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RECORDED!

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of a meeting between the President of the Republic of Croatia, Dr Franjo TUĐMAN, and a delegation of the Croatian Democratic Union of Bosnia and Herzegovina, held in Zagreb, on 27 December 1991. Also attending are officials of the Republic of Croatia.

Beginning at 6 p.m.

Chaired by: Dr Franjo TUĐMAN, President of the Republic of Croatia

THE PRESIDENT:

Gentlemen, this meeting is open. I welcome our guests, a HDZ /Croatian Democratic Union/ delegation from Bosnia and Herzegovina, with whom we are going to talk about an issue currently of the greatest importance for Croatia, and we may add for Bosnia and Herzegovina as well. I think there is no need for me to make any opening remarks. Let me just say that Croatia has won international recognition, it is there and no one can thwart it now, although powerful international forces opposed it. However, with the international recognition of Croatia the crisis in the former Yugoslavia is shifting to Bosnia and Herzegovina. Therefore, it would be good to hear the views of the gentlemen from Bosnia and Herzegovina, how the whole thing went with the claim for, with the recognition of Bosnia and Herzegovina, what the reaction

of the Serbian side was. Also, what is going on with the acceptance by Bosnia and Herzegovina of the Yugoslav dinar, whether this effectively means that Bosnia and Herzegovina has agreed to remain within this mini-Yugoslavia, or rather Greater Serbia, and, in that connection, what our position will be with regard to the Croatian part of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

I have just heard on the radio that MILOŠEVIĆ is holding talks with GLIGOROV in Macedonia, MILOŠEVIĆ himself. Therefore, we have entered the final phase of the Yugoslav crisis.

00837862

It seems to me that this is also an opportunity to consider certain differences of opinion about the HDZ Bosnia and Herzegovina policy that exist even among you yourselves in Bosnia and Herzegovina, so that this could also be a working meeting in which we seek to formulate a Croatian political strategy, an overall Croatian policy, including that of the Bosnia and Herzegovina HDZ in the period ahead of us.

Mr. Kljuić, you have the floor.

STJEPAN KLJUIĆ:

Thank you. I would like to greet all those present. As you know, the Presidency and the Government demanded international recognition for Bosnia and Herzegovina simultaneously. With that in mind we held a round of talks, meetings, we prepared ourselves, and although the Serbian side warned us that if we did that it meant war, for every honest man the choice between surrendering to Montenegro and Serbia or Bosnia's independence was no choice. I believe that everyone voted according to their conscience for independence.

We moved faster than anyone expected. We did it on Friday, although the final deadline was expiring on Monday. Now, of course, comes the phase of decision-making in Europe about whether we meet or do not meet /the criteria/, if any adjustments need to be made, and so on. But we cannot go back now, that is, those forces in Bosnia and Herzegovina favouring a sovereign Bosnia and Herzegovina cannot go back, and the Muslims and SDA /Party of Democratic Action/, and even the Communists from the SDP /Party of Democratic Changes/ also played an important role in this and gave their support.

For us and for the HDZ there were no dilemmas in this respect because this was our party's platform as well, and we stated our position clearly a year ago: that we were for a sovereign Bosnia and Herzegovina as long as there was a shred of a chance that it may come to pass.

I have to say that after the Friday developments, to be more specific last Tuesday, we had talks with top military officials. KADIJEVIĆ, ADŽIĆ and VASILJEVIĆ came. The talks were very strenuous but from the statement, and I am not sure if you have received it Mr. President, it can be seen that even here we managed to score some victories, although the ultimate question of whether one can trust the Army and to what extent they will respect what has been agreed upon remains open. In any case, we accomplished the following:

00837863

- For one, the Army will recognise the civilian authorities and will not interfere in the break-up of Bosnia and Herzegovina, leaving it to the political parties.
- Next, they agreed to an investigation into the crimes in eastern Herzegovina before a civilian court, so that it is now up to us to initiate this with a group of experts.
- Third ... for the displaced persons from those areas – the villages of Ravno, Trebinja, Vela Međa, and so forth, to return, and,
- Fourth, we talked about the military industry. At one point KADIJEVIĆ said: “Sure, you want everything from the Army but give nothing to the Army in return. When will you give money and conscripts to the Army?”

President IZETBEGOVIĆ stood up and said: “When you end the war in Croatia”. Then KADIJEVIĆ appealed to them in particular saying that I should intercede with you here to have Croatia end the war because in his assessment Croatia was now the one who was waging the war and, if that should not happen, he said that he would respond with unprecedented force.

I am not commenting here, I am just reporting the dialogue between us.

I have to say that his attitude was so arrogant that he never once used my name, although he was addressing me directly, although he had insisted that I be at the meeting, while at the same time he was using terms of endearment for KARADŽIĆ, and so on.

At one point he asked that the defence minister be replaced, to which I replied that the HDZ had won the election and the HDZ had a defence minister. If Mr. KADIJEVIĆ wanted to replace the defence minister he would have to win an election.

Finally, the fourth point which Mr. TUĐMAN just spoke of, the issue of the dinar, came as a big surprise to us all. In fact this move was carried out with perfect discretion, which caught us unprepared because no one from the Government, not even the two Bosnian ministers, one of whom was a Serb and the other a Muslim, who are still in the government in Belgrade, had informed us about it. However, we have taken certain measures and certainly next week we will demand categorically that we distance ourselves from this dinar.

I am glad to inform you that president PELIVAN has already invited bids for the design of a Bosnian currency.

However, as things are moving along rather slowly, since you already have some experience with this I would like for some of you, perhaps someone from your Government so we could refer our representative to him for help in how and where to

00837864

print it the money. In any case, both the Presidency and the Government will have to make the decision to pull out of this financial circuit in the course of next week, regardless of holidays, especially as we were never consulted; and secondly, people are wising up, judging by several talk show programs on Radio Sarajevo where numerous questions were asked – “Alright, so you want to protect our ... with the Croatian dinar, and the influx of dinars from Croatia, but what about the /dinars/ from Belgrade, because that is where they are printed?”

So this is a task that we have to tackle, as well as the issue of the military industry.

I think that this is an area, at least speaking for myself and the people from our Party, where we need expert assistance.

I would like to leave Zagreb with someone telling me “In such and such a case, when you have been sucked into this Yugoslav dinar affair you must do this, this and this” so that we can then hold consultations with the SDA /Party for Democratic Action/ and so that we can entrust Jure PELIVAN with the execution of this task.

There should be no doubt that the commitment is there to avoid any involvement with this dinar, and that does not come from political but from purely material and also patriotic sources.

Please, help us, tell us how to handle this.

A little later I would like to say a few words about party discipline, and the strategy we need to follow. I think that this is a difficult time and whatever we agree upon tonight, whatever positions we take here will have to be implemented. Whoever is not prepared to adhere to this, myself included, fine, let them step down, let them make sure that they follow the Croatian course, which is the most important one strategically.

I must tell you, however, that the Party, or rather the people working in the administration of Bosnia and Herzegovina have done a very good job so far, and to everyone's satisfaction, and that for many people, even for you, the efficiency, speed and timeliness of Bosnia and Herzegovina's demand for independence came as a surprise.

It is not my intention to score points here, or to take a positive or negative approach to things, but you have to know that there are still about 31% of Serbs in our area. That they still have about 60% of influence in the state and in public life.

00837865

Therefore, it would seem to me that we are on the right track. As for predictions about whether the international factor will decide whether Bosnia will be protected on the basis of the State Department statement, I think we should wait, we should come to an agreement, but in any case we should prepare alternative solutions, like when we met here on St. Ante's day and prepared three alternative solutions.

THE PRESIDENT:

I know, Stjepan, but let's get to the heart of the matter.

When KADIJEVIĆ said that the JNA /Yugoslav People's Army/ would respect, that it would leave the political solution to the politicians, what did he mean? That is one question.

The second thing is that last time we agreed that you in Bosnia should conduct direct talks both with IZETBEGOVIĆ and KARADŽIĆ. So we should talk about that a little, as well.

Does your delegation, that is, we have now heard that ministers are taking part in the Federal Government, and your delegation is still taking part in the Federal Assembly, regarding this decision, you adopted a decision demanding recognition, but how does the Serbian side treat this, and what is the situation in this regard /as printed/?

What steps have they taken so far and what do they intend to do?

STJEPAN KLJUIĆ:

Well, they have their line, and we have ours. Theirs is not legal. You have seen that the representatives of all parties which are in favour of Yugoslavia gathered in Belgrade yesterday.

Among them was some Party of Yugoslavs which does not have a single deputy in our Parliament. There was the Serbian Democratic Party /SDS/. There was this ŠUBIĆ, this Rabija, who represents MILOŠEVIĆ's party in Bosnia and Herzegovina. They were mostly minor parties, except for the SDS.

THE PRESIDENT:

So, the SDS was there, too?

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STJEPAN KLJUIĆ:

It was. Through the institutions of the system, such as the Government, Parliament, Presidency, we are fighting and standing up for what we have voted for.

I have to tell you that the European Community respects this. Namely, when we first adopted the Memorandum on the Sovereignty of Bosnia and Herzegovina, at 0330 hours, at 0730 Brussels asked for that document.

How much the European public and the Western countries will respect this, I have no experience with this, nor do we – you have more. But it is a fact that the SDA /Party of Democratic Action/, HDZ /Croatian Democratic Union/, NBO /?MBO - Muslim Bosniak Organisation/, SDP /Party of Democratic Change/ and even the liberals are exclusively in favour of a sovereign Bosnia.

Therefore, it is now only a question of the Serbs. That's as far as that is concerned. As for the Federal Assembly, in the Federal Chamber there are delegates who were elected six years ago. We withdrew the majority of the Croats. Two are still left – Boro KRAJINA and Božidar ŽAN. We cannot reach them.

Otherwise, only Serbs remain in that Chamber, not even Muslims. Of the two ministers who are in the Government, which still exists, one is the Muslim POISKIĆ, the other Stevo MIRJANIĆ, a Serb. They are there. However, we have now requested their withdrawal. They have no responsibility to the new government, as they are not from our system. They are behaving *ad persono* /as printed/ and staying there.

However, we have succeeded in having BOGIĆEVIĆ go up there, this was decided by the Presidency.

Now, we must draw conclusions from this. If BOGIĆEVIĆ does not go, they don't go. This winter we must break up the sport competitions, we must say – if the minister and the member of the Presidency don't go, then we can't maintain a league, either.

Therefore, we have a number of obligations to take care of. How many of them we will take care of, how much we can do, I cannot predict. It is a fact, though, that so far we have achieved everything that was our task.

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I can tell you that the political situation is such that these parties – the SDP, the Communists, the SDA, HDZ, NBO /as printed/ - are in favour of a sovereign Bosnia and Herzegovina.

What the strength of the SDS will be in coalition with some parties which are not represented in parliament, I cannot say. I know they are opposed. But we said, including in talks with the SDS, that there is no possibility of somebody bringing somebody over by force. The Serbs have agreed that the crisis in Bosnia and Herzegovina should be resolved peacefully, which means that they cannot drag the Croats and Muslims into Yugoslavia by force, that is, they said they wouldn't, nor do we wish to keep the Serbs by force, either.

Yesterday, at the Christmas reception, we talked to the Serbs who absolutely demanded cantonisation and division of the media, saying that cross will not go against cross to suggest that we should reach an agreement.

I think that now they only wish to contact regarding the partition of Bosnia and Herzegovina, where the army is the ultimate arbiter. Two days ago, KARADŽIĆ said on television that where there was even five percent of Serbs, that was Serbia.

Gentlemen, I think everything is clear to someone who adopts language like that.

I think it would be acceptable to have a sovereign Bosnia and Herzegovina divided into cantons, which would guarantee human rights to all, etc. But to partition Bosnia according to the Serbian recipe would put us in a minority position, as we constitute over 50% /?of the population/ in 14 municipalities, while in five municipalities we have a plurality.

(Interjection: Out of the total?)

Out of a total of 190 municipalities, right. On the other hand, they have already used the army to take Banjaluka and Trebinje. And the army said...

(Interjection: And Mostar.)

Right. The army has displaced /its units/ and we estimate that there are now 14 corps in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Everything that was pulled back from the borders in Slovenia, from the barracks in Slovenia, from the Croatian barracks, it all came here, plus reservists from Titograd and the Užice corps. We said in those talks that the reservists must be withdrawn.

The army is ready for some talks, purely regarding material conditions. I politely told Mr. KADIJEVIĆ that Bosnia and Herzegovina as a state would be

00837868

willing to take on upkeep of part of that army, primarily that part which had been stationed in Bosnia and Herzegovina before the war in Slovenia.

His answer to this was so brusque that it showed a lack of good manners. He said that it was insulting for them to discuss salaries and pensions.

Of course, I did not reduce /?our offer/, there was no need, they can think what they want. But if we change our currency, if we force it /?the army/ to finance itself in Bosnia, how far we shall be able to do this, how much preparation we need – that is a different matter /as printed/.

... to what extent we will be able to do it, how much preparation it would take, that's another matter, but I feel that the talks have boiled down to this – the Muslims are ready to talk about Bosnia and Herzegovina, about its internal organisation, human rights, even some regions, while the Serbs will only accept the partitioning of Bosnia and Herzegovina, their concept being that federal law will apply in Serb-dominated regions. When I asked what they meant by federal law, "You tell me KARADŽIĆ in plain language which law will apply, the one from Sarajevo or from Belgrade", because they keep talking about the federal state and there is no federal state anymore, he said, "From Belgrade".

So Mr. President, they insist on partition, and the Muslims favour a sovereign Bosnia and Herzegovina with certain qualifications, with every side exercising power on their territory, and then there should be a centralised

THE PRESIDENT:

Tell me, in these talks, about partition, did you get to the heart of the matter?

STJEPAN KLJUIĆ:

No, because they would not commit themselves. We kept trying to take them at their word, "All right gentlemen, since these are your ideas and all that, why don't you write up the papers?", and when they produced the first paper it was like this – Bosnia and Herzegovina would be in a Federal Yugoslavia together with Serbia and Montenegro enjoying full equality. I told them that there was nothing to talk about, what could we talk about, for us the paper was unacceptable.

THE PRESIDENT:

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No, it is about partition.

STJEPAN KLJUIĆ

No, no, those sons-of-bitches won't commit, they will not come out and say, "Let us divide it, and you get this, we get that". No, they won't do that. Instead, they say, "Where 5% of the population is Serb, that's Serbia". Now, you tell me! Gentlemen, they know exactly what they are offering us and no there is no difference on this point among Serbian politicians, Mr. President. From ŠEŠELJ, who is a Chetnik, to that MIĆUNOVIĆ guy, who is for Democrats, they are all willing to give exactly the same thing, western Herzegovina minus Stolac and Mostar, you understand, with the Neretva as the border, the rest is theirs. They keep trying to accomplish this over and over again. As we have not even discussed this matter in that sense, nor did I have any instructions, nor would I have agreed to negotiate this on my own, pardon me, but I think that I have always tried in these talks to make them produce a document which they would give us, while they have been gradually introducing the cantonisation concept. In my assessment we would accept cantonisation if one of the cantons comprised Livno, half of Kupres, Bugojno, Travnik, Gornji Vakuf, these are areas where we have an absolute majority. But when it comes down to geographic maps they will not accept it because there must be a logic to cantons in communications, their geo-physical position, and so on and so forth.

THE PRESIDENT:

Thank you. Who would like to take the floor?

(Interjection: "We can't hear".)

STJEPAN KLJUIĆ:

Later, the meeting with KADIJEVIĆ came after the American statement and that was what they asked for so we assumed that the Army wanted certain guarantees.

(Interjection: "Did they say anything about the statement?")

No. They said that we should not worry about what the world was saying, that the Army had come to a firm decision to abide by the Constitution, and so on. Mind you, this is a paradox. Now, was I supposed to tell ADŽIĆ, "Under what Constitution did you let Slovenia go?" and open up a discussion on that topic?

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What most people did say, however, except for the Serb side, was that they must not wreak havoc in Bosnia, that a war in Bosnia would be very nasty. On the other hand, and I don't know if the HTV /Croatian Television/ reported this, IZETBEGOVIĆ said on two occasions that their going to war in Bosnia would put an end to the Army.

I believe that statements like these rather reflect their firm position. True, we did talk with him. The question is, would the Muslims be willing to fight for our cause tomorrow? That they are protecting their own interests and that they will not accept the Army such as it is, this much is evident.

MATE BOBAN

All of you know that recently, there has been an alternative entity in the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina, or rather a continuity of the policies of the Croatian Democratic Union and the Croatian people in general. Something new exists called the Croatian Community of Herceg-Bosna and the Croatian Community of Posavina in the north of Bosnia.

This idea was embraced, in this sense, as a framework for the expression of the political will of the Croatian people whose most prominent mouthpiece is the Croatian Democratic Union. The people have placed their full trust in the leadership, setting up Croatian communities which represent political, cultural and economic attributes of the Croatian people in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Should Bosnia and Herzegovina remain an independent state without any ties with the former disintegrating, or any future, Yugoslavia, or should Bosnia itself disintegrate, the area where about 650,000 Croats live would implement internationally recognised democratic methods proclaiming this to be independent Croatian territory, which will accede to the State of Croatia but only at such a time as the Croatian leadership, in whom our people until now have placed their complete trust, should decide that the moment and the time had come.

As it is a new political entity in the area of Herceg-Bosna, on Monday, two or three days ago, we had a meeting in Tomislavgrad of all the presidents of the 30 municipalities which constitute the Croatian Community of Herceg-Bosna, presidents of municipal HDZ /Croatian Democratic Union/ boards, and deputies to the

00837871

Bosnia and Herzegovina parliament from the region to discuss the topic with which you, Mr. President, opened tonight's meeting. Therefore, I would like the secretary or one of deputy presidents of the Croatian Community of Herceg-Bosna to read the conclusions by way of introduction.

I believe that these are indications, the basic indications of the will of the Croatian people and the will of the party in the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina. But those present listed in the preamble of the minutes can vouch for the trustworthiness of these indications. They were for the most part legally elected representatives of the Croatian people in Herceg-Bosna - they were elected either by the party or at the first democratic elections as legal representatives to government.

Now I would like to ask that the conclusions be read and then perhaps raise some points for discussion and arrive at the truth from the region itself, that is, from the people, rather than airing my opinion or anybody else's.

PRESIDENT:

All right, please continue.

Please, introduce yourself for the record.

Ignac KOŠTROMAN:

I am Ignac KOŠTROMAN, Secretary of the Croatian Community of Herceg-Bosna and Administrative Secretary of the Croatian Democratic Union of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

An excerpt from the minutes of the second regular session of the Presidency of the Croatian Community of Herceg-Bosna, in expanded session with members of the BH HDZ Presidency from the territory of Herceg-Bosna and deputies from the territory of Herceg-Bosna to the BH Assembly appointed by the HDZ, starting at 1000 hours, on 23 December 1991 in Tomislavgrad.

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There is a list of those present. Shall I read their names?

(Comment: It is not necessary.)

Well, all members of the Presidency were present at the session, including members of the Herceg-Bosna leadership - Mate BOBAN, President; Božo RAIĆ, Vice-President; Dario KORDIĆ, Vice-President; Ignac KOŠTROMAN, Secretary; and all those who had been summoned.

Ignac KOŠTROMAN took the minutes. The agenda: 1. The current political situation; 2. Outstanding issues.

Issues 1 and 2 were discussed together. The session was chaired by President, Mate BOBAN. The following people took part in the discussion: Mate BOBAN, Božo RAIĆ, Dario KORDIĆ, Nenad ZED, Jozo MARIĆ, Franjo MARIĆ, Josip PERIĆ, Anto VALENTA, Franjo PETROVIĆ, Franjo HRKAČ, Ivan ŠARAC, Nevenka BOŠNJAK-MIJATOVIĆ, Bernard ČAKALIĆ, Ivan BAGARIĆ, Ivo LUCIĆ, Vinko ZORIĆ, Martin UDOVIČIĆ, Nikola MANDIĆ, Željko RAGUŽ, Boris MATIŠIĆ, Ivan MARKEŠIĆ, Zdenko ČOSIĆ, Ilija PETROVIĆ, Ivan BENDER, Ljubo ŠIMUNOVIĆ, Ignac KOŠTROMAN, Marko PRSKALO, Franjo BORAS, Mijo TOKIĆ, and Brother Ferdo VLAŠIĆ.

On the basis of constructive and comprehensive discussion, the following conclusions have been reached:

Item 1 - The Croatian Community of Herceg-Bosna congratulates the entire people on achieving our historical objective - the establishment and final international recognition of the Republic of Croatia.

Position 2 - We also extend all our congratulations to Dr. Franjo TUĐMAN, President of the Republic of Croatia, and his closest associates whose prudent policies forced the domestic and international public to recognise us.

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Item 2 - The Croatian Community of Herceg-Bosna has once again confirmed the will of the entire Croatian people of Herceg-Bosna expressed on 18 November 1991 in Grude, taking the historic decision to establish the Croatian Community of Herceg-Bosna which serves as a legal basis for the entry of these territories into the Republic of Croatia.

Item 3 - The Croatian Community of Herceg-Bosna recognises the full legitimacy of Dr. Franjo TUĐMAN as President of the Republic of Croatia and President of the Croatian Democratic Union to promote the interests of the Croatian Community of Herceg-Bosna both among international factors, and during inter-party and inter-republic agreements on the establishment of the final borders of the Republic of Croatia.

The Croatian Community of Herceg-Bosna endorses the Croatian Democratic Union of Bosanska Posavina in taking the same decision on behalf of the Community.

As far as local territorial negotiations are concerned, leaders of the Croatian Community of Herceg-Bosna shall remain responsible while they shall assist and be at the disposal of President Franjo TUĐMAN for global negotiations.

Item 4 - President Mate BOBAN, Vice-Presidents Božo RAIĆ and Dario KORDIĆ and Secretary Ignac KOŠTROMAN are hereby authorised to represent with the full legitimacy the Croatian Community of Herceg-Bosna at the meeting in Zagreb on 27 December 1991 (also in the future, regarding further activities of Herceg-Bosna and the Croatian Democratic Union of Bosnia and Herzegovina.)

Item 5 - The Croatian Community of Herceg-Bosna hereby declares the Serbian and Montenegrin military-Chetnik-occupying-wild-criminal and destructive army unwelcome and unneeded in the territories of Herceg-Bosna, emphasising that in the future we will tolerate no provocation whatsoever, demanding its immediate withdrawal from the territory of Herceg-Bosna.

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Item 6 - It is declared that there have been no personal conflicts between leaders of the Croatian Community of Herceg-Bosna and Stjepan KLJUIĆ, President of the HDZ, rather, this is a conflict between two concepts of the politics to date.

It is assessed that Stjepan KLJUIĆ diverged from established and agreed policy, thereby causing enormous confusion among members and the Croatian people in the field.

The HDZ leadership in Zagreb and the most responsible leaders of Herceg-Bosna and BH HDZ are advised to resolve finally all misunderstandings and possible dilemmas which, if not resolved at once, might prove disastrous for the Croatian people of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Item 7 - Recent personnel policy of the BH HDZ has created unforeseeable consequences for Croatian interests in Bosnia and Herzegovina; individuals appointed outside of regular procedure have been obstructing the implementation of already-established HDZ policy in these trying moments in politics.

Some of these cadres even work directly against the interest of the Croatian people.

The ill-conceived personnel policy of the BH HDZ has resulted in underrepresentation of Croats in the government organs in BH even more acute than during the communist regime.

Item 8 - Stjepan KLJUIĆ, President of the BH HDZ, does not have the legitimacy of the HDZ organs to act independently as a representative at State and inter-party negotiations crucial to the interests of Croats in this territory, so he is hereby once again denied that right.

Item 9 - The Bosnia and Herzegovina Ministry of the Interior is most sharply criticised; it has become a helping hand of the Serbian Army in legal /as printed/ and unlawful seizure and transport of weapons through BH, which will be directed, as they have up to now, at the Croatian people.

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On the same day, the Presidency of the BH HDZ made official both Croatian communities.

Item 14 - All crisis staffs of the Croatian Community of Herceg-Bosna are ordered to increase the defence readiness of the Croatian people immediately because of the imminence of war in our territory. Crisis staffs must remain in constant contact with the crisis staffs of the Croatian Community of Herceg-Bosna and obey their instructions and orders.

Special attention should be given to strengthening ties between municipalities and regions in order to ensure the prompt flow of information and orders. No one should react in any way to provocation without previous consultation with the command.

Item 15 - Our deputies to the BH Assembly from the territory of Herceg-Bosna should follow instructions issued by Herceg-Bosna.

Our deputies in federal organs shall withdraw, without delay, from these organs because Yugoslavia was nothing but a tomb for the Croatian people who finally cast off their fetters, and no one will ever have the right to shackle us again.

Item 16 - Our representatives to the BH Assembly shall no longer act as deputies as long as Momčilo KRAJIŠNIK, a supporter of the idea of Greater Serbia, chairs the Assembly.

Item 17 - Dobretići, a local commune with an exclusively Croatian population of about 5,000 with equal standing in the Croatian Community of Herceg-Bosna, is advised to initiate the lawful procedure to disassociate itself from Skender Vakuf municipality and to submit a proposal with the BH Assembly to be recognised as an independent municipality with the option of joining the municipalities of Jajce or Travnik. Dobretići may immediately begin the procedure for a referendum.

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Such conduct of the BH Ministry of Interior shall not be tolerated in the future, and competent authorities shall be called to account for this sordid affair.

Item 10 - The legitimacy of Alija IZETBEGOVIĆ, President of Bosnia and Herzegovina, to represent the Croatian people in public is hereby revoked because his recent actions or lack of them have facilitated and supported the Serbian Army's attempts at establishing BH military training ground for the attack against the Republic of Croatia.

Acting on behalf of the HDZ, the Croatian Community of Herceg-Bosna would not have given its consent for the extension of Alija IZETBEGOVIĆ's term of office as President of the BH Presidency had there been regular personnel consultations with the party.

Item 11 – In the event of the survival of an independent Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Croatian Community of Herceg-Bosna could only establish with BH some form of confederal or cantonal ties, but never again will it allow the Croatian people to assume an oppressed and subordinate position to other peoples.

Item 12 - It is acknowledged that our workers abroad and in other parts of BH have offered strong support to Herceg-Bosna, and we would hereby like to inform all Croats that they are always welcome in the Republic of Croatia /as written/ and that Herceg-Bosna will offer protection to every Croat, no matter where they live.

Item 13 – We hereby acknowledge deputy Nikola MANDIĆ's statement that after the meeting of the Main Board of the BH HDZ, in expanded session with ministers and deputies at the BH Assembly held on 28 November 1991, Stjepan KLJUIĆ told him we had held the meeting of the Main Board and we had condemned the establishment of the Croatian Community of Herceg-Bosna, despite the fact that the Main Board had indeed confirmed and made official the Croatian Community of Herceg-Bosna and the Croatian Community of Bosanska Posavina at that meeting.

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Item 18 - Herceg-Bosna leaders shall regularly inform members of the Presidency of the Croatian Community of Herceg-Bosna of agreements reached and measures taken.

Item 19 - There has been a motion to erect a large monument of King Tomislav in Tomislavgrad.

Signed by Secretary Mate BOBAN and Vice-Presidents Božo RAJIĆ and Dario KORDIĆ.

Herceg-Bosna also wishes all believers a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

THE PRESIDENT:

All right, gentlemen, I was unaware of these Conclusions, but I did know that there were differences among you, too, with respect to the strategy of the Croatian policy in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

They are not accidental and they are not unnatural. They arise from the delicate situation created by the crumbling of Yugoslavia, so allow me to say a few words, so that we could then address the crux of the problem.

As you know, even the most vocal champion of the survival and continued existence of Yugoslavia, the United States, in fact acknowledged today that Yugoslavia has ceased to exist, but they have not yet abandoned the idea of preserving some entity in that region, whether it be within some kind of association, or something akin to the developments in the Soviet Union, or else to use Serbia to assert their influence in the region, even to counter /the influence/ of the Muslims, of Islam.

There are numerous indications, you see, that America would gladly accept Serbia in a policing role against the Muslims, to forestall the establishment of a Muslim state in Europe.

What is the meaning of the current international recognition of Croatia, which, I believe, is not final? It is final in the sense that Croatia has already been recognised

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by some ten countries, by the leading European power and by the leading world moral power, the Vatican, and that this recognition cannot be stopped.

My next questions is, what about Bosnia and Herzegovina?

What KLJUIĆ has just said, you adopted a conclusion – it is going to be Muslim-Croat. In other words, the majority adopted the conclusion, demanded recognition. However, the Serbs do not accept it.

So, about one-third of the population in Bosnia are Serbs and there is the Yugoslav Army which supports the Serbian policy as it is. In other words, a Serbian-Montenegrin Army which supports such a Serbian policy.

Therefore, the prospects for a sovereign Bosnia and Herzegovina are nil.

Even if it was tenable, gentlemen, Bosnia and Herzegovina as a separate /entity/, what does it mean?

With this Muslim policy it would even join the Serbs, it would rather associate itself with Serbia than with Croatia in the political sense.

IZETBEGOVIĆ even – Stipe may recall – once openly said that he would favour a solution whereby Slovenia would go, Croatia would have somewhat more, and Bosnia would be more closely associated with Serbia.

The establishment of borders – will we set up border crossings between Croatia and Herzegovina, so that a Croat from Herzegovina may not go to his own Croatia, or Croat from here may not go there?

Shall we set up a customs office? Shall we set up customs. Shall we make it so that one has to, as the Government has already issued, and rightly so, an order that petrol may be sold, and so on, shall we a currency in the end /as written/, all this together, these are all problems that arise in the everyday administrative and legislative sense, which establish new relationships which would be unbearable according to this view, not only for Croatia in view of the shape of its borders, but also for the Croatian part of the Herzegovinian and Bosnian territory.

In addition, if Bosnia and Herzegovina was to remain /whole/, what are Croatia's prospects there? Gentlemen, when /Croatia/ acceded to the joint Yugoslav state, Croats made up 24% of the population, today they account for a mere 17%. It is quite certain that now that a sovereign, independent Croatian state has been established the Croatian man will continue to emigrate, as he has done before, from Bosnia and Herzegovina, they will now rush to Croatia in even greater numbers, so

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that those Croatian areas will be left with ever decreasing populations and significant, Croatian features will increasingly disappear from the area.

During the talks, under those circumstances, we supported the position of preserving a sovereign Bosnia and Herzegovina precisely because the greater Serbian policy raised the issue of Serbian areas in Croatia.

Therefore, in such circumstances, it would have been politically unwise for us to raise the issue of demarcation of borders in Bosnia and Herzegovina ourselves. However, if you recall, as early as in 1989, we said in our declaration, the historic HDZ declaration, that we were for a sovereign Bosnia and Herzegovina unless its existence came into question because in that case, in view of the interests of the Croatian people, we have to raise the issue of Croatia's borders.

Under the present circumstances, gentlemen, from the general Croatian standpoint a demarcation of borders suits us better; from the general Croatian standpoint and from the standpoint of the Croatian population in Bosnia and Herzegovina. This is not the first time that we have talked like this, even in this circle. For tactical reasons we did not raise, because we did not want to be the ones to raise it, the issue of borders, but in the draft Hague Conference on Yugoslavia /as written/, and generally in the world, which suits us, and the position is even reiterated by the United States, even in the letter that I received today from the State Department, it says that they oppose any changing of borders by force. However, it seems to me that conditions are becoming ripe for a political agreement on demarcation in Bosnia and Herzegovina because the world is opposed to war. And even if there was a war, it would begin because either the Army in Bosnia or the Serbs would start it, certainly we are not going to start it just as we did not start it in Croatia. This war will be a no-win situation for those who start it. Therefore, this also point, as KLJUIĆ said, to how KARADŽIĆ had told him that they favoured a division, and how KADIJEVIĆ had said that the Army would accept a political solution. Moreover, gentlemen, I think that a political demarcation, a political solution in Bosnia and Herzegovina would speed up the peace process in Croatia in general, and in the region as a whole, because Serbian policy is striving to create a greater Serbia.

There are, the fact is, therefore, that there are around 1,400,000 Serbs in Bosnia and Herzegovina. There also used to be 570,000 in Croatia, now there are 250,000 less, but this probably means that their number in Bosnia increased by some

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150,000. Therefore, for all practical purposes we should say that there are a million and a half in Bosnia.

In other words, the survival, the sovereignty of Bosnia in the present circumstances, from the Croatian standpoint, is such, that not only do we not have to advocate it, we must not even raise the issue openly. However, why not accept this offer of demarcation when it is in the interest of the Croatian people, the Croatian people here in this Republic, and the Croatian people in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Because I do not see a single reason, a single serious reason, against it. Moreover, in the talks that I personally conducted with IZETBEGOVIĆ and MILOŠEVIĆ. In addition, one of our people in Bosnia drafted a proposal for demarcation whereby the Croatian areas and those that you have included in this Community of Herceg-Bosna and in the Community of Croatian Posavina /.../ in the event of demarcation, Croatia would get not only those two communities, but also, for geopolitical reasons, Cazinska and Bihaćka Krajina which would satisfy almost ideally the Croatian national interests, not only present but also for the future, and then from the remaining areas, where ...

And to create a statelet, therefore, out of the remaining part around Sarajevo where mostly Muslims and some Catholic Croats would stay which would resemble the small historical land of Bosnia. It would, therefore, be a buffer zone in the demarcation of Serbia and Croatia and in such conditions it would have to rely on Croatia to a large extent. That would also satisfy international actors who are now surely seriously counting, as you mentioned, on Serb policing for that Muslim element, Islamic element in Yugoslavia, whose intention it is to establish with the help of Teheran and Tripoli an Islamic state in Europe.

From that viewpoint, not even some sort of cantonisation with a continuing existence of Bosnia and Herzegovina would mean for us the solution, which is the solution of demarcation.

So that is the nature of the problem. I think, therefore, that you have failed a little – you have been carrying out a policy, a policy on the one hand of maintaining sovereignty, while the surrounding areas, the areas, which have been more interested in joining Croatia and from which people have taken part in defending Croatia. /as printed/

The question arises:

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These people are asking for Croatian passports and many questions arise, you see. If we did not fulfil that, we would cause a division within the Croatian people.

It seems to me, therefore, that just as we have taken advantage of this historic moment to establish an independent, internationally recognised Croatia, I believe that it is time that we take the opportunity to gather the Croatian people inside the widest possible borders.

Whether that would be exactly 30 municipalities or 28 – even from that viewpoint that is less important.

And it seems to me, let's make it clear please – this is a very delicate issue. And we have to – and /discussion/ is still under way over there about Herceg-Bosna, yes, and that is, therefore, from the viewpoint of the Croatian people, from the viewpoint of territory and from the viewpoint of possibilities of organising the state in every aspect /as printed/. That is also from the viewpoint of the ordinary man among you, in Posavina or in Herceg-Bosna and so on.

This means that one part would be left out of this in Bosnia. So this means that it is, however, something we cannot count on in its entirety.

Mato BOBAN:

The founding municipalities of the HZ HB /Croatian Community of Herceg-Bosna/ now have a population, which according to the census is 55% Croatian, 27% Muslim, 9% Serbian and the rest are none-of-the-above.

However, because municipalities in Bosnia and Herzegovina were created, similarly as in Croatia, by composing Serbian and Muslim population in the territory of Croatia or vice versa, by cleansing border areas, practically border areas of Herceg-Bosna, this creates approximately 65% of the Croatian population in Herceg-Bosna.

And, pardon me, according to what I know – the most recent data from Serbia are 63%.

PRESIDENT:

Fine, let me finish so the discussion can go on.

It seems to me, therefore, that with a prudent policy, a clever demarcation and agreement with the Serbs in Bosnia, we can even achieve that instead of war, which is threatening because of this unresolved issue and the Army build-up, that the Army will serve as a guarantee for the implementation of such a demarcation.

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That is so. And it relies on the fact that the Army will accept a resolution.

But this means that if we want to achieve this, we will have to take an active approach in this respect and not only actively participate in seeking the sovereignty of Bosnia, because it is all right to seek the sovereignty of Bosnia. But, we have the Serbian side, which does not accept this and is breaking away and is already participating in Belgrade and creating this new Yugoslavia, both politically and practically, because they are already printing money and so on.

And to be active means to go to talks both with KARADŽIĆ and IZETBEGOVIĆ, seeking a solution which would be acceptable to all.

Please, this is the essence of the problem as I see it. Please, go ahead if somebody has a different view. We have to determine at today's meeting Croatia's strategy with regard to Bosnia and Herzegovina.

BROZOVIĆ, please.

Dalibor BROZOVIĆ:

I think that we have to be careful to bring up and weigh everything. Looking at the territory of the Community of Herceg-Bosna – there are some municipalities which are closer to the Croatian border, primarily Herzegovinian ones and those which are traditionally called in Bosnia *donji kraj* /lower part/ - Duvno or Tomislavgrad and Livno, which have a very high Croatian majority, while the others have a relative majority at best.

Let us assume now, in line with what has been said, that these parts would become part of Croatia in a partition.

This would, most certainly, be a relief for the largest part of the Croatian population and something that would be closest to their hearts and an ideal solution for a multitude of practical and all other problems in their lives.

We also talked about what would be left of this state around Sarajevo, which they say would be the classical Bosnia more or less and a part of Eastern Bosnia, the western and southern parts of Eastern Bosnia with a large Muslim majority.

This would, therefore, be a buffer statelet.

What we haven't discussed is what the Serbs would get and how it would be distributed and how the area that would be Serbian and under direct Belgrade administration would be related to Croatian borders, because I think that this is something that we have to weigh carefully.

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In Eastern Bosnia and Eastern Herzegovina, where the Croatian population is only on the fringes and the municipalities are either vastly Serbian or vastly Muslim, demarcation would not be difficult and the people there, the Serbs at least, are not insanely frustrated like the Krajina Serbs in Bosnia, but the situation here in the west is what concerns me.

In my 65 years either in Bosnia or dealing with Bosnia, experience has taught me that I cannot trust the majority of those people at all. No agreement. Just as they are violating them here, they would violate them there ten times more and the Army doesn't only have the problem of partition. The Army has many other caste-related problems and is saturated by hate and vengeance and it is hard for me to believe /them/ – we have to weigh everything. I am speaking without adding weight to either side of the scales, but if we carry out the partition with the Serbs, I cannot see any way for us to avoid them driving a wedge in the heart of Croatia, the wedge being administered by Belgrade and their Army. And the most headstrong of those people, those from Drvar, are directly bordering on the most headstrong of Croatian Serbs, those in Knin. That is an everlasting sharp-edged stone in the stomach, kidney, liver and gall-bladder.

PRESIDENT:

Next, please.

BARAČ:

I will say a few words about the work of the Croatian Democratic Union deputies in the Parliament of Bosnia and Herzegovina. I am the vice-president of the caucus.

(Interruption: How many are there...?)

44, but not more than 38 or 39 of us show up.

We have maintained and advocated so far a policy which we considered had been adopted, that is, agreed upon between the Croatian leadership and the leadership of the HDZ /Croatian Democratic Union/ of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In general, we have advocated a sovereign Bosnia in its present borders.

We have advocated this for the following reasons. We believed that such a Bosnia, if it were to stay integral, would benefit most both Croatia and the Croatian people in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

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That is one reason.

The second reason...

PRESIDENT:

I would ask you to direct our discussion to the current situation, because we will not finish otherwise.

In my views now, I presented I think, what are the views of the whole Croatian leadership here.

What do you recommend, therefore, with regard to the current situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina and these views?

We more or less know what has been and how. We have gone past that.

BARAČ:

I wanted to say this only so we could hear a position now on how to act from here on in.

We have had this position so far for these reasons and, secondly, because the Muslims have matured and created a nation, whether we admit it or not. They do not accept the ideas of dividing the Bosnia of 60 years ago.

How we will ever win over these 38 municipalities, that is, the municipalities with Muslim population, I do not know.

It is not a question at all of Western Herzegovina, where Croats are 98.8% /of the population/ in Grude. That is not a question at all.

It is a question of the other part where we are mixed. That is why I have described how we have worked so far.

As for this other part of Bosnia, if partition is in question, fine, we will work on that, but what we will achieve, that is a different question. However, we must draw up a political platform around which we will all gather and on which we will all work, because the situation so far has been such that we have managed to implement and win some positions with the Muslims in the Parliament with regard to the Serbs and against them, but we have to know how to act from now on.

And this is the essential question. If we accept this option now, then we will have to reach an agreement and follow this path from now on.

PRESIDENT:

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I would be interested to have you give say your personal opinions with regard to this.

Mato BOBAN:

I think that the Muslim people are practically – I am not defending them, when it comes to my personal opinion, I would also /want/ Croatia, the one in the borders of 50-60 years ago – but I think that it is hard to divide them /as printed/. They are a people with their own firm positions and I think that it will be very hard. As soon as Herceg-Bosna emerged there were objections, from Jablanica for instance, and from other places, which are not accepting such conceptions.

We may confront each other in some way and that will, it seems to me, subside.

PRESIDENT:

I would like to /ask/ you and the others once more, would the Muslim Cazin-Bihać Krajina in such a demarcation opt for Croatia?

Mato BOBAN:

I think it would and they are more inclined to join Croatia than Serbia and that is correct.

Stipe MESIĆ:

What if there is a Muslim state?

PRESIDENT:

They would have no connection, because it is a *krajina* /frontier/ and it has nowhere to go. What I talked about needs to be drafted first. Who will continue? Go ahead!

Iko STANIĆ: (President of the Croatian Community of Bosanska Posavina, Deputy)

I believe that I am competent to say something, if not on behalf of the majority of Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina, then certainly on behalf of the majority in Bosanska Posavina.

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Perhaps the best way to say it is to say that the Croats in Bosanska Posavina, in their largest part, are not as you described it /as printed/. We in Bosanska Posavina have already been living in Croatia for the past year or two the same as Croats in Croatia and we feel that now, and when you said that certain problems can appear – that is already felt, because the customs office in Bosanski Šamac is already a nuisance to us, not to mention other things.

This, therefore, must be taken into account and this is why I won't say a conflict, but a small disagreement has emerged between us and the HDZ leadership in Sarajevo, of which, true, I am also a member, and, I might say, between us and most Croats who live in Sarajevo, because Bosanska Posavina and Herzegovina are not Bosnia, Western Herzegovina but Croatia, and the rest can be Bosnia.

I have some proposals and I think there is no need at all for me to talk about that any further, but I have some proposals concerning what else I think should be done to strengthen this connection.

We have already done something over the past two months since we founded the Croatian Community of Herceg-Bosna. We are connected with Brod. I do not know how well informed you are, but after the meeting we had here on defence, economic and cultural issues, the biggest progress has probably been made on defence and perhaps it would only be needed to appoint a representative who would be here in Zagreb.

Whether this is a Croatian Government representative or a representative of the Party, this is the Zagreb Party seat, with whom we could remain in continuous contact and discuss all issues, because I have noticed in this short time that this is missing, since they are very busy in Slavonski Brod with their own work and as the President I do not have such authority to control things and directly inform you, nor do I have insight into the situation here.

That is why I think we could do it that way until this is dealt with later, and as for this /question/, my proposal, the proposal I am speaking for on behalf of the majority, /is/ definitely to opt for partition and a minimum which could satisfy us if there were no other way would be the cantonisation that has been talked about. But if we are just a sovereign Bosnia and Herzegovina, then I think that these people will be terribly disappointed and mass emigration would really follow.

PRESIDENT:

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We will stop now to watch the news and we will continue later.

(Break at 1930 hrs)

RESUMPTION AFTER BREAK AT 1955 hrs

PRESIDENT:

Please, gentlemen, may we continue and finish this meeting in some 20 to 30 minutes. Some people have to travel and we have work to do. I think that the problems are clear.

Please, guests have the advantage. Please, go ahead.

Miro LASIĆ:

I apologise if I am abusing the President's and the others' patience a little perhaps. But I think we might not be aware of the situation we are in and that we would have to clarify certain things completely. I am very impressed by the President's speech in this regard.

First of all, we have to state that internal turmoil is eating us away.

PRESIDENT:

Internal what?

Miro LASIĆ:

Internal turmoil, turmoil is eating us away in, so to say, Croatia proper, and likewise in Bosnia and Herzegovina. I mean, among us Croats.

Many in Croatia are not aware of the historic circumstances we are in.

I will say certain things here, which are facts and are undeniable and irrefutable, and they are also my thinking.

First, I must say that I have always felt myself to be a Croat from Bosnia and Herzegovina - I stress the "from" - and that I belong to a single and indivisible Croatian people. And our circumstances today are a historic opportunity to create a Croatian state.

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King Tomislav did this a thousand years ago and created a Croatian kingdom. Providence has today endowed President TUĐMAN with an opportunity to give Croatia the Republic of Croatia. This is an undeniable fact.

We must know that we are a rather tragic people, which has been able to achieve this once in a thousand years. King Tomislav and President TUĐMAN are two milestones in Croatian history from time immemorial until now. Everything else should pull back beside this fact.

I think that not even the territory of Croatia is important. The only thing history will record is Croatian statehood. And we are a generation to which God has given this grace. We must be grateful for this grace.

I am personally happy and proud for having lived through these historic events and having taken part in them under President TUĐMAN's leadership.

So the creation of a Croatian state is the essence.

We are receiving it with great and serious sacrifices by the Croatian people. This obliges us to quell our individualities and be a whole, to put it simply.

Unfortunately, the reality we were thrown in compels us in these historic moments to be sober and worthy of the Croatian people's history. Several questions, that is, several issues have been raised here.

One is about the Croatian people living in Bosnia and Herzegovina. As far as I know, 850,000 souls. This is our historical tragedy. There are 17.4% of us in Bosnia and Herzegovina in this turmoil. We have been recognised as a constituent people. Europe does not want to open a Pandora's box of borders. We must be fully aware that borders are a Pandora's box.

The current relation of political and social forces is not the solution. Namely, the solution, which in the present relation of political and social forces may seem optimal, is to preserve Bosnia and Herzegovina as a whole and not touch its borders. And if we had Bosnia and Herzegovina as a whole, sovereign and independent, its convergence with Croatia would be completely certain, completely certain. And the Croats living in Bosnia and Herzegovina should, in my view, have dual citizenship, which many already have.

A political solution could be found, for instance, between the Croats and the Serbs.

I believe that some time ago I told the President, too, that Radovan KARADŽIĆ offered me personally to inform President Stjepan KLJUJČ, and so I did,

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that he offered talks. But when asked what about the Muslims, he replied, "We will send them to the sea, all the way to Bari and the Italian coast."

It is also possible to agree with the Muslims, for us Croats to talk with the Muslims. So, an agreement between two of the peoples is possible.

But a very important question arises: what about the third people? The Serbs are offering us talks. But I am certain that they are offering us false gifts and that at a certain moment, when they find it suitable, they will simply walk out on us and shift to an agreement with the Muslims.

We always have to keep in mind that this is Byzantine, Byzantine politics, Byzantine mentality.

I do not have to remind you here, but let us recall TRUMBIĆ and PAŠIĆ. TRUMBIĆ, /who was/ a man of great education and great intelligence, but a man who was eventually tricked by somebody like PAŠIĆ.

I think that we must have negotiations. We must have talks.

We have not embarked on this entirely well in my view. I think that delegations need to be formed with selected people, so that it is clear who is the delegation leader and who is deputy, and to negotiate like that.

We must be aware of one thing. The Serbs are constantly repeating that they do not want to leave Yugoslavia. They will not leave Yugoslavia and that is *Srboslavija* in their case. That was the second issue.

The third has to do with finance. What has been done with finance is the coup method. We in Bosnia are financially now in *Srboslavija*. We are separated, divided from Croatia and we are thrown in with Serbia, Montenegro and Macedonia in *Srboslavija* and we must get out of it.

I must say that the Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina was not ready for this.

I am personally dissatisfied, I must say, and I expressed my dissatisfaction at a Government meeting. There was no coordination with Croatia. We in the Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina must have firm relations with Croatia and not just in this case, but I think also in the case of laws. For instance, the law on theatres, law on privatisation and so on.

Look what is happening now - there are 200,000 more Army and pro-Army people in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

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We are in terrible danger of banknotes and of being overwhelmed by banknotes from Belgrade.

We were told that central bank governors met and decided in a half an hour on this and neither Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina or the Prime Minister were informed of this.

That is a direct coup.

We were told that the issue was worth 80 billion of those dinars. Who can guarantee that it was 80 billion and not 160, 200 or 300 billion? Nobody.

We were told of the threat of a financial blow from Croatia. That Croatia has and owes to the so-called Federation 45 to 50 - I don't know how many, 48 billion dinars was mentioned – and that it should return it.

But I will give a figure now. Serbia transferred two and a half billion of the new dinars in various payments and such into Bosnia and Herzegovina on 24 December and this has been proven.

This means that in 15 days they could transfer to Bosnia and Herzegovina the entire amount they say Croatia must return to Yugoslavia and this is terribly dangerous.

I must say that I am personally dissatisfied with the running of the Bosnia and Herzegovina Government.

In particular, I must be frank and say here that I was surprised by the sharp protest written personally by the Prime Minister on 24 November because of the long-range artillery shelling of Bosanska Gradiška from the Croatian side.

I asked at a Government meeting that a ministerial-level commission be sent to Bosanska Gradiška and this commission went there and determined that 120 mm artillery fire was opened from Bosanska Gradiška on Croatia, but our Prime Minister sends a sharp protest to Croatia for shelling Bosanska Gradiška.

The same is true for Ravno village, the howitzer shelling of Dubrovnik, and so on.

I strongly believe that the Government is following a strategy and policy, which are, in my view, closer to Alija IZETBEGOVIĆ than to President TUDMAN.

The fourth is the issue of the party. Our party, the HDZ, in Bosnia and Herzegovina has no cohesion.

The founding of Herceg-Bosna – and I have to tell you that I am a Herzegovinian Croat, that is, a Croat from Herzegovina, that is, from Bosnia and

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Herzegovina, and I sympathise with all the people who are doing this – but I have to say that this looks like a quasi-party.

Nowhere in the world can there exist two parties, that is three – one a party, the second a quasi-party and the third a quasi-party. That will completely tear us apart. We are tearing ourselves apart from the inside.

I think that party unity is necessary. The question arises here of the relation between the President and the Vice-President. It is not good and it must be cleared up, if not here, then before the President. I mean President TUĐMAN.

I think that our party statute is not arranged well either.

I remember well when President TUĐMAN requested me as early as 14 August to take a look at the party statute, but PERINOVIĆ was in charge of the party then and he did not let me do so and blocked me from coming close to the statute.

That statute is completely unsuitable for a party like the Croatian Democratic Union in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

You see, the Bolsheviks worked out party leadership to perfection. In critical times they always had a politburo, which we can call headquarters or something else. That must be the party brain. We do not have that. It can be functional, it does not have to be hierarchical, but there must be some sort of a party brain.

I will also say something here about the President of the Croatian Democratic Union of Bosnia and Herzegovina Stjepan KLJUIĆ.

I am telling you, nobody else could survive what he has survived.

I am an */?advokatus diaboli/* to Stjepan KLJUIĆ. Nobody has surely told him more hard things and hard words in his life, but I am telling you that he has survived something, horrible pressure from all around, which nobody else could survive. You can believe me since I am old enough to be able to assess certain things and it is necessary in this matter to decide somehow and see if he is not suitable and if he is not implementing the procedure and tactics of President TUĐMAN's strategy, then let us remove him.

But if he is implementing them, then those who are with him and his team have to implement it, too, otherwise the team will no longer be his. Now we have three parties and I was told that a town of ours was taken by the Serbian Chetniks or somebody because we had three commands, the ZNG /National Guard Corps/, MUP /Ministry of the Interior/, HOS /Croatian Defence Forces/ or something and that everybody had his own commander there.

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I do not think that it is known that we have only four ministers in the Government and I am telling you that Jerko DOKO and I are fighting hand-to-hand combat in the Government. You can be sure of that.

Of course you have not been informed of this and you are not supposed to be informed of everything and you should not be troubled by this.

So, I must say here that we have to take a position.

The Croatian Democratic Union cannot have four headquarters or four decision-making centres in Bosnia and Herzegovina. One is Zagreb, the second is Sarajevo, the third is Grude and now the fourth is Derventa.

We have to unify these or otherwise we will compromise ourselves before the Croatian people in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

I would try now to answer some questions the President directly asked.

First, I must say that these theses from this Herceg-Bosna record are totally acceptable for me, but these theses are aspirations, not reality, and be sure that they are not reality, that they are aspirations. They are my aspirations, too, but they are not reality.

Listen, they are treating Western Herzegovina like Slovenia. They are all pushing it out of Bosnia and Herzegovina. They want to push it out like the Serbian Army or Serbian policy pushed out Slovenia and look what is happening now. Out of 850,000 Croats we will push out 150,000, but I claim because I was brought up there that they are both spiritually and physically in Croatia. No matter whether they are in Turkey or Australia, they are in Croatia.

We are supposed to take that bait, accept the false gift, accede Western Herzegovina to Croatia and leave about 600,000 Croats as a statistical ethnic minority. Certain municipalities have been mentioned here, but that is fiction. I do not know how many municipalities we have, but we can count on no more than 20 out of the 109 or 110 municipalities. Let us be clear about that and I am not sure if it is even 20. Do not throw figures around and I am protesting against these people of ours who, it seems to me, are misinforming the President. Please, let us see how many deputies we have in the Council of Municipalities. We won majority in those municipalities and in the others we did not. We even won in some municipalities in which we are not a majority, for instance, as I know precisely, in Fojnica. We can be sure in one thing. We will confront our own people. I have always said that I would rather be a clerk for President TUĐMAN than a prime-minister in Sarajevo and I am ready right now to

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move out of Sarajevo, but I can tell you that people in villages, on the land, will not move and we will stay together with our people, which will become an ethnic minority in *Srboslavija* or directly under Serbs.

The President asked about the Bihać Krajina or Cazin Krajina. They incline very much to Croatia, but I doubt they will move towards Croatia. There is a convergence and maybe they will become part of it in the future, but never forget the threat the Serbs are so afraid of when IZETBEGOVIĆ and ČENGJIĆ talked about 500 thousand Muslims in Turkey originating from here who want to return to their land.

You see, that is a very strong element and I think that the only buffer – Mr President talked about a buffer between Croatia /as printed/ - possible is an indivisible Bosnia. That is in our interest. It is questionable whether we can achieve it, an indivisible Bosnia, a sovereign Bosnia. It is a big question, because I told you that the Serbs have constantly been saying, “we do not want to leave Yugoslavia,” and we will find ourselves in a very complicated situation. Our talks with the Serbs may be very compromising and we have to be very, very careful, because, you see, the Muslims are always in the position of the third party and at some point the Serbs may cancel talks with us and announce they reached an agreement with the Muslims. Stjepan KLJUIĆ said to me that KARADŽIĆ and some others have been saying day after day that they will leave ...(the speaker was switched off)... and he went there and protested and I give him credit for that. He managed to put that off.

I think there is no solution clearly acceptable for all and we have to take that completely into account.

The fifth issue the President talked about was the issue of the Army.

Look, they have rockets, which are capable of destroying everything here in Bosnia and Herzegovina. We know that. Those rockets have been transported around and I am very disappointed with our Government's work and its governing. We should have held those trucks whichever way we could and not let the Army /pass/ with the rockets, those banana-rockets, and there were other trucks before them and so on, but that was not done. We made a mistake there and we are all responsible for it.

And I will tell you now something about informing. I think, perhaps because of my professional bent, we must have the broadest possible information available. We just watched Zagreb TV, but I think that somebody should be assigned to watch Belgrade TV as well, regardless of how much they attack us. This is very important to see what kind of information they are presenting on their side. Control of information

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is very important, you see, and I am afraid that our President does not have the accurate information he should have.

There is a person from Bosnia and Herzegovina with perhaps a slightly dubious personality, you see. That is correspondent Smiljko ŠAGOLJ who is carrying out his own personal policy and the information you get from Bosnia and Herzegovina is the information he sends. You do not have the /right/ information. And, to finish, I apologise for speaking for so long, I am aware of the many mistakes we make and I think that we have to sit down and have a serious discussion, but I am certain about one thing only and that still stands.

Whatever decision President TUDMAN makes, we will implement it, but I ask that it be kept in mind not to present our aspirations, which are unrealisable, as facts. Thank you.

PRESIDENT:

Thank you. Next one, please!

Božo RAIĆ:

Mr President, I am Božo RAIĆ, Municipal Board President,... Vice-President of the Croatian Community of Herceg-Bosna. I understood that the purpose of tonight's meeting in Zagreb was primarily to reach an agreement on how to carry out what is ahead of us. The task and responsibilities are big and that is why unity is needed, but it should be said openly and fairly that there is no unity in the HDZ of Bosnia and Herzegovina. There is unity among the people and those of us who are in the presidency of Herceg-Bosna at least guarantee that this unity is firm and that there is no dilemma about that.

There is no unity among politicians in the leadership of the HDZ of Bosnia and Herzegovina toward the municipal boards of the Croatian Democratic Union.

Why is it not there? Because there are different views on various problems and possibilities for their resolution. One of those theses is of those who do not accept with enthusiasm or oppose the concept of Croatian communities in Bosnia and Herzegovina. They are saying that the founding of these communities is not in line with the continuing policy of the Croatian Democratic Union and Croatian interests in general.

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We from Herceg-Bosna and Bosanska Posavina claim that it is. The meeting in Tomislavgrad on the 23rd of this month showed that unequivocally, because out of more than 70 legitimate representatives of the Croatian people, only three or four of them expressed their reservations.

The second opinion maintained by the opponents of this political course through Croatian communities and other things, which of course will go forward as allowed by circumstances, is that an unconditional promise of unifying these areas with the Republic of Croatia may cause disagreements.

We have never and nowhere expressly said that. We have said that it was our ideal and aspiration, but that we also had to work out the institution of these communities for other political forms of resolving the crisis, such as cantonisation, a confederate Bosnia or anything else that might appear.

There are conflicts on this line:

- The leadership of the HDZ of Bosnia and Herzegovina and a group of people appointed to government posts on behalf of the HDZ refuse to accept that Bosnia and Herzegovina does not exist as a real state, that it is occupied, that it is a base from which war is waged on the Republic of Croatia and from which serious danger threatens the Croatian people in Bosnia and Herzegovina itself. And our future policy for the Croatian people in Bosnia and Herzegovina should be determined in line with these facts and the general Croatian interest and especially the fact that the Republic of Croatia is an internationally recognised entity.

The fact that reservations with regard to Croatian communities, Herceg-Bosna in particular, have been expressed by individuals from the HDZ leadership and officialdom would not be troublesome were these not people with legality, legitimacy and the possibility of speaking in public and deluding the Croatian people in Herceg-Bosna.

We cannot accept, but we will abide by any agreement saying that from now on such important political talks, be they inter-party or international ones with various delegations from the European Union or other missions, be conducted through one person, without previous political consultations in party bodies.

It has been claimed that there is no proper information from Zagreb, that it is distorted and that everybody interprets it at will.

We deeply believe that we are in step with the information provided by the Republic of Croatia Party leadership and that those of us who have chosen this

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political concept of founding Croatian communities have made no mistake. If we have, we are ready to answer for it.

The best proof that we have not been mistaken are numerous telegrams, telephone calls and letters from our people throughout the world, who have seen the establishment of the Croatian Community of Herceg-Bosna, and Bosanska Posavina likewise, as their new national birth.

Some of our representatives in Sarajevo have also claimed that there has been a sudden turnaround in Party policy in Zagreb, that the concept of a sovereign Bosnia and Herzegovina has been abandoned with no announcement and without arguments and that this has resulted in confusion and disinformation and that it needs clarifying.

We know that there has been no turnaround, because the party platform also states:

- As long as a sovereign Bosnia exists – yes, but when it is attacked and when others start carving it up, not us first, we know then what our historical right is.

In this context I would like to say that we cannot accept those claims, which proceed from the notion that the current ethnic picture in Herceg-Bosna is the relevant factor according to which everything will be decided.

We are proceeding from the historical right of the Croatian people, from the statehood, which existed in 1939, as a minimum and from looking at the ethnic picture in continuity.

I think that some of our people are mistaken when they are making an assessment based on the *ad hoc* situation.

We raised the question of how advisable it was voting for a sovereign Bosnia and requesting the recognition of its statehood, with all due respect for the reasons presented here by President KLJUIĆ, without our representatives previously asking first Mr IZETBEGOVIĆ, and then the others, to determine the contents of that sovereign Bosnia. What kind of state it is, what rights and orientations there are, and what instruments guarantee the Croatian people that we would not be outvoted in some new coalition with the Serbs and drawn into Yugoslavia, where we said we would not go at any cost.

There is obviously a conflict of political views in the party, in the HDZ of Bosnia and Herzegovina. We from the leadership of Herceg-Bosna responsibly claim that this is not an interpersonal conflict, but something else.

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Specifically, it is our view that this is an attempt to install under the auspices of the Croatian Democratic Union in Bosnia and Herzegovina a so-called autonomous Croatian policy, detached from the Croatian people and detached from a united policy of the Croatian Democratic Union and that is where the greatest danger lies.

We are dissatisfied with the relation of our overall political activities and the Croatian Democratic Union in Bosnia and Herzegovina with the Party of Democratic Action. This submissiveness is a bit insulting for our people.

We request that in future contacts with the SDA /Party of Democratic Action/ and primarily with the President of the Republic, Mr Alija IZETBEGOVIĆ, a clear position be asked from them on the so-called JNA /Yugoslav People's Army/, the occupation, the suffering of the Croatian people and the use of the Republic as a base, and that he and everybody else forget any thought of drawing Croats in any way into a third Yugoslavia.

There is no information in the field, in Herceg-Bosna either, that our representatives have clearly said this to Mr IZETBEGOVIĆ on behalf of the Croatian people, if they could not do it on their own behalf.

We consider it a big political mistake that there have not been more intensive political talks with both the SDA and the SDS, because any talks are better than a single death. We know about your instructions, Mr President, to do this. But we also know that this has not been done.

The question of the procedure for establishing the Croatian communities is something that is frequently presented as a problem. We have replied that we are the people's political representatives in the field, on the ground, pure political amateurs and that we cannot engage in high politics. But that we have the Croatian state, a single Croatian Union and enough wise and politically mature people who know how to assess the procedure, the moment and the way to do this.

It is obvious that some of our people seem to doubt the deliberation of these propositions and requests.

We request, Mr President, that we reach a final agreement tonight that the Croatian Community of Herceg-Bosna and Bosanska Posavina be treated in the future not as a rival, a counterweight or something dislocating the Croatian Democratic Union as a political organisation, but as a form of organisation of the Croatian people on a territorial principle and a territorial, political, economic, cultural,

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communications, and other sort of community. And its purpose is not to exclude the Croatian Democratic Union of Bosnia and Herzegovina or any person representing it.

But it will have to exclude /them/ and there will be confrontation if we are not all on the same political line and we are obviously not at this moment.

And finally, my personal opinion, because most of these opinions that I have presented have been a summary of the discussion led on the 23rd of this month in Tomislavgrad.

I want to say that I have never had, nor do I have today, anything against anybody representing us in the Assembly, the Government, the party or anywhere else, but I am against and will continue to be against all those who oppose the implementation of the Croatian people's general political line. Thank you.

PRESIDENT:

This gentleman asked /to speak/.

Martin UDOVIČIĆ:

I am Martin UDOVIČIĆ from Travnik, a member of our party's Presidency and the Travnik Municipal Board President.

I took part in the meeting in Tomislavgrad that was mentioned and I want to say something because I was asked to with regard to relations between the HDZ leadership and Herceg-Bosna and how to deal with this tonight and because our people from municipal board leaderships know that this is being discussed tonight in the presence of our President, Mr TUĐMAN, and they are expecting final positions for the resolution to these problems.

I am a historian, a retired teacher, and I have been arrested and convicted in Travnik for my pro-Croatian positions, but I have somehow endured all that. I am in retirement now.

I became engaged in the politics of our HDZ because the population of Travnik and the wider area asked me to and I am also a member of the Presidency.

In the interest of our Croatian people and our party, we have to make historic decisions for our party, especially in Bosnia and Herzegovina today.

We have to clarify certain things in every aspect this evening and maintain unity and continuity in implementing our programme, which we have so far

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consistently implemented pursuant to our platform, our assembly conclusions, convention and so forth.

For these gentlemen to hear, and I stress, since I am in the leadership of our party in Bosnia and Herzegovina and as a historian I am interested in various historical forms of Bosnia and Herzegovina, I would add that I will not talk about the roots of our Croatian identity in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Minister LASIĆ has already spoken about this in a nice, concise and brief way.

I will stay concretely at the problem of our unity.

I would begin by stating that our party in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Croatian Democratic Union, which is the one and only, is still more a movement without a defined solid organisation, without a solid hierarchy and, I dare say, without particular discipline. I dare say also without continuous cooperation between all of us in the leadership and maybe that is what has led to such relations, because amateurism, wilfulness and so on have appeared more or less in the leadership and in the leading.

When I speak on behalf of Travnik, I speak on behalf of a very significant centre. We recognise Mostar as the centre of Croatian identity, but Travnik comes immediately after it.

Why am I emphasising this? We Lašva valley Croats suffered from large-scale persecution by the communist system and, unfortunately, under pressure of large-scale emigration. I can report the delightful news that recently some of our people have been returning to our area, even from abroad, and have established small businesses. They have already become active craftsmen and they are successful despite all these difficulties and our economic crisis.

I would also emphasise with regard to Travnik' significance, when one mentions it, not mine as a person, but that of our Travnik area, that the late RADIĆ participated twice and the late MAČEK also twice in gatherings organised in the Travnik area for all Travnik municipalities. We also played a very important role in the establishment of the Croatian *Banovina* when the well-known Minister SUBAŠIĆ-ŠUTEJ and the late MANDIĆ stayed there. Sorry, all of them deceased.

The Travnik Croatian element is mature enough in every respect to accept all our Croatian options and now it has accepted the Croatian Democratic Union as its only party, although others from this Croatian area have also tried to move in, admittedly with the prefix of a Croatian party, but they have not been accepted –

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counting on the authoritative people leading our party, so its success has, therefore, been complete.

Unfortunately, /because/ of the emigration of Croats from this area of ours, where we used to make up 56% of the population, today we make up 37% in the Travnik area. This means that 19%, almost 20%, of our people have emigrated.

Speaking about Herceg-Bosna and the municipalities we are claiming as ours, you see, we cannot even say that Travnik is ours.

If one were to talk about demarcation, and we have already had some confidential talks with the Muslims, we could not win them over to our side.

They are continuing to ask for our commitment to a sovereign Bosnia and Herzegovina along with them, so as to stand against the Serbs, the Serbian party, and that we would then agree how to organise equality between us.

That is why today, if we were to talk about demarcation, we from Travnik and our municipal boards would accept Herceg-Bosna and all its orientations and options.

However, we consider that to be an optimum we cannot achieve, you see, not even in Travnik. We cannot achieve it, because the Muslims do not accept the demarcation option. They want all of us to stay united, and be equal to them in organising sovereign Bosnia, although we do not consider that to be the solution for us.

What else would I say that is very significant for us and for my area and that I was asked to say?

We in this area, therefore, accept all established principles and orientations of Herceg-Bosna, since they have been quoted here.

However, we think that we can build our HDZ policy on them, but not go all the way with these requests, because that would lead us to direct confrontation with the Muslims who have already warned us of that.

Already after the establishment of Herceg-Bosna, they became so estranged from us that when we schedule inter-party meetings, they fail to appear, they avoid us and they are now whispering about another policy which would be damaging to our Croatian people.

I concede that there were problems in our leadership, even in the Presidency, of which I am a member. I concede that there are problems in some of us individuals too, in individual personalities in the leadership.

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I have participated in all the meetings of our Presidency, headed by Mr Stjepan KLJUIĆ as our President and Mr Mato BOBAN, our Vice-President, and I responsibly claim that we have had unity in party leadership and that we did not have any significant disagreements. We have made certain decisions, recommendations. They have been conveyed to our municipal boards. We have implemented them. How successfully is something that can be discussed.

Municipal boards have accepted this policy. Our policy interests were different. Apart from political problems we have been dealing with, /they also included/ defence and the economy.

I think that so far we have been successful in that as well. I am speaking concretely about our area.

However, we have never stated that we are against a sovereign Bosnia and Herzegovina and that is why we had excellent, very good cooperation with the Muslims.

We have been persuading them - the Muslims from the Travnik area where beys live /as printed/. Unfortunately, these bey families are dying out. They have always declared themselves Croats. We had 18 bey families and their families, such as those of Safet bey BAŠAGIĆ and the late Hamdija KREŠEVLJAKOVIĆ, who have declared themselves Croats.

However, their youth which have grown up now have become nationally conscious as Muslims and they are for cooperation with us, but when we mentioned that if *Srboslavija* came about, we could secede along with them, because we do not have /an absolute/ majority in many areas, but just a relative one, which we are counting on to join Herceg-Bosna, they would not accept that. In that case they are against it, they fiercely oppose it. In that case, they say, we will confront each other.

As for our leader Stjepan KLJUIĆ's remarks, I will tell you this. In our assessment, he has led the party very successfully.

To be frank, I have not been in the position lately to discuss the problems of Herceg-Bosna, because I have been in Switzerland as part of a group collecting aid for our people, in particular from our people from Travnik and others, too. They have been sending this aid directly to Zagreb.

I saw a pick-up truck off to Travnik today full of medical supplies and instruments /should/ war break out.

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Mr President will call our man working on that, Hrvoje GAŠO, who is the President of our community in the Munich area. That is why, although I accept Herceg-Bosna's orientations, I have not made myself familiar with all the minute details, which would, to be frank, impose on us a direct conflict, if we requested the optimal implementation of our Herceg-Bosna's programme, which has been presented tonight.

I took part in all our meetings and I would say the following about Mr. KLJUIC.

PRESIDENT:

Please.

Martin UDOVIČIĆ:

Just one sentence Mr President and I will finish.

I can tell you that he has been accepted very well in our area and by our municipal boards, and he has been just a *primus inter pares* so far in leadership. Nothing more. Just a first among equals.

If dual leadership, a rift, came about, I believe that it would harm us all a lot.

Thank you.

PRESIDENT:

Before I give you the floor, let me announce that Prime Minister Dr Gregurić, who had a cabinet meeting until now, has joined us, while the Assembly President had to go to another meeting.

Go ahead. But please be brief and give proposals and solutions to problems.

Dario KORDIĆ:

Mr. President, distinguished ladies and gentlemen, Dario KORDIĆ, President of the Busovača HDZ Municipal Board, Chair of the Travnik Regional Community of the Croatian Democratic Union and Vice-President of the Croatian Community of Herceg-Bosna.

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I have the duty and honour to speak on behalf of /the people from/ what some refer to as the so-called disputed area stretching from Dobretići and Jajce to Kraljeva Sutjeska and Vareš.

For six months we have been sweating blood deliberating over the idea you presented to us on 13 and 20 June.

I think that the Croatian spirit in the territory of the Croatian Community of Herceg-Bosna, Posavina, and particularly in Bosnia, has grown stronger during the past 40 days since the Croatian Community was declared in Grude than it had in the entire year since the elections in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The Croatian people in the region, the subregion of Travnik, live with the idea of acceding to the Croatian State and they are ready to do so at all costs. The young men are teeming with the Croatian spirit.

I say this because I come from the field. We have visited every single village in the territory of this subregional community of Herceg-Bosna.

I'd say that I am sorry that during the Christmas holidays many leaders from the Croatian Democratic Union of Bosnia and Herzegovina were not with their people in this territory, seeing the many Croatian flags on the houses of Croats in these municipalities in the Bosnian part. There were 60, 70 flags in each municipality. That is unprecedented.

Although this was a sad Christmas because of the destruction of Croatia, it was the most Croatian Christmas in this part of Bosnia since the war. This is a fact no one can dispute.

I think that any other option would be considered treason, save the clear demarcation of Croatian soil in the territory of Herceg-Bosna and preservation against destruction of the Croatian body politic through a well-defined State mechanism of the Croatian State serving as a guarantor to the Croats of Herceg-Bosna, even if only for three months or a year. However, we must believe in it.

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The fact that some gentlemen claimed that was not reality, what would its fate be, what had been said about Travnik, what I think is that they would not even win a relative majority if they did not follow this platform /as printed/.

There is one thing I would like to emphasise especially: that is that the whole time, the Bosnia and Herzegovina HDZ was a side-show to SDA policy, and a surrogate of Croatian policy. When the Croatian being which was resurrected in the second half of 1990 began to die from the time of the elections in November 1990 to November 1991, and Croatian policies lost their substance, and became submissive, passive and cowardly as they were shown to be from the beginning of the dirty war in the State of Croatia and its spill-over to the territory of Herceg-Bosna /as written/. The SDA leadership in these territories revealed all its "honest intentions" of establishing a civil republic which they dyed in the fierce Islamic fundamentalism of the SDA leaders and seasoned with the Congress of the Party of Democratic Action, with ovations from the Turkish and Libyan ambassadors, with the statement by the vice-presidents of three days ago presented by ČENGIĆ that their house is in Turkey and with their revelation of the dream of Jamahiriya premature to reaching a 51% majority.

We from mixed regions are well aware of the honest intentions of the leaders of the Party of Democratic Action.

I am no supporter of false peace because it calls for useless waste of energy. I think that what Mr. President said, the leadership of the Croatian people in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Government are not capable of reaching an agreement with Muslims and Serbs because they are starting from the premise that there are only 17.4% of us - they are not starting from who we are, what our real potential is, what our State is and how powerful we are.

I think that this leadership is not going to be able to implement this new platform and that the same people cannot continue to be members of the Croatian Democratic Union, that is, they cannot participate in implementing this policy.

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I would like to repeat what we have already said during assemblies of our people, that if Muslims had agreed to take up our cause, we would have fought along with them. However, we have no moral obligation at the moment because they did not deserve it. We also think that IZETBEGOVIĆ and his crowd will not be able to pursue Muslim policy in the territory which will remain theirs because they are driving the Muslim people to ruin - the Muslim people will depose them of their own accord because they did not provide a defence mechanism /as printed/ - and the people will eventually realise this.

Thank you for your attention.

PRESIDENT:

Thank you. Next please.

Damjan VLAŠIĆ:

Dear Mr. President, dear gentlemen.

I am Damjan VLAŠIĆ, a deputy to the Herceg-Bosna Assembly, and until recently President of the Mostar Municipal Board.

First I have to say that I am afraid of harsh words, whatever they are. Supporting any good thing, we cannot simultaneously label as a traitor everyone who would show any reservations about this good thing. By doing so, we completely restrict people's ability to reason, their ability to think, or to put it simply, the power of the word. We are returning to the very system we destroyed with such pleasure.

And I was really irritated when I heard the gentleman who spoke previously saying that whoever opposed something like this would be a traitor.

I would ask us to please refrain from harsh words if we can. In my view, any thing always depends on the way it is approached. A good thing, if it is applied in a bad way, can become bad and *vice versa*.

Please, if one talks here about the Croatian Community of Herceg-Bosna, the Croatian Community of Bosanska Posavina and so on in the sense of political aspirations, political declarations and so on. – especially of every Croat's political aspirations, then there is no dispute.

What would a Croat in Bosnia and Herzegovina want?

Where would he want to be? Well, I think there can be no dispute about that.

However, I must say that politics is the art of the possible, not the art of wishful thinking. As far as aspirations, we are all on the same platform here. The question of implementing these aspirations is something else again.

And I would ask that this problem be approached in the way the problem itself requires, because it is a difficult problem and this thing should really be carefully approached.

I must say, however, that it seems to me that we will deal with everything, even with this issue between us, for which we have gathered here today, much sooner than we will deal with the issue of ourselves. /as printed/

Allow me, I will be so free as to say that we have created disunity among us. This unity has been created in the same way, that everything else has been done regarding the Croatian Community of Herceg-Bosna and the Croatian Community of Bosanska Posavina.

Please, if a thing is so good for the Croatian people in Herceg-Bosna, then it is good because it is a good thing and needn't be hidden from anybody. This should be told and presented to the entire Croatian people of Herceg-Bosna *urbi et orbi* and to the leadership of the party in particular.

I will be so free as to say that my friend – I consider him one regardless of how he considers me - and my neighbour and fellow townsman Mate BOBAN was with me five days before the establishment of Herceg-Bosna or to be even more precise, I think a couple of days before, but I still first heard on TV that the Croatian Community of Herceg-Bosna with its headquarters in Mostar had been established in Grude, although I live in Mostar and although I am the Mostar Municipal Board President.

Now I wonder, why hide this good thing for the Croatian people so jealously from others. If you had reason to hide it from me, than it still would have been fair to say, "Damjan, you should not know about this." Human decency requires this. While we...

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Until we establish human decency, plain human decency, let alone high politics, because regardless of the bad names we give it, politics must have a dimension of human decency. If we exclude this from it, then it will be difficult for us to achieve the results we want to achieve.

The problem, I repeat, is therefore not the wish expressed in the community of Herceg-Bosna or Bosanska Posavina, but the manner in which all this was implemented, thus creating disunity. I shall not say "we must not allow", because I consider myself to be outside of all that, but I shall say that it must not be permitted that within a single party there are two organisations, with the president calling a meeting of the Presidency on Monday at 1000 hours in Sarajevo, while the vice-president of the same party calls a meeting for 1200 hours in Tomislavgrad.

This cannot be in the interest of any people, including the Croatian people, because disunity is in nobody's interest, and here the attempts at disunited action are evident. Now it appears that the more you do against the legal Presidency, the more you are considered a good Croat. No good Croat should do anything against the legal organs, as long as they are legal, legitimate. We should respect them and, if we are dissatisfied, we should dismiss them also in a legal and legitimate manner in the interest of the Croatian people. When we appoint somebody else, we should respect them.

There can be no success in any venture, party or otherwise, without legality and legitimacy.

Therefore, I point out that the manner was wrong here and that it caused all the confusion. I think there can be no doubt about what the desires of the Croatian people in Bosnia and Herzegovina are, regarding implementation.

I must say one thing – in this way we would be certain to lose the confidence of the Muslims, but there is a mountain-sized question mark about whether we would ever gain the confidence of the Serbs, if it is at all possible to gain their confidence. But we would certainly lose the Muslims' confidence.

We have met here now to weigh matters in a human fashion, to get together, to discuss what the interests of the Croatian people are. I maintain that the manner used so far was not at all in the interests of any person or any people, least of all of the Croatian people. I shall not speak of my own destiny, but allow each of us to hold to our personal dignity, and nobody can say that for the sake of a peaceful policy such-

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and-such a person must be dismissed. Please, no party can allow this, particularly as we are still debating on how to act.

In these conclusions from Tomislavgrad we have stripped everybody of legitimacy, Alija IZETBEGOVIĆ, KLJUIĆ, so who has remained legitimate now, pray tell me, who are we left with? I beg you, let us return to the terrain of legality and start acting in such a way that we know who is in charge of what. I tell you that the previous manner of operations has created disunity in Herzegovina, and this disunity must be solved, even if not tonight, but it must be solved vertically, so we finally know who calls meetings, who takes action, and so on, and so forth. Because if we go on this way, I am not sure what some third person will come up with tomorrow...

THE PRESIDENT:

You have framed the problem clearly, do not explain it any further.

DAMJAN VLAŠIĆ:

The Croatian interest, somebody will call a meeting in some third place, and somebody will go there as well and signatures will be gathered, this is really – forgive me if I have spoken for too long. Thank you very much.

THE PRESIDENT:

Next speaker. But please be brief, we have other obligations, there is business to attend to and some of us have a long way to travel.

IVAN MARKEŠIĆ:

I am the secretary-general of the HDZ /Croatian Democratic Union/ of Bosnia and Herzegovina. I sincerely thank you for having the courage to summon us here, to this meeting, in order to arrive at a joint position about what the Croatian Democratic Union of Bosnia and Herzegovina is to do in Bosnia and Herzegovina, that is, whether it should continue to exist.

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On the basis of what has been said /?here/ and the conclusions that were reached in Tomislavgrad and presented here, the impression is that the party will remain within a framework which is outside the former borders of the *banovina* /administrative sub-division of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia/ of Croatia and of the currently proposed borders of Herceg-Bosna and Bosanska Posavina.

I can tell you that last night I had the opportunity to take part in talks with the highest church dignitaries, the Archbishop of Bosnia and the Provincial of the Franciscan province of Bosna Srebrna /Silver Bosnia/, of which I am a pupil. I point this out with pride, and my complete discussion will be within this framework. The joint message, which I back completely, is that a united, sovereign and independent Bosnia and Herzegovina is the best solution for the Croatian people in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

When I learned of the forming of the Community of Herceg-Bosna and Croatian Posavina, I thought – and thus tried to fit it into HDZ positions – that it represented a special form of expression of the political will of people living in a certain area.

However, in Duvno I became convinced that it is a territorial organisation, while everything in the decision on founding is a quite different matter.

I would like to say that the positions expressed here show a clear split in the HDZ of Bosnia and Herzegovina, in the party of which I am the general secretary. I could not and, I must confess, I still cannot reconcile myself to this manner of forming communities for a simple reason: how can I, with what morality can I receive the Croats from Banjaluka, the 29,000 from Zenica where there are more than 20,000, the 20,000 from Tuzla, over 34,000 from Sarajevo?

What about an integral solution for the Croatian question in Bosnia and Herzegovina?

I estimate that in certain areas where there are compact Croatian entities there is an aspiration, after all, who of us would not like to live in the State of Croatia? I take this opportunity to salute its recognition. However, I think that the real circumstances in which we find ourselves will not permit this.

The circumstances in which Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina live, the people they meet, the political options, none of this will allow it. I do not know how it would be possible in Bugojno, Gornji Vakuf or Travnik just to say suddenly: “We are going into Herceg-Bosna and will be joined to the Republic of Croatia.”

00837910

We can wish for this. But I must tell you openly – you live here in Zagreb and probably – I can tell you sincerely – you can have quite a different view of our area down there. We who live down there, who all the time are meeting those people who are tied to that piece of land we live on, where we are a constitutive part of Bosnia and Herzegovina – you see these things quite differently, thinking it is simple and convenient to join all this up, saying, in the name of the Croatian people, that you would join it all to Croatia.

As Mr. VLAŠIĆ said, I am afraid of serious statements, so I shall tell you that I speak for the people between Dobrotić and Bugojno.

Mr. KORDIĆ, I think both you and I are too young to speak of such things, as the monks and priests I meet and am in touch with have quite different views. Even Brother Ferdo VLAŠIĆ clearly said at the Tomislavgrad meeting, quoting President TUĐMAN, that the optimum solution to the question of the Croatian people in Bosnia and Herzegovina was a sovereign, indivisible and independent Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In that context, I would suggest that we try to find a compromise tonight regarding the sequence of events for the realisation of this right of the Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina. My proposal is that the Croatian Democratic Union of Bosnia and Herzegovina should persevere in its demand for a sovereign Bosnia and Herzegovina as long as there is a trace of a possibility that it shall be realised.

Only in an extreme situation, if this demand cannot be fulfilled, then an optimum solution should be sought again from a future – I agree with this now /as printed/.

THE PRESIDENT:

Alright gentlemen, why are we wasting time on this while it is possible?

You have a situation in which the Serbian areas are no longer under the Bosnian government. They have their representatives sitting in Belgrade now, forming this Yugoslavia.

Therefore, let us start from with the facts. Please take this into account in you discussions.

IVAN MARKEŠIĆ:

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Excuse me, but we are also starting with the facts, forgive me for saying so, but in this way, with this partition, you are making possible for the first time for Serbia to expand into the area of Bosnia and Herzegovina, where it has never been before.

I'll tell you this: if an independent Bosnia and Herzegovina is created, even though I think it will be someone outside this area who will determine the fate of Bosnia and Herzegovina, then we should search for ways of ensuring political, economic and cultural links between Croats from Bosnia and Herzegovina with the new Croatian State.

I think that in this way an integral connection between the Croats from Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Croats in the Republic of Croatia would not be lost even if this independent Bosnia and Herzegovina is to be created. Because this is not a search, nor is it secession, created, but of autonomous Bosnian Croathood, in order to argue for it now /as printed/.

But I must tell you sincerely, and I told Mr. BROZOVIĆ this, too, when we were in Sarajevo. I do not want anybody taking decisions about my fate someplace else, without us agreeing about it. I say this sincerely, aware of the weight of what I say.

However, we are also willing to take part in all manner of talks about protecting the interests of the Croatian people in general.

That is all, thank you.

THE PRESIDENT:

Thank you. Who is next, please? Go ahead, please introduce yourself.

IGNAC KOŠTROMAN:

Many harsh words have just been said against Herceg-Bosna as if it were a case of a classic conspiracy against the sovereignty of BH and the BH HDZ. However, I would like to say that a conspiracy has indeed been hatched, but by the other party.

I experienced this on my return from Grude the day Herceg-Bosna was declared. That morning, I met Stjepan KLJUIC and a group of ministers who

00837912

threatened to kill me, and my wife and children because I had allegedly stated somewhere that I would kill him. Their people from UDBA /State Security Service/ said so.

Clearly, they had every intention of disposing of me as Secretary of Herceg-Bosna. My personal conflict with Mr. Stjepan KLJUIĆ began from the moment when that alternative plan was presented in Zagreb last summer in the event of Bosnia and Herzegovina being divided.

I was obviously a hindrance to such an implementation of that policy. And then they tried to remove me from the Secretariat, my position as administrative secretary. A position as manager of funeral services in Sarajevo was invented for me where I was supposed to go so that I would not obstruct or hinder - simply they tried to obstruct the policy of the Croatian Democratic Union and the main office.

Further investigating the threats made against me, I found certain bits of information which can be confirmed by facts and which fly in the face of the statement by Mr. VLAŠIĆ concerning a conspiracy. Instead, it was exactly the opposite. Physical and death threats were made to Abid HODŽIĆ, former Vice-President of the party by the inner circle of the Sarajevo leadership. He was simply, i.e. he received threats from Mr. Toka and his associates that he would be killed if he acted against the policies of Mr. Stjepan KLJUIĆ.

Furthermore, another threat was made to Ivan BREKALO after the tanks were stopped in Široki Brijeg, and we probably all know of the threats made to Reverend Anto BAKOVIĆ who later did not dare enter Bosnia and Herzegovina. In addition, at the Herceg-Bosna meeting Mr. Franjo BORAS, member of the BH Presidency, openly spoke of serious threats made to him. He was threatened with murder and told to steer clear of the political life of the Croatian Democratic Union of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Then, threats were made to the late Krešimir ROM, who worked as treasurer and who, after the scandal with ŠPEGELJ created by the Serbo-army, was taken to the MUP /Ministry of the Interior/ under very mysterious circumstances and kept for several hours in the BH MUP and Mr. Stjepan KLJUIĆ later claimed on several occasions that he would arrest him.

Then, Stjepan KLJUIĆ openly threatened Vice-President Dario KORDIĆ that he would send the police, the State Security Service, to bring him in chains if he failed

00837913

to show up at consultations regarding the establishment of the HDZ regional community.

After that, Anđelka STOJIC, secretary, was threatened that she'd be killed if she did not stop sticking her nose into other people's business, and then...

THE PRESIDENT:

Let us leave aside these personal problems and discuss political ones.

IGNAC KOŠTROMAN:

I have mentioned this in order to confirm with facts which side has been hatching a conspiracy. I'll admit, these are harsh words, but I can corroborate every statement with witnesses and facts.

This is obviously a clash of options and the essence of the conflict and it is clear that the simmering tension has surfaced. I think we should not leave Zagreb until we resolve the key issues because they will inevitably have serious ramifications on the ground.

I would also like to emphasise that Mr. Stjepan KLJUIĆ and his closest associates work hand-in-hand with Branko MIKULIĆ and Ištuk KOMŠIĆ. I do not know how well-meaning this cooperation is or whether it is just a matter of creating a Bosnian policy at all costs - this is a matter for political evaluation.

Concerning the proposals about what the best course of action would be today, I think that we should simply determine what to do because, after the meeting, we have to return to Herceg-Bosna and Posavina and explain to the people who have been misguided in certain dilemmas being launched on the ground that the BH HDZ Presidency is not in favour of this option, and it seems as if there is a conspiracy against BH HDZ and its leadership. It does not seem as if these are policies agreed on in Zagreb when almost all of us participated at the meeting of the leadership.

This is all I have to say for now. Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT:

Thank you. Perica JURIĆ asked to speak!

00837914

PERICA JURIC:

I think that the question of Bosnia and Herzegovina is the key for solving the present crisis. The question of ending the war is very closely linked to the question of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

I think we should have no dilemmas regarding that question and that we should act on our own interests, the interests of the Croatian people, and not anybody else's interests. The truth is one thing, diplomacy another.

I think that we can do everything regarding integration, from serious defence preparations to institutional links, to ties in the most serious sense of the word. At the diplomatic level, our people in Sarajevo can continue swearing that they are in favour of a sovereign Bosnia and Herzegovina, as we have done so far.

I think that this sovereignty will not happen, /?nobody is taking it seriously any more/. I think that Croatian politics have matured sufficiently to see to its own interests.

I do not know whether anybody has considered the problem of the wave of refugees from Bosnia and Herzegovina. I do not know whether it has been considered in Croatia, but I would like to raise at this meeting the question of the future wave of refugees. There will be not 500,000, but perhaps as many as two million of them. Gentlemen, I think this is a very serious question, and that we should stop this one-upmanship here and stop this inappropriate tone, not tone, actually, but substance.

I think that our policies must be positively defined, and I think that we must go on as we have been doing so far, taking primarily into account the interests of our own people.

I learned from one of the most respected Serbs in Bosnia and Herzegovina that, upon hearing the news that the Croatian Community of Bosanska Posavina had been formed, for joy Mr. KARADŽIĆ bought twenty people dinner. It is not true that the Serbs do not want the war to end, let us not be so stubborn in lack of trust and an anti-human disposition. In spite of the war and the open hostilities, the Serbs also want peace, they want a way out, and, objectively, they have their rights in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Let us stop thinking how the Muslims and we can find a solution to the crisis by pressing our majority in voting.

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I assure you, it is the most objective now to believe that this will come to pass, and Croatia must take care of its security, just as Austria did when it reinforced its borders to protect itself from the wave of refugees. When the war explodes in Bosnia and Herzegovina, we can expect a huge number of people, of refugees, from Bosnia and Herzegovina. I believe that people in Bosanska Posavina are overjoyed that Croatia has achieved sovereignty and international recognition and they are even willing to leave their land and all they have to come and live in Croatia, not to mention man's natural wish to fight on his piece of land for the protection of his own interests /as printed/. I think that there is sufficient strength for this.

The introduction of the Croatian dinar will force us to think objectively.

Gentlemen, you will see that in the municipalities of Herzegovina, Western Bosnia and the broader area of Bosanska Posavina the Croatian dinar will be the means of payment. The Croatian dinar will not be sold for either Yugoslav or Bosnian dinars. Some economists estimate that our people have most of the financial power in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

I assure you that no Croat in Herzegovina or in the Croatian areas of Bosnia will either use the Yugoslav dinar for payments or buy it. It will be a political demonstration, and we should support it. That is what we can agree on.

As for the Muslims, there is a dualism at the core of their political being.

I think that not all Muslims, not even a majority of Muslims, support the policies of Alija IZETBEOVIĆ and his eastern orientation.

I think that the European spirit prevails among the Bosnian Muslims. Let us not forget the fact of the war. It is a fact of life. We cannot escape from it. The war is there, it is reality, it influences political relationships.

However, we should look after our own interests, and that is at the heart of what I had to say. Thank you very much.

THE PRESIDENT:

Who else wants to speak?

Gentlemen, the discussion tonight has clearly shown that this meeting was necessary, and that the differences which surfaced at this meeting are not accidental, they are conditioned by the problem of Bosnia and Herzegovina itself and by the

position of certain areas of Herzegovina, Western Bosnia, Bosanska Posavina, Vrh Bosna /Central Bosnia/, etc.

All of history has shown that Bosnia and Herzegovina is no solution for the Croatian people.

First of all, gentlemen, let us not forget that it /Bosnia/ was created in the colonial conquests of an Asian power at the expense of the Croatian people and Croatian territories between the 15th and 18th centuries.

All colonial creations throughout history fell, both in Africa and Asia. Bosnia and Herzegovina did not exist between the two /world/ wars. The Communists invented it, put it back on the map after World War II, even declared the Muslims to be a nation in order to, supposedly, resolve the differences between the Serbian and the Croatian people.

Did they succeed? No, on the contrary.

Therefore, Bosnia and Herzegovina should not be taken as something God given which must be preserved, and we must especially not forget how harmful it is.

Because of the creation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia has been put in an impossible situation regarding its territory. Regarding administration, not to mention defence, we cannot establish an independent Croatia such as it is.

What are the further perspectives? What is the future of the Croatian people with Bosnia and Herzegovina?

I have cited already how from 24% we fell to 17%. Mr. VLAŠIĆ from Travnik said that in Travnik we dropped from 56% to 37%.

Be certain that if Bosnia and Herzegovina should survive, within ten years this would acquire even more horrible proportions. The Muslims are counting on demographic expansion, both with their birth rate and their plan to bring in 500,000 Muslims from Turkey and other places.

Therefore, the survival of Bosnia and Herzegovina as an independent and sovereign state, even if possible, is in any case against the interests of the Croatian people and makes impossible the normal territorial establishment of the Croatian State, and creates conditions for the disappearance of what remains of the Croatian people in Bosnia and Herzegovina today.

Furthermore, a united Bosnia and Herzegovina does not exist today.

You say, I do not know who said it, that partition of Bosnia and Herzegovina would mean allowing Serbia to cross the Drina /river/, where it has never been before.

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But they are here, there are a million and a half of them in Bosnia, they are there, there were 570,000 of them in Croatia, now probably half that number will be left in Croatia, but there are a million and a half of them in Bosnia.

Therefore, even if somebody gave us a border on the Drina, what would you do with two million Serbs and as many Muslims – what kind of Croatian state would that be? What future would it have?

Gentlemen, let us not base ourselves on petty interests, but, when thinking about the interests of the people and the State, let us look at the problem as a whole.

You see that the European Community and the international community are constantly pointing out that they are against border changes.

I agree, as I think LASIĆ said, that borders are a Pandora's box, but they also point out all the time, and do not think that they did not mean Bosnia and Herzegovina, too, that they are against changes by force.

Therefore, it would be desirable to achieve a political solution which would create conditions to avoid war, to avoid a conflict.

I think we have had sufficient experience, what with World War II and this war, that without demarcation between Croatia and Serbia there can be no political solution, no removal of the threat of war in the future.

I can tell you right here, at this table, that in private talks I had with IZETBEGOVIĆ, in private talks with MILOŠEVIĆ and /?in talks with both of them/, there was discussion of how to find such a solution which would satisfy both the Croatian and the Serbian people as well as the Muslims. It was discussed.

And now, if you please, as regards the conflicts among you and as regards politics.

The Croatian Democratic Union and the State leadership of Croatia have not changed, there have been no changes. No! But, because we, I shall not repeat what all you said, we said that for tactical reasons we were in favour of a sovereign Bosnia so long as it existed. But there is no longer a sovereign Bosnia. The Serbs have split off. You have no authority. The Bosnian government has no authority over the Serbian sections, and these Serbian sections, and not only the Serbian sections of Bosnia, all of Bosnia and Herzegovina is involved in the war against Croatia. Its territory and the Serbian population against Croatia. That is a fact.

Therefore, why are we speaking of a sovereign Bosnia? Why are we speaking of a sovereign Bosnia, when Serbian representatives are taking part in Belgrade in the

00837918

creation of a greater Serbia? When they are already deciding that you will use the Serbian dinar?

Therefore, this is the situation. And in such a situation we must decide on our policy. Our policies, such as they were, as somebody here mentioned, were partly surrogates of the Muslim policies in Bosnia. This cannot be denied.

However, let us be just. This policy was conditioned, because for a long time, because of the war, etc., we were in favour of the sovereignty of Bosnia, but at the last meeting /as printed/. I mean, even if there are slight misunderstandings, then it is because I said at the meeting with you, I do not know, not in that group, but with one, with representatives of you from Bosnia and Herzegovina, and especially to KLJUIĆ, I told him that direct talks should be started with IZETBEGOVIĆ and KARADŽIĆ, there you have it. And that we should be seeking a solution, not just in passing, for our demarcation, a solution which would satisfy all three sides. And that there should be nothing covert about it, but that we should talk with KARADŽIĆ, there you have it. If he asks for the areas where there is five percent, he also asks for areas where there is only one Serb, but he will have to back down, just as he will from all Serbian areas, allegedly Serbian areas in Croatia.

So, he asks for this, you ask for that. And then you agree in talks. And IZETBEGOVIĆ should be told: "What do you want? Do you want to go with them into Serbia? Go! But in that case, we are separating out the Croatian parts."

Therefore, there should be concrete talks both with KARADŽIĆ and with IZETBEGOVIĆ, there you have it. This does not mean that I am proposing we should put this on the table, saying that we want partition now, of course. But let us talk, let us look for a political solution. What is the political solution? You Serbs are leaving, you do not recognise anything at all. Alright. So be it. These are our demands. But what then about the Muslims?

Therefore, there should be concrete talks, and I think that in this respect KLJUIĆ was a bit, I think, he did not /as printed/, and you did not implement what we agreed to, that this was the way the solving of that problem should be approached.

What our friends did with this community of Herceg-Bosna and this Posavina, this was not a mistake. It derives from our general policy. When the Serbs were breaking away, the Croatian areas had to be self-organised, for self-defence, for organising the people for defence, if they should be physically threatened. We helped in this, too, in order to create pre-conditions for a political solution. In order to say to

00837919

those Serbs, and to Europe, this means there is a Croatian people there and it has its demand.

Now, here it is, that's it, both of our policies in Bosnia and Herzegovina, that of preserving sovereignty and that of creating pre-conditions for what is in our ultimate interest were present and there was a little misunderstanding among you. Some of you, clearly KLJUIĆ even today, some were more in favour of this – like MARKEŠIĆ – of preservation. What about the other Croats?

Listen, gentlemen, no people in the world can ever realise its maximum demands.

Therefore, we cannot count on getting all the areas where Croats live. But if we create a Croatian State with such a territory that it can survive, then the Croats who remain in what is left of Bosnia will have a base and, in keeping with modern international regulations, they will have guarantees from the Croatian State and through international conventions.

It is the same for the Serbs and the same problem will appear in their case.

Therefore, the Serbs must also back down from the separation of Knin or any other *krajina*, it doesn't matter which – this will not happen.

Therefore, in this respect we must be realistic. We should achieve territorially as much as possible under the present circumstances.

We have said, and it was no accident that we put in the Croatian Constitution:

/part of text missing?/

... therefore, imagine such borders for Croatia from the point of view of the future of the Croatian State, of the future of the Croatian people and from the point of view of a base for those Croats who shall remain outside that State.

In my opinion, therefore, we should very delicately, but also swiftly start those talks. I propose that we appoint a commission today consisting of at least five of you, which would conduct talks both with the Serbs and with the Muslims. How we shall get this on the agenda will depend on developments in Bosnia and in the world.

STJEPAN KLJUIĆ:

As I have been mentioned in a very unflattering context here...

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THE PRESIDENT:

Please don't say that...

STJEPAN KLJUIĆ:

Mr. President, please, let me tell you, I cannot leave this meeting just like that, you know what the two of us have been through in this year and a half, you know all that I have done and what I have not...

THE PRESIDENT:

KLJUIĆ, let us not waste time, we think, not only I, the Croatian leadership in general thinks that since becoming head of the HDZ you have all in all done a good job. I shall tell you, though, I shall repeat what I just said, that lately you have become closer to IZETBEGOVIĆ's policy regarding those negotiations which we wanted, I have written down somewhere the date when we discussed how talks should be held with both sides, and our aim, our aim from the beginning, from the proclamation we issued, if you want, was not to preserve Bosnia and Herzegovina as it is today. Essentially, this is not in the interests of Croatian policy, as Croatian policy would in this way be permanently frustrated by the demographic and territorial loss in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Therefore, we finally wanted, and it was no accident that in the preamble to the Croatian Constitution we also mention the *banovina* of Croatia.

Therefore, in that respect you from the Sarajevo circles and from the Herzegovina and Posavina circles, if I can call them that, have diverged somewhat. You understand, this is conditioned, you would like, as would I, to encompass all the Croats, but I think it would be unrealistic to say, let the Serbs take the Serbian sections, and they had both agreed to a certain amount of resettlement, so we can say there you have it to the Serbs, and the Muslims can come with us to Croatia /as printed/. In that way we would have the Muslims against us, but if we told them that we were in favour of their having a statelet of their own in the remnants of Bosnia, then they would have to be content with that. I have told you, and I shall repeat it

00837921

now, European and world international factors will accept this, too, as they are seriously thinking about the danger posed by the potential appearance of an Islamic state in Europe.

Therefore, these matters do not concern us alone, but everybody.

STJEPAN KLJUIĆ:

Mr. President, with all due respect, let me explain things a bit before leaving. I think I have the personal right to explain something to you.

First, this is not a competition to see who is the greater Croat. If it were, I would not let anybody be, we could only be equal. The idea of 13 June was mine, Mr. VLAŠIĆ developed it, Mr. DOKO and I brought you the papers here, if you remember, Vice VUKOJEVIĆ and Mr. RAMLJAK were present as well, there were quite a few of us.

Therefore, I am not against it, but we agreed to put it into action at a certain moment. In my judgement, it was not the right moment.

Second. Mr. President, it is not realistic to speak of 30 municipalities. In Bosnia and Herzegovina we have 14 municipalities where we have absolute majorities which all the Serbs recognise and five municipalities in which we have pluralities. Only about 30% of the Croatian population in Bosnia and Herzegovina lives in these 19 municipalities. Furthermore, it is not true that we did not implement policies and that we publicly said...

THE PRESIDENT:

Wait a minute, when we say that, you see, 30% of the Croatian territory /as printed/, but what does this territory mean for the Croatian State? Therefore, if you consider only one element, it seems as if it should be rejected immediately, but you have to consider it in respect of what I said, that the State of Croatia cannot survive such as it is, but a Croatian State even within the borders of the *banovina* could, not to mention if these borders were improved on.

STJEPAN KLJUIĆ:

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But, Mr. President, this version means that Knin and Drvar will join forces.

THE PRESIDENT:

It does not, because they are already bitter enemies over that, it is not...

STJEPAN KLJUIĆ:

Mr. President, in that case towns in which Croats today do not form the majority, but which have a tradition, which belong to the Croatian corpus, towns like Konjic, Mostar, Stolac, Derventa, Doboj, Jajce, Bugojno and Travnik, would remain outside the Croatian domain. It is not true that we did not publicly implement and publicly tell everyone that the Croats would not remain within a Serboslavia. In that respect, we kept pointing out in the inter-party agreement that nobody would force anything upon anyone else, you could read it even in *Vjesnik*, which does not report well about us at all.

Secondly, in the first version described by the young Mr. KORDIĆ, we must speak of political maturity. There are people who have information, who work in State services, there are people who go there to a public meeting, hold the meeting and take a decision /as printed/.

The question is, how possible is it for us to achieve what the Serbs did in the Krajina and in Trebinje. I would like to congratulate these gentlemen, I would even be proud of them, and it even says in one of the texts submitted to you that the application of Croatian laws is demanded in Busovača, Travnik, Vitez, etc.

Gentlemen, municipal /presidents/ come to me /?saying/ it is impossible to implement. I wish they could.

Furthermore, we considered that we should talk, but in all those talks, gentlemen, everybody asks who will be the first to propose a partition of Bosnia? Everybody says, let us see about cantonisation, and so forth. When we brought the Serbs to the point of telling them, you are the instigators, you will not be a part of an independent Bosnia and Herzegovina, and so on, please produce a paper on it, they only brought us a paper with the Belgrade initiative. But they have the press.

The question is, who will be the first to bite?

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We were here the last time when you were here, and you told us there were three versions:

- The first is to fight for sovereignty as long as we can.

- The second is if the Serbs do split off their areas, if it must be, because of international controls, we would have a rump Bosnia and Herzegovina in a confederation with Croatia. It would be a buffer zone, we would get the Muslims. Somebody said then, with little tact, we can give the Muslims some form of autonomy.

Let Bosnia and Herzegovina then be like that, then.

THE PRESIDENT:

Stjepan, let us be concrete now, let us not waste time, please.

STJEPAN KLJUIĆ:

The third version, just let me finish Mr. President, just two minutes.

The third version was that the Muslims would not want to come with us, that the Serbs wanted their part, so we would launch into propaganda about how this was a question of Europe and the Balkans, of Belgrade and Zagreb. Then we would have a chance of getting the Travnik Muslims, the Bugojno Muslims, those from Jajce, so Croatia would get a block. This should be prepared.

That is why we said that we should have a commission for cantonisation.

Furthermore, inside Bosnia and Herzegovina we should redraw several municipalities which the Partisans set up to our detriment, we should transfer Dobretići to Travnik or Jajce, where it used to be. Other areas, Ravno, for example, should be transferred to Neum. In this way, gentlemen, we would get more space, and finally in this united country we would have a more natural border.

Now, I have to explain my policy towards the Muslims.

If the Muslims had betrayed me, gentlemen, I had a plan. I would have committed suicide in Alija IZETBEGOVIĆ's office.

Please wait, Mr. President.

I live down there, I haven't slept for a year and a half, you see who the people are I have to work with. That one from my office says I threatened his family. That is

00837924

not true. The police came and told me that they wanted to kill me for being a traitor to the Croatian cause.

And then this idea voiced in Tomislavgrad, if you will.

(Interjection: Please, KLJUIĆ, leave that alone.)

No, BOBAN, you and I will have it out before the President. We were said to have betrayed the interests, Mr. President. We, who achieved the independence of Bosnia and Herzegovina more quickly than was expected. That was not easy.

Another thing, we brought the Muslims over to our option. Just over a year ago, as Mr. BROZOVIĆ knows, they set out for a moderate, reasonable federation. Then it was a confederation, then independence.

What would have happened, gentlemen, if it had been the other way around, if the Muslims...

THE PRESIDENT:

KLJUIĆ, please. Had IZETBEGOVIĆ accepted our proposal, our draft of a confederal association of sovereign states, there would have probably been no war against Croatia.

Therefore, we did not bring them over, rather, they continue to conduct their own policies. (Alright.)

Therefore, we have to take an active position regarding their policies.

STJEPAN KLJUIĆ:

Mr. President, you are the best example, you have your staff, you have your men.

After this, I can no longer occupy a post down there. I mean, we must be sincere. First, I am a private person, I could not be broken even during Communist times, when Branko MIKULIĆ persecuted me, and so on. It is being said here, because you told me to bring... into the HDZ. (I did.)

Well, let me tell you, regarding the policy here. It is not possible for the seventh dwarf to get up and make a ruckus about it. I did everything you told me to do. We cannot go on, you want Herceg-Bosna, you want BOBAN, well, you're welcome to them, gentlemen, I resign. I am always ready to resign, Mr. President.

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I do not deserve people speaking about me like that, because, after all, I took over the party from PERINOVIĆ, from BAKOVIĆ, a party in which half the people were against us, against your interests, and turned it into a party which has a public image. What we are like on the inside, only we know.

I worked with people night and day, I tried to rally as many intellectuals and strong personalities as possible. I have no family, I do not have a clan of my own, I did not bring in any kin of mine.

So, speaking of personnel policy, the majority are from Herzegovina. Was the selection better? If you bring in anybody from down there, somebody will come from the neighbouring village to tell you he's no good. I have no people of my own, and I took them all in here. When BOBAN kissed me at the Mostar convention, I thought we had cleared everything up.

Forgive me, Mr. President, please, I live for this, you must listen and see what is going on, Mr. TUĐMAN.

I am your man, and even when I was provoked by journalists, I knew what I was saying. I know what Gojko ŠUŠAK has done, but please.

THE PRESIDENT:

But I also know what you...

STJEPAN KLJUIĆ:

Please, I beg you, let us not leave this room if I have to sit with KOŠTROMAN again, you cannot ask me to do that. Excuse me, but I cannot take it. It is a question of my dignity, of my person. I was a Croat when it was not possible to be a Croat in Bosnia.

THE PRESIDENT:

Wait a minute, KLJUIĆ, let us not get personal.

I told you that we were satisfied with your policy and that you deserve the credit for establishing Croatian policies in Bosnia and Herzegovina. So let us not

reduce things to the personal level now, let us rather move on. The time which you mentioned has come – the Croats cannot join Serboslavia.

STJEPAN KLJUIĆ:

Absolutely, President.

THE PRESIDENT:

Well, that is what it is about.

Therefore, what is being said in some circles, that they created Herceg-Bosna of their own will, or at my instructions, is not true. It is not true. They and you both, and each in a somewhat one-sided way, without sufficient coordination, implemented the general policy. And the general policy was to preserve sovereignty until a certain moment, so long as it was convenient for Croatia. Now it is no longer convenient.

So, what they did is exactly what you are saying – the Croats do not want to join Serboslavia.

Therefore, this is the road we need to take to achieve a Croatian State which will be better in every respect.

JERKO DOKO:

In this way we shall never achieve it, President.

THE PRESIDENT:

Dear DOKO, let somebody else beside you think about that here, if you will.

You see, even at your meetings there is thinking, and so on /as printed/.

JERKO DOKO:

No, there isn't, they were secret meetings, I have to tell you, I cannot bear it any longer, they were secret meetings. (Which?)

These, which have been mentioned.

00837927

THE PRESIDENT:

What do you mean by secret meetings, when representatives of 30 municipalities met here?

JERKO DOKO:

That's not true, they are lying to you, I must tell you that they are lying to you. I shall tell you how they are lying to you, Mr. President, because I cannot stand it. I have come here now, I do not have to come ever again. But they are lying to you, Mr. President, they have forged the minutes.

Mr. GAGRO and Mr. Damjan VLAŠIĆ, who came to Grude and signed himself as Damjan, as if they were present there, and then the conclusions were adopted /as printed/.

In this way, we shall achieve nothing. Mr. GAGRO was there, and you forged things.

Mr. President, we agreed in June that we would do this, and you, Mr. President, should have called your representative and president of the BH HDZ and told him: "Stjepan, this should be implemented." But you did not tell him that.

THE PRESIDENT:

I beg your pardon, sir, would you teach me what I should do? You came here as well, and not once, you came several times.

JERKO DOKO:

Mr. President, it is no longer possible to enter Mostar, while you think that we shall get Konjic, too. It is impossible to go into Mostar, we are blocked from all sides. This isn't working.

THE PRESIDENT:

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The whole of Croatia was occupied, the whole of Croatia, that is what it is about, these are the significant differences, you see, and, please, if you said that it was impossible to conduct a policy of, you used a derogatory word, I shall not use it, but I call on you to ignore all these personal...

DR. MATO UDOVIČIĆ:

Something from the Travnik area, just one sentence – when we arrive in our towns tomorrow we must tell the people that we have a single party leadership. The party president, Mr. KLJUIĆ, and our Mr. Mate BOBAN should represent the unity of our party. One is the president, the other the vice-president, there should not be two channels in making decisions.

This will lead our municipal boards to split completely into two factions as well. We have to know tonight what they decided, that it is a single party.

THE PRESIDENT:

Yes, but this rift appearing between you is partly of a personal nature, but is mostly caused by this very delicate political problem facing the whole Croatian people, including those Croats living in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Let us be rational now and let us not opt for division, but let us accept a plan of work which will be in the interests of the Croatian State, internationally recognised for the first time after nine centuries. Let us leave all these personal /?matters/. There is something else you should know. All kinds of information are planted for you and everybody by people who work in all kinds of services which are aimed at causing disunity and, according to data which you brought me, etc., etc., interested in splitting the Croatian national being, etc. etc.

Therefore, in my opinion, nothing should be changed in the general policy. Formally, we can continue supporting the sovereignty you and the Muslims voted for. The Serbs are doing it, the Serbs know, and therefore, to avoid losing time, even to stimulate what is in the interest of the Croatian people, I told you, go ahead and talk directly to KARADŽIĆ, talk to IZETBEGOVIĆ.

Therefore, there is no Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Serbs have left, they are imposing the Serbian dinar on you. Therefore, we want to keep, we do not accept this,

00838256

so what should we, go ahead, for starters, today, it can be talks on cantonisation, as even they said, but naturally with our aim to breath life in it in the sense which is in the interests of the Croatian State, the Croatian people /as printed/.

MIRO LASIĆ:

If the creation of a Bosnian dinar were successful, believe me that the Serbs would suffocate in their own dinar excrement. If we succeed, but I do not know whether we can succeed.

THE PRESIDENT:

You will not succeed, it is clear that you will not succeed, you will not succeed.

I suggest we agree on a Commission which will conduct these talks and which will in that respect, if you will, even be the core leadership of the Croatian Democratic Union in Bosnia.

Do you have any proposals? KLJUIĆ, BOBAN, STANIĆ is from Bosnia, the three of them must be, let's proceed.

(Interjection: Bihać must be included.)

Bihać is very important to us...

(Interjection: I say, as a region it must remain ours.)

STIPE MESIĆ:

He suggests that it should be where it is critical /as printed/.

(Interjection: The negotiators should be from where it is critical.)

THE PRESIDENT:

Whom do you propose?

(Unintelligible interjection.)

Is he here?

Stjepan, it is not a personal matter, it is a matter of political orientation.

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Can you include RAIĆ...

/part of text missing?/

... why not the professor from Travnik?

THE PRESIDENT:

I did not say he could not.

Go ahead.

KORDIĆ:

(The speaker /?turned on his microphone/ later.)

... I have the right to be here, because 12 municipalities back me, because I am the chairman of that regional community.

THE PRESIDENT:

Alright, let's go. We said KLJUIĆ, BOBAN, Vlado ŠANTIĆ, Iko STANIĆ, UDOVIČIĆ, VLAŠIĆ and who else?

(Interjection: Dario KORDIĆ, Busovača.)

That makes seven - KLJUIĆ, BOBAN, Vlado ŠANTIĆ, Iko STANIĆ, UDOVIČIĆ, LAZIĆ /as printed/ and KORDIĆ. Agreed.

Let us vote. Who is for KLJUIĆ?

(Interjection: Generally, I am for all of them, only if they are not... - /?the speaker's microphone was not turned on/.)

If somebody does not accept what we just agreed on here in negotiations, he should say so and not take part, let this be clear.

(Interjection cannot be heard.)

These moments are too crucial historically for us to play and allow any personal views.

(Interjection: Mostar and Stolac are missing.)

(Interjection: These people must be in Sarajevo. You cannot have negotiations if people are coming and going. These may be intense negotiations lasting for two, three, four or five days, with the Muslims, then with the Serbs. If one person is from

00836253

Bihać, one from one place, one from another, I doubt they will be in Sarajevo. There is nothing worse than having the negotiators change.)

I know, but they must be, precisely because of the characteristics of the problem, so we said three, six, seven, which means, if two are absent, five must always know.

(Interjection cannot be heard.)

STJEPAN KLJUIĆ:

Excuse me, but when there are fewer negotiators, three, for example, who will... of those present?

THE PRESIDENT:

The president and the vice-president. President KLJUIĆ and vice-president BOBAN together, if you will, the president and the vice-president.

(Interjection cannot be heard.)

Gentlemen, let us set aside these personal matters, do not insult each other on a personal basis, because it arose for personal /?reasons/, it arose for political /?reasons/ /as printed/. It is difficult to take a position on all these problems. It is their nature.

You've mentioned the church. I know that representatives of the Bosnian church would prefer it to remain whole, isn't that right?

Therefore, it is a matter of the Croatian State, of what it can achieve, so skill is needed now in talks with both sides, as well as in the field, to achieve optimum demarcation.

There is another thing I would ask of you, so we are finished with that /as printed/. I hope we have all understood what we want.

Therefore, even with more ties, you are independent, but you are an integral part of the Croatian people and an integral part of the Croatian Democratic Union. There were different tendencies as well, which is no accident, after all, the opponents of the recognition of Croatia and its independence did all kinds of things, and it is no accident that there were such people down there. And that they will go on trying.

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I would like to remind you that, as we were, and still are faced with a very delicate task for our military officers, we are also now faced with the delicate task of creating our own diplomatic corps.

Therefore, give me proposals from your ranks, from all of Bosnia and Herzegovina, of people who speak foreign languages or have a talent for diplomatic service. Give them to me immediately, send or leave here brief biographies, so you can be an integral part of Croatia in this respect as well, and so we can solve this problem more successfully.

Thank you, let us have dinner now.

CONCLUDED AT 2155 HOURS

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