

The Doctrine of Total People's Defence – what Yugoslav armed forces learned from their past

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The article presents the development of the Yugoslav Military Doctrine and the Yugoslav Armed Forces from 1945 to the 1980s. The Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia developed the concept of General People's Resistance and Social Self-Protection which was defending the freedom, national independence, sovereignty, and the self-managing socio-political system. The new doctrine also formed two defence components, the Yugoslav People's Army as the operational army, and the Territorial Defence as the highest organisational form of defence and armed combat under the authority of republics and regions. Despite the well-conceived concept of the General People's Defence and Social Self-Protection, the latter failed to find answers on how to defy the "internal enemy" and how to solve internal political, economic, and national problems, which amassed in Yugoslavia of the 1970s and the 1980s. Slovenian Territorial Defence was something positive, which derived from the Doctrine of Total People's Defence. Since its establishment in 1968, the Slovenian Territorial Defence developed differently from the other federal republics and was increasingly considered as the Slovenian armed forces.

Socialist Yugoslavia was formed after the end of the Second World War. Unlike the other communist regimes of Eastern Europe that came to power because of the Soviet military dominance, Tito's post-war communist regime in Yugoslavia came to power by and large through its own political and military efforts during the national liberation and civil war from 1941 to 1945. Despite its federal form, the new state was, in the initial post-war period, highly centralised both politically and economically. Tito's Communist Party held the reins of power and the constitution was

closely modelled on that of the Soviet Union. However, a succession of new constitutions, adopted in 1953, 1963 and 1974, contributed to the formation of a more federal and liberal country.¹

Its armed forces, presented by the Yugoslav Army (YA)², had a very important role in the country. In the end of the 1960's and at the beginning of the 1970's, Yugoslavia adopted the concept and doctrine of Total People's Defence as the permanent form of defending the freedom, sovereignty, national independence, and the "self-managing" socio-political system. However, historical development of the new doctrine began much earlier, in the period of the Second World War and during the partisan guerrilla warfare, which was typical for the Yugoslav National Liberation Movement. After the Second World War, the experiences from the national liberation war were adapted and incorporated into the new military doctrine. Advancements in military technology, and anticipations of the development of international politics influenced the doctrine as well.³

The development of the Yugoslav armed forces and military doctrine from 1945 to 1969

The first period of the development of the armed forces (1945–1958) can be further divided into two subperiods, namely the 1945–1949 and the 1949–1958 periods. The era from the end of the Second World War and up to approximately 1949 may be referred to as the period of revolutionary etatism. In this period, post-war circumstances strongly influenced the establishment of the Yugoslav Armed Forces. The Partisan Army was reorganised into a peacetime structure, there were instances of demobilisation and first recruitments, the new army was formally regulated

¹ More about the history of the Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia see: Dušan Bilandžić, *Historija Socijalističke Federativne republike Jugoslavije. Glavni procesi 1918–1985* (Zagreb: Školska knjiga, 1985).

² On 22 December 1951 the Yugoslav Army (YA) was renamed the Yugoslav People's Army (YPA).

³ More about the role of the Yugoslav Armed forces in the Yugoslav "self-managing" socio-political system see: Anton Bebler, *Markszizm in vojaštvo* (Ljubljana: Komunist, 1975).

and the establishment of the new military industry was just around the corner. The Yugoslav Army (YA) was the key element for the defence and stability of the state, and the society as a whole. The emphasis on the development of the YA was placed on the improvement of organisation, formation, education and training.⁴

Maintaining absolute political control in difficult wartime conditions became a major problem, as the National Liberation Army expanded in size and reached 800.000 troops by early 1945. At the same time, the Communist Party of Yugoslavia (CPY) amounted to no more than 140.000 members. The CPY leadership rightly feared the "militarization" of the Party. The reorganisation process of the Yugoslav Army was strongly influenced by the Soviet model since the army headquarters were manned by accredited Soviet instructors and YA personnel trained in the Soviet Union. In case of aggression, frontal operations were the cornerstone of military strategy. Those operations relied largely on the operational echelon.

The formation of partisan units had not been planned; the Corps of National Defence of Yugoslavia was the only military formation that retained its territorial character inside the republics. It was responsible for protecting the national border and a number of important buildings in the territory, and for the liquidation of military groups that had collaborated with the Axis Powers. The Yugoslav military doctrine abandoned the doctrine of the National Liberation Movement and copied the Soviet Military doctrine. After 1947, the Soviet Union started to train and educate reserve Yugoslav officers. The YA abandoned everything what was "partisan-like" and started to develop frontal-manoeuvre warfare. The Decree on the Establishment of the YA, dating back to March 1945, was an act by the federal government that among other things transformed the partisan detachments into a regular army. The transformation progressed at the same time as the country was being liberated by the National Liberation Army.

During the National Liberation War, in the territory of Yugoslavia, the operational echelon consisted of brigades, divisions, corps, and armies,

⁴ Zvezdan Marković, *Jugoslovenska ljudska armada (1945-1991)* (Ljubljana: Defensor, 2007), 31.

while the territorial component was made up of detachments, under city and territorial command.⁵

A typical characteristic of the post-war period (1949–1958) was the Yugoslav split with the Eastern Bloc and the Soviet Union (the so-called Informburo Conflict). The Eastern Block failed to ideologically and economically influence Yugoslavia using the Resolution of the Informburo. The Soviet Union had established Cominform, a weaker successor to Komintern, in 1947 to serve as a coordinating body for communist parties in the Soviet Union, Bulgaria, Hungary, Poland, Italy, France, Czechoslovakia, Romania, and Yugoslavia. The establishment of Cominform signaled that the Soviet Union was once again setting itself up as the official leader of the communist bloc nations. Yugoslavia was an original member, but Josip Broz-Tito proved to be reluctant in following the Soviet line. The cause for the Yugoslav–Soviet split was Stalin’s rejection of Tito’s plans to absorb Albania and Greece in cooperation with Bulgaria, thereby setting up a powerful Eastern European bloc outside Moscow’s control. Stalin ordered Yugoslavia expelled from Cominform.⁶

Gathering Soviet divisions close to the Yugoslav borders (in Hungary, Romania, and Bulgaria) was a clear indication that the Soviet Union intended to invade Yugoslavia during the next phase of the political crisis. The Yugoslav Army and the state leaders made use of the lesson learned during the national liberation struggle and formed a Yugoslav Army’s territorial-partisan component made up of partisan detachments.⁷ However, the political crisis never developed into a hot war between Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union.

⁵ Ross A. Johnson, *The Role of the Military in Yugoslavia: An Historical Sketch* (Santa Monica: The Round Corporation, 1978), 3; Bojan B. Dimitrijević, *Jugoslovenska narodna armija 1945–1959* (Beograd: Institut za savremenu istoriju, 2014), 81–82; *Oružane snage Jugoslavije, 1941–1981* (Beograd: Vojnoizdavački zavod, 1982), 100; Zvezdan Marković, “Strategic Doctrine of the Yugoslav People’s Army – The Strategy of All-People’s Defence and Social Self-Protection,” – *Strategic Planning for War*, ed. Tomaž Kladnik (Ljubljana: Defensor, 2008), 55–56.

⁶ More about the Informburo Conflict and Yugoslavia’s opening towards the West see: Dmitar Tasić and Ivan Laković, *The Tito–Stalin Split and Yugoslavia’s Military Opening toward the West, 1950–1954* (Harvard: Rowman & Littlefield, 2016).

⁷ Marković, “Strategic Doctrine,” 55–56.



A Unit of the Yugoslav People's Army standing with rifles. Courtesy Svetozar Busić, Archive of the Slovenian Museum of Contemporary History, Ljubljana

In 1952, a three-party military assistance for Yugoslavia, provided by the USA, Great Britain and France was initiated. Soon the USA remained as the sole military donor. Consequently, the Yugoslav People's Army (YPA) began to implement the military strategy in how to react in case of Soviet aggression and nuclear attack; specifically it established five-unit divisions with five-company regiments. At the peak of the build-up in 1952, 22 percent of the national income was devoted to defence. Yugoslavia received US military assistance worth three quarters of a billion dollars in the 1950's. But the improvement of Soviet–Yugoslav relations after 1955 led to a gradual de-emphasis of defence in Yugoslavia.⁸

At the beginning of the 1950's two theoretical documents had been prepared – document A and B. Document A defined the advantages of the aggressor, who was equipped with state-of-the-art technology, while document B defined the possible advantages of Yugoslavia. Document B underlined the importance of compensating for aggressors material and

⁸ Marković, *Jugoslovenska ljudska armada*, 188–189.

technical advantages by organising people into a mass resistance. This was the YPA's tactic of responding to the possible aggression and applying the acquired lessons learned to new situations. The first milestone was the Military Service Act issued in 1951, which allowed for the possibility of forming a group of partisan detachments, a brigade, and a division under YPA command.⁹

The period from 1958 to 1969 was likewise divided into two sub-periods, namely the period stretching from 1958 to 1964 and the period between 1964 and 1968. It all began with the introduction of the Doctrine of Total People's Defence and ended with the search for the best solutions for the establishment of the Territorial Defence.

Originally the national defence and security system in Yugoslavia was called the General People's Resistance and Social Self-Protection (*Splošni ljudski odpor in družbena samozaščita*), which was later renamed the General People's Defence and Social Self-Protection (*Splošna ljudska obramba in družbena samozaščita*). The term Total People's Defence was used mostly in foreign papers and books describing the Yugoslav defence and security system.

It was assumed that Yugoslavia was endangered by aggression, the radical objective of which included the use of nuclear weapon. In 1958, the doctrine of total people's war was adopted. It provided for the formation of partisan units, special operations forces and territorial units, all part of the YPA. Further development of the operational army was motivated by an alleged possibility of aggression through the use of nuclear weapons, mass armoured units, and airborne units.

There were two major reorganisations of the YPA, the first one between 1959 and 1961, and the second one between 1963 and 1965. The two reorganisations aimed at balancing the operational and territorial components of the YPA. Based on the political and strategic estimation that the threat from the East no longer existed, a decision was made to reduce the size of the YPA. Accordingly, the disbandment of units located north from the Drava, Sava, and Danube rivers, and east from the Morava river was carried out. By 1968 less than six percent of national income was

⁹ Marković, "Strategic Doctrine," 56.



Female soldiers of the Yugoslav People's Army. Courtesy Miško Kranjec, Archive of the Slovenian Museum of Contemporary History, Ljubana

spent on defence and the YPA had been reduced to nearly 200,000. The Non-Aligned Movement was reinforced and the international relations were influenced by general peace processes. This had a positive impact on the Yugoslav economy which in earlier times had been in a rather difficult situation.¹⁰

With the adoption of the People's Defence Act in February 1969, the period between 1969 and 1985 introduced a new phase in the development of the concepts of the General People's Defence (*Splošna ljudska obramba*) and the armed forces of the Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia. The act laid down the unity and the composition of the armed forces, which comprised two parts, the Yugoslav People's Army and the Territorial Defence. Despite the dual nature of the armed forces, the Yugoslav People's Army presented the main, the most qualified, and the best equipped defence force. The general people's defence territorial defence

¹⁰ *Oružane snage Jugoslavije*, 106; Marković, "Strategic Doctrine," 57; Ross A. Johnson, "Total National Defense in Yugoslavia" (Santa Monica: The RAND Corporation 1971), 2.

system provided defence capabilities in the entire territory of the state also during a temporary occupation of a part of the state. Based on the mid-term and long-term plans and material capabilities of the state, the modernisation of the YPA and the development of its organisation and formation structure continued. Special emphasis was put on the development of territorial defence.

In 1971, the YPA was affected by the movement called the Croatian Spring. The perception of the Croatian nation that they were being held in a disadvantageous and a subordinate position on their own territory was strongly refuted by Tito himself. All Party organisations of the YPA strongly opposed this “nationalist movement”. This consequently led to the inspection of Yugoslav armed forces. In the course of the confrontation with the Croatian Spring movement, a number of Croatian senior officers and generals were forced to leave the army.

In parallel with the changes in the Yugoslav Defence Doctrine there were also the constitutional changes in Yugoslavia. The Yugoslav Constitution from 1974 was the fourth and final constitution of the Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia. The changes in the Yugoslav Defence Doctrine were seen also in the Constitution which also added elaborate language protecting the self-management system from state interference and expanding representation of republics and provinces in all electoral and policy forums. The Constitution called the restructured Federal Assembly the highest expression of the self-management system. Accordingly, it prescribed a complex electoral procedure for that body, beginning with the local labor and political organisations. Those bodies were to elect commune-level assemblies, which then would elect assemblies at province and republic level; finally, the latter groups would elect the members of the two equal components of the Federal Assembly, the Federal Chamber and the Chamber of Republics and Provinces. The constitution also proclaimed Josip Broz Tito president for life.

After 1981, the armed forces of the Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia were affected by the consequences of the death of their supreme commander Marshal Tito; the Presidency of the SFRY as a collective body did not have the same amount of influence and control over the entirely indoctrinated army as did its deceased supreme commander.



An YPA armoured fighting vehicle during exercises. Courtesy Svetozar Busić, Archive of the Slovenian Museum of Contemporary History, Ljubljana

Being a large independent system the YPA developed into a “state within a state” whose development was not in line with the changes in the internal political and geopolitical arena.¹¹

The new Yugoslav defence doctrine

Everything changed in 1968, when the Warsaw Pact forces intervened in Czechoslovakia. The invasion of Czechoslovakia by the Warsaw Pact was viewed in Belgrade as evidence of a Soviet determination to throttle possible independent Communist countries and, as such, an “indirect attack” on Yugoslavia. It came as a great surprise for the state leaders and military supreme command. Yugoslavia appeared to be seriously threatened and the YPA had never in the entire post-war period been less prepared to protect it. Politicians and the military supreme command concluded that

¹¹ *Oružane snage Jugoslavije*, 110; Marković, *Jugoslovsanska ljudska armada*, 188–189.

it was time to make use of the lessons learned from the National Liberation Movement in the Second World War. It was decided that according to the present circumstances, the territorial component, responsible for people's resistance, was to be established. This component was to operate alongside the YPA, but not within its structure. A completely new model of defence concept and the armed forces with a territorial component was developed.

The operational component would be the first in line to deter aggression. However, the territorial defence forces were planned to be the largest form of organising people into combat units, and were under the authority of the republics and regions. This was the first opportunity for the republics to develop their own defence units. The General Staff initiated the theoretical development of the General People's Resistance and Social-Self Protection doctrine in accordance with the political standpoints of the People's Federation Council. In 1971, Yugoslavia organised the *Svoboda-71* (Freedom-71) manoeuvre. The manoeuvre demonstrated the progress that Yugoslavia has made since 1968 in organising for defence according to the conception of total national defence. The distinctiveness of the approach was apparent when compared with defence preparations in the early 1950's. Then, fearing a Soviet invasion, Yugoslavia carried out a massive conventional military build-up of almost a half-million men under arms, with a corresponding mobilisation capacity.¹²

During the presentation of the document "The Fundamentals of the War Doctrine" from 1970, the Yugoslav Armed Forces had been emancipated from the persistent influence of foreign doctrines. The Yugoslav Armed Forces were capable of resisting an aggressor, made use of Yugoslavia's lessons learned and refuted the defence thesis arguing that resistance was possible only in depth. In the document "Armed Forces of the SFRY" the Territorial Defence (*Teritorijalna odbrana*, TO)¹³ had been given greater importance and TO's foundation had been reinforced. The TO was treated as the armed forces' strategic component, integrated into all spheres of the society and having various organisational forms. TO

¹² Marković, *Jugoslovenska ljudska armada*, 190; Johnson, "Total National Defense," 1–2.

¹³ In the beginning the TO units were called partisan units.



YPA soldiers in trenches during military exercises. Courtesy Svetozar Busić, Archive of the Slovenian Museum of Contemporary History, Ljubljana

needed to stimulate people's ability to offer long-term resistance against the aggressor, thereby enhancing the army's operational echelon and ensuring more effective results than could be predicted considering likely force ratios.¹⁴

The Defence Act¹⁵ of 1969 provided, further, that it was the right and duty of every citizen to participate in national defence and the right and duty of the local political authorities to organise total national defence and to command units in battle directly. In this scenario, the YPA itself would engage the enemy in frontal warfare and expel him from the country. The TO in the affected border region would selectively assist the YPA and would remain on alert in the event that the military threat increased.

Far more likely than the above scenario, according to Yugoslav military scholars, was the prospect of a massive attack led by the Soviet Union. In this case, the enemy would enjoy overwhelming military superiority in traditional terms. He can be expected to achieve general air superiority, to mount a massive armoured land invasion, and to attempt to quickly seize Belgrade, Zagreb, and other key cities by parachute troops and helicopter borne troops. In this scenario, the first task of the YPA was to employ frontal tactics and to avoid large losses, which would lead to the delay of the enemy's penetration. The YPA units, withdrawing from border areas, would wage an active defence in depth alongside the TO throughout the country. The expected consequence was a merging of the front and rear, the transformation of the entire country into a "hedgehog". YPA and TO units would fight on, utilising a mixture of combined and partisan tactics. On the "occupied" territory, both urban and rural, TO, and paramilitary forces would fight a guerrilla war. Only if the entire country would be occupied, however, would the YPA and TO units revert exclusively to partisan tactics, as in the Second World War.¹⁶

¹⁴ Marković, "Strategic Doctrine," 58.

¹⁵ Zakon o narodni obrani. Ur. L. SFRJ 8/1969 (11 February 1969).

¹⁶ Johnson, "Total National Defense," 3–4.

The role of territorial defence

TO was treated as the armed forces' strategic component which was to become the strongest military component, integrated into all spheres of society and having various organisational forms. The National Defence Act from 1969 conferred the use of legal sanctions to territorial defence units to stimulate people's ability to offer long-term resistance against the aggressor. Legally and doctrinally TO units were equal to and not subordinated to the YPA. After the creation, TO expanded to a force of nearly one million, with a goal of attaining a three-million-strong force in the next few years. When Yugoslavia started building TO units the main emphasis was put on company-sized units at the local level. These units were intended for defence within the boundaries of the commune. In addition, the creation of TO units depended on the production in some factories and other economic organisations. Each Yugoslav republic also formed some larger (battalion-sized) highly mobile TO units capable of defence throughout the republic. The desire to form larger units was voiced by Tito at the conclusion of the manoeuvre Freedom-71. TO units were subordinated to defence commands, staffed by reserve YPA officers at the communal and republican level. The communal commander was responsible both to the communal political authorities and to the higher, republican territorial defence command. The TO republican commands had considerable autonomy; they were subordinated to the federal Supreme Command and were not part of the YPA chain-of-command. Local TO units fell under YPA tactical command only when they were engaged in joint operations with the YPA units. Training for total national defence was carried out in communal training centres, where reserve YPA officers instructed TO units. TO units were primarily armed with light anti-tank and anti-personnel weapons of domestic Yugoslav production supplemented by heavier mobile anti-tank and anti-aircraft weapons for battalion-size TO units. Weapons were stored in mobilisation centres and YPA storage sites, while personal equipment was kept at home.¹⁷

¹⁷ *Ibid.*; Marković, *Jugoslovenska ljudska armada*, 190.

After the new edition of the “Strategy of Armed Conflict” in 1983, TO was defined as the largest formation which during armed conflict also included working citizens (population) and particular self-protection activities, as well as the largest formation in charge of organising armed total people’s resistance. In the command structure, the commander of the republic TO was still subordinate to the supreme commander of Yugoslavia and the Federal Presidency. With regard to deployment, functioning (operations) and preparations of units, the TO was subordinated to the republic’s authorities as well.¹⁸

The role of civil defence and civil protection

The post-1968 attention to TO in Yugoslavia had resulted in a de-emphasis of civil defence as conceived in the early 1960’s. TO also took over some activities, such as counter-intelligence and warning, which formerly were the responsibility of the civil defence. On the other hand, Yugoslav military doctrine envisaged an important role for civil defence forces, incorporating, in one form or another, the entire able-bodied population which was not included in the YPA or TO. The National Defence Act of 1969 stipulated that each commune had to form a civil defence organisation, subordinated to the communal defence command. The civil defence organisation was subdivided into engineering, sanitation, radiation-chemical-biological-defence and fire-fighting units, veterinary units, and evacuation and security units. The primary functions of the civil defence organisation were fire-fighting, public health, shelter, and limited evacuation (wounded, children, and the aged).¹⁹

In the SFRY, Civil Protection was the only one of the four elements inside the system of Total People’s Defence (defence measures and civil protection, defence forces, people’s defence affairs, authorities in charge of peoples defence requirements) in its wider sense, which had the form of a system. Civil protection was an important segment of the Total

¹⁸ Marković, *Jugoslovenska ljudska armada*, 195.

¹⁹ Johnson, “Total National Defense,” 6.

People's Defence system as it was organised in all apartment buildings, settlements, companies, and other organisations. The field of Civil Protection activities encompassed protection of the population in the event of war as well as protection of the population from disasters and catastrophes. The main characteristic of civil protection was its mass presence in almost every social environment, both in terms of the territory and production activity, which in short means, it was present everywhere where people worked – from the dwellings to other premises, and all the way to companies, local communities, and municipalities²⁰

The role of the Yugoslav People's Army

Acceptance of Total People's Defence in Yugoslavia signified a profound change in the role of the YPA. It was testimony to both the flexibility of outlook of the YPA senior officer corps and the YPA's institutional subordination to the League of Yugoslav Communists (LYC) and Tito personally, that the YPA apparently adapted to the new system of national defence without undue friction. The fundamental departure from earlier practice was the fact that the YPA was no longer the only Yugoslav military institution, but complemented by a larger TO which was doctrinally and legally co-equal with and not, even in wartime, subordinated to the YPA. On the other hand, the new Yugoslav military doctrine did not call for the transformation of the YPA into a professional training corps for a single army of citizen-soldiers. That meant that every Yugoslav citizen had to cooperate in the system of General People's Defence and Social Self-Protection. The YPA had to be able on its own both to resist a limited incursion to delay a massive attack so that the country could carry out

²⁰ More about Civil Protection in the Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia: Božidar Javorović, *Suvremeni sustavi civilne obrane: pregledna studija* (Zagreb: Otvoreno sveučilište, 1992); Milan Vučinić, *Splošna ljudska obramba in družbena samozaščita SFRJ II: učbenik za višje šole in fakultete SFRJ* (Beograd: Zavod za udžbenike i nastavna sredstva, 1986); Miroslav Ulčar, *Obramba in zaščita: priručnik za mladino, ki ne obiskuje šol srednjega usmerjenega izobraževanja* (Ljubljana: Republiški sekretariat za ljudsko obrambo, 1985); Polde Štukelj, *Osnove civilne zaščite, peta izdaja* (Ljubljana: Partizanska knjiga, 1985).

total mobilisation. The YPA would wage active defence in depth throughout the country. It would transform itself into smaller units waging predominately partisan warfare alongside the TD only if combat by larger formations failed to dissuade the enemy from continuing his attempt to control the country.

That fundamental change in the YPA's role in national defence had given rise to specific changes in YPA organisation. The major goal of continued modernisation of the YPA was the development of a modern mobile infantry, well-armed with anti-tank and anti-aircraft weapons. At that time in the early 1970's political and military leaders insisted that it would be pointless for Yugoslavia to attempt to compete with the Great Powers with tanks, aircraft, or other heavy modern weaponry, and that modernization of the YPA should not delay the arming of the TO. Second, the build-up of the TO had meant a relative de-emphasis of YPA reserves. Around 80 percent of YPA conscripts were subsequently assigned to the TO; 20 percent to the active or reserve YPA. Third, the nature of military manoeuvres had changed markedly. In the early 1960's, YPA manoeuvres usually simulated the conventional defence of cities, including mass evacuation of non-combatants. In the 1970's manoeuvres had usually involved joint defence by YPA and TO units against large-scale armoured invasion. Fourth, the YPA had begun to transfer some support functions (medical care, food supply, some engineering services) to the TO or the civilian sector.²¹

The increasing militarisation of the LYC and the federal government, and the increasing power and influence of the YPA in Yugoslav politics and society that went with it, caused a fundamental shift in power in the Yugoslav political system after 1966. A process of increasing YPA power and influence that began in 1966 gathered momentum in 1974 and became even more pronounced after Tito's death in 1980. In the 1980's after Tito's death and crisis in Yugoslavia, the Federal Presidency as the collective leadership body, which was re-elected annually, could not either legally or practically perform operational functions of the Supreme Commander, especially on a daily basis. Its operational command func-

²¹ Johnson, "Total National Defense," 7-8.

tions were, in fact only nominal. The YPA became the “backbone” of the country's political system and social order, with enough political power and influence to make the idea of YPA regime come true, but fortunately this did not happen. The critics of the existing defence security system in the 1980's were able to become more vocal. Demands regarding a stronger centralisation process were justified by growing frictions within the state communist leadership and economic problems.²²

Conclusion

By adopting the concept of General People's Resistance and Social-Self Protection as the permanent form of defending the freedom, national independence, sovereignty and self-managing socio-political system, the Yugoslav socialist-oriented society developed the Total People's Defence. The new military and the development of its operational use on the basis of the strategy of armed conflict were introduced in Yugoslavia after the Warsaw Pact forces had invaded Czechoslovakia in 1968. However, historical development began much earlier; the concept was based on Yugoslavia's own strategic lessons learned from the past, especially from the period of the Second World War and the National Liberation Movement. It was modified according to the estimated geo-strategic and geo-political position of Yugoslavia at the time, and lessons learned from the wars after the Second World War, and developments in military technology. The System of Total People's Defence, which stressed its total nature, created the reality of the already mentioned concept of a “nation in arms” which attached great importance to soldiers and the art of soldiering in Yugoslavia. Despite the well thought out concept of the General People's Defence and Social Self-Protection, the latter failed to find answers on how to defy the “internal enemy” and how to solve internal political and economic national problems which amassed in Yugoslavia in the 1970s and the 1980s.

²² Marko Milivojević, *Bradford Studies on Yugoslavia*, 13, *The Yugoslav People's Army* (Bradford: University of Bradford, 1988) 10, 28.

After the dissolution of the Yugoslav federation in the 1990's, the Doctrine of Total People's Defence has been forgotten and characterised as an old doctrine which is outdated in the context of the contemporary security situation. Nevertheless, Slovenian Territorial Defence can also be seen as a positive phenomenon, which derived from the Doctrine of Total People's Defence. Since its establishment in 1968, Slovenian Territorial Defence developed differently from similar organisations in other federal republics. Many among its few professional servicemembers and, particularly, members of the large reserve component considered the creation of the Slovenian Territorial Defence a resuscitation of the idea of Slovenian own armed forces. Among TO members in Slovenia and among the Slovenian population, the TO was increasingly considered as Slovenian Armed Forces, and as such part of the Yugoslav Armed Forces. In the 1990s the Slovenian TO became the basis for developing Armed Forces of the Republic of Slovenia, even at the price of a military confrontation with the YPA.

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