kindly ask you not to record this now, because I will give you the complete material.

(The session was not recorded for 10 minutes.)

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

All right. Who wants to speak about this subject?

Messrs Generals, do you want to add something more in addition to what the Chief of General Staff said?

Radovan RADINOVIĆ:

I support everything that General PANIĆ has said. I would just like to try to clear up something.

Our Army has an appropriate size and our resources are such that we can successfully prevent secession, defeat any neighbouring country in a local war, and ensure the conditions required for waging a long war in case such a war was imposed on us in our territory. Such a war would result in huge losses, but we would have to wage it if we were forced. Since the war would be imposed on us from a distance and since the chance of survival of that strike, and especially of the strike back, are limited, we have to do everything to ensure that no one would impose such a war on us.

17.

We have to define our stand regarding possible intervention of Croatia in Krajinas and possible intervention in Republika Srpska. It is certain that the Army of Republika Srpska and the Serbian people in Bosnia cannot confront the multinational forces. However, it should not be a reason for us to get immediately into war, because /words illegible/ impose it on us, and we would hardly manage to walk out of it. /Words illegible/ would be to our detriment.



Those are some facts that the Supreme Defence Council should bear in mind. I am sure that you do bear it in mind when defining our stand regarding the use of military force in the area of the FRY.

I think that the highest national interest of the Serbian people now is to preserve the territory that remained within the borders of the FRY.

Rade POLIĆ:

Mr. President, the General has presented the part that was worked out the most. I would just like to say a few sentences.

We have worked out all assessments of possible threat to our country in different situations and cases. Based on those assessments, we developed all plans for all possible cases in our territory.

However, we have not developed the plans for use of the Armed Forces of the FRY in the area of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Krajina, if they get engaged there. We could work out a special version of engagement of a part of the forces in that area, in case of making political decision and ordering the Army to intervene over there.

Risto MATOVIĆ:

Mr President, maybe we should also think of current help to the people in Republika Srpska and the Republic of Serbian Krajina. Being a staff manager, I face many problems in terms of response of men for Republika Srpska – response of commanding officers that are needed over there.

18.

The crimes and violations that have been committed by Serbs in Bosnia and Herzegovina are result of poorly organised troops and lack of commanding staff. Some individuals proclaimed themselves dukes, Chetnik commanders, etc. You know what the results of their behaviour are.

Therefore, I think that as per sending the volunteers /words illegible/ regarding the transfer of the commanding officers to those areas /words illegible/.

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

Do you know the number of volunteers?

Risto MATOVIĆ:

I am talking about the response of the commanding officers from that area who serve in the Yugoslav Army.

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

Herzegovina complains about the weak manpower levels. The response of men from Herzegovina is considerably weak.

Risto MATOVIĆ:

There are about 1,800 commanding officers in that area who served in the former JNA /Yugoslav People's Army/. Some of those commanding officers are actually the present volunteers. There are few hundreds of them. The rest of them happened to be there or they declared themselves for the division of the JNA into the Yugoslav Army and the Army of Republika Srpska. Most of them are in the Banja Luka sector. As per the number of commanding officers, the manpower level reaches up to 80 per cent. We have brigades in the East Bosnia Corps in which the reserve commanding officers, commandants and commanders, are reserve sergeants, for instance.

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

How many generals from the former JNA are there in Bosnia and Herzegovina?

Risto MATOVIĆ:

There are two of them, besides MLADIĆ. We have three of them in the RSK /Republic of Serbian Krajina/.

19.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

We have to discuss the whole issue. Still, we cannot discuss the whole issue unless we include in the analysis also the issue of the "fifth column" in our country. It is led by /words illegible/ and foreign group which is obviously on the side /words

illegible/ coalition and forces which /words illegible/ and directly support the “fifth column”.

Therefore, if we talk about our /words illegible/ about what might happen but do not talk about what is /words illegible/, it would be very irresponsible and naïve. It is /words illegible/ that should be seriously analysed.

Secondly, each security related issue /words illegible/ our duty and responsibility to help the Republic of Serbian Krajina and Republika Srpska, which requires a thorough previous consultation with the leadership of both Republics. We should not make these assessments related to their situation without them and we should figure out which kind of help would be the best and the most appropriate for them to expect from us.

Therefore, we should take those two aspects in consideration when treating the whole issue. We cannot discuss those issues just based on elements that we have now.

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

You are completely right. But, I thought that we should discuss today the defence of the country that we represent, as well as the general stance taken by political and military leadership of the FRY.

I thought that I could suggest that you have urgent talks with political leaders of the RSK and Republika Srpska. Your point (addressing MILOŠEVIĆ) is well taken; we have to take into consideration the internal hostile forces as well. Besides the location and the identification that you gave (addressing MILOŠEVIĆ), I would kindly ask you to add to it the discussion on situation in political parties that might act as the “fifth column”.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

That is what I am talking about; they are all inter-linked.

20.

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

Not all of them have been inter-linked. We have to prove the connection between them by using intelligence services. However, we have to know our internal political collaborators and “fifth column” forces very well. They are not small and modest. We should check them.

Života PANIĆ:

I agree. We can only /words illegible/.

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

We really have to study it. If we are not ready for that talk today, and we do not have the material, then we should issue order to our intelligence service for it. I do not know what is the other way /words illegible/ besides our public assessments which are not sufficient for a thorough analysis which should be an argument for the decision of such a military and defensive character. So, we should issue an order to our intelligence services to investigate it and deliver information as soon as possible.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

When it comes to contacts with both Serbian Republics, we should not talk about “C” until we help them with “A” and “B”.

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

All right.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

We should figure out how we can help them regarding the most necessary things and what assets, technical equipment, etc. they need. We should also check how we could help them regarding those constant requests to cancel the hospitality to military conscripts. There are several dozens of thousands of them here among the refugees. They should return to their territory in any possible way to defend their homes before someone else does that.

So, those are the things that they need very much.

21.

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

All right. I suggest that the three of us invite the leaders of those Republics as soon as KARADŽIĆ returns from Geneva, and talk thoroughly with them in order to find out what their needs and assessments are and to hear all those requests.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

There should be the three of us and Žika; his presence is also required.

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

Messrs Generals know that we really do everything that we can, as much as I have been informed, same as you /sic/.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

Well, you see, I am not sure that we do everything. For instance, the maintenance of huge technical equipment in Krajina has been left to them in a way, and they are not skilled enough for it. You do help them somewhat.

Života PANIĆ:

We have been sending everything.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

Secondly, they do not have enough fuel over there either.

Života PANIĆ:

They have 20,000 litres; that is my last information.

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

I also have the same information.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

What is 20,000 litres /of fuel/?

22.

Života PANIĆ:

They can have as much oil as they like, because Bosnia and Herzegovina does not have the oil purchase restriction. They can import huge amounts of oil from Hungary via the Danube river. The matter at issue is money.

Mr. President, we must not /words illegible/ any longer the reserves, where there are items with a 40 % capacity, to give /words illegible/ without ammunition /sic/. I kindly ask that the money is given in /words illegible/ the ammunition for them too. I told you we owe 4 /illegible/ dinars to *Krušik* Valjevo.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

Let us not go into details. You need to make a budget that will provide all material resources that the Army needs. We are talking about the defence here, but before that, we have to provide the equipment, ammunition, material resources, and so on.

Života PANIĆ:

We are already working on it. We have undertaken some measures, we will get some money, and we will use it to improve the situation.

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

Momir, what do you think?

Momir BULATOVIĆ:

Of course, we cannot foresee the developments on the international scene, but one thing is certain and that is a negative trend towards us and towards both the Republic of Serbian Krajina and Republika Srpska. It was only yesterday when we wondered whether it would happen or not, but the information on military strikes, although limited at first, is about to reach the Security Council.

I respect what our President said about the strengthening of the Islamic factor which rules the roost in the world and bribes all politicians. But let us not talk about something that we all are aware of.

23.

I cannot resist the feeling that we are overestimating our combat readiness a bit, at least based on the situation report that I have got. I think that our position in some domains is worse than it is being presented on the paper.

Are those 600, 000 /word missing/ that we have at our disposal and around 200, 000 against whom we have instituted criminal proceedings /words illegible/, or because of evasion of call-ups? /sic/ /words illegible/ According to the assessments of the Army, it will influence the state of combat /words illegible/ and the mobilisation, and the entire political situation.

As far as the Second Army is concerned, I have been informed that this Army exists only on paper. As per the situation in the Navy, I know that its plans of combat development and readiness are totally unrealistic. For example, you have 6, 000 men on paper, while in reality you can hardly gather one third out of the assessed figure of men.

The reason why I am telling you this is not my bad intentions. On the contrary, I am taking this dramatic moment into consideration. We must get realistic information and act accordingly. I do not know if it is necessary to discuss this issue, but considering the information, situation, technical equipment, and political readiness of men to respond to mobilisation, the situation in the Second Army is very problematic.

I am saying all this just so that we could assess our strength more realistically.

General PANIĆ's report clearly indicates that we cannot wage war outside our territory with these capacities and with this manpower level of the Yugoslav Army. At this moment, we cannot do that, and this is one of the most significant facts that we have to bear in mind.

In our meeting that will take place shortly, the most competent body, i.e. the General Staff, should give us information and the opinion on the precise meaning of the term "extreme need"? Extreme need would be defined as a threat of extermination of our nation outside the FRY /Federal Republic of Yugoslavia/ borders. Yet, it looks to me that even such case of "extreme need" can come under the following dilemma: whether we will have enough power and potential to do that in such case.

24.

If I understood the experts' suggestions well, in case of a most disadvantageous option, i.e. a general aggression of Croatia against the Republic of

Serbian Krajina and possible intensified international intervention in Republika Srpska, we would have to act in this way that is here /words illegible/, meaning diplomatically, the sending of aid, the sending of volunteers /words illegible/.

But, I insist that when considering /words illegible/, in the meantime that will make the situation more complicated and will result in a large wave of refugees who will cross over to our territory. /sic/ Thus, the complex situation for which we are to be blamed, will become even more difficult. There is a large number of people who must be forced out of this territory, so that they go there and take up arms. And we all know that nothing good can come out of it.

On the other hand, I'd like to accentuate the following interdependency: any proven case of forcible repatriation of refugees will mean the cessation of international humanitarian aid deliveries. Thus, we would face the situation where we would not be able to support 700, 000 refugees who are currently in the FRY and, in this case their number would be even bigger, due to the lack of international humanitarian aid. According to their rules, if they can single case of forcible repatriation, you are not entitled to receive aid any longer.

When all other historical and state-related dilemmas we are surrounded with are taken into consideration, and, if we simplify all this, the key solution lies in the hands of the Bosnian Serbs. I think we have to have very intensified, opened, friendly or brotherly, whatever you like, talks with those people. The other day when I talked with our President, I expressed my disagreement, because I do not see any sense in the continuation of military operations in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

They do not see it either. Radovan told me that he does not know why they occupied Jajce, a Muslim town that they would never be able to preserve.

25.

Why would anyone die for Jajce?



Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

Why are they fighting for Maglaj, Goražde, and so on?

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

That is why they formed now the Supreme /words illegible/ and put it under control. They are doing two evils: firstly, /words illegible/ that they will surely must leave, because it does not belong to them and they know it does not belong to them. Secondly, they are pushing Muslims, they are forcing them into a smaller territory, meaning, their response is stronger. Following that logic, they can expect new losses.

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

What you have just said (addressing MILOŠEVIĆ) is very important. I am very content that we agree about this matter, because they are constantly counting on your political support. I talk with them every week. Of course, they do not say it openly, but they consistently claim that Serbia is supportive of such policy.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

No, they do not have such support. It is not even KARADŽIĆ's policy.

Života PANIĆ:

While he is here, it is not his policy.

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

Exactly! How many times have we advised him about Sarajevo. But let us leave this issue for some other time.

Momir, please continue!

Momir BULATOVIĆ:

I think that the issue is too serious, and that it has dragged on for too long. While we are generally discussing these issues, we all agree. Yet, today we face the situation where, due to these operations, incomprehensible to all of us, Serbs in Bosnia are suffering big casualties.

Secondly, they cannot protect the ethnically indisputable territories. Thirdly, they are additionally destabilising the internal political situation in the FRY because we have been singled out as betrayers. Fourthly, they are putting us in the position where we simply must prepare ourselves for the war.

If we succeed to end such irrational policy, thanks to our decisiveness and our mutual efforts, then we must have more stabile situation in the Republic of Serbian Krajina too. I think that the key solution will be in the hands of the Bosnian Serbs.

I would like to say something about Kosovo. Next time we get a chance to discuss it more broadly, I kindly ask for a suggestion of mine to be considered in the preparations. I think that secessionism in Kosovo and possible secessionism in Sandžak must be considered from a political aspect rather than from a military one only. Because if we plan to activate our military potentials and destroy those secessionists, we must take into account the fact that the very same impression has been created in the international public opinion. Especially America is exerting pressure regarding the Kosovo issue. We will again face the “Vukovar syndrome”, not in terms of long-lasting military operations, but in terms of a constant presence of journalists, observers, and thus lies that will be spread from that territory.

Therefore, maybe our strategic plans should include an option of absolute decisiveness to protect and preserve that territory. Yet, the military operations should be adjusted to the altered war conditions. We should analyse a bit the behaviour of the Russian Army in similar situations, which objectively differs from our former actions, and compare it with the actions of our Army that participated in the wars in Slovenia, Croatia. Our Army was taken by surprise at first, and later on provoked to cause mass destruction which only produced counter- effects at the end.

A plan should be made. Maybe we should have a TV camera together with the first combat vehicle; carefully, step by step, we should try to avoid stirring up a trouble internally and the most sensitive areas are Kosovo and Sandžak at the moment. Having said this, I do not question our determination and readiness to protect this territory.

27.

Luckily we still face no such powerful and sudden motives which would make us react promptly. However, it might be good if we sat and organised our intervention,

because we have a significant level /word illegible/ and political power in Kosovo. We should see how we can /word illegible/ intervention with as little casualties as possible and with as little /words illegible/, and largest possible positive publicity, provided that it is a classic case of secessionism. If we think that we can destroy a certain area with napalm and cause enormous casualties, then we can also expect that someone will drop napalm on us.

Života PANIĆ:

We do not have that information regarding the Second Army and the Navy that you have; the assessments are the same. But we have no such information.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

What do you mean "the same assessment, but different information"?

Života PANIĆ:

I went down there several times. At this point, we have no such information.

An army commander is an extremely important figure. If the Chief of General Staff, the General Staff, and the Ministry of Defence do the job of an army commander, then the appointment of army commander will not be necessary. If you take Kosovo for example - since SIMONOVIĆ has been appointed Army Commander, we have not had any problems down there.

I would like to know what this Army Commander is doing when the Army is not capable of carrying out this task. We have not got such information in our briefings.

The same goes for the Navy. The Navy has 5,300 men in total. The Commander told me that he would not be able to augment the troops with the men from that territory only; it must be augmented from the entire Yugoslav territory. The Navy must get rid of dead wood; we have many vessels there.

28.

We allowed them to conserve those vessels, to put them aside, to sell them, and so on. The coast is small - 109 kilometres, and the issue is how many powerful vessels we will have at our disposal for fighting back at sea. But the main defence line of our

Navy, our coast and coastline /words illegible/ many means, we have rocket systems, gun /words illegible/, we have good aircraft in Podgorica, etc.

Momir BULATOVIĆ:

I cannot say who is right or who is wrong - of course, I believe you. But I talked with the men in the Navy considering this redeployment that followed after the decision and authorisation of President ĆOSIĆ. Let us be completely open and honest- the structure of combat units that is adjusted to existing commanding system has been formed. Now you have the number of brigades, the number of units, and the manpower levels in Staffs are brought up to normal levels. They mention augmentation of manpower levels targeting the territories where we can hardly find a single conscript, because the Second Army units are being augmented at the moment. /sic/ I cannot say how it is being done – in a professional or unprofessional manner. I am only telling you that I possess that information, we have units only on paper, and we do not know how we will be able to augment them. For example, you rely on Bar, and you have Muslims and Albanians in Bar who refused to take up arms last time, and they do not want to take it up again. Considering the current situation, they should not be given any arms anyhow.

These are the pieces of information that cannot be hidden, because they provoke confusion and political insinuations. For instance, the Second Army is not being augmented because the Montenegro will separate, etc.

Života PANIĆ:

We will check it out. An Inspection went down there. It assessed the units quite favourably, while the Army Command barely got a passing grade. The Inspection returned just when I was about to leave, so I didn't get a chance to examine it thoroughly.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

I think we should make a list of things and moves that need to be made right after this Military Council.

29.

The first thing is a financial budget necessary for current things and also we must assure material resources for all aspects.

Secondly, the inspection of composition of /word illegible/ the Army. In some short timeframe, you must have your /words illegible/ with wartime deployments, delivered and signed.

Života PANIĆ:

Ninety five per cent of it has been done.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

Thirdly—the means. You “can’t count the chickens before they are hatched.”

Those two things are serving the purpose of fulfilling the peacetime requirements required for the country to defend itself in the first place. It is something that must be done urgently. This job has to be done quickly and efficiently.

Života PANIĆ:

As to those 600, 000 men, 95 % is done, counting the call-up papers, and the men who are part of the wartime deployment at the moment and live in Yugoslavia. Those who ran away were not included, Šiptars /derogatory for Kosovo Albanians/ were not included either, as well as Muslims around Bar and Ulcinj, and a number of Hungarians who are extremists and support AGOŠTON /as written/— it is the area of Kanjiža – Senta – Ada – Mol.

Rade POLIĆ:

Taking into consideration the current situation, our assessments in the General Staff are as follows: in case of a full mobilisation, we expect around 70 % of response and in case of a limited mobilisation – we expect from 30 % to 50 % of response, but bearing in mind that in some areas it would be a much bigger response, while in the Belgrade area and some other areas, it would be smaller response.

30.

A month and a half ago, we carried out a complex analysis of our combat readiness, and we concluded that the level of manpower in the Navy is 48 % which is unsatisfactory and we assessed it as low. An additional reason for such assessment was because the zone of augmentation of manpower levels for the Navy was not extended. We obliged them to extend the zone. Fifteen days ago, during the briefing on analysis of combat readiness, the Navy Commander reported that the level of manpower in the Navy was more than 70 % now.

It is a fact that the peacetime manpower levels of the Navy and the Second Army are below levels comparing to the armies that are in the critical areas like Kosovo, where we had to bring the manpower up to 100 %. In Vojvodina, we have to keep battalions together with the companies on stand by and ready to go in any moment and in case that Serbian population is endangered or the genocide takes place.

At the moment, the level of manpower when it comes to superior officers is 85 % in the Navy, in comparison with the previous 69 %. The peacetime manpower level is 48 %. The lowest level is the peacetime manpower level in the Second Army.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

How many men do you have in Kosovo?

Života PANIĆ:

There are 4,700 men; it is 100 %.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

We have around 3,000 men in the police force; but we can increase to 10,000 very soon.

Života PANIĆ:

The armoured brigade is very strong as well. There are three men per tank; the manpower level is low, while the possibilities of the brigade are enormous. The same case is with the mechanised brigades – there are 10 infantrymen, but they leave nothing but barren ground in their path.

This is a peacetime manpower level; in war, the corps manpower level should be brought up to 30, 000 men.

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

My duty is to say a few /words illegible/ in my capacity as President, but because of the feeling of responsibility.

Above all, I think that the report /words illegible/ General PANIĆ, by its contents, by the elements, /words illegible/, needs, conditions and possibilities as a responsibility that we as the Supreme Defence Council have. /sic/ General PANIĆ did not have time to prepare himself for this meeting.

In order for us to make such difficult and fateful decisions, we must have more detailed report that need to be submitted to us. Such report must be examined and we must declare ourselves more responsibly than we do now.

I also have a feeling that a formal approach has been used in this report, as well as the existing institutionalised attitude and patriotic optimism that I highly appreciate, but it is not enough for such questions and responses that we posed to ourselves.

Therefore, following Mr. MILOŠEVIĆ's suggestions, Mr. BULATOVIĆ's objections, and some General RADINOVIĆ's standpoints, I would suggest and ask the General Staff to prepare us a detailed and thorough report which, besides the more detailed assessments of our potentials, must include the assessment of our internal enemies, the assessment of moral-political situation in which the country is, and you are not the only one responsible for it but anyhow, you can assess it as General Staff. Three of us are invited to participate in that assessment.

If you wish, you can consider me as someone officially inclining to pessimism, I think that is evident and it is my "genetic flaw", you can presume that and I respect it. I think that moral-political state of our manpower is unsatisfactory when it comes to the mobilisation; I'll be very euphemistic.

Our assessments must be more convincing and more realistic if we want to set out such high aims.

32.

The three of us must commit ourselves to participate in such a meeting even more responsibly than you should in terms of the assessment of moral-political defence potential of our society.

Therefore, I oblige, I suggest the General Staff /words illegible/ in its full composition, to submit a detailed report /words illegible/ not with your signatures but with a full competency. It can have a historical value, historical responsibility /words illegible/ submitted to us. This country, the people responsible for this country and we /words illegible/ a document that will speak about our seriousness, our responsibility for the defence of this country. I myself have studied history and I know very well how a bad judgement, a political immaturity and lack of readiness to see things and our situation properly, can be fatal in a moral, historical and national sense.

I am responsible before you because I did not inform you about this meeting on time and because I initiated such conversation without making necessary preparations prior to it; but we opened the discussion. Of course, our job is to continue with it, it is not a tragedy if we cannot make any radical or comprehensive decisions today.

We have just opened this issue.

What is indisputable for all of us here is the defence of the country, the defence of Yugoslavia by all means. I as a citizen and as President of Republic, deeply believe in this.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

How could it be otherwise?

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

It could not be any different, nor must it be any different. The only issue of course, is how to carry out that defence.

There is a real danger for us in Kosovo. In my opinion, in the forthcoming years, maybe even months, the breaking out of serious national disorders is just a matter of time, even attempts to alter the borders and create Greater Albania, which would also imply division of Macedonia.

33.

We should prevent such developments, we should face such events in better international constellation, so that we get rid of political and moral responsibility before the world. I think that the FRY and Serbia have a /words illegible/ task to do



our best in terms of political actions, and I think /words illegible/ much more than we are doing. Three of us /words illegible/ should talk about it, so that we can see what we can do /words illegible/ in Kosovo, to pacify the situation. Also, we should not provide a direct motive to our enemies for provocations, diversions, and any actions that could involve us in a difficult war.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

If you allow me, I have one remark - we have peace in Kosovo because they know we are strong. If they did not think we were strong, there would be no peace there.

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

My dear Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ, I do not know how long we will have such a situation. As a pessimist, I will repeat this – I do not think it will last long. You know well how things look like inside of it.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

Of course, I agree, if we gave in....

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

I will submit some reports as of tomorrow. Evidently, we have destructive activities within a part of the Geneva Convention towards Kosovo. /sic/ Evidently, there are some destructive activities to which we must adequately respond and see what we can do about it in a constructive manner.

Gentlemen Generals, please, if you agree, let's work on this task in the forthcoming days. Immediately upon KARADŽIĆ's return, the three of us will be obliged to meet with both governments separately, and talk with them without any secrets, conspiracies.

34.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

What does “without any conspiracy” mean?

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

It means that we will work with /word illegible/.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

It is another thing – with minutes.

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

So, the minutes are to be taken. Also, maybe an announcement should be released that we received them and that we talked with them. TUĐMAN does the same thing, Alija IZETBEGOVIĆ did the same in Džeda /as written/, Ankara, etc.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

Let us just not take Alija and TUĐMAN as role models.

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

They do not have to be our role models, but they give us the right for some legitimate actions. /sic/ But we can agree with them otherwise.

It is really necessary that we raise those objections with them, those questions that we have, and to come to the future session of this Council with the standpoints and the assessments. Of course, we need to inform the General Staff that has its task and its role in this.

Života PANIĆ:

The Army and the General Staff need to make an assessment based on the situation report in the country and abroad. If we make an assessment of the internal enemy, then one could say that we are all over the field. The Ministries of the Interior should be making an assessment of the internal situation, because they are more familiar with the situation in the country, while we are not.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

Don't you wash your hands of those duties.

Života PANIĆ:

We are not washing our hands of it, but the Army should not be the only one in charge of these assessments.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

Everyone should give the assessment within his own competency; yours should be in line within your competency. The things that endanger the organisation of the Army and combat activities and anything that can possibly endanger certain Army functions; you are obliged to do that. As to other aspects, the others should do the same within their own competency.

Therefore, if you are not bothered by a group of strangers in the Ministry of Defence and Government, and if you do not consider them as danger for the state security from the point of view of armed activities, or its military-political tasks, etc., then you need not mention it.

Života PANIĆ:

I think we made ourselves clear about it.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

The political declaration is irrelevant, it is important that you give your professional assessment and protect the Army.

Života PANIĆ:

Mr. President, we will prepare what you requested, the war plan too. When you visit us in our war conference room, we will present you with the specific assessment and our decision; you will see it and sign it, and we guarantee you that. It is an unpleasant feeling to hear you criticise the General Staff (addressing President ĆOSIĆ).

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

I must criticise you. I will ask you to explain to me certain formulations.

Života PANIĆ:

You must be an optimist.

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

Fine, you can criticise me for my pessimism, but I still see your formulations as formal. But it is not important anymore, it is important that we agree about how to act.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

All this should not delay the linking of 600, 000 people in one army.

I would add a specific thing here. I think that it would be good if the General Staff, as soon as they prepare the operation on closing the border towards Albania and Macedonia, should inform us about it. We should have the timetable and the action plan, so that we know in which timeframe the border towards Albania and Macedonia will be closed after the order is released. A part of it will be closed naturally due to the snow, because even a chicken cannot cross the border in some parts, but still there are parts that you can hardly close. Therefore, we should consider closing the border towards Albania and Macedonia with a “cork”, which is a good idea in my opinion, so there will be a space for them to go “downhill” /sic/. Also, we should see how much time you need to close the border after the order is issued, in which timeframe the job will be done. Because that is the only part of the border that we will close. Regarding other things, we do not plan to close the borders, but to establish appropriate border crossings that must be operational.

The closing of the borders must be well supported by the plan and implemented accordingly.

I asked Cyrus VANCE in private whether there is a danger of withdrawal of UN forces after the UNPROFOR mandate expires. He categorically told me: “No, that would mean a war”.

37.

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

He mentioned another, more general option to me: “ The UN does not have the money, it costs a lot, there is a big pressure, etc.”

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

That is also a sort of pressure on you.

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

Butros GHALI requested to meet me on the 28<sup>th</sup>. I will ask Mr. GHALI if he is considering withdrawal of their troops.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

He should be asked if he is considering making a decision on waging war, because that is the same thing. Therefore, they will assume the entire responsibility, and they will free us from any responsibility for further sanctions on aid.

Života PANIĆ:

They are making a big mess in India, and that will be a hot spot in the world from now on.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

Russia will be a hot spot too.

Momir BULATOVIĆ:

The Yugoslav Army rightfully demands the political standpoint and the decision of the Defence Council. But I also think that we have the right to demand from our Army to present us the elements for such decision-making. Look, some things are interrelated. For instance, if the aggression on the Republic of Serbian Krajina breaks out, we must have the following elements for the assessment and the recommendations given by the General Staff. What is a better option – to go for a limited mobilisation and get a 30% to 50% response, and then to proceed with the mobilisation with difficulties, since we have had negative experiences so far, or to go for a full mobilisation right away?

Furthermore, what would be the international military and political repercussions of such move of ours? I kindly ask you to analyse this in terms of your knowledge regarding these options. If we say: "We will go with the volunteers", then we should have an assessment on the number of volunteers we can count on. /words illegible/ lean on certain political parties, organised /word illegible/ and how the intelligence service should be used in order to protect us from all this, how long /word illegible/ can last without having negative impact. /sic/ For instance, you must tell us how both limited and full mobilisation will reflect on the level of combat readiness in the units that are augmented from 30 % to 50 %. Will there be a drop in morale in that case and will our units be disbanded, given that that we have had such cases so far?

There are several questions to which you need to give us relevant answers so that we can make our political decision.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

Momir, it is well recognised in the military practice that the level of combat readiness is to be upgraded even in case when there are manoeuvres in the vicinity of the state borders, because you can never know what the real intention behind a certain manoeuvre is. Therefore, our decision, based on the fact that we suspect the country could be endangered, can be a reason enough for general mobilisation.

Života PANIĆ:

A limited one is out of the question.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

Of course, we do not inform anyone how we will use the Army; this is a sovereign country, we can carry out general mobilisation, because there are activities in our surroundings which oblige us to do so.

I think we should not release any announcement regarding this meeting. We should not talk much about it, nor should we bring it out into the open. Above all, we need to prepare ourselves adequately.

39.

Života PANIĆ:

We guarantee over 70 % augmentation of manpower levels in the units, if we go for the general mobilisation, and the units with more than 70 % of manpower levels can carry out the tasks.

Secondly, Mr. President, /words illegible/ nowhere, we defend our country; it is a patriotic duty /word illegible/ to respond. /sic/

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

That is your and my opinion, but how realistic is that opinion?

Fine, let us end the conversation regarding the first item on the agenda.

Let us move on to the third item on the agenda:

### 3. Decrees on Appointments and Promotions of Colonels and Generals of the Yugoslav Army

We received your recommendations and your explanations. I kindly ask General PANIĆ to say something about those recommendations, and about my following thesis:

Considering the state of our society in general and the level of transformation and reorganisation of the Army, my political conviction is that despite the fact that those appointments and promotions are serving the purpose of the transformation and reorganisation of the Army, they were delayed. If I properly understood your situation at our meetings, and entire commanding potentials of our Army, there was a permanent delay in terms of carrying out those appointments and promotions. I would like to hear your opinion today.

Života PANIĆ:

I took you very seriously, and I accepted your point of view when we talked last time. Since this has been included in the agenda and we agreed to talk about it, let us talk about it.

40.

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

I must include your proposal in the agenda.

Života PANIĆ:

I would suggest we discuss this problem of promotions, while we can postpone the issue of appointments for some other time. Because we have lots of generals who have been waiting for promotion for a long time. For example, we have one general in the Air Force, Mika STEVANOVIĆ, while all others are colonels. I think it is not good for morale in the Air Force and the PVO /Anti-Aircraft Defence/.

If you agree, we can discuss this after the elections?

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

We can do that. But I think it would be good to get some biographies first since we talked about the promotions last time. I saw your lists, but they just indicate what positions they are holding. We should know whom we are talking about, we should be informed.

As to your comment regarding the Air Force, we should not wait any longer. Firstly, Mika STEVANOVIĆ is the oldest Lieutenant General, counting the length of his service holding this rank.

Života PANIĆ:

SIMONOVIC was appointed a year before him by decree.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

I have nothing against SIMONOVIC's promotion. But there is no reason why we should leave this problem in the Air Force unresolved and have only one general who awaits promotion, although he has held that position for a long time.

41.

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

I understand the necessity of some promotions, especially when it comes to army commanders. But we have a proposal here, to make a decision regarding 26 generals. It is a huge political risk; and I also know that injustice and harm can be done to the Army. It is not easy for me to make such a decision.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:



I would like to get completed biographies first, while we can deal with the most urgent things today – STEVANOVIĆ and few of his closest associates. It is really illogical that the Air Force Commander is Colonel General and the most senior rank below him is a rank of colonel.

Risto MATKOVIĆ:

Mr. President, Mr. General, I would like to present the view the Personnel Commission had had when it discussed and decided on future promotions.

To make this more understandable for you, I prepared two charts on the number of generals that we have at the moment, and the number of generals we should have according to the military formations plan. As you can see on the first chart, the plan includes 126 post for generals; including posts for colonels and major generals. The current state is as follows: there are 53 generals in the Yugoslav Army, and there are 8 generals outside the Yugoslav Army – in the Ministry. When you count this, you get a total of 61.

I have a chart here that shows that if we accepted today's proposal on promotion of 6 generals to a higher rank and 20 colonels to generals, we would have 81 generals.

If we analyse our needs, and if we consider them as realistic ones, then this is a minimum, because the formation needs are 103. We decided that out of those 103, not all of them should be promoted, but whenever there is a drain due to a retirement or any other reason, those who were appointed by decree but never promoted, should replace them. Thus, we would keep the number of 80 generals instead of 103 all the time.

42.

If this point of view is correct, and I would not call it either correct or incorrect, then we really do need to promote a large number of generals. You can see from those charts that the selected positions for which we need to promote colonels to generals are really significant ones. In the Navy, it is the Chief's position, in the Air Force – Chief, /word illegible/, and Chiefs of some departments in the General Staff, plus Corps Commanders.

We have 13 generals here who were appointed outside military formations and they cannot be used for the purpose of augmentation. By transformation of the Army,

we cancelled a number of posts for generals within military formations, but this is not a profile that can be used as corps commanders, chiefs of staffs, and so on. They have been kept in the Army and they will be released in accordance with the normal procedure.

Hence, around 15 generals are to be retired within the next year, due to their age and years of service, and that means that the number of 80 will come down to 65-70 generals.

That is why the Personnel Commission came to the conclusion that such proposal should be made and those generals should be promoted to a higher rank, i.e., colonels to generals. Therefore, there are six of them who are to be promoted to a higher rank – three Army Commanders, i.e., Air Force Commander, Commanders of the First and Third Army, and the Navy Commander are to be promoted to vice admirals. Accordingly, RADINOVIĆ and AJDUKOVIĆ are to be promoted to lieutenant colonels, while the rest of them are the colonels who would be promoted to generals.

In the JNA /Yugoslav People's Army/ there used to be around 180 generals per 186,000 soldiers.

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

What is the ratio in other armies?

Života PANIĆ:

It is much better than ours. There is a higher number of posts for generals.

43.

For instance, Greeks, Bulgarians, Hungarians and Italians have more generals than us.

I would like to propose that we do it individually. We should promote a number of officers and leave the rest of them for some other occasion. And we should not announce it.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

We can announce decrees, can't we? /few words illegible/ is not disputable.

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

We have to announce them.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

This approach of yours is logical, but that is a quantitative approach and there is no reason to have polemics about that: how many generals we should have, which posts they should hold, etc. But, those are big decisions and important posts and it would be good if we get more accurate information, biographies, etc.

Života PANIĆ:

Do you agree that we postpone this?

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

I agree that you should give us more accurate information, and now we can make a decision on several cases that are completely clear. This does not mean that we question other issues. We just want to be informed. For, if we want to decide we have to be informed.

Života PANIĆ:

I agree with this.

Momir BULATOVIĆ:

I am also aware of the difficulty of a decision and rights that belong to us. Our goal is not only to trust someone;

we really need to have a perspective of how this and that decision is going to be received by our Army.

Personally, on the basis of this information that we have, I do not feel ready to decide about that. But, I can accept that we need to solve several indisputable issues – for high level structures: Army Command, Air Force. There is some illogicality, because this is not going to be consented without a public comment. /word illegible/ for instance, one got a rank of major general last year or the year before, and now he gets a promotion – a short time passed. That causes unfavourable comments by people who were neglected during that promotion.

So, we should solve the most urgent issue now.

I have one question: is the process of naturalisation done?

Života PANIĆ:

Yes, it is!

Momir BULATOVIĆ:

There are people from Croatia, Bosnia, etc.

Života PANIĆ:

We did not give any proposal regarding this issue. There are also some proposals here that I am going to mark as disputable.

I would go with the proposals individually?

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

Good, let us go individually.

Života PANIĆ:

Vladimir STOJANOVIĆ, the Commander of 1st Army. He has held the same rank for three years.

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

Good, I am for the promotion.

45.

Života PANIĆ:

Dragoljub SIMONOVIĆ – the same as Vla.. /?Vladimir/.

Božidar STEVANOVIĆ – he has held the same rank for four years.

These are Army Commanders.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

I would not go further.

Života PANIĆ:

And the Navy Commander – Admiral.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

Of course, that is the Navy Commander. The Chief of Staff of the Air Force should probably be promoted, because it does not make sense that he remains a colonel.

Života PANIĆ:

Yes, ERCEGOVIĆ.

ANTUNOVIĆ is the Corps Commander. He is a colonel. He has been on the general's position for a long time.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

Let us not broaden the list a lot, before we check all these information.

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

You propose ERCEGOVIĆ. For how many years has he been a general?

Života PANIĆ:

Four years.

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

Good, all right.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

That is not disputable.

46.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

What about RADINOVIĆ? /sentence illegible/

Života PANIĆ:

Let us see into that later on – along with others.

PAVLOVIĆ, the Chief of Aviation Staff, is on the fourth page.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

He is the Chief of Staff. It is logical that he becomes a general.

Života PANIĆ:

But, General Mika said that he would not receive a promotion unless his people were promoted. There are three of them.

Here, PAVLOVIĆ is here.

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

Good.

Života PANIĆ:

RAKIĆ is the Chief of Navy Staff.

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

Wait! Let us check the Aviation once more. What about SEKULIĆ? – He is the Corps Commander.

Života PANIĆ:

You said that we should not consider Corps Commanders.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

We can make an exception with the Air Force, because they have nobody.

Risto MATOVIĆ:

We should promote all of them or only the Chief of Staff. For instance, he gives the advantage to VELIČKOVIĆ /sic/.

47.

Života PANIĆ:

The best way is to promote the Chief of Staff and we would decide about Corps Commanders in about ten days.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

How many generals has Mika proposed?

Života PANIĆ:

Four of them: SEKULIĆ, VELIČKOVIĆ, CAREVIĆ, PAVLOVIĆ.

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

Then, the Army Commanders will criticise us.

Života PANIĆ:

Let us discuss now the Chiefs of Staffs, Army Commanders and Chiefs of Army Staffs and we will discuss Corps Commanders in the second arrangement. So, I would propose that we now promote the following: Army Commanders, Military Branches Commanders, Chiefs of Army Staffs and Chiefs of Military Branches Staffs.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

Who do you have as Chiefs of Army Staffs?

Života PANIĆ:

No one, but I say it in general. We only have RAKIĆ and PAVLOVIĆ.

There is one disputable thing about RAKIĆ. His wife lives in Split and both of his sons are in the ZNG /National Guards Corps/ and he is the Chief of Staff.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:



Well, people, provide us all those information.

Života PANIĆ:

Yet, he is a competent officer.

48.

Momir BULATOVIĆ:

A competent officer, but he is commented negatively.

Života PANIĆ:

I did not know that until last night.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

As you can see, we have insisted on all information which are useful for both you and us.

Života PANIĆ:

I agree.

Therefore, let us promote ERCEGOVIĆ, Army Commanders and PAVLOVIĆ; and nobody else.

So, we would not go for the promotion of RAKIĆ now, but we would promote the following: STOJANOVIĆ, SIMONOVIC, STEVANOVIĆ, ERCEGOVIĆ and PAVLOVIĆ.

We will deliver more accurate information on others.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

I agree.

Momir BULATOVIĆ:

But, several intelligence data must overlap. People in the Navy are related– they left everything in Croatia. Here, Ratko BRAJKOVIĆ, the Commander – two of his brothers are in the ZNG and he works in the intelligence organ of the Navy.

Života PANIĆ:

Good, I think that we can agree with this proposal.

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

I agree with you.

49.

But, please, we should bear in mind the principal formation criteria: what are the formation posts that we necessarily need. That is probably not completely just, but I do not know how else we could solve that.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

The American Army has suitability – suitability “A” and “B”. If, by chance, the wife of an officer is not an American citizen and he is an excellent general, he cannot get a “suitability A” by any means; there is no way. Therefore, we have to check all this concerning the relations with the ZNG – and he even works in the intelligence organs.

Života PANIĆ:

I would propose something, if we adopted this.

I would propose Nedjo BOŠKOVIĆ be appointed as the Chief of Intelligence and Security Service and DIMITRIJEVIĆ as his deputy in the Security Service. He is an excellent officer.

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

We put BOŠKOVIĆ back into active service. He was retired. Why was he retired?

Života PANIĆ:

I know that he did not get on with RAKOČEVIĆ, the Chief of Security Service of the Air Force and Air Defence, and that he left because of him. And, RAKOČEVIĆ was supported for two years.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

Žiko, as for those appointments, I think that I mentioned it to you – we have General BOJOVIĆ who was the TO /Territorial Defence/ Commander and who is currently the Chief of Corps Staff. I have seen here that you do not plan to appoint him as the Corps Commander?

Života PANIĆ:

No!

50.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

I think that it would be good for you to think about that and consider him because he is a Kosovar, from Podujevo. He knows Kosovo extremely well. He performed the job of the TO Commander very well. He had a rank of lieutenant general. And, he is a major general now. He is on excellent terms with civilians and with the whole structure there. This whole problem of Kosovo is /word illegible/ to us according to all indicators and we should have a general from Kosovo as the Head of Corps, i.e., a general who knows people, territory, customs and who understands

things there. He did a good job. He has been the TO Commander for a long time and he is the Chief of Corps Staff at the moment.

Života PANIĆ:

We have planned to recommend him for a lieutenant general's post, so that he could be the Assistant to either Army Commander or Corps Commander for the civilian sector and reinforcement of Kosovo. The complete Kosovo part would be under his command.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

Yet, this position of the Corps Commander is more responsible one. He is an exceptionally good general, competent, a great patriot and people respect him there. I think that that selection would be very good.

Života PANIĆ:

I think that there was an option for him to be the Corps Commander. Shall we prepare a decree for him?

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

Every Chief of Staff has to be considered for the position of the Corps Commander, if he is a good Chief of Staff.

Života PANIĆ:

We will prepare a decree for him to be appointed as the Corps Commander and we will see later on who is going to be appointed as the Chief of Staff.

Do you agree about BOŠKOVIĆ?

51.

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

No, we should reconsider that. I asked you why that man had been retired and why he had been put back to service afterwards. There must be serious reason for that. That is not clear to me. So, please, explain it to me.

Risto MATOVIĆ:

He was a pilot. He has 46 years of /?service/. Whether that was a reason or not, I do not know.

Života PANIĆ:

We need a man such as DIMITRIJEVIĆ there. He would co-ordinate the work and that is why we propose him.

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

You know better than me how important that position is in the Army. There are many comments about him – on the reasons he was put back to service. I wouldn't even think of taking that as facts, but I have to ask because I cannot be indifferent. I do not know the man. I spoke with him only for several of hours. We need an outstandingly competent person for that post.

Života PANIĆ:

He has been in the Intelligence Service for 20 years, and he was a pilot before that. He is familiar with both intelligence and security work. He provides lots of information and creates certain panic regarding some issues. He has to work well from the analytic point of view. That is why we say that he has the analytic service and that that service should provide him with good information, etc. Given the fact that DIMITRIJEVIĆ is a highly competent officer, they will make some preparations

and present them to him, after which he will come to me with those information and I will present them to you (he addresses to ĆOSIĆ).

DIMITRIJEVIĆ has performed those tasks for a long time. He has extraordinary co-operation with the SMUP /?Federal Ministry of the Interior/ and MUP /Ministry of the Interior/ of Serbia. Both Ministers highly appreciate him.

52.

In this position, Nedja can only manipulate information that has already been processed. I think it would be extremely good for the Security Service.

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

Finet, if you think that this is right. I asked that because of the difficulty of a responsibility.

Života PANIĆ:

So, let us recapitulate: we appoint BOJOVIĆ as the Corps Commander.

Momir BULATOVIĆ:

I do not know, if this regarding BOŠKOVIĆ is not that urgent, we can postpone it?

Života PANIĆ:

I think that it is very urgent.

Momir BULATOVIĆ:

I have a dilemma now – do we promote or demote BOŠKOVIĆ by this decision?

Života PANIĆ:

We promote him. He merges two important functions – intelligence and security.

You know Lieutenant General STOJKOVIĆ. He is the Commander of Defence of Town of Belgrade. He was born in Belgrade. Our proposal is – and we do not have to decide on that now – that he should be appointed instead of SIMONOVIĆ. Ever since he has been appointed as the Commander of Defence of the town of Belgrade, we have had no problems.

Momir BULATOVIĆ:

One thing only – check whether he has an apartment in Bar?

Života PANIĆ:

He probably has, I do not know. AVRAMOVIĆ has one, too.

53.

They were receiving the difference /sic/ down there. That was the decision.

Momir BULATOVIĆ:

I think that they were receiving it differently.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

Whoever has some information here, I would ask him to present it, for it is important. These things are very important.

Momir BULATOVIĆ:

It is inconvenient to talk about that, but we have to. That is a large apartment house of 60 million dollars. I called General KADIJEVIĆ three or four

times in order to give that to the contractors from Montenegro, because “Pelagonija”, a company from Macedonia, was building it. Our contractors were on strike. The agreement was: our contractors would submit the same tender or even lower than the “Pelagonija”, for we cannot compete “Pelagonija” because they have 20% lower price because they do not pay contributions when working in another republic. But, we said that we would pay off the difference from our own budget. First I was promised that we would get the entire apartment house, and the second time I was promised that we would get half of the building, and then that we would get one third of the building. In the end, Generals AVRAMOVIĆ and STOJKOVIĆ got the apartments in Bar that were built by “Pelagonija”.

Života PANIĆ:

I know for sure about AVRAMOVIĆ. They can say whatever they want. He is one hundred percent clean. He has to get a four-and-a-half-room apartment. He has got a three-room or three-and-a-half-room apartment. He has a one-room apartment or efficiency apartment, which is in accordance with our Laws.

Momir BULATOVIĆ:

I am not saying that I support that story. I heard that story from the Army, because it was not clear to me how such decision could be made – opposite even to the interventions of KADIJEVIĆ? Those were the authorisations of the Corps Commander.

54.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

Let us make a conclusion on this minimal optimum /sic/ that we should check all information and acknowledge all warnings.

Života PANIĆ:



He is a lieutenant general. There is nothing special that he could get with this.

Momir BULATOVIĆ:

We have to have a clear conscience. I like General STOJKOVIĆ, we had a great co-operation and we are even friends. But, I am also suspicious before we check that out.

Života PANIĆ:

People talk a lot these days!

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

I have got several written complaints and opinions that are coming from the high generals' circles about present Intelligence Service of ours. Naturally, I take all that with necessary reserve.

Života PANIĆ:

Let that be checked.

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

You should know better than me that our Security Service is pretty troubled by the proceedings against VASILJEVIĆ. I fear the affairs. I have seen the verdict against General VASILJEVIĆ. I gave it to the Legal Service to check it here.

Many high ranking Generals have been engaged there – regarding the verdict and regarding BOŠKOVIĆ. They spread panic; they prepare entire feuillets for the public. It is our duty to approach this decision with the biggest caution. There are widespread rumours; media circles talk about personal conflicts, about conflicts within the Intelligence Service, etc.

Života PANIĆ:

The charges would have not been brought if there had been nothing there. Nobody influenced those charges, especially from the Army. All the rumours are accepted, but the facts have been rarely accepted. For instance, what does ADŽIĆ want? That was the Bosnian line. If we would make an analysis of everything that we proposed and they refused – we would have gone far. He was a security officer. He worked on the most confidential /two words illegible/, he participated at all meetings of the Presidency and the Supreme Command with officers, and now he is releasing it to the public. He got /figure illegible/ thousand billions from the NIN /?Independent Information Newspapers/ then. We have the document.

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

You and me have discussed that. On the occasion when he started to publish that “literature”, we said that it was the violation of basic standards of the intelligence work. I signed a decision to deprive him of the rank, for I considered it all. This other – criminal sphere, I do not know anything about that.

But, on that occasion, a group of senior generals in retirement went for a harangue – an expression used by the public. They were coming to me, they write to me. I inform you about it without any personal standpoint.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

Why are you going for that trial now?

Života PANIĆ:

He spoiled things and we do not have associates now – he revealed them all. If we come now and regardless of how much we pay him, he would not do it because he is not sure that some other guy would not betray him the next day.

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

He committed an offence as he broke the oath and he has to be punished for that.

56.

Života PANIĆ:

You could receive letters from ADŽIĆ, KUKANJAC, VASILJEVIĆ, his wife, RAKOČEVIĆ, MARČETIĆ.

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

And two to three other generals.

Života PANIĆ:

MARČETIĆ was in Zagreb for a long time. /several words illegible/ man. He got divorced. He married a Croat who he put to work as the cipher clerk. And there is a suspicion that the Intelligence Service bribed her to work for Croatia. /sic/

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

That causes big damages to us. That is not happening anywhere in the world.

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

It causes big damages to us.

I signed a decree of the Disciplinary Court because I was convinced that it was grounded and I do not know for anything else.

What have we decided – do we appoint BOŠKOVIĆ on that duty or we postpone it?

Života PANIĆ:

I would propose that it goes with this decree.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

I am not against it. I bear this Momir's reserve in mind.

Života PANIĆ:

He asked – is that a higher or a lower position? It is a higher position.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

I have no elements to deny that.

57.

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

I do not have any personal experience and proofs to deny this proposal of yours, except that these stances, announcements and /word illegible/ by several Generals from abroad /sic/. I read it out as /word illegible/ information to you. If you think that it is a rumour that /words illegible/ any factual value, then I withdraw.

Života PANIĆ:

I think that those are rumours. I think that /words illegible/ ADŽIĆ signed the decree on his return.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

That is correct. He signed it because it was a pressure. But, ADŽIĆ has a standpoint about that. After all – it is irrelevant.

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

Good, all right.

I have one more question that is not on the agenda.

What is going on with the facilities occupied by the Army and the General Staff, considering the decrease of capacities and positions? You have occupied huge buildings. Do you need them all? The number of Army men nowadays and the size of the service are different than the capacity of facilities that the old Army had. It is not only the capacity of facilities but also the ideological standpoint towards the Army. Is it all necessary? If not, let us give it back to the state, to the public.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

If they have any surplus, they should use it for something else. For, they have big material problems, housing problems, etc. I do not think that they have surplus because they decided to move the Military Technical Institute out and they have no place to settle it.

Života PANIĆ:

We will make information about that, but we do not have surplus.

58.

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

If you have surplus, it should be used as Slobodan said, or be returned to the state, to the town. /sentence illegible/

Risto MATOVIĆ:

Many institutions /words illegible/ republics were /?transferred/ to the area of Belgrade. Those are /word illegible/, Karlovac, the Technical Academy from Zagreb, etc. /words illegible/ remained in Belgrade, and one part had to go out /word illegible/ particularly because there is no accommodation. Nine thousand families in

Belgrade do not have necessary accommodation. We will provide information about that.

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

Good, make it and present it.

One more question: What is the purpose of having the Guards in Dvorovi /palaces/ and the Memorial Centre?

Života PANIĆ:

We protect all that!

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

What do you protect in the Memorial Centre?

Života PANIĆ:

A huge fortune.

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

You mean the Tito's house?

Života PANIĆ:

No, we do not protect the house. There is a vault. We do not protect the grave nor we guard it.

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

Some commissions have been working there these days in order to turn these palaces, museums, etc. into a civil, public and cultural facility.

59.

We cannot tolerate some memorial centres anymore and provide a big money to protect them. Those valuable facilities should change their functions – those that have cultural and historic values should remain as such and those that were nonsense of one time and the power of one leader, we need to separate.

Milan PANIĆ, the Prime Minister, uses Dvor for his dinners and private dinners; /words illegible/. What does it look like at all? What is that? What is happening with Dvorovi?

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

That has to be at the disposal of Protocol of the President of Republic, but not the Government.

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

We do not have a right to that.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

Who says that we do not have a right? That has to be transferred and placed at the disposal of the Protocol of the President of Republic, because that has always been an official residence of the Chief of State. That has to be a representative facility at the disposal of the Protocol of the President of Republic.

And this what they protect – it is logical that they protect it. That is a huge building complex and it should stay like that until it changes its purpose. After being used for some other purposes, it would have some security, as well. Every company has a security.

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

I hear that the Prime Minister and the Guards are up there. For instance, how do they use that vehicle?

Života PANIĆ:

That is not ours. That was all under the Presidency, and it is now under your command.

60.

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

Please, give me the authority to solve it properly.

Života PANIĆ:

Our officers drive it. That is /words illegible/.

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

Yes, and for the serving. The whole guards up there /words illegible/. I wonder what the Army is used for? By which protocol is the Army over there?

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

No protocol; that has been “used” as the misuse.

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

The request of my legal adviser was to stop the use of that facility until it changes its function – that was legally rejected. It was denied to me as a right, that is, to the Cabinet of the President of Republic. I tried everything but I failed. All that was sent back to me and I was told that it was not my competence.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

And whose competence is it?



Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

The competence of the Government?

Života PANIĆ:

Well, it is not the competence of the Government!

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

Since I have some competence in the Army, I am asking you – can I restrict those competencies at least from this side?

61.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

Issue an order to the Army that they cannot give the facility for use, without your agreement. Thereby you finish the whole /word illegible/...they cannot enter even through the gate.

Života PANIĆ:

We will issue that order tomorrow /words illegible/ order of the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces, /words illegible/ I sign that.

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

Dvorovi and all other facilities should be in the state of suspension, until the decision on their purpose is made. Since you have the Army there, you should take care of it.

Života PANIĆ:

We have a very important facility up there. The Vault.

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

We have to discuss the use of that vault and all that issue. We have to talk a little bit more functionally /sic/. We do not have to talk about that today.

Života PANIĆ:

I would propose that the National Bank take all that fortune from those vaults.

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

I proposed the Government to appoint a commission consisted of the most competent people from Belgrade and the Republic of Serbia, several academics, several historians, museologists /sic/, etc to study all that building complex and give proposals for solution. That is in process.

Good, we go on to the fourth item of the agenda:

62.

4. VANCE'S AND OWEN'S INVITATION TO GENERAL PANIĆ  
TO COME TO GENEVA ON 9 DECEMBER 1992.

Života PANIĆ:

I propose that we stay out of this and /words illegible/.

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

I arranged it like that.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

That is good. I have the same stand on that.

Secondly, KARADŽIĆ has made a smart move when he took BOBETKO out and brought him together with MLADIĆ to sign an agreement, which clearly shows that Croatian Armed Forces are in charge of signing the agreement. He should discuss the demilitarisation of Sarajevo – in what capacity? – none. He only has to serve them as an alibi that Armed Forces of Republika Srpska are under the jurisdiction of the Yugoslav Army commanding structure.

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

I said that I was not sure that the Yugoslav Army should talk about Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

As for the announcement, I would say that only the decision on promotion has been made.

Slavko KRIVOŠIJA:

The Army Services will do that.

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

Yes, we should not announce anything. We have the minutes that will be used as the document of our conversation.

63.

Please, announce it either now or after 22 December so that it is not connected to some dates.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

It should be announced immediately. There is no reason to postpone it.

Dobrica ĆOSIĆ:

Announce it tomorrow since that date is /words illegible/ that was 21 December – STALIN'S birthday. Send /words illegible/ greeting card: "We have formed a proletarian brigade", after which he scolded him and changed the date into 22 December.

Fine, I hereby conclude the session.

(The session was concluded at 1430 hrs).