

SUPREME DEFENCE COUNCIL

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MILITARY SECRET  
STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

STENOGRAPHIC RECORD

of the 16<sup>th</sup> session of the

SUPREME DEFENCE COUNCIL  
held on 25 December 1993

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BELGRADE

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of the 16<sup>th</sup> session of the  
SUPREME DEFENCE COUNCIL  
HELD ON 25 DECEMBER 1993  
BELGRADE

The session commenced at 1330 hours

Present: President of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and President of the Supreme Defence Council Zoran LILIĆ, President of the Republic of Serbia Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ and President of the Republic of Montenegro Momir BULATOVIĆ - members of the Supreme Defence Council; Federal Defence Minister Pavle BULATOVIĆ; Chief of the Yugoslav Army General Staff Lieutenant General Momčilo PERIŠIĆ, and Chief of the Military Office of the President of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, Major General Slavko KRIVOŠIJA.

(Stenographic record of the meeting taken by Jordan ŽIVKOVIĆ, senior conference stenographer and editor in the General Secretariat of the President of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia).

President of the Supreme Defence Council Zoran LILIĆ chaired the meeting.

Zoran LILIĆ:

I suggest we begin work. Today's agenda has been proposed as follows:

AGENDA

Adopting the minutes of the 15<sup>th</sup> session of the Supreme Defence Council

1. FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF YUGOSLAVIA DEFENCE POLICY
2. CURRENT ISSUES

Are there any suggestions for amendments to the proposed Agenda? (There are not)

The Agenda is hereby adopted.

Are there any comments on the minutes of the 15<sup>th</sup> session of the Supreme Defence Council?  
(There are not)

The minutes are hereby adopted.

We shall proceed with the first item on the Agenda:

1. FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF YUGOSLAVIA DEFENCE POLICY

As I understand it, this is about the Resolution on the Defence of the Country proposed by the Federal Government. Am I right Pavle?

Pavle BULATOVIĆ:

We at the Ministry thought this is a better formulation because the Federal Government can pass both resolutions and declarations in order to avoid debate in the Assembly, all sorts of comments and different approaches. Therefore, the Federal Government would adopt this as its resolution. The text ought to be abbreviated according to your suggestions. We have attempted to define only elementary defence policy components, without getting into detail, and the plan and program of implementation would define the obligations of all defence subjects.

This is the reason why this text is rather short. It gives us a possibility to provide and implement these defence policy principles in practice through the implementation program. This was our guiding principle while we were working on it.

That is all.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

Has the Ministry done this in cooperation with the General Staff?

Pavle BULATOVIĆ:

The General Staff was looking at it yesterday or the day before, I think.

Momčilo PERIŠIĆ:

No, we were not!

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

Then I think we should hear what the Chief of General Staff thinks, and then coordinate.

Momčilo PERIŠIĆ:

Mr President, a broad discussion is needed on defence policy. It is necessary that the Supreme Defence Council adopts the defence policy objectives, and when they are adopted more detailed material should be distributed for discussion to a broader auditorium – as we have a multi-party system. The Academy of Sciences and Arts of Serbia and Montenegro must be consulted. Only thus finalised material could go to the Assembly for ratification.

As defence policy is very important to us and we do not have the time to produce a quality paper, and the job is the responsibility of the Ministry, I suggested we opt for a resolution which we can accept in this form of text. This should be the basis, and in the future, when many things become clear, we would develop it further.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

Where did you get this idea to consult the Academy?

Momčilo PERIŠIĆ:

This is really necessary if we want to produce something which would reflect the interests of all possible structures. Mr President, by this I do not imply that there will be any extremist positions in these institutions.

Momir BULATOVIĆ:

Bearing in mind everything said by the Defence Minister and the Chief of General Staff, I understand that this is the basic program framework, there is nothing superfluous there. The constitutional principles have been summarised here.

As this is being passed by the Government, I think we can support the Resolution on the Defence of the Country.

I am just not sure how good the wording on the first page is, second subparagraph, in the preamble stating that “the security and independence of the country are at risk”.

I think it is better to word it as follows: “...there is a danger that the security and independence of the country may be at risk”. Otherwise it looks as if somebody has given us an ultimatum.

I think it is not our objective to make any concrete comments now. I think that this material has a new and fresh approach – it is brief and clear. The most important thing about it is that later it will oblige the Federal Government to adopt regular reports on the situation and problems in the defence of the country, and report/s/ on implementation of the country’s defence policy.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

I don’t know whether “resolution” is the right term for this document? There are some objectives there which have to be conveyed resolutely, such as not accepting occupation and forbidding capitulation, but there are also issues pertaining to financial instruments – that customs duty will be abolished, and I don’t know what else. I think that this is not just a resolution, but a document covering other issues, which by the nature of things are not material for a resolution.

Momir BULATOVIĆ:

The defence policy of the country is adopted by the Federal Assembly, and the Federal Government in the present vacuum – bearing in mind the current situation in the Federal Assembly – is taking the opportunity to pass special resolutions.

Pavle BULATOVIĆ:

This is from the Government’s Rules of Procedure.

Zoran LILIĆ:

This is a formulation which enables this to be passed by the Government.

Pavle BULATOVIĆ:

Yes. It says there: “resolutions and declarations”.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

Can that be “conclusions on the defence of the country”?

Momir BULATOVIĆ:

The Federal Government conveys its position through a form of resolution, or it can declare something. With regard to the possibilities provided by the Government’s rules of procedure I think that “resolution” is a better term.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

All right. I suggest that we send Pavle any minor editorial comments if we have them, let’s not get into it before it is referred to the Government.

Zoran LILIĆ:

That means that in principle we support the principles and options.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

Yes, no disagreement there.

Zoran LILIĆ:

All right let's conclude the first agenda item.

We are moving to the second agenda item:

## 2. CURRENT ISSUES

First, there is the issue of the needs and financing of the Yugoslav Army. We will refer all current issues to General PERIŠIĆ.

Momčilo PERIŠIĆ:

First among the current issues are some personnel issues:

Discussion of requests by Generals and Admirals for whom an enactment was passed for termination of military service. We have two requests:

The first is for four Generals: Vladan ŠLJIVIĆ, Vladimir VOJVODIĆ, Dušan ŽUNIĆ and Stanimir PERIĆ. They meet the legal criteria for promotion to higher rank. They requested this. However, the opinion of the Chief of General Staff's Collegium is that they should not

be promoted for two reasons: first because they left the Army when the number of Generals was reduced, and besides, probably, and I don't have sufficient information on this, I suppose they were not actually Generals anyway. Secondly, because there are no legal grounds for this, because a Decree on Promotion is to be issued after the new Law on the Yugoslav Army is passed. The Decree has not been issued yet, and until it happens we can promote neither active service Generals nor retired ones, or Colonels. It would be counterproductive if we allowed this for retired officers and not for those who completed their service - particularly in view of that fact that recently, it has been only the old law on promotion of Generals that has been in use. That's the first request.

The second request is from six generals who requested exceptional promotion, but they do not meet the criteria for either exceptional or regular promotion for the reasons I gave above. In addition, they have no legal grounds for it whatsoever. These are: Lieutenant/s/ General DOMAZETOVIĆ, Zoran STOJKOVIĆ, Slobodan ĐORĐEVIĆ, Miladin MOJSILOVIĆ, Milosav RADMANOVIĆ and Radomir DAMJANOVIĆ.

I can say for each of them that they do not merit a promotion, in addition to what I have mentioned previously.

Therefore, in order to prevent a counterproductive effects on the Yugoslav Army, it would be good if we did not promote anybody; secondly, in order not to damage the authority of the Supreme Defence Council in any way, and because I think that we should not promote them.

There are some explicit opinions, especially General DOMAZETOVIĆ's. I consulted a broad circle of people on this. For example I talked with the former Chief of General Staff, PANIĆ. He said: "If he gets the rank of Colonel General, I'll ask for the rank of Army General". (Laughter)

So, I suggest that we do not promote anybody, that we don't commend or give awards to anyone.

I propose that the President of the country as the Supreme Commander, together with me receives the Generals who retired this year at the Yugoslav Army Club on 28 December, at a cocktail party.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

He ought to receive them, but not at the Yugoslav Army Club: at his headquarters.

Momčilo PERIŠIĆ:

It can be there, and afterwards we can go somewhere.

At the same time we should tell them that the Council has made this decision. They do not gain anything by it except moral satisfaction. Because, if it has not been done before their service ceased, I think there is no reason to do it now.

Zoran LILIĆ:

So, the proposal is that nobody gets promoted?

Momčilo PERIŠIĆ:

That is the proposal of the Collegium of the Chief of General Staff, and our duty is to implement what you decide.

If you allow me, I would like to read to you what DOMAZETOVIĆ wrote:

“I alerted you before to the fact that my promotion must be put forward at a session of the Supreme Defence Council – in writing and by you. As far as I know, you have not done this, which indeed surprises me. I am informing you again that you have to do this and put it on the agenda. As for your opinion, if you do not agree I wish to be advised of it. The excuse that the members of the Supreme Council are not for it is no excuse as far as I am concerned. You, Momčilo are on test now.”

This is almost an ultimatum! Neither the Ustashas nor the Muslims were able to dictate conditions to me, let alone a retired General.

Momir BULATOVIĆ:

I think we should not get into individual cases. This position is fundamentally good and can be legally justified without creating any internal differences, problems etc. We certainly have people who deserve to be promoted, but we must be aware of the overall circumstances. We made a decision once. We rectified an injustice done to DOMAZETOVIĆ.

Honestly, although I am a lay person, I could never understand what the big difference was between Colonel General and Lieutenant General.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

It is important to a soldier whether he has one rank higher or lower.

I think that this ought to be told to people in a decent, open manner, the real truth: Of course, there are grounds for promotion of a number of people. However, in the context of all the changes that have been made, the Collegium is of the opinion that there should not be significant promotions. The Supreme Council accepted this explanation. They should be given all the credit and assurances that without doubt there must have been grounds for some of them to be promoted.

Momir BULATOVIĆ:

This individual communication worries me. As if we in the Supreme Defence Council were just a service for promotions. For example, DAMJANOVIĆ wrote some letters against me. He did not write to me, but to the others. There's no sense in this. It does not matter what individuals are like, but

they have to respect the institution of the Supreme Defence Council. And now this kind of General expects a promotion. It's ridiculous!

Zoran LILIĆ:

So, we accept the opinion of the General Staff Collegium.

Pavle BULATOVIĆ:

As for the higher rank group, the Supreme Defence Council does not need to give its opinion.

Momčilo PERIŠIĆ:

We are doing this because we have to follow the Law. Their comments when they were being retired are recorded here, of course if they are not about apartments etc. Almost all of them requested one more apartment – this from people whose duty was to provide accommodation for 18 thousand homeless people and did not do it – but when they were retiring they were not concerned

with the problem of the homeless, but their own problem. For example, General STRUGAR has as many as four apartments.

Momir BULATOVIĆ:

He even stole a yacht and registered it in his name, and now he is asking for an apartment. He has an apartment in Podgorica.

Pavle BULATOVIĆ:

I think he returned that apartment?

Momir BULATOVIĆ:

He did not return it – he bought it out. He even wanted to buy all the furniture, but we didn't allow it. He sent a request saying that he was emotionally attached to the refrigerator and wanted to buy out the furniture. (Laughter). So, he has an apartment in Podgorica, he has a house, an apartment in Belgrade, and in (the name of the place cannot be heard). Plus, he has a yacht which he stole and registered in his name.

Zoran LILIĆ:

Let's move on.

Momčilo PERIŠIĆ:

Proposal for regulating the service situation for those at the rank of General.

We transferred Mirko BJELANOVIĆ, a Navy Major General, to the 40<sup>th</sup> personnel centre, which is the Republic of Serbian Krajina. It is necessary, if you agree, that the State President signs the decree for this. He went, and is working there, but because of his status issues, a decision must be adopted to formally settle this. Of course, this isn't been given to him for him to wave it about.

Also, it is the end of professional service for Major General Velibor JOVANOVIĆ, who applied for termination of military service. He went to talk to the President of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. This request was rejected. He applied again. He meets all legal criteria for retirement.



He is an exceptionally decent and honest man, but he has family problems – his wife is sick and his health is frail too. I think it would not be good to insist on keeping someone who wants to leave.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

Whoever insists on retiring should be allowed to do so. I have heard only the best things about him, and I feel sorry for him. But if he insists he should be allowed to retire.

Momčilo PERIŠIĆ:

Further, also about retirement, but on other grounds – Air Force Commander PAVLOVIĆ requested to be retired. He says the following:

“Pursuant to Article 107, paragraph 1, item 6 of the Law on the Yugoslav Army, I would appreciate it if you initiated proceedings for my relief of duty as RV /Air Force/ and PVO /Anti-aircraft Defence/ Commander and termination of my military service. I have taken this step as the result of our differing assessments of certain actions and different views on solutions regarding personnel in the Security Administration, as well as on a range of other issues. As a professional soldier I am aware of my duty to obey and implement your decisions. However, as a RV and PVO Commander and a leader I cannot accept the manner in which these particular decisions and some others were made, and the resulting solution. In such circumstances I deem that a request for relief of duty and the termination of my professional service is the only right move in order to preserve my personal dignity, together with the integrity and authority of the post of RV and PVO Commander” He sent this to me.

As General PAVLOVIĆ submitted this request, and you see that he is heading into some ways of thinking which are not consistent with the unity of the Army, and therefore the state, my opinion is that his request ought to be approved. If you approve this I would like to suggest at the same time that Major General Ljubiša VELIČKOVIĆ be appointed Air Force Commander. He participated in the war in Slovenia at the Brežice airport, in Croatia at the Zemunik airport, and in Mostar. He is capable of being a commander, and does not have any - for this situation - deviant opinions, on the contrary, he is endeavouring to create greater unity within the Yugoslav Army.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

I did not take PAVLOVIĆ's efforts at organisation as being deviant. He voiced his opinion. It is good that commanders voice their opinions and advocate them, especially if it is done in a regular way – at a Supreme Defence Council session. I would not hold this against him. However, if he requests to be relieved of duty and retired for the reasons he stated – which surprises me because I could not find any serious reasons for it – it is quite right to meet his request.

Momir BULATOVIĆ:

I agree. I think the important thing in his request is that he accepts military subordination, but says that he himself doesn't really believe in it.

Zoran LILIĆ:

All right, Momo, let's move on.

Momčilo PERIŠIĆ:

The third thing is the appointment of Colonel Radovan TOMAŠEVIĆ to Assistant Navy Commander.

Zoran LILIĆ:

Sorry, does this mean that VELIČKOVIĆ will be appointed Commander?

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

This is the proposal of the Chief of General Staff. We do not know General VELIČKOVIĆ. We suppose that the Chief of General Staff has thought this proposal through?

Momčilo PERIŠIĆ:

I have, Mr President, and I have consulted a wide circle of people. We do not have a better solution.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

We trust the Chief of General Staff's proposal.

Momčilo PERIŠIĆ:

Third, the appointment of Colonel Radovan TOMANOVIĆ to Assistant Navy Commander for Logistics instead of General BJELANOVIĆ. TOMANOVIĆ has had comprehensive troop experience and has a masters degree.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

Is he a logistics man?

Momčilo PERIŠIĆ:

He has had logistics duties so far. He is a mechanical engineering graduate.

Further, the annulment of the decree terminating active service for Major General Milorad TERZIĆ and his appointment as adviser to the Minister pursuant to the last meeting's decision. I say this because we have to do it in order for Mr President to sign the annulment of the decree.

We have an amendment of the decree for the RV and PVO Corps Commander, Colonel Slavko DIVJAK - from salary class six to salary class five.

Zoran LILIĆ:

Is this all?

Momčilo PERIŠIĆ:

I have one more question with regard to this subject: for you to agree in principle with the order on persons with the rank of General, in fact on the number of positions with the rank of General in the Yugoslav Army. You received this in your material.

So far the number of positions with the rank of General has been 0.7% of the officer positions. We reduced this number to 5.8% of positions envisaged by the new establishment and organisational structure. This means that we may have

about 91 establishment positions. A total of 36 positions would alternate between Colonel and Major General; 21 positions would be for Major Generals only; 8 alternating between Major General and Lieutenant General; 11 positions for Lieutenant Generals; 13 alternating between Lieutenant General and Colonel General; one position for Colonel General; and one alternating position for Colonel General or Army General.

Currently we have 48 Generals in the Army, which is below 50%. We believe that in our personnel policy we must never go beyond 70 Generals, which is somewhere about 75 – 80%. Thus we would bring the current proliferation down to an optimum level. But in order not to be soft on certain positions when creating the next establishment structure, or create positions for individual persons, I think it would be good if it were initiated by one central order.

If you agree to this, the President would be able to sign this order, which would represent a limit for us that we would not be allowed to exceed.

Zoran LILIĆ:

This is just determining establishment positions.

Momčilo PERIŠIĆ:

Yes, just determining establishment positions. When writing it we would incorporate this into every establishment book, and thus curb any subjectivism and the tendency for Generals to proliferate.

Pavle BULATOVIĆ:

I would appreciate your opinion. It is envisaged here that the Assistant Minister for Military Economy is at the same time Deputy Minister. I have a dilemma – in view of the structure of the Defence Ministry, its responsibilities and the duties of the Deputy Minister, should the Deputy Minister be an officer, whether a general or of other rank, or ought he to be a civilian? My feeling is that it should rather be a civilian because of representing the Ministry in the Government and the Federal Assembly. If the Ministry creates defence policy I don't know how far the rank of General is compatible with managing defence policy.

Momčilo PERIŠIĆ:

What prompted us to make this decision? First, the present Ministry structure is as it is. And the structure of the Ministry depends on the Government's decision.

The Minister is appointed a result of elections, so it can be a member of a party. As the Army is a non-party organisation we wanted to distance ourselves in a way – my apologies Minister, but the Army must look beyond the present moment - from any possible deviation.

Therefore I think that it is important that either the Minister or his deputy is a General. As the Minister cannot be a General, it would be good if the Deputy Minister was a General.

Pavle BULATOVIĆ:

The Deputy is appointed by the Federal Government.

Momčilo PERIŠIĆ:

I'm talking about the situation at the present moment. This will be solved by the staff and job planning. There are five Generals here in the Ministry. Maybe they will decide that there should be none. We will make proposals as we see fit, but we do not know what the decision will be.

Zoran LILIĆ:

I don't think that there's any disagreement there. Shall we accept it as proposed?  
Do you agree?

Momir BULATOVIĆ:

I think that we should remove the text in the brackets.

Zoran LILIĆ:

Do you agree to remove the text in the brackets? (Agreed)

So, we've solved this. Let's move on.

Momčilo PERIŠIĆ:

The old regulations on the /missing text/ are in force. They are linked to the SFRY /Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia/. In order to bridge this period /missing text/ conditions for drafting the real Service Regulations, we suggest that the Draft Service Regulations, which are in line with all current laws, be adopted. They would go through a one-year ratification period. Then we would change them in the light of that experience and adopt Service Regulations. I don't think I have to elaborate on this.

I propose that this be accepted and the President signs it.

Zoran LILIĆ:

All right, are there any comments? (There are not)

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

This is just a proposal on changes; otherwise the Service Regulations book is much thicker.

Momčilo PERIŠIĆ:

The situation is the same with the Rules of the Military Discipline. This is only harmonisation with the Draft Service Regulations and the Law on the Yugoslav Army. The President also needs to sign it.

Zoran LILIĆ:

All right, do you agree? (Agreed)

Let's move on.

Momčilo PERIŠIĆ:

The next question is military service for conscripts and recruits who have come from the territory of Republika Srpska and the Republic of Serbian Krajina. We have a lot of problems with this because they are not there and cannot do military service there, while here many of them are not registered. Also, many of those who are registered do not have citizenship. We have two possibilities here:

One possibility is to send them there, and the other is that they do their military service here with us and when they complete it, if it comes to any degree of danger, we can send them there.

Please let us make a decision on this. Our proposal is that all those who turned a deaf ear to returning to Republika Srpska or the Republic of Serbian Krajina should be put on file and do their military service here. For example, we managed to find the following on our records: There are 293 recruits and 1,327 conscripts in Belgrade; 626 recruits in Kragujevac, etc, not to mention all the towns. There are 3,265 recruits in total in FRY territory – that's one brigade - and 19,765 conscripts.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

What are conscripts?

Momčilo PERIŠIĆ:

Those are people who have done military service, are liable for call-up, but are currently not in the army.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

The local military organs are to call up the 19,765 conscripts, round them up and in agreement with the Republika Srpska leadership, which will establish a mobilisation centre in Zvornik, take them to Zvornik as military deserters, hand them over to the mobilisation centre and send them to serve in the Republika Srpska Army. This is a whole corps of military deserters who are involved in crime across Yugoslavia while avoiding defending their own country. We have stipulated that they must establish a mobilisation centre in Zvornik, that these people are to be brought in, taken to the centre and put into units of the Republika Srpska Army.

As for those who ought to do military service, they can do it here, but when they finish they should be sent to the Republika Srpska Army if there is a need. Because it's ridiculous that volunteers are going from here while these people wander around Belgrade and Serbia. I believe that the number is somewhat larger than 19 thousand.

Momčilo PERIŠIĆ:

This number is larger, but I'm talking only about these that we found in the records.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

Please develop these organs well, this larger number must be established and all of them called up at once so that they don't run away. They should be temporarily assembled somewhere and then transported there, to the mobilisation centre in Zvornik, that is, to their jurisdiction.

Franjo TUĐMAN has been mobilising all the Croats born in Bosnia and Herzegovina to replenish the units, and we are not sending those who fled Bosnia and Herzegovina back to their territory.

Momčilo PERIŠIĆ:

We should bear in mind two things. One is that through various connections, some of these men have managed to get FRY citizenship. The other is, there is a number of students who have permits to continue their studies.

Third, we appeal to the Montenegrin and Serbian MUP /Ministries of the Interior/ to help us because we don't have the right to send the military police into homes to detain somebody if they do not want to go.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

We will give all /possible/ assistance, there's no problem there.

Both your government (to M. BULATOVIĆ) and mine will have requests on Monday.

Momir BULATOVIĆ:

We have a thousand students from Bosnia and Herzegovina in Montenegro and they are accommodated in student halls of residence, faculty buildings etc. If they want to revoke that they first have to revoke their request to us to accommodate the students.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

Among these 19 thousand there are a thousand students at the most.

Momir BULATOVIĆ:

There is one specific thing here – the training of recruits. I think we can only do this by observing the law – military cooperation between the FRY and other state entities. We cannot send children there. We can say: we will train your children there.

Momčilo PERIŠIĆ:

That's what we suggested too – to receive them here, train them, and then they can go.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

It wouldn't be right to send recruits there.

Momir BULATOVIĆ:

Yes, we can train them here. They have to request this from us. Otherwise I believe it won't be of much use – many will disappear.

Zoran LILIĆ:

All right, Momo, but we ought to try.  
Let's move on.

Momčilo PERIŠIĆ:

The next is a report on military attachés. You requested it at the last session. We have a total of 17 military missions, so there should be the same number of attachés, 13 assistants, two officers...Of this we have 10 military attachés, 6 assistants, one... officer and six secretaries.

In 1994 we planned to dispatch ten of them through regular rotation etc., I won't bother you with this. We are not satisfied with some of them. We have already replaced the military attachés in America and Great Britain.

In order to raise the quality of people representing our country – these are our military ambassadors – Please let us adopt

a decision that in the future we propose, and the Supreme Defence Council approves the military attachés who will go abroad.

Zoran LILIĆ:

We adopted this conclusion at one of the sessions.

Momčilo PERIŠIĆ:

Until now there have been all kinds of protégées. I can tell you that their quality in five countries is such that we must recall them immediately. I have already prepared the people and preparations for going there are underway. I would appreciate it if we passed a decision here so that we can continue with the work.

ZORAN LILIĆ:

We already have that decision.

Pavle BULATOVIĆ:



The Defence Ministry proposes the military attachés based on an opinion from the General Staff, if my memory of the conclusion serves me.

Zoran LILIĆ:

Is this the conclusion of the Council, General?

Slavko KRIVOŠIJA:

Yes, it is.

Momčilo PERIŠIĆ:

We've planned the regular rotation of attachés in Athens, Paris, London and Washington; the recall or change of attachés from Sofia, Bucharest, Cairo and Rome.

Zoran LILIĆ:

The attaché in Budapest stays?

Momčilo PERIŠIĆ:

I had prepared everything to recall him. You intervened. This is a Muslim of exceptional authority.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

They say he is a very solid man. So what, if he's a Muslim, that's irrelevant.

Momčilo PERIŠIĆ:

I propose that he stays on. He's from the Sandžak, born in Brod, and has enormous influence up there and in the Sandžak. Some nationalists insist on this aspect saying: "How can the FRY be represented in Hungary by a Muslim?"

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

He is a citizen of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

Momčilo PERIŠIĆ:

We have two more things.

Jovan PAVIĆEVIĆ from Belgrade filed a criminal report with the Military Prosecutor's Office against Bogić BOGIĆEVIĆ, Vasil TUPURKOVSKI, Stjepan MESIĆ, Janez DRNOVŠEK...and 14 Generals.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

Throw that in the wastepaper basket.

Momir BULATOVIĆ:

He's a madman.

Momčilo PERIŠIĆ:

But he'll attack the Military Prosecutor's Office then.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

Let him!

Momčilo PERIŠIĆ:

I also need your help with the reorganisation of Military Prosecutor's Offices. This is a procedure before the Federal Assembly. We cannot wait for this decision, and it is about the following:

We have altogether five Military Prosecutor's Offices, which is not rational – we have three Military Courts.

I propose that the Military Prosecutor's Office, and the Military Court for the Navy and the 2<sup>nd</sup> Army remain in Podgorica; in Niš for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Army; in Belgrade the Military Prosecutor's Offices for the Air Force, the General Staff and the 1<sup>st</sup> Army should integrate and the offices should be integrated with the courts. That way we would reduce the number of prosecutors and staff by more than 40%, and work would be much more efficient. It would be good if you agreed to this and the President signed it until a Decree Law is ratified by the Assembly. We have no prosecutor in the General Staff – he retired; we don't have one in the Air Force, etc. We have a lot of problems there.

Zoran LILIĆ:

Do you agree? (Agreed)

Momčilo PERIŠIĆ:

Also we need your opinion on the following: You know that many border crossings are closed from time to time because of the sanctions, of course with the knowledge of the MUP and the governments of both republics. However, this contravenes federal laws and there may be incidents with significant consequences. I don't have anything against this, but it would be good if we made a decision at this level to legalise some of these crossings in line with the law, to prevent incidents with unforeseen consequences because the border regime has been violated and we have no legal approval for it. We soldiers must either prevent this or take a great risk – the Army, the MUP, the governments of both republics, as well as the Federal Government. I have concrete information, but I don't think it is necessary to present it now.

Momir BULATOVIĆ:

I think that President LILIĆ should find some *modus operandi* in cooperation with KONTIĆ. The situation is obviously such that every opportunity must be used. For example, there is a smuggling channel from Albania across the Skadar lake. One time the army comes and yells at the smugglers as if they were going to shoot them on the spot, take everything off them, but give them back the barrels – this means do it again. (Laughter).

Then the smugglers are caught by our police - who take everything. There's some sort of gentleman's agreement going on there.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

So, there's a gentleman's agreement on robbery, and because criminals are being robbed it's supposed to be legal? This is not the way things are done.

Border crossings must be put in order. The Police are responsible for border crossings. Whatever is not a border crossing is the responsibility of the Army.

Momir BULATOVIĆ:

The crossing is, say, on the lake. Once our troops fired at people who were smuggling diesel fuel across. It would be a disaster if the diesel spilled into the lake or if somebody got killed.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

They must not be fired on, smugglers must not be fired on – instead what they are smuggling should be confiscated from them.

Momčilo PERIŠIĆ:

Mr President, but sometimes they draw their weapons.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

It's different if they draw their weapons.

Momčilo PERIŠIĆ:

I have one more question, and then there remains only the question of traditions.

The Army is exceptionally resilient; they can endure a lot, but they are asking the following. Thanks to a great number of extremely correct and honourable officers we have endured everything to date, and we shall endure even worse.

Please let us not bring the Army as a social category below subsistence level, below the level of other categories in the society, particularly in the republics - due to the federal state not functioning

well or functioning worse than the republic states.

One concrete example: trade unions in work organisations are organising food parcels which are given to the police, but the Army has no funds to do so because it has trouble feeding its own troops.

We would appreciate it if members of the Army were given the same as the others.

Also, reliable sources of funds should be provided within reason, so that the Army doesn't change from being a stabilising factor into a destabilising one. Because these are armed men who are five times more dangerous if there were to be a mutiny fomented by the parties, etc. You know how it was in Banjaluka, although it was a different context. We have this in eastern Slavonia now, and it could happen here too. There haven't been any indicators of it so far. I guarantee this will not happen, but some other social categories should not in any way be above the Army. I mean the police and similar organisations.

We have altogether 54,866 commissioned officers and non-commissioned officers, etc. There are 7,233 of them in two personnel centres in Republika Srpska and the Republic of Serbian Krajina. When planning any kind of welfare assistance these people should be included.

Pavle BULATOVIĆ:

Plus 50 – something thousand military pensioners.

Momčilo PERIŠIĆ:

I think that pensioners are included like the other pensioners.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

All pensioners are included.

Momčilo PERIŠIĆ:

In some places they are, in others they aren't.

Momir BULATOVIĆ:

Military pensioners in Montenegro are included.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

I think that we should solve the problem of funding the Army here, and the other thing - with regard to assistance – other organs will take care of that.

Momir BULATOVIĆ:

General, as the Supreme Defence Council we would really have to react if for example the Federal Government did not grant a concrete request to allocate something from commodity reserves, etc. This is the situation in the republics: those who ask, get what they want. It has never happened that somebody /?asked for/ commodity reserves and got nothing.

Momčilo PERIŠIĆ:

I can't contact the Republics.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

Contact the Federal Government.

Momir BULATOVIĆ:

I believe this has to be done by the Defence Ministry together with the General Staff, through the Federal Government, and this ought to be implemented.

Momčilo PERIŠIĆ:

I would like to ask for two more things important for funding.

First, that the Army has priority with regard to funding, within the approved limits.

Second, it should not be a Friday because by Monday it becomes worthless in terms of payments to suppliers and cash payments.

Zoran LILIĆ:

You and Pavle must solve these things with Vuk.

Momčilo PERIŠIĆ:

Mr President, I must advise this meeting that I will do everything. As for me personally, there is no problem, but I must provide the minimum subsistence for the men so that they can really be what they ought to be. There are 18 thousand homeless who have been fleeced by landlords, etc. There is a line below which we must not go because this enormous energy may go in a negative direction.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

The argument that someone will mutiny should not be used. When the Army mutinies for things like that, there is no more Army. Then the Army is not a factor which should be discussed at all.

We ought to solve the problems, not because someone will mutiny, but because problems have to be solved.

Pavle BULATOVIĆ:

The Budget is a matter of principle.

Zoran LILIĆ:

This ought to be sent here in the form of serious material, which we ought to discuss.

Momčilo PERIŠIĆ:

Finally, we have the issue of tradition in the Yugoslav Army.

You've probably read the criteria for respecting traditions. This is the decision about celebrating Yugoslav Army Day.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

In the first part where it says "...it will assert....of the peoples...it is without doubt...particularly the traditions..." it ought to be added: "from the liberation wars of Serbia, Montenegro, Yugoslavia and the national liberation war".

Momčilo PERIŠIĆ:

All right, we'll add that.

Let's move to the Army tradition.

It's your responsibility to decide on the Yugoslav Army Day, and the KOV /Army Ground Forces/ Day. All other things have been the responsibility of the Chief of General Staff.

However, we said here, both the Yugoslav Army Day and the Arms and Services Day.

We propose 16 June for Yugoslav Army Day; 24 December can be the Air Force and Anti-aircraft Defence Day, and 10 August can be Navy Day.

There is justification for this.

Other possibilities for Yugoslav Army Day are: 20 May and 22 December. In order not to give material to the opposition and others, we avoided 22 December, although, to tell you the truth, I personally would opt for 22 December.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

The fact that a treaty was signed in Venice is not a great argument, you know. I don't know, why should we change 22 December?

Momir BULATOVIĆ:

There are many reasons to keep it, but I think there are more reasons to change it. It's purely psychological.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

Then, let's go for 20 May when the Yugoslav Army was created following the creation of the new state. However, this is not in our favour from the standpoint of continuity that we insist on, etc.

Momir BULATOVIĆ:

I think it wouldn't be bad to go back to the past a little, because this common struggle basically brought about international recognition.

I think that the argument for Navy Day is insufficient. I would suggest that the old Navy Day remains.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

I agree, the old Navy Day should stay.

Which is the RV and PVO Day?

Momir BULATOVIĆ:

This was the formation of the first Serbian air force unit. I think it can be the RV and PVO Day.

Momčilo PERIŠIĆ /to the two Presidents/:

In every statement we make, we will mention the history of the Serbian, Montenegrin and other peoples, in the people's liberation war and all the rest.

Zoran LILIĆ:

All right, which will be Yugoslav Army Day?

Momir BULATOVIĆ:

I propose 16 June.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

All right, let it be 16 June, but don't say that the reason for it is the convention in Venice. The most prominent should be the military convention, which envisaged concrete military action for the liberation of the Balkans from the Ottoman Empire.

Zoran LILIĆ:

All right, so Yugoslav Army Day is 16 June.

Navy Day remains the same.

Momčilo PERIŠIĆ:

We also have the adoption of the general emblem. You ought to adopt the general Yugoslav Army emblem. It's given in this picture here. We've consulted every expert available.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

I wouldn't like to get into detail now. This is all good and well done. Only I don't like the fact that emblems for the combat arms, officers, non-commissioned officers, soldiers and generals, do not have the tricolour.

Zoran LILIĆ:

This is my comment too.

Momčilo PERIŠIĆ:

Mr President, a soldier /?always/ wears the general emblem somewhere. That means he will have one thing on his cap, another on his sleeve and a third showing which unit he belongs to, somewhere else on the uniform. The general emblem with the tricolour is obligatory somewhere among these three. There is no need for it to be on all three.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

Yes, but the tricolour can also be here. (Points to the picture)

Momčilo PERIŠIĆ:

No problem, we can put the tricolour everywhere.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

Can the General's insignia be a little more lavish compared to the officer's one – there is almost no difference?

Also, why do the airmen need a compass?

Momčilo PERIŠIĆ:

We've removed the compass.

So we'll put the tricolour everywhere, and cut off this up here on the non-commissioned officers' insignia (points to the picture).

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

I'd rather leave the ring everywhere.

Momčilo PERIŠIĆ:

It is difficult to make a distinction then, and it is very expensive.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

All right.

Momčilo PERIŠIĆ:

Mr President, the General's /insignia/ is multicoloured anyway.

I have no more questions.

Slobodan MILOŠEVIĆ:

As for the press statement, it ought to be brief and say that the Council discussed issues within its responsibility, which are important for the operation and functioning of the Yugoslav Army and defence, etc. We should also say that the Council adopted a number of decisions within its competence.

Zoran LILIĆ:

All right, do you agree that the session should close?

(The session closed at 1430 hours)