
**STENOGRAPHIC TRANSCRIPT of the meeting of
The Council of Defense of the Socialist Republic Romania**

31 May 1989

The meeting was **chaired by** comrade Nicolae Ceausescu, General Secretary of the Romanian Communist Party, President of the Socialist Republic Romania and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Socialist Republic Romania.

Participants: comrades Constantin Dascalescu, Emil Bobu, Ion Coman, Gheorghe Oprea, Radu Balan, Ioan Totu, Vasile Milea, Tudor Postelnicu, Iulian Vlad, Ilie Ceausescu.

Invitees: comrades Stefan Gusa, first deputy of the minister of national defense and chief of the General Staff; colonel general Ion Hortopan, commander of the Infantry and Tanks Command; colonel general Mircea Mocanu, commander of the Air Defense of the Territory; lieutenant general Traian Dafinescu, chief of staff of the Command of the Army Services; major general Gheorghe Voinea, commander of the 1st Army; lieutenant general Mihai Chitac, commander of the Chemical Troops and commander of the Bucharest garrison; major general Iosif Rus, commander of the Air Forces; major general Constantin Ionita, commander of Artillery; colonel Petre Teaca, commander of the Border Guards; colonel Gheorghe Popescu, commander of the Engineer Troops/Corps.

Other invitees: comrades Gheorghe Ghintei, deputy of the chief of staff of the Patriotic Guards of the Central Committee of the RCP, lieutenant general Victor Stanculescu, first deputy of the minister of national defense; Ion Radu, Eugeniu Radulescu, Nicolae Vaidescu.

Comrade Nicolae Ceausescu:
Have you seen the agenda?
Let us discuss point 1, comrades.

POINT 1

REPORT on the fulfillment, in 1988, of the provisions of the Directive of the Commander-in-Chief regarding the increase of combat readiness and political instruction of the troops, increase of combat and mobilization capacity, strengthening of military order and discipline, and the contribution of the army to the national economy.

Have you anything else to ask or to say?

Cde. Constantin Dascalescu:

I would like to ask a question: on pages 6 and 7, in relation to combat readiness, for collective shootings with infantry weapons the “satisfactory” and “unsatisfactory” grades are, in a proportion of 27%, one per cent higher as compared with 1988, and for the shootings with tank armament the “unsatisfactory” grade also increased in comparison with 1988.

It seems to me that the measure proposed for further improving the situation is not sufficient.

Cde. Vasile Milea:

Comrade Nicolae Ceausescu, General Secretary of the Romanian Communist Party, Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, I report to you that – as compared with 1987 – a decrease in combat readiness was noticed for the shootings with both tank armament and infantry armament.

Last year, but especially this year, we came up against issues of military order and discipline within the framework of both military units and units working in the economy, but the most serious ones appeared in fact in the military units. This was a consequence of the fact that the Ministry of Defense was not involved to a sufficient extent in the solution of all of the issues; the controls were conducted irresponsibly by the central organs and the commands in the economy, and the measures were not taken depending upon the gravity of the situation, a fact that caused their proliferation, with a lot of infringements of the military order and discipline and others – especially serious – mainly within the framework of both the command of the air force, guard and warehouses troops, in relation to the handling of armament and ammunition, and of the command of the border troops.

I also report, comrade commander-in-chief, that we were never faced with situations of this nature brought about by cadres, at the level of either troops or commanders of big units. We had such situations with troops in compulsory military service, but a fact that is extremely serious and affected us very much was that also a number of high-rank officers committed breaches of duty.

Cde. Nicolae Ceausescu:

Are there other issues you want to raise, comrades?

The commanders of the commands have the right to take the floor as well.

Colonel Petre Teaca, commander of the command of border troops:

Esteemed comrade commander-in-chief, allow me to report: the great majority of our cadres and troops fulfill with responsibility the tasks of guarding the borders assigned to them and display devotion to the party and the people and to the successes registered in the defense – with patriotism and dignity – of the revolutionary conquests of our homeland. First of all, our cadres watch over the application of the foreign policy of our party and state; I report that in the case of our relationships with the border authorities and the authorities of the neighboring states we do our best to ensure the solution of all of the border issues in the spirit of the treaties, agreements, and conventions in force, and of the good neighborly relationships with the neighboring states. In this spirit were solved all of the issues arisen at the borders of our state. Special measures were taken as regards the guarding of the borders with Hungary and Yugoslavia.

We received special support from the leadership of the ministry [of defense] regarding the equipping of the border troops with new technical means for apprehending the criminals who try to cross the border.

I report with full responsibility, in my quality as representative and commander of the border troops that, in spite of all of our efforts and the efforts of the majority of the border cadres, we registered some serious breaches of duty, mainly indiscipline and non-observance of the country’s regulations.

In April and May of this year two extremely serious cases occurred: two commanders, one from the border guard unit at the border with Yugoslavia and one from the similar unit at the border with Hungary abandoned their combat missions and crossed the border illegally/fraudulently..

Last March grave breaches of law happened, which resulted in the rash killing of military and civilians found on the border line.

The main causes of these shortcomings consist, first of all, in the inappropriate activity conducted within the framework of the troop command, the inadequate activity of cadres with leadership functions from the brigade and unit commands, and in the inefficient conduct of a number of cadres during the control, guidance, and training activity of the military who committed breaches of duty.

I report as well that such shortcomings, which we came up against in the past and still do in the present, are also due to the deficiencies in the formation of young cadres in our military academies, and the inappropriate guidance in the border guard units and subunits.

On the basis of the analysis conducted by the Ministry of Defense in the Military Council and the Bureau of the Political Council of the troops, we acted and are acting with full responsibility to remedy this unsuitable situation as soon as possible. In this activity, which will be carried out – on a priority basis – in the border guard pickets and companies, and in sectors of special activity on the West and South-West borders, all of the responsibility factors will be involved.

Our main preoccupations are abiding by the laws and agreements concluded with the neighboring states, and toughening of military order and discipline in the spirit of socialist patriotism, vigilance, honor, honesty, and correctness.

We assure you that, along with the party organs and organizations, we will do away – as soon as possible – with all of the shortcomings reported by comrade minister and will mark the great events of this year only with good and very good results.

I have finished my report.

Major General Iosif Rus, commander of the Air Forces:

Comrade Commander-in-Chief, I report that – due to the permanent care of the higher party and state leadership and of yourself – the Air Forces developed continuously, they were equipped with new types of aircraft, and its training and preparation conditions were improved, which brought about an increase in combat capacity. In addition, the Air Forces are involved in the economic activities carried out in our country, and they do their duty with honor, and enjoy the party's appreciation for the results obtained.

I have understood the purpose of our being convened here. The situation is not up to the mark as regards the requirements and exigencies requested by you at the meeting with the command and party active of the army in respect of the tasks of socialist construction and the increase of the defense capacity of our homeland.

The measures taken in the airforce were not convincing and exacting enough. Accidents and breaches of duty continued to occur last year and in the current one. Meeting you now and on other occasions in the past are – in my view – genuine activity reports, which we with patriotic pride and deep respect submit to your attention since we look upon you as the founder of modern aeronautics in our country.

In the Air Force, the present commanders did not pay enough attention to the preparation of cadres and aircraft. The technical control commissions did not regard, with full responsibility, the manner of ensuring flight and traffic security. There were cases of indiscipline in the technical preparation, too. Comrade minister called my attention on your observations and indications, which we have always understood as orders from you

We are responsible for all of the shortcomings in our system of training the personnel – the whole personnel

of the air forces and civil aviation – whose training is made in the military academy for aviation officers, for which we assume full responsibility, including the equipping and, mainly, the service and preparation of Romanian-made helicopters and of aircraft, for which we have to improve the quality of works and conduct periodic analyses with the manufacturers of equipment for aviation.

There are certain proposals regarding the appointment of personnel for the command and for leadership positions; some of them can even be revised and comrade minister even ordered me to come up with new proposals that are to be submitted for approval.

We are aware of the great responsibilities and of the shortcomings that still persist in our activity, which we have analyzed recently with the party organs of the air forces and established specific measures which – when they are applied – I assure you, comrade minister, will enable us to do away with the shortcomings, increase flight security, and further raise the combat capability of the air forces.

Major General Constantin Ionita, Artillery Commander:

I report that in this year of training, too, the artillery units and major units obtained and are obtaining adequate results.

Regarding the equipping with armament and ammunition, I report that despite the specific measures taken, we did not succeed in determining in all of the personnel an increase of responsibility as to keeping armament and ammunition in full security. We did not manage to permanently maintain the integrity of the defense zones of the warehouses, mainly because of the advanced wearing of the wire fences, which could not be brought to normal parameters for lack of insured quotas (?).

I also report that shortcomings were found in the guard and defense system of the warehouses. The warehouses developed, new constructions were made, the great majority of units remained with the same effectives, and they did not toughen the guard system.

I further report that as there is a worldwide tendency of stealing armament and ammunition, it is necessary for us to strengthen the guard of the zones and warehouses as well.

The majority of detail findings were analyzed at the meeting of the Leadership Council of the Ministry of Defense, and appropriate measures were taken. At the present time, big efforts are being made to insure full order in keeping, warehousing, handling, and transporting armament and ammunition.

I admit, comrade commander-in-chief, that I and the Command did not involve ourselves in all of the situations, and did not exhibit maximum exigency in this respect.

In the future we will intensify our efforts, increase our exigency, improve the training of the cadres so that people can work in these places who have high responsibility and revolutionary conscience.

I report that we will also make our best efforts to greet the great events of this year with remarkable results in all of the fields of activity.

Cde. Nicolae Ceausescu:

Is the Command concerned with the guarding of warehouses, too? Did I understand well?

Cde. Vasile Milea:

It is concerned with the handling, warehousing, and security insuring of the ammunition.

Cde. Nicolae Ceausescu:

It was because of the lack of wire that you lost the cases with ammunition on the road?

Major General Constantin Ionita:

I report that the cause was not this, but the lack of responsibility of the personnel whose task was to carry out these missions.

Cde. Nicolae Ceausescu:

No theft was committed by someone breaking into these units from the outside, so that you may justify yourselves by assuming that there is a general tendency worldwide, but everything was stolen from the inside, from you.

Major General Constantin Ionita:

Yes, that is the truth!

Cde. Nicolae Ceausescu:

Then why are you coming up with justifications bearing no relation to reality, instead of noticing the poor organization of transportation and storing in warehouses, including the fact that the elementary order measures are not applied within the units?

Major General Constantin Ionita:

That is so. I have understood.

Cde. Nicolae Ceausescu:

If the real situation is not recognized, it is difficult to take adequate steps.

Major General Constantin Ionita:

Comrade Commander-in-Chief, allow me to report. The Artillery Commander is responsible for storing the armament extant in the reserve of the Commander-in-Chief. The rest of the warehouses are at the major units, located throughout the country and subordinated to the armies, which have obligations on that score. There was no case of someone breaking into the central warehouses and stealing from them or of wrong handling of the armament and ammunition.

Cde. Nicolae Ceausescu:

But we have to check the way the control is conducted in the big units.

Major General Constantin Ionita:

We did not succeed in acting with exigency and responsibility in these units.

Lieutenant General Mihai Chitac – Commander of the Chemical Troops and Commander of the Bucharest garrison

Comrade Commander-in-Chief, allow me to report:

In accordance with the orientations and tasks assigned by you in your speech made at the Plenary Session of 12-14 April this year, the leadership of the Ministry of National Defense, in accordance with the order and discipline and the measures specified and sustained in your speech, drew up and issued a special order for the Bucharest garrison, and the leadership of the garrison took a series of measures aimed at toughening order and discipline in the garrison.

The new measures resulting from the order drawn up by the leadership of the ministry prevent the breaches of duty by introducing the organs of the garrison into the units and increasing exigency during the activity within the garrison.

Because of some shortcomings in our work, the work of the garrison command, and that of the commanders of units and formations, the number of breaches of duty is still high in the Bucharest garrison, since 7% to 10% of the number of military we managed to verify committed breaches of duty. Thanks to the measures of increasing exigency and preventing breaches of duty, the situation has improved lately, but not up to the level of requirements. We have the possibility of including both the capital and the Ilfov agricultural sector in the planned measures we are applying now, and the situation is improving. We still have a lot of work to do, but I report that we are going to do it.

The chemical troops deploy their activity in accordance with the provisions in your Directive regarding the antinuclear and antichemical protection both by air and on the territories of other countries.

The results are generally good and very good, but with enough shortcomings both in the field of shooting with infantry armament and in the specialist activity, on the basis of the experience acquired at Chernobyl. I report that we will improve our activity as well, saluting the great events of this year with superior results.

Colonel Gheorghe Popescu, Commander of the Engineer Troops:

Comrade Commander-in-Chief, allow me to report:

We are also involved in the engineer training of major units and the units subordinated to them, as well as of the whole Romanian army. By the activities the engineer troops carry out in the national economy, they make a substantial contribution to the engineer training and the defense of the Socialist Republic Romania. Concurrently, in keeping with your order, the engineer troops participate in the achievement of objectives of special importance, which are a part of the great achievements of the epoch bearing your name – starting from the road crossing the Fagaras Mountains, continuing with the navigable canal in Dobrudja, and then the Arges-Dâmbovită canal. In the army's sector, the latter canal began to take shape. We have already built thirty kilometers of dams at various water levels, and we are now executing the protection constructions against flooding so that we can step up the works on the Danube-Bucharest canal, which will link the capital of our homeland with the Black Sea.

At the present moment, we are coming up against some difficulties in the course of our upgrading and of the activity carried out especially on the sites, and we committed ourselves – in compliance with the tasks and orientations given by you – to use the working time and each gram of fuel efficiently so that we can maximize as fully as possible our productivity.

Cde. Nicolae Ceausescu:

We cannot analyze all of the activity now because we would need an entire day for it.

Have you anything more to say about the report or have you anything special to raise for discussion?

Cde. Vasile Milea:

Comrade Commander-in-Chief, please allow me to report on behalf of all of the people present here, and to thank you most respectfully for your permanent care displayed personally and for the precious indications you gave us.

This analysis will be a real help and I report that we are and we must be in a position to have, as you have asserted, an army with flawless order which will fulfill – to the letter – the orders you will give us.

Cde. Nicolae Ceausescu:

Is there anybody else who wants to say something?

Cde. Ion Coman:

I would like to ask a question in connection with this activity. I report before you as well that I raised several times – with the Leadership Council – the issue of training the troops, where we are tempted to be subjective, and for a great many categories, such as shootings, in the case of which we cannot control exactly, the grades are very good because they are about aimed and hit targets, in other words a very precise criterion of appreciation, and the grades in 1988 are lower than the grades obtained in 1987.

Taking into account the fact that now we are analyzed before the Commander-in-Chief of our armed forces, I would ask all of the service commanders to take appropriate measures so that, from now on, there can be agreement between words and facts in the appreciation both of the individual cadres and of the units as a whole, in order to get accurate knowledge about the activity of the troops.

Regarding the military academies, [I report] that in spite of all the efforts currently made by the ministry, the training is not conducted at an appropriate level, and – as a result – there are lots of breaches of duty of the young officers, a reason for which many of them were put in the reserve.

I also want to report here, too, that we will not be able to take the radical turn for the better, justifiably desired by you in the Directive and in the innumerable discussions held with the leadership of the ministry, unless – first of all – the service commanders are themselves examples from all of the standpoints.

You have continually raised this issue, it was discussed in the Leadership Council, but – as you said on numerous occasions – it is necessary to take action and all of the comrades who are members of the Central Committee and the deputies of the Great National Assembly must feel responsibility, as you required at the plenary session.

Cde. Ilie Ceausescu, deputy of the Minister of National Defense, secretary of the Higher Political Council of the Army:

Comrade Commander-in-Chief, in the material, under point I, the party work in the army is also directly involved. I would like to report here that the whole party work in 1988 and in the first months of 1989 was carried out on the basis of the April Theses approved by the Political Consultative Committee, the tasks assigned at the common meeting of the Democratic Forum in November, and the tasks assigned by the plenary meeting of the Central Committee in April this year.

I want to report with full responsibility that the whole personnel of the army received with all responsibility and total adhesion the Theses and tasks assigned by you in both the Political Consultative Committee and the plenary meeting in April this year.

The army personnel took great pride in the fact that our foreign debt, as it was announced, was paid completely. Meetings were convened, and a lot of steps were taken so that this special victory in the history of our people can be consolidated and no more foreign credits be contracted.

I also want to report that, generally speaking, the military training of the army is good.

As it was established at the 13th Congress of the Romanian Communist Party, the army is capable of fulfilling its combat mission and defending the destiny of our homeland.

In addition, I report to you, Comrade Commander-in-Chief, that the political and moral preparation of the army is good. The army is firmly attached to the Theses and ideas raised by our party and by you at the plenary meeting of the Central Committee in April this year and in the Democratic Forum in November last year, and fully supports them.

We have no cases where the adhesion to these Theses and ideas was not total.

Lots of activities were carried out, but the results are not at the level of the requirements.

There still are numerous shortcomings related to the efficiency of political-educational work, where the results are not satisfactory. However, we have conditions and possibilities to obtain much better results than until now.

We have shortcomings especially regarding the conduct problems of some of the commanders and party activists on issues of commitment, in the fulfillment of their tasks and discharge of their functional attributions. We also have cases, where party activists commit breaches of duty and can no longer constitute examples in the work of education and preparation of the troops.

We are now in a period where we prepare the activities which will enable us to analyze the way the activities have been carried out since the last elections and prepare the meetings for the reports for 14th Congress of the party.

We are also preparing the activities intended for celebrating the 45th anniversary of the liberation of our homeland.

We have a group of well-reasoned measures and are convinced that we will obtain good results.

I report here, Comrade Commander-in-Chief, that the soldiers of the army of the Socialist Republic Romania reject with indignation the hostile policy and the inimical activity of some circles abroad, mainly imperialist and – unfortunately – of citizens of some socialist countries. The soldiers do not agree with the policy of wounding national sentiments, of distorting the great achievements obtained by the Romanian people in the socialist era and especially, after the 9th Congress of the party.

To counteract this policy, intense work is carried out to show how untrue [the propaganda of] this hostile activity taking place abroad is.

We are firmly decided that, to greet the great events of the year 1989, the party organs and the Union of Communist Youth (UCY) organizations involve themselves directly in the increase of the socialist conscience of the cadres, and of the soldiers in order that the tasks assigned to the army may be fulfilled at the present level of exigency.

Cde. Nicolae Ceausescu:

Then let us wind up the discussions under this point.

I think nobody else wants to take the floor.

Throughout last year, the army undoubtedly carried out important activity. Good results were obtained in all of the fields and, on the whole, it can be appreciated – without the shadow of a doubt – that we have a good situation, however a number of things happened which we have to take account of.

Of course, I understand very well that the broad participation of a big number of military in various activities in the national economy might justify some negative states of affairs, but in fact the latter were caused by shortcomings in the general activity of combat training and discipline toughening, and – either we want it or not – we must say that a certain weakening in combat training and the state of military discipline and order may be ascertained.

The participation in the economic activities of a big number of military does not have, however, to bring about such states of affairs, and – consequently – it is all the more necessary for the activity of combat training and toughening of military discipline and order to be intensified. It goes without saying that an improvement of the political-educational activity is also all the more necessary.

A number of states of affairs that appeared in a series of units: cases of lack of discipline, acts of betrayal at the border, grave accidents of the air forces which resulted not only in a big number of pilots and officers losing their lives but also in the loss of aircraft, the situation of armament storage – because it is inadmissible

that cases with ammunition be lost and then found by citizens or militia organs – show that there is an extremely serious weakening of the spirit of discipline, order, and responsibility.

All of these aspects have to be analyzed very seriously and the necessary conclusions be drawn, first of all in respect of the training of cadres, officers, and non-commissioned officers, as well as – naturally – in relation to the general training of troops in all of the fields, including the troops participating in various activities in the economic domain. The fulfillment of the tasks assigned to the troops is very important in economy, but this should not be detrimental to combat training, discipline, order, and level of political education. And, to tell you my opinion bluntly, beginning with the Leadership Council of the Ministry of Defense, the central commands must draw conclusions with reference to the toughening of order and discipline, because we simply cannot do without them!

We also have to take into consideration the fact that, in the following period, we will go on to the stage of applying the measures of reducing troops. Undoubtedly, this will be done on the basis of an agreement, via the negotiations currently taking place, but this presupposes the prerequisites of a better organization, a better discipline, and a better order so that – with the remaining effectives – the army be at any moment in a position to carry out its mission of defending the revolutionary and socialist conquests, as well as the independence of the homeland.

The fact must be well understood that the policy of disarmament and peace of our party and state does not mean a weakening of the combat capability; as long as imperialism still exists, as long as a policy of force is resorted to, until the elimination of nuclear weapons and of other weapons of mass destruction is reached, and a substantial reduction of conventional armament is made, the danger of a war breaking out still exists. But even afterwards, with diminished effectives and armament, it will be all the more necessary for the army and the combat units to be better trained and better disciplined in order for them to be able to fulfil their mission.

War will take a long time to completely disappear from the life of humankind, and in the activity that we are carrying out no illusion should be created – and if such an illusion happens to arise, it has to be suppressed right away – that a danger of war no longer exists, and we can relax order and scale down military combat training.

It is highly necessary, therefore, that all of the conclusions be drawn for all of the commands and units that we have to act with more responsibility within a framework of firm military discipline, order, and great responsibility!

This is valid for the good management and maintenance of armament and general [combat] means.

We have the necessary force, capability, and training to quickly do away with these negative states of affairs, to debate the issues very seriously in all of the units, but – as we discussed this morning – especially with the air forces and the border guard troops on the subject of the storage of armament, ammunition, and weapons we have in warehouses.

No kinds of justification can be found for such negative states of affairs, and we must act with full determination in this direction.

That is all for this point.

Do you agree? (All of the comrades agree).

POINT 2

REPORT on the fulfillment, in 1988, of the missions and provisions of the combat training plan for the security and firefighter troops.

Have you anything to say?

Cde. Ion Coman:

Comrade General Secretary Nicolae Ceausescu, everything you ordered for the army is absolutely valid in its entirety for the troops of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, with a number of supplementary obligations for the army because the security troops are not involved in activities in the national economy, they have the positions they have, and the obligations they have mean that they are used to a smaller extent in the national economy.

The same thing is valid for the firefighter units and the units of the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

We discussed this topic within the framework of the beginning-of-the-year balance, when we established – with responsibility – the measures to be applied afterwards.

Cde. Tudor Postelnicu:

Comrade General Secretary, allow me to raise only two issues:

First of all, I would like to report that we are quite dissatisfied with the infringements of discipline that happened in 1988, although we are witnessing a reduction in the number of cases with both the security troops and the command of the firefighter troops. This fact, I repeat, annoys us since we do not witness such infringements only on the part of troops during their compulsory term of service. The fact is grave that, especially with the militiamen, we witnessed a series of infringements committed by some cadres in which a number of military during their compulsory term of service – who participated in the missions assigned to them – were indirectly drawn into. These infringements were underscored succinctly in the report submitted to your attention by the Defense Council.

An issue I would also like to raise is that, in the Firefighter Troop Command, we have long come up against – and still do – the mentality that the only task of the firefighter troops is to put out fires, not to take intensive action to prevent them as well.

Although both the number of fires and the damage caused by them are diminishing in comparison with 1987, we are not happy with their number, we are not happy with the incipient fires, we are not happy with the way the fire prevention concept – which belongs entirely to you – in the Directive of our Commander-in-Chief was assimilated and applied in practice by all of the units and subunits within the framework of the Firefighter Troop Command.

I assure you, much esteemed comrade General Secretary, as comrade secretary Ion Coman mentioned before me, and according to the conclusion drawn by you under Point 1 of the agenda, that we have learned our lesson, and that for us a great many of the issues raised by the comrades in their interventions are entirely valid, although initially they were the object of much debate. We are still dissatisfied with the efficiency of these measures. We are in a position to learn our lesson on the subject, we are in a position to remedy the shortcomings still existing in the activity of the two service commands.

Cde. Iulian Vlad, Chief of the State Security Department:

I have fully understood the orders and indications given under the previous point. I ask you to allow me to assure you that we will do our best for these orders and orientations to be exactly put into practice, in the training and education of the security troops.

I report that in the course of last year, in accordance with the dispositions regarding the combat and political preparation of the army, and the Directive given by you, a number of positive results were registered in the field of instruction; especially in the field of fire and shooting training the number of good and very good results increased, but we have not yet met the requirements ordered by you in the sense that the results of the

security troops be 100%. We still have satisfactory results and some unsatisfactory ones. I assure you that we, the Security Troop Command, and the Political Council, give this issue priority treatment, and we will make every effort for this issue to be solved in accordance with the indications and orientations given [by you].

Cde. Nicolae Ceausescu:
Have you anything else to say, comrades?

The military and firefighter units within the framework of the Ministry of Internal Affairs also have good results, but what I said about the units of the Ministry of National Defense is wholly valid – and I do not want to repeat it any longer – for the security troops, too, and in general for the firefighter troops as well, which have a specific activity, and where – unfortunately – there still are lots of negative aspects.

We have discussed the activities of the Ministry of Internal Affairs before, and still discuss them very often, that is why I do not want to insist [on this topic] too much now, but here, too, the [complex] issue exists of a better organization, of the improvement of order and discipline, of the intensification of the political-ideological activity, of understanding – as well as possible – the responsibilities of these bodies in defending the national property, the property of us all, and – naturally – in ensuring the normal conditions of development for the whole economic and social activities. We have possibilities in both the Ministry of Internal Affairs and these commands, and we must improve the activity.

Generally speaking, I think that a certain state of self-contentment, of everything going well, was likewise created in the army, this being the greatest danger for military units and – by and large – for all of the domains.

Let us then also approve the activity of the Ministry of National Defense and of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, but with the request that everything that was said here, everything that was established for this year for the general activity be taken into consideration, and the measures deemed necessary be taken.

Cde. Vasile Milea:
I have understood. We will demonstrate this by facts.

Cde. Nicolae Ceausescu:

POINT 3

REPORT on the fulfillment by the patriotic guards, in 1988, of the objectives and tasks deriving from the Directive of the Commander-in-Chief.

Has everybody seen the report? Have you anything to say or to ask?
Have you not finished the reorganization yet?

Cde. Ion Coman:
We will finish it in the first semester.

Cde. Nicolae Ceausescu:
You have nothing to say?

Cde. Ioan Totu:

I would like to ask a question.

I took a look at the synthetic table and saw that for the common military training and the collaboration with the military units but especially for the common military training, all of the grades are “good” for all of the counties. There is no “very good” grade or the parameters are so difficult to achieve that no „very good” grade can be given? The situation as regards the collaboration with the military units is similar since only one county has the “very good” grade, and all of the other counties only “good”. Does this happen to be some kind of uniformization grade?

Cde. Colonel Gheorghe Ghintei, substitute of the deputy of the Chief of General Staff of the Patriotic Guards from the Central Committee of the RCP:

In the case of the common military preparation, greater emphasis was laid on this preparation, and in respect of the collaboration with other military units, [I report] that we collaborate with the firefighters, and we are weaker on that score. That is why we graded this collaboration only with “good”.

Cde. Ion Coman:

I have seen the report, and I have discussed with them. The remark made by cde. Totu is quite valid since we cannot allow the combat preparation of the Patriotic Guards to weaken.

We will discuss this issue with all of the counties. In eleven counties these issues are reviewed annually in all respects. Tomorrow I leave for Satu Mare, where we will discuss this issue as well.

Cde. Nicolae Ceausescu:

We have discussed the activity of the Patriotic Guards before. I would like to call your attention to two questions.

Firstly, on the one hand we have to apply the established measures regarding the reorganization of the Patriotic Guards and, consequently, the reduction of their number, and on the other hand to pay attention to the necessity of intensifying the activity of general preparation, which in fact means that the level of combat preparation of the army reserve must be maintained. We must include here the youth, too, in other words we must prepare it as well. I am referring, however, especially to the Patriotic Guards as they are a very good form of maintaining the permanent combat preparation level of the army reserve for the defense of our country. We must pay special attention to this issue, all the more so as – concurrently with the reduction of military effectives – it will become necessary to improve and upgrade this activity, and we must review and improve the general programs, too.

Secondly, what we have discussed in relation to the storage of armament is fully valid for the Patriotic Guards as well. Even today we saw what had happened at Ploiesti. They left their armament behind on the [drilling] grounds because the rain came. This is not the only case. In general, there are some thefts of armament and ammunition within the Patriotic Guards, and very serious measures have to be taken on that score.

In another respect, the Patriotic Guards will have to collaborate more closely with the organs of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, that is to say – aside from the security they should collaborate with the militia as well to defend national property in all of the fields. In fact, by virtue of the laws and regulations, they have these attributions, and we have to improve and upgrade this activity. Here, too, the general conclusions regarding order, discipline, and combativity spirit, which refer to the workers’ guards as well, are valid. Actually, we

have here six times the strength of the army, and the Ministry of National Defense must pay more attention to this issue as well.

Cde. Vasile Milea:
Duly understood.

Cde. Nicolae Ceausescu:

Taking into account the fact that, at any rate, the military cadres work with reduced strength, we have to involve ourselves to a greater extent in the preparation of the Patriotic Guards, and draw up a special program for this activity.

Let us also approve the activity of the Patriotic Guards with these conclusions and recommendations. We have decided today to keep the existing basic organization. I do not know whether the comrades know this issue.

There were a number of proposals to the effect that improvements be made, that is to say that the organizational structure of the military units be modified. This morning I discussed with the comrades and decided that, for the time being, the present structure be maintained because the regiments are now a good basis and they have to remain as such.

Actually, this was POINT 4 on the agenda, that is to say:

REPORT regarding the reorganization of some commands and central directions with a view to coordinating – in a unitary manner – the combat and political preparation of units of the ground forces, air defense, and air forces, leading operatively and efficiently, eliminating parallelisms, and reducing expenditures.

For now, therefore, we remain as we are at present.

With reference to POINTS 5, 6, and 7, [I propose] to discuss them together since they are about the equipping of the army.

POINT 5

REPORT regarding the fulfillment of the plan of production, export, and assimilation of new products of military engineering, and special investments to the year 2000.

POINT 6

REPORT regarding the stage of fulfillment of the plan for armored vehicles, the tasks up to the end of the current five-year plan, and the development directions until the year 2000.

POINT 7

REPORT regarding the ensurance of the production of electronic components necessary for manufacturing the military technical means specified in the “Unified Plan of Development of Defense Industry 1989-1995”, especially the equipment for armored vehicles, air forces, navy, radar, and laser communications.

What have you to say?

It is a certain thing that the activity was not up to the mark..

Cde. Vasile Milea:

Comrade General Secretary,

As it was presented in the report, we have categories of military technical means that were achieved integrally, and categories of military technical means achieved under the [established] percentage and under the ones established in the state plan.

I ask you to allow me to report in a special manner in connection with the quality issue with tanks and aircraft that, from the point of view of electronics, the reliability was not always at the level of the established parameters. The consumption of fuels and lubricants is high, exceeding the admitted norms. We have tried several times, but did not manage to do very much [to solve] this issue, which is of ongoing concern to us. Our units have already been equipped and we have begun their training, but we have difficulties from this standpoint.

Cde. Lieutenant General Victor Stanculescu, first deputy of the Minister of National Defense and Chief of the Department for Defense and Army Procurement

I ask you to kindly allow me to report.

As a result of the analysis – at the level of national economy – conducted under your leadership at the plenary session of the Central Committee, at the meetings of the Political Executive Committee, as well as at the working meetings you had, in the first five months of this year – from the point of view of fulfilling the plan for defense production – the indicators improved, so that we can report to you that the production plan for the first five months was fulfilled 101.5% and represents 40% of the annual plan, as compared with the corresponding period of the year 1988, when the respective percentage was only 33%. However, as comrade minister also reported, this did not solve the quality issue. We carry out our activity together with the ministries, the industrial trusts (“centrale industriale”) and enterprises, as well as with the whole apparatus of the industrial trusts... the State General Inspectorate for Product Quality Control and the military control apparatus in order that, in the field of product quality and reliability, the programs be achieved, which were established for increasing the quality of military products. In keeping with your order, measures were established in relation to the collaboration with quality control in the field of motor vehicles, where the State General Inspectorate for Product Quality Control and the control organ of the Ministry of Internal Affairs conduct such verifications for the products intended for export.

I also report that we had some problems connected with the way a number of materials were assimilated in metallurgy and chemistry, in the sense that some of these materials could not reach the established parameters and, for this reason, we likewise had some difficulties that were reported and that define some shortcomings in the functioning of military technical means. There were some delays in the deliveries from metallurgy and chemistry of products included in the defense production. I informed the comrades vice prime ministers of the government, who coordinate these [industrial] branches, and they acted accordingly, so that I can report that now we have almost reached the full rhythm of ensuring the materials as regards both quantities and quality, in accordance with your indications.

Some deficiencies still exist in relation to the proposals for the prime costs submitted to your attention. Although we took steps to reduce the prime costs, some of them were rejected at your level with good reason. We learned our lesson from this, and we will take measures so that, together with the relevant producing ministries, we increase exigency in the economic analysis of individual enterprises. I assure you that, together with the respective ministries and the industrial trusts of the Department for Defense and Army Equipping Production, in the spirit of your indications and of party decisions, we will act better so that the plan for the current year can be fulfilled integrally and, as you indicated, an increase in quality be obtained, which will give these products what is required for all of the products intended for the defense of our country, and – when necessary – make them competitive for export.

Cde. Gheorghe Oprea:

Please allow me to report:

In the course of the first trimester, together with comrade minister Vasile Milea, comrade Victor Stanculescu, comrade secretar Ion Coman, and the competent ministries, I analyzed the stage of fulfilling the tasks for production and established the necessary steps – which resulted in the achievements for the first five months increasing substantially – and agreed that, on a monthly basis, at all of the meetings convened at the level of the Department for Defense and Army Equipping Production and of the Ministry of Defense, we should analyze the cases where delays and problems connected with product quality still appear. We are paying special attention to these problems, and we will act in accordance with the indications given by you at the last meeting as well, when you called our attention to the way we have to work to improve this situation.

Cde. Nicolae Ceausescu:

Is there anybody who has anything else to say?

Cde. Ion Coman:

Much has been done, it is true, the army has been equipped, and there have been some exports, too. However, despite all of the efforts made, the problem has not yet been solved of the 800-HP tank, which leaves much to be desired from the point of view of both planned quantities and quality. There are problems with the engine and the transmission, and – in spite of all of the analyses conducted in the factory and on the shooting range – the problem of this tank has not been solved yet.

Cde. Vasile Milea:

We sent [the tank] to Morocco, and the test results were very good.

Cde. Ion Coman:

Did we send one tank or two?

Cde. Vasile Milea:

We sent two. We have analyzed this tank a zillion times, and it was upgraded each year.

Cde. Eugeniu Radulescu:

At the “23 August Works”, the engine currently has some essential defects, which we want to improve in a very short time. We found that after a number of hours of operation the engine power cannot be maintained. There are combustion defects and design defects. We drew up a program and we work together with INMT

to improve the engine parameters and increase its power. This problem is receiving our full attention, and it has been our main concern in the last two months. It is a pity because it is a tank that can be effective, and we must offer it for export as well.

Cde. Nicolae Ceausescu:
But we must fix it first.

Cde. Eugeniu Radulescu:
We are currently dealing with this problem. We will shortly present a program to you. We will deal with this problem in earnest.

Cde. Ion Coman
I would ask cde. Oprea once more, in fact we have already discussed this problem; it is the problem of the gaskets, which has not been solved fully yet. Neither the problem of the turret for the 30-mm gun has not been solved so far; the turret is too big and heavy and cannot be mounted on armored cars. We have conducted a lot of analyses so far, but we do not have the results yet.

Cde. Ion Radu:
As it was emphasized before, we have analyzed all of these issues, and paid special attention to the assimilation of metallurgical products. There are still quality issues. We know them, we have programs [for them], we must take them into account and, as you have emphasized, we must solve them urgently. Significant advances in the upgrading of the tank and its transmission have been achieved. At the “Hidromecanica” - Works at Brasov the mechanical part [of the tank] has put into operation. As regards the tanks we took to Morocco, being aware that there are tightness problems with the seals, as cde. Ion Coman underlined, we found low-cost solutions together with the army, and used imported parts for the...
Together with the chemical industry, we took action at the “Enterprise for Technical Items Made of Rubber” at Brasov and we have still to act [to solve them] since the products manufactured by it are of bad quality. There has been no leak caused by the seals for the last thirty to forty days, but – in contact with
This year we have sufficient technical and production capacities, as well as trained workers, to radically improve the unsatisfactory situation caused by the non-fulfillment of the procurement plan in 1988, signaled by you.

Cde. Nicolae Ceausescu:
I think that the army as well – in fact , you, the Minister of Defense, bear the responsibility for the quality, and nothing can be put into production without the army having its say – neither the tank nor the gun for it! All of these issues must be reviewed by you. In relation to quality, both machine-building ministries and the chemical industry bear the responsibility.
I deem it necessary for you to present to me, in two weeks’ time, the program with the quality problems we still have, and to specify how long it will take – more precisely, how many weeks or months – to solve them completely. We cannot go further like this any longer!
I want to call your attention to the fact that we will have to discontinue the tank production if we are not able to correct the situation. Let this be clear to you! If we do not solve the problems, we will have to use the works for other purposes. Everybody must understand this very clearly.

Generally speaking, the procurement plan is very clear, and it comprises both the necessary things and the things that can wait some more. We have noticed a series of things here. Surely, they are necessary in wartime, but we must not equip ourselves with hundreds of kilometers of cable only to keep it buried in the ground!

Surely, the cables are strictly necessary for the activity, but anyhow they fall into disrepair in the long run. But we will have to go through all this again and make reductions even this year, and in the same way, in two weeks I want you to come up with proposals for the elimination of the items that are not necessary and that can be easily ensured in case of the international situation worsening.

Cde. Vasile Milea:
I have understood.

Cde. Nicolae Ceausescu:
There is no point in our equipping [the army] and spending money on some materials which deteriorate. The second thing in this respect is the issue of electronics. It seems to me that here, too, we exaggerate with the introduction of electronics. There is even a formulation here to the effect that we have to replace the current equipment. Let us leave alone the equipment that we have! I ask you to present everything to me. No item of equipment is to be modified, except for what we establish as being strictly necessary. The classical equipment we have is better, more reliable, and gives better results. Let us do away with this “electronization” because we do not have to increase the production of electronic equipment only to spend money. Please present me everything on this point in two weeks’ time.

Cde. Vasile Milea:
Yes. I have understood.

Cde. Nicolae Ceausescu:
Generally, we must renounce this tendency of doing excessive electronization since, practically, it does not bring anything extra; on the contrary, it worsens reliability. What I have said about quality is valid not only for the tank, not only for the army, but also in the field of aviation, helicopters, and other fields and I ask you to take all of these issues into consideration. Since the comrades from the machine-building industry are present at this meeting, [I want to tell them that] this morning I discussed with the comrades from the leadership of the Ministry of Machine-Building about this issue of cooperation with the Soviet Union, including in the field of transport aviation, and we have to resume the discussions. At a given moment, we eliminated the issue of equipping [our aviation] with big aircraft, but now we have to resume the discussions on this issue. If we do not reach agreed conclusions ... [?] Naturally you will have to study, aside from the other issues in progress, the short-range courier aircraft as well. Let us review these issues quickly, and then come here to establish the ways of solving them. What have the specialized ministries and the Ministry of National Defense to retained from the discussions today? That we mandatorily have to take action with more responsibility to avoid excessive electronization, which I think has its say in the tank issue, too, and we must eliminate such things.

Cde. Vasile Milea:
Actually, there is electronic equipment on the tanks as well.

Cde. Nicolae Ceausescu:

We must take out the electronic equipment and make simple things, easy to manage by the tank operators, otherwise the tank will stop dead on the battle ground and will not be worth a red cent any more! We must review everything that is expensive and remove everything that is expensive and detrimental to quality. We must go directly to classical equipment. This is how we have to proceed!

POINT 8

REPORT regarding the downgrading and scrapping of some categories of military equipment which have lost their useful life, falling under the competence of the Ministry of Defense of the Socialist Republic Romania.

I would propose that a commission to review this issue be established.

Cde. Constantin Dascalescu:

There is downgrading and scrapping. Should we really scrap them?

Cde. Nicolae Ceausescu:

No, we should not. Let us set up a commission and see whether we could transfer some of them to the Patriotic Guards. In other words, let us review the problem of strapping. Of course, it does not refer to the damaged military equipment, such the MIG fighter aircraft. Let us enter these items in the books as such, not in the form of scrapped items, to cover the whole indiscipline related to the MIG fighter aircraft since it cannot be said that all of the possibilities of this type of aircraft have been exhausted.

Let us try to solve the issue this way. Let us, therefore, establish a commission in accordance with the provisions of the law. This commission is to see what items could be used as such, with some improvements, and to decide either to transfer them for use by the Patriotic Guards or give them to certain countries asking us to give them for free, under the form of aid, and which do not need highly technical items of equipment. Consequently, it is this way that we have to proceed.

POINT 9

REPORT regarding the investments made by the Ministry of Internal Affairs for the year 1989, without approved technical-economic indicators.

POINT 10

REPORT regarding the investments made by the Ministry of Internal Affairs for the year 1989, without approved technical-economic indicators.

Have you anything to say?

Cde. Vasile Milea:

This year, too, the investments are 35% smaller than the investments for last year. We have focused only on the insurance of the conditions for new technical means, imported for equipment, more precisely for missiles.

Cde. Nicolae Ceausescu:

“Completion of the defense system of the navy”.
It can remain in the future as it has been until now!

“Upgrading of bases and repair sections”

There are a lot of things here that must be revised. In view of the fact that we intend to continue taking a number of items out of equipment, all of this is not necessary any longer!

If I understand well, it comes to about twenty-nine million for area management and extension of space. Start managing them with military labor because not even a million will I give you!

“Works for sheltering and raising animals: fifty-four million”.

Here things are put at random.

There are still seventy million.

We will not give one aircraft more. Start doing the repair and maintenance work!

In other words, here are included things for which you merely want to spend money! Our line of action is not to develop the military units but to reduce them. On the whole, we will not increase equipment because if it is approved and an agreement is reached, we will also have to reduce [equipping] by 50% since we ourselves have proposed such a reduction. So get to work and revise everything in this sense so that we may not have to spend money any more! The reduction must be 80% not 50%. Only what is strictly necessary for maintenance should remain. In fact, these belong to other chapters, not to investments.

What I have said so far is valid for the Ministry of Internal Affairs as well.

It is necessary, therefore, that everything be revised. Practically, it comes only to equipment because from the standpoint of constructions and accommodation room we do not have to do anything any longer. Only what we established in Bucharest regarding upgrading remains valid.

We will reduce the effectives as well.

Review everything and present the situation again in two weeks. This is also valid for the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

Then let us proceed accordingly.

I call the attention of the industry and of the Ministry of Defense to the fact that, in relation to the equipping issue, we must not complicate things and, only to achieve value, use complex equipment, as in the case of the tank which functioned better before you introduced all kinds of [sophisticated] equipment. But there are in the army as well officers who read in magazines about all kinds of strange contraptions – so to speak – which not even those who write about them utilize.

Practically, however, this excessive endowment with electronic equipment brings about a weakening of the operational capability and there is no point in using it because, in general, electronic equipment has a very short lifetime in exploitation, it breaks down easily, and it is wrong for the Ministry of Electrical Engineering to believe that by using electronic equipment it can fulfill the plan. Let us make the production we need, and not spend money to weaken the production capacity and reliability of equipment. As we have already discussed, this is valid not only in the army, but also in the industry..

It took us six months to remove the new equipment and to put again the old one so that the products can function normally. Let us put an end to all of these things!

It seems to me that with the points mentioned above we have finished discussing the agenda.

I think that the comrades in the army and the industry will draw all of the conclusions, and an overall improvement of the whole activity will be obtained. We must have in view that we have to firmly continue

our policy, and we must insist on the reduction of armament, but – at the same time – the units that remain should be well equipped, disciplined, with a good combat and political preparation. All of these things should be understood well, in this spirit!

Then let us take action in this spirit.

This meeting is now adjourned.

[Source: National Central Historical Archives (ANIC), Political Executive Committee of the Central Committee of the Romanian Communist Party, no.1012, .1.7.1988. Translated for PHP by Viorel Buta]