

ŽELJKO GLASNOVIĆ

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We are switched on. Would you please introduce yourself – your first and last name, date and place of birth, place of abode and occupation.

I am Zeljko Glasnovic, retired Croatian General. I was born on 24.02,1954 in Zagreb. When I came to Croatia in the year 1991. in the 8th month, that was the third Army I served, because I served five years in the Canadian Army and one year and a half in the Foreign Legion.

And then you came to Croatia?

Yes, to Croatia where I was attached to the battalion Zrinski, in the year 1991. I carried out combat actions in Lika, AND on the southern front in the year 1991. At the end of year 1991, after the fall of Vukovar, I was transferred by orders to Bosnia Hercegovina, to train a formation in Tomislavgrad. The combat action starts in Kupres in the 4th month of year 1992. There I was wounded and after a month, in reality two months I was out of the action, because I was critically wounded. In the 10th month of the year 1991 I returned, and took over the brigade Kralj Tomislav. After the execution of Washington Accord in the 2nd month of the year 1994, I took over 1st Gardijska Brigade. After that the Cincar operation starts, when the Gardijske Brigades were capturing Kupres. In the 5th month of the year 1994 I was replaced as the Commander of the 1st Gardijske Brigade and took over the combat territory of Tomislavgrad, which in fact was, to the end of confrontation, until the 10th month of the year 1995, a month before the signing of the Dayton Agreement, the Headquarters of HVO under different names: North, West, East, etc. At the end of war I became program manager for military stabilization in Sarajevo and after that for a year I was commander of the

Croatian Gardijski Zbor. In the year 2000 by the orders of president Mesic, I was retired, until this day.

Well, you say this is the third army you joined, you have experience. You are schooled. What interests me is what did you encounter, when in 1992 you came to Bosnia and Hercegovina? What did you encounter there, what kind of situation, what do you notice?

With the elections of 1990. when Bosnia and Hercegovina announced the independence from Yugoslavia, and when they voted by, how would I say that, national...

National input ...

Yes. There was no army, there wasn't any armed force to defend the constitution and territorial integrity of Bosnia and Hercegovina, there was no such a thing. The only force there was JNA, which already in the 9th month of 1991. burned village Ravno. That wasn't the first transgression against the integrity of Bosnia Hercegovina. That was the raid of cetniks from SAO Krajina in the village Uniste in the Grahorska County, where they burned down Croatian homes and took some Croats to Knin, and there it became clear that Bosna and Hercegovina is incapable to defend its citizens, of the Croatian and Muslim nationality. After that the forming of Croatian formations started on the territory of Bosnia and Hercegovina, because there primarily, was no military structure on which an army could be established. They were in most cases guards, those village guards, and there was no armaments, because all the armaments were removed from the local headquarters of the TO in the 10th month after the elections, and placed there where the Serbian population was (either majority or minority). The army didn't exist and it wasn't armed and the people started to acquire on their own, some arms...

How did the people orientate themselves, how did they get the arms?

Some came from outside, over the border, which was smuggled. There wasn't any heavy armament, because there was no military industry. In central Bosnia, there was Vitez. (military manufacturing) There was no heavier than infantry armaments. I think, at the beginning of the war in 1991, HVO had less than twenty mine throwers 120 mm, altogether from Posavina to Neum. The military justice system didn't exist, that was*****...inasmuch as in 1991 one unit was formed in Grude, to unify those formations.

That unit was run in by Misters, colonel Sucic as deputy, and Mikulic was the commander. Both were higher cadre, however that unit wasn't effective. The people would refer, but there wasn't nay serious preparation for combat actions. Military-justice system didn't function. Because I started forming the formations, their training and complementing depended on individual commanders in the counties. I experienced it myself. The Military-justice system didn't exist. I was the psychologist, and military policeman and commander at the same time.

You say military-justice system didn't exist, consequently didn't function, what doe that in practical sense, in the daily sense means? What problems did you encounter?

You see, the army just as the civil society needs a military system, needs justice system ...

When you say it depended on the individual commanders, who were in the counties...

On the initiative and experience of the individual commanders.

How was that really? Now you are coming there trying to make something? How do you do that?

Well, firstly you have to start ...

Where from do you first start?

Everything depends on the cadres. First you have to make a positive selection of the cadres. Five years is needed to create a sergeant in the army. Gradually. Let's say if you are in the English army as a younger soldier, you enter with 16 years of age...

You are talking about established armies?

Established armies. Well and at age16 you pass the elementary drill, than you go to collective training. After collective training you find yourself in a formation. In that formation depending on your talent and initiative and how fast do you learn, it's possible to become a leader of a firing squad – that is five men. A year thereafter, leader of ten men, leader of the second firing squad. And gradually that way to the assistant of the platoon leader. Well, you need five years to become, minimally five, assistant to the platoon leader.

**Can you compare? It means that is that in the established armies, right?
Can you compare this with the situation that existed and with the attempt
to establish the army on the territory where you were at that time?**

There existed I would say, personal anarchy because it wasn't possible to create a formation in an efficient way, because you didn't have, firstly, logical support, nor conditions or barracks, to form the men. On my territory, there were no military barracks.

So you didn't have the barracks? Didn't have logistics...

I had to use the schools, renovate. You know how many sanitary installations, showers per soldier, per head, the men must be fed. For a brigade it takes 1,000,000 D.M. per month, I think, to keep it on the line during the war. That is one thousand five hundred men with fuel and food, without the ammunitions. Every round is 75 pfenings. Grenades 110 and 120 D.M. That can't be created over night. The biggest problems were not logistics. That can be made up for, but personal problems.

What does it mean when you say the biggest problems were personal?

All the armies are organized according to the same principle, and that principle is that every, including the smallest, noted mistake must be corrected on the spot; and second principle is that an army can be organized only through the leadership, and that is the organization where the leadership must reach, the leadership and initiative must reach to the lowest level. In the organized armies there are three leaders for ten men, for then men. For us it was difficult to do, to find sometime on the level of a battalion, brigade. And not only that. It was particularly difficult that all of those men were from the same location. Demographically, from the same village. There were primarily regional links, then city links and after that the tribal links, I would say.

What does it mean when you say that those links existed ...

But, what existed ...

...and that was an obstruction?

It means the principle could not be carried out to punish or to correct every noted mistake on the spot. That was unrealizable and therefore that became conspiracy of silence. Yes.

As you know, if a cousin is on the tank and he steals 500 liters of fuel from the tank on the line, another cousin from that village will not report him, because he would become a snitch.

What did you do in such a situation?

I accepted the responsibility, because all the commanders in the Homeland war must accept the responsibility. One must accept the responsibility, because first principle of the war is to lead by example. First of all, lead by example. But at the same time formation of an anarchic situation to cause the dysfunction of a formation, can not be tolerated. I formed the military tribunal. I did convey according to my own standard, sometimes I would...

You formed Military Tribunal?

On my own, local level, I formed Military Tribunal. I let it be known, if they play foul with me, there will be no mercy. That was in the Legion, where I said: you have problems with the sergeant, you did something wrong, he takes you in front of the barracks and flattens you. He flattens you, you flatten him, which is the way it's done. That's the way it functioned, that is called reality therapy.

How was it called?

Reality therapy, or modification, behavior modification. How is it said, activities modification.

Yes, that too. But in those armies, leader of a squad is the god and the stick (figure of speech: has all the power to award and to punish) to them and the platoon leader. In that squad those ten men do what he tells them. Such a situation wasn't with the armies which we ... with honorable exceptions. Those are exceptions in the formations which were lead by the men who were earlier professional soldiers. Even those had to swim sometime; all of us had to swim sometime, how to say that, uncharted waters, and the waters nobody sailed. They also had to have flexibility, in some situations they had to be more flexible, than they would be in an army that has organization and justice system, where chain of command goes that way, not this way.

What was the situation with mobilization, with response to mobilization, what kind of men in fact...

Again, there was no standard, everything can exist on the paper, but if there is no mechanism to carry that into reality it is only an exercise, paper exercise. Again I could speak about my own experiences. I can say that in Tomislavgrad ten percent of the inhabitants were mobilized, which was big success. And that was thanks not only to me, but to my men who worked in the mobilization office and kept it up to date. We had not only military conscripts, but tax payers, who were obliged to pay monthly as much to keep the army on the line, there were so many men who got the papers that they are working out of the country before the war, in Austria, Germany etc. (guest-workers),. And they were providing 40% of the means necessary to keep the formations on the line. And in fact, the first thing I organized when I came there was forming the military police. I went across the border, the border didn't exist, I went to Imotski, I got the belts, white holsters and batons, and that is the way it started.

It means you first organized the police?

Yes.

Tell me, you are coming in the year 1992...

1991. 8th month

Year 1991 in the 8th month. From that time on, how did the relationship between Croats and Muslims progress and shape?

There were no problems of any kind. In my brigade I had about 500 Muslims, mostly in the second battalion; they had the same food, the same pay, and the same conditions. There was no difference, I wasn't noticing. Maybe I have lived out of the country for a long time naturally I new about the difference between (Croats and Muslims) but I didn't accept that as the only correct fight against Serbian aggressor. Because there were too few Croats there, 17.5% to fight the battles on two fronts. They (Muslims) stayed till summer, to the very conflicts, until those escalated to the extreme some of the conflicts in the year 1993, in the summer of 1993, I thing it was 6th month...

In the summer of 1993. you had ...

They were in the brigade, and then I had to disarm them, because I was afraid there could be incidents inside Tomislavgrad and something could happen – and thanks Lord, there were no big incidents, except one. That what happened wasn't committed by the men from my brigade, but from the outside, the ones who crossed the border. Killed some men, killed them on the home threshold ...

Could you remember. You said there were no problems, you were all together in the formation, and five hundred Muslims were there?

Five hundred, the brigade was more than three thousands, four battalions, more than three thousand men.

Could you remember how that function did. There was, most likely common training, isn't that so? There were common departures, keeping of the line. How did that look alike?

We kept the line, in the beginning, towards Kupres, about forty kilometers of the terrain. And for that we had to stay awake, every man must know his duty, and I had the luck to gather some good men, to whom I could delegate the authority. And the preparations were fundamental, I think, as much as we could provide, now we never brought that about, after 1992, that was after the fall of Kupres in 1992, in the 4th month, there were lighter attacks, but the line remained unchanged to 1990, I mean 1994, 11th month.

You say in the summer of 1993. you had to disarm ...?

Well yes, what was happening ...

Why, what was happening?

It took off, look, it started. According to the chronology of that war, the war started on local levels and later it inflamed into a universal war and then it came lo light, of course, this where the west was, where the center is versus Bugojno, this Bugojno which we are forming, that was Muslim Operating Group which was formed by the order of the BiH Army from Zenica to connect with 4th Corpus from Jablanica and now water flows where the resistance is insignificant, and they did...Sarajevo was surrounded,

Bihac surrounded, ***** eastern Bosnia. And they saw to make an undertaking here, because already in 1990 and ... beginning of 1992, they were really, not in the beginning, but in the middle of 1992. there already existed three separate commands on the territory of Bosnia and Hercegovina. In reality two. The only organized armed power which confronted Serbian aggression was HVO, Croatian Council of Defense. And all the arms, that were coming, were coming from Croatia. Across the border, mostly Kamensko, for the BiH Army. They were arming themselves gradually and also, most likely there were flights to Tuzla and to the air fields around Bihac, that should be much more researched, how many flights were carrying armaments for them. HVO would receive certain percentage for themselves, as per agreement between Alija Izetbegovic and Mate Boban. Up until 6th month there were no perturbations, until 6th month of 1992. in my zone of responsibility. In the operational zone of Northwestern Hercegovina there were no incidents between Muslims and Croats, neither there were any signs or signals indicating possible arising problems. I went to Jablanica in the 7th month, wit a delegation from Tomislavgrad to talk about common...

That was after the first incident?

Yes, after the first incident, but that was, hardly noticeable. We took that as the fight between local black-marketers, between smugglers and some local power brokers. There were those storms in ***** . Nobody paid any attention. Much bigger things were happening. Konjic was under siege and the battles were going on at other localities. But we went to Jablanica, I surely know the precise date, 7th month that was, to start mutual action with the formations of TO, we called them TO, not army of BiH, and with the brigade from Tomislavgrad and Croatian forces and Muslims from Jablanica against Konjic. And we had, the cavalry brigade led by Pisketa.

How, Pisketa?

Pisketa lead that brigade, Pisketa, Praljak knows him, they were always seen each other. That was this, now I forget the name of the brigade, Croatian Cavalry brigade Herceg Stjepan,

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From HVO, and we talked in the County (building) We invited them for a reciprocal visit, to complete the plans, if we are to go to work, to have them come to Tomislavgrad. Inside a week they didn't show up.

What does that mean that the action was arranged?

Well, that was a phase of planning. We didn't arrange the details, but we invited them to come to Tomislavgrad...

Who was present from HVO and from TO?

I was there, the commander Zelenika, he died recently, Zelenika. He was commander of HVO, in fact he initiated this meeting, and was my deputy, and he was in the operations. There was the commander of Jablanica TO, his name escapes me, the commander of the Territorial Defense, that is known to this one from Jablanica Matan-Zaric, he was the civilian authority, at the time I didn't keep the minutes. After that there was the meeting. Praljak was at that meeting in the motel Radosa in Uskoplje.

When was that?

That was summer of 1993, he chaired the meeting.

1992. or 1993?

Excuse me, 1992, before the conflict. He chaired the meeting, Praljak, motel Radosa in Uskoplje, he should know who was there, and I know Tokic was there, Zrinko Tokic.

Motel Radosa?

Motel Radosa, Uskoplje, summer of 1993, I think it was 7th month after this meeting.

Summer of 1992?

1992, excuse me, not 1993. He was there and surely there was Zrinko Tokic, commander of this brigade HVO from Uskoplje.

And what was the conversation about?

Well about mutual action with...that was introductory talk for further work, again there was the one, and he was an invalid. He was an invalid. I just remembered him. Now the name, from the BiH army, from 3rd Corps, he led this delegation, AND MAYBE HE WAS... Zrinko Tokic knows for sure, he recorded everything. I came there, not as a main actor, but indirectly, I should know, but that was long time ago, those details, I just remember that happened for sure.

All right, what was the atmosphere on those meetings? Was that the atmosphere of conviction, distrust?

Well, it was a relaxed atmosphere; there were no indications of any kind.

That means we are talking about the time of summer 1992?

Summer Of 1992. Praljak should know, because he drove a Jeep. He started the first to get going there; he went with the Jeep towards Mostar. I think he was the main initiator of the meeting, and maybe Tokic.

And after that there were quite a few heavy combative actions in the 8th month towards the Kupres line. There was flattening a week long without stopping, mostly artillery, limited infantry attacks. But I came for a visit to Rama in the 9th month and went there to the line over Raduski Kamen, which was held mutual forces HVO and TO. Actually, I didn't know there exist some TO, because in my case everybody was in the brigade Kralj Tomislav, those 500 Muslims. But I went to the line. The line was kept commonly in the 9th month in Prozor. And after that 20, the date 21,22,10 I again visited Prozor and then I have seen there are two commands in the town. One was in the bicycle factory, all others from brigade Rama HVO, and lower was TO. And I came to visit TO, but the commandant wasn't there, but there were no indications that something would happen, that something is planned, neither that was strange to me, I didn't think about it. Yes, that evening we are coming to Tomislavgrad and somewhere after midnight I am getting a telegram from Rama Brigade, it had started.

That means you were there immediately prior to it.

A day before.

And you didn't...

Not at all ...

... recognize, neither comprehend, nor see ...

There never was any...

Nor you had information about something to happen...?

None, normally when such a thing starts, the posts start first, and there are indications. Let's say, how it started with JNA. They have firstly, it can be observed according to phases, alarmed Serbian population in Croatia, that is the first alarming phase. The second is arming; and third is the matter of incidents, so they can join directly... There were no signals that something might start and here we are. The operative from Rama Petar Kolakusic is sending me a fax^{*****}, he said it started up there. We talked about mutual^{*****} we held, and on Makljen, Franjo Zadro, from our brigade was killed, and the flattening starts. We are asking for help, we need tanks in the town, we have killed and wounded, we captured many members of the BiH Army.

Did that surprise you?

Yes, of course. I think it surprised Siljag too. That was only a headache because there was the line, and then the preparations, then I had to prepare immediately a good company.

What did that mean? Consequently, at that moment for us, for you in that moment? In a concrete sense, in the operating sense?

Well, headache, loosing of energy and headache. The forces had to be taken off the line; they have to be taken from there. I think that was planned, somebody would give me an order in advance, that is a total stupidity, and I know how it started. The biggest (stupidity) the one where Mesic threads through the papers, that Vice Vukojevic said to him he was unloading in Prozor from his trucks, stupidity, there were killed and wounded on both sides, but that isn't so. And after that the battalion from Prozor, retreated easterly towards Here, they dug themselves in there in Here. Here Scipe, Kute, that is theirs. Well I

talked with Praljak, that night we talked on the phone, satellite phone, I said: Praljak, this is madness, we got to stop...

Where was Praljak at that time?

I think he was in Mostar. He said: something detailed but in the framework is being prepared I can't now say word for word, but the talks are going on and the delegations will be sent from Jablanica, Up towards us in the next few days.

Can you clear up that for me, well, you said to General Praljak...?

I said: this is madness, this is escalating, and I was worried about the line towards Kupres.

And what did General Praljak say to that?

Glasnovic, he said, listen, we are trying to get in touch with 4th Corpus of the BiH Army. And we will try to stop this.

Were you the first who reported to Praljak that it started or he already...?

Either he to me, or I to him, I think he called me, somebody gave me a phone, that was outdoors at the south part of Prozor, down south towards the exit from the town, I was down there looking at something and that was a day after the start, the day when the conflicts started, it was somewhere in the evening,

It means that already passed?

Already passed. No didn't pass so much, now look, they started... yes in the morning it started, that is already past let's say 18.00 o'clock, there somewhere 17.00 16.00 o'clock

You mentioned now General Praljak. The Hague indictment brought against General Praljak is the reason we are talking. Can you tell me about: your meetings with the general, where did you meet, were the meetings frequent, what kind were they?

Well, here, the first meeting with Praljak was somewhere 05.04.1002 in Kupres ... in Suica. The battles are going on at Kupres. I wasn't sure what his official function was. At the time there were no ranks. The commanding status existed,

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Commanding titles. As I would say within the parameters, because the brigade didn't exist at the time. I had a reinforced company, three, four platoons, at most two tanks. That was more like an operating group than some organized formation, but I think Praljak came there as an advisor.

All right, that means, we don't know in what capacity...?

We don't know, yes, we don't know in what capacity.

But how did that meeting look alike, where did you meet him?

He was sleeping in the sleeping bag, where I slept...

Well, that was your first encounter?

Yes, I saw his head. An unpleasant head protruding from the bag. I was thinking: who is that drifter, who let him in? I didn't sleep for two days. He was snoring in the bag. Then he woke up...

That is your first recollection of him?

Yes, the ammunition rounds came in, and I wanted to send them directly to Kupres, and he said: Glasnovic, no. The battles are raging on. The truck could be shot, and it is loaded with ammunitions, and then we agreed to unload in Poganc. Those were my thoughts. I didn't want to send it into the town, but that was our first meeting. And after that I didn't see him. He went to Zloselo to talk with the men, because they were broken by time and battle, to encourage them. I understand him as a man who stood up for the defense of his country when it was jeopardized. Who stood up in defense of his people that is the way I comprehend him. I think he is a humanist, he has pronounced feeling for justice. And he confirmed it with his capabilities and demonstrating the talent to lead. He already had experience in Croatia.

And how would you explain to someone who doesn't know Praljak, you and I know him, what does in his case mean "talent for leadership"?

Well, that is by nature, it isn't possible to learn that, he took over...

By what, do you remember him, by which detail?

It wasn't easy to lead at that time. It's easy to lead what's organized, it's easy to be a general***** where one has air force, thousands of fire arms, has 350,000 soldiers

organized, has most modern technology, chain of command which functions with ease. This was completely something else. Here if you accepted the responsibility to lead, means your life would also be jeopardized every minute. Many of those men from JNA could have, but didn't. That is not leadership. This war could not be commanded from commanding post. How would I say Military correspondence, can not command, if you write an order and send it via courier, that isn't the same. He had to come, where he should have been. What did I do on the higher level? I was a psychologist, and military policeman and the leader. Everything. The ball was in his court many times and thanks Lord, he had enough ..., and many men had high opinion of him...

All right, you said you were the psychologist, the leader and what more did you say...?

Military policeman.

Military policeman. You were that. In relation to those three things, what was Praljak? Was he a commander of that type, or was he commander of some other type...?

He was the leader. He was leading with authority. And he is big enough, when he bangs his fist everybody listens.

Did he bang a lot?

Yes, well yes. He would get red when he was furious. He wanted to smash some of them, several times. I didn't see him flattened anybody, maybe he did, maybe he should have some of them. Most likely it happened.

You were present in the situations when he yelled, when he...?

Well, of course, who didn't...

In which situation did Praljak yell, got furious?

First of all at the people who were slowing down the fighting readiness, those local power brokers, politicians, who were also slowing down the organization for violation of military discipline. He understood we don't have much time, we don't have a decade to organize the army, and we have to accelerate the process.

You were there?

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I wasn't, I heard about it, I wasn't there, and he was. He was their commander, in the year 1993. I was watching over towards south, towards north, mostly around Prozor, he was up towards Uskoplje.

Tell me I have here a reminder, well, we have the situation in Rama.

In Rama yes.

How do you remember Rama, what was the situation there?

***** how do you say G...? How would I explain that? A military town, and there were many formations. The war was going on above Makljen down, central Bosnia. Makljen is the border of East Hercegovina, northern border and there were many formations. The bars were not closed all the time. The Rama brigade was a good one. Courageous boys, they were good men, but in every army there are the brainless ones. And there for example, not only from Rama. I know the headquarters in Prozor was attacked three times by our men.

Why?

Who knows? Well, in 2nd month there were no combative actions. In 2nd month of 1993, I believe, now I can't remember, they started, who knows, maybe pays, maybe... an idiot fired a grenade into transformer station because somebody disconnected his phone. Those are incomprehensible matters for me. See, there...my man was wounded in Rama, not mine, he was added to artillery. A drunk entered the headquarters of the Northwestern Operations Zone, and riddled the wall with Kalashnikov; the one who stayed at the wall now is an invalid. And now I was positioned towards south. I placed the point, by me such things didn't happen, I didn't have insight into everything, but there were no major breaches of discipline. Major violations where somebody was killed or ...Look, there was use of firearms off the line, because we had no barracks, the men were taking the arms to their homes, disregarding my written order. Here, I had a foreigner with me. A Swiss man was killed in a tavern. That is a major violation. According to this, the situation on the territory of so called Croatian community

Herceg Bosna wasn't extraordinary. It was quite disturbed by such incidents. It almost came to war between Siroki Brijeg and Ljubuski.

Why?

Well it was among them. Some members from Siroki Brijeg and Ljubuski fought among themselves. Praljak knows much more about it, and then I do, because he was more and directly connected. There were groups. There were so called units which were not directly under the command of central headquarters. There was no direct line, the line wasn't crystallized to have a unit registered let's say under Tomislavgrad, Ljubuski, and so on. Yes, with me there wasn't any AT groups or special units, everything was in the brigade. But in other territories there were those so called AT groups. Sometimes I would call them Auto Television. Look, in the local centers there were combatants who would distinguish themselves, or had some formal, formal or real authority and they took over those units. Many a time one could use Home Guards on their own. Let's say for some specific tasks, but for attacking actions, it would be difficult. There was perhaps also post trauma stress. There are men who were wounded three times after (fire christening). Now in Croatia you have fifteen ***** men who killed in Croatia. I had hundreds of men who were in the brigade, who were wounded three times and who still came to the line.

Yes, tell me about Rama. You say military town, town of the army, is that so, means...?

The formations who were there when the war... The war was going on in Uskoplje until 2nd month of 1994. when the Washington Agreement was signed. That means the war was raging on almost for a year. A year, ten, eleven months without interruption, where the Croatian formations tried to break, to get to the enclaves in central Bosnia, who were naturally surrounded by MOS. There was no military police, the troops were overloaded to organize the military discipline, as it should have been organized, which means there were such incidents where those principles and military discipline, order and work were broken.

Which principles were most often broken under the conditions at that time, on that territory?

Well look, the combination of alcohol and fire arms is not the most joyful solution. The men are being killed daily and all commanders are lobbying for their unit. They want replacements, the men are tired and it comes to conflicts, noting big, but surely it was coming to disagreement between commanders. For instance, the commander who is on the line for 30 days for 27 days continuously, and he is asking for replacement, that replacement is not coming, and then he is kept responsible for his men. The pressure is on him, and in the end it would come to the headquarters. In Prozor. OZ northwest and whoever was on that level. On that operating level.

You said you met Praljak in 4th month of 1992. After that did you meet often?

I would see him, on the run, as one would say, not often. I saw him as I said at the meeting. He was there...There was also the meeting. He was ... the plans were made in Tito's villa in Bugojno for attack on Kupres in the 11th month of 1992.He coordinated the meeting.

You were there?

Yes. And there was already...The BiH Army and our units were to attack village Koscani. But their cooperation was questionable. There already it started.

When did it start?

Year 1992.

Do you remember that?

Yes. I sent my men up there and they made the plan of anti-armor warfare. About five-six companies should have participated in that attack. Yes that was a limited attack towards Kupres, and that is already after Prozor. That means the relations were already strained.

You said there was a meeting?

Yes, he was leading coordination, only. He was asking, he only gave the directions. You only give the directions and go on.

Were there Muslim representative or ...?

No, only HVO. It was mentioned that they are from Bugojno, but in Bugojno they were keeping the front line together. TO and HVO, salvation for Bugojno.

Nobody will ever separate us – that song, is that right?

Yes, yes... You know everything about it...

At that meeting, respectfully that coordination, did Praljak say something, what did he talk about, what was the atmosphere ...

He didn't say much, he said get your legs ready, there will be walking, hilly terrain, get ready. The orders were distributed at the end....

Were there any meetings later with Praljak?

Who remembers now, it was at... In Prozor I've seen him... I think he was with the delegation and Pasalic when he got to Prozor in the tenth month, but I didn't talk with him about details. That was before, it was tenth month 25, 26, or 27, in Prozor, but at the time I wasn't the commander of the brigade, but only deputy, informally. I didn't get to talk to him, because the negotiations were going on. Those negotiations were led by Pasalic, Siljeg and others. After that I think Boksevica was falling...

You met Praljak at Boksevica?

Yes, yes. There at Boksevica was first attack, second attack, last attack on Boksevica...

Last attack?

Last attack, I don't remember the date, I would have to look it up in the book, because that was last attack 02-03/04/93. The last attack, and they already passed through. We were taking turns. We take, they take and that was last, they took the entire Boksevica. There we had to pool out the civilians from Klis.

How was Boksevica, what do you remember?

ŽELJKO GLASNOVIĆ

Well look, we did... we didn't have enough men that were the problem. If we had the men we would have retained (Boksevica). Also the problem was mobilization by HVO. We didn't have reserve, operational reserve men, which we didn't have. Because you can't keep the men who fought whole day, and then the contra comes, not possible, that is almost indefensible. My (men) participated first time in the attack when Boksevica was taken. I kept part of the brigade downhill towards Jablanica, but I always detached the men there because the line would stretch. Doljani fell, and then we must move there to the right. We have to retake Doljani, we have to retake this, and we have to retake that. And really we were too stretched. This, Boksevica here, if we had reserve of men, then it would be...

What did you think of Praljak at Boksevica?

Well see, he hoped it was possible to overtake, to try to motivate the men and give them moral to go ahead. But I think he realized, when the attack stopped, that was questionable. Our tank struck a mine, they were ten twenty meters from us, we held that part of Boksevica towards Urin Ravni***** where the headquarters were, that means they took the entire plateau. We needed many more men than we had, to recapture. And then... I remained there to the end. I pulled out my men, I couldn't hold.

You remained the last?

The last. I had two questions: is there enough men to hold the line, there was, and second do we have enough men to go to attack, no. Then I had to stay on the line. That was the ball in my court. It was given to me. That is the way it was, let's go to the end. Then the whole night we pulled the men from Klis. To one of them I held the knife on the neck. He didn't want to pull the men; he left the civilians in the forest. I didn't kill him, I had there...

Well see, he pulled out, and didn't want to ...

Who?

ŽELJKO GLASNOVIĆ

There were civilian guides who pulled out people out from Klis. Signed order came from Praljak the army has to stay on the line, to let the civilians withdraw, but that wasn't feasible, because they were not professional soldiers. Those were their families, and when the civilian part was withdrawn, they went with them (the soldiers) but the pulling out was still going on, many remained in the forest, one of them would not go ahead to get them, and I said: go because I will get you, and he went back, then we were pulling out. That was breakdown.

How many civilians were pulled out, approximately?

I don't know, hundreds for sure. I had the trucks drive in the morning; it lasted from midnight to early in the morning. We took the trucks, and I don't know, I should look it up, I think the entire village, whatever the population was, and they could be counted in hundreds. Plus soldiers. Yes those are the ones who left the trail of the arms from Boksevica down to Kucan. They threw away everything, naturally that included. When the civilians go then the army goes, same thing in Jajce and it was in Bugojno. Men from Jajce could not be accused, they fought well up there, but Serbian superiority was more than the army, and Bugojno the same thing for sure and Klis as an example. Doljani, let's say Doljani. It was the same because they are not the soldiers who have organization, the level that should have been. There were good fighters***** keeping up for a month, but these other villages, Trussing that around Bolshevik everything was falling. And from 12,000 inhabitants, 14,000 maybe were Croats in that county of Konica, less than 1,000 remained. And what was left, remained between main road to Konica and Serbs. All other Serbs were surrounded, do you know that case? They were surrounded for a year, I...

Tell me I got here more...

Yes, all right, so I wouldn't divert much from the theme.

All right, let's return... to the things which are in that story. I have here another notation, letters to the civilian authorities to solve desertion problems etc...

That is the meeting that was, already was...

That is the meeting we said was on, when was it?

That was I think 10. month, wait, was that 10. 1993. I have it written somewhere, it was around that time.

10. month 1993.

Yes.

That meeting was where?

In Tomislavgrad in the Brigade Headquarters.

Do you remember that meeting?

Yes, yes, well everybody agreed.

Well, what was the theme, what was discussed at the meeting? Who called the meeting?

Well look, the manpower we had wasn't adequate to defend the territory. First problem was mobilization; it should have been carried out. I said, in Tomislavgrad I engaged about 10%, everything that could walk. In some of those God forsaken parts, down southerly they didn't get 3%, I prepared 4 generations the novices, trained them, a company of about 100 men, and trained the brigade. Some of them didn't start with first generation. They are the nits (louses) that got the civilian tasks to organize the army. They worked at it vocally, not formally, the right way, claiming there all the credits and screwing here, excuse me, in Zagreb, going to Sheraton to gorge them, and didn't do what should have been done. They introduced mobilization and standards of mobilization for every man in Bosnia Hercegovina, every Croatian in BiH. That was the battle for survival, meaning every man from 18 to 65 years of age would have to be military conscript, no exceptions. End of story and everything else is desertion.

But it wasn't like that.

It wasn't, no way, I don't know when, they did try in 1993. in the summer when it already started with the Muslims, then they tried to carry out that mobilization. They published the regulations, the literature. They should have done it immediately. They were a year late. What a stupidity, when the flattening already started with Serbs,

then with Muslims, and again issuing the calls for mobilization. Those are important orders. Every idiot knows that is totally unreal. Because they didn't expect anything, they thought what is taken, it's taken and it will stay that way.

It means, that was one of the main themes of the meeting?

Military discipline. Banditry. Military discipline, banditry. Somewhere I have the minutes. Maybe Praljak has too, I don't know whether he has or not. Military discipline, banditry, mostly mobilization, contraband.

That means they were themes about which ...?

Annexation of Military Police, to be placed under the command of its commander, not city of Mostar. To have it annexed so they could introduce ... The Chinese say far away fire will not save your home, if your house is on fire. I know, I had my Military Police, that is *****, I didn't wait to have them do for me; if I had to wait for them I would have been dead long time ago. But I am not saying, in the Military Police there are many killed, they are also a fighting unit, but the problem is that they could not do everything they should have. They could not, they were powerless in those matters, and they were also crippled.

Did General Praljak attend that meeting?

No, what do I know, I don't remember him (there) I remember when he came back with that proposal. He accepted the proposal, but he said: boys my superiors comprehended that as a military coup.

And that means the signed minutes of the meeting did...

Well, every commander in the operations zone Northwest signed the conclusion, including Siljeg who was the commander of operations zone Northwest.

Tell me is there anything else vital we should mention, did we forget to mention anything? I know the territory is wide.

Yes. What could I say, we covered the most. That mythology about Croats starting the war, which is really mythology. The person of high treason, our president should be accused for false testimony. Well, that is true; he is accusing his own country, on the bases of hearsay that is complete stupidity.

ŽELJKO GLASNOVIĆ

Second: If there existed some kind, if the HVO was organized in the year 1992, when we started, if there was organized, to say trained, instructed, if we only had instructed and ready forces to turn against Serbs and Muslims. That is also nonsense and stupidity. Here, that is mostly what I think, that's what I would say.

Thank you very much, now I will disconnect the Dictaphone.

Zagreb, March 2006