

0:00:08 – 0:00:47

/Date on screen/ 14 October 1990

/Text on screen/ Audio recording

Conversation between ministers Martin ŠPEGELJ and Josip BOLJKOVAC

*Martin ŠPEGELJ:* Listen, if the need arises, in a crucial moment, find two or three men to get rid of the most dangerous ones.

*Josip BOLJKOVAC:* OK.

*Martin ŠPEGELJ:* To get rid of them physically. Somebody goes to the flat. A courier. He appears at the door...bang, bang, bang, and goes down the stairs.

*Josip BOLJKOVAC:* ...and then they can call the police and ask them who did it...

*Martin ŠPEGELJ:* Then down the stairs, goes to another one, and then kills him, that is, at the same time. The most dangerous ones can be killed at the doorstep. Never mind about women and children, none of that.

/Text on screen/

Some parts were recorded in difficult technical conditions, on a VHS system, without the knowledge of the main protagonists of the story

#### WHAT'S TRUE ABOUT ARMING OF THE TERRORIST FORMATIONS OF HDZ IN CROATIA

*Franjo TUĐMAN:* Up till now, I assure you, Croatia's leadership, the new democratic leadership of Croatia, generally speaking, hasn't made a single wrong move. Solving particular issues with specific places is a different thing...and with such policy we have provided such democracy, that caricatures and improper things can be published, and people can write about TUĐMAN being a Bolshevik, a Yugoslav agent, an Ustasha etc., coming not only from those who plot against our lives, but also from the opposition parties here. Therefore, dear gentlemen, I had to say this, not because of myself, not because of HDZ, but because of Croatia.

/Text on screen/

*Goran RIBIČIĆ:*

...in the realisation of the Subotica - Novi Sad axis?

*Unidentified male:*

Yes, yes, yes.

*Goran RIBIČIĆ:*

/unintelligible/

*Unidentified male:*

And in this case, up to that axis, how would that be realised?

*Goran RIBIČIĆ:*

Well, basically, if the situation over here is settled...settled in the sense of crushing the JNA in this region, taking over its facilities and equipment, especially equipment. Then we would set in, together with /unintelligible/...and then other units, not only the ones from Osijek would set in...some 300 soldiers if I remember well would be deployed...actually one part would move forwards towards Novi Sad, one towards Subotica...directly towards those big cities. En route we would create such an atmosphere that would enable recruitment of manpower. The recruitment would be carried out by units that would go behind us.

*19.10.1990*

*Martin ŠPEGELJ:*

.../unintelligible/...they have all those numbers...unintelligible/

*Unidentified male:*

They check them, right?

*Martin ŠPEGELJ:*

Yes, they do, if he's at home, not at home, etc. For example, they know where /unintelligible/ was in the last 24 hours.

*Unidentified male:*

Yes, yes, yes.

*Martin ŠPEGELJ:*

...at the barracks, across the street, then home, he had a fight with his wife, they know it all...

*Unidentified male:*

Unbelievable...

*Martin ŠPEGELJ:*

They cover all the municipalities, for sure.

*Unidentified male:*

...I'm very sensitive about this, you know...

*Martin ŠPEGELJ:*

.../unintelligible/...when they had no weapons...

*Narrator:*

Following of JNA units and officers and putting pressure on them is Martin ŠPEGELJ's every-day obsession. Faxes containing information on the activities of JNA units and their commanders are being sent from all parts of Croatia.

*Franjo TUĐMAN:*

As for the arming, we did not arm HDZ.

*Unidentified male:*

We are concerned if the going gets rough...on one side...damn...look, I don't see that HDZ is organised...But, they are fanatic...and you may think they are a handful of wretches...fuck.

*Narrator:*

The criteria for the selection of elite members of the new army are identical to the criteria of the underground. Apart from pure family tree and Croatian kinship to the third degree, the majority of the infamous elite forces are hardened criminals and Ustasha terrorists. They have been taken off the arrest warrants, and instead of being taken before the Court, they are now members of the legion whose only goal is to, not caring for the innocent victims, achieve the NDH /Independent State of Croatia/ vision of Croatia.

*Martin ŠPEGELJ:*

...they are fanatics, man...they are fanatics.

*Unidentified male:*

I know, when you told me last time...

*Martin ŠPEGELJ:*

They are not from Virovitica. They come from that village...Pepelane, or what it's called...

*Unidentified male:*

Yes, there is a village called Pepelane....

*Martin ŠPEGELJ:*

They are Croats from that village, they used to be tough Ustashas. They are heavily armed.

*Narrator:*

The Minister of defence says that the Ustashas are tough, but he's not bothered by their toughness.

*Josip BOLJKOVAC, Minister of Interior of the Republic of Croatia:*

We are going to use all means, we are going to use weapons, and the Serbs in Croatia will never be what they have been so far, as long as we are here. Their supremacy is history. Their Knin is not going to be Knin anymore. We will take over Knin. Knin is going to disappear. All Croats should mind this, and we will establish a state, no matter what the price is going to be, and no matter if blood is spilt.

*HTV Interview with Martin ŠPEGELJ, 24.11.1990*

...and putting emphasis on what you say, peace is indeed something that should initiate all people with good will to fight for peace in their institutions, organisations and political parties, to fight for temperance, harmony, mutual respect and tolerance. It is better to negotiate for 10 years than to wage war for 10 minutes. I think I can say this with full responsibility.

*Audio recording:*

*Martin ŠPEGELJ:*

The Knin issue will be solved like this: we're gonna slaughter them. And we will have an international recognition for that. We will slaughter them. Especially now, when this bitch has won in Serbia...

*Unidentified male:*

MILOŠEVIĆ?

*Martin ŠPEGELJ:*

Yes. Americans are now offering us all the help we need. And so far they have been only speculating. Now they say: 1000 armoured vehicles and full equipment for 100 000 soldiers, all for free.

*Franjo TUĐMAN:*

We did not arm HDZ.

*HDZ secretary for Virovitica:*

...when we organise something through HDZ, only with the chosen people. We have lists of men who are under my command and for whom I have the weapons, but they are not going to get it until the last moment. One of our men is always there. Our men go there immediately and arrest.

*Unidentified male:*

OK...in that moment?

*HDZ secretary for Virovitica:*

We switch their radio transmitters off...

*Unidentified male:*

Uh-huh...a Montenegrin, I know him, PEROVIĆ...

*Martin ŠPEGELJ:*

So, 10 of them, 9 that is, they all come to me, I send them over and my couriers with them right away. At the same time one of them, in case the conditions are bad, he goes to the station where our men switch power off to the whole city.

Our men know their ways around in the city much better than they do...

*Unidentified male:*

Goddamn...

*HDZ secretary for Virovitica:*

Yes, yes, when he throws him /as heard on the tape/, no way...So, they alarm ROMIĆ, he alarms the sabotage platoon and he's in charge of laying siege around that village.

*Unidentified male:*

OK...

*HDZ secretary for Virovitica:*

And one of them, supported by two more is in charge of the radio transmitter.

*Narrator:*

It all goes through HDZ, indeed, and through its chosen people. The most loyal members of the ruling party are directly engaged in the actions of "silent killing".

\*\*\*

*Unidentified male:*

So, that's the group for silent killing?

*Osijek HDZ member:*

Yes, exactly. The names of those who are in possession of automatic rifles are highlighted. 7 or 8 men out of 17 are in possession of both automatic rifles and pistols.

*Unidentified male:*

Who's the commander of that group?

*Osijek HDZ member:*

GLAVAŠ Branimir gives instructions...

*Unidentified male:*

On what is to be done?

*Osijek HDZ member:*

Like I said last time, they received instructions on that from the bearded fellow from Zagreb, from ŠEKS.

*Unidentified male:*

So he's actually giving instructions?

*Osijek HDZ member:*

Well, look, I would say that he's an extremist – the worst one. ŠEKS is an extremist and VEKIĆ, if you ask me, is there only because of money. And Branimir is just a tool that they will get rid of one day. No one will even notice.



16.01.1991.

*HDZ secretary for Virovitica:*

/unintelligible/

*Narrator:*

HDZ has made a plan on defying an order on disbanding and disarming of illegal formations. This plan has been made on all levels. The faulty imported weapons should be returned to the police station and not to the JNA Garrisons.

04.12.1990

*Osijek HDZ member:*

All those who are not Croats are suspicious. It's a normal thing. It's normal that those who are members of the Communist Union are rejected automatically, that they can't be trusted. That goes for Bernardines, as they say.

*Unidentified male:*

What is that group for silent killing comprised of?

*Osijek HDZ member:*

They will get instructions on when and whom...from Branimir GLAVAŠ.

*Unidentified male:*

Where are those lists?

*Osijek HDZ member:*

With GLAVAŠ.

*Unidentified male:*

How is that list made?

*Osijek HDZ member:*

Well, listen, I've just told how it's done in the police, I guess it's the same in the military.

19.10.1990

*Martin ŠPEGELJ:*

There is nothing for the army there. It will be defeated badly. I'm thinking how to protect the two of you in this moment. Not from the army, but from the others.

*Unidentified male:*

Fuck...

*Martin ŠPEGELJ:*

Every officer is covered with five men in Virovitica and they are all going to be executed while still at their homes.

*Unidentified male:*

We'll give you this list now, and you'll get the other ones tomorrow.

*Martin ŠPEGELJ:*

I must act quickly and tell those guys in Virovitica whom they should separate...

*Unidentified male:*

I know when we make...

*Martin ŠPEGELJ:*

A soldier, anyone...in the street, a jeep, I don't know, whatever...when the signal is given, they are all to be cut down. No questions. No identification.

*Narrator:*

Minister of Defence of the Republic of Croatia obviously believes that his system of organised killings of superiors is highly elaborated. He orders execution of JNA members in the street, in order to prevent them from getting to the barracks in case of alarm.

*14.10.1990, audio recording:*

*Martin ŠPEGELJ:*

As for the watchtowers, when it comes to that point, they are all going to be disarmed. But Albanians should be left 5 bullets in their rifles. The other ones should be locked in the basement and given food and water if it takes more than three days. And about this...if something happens, just give an order to your men: kill extremes. On the spot, in the street, within the barracks premises, anywhere else, with a shot in the stomach. It's not going to be a war, it's going to be a civil war with no mercy for anyone. Not even for women and children. Bombs could simply be thrown into flats.

*HTV Interview, 24.11.1990*

*Martin ŠPEGELJ:*

I am an optimist, sometimes maybe an unrealistic one. And I'm trying to be a realistic optimist, an optimist of the possible, not an optimist of what one would want, because wishes very often exceed possibilities.

MEETING BETWEEN FRANJO TUĐMAN AND LEADERS OF POLITICAL  
PARTIES IN CROATIA

*Željko MAŽAR, SSH President:* The next thing that I would like to say is that we are unpleasantly surprised with the fact, at least what we know from the situation in the field, that the members of the leading party are keeping a night-watch, and we actually don't know what for, except for what we've heard here today. Radio and TV stations are reportedly also under strong surveillance by armed formations.

*Franjo TUĐMAN:* As for the arming, we did not arm HDZ members.

*Ivan Zvonimir ČIČAK, HSS President:* I am confused with the presence of armed individuals in public places, taking into consideration the fact that we haven't been informed about the particular reasons for that. The fact that weapons are being distributed to members of certain parties only is also confusing, and why are weapons being distributed at all...

*Franjo TUĐMAN:* We did not arm HDZ members. We created police, according to the Law and the Constitution, and we created reserve police /units/, and we armed them. We are entitled to that as well. In order to be able to defend ourselves from those who would attack us.

0:03:45

*Martin ŠPEGELJ, Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Croatia:*

I was aware that all these assessments stated that danger lurked from all sides, from above, from below, from the east and from the west, left, right. But it turned out that these were often illusions, or they were given too much attention, and all the threats which were reasonable in the past ceased to be reasonable because of the democratisation. Negotiations and agreements come before everything else, before united forces /?/

*Narrator:*

19.10.1990

*Unidentified male:*

And this?

*Martin ŠPEGELJ:*

They are going to be killed even before they....

*Unidentified male:*

And this one, Ljuban?

*Martin ŠPEGELJ:*

Yes...

*Unidentified male:*

He's not defined...

*Unidentified male 2:*

Yes, he's not defined...

*Martin ŠPEGELJ:*

And this one?

*Unidentified male:*

That one definitely.

*Unidentified male 2:*

Highlight the last name on the list.

*Unidentified male:*

Yes, underline his name three times...

*Unidentified male 2:*

Underline his name...

*Martin ŠPEGELJ:*

Let them block him, don't let them kill him, fuck...

*Unidentified male:*

OK about that, but...

*Unidentified male 2:*

Him as well?

*Unidentified male:*

Yes, yes.

*Unidentified male 2:*

He's not defined...let's not say undefined, but rather frightened...

*Unidentified male:*

Should we do it for all of them? I can do it for all of them, tomorrow. I can make...

*Martin ŠPEGELJ:*

Everything, everything...

*Unidentified male:*

OK.

*Martin ŠPEGELJ:*

And listen, a sergeant, a crazy sergeant that you don't take seriously could go to the barracks, prepare the forces and start shooting.

*Unidentified male:*

Fuck...

*Martin ŠPEGELJ:*

That's why they all should be...

*Narrator:*

Can Martin ŠPEGELJ organise disappearance of all people who stand on his way? He believes it begins with highlighting of certain names on the lists.

*14.10.1990, audio recording:*

*Ministers Martin ŠPEGELJ and Josip BOLJKOVAC:*

*Martin ŠPEGELJ:* Listen, if the need arises, in a crucial moment, find two or three men to get rid of the most dangerous ones.

*Josip BOLJKOVAC:* OK.

*Martin ŠPEGELJ:* To get rid of them physically. Somebody goes to the flat. A courier. He appears at the door...bang, bang, bang, and goes down the stairs.

*Josip BOLJKOVAC:* ...and then they can call the police and ask them who did it...

*Martin ŠPEGELJ:* Then down the stairs, goes to another one, and then him, that is, at the same time. The most dangerous ones can be killed at the doorstep. Never mind about women and children, none of that.

*Text on screen:*

*Only part of a large quantity of the material pertaining to the arming of the chauvinist HDZ formations and the real nature of the ruling Party, which is preparing itself for the terror against the citizens of Yugoslavia has been broadcast.*

*Prepared by: SSNO Public Information Service, VFC "Zastava film", 1991.*



At the moment when the minister addresses the HTV audience, the arming of an illegal HDZ Army is being carried out very fast, which is one of the signs that a terrorist militia is being established in Croatia. Although formal requests for the arming of the HDZ army are being filed to the competent institutions in the country as well, the Croatian leadership sets in motion mechanisms of mass arming from foreign military warehouses. The President of the Republic, Franjo TUĐMAN, and the Minister of Interior BOLJKOVAC, are making numerous contacts with weapons producers all over the world. Hungarians are most supportive of them and they are opening their warehouses wide. On 11-Oct-90, the first shipment of weapons crossed the border between Hungary and Yugoslavia in two trailer trucks, owned by "Čazmatrans" from Bjelovar. The shipment was sent from two warehouses near Budapest to the "Astra" company in Zagreb. The content of the shipment: 450 boxes with over 4500 Kalašnikov rifles and the corresponding amount of ammunition. In view of that, the Federal Secretariat for People's Defence sent a warning to the Hungarian military authorities, reminding them of the possible consequences of such behaviour, which is against all international conventions. The Hungarians sent a rather cynical reply, stating that it was just business and that it had nothing to do with our neighbour's Ministry of Defence.

*Journalist /from an interview given to the HTV on 24.11.1990/:*

Rumour has it that Croatia is hurriedly arming itself, for example that we are buying weapons from the Hungarians who want to join the NATO. Allegedly, among other formations, the police forces receive most of the weapons.

*Martin ŠPEGELJ:*

The question should have been addressed to the Ministry of Interior, but now that we are talking about these issues, of course I am familiar with the speculations in the media.

*/secretly filmed footage/*

*Martin ŠPEGELJ:*

Nobody saw anything. The crossing was like this. There was a column at our side of the border. Then this minister whom no one knows went with a diplomatic passport. He gave the diplomatic passports, then the access ramp was lifted and that was it. So no one saw us except the ambassador, er, that is the customs officer. So, no one saw anything, not even the passports... nothing. But then a Hungarian customs officer saw the passports and said...

*One of the males:* A tall guy, slender?

*Martin ŠPEGELJ:* No, a young guy, plump, he said...

*One of the males:* Yes, what did he say?

*Martin ŠPEGELJ:* He said ŠPEGELJ – yes, MRŠIĆ- yes, but when he said ŠPEGELJ, he closed the driver's passport and did not look further. I said "thank you" and he did not see anything.

*Narrator:*

Hungarians allow ministers ŠPEGELJ and MRŠIĆ to stay illegally in their country, and the transport of weapons from the military warehouses is continued at an unusually fast rate. It is even allowed for The Ministry of Interior of the Republic of Croatia to follow the trucks with weapons in Hungary. On the same night when this conversation took place, 8 "Čazmatrans" trailer trucks loaded with weapons and ammunition intended for the terrorist HDZ Army crossed our border on 20-Oct around 02:00 hrs.

Radio Budapest, taking the position of the Hungarian authorities, predicts engagement of UN forces for settling down the situation in Yugoslavia. We are talking about a special form of aggression against our country, which is being carried out by systematic arming of its most fanatic and persistent enemies.

*Martin ŠPEGELJ:*

“The question should have been addressed to the Ministry of Interior...”

*Narrator:*

“Minister of Defence of the Republic of Croatia, Martin ŠPEGELJ, has done his best to make the illegal import of weapons with the purpose of terrorism successful. If this is not the case, then how can one explain the fact that the fax containing information on possible weapons smuggling sent from the Federal Customs Dept to the customhouses on the borders with Austria and Hungary had no effect? High HDZ and Republic of Croatia officials played a key role in illegal import of weapons. Marijan BALABAN, Chief of Čakovec Public Security Station; Ilija DODIG, Chief of Varaždin State Security Service Centre; Željko TOMLJENović, Defence Affairs Under-secretary; Josip PERKOVIĆ, State Security Under-secretary; Zdravko MRŠIĆ, former Minister of External Affairs; Josip BOLJKOVAC, Minister of Interior of the Republic of Croatia, and Martin ŠPEGELJ, Minister of Defence of the Republic of Croatia.

*Martin ŠPEGELJ:*

“There are 9000 officers in the Fifth Military District at this moment.”

*One of the males:*

Yes?

*Martin ŠPEGELJ:*

That includes servicemen, musicians, etc. That’s 9000. And 18000 soldiers, in Slovenia, Croatia and part of Bosnia. That means 9000 plus 18 000 for the entire Fifth Military District. And we have 80 000 men armed with Kalashnikovs. Let’s say there are 10000 of them with weapons...

*One of the males:* So why the hell did you go to Hungary? Couldn’t you find the weapons here?

*Martin ŠPEGELJ* : I guess you have no idea what's going on. We are at war with them.

*One of the males*: With whom?

*Martin ŠPEGELJ* : With the army.

*Narrator*:

Minister ŠPEGELJ thinks he knows everything about the 5<sup>th</sup> Military Corps. His infamous role of breaker of the units that he was the commander of is expressed in one sentence: "We are at war with the Army." He states this as the Commander of the newly established chauvinist units.

*Martin ŠPEGELJ* : Only like this .. If a truck goes through Podravina and if the army would be alerted, then the President of the Executive Council of Virovitica should be immediately informed. And how you're going to do that, it's up to you to figure out, even if a child would have to take the message. So, if something happens, if a truck is stopped, immediately inform the President of the Municipal Executive Council.

*First male*: One of these days?

*Martin ŠPEGELJ*: Yes, one of these days. If it happens, it is better for us to know than not to know. It is not important where it comes from...

*Second male*: OK, that is not important.

*Martin ŠPEGELJ* : And we have mainly solved the problem.

*Second male*: Well, I've been having doubts about all this .../swear word/

*Martin ŠPEGELJ*: Slatina is full of arms, owned by Croats.

*First male*: We know that.

*Martin ŠPEGELJ:* And it has been received only now...

*Narrator:*

Slatina is full of weapons, says the Minister. And it's intended for the chosen Crats across the Republic. Documents for secret informing on the JNA's activities have been sent to all municipal secretariats for people's defence in the Republic of Croatia.

*HDZ secretary for Virovitica, 12.11.90:*

"There are four vehicles for the radio transmitter. The transmitter is located in the old "Agroservis" mill where one of my men goes often. There is a phone communication with the headquarters and we can contact my men, the externals...."

*Unidentified male:*

"You have it all worked out?"

*HDZ Secretary:*

"Yes, yes, yes...and no one can interfere, it's a closed-type station, it works on a particular frequency. There is also a code that we can switch to in case someone breaks into the system. It works on a particular channel...We have developed the system of withdrawal, too...I have released them all from their work duties, they are on sick leave, but they have to be at my disposal 24 hours a day. They have meetings every day and we are analysing thing every day all over again. We exercised assembling and alerts, maybe 5 or 6 times, during and after working hours. We chose different assembling points. And I can tell you, the last man to arrive arrived in 32 minutes.../short interruption/...and he's just to say "the winter's coming" – the answer is "there's gonna be snow"..."

*Male:*

"The winter's coming, there's gonna be snow", no matter who it might be, a soldier, an officer..."

*HDZ Secretary:*

“No matter who...”

*Male:*

“The winter’s coming, there’s gonna be snow...”

*Narrator:*

“The HDZ Secretary, for whom ŠPEGELJ himself says is dangerous, has devoted himself completely to the military organising of his party. This fanatic follower of the ruling party has made a plan on the establishment of the system of radio connections, sabotages, and a password for joining the HDZ Army. Similar plans have been made in other parts of Croatia.

08.12.1990

*Goran RIBIČIĆ, HDP and HU Secretary for Osijek:*

HDZ’s position was that it needed an organisation like ours, a real right-wing organisation that would push HDZ towards the centre...

*Unidentified male:*

A radical right-wing organisation actually?

*Goran RIBIČIĆ, HDP and HU Secretary for Osijek:*

Yes, a radical Right that will push HDZ towards the centre for the eyes of the public. They would invest funds and human resources...

*Narrator:*

The Croatian Nation-Building Movement is in contact with the HDZ, and it's contributing to the organised aggression of the ruling party. Their common goal is Greater Croatia, and the most passionate fighters for the realisation of this plan are the members of the "Croatian Sheet Ancor", the HDP fanatic military wing. Members of this movement are working on the realisation of an extreme idea on breaking up of Yugoslavia by means of "word and dynamite" dialectic, advocated by their ideologist Maks LUBURIĆ. And they don't choose their methods or victims. The choice of opponents is based on racist criteria and the principle of pure Croatian-ness. For the implementation of this, an Aryan system of chauvinistic extermination is applied.

*Goran RIBIČIĆ:*

...As for the closed-type facilities, post offices, Radio and TV, train station, a /unintelligible/ would be there, which would enter those facilities /unintelligible/...

/short interruption/

...and check if there is another armed formation in the building, which should not be the case if we are given that assignment...we have been told we should eliminate that armed formation, which means not to expel them from the barracks, but keep it and disable it...

/interruption/

...many facilities, for example, many HDZ members.../unintelligible/...40 of our men, 80 of them, other HDZ units would be in charge of setting roadblocks on the roads, both on the access roads in Osijek and the frequent ones in the centre of Osijek.

.../interruption/...

*Unidentified male:*

...in the realisation of the historical Croatia...?