



ACTA HISTRIAE
31, 2023, 2



UDK/UDC 94(05)

ISSN 1318-0185
e-ISSN 2591-1767



Zgodovinsko društvo za južno Primorsko - Koper
Società storica del Litorale - Capodistria

ACTA HISTRIAE
31, 2023, 2

KOPER 2023

ISSN 1318-0185
e-ISSN 2591-1767

UDK/UDC 94(05)

Letnik 31, leto 2023, številka 2

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Published by:**

Zgodovinsko društvo za južno Primorsko - Koper / Società storica del Litorale - Capodistria[®] / Institut IRRIS za raziskave, razvoj in strategije družbe, kulture in okolja / Institute IRRIS for Research, Development and Strategies of Society, Culture and Environment / Istituto IRRIS di ricerca, sviluppo e strategie della società, cultura e ambiente[®]

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Zgodovinsko društvo za južno Primorsko, SI-6000, Koper-Capodistria, Garibaldijeva 18 / Via Garibaldi 18, e-mail: actahistriae@gmail.com; https://zjdp.si/

Tisk/Stampa/Print:

Založništvo PADRE d.o.o.

Naklada/Tiratura/Copies:

300 izvodov/copie/copies

**Finančna podpora/
Supporto finanziario/
Financially supported by:**

Javna agencija za znanstvenoraziskovalno in inovacijsko dejavnost Republike Slovenije / Slovenian Research and Innovation Agency, Mestna občina Koper

**Slika na naslovnici/
Foto di copertina/
Picture on the cover:**

Mlada Čehinja kriči na sovjetske vojake na tanku med invazijo na Češkoslovaško pod sovjetskim vodstvom v Pragi 26. avgusta 1968 (arhiv BettmannGetty Images) / Una giovane donna ceca urla contro i soldati sovietici su un carro armato durante l'invasione della Cecoslovacchia da parte dei sovietici, a Praga il 26 agosto 1968 (Archivio BettmannGetty Images) / A young Czech woman shouts at Soviet soldiers on a tank during the Soviet-led invasion of Czechoslovakia, in Prague on Aug. 26, 1968 (BettmannGetty Images Archive).

Redakcija te številke je bila zaključena 30. junija 2023.

Revija Acta Histriae je vključena v naslednje podatkovne baze / Gli articoli pubblicati in questa rivista sono inclusi nei seguenti indici di citazione / Articles appearing in this journal are abstracted and indexed in: CLARIVATE ANALYTICS (USA); Social Sciences Citation Index (SSCI), Social Scisearch, Arts and Humanities Citation Index (A&HCI), Journal Citation Reports / Social Sciences Edition (USA); IBZ, Internationale Bibliographie der Zeitschriftenliteratur (GER); International Bibliography of the Social Sciences (IBSS) (UK); Referativnyi Zhurnal Viniti (RUS); European Reference Index for the Humanities and Social Sciences (ERIH PLUS); Elsevier B. V.; SCOPUS (NL); DOAJ.

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THE IMPACT OF THE 1968 PRAGUE SPRING ON CZECHOSLOVAK AND YUGOSLAV MILITARY DOCTRINES

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ABSTRACT

This paper analyzes and compares the impact of the 1968 Prague Spring on military and strategic thinking in Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia. A great change in the Czechoslovakian military caused Memorandum 68, a proposal of domestic military doctrine which consistently took into account the vital security interests of Czechoslovakia in international relations at that time. The document was mainly based on the inviolability of Czechoslovak territory and the right of its nations to defend their own existence regardless of the superpower interests of the Soviet Union. At the same time Yugoslavia began to develop its own doctrine of the General People's Defence and Social Self-Protection, which emphasized its total nature, creating the reality of the concept of a "nation in arms," which attached great importance to soldiers and the art of soldiering in Yugoslavia.

Keywords: Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Prague Spring, military doctrine Memorandum 68, NATO, Warsaw Pact

L'IMPATTO DELLA PRIMAVERA DI PRAGA DEL 1968 SULLE DOTTRINE MILITARI DELLA CECOSLOVACCHIA E DELLA JUGOSLAVIA

SINTESI

Il contributo analizza e confronta l'impatto che la Primavera di Praga del 1968 ha avuto sul pensiero militare e strategico in Cecoslovacchia e in Jugoslavia. Un grande cambiamento nelle forze armate cecoslovacche seguì al Memorandum 68, una proposta di dottrina militare interna che teneva rigorosamente conto degli interessi vitali della sicurezza della Cecoslovacchia nelle sue relazioni internazionali. Il documento si basava principalmente sull'invulnerabilità del territorio cecoslovacco e sul diritto dei suoi popoli a difendere la propria esistenza indipendentemente

dagli interessi di superpotenza dell'Unione Sovietica. Contemporaneamente, la Jugoslavia iniziò a sviluppare una sua dottrina dal nome «Difesa totale nazionale e autoprotezione della società» che ne enfatizzava la natura totalizzante, concretando così il concetto di «nazione in armi» che attribuiva grande importanza ai soldati e all'arte militare in Jugoslavia.

Parole chiave: Cecoslovacchia, Jugoslavia, Primavera di Praga, dottrina militare Memorandum 68, NATO, Patto di Varsavia

INTRODUCTION

The military, political, and strategic cooperation between the former states of Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia had deep roots. The two countries began collaborating soon after the First World War, and their close contacts with each other essentially continued for the entire duration of their existence as states. This was implemented at many levels, and it involved mutual influence in considerations about war or peace—in particular, in military doctrine and developing the two countries' armed forces.

On August 14th, 1920, Czechoslovakia concluded a treaty of alliance with the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes (after 1929 the Kingdom of Yugoslavia), which was later supplemented by bilateral military agreements between the two countries and Romania, called the Little Entente. From 1921 to 1939, the organization of the Little Entente functioned as part of the French eastern allied system. The Munich events at the end of September 1938 were not influenced or effectively dealt with by the Little Entente; however, secret cooperation between the British, Czechs and Yugoslavs (Slovenes) began in 1938. Yugoslavia's foreign policy condemned the Nazi aggression against Czechoslovakia, and took the same stance on the occupation of Bohemia and Moravia in mid-March 1939 (Wandycz, 1962, 195–197; Wandycz, 1988, 14; Klabjan, 2007, 311; Bajc, 2010, 127–150; Sovilj, 2016).

Both countries experienced a similar fate during the Second World War. Their neighbours seized and annexed the territories they wanted, and Nazi puppet states were created in both Slovakia and Croatia. Similarity can also be seen in the wartime resistance movements that were formed in the two countries, and also in authentic popular support for the communist regimes that developed in both countries. However, there were also differences in the number of wartime casualties and economic consequences, which hit Yugoslavia harder (Judt, 2005, 18–22). The main difference, which also dictated developments after the Second World War, lay in the success of the Yugoslav communists in carrying out a revolution to assume power during the war and,

in connection with this, in their legitimization of power at home and abroad. After 1948, Czechoslovakia remained within the Soviet sphere, whereas Yugoslavia did not. In Yugoslavia, Tito's regime went its own way in this regard, and it soon defected from its vassal relationship to Moscow (Ivešić, 2022, 241; Djerdj, 1976).

Diplomatic and political relations between the two countries were again in focus during the Prague Spring of 1968. Some historians from the former Yugoslavia (Jakovina, 2011; Dimić, 2005, Režek, 2010) and Czech historians (Pelikán, 2008a, 2008b, 2010) have carried out research and published high-quality studies about this period. In the studies published to date, there is a lack of research on how the Prague Spring influenced the military strategy and doctrine of the two countries. The military quashing of Czechoslovakia's Prague Spring by Warsaw Pact troops after August 21, 1968, had a powerful impact, which also meant the end of a bold attempt at military reform. This text analyzes and compares the impact of the August events on military doctrinal and strategic thinking in the two countries up to the early 1990s, when both Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia were dissolved.

THE MILITARY SCHOOL SYSTEM AND MILITARY REFORMS OF THE 1968 PRAGUE SPRING IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA AND YUGOSLAVIA

After the communist takeover of Czechoslovakia in 1948 the Czechoslovak Army became completely 'sovietized'. It could be said that the total sovietization of the Czechoslovak military after 1948 very soon came into conflict with the general concept of nuclear war (Graebner, Burns & Siracusa, 2020, 89–92), which began in Czechoslovakia in the second half of the 1950s. The rapid development of nuclear weapons in the United States of America (1945) and later in the Soviet Union (1949) (McCauley, 2016, 98–99) opened the way, in a global perspective, for the acceleration of the scientific and technological revolution, which also took place in Czechoslovak military science. A new organization of Czechoslovak military higher education also responded to this. By August 15, 1951, three military colleges of the university type had been established in Czechoslovakia: the Military Academy in Prague (Vojenská akademie); the Military Technical Academy (Vojenská technická akademie) in Brno; and the Military Medical Academy (Vojenská lékařská akademie) in Hradec Králové (Vondrášek, Chrastil & Markel, 2005, 40). In particular, the requirements for university professional education of technical personnel officers grew.

The planned use of nuclear weapons brought additional demands to accelerate the pace of military operations, which placed increased claims on the flexibility, speed and continuity of the command and control system (C2). A staff member was no longer a primitive executive tool for transmitting command decisions, but on the contrary, they became an independent intelligent unit with

the necessary education, specialization and expertise. Completely new technical inventions penetrated the Czechoslovak People's Army (CSLA) at the turn of the 1950s and 1960s.¹

These trends were analyzed mainly by Czechoslovakian military sociology. One of the decisive pioneering sociological institutes in the CSLA was the Scientific Research Institute of the Sociology of the Army (Vědecko-výzkumné pracoviště sociologie armády) at the Klement Gottwald Military Political Academy (Vojenská politická akademie Klementa Gotwalda – VPA KG) in Prague, which started work in the autumn of 1964. The dynamic development of military sociology was also secured by the Departments of Sociology of the VPA KG and the Military Academy Antonín Zápotocký (Vojenská akademie Antonína Zápotockého) in Brno and some other workplaces, which also included the sociological group of the personnel department of the CSLA Main Political Administration (MPA) (Rice, 1984, 108–109). In the autumn of 1967, an independent Military Institute of Social Research (Vojenský ústav sociálních výzkumů) and a Group of Social Research of the Scientific and Technical Revolution (Skupina sociálních výzkumů vědecko-technické revoluce ve vojenství) were established at VPA KG (Ždímal, 1992, 4–5).

Military sociologists were also inspired by Western theorists of thermonuclear war. This concerned in particular the American futurologist, mathematician and physicist Herman Kahn². In his analyses, Kahn focused mainly on the role of hydrogen weapons in US foreign policy (Kahn, 2017a, 432–434). In his texts from the early 1960s, he always emphasized the close connection between politics and the military, which included a large number of conditioning elements, variables and possible target states. The Czechoslovakian military reformers were strongly influenced by his thoughts on the escalation scale (Kahn, 2017b, 5) and on the psychological effects of thermonuclear war as a real possibility (deterrence strategies and its escalating types) (Freedman & Michaels, 2019, 138–141).

A great change in the Czechoslovakian military caused the military Memorandum from the turn of May and June 1968 (Memorandum 68). It was born out of a breeding ground of many years of scientific work at the Prague VPA KG. About 30 military scientists from the frame of the CSLA and another 12 collaborators participated in the creation of this document, using their knowledge of sociology, psychology, theory of science, war economics, political science, pedagogy,

-
- 1 VÚA-VHA – 280, Carton 47, No.0493, Evaluation of the Symposium on the Sociology of the Military, which was held at the VPA KG in Prague on April 25-27, 1967, with participation of sociologists from friendly armies, 13; Carton 46, Basis for the Meeting of the Sociology Commission at the Symposium on Social Sciences in CSLA, 15 December 1966, 12-13.
 - 2 Herman Kahn (1922-1983): he based his scientific work on games and systems theory, and in the 1960s acted as a strategic advisor to the Pentagon and the Atomic Energy Commission. In 1961, he founded the Hudson Institute, which, as a private institution, compiled analyses of US national security and global forecasts of world development.

history, management theory, forecasting and technical sciences. It was subtitled “The formulation and constitution of Czechoslovakian state interests in the military” and was a methodological guide on starting points for creating an original Czechoslovakian military doctrine. The Memorandum was divided into five main parts: political and military doctrine; the military policy of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic; the situation of war and peace throughout the late 1960s; the possible formulation of the military interests and needs of Czechoslovakia; and a proposal for a systemic approach (including modern research methods) for the creation of a new military doctrine.

Memorandum 68 refused the stance based on one unbalanced point of view, the simple logic of “common sense” and determined the current methods of work to be the main danger in the constitution of the Czechoslovak military doctrine. In particular, it seemed absurd to absolutize the variant of a general nuclear war on the European battlefield, which would bring about the total destruction of Czechoslovakia, regardless of the size of its army and the amount of its defence spending.³ Memorandum 68 stated that the modern military should give up the frontal destruction of the enemy preferred by the Soviets and, conversely, reorient to the intensive destruction of key elements in the enemy’s defence. By controlling these, through paralysis or direct physical destruction, it would be possible to effectively paralyze the enemy’s defence system as a whole. It was not only a theory, because the text of Memorandum 68 explicitly cited the example of the Arab-Israeli (so-called “six-day”) war between June 5 and 10, 1967. To sum up, it was a hidden critique of the Marxist conception of war.

Unfortunately, thanks to the Prague Spring of 1968 and the occupation of Czechoslovakia by Warsaw Pact troops on August 21, 1968 (Williams, 1997, 37–38), for many years Memorandum 68 remained only a bold theoretical inspiration without practical implications for Czechoslovak foreign and military policy, despite the fact that the “military” Prague Spring was a turning point in the Cold War, along with other global events of the memorable year 1968 (Bischof, Karner & Ruggenthaler, 2011, 4; McDermott & Stibbe, 2018, 1).

The Soviet supporters in the CSLA, understandably, were not satisfied with the expected abolition of the VPA KG in the summer of 1969. The Soviet supporters decided to deal harshly with the representatives and followers of the military reforms of the Prague Spring. The entire wider circle of authors, signatories and political promoters of Memorandum 68 became particularly dangerous to the regime. The first step was the professional liquidation of career military professionals, who were first reassigned to the personnel disposition, expelled from the Communist Party if they were members, and then released into the

3 VÚA-VHA – 280, Carton 35, Report on a Business Trip to the Meeting of the Working Group of the International Sociological Association (London), 14–16 September 1967 on the issue of militarism and the social group of professional soldiers, 4.

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	Kódie materiálů
	Číslo:
	Státní politická správa Československé lidové armády
	Kódj.: 0500/ 45 - 1969
	Příloha IV
M e m o r a n d u m	
FORMULOVAT A KONSTITUOVAT ČESKOSLOVENSKÉ STÁTNÍ ZÁJMY V OBLASTI VOJENSTVÍ	
<p>Návrh akčního programu Čs. lidové armády klade s mimořádnou naléhavostí otázku tvorby státní vojenské doktriny ČSSR. Východiskem pro tvorbu doktriny jsou, podle našeho názoru státní zájmy ČSSR v oblasti vojenství, jež však dosud nebyly formulovány a konstituovány.</p> <p>Signatáři tohoto memoranda, vědeckí pracovníci Čs. ozbrojených sil, chtějí přispět k vědeckému zkoumání a stanovení těchto státních zájmů.</p> <p>Vyjadřují své stanovisko ke stavu naší vojenské doktriny a vojenské politiky v bodech 1. a 2. V bodech 3. a 4. koncipují postup teoretického rozpracování podkladů pro tvorbu doktrinárních závěrů. V 5. bodu pak zdůvodňují nezbytnost vědeckých metod při řešení této problematiky.</p> <p>Zasílají Vám toto memorandum jakožto poklad k výměně názorů. Tento dialog považují za nezbytné východisko pro rozvinutí samostatné vědeckovýzkumné práce.</p>	
Praha, květen 1968	

Fig. 1: The first page of Memorandum 68, the core of military reform of the Prague Spring (Central Military Archive (Prague)).

reserve. This act was most often followed by placement in inferior manual jobs. Not only former members of the Prague VPA KG, but also some related military scientists from Antonin Zapotocký's Military Academy in Brno met this fate. This was followed by a systematic increase in the pressure of the communist regime, which consisted of the criminalization of the military reformers of 1968 and 1969⁴.

The State Security, or rather its mutated military counterintelligence, acquired an irreplaceable role in the environment of the CSLA. In June 1970, military counterintelligence created a central register of the professional soldiers and civil workers of the CSLA who in 1968/69 had showed hostility towards the Communist Party, the socialist system and the Soviet Union. It is obvious that military counterintelligence considered the signatories, as well as all active supporters and promoters of Memorandum 68, to be actual or potential enemies of the normalization regime (*Rozkaz náčelníka*, 1970, 3).

The development of the Yugoslav Army (YA)⁵ and its military science and higher education from the end of the Second World War up to 1948 can be referred to as a period of revolutionary statism. The YA was reorganized into a peacetime structure, there were instances of demobilization and the first recruitment, and the new army was formally regulated. The YA was the key element for the defence and stability of the state and of society as a whole. In the development of the YA, emphasis was placed on improving its organization, formation, education, and training (Marijan, 2008, 34; Marković, 2007, 31).

From 1945 to 1948 the YA became completely "sovietized". The reorganization of the YA and military higher education was strongly influenced by the Soviet model, because the army headquarters were manned by accredited Soviet instructors and YA personnel trained and educated in the Soviet Union. Yugoslav military doctrine abandoned the doctrine of the Partisans' National Liberation Movement and copied Soviet military doctrine. The Yugoslav Army abandoned everything that was "Partisan-like" and began to develop frontal-manoeuvre warfare. A very important year for the development of this was the Tito-Stalin split in 1948. The Eastern Block failed to ideologically and economically influence Yugoslavia through the Resolution of the Communist Information Bureau (Cominform). The establishment of Cominform signalled that the Soviet Union was once again setting itself up as the official leader of the communist bloc nations. Yugoslavia was an original member, but Tito proved to be reluctant to follow the Soviet line. The cause of the Tito-Stalin split was Stalin's rejection of Tito's plans to absorb Albania and Greece in cooperation with Bulgaria, thereby setting up a powerful eastern European bloc outside Moscow's control. Stalin ordered Yugoslavia expelled from Cominform. Gathering Soviet divisions close to the Yugoslav borders (in Hungary, Romania, and Bulgaria) was a

4 ABS – V-15242 MV, AKCE TRANSIT – ÚNOS, refilling knowledge, August 12, 1970, 1.

5 On 22 December 1951 the Yugoslav Army (YA) was renamed the Yugoslav People's Army (YPA).

clear indication that the Soviet Union intended to invade Yugoslavia during the next phase of the political crisis. The country's leaders made use of the lessons learned during the Second World War and formed a territorial component of the YA, made up of Partisan-style detachments. However, the political crisis never developed into a hot war between Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union (Johnson, 1978, 3; Dimitrijević, 2014, 81–82; Marković, 2008, 55–56).

The beginnings of Yugoslav military education had already formed during the Second World War; however, the situation in which the armed uprising against the Axis forces began did not allow the immediate establishment of a military school system, such as military academies. After the war, the Yugoslav military education system faced a shortage of educated officers, and Yugoslavia had not yet begun to develop its military science because it did not even have a regulated military school system. Changes in the development of the army, the concept of defence, and military doctrine affected the development of higher military education in Yugoslavia (Bjelica, 1983, 43).

The construction of the Yugoslav military school system was influenced by the Soviet model of military schools, including a number of factors, such as the Soviet military instructors who played an important role in the Yugoslav military school system. The Yugoslav military commanders of the time had been trained at Soviet military schools and colleges, and Soviet military literature was used for education and training in the YA. Under Soviet influence, on July 31, 1945, the military school system was reorganized. The Yugoslav Military Academy was dissolved, and military colleges for individual branches of the army were established. After the Tito-Stalin split, the first objections to the stereotyped use of the Red Army's experience in the military education system can be traced, and the experience from the Yugoslav front of the Second World War began to be studied. On July 30, 1948, the Military Academy (Vojaška akademija) was established, and later the Higher Aviation Military Academy (Višja letalska akademija), the Higher Naval Academy (Višja pomorska akademija), and the Military Medical Academy (Vojaškomedicinska akademija). Yugoslavia began to develop its own military school system and also began to develop military science (Dimitrijević, 2006, 236–251).

The Prague Spring in 1968 and the intervention of the Warsaw Pact troops in Czechoslovakia had a very strong influence on the Yugoslav security and defence system. The situation in Czechoslovakia was viewed in Belgrade as evidence of Soviet determination to throttle possible independent communist countries, and thus as an indirect attack on Yugoslavia. It came as a great surprise to the country's leaders and its military supreme command. Even Great Britain and its allies in NATO were fully aware of the difficult position of Yugoslavia in the summer of 1968. We can say that Great Britain had made significant efforts to induce NATO to admit that Yugoslavia would be interested in developing exchanges with the West, particularly in trade and industry, and obviously with the European Economic Community as well (Bajc, 2016, 76–77).

Yugoslavia appeared to be seriously threatened, and the Yugoslav People's Army (YPA) had never been less prepared to protect it during the entire postwar period. Politicians and the military supreme command concluded that it was time to make use of the lessons learned from the Partisan experience during the Second World War. Under the circumstances, it was decided that a territorial component responsible for popular resistance needed to be established. This component was to operate alongside the YPA, but not within its structure. A completely new model of the defence concept and the armed forces with a territorial component was developed. The operational component would be the first in line to deter aggression. However, the territorial defence forces were planned to be the largest form of organizing people into combat units under the authority of the Yugoslav republics and regions. This was the first opportunity for the republics to develop their own defence units (Torkar, 2017, 195)

The General Staff of the YPA (Generalštab Jugoslovanske ljudske armade) initiated the theoretical development of the doctrine of General People's Defence and Social Self-Protection (Splošna ljudska obramba in družbena samozaščita) in accordance with the political standpoints of the Federal Assembly (Zvezna skupščina). The distinctiveness of the approach was apparent when compared with defence preparations in the early 1950s. Then, fearing a Soviet invasion, Yugoslavia carried out a massive conventional military build-up of almost half a million men under arms, with a corresponding mobilization capacity. In 1970, the YPA was capable of resisting an aggressor, made use of Yugoslavia's lessons learned, and refuted the defence thesis arguing that resistance was possible only in depth. In the document "Armed Forces of the SFRY" (Oborožene sile SFRJ), the Territorial Defence (TD) was given greater importance. The TD was treated as a strategic component of the armed forces, integrated into all spheres of society in various organizational forms (Bebler, 1992, 52; Marković, 2007, 31).

WARSAW PACT DOCTRINE, MILITARY DISSENT AND CZECHOSLOVAK WAR PLANS (1968–1991)

Thanks to the Soviet occupation after August 21, 1968, Moscow's long-term strategic intentions became absolutely binding (Brezinski, 1967, 435; Gaddis, 2007, 185-188) for the Czechoslovak war plans. The operational preparations were also related to the highly probable presence of Soviet nuclear weapons on Czechoslovak territory, based on a secret treaty of December 1965. The CSLA operational plan from December 1977 became the expression of the persistent Cold War confrontation (Luňák, 2019, 262–263), according to which the stopping of imperialist aggression in the territory of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic was prepared by the plan of the subsequent offensive operation. This operational document cannot be described as anything else other than unrealistic nuclear fantasy. The goal of the "Czechoslovak front" (the group of armies) was nothing less than the destruction of the NATO ground and air forces in

the southern part of West Germany, and to reach the French state border on the eighth or ninth day after the start of the operation. This victory was to be achieved by using Soviet 258 nuclear warheads in the form of missiles and air bombs. At the time of its validity, the plan fitted exactly into the intensifying course of the Cold War. This was mainly due to the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan (1979-1989), which accelerated the collapse of the Soviet Union and the demise of its vassal states situated in the central and eastern parts of the European continent. At the end of the summer of 1983, the Kremlin decided to deploy SS-20 medium-range missiles in both buffer states, East Germany and Czechoslovakia. The West again proved its intransigence during NATO's annual "Able Archer" international exercise, which in early November 1983 could have turned into a general nuclear confrontation. About 40,000 Alliance troops practised the escalation of the conflict from the conventional level to the use of chemical and nuclear ammunition (Jones, 2016, 54–59; Krüger, 2017, 80–8; Sauer, 2016, 10–11).

In a fateful five days of November 1983, some simulation elements were used to bring the exercises as close to reality as possible (Futter, 2015, 109–110). The Soviets, after eavesdropping on communications between Western commanders, decided that everything was approaching a surprise nuclear strike on the Soviet Union, and therefore put their forces at the highest levels of combat readiness. Czechoslovakia contributed to the growth of nuclear tensions in Europe with its loyal passivity to the Soviet Union. In October 1983, the government of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic had already agreed to begin preparatory work on the development of missile complexes for operational and tactical use in Czechoslovakia. A year later, US Pershing 2 missiles (Thompson, 2003, 62–63) capable of carrying thermonuclear warheads were deployed in West Germany, Belgium, Italy, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom (Thompson, 2003, 62–63; Johnston, 2017, 183).

On March 11, 1985, the new Secretary General of the Soviet Communist Party, Mikhail Sergeyevich Gorbachev, took over power in the Soviet Union, raising general expectations about a possible change in military-political relations, or even a change in the strategic paradigm of the entire Cold War. From his first days in office, Gorbachev was aware that Moscow's economic and technical expertise was becoming obsolete behind the ever-growing US defence potential. Under his leadership, the Soviet administration sought to stop the arms race, limit the development of nuclear weapons, and totally banned deployment in space. At the turn of 1985/86, a final decision was also made on the prospective transfer of Soviet troops from the hot Afghan soil. The Soviet ideas about a possible victory in the global nuclear conflict were strongly reduced after the accident at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant (Adamsky, 2019, 41), which took place on April 26, 1986. This was the definitive end of nuclear romanticism, which had led to the idea that nuclear weapons could enable victory in a possible "Third World War". In the aftermath of the accident, the

Soviet army was forced to conduct a real military operation in an environment contaminated by real radioactivity for the first time. The consequences for the health of the intervening soldiers were more than appalling. Thanks to this the trends of “new thinking” and “common European house policy” became more and more favoured over military confrontation in Soviet foreign policy.

However, the Czechoslovak war plan, which was created based on the Soviet directives in the Czechoslovak General Staff at the end of October 1986, reflected these tendencies only to a very limited extent. On the one hand, the plan defined the defensive operation of Czechoslovak troops. On the other, the plan assigned an offensive task to the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic immediately after the expected aggression of the Western armies was repulsed. After crossing Switzerland, the Czechoslovak front would have to go through the southern part of West German territory and reach the French border about fifteen days after launching the offensive operation. This time limit was counted up in the conditions of a nuclear inferno. It was planned to allocate Soviet 344 nuclear warheads (Luňák, 2019, 312) to the Czechoslovak operation; at the same time, the strategic nuclear forces of the Soviet Union were given the combat task of destroying enemy objects west of the line set for the advance of the detached units of the Czechoslovak Army. The operational document became an anachronism at the time of its creation.

Despite this fact, the end of the Cold War was inevitably approaching, which was only confirmed by work on the new, Gorbachev military doctrine (January 1986 – summer 1989). The new Soviet doctrinal document was officially introduced at the Warsaw Pact Political Advisory Committee in East Berlin on 28–29 May, 1987. It spoke about “defensive sufficiency” and “non-offensive defence” (Bílý, 2021, 255; Mastny, Byrne, 2005, 61). According to its fourth point, NATO’s attack was to be repulsed only by defensive operations, and Moscow undertook to address the causes of the war solely by political means. The fifth point defined the rules of the Soviet political and military leadership task of preventing the emergence of armed conflict at all (Glantz, 1992, 212–213) and in all possible circumstances.

The year 1985 became important not only due to the launch of Gorbachev’s reform plan, but also from the point of view of the formulation of the foundations of the military-political programme of the Czechoslovak opposition. It was predominantly represented by the Charter 77 civil movement (McDermott, 2015, 174–178; The Moravian Library, 2017, 9). Military issues were mostly avoided by this opposition initiative, due to fears of accusations from the side of normalization power (criminal activity against the republic). Despite this, the document Charter 77 No. 18/1978 fundamentally criticized the Soviet occupation of 1968 (Commission on Security, 1982, 135–136). The document Charter 77 No. 7/1985, called the “Prague Challenge”, marked a fundamental breakthrough in this regard. It suggested the reduction of the dangerous situation on the European continent at that time through disarmament initiatives,

the creation of neutral and nuclear-free zones, the conclusion of agreements on non-aggression, the renunciation of nuclear weapons, or the unification of divided Germany. Charter 77 proposed the dissolution of the military structures of NATO and the Warsaw Pact, removing all nuclear weapons from Europe, and initiating the withdrawal of all US and USSR military units from the territory of their European allies (Forster, 2021, 17–19).

All this was to be accompanied by a permanent reduction in the ranks of all the armies of European countries. The Prague Challenge saw a permanent solution in the transformation of Europe into an equal community of friendly partners which, within the framework of a system of collective security, would permanently reduce the danger of global war. Leading representatives of the Czechoslovakian opposition, such as Václav Havel (1936–2011), Jiří Dienstbier (1937–2011) and Luboš Dobrovský (1932–2020), also signed the document. In the early 1990s, however, in the positions of Czechoslovak President, Foreign Minister, and Federal Minister of Defence respectively, they largely abandoned this concept (Johnston, 2017, 132–133).

The second half of the 1980s brought the emergence of several independent civil initiatives in the late normalization public space, which developed opposition-oriented activities in solving the societal issues of war, peace or the form of military service. At the same time, these informal groups took advantage of the weakening power position of the regime under the leadership of the Communist Party. In April 1988, the Independent Peace Association (IPA) was established – an initiative for the demilitarization of society, whose members perceived themselves as a free community without a rigid organizational structure (Bulletin Nezávislého mírového sdružení, 1988, 2–3).

According to the IPA statement, the CSLA should have been subject to democratic control and participated more significantly in the education of the young generation from the point of view of culture and politics. Military service had to be transformed from a form of necessary evil into a concept of honourable civic duty. This is why the IPA supported the legalization of an alternative military service, without weapons. From the point of view of international politics, the association advocated the strengthening of security and trust between nations and supported all steps of Czechoslovakia leading to general disarmament.

In the spring of 1988, an informal movement, Czech Children, was also established, which distributed leaflets promoting social mobilization for the 20th anniversary of the occupation of Czechoslovakia by Warsaw Pact troops on August 21, 1968. At the beginning of December 1988, the John Lennon Peace Club (JLPC) was founded. The JLPC also did not have firm organizational foundations, and its activities were mainly aimed at promoting alternative culture. Its founders criticized the contradiction between the official statements of the Czechoslovak government on peaceful coexistence between nations on the one hand, and the deep militarization of society on the other. From February 1989, the Club for Socialist Reconstruction (Obroda) began to work, which, on the

basis of Gorbachev's reconstruction, strove for dialogue with official power with the aim of radical democratization and reform of degenerate normalization socialism (The Associated Press, 2015, 10; Marples, 2004, 27–29).

In the fall of 1989, Obroda created a proposal to enforce basic military service lasting only fifteen months, then a proposal to introduce substitute service lasting five months for socially needy conscripts, and finally the idea of introducing an alternative military service without weapons for reasons of conscience or religious conviction. Within its frame a special Committee of the Military Section was also established. The memorable November 17, 1989 then opened the floodgates for societal change without any restrictions, which naturally affected the understanding of military issues.

THE DOCTRINE OF NON-ALIGNED COUNTRIES, THE YUGOSLAV DOCTRINE OF GENERAL PEOPLES DEFENCE AND SOCIAL SELF-PROTECTION, AND YUGOSLAV WAR PLANS (1968–1991)

The countries of the Non-Aligned Movement, in which Yugoslavia played one of the major roles, did not have a unified or coalition-oriented military doctrine. Each country developed its own military doctrine, which was based on striving for peace, independence, and coexistence, which was an alternative to the bloc division of the world. It was characteristic of the non-aligned countries that they relied on their own armed forces in security and defence, which was a condition for independence and freedom from the pressures and influence of foreign countries. Defence and security cooperation between the non-aligned countries thus took place in sales of military equipment and weapons, transfer of military technology, and training of command staff (Ljubičić, 1981, 209–211).

In the summer of 1969 the Yugoslavs were the strongest champions of the liberalizing Dubček regime, and the appreciative Czechoslovaks saw in them their closest and truest friends. After the Prague Spring in 1968, Yugoslavia began to develop its doctrine of General People's Defence and Social Self-Protection. Yugoslavia's military forces consisted of two components: the Yugoslav People's Army (YPA) and the Territorial Defence (TD).⁶ Their duty was to defend the country and its constitutional order. The majority of military experts (the officer corps) were members of the Communist Party, which was a prerequisite for pursuing such a career. The TD was assigned greater importance and its foundation was reinforced. The TD needed to increase the population's ability to offer long-term resistance against an aggressor, thereby enhancing the army's operational echelons and ensuring more effective results than could be predicted considering likely force ratios. The 1969 Defence Act (Zakon o ljudski obrambi) further stated that it was the right and duty of every citizen to participate in national defence, and the right and duty of the local political

6 TNA FCO 28/640, Yugoslavia-Czechoslovakia – the Honeymoon is Over, 7 October 1969, 1.

authorities to organize total national defence and to directly command units in battle. In this scenario, the YPA itself would engage the enemy in frontal warfare and expel it from the country. The TD in the border region affected would selectively assist the YPA and would remain on alert in case the military threat increased. Far more likely than the above scenario, according to Yugoslav military scholars, was the prospect of a large-scale attack led by the Soviet Union. In this case, the enemy would have overwhelming military superiority in traditional terms. It could be expected to achieve general air superiority, to mount a large-scale armoured land invasion, and to attempt to quickly seize Belgrade, Zagreb, and other key cities with parachute and helicopter-borne troops. In this scenario, the first task of the YPA would be to employ frontal tactics and to avoid large losses, which would lead to a delay in the enemy's penetration. The YPA units, after withdrawing from border areas, would wage active defence in depth alongside the TD throughout the country. The expected consequence was a merger of the front and rear, or the transformation of the entire country into a "hedgehog defence" system. The YPA and TD units would fight on, utilizing a mixture of combined and partisan tactics. In occupied territory, both urban and rural, the TD and paramilitary forces would wage a guerrilla war. Only if the entire country were occupied, however, would the YPA and TD units revert exclusively to partisan tactics, as in the Second World War (Marković, 2007, 34–37; Johnson, 1978, 3–4).

The Yugoslav war plans had the code name *Sutjeska* and were created at the beginning of the 1970s. The plans envisaged full-scale aggression against Yugoslavia in two versions—an attack from the east (*Sutjeska-1*) and attack from the west (*Sutjeska-2*)—and the response of the YPA. On the basis of the western variant, *Sutjeska-2*, which was systematically refined in the 1980s, the YPA conducted a military exercise codenamed *Romanija* every year from 1986 to 1990, in which the commands and units of the YPA trained to implement the planned response to the aggression scenario. The plan predicted that NATO would be successful during the first days of the war, occupying part of Yugoslavia, and that after adjusting to the situation and transitioning society to wartime conditions the YPA would conduct a successful liberation by engaging forces from deep positions. It was anticipated that the territory occupied by the enemy would be liberated almost entirely by the TD. Training for the eastern version of the plan (*Sutjeska-1*) was mostly neglected in the 1980s by the YPA (Marijan, 2008, 102–107; Kadijević, 1993, 135–136).

CZECHOSLOVAK MILITARY STRATEGY AND ARMED FORCES AND THE TERMINATION OF THE FEDERATION (1989–1992)

At the time of the November coup of 1989, the serving communist leadership counted on certain options of the CSLA's deployment against opposition demonstrations (the "INTERVENTION" action) or the taking over of the

technical performance of broadcasting on Czechoslovak Television by military experts (the “WAVE” action). In the end, however, the misuse of the army for the purpose of defeating the Velvet Revolution did not happen (Kroupa et al., 2019, 12). The soldiers thus remained out of dynamic political developments. Until the end of 1992, on the other hand, extensive democratization and at the same time humanization of the Czechoslovak Army (CSA)⁷ took place. It was gradually transformed into a guarantee of the society-wide democratization process. Some global geopolitical changes such as the definitive end of the Cold War, the decomposition of the bipolar world and the collapse of the former Czechoslovak protectorate of the Soviet Union also contributed to this. The new state, with the new name “the Czech and Slovak Federative Republic (CSFR)”, had definitively joined the new global era.

Czechoslovak military units actively participated in Operation Desert Shield and Desert Storm in the Persian Gulf (1990/1991) (Hutchinson, 1995, 6; Bin, Hill, Jones, 1998, 95-96), as well as supporting the peacekeeping deployment of UN forces in the disintegrating and warring Yugoslavia. The process of ensuring the country’s security in foreign policy was fully underway after the departure of the former occupying Central Group of Soviet troops (end of June 1991) and the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact on July 1st of the same year (Keohane, Nye & Hoffman, 1997, 360–361). There were ideas about possible Czechoslovak neutrality, the parallel dissolution of the North Atlantic Alliance, and the construction of a pan-European system of collective security based on the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (Gaddis, 1992, 38–39).

In the first post-recession months, the former opposition structures created several independent centres that conducted a dialogue with the Federal Assembly (Federální shromáždění), the Federal Ministry of Defence (FMoD) (Federální ministerstvo obrany) and the General Staff of the CSLA (later the CSA) (Generální štáb) about military reforms based on the newly understood doctrine and strategy. The political movement Občanské fórum (OF), which was founded on November 19th, 1989, created the Military Commission of the Coordinating Centre (MCCC) (Vojenská komise koordinačního centra) of the OF at the end of January 1990. The activities of the MCCC were aimed at reforming the FMoD from many angles, and therefore its scope of action was quite broad. In particular, it strove for the amendment of military law and the formulation of the law on civil service, and, last but not least, it dealt with the issue of the existence of spiritual care in the army. The main goal of the MCCC then became the introduction of the institution of the General Inspectorate, whose activity was to guarantee the democratization and humanization (Roušar, 2006, 33) of the entire social area of the military.⁸

7 The name of the army was changed by Act No. 74/1990 of the Collection of Laws.

8 APS – FS VI., Carton 60, Resolution No. 20 of the Defence and Security Committee, October 5, 1990 (draft law on the General Inspectorate).

At the strategic level of the FMoD, former professional officers and supporters of the military reforms of the Prague Spring returned to civilian management positions. These were mostly experts in the field of social sciences, especially from the field of military sociology, which significantly influenced the military science of the 1960s and the memorable Memorandum 68. In 1990, these veterans of military reforms began to promote the systemic concept of a democratic army which went beyond only a purely military subsystem headed by the Chief of the General Staff. Their reform considerations were based on the need to create strategic, economic and social management subsystems within the political-administrative section of the FMoD – all this with significant elements of civilian management of the armed forces (Manitz, 2017, 114–115).

Preparations for the development of the new Czechoslovak military doctrine did not take place only at the level of theoretical and professional considerations, which were significantly influenced by the former military reformers of 1968/69. From an international political point of view, 1990 and 1991 were characterized by a transition from the policy of confrontation between NATO and the surviving Warsaw Pact (Blank, 2011, 2), to a multilateral system of international relations arising from ideas about European collective security. The formation of the doctrine was influenced by the internal political events in Czechoslovakia (national conflict) (Leff, 1988, 272–273) along with the legislative aspects of the whole process. In May 1990, the State Defence Council⁹ decided to prepare a doctrinal text that took fully into account the reality of international politics at the turn of the 1980s and 1990s. On June 28, 1990, the President of Czechoslovakia, Václav Havel, made an urgent request on the floor of the Federal Assembly; his idea was that Czechoslovak military doctrine should be established on the principle of reasonable defence sufficiency against any hostile, aggressive attack from any geopolitical direction.

The legislative process¹⁰ was completed on March 20, 1991. On this day, the Federal Assembly of Czechoslovakia announced the military doctrine as an official text at the 14th joint meeting of the House of People and the House of Nations, as its resolution No. 122 (print 366). The text of the doctrine did not specify any concrete enemy of the state, thereby signing up to the principle of “azimuth” defence, i.e. defence feasible in all possible directions. It was clearly based on the strategic idea that the defence of Czechoslovakia was no longer ensured on a coalition basis, but was completely independent (Balík et al., 2015, 8). The main task of the CSA, therefore, became repelling ground and air attacks launched from any direction on any part of the state territory.

9 This was a military-political body established at the beginning of the existence of the Czechoslovak Federation, according to the Constitutional Act No. 10/1969 Collection of Laws.

10 APS – FS VI, Carton 61, List of Materials for the 13th Meeting of the Defence and Security Committees of the Federal Assembly, 21 March 1991.

The fundamental issue was the adoption of the principle of reasonable defence sufficiency. The doctrine provided for the provision of an army for the needs of UN peacekeeping operations and the liquidation of the consequences of ecological or other natural disasters. The Czechoslovak state further declared that it did not own or manufacture nuclear weapons or other weapons of mass destruction, nor did it seek to own or deploy them on its sovereign territory. The doctrine from 1991 reflected not only all the basic theses of the military reforms of the Prague Spring, but also subscribed to long-term Czechoslovak strategic thinking. It was mainly a matter of taking into account the geopolitical position of Czechoslovakia in the centre of Europe and the elongated shape of the state territory with minimal depth (Moravec, 1938, 79), which in essence allowed only some variants of strategic defence.

In the course of 1992 the process of disintegration of the unified strategic concept was constantly accelerated as the agony of the Czechoslovak federation continued. This became irreversible based on the result of the parliamentary elections on June 5-6 of the same year, and the CSFR ended its existence on December 31, 1992. The division of the federation put the two successor states in an even more disadvantageous geostrategic position than united Czechoslovakia, along with the obvious financial cost of the process of the withdrawal of the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic from the originally unified framework. Both countries acquired long borders, which made it impossible to build up enough forces and resources for the needs of linear defence. The CSA came to an end as the protection of the state and the pillar of federative ideas (Innes, 2001, 176–177; Heimann, 2009, 319–320).

THE YUGOSLAV MILITARY STRATEGY AND ARMED FORCES IN THE 1980S UP TO THE DISSOLUTION OF THE FEDERAL STATE

In the 1980s, Yugoslavia was marked by political crisis, economic problems, the growth of nationalism, and the emergence of civil society movements focusing on peace, ecology, feminism, and other issues. Civil movements, especially in Slovenia, were critical towards the YPA, which represented a “brotherhood and unity” that was no longer present in Yugoslavia. The process of increasing YPA power and influence became even more pronounced after Tito’s death in 1980. Yugoslavia’s federal presidency, as a collective leadership body that was re-elected annually, was incapable of legally or practically performing the operational functions of supreme command, especially on a daily basis. Its operational command functions were, in fact, only nominal (Marković, 2008, 64–65; Repe, 2002).

In 1987, the document “The General People’s Defence and Social Self-Protection Strategy of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia” (Strategija splošne ljudske obrambe in družbene samozaščite SFRJ) was adopted by the presidency. It defined the theoretical, doctrinal, and regulatory integration of

all defence and security elements. The document introduced a section on crisis situations; this was the first time this issue had been discussed in a regulatory or doctrinal document of the Yugoslav defence and security forces. The document defined two types of crisis situations: situations provoked by insurrection and direct risk of aggression. In addition to this, the document allowed for a broad interpretation of the term “crisis situation”, defined as including possible serious natural or technological disasters. The document also mentioned the possibility of the aggravation of a crisis situation due to weaknesses and problems in the functioning of the social system, regardless of whether the reasons for this were outside or within the country’s control. The document especially warned of possible infiltration into the system’s institutions and the spread of ideas that countered the concepts of a self-governing social and economic system. In general, the document warned against all ideas that could in any way affect established processes and situations.

The unitarism and the protection of an extremely centralistic system served as a strategic instrument of defence and security to resist all change. The system even allowed for the possibility of action against positive attempts at democracy. The responsibilities at all systemic sociopolitical levels were carefully defined, including the responsibilities of security service authorities. The YPA was to be engaged for two purposes: the demonstration of force against threats, and direct engagement in crisis management. If approved by the federal presidency, the Federal Secretariat of the People’s Defence was designated as the authority to decide whether to activate the YPA in crisis situations. This made possible the regulatory arrangement of the armed forces deployment concept for internal Yugoslav situations, as well as the provision of material to carry out the concept (Marijan, 2008, 107–123).

The YPA became the “backbone” of the country’s political system and social order, with enough political power and influence to make the idea of a YPA regime come true—but fortunately this did not take place. The critics of the existing defence security system in the 1980s succeeded in becoming more vocal. The constant lagging of the YPA behind the democratization process, and the unwillingness of its leadership to separate the federal army from the Communist Party and remove it from the political scene, contributed to the deepening of the country’s ethnic and political divisions and to the exacerbation of the Yugoslav crisis. All of this led to the bloody Yugoslav wars in the 1990s. Demands with regard to a stronger centralization process were justified by growing frictions within the system of the General People’s Defence, which emphasized its total nature, creating the reality of the concept of a “nation in arms,” which attached great importance to soldiers and the art of soldiering in Yugoslavia. Despite the well-thought-out concept of the General People’s Defence, it failed to provide answers to how to defy an “internal enemy”, and how to solve the country-wide internal political and economic problems that accumulated in Yugoslavia in the 1970s and 1980s. After its establishment in

1968, the Slovenian TD developed differently from similar organizations in the other federal republics. Many among its few professional service members and, particularly, members of the large reserve component, considered the creation of the Slovenian TD the resuscitation of the idea of Slovenia's own armed forces (Bebler, 1992, 52–57; Torkar, 2017, 204).

CONCLUSION

From an overall perspective, the Prague Spring of 1968 grew out of the specific Czechoslovak conditions, but, on the other hand, its violent suppression by the invasion of Warsaw Pact troops had a strong impact on the military doctrines of both Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia. August 21, 1968, and all the violence associated with that date, strongly influenced Yugoslav strategic thinking at that time. The Yugoslav regime, under the leadership of Tito, recognized that Yugoslavia could be a similar target of Soviet aggression in the future. Yugoslav military doctrine and the country's military plans consistently reflected this fact in the 1970s and 1980s.

Czechoslovakia adopted a Warsaw Pact doctrine that was based on nuclear arms and conducting an offensive nuclear war against NATO, whereas Yugoslavia developed its own doctrine focused on combining the YPA with territorial defence. In planning, this entailed the conventional army meeting an invasion head-on, buying time for reserves and the general population to mobilize.

Czechoslovakia's Memorandum 68 out of necessity declared Czechoslovakia's affiliation with the Soviet sphere of influence in eastern and central Europe. Nevertheless, it was the proposal of the domestic military doctrine that consistently took into account the vital security interests of Czechoslovakia in international relations at that time. The document was mainly based on the inviolability of Czechoslovak territory and the right of its nations to defend their own existence regardless of the superpower interests of the Soviet Union. Memorandum 68 reflected these conclusions based on the latest knowledge of Czechoslovak military science, especially in the social sciences.

These military and political concepts from the military reform of the Prague Spring strongly resembled a number of aspects of Yugoslav military doctrine at that time. The Yugoslav doctrine of the General People's Defence failed to find answers to how to defy the "internal enemy" and how to solve the internal country-wide political and economic problems that emerged in Yugoslavia in the late 1980s. Since the dissolution of Yugoslavia in the 1990s, the Doctrine of General People's Defence has largely been forgotten, and is characterized as an old concept that is outdated in the context of today's security situation. The Slovenian Territorial Defence can be seen as a positive phenomenon, which derived from the Doctrine of General People's Defence (Clark, 2001, 434).

The series of bloody civil wars in the former Yugoslavia (Gray & Colin, 2012, 257; Brzezinski, 2016, 53) that began in the early 1990s also had an impact on the atmosphere in which Czechoslovakia was divided. The crisis in Czech-Slovak relations raised the prospect of the danger of a “Yugoslav scenario”. The peaceful division of Czechoslovakia can rightly be attributed to the greater cultural, linguistic, and ethnic proximity of the Czechs and Slovaks (Haass, 2017, 106). However, the ethnic cataclysm of Yugoslavia’s disintegration undoubtedly also played a role. The military and political events in the two countries were closely related in the period between 1969 and 1993, and it is thanks to this that mutual connections in doctrinal and strategic thinking can be found.

VPLIV PRAŠKE POMLADI 1968 NA ČEŠKOSLOVAŠKO IN
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POVZETEK

Vojaško, politično in strateško sodelovanje med nekdanjo Češkoslovaško in Jugoslavijo je imelo globoke korenine že od samih začetkih obstoja obeh držav. Obe državi, ki sta nastali na ruševinah stare Evrope, sta začeli sodelovati tako na političnem, gospodarskem in tudi na vojaškem področju. Medsebojni vpliv se je videl tudi v skupnih razmišljanjih o vojni ali miru – zlasti pa pri vojaški doktrini in razvoju oboroženih sil obeh držav. Vpliv praške pomladi leta 1968 na vojaško ter strateško razmišljanje na Češkoslovaškem in v Jugoslaviji je bil velik. Veliko spremembo v češkoslovaški vojski je povzročil Memorandum 68, ki se je pojavil kot predlog domače vojaške doktrine, ki je dosledno upoštevala vitalne varnostne interese Češkoslovaške v takratnih mednarodnih odnosih. Dokument, ki je bil kritika Marxovega koncepta vojne, je temeljil predvsem na nedotakljivosti češkoslovaškega ozemlja in pravici njenih narodov, da branijo svoj obstoj ne glede na interese Sovjetske zveze. Istočasno je jugoslovansko politično vodstvo zaradi intervencije sil Varšavskega pakta na Češkoslovaškem spoznalo, da JLA sama ni zmožna ubraniti napada z vzhoda, zato se je jugoslovanski politični in vojaški vrh začel naslanjati na izkušnje iz narodnoosvobodilnega boja. Nastala je nova vojaška doktrina, poimenovana »doktrina splošne ljudske obrambe in družbene samozaščite«.

Ključne besede: Češkoslovaška, Jugoslavija, praška pomlad, vojaška doktrina, Memorandum 68, NATO, Varšavski pakt

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