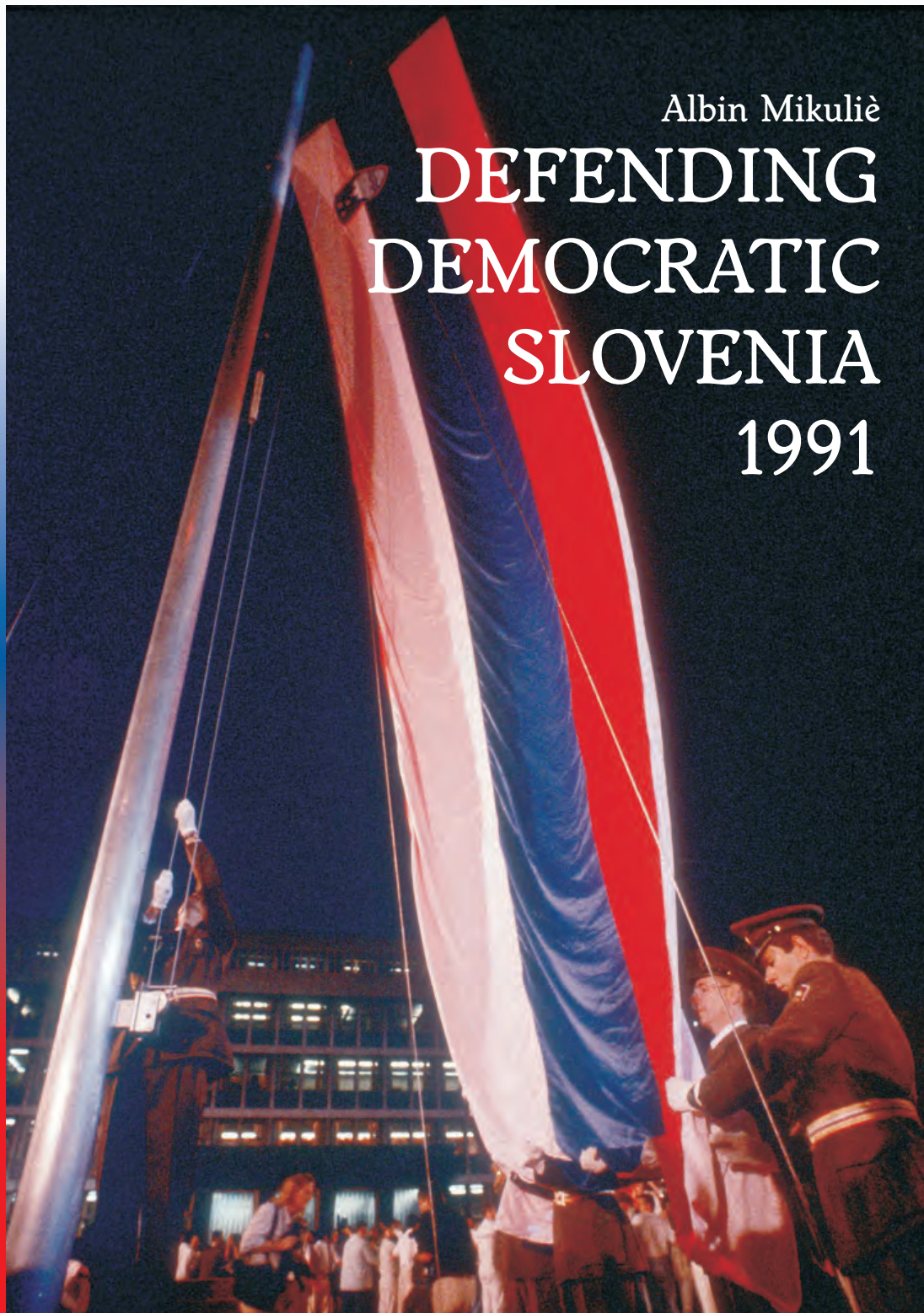


Albin Mikuliè

DEFENDING DEMOCRATIC SLOVENIA 1991





Republic of Slovenia
Ministry of Defence
Slovenian Armed Forces
Military Museum

DEFENDING DEMOCRATIC SLOVENIA 1991

Albin Mikulič

Ljubljana, September 2006

Albin Mikulič:

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HISTORIC CHANGES IN EUROPE, YUGOSLAVIA AND SLOVENIA

EUROPE AT THE END OF THE EIGHTIES

*Europe in 1990
- - - - the border between
Eastern and Western
Europe*



Berlin, 9 November 1989

After 28 years, the Berlin Wall falls.

The German Democratic Republic opens its western borders; citizens from both Germanies are allowed to freely visit each other again. One of the most painful periods of post-war German history is over.

The fall of the Berlin Wall is an historical event symbolizing the end of the Cold War. Germany is reunited.



The year 1989 saw dramatic changes in Eastern Europe. These changes also had a major impact on the situation in the former Yugoslavia and in Slovenia.

People in the Warsaw Pact countries were increasingly dissatisfied; political systems in Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria and in the German Democratic Republic collapsed. In Poland, the Solidarnost Trade Union took over. In 1990, Vaclav Havel, a writer and a fighter for human rights, was appointed the Czech President. Unlike the velvet revolutions in Hungary, the Czech Republic and Poland, the people's uprising in Romania was extremely cruel. President Ceausescu was shot.

In Paris, heads of states from 34 member countries of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe signed **the Charter of Paris for a New Europe**; this was to help eliminate the post-WWII division of Europe.

In May 1990, Boris Nikolajevič Yeltsin, who was in favor of rapid and radical political and economic changes, was appointed the first President of the Russian Federation by the Moscow Parliament.

After the political changes in Eastern Europe in 1991, the military part of the Warsaw Pact was dissolved. A few months later, the political committee of the Eastern defense alliance was also disbanded.

In all former communist countries in Europe, old regimes were replaced with democratic governments.

YUGOSLAVIA AT THE CROSSROADS



Pictures of Milošević were widespread in public gatherings in Serbia, and the majority of texts on posters were directed against Slovenian politicians. This poster shows the famous “Hafner’s finger”. At the 17th session of the Federal Party Congress, Vinko Hafner pointed his finger at Slobodan Milošević accusing him of non-communist behavior.

With the death of historic leaders such as Tito, Kardelj and others who had managed to keep the situation in the former Yugoslavia under control by means of Party policy, the decisive element of the united country was gone. In the early 80s, severe disagreements among the republics emerged. The first interethnic disputes broke out between the Serbs and Albanians in Kosovo.

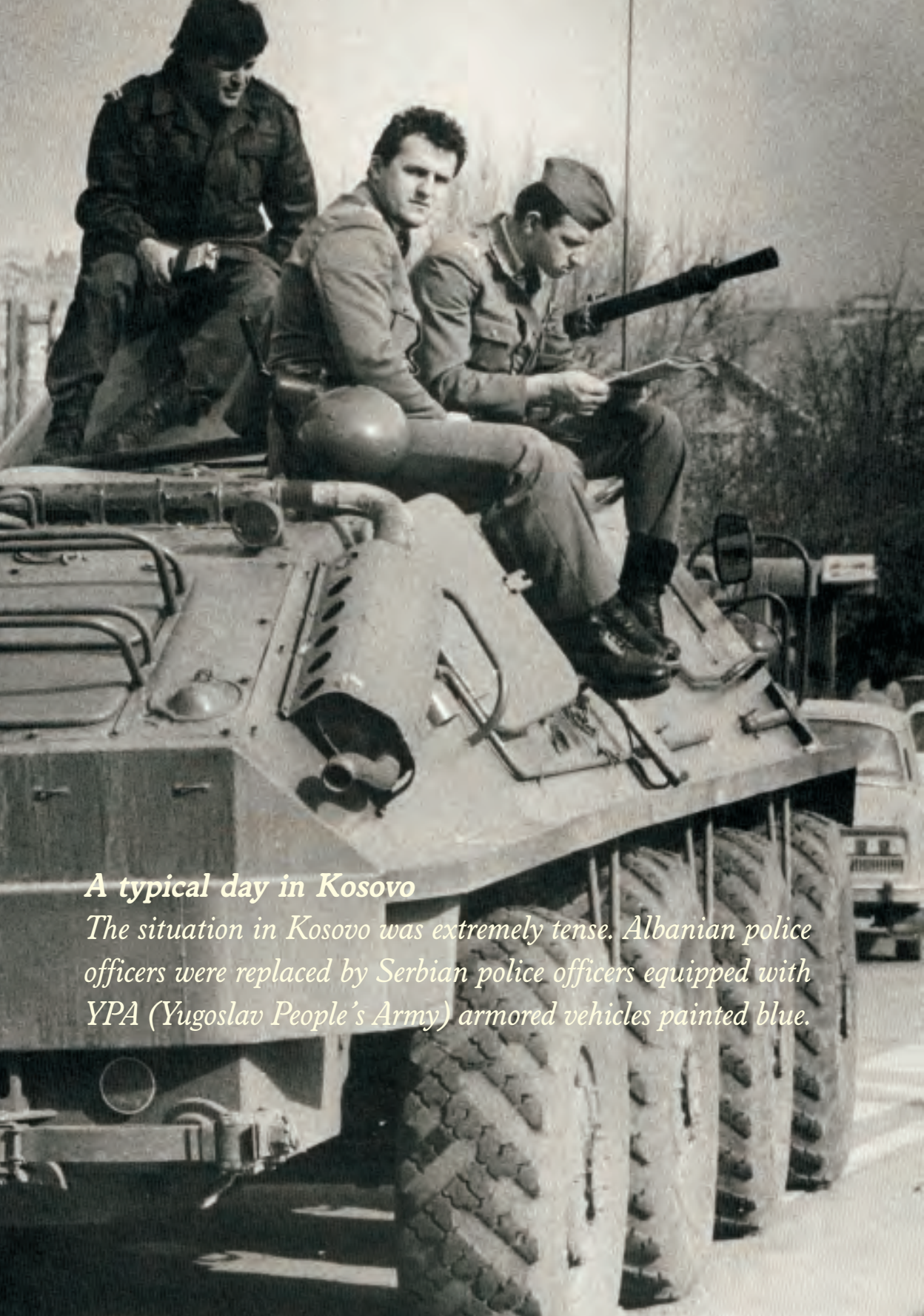
In the Serbian Academy of Science and Art Memorandum in 1986, a clearly nationalistic program for a Greater Serbia was published. The principle that all Serbs needed to live in one country put great pressure on all republics with Serbian inhabitants.

Disputes between those who advocated greater autonomy for the republics and those who represented centralist and unitarian movements were increasingly severe. The situation was made worse by the aggressive statements by the Greater Serbia nationalists led by Slobodan Milošević.

Slovenia was against the movement to overcome problems through centralization and unification of the country.



Presidents of the former Yugoslav republics (from left): Momir Bulatović, President of Montenegro; Kiro Gligorov, Macedonia; Slobodan Milošević, Serbia; Franjo Tuđman, Croatia; Alija Izetbegović, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Milan Kučan, Slovenia.



A typical day in Kosovo

The situation in Kosovo was extremely tense. Albanian police officers were replaced by Serbian police officers equipped with YPA (Yugoslav People's Army) armored vehicles painted blue.

SLOVENIA, THE TRIAL AGAINST THE FOUR



On 31 May 1988, on a request by the YPA leadership, the Slovenian State Security Service arrested three journalists who worked for *Mladina* magazine and a YPA non-commissioned officer, accusing them of the illegal possession of a classified military document.

In the summer of 1988, the trial against the four was conducted at the courthouse on Roška street in Ljubljana. This trial led to mass demonstrations and to discussions about the jurisdiction of military courts. In addition, the decision made by the Federal Secretariat for the People's Defense that trials in Slovenia could be in the Serbian language caused great dissent. The Military Court sentenced the four to prison.

Defending Democratic Slovenia 1991

When the accused, Janez Janša, David Tasič, Ivan Borštner and Franci Zavrl, came out of the courthouse, they were welcomed by a crowd of people from all over Slovenia.

The arrest of the four resulted in the establishment of the Human Rights Committee, which had many members under the leadership of Igor Bavčar.





Founders of DEMOS

At the end of 1989, the opposition parties united as the Democratic Opposition of Slovenia or DEMOS. Jože Pučnik was elected President of DEMOS.

Title page from the 57th edition of “Nova revija”

“Nova revija” was first published in the spring of 1987. A group of people from among the Slovenian intelligentsia (among others, France Bučar, Tine Hribar, Peter Jambreč, Jože Pučnik and Dimitrij Rupel) published their contributions to the Slovenian National Program. Their position was that sovereignty belonged to a nation rather than to a federation. The negative response by the federal leadership and the majority of the republics made Slovenian national and political unity even stronger.



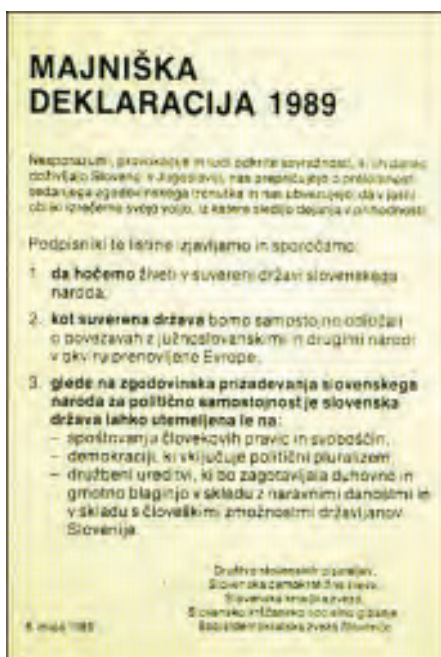
The emergence of democratic parties in the first half of 1989 (SKZ, SDZ, SDZS, ZS, and KSG) was a clear sign of political pluralism in Slovenia. The Slovenian Communist Association did not want to comprehend, let alone accept, this fact. Therefore, it used the Socialist Federation (SZDL) and the mass media in an attempt to prevent the political functioning of the new opposition organizations. Upon the establishment of the Social Democrats, it also sought the assistance of the police in preventing new political organizations from becoming political parties within the SZDL.

Jože Pučnik, the emergence of DEMOS, Nova revija, Ljubljana 1996

THE MAY DECLARATION

The May Declaration

*On 8 May 1989, the opposition parties introduced to the public the **May Declaration**, a document which claimed a sovereign Slovenian state and its right to make a free decision on its integration with other countries. On 22 June 1989, the Slovenian leadership presented the **Fundamental Charter**, which stated they were still in favor of a Federal Yugoslavia.*



The May Declaration, which was called an “Open Session of the RK ZSMS Presidency” for fear it might be prohibited, was read by the poet Tone Pavček. The public protest gathering was at the Kongresni trg square in Ljubljana.

Assertions in the May Declaration were included in the basic program of the emerging democratic opposition parties.



Ljubljana, Kongresni trg, 8 May 1989

A large political gathering at which the May Declaration was introduced.



Ljubljana, 5 February 1990, police officers return from Kosovo

As requested by the Slovenian leadership, the Slovenian police officers deployed to Kosovo as part of the Federal police detachment, returned home. This was the first act of disobedience by the police to the Federal authorities.



Poster from the 14th special ZKJ Congress

The movement related to a Greater Serbia was also prevalent in the Yugoslav Communist Association. Slovenian representatives demanded a debate on actions needed to solve the crisis in Yugoslavia. Most of the representatives were against this proposal so the Slovenian delegation walked out of the Congress early. This resulted in the collapse of the Communist Party. All attempts to continue the Congress failed. In November 1990, the Yugoslav Communist Association, a movement for Yugoslavia, was established and was mainly comprised of YPA servicemembers. The Yugoslav Communist Association had no significant impact on later developments in Yugoslavia. When the Slovenian and Croatian communists decided to support national politics and with the death of Tito, the last obstacles which had maintained an intact Yugoslavia were gone. Just the YPA was left caught in political intrigues, and its leadership succumbed to the idea of a Greater Serbia.

MULTI-PARTY ELECTIONS IN SLOVENIA

The first multi-party elections were held in Slovenia from 8 to 22 April 1990, 52 years after the last ones. This was a key milestone in the creation of the new country.

The democratic opposition won the elections with 54% of the votes. The new government was also elected with Lojze Peterle as President of the Government and also president of the strongest opposition party, the Slovenian Christian Democratic Party. Other government positions, which were important in the process of gaining independence, were assigned to members of the democratic coalition. Igor Bavčar was appointed Secretary of Internal Affairs, Janez Janša Secretary of National Defense and Dimitrij Rupel Secretary of Foreign Affairs.

At the constitutional meeting of the National Assembly on 17 May 1990, Dr. France Bučar was elected President.

Along with elections of delegates to the Sociopolitical Chamber, the Chamber of Associated Labor and the Chamber of Communes of the Assembly, there were also elections for the President of the Republic of Slovenia and members of the Presidency.

In the second round of presidential elections, Milan Kučan got 58% of the votes, thus winning the elections and defeating his rival, Dr. Jože Pučnik. Other members of the RS Presidency were Dr. Matjaž Kmecl, Ivan Oman, Ciril Zlobec and Dr. Dušan Plut.



*Milan Kučan, the newly
elected President of the RS
Presidency.*



*Dr. Jože Pučnik, President of
DEMOS*



Debate of RS presidential candidates (from left to right) Milan Kučan, Ivan Kramberger, Dr. Jože Pučnik and Dr. Marko Demšar



The RS Executive Council was elected on 17 May 1990.



President of the RS Assembly, Dr. France Bučar (left) and President of the new Slovenian Government, Lojze Peterle (right)

DISARMAMENT OF THE TERRITORIAL DEFENSE OF THE REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA



*Commandant, Territorial Defense of the Republic of Slovenia
Lieutenant General Ivan Hočvar*



*Top Secret
Order no.
625, dated
15 May
1990*



The Chief of the Territorial Defense Headquarters of the Republic of Slovenia (RS TD HQ), Major General Drago Ožbolt, signer of the order on the transfer of weapons, ammunition and explosive ordnance to YPA storage sites.



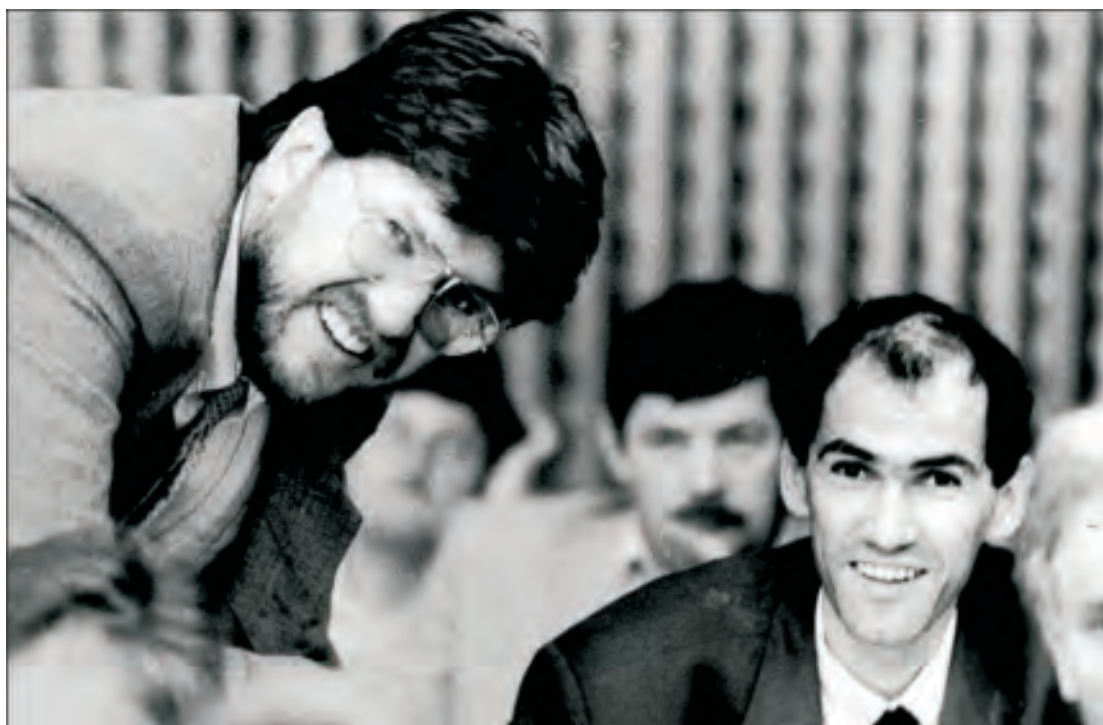
Šentjur near Celje, the afternoon of 19 May 1990

Weapons and ammunition are being moved from the Regional TD HQ

In January 1990, General Hočevar had already demanded that the subordinate territorial defense headquarters submit data on the quantity and types of weapons in YPA military posts. The RS TD HQ wanted to be informed of the quantity and types of weapons and ammunition held by the municipal and regional units and the TD Protection Brigade. Based on the data obtained, an order was issued on 15 May 1990 that weapons, ammunition and explosive ordnance be moved to YPA storage facilities. The task was supposed to be top secret, and no one in the RS leadership was informed. This meant disarmament of the RS Territorial Defense Forces.

Preparations for the confiscation of the weapons were started several months prior to the execution and the confiscation was planned to be carried out so that it would coincide with the end of the mandate of the President of the SFRY, Janez Drnovšek, and the change of government in the Republic of Slovenia.

RESISTANCE AGAINST THE CONFISCATION OF TERRITORIAL DEFENSE WEAPONS



At the very beginning of their mandates, Igor Bavčar, Secretary of Internal Affairs, and Janez Janša, Secretary of National Defense, had to face the problem of the Slovenian territorial defense disarmament. Immediate action was necessary to stop any further dispersement of weapons to YPA storage sites.



The YPA representative in the RS National Assembly, Colonel Milan Aksentijević, demanded that the order for the transfer of weapons be fully carried out. He used persuasion and threats to prevent the delegates from adopting measures that would lead to independence.

According to some sources, Aksentijević was part of the “long arm” of the YPA counterintelligence service.



The Slovenian National Assembly

The first meeting of the new Slovenian National Assembly took place on 4 May 1990.

The confiscation of weapons provoked strong reactions from Slovenian politicians and the civilian public. Urged by President Milan Kučan, General Ivan Hočevar, who was also bound by federal legislation to inform the Slovenian Presidency of the transfer of weapons, gave the unconvincing explanation that this was just a precautionary measure.

In the afternoon of 19 May, on a request from the Secretariat of the Republic of Slovenia for National Defense, the RS Presidency sent a telegram to the municipalities advising them to stop surrendering weapons.

By the time the prohibition was issued, approximately 70% of all weapons had already been moved to YPA storage sites. In addition, five defense authorities at the municipal level had also had their weapons confiscated.

The TD HQ staff found themselves in a very difficult position as the majority of them knew that the confiscation of weapons was at odds with the best interests of the Republic of Slovenia.

The spontaneous resistance against the illegal confiscation of weapons led to the creation of one of the best organized conspiratorial actions in recent Slovenian history, a project of the National Protection Forces called **Manevrska struktura narodne zaščite (MSNZ)**.



The false driver's license of the president of the municipality of Kočevje, Mihael Petrovič, MD.

In order to assure the safety of MSNZ project leaders, certain tricks were necessary, such as false documents for the main MSNZ actors.



MGV 176 Machine Gun

In the summer of 1990, the firm Gorenje developed weapons for short distance combat.

During the same summer, new camouflage uniforms were tested in the Kočevje forests for field training purposes.

RECONCILIATION IN KOČEVSKI ROG



8 July 1990, reconciliation in Kočevski Rog



The reconciliation in Kočevski Rog was conducted in front of the mass grave of the members of the homeguard. The ceremony was attended by the highest representatives from the political and public spheres. In the crowd of over ten thousand people was the President of the Republic, Milan Kučan, and the Archbishop of Ljubljana, Dr. Alojzij Šuštar.

On this occasion, a monument made by Metod Frlic was raised to the victims of postwar killings.

Despite the symbolic ritual, political differences concerning national reconciliation remained.

In the summer of 1990, intensive intelligence activities were conducted. Rade Klisarič, a member of KOS (counterintelligence service) employed by the territorial defense, was responsible for the collection of data on the YPA. A round-the-clock control was implemented over all important YPA facilities, movements of units, training of YPA units and activities at the Republic Territorial Defense Headquarters still under the command of Lieutenant General Ivan Hočevar. Timely information was important for the officials at the Republic Secretariat for National Defense and at the Republic Secretariat for Internal Affairs so that they could make appropriate decisions.

Based on the intelligence material gathered, an assessment was made of causes and possibilities for YPA action in Slovenia. Later, these findings served as a good basis for the drawing up of the Ordinance for the Use of the MSNZ.



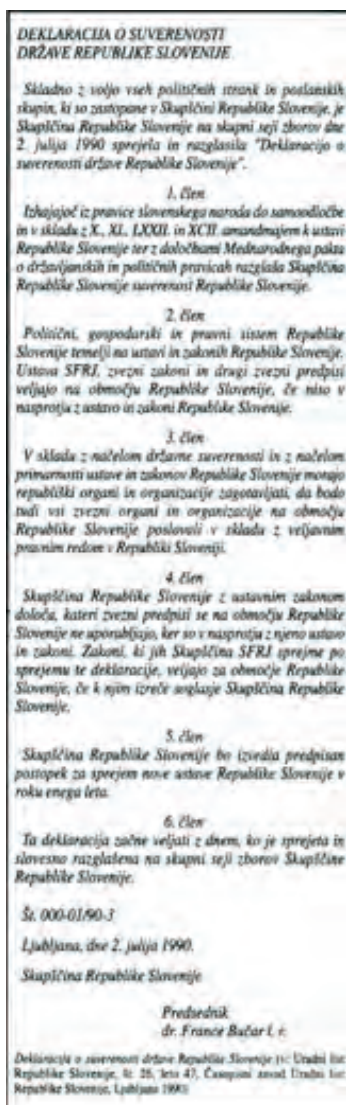
Gotenica, Summer 1990

In Kočevje, the communist authorities had underground facilities ready to retreat to in case of an emergency or war. The area, kept under a very strict security regime, extended over 200 square kilometers. In 1990, the newly elected government decided to open Gotenica and its surroundings to the public. A special commission was appointed headed by Prime Minister Lojze Peterle whose task was to identify what there was on the so-called Maček's territory. There was also a subcommission appointed headed by Tone Krkovič. Its task was to find out how much ammunition and how many weapons there were in the area of Gotenica. There were two units positioned there, a police logistics unit and a territorial defense protection unit. Later, it turned out that greater quantities of weapons had been expected to be found. Gotenica was an important location for the transportation of weapons to MSNZ units in Slovenia.

THE DECLARATION OF THE SOVEREIGN STATE OF THE REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA

As early as the summer of 1990, the Slovenian National Assembly had started debating legislation pertaining to independence. In July, the National Assembly of the Republic of Slovenia adopted the **Declaration on the Sovereignty of the Republic of Slovenia**. A timeframe of one year was set for the adoption of the new Slovenian constitution and the establishment of a procedure to determine which federal regulations were no longer valid in Slovenia. In addition, the Slovenian representatives were recalled from the Federal Assembly.

With constitutional changes on 28 September 1990, the Assembly voided several federal regulations in Slovenia and took over the decision-making process concerning compulsory military service and the command of the RS Territorial Defense. Federal authorities and some of the republics tried to force Slovenia to revoke these measures as well as the declaration of sovereignty.



*The Declaration of the
Sovereign Republic of
Slovenia*



Kočevje Utility Administration

On 23 August 1990, immediate MSNZ leadership held a meeting in the Kočevje Utility Administration building. During the meeting, the MSNZ organizational chart was approved and listed the first and last names of the most important organizers as well as the units up to the municipal level.



Territorial defense weapons storage site in Ljubljana

It was often the case that people who worked for the territorial defense and were members of the MSNZ stole weapons owned by the territorial defense and stored in YPA storage sites. They had to be very careful not to be discovered. A lot of weapons and ammunition were collected in this manner.



Secret weapon storage site in the village of Libušnje in the Tolmin municipality

Weapons were hidden in the well (marked in the picture).

During the MSNZ project, there were several secret weapon and ammunition storage sites in Slovenia intended for the use of MSNZ units. They were distributed across the country in the custody of the most reliable individuals.



The business premises of Anton Županc, Stranje 28, Senovo, a secret storage site for weapons and ammunition for the needs of the MSNZ Krško municipal headquarters.

A decision was made to appoint Tone Krkovič MSNZ Chief. In the next few days, Igor Bavčar issued decisions appointing all regional MSNZ chiefs who, in turn, issued decisions appointing their assistants and municipal MSNZ chiefs.

ORDINANCE ON THE USE OF THE MSNZ



Pristava nad Stično, where important documents were adopted for the further work of the MSNZ.

On 7 September 1990, a meeting which was very important to the future work of the MSNZ was held in Pristava nad Stično. At the meeting attended by Janez Janša, Igor Bavčar, Tone Krkovič, Vinko Beznik and Jože Kolenc, the existing situation and the measures taken concerning the organization of the MSNZ were analyzed. An overall action plan was finalized. Tone Krkovič introduced the war plan proposal and the organizational scheme of the MSNZ. **Based on the approved Directive from the Chief of the RS National Protection for the Demonstrating, Partial or Total Use of MSNZ, the necessary working documents and charts were prepared.** This was the first time the YPA was mentioned as a potential aggressor or key threat to the achievement of Slovenian independence.

The meeting in Pristava was an historical one since a document assuring protection for the process of achieving Slovenian independence was approved. At the regional level, adequate follow-up documents were written, tailor-made for the use of MSNZ units in individual regions. The next year, many of them were used in the war for Slovenian Independence.



A Territorial Defense Protection Brigade storage site in Gotenica, from where a lot of weapons and ammunitions for MSNZ units across Slovenia were distributed. Most of the distributions were conducted at night under the protection of special police units.

REBELS WITH A CAUSE





Janez Janša

In 1990 he was the main actor of the MSNZ project.



Igor Bavčar

In addition to Janez Janša, Igor Bavčar was the main coordinator of the MSNZ project at the republic level.



Tone Krkovič

In charge of operations for the MSNZ project at the republic level.



Vinko Beznik

Commander of the police Special Unit. In charge of police operations for the MSNZ project.

At the level of the Republic of Slovenia, the MSNZ project was led by Janez Janša and Igor Bavčar. Tone Krkovič was tasked with operational leadership. Vinko Beznik and Jože Kolenc coordinated the activities of the MSNZ organizers and the police (a special police unit at the regional level). Igor Bavčar also appointed MSNZ chiefs in 13 regions, and they, in turn, appointed chiefs for the municipal MSNZ headquarters in all 62 municipalities. MSNZ unit formations were adjusted to the weapons and equipment available.



Miha Butara
*Commander of MSNZ,
the city of Ljubljana*



Janez Slapar
*Commander of MSNZ,
Gorenjska region*



Elo Rijavec
*Commander of MSNZ,
greater Ljubljana area*



Rade Klisarič
*Commander of MSNZ,
Dolenjska region*



Marjan Fekonja
*Commander of MSNZ,
Vzhodnoštajerska region*



Štefan Šemrov
*Commander of MSNZ,
Zahodnoštajerska region*



Leopold Čuček
*Commander of MSNZ,
Južnoprimorska region*



Drago Vidrih
*Commander of MSNZ,
Severnoprimorska region*



Jože Ranzinger
*Commander of MSNZ,
Zasavje region*



Mladen Mrmolja
*Commander of MSNZ,
Koroška region*



Ernest Breznikar
*Commander of MSNZ,
Posavje region*



Vojko Štembergar
*Commander of MSNZ,
Notranjska region*



Ivan Smodiš
*Commander of MSNZ,
Pomurje region*



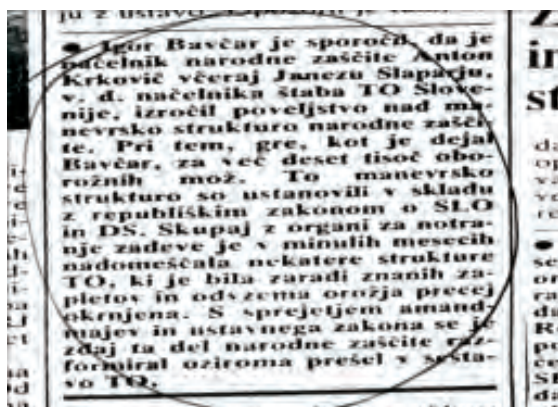
A meeting of the leading MSNZ members in September 1990



The MSNZ project is unique in Slovenian history. It was initiated under special circumstances, during the most sensitive period of the working towards Slovenian independence, and in accordance with real political and military conditions. There was a lot at stake, which was also true of the goals set. If we had not taken the risk at that time, there would probably not be an independent Slovenia today. Usually, when there is risk involved and people who are willing to take it, the paramount amount of effort is not seen clearly. The more successful the outcome, the more perceivable are the results of the risk, and usually everybody would like to take their share of it. Those who were against the risk and against the project are usually the first and loudest in claiming the merit or even in awarding medals to others. This is not unique only to Slovenia or the MSNZ project. However, such behavior cannot change facts retrospectively. As time goes by, events often become less clear. Courageous actions imprinted on the history of a nation keep on living, are sacred to the values of a nation, and make new generations proud of their history. The MSNZ project is one of these actions.

Ljubljana, 12 May 2003

Janez Janša



Delo, 4 October 1990

PREDSEDNIK
REPUBLIKE SLOVENIJE

ODLIKUJE

*Pripadnike Manevrske strukture
narodne zaščite*

Z ZLATIM ČASTNIM ZNAKOM SVOBODE
REPUBLIKE SLOVENIJE



*za izjemne zasluge pri obrambi svobode in uveljavljanju
suverenosti Republike Slovenije v času,
ki je bil usoden za slovensko prihodnost*

UKAZ ŠT. 996-01-15/2000
V LJUBLJANI, 26. 5. 2000

PREDSEDNIK
Mitja Kučan



Ljubljana, 21 June 2000

President Milan Kučan awarded decorations to MSNZ members. In his address, he pointed out the importance of the MSNZ in 1990 when the new Slovenian state was being established.

The highest national decoration for MSNZ members in recognition of their contribution to Slovenian independence.

OCCUPATION OF THE REPUBLIC TERRITORIAL DEFENSE HEADQUARTERS



On 4 October 1990 at 2230 hours, a military police unit from the Šentvid military post broke into the Territorial Defense Headquarters located in Ljubljana at Prežihova 4. YPA representatives stated that it was only an additional measure to secure the facility. In reality, it was a »minor strike«, led from Belgrade and carried out by Lieutenant General Ivan Hočevar, who had been removed, and the Commander of the 5th Military District, General Konrad Kolšek.

Initial reaction from Slovenes was very strong, but they calmed down at the news that the headquarters had already been moved to another location under the command of the acting chief Janez Slapar.

On 28 September 1990, the Presidency appointed reserve Major Janez Slapar the new Acting Chief of the Slovenian Territorial Defense Headquarters. This provoked violent opposition among the YPA military leadership. The Federal Secretary of National Defense stated that Slovenia was creating its own armed forces. In his reply to this statement, Janez Janša, the Republic Secretary of Defense, asked where they were when Serbia changed its constitution and included much more radical provisions.

On 2 October, the SFRY Presidency decided that the Commander of the 5th Military District in Zagreb would take over the command of the Slovenian Territorial Defense. On this occasion, Janez Slapar said, “The sooner the YPA recognizes the new TD HQ, the easier finding a solution to the conflict will be.”



In front of the Republic Secretariat for National Defense, Ljubljana

After the YPA military police broke into the abovementioned headquarters on Prežihova street, the police and territorial defense units subordinate to Major Janez Slapar secured all important facilities. The Republic Secretariat for National Defense was protected by MORiS members wearing new uniforms made in the Kočevje firm OPREMA and armed with MGV machine guns.



On 19 October 1990, after a few days of operation on Prežihova street, the RS TD HQ moved to new premises in “Kardelj’s Villa” in Tacen. After inspection of the territorial defense honor guard, the new premises were opened by the RS President, Milan Kučan.

THE DREAM OF INDEPENDENT SLOVENIAN STATE
COMES TRUE



THE BEGINNINGS OF THE SLOVENIAN ARMED FORCES

17 December 1990 was a cold winter day in Kočevska Reka, and yet it was a special day. It was marked by an event that had a major impact on the later development of events, brought dramatic changes to the Slovenian nation and helped fulfill a thousand-year-old dream for an independent Slovenian state.

On this day, the MORiS Special Brigade first stood in formation in Kočevska Reka.

Open threats by the YPA motivated brigade servicemembers even more and instigated their pride as if they were aware that the new Slovenian Armed Forces were being formed. The pictures broadcast on TV conveyed a clear message, "All right! We are here waiting for you!"

MORiS was the first unit in the Slovenian Armed Forces where the word Homeland started with a capital letter.



Tone Krkovič, Commander of MORiS Special Brigade, reporting to the Acting Chief of the TD HQ, Major Janez Slapar.



Technical equipment

During the formation in Kočevska Reka, new weapons were put on public display for the first time. It was learned that the Slovenian territorial defense units were armed with SAR-80 rifles and new anti-tank resources. The YPA followed these events with great interest.



After the formation, MORiS members acted out a scenario of an “attack on a building” exercise and proved that they were also trained for special tasks.

PLEBISCITE FOR A SOVEREIGN AND INDEPENDENT SLOVENIA

In the fall of 1990, Slovenia proposed to the Federation and all the republics that an agreement on confederation be signed. All of the republics but Croatia refused this proposal. As a consequence, some political parties introduced radical attitudes towards Yugoslavia. A mixture of radicalism on the part of DEMOS, which was constantly reminding Yugoslavia that in the long run changes could not be prevented, and the expected reserved posture by the political parties from the previous system bore results. The plebiscite for an independent and sovereign Slovenia was first suggested by the Slovenian Socialist Party; the official proposal, however, was put forward by DEMOS. Despite differing positions, it was agreed that the plebiscite would be valid and honorable for Slovenians if more than half of those who had the right to vote were in favor.

The plebiscite was held on 23 December 1990. Out of 93.2% of the voters, 88.5% were in favor of independence. In accordance with the law, the decision had to take effect in six months.

As the music of Prešeren's Toast played on 26 December 1990, the Assembly solemnly announced the plebiscite results.



Plebiscite ballot

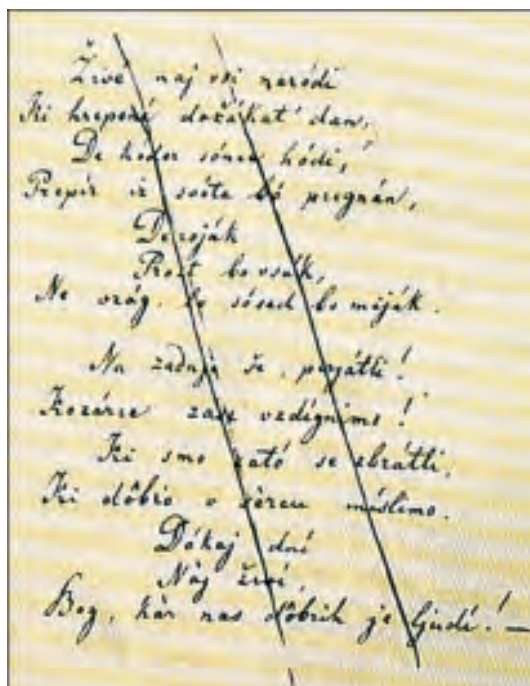
Not only Slovenians living in Slovenia but also many countrymen abroad voted for an independent Slovenia.



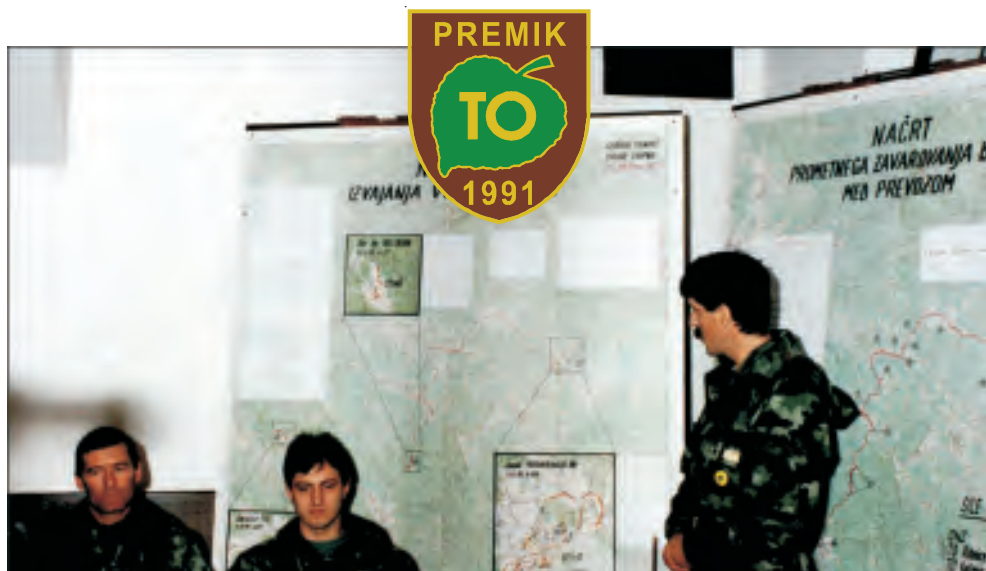
Celebration in front of the Ljubljana Town Hall

After the plebiscite results were announced on 26 December, Slovenia was on its feet, and most Slovenians celebrated this historical day until late in the night.

Prešeren's poem, "Zdravljica (the Toast)", set to music by Stanko Premrl, had been the anthem of the Republic of Slovenia since 1987 and became the National Anthem in 1990.



“PREMIK-91” EXERCISE



Exercise preparations

The exercise Premik-91 (Movement 91) was led by the Slovenian Republic Territorial Defense Headquarters. In the Primorska region, the main effort was on the mobilization and movement of units and in the Dolenjska region the use of assigned units. There was also a MORiS brigade participating in the exercise tasked with setting up ambushes.

Preparations for independence also included RS Territorial Defense exercises, one the most important being a tactical exercise, Premik-91, which was conducted 22 - 24 March 1991.

The exercise objectives were to carry out mobilization in order to verify the tactical operations of TD units during attack following a movement to contact and counter-commando combat.

TD units from the 6th and 2nd Regional TD HQs and the MORiS special brigade participated in this exercise.

The exercise started with mobilization in the Vogrsko district near Nova Gorica, followed by movement in the direction of Postojna-Sodražica-Kočevje-Trebnje, with the final destination being Šmarjeta in the Dolenjska region.

A lot of activities were carried out during the movement of the unit. The unit engaged in anti-aircraft and anti-helicopter combat, and in Stari Log na Kočevskem it engaged in an ambush operation. It also conducted terrain surveillance since there was a danger of enemy reconnaissance commando units.

The Premik-91 exercise verified that the level of readiness of the RS TD was adequate for it to become the key actor offering armed resistance within the defense system if the freedom, independence and territorial integrity of Slovenia were threatened.

Soon, we were able to make use of appropriate guidelines, professional leadership, highly motivated personnel, sound logistics and a pool of experiences. We were ready.



The movement of territorial defense units was carried out mostly with vehicles assigned to the reserve component and “mobilized” for this exercise.



The TD unit of the Dolenjska region marching through a community



The exercise was observed by the leading personnel responsible for the combat readiness of the Republic of Slovenia.

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE IG AND PEKRE TRAINING CENTERS





Pekre

Conscripts arriving at the training center

For the first time in history, the Slovenian nation had its own peacetime soldiers. Soldiers had previously done their military service in Austria and in Yugoslavia far away from their homes and in a foreign language. When Slovenia decided on independence, it also got its own military.

In April 1991, the first squad and platoon leader and company commander courses started in the new TD Training Center in Poljče in the Gorenjska region. On May 15, the first soldiers arrived. 180 conscripts arrived at the Ig Training Center and 120 soldiers at the Pekre Training Center near Maribor. Military service was completed in modernized barracks; sound relationships were established and the foundations for building respect for military persons were set.

On 2 June 1991, the first peacetime soldiers swore their allegiance to the country at Ig and in Pekre.



*Commandant, 510th
Training Center, Ig
Major Bojan Šuligoj*



*Combat colors of the
Slovenian Armed Forces*



*Commandant, 710th
Training Center, Pekre
Major Andrej Kocbek*



***Ig**
The Commandant of the Ig Training Center reporting to the President of the Republic
of Slovenia, Milan Kučan*



The color guard is ready.



Pekre

Everything is ready for the swearing-in ceremony.

PEKRE, 23 MAY 1991



The 710th Territorial Defense Training Center in Pekre

On 23 May 1991, the YPA tried to enforce its will at the Territorial Defense Training Center in Pekre near Maribor. It used its armored vehicles and military policemen to surround the center. It also used threats to get to the conscripts which would probably have meant the end of the beginning of the Slovenian armed forces. However, training center personnel would not yield and were ready to use weapons if necessary. This did not happen. Many people from Maribor also organized demonstrations to defend Slovenian independence and freedom. The wheels of the YPA aggressor, an armored vehicle, took their first death toll, Josef Simčik.



The YPA was ready to use firearms to complete its task.



YPA armored vehicles in front of the Pekre Training Center



Many inhabitants from Maribor gathered in front of the 710th Territorial Defense Training Center preventing new YPA units from entering.

A DAY EARLIER IN PRIMORSKA REGION





Vrhpolje, 26 June, evening

The barricade stopped the advance of the YPA armored vehicle convoy; the soldiers who were escorting the convoy had their weapons ready to fire.

On 26 June 1991 at 1315 hours, based on an order by the Commander of the Rijeka Corps, General Marjan Čad, armor units left their military posts in Ilirska Bistrica and in Pivka and headed towards the Slovenian-Italian border. Territorial defense members, along with police officers, escorted them and helped increasingly upset locals set up road barricades. The advance of the YPA was not a routine movement. Members of the Territorial Defense and the police were instructed to avoid conflict and not to be the first to use force.

At 1430 hours, a young 2nd lieutenant fired at the barricade in Divača, fortunately without consequences.

Despite the problems, YPA units were quite successful in carrying out the order and occupied several border crossings with armored vehicles.



Vrhpolje, 26 June

At approximately 1600 hours, the first YPA tank drove into the village. Angry villagers stopped the armored convoy with a barricade.



Vipava, 26 June, evening

A clear message from the locals to the YPA



Krvavi potok, 26 June 1130

On 26 June at border crossings all over Slovenia, the border entry signs were replaced with new ones saying the Republic of Slovenia. At several border crossings, there were problems which required a police presence.

THE DECLARATION OF AN INDEPENDENT AND
SOVEREIGN REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA, LJUBLJANA, 26
JUNE 1991





On 26 June 1991, a huge crowd of people from all over Slovenia gathered at the Ljubljana square, Trg republike, to attend the celebration upon the declaration of an independent and sovereign Slovenia. This was a grand event.

On 25 June 1991, the National Assembly of the Republic of Slovenia adopted a constitutional law on the coat of arms, the flag and the Basic Charter on the Independence and Sovereignty of the Republic of Slovenia.

On 26 June at 2115 hours in front of the Slovenian Parliament building, a celebration began upon the declaration of the independent and sovereign Republic of Slovenia.

Archbishop Dr. Alojzij Šuštar blessed a newly planted linden tree. There was a cultural program with the actor Polde Bibič, the police band and the "Slovenski oktet" octet choir.

The celebration at which a huge crowd of people had gathered ended with fireworks and the chiming of bells. There were also bonfires on the tops of neighboring hills.

Across Slovenia, celebrations were held but flights overhead by YPA aircraft were a bad omen.



Lieutenant Colonel Tone Krkovič was in command of the honor unit of the Territorial Defense of the Republic of Slovenia.



The President of the Republic of Slovenia and the Commander-in-Chief of the Slovenian Armed Forces, Milan Kučan, escorted by the Chief of the Republic Territorial Defense Headquarters, Colonel Janez Slapar, and Lieutenant Colonel Tone Krkovič inspected the honor unit's formation which was comprised of conscripts from the Ig and Pekre training centers.

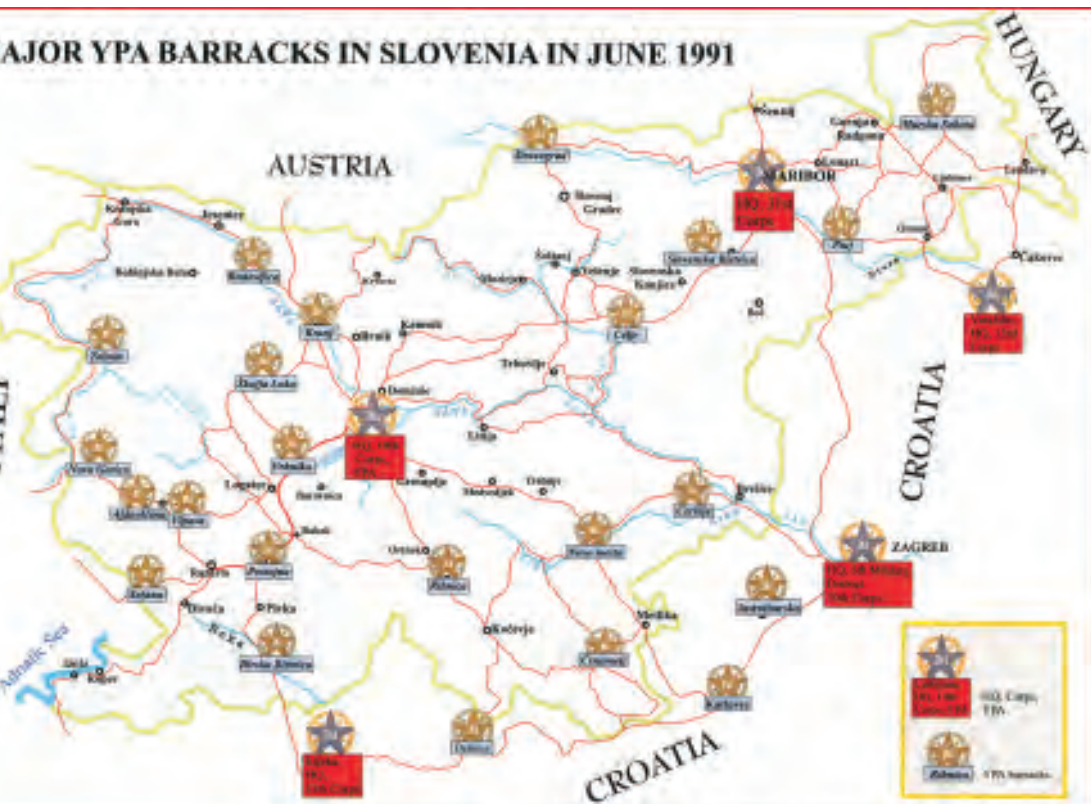


Members of the Slovenian Territorial Defense raising the Slovenian flag



THE YUGOSLAV PEOPLE'S ARMY (YPA)





According to the Constitution, the YPA was an armed force common to all Yugoslav nations and nationalities. Its basic mission was, along with the territorial defense forces, to stop an aggressor in a potential attack on Yugoslavia.

The YPA was the strongest military force in the Balkans and the largest state institution. As such, it was also very costly.

After the death of its Commander-in-Chief Tito, the YPA declared itself the backbone of the political system. It had an important influence on events in Yugoslavia. In 1988, the Army Command in Ljubljana was disbanded under the pretext that this measure was necessary in order to introduce modern combat principles. The military district command was in Zagreb and it was only from there that they were able to command YPA units stationed in Slovenia. An important fact is that until 4 October 1990 the 5th Military District was in charge of commanding the Republic of Slovenia's Territorial Defense.

Defending Democratic Slovenia 1991

Regardless of legislation, the YPA was single minded. After the disintegration of the ZKJ (Yugoslav Communist Party), its political power was enhanced with the establishment of the Communist Party - a Movement for Yugoslavia. In terms of nationality, most YPA servicemembers were Serbs, and only 2.8% were Slovenes.







*General of the Army Veljko Kadijević
Federal secretary for People's Defence
(SFRY defence minister)*



Every year, the YPA had a parade as a demonstration of force. The last parade was held in 1985.

Defending Democratic Slovenia 1991

| | YUGOSLAV PEOPLE'S ARMY | 5TH MILITARY DISTRICT OF ZAGREB |
|--|---|--|
|  | <p>The army was organized into 17 corps, a guard division (Belgrade) and 63rd parachute brigade (Niš).</p> <p>YPA peacetime structure was comprised of 180,000 servicemembers.</p> | <p>The 5th military district of Zagreb was organized in the 5 following corps: 14th Corps of Ljubljana, 31st Corps of Maribor, 32nd Corps of Varaždin, 10th Corps of Zagreb and 13th Corps of Rijeka.</p> <p>The peacetime structure of this military district was comprised of 45,000 YPA servicemembers.</p> |
|  | <p>Air Force and Air Defense forces were organized in three corps (Zagreb, Belgrade and Skopje). They had 512 combat aircraft, 104 transport aircraft, 152 helicopters and 118 other aircraft, 5,100 anti-aircraft guns and 2,800 anti-aircraft rocket weapons.</p> | <p>The 5th Air Force and Anti-Air Defense Corps was stationed in the area of the 5th Military District. The corps with 200 combat aircraft and helicopters used one third of overall infrastructure assets and combat potential available to YPA combat aircraft and anti-aircraft units.</p> |
|  | <p>YPA had 2,100 tanks, 1,000 armor personnel carriers, 8,000 pieces of artillery weapons, 1,300 anti-armor missile weapons.</p> | <p>There were 1,160 tanks and armor combat vehicles, more than 3,000 artillery pieces, mortars, multiple launch rocket systems and more than 500 anti-aircraft pieces in this district.</p> |
|  | <p>YPA Navy capabilities: 1 torpedo boat brigade (14), 1 rocket and torpedo rocket boat brigade (16), 1 patrol ship brigade (14), 1 mine hunter battalion (9), 1 submarine brigade (11), 1 maritime special operations detachment and 3 marine corps brigades.</p> | <p>The 5th Military District was responsible for SFRY borders with Italy, Austria and Hungary (716 kms). Along the Slovenian border there were 85 checkpoints.</p> <p>CSS was conducted by three rear area bases with more than 400 storage installations.</p> <p>National representation of senior NCOs and officers in the 5th military district: 5.5% Slovenes, 16% Croats, 52% Serbs, 19% other nationalities.</p> |



Tank units were the most exposed YPA weapons. The highest ranking YPA officers thought that ten or so tanks on Slovenian roads would be enough to reduce Slovenia to obedience. Events during the War for Slovenian Independence proved them wrong.

SLOVENIAN DEFENCE FORCES



The Presidency of the Republic of Slovenia had already, on 18th March 1991, founded the **Operational Coordination Body in the Event of a State of Emergency**. The foundation of the coordination group was one of the most important operational decisions for the defence and protection measures related to the independence process.

The coordination body coordinated all defence and security preparations and, during the war, functioned as the headquarters of the commander-in-chief. The role of the commander-in-chief was, according to the Constitution, performed by the Presidency of the Republic.

The coordination group was composed of: Igor Bavčar, Janez Janša, Jelko Kacin, Miran Bogataj, Janez Slapar, Tone Krkovič, Vinko Beznik, Bregar Miloš, Brejc Miha, Čelik Pavle, Domadenik Milan, Fekonja Marjan, Kokoravec Franc, Kolenc Jože, Koprivnikar Bogdan, Kuralt Alojz, Kuzma Danijel, Lovšin Andrej, Merljak Rudi, Praprotnik Stane, Stušek Janko, Ušeničnik Bojan, Vereš Anton, Zvonar Ludvik, Žnidaršič Franci.



Andrej Lovšin

*Chief of Intelligence Department of
the Republic Secretariat for National
Defence (Ministry of Defence)*



The intelligence Department of the Republic Secretariat for National Defence had employed a few persons. In the time of preparations for the independence process and during aggression of YPA, they contributed, timely, quality and key information on the YPA for the Slovenian authority.



**THE TERRITORIAL DEFENSE (TD) OF THE REPUBLIC OF
SLOVENIA**





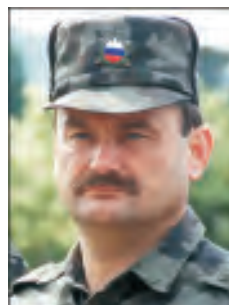
The TD concept was established on 20 November 1968 in all of the former Yugoslav republics.

It was designed to be a special military organization with no standing troops, military posts or armament. The level of equipment could not be compared to that of the YPA. TD units were manned by reservists and commanded by reserve officers. The most important positions in the Republic TD HQ were occupied by YPA officers, with minor representation in regional and municipal HQs.

The first Commander of the Slovenian TD was Bojan Polak-Stjenka. The 1990 multi-party elections in Slovenia also influenced the TD by triggering several political changes. Given the amendments to the legislative basis, the entire TD-related authority was taken over by the Presidency of the Republic of Slovenia. On 28 September 1990, Major Janez Slapar was appointed to the position of Acting Commander of the Republic TD HQ. This was followed by the nomination of new commanders for the regional TD HQs. In June 1991, the TD was under the guidance of the Republic TD HQ. Seven regional and 26 district TD HQs were set up. The special forces brigade, MORiS, and two training centers were also established.



Janez Janša
*Secretary of
National Defense,
the Republic of
Slovenia*



**Colonel Janez
Slapar,**
*Commander of
the Republic of
Slovenia TD HQ*



**Lieutenant Colonel
Tone Krkovič,**
*Commander of the Special
Forces Brigade, MORiS*



**Lieutenant Colonel
Albin Gutman,**
*Commander of the
Dolenjska TD
2nd Regional TD HQ*



**Lieutenant Colonel
Peter Zupan,**
*Commander of the
Gorenjska TD
3rd Regional TD HQ*



**Lieutenant Colonel
Franc Anderlič,**
*Commander of the
Južnoprimorska TD (4th
Regional TD HQ)
through 30 June 1991*



**Major Vojko
Štemberger,**
*Commander of the
Južnoprimorska TD (4th
Regional TD HQ) from
30 June 1991*



**Lieutenant Colonel
Bogdan Beltram,**
*Commander of the
Severnoprimorska
Regional TD (6th
Regional TD HQ)*



**Lieutenant Colonel
Miha Butara,**
*Commander of the
Ljubljana Regional TD
(5th Regional TD HQ)
through 30 June 1991*



Major Janez Lesjak,
*Commander of the
Ljubljana Regional
TD (5th Regional TD
HQ) from 30 June
1991*



**Lieutenant Colonel
Vladimir Milošević,**
*Commander of the
Vzhodnoštajerska
Regional TD (7th
Regional TD HQ)*



**Major Viktor Krajnc,
M.Sc.,**
*Commander of the
Zahodnoštajerska
Regional TD (8th
Regional TD HQ)*



In ambush

Training for TD members was well prepared and tailored to the specific needs of TD units.

Defending Democratic Slovenia 1991

When declaring independence, some 20,000 of the TD wartime troops were called up into TD units. Slightly fewer than 16,000 of them responded to the invitation.

In June 1991, the Slovenian TD had the following armament:

- 39,000 infantry weapons,
- 17,000,000 rounds of ammunition for infantry weapons,
- 1,100 anti-armor weapons, and
- 100 anti-tank missiles.

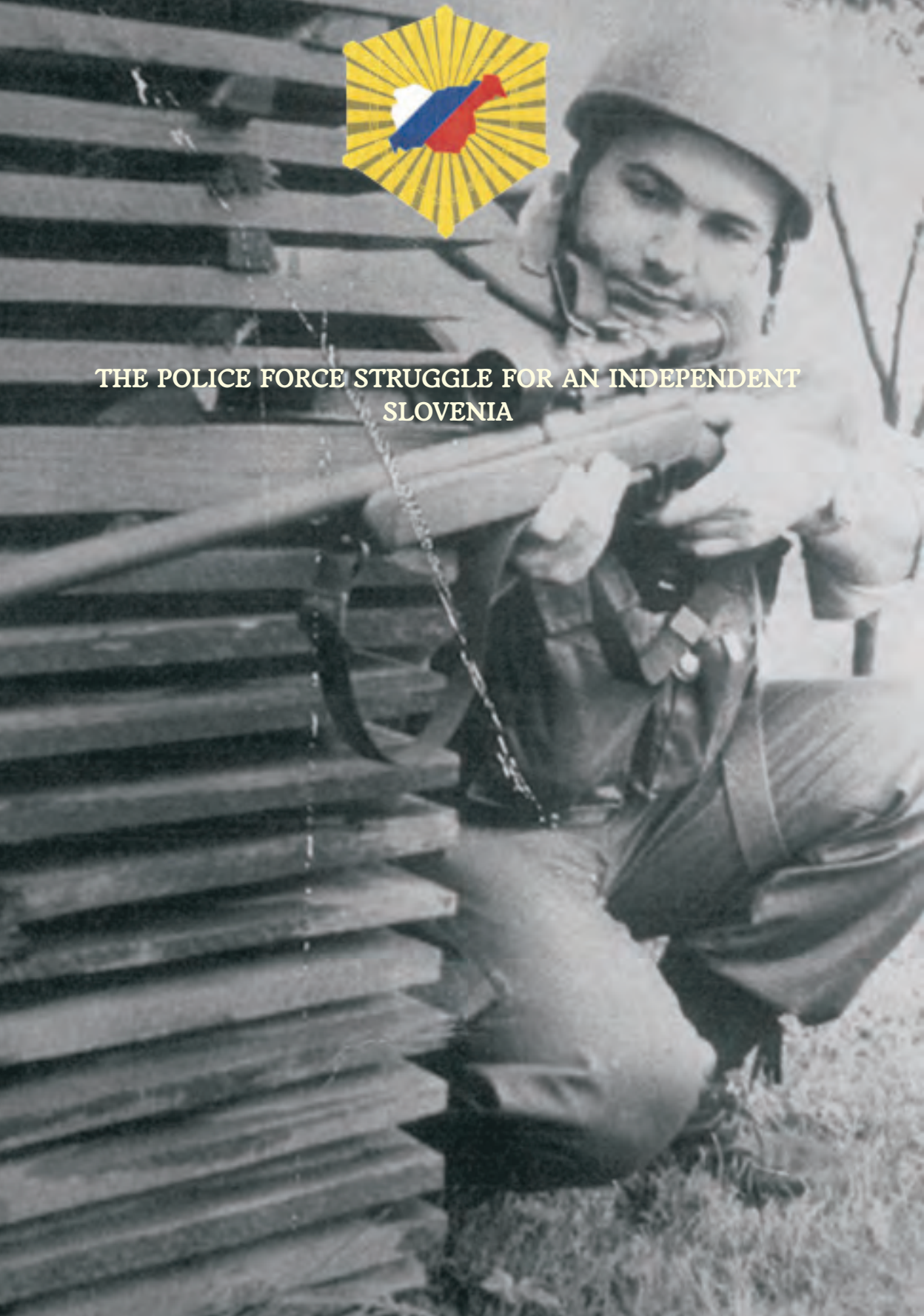
The TD had no armor, airborne or artillery units of its own.



TD members were well prepared and adapted to the purpose and tasks of TD units.



THE POLICE FORCE STRUGGLE FOR AN INDEPENDENT SLOVENIA





The authorities responsible for the Republic of Slovenia's internal policies were divided into 13 regional internal affairs offices.

At the outbreak of the armed conflict in Slovenia, the police forces were well prepared. All active and reserve police officers were called up. Their defense preparations had been carried out long before, and their experience gained in the "Gathering of Truth" on 1 December 1989 was extremely valuable.

During the attack on Slovenia, the police and TD forces fought side by side against the YPA. The result of this joint effort was the capture of a considerable number of YPA soldiers.

A great deal of success was recorded in the other services under the Secretariat for Internal Affairs. The Criminal Investigation Service focused its operations mainly on the collection of documents on criminal acts committed by YPA soldiers. The service also conducted interviews with prisoners, cooperated with the police in inspecting some facilities and premises, and accomplished a number of other tasks.

The Security and Information Service was actively involved in the suppression of YPA counter-intelligence service operations and collected a lot of information on enemy activities and their objectives at home and abroad. One of the merits of the joint services was also the provision of full logistic support.

The War for Slovenian Independence involved 7,100 police officers, among them 4,500 professional and 4,900 reserve police officers.



Igor Bavčar,
*Secretary of Internal
Affairs, the Republic of
Slovenia*



Milan Domadenik,
*Deputy Minister of
Internal Affairs*



Dr. Miha Brejc
*Director of the Security
and Information Service*



Dr. Darko Maver,
*Director of the Crime
Prevention
Administration*



Pavle Čelik, M.Sc.
*Commander of the
Slovenian Police*



The police helped replace border entry signs



The police conducted strict control

CIVIL PROTECTION (CP) OF THE REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA

The CP and other organizations in the existing protection system played an important role during and after the War for Slovenian Independence.

CP units carried out preparations similar to those in the defense and other areas before the actual declaration of independence in order to be ready for any potential escalation in the situation. There were also assumptions that the opposite side would use force in order to quash the independence process. Right after receiving the information that YPA tanks had left the military post, the Republic CP HQ (RCPHQ) initiated its operations on Župančičeva Street in Ljubljana; its operations proceeded without interruption until the end of the war. The RCPHQ immediately established contacts with the municipal and Primorska CP HQ, introduced day and night duty in all CP HQs and issued an order for the call-up of municipal specialized units which then operated until the end of the war. They carried out measures which had been established in case of immediate danger, such as the arrangement of shelters and protection trenches, fire protection measures, NBC protection activities and the like. The population received daily information through radio and television broadcasts on the necessary measures to be taken in case of air raids, how to build shelters, the use of protective masks, the hermetic sealing of their homes and stalls, the protection of wells, and the stockpiling of necessary reserves of food and drink. The majority of tasks associated with immediate protective measures, notably in the area of armed conflict, were accomplished by firefighters and emergency medical services. Special measures were initiated by the RCPHQ during the air raid in Kočevsko and the bombing threats to the oil derivatives storage site in Mokronog. All of the actions by the CP and other forces were, as in other areas, derived from the guidelines and the group responsible for defense coordination.

In 1991, TD forces still lacked some of the required assets and decided to make use of CP stocks, in particular **generators** with the capacity of 1 and 2 kW, beds, blankets, sleeping bags and other accessories.



Miran Bogataj,

CP Commander of the Republic of Slovenia

The war situation at the CPRHQ ended with the departure of the last YPA soldier from Slovenia. This, however, did not mean the termination of activities for CP personnel. EOD personnel were among the busiest as they had to clear large areas of mined land as well as material left behind from the 1991 armed conflicts. The work was carried out in stages from April to July 1992, from September to November 1992, from April to June 1994 and from September to November 1994. CP and TD EOD personnel managed to clear 1,500 hectares with some 800 anti-personnel mines being discovered or destroyed; this was a highly demanding and dangerous task and one which required much responsibility.

In terms of the organization, facilities, and personnel and technical assets, the reception, accommodation and provision of supplies to the refugees from Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina which followed the escalation of war operations in the former Yugoslavia was an even more complex mission than that of demining. By August 1992, when the RS government established the Refugee Office, the CP had managed to receive, accommodate and provide supplies for more than 80,000 people from the former Yugoslavia with the help of the Slovenian Red Cross and other authorities.



Kranj

A group of inhabitants of Kranj in front of a shelter



Two firefighters testing gas masks

CIVIL DEFENCE

The system of Civil Defence had very important role in the period before and during the aggression of YPA. Members of Civil Defence hindered YPA units during the fights, switched off electricity, military telephone-exchanges and water infrastructure in barracks, performed transports, prepared barricades and supplied Teritorial Defence and police units.



Novo mesto
Road blockade

Nova Gorica
There were many interventions by firefighters. During one of their operations, they had to put out fires on tanks after an armed conflict in Rožna Dolina.



TEN DAYS OF ARMED CONFLICTS DURING THE WAR
FOR SLOVENIA (1991)



ON THE FIRST DAY OF THE WAR (THURSDAY, 27 JUNE 1991)

At daybreak of the first day following the declaration of Slovenia's independence, the YPA started its armed aggression on the newly declared state. A convoy of armored vehicles moved from Croatia to Novo mesto and Ljubljana, and tanks from Vrhnika set off towards the Brnik Airport in two columns. Tanks and armored vehicles from Maribor approached the border crossings with Austria while the Varaždin-based tank convoy, under the command of Colonel Popov, attempted to force its way through Ormož. The order issued to command personnel required the use of all combat operation rules and these were eventually applied. Federal police officers were deployed to border crossings. It seemed as if nothing else could have stopped the tanks' progression. The officers acted with a lot of determination and self-confidence.

However, Slovenia did not yield as was expected in Belgrade. The Presidency of the Republic of Slovenia convened and, as the Supreme Commanding Authority, decided to respond to the YPA aggression with force.

An order issued by the commander of the 5th military district a few hours after the commencement of the YPA aggression in Slovenia





A convoy of YPA vehicles consisting of 12 BOV3 armored personnel vehicles, 6 trucks and 3 all-terrain vehicles drove through Metlika at 1:15 a.m. The final destination of the convoy was not known. A decision was made to set up a roadblock at Poganca on the outskirts of Novo Mesto. The roadblock was made up of trucks from the Novo mesto Road Company and protected by the counter-diversion unit of the 21st District TD HQ Novo mesto.

At 3 a.m., Major Boško Prodanovič, the YPA unit commander, ordered the removal of the roadblock and backed up his decision by firing a few shots from a machine gun. A TD member responded to the fire and wounded an officer in the convoy.

This is regarded as the first shooting incident in the War for Slovenian Independence.



At Trzin, three armored personnel carriers and a signals vehicle were left behind from a convoy of armored vehicles from Vrhnika. As evening approached, members of a special operations detachment left two YPA helicopters to assist the armored vehicle crews. Shooting broke out and lasted around 20 minutes. Members of the 55th District TD HQ in Domžale, police officers from the Domžale police station and special police forces were involved in the fighting. Four YPA soldiers and one TD member lost their lives. The rest of the YPA soldiers surrendered, and the soldiers from the YPA special operations detachment were captured the following day.



At 9 a.m., ten tanks set off from Maribor towards the Šentilj border crossing, and five tanks and ten armored vehicles started towards Dravograd. The convoy moving towards Šentilj was stopped by a barricade at Pesnica. Around noon, the barricade was fired on and later was set on fire. The tank column was attacked by TD members at around 5:30 p.m.

At the extended session of the Republic of Slovenia's Presidency, President Milan Kučan addressed the public: "According to the assessment of the Presidency, the maneuvers of YPA units—the message from the 5th military district—can be regarded as violent and ruthless actions by the Yugoslav Army, an act of aggression against the independence and sovereignty of the Republic of Slovenia and an attempt to permanently occupy Slovenia. Slovenia will respond to this aggression by using all available means in order to protect its sovereignty. The Presidency of the Republic of Slovenia has ordered the Slovenian TD forces to use weapons, if necessary, to protect facilities and communications assets vital for people's lives in the Republic of Slovenia and for the protection of its sovereignty."

The Republic of Slovenia's Presidency urged all Slovenes in the YPA to refuse to participate in aggression against their own nation.



Ormož, consequences of conflict
Units from the Ljutomer District TD HQ set up obstacles on the bridge in order to prevent the further progress of the tanks. The defense was successful and, in the evening, the column returned to Varaždin.

Sniper on stand-by



A YPA armored convoy tried to move past Novo mesto towards Ljubljana to reach its final destination at the Brnik Airport. It stopped on the Medvedjek slope near Trebnje where the Dolenjska TD forces had laid an ambush. Negotiations between the TD and the YPA started; however, there was no real success. The situation was additionally complicated with civilian vehicles stuck on both sides of the blockade.



DAY TWO (FRIDAY, 28 JUNE 1991)

The Slovenian Armed Forces reinforced blockades and mobilized new units to protect border crossings.

All coordination groups received an order: “Carry out offensive activities against the occupying units and their facilities at all points where our units have a tactical advantage. Force the enemy forces to surrender, set the shortest deadline possible and carry out operations with all available weapons. Make sure that the civilian population is evacuated and protected.”



Brnik after a devastating air attack

Major General Konrad Kolšek announced that the YPA would also use air strikes; this eventually happened at half past ten. Two planes attacked the Brnik Airport firing several bursts at hangars and parked cars. As a result of the attack, an Airbus 320 belonging to the Slovenian airline company and some twenty vehicles were damaged with eight vehicles being totally destroyed by fire. In one of the vehicles, two Austrian journalists lost their lives.



In the morning at approximately ten o'clock, the TD attacked a column of armored vehicles after a series of unsuccessful negotiations. Shooting was violent with the YPA also using anti-aircraft guns. Around noon, YPA aircraft carried out an attack and TD positions were fired on with missiles from four MIGs and three "jastreb" assault aircraft. In the village of Veliki Gaber, planes strafed and burned down the Kotar family's house and farm buildings; the owner, Anton, was killed by machinegun fire. YPA aircraft used the notorious bomb clusters which were forbidden by international law.



Gornja Radgona

At four minutes to five o'clock in the morning, some thirty tanks set off from Veržej, making their way through Križevci towards Radenci. In the village of Hrastje-Mota, they reached the first obstacle, broke through it and then reached Radenci. There they made a sudden move towards Gornja Radgona.

At 10:50 a.m., they found themselves in front of the town which looked as if it had been deserted. The YPA tank crews, who had been firing while moving, came across a roadblock built from railway cars and set up across the street. They responded with shells.

Shortly before eleven, they proceeded towards the border. One of the tanks ran into a house in the city center and pulled it down.

Four young people from Radgona crawled close to the column and threw Molotov cocktails at the military trucks.

The tanks rolled on. Just before half past three, the Radgona border crossing was leveled to the ground.



Combat colors confiscated in Borovnica

The recon platoon of the MORiS special forces brigade occupied a large YPA military depot in Borovnica near Ljubljana. The war items confiscated were considerable and included several hundred tons of explosive ordnance, infantry weapons and ammunition, and other military equipment. During the next few days, the items were quickly disseminated in fear of an air raid. The attack did not take place as the corps command was allegedly not informed about the occupation of the depot until the end of the war.

FIGHTING FOR BORDERS

Milan Kučan, the President of the Republic of Slovenia's Presidency, and Admiral Stane Brovet, the Assistant Federal Defense Minister, agreed over the phone to cease hostilities at 9:00 p.m.

The agreed to cease-fire was not respected. On the very next day, YPA troops provoked a number of incidents.



YPA soldiers attempted to attack the border crossing which was guarded by police forces as early as the evening of 27 June but without success.

The decisive clash for Holmec started on 28 June sometime after 5 a.m. and was finished by 10:50 a.m. The first shot came from the YPA sentry box on the border; this was then followed by the response from the TD and police forces.

After this violent conflict, the YPA soldiers surrendered.

The victory won at Holmec was a joint effort by police and TD forces.

The Slovenian flag was flying at Holmec at 7:00 p.m.



At the Rožna Dolina border crossing between Nova Gorica on the Slovenian side and Gorizia on the Italian side, 115 YPA troops were posted. They were fully armed and supported by 5 tanks. Despite the unfavorable ratio for the TD, a decision was made to attack the border crossing with territorial and police forces. Major Srečko Lisjak was appointed the commanding officer of this operation. As evening approached, YPA troops were asked to surrender, but YPA soldiers eventually assumed their positions and the tank crews started the tanks' engines. One T-55 tank was destroyed by the first shots alone, and one more caught fire later on. YPA soldiers realized very soon the helplessness of the situation and surrendered.

The liberation of the border crossing at Rožna Dolina had a significant effect on the further development of events in the Primorska region.

DAY THREE (SATURDAY, 29 JUNE 1991)

From Friday night to Saturday morning, a meeting between Slovenian representatives, three representatives from the European Community and the Chairman of the Federal Executive Council was held in Zagreb. They reached an agreement on ceasing hostilities which was, however, never implemented.

The following issues were discussed during these talks:

- a cease-fire and YPA withdrawal from military posts,
- a 3-month postponement in the implementation of Slovenian independence, and
- the election of Stipe Mesič as the Croatian representative for the Chairman of the SFRY Presidency.

There was no question of postponing the implementation of Slovenian independence; in fact, there was no way to go back. It became clear that Slovenes were not willing and were not in a position to give up their independence.



Škofljica during the war

The implementation of stricter traffic regulation measures



Brod na Kolpi

During the War for Slovenian Independence, border control was increasingly important. At several locations, police forces were supported by TD forces.



Solkan

Upon arrival at the national border with Italy, the TD used the remaining parts of a YPA armored unit to form the first TD armor unit, officially called TONI-55. (The YPA armored unit had split into two groups; one had occupied the Rožna Dolina border crossing and the other the border crossing at Vrtojba.)

DAY FOUR (SUNDAY, 30 JUNE 1991)



Murska Sobota

During the War for Slovenian Independence, medical institutions played an important role by generously providing care for the wounded on both sides - for both TD and YPA troops.

The Slovenian Red Cross provided continued care for prisoners and YPA deserters. They supplied civilian clothing and, in cooperation with the Yugoslavian Red Cross, made arrangements for the return of YPA soldiers to their homes.

In all major Slovenian towns, leaflets and posters were distributed demanding that the YPA leave Slovenian territory. The YPA was an occupation army.





Bistrica pri Naklem

A column of YPA vehicles moving from Kranj to the upper Gorenjska

In spite of three days of fighting, barricades on roads and closed borders, the people of Slovenia did not realize until the last Sunday in June that the nation was at war. At nine o'clock, there were air-raid sirens all over Slovenia. People retreated en masse to shelters. The alarm was cleared only after a full hour.

Although neither side revoked the ceasefire, there were constant violations. The number of volunteers joining the TD forces was rising, and there was an increasing number of soldiers and officers deserting the YPA.

The establishment of new forces from the Varaždin, Zagreb and Reka corps was in process; their mission was to conduct an attack on Slovenia.

DAY FIVE (MONDAY, 1 JULY 1991)

The leading YPA commands from Belgrade kept sending messages with threats and lies directed against Slovenia and its people. In their messages, they kept repeating that the YPA was at the highest level of combat readiness, that units were supplied with basic supplies, that some personnel measures had been introduced to improve the efficiency of YPA operations, and the like.

The situation in Slovenia grew in intensity. The number of YPA members surrendering and deserting to the TD was rising. Internal Affairs authorities set up temporary detention centers in cooperation with the TD and the Red Cross.

In the evening of the same day, Slovenia received a new ultimatum.



A YPA helicopter after take-off from the Celje barracks

The firing from a machinegun of a helicopter bearing the sign of the Red Cross was directed towards Maistrova Street in Celje.

The YPA often misused Red Cross signs to fire from helicopters. The helicopters were also frequently used to transport military equipment, soldiers, ammunition and signals assets.



Črni Vrh nad Idrijo

Just after 1 a.m., a fire broke out in the weapons, ammunition and EOD depot. Several violent explosions followed later on. An 18-meter long and 6-meter deep crater formed at the location of the depot and some 80 percent of nearby houses were damaged.

DAY SIX (TUESDAY, 2 JULY 1991)



The consequences of air raids on the Kum transmitter

The first attack on the Kum transmitter was conducted on Friday, 28 June, around 2 p.m. The TD crew safeguarding the transmitter was taken by surprise. The consequences were grave. Eight members of TD units were wounded by particles scattered after the explosion of the shells. The transmitter was heavily damaged.

The second attack followed on 2 July at around 11 a.m. This time, the air defense protection was prepared. One of the planes was hit. The aircraft did not crash, but the pilot was forced to eject.

German Foreign Minister Genscher intended to visit Ljubljana. The entire Yugoslav air space was closed. There were additional warnings from Belgrade about the tank columns presumably approaching the Slovenian capital, and the meeting was, therefore, held in the Austrian Villach. President Kučan explained to Minister Genscher at the meeting that the independence declaration could only be revoked if the Slovenian people decided to do so. The situation in Slovenia worsened. YPA bombings and missile attacks were selectively directed at the major television and radio transmitters.



On Day Six, YPA aircraft intensified their attacks on the major Slovenian transmitters. They attacked the transmitters on Nanos, Krvavec, Kum, and Boč. For several hours, soldiers were firing from the Maribor military post towards Pohorje in an attempt to destroy the RTV Slovenia transmitter but without success.



The Logatec slope

The YPA tank column from the Vrhnika military post



Krakovski gozd

In the morning, TD units attacked a column of armored vehicles in the woods “Krakovski gozd”. From the direction of Jastrebarsko, they were backed up by the column, while YPA aircraft were engaged by TD forces lying in ambush. During the attack, they also hit YPA tanks and armored vehicles. Within a few hours, TD forces destroyed the column of YPA armored vehicles. Finding themselves in a hopeless situation, the YPA soldiers left their armored vehicles and were captured the following day.



A destroyed tank at Prilipe

From the direction of Jastrebarsko, a column of 20 tanks set off in order to unblock the column located at the Krakovski gozd. TD units stopped them at Prilipe and destroyed three advance tanks.



Presika

An incapacitated tank remained at the scene of attack.

DAY SEVEN (WEDNESDAY, 3 JULY 1991)



The remaining parts of a destroyed tank on Kog

A new YPA column attempted to force its way across the hill of Kog. Two platoons from the 73rd District TD HQ set up an ambush in the area of Bajzek. A group of three volunteers lay in ambush at the house of the Šterman family. They fired at the tank from there, hit it and destroyed it.

The crew left the tank, hid a few days in the nearby woods and then surrendered.

A ceasefire was agreed to but not taken seriously by the Yugoslav generals. Two columns of tanks were sent from Croatia to Slovenia.

An armored division from the national guard, one of the elite units, left Belgrade in the direction of Slovenia. The majority of vehicles, however, had to stop along the road because of breakdowns. The march to Slovenia was a complete failure.

Information was received from Rome that the Italian Army had deployed a few dozen tanks along its border with Slovenia.



Škofije, 3 July, 9 p.m.

With the withdrawal of the YPA, the border crossing is again in Slovenian hands.



Members of the police and TD forces are getting ready to escort the convoy from Dravograd.

DAY EIGHT (THURSDAY, 4 JULY 1991)



Golte, the “gazelle” helicopter with the TO 001 marking

Slovenian members of the Yugoslav Aviation Group, Major Jože Kalan and Senior Master Sergeant Bogomir Šuštar, accomplished a brave feat during the War for Slovenian Independence. Using a well-prepared and detailed plan, they managed to transport a “Gazelle” helicopter to the Slovenian side. They left the post in Maribor at 10:30 a.m. on 28 June. First, they landed on Rogla and then proceeded in the direction of Golte on 9 July, but for security reasons they had to move to Smrekovec. Despite searching for them, the Yugoslav Army never found the “Gazelle”.



During the talks between the Slovenian and Yugoslav delegations held in Zagreb, the Slovenian side sought to cease hostilities, enforce the separation of YPA troops, unblock TD forces, and resolve the issue of prisoners of war and the regime on Slovenian borders. Following lengthy negotiations, establishing compliance with the ceasefire rules and the mutual exchange of information on any incidents were agreed to. Ljubljana hosted the visit by the European Union observers.

The parents of the young men doing their YPA service in Slovenia arrived in Ljubljana to meet their sons.

The withdrawal of the Yugoslav Army to the military posts, which took the entire day, left nothing behind but destruction. Border crossings were demolished, several roads were damaged by tanks, and houses were pulled down.



Fernetiči, 4 July, after YPA tanks fired on it

Federal police officers accomplished a notable “exploit” at the Fernetiči border crossing. One of their “successful” actions was also the plunder of the Kompas duty-free shop.



*Children's "respite".
Even during times of war, the children
found a place to play amid the sand bags
rearranged as shelters.*



Dnevnik, 7 Julij



Ljubljana, traffic regulation

In cooperation with the TD, police forces increased their control of traffic in all of Slovenia and notably in the major cities.



DAY NINE (FRIDAY, 5 JULY 1991)

Prisoners of war (POWs) are typical in wars where the warring parties come in direct contact with each other and capture members from the enemy side. At the beginning of the War for Slovenian Independence, there were some unresolved issues which had not been anticipated before or at least not to such an extent. The Slovenian Red Cross was probably among the best prepared organizations.

The fighting was over, but the ceasefire was still fragile. The YPA was reluctant to give any official assurances.

The ceasefire brought some relief though and time for a more intensive debate on policy and diplomacy.

The special session of the Conference on European Security and Cooperation held in Prague came to an end. A decision was reached to assign a group of professionals to Yugoslavia to assist in negotiations on the peaceful resolution of the crisis.

The Chief of the YPA General Staff, Blagoje Adić, addressed 150 senior YPA officers in Belgrade with a lot of self-confidence saying that “the YPA is involved in a war which has been imposed on it by the secessionists in Slovenia and Croatia” and that “conditions are very dramatic and worse than in 1941.” He accused Marković and the Federal Executive Council of having secret talks with the West and the USA about the division of Yugoslavia and claimed that the units mobilized in Serbia were highly motivated and prepared for anything.

Bogojina, YPA prisoners of war

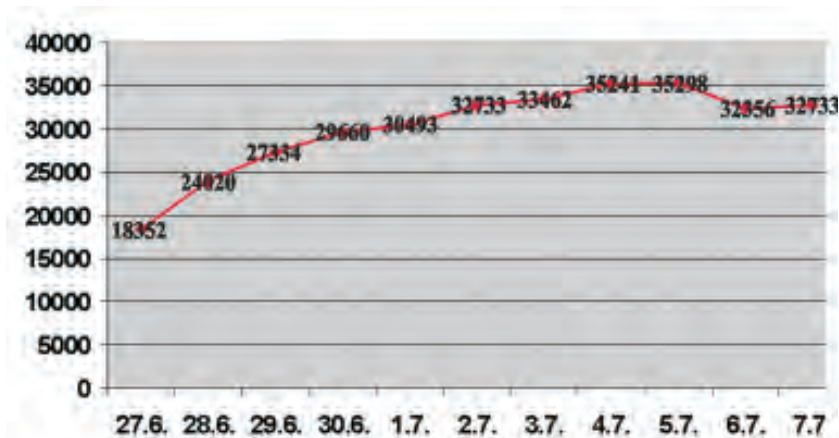
Prisoners of war in Slovenia were under the control of the Criminal Investigation Service which also collaborated with the police forces and the Red Cross. The records of the Slovenian Red Cross reveal that, up to 7 July, 2,405 YPA members, 131 federal police officers and three civilians were captured.



DAY TEN (SATURDAY, 6 JULY 1991)



Barricades in front of the tunnel at the bottom of the Ljubljana Castle



The table shows the number of TD members from all over Slovenia who responded to the call-up.

The response by TD members who were called up was around 90 percent. A large number of volunteers also reported and were mainly posted to units due to the shortage of weapons.

It was a quiet night. The majority of YPA troops were at the posts, in trenches and in their positions.

Parents from the other republics kept coming to Slovenia to look for and visit their sons. There were some 3,000 young men from Slovenia in the YPA, and their status caused a lot of concern.

In the morning, an expanded session of the RS Presidency, including members of the Federal Presidency Dr. Vasil Tupurkovski and Bogić Bogičević, took place in Ljubljana. The session was not about negotiations, but rather about clarification of the ultimatum issued by the SFRY Presidency.

In the evening of the same day, the Yugoslav Defense Minister, Veljko Kadijević, appeared on the Belgrade television channel. In his emotional address, he made several serious accusations against and reproachful remarks about Slovenes. He also made it clear that political means were the only instruments for resolving the disputes.

He was, nevertheless, much more relaxed than the Chief of the General Staff, Blagoje Adžić, had been the day before.



The Kočevje CP inspecting the remains of cluster bombs

The YPA bombed the area of the Kočevska Reka two times, on 28 June and 3 July. During the first air raid, they also dropped cluster bombs. The damage was not significant, but there was a great risk of accidents caused by the potential explosion of the unexploded bombs. With the help of EOD personnel, CP units from Kočevje collected the majority of the used cluster bombs.

**THE BRIONI DECLARATION
(SUNDAY, 7 JULY 1991)**



The Slovenian delegation at the negotiations on the Brioni islands

Members of the delegation (from left): Foreign Minister Dr. Dimitrij Rupel; Chairman of the Parliament, Dr. France Bučar; Prime Minister Alojz Peterle; Chairman of the Republic of Slovenia Presidency, Milan Kučan; and Dr. Janez Drnovšek.

If we think of the general tension, the day was relatively peaceful. The European Union interfered at the Brioni negotiations. The delegation was headed by the Dutch Foreign Minister, Hans van den Broek. There were separate negotiations with the delegations from Slovenia, Croatia and the Federation. After 15 hours of negotiations, a joint declaration, called the Brioni Declaration, was adopted.

SOME HIGHLIGHTS OF THE BRIONI DECLARATION:

- the peoples of Yugoslavia alone can make decisions about their future,
- negotiations on all aspects of Yugoslavia's future should start no later than 1 August 1991,
- all of the parties involved shall refrain from all unilateral acts, especially violent ones, and
- the collective SFRY presidency shall establish full authority and assume its political and constitutional roles.

Part of the agreement was also the quick establishment of an international observers' commission.



The war is over. It is time for joy.



Škofja Loka

Graffiti on a city wall appealing to members of the Slovenian defense forces to keep on defending the independence and sovereignty of the Republic of Slovenia.

The strain and fatigue were immense.

THE WAR IS OVER

Data which was collected by the Slovenian Red Cross up to 7 July:

| | |
|------------------------------------|-------|
| - captured YPA members | 2,405 |
| - captured federal police officers | 131 |
| - captured civilians | 3 |
| - wounded YPA members | 163 |
| - wounded TD members | 89 |
| - wounded police officers | 22 |
| - wounded civilians | 38 |
| - wounded foreign citizens | 1 |
| - YPA casualties | 39 |
| - TD casualties | 4 |
| - police force casualties | 4 |
| - civilian casualties | 5 |
| - foreign citizen casualties | 10 |



The war is finished. A soldier at the Ajševica military post ponders his future destiny.



Sabotin near Nova Gorica

The Slovenian flag was raised in many places all over the newly established state of Slovenia.



KOPER 1991

FAREWELL WITHOUT TEARS





Pivka, September, at the railway station

Observing the trains loaded with military equipment, people could not get over their surprise at seeing the quantities of military weapons concentrated in individual towns. The YPA left military posts in extremely poor conditions. A lot of demolition and robbery was done intentionally. This was also the YPA.

On 18 July 1991, the SFRY presidency reached a decision on withdrawing YPA troops from Slovenian territory. Preparations for the withdrawal were initiated immediately as the concentration of military equipment, assets and weapons was large and the withdrawal was to be completed within three months. The YPA took the majority of its assets and left only a minor portion in Slovenia. The YPA withdrawal from Slovenia was carried out in various directions, mostly by rail. The last YPA convoys left by sea from the Port of Koper. Although an agreement was signed for the peaceful withdrawal of the YPA from Slovenia, TD and police forces were prepared to respond to any provocations or incidents. The last ship with YPA troops onboard left

the Port of Koper on 26 October a few minutes after midnight.

“This was a farewell without tears,” was the sentence most frequently heard during those days.

Farewell without tears. The tension has eased and smiles have appeared on faces.



During their stay in Slovenia, many officers openly showed their preferences and true character. They did not stop any of this even when they were leaving the Port of Koper to join the evolving war in Croatia and Bosnia.



**MINISTRY OF DEFENSE DECORATIONS FOR
MERITORIOUS SERVICE DURING THE WAR**

MILITARY MEDAL OF HONOR

**ORDER OF THE
SLOVENIAN ARMED
FORCES WITH
SWORDS
ON STRAP**



**ORDER OF THE
SLOVENIAN
ARMED FORCES
WITH STAR
AND SWORDS**



**ORDER OF THE
SLOVENIAN
ARMED FORCES
WITH SWORDS**





BADGE MSNZ 1990

Is awarded in recognition of participation in the organization of national protection in 1990



BADGE "DEFENDED SLOVENIA IN 1991"



MEDAL OF COURAGE



MEDAL FOR THE WOUNDED

ORDER OF GENERAL MAISTER WITH SWORDS



Order of General
Maister with
swords
Clas 1



Order of General
Maister with
swords
Clas 2



Order of General
Maister with
swords
Clas 3

MEDAL OF GENERAL MAISTER WITH SWORDS



Gold Medal of
General Maister
with swords



Silver Medal of
General Maister
with swords



Bronze Medal of
General Maister
with swords

MEDAL OF THE SLOVENIAN ARMED FORCES WITH SWORDS



Gold Medal of the Slovenian Armed Forces with swords



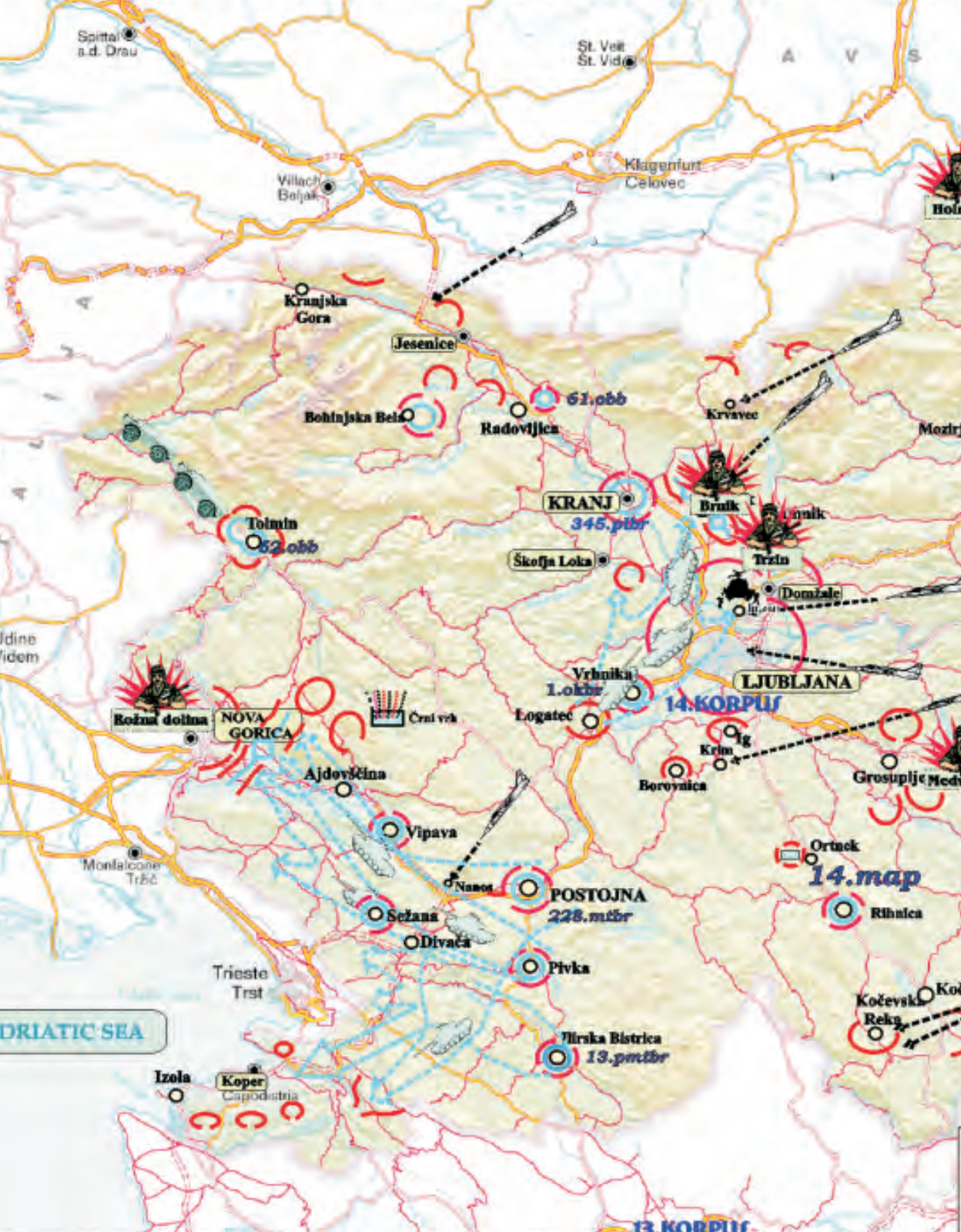
Silver Medal of the Slovenian Armed Forces with swords



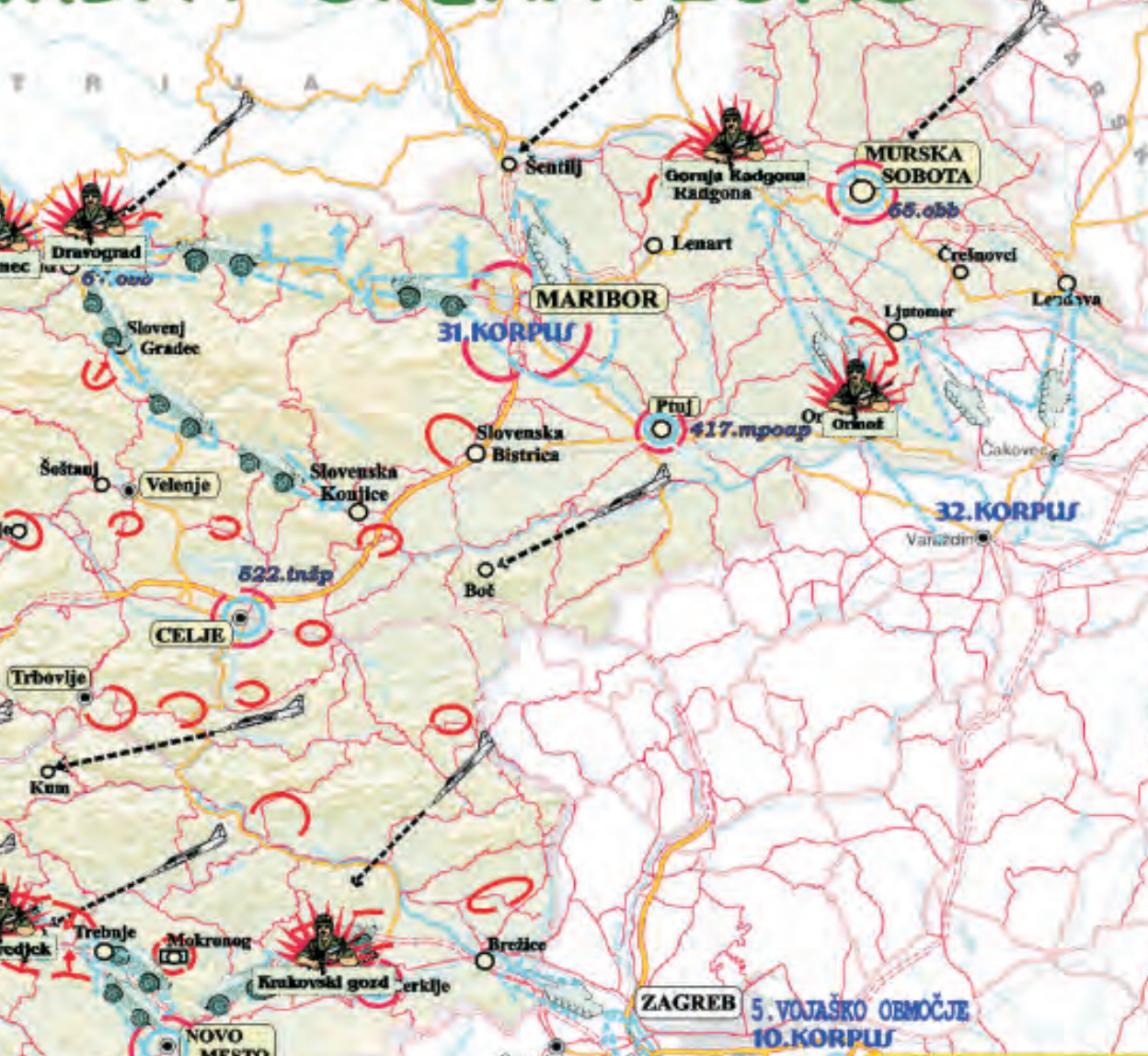
Bronze Medal of the Slovenian Armed Forces with swords



MANOUVER AND CO



MBAT OPERATIONS



ABBREVIATIONS:
obb : border region battalion
autbr : motorized brigade
mpoap : mixed anti-armor brigade
mbzr : mechanized brigade
pmotbr : anti-armor motorized brigade
okbr : armor brigade
okb : armor battalion
plbr : mountain brigade
inbr : engineer regiment
lap PZO : light anti-aircraft regiment
map : mixed artillery regiment
plc : mountain company
mtc : motorized company

ABBREVIATIONS APPLY TO YPA UNITS

LEGEND:
LJUBLJANA
 City over 10 000

Holmec
 Battlefields



Republic of Slovenia
Ministry of Defence
Slovenian Armed Forces
Military Museum