
**STENOGRAPHIC TRANSCRIPT of the meeting of the Political Consultative Committee of
the Central Committee of the Romanian Communist Party**

17 June 1988

The meeting was **chaired by comrade NICOLAE CEAUSESCU**, General Secretary of the Romanian Communist Party.

Participants in the meeting: comrades Emil Bobu, Elena Ceausescu, Lina Ciobanu, Ion Coman, Nicolae Constantin, Constantin Dascalescu, Miu Dobrescu, Ludovic Fazekas, Manea Manescu, Paul Niculescu, Constantin Olteanu, Gheorghe Oprea, Gheorghe Pana, Dumitru Popescu, Gheorghe Radulescu, Stefan Andrei, Stefan Bârlea, Gheorghe David, Mihai Gere, Suzana Gâdea, Neculai Ibanescu, Vasile Milea, Ana Muresan, Cornel Pacoste, Tudor Postelnicu, Constantin Radu, Ion Stoian, Ioan Totu, Ion Ursu.

Invitees: comrades Radu Balan, Silviu Curticeanu, Gheorghe Tanase, Ion M. Nicolae, Ilie Vaduva, Nicolae Popovici, Nicolae Mantz, Nicolae Mihalache.

Comrade Nicolae Ceausescu:

Before starting the discussion of the issues on the agenda of the meeting, comrade Gheorghe David can briefly inform us about the progress of the barley harvest, what the yield is, and what measures are being taken in regard to vegetables and the other crops so that the whole activity may unfold in the best conditions, and we may achieve what we set out to do.

Comrade Gheorghe David:

Comrade General Secretary, please allow me to report:

By last night, more than 38,000 hectares of barley – that is to say 6% of the cultivated area – had been harvested.

Comrade Nicolae Ceausescu:

That is rather little.

Comrade Gheorghe David:

People worked yesterday and they work today as well in all of the agricultural units in the Tulcea, Constanta, Ialomita, Calarasi, Giurgiu, Teleorman, Olt, Dolj, and Mehedinti counties. Consequently, in all of these counties people are working and in all of this southern region; on the basis of the daily rate of harvesting and of the number of combine-harvesters on the fields, harvesting can be finished – as you have indicated, Comrade Nicolae Ceausescu – in three days at the latest.

There still are some areas in the hilly zone the Dolj county, where barley was about to reach the ripening stage, and I think that harvesting began there today as well.

I report that, as compared with the estimate of more than 6,000 kg per hectare for barley which was presented to you, from the reporting last night there resulted a production of 5,800 kg per hectare. I report,

however, that this production will rise in the Olt, Teleorman, and Giurgiu counties, just as you found yourself yesterday.

Comrade Elena Ceausescu:

It is apparent that the figure reported is smaller.

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POINT 3

REPORT regarding the Statute of the Unified Armed Forces of the states participating in the Warsaw Treaty

The issue here is the drawing up of a new Statute of the Unified Armed Forces for wartime. This issue is older, it was discussed several times in the past, and now it is resumed. Let comrade Vasile Milea present it to us.

Comrade Vasile Milea:

The Unified Command sent us the draft of a new “Statute of the Unified Armed Forces of the states participating in the Warsaw Treaty and of the leadership bodies of these forces for wartime”. This document comprises a number of modifications in comparison with the statute adopted in 1980 by the other states, without our country, and does not solve the issues of substance with which the Romanian side did not agree at the time.

I also want to report that this statute was discussed and rediscussed for eight years, and now they brought it here again for us to finalize it. In fact, it is – by and large – the old statute, but with a number of additions. The more special issues contained in the draft of the new statute are the following:

“ Establishment of the Supreme Main Command, composed of the commanders-in-chief of the armed forces of the Warsaw Treaty countries, each of them having as deputy the minister of defense of the respective country.

Comrade Nicolae Ceausescu:

The commanders-in-chief are the general secretaries of the parties.

Comrade Elena Ceausescu:

That is so!

Comrade. Vasile Milea:

It is also specified in the draft statute that the Supreme Commander of the Unified Armed Forces should be the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces of the USSR, having as first deputy the minister of defense of the Soviet Union and as deputy for the allied armies the commander in chief of the Unified Armed Forces. The working organ of the Supreme Main Command should be the General Staff of the Soviet army, and the planning and organization of the combat actions should be performed by the latter along with the combat theater commanders, without taking into account the boundaries of the states participating in the Warsaw Treaty. The combat theater commanders should have the right to issue orders and dispositions to the large units at their disposal, without the agreement of the national commands.

Comrade Nicolae Ceausescu:
Theaters, that is to say operation theaters.

Comrade Vasile Milea:
For leading the Unified Armed Forces on the theaters of military operations commands should be established on the basis of the existing Soviet commands, more specifically with the commanders provided by the Soviet army, and the deputies – as well as other functions – provided by the governments of the countries providing the troops. The commanders of the major units at their disposal shall be appointed by the relevant governments only with the agreement of the commander of the respective theater command.

- .. Establishment of a unified fleet in the Baltic Sea and of another one in the Black Sea, commanded by Soviet commanders;
- .. Setting up of a political direction in each theater of military actions, whose chief is to be appointed from the Soviet army, and the latter's deputies – from the allied armies;
- .. Aside from the quota of 10% of our country for the budget of the general staff of the Unified Armed Forces, another quota of 24.1% is provided for the budget of the command in the South-West theater of operations.

Comrade Nicolae Ceausescu:
They have not given up [the idea]?

Comrade Vasile Milea:
No, they have not.

I report that after the signing – as I said before – of the statute in 1980 by the leaders of the other countries, in keeping with your approval the Ministry of National Defense had also held discussions with the Unified Command in connection with this document up to 1983, without any agreement being reached. At the discussions to be resumed at the request of the Unified Command, the Ministry of National Defense proposes to use as guideline the following point of view, drawn up in compliance with your indications:

“The Political Consultative Committee is to be the supreme body empowered to decide on a state of war and on the defense issues of the socialist states participating in the Warsaw Treaty, and the working organ of the Political Consultative Committee should not be the General Staff of the Soviet Army, but the current Command of the Unified Armed Forces.

Comrade Nicolae Ceausescu:
First of all, the principle provided in the Warsaw Pact is the rotation principle. There are commanders from each country, and – each year – there are presidents. They cannot decide whether we enter a war or we do not.

I think, however, that the Political Consultative Committee should decide on that score, but let us assume that the decision to take part in a war or not is made by the supreme organs of each state. Naturally, the Political Consultative Committee should mandatorily be the supreme body, but it can only act after the supreme party and state organs of the member states of the Warsaw Pact have decided on that score. We have to write this point in this form in the Statute.

Comrade Vasile Milea:

The commander of the theater of operations should be appointed from the national army which provides most of the forces, and the chief of general staff should not be from the same army. The commander of the theater of operations should have as first deputies representatives from the national armies, and the other leadership and responsibility functions should be filled by cadres belonging to the said armies.

Comrade Elena Ceausescu:

This point is not clear.

Comrade Nicolae Ceausescu:

There is a theater of operations in the south. There will be Romanian, Soviet, and Bulgarian troops there.

Comrade Elena Ceausescu:

And it is the Soviets that have the majority of troops.

Comrade Vasile Milea:

It is not they that have most troops.

Comrade Elena Ceausescu:

We recognize [the fact]. We do not say “the largest forces”!

Comrade Nicolae Ceausescu:

The change regarding rotation. The theater of operations had different commanders.

Comrade Vasile Milea:

The remark is correct because there were both Bulgarians and Poles in the Western theater [of operations].

Comrade Elena Ceausescu:

Consequently, not depending on the size, but by rotation. This is the right way to say it.

Comrade Vasile Milea:

And with the agreement of governments.

The major units and the units comprising the Unified Armed Forces should remain subordinated to the national commands, which will appoint their commanders, and the combat missions are to be transmitted to the first deputies of the commander of the theater of operations appointed from the national armies.

Comrade Nicolae Ceausescu:

The fact that each army acts in collaboration in a national command is something different. But, for example, the Romanians act under the Romanian command, the Bulgarians under their command, and so do the Soviets. There is a coordinating command, a supreme command, but each army has its own command.

Comrade Vasile Milea:

Wholly temporarily.

Comrade Nicolae Ceausescu:
[The national commands are not subordinated to the supreme command].
However, there must be coordination.

Comrade Elena Ceausescu:
But each [country] commands its own army.

Comrade Nicolae Ceausescu:
And the commanders of these major front units. And the Supreme Command is created and, together, they decide on the actions and on what they have to do, and periodically one of them coordinates, that is to say he is chairman.

Comrade Vasile Milea:
Of this Council.

Comrade Elena Ceausescu:
And each [country] has its own army

Comrade Nicolae Ceausescu:
The army cannot act at random! It must be coordinated. For example, if in the case of this issue everybody does as he likes, where do we end up?!
For example, the three [armies] in the South have their commanders.

Comrade Vasile Milea:
Of the national army.

Comrade Nicolae Ceausescu:
And [these commanders] lead the troops and make decisions and from these three the commander of the theater of operations is appointed; by rotation, for a year or each six months, this commander is also the president of this commandment.

Comrade Vasile Milea:
I understand.

Comrade Nicolae Ceausescu:
One day a decision will be made using nuclear weapons, and then it will be something quite different.

Comrade Elena Ceausescu:
Is this statue of any use then?

Comrade Nicolae Ceausescu:
Until we do away with nuclear weapons and the military blocks. This is [the statue's] use!

Comrade Vasile Milea:

The military actions of the allied forces on the territory of a state taking part in the Warsaw Treaty should be carried out only at the request of the constitutional bodies of the respective state and with the agreement of the state providing the troops, under conditions to be established by bilateral governmental conventions concluded in peacetime.

Comrade Nicolae Ceausescu:

This point is good.

Comrade Elena Ceausescu:

This point is clear.

Comrade Vasile Milea:

The Navy of the Socialist Republic Romania should remain in the subordination of the national command and act in the latter's zone of responsibility in cooperation with the Unified Fleet in the Black Sea, and the units of air defense of the territory should act only on the territory of our country in accordance with the operational and cooperation plans agreed upon.

Comrade Nicolae Ceausescu:

The conception here is that each fleet is subordinated to the national command, and cooperates with the other fleets in conformity with the same principles.

Comrade Vasile Milea:

The political work in the units of the Romanian army intended to be a part of the Unified Armed Forces should be done only on the basis of the decisions of the Romanian Communist Party, under the leadership of the political organs in our army.

Comrade Nicolae Ceausescu:

We propose the following general principle: Each army has its own tasks, and the political work is to be carried out only on the basis of our orders.

Comrade Vasile Milea:

Only on the basis of party decisions and under the leadership of the relevant organs.
The quota for the budget of the Unified Command should remain 10%, in accordance with the decision of the Political Consultative Committee of March 17, 1969, and the participation in the budget of the Command of the theater of operations should be discussed only after the Statute for wartime has been agreed upon.

Comrade Elena Ceausescu:

It is still too much, 10%.

Comrade Nicolae Ceausescu:

Naturally, these are the main issues, the outstanding ones are minor. That is why I wanted to discuss them in the Political Consultative Committee, and I think it is good to do so.

At the respective time, we discussed them, but it has been eight years since then, the issues were forgotten to some extent and now they want to raise them again as a "restructuring" is going to take place.

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

POINT 4

Data to be transmitted by the Ministry of National Defense in connection with the negotiations regarding the reduction of conventional armament

Comrade Vasile Milea:

The Ministry of National Defense and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs have analyzed the content of the documents sent by the General Staff of the Armed Forces of the Soviet Union, to which data concerning the troop strength, military technical means, and armaments are to be added by the Romanian side in order that a decision can be taken on the manner of using them at the negotiations with the member states of NATO on the issue of conventional disarmament in Europe.

Comrade Nicolae Ceausescu:

First of all, we must say so: the data should be centralized by the Warsaw Pact Command, nobody else can meddle with it. Afterwards, the data will be sent to the Unified Command; it is to this Command that we will send the data, not to the Soviet Union. What [the Soviet Union] does with the data is its business because it is also a part of this Command. More precisely, according to the same principles.

Comrade Elena Ceausescu:

Of equality. They are well known.

Comrade Vasile Milea:

I have understood.

Comrade Nicolae Ceausescu:

And, comrades, there is still the question of communicating the respective data, as I said at the outset.

Comrade Vasile Milea:

I report that these are the issues resulting from the meeting that took place in Warsaw, and that is why the representatives [of the Ministry of National Defense] along with the representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs agreed to hold talks with the NATO Block.

Comrade Nicolae Ceausescu:

The discussions are held between the Warsaw Pact and the NATO Pact, not the Soviet Union. And these should be the data. Let us say it in a crystal clear manner. These issues were not clear to us either.

Comrade Vasile Milea:

In relation to the data, it is proposed that we communicate the effectives that we have.

Comrade Nicolae Ceausescu:

In peacetime.

Comrade Vasile Milea:

How many ground troops, the number of divisions, how many of them are in a combat-readiness state.

Comrade Nicolae Ceausescu:

We are going to communicate that the effectives of our army are 210,000 troops.

Comrade Elena Ceausescu:

I thought there were 220,000 troops.

Cde. Vasile Milea:

We have somewhat reduced their number.

Comrade Nicolae Ceausescu:

15,000 in the air forces, from what we have. The number of 210,000 troops does not include the naval personnel.

Comrade Elena Ceausescu:

And must the navy personnel be added?

Comrade Vasile Milea:

The issues of the navy have not been discussed.

Comrade Nicolae Ceausescu:

We should have eighteen major units, of which fourteen divisions. Some of the divisions are to be full-fledged, other will have reduced strength – so it is said here, in the material. In combat readiness – six divisions, with reduced strength – eight divisions, and four brigades. Eighteen major units all told. Aircraft – 450, helicopters – 380, launching pads for tactical missiles – 85; tanks – 4,500; artillery pieces and antitank missile installations (“bazookas”) – 6,500; combat cars for infantry, armored troop carriers – 5,500. Further: reactive systems for salvo shootings (“Katyusha” launchers) – 8,100; anti-aircraft artillery and missiles – 2,500.

These are, by and large, our data. Our armament is not complete because we do our equipping in compliance with a program. These are in an organizational stage. And we must take measures to have the necessary capacity in case the situation worsens, [and to have the relevant armament] operational.

And, on this basis, to enter the discussions, but we will have to add one more thing: the reduction presupposes that NATO, too, and the respective western countries make a reduction, not automatically 10%, but so that an equitable ratio between the armed forces, between the armaments can be ensured. A certain ratio must be established.

Comrade Manea Manescu:

This [should be done] first of all since not all [of the armies] have the same effectives.

Comrade Nicolae Ceausescu:

Otherwise, we will take into account what they have now – three million – and the Soviets should reduce 10% of it, but 2.6 million still remain.

That is why we have to see, to propose and, when the issue is raised, to call attention to it. We must insist on this issue but, in our turn, we have to understand the matter very well.

Comrade Vasile Milea:

There must exist a report.

Comrade Nicolae Ceausescu:

Depending upon each country, upon the total, not at random. And, in addition, the insurance in common, but each country should have its own armed forces, too.

These, comrades, would be the issues I wanted to raise before the Political Consultative Committee so that they may be known. There are issues which will be discussed in Warsaw, in which a lot of people will participate, but now the question is to send them to NATO. There are issues which have to be well known by everybody. I, in fact, have discussed them with comrade Milea already.

Comrade Elena Ceausescu:

These are [the issues] required for holding the talks related to the reduction of conventional armament.

Comrade Nicolae Ceausescu:

Yes, they are. Have you any other issues? (No). I agree.

(All of the comrades agree).

And with this our meeting is 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]