

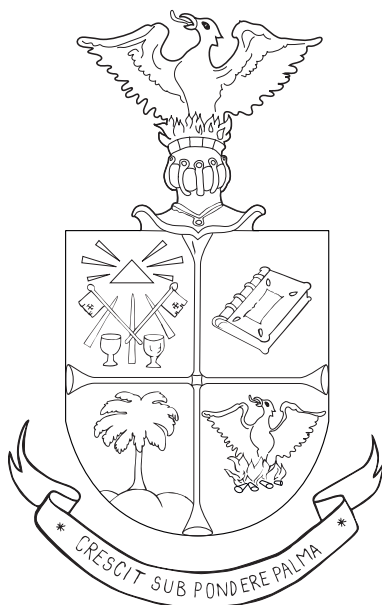
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SLOVAK EFFORTS TO CHANGE THE PICCION DEMARICATION LINE WITH HUNGARY¹

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Abstract

At the time of the creation of the first demarcation line separating the southern border of Slovakia with Hungary, there were the voices encouraging its correction. The designated demarcation line thus divided the territory between the two states and also the border population. These and many other unanswered questions have contributed to the resistance to the then demarcation line and to the efforts to change it. However, the efforts for change and especially the spread of misinformation and deceptive half-truths resulted in another military conflict between the Czechoslovak and Hungarian armies in the border area.

Key words

Czechoslovakia, demarcation line, Slovak-Hungarian relations, military conflict

Already at the moment of the agreement on the first demarcation line separating the southern border of Slovakia with Hungary, there were voices in the general public as well as among political representatives, encouraging its correction. The negative attitudes demanding the correction or adjustment of the demarcation line gradually began to be perceived on both sides of the Danube. Although the reasons for dissatisfaction with the newly marked limits were different and both sides defended their opinion on the basis of different motives, both camps had one thing in common efforts to create a new demarcation line.

From the point of view of the Hungarian-speaking population clustering mainly in the area of southern or south-eastern Slovakia, the determina-

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tion of the first demarcation line was quite unacceptable. The demarcation line thus established divided not only the territory between the two states, but above all the border population too, often bound together by ties of kinship. Representatives of Hungary, on the other hand, were in favor of returning to the demarcation line previously agreed upon between M. Hodža and Barth. It was established on St. Nicholas Day in 1918 in Budapest. At the same time, the growing tension on the Slovak side of the divided territory did not help to calm the situation. The stabilization of the Slovak-Hungarian border brought with it the resolution of several state policy or national economic issues. Its possible military security also played an important role. The general population has faced a language barrier in the border areas, which did not help to calm the situation either.

The military solution to the railway issue in the area of the demarcation line passing through the Ipľa river basin did not contribute to the tense situation after the end of the war. Efforts to occupy the railway network in the demarcation line ultimately resulted in the conclusion of an agreement to stop hostilities, but the final solution to this complicated situation does not come until the Lučenec Treaty was adopted. Representatives of the 7th Czechoslovak Division, together with representatives of the Hungarian military authority, declared recognition of Piccione's first demarcation line. However, the Ipľa river basin was not the only railway problem in the demarcated line. These and many other unanswered questions have contributed to the opposition to the current demarcation line and to efforts to change it.

Vavro Šrobár also joined the opponents of the demarcated border between Hungary and Czechoslovakia, actively advocating the need to change the demarcation line. Šrobár's dissatisfaction with the demarcation line is also evident from his correspondence, both before the beginning of the peace conference in Paris and during it. In his dissenting position, the Minister with a power of attorney for the administration of Slovakia argued primarily that the demarcation line did not coincide with the economic, cultural, or linguistic requirements of the population living in the given territory. He was also very concerned in his communication at the time about ensuring the security of Prešpork, which in his opinion could only be achieved if the southern part of the demarcation line was moved further.

Ultimately, General Piccione himself joined the opponents of the established demarcation line. However, the position of the Italian peacekeeping

mission on our territory already had to face several complications during this period. As a result, due to the insufficient number of Czechoslovak troops occupying the demarcation line, General Piccione ordered the inclusion of II. brigade among the relevant military units, thus dividing the demarcation line. The Italian peacekeeping mission on our territory therefore had to face considerable resentment, both domestically and internationally. The arrival of the French peacekeeping mission also contributed to the unstable situation in our territory and thus to destabilizing the situation on the territory of the demarcation line. The above-mentioned Vavro Šrobár joined the opponents of the Italian troops in our territory, who, from the beginning, clearly spoke out against the preservation of the demarcation line established initially.²

The arrival of the French peacekeeping mission on our territory also brought with it competence disputes between members of the Italian and French diplomatic missions. Dissatisfaction with the presence of the Italian military mission was underlined by the relatively clear pro-French stance of the then Minister of Foreign Affairs. Initially, the French military was supposed to have only an advisory body, but gradually they were involved in the complicated process of establishing the final border between Hungary and our territory. Apart from the issue of the Hungarian-Slovak border line, however, French troops were obliged to solve several other problems arising during the creation of an independent Czechoslovak state, among which we can mention the military conflict between the Czech-Slovak Republic and the Republic of Hungary.³

The escalating situation in Slovakia and the never-ending dispute between the top representatives of the French and Italian peacekeeping missions resulted in a growing resentment against General Piccione and his demarcation line. At that time, the head of the operational department of the Prague Ministry of National Defense, Major Emil Fiala, was also among the critics of the initial demarcation line.⁴ The growing reluctance in professional circles resulted in the adoption of the Ministry of National Defense

2 AMZV ČR, Praha, PA, zv. 38, č.4859. (archival document).

3 HRONSKÝ, Marián: *Le rôle de la Mission militaire française dans les combats en Slovaquie et dans la formation des frontières de la Slovaquie en 1919*. In: *Batir une nouvelle sécurité. La coopération militaire entre la France et les États d'Europe centrale et orientale de 1919 à 1929*. Paris, Chateau de Vincennes, 2001, 331-344.

4 AMZ V ČR, Praha, PA, zv. 36, č.4286 – výťah z listu E. Fialu spracovaný R. Kalhousom v Paríži 27.2.1919. (archival document).

Memorandum clearly declaring the unsatisfactory provision of the demarcation line in the first post-war days. The unacceptable definition of the first demarcation line was thus derived from the hectic period of the first post-war days as well as the unavailability of adequate cartographic documents reflecting the geographical conditions in the country.

The basic point of the Memorandum was the efforts to shift the demarcation line toward the area of southern and eastern Slovakia, as a result of which it was possible to solve the problematic railway issue in our territory. The new demarcation line was therefore to be moved from Ipľa to the Carpathians. However, in addition to the new demarcation line between Hungary and Czechoslovakia, the Memorandum created also proposed establishing a special demarcation line from the Hungarian side, which would create a separate neutral and demilitarized zone between the two countries. Such a solution to the situation was supposed to improve the security situation in the border area. The need to resolve the unfavorable railway issue was also recognized by General Pellé, who, by letter, appealed to the French Prime Minister to comply with these requirements.

However, professionals advocating the creation of a new demarcation line with Hungary could not agree on the final demarcation of the new border. However, the pressure on members of the Czechoslovak political leaders to change it continued to intensify. The unstable situation on our territory could no longer be ignored, as a result of which the political authorities in Paris also began to deal with it. The relevant negotiations aimed at correcting the demarcated border also brought with them considerable complications.

However, in the case of resolving the issue of creating a new demarcation line between Hungary and Slovakia, we cannot forget the activities of the Commission for Czech-Slovak Affairs, whose basic task was to decide on the final borders of Slovakia. In this context, it should be noted that a possible correction of the demarcation line reflecting railway requirements was not entirely in line with the notions of military mobility at the time. From the point of view of Czechoslovakia, a much better solution seemed to be a change of the demarcation line reflecting the strategic requirements, subsequently confirmed also through the peace conference in Paris. The efforts of military officials to consider the strategic aspect of the demarcation line between Czechoslovakia and Hungary thus ultimately made the already complicated situation leading to the creation of a new demarcation line in

the given area even more obscured. The ambiguity of the situation is thus evidenced by several recorded telephone conversations from March 1919 between the highest representatives of the then political elite. General Piccione, who requested military reinforcements to occupy the demarcated border, contributed to the disinformation, although no final decision was reached yet. This situation was also confirmed on March 19 and 22 of that year, when Dr. Fric made it clear that the Prague Ministry of Foreign Affairs had not received an answer on the border issue from Paris.⁵

However, disinformation and obscure facts contributed to V. Šrobár himself becoming involved in the whole situation, who asked General Piccione to prepare an operation to occupy the railway line in accordance with the new demarcation line. Preparations for the occupation of Hungarian territory were also to begin on the Slovakian side according to the information available to him.⁶ The situation caused by disinformation and the related military-political activities of V. Šrobár ultimately only contributed to the escalation of tensions between the two countries. However, the subsequent request for reinforcements from General Piccione to General Pellé was rejected due to a decision not to move the line. He was also unaware of any operations to occupy the new territory that would require reinforcements.

However, the failure of General Pelle to provide military reinforcements did not prevent the Presidium of the Council of Ministers from asking both the Ministry of National Defence and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to do everything necessary in preparation for the occupation of Subcarpathian Russia. By letter no. 8445/op. of 31 March, in its preparations for the occupation of the alleged Slovak territory, the Ministry requested the Ministry of Railways to prepare the necessary documents for the immediate provision of transport in the given territory, both in Subcarpathian Russia and the affiliated territories of Slovakia.⁷ In the end, the Ministry of National Defence took all the necessary steps for the forcible occupation of the said territory, which, as they thought, had already been clearly attached to Slovakia.

Unexpected complications in the case of negotiations on the determination of a new demarcation line and thus on the creation of a permanent bor-

5 AMZV ČR, PA, zv. 48, č.4886, č.4889. (archival document).

6 FERENČUHOVÁ, Bohumila: *Slovensko a Malá dohoda z hľadiska geopolitiky*. In: VALENTA, Jaroslav – VORÁČEK, Emil – HARNA, Josef (ed): *Československo 1918-1938. Osudy demokracie v střední Evropie: Sborním mezinárodní vědecké konference v Praze 5-8 října 1998* Praha, Historický ústav, 1999, zv. 1, 589.

7 VHÚ Praha, MNO – Hlavný štáb, Oper. odd. 1919, kr. 1,3-9/7. (archival document)

der between Czechoslovakia and Hungary were also brought about by the development of the political situation on the Hungarian side of the Danube. The preparation and subsequent arrival of the Bolshevik representatives only complicated matters to a greater extent causing more tension and confusion. The new political mobility fundamentally rejected Hungary's obligation to leave the territory between Transylvania and the Vásárosnamény–Debrecen–Dévaványa–Gyoma–Orosháza–Hódmezővásárhely–Szeged line, which they were to leave to Allied troops. The deteriorating situation on both sides of the Danube raised questions about a possible military solution to the situation. The preparation of the Czechoslovak political leaders for a possible war solution to the unfavorable situation is also evidenced by E. Beneš's subsequent communication with President Masaryk, in which Beneš informs the President about the possibility of a military expedition to Hungary. In connection with the newly created situation, it was possible to assign a new strategic-military dimension to the solution of the railway situation in our territory, which was noticeable especially on the railway section Sátoraljaújhely–Čop.

Subsequent negotiations between E. Beneš, Pichon, Foch and the French president indicate the efforts of the parties to shift the demarcation line and thus align it with the political-military ambitions of the Allies in other areas. The meeting of the Commission for Czech-Slovak Affairs, which took place on March 24, 1919, was also forced to deal with the issue of the second demarcation line. Marshal Foch's proposal was substantiated, both by letter communication and by the Memorandum. These documents were to clearly declare dissatisfaction with the previous demarcation line, as well as the need for its subsequent correction. Following the example of the Memorandum of 9 March 1919, the Commission was to decide on the creation of a narrow strip between the borders of Hungary and Slovakia, serving as a neutral zone between the countries. Foch also proposed shifting the demarcation line and creating an inter-allied railway commission. It was then to operate in the neutral zone and ensure the free use of the Štúrovo-Miškovec railway line to both neighboring countries.

Despite the fact that the Commission forwarded Marshal Foch's requests to the Supreme Council to decide on the proposal, we still cannot forget, that not only Marshal Foch has ultimately decided on the final border between Slovakia and Hungary. The political-power ambitions of the treaty powers also had a significant effect on the adjustment of the demarcation

line. The top representatives of the treaty powers, however, had no clear idea of the final post-war arrangement of relations between Czechoslovakia and Hungary.

The emerging tensions, created mainly from the power ambitions of the treaty powers, did not subside with regard to another problematic border. Hungarian officials had to reflect mainly on the proposal of Marshal Foch. Through the Council of Four, he tried to push through a military invasion of Budapest. However, the effort to find a peaceful solution to the post-war international relations ultimately outweighed his opinion. The proposal thus met with strong opposition from the representatives of the Agreement.⁸

At the same time, Marshal Foch's order to occupy the territory was expected every day on the domestic political scene. The impatience of the domestic officials is clearly stated in the subsequent communication between Marshal Foch and General Pelle, in which the general tries to outline the most likely plan of attack. Therefore, for a smooth progress in the military operation, he proposed the immediate occupation of the railway south of the demarcation line, which was supposed to help the subsequent advance to Subcarpathian Russia. However, given the political sentiment that persisted in Paris, no military interaction was possible, and the political elite kept trying to find a peaceful solution to the unfavorable situation.

On March 29, 1919, despite political efforts for peace negotiations in Paris, Minister Klofáč issued a directive File No. 9680/op., dealing with instructions for General Hennocque. The essence of this directive was to allow the general to occupy the eastern basin of Bodrog militarily, but only in case the diplomatic situation should deteriorate. At the same time, the occupation of the railway line connecting Michaľany and Užhorod remained the basis of the entire military operation. However, the adopted directive recording the exact military campaign still remembered Piccion's demarcation line, which it forbade to cross. However, in the event of an attack, the current positions were to be defended.⁹

The communication between General Pelle and the commander of the Eastern armies, who informed the general about a possible military action against Hungary, also contributed to the aggravation of the already unfavorable situation. Such communication could help to clarify it. However,

8 PERMAN, Dagmar: *The shaping of Czechoslovak State. Diplomatic History of the Boundaries of Czechoslovakia 1914-1920*. Leiden, E.Y. Brill, 1962, 184-185.

9 VHA Praha, FVM, kr.5, A-M. s., III. odd., kr. 5,9. zv., č.15. Tiež VHA Bratislava, ZVV Bratislava 1919. Prezídium, kr. 3, č. S-279-1/7. (archival document).

as it reported on a possible military conflict in the border area, it greatly increased tensions between the two countries. The delivered communication triggered an avalanche of other decisions led by Minister Kľofáč. He responded by issuing the order "Occupancy of new borders in Slovakia" (No. 1080 / op.). Minister Kľofáč ordered General Piccione to take part in the military occupation of the new demarcation line and occupy the Danube line up to Verőce, then in the direction of the Szurdokpüspöki – trigonometer 803 – Mátra – trigonometer 314 – Kakasnyílás kóta 219–Mályi–Gesztely–Monok–Tállya–Sárospatak. At the same time, the order does not forget General Hennocque, who was to proceed further and occupy the line Vajdácská–Baťovo–M Dobroň–river Uh.¹⁰ In this context, however, we cannot forget the Serbs or Romanians, who were also to begin a military campaign against Hungary to defend their own borders at the same time as members of the Czechoslovak army.

In its plans for a new demarcation line between Slovakia and Hungary, the political elite failed to agree on a date for convening a peace conference, which would then clearly determine its real contours. Several dates came into consideration during February, March, and April 1919. However, we can reliably exclude from the historical facts outlined so far, any date that would time the peace conference on the establishment of a new demarcation line during February 1919. The fact that the negotiations on the second line of demarcation could not take place in February is evidenced by the adoption of the above-mentioned Memorandum adopted by the political elite in Paris, submitted in the first half of March 2019. As in the case of February, a possible peace conference on the shift of the demarcation line could not take place in April either.

Minister Šrobár, who from the very beginning tried to correct the first demarcation line, said that the border line between Hungary and Slovakia had been changed several times. Negotiations on the final demarcation line took place not only in Paris, but also in Pest. At the same time, Minister Šrobár did not forget to mention in his statements the domestic correction of the demarcation line while encountering General Piccione's military attempt in the Ipľa Valley.¹¹ During the negotiations in Pest, the Hodž demarcation line was established during 1918. Opponents of Piccione's demar-

10 VHU Praha MNO – Hlavný štáb, Oper. odd. 1919, kr. 2, č. 3 78/25. (archival document).

11 SNK-ALU MS Martin, 173, M2, pamäti Vavra Šrobára: Oslobodené Slovensko. Pamäti z roku 1918-1920, zv. 2, časť III., 57. (archival document)

cation line from around the then Hungarian political elite also invoked it. However, the most important and final negotiations on the establishment of a demarcation line between Hungary and Slovakia took place at a peace conference in Paris.

However, the issue of the second demarcation line was not completely resolved even by E. Beneš. Based on his subsequent communication with President Masaryk, it is clear that the issue of the second demarcation line has not yet been fully resolved during June 1919. Beneš himself asks Masaryk when the new demarcation line was established, or who determined it. Such ambiguous communication between the two top representatives of Czechoslovakia testifies to clear disinformation and doubts about when and whether the second demarcation line was established at all.

To Beneš's allegations, that Marshal Foch had acted in some cases without the consent of the treaty powers, or that he had 'forgotten' to inform them about his action, F. Peroutka has subsequently joined. However, apparently neither Beneš nor Peroutka had information that Marshal Foch, despite his obvious disagreements with Clemenceau, submitted a proposal for a new demarcation line to the Commission for Czech-Slovak Affairs and consulted on his further action on March 24, 1919. However, it remains questionable whether Marshal Foch informed the domestic political scene in Prague not only of the Commission and thus of the representatives of the treaty powers about his diplomatic efforts to establish a second line of demarcation.

However, on a closer look at the demarcation line declared in Minister Klofáč's order, we can clearly state that the established line of activity of the Czechoslovak army cannot be considered final. In this case, the sketched line was supposed to only reflect on the area of interest of the Czechoslovak army, in the case of a military invasion of Allied troops into Hungary. The document was intended to illustrate the possible course of action of the Allied troops, but any assumptions about the meaning of this document are currently unsubstantiated claims, as no documents are known to support such a statement. In this context, we can argue about whether Klofáč did not count on the spontaneous crossing of the Piccione line on the basis of the disinformation made available and through his order. Therefore, if Foch could not inform the domestic political scene about his indications of the correction of the demarcation line in time, we can also play with the idea of whether the question of the second demarcation line was not accepted in our territory until the Klofáč line of military progress was sketched.

On the domestic political scene in the post-war period, also as a result of the departure of Beneš and other politicians to Paris for peace negotiations, Masaryk, Klofáč and Pellé decided on the most important issues. However, communication between members of the domestic political mobility and the peace delegation in Paris was not easy and, as already mentioned, there was often considerable misinformation or incomplete interpretations of the facts presented. Nevertheless, we can hardly assume that Klofáč acted on his own regarding an important international political issue and did not undertake any political negotiations, at least on the domestic political scene, through which he would consult on the intended situation. On the other hand, we can also consider other facts that bring closer the reasons for the considerable reluctance to hold such a consultation, mainly with President Masaryk. Unlike Klofáč, he advocated the correction of the demarcation line on a much smaller scale while in his deliberations he counted on the acquisition of the southern bank of the Danube. Masaryk also tried in his reflections on a possible correction of the demarcation line to find a political solution suitable for both neighboring countries, which would bring from the Slovak side the capture of only a minimum of the Hungarian population.

Despite the fact that the establishment of the second demarcation line was fully in the competence of Foch in the first days of April 1919, we can draw attention with the focus on this important issue for Slovakia, especially to Minister Klofáč. On May 7, 1919, Klofáč was invited to a meeting of the Defense Committee of the National Assembly, which asked him to explain the situation. Klofáč explained to the members of the Defense Committee that a new demarcation line had been set earlier, on 13 January 1919, but the Czechoslovak army had only begun its military occupation now as it wanted to avoid bloodshed.¹² However, the subsequent activities of V. Šrobár were also connected with the date of March 13, 1919. Klofáč also defended the second demarcation line in the case of the July communication with Beneš, in which he clearly pointed out that the new demarcation line between Hungary and Slovakia was established as early as March 1919. Minister Klofáč thus clearly declared that any changes in demarcation lines were no longer possible and therefore, in his view, the representatives had already reached a final decision on this issue. For this reason, he also took part in its subsequent

12 VHA Praha, MNO, Prezídium 1919, kr.9, inv. č. 3/2 – Branný výbor, č. 503 – 5950. (archival document).

implementation in the form of a military offensive on the territory of Hungary. On the basis of the information provided to him, he was therefore firmly convinced that the demarcation line which had been determined would no longer change, but in the context of both the foregoing and the following facts, it was relatively questionable at that time whether the negotiations in question had in fact been definitively concluded.

The subsequent opinion of the Defense Committee of the National Assembly shows that, on the basis of Klofáč's statements, it was not him who announced the progress of the Czechoslovak army either to General Pellé or to Marshal Foch.¹³ He was to be informed by letter of April 7, 1919, in which Pellé described the course of announced offensive. However, General Pellé's plans in the letter in question continued, as he did not forget to outline in the letter the subsequent march of Allied troops directly to Budapest. However, such offensive thinking by top military officials ultimately only escalated tensions in addressing key issues. However, the need to resolve them peacefully was more than necessary after the end of the global military conflict.

Internal confusion among individual military officials also contributed to the dire situation to a large extent, as there are well-known and historically documented cases in which Pellé asks Foch to hand over military command over the Czechoslovak army. However, Foch vehemently rejects his request and leaves command to General Piccione.

Plans for the implementation of the Military Action occupying the new demarcation line were implemented in connection with the planned offensive action of General d'Espèrey. However, the plans of the military offensive were thwarted by Marshal Foch himself through his telegram no. 3597/BS of 8.4. 1919. In response to information from Pellé, it clearly showed a defensive solution to the situation. The defensive position was thus also ordered to the Czechoslovak army.¹⁴ Minister Klofáč also had to take a stand on Foch's telegram by issuing order no. 11021, the essence of which was the restriction of military activities in the border area with Hungary exclusively for defense purposes. Contrary to the telegram, however, this order ordered members of the Czechoslovak army to proceed covertly in occupy-

13 VHA Praha, Prezídium 1919, kr. 7, č.38. (archival document).

14 FERENČUCHOVÁ, Bohumila: *Talianská a francúzska vojenská misia na Slovensku a česko-slovensko-maďarský konflikt v rokoch 1918-1919*. In: Slovensko a Maďarsko v rokoch 1919-1920: Zborník referátov z konferencie v Michalovciach 14-15.6.1994, Matica Slovenská, 1995, 140.

ing Hungarian territory.¹⁵ The direct order to proceed was thus not issued through the Paris Ministry of National Defense until 27.4. 1919. Nevertheless, operation in the border area significantly contributed to the deterioration of relations and to the unpleasant life of the war-torn population of the border area.

From the point of view of the new demarcation line and its subsequent integration into the Slovak territory, the order of Minister Klofáč No. j. 10807/op. from 7.4.1919 played an important role. It modified the procedure of Western Group troops in relation to the occupation of a new demarcation line. However, General Hennocque's Eastern Group was to join the advance, supporting the Eastern bloc of Piccione's army. However, Minister Klofáč's order also reckoned with possible Hungarian resistance to the Czechoslovak army. The resistance was to be faced with the help of General Hennocque, with the proviso that the possible occupation of Subcarpathian Russia would be postponed until the conflicts with Hungary were resolved. However, the primary goal of the Eastern group remained to occupy the line Vajdáccka, Szölömaj elevation 121, Kiskövesd, Nagyrozvágy, Agárd, Bezdék, Nagylónya, Hetyen. To the east, the group was to continue in the line of Bótrágy, Bátyú, Nagydobrony, Putka Helmec elevation 304, Árok elevation 333, Úh river.¹⁶

The order of Minister Klofáč itself also encouraged the accelerated process of occupying the demarcated border, while the Western Group was to ensure occupation from Verovíce to Blatný stream. As a result, individual action plans were subsequently developed by the commanding generals. From the point of view of the Western Group, it was crucial to occupy the industrial and surrounding area near Miskolc was crucial. However, creating a concrete and comprehensive roadmap was not a simple task. General Piccione worked on his plans continuously during April 1919, with specific contours being created through six separate and consecutive orders.¹⁷

In their plans to occupy the new demarcation line, neither Generals Piccione nor Hennocque could forget the decision of the Minister of National

15 VHA Praha, MNO – Hlav. štáb, Oper. odd. 1919, kr. 1, č.3-9/4, tiež kr.2 č.3 23/13. (archival document)

16 HRONSKÝ, Marián: *Trianon Vznik hraníc Slovenska a problémy jeho bezpečnosti (1918-1920)*. VEDA, 2011, 217.

17 There were orders: no. 2187/op. from 10.4.1919, no. 2233/op. from 12.4.1919, no. 2275/op. from 14.4.1919, no. 2347/op. from 19.4.1919, no. 2505/op. from 27.4.1919, no. 2528/op. from 28.4.1919.

Defense Klofáč and his plans which were more than territorial. Klofáč also tried to prevent the penetration of Bolshevik political views into our territory. Last but not least, we cannot forget the efforts to ensure the smooth running of rail transport through the Ipľa valley to Uzhhorod. The subsequent process of occupying the demarcated areas and its successful implementation was to be coordinated with representatives of the Romanian army. Together with the Czechoslovak ones, they were able to force the Hungarian army back.

However, as we have already mentioned, the occupation of the mentioned areas was supposed to start as soon as possible. The most probable date for the start of the military offensive against Hungary was thus set on 18 January 1919, despite the fact that the first ministerial order did not include the possibility of its implementation yet. However, the order issued on April 7, 1919, also came with the reorganization of the armed forces in the territory of the former Hungary. As a result of Klofáč's order, the Czechoslovak army was divided into two groups, the above-mentioned Western and Eastern groups. In this context, however, we cannot forget the emerging complications with the formation of the 4th Czechoslovak Division. It was to be formed by militia battalions from Italy.¹⁸ However, problems could also arise due to the accumulation of German forces. They were concentrated around the German-Silesian border and made it difficult for troops in the Tešín region to cross. Due to the complicated international political and military situation, the relevant military units did not manage to consolidate their positions, and the military operation could not begin on the expected date of April 18, 1919. The unchanging and relatively strict attitude of Marshal Foch to maintaining a defensive attitude in the area of occupying a new demarcation line with Hungary is unforgettable. General Pellé also tried to solve the ambiguous situation in the Czechoslovak army. As the situation became considerably more complicated as a result of the Romanian army, it was necessary to reconsider the attitude of Marshal Foch at the time.

As a result, he wrote to the marshal asking about his current position. However, Pellé did not receive answers to his questions in connection with the further progress of the Czechoslovak army. As a result, it is therefore necessary to argue about how the general could or should have explained

18 VHA Bratislava, Zemské vojenské veliteľstvo Bratislava 1919, Prezídium, kr. 3, S-280-3/11 – Hlásenie generála Piccioneho č.2233/op. z 12.4. 1919; VHA Praha, MNO – Hlavný štáb, Oper. odd. 1919, kr. 1, č.3-9/4 – hlásenie generála Piccioneho č. 2275 z 14.4.1919. (archival document)

the marshal's actions. Should the Czechoslovak army continue to maintain its position and continue to maintain a defensive stance towards further action, or invade into Hungarian territory and occupy a new demarcation line in cooperation with the Romanian army? However, the emerging historical circumstances clearly indicate that the situation and especially the spread of misinformation and half-truths contributed to this hectic post-war period and managed to provoke a military conflict between the Czechoslovak and Hungarian armies in the border area.