

THE SLOVAK PARTICULARITIES OF THE CZECHOSLOVAK SECURITY SYSTEM OF THE LATE 1960'S

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PŮČIK, M.: The Slovak particularities of the Czechoslovak security system of the late 1960's. *Vojenská história*, 4, 24, 2020, pp 58-72, Bratislava.

The study deals with the complex and so far insufficiently processed topic of building the security system of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic in the period of the 1960s. The text of the study uses a period term "defence system", which is, however, an obsolete terminology. In its basic features, it corresponds to the modern term "state security system". The period in question is specific in that the ideological model of the "all state defence" ended with a fiasco and with the military intervention of part of the Warsaw Pact troops in August 1968, which violently interrupted the courageous discussions on one's own defence doctrine in the period of the so-called Prague Spring. After the establishment of the federation, a new model of the "defence system" began to be implemented, in which the importance of Slovakia increased. The Army became the basis of the whole system yet again. However, the importance of nationwide preparation of the population for the anticipated war conflict with the "West" has increased. The basis of the new model of the "defence system" from the late 1960s was still valid in various modifications in the following period.

Key words: Security system, defence system, Ministry of National Defence, army, defence units.

As one of Europe's newest countries, Slovakia is suddenly having to develop its own military doctrine. The search for a new defence policy requires a critical re-evaluation of the one that had governed Slovakia since the federalization of Czechoslovakia in 1968. The end of the 1960s and beginning of the 1970s marked an abrupt turning point for the Czechoslovak security system.

In 1967 a new defence model was adopted that contained elements of reformist thinking, and in May 1968 attempts to work out a proper military doctrine culminated in the Memorandum of the researchers of the Czechoslovak armed forces. However, after the violent interruption of the Prague Spring, the Czechoslovak Communist Party's Presidium (still headed by Alexander Dubček) decided on 22 October 1968 to elaborate a new security system that would accept the reality of the Warsaw Pact invasion and occupation of Czechoslovakia. The deadline for the theoretical elaboration of the model was set for 31 December 1969, and after its discussion and approval by the State Defence Council it was carried out experimentally in the early 1970s. From that point onward, Czechoslovak military doctrine was subject to Soviet pressure and interests.

At the time the term "the national defence system" was understood to mean the preparation and actual combat activity of the armed forces together with a complex of subsequent measures for "the defence and protection of the territory."¹ Official documents concerning this matter worked from the ideological premise that the security system of a state of the "socialist type" represented a special institutionalized activity determined by social-political changes in society. The implemented security system model accepted inter alia that even in times of peace it would be designed to guarantee smooth transition to a wartime footing.

¹ Central Military Archives – Military Historical Archive, Prague (VÚA-VHA), Ministry of Defence (MNO), fond (f), Hlavná politická správa ČSLA (Main political administration of the Czechoslovak People's Army – hereafter HPS ČSLA), 1966, sign. No. 25-3/3.

Four fundamental stages were emphasized in the Czechoslovak security system:

- Entitled “the structure and defence of the country in peaceful conditions”², the first stage was meant to carry out the so-called concept of the creation of a system of organs, institutions and organizations with “the uniting function of building society and its defence.” Running parallel to this was the process of intensive preparations for the smooth transition of this system to a state of war with the “external enemy.”
- “Transferring the state from peaceful conditions to those of war”³ was regularly divided into three levels of readiness and a danger situation. In this stage the model’s creators counted on the transition to military organisation, characterized by increased centralized pressure and organized, directive interventions.
- The “initial war period”⁴ was designated by military experts as the decisive and simultaneously the most difficult stage in terms of defence. During this stage, according to contemporary notions, there should be resistance to the potential “external enemy’s” main strike and at the same time the troops’ combat activity should be secured.
- The “further conduct of war”⁵ would be characterized by required efforts to overcome the destructive results of the “initial war period” and by the “mobilization of all accessible reserves for a victorious end to world-wide coalition conflict.”⁶

Representatives of the Allied Command of the Warsaw Treaty Organization (WTO) emphasized the geostrategic importance of Czechoslovak territory during the drafting of the security system.⁷ Czechoslovakia lay in a geopolitically and geo-strategically important area, the buffer zone of both blocs, through which the main thrust of every large military operation would pass.

Slovakia occupied a strategically important position in the line of contact with the potential enemy, NATO. This line, known as the main defence line of the WTO, began in the north-west (the East German defence line), passed through Bohemia, Moravia and Slovakia and continued to the south-east (the Hungarian defence line). From the point of view of Slovakia, Bohemia and Moravia, it can be said that despite the permanent preparation of the WTO for war and their position in the centre of a potential zone of European conflict, no strategic military thrust passed through the territory of Czechoslovakia. The geostrategic significance of its position was given inter alia by the fact that this territory divided and, simultaneously, joined through the “Moravian gate” the main northern and southern European strategic thrusts.

Mastery of Czechoslovakia permitted a freer and more flexible manoeuvring in the main strategic directions. Unlike Slovakia, Bohemia was located in the contingent area through which passed the strategic-operative thrust Prague – Nürnberg – Strasbourg – Dijon and back. From the military-defence perspective, Czechoslovakia’s position was disadvantageous, as the theoretical value of defence was reduced by the long meridian-like geographical shape of the state and the total length of its borders.⁸ From the geostrategic point of view, the strategists of the WTO’s Joint Command divided Czechoslovakia into two relatively independent units, the Bohemo-Moravian

² VÚA-VHA, Prague, MNO, f. Sekretariát MNO (MNO Secretariat), 1966, sign. No. 24-5/2-4.

³ VÚA-VHA, Prague, MNO, f. Sekretariát MNO (MNO Secretariat), 1966, sign. No. 24-5/2-4.

⁴ VÚA-VHA, Prague, MNO, f. Sekretariát MNO (MNO Secretariat), 1966, sign. No. 24-5/2-4.

⁵ VÚA-VHA, Prague, MNO, f. Sekretariát MNO (MNO Secretariat), 1966, sign. No. 24-5/2-4.

⁶ VÚA-VHA, Prague, MNO, f. Sekretariát MNO (MNO Secretariat), 1966, sign. No. 24-5/2-4.

⁷ VÚA-VHA, Prague, MNO, f. HPS ČSLA, 1966, sign. No. 18-3/10.

⁸ It was estimated that the length of the borders reduced the value of the defence provided in the Czech lands by the armed forces by 25 percent and in Slovakia by 55 percent. (Vojenské rozhledy, 1992, special issue, pp. 32-33.)

geostrategic space and the Slovak geostrategic space. The two were joined by a section of Slovak territory, Záhorie, which is a part of the “Carpathian curve.” (In some accounts Záhorie is considered a part of the Bohemo-Moravian geostrategic space.) The Bohemo-Moravian space was considered difficult to defend, and thus created suitable geographical conditions for conducting extensive military operations.

From the geographical perspective, in which the decisive factor is the configuration of the terrain, the Slovak space was considered easier to defend, therefore military strategists ruled it out for conducting ground or air operations. The optimal defensive areas were considered to be central and northern Slovakia, whereas the most vulnerable areas were in southwestern, southern and eastern Slovakia.

Because an attack from NATO forces was expected, the preponderant part of the military force was concentrated along the western and southwestern borders contiguous with the “imperialist world.” Altogether about fifteen divisions were designated for operations in Czechoslovakia, of which about 80 percent were located along the dividing line between the two blocs. Decades of building up the army as a front-line force of the WTO were reflected in the absence of a state military doctrine and in subordination to bloc (i.e. Soviet) interests in questions of location, organization, equipment and exercises. Because of pressure from power elites, of all the armies in the Soviet bloc Czechoslovakia’s was the largest in relation to the size of its civilian population. The Czechoslovak People’s Army (CSPA) systematically prepared itself solely for the event of NATO “aggression” from the west or, conversely, to invade westwards.⁹

As regards the latter, in the 1960s the military conception of the WTO proceeded from the possibility of a swift, offensive insertion of several tank armies over a broad territory. The focus of the operations was to be Central Europe, and especially West Germany, with occupation taking place in three overlapping phases. In these plans Czechoslovakia took priority. The Soviet power elite from the first half of the 1960s strove, and later exerted increasing pressure, for the stationing of Soviet forces in Czechoslovakia.

This Soviet pressure also forced responsible circles in Czechoslovakia to adapt the security system to military conditions as much as possible in times of peace. The notion that almost the entire territory of the republic would fall into zone of direct combat led to the dominant place of the military aspect of the defence of Czechoslovakia.

As in all areas of social life, so in branches of the security system’s structure the “leading role” of the Czechoslovak Communist Party (CPCS) was constitutionally guaranteed. Because of the CPCS’s power monopoly other political subjects legally active in the political system were prevented from influencing the creation of the security system. The CPCS’s power elite decided on the construction of defence commissions which were created from the Central Committee down to the district level. Gradually state organs and institutions and almost the entire “representative system,” economic sector and social interest groups were included in the security system, but their position and influence in this area were almost zero compared to those of the CPCS.

Combat activity oriented towards fulfilling “defensive” and “protective” tasks became the fundamental area of the surviving 1967 security system model. This area involved the creation of “field armies,” securing combat operations and safeguarding combat activity on state territory. In connection with anticipated military action on their own territory, relevant command organs were established at sufficient level for territorial defence functions.

The first territorial organs arose at the Defence Ministry and general Staff levels, with the ministry’s territorial organ headed by the deputy minister. Major General Karel Peprný, who was directly subordinate to the minister and simultaneously served as chairman of the “interdepartmental coordination commission for the territorial security system of the

⁹ Military Historical Archive (VHA), Bratislava, f. 0855, carton No. 169, 24.

Czechoslovak Socialist republic.”¹⁰ A territorial organ was also established at the CSPA General Staff and its main purpose was the conceptual elaboration of the bases of the territorial part of the security system along with other sectors of the Defence Ministry. It also drafted decrees for the CPCS Central Committee’s defence commission.

At the regional and district level a concept was prepared for the organizational and personnel restructuring of the existing military administration into territorial commands, which according to contemporary analyses had to be able to secure completely “complex military activity” within their territorial jurisdictions.

It was asserted that one condition for the functioning of the historical model of territorial defence was the reliance on “field armies of independent armed forces,” which would fulfil “all defence” tasks on their own territory.¹¹ It was assumed that anti-air defence forces would be the fundamental unit of the armed forces on state territory. A potential source for the creation of “unified” armed forces were the proposed road and railway forces of the Defence Ministry, which according to territorial considerations remained after the detachment of “field-destination” forces and after partial mobilizational supplementing.¹² (Another part would have been made up by the Civil Defence forces.) Measures were drawn up in theory that were intended to lead to the smooth organizational incorporation of these “military components into the unified military force” under the Defence Ministry.¹³

The following tasks were planned for the territorial forces: “The reliable protection of passive sections of the state border with neutral states”; “The destruction of airborne units”; “Reconnaissance of all types”; “Carrying out liquidation [sic] and rescue missions”. The ground forces were to carry the following types of activities: “Conduct the struggle against airborne enemies, either independently or in connection with other units of the armed forces”; “In the field forces’ zone, share in the liquidation of the enemy’s forces that have penetrated the border into Czechoslovak territory”; “Eliminate the results of the use of weapons of mass destruction”; “Secure the transport and protection of military workplaces of the ministry of national defence, district commands and central organs”; “Organize the guarding of prisoner of war in prisoner camps and in work assignments”; “Secure uninterrupted radio, chemical and biological monitoring”.

Changes in the 1967 security system required among other things amendments to the relevant legislation.¹⁴ The security system model facilitated the transformation of Czechoslovakia’s defence structure into a unified system. On the bases of individual sorts of activity, the system was structurally broken down into four areas (sub-systems):

- 1) Military activity for the “defence and protection” of the territory, under the Defence Ministry;
- 2) Political and ideological activity, under the Communist Party organs;
- 3) The economic safeguarding of the defence of the state and activity for securing the defence of the population, under the state planning commission;
- 4) “security and order measures for protection of the territory,” under the Interior Ministry.¹⁵

¹⁰ VÚA-VHA, Prague, MNO, f. Náčelník HPS ČSLA (Chief of the Main Political Administration), 1967, DS č.j. 007661.

¹¹ VÚA-VHA, Prague, MNO, f. Sekretariát MNO, 1967, sign. No. 24-4/1-7.

¹² VÚA-VHA, Prague, MNO, f. Náčelník HPS ČSLA, 1967, DS č.j. 007661.

¹³ VÚA-VHA, Prague, MNO, f. Sekretariát MNO, 1967, sign. No. 24-4/1-7; Štátny ústredný archív Slovenskej republiky (State central archive of the Slovak Republic, hereafter ŠÚA SR), f. Vláda SSR (file of the government of the Slovak Socialist Republic), 1969, č.j. 00443/1969.

¹⁴ The main laws amended were #40/1961 on the defence of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic; defence law #92/1949, the wording of declaration #20/1958, and #70/1965 on the National Corps (which consisted of Public Security – regular police – and State Security (StB), the equivalent of the Soviet KGB).

¹⁵ VÚA-VHA, Prague, MNO, f. HPS ČSLA, 1966, sign. No. 24-3/2.

The 1967 security system model was officially abolished by the CPCS Presidium in October 1968, when it was decided to work out the principles for a new system. As it was realistically expected that the adoption and implementation of the new principles could take place only in the early 1970s, the officially abolished 1967 model remained intact with minor changes. The vacuum caused by the absence of a security system from October 1967 to December 1969 was filled by administrative measures by the Defence Ministry, in accordance with the CPCS Presidium decision. These measures, entitled "Principles for the temporary direction of defence" according to propaganda statements by the minister and other high Party and army functionaries, "safeguarded the defence needs" of an occupied state. As for Slovakia, however, these principles realistically accepted only the fact of an artificially asymmetric model of Czechoslovakia's federal set-up and Constitutional Law #10/1969 on the State defence Council.

At its first meetings the State defence Council adopted essential administrative measures to launch defence councils at other individual levels of management. It appointed the Slovak and Czech Defence Councils, assigned the republics' prime ministers to establish departments for defence and security at their level by 15 June 1969, which were to act as secretariats for the republics' defence councils and also as the prime ministers' defence and coordination organs. The head of the Slovak government's defence department was Colonel Vladimír Šmidke, who simultaneously served as secretary of the Slovak Defence Council.¹⁶ With the appointment of the chairman and members of the defence councils of specific national committees (local councils, dominated by the CPCS and equivalent to Soviets in the USSR) or, more specifically, with the handing over of documentation on 30 June 1969, the activity of the defence commissions of the regional and district Slovak Communist Party (CPS) committees ended. Career soldiers were named secretaries of the national committees' defence councils, and they were relieved according to principles set out in government decree #696 from 1958.

Slovakia's Defence Council acted as a state body and oversaw the execution in Slovakia of the State Defence Council's decrees.¹⁷ It recommended to its superior body measures for solving questions of Czechoslovakia's "defence capability". On the territory of Slovakia, the Slovak Defence Council directed the activity of individual ministries, of other organs of state administration and of the defence councils of the national committees.

An important moment in the functioning of the security system was the correction of mutual relations between the Slovak defence Council and the Slovak government, ministries and other organs of state administration and the national committees' defence councils along vertical and some horizontal lines. The Slovak government, according to the transitional security system model elaborated on the "Principles for the temporary direction of defence," acting in defence matters according to the laws and other regulations valid at the time. In principle it followed the conclusions and directives of the Slovak defence Council. In cooperation with relevant departments of the federal government, the Slovak government took care of agreed measures and planned-out tasks in relevant organs in Slovakia, at individual levels of national committees and in the economy, such as tasks from a special part of the federal plan. In relation with the Slovak ministries, organs of state administration and defence councils at all levels, the Slovak defence Council has the right within its jurisdiction to assign serious tasks and regular reports on their fulfilment. This only served to strengthen the system of directive orders and the long-term "administrative-bureaucratic" system of management.

¹⁶ Archív Odboru obrany a bezpečnosti vlády Slovenskej republiky (Archive of the defence and security department of the government of the Slovak republic – hereafter A OOB vlády SR), č.j. 00279, 1969.

¹⁷ According to article 2 of the procedural code of the Slovak Socialist republic's Defence Council, approved at its second meeting on 27 November 1969, the chairman of the State Defence Council (the President of the Republic *ex officio* – trans.) could appoint and remove the chairman, vice-chairman and members of the Slovak Defence Council based on recommendations from the Slovak National Council (the republic parliament – trans.). A OOB vlády SR, 1969, č.j. 0871/1970.

In order to improve the quality of the defence branch a department for defence and security was established under the Slovak government and also served as the secretariat of the Slovak Defence Council. The department was instituted as an independent, military, advisory and coordinating organ for the Slovak prime minister and government in matters of defence and security. Other Slovak institutions involved in defence included the ministries of the interior, planning, industry, forestry and waterways, finance, agriculture and nutrition, construction, post and telecommunications, technology, transport, education, labour and social affairs, health and trade. Other organs that shared in tasks were the Statistical office, Unions of production and consumer cooperatives, the Union for Cooperation with the Army (ZVÄZARM), the Czechoslovak Red Cross, and the Czechoslovak fire safety union.¹⁸

On 7 November 1969 the Slovak government discussed “Principles of the direction of state defence,” which essentially replaced the 1967 security system. The principles were issued to all defence council of district and city national committees in Slovakia. The abolition of regional national committees complicated the situation at first, as all plans and preparations of the territory for defence had hinged on this level of national committee and on the regional CPS committees’ defence commissions. Measures to create detached workplaces under the government’s department for defence and security in the former regions failed to control this chaotic situation, as the old link had functioned as the “directing, coordinating and executive organ of economic-mobilizational preparations.”¹⁹ The State Defence Council eventually solved the problem with its decision to create regional defence councils, and they began operation on 1 September 1979.

The extent to which the “Principles” were elaborated and implemented in Slovakia was influenced in large part frequent personnel changes in ministries, national committees at all levels, the defence councils, and in other organs and organizations during the “normalization” period following the Soviet-led invasion. The most complicated situation arose in the early 1970’s in central branches of state administration, which exercised insufficient influence over the apparatus of the national committees and other subordinate components. With time situation worsened and was only solved by strengthening the role of the Slovak Defence Council’s secretariat (the government’s department for defence and security) by creating a “predesigned staff” of the Slovak defence Council and representatives of the main links in the security system. This essentially administrative measure, however, brought about nothing positive, because the basic problem which had to be solved was the lack of qualified experts, most of whom had been let go.

Another serious problem that gradually crystallized was the question of mutual relations, rights and delimitation of roles between the federal and republic organs of state administration, especially over matters for which at the centre federal committees were set up at the republic level ministries, such as for prices, industry, agriculture, transport, post and telecommunications, technology and R & D; these committees were abolished in 1971 and replaced by full-fledged ministries. The response at the time was to give a greater role to the republic governments in solving security matters.

The Slovak defence Council began operation on 7 August 1969, and district defence council were in place by the beginning of November. After the abolition of the regional level of national committees the newly established regional defence councils began functioning by September 1970.²⁰ Altogether 38 district defence councils had to be set up in Slovakia, but with regards to the personnel staffing of the republic defence council and its secretariat it was difficult to render the lower-level defence council any methodical help, guide their activity or supervise them.

¹⁸ A OOB vlády SR, 1969, č.j. 0018/1969.

¹⁹ A OOB vlády SR, 1970, č.j. 01206/1970.

²⁰ A OOB vlády SR, 1970, č.j. 00406/1970.

The republic defence council was plagued above all by uncertainty over its obligations in coordinating defence and protection roles in state administration. There was an essential definitive statement of the structure of defence departments and the content of their operations. The Slovak defence Council was to serve as an overarching supervisory organ, but this could not be asserted in its supervisory measures, as reflected in the fact that in mutual relations between the Slovak Defence Council and ministries, central organs, Slovak organizations the whole question of overarching supervision in safeguarding defence and protection roles on Slovak territory could not be resolved. This in turn affected the safeguarding of combat readiness at the district and regional defence council levels. A similar state of affairs existed in relations between the Slovak Defence Council and central organs.

This situation prevailed in Slovakia until the end of 1970.²¹ A solution was sought not in raising the specialized expertise of people but again only in administrative measures which evaded this fact. The tendency toward administrative-bureaucratic interventions was boosted by the amendment of Constitutional Law #10/1969 which was to create the structure of the defence council system “as principal organs of the republics, regions and districts,”²² that is, to block the defence councils of the lower national committees. This goal was pursued in the creation of the district, regional and Slovak defence councils as independent entities with subordinate secretariats. With the creation of the secretariats the situation did not improve, as it was just a matter of “adding cadres,” the expertise of which was debatable (as confirmed by internal audits, the findings of which are stored in the Slovak government’s defence and security department). Again, it was just an administrative measure.

The regional and district defence councils gradually assumed the function of directing and coordinating organs in matters of “defence and protection” on their respective territories. The overall level was varied, because it was conditional on a factor often underestimated – people’s qualifications for carrying out a specific function. This deficit could not be eliminated or made up for by “methodical” orders or other expertly intended directives from a higher level. National committees’ defence councils’ operations were oriented to implementing the Communist Party’s defence policy in all branches of political, economic and cultural life on a given territory. They were also directed in this main aim by instructions from the Slovak Defence Council.

In the initial phase of the defence councils’ operations the documentation of the former Communist Party defence commissions was used. As supervisory organs discovered, many members of the councils were new and “therefore still do not orient themselves sufficiently in their tasks...”²³ Fulfilment of plans and sessions of the defence councils were often “disrupted by lack of time of their members in fulfilling tasks for consolidation” (like “normalization,” “consolidation” was a euphemism for the post-invasion restoration of control).²⁴ Some members of the council actively played their parts in the screening commissions that purged the CPCS and state.

Of the fundamental documents for the defence council system at the end of the 1960s and beginning of the 1970s only Constitutional Law #10/1969 and the “Principles for the direction of the defence of the state” were adopted at the federal level. By contrasts there were delays in issuing a Federal Assembly law on the competences of federal organs, of the republic, regional and district defence councils, of other organs of the republics and national committees for direction and fulfilment of “defence” tasks and relations between these organs as stipulated

²¹ A OOB vlády SR, 1970, č.j. 00406/1970.

²² A OOB vlády SR, 1970, č.j. 00406/1970.

²³ A OOB vlády SR, 1970, č.j. 00406/1970.

²⁴ A OOB vlády SR, 1970, č.j. 00406/1970.

in paragraph 11 of the aforementioned 1969 Constitutional Law on the State Defence Council.

It was mentioned earlier that in the early 1970s frequent personnel changes were characteristic of the situation at all levels of defence councils, as shown in table 1.

Table 1. Personnel changes in defence council compositions in Slovakia in early 1970s.

Level of security system	Council chairman	Vice-chairman	Members
Slovak Defence Council	1	0	1
National Committee security councils	10	5	18

The forces and means necessary for operation were not allocated to the national committees' defence councils. Demands for forces and means were resolved by the secretary of the Slovak Defence Council at the level of the army's General Staff, which allocated them from the Eastern Military District.²⁵

Despite the "Principles of the direction of state defence" adopted by the Defence Council on 10 July 1969, most of the decrees of CPCSC Central Committee's former Military Defence Commission still applied at the end of the 1960s into the early 1970s. The usefulness and realism of the documentation, however, already clashed with the changes which hinged especially on the transition from defence commissions of Party organs to the system of national defence councils. This documentation was not corrected to suit the operations of particular departments either. The most complicated situation arose in the defence council of the Košice national committee, where there was still no apparatus.²⁶ For this reason the drafting of documentation for the defence council could not begin even in 1970.

In accordance with Constitutional law #10/1969, paragraph 1, section 2 and the Principles of direction of the defence of the state, "defence formations" were established at ministries and other central Slovak offices in the early 1970s. According to interpretation of the Principles, individual ministries and central offices were responsible for carrying out measures concerning the state. Within their jurisdictions they directed the economic-mobilizational preparations, civil defence preparations and fulfilled other defence tasks according to the instructions of the Slovak Interior Ministry, Ministry for Labour and Social Affairs, and the Finance Ministry. The defence formations handled proposals for implementation and middle-term plans of mobilization investment and Civil defence investments of work projects, for supplementing state and mobilization reserves, for financing mobilization preparations, Civil Defence preparations and special research and development. A special role was played by the defence formations at the Slovak Planning Ministry, which was the central office for planning, "methodical management, coordination and realisation of roles in the Slovak Socialist republic's economy for safeguarding defence and security and for the methodical management and coordination of economic-mobilizational preparations for branch ministries and national committees..."²⁷

The defence formations' roles ensued from the Principles for direction of the defence of the state and from instructions and regulations of relevant central Czechoslovak bodies. During the

²⁵ Forces for individual regions in Slovakia were allocated in the early 1970s thus:

Western Slovakia – 200 persons

Central Slovakia – 225 persons

Eastern Slovakia – 150 persons

Over the long term, however, it was necessary also to take into account forces for the defence council of the Bratislava National Committee.

²⁶ A OOB vlády SSR, 1970, 00183/1970.

²⁷ A OOB vlády SSR, 1970, 0094/OOB.

period under consideration the defence formations' significance was not fully appreciated, as emerged in the management of subordinate organizations, which was conducted in a purely administrative way. The underestimation of the defence formations was also reflected in their personnel staffing. To a great extent positions were filled by unqualified workers without the appropriate education or necessary experience in the given field of activity required by the valid nomenclature of that period (#142/1968) issued by the Ministry for Labour and Social Affairs on 15 January 1969.²⁸ Very few of the leading specialists and top officials had had any tertiary education (all members of the defence departments had secondary or equivalent secondary specialized education). In the early 1970s most of the defence formations did not employ a single career soldier: specialized functions were performed by civilians (38 cases) or by N.C.O.'s and soldiers in the reserves (27 cases). Such practice did not guarantee perfect knowledge of branches of the economy or methods of planning, especially from the military angle. In the early 1970s it proved necessary to supplement defence formations with an extra 45 workers, including two career officers for the Slovak government's defence department. The planned total number of employees for 1970 was 174. (See Table 2.)

Table 2. Staffing levels for defence formations in Slovakia in 1970

Ministry or central office	Title of department	Number of officers planned	Actual number of officers	Number of civilian staff planned	Actual number of civilian staff	Total planned staff	Actual total staff
SSR Defence Council	Defence and security council	11	9	16	3	17	12
SSR Ministry of Planning	Military economics department	8	8	14	6	22	14
SR Gov't Office, SSR Nat'l Council	Defence department			5	3	5	3
SSR Min. of finance	Fin. Def. dep't			10	9	10	9
SSR Min. for industry	Defence dep't	1	1	33	19	34	20
SSR Min. for Agric.	Defence department			5	4	5	4
SSR Min. for trans., post & telecom.	Defence department			13	8	13	8
SSR Min. for technology	Defence formation			2	2	2	2
SSR Min. for labour & soc. affairs	Defence formation			3	2	3	2

²⁸ A OOB vlády SSR, 1970, 0094/OOB.

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SSR Min. of interior	Defence department	5	5			5	5
SSR Min. of trade	Defence department	1	1	4	4	5	5
SSR Min. for construction	Defence department			4	4	4	4
SSR Min. for forests & rivers	Defence department			5	2	5	2
SSR Min. of health	Defence department			8	8	8	8
SSR Min. of education	Defence department			5	5	5	5
SSR Min. of Culture	Defence department			5	5	5	5
SSR Min. of justice	Defence formation			2	1	2	1
Slovak Price office	Defence formation			2	2	2	2
Slovak statistical office	Defence formation	1	1	2	1	3	2
Slovak Acad. of Sciences	Defence department			5	4	5	4
Slov. Mining office	Defence formation			1	0	1	0
Slov. Admin. for geodesy & cartography	Defence formation			1	1	1	1
Slovak office for press & info	Defence formation			1	1	1	1
Slov. Office for labour safety	Defence formation			1	1	1	1
Supreme oversight office	Defence formation			1	1	1	1
Other				8	8	8	8
TOTAL		27	25	147	105	174	130

Another problem was the management of the defence formations and their inclusion. In some Slovak ministries they were incorporated into other departments (internal and so forth). Cases were also frequent of management by the heads of departments, who because of principles of secrecy were not supposed to find out defence-related roles. Consequently, measures were quickly taken to make defence formations independent, subordinate exclusively to the deputy

minister responsible for defence in that area. Other complications arose in connection with highly-secret "Special Formations," which also carried out defence functions but outside the defence formations. With the tendency toward centralization measures arose to incorporate the Special Formations into the defence formations. Later, however, it proved necessary to detach the Special Formations, as decreed by the Slovak government on 5 December 1969.²⁹

According to contemporary considerations and practical measures in the area of defence the decisive role in the Soviet model was played by the Ministry of National Defence. It worked from the conclusion that the presumed factors of war and the consequent needs of defence and protection of the territory demanded the implementation of at least the following basic principles:

- Preparation for defence and concordant needs were understood with regard to planning as strengthening centralisation. They worked from the overall concept of the defence of the state as derived from defence and security policy, from doctrinal principles and from the concept of the Joint Command of the WTO.
- The overall understanding of the "concept of preparation for defence" was adapted to the anticipated potential opponent, the "external class enemy" and the development of the means of attack.

The army's ability to carry out its tasks ensuing from the security system was seriously affected, and in some cases rendered impossible by the very intervention of the five WTO armies and their subsequent relocation and reorganization. The reality of the occupation was legalized by the signing of the Moscow Protocol, according to article five of which Party and government circles, together with the defence ministry, had to resolve immediately a number of problems relating to the stationing of a contingent of the invading force. Representatives of the CSPA were acquainted with tasks ensuing from the Protocol during assemblies held on 28 August and 1 October 1968. The commanders of armies, military districts and their chiefs of political administration and leading defence functionaries were briefed by Defence Minister Dzúr on the army's reaction to the critical days of the intervention and after. By the end of August, he already formulated a several-point line of approach marking a conciliatory turn towards the invaders. This turn was clearly expressed in ministerial order no 12.³⁰

One of the problems that the army command had to solve in order to defend the "new line" was the already-mentioned question of stationing occupying forces. Minister Dzúr entrusted the drafting of the project to the CSPA General Staff's operational administration.³¹ A breakthrough came with the negotiations between Soviet and Czechoslovak military delegations in the Ruthenian city of Mukachevo on 16-17 September.³² As a result, in the Eastern Military District 23 military formations had to be moved, eight were abolished and another five subordinated to

²⁹ A OOB vlády SR, 1970, 0094/OOB. The detachment was recommended by the Slovak Interior Ministry in its guideline 01340/170-64.

³⁰ VHA, Bratislava, f. 0855, carton No. 25.

³¹ J. Paulík, a member of the Czechoslovak federal government's commission for analysis of the events of 1967-1970, concludes on the basis of an interview with General V. Pícek (in 1968 the deputy commander of the operational administration) that General K. Rusov asked General Pícek to work out a project for the location of the Soviet forces along the northern borders of Bohemia and in northern Moravia. (J. Paulík, „Československá armáda po srpnu 1968," manuscript, p. 48.)

³² The Soviet delegation was led by Defence Minister A.A. Grechko and included Generals I.S. Marjachnin, N.V. Ogarkov, P.S. Kutachev, M.m. Kozlov, and A.M. Jamshchikov. The Czechoslovak team was led by Dzúr and included Generals K. Rusov, M. Šmoldas, J. Lux, B. Dvořák and P. Kalický. The two sides agreed that Soviet ground forces would be stationed in northern Prague, northeastern Pardubice, northwestern Ostrava, in Olomouc and in central Slovakia. Air units would be stationed in Hradčany, Milovice, Olomouc and Sliač. (VÚA-VHA, Prague, MNO, f. Vojenská rada, 1968, sign. No. 1/23-4.)

other commands.³³ Altogether 22 garrisons were released in the EMD. More than 250 formations, facilities and institutes had to rework entirely their mobilizational plans. Such reorganizational changes in the Czechoslovak army and the stationing of part of the Soviet forces of occupation had a long-term negative impact on the Czechoslovak army as a whole.

The sharp lowering of the Czechoslovak army's fighting power was a direct negative result. The relocated and reorganized military formations became literally incapable of fighting for a relatively long period. The army's fighting power and capability was weakened by the transfer of the 13th tank division from Bohemia to a base in southwest Slovakia. The division, officially named the "Kiev-Dukla-Ostrava division of Czechoslovak-Soviet Friendship," was moved from its original location outside Prague, because its proximity to the capital had created "very intensive contacts with various "progressive" institutions."³⁴

The army command considered the division to be the most infected "by ideas of a rightist opportunism and revisionism" and feared that its "moral-political condition was so disintegrated that, from that perspective, the division was no longer capable of fighting."³⁵ There had been frequent and relatively extensive changes in personnel in the division. During 1967 and 1968 the composition of the officer corps was changed by 85 percent and in subordinate formations by 90 percent.³⁶ The relocation of the division to Slovakia brought another 261 departures by career soldiers, with 303 officers and 100 non-commissioned officers requesting reassignment.³⁷

Until new mobilization plans were drawn up, bringing the division's numbers up to war strength in the event of mobilization could not be secured, nor the creation of three new mobilization units and 180 formations, institutes and facilities.³⁸

The financial costs of relocation in 1968 were estimated by the CSPS's General Staff and by the planning to run from one billion to 1.5 billion crowns. Funds for relocation of units and the repair of garrisons according to the demands of the treaty on "temporary" stationing of Soviet forces were incorporated into the army's budget for 1969. (According to the 3 December 1968 meeting of the parliament's defence and security committee, the army's budget was 15,805,000,000 crowns.)

The Eastern Military District had not only its specific place within the framework of the security system of all of Czechoslovakia but also extraordinary significance for the geopolitical space which Slovakia occupied. Created in 1965 to replace the Second Military District that had existed since 1950,³⁹ during its existence the EMD went through various organizational and location changes, which had substantial influence on command structure, on the number and strength of units, formation and facilities regardless of direct subordination.

Substantial changes were made in 1965 with a reduction in the choice numbers of the district's commands; several units and formations were abolished or relocated to Bohemia and Morava. With these measures the EMD became the territorial command for Slovakia and North Moravia. It covered 60,074 km over four regions or 46 percent of state territory, with 6,035,135 inhabitants (more than 40 percent of the population of Czechoslovakia). As of 1968, the EMD

³³ VHA, Bratislava, f. 0855, carton No. 153.

³⁴ VHA, Bratislava, f. 0855, carton No. 169.

³⁵ VHA, Bratislava, f. 0855, carton No. 41, 153.

³⁶ VHA, Bratislava, f. 0855, carton No. 41.

³⁷ VHA, Bratislava, f. 0855, carton No. 153.

³⁸ VÚA-VHA, Prague, MNO, f. MNO Secretariat, 1968, sign. 1/23-6.

³⁹ In 1950 the Second Military District had overseen six divisions, but after a reorganization in 1958 only one division remained.

was served by 9,259 career soldiers, non-commissioned officers, and officers.⁴⁰ The prescribed numbers of military equipment as of 1968, which called for 1029 tanks and 899 armoured personnel carriers, were not met.

Instead, the EMD had at its disposal 935 tanks (32 T-54s, 734 T-34s, 169 SD-100s) and 378 APCs of various marks. Only one tank division was located in Slovakia, arising out of the reorganization of a motorized rifle division.⁴¹ The relocation and reorganizations demanded by the Defence Minister's Order #001089 (in connection with handing over bases and sites to Soviet units) had a negative impact on the District's fighting capability. After this order was issued on 28 September 1968, the EMD Command began carrying out the unrealistic tasks which had to be fulfilled by 15 October 1968.⁴²

The five Soviet occupation divisions were stationed in 33 garrisons and four airfields. Military technology and other materiel were stored in the garrisons and in 19 special warehouses and six fuel depots.⁴³

In the autumn of 1968, the Hungarian forces that had participated in the invasion gradually left Slovakia. On 17 October Hungarian government decree no. 3339/1968 declared that "in the interest of the defence of the cause of socialism, Hungarian units located on the territory of Czechoslovakia along with allied armies have fulfilled their international mission."⁴⁴ According

⁴⁰ The sharp reduction in staff of the EMD in the mid-1960s forced the EMD command to issue many complaints. The defence ministry rejected the EMD command's demands for a larger peacetime force with the argument that it was impossible to meet the „justified demands“ as it would mean a „significant“ breach of the planned number by 4000 to 5000 soldiers.

⁴¹ In the history of this division we see the arduous process through which the entire EMD passed. The reorganization of 1964 meant above all the substantial reduction of professional soldiers and non-commissioned officers from 2031 to 780 and of the number of officers from 815 to 445. The amount of weaponry grew, such that there were now 2.1 tanks for each tank driver in the division, and 32 APCs for each APC driver (all APC drivers were concentrated into one tank regiment), while there were 9.3 wheeled vehicles for each driver. Only in 1966-67 was there an increase in career soldiers and NCO's by 333, and of officers by 120. While performing its role as a logistical and training base, the division also carried out demanding mobilizational tasks. Two divisions of reserves were trained annually. In 1967 the division held the greatest number of command staff exercises, tactical exercises and wargames in the whole CSPA. (VHA, Bratislava, f. 0855, carton No. 202, 39, 169, 44.)

⁴² The timetable for executing Defence Minister's Order #001089-13/MNO GS was drawn up and realized thus:

Base	Leave by	Soviet demand
Bruntál	5-10-1968	
Frenštát pod Radhoštěm	10-10-1968	
Jelšava	04-10-1968	
Jeseník	14-10-1968	08-10-68
Komárno	13-10-1968	
Krnov	10-10-1968	
Město Libava	10-10-1968	
Lešt' (training area)	13-10-1968	
Olomouc	10-10-1968	05-10-68
Nové Zámky	07-10-1968	
Rožňava	10-10-1968	07-10-68
Ružomberok	15-10-1968	13-10-68
Rimavská Sobota	08-10-1968	06-10-68
Šumperk	10-10-1968	
Sliač	12-10-1968	11-10-68
Zvolen	12-10-1968	11-10-68
Štúrovo	07-10-1968	

Source VHA, Bratislava, f. 0855, carton No. 157.

⁴³ VÚA-VHA, Prague, MNO, operačná správa, 1968, sign. No. 2-10/1.

⁴⁴ Archív Komisie vlády SR, Bratislava, Uznesenie Maďarskej revolučnej robotnícko-roľníckej vlády č. 3339/1968, „O stiahnutí maďarských vojsk rozmiestnených v Československu.“

to that decree, the Hungarian defence minister was ordered to arrange the withdrawal of the eight Hungarian armoured rifle division and organize the “festive welcoming of the troops,” secure the necessary publicity, propose citations and receive “measures within his own authority for the rewarding of outstanding merits in various forms.”

During the withdrawal of part of the invading force the relocation of the five Soviet divisions was taking place. The occupation of Czechoslovakia and stationing of elite Soviet divisions altered the strategic situation. The old strategic-operative line Prague-Dijon and the territory of Czechoslovakia acquired a new strategic dimension. The Soviet power elite could already plan on the potential use of Czechoslovak territory for the stationing of tactical nuclear weapons, which could lead to the acquisition of strategic supremacy. The Soviet concept of a surprise start of a nuclear war counted on the alternative of creating a highly battle-ready, mobile front line of WTO forces in Central Europe. Its task was to launch and maintain a rapid ground attack. This front line consisted of Soviet forces stationed in the GDR and Czechoslovakia, and divisions of the first and fourth Czechoslovak armies. The stationing of Soviet forces in Slovakia also created optimal conditions for possible aggression through Austria and then westwards. (Soviet forces were already based in Hungary before the invasion of Czechoslovakia.)

After the adoption of Constitutional Law on the Czechoslovak federation in January 1969 the North Moravian region was removed from the EMD and transferred to the Central Military District. During the realization of the army’s “Macrostructure” in April 1969 several military formations were abolished and the EMD Command was directed to establish a reserve army command by 1 April 1970, according to the mobilization development plan.

Through these measures and the reorganization of the 13th tank division into a training unit the district’s character also changed into an army-type district, with significant training purposes.

With the implementation of the “Principles of the direction of state defence,” demands on the safeguarding of economic-mobilizational preparations were substantially raised by comparison with the 1967 security system model. Acting on the proposal of the Slovak planning ministry, the republic’s defence council approved and the Slovak government accepted (by decree #195/1970) measures intended to create the conditions for meeting the requirements of the armed forces. In arms manufacture the main emphasis was placed on increasing military capacities in industry, transport and health. In industry it was a matter of completing the largest investment units in Vihorlat Snina, the Dagmar stock and ZÚS Dubnica. In road transport in the late 1960s and early 1970s the focus of capacities was oriented toward constructing roads for moving the troops concentrated on Slovak territory after the invasion of August 1968. These main and intersecting automobile roads were designated HAS-PAS. Work was also begun on communications network to meet the demands of the invading forces’ commanders.

These economic-mobilizational preparations were essentially executed and safeguarded by the defence formations formed in the Slovak government office, ministries and other central state organs according to Constitutional Law #10/1969 and the “Principles for the direction of the defence of the state.” These formations devoted heightened attention to the accelerated modernization of the armed forces and a marked rise on the level of equipping the army with weapons and military hardware. Another goal of the growth in weapons production in Slovakia was the project to improve balance of foreign trade, especially through arms deliveries. Production programme V 5632 (caterpillar vehicles), approved by CPCPS Presidium and Czechoslovak government, was intended to meet many of these preconditions. This production programme largely took care of supplies to the USSR and other East bloc countries, thereby achieving a significant improvement in Czechoslovakia’s balance of trade with those states. In other areas attention was turned to building up capacities for other military technology, in particular weapons, ammunition and automobile fixtures, which at that time were pursued as being among the most profitable and prominent commodities.

At the close of the 1960s bodies were established for the safeguarding of the economic-mobilizational preparations and preparation of civil defence at the former State Planning Commission and at ministries. Before 1969 there was no such body in Slovakia which handled this matter. Though there were officials from "Special Formations" in the Slovak National Council, the regional and district national committees, economic-mobilization preparations were only a peripheral matter in their activity, as they devoted their attention mostly to filing secret documents and protecting state, economic and service secrets.

M. PÚČIK: ÚČASŤ SLOVENSKA NA ČESKOSLOVENSKOM BEZPEČNOSTNOM SYSTÉME V 60. ROKOCH

Štúdia sa zaoberá zložitou a doposiaľ nedostatočne spracovanou problematikou budovania bezpečnostného systému ČSSR v období 60. rokov minulého storočia. V texte štúdie sa používa dobový pojem „obranný systém“ (v niektorých dokumentoch je používaný aj pojem „branný systém“), ktorý je však už zastaraný. V základných rysoch zodpovedá modernému pojmu „bezpečnostný systém štátu“. Predmetné obdobie je špecifické tým, že sa fiaskom skončil ideologický model „všeľudovej obrany štátu“, a vojenskou intervenciou časti vojsk Varšavskej zmluvy v auguste 1968 boli násilne prerušené odvážne diskusie o vlastnej obrannej doktríne v období tzv. Pražskej jari. Po vzniku federácie sa začal realizovať nový model „obranného systému“, v ktorom vzrástol význam Slovenska. Základom celého systému sa stala opäť armáda. Zvýšil sa však význam celoštátnej prípravy obyvateľstva na predpokladaný vojnový konflikt so „Západom“. Základ nového modelu „obranného systému“ z konca 60. rokov minulého storočia platil v rôznych modifikáciách aj v nasledujúcom období.

M. PÚČIK: SLOVAKIA IN DER SICHERHEITSSYSTEMS DER TSCHECHOSLOWAKISCHEN SOZIALISTISCHEN REPUBLIK IN DER ZEIT DER 1960ER JAHRE

Die Studie befasst sich mit der komplexen und bislang unzureichend verarbeiteten Frage des Aufbaus des Sicherheitssystems der Tschechoslowakischen Sozialistischen Republik in der Zeit der 1960er Jahre. Der Text der Studie verwendet den Begriff „Verteidigungssystem“ (in einigen Dokumenten wird auch der Begriff „Wehrsystem“ verwendet), der jedoch veraltet ist. In seinen Grundmerkmalen entspricht es dem modernen Begriff „Staatssicherheitssystem“. Diese gegenrechte Periode ist insofern spezifisch, als das ideologische Modell der „Volksverteidigung des Staates“ mit einem Fiasko endete und die militärische Intervention eines Teils der Truppen des Warschauer Pakts im August 1968 die Diskussionen über die eigene Verteidigungsdoktrin zum Zeitpunkt der sogenannten „Prager Frühling“ gewaltsam unterbrach. Nach der Gründung der Föderation wurde ein neues Modell des „Verteidigungssystems“ eingeführt, bei dem die Bedeutung der Slowakei zunahm. Die Basis des gesamten Systems wurde wieder die Armee. Die Bedeutung der landesweiten Vorbereitung der Bevölkerung auf den erwarteten Kriegskonflikt mit dem „Westen“ hat jedoch zugenommen. Die Grundlage des neuen Modells des „Verteidigungssystems“ aus den späten 1960er Jahren war in der Folgezeit in verschiedenen Modifikationen noch gültig.