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An International Symposium "SOUTHEASTERN EUROPE 1918-1995"

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For the Publisher: Ante Beljo
Expert Counsellor: Dr. sc. Dragutin Pavlicevic
Editor: Aleksander Ravlic
Graphic Design: Gorana Benic - Hudin
Printed by: TARGA
Copies Printed: 2000
ISBN 953-6525-05-4

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Financiranje i korisnici

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For the Publisher: Ante Beljo

Expert Counsellor: Dr. sc. Dragutin Pavlicevic

Editor: Aleksander Ravlic

Graphic Design: Gorana Benic - Hudin

Printed by: TARGA

Copies Printed: 2000

ISBN 953-6525-05-4

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IMPRESSUM

Publisher: Croatian Heritage Foundation & Croatian Information Centre

For the Publisher: Ante Beljo

Expert Counsellor: Dr. sc. Dragutin Pavlicevic

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Revision of English Texts: Silvija Grubisic

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Graphic Design: Gorana Benic-Hudin

Computer Processing: Petra Petrovic, Gordana Vojvodic

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PROLOGUE

The book you have in front of you, dear readers, was published thanks to the Croatian Heritage Foundation and the Croatian Information Centre under the guidance of Mr. Ante Beljo. Mr. Beljo and his collaborators prepared the International Symposium entitled "Southeastern Europe 1918-1995" and invited distinguished scholars, university professors, publicists (historians, sociologists, geopoliticians, lawyers, geographers, demographers, politicians - the witnesses of these events) from numerous European and overseas countries. Of the fifty prominent names invited, thirty accepted: 12 from the Republic of Croatia and 18 from abroad. Some, who were unable to attend, promised to come to the next symposium and some submitted their written works prior to or after the Symposium. Ten states and twenty-odd nationalities

from Europe and America were represented at the gathering leading us to the conclusion that this was the largest international symposium in the field of social sciences to be held in the democratic Republic of Croatia subsequent to the establishment of its independence.

Although the topic of the Symposium was dedicated to Southeastern Europe, covering the period from the end of the First World War up to 1995, some lecturers encompassed somewhat broader spheres of time and place. Namely, events in Europe as a whole were reflected to a certain degree in these regions and the events prior to 1918 certainly influenced subsequent happenings. The Symposium took place in Zadar, an ancient Croatian coastal town with a long and troubled history. The Venetians tried to conquer it, but failed and in 1202 they called upon the crusaders to do it in their stead. In recent times (1918-1943) Zadar was held by the Italians and in 1991, it was attacked and greatly damaged by rebel Serbs from the hinterland, persuaded from Belgrade.

The participants of the Symposium met in Zagreb and were received by the highest Croatian state officials and President Franjo Tuđman. They arrived at Zadar on 27 September, 1995, having travelled across the "burned land", the parts of the Republic of Croatia liberated by the Croatian Army in a flash action called "Storm" at the beginning of August 1995. The Symposium and the subsequent round table entitled "Serbia and its neighbours" lasted three days. Afterwards, the participants paid a visit to Split - the largest Croatian town on the Adriatic Coast, then Siroki Brijeg in Herzegovina, the location of a well known church festival, and then the cultural and administrative centre of Herzegovina, the city of Mostar, which is currently under international administration. They finally arrived at Dubrovnik - a pearl of Croatian culture and history, so proudly called "Croatian Athens". Lectures were given in all these places and debates were held on this topic which are represented in this book in both the Croatian and English language.

In Zagreb, 15 January, 1995 (on the fourth anniversary of the international recognition of the Republic of Croatia).

The Symposium organiser

[Dr. sci. Dragutin Pavlicevic: South-Eastern Europe and Balkan Peninsula on the Margin of the Worlds - Foreward](#)

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SOUTH-EASTERN EUROPA AND BALKAN PENINSULA ON THE MARGIN OF THE WORLDS

FOREWORD

Roman emperor Theodosius the Great divided the Empire into an eastern and western part in 395.AD, and this division was renewed in 812.AD between the Franks and the Byzantins in Aachen.In 1054 after the division of the Christian Church into Greek-Orthodox,in the Byzantine East and Catholicism in the Roman West, confirmed Europe's division into two different civilizations and cultures, that is eastern and western spheres.

All these divisions have traditionally been traced over the middle part of the Balkan Peninsula, specifically the river Drina which is usually taken as a border, figuratively called the border of the two worlds.

The century-old division between East and West was disrupted by the Ottoman Turks in the 15th and the 16th century, who conquered Constantinople, ruined Byzantine Empire, subjugated Bulgaria, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Zeta (Montenegro) and conquered a great part of today's Romania, Hungary and Croatia. Supported by Austrian countries Hungary and Croatia defended the margins of Middle Europe, while at the same time founded Vojna Krajina. Then with common forces in the 17th and the 18th century the Hungarian and the Croatian compelled the Turks to withdraw to the banks of the Danube and Sava. Bosnia, Herzegovina and a part of Montenegro, Serbia, Kosovo, Bulgaria and Greece remained under Turk authority. Turkish aggression changed national, religious and geopolitical relations in the region. Under Ottoman empire the Balkans, non-Slavic Vlachs of Greek-orthodox religion spread to the west, up to the river of Kupa, Lonja and Zrmanja into Croatia and they lived there under privileged patronage of Greek-orthodox patriarchate founded in Pec, Kosovo, in 1557. These Vlachs were cattle-breeders and by the end of the 19th century, as a Greek-orthodox congregation they accepted Serbian nationality and have been living up to the present days as Serbs in Bosnia, Herzegovina and Croatia.

The Ottoman Turks Islamic religions was spread all over the Balkans and it was accepted by numerous inhabitants of Bulgaria, Serbia, Kosovo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, by Catholics as well as by the Greek-orthodox. Even today their descendants have been living in Albania, Kosovo, Macedonia, South Serbia (Sandzak), Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina. In Albania despite of different religious the believers of Greek-orthodox, Catholic and Islamic religions are people considering themselves Albanians by nationality, meanwhile in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Greek-orthodox are Serbs, Moslems are Bosnians and Catholics considered themselves to be Croats. Albanians (Moslems and Catholics), Greek-orthodox Serbs and a small number of Catholics-Croats live in Kosovo. This confirms the tradition that the Balkan Peninsula is a border between the eastern and the western world.

In the beginning of the 20th century it was said the Balkans was "a barrel of gun powder" whose spark ignited World War One in 1914. However, today Bosnia, Herzegovina and Kosovo represent the Balkans on a small scale, or Yugoslavia in miniature. This small territory contains all unresolved historical Gordian knots, as well as all compromises between big powers in their endeavour to solve eastern questions it also contains the internal contradictions which exist among people on the Balkan peninsula and eastern Europe. There is a hidden hope of a future peace but at the same time, it unfortunately could be a spark for an even greater explosive, such as cause of a possible Third World War.

South-eastern Europe is usually considered the territory from Austria to Turkey or from Vienna to Constantinople and from the massif of Karpati to the Adriatic Sea. This area includes middle Podunavlje on the north, and on the south Balkans peninsula i.e. the territory which follows the river of Danube from its mouth to Belgrade, and further on following the river Sava to Kupa. The Balkan Peninsula might be divided into its western part consisting of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Croatia and its eastern part consisting of Serbia, Kosovo and Bulgaria, and its southern part consisting of Greece and Albania. The river Drina has been a natural border for

centuries between the East and the West Balkans, while the massif of Sar - planina divides its southern part. The major traffic lines have always followed rivers Sava, Danube, Morava, Vardar and Marica. Serbia has got a central position on the Balkans peninsula and at the same time the major north-south traffic line, which follows the valley continues along the rivers Nisava and Marica to Constantinople, and along with the river Vardar towards the Solun and Aegean sea. This central position of Serbia has been a factor for all the events in this area from the beginning of the 19th century to the present days.

At the beginning of the 19th century until the Serbian and Greek rebellions, almost the whole Balkans Peninsula was a component part of the Turkish Empire, and the Middle Danube region was a part of Austrian Monarchy. Tsar's Russia was greatly influenced by the Greek-orthodox peoples and from 1774 they helped in the anti-Turkish rebellions of the Serbs, the Greeks, the Bulgarians, the Montenegrins. Their purpose was to withdraw Turkey from the Balkans and in that way Russia would be able to have a passage to the Mediterranean, through the channels of Bosphor and Dardanel. This process of liberation of small Balkans nations from Turkish government and the withdrawal of Turkey in general, is called the Eastern question. Russia unsuccessfully tried to solve this problem with Crimean War (1853-1856) and it was partly solved in the great eastern crisis (1875-1878) and was concluded by Berlin Congress. From that time on Germany, France and England were actively involved in resolving of the eastern question in addition to Russia, Austria and Turkey. Austria got the right to occupy Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1878 in Berlin, while Serbia became independent and was enlarged towards south. Montenegro got the independence and also enlarged its territory. Bulgaria was created again as a state after half a millenium with Russian help. A conflict began between Serbia and Bulgaria due to the division of Macedonia, which still remained in Turkey. Serbia and Montenegro tried in vain to take Bosnia and Herzegovina, but the Austria-Hungarian empire occupied the Sanjack (Novi Pazar) in order to prevent this unification.

As stated above Serbia had a central position on Balkans, and as a great number of Serbs lived out of its borders, the prime concern of its foreign policy was to unite all the Serbs and to convert all south-Slavs into Serbs and ultimately attempt to dominate the whole Balkans peninsula. It was an expansionist policy and the best Serb minds like a linguist Vuk S. Karadzic and Jovan Cvijic a geographer, served this policy. Even the statesmen like Ilija Garasanin took this program of south Slavs reunion created by the Chech Zack and exchanged the term "Slav" into the term of "Serb". Later on the greatest Serb politician Nikola Pasic, did the same and successfully realised this idea of the creation of Great Serbia from 1903 to 1918.

The idea of Great Serbia, relied on two historical facts for the Serbs. The first fact was that the Great Medieval Serb state was established in the mid-14th century on the territory of the weakened Byzantine empire, and its ruler - Dusan, according to Byzantine rules proclaimed himself a tsar. This state got a passage to three seas and this has remained a constant desire in Serb political tradition - the creation of a great Balkans empire and an exit to the sea. The renewal of the Dusan's empire, Greater Serbia, became an obsession of nearly all Serb governors and politicians of the 19th and the 20th century. The second fact was the existence of a separated Greek-orthodox, Patriarchy, the Patriarchy of Pec, that was in charge of all Greek-orthodox (Serb) churches and monasteries in all regions conquered by Turks. Because of the fact that Serb church has played a role of non-existing state, they always wanted to take all the countries conquered by the Turks, as long as the interference of their

church spread out. In reality it means to take whole Bosnia, Herzegovina and half of Croatia on the west.

A constant target of Serb foreign policy was to enlarge Serbia, to provoke crisis, conflicts and wars, and all was implemented, by both of their dynasties, all their governments without choosing the means. Very often their opposition contributed to this policy in the past as well as today. According to the abilities and circumstances Belgrade planned to enlarge Serbian territory on all four sides of the world. So, during a great eastern crisis (1876-78) Serbia was involved in two wars against Turkey. In 1885 attacked Bulgaria and lost the war. Particularly aggressive politics was that of the dynasty of Karadjordjevic from 1903. Thence forward Serbia started systematically to ruin Turkish and Austria-Hungarian government and to conquer their territories. At the same time they want to take Montenegro, then Macedonia, Kosovo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Vojvodina and Sandjack. They were partly successful in their intention in two Balkans wars (1912-13) when they conquered Kosovo and together with Bulgaria and Greece divided Macedonia. They have never succeeded to conquer Albania. Its independence was confirmed in London on 28th November 1912.

Serbia intentionally provoked the attempt of Sarajevo in 1914, giving a cause for World War One in which although military defeated but thanks to its allies - the forces of Antanta, - succeeded to win and then to conquer or incorporate into its state all South Slav countries that were constituent part of Austria-Hungarian empire and to remove by force Montenegrin King and consequently to conquer Montenegro.

By means of diplomacy, Serbia succeeded to get Croatia, Slovenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, without referendum, and without the decision of Croatian Parliament as the only one that had the autonomy and a tradition as a state on that territory.

Until the October Revolution (1917) Serbia had a full support of Tsar Russia, and in World War One and after, enjoyed the political help of the forces of Antanta, particularly of France and England. A new state, formed up in 1918, yet it had a title as the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenias, and even from 1929 the Kingdom of Yugoslavia it was in fact enlarged Serbia with the Serbs as prime ministers, most of other ministers, generals, etc.

National rights were not recognised to other nations. The Croats, Macedonians, Albanians, Hungarians, Germans were often persecuted, arrested and frustrated in every possible way. The strongest resistance against such a policy of centralism, king's absolutism, and serbism, was made by the strongest nation - the Croats. That was the reason why the Serbs ordered several Croatian members of parliament to be killed with the national leader of the Croats, Stjepan Radic. He was wounded and died due to this mortal wound. As the result of this act was the Croatian emigration and the formation of Croatian revolutionary organization - Ustasche, with the unique scope of throwing down Yugoslavia and constituting an independent Croatia. The same did Macedonian revolutionaries in 1934 when they killed the king Alexander in Marseilles.

From then on Serbian and Croatian national-integration ideology directly come into collision and Chetnics, as aggressive terroristic great serb organization, formed at the beginning of the 20th century. They knocked against Ustasche, as national-liberation and defensive organisation that were not choosing the means in realisation of the idea of free Croatia. During the World War Two these conflicts culminated into the civil war

with participation of partisans led by communists influenced from Soviet Russia. The Germans, Italians, Hungarians and Bulgarians divided then Yugoslavia among themselves. The two national states remained under direct or indirect government of German and Italian occupants.

It was an Independent Croatian State (including Bosnia and Herzegovina) but without the Croatian part of Dalmatia occupied by Italians. There was a state - protectorate under the leadership of Serbian general Nedic, on the narrower part of Serbia. In the inland was also operating chetnic's organisation led by the Serb general Draza Mihailovic. Both the states had concentration camps, passed some fascist laws, liquidated the Jews, Gypsies, antifascist Croats, Moslems and others.

The organised activity of partisans and communistic rule started in 1943. They announced the solution of the national question, as well as the introduction of federalism instead of Serbian centralism and liberation of the whole country. The areas, occupied by the Nazis and the fascists were promised to be returned. This was mostly realised. However, communists were systematically destroying all their political enemies, rich people and all those having a good connections with occupants. At the end of the war started mass persecutions, liquidation of Ustashe, evidently less of Chetnics, Slovenian white guardsmen, Albanian Ballistics, Germans and the others. The hardest stroke of that time suffered the Croatian nation whose army was given over by Englishmen to Tito's Yugoslavia. The Croatian army was mainly killed off or tortured on the hundreds of kilometres long so called the Ways of the Cross along Croatia and Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, to Macedonia, Montenegro and Kosovo.

And the second, Tito's Yugoslavia, although a formal federalism existed within it, repeated most of the faults of the first Yugoslav state. Instead of the Serbs and their king, communists led by Tito have taken over all the wield of power but very soon again the whole government machinery, the central government, the army and the general staff, as well as the diplomacy, were maximally Serbised. Even the territories under Serbian authority were predominately given economical preference. The Slovenes and the Croats as economically the most developed were mostly furnishing capital for those purposes. That was the result of dissatisfaction in Croatia in 1971, demanding federalisation or even confederation. So called "Croatian spring" was suffocated by force as well as the Czech's spring in 1968 greatly supported by Soviet Russia. Although Tito in 1974 passed a constitution which recognised all republics as real states and Bosnian Moslems got a status of a nation, his death in 1980 announced a very fast breakdown of the second Yugoslavia.

Everything started with disorders in 1981 at Kosovo. The unsolved question of Kosovo opened again. Kosovo then demanded a status of a republic. All nationalistic forces in Serbia forgathered thereupon and very soon dissolved the autonomy of Vojvodina and Kosovo in 1986. The Serbian Academy of Science carried out its Memorandum-in fact the renewed plan of the creation of the Great Serbia. In 1989 at the celebration of the 600th anniversary of the Battle of Kosovo Slobodan Milosevic announced the effectuation of this idea by hook and crook. In 1990 disintegrated the League of Yugoslav Communists. In 1991 Serbia and its Serbised Yugoslav Army supported by rebel Serbs attacked Croatia (and Slovenia) and later on even Bosnia and Herzegovina. Croatia intensely resisted although has lost one fourth of its territory together with the town of Vukovar-the symbol of Croatian resistance called "Croatian Stalingrad". Upon this defeat Serbia with Milosevic abandoned the idea of changing

Yugoslavia into Great Serbia.

When in 1991-1992 the World and Europe didn't want to stop the Great-Serb aggression and UNPROFOR didn't accomplish its duty Croatia systematised a forcible and an enthusiastic army and in the "Flash" action within several days liberated West Slavonia from Chetnics in May 1995. At the beginning of August, the same year, in only four days in a flash action "Storm", Croatia took possession of the whole so called "Serbian Krajina". Then they helped the Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Bosnian Moslems in breaking a blockade of Bihac and in taking in possession the region of West Bosnia. Two actions have changed the relation of forces in Bosnia as well as in Croatia. Only Eastern Slavonia, Baranja and Western Srijem with Vukovar remained under Serbian occupation. Upon that defeat in Croatia and Bosnia, Serbia and Milosevic become peace-loving. The Americans offered help and united the Croats and Bosnian Moslems. At the end of 1995 in Dayton (the U.S.) was made a preagreement of peaceful solution of Croatian-Bosnian-Serbian crisis and war. Soon after it was signed in Paris.

In 1991 Serbia rejected Croatian and Slovenian proposal of confederation, which rebelled the Serbs in Bosnia, Herzegovina and Croatia. This implemented ethnic cleansing, genocide and destruction of all cultural and religious objects. Instead of the Great Serbia the Serbs satisfied themselves first by something less than Great Serbia. At the end of 1995 tried to save for themselves Serbia, Montenegro, Vojvodina and Kosovo, so called the third Yugoslavia and to control a part of eastern and northern Bosnia and eastern Herzegovina. In such a manner ingloriously ended a two-centuries old dream of the Great Serbia and the renewal of Dusan's empire, the exit to the sea, of Serbian hegemony on the Balkans, of "all the Serbs in one country" and of the border of Serbia on the western line of Virovitica -Ogulin-Karlobag. The Serbs as the ruling nation failed to create one complex community of Yugoslav nations from the two Yugoslav states. Neither monarchist Yugoslavia between the two wars did it nor the communists succeeded to create it in World War Two. Now Serbian communists and nationalists wish to create the third mini-Yugoslavia as the ostensible successor of the first two countries. The Serbs have even discredited the idea of all Yugoslav nations unity, so called Yugoslavianism created in Croatia in the 19th century. Namely, Yugoslavianism as well as Yugoslavia, to great Serbian politicians, was only the first transitive step toward the Great Serbia.

When you complete reading this book, you would draw a conclusion that the Great Serbia was the main originator of its whole policy but also a source of constant crisis and wars which Serbia (when the Serbs committed massacre upon Turks in Belgrade) have been mostly provoking from 1807 up to the present days. General characteristics of Serbian policy within the two last centuries was intolerance toward other nations and religious and constant insatiability possession toward neighbouring countries and nations. There are just a few countries in Europe that have provoked so many wars from 1875 up to the present days and that have demonstrated such an imperialistic aggressiveness. From the First Serbian Rebellion in 1804 until 1991 the Serbs had manifoldly enlarged its national territory.

Just owing to Serb presentation the world permanently established the opinion of the Croats as separatists, a genocide nation, terrorists and the main deranged factor in both Yugoslavias. On the other hand, all these works will show that the Croats and other neighbouring nations were in constant defensive, in a struggle of preserving its own nation and territory ahead of constant Serbian offensive and aggression. You will

as well become aware of the fact that there is no neighbouring nation the Serbs were at war with (except Romanians) or attacked or have taken a part of their territory, upon whom there were not committed violence or ethnic cleansing. The same happened to national minorities inside Serbia and the former Yugoslavia ,i.e. the Albanians, Hungarians, Germans, Jews (Hebrews),Turks and Moslems in Sanjack and in Montenegro. Accordingly it might be concluded that all nations and states have not imperilled the Serbs but on the contrary the Serbs have imperilled them. Yet it should be also concluded that not all the Serbs nowadays and in the past were for ethnic cleansing and aggression, for the Great Serbia, but unfortunately they were in minority. After all, as well as they are today.

dr sci.Dragutin Pavlicevic

[Opening Words of the Organiser and Host of the Symposium](#)

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An International Symposium "SOUTHEASTERN EUROPE 1918-1995"

Publisher: [Croatian Heritage Foundation](#) & [Croatian Information Centre](#)

For the Publisher: Ante Beljo

Expert Counsellor: Dr. sc. Dragutin Pavlicevic

Editor: Aleksander Ravlic

Graphic Design: Gorana Benic - Hudin

Printed by: TARGA

Copies Printed: 2000

ISBN 953-6525-05-4

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OPENING WORDS OF THE ORGANIZER AND HOST OF THE SCHOLARLY MEETING

Ante Beljo

Good morning and welcome to the first scholarly meeting in Zadar, based on the topic, SOUTHEASTERN EUROPE FROM 1918 TO 1995 in Zadar. In my opening words, I wish to stress why we have chosen this time and this place to organize meetings and discussions among eminent local and foreign scholars, publicists and politicians.

The history of this central European and Balkan territory is full of contradictions and

conflicts of various cultures, civilizations and religions. In these century old conflicts, it was precisely the Croatian people with 14 centuries of tradition in all the above domains, who experienced the greatest losses. For centuries, and until recently, Croatia has been experiencing loss of its national territory and part of its population.

Now, when the Croatian people have finally achieved their century old dream of having their own independent state, we would like this territory to become a meeting place and a bridge connecting past diversities and contradictions. We would like for history to be written about objectively but before entering into the third millennium of western civilization, the Croatian side and the opinion of objective foreign researchers must first be heard. Until now, before the existence of the Croatian state, we have only heard one side. As they say, history was written by the victor; those who were victorious on the green field or at the green table.

In the last one hundred and fifty years, at the border of central Europe and the Balkan Peninsula, where Croats and Serbs live, a battle of ideas and politics was being lead between those who wished to create a unified Yugoslavian nation and those who endeavored to expand Serbia and assimilate other nations to achieve the Greater Serbian idea. However, there were also those who endeavored to achieve freedom, independence and statehood for all nations living on this territory; an aspiration which was actualized with the breakdown of the second Yugoslavia.

If we wish to begin writing history objectively and if we wish to re-assess past results, we must organize scholarly meetings of prominent researchers from various countries, in peace. For, these meetings are certainly better than conflicts and the solving of accumulated problems with violence and war.

Since we believe that the violent actualization of the Greater Serbian idea was caused by a number of conflicts, this will be the primary topic at hand. It is specifically the period between 1918 and 1995 that will be addressed, during which time Yugoslavian nations were destroyed by force. The basic idea in both Yugoslavias was: to create a Greater Serbia. The idea of unity and Yugoslavianism was only a passing phase. In both Yugoslavias, Serbs were the majority. They were the strongest and most organized nation. This is again the case in the third, smaller Yugoslavia, organized around Belgrade and Serbia.

Our task is to provide all those who concern themselves with this problem, an opportunity to actively participate in our scholarly meeting, and afterwards to join us at a round table, to discuss the accomplishments of our meeting, as it is done in Europe and in the world. In this respect, the nations of the Scandinavian Peninsula, should serve as an example to us, as nations who shared a history and despite their share of problems, peacefully separated and today, objectively and rationally write about their past together.

It is a special honour to be able to greet so many well-respected guests from around the world in our ancient historical Croatian city, Zadar. I would also like to take this opportunity to welcome the representatives of the local and district governments, and delegates from the Croatian assembly and government. I would like to extend a special welcome to the lecturers from numerous neighbouring and distant countries, who put their own work aside to, not only to participate in the reconstruction of the historical picture in this area, but to assist with the development of long lasting peace;

which is long overdue in this area, metaphorically nicknamed "gunpowder barrel" at the beginning of the century.

I would also like to invite the present experts to participate in a discussion after the scholarly meeting, at the "round table", and at the popular lectures later to be held in Split, Mostar and Dubrovnik.

Thank you all very much for coming. Thank you, as well, to our hosts, representatives of the city of Zadar, who so graciously received us as guests in their city, where we can still smell the gunpowder and where ruins and fresh graves remind us of the past, and invite future long lasting peace.

I would know like to invite Mr. Mario Matulina to say a few words on behalf of the town council and the mayor.

Mr. Mario Matulina:

Ladies and gentleman, as the president of the town council, and on the behalf of our Mayor, who is unable to be here, it gives me great pleasure to welcome you here today at this distinguished meeting, which will discuss this territory's political history throughout this past century. It is an exceptional honour to hold such a meeting in the city of Zadar. Zadar, deserves to host this gathering because it is a city full of historical and archeological sediments and a city, which has been the centre of numerous significant events throughout history. The historical significance of Zadar, which even the local people of Zadar will attest to, earned Zadar its Faculty of Arts, as well.

I believe, that it is extremely important for us to hold such gatherings, here, and in Europe, simply because they assist us in destroying the negative propaganda which has been dominant here for centuries. They will allow for objectivity and assist in clarifying history, which will certainly please all of us. Once again, I welcome all our distinguished guests and hope the next three days prove enjoyable for you all. We have given you a photo-monograph illustrating Zadar as it once was, as well as the effects of the war on Zadar. You might not be able to notice the effects of the war on Zadar today, because as soon as a bomb would fall, we would immediately clean and fix anything that was destroyed. The photo-monograph will thus give you a more distinct picture of the dreadful effects of the war on Zadar.

I wish you great success in your discussions, here, today, and success in your future endeavors.

[Ante Beljo: The Ideology of Greater Serbia](#)

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THE IDEOLOGY OF GREATER SERBIA

Our first theme is titled The Ideology of Greater Serbia and will deal with its origins and what it had induced as such in the area. I shall try to give you a brief outline of this ideology with a reflection on several prominent persons and works from the Serbian history who were its creators.

ILIJA GARASANIN (1812-1874)

Ilija Garasanin was one of the most active Serbian politicians in the 19th century. He was the contemporary of Ljudevit Gaj in Croatia. He was a minister in several ministries of the Obrenovic dynasty and the Karadjordjevic dynasty, thus just this fact shows his political ingenuity. He became famous for his "Nacertanije" which originated in 1844, but was published at a much later date. In his "Nacertanije" he outlined a plan for the creation of Greater Serbia which was to include not only the territories that once belonged to Serbia, but also the lands he thought should belong to Serbia. Garasanin knew that Serbia would need the aid of neighbouring countries for the realization of these plans and he counted on the weakening of the Balkan states by the fall of the Turkish Empire, thus enabling Serbia to grab certain territories more easily.

In this "Nacertanije" he says: "The Serbian state must strive to expand and become more stronger; its roots and foundation are firmly embedded in the Serbian Empire of the 13th and 14th centuries and the glorious pageant of Serbian history. Historically speaking, the Serbian rulers, it may be remembered, began to assume the position held by the Greek Empire and almost succeeded in making an end of it, replacing the collapsed Eastern Roman Empire with a Serbian-Slavic one. Emperor Dusan the Mighty even adopted the crest of the Greek Empire. The arrival of the Turks in the Balkans interrupted this change, and prevented it from taking place for a long time. But now, since Turkish power is broken and destroyed, so to speak, this process must commence once more in the same spirit and again be undertaken in the knowledge of that right.

The substructure and framework of the Serbian Empire, therefore, must be cleared of all encumbrances so that a new edifice may be constructed on this solid and durable historical foundation

"The Serbs were the first of all the Slavs of Turkey to struggle for their freedom with their own resources and strength; therefore, they have the first and foremost right to further direct this endeavour. Even now in many places, and in certain European cabinets, it is anticipated and expected that a great future is imminent for the Serbs, and it is this fact which has attracted the attention of Europe. If Serbia is thought of as merely a principality, the nucleus of a future Serbian Kingdom, then the world need not concern itself any more than it did with the Moldavian and Wallachian principalities where there is no independent principle and whom it considers Russian satellites.

A new Serbian state in the south could give Europe every guarantee that it would be orderly and strong, and able to maintain itself between Austria and Russia."

"... the hereditary princely dignity must become the most important and fundamental law of the state. Without this principle, which is the very embodiment of national unity, an enduring and permanent fusion between Serbia and Serbs in neighbouring areas is unthinkable."

* * *

"Not only must the fundamental constitutional laws of Serbia be extended to Bosnia and Herzegovina, along with the administrative system of the Principality of Serbia, but a number of young Bosnians should be accepted into the Serbian administration to train them as political, financial and legal specialists. Later these people would take what they learned in Serbia to their own country, and put into practice the knowledge which they have gained. Therefore, they endeavoured by all means to educate in administration a certain number of people from Bosnia and, once they were sent back, this would be utilized to Serbianize Bosnia.

"Special attention must be paid to the problem of diverting the peoples of the Roman Catholic faith from the Austrian influence, and evoking a sympathy for Serbia. This goal can be best achieved through the Franciscans. The Franciscans must be won over to the idea of the union of Bosnia and Serbia."

They strove to win over to this idea the Franciscans who were always held in esteem by the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina and enjoyed their support. Thus Garasanin proposed for this purpose the publication of certain religious books in the Serbian language, which were then to be used during religious ceremonies in Bosnia. These were the ideas of Garasanin which the state administration of the Serbian state of that time implemented.

VUK STEFANOVIC KARADZIC (1787-1864)

Vuk Stefanovic Karadzic was a linguist and writer who traveled throughout the Balkan lands studying and collecting folk songs. He wrote widely on linguistic subjects and problems, and published a grammar book and dictionary of what he considered to be the Serbian language. The Serbs consider him to be the founder of the Serbian language reform and Serbian culture in general.

One of the main themes of his work is that all those speaking the Stokavian dialect are Serbian (even though most Croats speak a form of this dialect as well). This line of thinking is evident quite frequently in Karadzic's work, and it influenced Serbian attitudes toward other Balkan nations. Karadzic's article "Serbs All and Everywhere" was published for the first time in the book "Treasure Box for the History, Language and Customs of Serbs of All Three Faiths" in 1849. This work is a typical example of Karadzic's views on the language and ethnicity of Serbia's neighbours. He also attempted to negate the existence of any significant number of Croats, distorting historic and linguistic facts to prove his theories.

While Garasanin in his "Nacertanije" from 1844 outlines ideas how to Serbianize other nations, Vuk Stefanovic Karadzic had already in 1836 integrated all neighbouring nations into the Serbian nation. This can be concluded from his text written, as I already stressed, in 1836

"It is known for certain that Serbs now live in present-day Serbia (between the Drina and Timok rivers, and between the Danube and Sar mountains), in Metohija (from Kosovo over the Sar mountains, where Dusan's capital Prizren, the Serbian patriarchate of Pec, and the Decani monastery are located), in Bosnia, Herzegovina, Zeta, Montenegro, Banat, Backa, Srijem, the western Danube region from Osijek to Sentandrija, Slavonia, Croatia (Turkish and Austrian), Dalmatia, and in the entire Adriatic littoral from Trieste to Bojana. I said at the start that it is known for certain that Serbs live in these regions, while it is still not known how many Serbs are Albania and Macedonia. Along the Cetina river (in Montenegro) I was talking with two men from Dibra, who were telling me that in those places there are many Serbian villages, in which Serbian is spoken the way they speak it, that is, a cross between Serbian and Bulgarian, but always closer to Serbian than Bulgarian.

In the aforementioned places there are at least five million people who speak the same language, but by religion they can be split into three groups: it can be estimated roughly that about three million are Greek Orthodox, and of this one million in Serbia (with Metohija), one million in the Austrian provinces (Banat, Backa, Srijem, western Danube, Slavonia, Croatia, Dalmatia and Boka), and one million in Bosnia, Herzegovina, Zeta and Montenegro; of the remaining two million it can be said that about two-thirds are Muslim (in Bosnia, Herzegovina, Zeta etc.) and one-third are Roman Catholic (in the Austrian provinces, and in Bosnia, Herzegovina and the Bar nahija). Only the first three million call themselves Serbs, the rest will not accept the name. Those of the Islam faith think that they are real Turks, and call themselves that, although only one in a hundred can even speak Turkish. Those of the

Catholic faith use the name of the place in which they live: for example Slavonian, Bosnian (or Bosniak), Dalmatian, Dubrovnian, etc., or, as is common among writers they use ancient names such as Illyrian or Illyrianist. However, in Backa they are called Bunjevacs, in Srijem, Slavonia and Croatia they are called Sokacs, and around Dubrovnik and in Boka they are called Latins. Bunjevacs possibly get their name from the Herzegovinian river Buna, from where these people, as it is told, migrated some time ago..."

"All of the wiser people among the Orthodox and Catholic Serbs recognize that they are one people and strive to totally uproot or at least lessen the hatred because of different religions as much as they can. Even so, those of the Catholic faith still have a hard time calling themselves Serbians, but they will adjust to this in their own time, because if they do not want to be Serbs, then they have no national name at all. To say that one is Slavonian, another Dalmatian, still another Dubrovnian is useless, because all these are place names and do not describe any nation. To say that they are Slavs is too general, as Russians, Poles, Czechs and all other Slavic peoples fall under that name. To say that they are Croats, I would say that in truth only the Cakavian speakers could use this name. They are the descendants of Constantine Porfirogenitus' Croats whose language is a little different from Serbian, but still closer to Serbian than any other Slavic dialect. Today's Croats in the Zagreb, Varazdin and Krizevci districts, whose land was called Croatia after the Battle of Mohacs in 1526 (and was until then called upper Slavonia), speak a language which is a cross-over from Slovenian into Serbian. I do not know how the name Croatian can be used for our Catholic brothers who live in Banat, Backa, Srijem, Slavonia, Bosnia, Herzegovina or in Dubrovnik, who speak the same language as the Serbs."

These are the ideas expressed by Vuk Stefanovic Karadzic.

NIKOLA STOJANOVIC (1880-1964)

Nikola Stojanovic, a lawyer and politician, was born in Mostar. Before World War I, he was a prominent opponent of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy and the founder of an opposition paper called "Narod" (Nation). During the World War I he was a member of the Yugoslav Committee, which worked on the unification of the South Slavs. He was considered an expert on Bosnia and Herzegovina, and was an adviser for that region during the Peace Conference of 1918-1919. He wrote an article that was first published in "Srbobran" (a Serbian periodical based in Zagreb), number 168/169, in 1902. In the article, titled "To Extermination: Ours or Yours", he judges the Serbians and the Croats as though it were merely a matter of two different parties, and not as if it were a matter of different nations, one of which had to win and eliminate the other (Croatia, in reality). He said the following:

"... Serbs and Croats are, according to some, two tribes of the same nation; the others, two separate nations (nationalities); still to others, one nation, one tribe."

"A tribe originates in the time before the formation of a state, a nation emerges in a state at the initiative of one tribe. In our history, this role was filled by the tribe of Stevan Nemanja, but after this we have many examples showing that Serbian leaders did not want or did not comprehend the union of interests of all religions, without which there can be no talk of a political union. The Serbs were politically united during the defense of Kosovo and by the subsequent shared fate of slavery under the same authority. Cultural unity, founded by Saint Sava, was at its best in this magnificent defense and in the later amalgamation of the Serbian aristocracy with democracy into one indivisible, wonderful whole-democracy with aristocratic pride. In this lies the importance of the Battle of Kosovo, in this sense the Serbian defeat in

Kosovo meant one great victory."

It is a fact that the Serbs turned many defeats in history into victory. He continued to say: "The Croats have neither a separate language, nor unified customs, nor a firmly unified lifestyle, nor, most importantly, a sense of mutual affiliation, and because of this cannot be a distinct or separate nation."

* * *

"The Croats are thus neither a tribe nor a separate nationality. They are now something between a tribe and a nationality, but without hope of ever becoming a separate nationality."

* * *

"Their wandering in the 19th century from Gaj's Illyrianism to Strossmayer's Yugoslavism to Starcevic's Croatianism proves this quite well. Their leaders, who wanted to create a nationality to fit the needs of others, forgot that a nation as a product of history is not created overnight, and that various myths cannot destroy the Serbian pride in their past, expressed in the epic poetry, and be replaced by pride in the 'shining Croatian past'."

* * *

"Croats often assert that they have some sort of cultural advantage over the Serbs. Those who do not have a distinct view of the world (in religion, customs, education etc.), no national art nor literature, dare to speak of Croatian culture."

* * *

"Croats, therefore, are not and cannot be a separate nationality, but they are on the way of becoming part of the Serbian nationality. Taking on Serbian as their literary language.

* * *

"The process of blending is unstoppable, as these are masses speaking the same language, and by the same token we must reject without any declamation of unity a battle between the intelligentsia and the middle class; as the Serbs and Croats in today's form are two political parties. The struggle going on between liberalism and ultramontane cosmopolitanism is personified in the struggle between the Serbs and the Croats. The contrast between the historical state right, which serves as the basis for the programmes of all Croatian parties, not one of which is liberal (certainly unique in Europe), and the natural rights expressed in the Serbian national thought, which is the basis for Serbian political party programmes, none of which show any trace of clericalism or conservatism, is the best proof of this." "The proud people of Dubrovnik decided on Serbianism, although the other Dalmatian cities, which were under the influence of the same Italian culture, decided on Croatianism. Dubrovnik was a free republic, but the remaining cities were under the domination of the Republic of Saint Mark (Venice). The liberated people decided to go with the liberated and progressive Serbian nation, the subjugated people chose subservient and regressive Croatia.

This is the best proof that only concepts of freedom separate us, that we are simply two political parties.

In the struggle between these parties there can be no talk of unity, as their principles come

from a separate foundation, and because the Croats are somebody else's avant-garde, whereas the Serbs represent the principle of 'the Balkans for the Balkan people'.

On the basis of this principle the Serbs must unite with other Balkan nations, leaving internal Balkan questions for another time. Croats, as the representatives of foreign expansionist desires, are totally excluded from this, not because of their national characteristics, but rather because this nation allowed its fate to be managed by a few cliques who were obviously serving the interests of foreign governments.

This struggle must lead to an extermination of 'ours or yours'. One side must submit. That this will be the Croats is assured by their small size, geographic location, surroundings (as they are mixed in with Serbs everywhere) and the general process of evolution, where the Serbian ideal means progress.

Through the education of the masses and their participation in politics, the reactionary clericalist idea will finally subside. The fall of clericalism in our nation means the fall of Croatianism."

JOVAN CVIJIC (1865-1927)

Jovan Cvijic is an eminent ideologist of the Greater Serbian idea. He is considered the founder of modern geographic science in Serbia. He researched and wrote extensively about Balkan geography. He had a great knowledge not only of the geography of Serbia and the surrounding regions but also of the history and current events in those areas.

He was also interested in Serbia's political advancement and because of this he often lost his scientific impartiality when writing about Serbia or the Balkans in a geographic context. Much of his work was and is used as a 'scientific justification' for Greater Serbian politics.

I shall present statements from various articles and publications by Cvijic in which he clearly shows his Greater Serbian inclinations in the context of an academic/scientific conception. All of these statements reflect the assertions of present Greater Serbian ideologists, and it is evident that Cvijic's work, since he was a reputable geographer, is used as 'scientific proof' of their territorial claims.

I shall quote some of his statements:

"Serbs also live outside the present boundaries of Serbia." He continues: "The world must know and realize that Serbia can operate with a much larger entity than the territory it now holds. The greatest possible territorial transformations may take place with Serbia. We must not flinch from this fear pouring into the world if it is useful to our national interests."

"The Serbian problem must be resolved through violent means. Both Serbian states must chiefly prepare themselves militarily and educationally, sustain their national energy in the military portions of the Serbian population, and use the first possible opportunity to debate Serbian questions with Austro-Hungary."

"Outside of the Morava-Vardar depression (South Serbia and Macedonia) there are no territories in the western half of the Balkan Peninsula suitable for forming a permanent state able to live an economic and political life." He goes on to say: "The economic and trading interests of certain Dinaric regions (the following are listed by name: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Dalmatia and the 'Dinaric' Croatia) even now aim for the Morava-Vardar depression; these lands cannot acquire life and importance unless they join with the Morava-Vardar state..."

"... it is widely known that Bosnia and Herzegovina are lands settled entirely by people who are purely Serbian in race..."

"... as an unassailable minimum for the principle of nationality it must stand that one cannot relinquish that central dominion and the heartland of the nation to another country, a foreign state; this is what Bosnia and Herzegovina represent to the Serbian people."

"... for economic independence, Serbia must acquire access to the Adriatic Sea and one part of the Albanian coastline: through the occupation of the territory or by acquiring economic and transportation rights to this region. Therefore, this implies occupying an ethnographically foreign territory, but one that must be occupied due to particularly important economic interests and vital needs. Such occupation might be called an anti-ethnographic necessity and in such a form it is not against the principle of nationality. In this case it is all the more justified because the Albanians of northern Albania came about through a merging of the Albanians and Serbs.

This is what Cvijic says about Dubrovnik and Dubrovnikians:

"It seems that the Slavs who settled in these lands in the 6th and 7th centuries first settled on the steep cliffs above where the town is located today, on the cliffs that used to be wooded with an oak forest, known then as 'dubrava'.

This, then, is the origin of the Serbian name for the city of Dubrovnik which replaced the earlier Greek-Roman name (Ragusa)."

VASA CUBRILOVIC (1897.-xxx)

Vasa Cubrilovic wrote a memorandum for the Stojadinovic government in which he proposed measures for resolving the Albanian problem. He was born in Bosansko Grahovo and was one of the youngest participants in the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand in Sarajevo. He was a historian and a member of the Serbian Academy of Arts and Sciences. In his memorandum about the Serbianization of Kosovo he criticized the colonization of that region after World War I. Members of the former Serbian army were at the time settled there in order to expel the Albanian population. In his memorandum, sent to the government of Milan Stojadinovic on the 7th March 1937, he suggested methods of physical expulsion of the Albanians from Kosovo to Albania. That was in actual fact an elaborately planned ethnic cleansing.

Let us see how Vasa Cubrilovic conceived this:

"The problem of the Albanians in our national and state life did not arise yesterday. It played a major role in our life in the Middle Ages, but its importance became decisive by the end of the 17th century when the Serbian masses were displaced northwards from their former ancestral war territories and were supplanted by the Albanian highlanders. Gradually the latter came down from their mountains to the fertile plains of Metohija and Kosovo and, penetrating to the north, they spread in the direction of Southern and Western Morava; by crossing the Sar Mountain, they descended toward Polog, and hence toward Vardar. In this manner, by the 19th century, the Albanian triangle was formed, a wedge which, based on its Dobar-Rogozna axis in its ethnic hinterland, penetrated as far into our territories as Nis and separated our ancient territories of Raska from Macedonia and the Vardar Valley.

Serbia began to cut pieces off this Albanian wedge as early as the first uprising, by expelling the northernmost Albanian inhabitants from Jagodina."

* * *

"From 1918 onwards it was the task of our present state to destroy the remainder of the Albanian triangle. It did not fulfill this task. There are several reasons for this, but we shall mention only the most important:

1) The fundamental mistake of the authorities in charge at that time was that, forgetting where they were, they wanted to solve all the major ethnic problems of the troubled and bleeding Balkans by Western methods. Turkey brought to the Balkans the custom taken from the Sheriat, according to which victory in war and the occupation of a country confers the right to the lives and property of the subject inhabitants. Even the Balkan Christians learned from the Turks that not only state power and domination, but also home and property are won and lost by the sword. The concept of the relations of private ownership of land in the Balkans was to be softened to some extent through laws, ordinances and other international agreements issued under the pressure from Europe, but this concept has been to some degree the main lever of the Turkish state and the Balkan states to this day. We do not need to refer to the distant past. We shall mention only a few cases of recent times: the removal of Greeks from Asia Minor; the recent removal of Turks from Bulgaria and Romania to Turkey. While all the Balkan states, since 1912, have solved or are on the way to solving the problems of national minorities through mass removals, we have stuck to slow and sluggish methods of gradual colonization. The results of this have been negative... Taking into account the intractable character of the Albanians, the pronounced increase in their numbers and the ever-increasing difficulties of colonization through the old methods, with the passage of time this disproportion will become even greater and eventually put in question even those few successes we have achieved in our colonization from 1918 onwards."

* * *

4) There is no doubt that the main cause of the unsuccessful colonization in those regions was the fact that the best land remained in the hands of the Albanians. The only possible way for our mass colonization of these regions was to confiscate the land from the Albanians. After the war, at the time of the rebellion and actions of the insurgents, this could have been achieved easily by expelling a part of the Albanian population to Albania, by not legalizing their usurpation and by buying their pastures. We have to return again to the grave error of our post-war concept about the right to possession of land. Instead of taking advantage of the Albanians' own concept about their usurpation of land - scarcely any of them had title-deeds issued by the Turks, and those only for the land purchased - to the detriment of our nation and state, we not only legalized all of these usurpations, but worse still, accustomed the Albanians to Western European ideas of private property. Prior to that they never had these notions. In this way we ourselves handed them the weapons to defend themselves, to keep the best land for themselves and to render impossible the nationalization of, to us, one of the most important regions."

* * *

"This concentration of Albanians around the Sar Mountain has great national, state and strategic importance for our country. We have already mentioned the way it came into existence and the importance of this region for linking the regions around the Vardar Valley firmly with our ancient territories. The greatest force behind Serbian expansion ever since the creation of the first Serbian state in the 9th century has always been based on the continuity of this expansion of the ancient territories of Raska in all directions, even towards the south... Only the country inhabited by its own people can be secure in the 20th century; it is, therefore, an imperative for us all not to allow these positions of such strategic importance to be in the hands of a hostile and alien element. The more so since this element has the

support of a national state of the same race. Today this state is powerless, but even in this condition it has become the base of Italian imperialism, which intends to use it to penetrate into the heart of our state. Our own element, which will be willing and able to defend its own land and state, is the most reliable means against this penetration.

Besides this block of 18 district, The Albanians and other national minorities in the southern regions are dispersed and thus not so dangerous to our national and state life. To nationalize the regions around the Sar Mountain means to bury all irredentism forever and to ensure our power in these territories forever."

* * *

The Albanians cannot be repulsed by means of gradual colonization alone; they are the only people who managed during the last millennium not only to resist the nucleus of our state, Raska and Zeta, but also to harm us by pushing our borders northwards and eastwards. While our ethnic borders were shifted over the last millennium to Subotica in the north and Kupa in the northwest, the Albanians pushed us from the valley of Skadar, the former capital of Bodin from Metohija and Kosovo. The only way and the only means to cope with them is through the brute force of an organized state, in which we have always been superior to them. We are to blame for having no success in the struggle against them since 1912, as we have not used this power as we should have done. It is not feasible to speak of any national assimilation of the Albanians in our favour. On the contrary, their national awareness is awakened in their countenance for Albania, and if we do not settle accounts on time, within twenty to thirty years we shall have to cope with a horrific irredentism, the signs of which are already apparent and which will inevitably place all our southern territories in jeopardy."

* * *

"As we have already stressed, the mass removal of Albanians from their triangle is the only effective course for us. In order to realise the relocation of a whole population, the first prerequisite is the creation of a suitable psychosis. It can be created in many ways. It is a known fact that Muslim masses in general are very susceptible to influence, especially religious, and are superstitious and fanatical. Therefore, first of all it is necessary to win over, through money or threats, their clergy and men of influence to support the relocation of the Albanians. Agitators to advocate this removal must be found as quickly as possible, especially if Turkey would be willing to cooperate with us."

* * *

"Another means would be coercion by the state apparatus. The law must be enforced to the letter so as to make life intolerable for the Albanians: fines and imprisonments, the ruthless application of all police dispositions, such as the prohibition of smuggling, cutting forests, damaging agriculture, leaving dogs unchained, compulsory labour and any other measure that an experienced police force can contrive. From the economic aspect: the refusal to recognize the old land deeds, the work of the land register should include the immediate and ruthless collection of taxes and the payment of all private and public debts, the requisitioning of all state and communal pastures, the cancellations of concessions, the withdrawal of permits to exercise a profession, dismissal from state, private and communal offices etc., would hasten the process of their removal. Health measures: the brutal application of all the dispositions even in homes, pulling down encircling walls and high hedges around houses, rigorous application of veterinary measures which would impede the sale of livestock on the market etc., could also be applied in an effective and practical way. The Albanians are most

susceptible to matters regarding religion, and thus they should be most harassed on this point also. This could be achieved through ill-treatment of their clergy, the destruction of their cemeteries, the prohibition of polygamy, and in particular the inflexible application of the law compelling girls to attend elementary schools wherever they are.

Private initiative can also assist greatly in this direction. Weapons should be distributed to our colonists as need be. The old forms of chetnik action should be organized and secretly assisted. In particular, a tide of Montenegrins should be launched from the mountain pastures in order to create a large-scale conflict with the Albanians in Metohija. This conflict should be prepared through our trusted people: it should be encouraged and this could be all the more easier once the Albanians revolt; the whole affair should be presented as a conflict between clans and, if need be, ascribed to the economic reasons. As a final resort, local insurrections could be incited. These would be violently suppressed through the most effective means, by colonists, Montenegrin clans and chetniks rather than by the army.

There remains one more means, which Serbia had employed with great practical effect after 1878, and that is the secret burning down of Albanian villages and city quarters."

* * *

Hence, if we want the colonists to remain where they are, they must be assured of acquiring all the means of livelihood within a few years. All speculation with the houses and property of displaced Albanians must be ruthlessly suppressed. The state must reserve for itself the unlimited right to dispose of the fixed and movable assets of the people transferred and must settle its own colonists there immediately after the departure of the Albanians. This must be done because it will rarely happen that a whole village departs at once. The first to be settled in these villages should be the Montenegrins, as arrogant, irascible and merciless people who will drive the remaining Albanian population away with their behaviour, and then the colonists from other regions can be brought in."

* * *

"In view of all that has been said above, it is no accident that, following our examination of the question of colonization in the south, we proceeded with the view that the only effective method for solving this problem is the mass resettlement of the Albanians. Just as in other countries, gradual colonization has yielded no success in our country. When the state wants to intervene in favour of its own element in a struggle for land, it can be successful only if it acts brutally. Otherwise the native, with roots in his birthplace and more accustomed to his surroundings, is always stronger than the colonist. In our case this should be kept especially well in mind, because we have to deal with a rugged, resistant and prolific race, which the late Cvijic described as the most expansive in the Balkans."

The quotations I have presented are the best manifestation of the viewpoints held by Vaso Cubrilovic, who, I might stress, advocated the "mass displacement of Albanians". As he had said, this option was "the only effective means of resolving this problem".

STEVAN MOLJEVIC (1888-1946)

Now after Cubrilovic let us see what another advocate of the Greater Serbian ideology said about the homogeneity of the Serbs. Let us speak of Stevan Moljevic, a lawyer from Banja Luka. He was born in 1888, and in 1941 he fled to Montenegro. He was one of the chief advisers to the chetnik leader, Draza Mihajlovic. The ideas advocated by him and the kind of Greater Serbia he hoped for, are best shown in his memorandum called "The Homogenous Serbia" which was released in Niksic on 30th June 1941.

Stevan Moljevic wrote the following in this manifesto: "The temptations of the Serbian people in this war, provoked by the loss of their state and their freedom, has brought them to these unwavering convictions:

1) that the power of a country is not based on its territorial size, nor the number of inhabitants, nor even upon the richness of the land, but rather on the independence of thought, the concept of love for the country, its freedom and independence, internal unity and spiritual ties of the nation when subject to foreign invasion, and the readiness of its people to sacrifice everything they have, including their lives, for their country and its freedom;

2) that this identity with national views, sense and love of nation and independence can only be reached in a homogeneous Serbia. Examples of this are Serbia and Montenegro in past wars and Greece in the present war.

In this regard, the Serbs today have a primary and basic duty:

- to create and organize a homogeneous Serbia which must consist of the entire ethnic territory on which Serbs live, and to ensure the necessary strategic and transportation lines and centres, as well as economic areas which would enable and secure free economic, political and cultural life and development for all times.

These strategic and transportation lines necessary for the security, life and existence of Serbia must serve the interests of Serbia and the Serbian nation so that the horrible suffering the Serbs have endured at the hands of their neighbours whenever the opportunity arose does not to repeat itself, even if some of these areas would not have Serbian majorities in the local population today.

Moving and exchanging inhabitants, especially Croats from Serbian and Serbs from Croatian areas, is the only way to establish a border and create better relations between them, and thereby eliminate the possibility of repetition of the horrific crimes which happened in the last war and particularly in the current war in all areas where Croats and Serbs are intermingled, and where Croats and Muslims planned the extermination of Serbs."

the continuation of the manifesto Stevan Moljevic elaborated the question of the borders of GREATER SERBIA, and he wrote the following:

"The basic mistake of our state administration was that in 1918 the boundaries of Serbia were not firmly set up. This mistake must be corrected immediately, for tomorrow it will be too late. These borders must be struck now, and they must include the entire ethnic territory on which Serbs live with unhindered access to the sea for all Serbian districts that are in the vicinity of the coast.

1) In the east and southeast (Serbia and South Serbia), the Serbian borders are the result of wars of liberation, and it is only necessary to reinforce them by adding Vidin and Custendil. In the south (Montenegro and Herzegovina), the Southwest Serbian province should include not only the Zeta Banovina (Royal Province) but:

a) all of eastern Herzegovina with a railroad tie from Konjic to Ploce, including a land belt that would protect this line, so that in this area the entire Konjic district would be included; from the Mostar district the following municipalities: Mostar, Bijelo Polje, Blagaj and Zitomislici; the entire Stolac district; from the Metkovic district Ploce and all the areas south of Ploce, as well as Dubrovnik, which would have a special status.

b) the northern part of Albania, that is in case Albania does not acquire autonomy.

3) In the west, the Western Serbian province should include, apart from the Vrbas Banovina, Northern Dalmatia, the Serbian part of Lika, Kordun and Banija and a part of Slavonia, so that the railroad from Plaski to Sibenik and the northern rail connection from Okucani over Sunja to Kostajnica belong to this region. This province would include one part of the Bugojno district except for Gornji Vakuf, and from the Livno district: Livno and Donje Polje, and on the other side from the Sibenik district: the municipalities of Sibenik and Skradin; from the Knin district: the city of Knin and the Serbian part of the Drnis municipality with its territory through which the Knin-Sibenik railroad passes, and eventually the Serbian part of Vrlika in the Sinj district; the entire Benkovac district; the entire Biograd district; the entire Preko district; so that the borders of the Western Serbian province go along the Velebit Channel and include Zadar with all the islands around it; from the Gospic district: Gospic, Licki Osik and Medak; the eastern part of the Perusic district through which the railroad passes; from the Otocac district: Dabar, Skare and Vrhovine; from the Ogulin district: Dreznica, Gomirje, Gornja Dubrava and Plaski; the Vojnic district except the municipality of Barilovic; the entire Vrginmost district; the Glina district except the municipalities of Bucice and Stankovac; from the Petrinja district: the municipalities of Blinja, Gradusa, Jabukovac and Sunja; the Kostajnica district without Bobovac; from the Novska district: Jasenovac and Vanjska Novska, but these places should be abolished so that the railroad stays on the territory of these two municipalities; the entire Okucani district; the Pakrac district without: Antunovac, Gaj and Poljana; Velic Selo from the Pozega district; the districts of Daruvar, Grubisno Polje and Slatina; then the Bosnian districts of Derventa and Gradacac. It is understood that all other districts within these borders will be included in this region.

For this Western Serbian province, which would have 46 districts and nearly 1.5 million inhabitants, on which the entire Sipad enterprise falls, as well as the iron mine at Ljubija, and over which the Adriatic railway Valjevo-Banja Luka-Sibenik runs, it will be necessary to secure the Zadar area and the surrounding islands to ensure its outlet to the sea.

4) The Northern Serbian province should get, in addition to the territory of the Danube Banovina, the dispossessed Serbian districts of Vukovar, Sid and Ilok, and from the Vinkovci district: the municipalities of Vinkovci, Laze, Mirkovci and Novi Jankovci; the entire district and city of Osijek. This district should be secured with Baranja with Pecuj and eastern Banat with Temisvar and Resice.

5) The Central Serbian province - the Drina Banovina - should have the following dispossessed Bosnian districts returned to it: Brcko, Travnik and Fojnica.

Dalmatia, which would include the Adriatic coast from Ploce up to Sibenik, as well as the Bosnian-Herzegovinian districts: Prozor, Ljubuski, Duvno; the western parts of the Mostar and Livno districts, and the northern parts of the Knin and Sibenik districts, must become part of Serbia but has to be granted a special autonomous position. The Roman Catholic church in Dalmatia will be recognized and receive state aid, but the work of the church and the Catholic clergy among the people must be favourable to the state and under its control."

In chapter II "Relations with other Yugoslav and Balkan States", Moljevic wrote:

"With the conviction of its past and its mission in the Balkans, Serbia must also in the future be the bearer of the Yugoslav idea as well as the first defender of Balkan solidarity and Gladstone's principle of 'the Balkans for the Balkan people'. Time demands that smaller states must combine in larger communities, unions and blocks, and Serbia's friends will expect this of her. Serbia will gladly respond to these expectations, for this is at the heart of

her historical mission in the Balkans. The Serbs already started on this path when they created Yugoslavia, and they will continue on this path. However, the first step on this path was taken incorrectly in that the Serbs and the Montenegrins allowed themselves to be immediately melted into Yugoslavia, while the Croats, Slovenes and Muslims took a different course and take all they can from Yugoslavia without giving anything in return. This mistake must be corrected and it can only be done if the Serbs, with the resurrected Yugoslavia, immediately and unhesitatingly create a homogeneous Serbia within the borders previously outlined. Only after this has been achieved will we approach all other questions relating to the Slovenes and Croats.

Yugoslavia would thus be arranged on a federal basis with three federal units: the Serbian, Croatian and Slovene units (Serbia, Croatia and Slovenia, my own remark). Only when this state of affairs is settled, when all Serbian regions are united in a homogeneous Serbia, can a limited rapprochement with Bulgaria be conceived... The Serbs must exercise hegemony in the Balkans, therefore they must previously gain hegemony in Yugoslavia."

THE MEMORANDUM OF THE SERBIAN ACADEMY OF ARTS AND SCIENCES (SANU), 1986

After learning about the viewpoints of the six most eminent ideologists of the Greater Serbian idea, i.e. Ilija Garasanin, Vuk Stefanovic Karadzic, Nikola Stojanovic, Jovan Cvijic, Vasa Cubrilovic and Stevan Moljevic, let us learn about the theses represented by the Serbian Academy of Arts and Sciences through its renowned MEMORANDUM. It was written at the time when the democratic changes taking place in the world were slightly felt even in Yugoslavia, and Serbia began losing the power of absolute economic and political control. This is the time when Milosevic calls the Serbs to rebel. The main message of his famous speech at Gazimestan on Kosovo was that all Serbs must live in one country and that "no one will beat the Serbs".

"The Memorandum of the Serbian Academy of Arts and Sciences" was reproduced with mimeograph in 1986. It comprised the ideological basis for Milosevic's future politics and instructions for the Yugoslav Army as what to do in a war that was inevitable. I shall read only some of the passages:

"The dilapidation of moral values and leading public institutions and a lack of faith in the competence of decision-makers have spread apathy and bitterness among the public and produced alienation from all the mainstays and symbols of law and order. An objective examination of the Yugoslav reality suggests that the present crisis may end in social shocks with unforeseeable consequences, including such a catastrophic eventuality as the disintegration of the Yugoslav state. No one can close his eyes to what is happening and to what may happen. Certainly our nation's oldest institute of scientific and cultural creativity cannot do so.

In these fateful times, the Serbian Academy of Arts and Sciences feels obliged to express its views on society's condition in the conviction that this will help us find a way out of the present troubles. The nature of this document, however, obliges us to limit ourselves to the key issues of the Yugoslav reality. These issues regrettably include the undefined and difficult position of the Serbian nation, a position brought to the fore by recent events..."

* * *

"Unlike national minorities, portions of the Serbian people, who live in other republics in large numbers, do not have the right to use their own language and alphabet, to organize politically and culturally, and to develop the unique culture of their nation. The unstoppable and severe persecution of Serbs in Kosovo shows that those principles that protect the autonomy of a

minority (Albanians) are not applied when it comes to a minority within a minority (Serbs, Montenegrins, Turks and Gypsies in Kosovo). Considering the existing forms of national discrimination, present-day Yugoslavia cannot be considered a modern and democratic state."

* * *

"Yugoslavia does not present itself as a community of equal citizens or nations and nationalities, but rather as a community of eight equal territories. But even this variety of equality does not apply to Serbia because of its special legal and political position which reflects the tendency to keep the Serbian nation under constant supervision. The guiding principle behind this policy has been 'a weak Serbia, a strong Yugoslavia' and this has evolved into an influential opinion: if rapid economic growth were permitted to the Serbs, who are the largest nation, this would pose a danger to the other nations. And so all possibilities are grasped to place increasing obstacles in the way of their economic development and political consolidation. One of the most serious of such obstacles is Serbia's present undefined constitutional position, so full of internal conflicts.

The Constitution of 1974, in fact divided Serbia into three parts. The autonomous provinces were made equal to the republics, save that they were not defined as such and that they do not have the same number of representatives in various bodies of the federation."

The statement is not true because Serbia always had three voices in the collective Yugoslav presidency whenever the need arose (Serbia proper, Kosovo and Vojvodina). They continued to say:

"With the exception of the Independent State of Croatia from 1941-45, the Serbs in Croatia have never been as persecuted in the past as they are now. The solution to their national position must be considered an urgent political question. In case the solutions were not found, the consequences could be disastrous, not just in relation to Croatia, but to the whole of Yugoslavia."

* * *

"Having borne for over half a century the stigma and the handicap of being the jailer of other Yugoslav nations, the Serbian nation was incapable of deriving support from its own history."

* * *

"After the dramatic inter-ethnic conflicts of World War II, it had appeared that nationalism lost momentum and was even on the road to oblivion. This appearance has proven deceptive. It was not long before nationalism began rising up once more, and every change in the constitution served to promote its growth. Nationalism has been promoted from above, its chief initiators have been politicians. The fundamental cause of this multidimensional crisis can be traced to the ideological defeat of socialism at the hands of nationalism. The disintegration processes of all kinds that have brought the Yugoslav community to the brink of ruin, as well as the dilapidation of the system of values, are the consequences of this defeat... Therefore, the first and foremost action must be to remove the burden of historical guilt from the Serbian nation, to categorically deny the contention that it enjoyed a privileged economic position between the two wars, and to refrain from denigrating Serbia's liberation-oriented history and contribution in creating Yugoslavia."

* * *

"The present depressing condition of the Serbian nation, with chauvinism and Serbophobia being ever more violently expressed in certain circles, favour the revival of Serbian nationalism, an increasingly drastic expression of Serbian national sensitivity, and reactions that can be volatile and even dangerous. We must not even for a moment under any circumstances overlook or underestimate these dangers...

Unresolved matter of Serbian statehood is not the only deficiency that must be corrected by constitutional amendments. The 1974 Constitution turned Yugoslavia into a very unstable state community, prone to considering alternatives other than the Yugoslav alternative, as has been made clear in recent statements by public figures in Slovenia and the earlier positions taken by Macedonian politicians. Such considerations and a basically accomplished disintegration lead to the notion that Yugoslavia is in danger of further corrosion. The Serbian nation cannot meekly await the future in such a state of uncertainty. Therefore, all of the nations within Yugoslavia must be given the opportunity to express their aspirations and intentions. Serbia would thus be able to declare and define her own national interests. Discussions and agreements in this vein must precede an examination of the Constitution. Naturally, Serbia should not take a passive stand in all this, waiting to hear what others will say, as she has done so often in the past."

The Serbian Academy of Arts and Sciences concluded its memorandum with the following statement:

"The Serbian Academy of Arts and Sciences is taking this occasion to express once again its utter willingness to promote this portentous undertaking and the historical aspirations of our generation with all the resources at its disposal."

This is the ideology of Greater Serbia with which the Serbs entered Yugoslavia and governed in it, but which was in constant collision with the concept of a joint state comprising equal nations, as well as with the concept of independent states in this region advocated by the other nations comprising the former artificial state.

[Dr. sci. Dragutin Pavlicevic: Persecution and Liquidation of Croats on Croatian Territory from 1903 to 1941](#)

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An International Symposium "SOUTHEASTERN EUROPE 1918-1995"

Publisher: [Croatian Heritage Foundation](#) & [Croatian Information Centre](#)

For the Publisher: Ante Beljo

Expert Counsellor: Dr. sc. Dragutin Pavlicevic

Editor: Aleksander Ravlic

Graphic Design: Gorana Benic - Hudin

Printed by: TARGA

Copies Printed: 2000

ISBN 953-6525-05-4

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PERSECUTION AND LIQUIDATION OF CROATS ON CROATIAN TERRITORY FROM 1903 TO 1941

FOREWORD

When the Serbian-Yugoslav Army launched an attack on Slovenia in 1991, the state of war on the former Yugoslavian territories, subsequently led to an aggressive war against Croatia.

In 1992, with the aid of the Bosnian Serbs, the Yugoslavian Army attempted as well to conquer Bosnia and Herzegovina. This is a Serbian and Montenegrin war against the three former separate and independent republics still in effect today. This aggressive war was another attempt to preserve Yugoslavia in which Serbia with the help of Montenegro would retain its domination over the other republics and people. This is the final act; the finale of Greater Serbia politics which has been executed by all possible means for almost two complete centuries in an extremely organized form since 1903.

1.TWO CENTURIES OF GREATER SERBIAN EXPANSION TOWARDS THE WEST.

The first Serbian state originated in the Turkish whirlpool in 1459. The new second Serbia began to take shape from the First and Second Rebellions against Turkey in 1804 and 1815. However, the Serbian Orthodox Church preserved the idea of the revival of the Serbian State (a re-establishment of a Greater Serbia from the 14th century during Emperor Dusan's era with its expansion towards the West as far as the Serbian Orthodox Patriarchal jurisdiction stretched with its centre in Pec in Kosovo). Hence, it is not surprising that the thesis stating, that all nations who speak similar languages as the Serbian language are Serbian, was proposed primarily by leaders of the Serbian church. For example, The Monk writer Dositej Obradovic in 1783 and Monah and historian Jovan Rajic in 1794, counted Bosnia, Dalmatia, Slavonia, thus parts of Croatia, as Serbian land.¹

In 1806, the first map, published by Sava Tekelija (Popovic), of expanded Serbia consisted of Montenegro, Bosnia, Herzegovina, and Croatian lands of Dalmatia and Dubrovnik. In 1806, Montenegrins with the aid of the Russians, who sailed into the Adriatic Sea in a battle against France, violently attacked and looted Konavle, a part of the Croatian-Dubrovnik Republic. This was repeated in 1991 by their great grandchildren from Montenegro with the help of the Serbian Army which at the time was called the Yugoslavian Army. Along with the looting and the tyranny, they violently bombed the museum city of Dubrovnik which they have long wanted to Serbianize or destroy for well over a century and a half.²

One of the characteristics of the Eastern or Orthodox Church is religious exclusivism. These distinctions relate to the Serbian Orthodox Church. From the 12th century, since the founder St. Sava, its first and last ideologist, persecutes and endeavors to destroy other faiths, principally the Catholic faith and Islam from the 19th century. The fundamental characteristics of the teachings of St. Sava, include: equalization and a narrow tie between the Serbian State and Church, national and religious exclusivism, destruction of all members of other nations and faiths, the stealing of possessions and conquering of territories all resulting in religious, national, and political exclusivism and intolerance. The Serbian Orthodox Church utilized such politics by transferring Catholic Montenegro into Orthodoxy and by settling Bosnia, Herzegovina and part of Croatia with Orthodox Vlachs (cattle-ranchers with non Slavic roots or Roman or Illyrian origin and later transforming them into Serbians as a nation in the 19th and 20th centuries).

The Vlachs, as servants to the Turkish Ottomans, aided in conquering Bosnia, Herzegovina, parts of Croatia, and southern Hungary. When the Turks grew weaker at the end of the 15th century, they crossed over to serve Austria demanding special rights, religious freedom, land, and the right to loot and persecute surrounding nations. Thus, it is mentioned already in 1630 that the Orthodox Vlachs took advantage of the privileges of the Austrian authority in Croatia and began to banish native Catholics, claiming that the King gave land only to the Vlachs.³ This was the first example of what today we call ethnic cleansing. The second, even a more vivid example, is the first Serbian rebellion in 1807, when Serbians took-over and "cleansed Belgrade". According to their own admission, in this opportunity, they "slaughtered the Turks" one after the other, sparing "neither wounded, nor women, nor children." Then they banished the Jews, Tzintzars and others. Younger girls were taken "for bed, "raped. The Serbian victors announced it as an act of revenge and as an explanation as safety because the Turks

wanted to destroy them."⁴ of Zagreb were They began immediately with the destruction of Turkish Mosques and all other Islamic monuments throughout the entire 19th century. With this ethnocide and culturacide, they entirely erased every Turkish and Islamic trace in Serbia. In this manner, Serbians ethnically and religiously cleansed territory which they captured in 1878, then in the Balkan Wars of 1912 and 1913, and similarly again, somewhat calmer and calculating after 1918 and 1945. At the same time, they occupied territories in Kosovo, Macedonia, Sandzak, Bosnia and bordering territories in Croatia through the colonization of Serbians.

Quickly, Serbian politicians, journalists, and scholars joined the battle to Serbianize other neighboring Slavic nations. In respect to this, even in 1818, one hundred years before the foundation of the Kingdom of Serbians, Croats and Slovenes, Serbians announced in a Serbian newspaper from Vienna that even the people of Zagreb were Serbians.⁵ While Croats during the Croatian national renaissance, struggled to win over all Southern Slav people over a neutral Illyrian name, Serbian scholar V.S. Karadzic, wrote how all Catholics (meaning Croats) and Muslims were Serbians in spite of their faith.⁶ The Croatian Assembly in 1861, and throughout the 19th century, endeavored by the supernational Yugoslavian name to assemble all Southern Slavs, had a Serbian-Orthodox patriarch, Josif Rajacic, stress how Croats and Serbians were two different nations with their own separate history, church, script and culture. Serbians, he says will not renounce their Serbian name "neither for love of Illyrianism, Yugoslavianism or Croatism".⁷

SYSTEMATIC GREATER-SERBIAN POLITICS TOWARDS THE END OF THE 19th CENTURY AND AT THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE 20TH CENTURY.

In the second half of the 19th century, there existed the calculated and organized politics of the Serbian government and Orthodox Church to transform the non-Slav, Orthodox Vlachs into aggressive, national, conscious Serbs. The Vlachs were peaceful peasant cattle-farmers who had considered Croatia their homeland and called themselves Orthodox Croats. In Pakrac, in Slavonia, an area settled by a great number of Vlachs, called "Little Vlasca", in 1876 there existed a Serbian conspiracy to liquidate all Croatian Catholics.⁸

When Serbia and Montenegro gained independence at the Berlin Congress in 1878, they were forced to disclaim Bosnia and Herzegovina which was occupied by Austria-Hungary. The territory of the former Croatian Military Border, part of Croatia until Austria occupied it with Vlachs, was returned to Croatia in 1881. Given that quite a number of Vlachs resided in these lands and began to consider themselves Serbs, Serbia began a specific task of Serbianizing the surrounding non-Serbian lands and then by joining the lands with the expanded Serbian state. The orientation of Serbia towards the West and the South began in 1885 when Serbia was defeated in a provoked war against Bulgaria.⁹

Towards the end of the 19th century, the Greater Serbian political ideologies and cultural-educational preparations began in Serbia and in neighbouring lands. Books were written in which the Serbian past is mythologized, the cult of St. Sava is exaggerated, the Kosovo battle of 1389 is celebrated, the needs in creating a Great Dusan Empire is stressed, and is requested access to the sea. It is systematically written about the expansion of Serbia and its transformation to a Greater Serbia which would be hegemonic on the Balkans and with the help of Slavic Russia, would liberate South or Old Serbia, Kosovo and Macedonia from the Turks and so prevent the Austro-Hungarian empire of taking Turkish positions in that territory.¹⁰

In Zagreb in 1884, with the help of Serbia, a newsletter called *Srbobran*, spread Greater Serbian propagand ¹¹ *Zastava* also did this in Novi Sad and other pro-Serbian newsletters in Sarajevo, Zadar, and elsewhere. The first anti-Croatian demonstration took place in Belgrade

in 1892. The following year in Knin, once a city of Croatian kings, in which, at that time, the Serbians did not make up the majority, Croatian scholars who had opened a Croatian Archeological Museum, were beaten up.¹² Serbian state flags were systematically raised in Croatia even though they were distinctly forbidden in 1895 when the Habsburg Emperor Franjo Josip I, then the King of Croatia, visited Zagreb.¹³ Intentional provocation was achieved by the Greater Serbian newsletter in Zagreb, *Srbobran*, which conveyed Nikola Stojanovic's article. It stated Croats are directly informed of the battle of destruction in which the Croatian nation, language, history and culture are denied and proclaimed Serbian¹⁴. The response were massive anti-Serbian demonstrations in Zagreb in 1902.

When officers of the Serbian Army and members of secret conspiracy organizations liquidated the last Serbian King in the Obrenovic Dynasty and brought Peter from the Karadjordjevic Dynasty to the throne in 1903, propaganda was organized and paid by the government using all means to create a Greater Serbia. To prevent foreign countries from accusing the Kingdom of Serbia as being a subversive state, with war preparations and revolutions among Southern Slavs, King Peter and his government organized several groups, associations, and organizations to spread Greater Serbian propaganda on Austro-Hungarian and Turkish territories, in particular the Southern Slav territories of Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Kosovo, Vojvodina, but without renouncing Bulgaria nor Slovenia. A secret officers' organization was founded called the "Black Hand" in May 1903 (causing unrest, rebellions, and assassinations and consisting of secret agents and propagandists).¹⁵ Because the organization acted illegally, its political and public work proceeded through the club "Slovenian South" which was led by people close to King Peter.¹⁶

In Kosovo and particularly in Macedonia, in the second half of the 19th century, a volunteer Serbian terrorist organization called Chetniks was in operation. They fought and rebelled against supporters of Bulgaria and those who supported Greece and a liberated Macedonia. Also in 1903, in Belgrade, a main council for the Chetnik actions were chosen and in 1905 an association Serbian Defense was founded with the goal to strengthen the battle "for Serbian interests"¹⁷ From 1908, the National Defense was working on the same task that directly prepared political and sabotage actions in Bosnia, Serbia, Montenegro, and Croatia. All these organizations and associations were supporters and trainers of the terrorists who assassinated the heir to the Habsburg throne, Ferdinand in Sarajevo in 1914, provoking the First World War.

They planned (with Peter Karadjordjevic's knowledge) the liquidation of his grandfather, the Prince and King of Montenegro Nikola Petrovic (the bomb and the Kolasin affairs of 1907/8).¹⁸ Members of these terrorist organizations stood behind a number of actions and liquidations in Croatia. Some Serbians from Croatia were volunteers in Chetnik units in Macedonia and their leaders often travelled as informers in Croatia and Bosnia.¹⁹

At the same time, while these revolutionary-terrorist organizations in Belgrade were being formed, at the end of 1903, a weekly newspaper *Slovenski Jug* which had the task of "popularizing the idea of South Slavs" and work for "its establishment" was being circulated. Periodically, until 1912, the newsletter had as its contributors Bulgarians, Croats, Slovenians, and naturally Serbians. The newsletter *Pijemont* which was named after the small Italian state that unified Italy, had a similar task. The message stated as the Piedmontese unified Italy, Serbia and Belgrade will unify Southern Slavs. However, the difference was that Piedmont unified Italy and embodied itself and "drowned" itself in it; but Serbia under Karadjordjevic wished to create a Greater or at least an expanded Serbia transforming all Southern Slavs into Serbians.²⁰ In this question lies the reason for the Serbian—Bulgarian animosity as well as the conflict between Serbia and Montenegro, Serbia and Croatia, Serbians and Macedonians, and Serbians and Albanians. The former Montenegrin Minister

Sekula Drljevic wrote about this: "All conflicts we speak about, in which there are conflicts between the lands of Southern Slavs, are provoked by Serbia (...) It is necessary to look at the moral, ethnical and political shape of Belgrade in order to comprehend why Yugoslavia became what it became, lived as it did and disappeared as it did."²¹

At the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th centuries in Serbia and with the Serbians in Croatia, the idea began to spread about the so called Serbian lands. All three Croatian province-lands were included (Croatia, Slavonia and Dalmatia) and so were Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Macedonia, parts of Albania, Bulgaria, Hungary, Romania and in some political maps, Slovenia as well.²² At the same time school textbooks extol Serbian history, language, and culture while Croatian and Montenegrin literary works were being passed as Serbian²³. The Serbs particularly usure Dubrovnik, its culture and literature, and all the language exclusively Serbian. All Serbian schools and even the religious Orthodox schools in Croatia, Bosnia, Herzegovina, Vojvodina and elsewhere had distinct nationalistic programs in the style of Karadzic's message-motto: Serbians all and everywhere!²⁴ Mythologized Serbian histories were announced in which they were the greatest and most significant nation in the world with roots from Alexander of Macedonia. Thus, it was a general mythology of Serbians and their past.²⁵

All these became the ideal preparations for the wars which Serbia was intensely planning with the help of Russia that also had its interests in the Balkans. Serbia also had close relations with France that mainly educated Serbian officers since King Peter's time. The first goal for Serbia, with the aid of the above-mentioned superpowers, was to destroy Turkey and Austro-Hungary and to drive them from this territory and to prevent German-Austrian Advance to the east. It was only with the signing and the breakdown of the Turkish and Austrian empires that the Serbs could realise their greater Serbian plan and occupation or as they called it "liberation" of Serbian lands. The first of the Serbian raids towards the west, east and south were directed toward the Bulgarians and the Croats, was had their own integrational national program. For example, Croats wanted to unify all Croatian lands: Croatia, Slavonia, Dalmatia, Istria, Rijeka, Medjimurje, Boka Kotorska, and parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina where Croats resided (Western Bosnia called Turkish Croatia at the time.

GREATER-SERBIAN ACTIONS ON THE TERRITORY OF CROATIA AND SLAVONIA (1903-1918)

In the framework of Austria-Hungary, Croatian lands were divided in two parts according to the Austrian-Hungarian agreements of 1867 and 1868. It said Croatia and Slavonia were an autonomous part of the Kingdom of Hungary and that Dalmatia, Istria, and Boka Kotorska were a part of the Austrian Empire. The greatest Croatian port Rijeka was directly in Hungary as was Croatian Medjimurje and Bosnia and Herzegovina from 1867 was shared between Austria-Hungary. Serbs as minorities lived in Croatia, Slavonia, and Dalmatia. Most of them resided in the former Croatian Military Border and also in the hinterland of Dalmatia especially around Knin which was never a composing part of Croatian Military Border.²⁶

According to the population census of 1880, which was completed according to language and religious affiliation, and not according to nationality, one can nevertheless indirectly conclude that the civil or Ban's Croatia had a population of 1,194,415 inhabitants and Croatian Military Border had 698,084. From this, 1,214,607 were Croatian, 497,764 Orthodox Serbs, 83,139 Germans, 41,417 Hungarians, and 13,488 Jews. In percentages, 71.11% Croats and 26.30% Serbs.²⁷ Although Serbian politicians claimed that the territory of the former Croatian Military Border was "Serbian land", there was less than 47% Orthodox Serbs living there in 1881 during its unification with Croatia. That number was consistently falling in spite of the planned settlements of Serbs from Serbia and Bosnia after 1918. The number of Serbs in 1991 was only 12.2%.²⁸

At the Croatian Parliament in 1861, Serbians requested equality for their language, a separate script- Cyrillic, [29](#) and separate religious schools through cultural autonomy. They were granted all of this 1887. However, at the end of the century, when the process of transforming the Orthodox Vlachs into nationally conscious Serbians, more and more demands for political autonomy and the separation of territory for the emigrated Serbians were emphasized. At the beginning of the 20th century, more work was done to destroy the existing states of Austria-Hungary, Turkey, Montenegro, and Croatia in order to create a Greater Serbia. The leader all these organized actions was the Kingdom of Serbia, particularly following 1903 when the Karadjordjevic dynasty came to the throne and intentionally provoked conflicts with neighboring states [30](#).

The Serbian Independent Party, which received financial and other aid from the Serbian state and the Serbian Orthodox church, was working in Croatia. Serbians supported the pro-Hungarian regime of Ban Hedervary in Croatia. They opposed requests of greater autonomy for Croatia and Slavonia in Hungary, and similarly opposed the union of Dalmatia and Istria with Croatia. In civil Croatia, Serbians supported the pro-Hungarians and in Dalmatia or they collaborated with the Italians who were fighting for Dalmatia autonomy. Of twenty Serbian representatives in the Croatian Parliament, about 18 had support the government of Ban Hedervary which worked towards making any Croatian autonomy impossible. [31](#)

In 1903, political circumstances were also changing in Croatia. Croats led the second anti-Hungarian movement (the first was in 1883). They burned the Hungarian flag again and organized demonstrations and diversions in the manner that illustrated that the Croatian problem was not solved in Austria-Hungary [32](#). Ban Khuen Hedervary who protected and assisted the Serbians was forced to withdraw. In this movement, Croats from civil Croatia was assisted by Croats in Dalmatia and Istria. The leadership in national politics was taken over by Croats of Dalmatia, in particular Frano Supilo and Ante Trumbic. They turned the existing Croatian politics in a new direction, the so called "new course". [33](#) This meant co-operating with the Serbian and Hungarian oppositions. The result of the "new course" politics was the Croatian-Serbian coalition which won the elections of 1906 in Croatia and took over the leadership. The strongest person in the coalition was the Croatian Serbian Svetozar Pribicevic who was engaged in strengthening and organising the Serbs in Croatia and in persuading the Croats to consent to an alliance and union with Serbia. [34](#) Pribicevic and his three brothers were in a direct service to create a Greater Serbia as well as the mentioned Prefect Budisavljevic and a great majority of Serbian representatives in the Croatian Parliament. The Serbian Independent Party was working on this as well as the Serbian club in the Parliament, numerous Serbian clubs in Croatia, various societies, the separate Serbian Bank, etc.

The politics of the Croatian-Serbian Coalition especially in 1906 directly aided the spreading of the Greater-Serbian idea when it took over the leadership and Pribicevic increasingly pushed Supilo back. After the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina to Austria-Hungary in 1908, the Greater-Serbian politics was beginning to be led even more intensely. Serbians had expected to acquire Bosnia and Herzegovina and then eastern parts of Croatia, the territories of the former Croatian Military Border. The loss of Bosnia provoked the annexation crisis which threatened war. Russia was barely able to stop Serbia from beginning a war with Austria-Hungary. In Croatia and Dalmatia, the political heat was felt. A supreme-treason process in 1903 was led against 53 Serbians from Croatia due to direct Greater-Serbian politics. At the supreme court trial in Zagreb, statistics were gathered that proved the massive Greater-Serbian action. [35](#)

These documents displayed that from 1906, when the Croatian-Serbian coalition came to power, Croats were persecuted, mistreated, wounded and even killed in their own Croatian state by aggressive Serbians who were expelling them from their own homes similar to the

attacks of 1991. Similarly, Croatian properties were destroyed along with their livestock. Catholic churches were desecrated and the Croatian flag was rejected. Serbians threatened Croats in western Slavonia, in Banija, to Kordun and Lika, that they would be forced to cross the Kupa and Sava rivers to the West because the regions they were in now were part of Greater-Serbia.³⁶ This was happening in the same territory where Serbians performed genocide and culturicide upon Croats and everything Croatian in 1991 and 1992. They always proclaimed that Bosnia, Herzegovina, and former Croatian Military Border would become Greater Serbia or it would all be transformed into a great grave³⁷ which in fact took place but not until 1991. The principle ideologist at the time was Svetozar Pribicevic who at his political gatherings, spoke to Serbian peasants in Croatia about the same topics that Slobodan Milosevic announced in Kosovo Polje - peacefully or forcefully, Greater Serbia would be formed.³⁸

From 1906 to 1909, Croats were forced to endure fear in all villages which they resided together with Serbians. Their houses were burned and crops destroyed. There were numerous cases of beatings along with wounding both Croats and Serbians who did not accept the aggressive Greater-Serbian politics. There were a number of Croatian political leaders who were murdered. The criminals were never found. According to a statement by a Serbian witness at the mentioned trial in Zagreb, several Croatian peasants were killed in Jasenovac.³⁹ Nearby the outlet of the river Una into Sava near Jasenovac, there was a concentration camp from 1941. Croats were killed thirty years before then. For example, Croatian Stanko Dragic was killed only because he complained to Serbian Lazo Bacic about the hanging of a Serbian flag representing the Kingdom of Serbia which was officially forbidden in Croatia.⁴⁰

In Jasenovac and surrounding areas, five Croatian peasants were killed and their murderers were not found, although it was known that an organized Serbian gang who terrorized and killed Croats were responsible. When any Serbian was accused of a crime, ten Serbians would be found to go to the District office and testify to the innocence of the accused. It is necessary to emphasize that usually the most influential agitators in the persecution of Croats were Orthodox priests (Serbian). For example, Parish rector Joco Jovanovic publicly preached hatred towards Croats even in Church. He claimed that all Croats, Slavonians should be banished because the entire territory must be Serbian territory, that is, Greater Serbia.

There was no end to anti-Croatian slogans by those emigrated Serbians to Croatia. It was stated that Croats, that is, Slavonians, must be driven away over the Kupa or Sutla, that Bartholomew's night should be prepared for them, that is, they should be slaughtered. It was discovered that a Greater-Serbian agitators were arriving from Serbia. For example in Okucani, when one of them was departing he would be escorted to the station, and asked by a domestic Serbian: " Sir, when are we going to slaughter these Slavonians?"⁴¹

In 1907 at the time of the elections, Orthodox Serbians threatened that they would destroy the Croatian town Spanovica by Pakrac. They did not do so then. However, this was accomplished by their grandchildren -partisans- during World War II. The town was completely destroyed and was not renewed until after the war and all Croats were chased away. In the town, until 1995, stood a Serbian name, Novo Selo, which after the operation "Bljesak" secured its old name, Spanovica. This was not the only such case. The same occurred in numerous Croatian towns surrounded by Serbians including Boricevac in Lika, Zrno in Banovina, and Donja Moticina by Nasice.

Many anti-Croatian announcements were being made in Pakrac and surrounding areas in 1908. One Serbian peasant announced in a bar: " Hello brother Serbian, drink wine, it is free,

Serbia and our King Peter Karadjordjevic is paying for it (this was true!) This is Serbian land - not Croatian...Hit the Croatian wherever you can!" Similar statements could be heard from western Slavonia to southern Lika, all the same words, slogans and patterns.⁴²

It is not surprising that Serbian Chetniks destroyed almost all Catholic Churches they came across in 1991 through 1995. They desecrated sacral objects and graves because their ancestors had done the same in the beginning of the century. This is supported by a testimony from a witness I. Mrnjavcic at a trial in Korenica in Lika from 1909. " In Korenica, the life of a Catholic is so endangered, that they cannot even live there. Everything that is Catholic is detested. On Catholic holiday's, Orthodox people always work. On greater Catholic celebrations, when there are great masses, rocks are thrown, only to disrupt the Catholics. The teacher, Uzic (Serbian) washes her clothes and puts it out to dry provokingly when there is any type of Catholic holiday (...) The Catholic cemeteries are desecrated and vandalized in a shameful manner. Wooden crosses are broken, stolen, burned and metal crosses are also broken. On my deceased wife's marble grave, there is a statue of the Mother of God, which they broke into small pieces (...); barbarically destroying everything. The Orthodox people allow their cows to graze on the Catholic cemetery. I even saw the Orthodox priest's cow graze on our grave. They put a pot on the big cross which is in the centre of the Catholic cemetery and throw rocks into it. In November 1905, they dirtied and filled the cemetery with Cath. church human and animal excrements..."⁴³

From these statements, it can be seen that Serbians had beaten, mistreated, and killed Croats in the Dominion of Croatia under Austria-Hungary when Croatia had its own government, parliament, and Ban. This was enacted without any punishment because of the support given by the Hungarian side, by the protection local Serbians received from Serbian politicians from the Croatian-Serbian Coalition, by encouragements from the Orthodox Church, and finally moral and material aid from the Kingdom

MASSIVE AND SYSTEMATICAL LIQUIDATION OF CROATIANS IN MONARCHIST YUGOSLAVIA (1918-1939)

Miroslav Krleža, a Croatian writer of European format, wrote about Croatian history and politics from 1914 in a book called Ten Bloody Years.⁴⁴ We will call the era of the State of Serbians, Croats and Slovenes up to 1929 and the Monarchy in Yugoslavia. As it was renamed in 1929 until 1939 the period of twenty truly bloody years in which the lives of non-Serbian people had no value; the spilled blood of Croats, Albanians, Macedonians, Muslims, and the opposition Montenegrins could not even receive employment promotions.

The establishment of a new state in 1918 was made possible by Croatian politician, Ante Pavelic with his speech in Belgrade in 1941. He was overthrown by another younger Ante Pavelic, the President of the Independent State of Croatia. The state was being created in 1918 and 1919 through blood and violence and in the same way disappeared in 1941. Everything began with the massacres on December 5, 1918, four days after the proclamation of the unified Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes (1.12.1918) on Jelacic Square in Zagreb - the December victims. The Croatian soldiers from the former Austro-Hungarian army came here and cheered the Croatian Republic. They were awaited by the military and the police who opened fire with machine guns from the windows surrounding the houses, immediately, killing 13 people, nine were soldiers and 17 additional innocent citizens and soldiers were wounded.⁴⁵ This was the official report but many old citizens of Zagreb claimed that about a hundred people were wounded and killed. In this way the new government, illustrated the means it would use to maintain its power. It had remained faithful to this for almost twenty years of its existence.

The Serbian army that entered into Croatia acted as if it were on enemy territory. With every protest, resistance, and demonstration, they reacted with force. In 1920, a rebellion broke out

against the Serbian tradition of branding of livestock.⁴⁶ Around Cazma, Bjelovar, Kriz, Dugo Selo, Zelina, and Kutina, ten Croatian peasants were killed and more than ten beaten and arrested. In Kriz alone, beside Ivanic-Grad in the so called Krz Republic⁴⁷ ten peasants were killed or wounded. Similar events occurred in Petrijevci (Slavonia) and elsewhere. Banishment and murders of Croatian communists and members of Radic's Croatian Peasant Party were a usual occurrence. The imprisonment of highly respected politicians (Radic, Macek, Sufly, Predavec and others) were common. Persecution of Croatians was organized by ORJUNA (Organization of Yugoslavian nationalists) which was aided and protected by the Ministry of Internal Affairs led by Svetozar Pribicevic.⁴⁸ In the entire Yugoslavia, especially in Croatia, Bosnia, Kosovo and Macedonia, Chetnik organizations were at work. Without any sanctions, the Chetniks killed people, beat them, threatened them, and burned their houses.⁴⁹

Terror, threats, and pressure in Lika were usual actions during the elections. In Stajnica in 1925, five Croatian peasants were killed; many murderers were never uncovered. Nevertheless, the greatest murder of a well-respected Croatian occurred at the Parliament of the Kingdom of Slovenes, Croats, and Serbs in Belgrade in June, 1928. These were the so called June victims which illustrated that the Greater-Serbian regime flinched at nothing. Punisa Racic, a Serbian representative and Chetnik leader who practiced shooting at live targets in Southern Serbia, killed Stjepan's nephew Pavao Radic and Djuro Basaracek and wounded Stjepan Radic, Ivan Pernar and Ivan Grandja, all representatives of the Croatian Peasant Party.⁵⁰ Shortly afterwards, the wounded Stjepan Radic died in Zagreb and his burial was transformed into a nation-wide demonstration against Greater Serbian politics in Croatia and Yugoslavia. This action, which was condemned by the entire democratic world, was a turning-point in the history of the first Yugoslavia. From that day, Croatians wished to exit the state and grew increasingly to organize themselves and to establish an opposition to the crude forces of Belgrade.⁵¹

The consequences of these crimes was the announcement of the King's dictatorship in 1929, the prohibition of all political parties, especially non-Serbian, and the renaming of the state to the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. More frequent persecutions of Croatians began especially among Croatian nationalists and communists. The secretary of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia Djuro Djakovic was killed, as well as the well-respected communist Nikola Hecimovic, and the so-called seven secretaries of SKOJ (Union of Communist Youth of Yugoslavia) which comprised a majority of Croatians. There were more murders in Croatia and Bosnia and among them were several Muslims. In 1931, a great trial was led against Croatian nationalists (Stipe Javor, Matija Soldin, Marko Hranilovic and others). The same year, a notable Croatian historian and trial an authority on Albania, Dr. Milan Sufflay was killed and numerous other Croatian youths were liquidated or succumbed to tortures in jails.⁵²

During 1932, Serbian Chetniks, gendarmes, and police killed forty people in Croatia from Zagorje to Dalmatia. For example, in Benkovac, Nin, Polaca, Lisani, and in Brusani in Lika, a so called Licki Rebellion broke out and was not successful. The punishment against the Croatians was drastic fifty Croatian houses on Velebit were burned). In 1933, Ivo Pilar, pseudonym Sudland, who wrote a book in German about the southslav question and

revealed all Greater Serbian intentions until 1917, was killed under strange circumstances.⁵³ That same year, scores of Croatian peasants from Srijem to Lika were killed. Those individuals who liquidated them received no punishment or investigation. For example Milivoj Cunic killed two Croatians near Nin and in return received Eminence in the Order of St. Sava. A Serbian gendarme killed a postman in the centre of Zagreb simply because he was apparently singing Croatian songs.⁵⁴ Hundreds of Croatians were imprisoned, tortured, and beaten, using the excuse that they were Ustashas. For Greater-Serbiens, every Croatian is an Ustasa, and every song which talks about Croatia including the Croatian National Anthem is an Ustasha song.

In 1934, more Croats are killed, several legal proceedings are led against Croats, and hundreds of people are imprisoned. There was an increasing number of protests, explosions, displays of the Croatian flag, and attacks on gendarmes. In October 1934, as an act of revenge, the creator of dictatorship, Serbian King Alexander, Karadjordjevic, was killed in Marseilles. The people considered this justice because Stjepan Radic and his notable party associates were killed with the King's knowledge. Considering that Croats were under brigandage in many places and in February of 1925, the so called Sibirja victims "fell" besides Slavonski Brod and immediately afterwards, the Ruscic victims at the same place, 13 peasant Croats were killed.⁵⁵ Murders were occurring like an assembly line in all areas of Croatia. Peasants decided to extend opposition by gathering people in a so-called national defence.⁵⁶ Relative to this, after the murder of the well-known Croatian, Karlo Brkljacic in Lika (April 1936), exasperation became predominant. When one Chetnik gang left Zagreb for a mission in Kerestinec (April 16), they were awaited by peasants who killed six chetniks in a battle around the castle. And then three more in a house which had the inscription "Chetnik association Samobor".⁵⁷ This was one of the few responses to numerous violent acts and massive killings of Croats. That same year in 1936, the Croatian martyr Stipe Javor died in prison in Mitrovica because of a hunger strike in protest of the Serbian torture's in prison.⁵⁸ Death found Svetozar Pribicevc in Prag, one of the greatest criminals to the Croatian nation, who until he was rejected by the King in 1927, systematically destroyed everything that was Croatian for almost thirty years. Only in the past ten years changed his position and wrote a book "The Dictatorship of King Aleksandar", and a letter to the Serbs in which he condemns the monarchy, the King, and Serbs for violence against Croats.⁵⁹

Finally, among the great crimes against the Croats were the so-called Senj victims of May 9, 1937. Singers from the Croatian singing society of "Trebevic" from Sarajevo and Croatian citizens from Gospic were guests in Senj. They were awaited by 25 gendarmes, who as if crazy, began to shoot at the Gospic truck only because a Croatian flag was waving from it. They were shooting with illegal bullets (dumdum) and killed six men and one girl (no one was older than 24). The funeral in Gospic became a Croatian-wide mourning but there was no investigation nor punishment.⁶⁰ The majority of Croatian Serbs approved these crimes. At the same time of the June Victims, numerous new-born children were named Punisa in Belgrade, Serbia, after Punisa Racic who was liquidated by Partisans.

During 1938 and 1939, political conditions in Yugoslavia and the world changed. The Croatian Peasant Party grew stronger and even the Serbian side realized that with violence nothing could be achieved except hate, so they began to yield. Due to this, the number of Croatian victims were less. In a short time, negotiations for the renewal of Croatian political autonomy began and the union of Croatian historical territories which meant transforming the Sava and Primorje Dominions and some other territories in central and northern Bosnian around Dubrovnik into the Dominion of Croatia. This was the renewal of Croatian statehood and the assembly of Croatian historical territories which the authority of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia intentionally shattered in 1918. Again, Zagreb became a national centre for all Croats and the Croatian Peasant Party became the national party for the entire Croatian nation. However, in Europe the Second World War began which in 1941 caught hold of Yugoslavia and rendered impossible Croatian aspirations for a democratic, national state.⁶¹

The proclamation of the Independent State of Croatia, after the overthrow of the Greater Serbian, Yugoslavian army in April 1941, was awaited by the Serbs in Croatia and Bosnia literally "with knives." In Herzegovina, Dalmatian Zagora, Lika, and elsewhere real revolts and the Chetniks executed liquidations a great number of Croats before the new Croatian state gained control. Greater Serbs with Chetniks as their leaders displayed that they were against any kind of Croatia no matter what internal order it had. After all, it was similar to 1990 and 1991 when they began to rebel and become very aggressive, well before the

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We have written this work with the intention of illustrating how persecution, terror and liquidation did not begin in 1941 and was not first started by the Croats in the Second World War. Rather, it was the Serbs and forty years earlier. Croats acted, in all of this, a defensive role which is shown by the fact that the Chetniks began an organized extermination of Croats and other non-Serbian nations in 1903. They founded the Black Hand and Chetnikism while the Ustasha Organization did not begin until 1929 after the murder of Stjepan Radić and other Croats at the Belgrade National Assembly.

Croats were victims on their own land from 1903 to 1941. They were victims of grandomania and mythologized Serbian consciousness of creating a Greater-Serbia on Croatian, Bosnian-Herzegovian, Montenegrin, and Hungarian territory. Serbs were in fact the "Trojan horse" in these lands through the conquering politics that manipulated them. Because of this, as in the war from 1941 to 1945, in the homeland war of 1991 to 1995, they had to pay a high price.

[Dr. sc. Ante Sekulic: SERBIANISM IN PODUNAVLJE \(THE DANUBE REGION\) 1918-1995](#)

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An International Symposium "SOUTHEASTERN EUROPE 1918-1995"

Publisher: [Croatian Heritage Foundation](#) & [Croatian Information Centre](#)

For the Publisher: Ante Beljo

Expert Counsellor: Dr. sc. Dragutin Pavlicevic

Editor: Aleksander Ravlic

Graphic Design: Gorana Benic - Hudin

Printed by: TARGA

Copies Printed: 2000

ISBN 953-6525-05-4

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SERBIANISM IN PODUNAVLJE (THE DANUBE REGION) 1918-1995

The Serbian penetration of the central European territory over the Danube must be discussed as the issue here is the exaggerated desire of the Byzantine-Orthodox groups from Belgrade to place themselves on the soil of the native western and central European community. We are not talking about the Orthodox group which took refuge in Podunavlje areas in 1690, under the leadership of the religious head, patriarch Arsenije Crnojevic (Carnojevic) with the permission of the Viennese court. Descendants of the settlers remained inhabitants of Backa, Baranja, Srijem, and parts of Banat were referred to as "native Srbliji". When considering the social, economic and cultural Serbian tyranny since 1918, in Backa, Baranja and Srijem, and

Podunavlje, it is necessary to differentiate the older population from the population which was abruptly "thrown in" after the First World War. The native inhabitants referred to these new settlers as "newcomers", "carpet baggers," and "volunteers" because they were arriving from various regions as rewarded Serbian volunteers. The newcomers acted like privileged individuals in the Podunavlje territory to whom other people were to be obedient. Nonetheless, it is necessary to follow these general observations in the developments of Podunavlje from 1918 and onwards.

1. Numerous literary works have been written on reasons for the alterations in the European national borders after the First World War and the shaping of new states. The "punishment" of the Dual monarchy (Germany as well) and the "rewards" for those who participated in "getting even" with Italy, Germany, and The Austro-Hungarian empire, are discussed. However, it is necessary to note that there is a constant misunderstanding when written and discussed on how Vojvodina is included in the new nation of Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the Kingdom of Montenegro and Serbia. Yet, it was Backa, Baranja and Srijem that joined the new nation. Any declaration of Vojvodina is not mentioned in any documents because it was not a favorable name to the inhabitants. Memories of the Serbian Vojvodina of the nineteenth century were still fresh, as well as memories of the behavior of politicians who wished to reestablish the Serbian Vojvodina (Svetozar Miletic and others). It is also known that the mentioned district name was not even during before the re-construction of the Kingdom of Slovenes, Croats and Serbs in 1929. The re-construction of the Dominion neglected Vojvodina, but the arranged Danube Dominion, according to the political organization, is at a large scale, territorially, much more "Serbian".¹

In the events from 1918 to 1920, priests (Bl. Rajic, I. Budanovic, M. Catalinac, I. Petres, P. Evetovic, I. Probojcevic, F. Pijukovic and others), lawyers (Stipan Vojnic Tunic, I. Sudarevic, Stj. Matijevic, M. Matic and others), and some teachers (M. Mandic, M. Ispanovic, K. Romic and others) were mentioned it is necessary therefore to emphasise that Croatian inhabitants in southern Hungary were peasants (farmers, land owners) with few educated individuals. There was no reason why the Bunjevac-Sokac children could not be educated but mistrust towards the government hindered the parents from registering their children in schools (in which Hungarian was taught). Nevertheless, when any Backa Croatian would set off "to school," he would usually choose an independent vocation or employment (priest, lawyer).²

MAP 1

Picture 1. Changing of the banovina borders in Srijem 1918-1945.

Peter Pekic reported the events in the autumn of 1918 in the book, *The History of Croats in Vojvodina*.³ Because at the time the young author was a witness to the events in Backa, his reports should be reliable. Yet, Pekic euphorically approached the material and clumsily gave an account of only fragments of the events that had occurred. Convinced that the line of demarcation, Moris, Tisa, Horgos, Subotica, Baja, Pecuh and Barc, would be the final state borders between Hungary and the new South Slavic state union, Pekic was bitterly disappointed when his hometown of Gornji. St. Ivan was assigned to Hungary in the border agreement. Pekic saved a list of participators in the meeting which was held on November 5, 1918, in the family home of Manojlovic in Subotica. Blasko Rajic, Dr. Josip Vojnic Hajduk, Dr. Josip Prcic, Ilija Kujundzic, Lazar Orcic, Andrija Mazic, Gavro Covic and the Serbs Marko Protic, Jovan Petrovic, Bogdan Svircevic, R. Miladinovic were in attendance at this meeting. At the meeting, it was decided that the process of secession of the territories of southern Hungary be led by Pucka kasina (Subotica).⁴ It is necessary to mention that the meeting was held after the return of Blasko Rajic from the historical session of the Croatian parliament in Zagreb (October 29, 1918.) The other Croatian delegates from Backa, Dr. Mirko Ivkovic Ivandekic and Dr. Stjepan Vojnic Tunic, remained in Zagreb.

When discussing the proclamation and establishment of the new South Slavic nation, the fact is that the process of historical events in Baranja and especially in Backa and Banat, from November 1918 until June 1920, are frequently neglected. Until the signing of the Trianon agreement, the direction of the so called northern border of the new state was not guaranteed. There were numerous speculations, many schemes, and political games which the Serbians, Nikola Pasic, Vasa Stajic, Dusan Popovic, Vitomir Kovac , Jasa Tomic and others, were prominent.

Blasko Rajic, the priest and parish rector of St. Rok ⁵ was among one of the most mentioned Croatian public officials who was actively working for the joining of parts of Southern Hungary at the time with the new state. He was educated in Subotica and Kalaca. In his youth, he decided to follow the national revival activities which Ivan Antunovic ⁶ had begun. Following the death of Pajo Kujundzic (1915), Blasko Rajic took over the leading role amongst Croatian priests in Backa. In a conversation about his activities, Rajic said to me: " I have always wanted our people to have the same rights as the others in Backa: Germans, Hungarians...".⁷ Perhaps this is why sometimes in his statements, they have double meanings. Considering that Rajic eagerly pointed out how Subotica and all of the territories to the Danube, "have become part of the framework of the South Slavic state thanks to us," one cannot discuss about the formation of the Kingdom of Slovenes, Croats and Serbians without mentioning and being acquainted with Rajic's work.⁸

Pekic writes about the collaboration of the Backa Croats with Zagreb in the summer of 1918. He also mentions the secret meetings in Subotica at which the situation in the Monarchy and the status of the Bunjevac-Sokac Croats are discussed on the basis of Wilson's principles about " self-determination of the people".⁹ With respect to this, it is valid to draw attention to "The resolution of independent Serbians and Croats from Southern Hungary" ,¹⁰ amended at meetings held on 2.,24., and 25, October, 1918, by which The National Council of Slovenes, Croats and Serbians is recognized in Zagreb, as the complete and only "legal authority" (competence) in resolving the question of Croats and Serbians in Southern Hungary.¹¹ The military overthrow of Austria-Hungary prompted and set in motion a series of violent changes in Hungary ("unification of the National Work Party and the Constitutional Party, proclamation of the Social Democratic Party of Hungary, gathered around Mihaly Karoly, the foundation of the Hungarian National Council, the Autumn revolution of the "Roses")¹² but a series of meetings and agreements were set in motion as well in the family home of Alb Malagurska (Subotica, Strossmayerova). The following were present: Alb and Jos Malagurski, land-owners; Stipan Matijevic and Jovan Petrovic, lawyers; Josi Prcic law clerk; Vojislav Stankovic, director of the Hrvatska zemaljska banka, Joso vojnic Hajduk; lawyer, Ivan Vojnic Tunic, professor and a series of others. At the meeting, it was decided that Subotica and the Subotica territory secede from Hungary.¹³ At the meeting, it was also decided that Blasko Rajic , the parish rector, go to Zagreb as a representative on behalf of Subotica and its inhabitants. V. Stankovic informed Rajic of the decision and Rajic accepted and prepared for the journey to Zagreb.¹⁴ The actual day that Rajic and Radic personally met is not known. I was not able to discover for certain even while Rajic was still alive. Most likely it occurred in the second half of November of 1918. Rajic was seven years younger than Radic, the leader who was well known even among Croatian peasants. Therefore, Rajic was able to learn about the political and party life in the years of the downfall of the Monarchy from Radic as well as the establishment of the borders of the new national creation and South Slavic Union.

Rajic set off for Zagreb with the authority and with an identity card to work in the National Council. He was present for the historical decisions at the Council from October 27 to 29, 1918. Other than the meeting with Stjepan Radic, Rajic met with Svetozar Pribicevic, Srdjan Budisavljevic, Ivica Kovacevic, Cezar Alacic and a series of other representatives and

politicians. He stayed as a guest with the Archbishop Dr. Antun Bauer at the archbishop's residence.¹⁵

Radic's opinion "about the incomprehensible and illogical" title of Vojvodina instead of Backa and Baranja is well known.¹⁶ Nevertheless, the fact that Radic, at the end of 1918 and 1919, directed a series of young people, primarily of free vocations to Backa where they wholeheartedly joined in the social work of the Backa Croats in Subotica, Sombor and other settlements, is unknown to many of our scholars.¹⁷

Blasko Rajic returned to Subotica on November 2, 1918. Other fellow collaborators, Mirko Ivkovic Ivandekic and Stipan Vojnic remained in Zagreb and until November 13 probably participated in the meeting of Backa Croats and Serbs in Zagreb in the National Council at which time Vasa Stajic became a member of the National Council.¹⁸

The return of Blasko Rajic befitted the stormy events in the city and on the entire Backa territory. The events in Budapest echoed in Subotica, where the supporters of the chapter of the Independent Party (led by Sime Mukic) accepted the program of M. Karoly. Supporters of the Territorial Civil Radical Party joined them as well. In cooperation with the supporters of the Civil Radical Party, everyone met on the afternoon of October 30, 1918 (in S. Mukic's apartment) and proclaimed the Hungarian National Council and organized the Civil Guard.¹⁹

It was necessary to act quickly. On November 5, a meeting of Croatian and Serbian leaders and the organized Civil Guard (altogether 354 men, including officers) was held. Again, on November 10, a great national meeting (over 10,000 participants) was held, and young Gavro Covic carried the Croatian flag to City Hall in a procession where he hung it on a high tower.²⁰

Other than in Subotica, a national council was organized in Sombor, Novi Sad, Baja and other settlements.

There are notes and descriptions in daily newspapers and gazettes about the entrance of the Serbian army in Backa and the occupying of territory marked by the line of demarcation. Given that the Serbian army was entrusted with controlling the territory up to the line of demarcation, the local authorities until that time in the Backa, Baranja and Banat settlements were discussing the handing over of businesses to them.

Already on November 16, representatives of national councils from Backa, Banat, and Baranja are invited to send their delegates to Novi Sad for a great national assembly on November 25, 1918. Pekic, who we have mentioned, called it a "magnificent assembly". The assembly took place in the room of the "Matica Srpska" where late at night a Resolution the Secession of Backa, Banat and Baranja from Hungary was proclaimed. According to Jovan Hranilovic's statement, the decision should have stated that the mentioned regions join with the South Slavic lands, and Jan Grunik, a Slovakian delegate, stated on behalf of Slovaks that "Banat, Backa, and Srijem belong to the Serbian, Croatian and Slovenian State."²¹ There are diverse opinions about the assembly in Novi Sad.²² There is even a greater outrage in the wording of the resolution: Jasa Tomic, the secretary at the meeting, and a Greater Serbian politician, added the word "Serbia" without the authority or permission of the National Council.²³ The Novi Sad Assembly appointed B. Rajic and J. Tomic to present the decisions in Belgrade.

The entry of the Serbian army onto the territory marked by the line of demarcation, the resolution in Novi Sad and the speeches in Belgrade on December 1, 1918 did not mean the termination of the procedure for breaking away from Hungary. Peace was not signed with the

northern neighbor and news about political games worried the citizens. Not even the behavior of the "liberators" allowed the inhabitants of Podunavlje to sleep peacefully.²⁴ Croatian intellectuals (priests, lawyers) accomplished a great deal in their endeavors for all territories within the line of demarcation to join with the new state.²⁵ In this way, on January 15 1919, in Bereg (Backi Brijeg), Lajco Budanovic gathered several officials, Blasko Rajic, Franjo Pijukovic, Matija Catalinac, Ivan Evetovic, for an agreement that a meeting be improvised in every Croatian municipality. Their goal was to explain what was happening to the people and that the people be made aware of the number of our people living in the territories (as opposed to the number the Hungarians suggested). Meetings were held the following few days in Gara, Cavolj, Gornji St. Ivan, Baja and telegrams were sent to Novi Sad, asking for them to be sent on to Paris. The "National administration (Novi Sad) did not send them"²⁶.

In February 1919, the Belgrade government invited the Baja rector Lajco Budanovic to attend a peace conference in Paris and defend the interests of his people. Budanovic did not go to Paris, rather Blasko Rajic was sent in his place (March 14, 1919). The mission was successful in that Subotica was "saved" but Baja and the territory around Baja (Bajski Trokut) was lost. The endeavors of patriots to send a delegation to the Peace Conference in Paris suggesting that a plebiscite be stipulated in the Baja triangle under the supervision of the state were not successful. Despite the harmony and leave of the military command, the great Backa district-prefect (appointed by the Belgrade government) Kosta Bugarski forbid the plebiscite.²⁷

There were a number of attempts to display the activities in Subotica (and elsewhere in the Backa territory) as being "progressive", "revolutionary", and "radical."²⁸ However, from data which I was able to gather from families and daily newspapers ²⁹, it appears that there were indeed workers who participated in riots, but all in all, the combativeness of the Hungarian irredente (or revanchism) prevailed.

It is valid to note the fact that the Croatian Party (Bunjevac-Sokac), founded on September 15, 1920, held a great meeting (5000 people) on October 10, 1920, in which participants asked for the autonomy of Backa, Baranja and Banat or, as some later suggested of Vojvodina.³⁰ This occurred three to four months after the signing of Trianon.

From 1918 to 1920, the years of the formation new state borders, Backa Croatsians strived to fit in their need to preserve their national identity into the political games.

2. We have mentioned the facts from 1918 when the national legal relations between the Triune Kingdom and the Kingdom of Hungary and the Austrian Empire ceased to exist. At that time, December 1, 1918, all South Slavic lands of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, joined with the newly formed state of Croatsians, Slovenes and Serbians. Backa and Srijem were amongst those in the unified territories. On that day Croatia lost its historical identity. In 1921, the Vidovdan Constitution was conceived which ensured the greater Serbian predominance. That day the Belgrade authority celebrated the union of everything Serbian. The other nations lost their individuality and freedom. The Backo-Bodroska and the Srijem districts existed until 1922 when the new national community was divided into six districts. And the Parts of the Croatian national territory remained outside of its six mentioned districts: Medjimurje joined with the Maribor district, Kastastina with the Ljubljana district, Istria was surrendered to Italy as a result of the Rappal agreement and Boka Kotorska was joined with the Zeta District. One should keep in mind that the Trianon agreement resulted in Backa being divided into two parts as was Baranja. With respect to the ethnic principle, the joining of the Baja triangle and the towns of Mohac, Pecuh and Baja with the newly formed state, was requested but this did not occur, not in 1920, nor later in 1947.

With a peaceful and liberal disposition, and in concordance with Wilson's principles, the Croatians wanted to establish their own new life conditions with of economic success. The first two years of life in the new national union, (until the elections on November 28, 1920), Croatians experienced Podunavlje as an idea with great possibilities in all aspects. No one conceived that "our people would experience injustice which we cannot and will not remain silent about". Party life in the new State union was complex everywhere, thus combining the "victorious" behavior of Serbians, Hungarian irredentism and Croatian patriotism was difficult even in Backa. The Bunjevac -Sokac Party, under the leadership of Blasko Rajic endeavored to include itself in the rival elections (representatives, Franjo sudarevic, Stipan Vojnic-Tomic and Ivan Evetovic).³¹ The same party endeavored to come to an understanding with the Belgrade authorities (especially with the government of Ljubo Davidovic 1924) but there was no improvement because the leadership was constantly changing.

Nonetheless, it should be noted that on August 31, 1920, along with the above mentioned people, who participated in the activities from 1918 to 1920 and onwards, the educational association "Neven" was founded. Shortly afterwards, on December 4, 1920 the Croatian Choral Association "Neven", whose conductor was a young lawyer, Dr. Mihovil Katanec, was founded. Other associations became active as well: the Bunjevac Men's Dance Group (1920), the Croatian Academic Association "Antunovic" (Subotica, 1924) Croatian Falcon (Subotica, 1925.), the Croatian Catholic Eagle (Subotica, 1922) and other associations and societies.³²

Social, cultural, and educational life amongst the Backa Croatians were passed over to young people who came to Backa immediately after the completion of the peace agreement. They enthusiastically assisted and often led the social, cultural and educational life. Mihovil Katanec, Dragan Mrljak, Matej Jankac, Marin Juras, I. Sercer and others were among those who came to Subotica. Ladislav Vlasic, Vinko Zganec, I Skrabalo and others came to Sombor.

I personally believe that those who were responsible for the activities in the cultural life of Podunavlje Croatians during the years between the two wars were people who had come from Zagreb generally from Croatia. They wanted to help with the strengthening of the Croatian national consciousness and cultural life in general. I would like to mention a series of statistics: in 1925, Croatians from Podunavlje formally celebrated the thousandth anniversary of the Croatian Kingdom (Subotica, Sombor, Bac and others); in 1933 the Croatian Choral Association "Neven" toured Blagaj, Mostar, Dubrovnik, Gospic, and Zagreb; in 1933 and 1934, "Matica suboticka" is established (L. Budanovic); in 1936 the 250th anniversary of the arrival of a larger group of Croatians in Backa is formally celebrated; the newspapers "Klasje nasih ravni", "Kolo mladezi", and others are formed; in Zagreb, the Association of Backa Croatians is set in motion and a number of expectations and ideas are set in motion and actualized. In the stand against Orthodoxy and Serbianism, the people closed ranks, convinced that the majority of Croatian districts would be joined with the mother country. (1939)

The Serbian leaders, influenced by the peaceful rewarding of the new territories which had never previously been Serbian, neither historically nor constitutionally, very quickly after the organization was complete, systematically changed the demographic picture of the territories given to them. In Backa and in Srijem, new "volunteer" settlements were established like rings over the strong Croatian and non-Serbian centers (Subotica, Sombor, Sid, S. Mitrovica and others). New divisions of the state occurred in 1929 based on the title and division law in which the state became the Kingdom of Yugoslavia and was thoughtfully divided into nine provinces. The historical, ethnic nor geographic whole was not respected: Backa was included in the Danube province, while Srijem, an ancient Croatian district was excluded from Croatian entirety and divided between the Drina and Danube provinces. The notion of eastern Srijem was substantially filled with Serbianism. This occurred in 1931, when western Srijem is returned to the Croatian Sava province and eastern Srijem remained in the Danube province.

Such a division, placed in the middle of the Srijem territory was enforced as the eastern border of Croatia. Also, in attempt to solve the Croatian problem with the establishment of the Province of Croatia, they endeavored to include all Croatian lands in the new province, except the Croatian Baranja and Backa regions. So, the Srijem districts of Ilok and Sid were included in the new province.

MAP 2.

Picture 2. Demarcation of Croatia and Serbia after World War II.

1. border of Banovina Hrvatska in 1939; 2. current state border; 3 border suggestion according in "Djilas Commission", 4.a) annexed to Croatia after of the suggestion of the "Djilas Commission", b) connected to Croatia in 1947 or 1948; 5. annexed to Vojvodina

3. Between 1941 and 1945, war was in effect on Croatian territory and the Yugoslavian Communist Party was against the proclamation and establishment of the Croatian State. Nevertheless, despite the Yugoslavianism in the ranks of the anti-Fascist units, there pro Croatian politicians who believed in the solution of the position of the Croatian people in a unified state ("Yugoslavianism" was very strictly imposed during the war) which the Party viewed as a federal union. In 1942, the partisan Yugoslavian leadership divided Croatian territory into operational zones (for more successful organization and battles), in which Slavonia was a separate zone "including Srijem to Belgrade". Srijem's pertainment to the command of the Partisan forces in Croatia (Slavonia) certainly influenced the fighting morale of the Partisans in this great low-land.³³ Until 1943, Srijem was considered an integral part of Croatia in communist decisions and regulation.³⁴ However, from then on, the Serbian desire to create and constitute Vojvodina as an equal autonomous unit in the future federally arranged Yugoslavia is activated. It is officially explained that the plan is in effect the arrangement of Backa, Banat, Baranja and Srijem into a whole (the comparison of Serbian ideas about a Serbian Vojvodina, lasting shortly in the middle of the nineteenth century has been imposed on historians). Before the end of the war, borders between Croatia and the future Vojvodina were drawn at Vukovar, Vinkovci, and Zupanja: the entire Zupanja District and the western part of the Vinkovac District, the city included, as well as the western part of the Vukovar district, belonged to Croatia. The eastern part of the Vukovar district belonged to the Srijem part of Vojvodina. -A decision followed about the establishment of a military base for Backa, Banat and Baranja. On April 6, 1945, the Principal National-liberation council of Vojvodina decided that the territory join Serbia.³⁵

Towards the end of the war in 1944 and 1945, the Srijem front was shaped. There were precise maps which were not included in this work because any type of change with respect to the name of the settlement was not noted. However, before the new shaping of Vojvodina's borders, (the principles changed constantly when it was necessary either through historical principles, sometimes ethnical principles were used and, finally, they even called for economical principles), very cruel ethnic cleansing was exercised on the Backa and Srijem territory: the German population and its property "disappeared".³⁶ New inhabitants (war heroes), who needed to "fill" the Serbian national minority, settled in these territories.³⁷

4. Immediately after the Second World War, the controversial territories in Srijem and Backa were brought up in the drawing up of borders between Croatia and Serbia. A correction of the Trianon borders towards Hungary in the Baja triangle is also mentioned.³⁸ Andrija Hebrang was among the negotiators working on the behalf of Croatian rights. Juraj Andrassy, Milovan Gavazzi, Vinko Zganec and others contributed to the cause with their knowledge and education. Yet, the commissioners and leaders of the commission for the re-establishment of borders were Rade Pribicevic and Milovan Djilas including also of the Yugoslav Communists Party Milentija Popovic, Jovan Veselinov, Jasa Prodanovic and others. On June 19, 1945, it was decided that Jerko Zlataric become a member of the commission. The Djilas

Commission [39](#) decided that Baranja pertain to the Croatian composition but the Srijem districts Vukovar, Ilok and Sid, as well as northern Backa (the Subotica district and a greater part of the Sombor district) still remained controversial. According to the Djilas Commission, the border between Croatia and Vojvodina was to extend from the Hungarian border (the Baja triangle was no longer mentioned), along the Danube River to the border between the town Backo Novo Selo and Bukin (the Backa-Palanacka district), then along the Danube and between Opatovac, Mohovo, Lovas, Bapska, Tovarnik, Sid, Podgradje, Adasevci, Lipovac, Strosinci, Morovic. Thus, Mohovo, Bapska, the city of Sid, Ilinci, Mala Vasica, Batrovci, Morovic together with counties of the mentioned settlements, belonged to Serbian Vojvodina.

At the beginning of 1946, the Yugoslavian Constitution was accepted. Then in 1947, the administrative and territorial division of the national territories was completed. The attempts of the Vojvodina politicians to change the borders towards Croatia (Bapska, Novak, Jamena and the islands in Vukovar territory) were not successful. Nevertheless, by observing the following events from 1918 to 1945 and the re-shaping of district and territorial borders in the South Slavic state, it is not difficult to conclude that the Croatian territory, in which Srijem was its inealabel part, was decreasing in size. Before the determining of the so called AVNOJ (Anti-Fascist National Liberation of Yugoslavia) borders (1945-1947), a double principle was adopted. While historical, geographical, economic, and especially ethnic principles were respected in the case of Baranja and its union with its mother homeland, the ethnic structure (already "filled" in 1918) was "decisive" in Srijem. The same principle was not respected in the solving of the northwestern Backa (Subotica, Sombor, Apatin and other) problem.

* * *

The tragedy of the unsolved borders between Croatia and Serbia was paid for at the time of the collapse of the South Slavic state in 1990. Serbia first annexed Vojvodina as a whole without any objection from the other republics. Then, Croatia accepted the status of its borders as they were determined at that time (from 1945-1947). Nevertheless, warring Serbians changed the borders temporarily during their endeavors to conquer and occupy Srijem and Baranja. Apart from the inhuman pictures from the Srijem territory (Vukovar, Kukujevcı and other) and from Baranja, violent and inhumane changes in the composition of the population occurred. The extent in banishment, persecution, and murder in Croatia from 1990 until today will never be known exactly.

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An International Symposium "SOUTHEASTERN EUROPE 1918-1995"

Publisher: [Croatian Heritage Foundation](#) & [Croatian Information Centre](#)

For the Publisher: Ante Beljo

Expert Counsellor: Dr. sc. Dragutin Pavlicevic

Editor: Aleksander Ravlic

Graphic Design: Gorana Benic - Hudin

Printed by: TARGA

Copies Printed: 2000

ISBN 953-6525-05-4

IMPRESSUM



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CONSTITUTIONAL AFFILIATION OF BARANJA TO THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA AND THE IMPLICATION OF THE "ADMINISTRATIVE REGION OF SREM AND BARANJA"?

State acts on the creation of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes (Kingdom of SCS) on December 1, 1918, legalized the fundamental principle according to which all members of the Croatian, Serbian, and Slovenian population, regardless of their historical or national borders, must exist in one common state. This program of assimilation resulted in an unavoidable revision of borders from previous historical/national/autonomous provincial entities of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes. In this context, the borders towards Italy and Hungary provoked the greatest conflict. Despite the fact that Serbia and Italy were on the winning side at the conclusion of World War I, Italy showed no scruples with respect to this,

therefore rapidly occupying the territory of the Kingdom of Dalmatia and Istria which was the territory belonging to the united states of Slovenes, Croats and Serbs and to the Kingdom of Serbia legalizing the occupation through the Rappal agreements. Contrary to this, Hungary sided was on the side of the defeated after the First World War. On the basis of this, the Hungarian delegation had a weaker starting position at the international peace conference. Partially , due to this, the Kingdom of SCS in the north was expanded by territory in Southern Hungarian and in the west it lost part of Dalmatian territory and Istria.

Along with the Serbian military presence in Southern Hungary and following the armistice between Austro-Hungary and the forces of the Entente, the National Councils of Backa, Banat and Baranja held a congress on November 25, 1918. The congress proclaimed Vojvodina Serbian, in which Backa, Banat and Baranja would enter the union with the Kingdom of Serbs. Given that at that time, anarchy ruled in the entire, already former, Austro-Hungary, the National Councils undertook all administration, and the Serbian government annexed Backa, Banat and Baranja on December 1, 1918. By the Trianon peace agreement, of June 4, 1920, the borders between the Kingdom of SCS and Hungary were determined which in a great degree resemble the borders even after the Second World War.

Based on the constitutional statutes from the 1921 Constitution, in April 1922, basic laws for the internal organization of the Kingdom of SCS were established. These were:

- Law with respect to general administration.
- Law with respect to regional and district autonomy and the Regulation of the distribution of land into administrative regions.

The entire country was divided into 33 administrative regions and the area of Baranja was annexed to the Backa administrative region. The surface area amounted to 7.173 km², and was divided into districts: Apatin, Backa Palanka, Backa Topola, Batina, Darda, Kula, Novi Sad, Odzaci and Sombor. Districts then were divided into municipalities.

It is necessary to emphasize that the regional division of land did not consist of territory in its historical and lawful entirety. It was an ordinary administrative management division with the goal of breaking up former provincial and political entities. The Kingdom of Yugoslavia did not allow any lawful reminders of the past. Hence, even today there is no legal basis to attach importance to the affiliation of Baranja to today's states of Croatia or Serbia. Baranja simply belonged to the Kingdom of Yugoslavia as did all its other historical and geographical components.

From the beginning, administrative regions did not have any state-level functions rather a modest local autonomy without any state attributes. It must be stated that today Serbian authors frequently write that Baranja belonged to Vojvodina. Vojvodina as a political, territorial, or autonomous entity is not mentioned until World War II and, not even then, is Baranja a part of Vojvodina. The division of the state into administrative regions was to develop a Serbian-Croatian-Slovenian unity and not the creation of any type of future separate state territories. Namely, historical and state rights are acquired through the long-term execution of independent authority. This did not exist there.

After the declaration of the January 6 Dictatorship, the internal administrative and autonomous organization (administrative regions and regional autonomy) did not satisfy King Alexander who by abolishing parliamentarianism, abolished the regional representational system (regional assemblies) and introduced commissioners for individual administrative regions. The law "on the title and division of the Kingdom into administrative territories" of October 3, 1929, stated the Kingdom (now Yugoslavia) was divided into nine banovinas (Ban's dominions). The districts, Batina and Darda, were annexed to the Danube Banovina

with its capital in Novi Sad. Their affiliation to the Danube Banovina did not create any political and legal effects given that the banovinas did not sui juris (by their right) determine their own organization, nor did they choose their own officials. In these same banovinas, internal self - organization did not exist and they were without any international subjectivity.

The bringing of the Statute with respect to the banovina of Croatia in 1939 brought upon internal territorial changes between banovinas. The creation of the Croatian Banovina represented a new quality in the search for a favorable solution for Croatia. The districts of Darda and Batina did not enter into the union with the Croatia Banovina in 1939. Before examining this problem, it is necessary to focus on the following fact. The creation of the Croatian Banovina was only a first step in an attempt to remove Yugoslavian centralism and introduce federalism based on three national entities. Macek, the president of the Croatian Peasant Party and influential Croatian leader, claimed that by creating the Croatian Banovina "the question of Croatian territory is not definitely answered, as we have added a special clause in the agreement which states that the definite borders of the Croatian Banovina will be established when the entire state is rearranged. And this is quite natural, as the respective territory will appear quite different whether or not the autonomous Vojvodina is included in the new rearranged state; and different whether or not autonomous Bosnia is included. And we have left this question open." Moreover, Baranja, according to a census in 1931, there resided 25,135 Roman Catholics, 5,745 Evangelicals, and 11,314 individuals of the Orthodox faith. Among the Catholics, the vast majority consisted of Croats.

Baranja remained in the composition of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia until 1941, when it became occupied by Hungarian troops. The Hungarian parliament on December 16, 1941, passed legislation regarding the union of the southern regions according to which Baranja and Backa became an integral part of the Hungarian state. On the other hand, the authorities in the Independent State of Croatia passed legislation regarding the eastern borders of the Independent State of Croatia towards occupied Serbia, which included Srijem in its entirety.

Between 1918 and 1941, Baranja i.e. her districts, Darda and Batina, were located in a politically legitimate undivided Yugoslavian space with no particular historical or political essence.

Following the Second World War, the Djilas Commission responsible for the formation of borders in Croatia and the establishment of the autonomous province of Vojvodina (of Serbia) concluded:

"The districts of Batina and Darda, as a whole, have, of all Slav minorities, a relative majority of Croats. Both these districts, economically incline towards the West. Therefore, both economic and national reasons require both of these districts to become a part of Federal Croatia and to leave Vojvodina in which they are now located." The parliament of the Republic of Croatia accepted the drawn up borders as did the National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia. Due to this action, these became the federal political borders. All supreme legislative bodies passed legislation stating that without approval of the same legislative bodies, the borders of federal units could not be changed. The parliament of the Republic of Croatia did not bring such a decision and the Serbian aggression does not influence any type of change (from the international point of view also) of Croatia's legal borders.

In a short summary, with complete certainty and justifiability we can conclude the following:

1. Baranja did not have its own legitimate representatives at the Assembly of Novi Sad.
2. At the time, in Baranja, Banat and Backa, there resided approximately 30%

Serbian inhabitants and 70% Croatian, Hungarian and German inhabitants. Contrary to this, Serbians had a 75% representation at the Assembly in Novi Sad.

3. Vojvodina, as a political concept, existed a short time mid-way through the nineteenth century and again in FNRJ (Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia), that is, SFRJ (Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia). At the commencement of the twentieth century, this territory was referred to as Southern Hungary.

4. Political decisions and decisions relating to public law, of the Assembly in Novi Sad in 1918, served to unite all Southern Slavs, rather than the territorial expansion of the Kingdom of Serbia. As a result, Serbian authors provide only short inferences from complete documents which suit their theory of Serbia's claim to Baranja.

5. Territorial rearrangement of borders in Serbia and Croatia, which took place in 1945, to a great degree respected the historical Croatian borders correcting them on an ethnic principle. This was also the case with Baranja with the so-called, Djilas Commission.

6 Mentioning Baranja today in another context other than Croatian in respect to 1918 would open the unavoidable question of Srijem and Boka kotorska since no other legal decisions exist except those which include them as historical national territory, territory which was indeed lost in 1945 based on ethnic principles, and even more due to political voluntarism of the authorities at the time.

7. In the old Yugoslavia (1918-1941), any type of internal reorganization of borders based on historical or political legitimate criterion was not allowed. In this context, one cannot speak of the Kingdom of Serbia, the State of Croatia, or anything similar.

8. It was not before Socialist Yugoslavia that a formal rather than a real sovereign republic was established, and the constitution of 1974, to a great degree confederalized SFRJ. The republics became states with fundamental state prerogatives.

9. The Croatian referendum of May 1991 represents, on the most extensive democratic foundation, the declaration of the population of Baranja. At that time, more than 50% voted in favor of the Republic of Croatia.

10. For the international community, Croatian borders from 1945 are at the same time state borders between the republics of former Yugoslavia. It is within these borders that individual states on the territory of former SFRJ are internationally recognized. (Badinter's opinion).

Thus, all of the claims that Baranja is not a territory belonging to the state of Croatia does not have any historical, ethnic nor international legal basis.

During these days I had the opportunity of hearing that the usage of the name, the so called "Territory of Srijem and Baranja" without Slavonia, means an advantage for Croatia. I believe in the opposite, that Serbia desires a return to 1918, but only partially, consisting only of

Baranja and Srijem.

In the preface to the book, "Annexation of Srem, Banat, Backa and Baranja to Serbia in 1918", (Novi Sad, 1993), the author, Drago M. Njegovan, writer of the preface and reviewer, academician Cedomir Popov, wrote the following sentences: "The annexation of the administrative regions of Vojvodina (Banat, Backa, Baranja and Srem) to the Kingdom of Serbia, that is, their entrance into the State of Yugoslavian nations, which was created from the hell of the First World War, represents an extremely important occurrence, not only in the history of Serbians and other southern Slavs, rather for the entire Balkans and Danube basin region... The European dimension of this phenomenon is comprised of Europe's concord with the endeavors to apply the principles of national self-determination and the easing (if not the solving) of the national question of this entire continent on the territory of the Balkans and the Central Danube basin area. The removal of the Vojvodina's administrative regions from the Habsburg Monarchy and their annexation to the Serbian state, contributed to halving the number of members of national minorities in Europe from 60 million (1914) to 30 million (1920)."

I was reminded recently of this book as once again the expression "administrative regions of Srijem and Baranja" is being utilized in the occupied regions of Croatia, and also in Belgrade, for the territory of eastern Croatia (parts of Slavonia, parts of Srijem and parts of Baranja). A reminder is necessary that this area of Croatia was, until "Oluja", in the so-called Serbian Krajina region, also referred to as "Western Serbia" and now finally the "administrative regions of Srijem and Baranja." This is not surprising at all, as I presume that for this region, apart from eventual military preparation on account of defense, a diplomatic battle by the Serbian republic, her diplomacy, politics, probably even sciences, is being led solely for the purpose of preserving the existing situation. I mention sciences because it was from these circles that "Nacertanije" and the "Memorandum" originated. Therefore, I believe that it was there that the actual word "oblast" (administrative region) originated for the occupied territory of Croatia.

In Mazuranic's, "Contributions to the Croatian Legal-Historical Dictionary", the word OBLAST (administrative region) is defined as: 1. auctoritas, potestas, dominium, jus, jura et privilegia, authority, right, ancient right, possession, property; 2. provincia, regio, locality district, county, where an owner or authority demonstrates ownership or authority; and 3. the legal competence of the regional prefect or the office in the region's capital.

In the tradition of the Croatian government, we do not use the terminology -oblast- to define this Croatian territory. This is true for Baranja as well because since the Croatian-Hungarian agreement, and even before, the division into counties of Croatia and Hungary excluded regional organization and the division of any part of the country into administrative regions. The same can be said for the territory of today's Vojvodina, namely, in December 1860, the Austrian government abolished Serbian Vojvodina as an administrative region belonging to the crown in the Habsburg monarchy (established in 1849) and returned part of the territory to the sovereignty of Hungary (Southern Hungary) and another to the authority of the Kingdom of Croatia and Slavonia. Following 1867 (Austro-Hungarian agreement), the territory of Banat and Backa, as well as a part of Southern Hungary, was divided into three counties: Backo-Bodroška, Torontalska and Tamiska. The entire Srijem was situated within the Srijem County (Kingdom of Slavonia) with its headquarters in Vukovar. Baranja was naturally within the Hungarian Kingdom. This was the constitutional position (according to public law) of parts of the territory of today's Vojvodina, as well as occupied Croatian state territory prior to the unification of December 1, 1918.

Local administration and self-administration in the Kingdom of SCS, according to the Constitution of 1921, was conceived and legalized on the regional criterion as a specific self-

administration and administration which was inaugurated by Serbian radicals already in 1888. The specific character was in the fact that "apart from self-administrative organs, in every autonomous unit, there was, at its head, a state organ, that is, an organ appointed by the central state authorities (the so-called "double-gauged power") and that this state organ was older and more important (by authority and by control) than the self-administrative organs" (D. Jankovic).

Furthermore, Serbians, at the commencement of this century, called the area of Kosovo and Macedonia administrative regions until they were integrated into the Serbian state territory in 1919 (Old Serbia). Legalizing the administrative regions in 1922, as units of local administration and self-administration in the Kingdom of SCS, was only the first step in erasing the historical and state characteristics of individual nations especially the Croats whose national and political consciousness was at the highest level and all of this with the intention of integrating, with the aid of centralist politics (decentralization was merely an illusion), as soon as possible the entire territory of the Kingdom of SCS according to the models and patterns of the Serbian civil state from the 2nd half of the 19th century.

In this historical tradition, the authorities of Serbia most likely desire to prepare Croatian state territory for a future formal unification with Serbia by calling it a region. Naturally, this is simply another maneuver by which the Belgrade regime wishes to save and retain "little Greater Serbia."

We anticipate and are confident that it is too late for this today.

[Dr. sci. Stjepan Srsan: Ethnic Changes in Baranja, 1918-1995](#)

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An International Symposium "SOUTHEASTERN EUROPE 1918-1995"

Publisher: [Croatian Heritage Foundation](#) & [Croatian Information Centre](#)

For the Publisher: Ante Beljo

Expert Counsellor: Dr. sc. Dragutin Pavlicevic

Editor: Aleksander Ravlic

Graphic Design: Gorana Benic - Hudin

Printed by: TARGA

Copies Printed: 2000

ISBN 953-6525-05-4

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ETHNIC CHANGES IN BARANJA, 1918 -1995

Until the Turkish advance at the commencement of the 16th century, Croats and Hungarians resided in Baranja. Nevertheless, with the Turkish advances during the 16th and 17th centuries, there was a growing number of refugees from Serbia and Bosnia, Catholics and the Orthodox (Croats, Serbians, Vlachs, Montenegrins and others) entering Baranja. During the Turkish Wars, many castles, churches and villages that had been built in the Middle Ages were destroyed and the migrations mixed the population of diverse national groups. During the battle for liberation from the Ottoman Empire, at the end of the 17th

century, significant ethnic changes occurred since almost the entire Muslim population and a part of the Orthodox population, in particular those who served in Turkish units, retreated, along with the Turkish army. Nevertheless, some "raja" (Christian Turkish subjects without rights), Croats, Hungarians and somewhat less, Orthodox settlers, especially Serbs, remained in the villages.

Two landed estates in the 18th century gave Baranja its characteristics: the Belje Estate, first owned by Prince Eugen of Savoy and afterwards by the Archducal House of Habsburg and the Darda Estate, first owned by General Veterani and afterwards by Esterhazi, Palfi and Schaumburg Lippe, western European aristocrats. Through cultural, economic, and social developments in the 18th century, Baranja rapidly attained western European standards. Catholic, Orthodox, and Protestant churches were constructed. Many citizens took to work and found prosperity on the fertile land. Religious life was organized by Catholic, Orthodox and Protestant parishes, civil life by the Baranja county, while estate owners managed commercial affairs and, until 1848, administrative-judicial affairs of the first stage. Baranja was situated in Hungary, although the borders between Croatia and Hungary were not as strictly specified as they were following 1918, namely, properties, church territories, ethnic mixture and cultural ties were so strong that free communication always existed in the Croatian-Hungarian community. Throughout history until 1918, it has been stated that the inter-ethnic relations in Baranja were good. It was understood that the people were to be respectful and loyal subjects on the land they resided upon respecting her laws and working towards the welfare of the state and one's own home. It is known from documents, old maps, and censuses that the border with Serbia until 1918 were the Danube and Sava Rivers. Thus, Vojvodina and Baranja had always situated in the composition of Croatian-Hungarian state.

In the schematism (official list of people belonging to the church administration) of the Pecs Diocese for 1855, printed in Pecs in Latin, there exists data and authentic sources for the population of Baranja. The Pecs Diocese included the deaneries of Branjin Vrh and Darda in Croatian Baranja. When the Greek separate ceremony is listed in the schematism as religious affiliation, it is then in general understood that these are people of Serbian nationality, although some other nationalities which were represented by religious affiliation to the Orthodox faith (Vlachs, Romanians, Macedonians, Bosnians, Greeks, and such) should also be taken into consideration.

According to Revai Lexicon (Volume II, p. 587) 1900, in the district of Branjin Vrh (southern Baranja, Croatian Baranja) there were 47, 470 inhabitants. They include:

Hungarians 17,325 (35.0%),
Croats 11,198 (23.6%),
Germans 12,324 (26.0%),
Serbs 5,873 (12.4%),
Others 750 (1.5%)

TABLE 1: Religious affiliation of the inhabitants off Baranja in 1855

Following the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Empire in 1918, in her former southeastern territories, the State of Slovenes, Croats and Serbs was established. On December 1, 1918, however, Serbian diplomacy and politics, with the aid of the army, realised the unification of all territories into the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, later to become the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. This is when Serbia began to actualize the idea of one great state on territory where Serbs (people of the Orthodox faith) lived or settled on. Thus, the territory of Vojvodina and Baranja came under the authority of a separate Serbian administration. Croatia protested against the administrative annexation of Baranja and Vojvodina since Baranja had never belonged to Serbia, neither constitutionally, culturally nor ethnically, but

had always gravitated towards Croatia and Hungary. This was the work of the Serbian occupation of Baranja, since prior to 1919, only some 12% of the population of Baranja were Serbian who were the fourth largest national group following the Hungarians, Germans and Croats. Nevertheless, after 1918, the Belgrade regime began to settle Baranja with Serbian volunteers from the Salonika Front and placed its people on the rich Belje Estate. Once the richest estate, it soon became poor, since theft and the loss of funds to Belgrade contributed to turning Baranja into a Serbian colony.

According to official statistics in 1921, there was a population of 49, 694 in Croatian Baranja of which:

Croatians 9,965 (20.0%),
Hungarians 16,639 (33.5%),
Germans 15,955 (32.1%),
Serbians 6,782 (13.6%),
Other 363 (0.7%)

By religious affiliation:

Catholics 35,343 (71.22%),
Evangelicals and Calvinists 6,856 (13.8%),
Orthodox 6,782 (13.6%),
Jewish 363 (0.7%)

Major ethnic changes occur in Baranja towards the end of 1944 when Germans were forced to flee ahead of the advancing anti-fascist army. This was a real exodus of the German population who had lived in Baranja for centuries. Subsequently, Serbs from passive areas, who knew less about farming than about politics and protecting the new socialist (Greater Serbian) state, moved into the wealthy houses.

When the borders between Croatia and Serbia were determined in 1945, the Djilas' state commission decided that Baranja belonged to Croatia. With this, the historical, constitutional, cultural, ethnic and territorial question was legitimately resolved because all these elements made Baranja a part of Croatian and not Serbian territory. After 1945, the ethnic make-up of Baranja shows how it was populated by a majority of Croatian and not Serbian inhabitants. Thus, according to data from the Federal Institution for Statistics in Belgrade in 1961, the situation in Baranja was the following from the total of 56.087 inhabitants. [\(TABLE 2\)](#)

Given that life in Baranja after 1945, was being suffocated by the unproductive, one-party, totalitarian communist system, with no private enterprise and progressive economic management, it is understandable that the new democratic wave and demands for progress moved towards the path of freedom, the multi-party system and the free market in Croatia in 1990. A group of privileged Serbians, however, aided by the former Yugoslavian National Army, and inspired by the idea of a Greater Serbia, with the use of weapons, cast off the legal Croatian authority in Baranja and occupied it. A great number of non-Serbian inhabitants were forced to leave due to Serbian terrorism and tyranny, thus ethnic cleansing of all the non-Serbian populace, primarily Croats and Hungarians was accomplished.

TABLE 3: [Population Census of Baranja in 1991 and 1992](#)

Through violent ethnic cleansing in 1991 and 1992, the Serbs altered the ethnic composition of Baranja and for the first time "jumped" to first place. The ethnic make -up is seen by comparing the official population census of March 31, 1991 and the one carried out on the

occupied territory of Baranja during the period of January 27 through March 5, 1992, after the ethnic cleansing of the entire non-Serbian population. If we compare the Hungarian census from the schematism of the Pecs Diocese from 1855 as well, we may observe how the ethnic picture in Baranja changed as a result of Serbian politics and tyranny to the benefit of the Serbs and to the disadvantage of the Croats, Hungarians and Germans. The Serbian occupiers within only a year (from 1991- 1992) completely altered the ethnic picture of the population in Baranja by the forceful method of ethnic cleansing. The facts show that there was no question of any type of oppression of the Serbs; it was rather the forceful actualization of the idea of a Greater Serbia; the capture of Croatian territory and the violent alteration of the ethnic make-up of the population.

Thus, tables with statistical data with respect to the population of Baranja from 1855-1992, display great ethnic changes. **(TABLE 4)**. First, the Germans in 1944-45 were forced to leave Baranja and in 1991-92 Croats, Hungarians and other non-Serbs.

The reason is the same: the advance of Serbia and Serbs onto Croatian state territory with the goal of creating a Greater Serbia.

The above table statistically displays the actualization of greater-Serbian politics in Baranja beginning some 90 years ago. There are three fundamental differences in the population of Baranja during the period up to 1918, from 1918 to 1991 and from 1992 onwards.

Up to 1918, Croats made up 1/5 (20%) of the population, Serbs 1/8 (12.5%), Hungarians 1/3 (33.3%), (which is understandable, because Baranja was in the Croatian-Hungarian union), Germans over 1/4 (27%) and others 7.2%.

From 1918 to 1991, Croats made up 2/5 (43%) of the population, Serbs 1/4 (25%), Hungarians 1/5 (22%), and others 1/10 (10%).

After the Serbian aggression and the occupation of Baranja in 1991, and the expulsion of the non-Serbian populace, according to the Serbian census of 1991, only 1/5 (20%) of the remaining population was Croatian while the Serbian populace "grew" to 3/5 (60%), with Hungarians making up less than 1/6 (16%) and others 4%.

The enormous ethnic changes stated above are the result of Serbian ethnic cleansing following the Serbian occupation of Croatian Baranja.

[Prof. dr. Josip Pecaric: Croats of Boka Kotorska from 1918 until Today](#)

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Publisher: [Croatian Heritage Foundation](#) & [Croatian Information Centre](#)

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Copies Printed: 2000

ISBN 953-6525-05-4

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CROATS OF BOKA KOTORSKA FROM 1918 UNTIL TODAY

1. THE CURRENT STATUS OF CROATIANS IN BOKA KOTORSKA

From the beginning of the Serbian aggression against Croatia in 1991 until today, the status of Croats in Boka Kotorska has been characterized by various kinds of pressure. The most

respected Croatian families in Tivat have received threatening letters in which the following, among other things, are written:

"If you do not leave on time, the night will swallow your children and family. Hurry to the summons of Mr. Tudjman to Croatia, because there are more Serbian centuries-old homes there than there are of you." (The letter was published by independent Montenegrin media.)

For this reason, Croatians of Boka have been moving to Croatia, while from Tivat alone, there have been over 300 Croatians (7 medical specialists among them) who have moved to Croatia. In effect, what has happened is a continuation, if not a completion, of the ethnic cleansing of Boka Kotorska since the existence of Yugoslavia. The census of 1910 (the last census carried out during the Austro-Hungarian Empire) and the census of 1991 (the last census in Yugoslavia) reveal that ethnic cleansing is truly in effect. The total population almost doubled from 33,400 in 1910 to 61,440 in 1991, while at the same time the number of Croatians has decreased three times (from 13,500 in 1910 to 4,910 in 1991).

However, only one part of the population emigrated. The other half was subjected to constant pressure to change nationality. This is why we have separated "Yugoslavians and others" in the tables presenting the national structure of Boka Kotorska and Montenegro. The reason is obvious: only Croatians in Montenegro had reasons to declare themselves as such in the census of 1991.

According to data of the Catholic Church of Boka, today there are approximately 12,000 Catholics. Thus, we have a paradoxical situation with more Catholic-Yugoslavians in Boka than Croatians.

The demographic picture of Boka Kotorska, however, has changed dramatically since 1991, not only because of the exodus of Croatians, but also because of the great influx of Serbians, namely, the Yugoslav Navy has made Boka its naval base and Serbians from eastern Herzegovina and Croatia have settled there - SERBIANIZATION is in full effect in Boka. It is not surprising that of the 1,000 refugees who departed from Croatia after "Oluja", 200 settled in Tivat. For this purpose, an initiative for a "census of empty houses" was set in motion by the Podgorica "Pobjeda" at the beginning of August so as to "take care of the people of "Krajina" in Montenegro". Thanks to the Montenegrin independent media, as well as the attitude of the municipal organizations of the Social Democratic Party and the Liberal Union, the attempt at the so-called "humane confiscation" of empty Croatian houses was somewhat thwarted but not completely stopped.

GRAF 1

Percentage of Croatian Catholics in the population of towns (1910.) and imunicipalities (1991) of Boka kotorska.

2. DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGES IN BOKA FROM 1910 UNTIL 1991.

When we say Boka Kotorska, we understand this to be the Boka Kotorska Bay. The coastal belt of Boka Kotorska-Budva-Spic was, however, in the Austro-Hungarian Empire administratively included into one district with its center in Kotor. The censuses carried out convey religious rather than ethnic affiliation. While it is clear that the Catholics are essentially Croatian people, it is difficult to distinguish the Montenegrin and Serbian people among the Orthodox inhabitants. It is not difficult to note certain regularities in the displacement of the population in 1910. The Orthodox majority in the entire district was the result of colonization in higher mountainous regions, as for example, the Boka Kotorska hinterland and the region of Pastrovici, in which the people of the Orthodox faith are practically the only inhabitants. They also make up the majority on the Lustica Peninsula and in the agricultural Grbalj parish. In

larger towns, the Orthodox population in 1910 and earlier was only noted in Risan. The remaining town settlements : Kotor, Perast, Tivat, Dobrota, Prcanj, Herceg-Novi and Budva had a Catholic, that is, Croatian majority. Distinct Catholic regions were the Vrmac Peninsula in Boka Kotorska and the southern part of Spic from Sutomore to the border towards Montenegro. (see pict. 1)

We may justifiably calculate that the situation was similar at the time of the creation of the first Yugoslavia and from that moment, the influence of Greater Serbian politics was of crucial significance to the demographic changes in Boka. Graph 1 displays how this was reflected in the population censuses in the second Yugoslavia in the entire number of inhabitants and Graphs 2 and 3 in Montenegro in percentages.

GRAF 2

The national structure of Boka kotorska (1991).

The annexation of Boka to Montenegro did not follow until 1945 when federal units of the new Yugoslavia were established (during the war the terms used were: Montenegro and Boka Kotorska, that is, Montenegrins and the people of Boka). The census of 1948 was characterized by great pressure on the population to declare themselves Montenegrin. There is, however, a characteristic fact seen in Graph 3 showing that the number of Serbians and Croats in Montenegro was the same in 1948, while in 1991 there were 9 times more Serbians. Also, Graphs 1 and 3, show how the number of Croats was reduced with respect to the population as a whole and in part in percentages.

3. GREATER SERBIAN POLITICS AND BOKA KOTORSKA

Boka Kotorska was the first of all Croatian lands to be inflicted by Greater-Serbian politics. Objective and subjective reasons exist.

Objective reasons lie in the fact that Boka Kotorska is the most southern of all Croatian lands.

Subjective reasons lie in two great Serbian complexes.

1. The sea is a generally known Serbian complex. From the time of the Nemanjic Dynasty until today, whenever they were in a position to do so, Serbians have executed genocide upon the people who were obstacles to their access to the sea.
2. The Croatian cultural heritage is a Serbian complex which was best manifested in the war when they systematically destroyed all cultural monuments of the Croatian people. The symbol of this both here and in the world is Dubrovnik.

The culturocide, however, which is being carried out against the Croatian people holds one more component which may be seen in the attempt to usurp the cultural heritage of the Croats of Boka Kotorska, namely, it is the Boka Kotorska coastal settlements which were primarily inhabited by Croats and which were the hub of maritime affairs. For centuries, this promoted strong development of the territory and the inhabitants were the bearers of a culture which attained an enviable level. This culture was particularly important to the Croatian people. Let us emphasize that the oldest Croatian Cathedral dating back to 1166, is St. Tripun's Cathedral in Kotor or Our Lady of Skrpelja, the magnificent church, the shrine to

the Holy Virgin erected on an artificial island across from Perast which was built by the inhabitants of that town. The church houses the life's work of the greatest Croatian baroque painter who was born in Perast - Tripo Kokolja. Testimony to the greatness of the Croatian people's heritage may be found in official Montenegrin sources, which state that 40% of the republic's immovable heritage and 66% of the republic's movable heritage is located in Boka Kotorska. Clearly, one may conclude that today over 50% of Montenegro's cultural wealth belongs to the Croatian people. More precisely, the Croatian people of Boka are heirs to this wealth.

GRAF 3

Nacional structure in Montenegro (1991)

After his visit to the Catholic parishes in Boka and Montenegro, Monsignor Ratko Peric, the Bishop of the Mostar-Duvno and Trebinje-Mrkanj dioceses, said: "It takes more courage to be Croatian there than it does to be Catholic". In effect, his comment is indirectly talking about the goal of Greater Serbian politics in respect to the Serbian usurpation of the Croatian cultural heritage of Boka. Serbians need non-Croatian Catholics to ensure the painless seizure of the heritage which is primarily situated in Catholic churches. Eventually, with the completion of ethnic cleansing in Boka and the disappearance of Croatian Catholics, the Kotor Diocese would no longer be a part of the Church for Croats. Yugoslav Catholics would rapidly become, first, Montenegrin Catholics and then Serbian Catholics. In other words, Montenegro would first swallow Boka and then Serbia would swallow Montenegro. Moreover, while Montenegrins are, for Croats, those who are taking away their land and their cultural heritage (something which is truly being witnessed by our people), the reality is that Montenegrins are also victims of Greater Serbian politics. Namely, they are doing the dirty work for Serbians in the same way they were drawn into the attack on Dubrovnik with the same scenario. They are not aware that they are working against themselves because by unjustly claiming the so-called Nemanjici Bay, they are giving an added motive to their own Serbianization.

MAP

By taking over Boka, Greater-Serbian politics is working in three basic directions:

1. the elimination of national consciousness of Croats in Boka;
2. memocide upon the Croatian people as a whole, that is, erasing Boka and the Croatian people in Boka from the minds of Croats in Croatia.
3. territorial separation of Boka from Croatia.

The elimination of national consciousness was first carried out by the so-called "Bokism" and then by "Yugoslavianism". In the previous century, Serbians spoke to Croats in Boka about "togetherness:" We are all "Bokans" and nothing else", they would say. Then they proceeded to divide them into Serbians and Catholics! Thus, Croats were denied their Croatianism, whereas Serbianism was not touched because their faith is Serbian! At that time they were successful, especially in the creation of the first and second Yugoslavias when some Croats found salvation by declaring themselves to be "Bokan" (and later Yugoslav) rather than Serb or Montenegrin! But in both circumstances, the Serbians achieved what they had wanted: for the Croats to cease to exist because, severed from their people, they are condemned to become that which the Serbs want them to become, condemned to give the Serbs the great cultural heritage of the Croatian people of Boka as dowry.

There are many examples that display how successfully memocide was carried out upon the

Croatian people as a whole with respect to Boka, the Croatian people and the great Croatian cultural heritage in Boka. The effect of this memoricide can still be felt in Croatia although I believe that many more people today know about Boka and its meaning to the Croatian people than they did several years ago. Three to four years ago, I was appalled by the fact that many Croatian politicians and cultural workers did not know that Boka Kotorska was the "Bay of Croatian Saints". Namely, of the six Croatian Saints and canons, three are from Boka (St. Leopold Bogdan Mandic, sainted Ozana of Kotor and sainted Gracija of Mula). The only Croatian Pope, Siksto V, is also from Boka. I was also appalled to discover that many Croatians of Boka did not know this either.

From the very beginning, the territorial separation of Boka from Croatia has been a major goal. This can be seen in the Vidovdan Constitution of 1921 in which the division of states into administrative regions was proposed. The division would be carried out by a parliamentary decision at the government's suggestion. If this is not accomplished, a shortened legal procedure is predicted and should this not succeed the King would pass a statute in which the district of Boka Kotorska would fall under the Zeta administrative region. One can see how such crucial decisions were determined in advance and it is immediately clear that neither the first nor the second circumstance occurred, rather the third, which ensured the separation of Boka Kotorska from her mother country. In all future changes, including the Banovina (Ban's dominion) of Croatia, Boka remained outside Croatian borders. When the HSS (Croatian Peasant Party) gained the most votes in seven Boka municipalities at the elections of 1939, Croatians in Boka expected that the Boka Kotorska Bay would enter the Banovina. Since the Cvetkovic-Macek Agreement did not define the borders, representatives of Boka Croats went to the HSS headquarters in Zagreb asking for the border to be on Trojica, behind Kotor. A correction of the border, however, was never accomplished due to the war and the arrangement of the first Yugoslavia.

Boka did not enter into the Independent State of Croatia in 1941. It was after the fall of Italy in 1943 when Boka formally entered into this structure, but it was, however, the German army which entered Boka rather than Croatian armed forces. In Boka, people believe that the reason for this was that Don Ivo Stijepcevic, a well-known Croatian historian, requested this. It is ironic that Don Ivo was imprisoned after the war by those whom he had aided by this act.

On the other hand, the "Boka " syndrome was in effect turning those Croatians in Boka into partisans. During the war, the term Montenegro and Boka Kotorska was used, whereas at the second meeting of "ZAVNOCG i Boka" (Territorial Anti-Fascist Council of the National Liberation for Montenegro and Boka), which took place on June 14, 1944, the name was changed to "CASNO" (Montenegrin Anti-Fascist Assembly for National Liberation). By the end of the year the term "and Boka" was erased from the title of the republic as well, although many organizations kept to the original name even several years after the war. This was clearly a simple consequence of the fact that Boka had been wrenched from its mother country. This enabled great pressure to be placed upon the Croatians of Boka. In this way, many well-respected Croatians in Boka were killed, among them priests: Don Ivo Brajnovic, Don Gracija Sablic and Don Djuro Perusina.

There were 17 Croatian culture clubs in Boka in the first Yugoslavia and the Croatians joined their mother country in joy (the thousandth anniversary of King Tomislav was celebrated magnificently in Boka and a stone plaque was placed on the Cathedral in Kotor commemorating the event) and in sorrow (a Boka navy unit took part in Stjepan Radic's funeral). In the second Yugoslavia, however, all of this was destroyed in the two years following the war. In 1948, Croatians were faced with great pressure to declare themselves Montenegrin. Those among them who were in the Communist Party received party orders to do so. Not even three years had passed since the erasing of the term "and Boka". In those three years, many well-respected Croatians were imprisoned, with or without trial, and loss of

employment was a standard occurrence.

This was usually accompanied by the label "clericalist". Pressure continued during the entire existence of the second Yugoslavia resulting in the demographic changes we have mentioned.

4. CROATIA AND BOKA KOTORSKA

The confiscation of Croatian houses, threatening letters and a case of arson in Donja Lastva by Tivat (the owner of the house in question was a Croatian Dejan Brkan), have made the situation in Tivat very explosive. This was reported to the Minister of Internal Affairs by a delegation from the Liberal Union of Montenegro. It is clear why the Montenegrin opposition did this and why they are supporting Croatians in Boka: by fighting for the Croatians, they are fighting for themselves and for the independence of Montenegro and its European orientation. To the Croatians of Boka, its Serbianization means losing their homeland, but to the Montenegrins it is a battle TO BE OR NOT TO BE . They are fighting for the survival of their nation.

Unfortunately, the Montenegrin opposition is not powerful enough to significantly alter the situation. This is why the question of what the Croatian nation can do is extremely important.

Clearly, it is Croatia's duty, according to its Constitution, to report on the current situation in Tivat and the entire Boka region to all relevant factors to the world. However, that is not enough.

In its political program, Croatia must begin with the fact that Boka Kotorska is one of Croatia's most important interests. That this is truly so we may conclude from the following three facts:

1. The overwhelming Croatian cultural heritage in Boka. In fact, by destroying our heritage, the Serbs have raised the level of awareness of Croats with respect to the significance of their cultural heritage.
2. Boka is the Bay of Croatian Saints. Is it necessary, particularly now after the visit of the Holy Father to Zagreb, to emphasize what Catholicism and the Bay of Croatian Saints means to the Croatian people and the Croatian nation.
3. According to the Croatian Constitution, Croatia is obliged to take care of all Croatians outside Croatia, therefore the Croatians of Boka Kotorska.

Thus, because Boka Kotorska is one of Croatia's significant interests, Croatia cannot accept that it be a part of a state such as today's SR Yugoslavia - a state in which Croatians and other peoples are subjected to culturocide and genocide.

Naturally, the Croatian army will not cross Croatian borders (unless Croatia is attacked), regardless of the fact that demographic movements in Knin and Boka have been very similar in this century and that with the completion of ethnic cleansing in Boka, they would be entirely the same.

All these reasons show how it is of vital interest to Croatia that Montenegro become an independent state, as are the other republics of the former Yugoslavia. We are hopeful that Croatia will succeed in convincing its allies of this fact and that they will become more active in aiding the Montenegrin opposition in its battle for freedom and the independence of Montenegro. Montenegro, separated from Serbia, would surely turn towards Europe, and in this way Boka Kotorska, this Bay of Croatian Saints, would, together with Montenegro, be where it belongs - in Europe. European Montenegro is a guarantee for everything Croatian in Boka Kotorska and it is the Croatian part of Montenegro which is exactly the ticket to

affiliation to the Western world. Today's situation, i.e. Serbian Montenegro, represents the feeding of the Greater Serbian appetite and ensures the continuation of Greater Serbian politics, which alone is a constant threat to vital Croatian interests.

[Prof. dr. Dzenana Efendic Semiz: Serbian Land Reform and Colonization in 1918](#)

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An International Symposium "SOUTHEASTERN EUROPE 1918-1995"

Publisher: [Croatian Heritage Foundation](#) & [Croatian Information Centre](#)

For the Publisher: Ante Beljo

Expert Counsellor: Dr. sc. Dragutin Pavlicevic

Editor: Aleksander Ravlic

Graphic Design: Gorana Benic - Hudin

Printed by: TARGA

Copies Printed: 2000

ISBN 953-6525-05-4

IMPRESSUM



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SERBIAN LAND REFORM AND COLONIZATION IN 1918

It is a rare occurrence in the world that in the last 150 years one nation should succeed in expanding its state territory and in banishing all non-Serbian peoples. This has been achieved by Serbia. It is interesting to note that their success is not based on their victories in the field, but rather at the negotiating table, achieved with the support of their war allies. Serbian proper, which encompassed the Belgrade pasha jurisdiction, expanded territorially to include Kosovo, a part of Sandzak and the so called Yugoslavian Macedonia, after the Balkan Wars of 1912 and 1913. During the first Balkan War, Serbian forces began to execute crimes of

genocide against Albanians, Bosniacs and Macedonians in these territories. They set entire villages on fire, killing civilians in the most barbaric fashion using knives, axes and dull wooden mallets. Such crimes have never been recorded in Europe since the times of the Great Migrations. The persecution of non-Serbian citizens continued after Serbians gained power and led to massive exile, causing a change in the demographic structure and making Serbian colonization possible on the confiscated properties of those banished.

The above mentioned expansion of Serbian territory, on which colonization was implemented, marks the beginning of the actualization of the political program, defined in Ilija Garasanin's "Nacertanije" from 1844.

THE SERBIAN CONQUERING IDEOLOGY

The Serbian national program outlined in "Nacertanije" of 1844, originated from the re-establishment of Dusan's Empire in the XIV century, with certain changes which were a consequence of political events from the middle of the previous century. In effect, "Nacertanije" became a synonym for Greater Serbian hegemony with respect to the neighboring nations.

This national program sets forth the fact that Serbians cannot be satisfied with their gains from the First and Second Serbian Rebellions and that they will continue their battle to gain power on the Balkans. "Nacertanije" defines the territories in which Serbia must organize propaganda and intelligence activities, as preparation for the annexation of these territories to their state. For this reason, the program was not published until 1906. The national program foresees that Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Montenegro, northern Albania, Srijem, Banat and Backa join Serbia. For the first time, the territories of Bosnia-Herzegovina and Vojvodina, which were not encompassed by Dusan's Empire, are included as Serbian national territory. Later "Nacertanije" was to become the Serbian ideology for the Obrenovic and Karadjordjevic dynasties, and all Greater Serbian programs including Stevan Moljevic's and Draza Mihailovic's genocidal Chetnik programs and the SANU Memorandum of 1986.

In this respect, Greater Serbian hegemonistic politics in the last 150 years, has, in essence, not changed because its basic aims have been the conquering of territory, penetration towards the West over the Drina River, persecution and destruction of non-Serbian nations to create a Greater Serbia and ensuring that "all Serbians live in one state". For this reason, the ethnic structure was altered through colonization of conquered territory. Wars were waged in order to set the program's politics into motion, and land reform on the conquered territories was conducted due to the colonization of Serbian population. Let us consider some aspects of agrarian reform and colonization in 1918 in our discussion.

CHANGES IN LAND OWNERSHIP IN 1918

In order to gain a better insight into the situation concerning land ownership before the agrarian reform in 1918 and 1919 in Bosnia and Herzegovina, where it was most drastically performed, we will make use of the final census of land ownership and population according to religious affiliation, conducted in 1910 in Austro-Hungary.

According to that census, Bosnian - Muslims owned 91.1%, Orthodox Serbians owned 6.0% , Croatian Catholics owned 2.6% and others, 0.3% of the property.

Following the establishment of the Kingdom of Serbians, Croats and Slovenes, the Bosniac nation was in an inferior position, because it gained the status of a religious minority, so it lost its political and cultural autonomy. With the first agrarian reform of 1918 and 1919, genocide against Bosniacs was deceitfully performed, by the taking away of property with only symbolic reimbursement which was never paid in its entirety. Many wealthy families and landowners became homeless overnight, without any means of survival. Some families even

had their farm buildings and private lots taken away from them. The process to massively impoverish the Bosniac nation and their exodus to Turkey had begun.

Serbian families from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatian Krajina, Serbia and Montenegro were given the lands taken away from the Bosniac families. They were recorded in land registers as owners who did not pay a cent for the properties they had received. This was their reward for belonging to the privileged nation. The main goal was to forcefully alter the demographic structure, using Serbian colonization, in accordance with the "Nacertanije" program. That is to say, Bosnia and Herzegovina was to be considered Serbian land which was to join Greater Serbia at the right moment in history, at any expense. The degree of genocide against Bosniacs can be illustrated in indexes regarding the change of the structure of ownership of land, which was taken away in the first agrarian reform in 1918 and 1919. Bosnian Muslims had a total of 1,175,305 hectares of agricultural and forest land taken away from them. 110,922 hectares of land were taken away from stock corporations, banks and other institutions. Thus, a total of 1,286,227 hectares of agricultural and forest land was seized.

The total amount of land taken away by the first agrarian reform in 1918 and 1919 was divided among 249,518 Serbian families, among whom were settlers, colonists outside Bosnia and Herzegovina and especially volunteers of the Salonika front. If we consider that every family, on average had four members, we can infer that almost one million Serbian inhabitants became land owners and so became significantly wealthy. The agrarian reform of 1918 and 1919 was primarily aimed against members of the Islamic faith, due to the revival of the St. Sava ideology "One nation, one religion in one state." For this reason, the agrarian reform was conducted in a genocidal manner against Muslim land owners in Macedonia, Kosovo and Metohija, Sandzak and Montenegro. A total of 231,098 hectares of land was taken away from them and divided amongst 48,267 Serbian families. If we apply the above methodology that the average family had four members, it can be deduced that almost 200 thousand members of Serbian families received land. In this way, the proprietary and ethnic structure of the population was significantly altered. The process of emigration of citizens from this territory and immigration into Turkey was parallel with the colonization of Serbian citizens from Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Dalmatia, Lika, Banija and Kordun.

Within the Kingdom of Serbians, Croats and Slovenes, the agrarian reform in 1918 and 1919 in Croatia and Slovenia, was performed in a notably milder manner, compared to the territories in which Muslims resided. The agrarian reform was practiced on owners of large estates and relatively less land was taken away, which according to statistical indexes represented 1/4 of the total land taken away in the state. This came to 406,981 hectares of land, which was divided among 316,762 Serbian families who were primarily colonized from passive areas. In this way, almost 1,200,000 family members received land and property.

The agrarian reform of 1918 and 1919 was in effect carried out everywhere except for Serbia, within the borders of the former Belgrade pasha jurisdiction up to 1912. This proves that the Serbian owners of large estates were privileged among those in the Kingdom of Serbians, Croats and Slovenes.

In the above mentioned analysis, we can see that 1,924,307 hectares of land were taken away from former land owners in the Kingdom of Serbians, Croats and Slovenes and divided amongst 614,603 families, primarily Serbian. If we apply the adopted methodology, that every family consists of an average of four members, we can infer that approximately 2,450,000 family members received possession and ownership of land, without paying anything for it. From a historical perspective, the agrarian reform resulted in the largest colonization of the Serbian people onto territory across the Drina River in the Kingdom of Serbians, Croats, and Slovenes. This was a political conceived plan for Serbian territorial

expansion under post war conditions. Those who were most afflicted were Bosnian members of the Islamic faith, Albanians, Turks and Macedonians because 3/4 of the entire land confiscated in the agrarian reform belonged to them.

HISTORICALLY, BANJA LUKA IS NOT A SERBIAN CITY

Towards the end of the agrarian reform of 1918 and 1919, when land was taken away from Bosniacs, based on a discriminatory law, terrorist methods were implemented such as the infamous "death march" in 1919 on Bosniacs from Lijeve polje near Banjaluka. 50,000 Bosniacs resided on the fertile plains of the Lijeve polje, of whom over a thousand land owners were killed by Serbian terrorists during the "death march" and the remaining civilian inhabitants were banished from their centuries-old home. A long colony of victims walked to numerous camps in Kosovo and Sandzak, where they were transported to Turkey and settled in Anatolia. At that point, Bosniacs lost their properties in the Banjaluka municipality in the most brutal manner, through genocide. Serbian families, those without land and Salonika volunteers settled in the houses and occupied the properties which had belonged to the banished Bosniacs. Drastic changes in the demographic and proprietary structure in the Kingdom of Serbians, Croats and Slovenes, occurred. To illustrate this, statistical indexes show that until 1878 not one Serbian family owned property in Lijeve polje by Banjaluka.

It was not until after the agrarian reform of 1918 and 1919 that the settlement and colonization of Serbians into the municipality of Banjaluka intensified. According to the first population census in 1879 in Bosnia and Herzegovina, during the Austro—Hungarian Empire, Bosnian Muslims made up the absolute majority in Banjaluka according to religious affiliation and comprised 67.71% of the population. From 1895 until 1991, this percentage constantly decreased and today it comes to 19.35%. In 1879, Catholic Croats totaled 10.52% of the population. This number gradually grew and in 1931 they made up 29.9% of the population. This remained so until 1953 at which time Catholic Croats represented 28.34% of the population. Afterwards, the number of Croats in the total population rapidly decreased to 10.97% in 1991. The Orthodox population, including Serbians and Montenegrins, represented 19.80% in the population census of 1879. From then on, their proportion increased to 30.53% in 1931 and continued to intensively increase until 1948 when this percentage reached 34.78%. Finally in 1991, the percentage totaled 49.3% . From the provided indexes, it can be concluded that Banjaluka is not historically a Serbian city, as the war criminal Radovan Karadzic claims, because the Serbian population in that city began to settle there in the XIX century. The rapid increase of the Serbian population began after the realization of the agrarian reform of 1918 and 1919, when Serbians occupied Bosniac properties and after the catastrophic earthquake of 1969, when they comprised the majority of those who gained employment and received newly built residences. In addition to this, the JNA corps, comprised of 25 thousand soldiers and 700 officers, from lieutenants to generals, who were primarily from Serbia and Montenegro, contributed to the increase in Serbian population.

In a way, history repeats itself. During the Serbian aggression, from 1992 until today, the Serbian aggressor performed genocide against Croats and Bosniacs in the city of Banjaluka. The population census of 1991 statistically provides us with the information that 12 villages in the Banjaluka area consisted of an ethnically pure majority of Croats. However, the Serbian aggressor has banished almost all Croats, and Serbian families have moved into their homes and taken their lands. The process of forced changes in the demographic structure and ownership has been performed systematically since the establishment of the Kingdom of Serbians, Croats and Slovenes and has lasted for almost 80 years. Up until 1992, however, Serbians did not make up the absolute majority of the population in Banjaluka. Considering that Banjaluka is historically a Bosnian city, which is now occupied by the Serbian aggressor, the legal government in Sarajevo is justly requesting its demilitarization and that it be placed under the control of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, using peaceful means. For this reason, the international community has accepted the proposition for the suspension of military activity and by way of negotiations, the

peaceful solution to the status of the city of Banjaluka.

TOKEN REWARDS FOR SEIZED PROPERTIES

Dr. Stjepan Radic, a member of parliament - of the National Assembly of the Kingdom of Serbians, Croats and Slovenes, in his speeches and articles opposing hegemony, criticized, among other things, the manner in which the agrarian reform of 1918 and 1919 was conducted, in which Muslim properties were seized by force (from agas to beys). Because of this, the radical representative, Punisa Racic, shot at the Croatian members of parliament, killing Pavle Radic and Djuro Basaricek and wounding Stjepan Radic, Ivan Pernar and Ivan Grandja. On August 6, 1928, Stjepan Radic died due to the severity of his injuries. It was decided, afterwards, that the Bosnian Muslims be compensated for the properties taken away from them, and the state admitted that there had been "irregularities" in the realization of the agrarian reform. Laws regarding the financial settlements for the compensation for territory seized after 1928 were passed, by which the payment of the properties was to be regulated. The value of the land was appraised at 60% less than market value, and payment was conducted in cash and bonds in a 50 year period including 4% interest per annum. The payments were made twice annually, beginning in 1923 and were to continue until 1971. Bosnian Muslims were reimbursed for land which had belonged to agas (under serfs' contract) and for land which had belonging to beys (under leasehold). Until the beginning of the Second World War, the former owners were paid 49%, that is, 125 million dinars in cash and 36% in bonds, amounting to 46.8 million dinars, for agas' lands.. The total amount paid was 171 million dinars or 67.4%. 83.2 million dinars or 32.6% remained unpaid. As opposed to the compensation to the owners of the agas' land, the reimbursements for the land taken away from the beys was planned exclusively in bonds, with a 50 year payment period. From the total foreseen 650 million dinar reimbursement in 36 semi-annual installments, only four installments amounting to 139.5 million dinars were paid, or 1/4, that is 21.5%. Therefore, 510.5 million dinars or 78.5% remained unpaid.

The above indexes clearly illustrate that the seized property of the former owners (agas and beys) was never fully paid for, and thus could never have become the property of Serbians, nor could it justly or appropriately be given to their descendants. According to the opinions of legal experts, there is no date limit in regards to unpaid for land and realty documents with respect to the agrarian reform have been preserved in the archives in Sarajevo and Vienna.

SUMMARY

Following the Balkan Wars of 1912 and 1913, the "Nacertanije" national program of Greater Serbian dominance began to take effect in the colonization of the Serbian population onto the captured territories of Kosovo, parts of Sandzak and the so-called Yugoslav Macedonia. This process of colonization of the Serbian populace onto the other side of the Drina River intensified after World War I, when the Kingdom of Serbians, Croats and Slovenes was created in 1918. The Agrarian reform of 1918 was among the first legal actions of the new state, for the purpose of colonization and the alteration of the demographic and proprietary structure of the population. It was most drastically enforced in Bosnia and Herzegovina upon the Bosnian Muslim land owners, from whom 1,286,227 hectares of agricultural and forest land were taken and later divided amongst 249,518 Serbian families. This was similarly executed upon Muslim land owners in the remaining parts of the Kingdom of Serbians, Croats and Slovenes as well as those who resided in Macedonia, Kosovo and Metohija, Sandzak and Montenegro. 3/4 of the land belonged to members of the Islamic faith and this was confiscated during the agrarian reform of 1918 and 1919. The difficult economic situation this placed them in, forced them to move to Turkey. Our presented discussion illustrates that the agrarian reform affected larger estates in Croatia (Dalmatia and Slavonia) Vojvodina and Slovenia, where 406,981 hectares of land amounting to less than a 1/4 of the total land was seized and distributed to 316,762 Serbian families.

In total, the agrarian reform resulted in 1,924,307 hectares of land being taken away and divided amongst 614,603 families, primarily Serbian. According to the methodology employed in our analysis, nearly 2,450,000 family members became owners of agricultural and forest land. In so doing, the first colonization of Serbian populace was completed, by which the demographic and proprietary structure of land in the first Yugoslavia was altered.

LEGAL ACTIONS REGARDING THE AGRARIAN REFORM IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA FROM 1919 UNTIL 1933:

1. Regent Aleksandar's proclamation regarding the agrarian reform on January 5, 1919.
2. Preliminary decisions for the realization of the agrarian reform on February 25, 1919, Sl. novine (Official gazette) KSHS (Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes), number 11/1919.
3. The Statute of July 4, 1919 regarding the prohibition of the estranging or encumbering of large estates. Sl. novine KSHS, number 82. dt. July 21, 1919.
4. The Statute of July 21, 1919 regarding the registration of ownership of serfs' homesteads formerly belonging to serfs into the realty books of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Sl. novine KSHS, number 84/1919.
5. The Statute regarding the collection of revenues (harvest) from beys' agricultural lands in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1919. Sl. novine KSHS, number 81/1919.
6. The Statute regarding the handling of beys' lands in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Sl. novine KSHS, number 40, February 22, 1920.
7. Changes in the Statute regarding the handling of beys' lands in Bosnia and Herzegovina, February 14, 1920.
8. The Statute regarding financial reimbursement of agrarian relations in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Sl. novine KSHS, 111/1921.
9. Law regarding the implementation of partial confiscation of large estates for public interests, colonization and construction of residences for laborers and clerks. Sl. novine KSHS, number 10/1922.
10. Law regarding changes and amendments of laws which pertain to the agrarian reform in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Sl. novine KJ (Kingdom of Yugoslavia), number 21/1933.

WORKS OF SCHOLARS AND EXPERTS:

11. Genocide against Muslims in Bosnia and Herzegovina Accomplished by the Agrarian Reform of 1918 and 1919, study financed by the Fund for Scientific Research of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Sarajevo, 1991.
12. How Serbians Became Land Owners in Bosnia, by Dzenana Efendic Semiz, Muslimanski glas, May 3, 1991.
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An International Symposium "SOUTHEASTERN EUROPE 1918-1995"

Publisher: [Croatian Heritage Foundation](#) & [Croatian Information Centre](#)

For the Publisher: Ante Beljo

Expert Counsellor: Dr. sc. Dragutin Pavlicevic

Editor: Aleksander Ravlic

Graphic Design: Gorana Benic - Hudin

Printed by: TARGA

Copies Printed: 2000

ISBN 953-6525-05-4

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THE STATUS OF HUNGARIANS IN VOJVODINA FROM 1918 TO 1995

INTRODUCTION

Following the First World War, Hungarians in Vojvodina and the entire nation shared a tragic fate. This was the result of the Trianon Peace Agreement (June 4, 1920). Approximately 189,797km or 67.10% of 282,870 km of territory belonging to the Kingdom of Hungary² was lost. According to a 1910 census, 10,649,416 citizens or 58.31% of Hungary's population before the war (18,264,533) had lived in the lost territory. The national composition of the population in the territory lost by the Trianon Peace Agreement consisted of the following: 3,213,631 or 30.18% Hungarians, 2,919,747 or 27.42% Rumanians, 1,781,084 or 12.66% Slovaks, 1,348,763 or 16.72% Germans, 463,207 or 4.53% Ruthenians, 435,345 or 4.09% Serbs, 220,273 or 2.07% Croatians and 267,366 or 2.51% other nationalities. This data undoubtedly illustrates the injustice of the peace agreement which 1/3 of the Hungarian nation was annexed to the Kingdom of Rumania, the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia and the Republic of Austria. Due to the unmistakable and unfavourable political relations between Hungary and the little Entente (Yugoslavia, Rumania, and Czechoslovakia) between the Two World Wars, a general conclusion can be made that the status of Hungarians in these states were exceptionally difficult.

This was also the case in so-called Vojvodina which was annexed to the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes (later Yugoslavia), despite the fact that Hungarians comprised the majority of the population according to the 1910 census (32.08%, see [Table 5](#)). We are referring, of course, to the part of Vojvodina (Backa and Banat) that belonged to the Kingdom of Hungary up to 1920. If, however, we take into consideration the entire territory of "today's" Vojvodina, which includes a part of the former Srijem County, which was part of the Kingdom of Croatia and Slavonia until 1918 (3,885 km² and 234,413 citizens)³ The national structure becomes more favourable for the Serbs (a relative majority of 33.80% - see [Table 6](#)). However, this can hardly account for such a great territorial gain for the Serbs. Furthermore, it should be made clear that it was almost impossible to establish ethnic borders in Vojvodina due to the exceptionally complex national structure of the population. For this reason, it is surprising that the winning forces of the First World War did not adopt the principle of self-determination (which they themselves emphasized in the context of Wilson's 11 Points) and conduct a plebiscite in Vojvodina. Moreover, the principle was not respected in Hungary's case during the demarcation towards Rumania (the Transylvanian question) and Czechoslovakia. The following data best illustrates the injustice of the Trianon Peace Agreement: approximately 10,000,000 Hungarians received territory totaling 93,000km², 2,900,000 Rumanians received 103,000km², 1,800,000 Slovaks received 62,000km² etc. This territory refers to the entire territory of the former Hungarian Kingdom.

THE EVOLUTION OF THE HUNGARIAN NATIONAL ENTITY IN VOJVODINA UP TO 1918

The fact that Hungarians settled in Backa, immediately after they occupied the Carpathian basin, that is, the so-called Panonian area, is indisputable. The work by Konstantin Porfirogenet (translation Moravcsik Gy. 1950) from the middle of the tenth century irrefutably implies this as well. In his work, he suggested that Hungarians had settled the regions across the Danube River and the areas between the Danube River and the Sava River. Before the arrival of the Hungarians, the population was primarily comprised of Slavs⁴ However, during the Middle Ages, they were assimilated into Hungarians. Thus, the greater part of Backa was a part of the Hungarian national entity. In the eleventh century, according an analysis of toponyms (Kniezsa J., 1938),

they were living intermixed with the Hungarians by the Danube in northwestern and southwestern Backa.⁵ In spite of the catastrophic consequences of the penetration of the Tartars in the thirteenth century, when 40-65% of the settlements in the Backa region and 50% of the settlements in the Bodrog region were destroyed, there were no significant changes until the sixteenth century (Györffy Gy., 1966).

The Backa and Bodrog regions were relatively densely populated areas at that time. There were 82 settlements in Bodrog in the first half of the fourteenth century and 225 by the end of the fifteenth century and in Backa, respectively, 127 and then 332 (Györffy Gy. 1966 Csánki D., II, 1894). The tax documents from 1522, 4 years prior to the Mohacka Battle, (Szabo I., 1965) were of great significance in establishing the ethnic structure of the Backa⁶ population. The names of the settlements, as well as the names of the tax payers, were documented. The head of each family, paying taxes in 164 settlements (29.4% of all settlements in the Backa and Bodrog region), was listed totaling over 4,000 names and surnames. If we assume each family consisted of 5 family members, the approximate number of citizens per settlement at the time would amount to 120. Without entering into a detailed, scientific, onomastic analysis, it certainly can be inferred that the great majority of the Backa population (approximately 90%) was Hungarian. Amongst the Slav names (approximately 10% of the names and surnames), the surname "Toth" is predominant. "Toth" is the terminology the Hungarians used when referring to the Slavs who settled in today's Slavonia and Srijem during the Middle Ages (Szabo J., 1965, Kniezsa I., 1938). Considering the fact that only 1.79% of the names listed were characteristic of Orthodox Christians, it is obvious that the listed Slavic Backa population, at the time, was predominantly Croatian Catholic. At that time, both Croats and Serbs were fleeing north from war-torn Srijem and northern Serbia. Since only 30% of the settlements are documented, the Slavic population was probably significantly greater, especially Serbs in southeastern Backa. Furthermore, it is difficult to say whether a portion of the documented Slavs referred to the older native population from the Middle Ages.⁷

In the first half of the sixteenth century, the penetration of the Turks in the Panonski area had catastrophic effects on the demographic development and deployment of the Hungarian population in Vojvodina.

PICTURE 1

Picture 1. The evolution of the Hungarian nationality in Vojvodina from the 11th century until 1991 (according to K. Kocsis, 1995.)

Although the area was not occupied until 1543, Hungarians almost completely disappeared due to infectious diseases, the migration of numerous armies, the Dozs Györgya peasant rebellion, and the raids by the so-called emperor (Jovan Nenad's gangs, deportations and murders, and banishment). Subsequently, the Serbs settled Backa and Banat and the remaining portion of today's Vojvodina (Popovic J.D., 1957). While during Turkish control, the permanent residents lived primarily in the cities because the Serbian population was constantly on the move due to the nature of their livelihood (soldiers and cattle-breeders).

PICTURE 2

Picture 2. Ethnic map of individual settlements in Vojvodina in 1910 (according to Kocsis, 1995). Legend; A= absolute or relative majority-1. Serbs, 2. Hungarians, 3. Germans, 4. Croats, 5. Slovaks, 6. Rumanians, 7. Ruthenians, 8. border of 1995. Czechs; a=national border 1995, b=southern Vojvodina

Following the liberation from the Turks, the mass colonization began of Serbs from Kosovo and Serbia (40,000 families). This was conducted under the leadership of the Patriarch Arsenije Carnojevic (1690). Croats- Bunjevac began to settle the Subotica region in 1687. According to the censuses conducted by Austria in 1715 and 1720, Serbs and Croats comprised of 97.6% of the Backa population. There were only 530 or 1.9% Hungarians and 0.5% Germans (Kocsis K., 1989). Following the Pozarevac Peace Agreement of 1718, mass colonization of the area began. Until then, and according to the 1720 census (Kocsis K., 1995) there were only 0 to 5 people per km². Only after the Serbs left, Germans settled in the Banat territories and in the territories of Apatin and Odzak in Backa. After 1740, Marija Terezija carried out the settling of Hungarians, Slovaks, and Ruthenians⁸ Hungarians settled the Northeastern portion of Backa by Tisa. Which Serbs had left after the abolishment of the Croatian Military Border of the Tisa Basin (1741), the Subotica territory, the plain of Telecka, and the surrounding areas of Sombor. These were primarily immigrants from Dunántula, central Alföld, and the Csongrad region. The first large group of settlers arrived from 1742 to 1750 and settled in Bezdan, Doroslovo, Backa Topola, Bajsa, Kula, etc (Bodor A., 1914 - Kocsis K., 1989). Serbs still were the majority of the population according to the census of 1773 (Lexicon 1920). However, the number of other nationalities had considerably increased, so that Backa served as an area with an exceptionally complex ethnic structure.

TABLE 1: ETHNIC STRUCTURE OF THE POPULATION OF BACKA FOR THE PERIOD 1910-1991

From 1720 until 1787,⁹ the number of citizens in Backa and Banat increased seven times because of immigration. At the end of the eighteenth century, the settling of Germans continued during the reign of Josip II, expressing the political tendency of "germanization" of this extremely valuable agricultural area. The majority of Germans came from Franconia, Baden Württemberg, and the Rhine Valleys (Kocsis K., 1989). At this time, the settling of Hungarians decreased (Feketic, St. Moravica, Pacir, etc. - that is, the Telecka area - Kocsis K., 1989). During the first half of the nineteenth century, planned colonization came to a halt. This made the spontaneous settling of Hungarians and Slovaks possible. Midway through and during the second half of the nineteenth century, once again, Hungarians became the dominant nationality in Backa (relative majority) and a significant number of Hungarians settled in the northern and central part of Banat (partially due to planned colonization) and Srijem.

TABLE 2: ETHNIC STRUCTURE OF THE POPULATION OF BANAT FOR THE PERIOD 1910-1991

At the beginning of our century, following great migratory movements during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the ethnic picture in Backa had finally stabilized. Hungarians dominated the northern and northeastern part of Backa, where Croats (Bunjevci) also appeared as a great enclave in Subotica. The Serbian ethnic picture showed signs of regression alongside constant migration. They primarily remained in

the southeastern part of the region called Sajkaska. They made up enclaves in Sombor and in parts of Southwestern Backa. Germans were predominant but lived intermixed with Croats, Serbs, Hungarians, and Ruthenians in the southwestern and western part of central Backa. Slovaks made up a relatively large enclave west of Novi Sad (see illustration #6). From 1880 until 1910, the Hungarian population increased greatly in the towns. This was primarily due to a natural growth in the population, new immigration and assimilation of Germans and Croats (Subotica) into Hungarians.

THE PERIOD BETWEEN WARS, 1918 TO 1941

From November 7 to 19, 1918 Serbian troops occupied southern Hungary with the Entente's blessing. The Novi Sad Assembly (November 25, 1918) proclaimed Vojvodina's union with the Kingdom of Slovenes, Croats, and Serbs with no consideration of the wishes of the Hungarian and German population of 54.41% of the total population which made up Vojvodina (Backa, Banat). De facto, 29.33% of the Backa and Banat population of Serbs in 1910 made the decision to annex the area to the Kingdom of Slovenes, Croats, and Serbs. This was sanctioned by the Trianon Peace Agreement on June 4, 1920, when Backa's 8,558km and Banat's 9,324km were joined with the Kingdom of Slovenes, Croats, and Serbs.

TABLE 3: ETHNIC STRUCTURE OF THE POPULATION OF SRIJEM FOR THE PERIOD 1910-1991

The Serbian minority gained power and the liquidation of the existing national organization and the economic and political destruction of the Hungarians immediately began.

The great majority of Hungarian state officials were dismissed or forced to resign. At the end of 1918, 645 Hungarian elementary schools and 277 day care centers were in operation with 1,832 teachers employed (Deak L. in *Visztert delvidek*, 1941). These schools were nationalized on August 20, 1920. By a process called denationalization in Vojvodina (Jojkic V., 1931), the "agrarian reform" was executed. It began on February 25, 1919. The majority of large estates, with an area of over 500 cadastral acres and later, those with an area over 100 cadastral acres, predominantly owned by Hungarians and Germans, was expropriated.¹⁰ The direct consequences of these measures were the destruction of a class of Hungarian large estate owners and indirectly, the Hungarian peasant and working class. In 1919, 57,631 people were without land (41.4% were Hungarian and 18.2% were German). Since the German and Hungarian populations were considered as an enemy, it is not surprising that they did not participate in the distribution of land taken away from large estate owners. In addition to this, according to the calculations of K. Kocis (1995), 14,345 Hungarians and 1,239 Germans (labourers and servants) were dismissed from the large estates, so that Serbian colonists and so-called volunteers could take their place.

The mentioned events had resulted in extreme demographic regression of Hungarians. Comparing the Backa and Banat census of 1921 with the census of 1910, an absolute decrease can be noted with respect to the number of Hungarians, approximately 50,000 citizens (relatively 12%). If however, we include the total territory encompassed by today's Vojvodina, the decrease is somewhat larger, approximately 55,000 citizens or 13%. According to the approximate calculations of K. Kocsis (1995) in 1910, 52,000 citizens declared themselves as Hungarians. However, due to new unjust political and economic circumstances surrounding the census of 1921 and

according to Svetozar Pribicevic's¹¹ analysis of surnames, these Hungarian citizens declared themselves as Germans (12,300), Serbio-Croatian Catholics (32,620), and others (6,850). Alongside this "dissimulation", 39,272 Hungarian officials, intellectuals, and proprietors were banished, exiled or repatriated from the end of 1918 until the beginning of 1921 (Nyigri I., 1941). This influenced the significant decrease of the Hungarian population in border areas, especially in Subotica and Sombor. In Subotica, Hungarians were no longer considered the majority, as a result of the application of Svetozar Pribicevic's so-called method of surname analysis in assessing data from the 1921 census.

Congruent with Greater Serbian politics, the further development of the "agrarian reform" proceeded after 1921. It served the purpose of increasing the number of Serbs and destroying the ethnic block of Hungarians in northern Backa, especially in the Tisa river basin. Of 468,969 cadastral acres of agricultural area received due to the agrarian reform, approximately 20,000 families (45,000 Serbs and 300 Croats - Bunjevci) had settled primarily by the border by January 31, 1939 (Kocsis K., 1995., using data from Jojkic v., 1931., Nyigri I., 1941., Gacesa N.L., 1968, 1972, 1975, Mesaros S. 1981).

An especially perfidious act which served to impoverish the Hungarian, German, and Croatian population, was related to the realm of tax politics. The taxes charged to the Hungarians in Vojvodina per citizen were 3 to 4 times more than the taxes in Serbia Proper. Moreover, settlements with a Hungarian majority were burdened with special village taxes. In addition to this, Hungarian tradesman, industrialists, and merchants were burdened with taxes four times greater than the usual (Nyigri I., 1941). This resulted in an intense economic emigration of the Hungarian population from 1921 to 1929. During this time, 14,442 Hungarians (10,000 from Vojvodina according to Nyigri, 1941) emigrated to America and Australia from Yugoslavia. The data from the 1931 population census in Yugoslavia best illustrates the consequences. Despite a relatively favourable birth rate from 1921 until 1931 (7.5% amounting to 25-30,000 citizens), there was only a slight increase of the Hungarian population (approximately 5,000 in Banat and Backa and 3,000 in the entire territory of today's Vojvodina) due to the mass Hungarian emigration to Hungary and abroad. However, there was also a relative decrease of the Hungarian population (26.62% of the entire Backa and Banat population, 22.97% in Vojvodina). At the same time, due to the immigration of 64,000 Serbs (Kocsis K., 1995), the Serbian population increased to 37.43%, thus altering the ethnic structure of many settlements which were, until then, primarily settled by Hungarians and Germans. 53 settlements with a Hungarian and German majority became predominantly Serbian settlements (see the corresponding population census).

THE WAR PERIOD 1941- 1944

On April 6, 1941, German and Italian troops began military operations focused against the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. Subsequently, during the period between April 11 - 14, 1941, Hungarian troops accomplished the occupation of Backa, Baranja, Medjimurje, and Prekomurje. On April 11, 1941, Germans occupied Srijem and Banat. Srijem was subsequently included in NDH. Banat was, in effect, no one's territory but was governed by the local German population. Following the implementation of the Hungarian administration, the process of territorial pacification and deportation began of Serbs who had settled after December 31, 1918. At the same time, the colonization of Hungarians from Bukovina (Rumania) and Moldavia began. From May 11 until June 20, 1941, 13,200 Hungarians from Bukovina (3,279 families), 161 (53 families) from

Moldavia (Rumania), and 481 aristocratic families (2,325 people) had settled in territories once settled by Serbian colonists. As a result of this colonization and return of citizens who were banished between the two World Wars, along with the arrival of numerous officials, the number of Hungarians in Backa, according to the 1941 population census and in comparison with the 1931 population census, increased by 80,000. The Hungarian portion of the total population increased from 34.2% to 45.4% . Hungarians especially marked a large increase (74.7% of the total population) in northern Backa and in cities of Subotica, Novi Sad, Sombor, Kula, etc. According to the 1941 population census, Hungarians marked the absolute majority in Novi Sad (50.4%). The tendency of a strong assimilation process with respect to Germans and Croats, who expressed themselves as Hungarians in a relatively large number, was noted once again. The Serbian population was only a majority in southeastern Backa (called Sajkaska), where Partisan activities began in 1941. The Hungarian government executed pacification in this part of Backa. From 1941 until 1944, 4,629 Serbs and Jews were killed. 3,310 of these people were killed during the famous raids at the beginning of 1942 in Novi Sad¹² It is interesting to note, and quite instructive as well, that the Yugoslavian government emphasises exclusively these crimes. Yet, they have never mentioned genocide against the Hungarian and German populations, executed by the Yugoslavian army during its occupation of Banat, Backa, and Srijem at the end of 1944. It was not until 1991 in Budapest that comprehensive information was issued regarding the bloody events that followed the entrance of National Liberation Army units and the Soviet army into Backa. The genocide that was performed against the Hungarian people has thus been consciously kept silent; until recently, not only the official Yugoslavian authorities, but also by the authorities in communist Hungary. The fact that members of military units whose holy goal included "brotherhood and union," "equality and freedom for people," and "proletarian internationalism" (at least at the time) executed systematic extermination, is appalling. In light of the new events in the former Yugoslavian territory, it is now clear that the genocide performed at the end of the Second World War was performed in the name of "Greater Serbianism" and the idea of so-called "Greater Serbia". According to data from Cseres Tibor (1993), 34,491 innocent Hungarian citizens were killed.¹³ Among those killed, were 15 priests and monks.

MAP 3

Picture 3. Victims of genocide upon the Hungarian population in 1944 (according from T. Cseres' data, 1991, composed by A. Bogнар ,1993).

Although these numerical references do not include victims from the Banat and Srijem territory, it is important to stress that despite the partial approximate characteristics of the number of victims, it is difficult to grasp the magnitude of these monstrous atrocities. Vladimir Zerjavic's *Yugoslavia's Population Deficits in the Second World War* (issued by the Yugoslavian Victimology Society, Zagreb, 1989) does not use data from the 1941 Hungarian population census. In addition, new sources are still unfamiliar (Cseres Tibor, 1993), which were subsequently issued including the calculated Hungarian casualties of war (approximately 1,000) which are unrealistic and completely unacceptable¹⁴ This observation is valid for the calculation of German victims (23,000) and Croatian victims (6,000) in Vojvodina. They are manifold times greater according to some German sources (68,000 Germans, *Das Schicksal der Deutschen in Jugoslawien*, München, 1984 - V. Zerjavic, 1989).

THE STATUS OF HUNGARIANS FOLLOWING 1945

At the end of 1944, the occupation of Vojvodina by National Liberation Army, Soviet and Bulgarian troops had difficult consequences on the status of Germans and Hungarians in Vojvodina. A significant number of Germans retreated with German troops (270,000)¹⁵ of which 68,000 were killed or had disappeared.¹⁶ Also, approximately 140,000 Germans were imprisoned in 41 concentration camps (K. Kocsis, 1995).

TABLE 4: THE STARTING POINT AND THE DESTINATION OF THE POPULATION IN THE FORCED RESETTLEMENT IN THE AUTONOMOUS PROVINCE OF VOJVODINA FOR THE PERIOD 1945-48.

The majority of these prisoners were subsequently moved to Germany, but many died due to malnutrition and illness. In the 1948 census, a significant number of Germans declared themselves as Hungarians (40,000), Serbians (5,000), and Croats (2,000)¹⁷ due to legal and political safety. All of this had influenced the fact that Germans almost completely disappeared from the Vojvodina territory, that is Yugoslavia after 1945.

Hungarians also marked a powerful demographic regression (see table 6). There are many reasons for this: the retreat of the Hungarian army caused, numerous administrative employees to leave as well; Hungarian settlers from Bukovina and Moldavia, who had settled during the war, experienced a similar fate; the genocide performed against Hungarians in Backa during the occupation of Vojvodina by National Liberation Army.

Since population censuses were not conducted in Srijem and Banat in 1941, exact the before are unavailable. The summarized data for 1941 from table 6 are approximate. For this reason, our demographic analysis will only be focused on the Backa territory.

By comparing the data from 1941 and 1948, we can observe that the number of Hungarians decreased by 51,188 citizens or 14.3%. However, the 25,000 German citizens (a total of 40,000 in Yugoslavia), who pronounced themselves as Hungarians in 1948, are not included in this number.¹⁸ This apparently minimized the real demographic losses which in effect amounted to approximately 76,000. This seven year interval had a natural population increase but did not occur during this seven year interval due to war casualties and the fact that approximately 40,000 Hungarians left Backa in 1944 and 1945 (Jelentesek...1988). For this reason, the data regarding genocide against the Hungarian population can be relatively viewed as correct.¹⁹

TABLE 5: ETHNIC STRUCTURE OF THE POPULATION OF PART OF VOJVODINA 1910-1991 (BAEKA, BANAT), WHICH TILL 1920 BELONGED TO HUNGARY

The ethnic triad established during the 18th and 19th centuries was destroyed. It ceased to exist because of the German disappearance, a decrease in the number of Hungarians, and extensive colonization of Serbs and Montenegrins (see table 4) from Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Serbia²⁰ into previous German and Hungarian settlements. In order for such an extensive colonization to occur as part of the agrarian reform, 389,256 hectares of land owned by Germans was confiscated. The great majority of these properties (84%) was given to Serbian colonists while only 9.9% was

given to Hungarians without land (K.Kocsis, 1995).

According to the first Yugoslavian population census of 1948, due to the enormous migratory movement, Serbians comprised 49.97% of 1,633,836 citizens in Vojvodina. Subsequently, in 1953, they had the absolute majority (50.61%). This illustrated that their Greater Serbian dream had finally been actualized and that the previous ethnic structure of Vojvodina was completely altered.

From 1948, a series of factors effected the status of Hungarians. They included the following: government politics towards minorities, the socio-economic development of Vojvodina within Yugoslavia, the assimilation processes, and methods used in certain population census'.

The fact remains that the natural growth of the Hungarian population in Vojvodina has been constantly decreasing since 1948. Moreover, this can be viewed as a general tendency of the demographic development of the Vojvodina population. According to K. Kocsis' calculations (1995) between 1948 and 1993, including the data from K. Mirnic (1993, in K. Kocsis, 1995), the total natural growth of Hungarians from 1948 until 1993 amounted to 17,191 people or 4%. This was a consequence of a decrease in fertility (1953-19.5%, 1991-11.4%) and an increase in the death rate (1953-11.2%, 1989-18%). This resulted in an older Hungarian population. The index of elderly Hungarians increased from 63.9 in 1961 to 155.2 in 1991(K. Kocsis, 1995). At the same time, the demographic status of Serbs, Montenegrins, and so-called Yugoslavians was significantly favourable. Data regarding the natural growth further attests to this. For example, data from 1989 suggests that the natural growth of Yugoslavs was +11.3%, Montenegrins +4.2%, Serbs -1.1%, Croatians -4.9%, Slovaks - 6.4%, Hungarians -6.6%, and Romanians -8.0%.

TABLE 6: ETHNIC STRUCTURE OF THE POPULATION OF VOJVODINA IN THE PERIOD OF 1910-1991

In order to carry out political "serbianization" in Vojvodina, a series of subjective methods were used to attempt denationalization or even outright assimilation of numerous nationalities. Constant disguised propaganda appeared regarding the existence of certain nationalities and their lack of prospect. For Hungarians, methods of discrediting were used, considering that Hungary was a member-country of the Warsaw Agreement and under Soviet occupation. Special attention was focused on reorganization and so-called "internationalization" of the Hungarian school system. As a result, Hungarian registration in Serbo-Croatian schools increased (1959/60 and 1989/90 from 13.1% to 20 % according to K. Mirnics 1993). To a great extent, an increase in the number of mixed marriages initiated the assimilation process. This is illustrated by the fact that a relative portion of ethnic homogenous marriages is constantly decreasing(1956-82.2%, 1988-73.6% - K. Kocsis 1995). Mixed marriages, combined with the political exaggeration of so-called "Yugoslavianism", unfavourable to the preservation and development of the culture and language of each individual nation, influenced the rapid and constant decrease of the number of Hungarians following 1961. A great deal of demographic losses experienced by Hungarians and other small ethnic groups can be attributed to an increase in the number of so-called "Yugoslavs". This was a category of people who did not declare their national affiliation in censuses from 1961 until 1991. The spreading of the "Yugoslavian" idea was particularly emphasized among younger groups of people who were reproductive

and most active working part of the population. In fact, 71.2% of "Yugoslavians" were in 1991 under 40 years of age. (K. Kocsis, 1995) In addition to this, I wish to mention the significant external and internal migration of the active working populace, which serves as an important factor which influenced the demographic regression of Hungarians. According to data from the 1971, 1981, and 1991 censuses, where Hungarians and Croats were the majority (northern Backa), a great portion of the populace emigrated towards Western Europe and other continents because of economic reasons. At the same time, internal migration of the population was constantly aimed toward the city centers for work (Novi Sad, Belgrade, etc.). Here, assimilation processes were most explicit. How else could one explain the long stagnant qualitative development of Hungarians in Novi Sad, Zrenjanin, etc.? This was their rapid demographic regression illustrated by the 1991 population census, carried out in a significantly "greater Serbian" atmosphere. This also explains the unmistakable decrease in the number of Hungarians in the entire Vojvodina territory in 1991.

Today, the greatest portion of Vojvodina Hungarians live in the northern part of Backa.²¹

Where they comprise the majority of the population (56.5%) according to the 1991 census. Outside this territory, Hungarians were the majority in 20 Banat settlements, in eight southern Backa settlements, and in two settlements in Srijem.

MAP 4

Picture 4. Ethnic map of individual settlements in Vojvodina in 1991 (according to K. Kocsis, 1995)

Legend: A= absolute or relative majority-1. Serbs, 2. Hungarians, 3. Croats, 4. Slovaks, 5. Romanians, 6. Ruthenians and Ukrainians, 7. Macedonians, 9. Germans, 10. Czechs, 11. Slovaks; a= national border 1995, b= southern Vojvodina border of 1995.

The recent war leading to the breakup of Yugoslavia, significantly influenced the alteration of the ethnic picture in Vojvodina. It had a marked negative influence on the status of Hungarians and especially Croats in Vojvodina. To avoid recruitment 25 to 30,000 Hungarians, primarily young males, emigrated to Hungary and other parts of the world, This had negative effects on the structure with respect to age, sex, and the reproductive capacity of the demographic body of Hungarians. Since the reproductive capacity of the Hungarian population in Vojvodina has not been favourable, due to aging and decrease in fertility, we can only await catastrophic effects in the further development of the Hungarian nationality. This is expected soon because Vojvodina, as a part of Yugoslavia since 1991, is experiencing a marked economic crisis because of the economic sanctions. It has impoverished a great number of citizens forcing them to leave and altogether decreasing the birthrate.

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An International Symposium "SOUTHEASTERN EUROPE 1918-1995"

Publisher: [Croatian Heritage Foundation](#) & [Croatian Information Centre](#)

For the Publisher: Ante Beljo

Expert Counsellor: Dr. sc. Dragutin Pavlicevic

Editor: Aleksander Ravlic

Graphic Design: Gorana Benic - Hudin

Printed by: TARGA

Copies Printed: 2000

ISBN 953-6525-05-4

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ALBANIA IN THE LIGHT OF SERBIAN FOREIGN POLICY

Until the year 1844, the Serbian principality never really had a plan of foreign policy. Not until the arrival of Ilija Garasanin (16.I.1812-15.VI.1874) as the Minister of Internal

Affairs on 23.IX.1843, was its line of direction established. In the year 1844, on the basis of Adam Czartoryskog's idea, the leader of the conservative wing of Polish emigration, he produced in writing "Conseils sur la conduite a suivre par la Serbie" and the so-called "Plan for the Slav politics of Serbia" by Fran Zach, in which the concept of French diplomacy was worked out through the solution of the "Eastern question". He also put together "Nacertanije"- a program of foreign and national Serbian politics at the end of 1844 which was valid until the year 1918, but in more definite terms until today's times. The fundamental paradigm of that program was "historical justice based on Serbian traditions in the Middle Ages."¹ This first written program of foreign policy was supposed to be introduced by the "Piedmont" Southern-Slav nation, which with reliance on France and Great Britain, would have been a strong obstruction for Russia to break through to the Mediterranean.² No matter how many times he departed from the principle that "The Balkans need to devolve upon the Balkan people", his goal was that "after the collapse of the Ottoman empire in Europe, measures must be taken to prevent some great force from taking it over, like Austria for example."³ In essence, the whole program was conceptualized for the creation of a Greater Serbia, or Yugoslavia actually, with Serbia playing the leading role."⁴

Departing from the principle of "Nacertanije", in March of 1849 the "Constitution of political propaganda" was introduced in Serbia and was supposed to be realized in "Slavic-Turkish countries" in which Bosnia, Herzegovina, Montenegro, Southern-Serbia, Sandzak of Novi Pazar, northern Albania, south-western Bulgaria, Dalmatia, and regions along the Croatian-Slovenian border made one inseparable entirety.⁵

Since it was considered that the "Eastern question" could only be solved in collaboration with Christian nations, Serbia contacted the Abbot of Mirdita, Msgr. Gasper Krasniqi, with the goal of acquiring the Albanian-Catholic element as the alleged solution to the "Eastern question". Indeed, Msgr. Gasper Krasniqi was confronted with the fact that the Albanian-Islamic population was fighting the Turks for social and economic freedom only, and not for political power, and so he contacted Ilija Garasanin.⁶ However, their goals were different. Namely, while I. Garasanin considered those contacts the means for the realization of an exit to the sea, Msgr. Gasper Krasniqi made every effort to help I. Garasanin, or Serbia to be exact, organize a general revolution of the Albanian-Catholic community, primarily Mirdita against the Turks, for the complete political freedom and independence of the Albanian people.⁷ Of course, Serbia's foreign policy towards Albania wasn't dependent only on Mirdita, but on the agas and beys that it bribed, as was the situation with Ibrahim Zajmi from Rozaj, Ali Aga from Galici, and especially the Kryeziu family (sc. Crnoglavic, Z.M.) from Kosovo, as well as Esat pasha Toptani in Albania.⁸

In spite of that, Serbia was confronted with insurmountable obstacles in the realization of the program "Nacertanije".

Above all, the formation of the country of Albania, on the part of the Great Forces on November 28, 1912; with which as US President Woodrow Wilson opposed the French-British plan of a Serbian exit to a warm sea, and Russia through her, the conception of Serbia's foreign policy in gaining ethnic Albanian territory was curtailed. On the other hand, since the majority of Albanian inhabitants was of Islamic religion, Serbia, in the realization of its foreign policy and in conjunction with religious Moslem

priests who were bribed like the aforementioned begs and agas, continued its ethnic cleansing of Southern-Serbia with the intense eviction of Albanian Muslims which started during the time of Milos Obrenovic.

The first systematic ethnic cleansing of Albanian-Muslims by the Serbs started in the year 1878. Namely, with the resolutions of the Berlin Congress in 1878, Serbia became independent and territorially stretched towards the south. Thus, in her frame then entered Nis, Pirot, Leskovac, Vranje and Prokuplje.⁹ The entire Albanian-Islamized population that was expelled from these parts settled down on the territory known today as Kosovo.

Confronted with the consequences of this fatal mistake, Serbia worked out a plan so as to penetrate the spirit of "Nacertanije" and as to liberate itself from this biologically productive population. Those plans later found themselves in the works of a well-known Serbian ethnologist, Jovan Cvijic, and later, in the studies of Ivo Andric and Vasa Cubrilovic.

Jovan Cvijic believed that Serbia must get an exit to the sea after it was determined at the Berlin Congress that "Serbia is a surrounded country" and that Serbs were "an imprisoned people".¹⁰ In the actualization of that policy, he insisted on's right to Serbia Kosovo and northern Albania in spite of the non-Slavic population in those territories. That was in essence for him an "anti-ethnographical necessity" considering that Albanians in northern Albania are a mixture of both Albanians and Serbs.¹¹

For Serbia, the idea of an exit to the sea through northern Albania, along with other foreign policies, never disappeared in spite of the new political maps of those regions. The government of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes signed an agreement in mid-1921 with the leaders of Mirdita, particularly with the Gjoni Markagjoni house. This treaty was foreseen as the formation of a free Mirdita republic which was supposed to be defended by the army of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, and represented by the government in Belgrade¹². However, in the realization of those plans, an "Albanian wedge" came to be which "Serbia began to strike", said Vasa Cubrilovic, "even in the first revolt, expelling all the Albanians north of Jagodina."¹³ How to get rid of that "wedge"? Namely, the assimilation and colonization didn't give the required results. The only possible means was the emigration of the Albanian-Islam religion to Turkey and Albania in which the ethnic homogenous territory of Southern Serbia would be broken

The procedure for implementing that ethnic cleansing was given by Vasa Cubrilovic in his lecture held in the Serbian Cultural Club on March 7, 1937, under the title "The emigration of Albanians".¹⁴ As viewed in the context of time, Vasa Cubrilovic's proposals were based on ideas from "Nacertanije", with reference to elements from the "eastern option" of Nikola Pasic, which implicitly includes an exit onto the Aegean Sea over Salonika, and the safeguarding of strait of otranto through northern Albania.

In solving that question, Vasa Cubrilovic recommended European methods which were applied in the exchange of the Greek-Turkish population. However, the difference was that in this event, it was a one-way step. Recommending just that, he alluded to the Islam mentality of Albanians who could identify with the Turkish people. That is clearly foreseen in chapter 1 - "Convention" about the regulating of emigration of Turkish inhabitants from Southern-Serb territory in Yugoslavia which was signed in

1938 and states: "This agreement identifies Yugoslavian citizens who speak Turkish and have Turkish culture.¹⁵ In order for that to be conveyed as efficiently and as soon as possible, Vasa Cubrilovic stated: "All diplomatic means need to be used for Tirana to accept one portion of our emigrants (...) Italy will be involved and will aggravate matters, but money in Tirana plays a major role (...) let the Albanian government know that we fear nothing regarding the decision to this question, and simultaneously give a subsidy for colonization in which control cannot be exercised, eventually through secret canals and material engagements of distinguished people in Tirana, so that they won't oppose the entire question.¹⁶ As to the effect that emigration had on the religious feelings of the Islamized population, Vasa Cubrilovic states: "(...) generally, they easily succumb to the religious influence, are gullible and even fanatics" suggesting that "it is necessary to have preferences for the emigration among the Albanians, acquiring their clergy and most influential people, either with money or by threats".¹⁷ And in that they had great success. Furthermore, he suggested "pressure from the government" and "legally not recognizing old land ownership documents."¹⁸ Accordingly, he proposed that "female children need to attend elementary school" and that the "colonizers need to distribute arms by necessity".¹⁹ Villages need to be evacuated first because they "are more stable, and therefore more dangerous", as well as the middle class and wealthy "because they are the backbone of every nation."²⁰ The distribution of travel documents needs to be quickened,²¹ and the people of Montenegro, Herzegovina, Lika, and Krajina should settle on the evacuated territory.²² No matter how much that plan was actualized, in the end, as both the past and the facts show, it did not succeed.

It is interesting that the approach of Ivo Andric, renowned author and Nobel Prize-winner, did not differ whatsoever from the spirit of "Nacertanije", nor did it vary from Vasa Cubrilovic's concept. His study, from January 30, 1939,²³ among others, clearly discusses the division of Albania between Serbia and Greece, or Serbia and Italy with the purpose of getting an exit to the Adriatic Sea. Namely, "Yugoslavia's vital interest", states author Ivo Andric, "is to not be endangered on the border towards Southern-Serbia, nor towards Kosovo (inhabitant by Albanian), Skadar and Montenegro", and continues, "the division of Arbania (Albania) would lose its attraction as the center for the Albanian minority in Kosovo and would easily assimilate to the new situation. We would eventually gain another 200,000-300,000 Albanians, but they are mostly Catholic, and their relations with the Albanian-Muslims were never very good. The question of Albanian-Muslims emigrating to Turkey would likewise be derived by new circumstances, because there would be no stronger action for that to be prevented."²⁴ In the realization of those measures, and especially in the division of Albania, the interests of the Great Forces became intertwined, primarily the interests of Italy.²⁵ In addition, World War II broke out, and all the plans, especially those dealing with the division of Albania, and the emigration of Turks and Albanians into Turkey, came to a halt while the nation of Yugoslavia owed Turkey a debt of approximately 800,000 dinars.

From everything mentioned above, one clearly sees that quotes from the study on ethnic cleansing as well as from "Nacertanije" were directed only to the Albanian-Islamized population.²⁶

One would expect that the "brotherly" anti-fascist struggle would free them from the

idea of ethnic cleansing on Yugoslavian territory inhabited by national minorities. Reading Vasa Cubrilovic's report on the question of national minorities and the ways of solving them which was held on November 3, 1944, in front of the largest national and party leadership of the new Yugoslavia, one can see that other than its terminology, it did not change at all since 1937.²⁷ It can easily be said that what was claimed in the report was achieved completely.

In the year 1952, the question of origin of ethnic Turkish minorities in Kosovo arose which didn't figure during NOR (the National Liberation War) and NOP (the National Liberation Movement). Resistance was met with imprisonment and judicial processes. In the year 1955, a gathering of weapons from the Albanians was organized in which many were wounded. This began the massive emigration of Islamic Albanians to Turkey. In the year 1966, when in fact the Albanians became second-class citizens, approximately 200,000 Albanians moved out of Kosovo and Macedonia and into Turkey.²⁸ It was not until July of 1966, when A. Rankovic descended from the political scene that the situation began to change. Managerial positions in significant governmental institutions as well as in the courts, internal affairs, and administrative - judicial offices were held by Albanians.

However, as was said in the aforementioned study in reference to the Islamic Albanians population only, the question of the position of Albanian-Catholics can be rated according to itself. In Albanian historiographical literature, this question isn't raised unless their reactionary role in the movement for national freedom was emphasized, as was the creation of the "Republic of Mirdita" in the year 1921.

Taking all into consideration, the position of Catholic Albanians was nothing better than their fellow blood brothers. In fact, it can be freely said that they were in between the hammer and the anvil.

Namely, in spite of the fact that after the Berlin Congress in 1878, Catholic-Albanians were under the jurisdiction of the protectorate of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy,²⁹ they were still under continuous pressure from Serbia and Montenegro to convert to the Orthodox religion. That is how approximately 12,000 Catholic-Albanians from the Djakovica region were converted to the Orthodox faith in the year 1913.³⁰ The catholic clergy was systematically persecuted. The Bishop of Prizren, Lazar Mjeda, was forced to leave his district on November 5, 1911, and go to Skadar.³¹ The Bishop's chair remained empty all until October 29, 1924 when a Slovenian by the name of Ivan Gnidovec was appointed and then transferred to Skopje in 1934. There were victims in the conversion of the Catholic-Albanians; Luidji Palic, the parish priest of Glodjan, near Pec was killed on February 22, 1913,³² while on October 14, 1929, on the way to Zjum another victim of the Shtjefen Konstanin Gjecovi-Kryeziu was conspiracy. The Albanian rural community of the Catholic faith wasn't excluded from agrarian reform or from other measures which were relevant to the Albanian-Muslims. The catholic clergy opposed this form of mistreatment and persecution. Confronted with all those atrocious deeds of the police, of the regime of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia over innocent Albanian inhabitants, Muslims as well as Catholics, three priests: Don Gjon Bisaku, born in Prizren but parish priest of Bec by Djakovica, Don Shtjefen Kurti, also from Prizren and the parish priest of Novoselo by Djakovica, and Don Luigj Gashi, from Skopje the parish priest of Smac near Djakovica. Sent a memorandum on May 5, 1930, a memorandum was sent to the Secretary General of the League of Nations in

Geneva, Mr. Eric Drumond, describing all the terror that the Albanian people experienced regardless of their religious belief on the part of the nations' authorities.³³ Because of their impertinence, they were obligated to emigrate to Albania.³⁴ Likewise, it must be said that the Albanian Catholic element in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia was completely withdrawn from the political and administrative-jurisprudence of the authorities. Religious division was perfidiously used in the distrust between Albanians themselves. Although the religious contradictions weren't publicly manifested, they still existed.³⁵

The situation of the Catholic-Albanians didn't even change in the new Yugoslavia. Indeed, the newly-arrived authorities immediately criticized the prominent Catholic families, and from many, one member was executed or suffered in prison due to the "participation" of the authorities during the Italian and German occupation of Kosovo and Albania, or because of "wartime profiteering". That gave them reason to instantly start emigrating with their entire families, first to Australia, and afterwards to Croatia. The emigration took place between the years 1946-1955 and mainly out of Prizren, Urosevac, Pec, Djakovica and Skopje.

The second wave began at the end of the 1950's and lasted until the end of the 1960's. It hit the remaining town and country inhabitants who were mainly filigreeists and goldsmiths, and who were colonizing to Bosnia and Herzegovina, Dalmatia, Istria, and other cities in Croatia. This emigration, at least where Croatia was concerned, was supported by the country's authorities in the facilitation of the opening of workshops in the best places.

The third wave unfolded in the course of the 1970's all until the end of 1981. That wave essentially included a rural structure with the entire family, especially from the Djakovica area and the vicinity of Klina that emigrated to America. Curiously enough, that was the interval of time when Albanians were ruling either in party or state organs. It would be interesting to find out why it came to that... In those years, a massive emigration out of Montenegro and to the US mainly developed, and not only younger people, but entire families as well.

However, the most massive emigration of the Albanian population, both Muslim and Catholic, occurred from the years of 1981 to 1992. It is believed that with the evasion of military commitments, approximately 350,000 young people abandoned Kosovo who found themselves in a world without the possibility of returning. Certainly, I did not mention the departure into West-Europe as guest workers. That phenomenon was characteristic of the 1960's for socialist Yugoslavia.

What is one to say at the end of all of this? I am aware that it is too early to discuss or give definite criticisms of some problems which are only touched upon here, especially those from 1986 to today. Accepting an invitation to say something in regards to the question of "ethnic cleansing" which throughout history wasn't new and specific only to Balkan nations, is to say that it was not my intention to concern myself with Kosovo's future political problems, but at the least to give some presumptions. In fact, that is neither an option nor my profession. However, I still consider the methods explained in the aforementioned studies in contemporary social and international relations inapplicable and counterproductive. After all, in the "Memorandum SANU" alone, it expressly states: "In modern society, every political oppression and discrimination on the basis of national civilization is unacceptable."³⁶ The only thing worth pitying is that

it was practiced conversely.

It is certain that the solution to the Albanian question in the territory of the "former" Yugoslavia or even in the Balkans cannot be solved, regardless of the clear observation that there is a problem in Europe in which Albanians are degraded in terms of the problem of the self-determination of their nation. Likewise, I believe that the aforementioned problems cannot be solved on the basis of a definite vision of the past. Because, "the man who isn't in a position to confront his past", says Schelling, "either doesn't have one, or cannot get out of his past and constantly lives in it."³⁷

FOOTNOTES

1 Ljiljana Aleksic-Pejkovic, Garasanin's "Nacertanije": Yugoslavian Encyclopedia, 4, 1986, p. 318.

2 Ilija Garasanin, Nacertanije (Program for Serbian foreign and national policy at the end of 1844): The Roots of Greater Serbian aggression. Discussions-documents-cartographic accounts. Arranged by Bozo Covic. "August Cesarec", Zagreb, 1991, p.66.

3 Ibid.; Vasa Cubrilovic, "Nacertanije": YE, 3, 1958, p.429.

4 Mirko Valentic, The first programmed formulation of the Greater Serbian idea: Sources...p. 41-64.

5 I. Garasanin, Nacertanije, ibidem, p. 75.

6 P. Bartl, Die Mirditen. Bemerkungen zur nordalbanischen Stammesgeschichte: Munchener Zeitschrift fur Balkankunde, 1. Band 1978, p. 27-69.

7 The official Albanian historiography considers him a traitor because of his collaboration with Ilija Garasanin as well as Prince Nicholas I. That is unfounded however, because when he entered into contact with those individuals, he had nothing to disclose. In that time, an Albanian nation or any other national institution did not even exist. However, as distinct from him and his actions, the majority of the Islam population along with their political and spiritual leaders fought only for the autonomy of their land, but in the frame of the Turkish Empire. In the end, only Prizren's League remained, particularly the main chapter in Kosovo, entirely Muslim (Peter Bartl, Die Liga von Prizren im Lichte vazikanischer Akten; Archiv der Propagandakongregatio: Sudost Forschungen Bd. XLVII-Munchen 1968., p. 145-186.

8 Zivko Avramovski, the country of Albania from 1912 to 1939: anthology of debates: From the history of Albania. The anthology of lectures, Belgrade 1969., p.153-185.

9 Vasa Cubrilovic, The Emigration of the Albanians: Roots of Greater-Serbian Aggression...p. 117.

10 Jovan Cvijic, The geographical and economic situation of Serbia (Jovan Cvijic: Collected works, book 3, volume 1, Speeches and articles, Belgrade 1987, p. 165.

11 J. Cvijic, Historical-ethnographic review (A Collection of works..., p. 218; Stanko Zuljic, Critical review of the conclusions and messages of J. Cvijic and his anthropogeographical investigations: Roots of Greater-Serbian Aggression...,p.355; Radovan Pavic, Greater Serbia from 1844 to 1990/91, ibid, p159.

12 Bogdan Krizman, Dr. Ivo Andrics study of Albania from 1939: Journal of Contemporary History 11/1977 (Zagreb),. p.86.

13 Vasa Cubrilovic, The Emigration of the Albanians..., p.106.

14 Ibid

15 In 1938, the Convention between the governments of Yugoslavia and Turkey for the emigration of "Turkish" families from Southern-Serbia to Turkey was signed. (Convention. Reglementant l'eigration de la population Turque de la region de la Serbie du Sud en Yougoslavie, ap. Hakif Bajrami, Konventa jugoslavo-turke e vitit 1938 per shpernguljen e shqiptareve: Gjurmime albanologjike. Seria e shkencave historike XII-1982. Instituti Albanologjik I Prishtines. Prishtine, 1983, p. 251-158. For the length of six years, from 1939-1944, 40.000 families were supposed to relocate (Art. IV). The Yugoslavian government was supposed to pay 500 Turkish lira to the Turkish National Bank for every emigrant (a total of 20.000.000 Tli.) (ArtVII) itd.; P. Bartl, Die Albaner: Der rehelose Balkan. Die Konfliktregionen Sudosteupas, Dtv. Munchen 1993, p. 189.

16 V. Cubrilovic, The Emigration of the Albanians, ibid, p. 111-112.

17 Ibid, p.113.

18 bid, p. 113.

19 bid, p. 113.

20 Ibid, p. 114.

21 Ibid, p. 115.

22 In fact, the colonization of the Kosovo territory from the aforementioned Slavic population was accomplished at the end of the nineteenth century, but systematically from 1918-1941. (for further information: Dr. Milovan Obradovic, The Agrarian Reform and Colonization in Kosovo (1918-1941). The Institute for History. Pristina, 1981.

23 B. Krizman, CSP II/1977, p. 77-89.

24 bid, p. 88,89.

25 Z. Avramovski, The Albanian problem in the Yugoslavian-Italian Agreement of

15.111. 1937: History Review IX/1963., 1, p. 19-31.

26 P. Bartl, Die Albaner..., p. 188.

27 Serbia and Albania. Review of Serbian policy towards the Albanians. III, Casopis za Kritiko znanosti" Ljubljana 128, June 1989., pp. 51-55; Le nettoyage ethnique. Documents historiques sur une ideotogie serbe rassembles, traduits et commentes par Mirko Grmek, Marc Gjidara et Neven Simac Fayard, Paris 1993, PP.225-228.

28 P. Bartl, ibid, p. 199.

29 B. Hrabak, The cult protectorate of Austro-Hungary onto the Catholic Albanians (1897): Vjetar-Godisnjak. Arkivi i Kosoves - Arhiv Kosova" XXIII/1987, Prishtine, pp. 33-53.

30 Dr. Branko Babic, The policy of Montenegro in newly-freed areas 1912-1914. "Obod" Cetinje-"Pobjeda" Titograd 1984., p.208.

31 Dr. Gasper Gjini, Ipeshkvia Shkup-Prizren neper shekuj "Drita" Feriza 1992, p.203.

32 Dr. B. Babic, p.216-220. Muslims and Albanians of the Islam religion converted to the Orthodox creed (B. Babic, op. cit., p. 221-242).

33 La situation de la minorite en Yougoslavie. Memoire presente a la Societe des Nations par Don Jean Bisaku, Don Etienne Kurti et Don Louis Gashi. Governmental archive of the Secretariat of Internal Affairs 4/10528. F 15 DI, p.31.

34 In spite of the national activity in which he defended Albanian-Muslims and Catholics, and for which Don Shtjefen Kurti had to flee to Albania in the year 1970; he was shot by the regime of Enver Hoxha as "an enemy of the state" in 1970 . Namely, the, he secretly christened one child.

35 Roberto Moroco della Rocca, Kombesia dhe Feja ne Shqiperi 1921-1944, Tirane 1994 (Translated from Italian: Nacione e religione in Albania). Albania is usually regarded as a nation without religious intolerance. It is true that there were no religious wars, but that intolerance was present from 1468 since the death of Gjergj Kastrioti-Skenderberg, until modern times. That intolerance is felt more in city centers rather than village structures. That is understandable because village structures were tied to clan relations, therefore it is no surprise that there were Catholics and Muslims in the same clane. However, that division was beneficial in the time of the kingdom of SHS, but was manifested in Albanian society in that Catholic which Albanians, other than in some trivial functions, were not present. With the arrival of communists in power, what was felt in Kosovo was even stronger. The name itself was stigmatized...

36 "Memorandum SANU": Roots of Greater-Serbian Aggression, Zagreb 1991, p.271.

37 F.W.Schelling, Die Weltalter Urfassungen. Aufl. M. Schroter 1944, p. 11.

[Mr. Zdravko Dizdar: Chetnik Genocidal Crimes Against Croats and Muslims in](#)

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An International Symposium "SOUTHEASTERN EUROPE 1918-1995"

Publisher: [Croatian Heritage Foundation](#) & [Croatian Information Centre](#)

For the Publisher: Ante Beljo

Expert Counsellor: Dr. sc. Dragutin Pavlicevic

Editor: Aleksander Ravlic

Graphic Design: Gorana Benic - Hudin

Printed by: TARGA

Copies Printed: 2000

ISBN 953-6525-05-4

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**CHETNIK GENOCIDAL CRIMES AGAINST CROATIANS AND MUSLIMS IN
BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA AND AGAINST CROATIANS IN CROATIA
DURING WORLD WAR II (1941-1945)**

I. Genocide represents the most serious international crime. Its concept and goal is to totally or partially destroy the national, ethnic, racial or religious identity of a group of people. Recently, this notion has been complimented with new international documents. All signatory countries are obliged to work on preventing genocide. If, however, genocide is committed, the parties are obliged to punish the perpetrators no matter when the crime was committed because the statute of limitations does not apply to such a crime.¹

The Chetniks not only intended to perform genocide, they carried out several forms of genocidal crimes against Croats and Muslims in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croats in Croatia during World War II from 1941 - 1945. Until recently, however, this topic was considered taboo and was not allowed to be written about in the former SFRJ (Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia). It was either kept a secret or incidentally mentioned without any concrete facts or numerical indexes. Contrary to this, the sufferings of the Serbs and the crimes and genocide committed against them in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia by the Ustasa Regime in 1941, were basically the only topics written and spoken about during this time. This served a political purpose with incorrect and malicious claims against the alleged genocidal Croat people.² Until now, a more orderly and complete investigation of this problem has been absent. In 1989, with the democratic changes implemented, the genocide against the Croats and the Muslims began being written about along with the correct statistics concerning human casualties in the former Yugoslavian territory from 1941-1945.³ A scientifically based study is required in order to entirely investigate the problem. With this opportunity, I hope to present some of the most significant elements of Chetnik plans and activities during World War II which, according to all characteristics outlined by the international community, represent the crime of genocide against Croats and Muslims.

II. Since its establishment, the Chetnik organization has almost exclusively served as an instrument of nationalistic and expansionist Serbian politics. This was also the case in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia (1918-1941). Through force and terror, the Chetnik organization, together with the army and the police represented a means of getting even with their political rivals and preserving the centralist, Greater Serbian political system headed by the King. For this reason, by the beginning of the war in 1941, some 300 Chetnik and similar organizations in Bosnia and Herzegovina and about 200 in Croatia were established which were recognized for their terror and barbarity along with the murders of a great number of Croats and Muslims. Through these organizations, the Greater Serbian political goal attempted to be realized. They battled against and suffocated every Croat and Muslim aspiration for recognition of their own national values and at the same time, Serbian national values were often emphasized and there were attempts to spread Serbian national consciousness among Muslims and some Croats. After the unification in 1918, with the abolition of the parliament and government, the Croat guardsmen and police, along with the division of territory into six banovinas (Ban's dominions) (guaranteeing Serbs power within these provinces), Croatia lost its historical identity and statehood which it had preserved for centuries. Bosnia and Herzegovina was also divided into four banovinas through administrative means but in such a manner that the Serbs were guaranteed predominance in three of the banovinas. All of this resulted in corresponding counteractions from the Croat and Muslim side. One way was the establishment of the illegal Ustasa movement (1929) whose goal was to create an autonomous and independent Croat state outside Yugoslavia.. There were also the elections of 1938 which demonstrated the unstoppable strengthening of the Croat national movement

led by the Croatian Peasant Party. The party demanded a solution with respect to Croatia in the framework of Yugoslavia which the Greater Serbian monarchist regime needed to take into consideration due to the intensification of international conditions in Europe where war was drawing close and to save the nation from collapse. Consequently, an agreement on August 26, 1939 allowed the establishment of a separate Croatian Banovina within the Kingdom of Yugoslavia with its own government, parliament, legislative, administrative and judicial autonomy, which could not be taken away or decreased without the permission of the Banovina itself. Thirteen districts from Bosnia and Herzegovina and the district of Sid in Vojvodina in which the Croatian population was the majority, were annexed to the Banovina but without the Croatian historical territories of eastern Srijem, Boka Kotorska, Budva and Spic. The Banovina had an area of 65,456 km, with a population of 4,025,601 (according to the 1931 census): 70.1% were Croatians, 19.1% were Serbians and 10.8% were listed as "others". There were many who were against the agreement: on the Croatian side these were the supporters of the Ustasa movement who claimed that the agreement did not solve the Croatian problem, nor did it create a Croatian independent state; on the Muslim side, the majority of the Muslim political leadership wanted Bosnia and Herzegovina to become a separate autonomous political territorial unit within its historical borders. Serbian counter measures followed, so that all Serbian parties, except the SDS, all nationalist and Greater Serbian organizations and associations, as well as the army and the Orthodox Church, opposed the establishment of the Croatian Banovina because they perceived it to be dangerous for Serbianism and the existence of the state. They often reacted as chauvinists (who hated Croatians and everything that was Croatian) and as advocates of their Greater Serbianism. The movement "Srbi na okup" was developed with the express purpose of joining the other six banovinas (Vrbaska, Drinska, Dunavska, Moravska, Vardarska and Zetska) into one administrative entity under the title "Serbian lands". All the parts of the Croatian Banovina in which Serbians were the majority, as well as those which Serbians considered of geostrategic and political importance, for resistance preparations (Knin, for example), were to be annexed to the "Serbian lands", all of which intensified international relations. *The program to create a "Greater Serbia" at the expense of Croatian historical territories (and others) was to remain a constant orientation of the Greater Serbian and Chetnik political expansionist circle since that time, during the Second World War, up to today and was to remain the principle motive for their genocidal actions against Croatians, Muslims and other non-Serbians.* For this reason we cannot ignore this pre-war period and the events during the war on the former Yugoslavian territory.⁴

III. THE BASIS OF THE PROGRAM OF THE CHETNIK MOVEMENT SERVED AS THE BASIS OF THE CRIMES AGAINST CROATIANS AND MUSLIMS WITH CHETNIK UNITS SERVING AS EXECUTORS OF THE CRIMES

The bloody events of the war on the territory of the shattered Kingdom of Yugoslavia during 1941 - 1945 were to a great extent the result and consequence of pre-war conditions and political relations in the new situation on the terrain. The events were expressed in conflicting concepts for the renewal of Yugoslavia on the one hand and the efforts of non-Serbian people, especially Croatians, on the other hand, to preserve the already existing state or endeavor to establish independent national states outside Yugoslavia. This was mainly displayed on the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia. Chetniks emphasized that the twelve-day war, their military defeat, as well as the occupation and breaking of Yugoslavia by the fascist states had lost the Serbians their "state and freedom" (since they considered the Kingdom of Yugoslavia to be

merely an extended version of Greater Serbia and often acted as if it was). They blamed all other non-Serbian nations primarily the Croats and Muslims. They were particularly displeased with the formation of the Independent State of Croatia (NDH) which included Bosnia and Herzegovina, eastern Srijem, but not Dalmatia from Zadar to Split, the eastern part of Konavle and Boka Kotorska, then almost all of the Adriatic islands, except Hvar, Brač and Pag and a considerable part of the coast of the Bay of Kvarner and Gorski Kotar which were all annexed by the Italians (zone I.). Medjmurje and Baranja were annexed by the Hungarians. The NDH encompassed an area of 102,725 km², included a population of 6,640,000 and was administratively divided into 22 large counties with 141 districts, 19 district offices, 31 towns, 1,005 municipalities, and the city of Zagreb as a separate administrative headquarters. Serbs made up 30% of the entire population. The NDH was divided by a demarcation line to the south of Samobor, Glina, Dvor, Jajce, Fojnica and Visegrad. To the north of this line was German and to the south Italian-occupied territory. The occupied Italian territory in the NDH was divided into zones II and III. Civilian, police and military state authorities were established on NDH territory. The only political organizations allowed to operate in the NDH were Ustaša organizations and separate Ustaša units were formed as well.

The Ustaša regime implemented nationally and racially exclusive politics. The existence and activities of the NDH government were dependent on the concrete situation on a given territory, especially Partisan activities, the activities of Chetnik forces on some territories following the rebellion in 1941, as well as the interests and will of the occupier. The so-called "Muslim question" in Bosnia and Herzegovina (i.e. NDH) did not pose a problem to the Ustaša leadership with Ante Pavelić at its head as it adopted Dr. Ante Starčević's theory of "Muslims as the purest part of the Croatian people", in which "religious differences do not and should not matter".⁵

Serbian nationalists and expansionists of which the Chetniks, as a military and political organization, were the most well-known and prominent, could never resign themselves to the creation of any kind of Croatian state (NDH included). The reason is fairly simple, namely, they believed that almost 90% of NDH territory (in its maximum program) represented the territory of the so-called "Serbian lands" (including the entire territory of today's Bosnia and Herzegovina and most of the territory belonging to today's Republic of Croatia), regardless of the fact that these territories had never been a part of the Serbian state, and that Croats and Muslims represented a majority in them. For this reason they believed that the territories of the NDH could only enter into the so-called "Homogeneous or Greater Serbia", as referred to in documents. The principle prerequisite for this was the destruction of the NDH and cleansing of the Croatian and Muslim population from these territories in order to annex them to Greater Serbia.

This is one of the reasons why immediately following the proclamation of the NDH, we come upon the first massive killings of Croatian and Muslim citizens by Chetniks and also the burning of a great number of houses and entire villages in some regions of the NDH. In this way, Chetnik units, which were part of the regular army of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia and were designated for "special actions", and individual Chetnik commanders, during the Derventa retreat, killed 17 Croatian civilians, five women among them on April 11-13, 1941; killed three Croatian women, a young girl among them on April 11 in Siveric; on April 9, 28-29, killed three Croatian civilians and wounded one near Bjelovar; from April 13-15, killed 20 Croats, 5 Muslims and burned 40 houses near Čapljina; on April 15, killed 5 Croatian civilians, one woman among them near Mostar, and burned down the Croatian villages of Čim and Ilici.

Such murders occurred in other places indicating what was to soon follow.⁶

After the first shock, as a consequence of the occupation and break down of Yugoslavia, as well as the creation of the NDH, Chetniks in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia, often in co-operation with the communists, began to organize a Serbian armed rebellion against the Croatian State, in this case, the Ustasa NDH (communists were against the occupying force), calling on past Serbian traditions. At the same time, they worked on establishing ties with other Chetnik and nationalistic forces on the territory of former Yugoslavia (primarily with those in Serbia). Similarly, they worked towards creating a basis for the movement program in which the genocidal intentions against Croats and Muslims were clearly emphasized. With respect to this, on *June 30, 1941, Stevan Moljevic*, one of the main Chetnik ideologists and national leaders, formed the project, "*Homogeneous Serbia*", in which the Chetnik program regarding borders, the social system and foreign policy of Greater Serbia in the re-established Yugoslavia were outlined months before the establishment of the Jasenovac camp. The project proposes that "... today the first and fundamental responsibility is imposed upon Serbians: *to create and organize a homogeneous Serbia which will encompass the entire ethnic territory in which Serbians live....*" This meant annexing Bosnia and Herzegovina and a greater part of Croatia to Serbia through "migration and transfer of inhabitants" and cleansing. All this was expressed cartographically in a special propaganda leaflet together with a corresponding text.⁷

At the same time, a *group of Serbian nationalists* who had escaped from Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia into the annexed part of Dalmatia and linked itself with the Italian government, *sent the Italian government in Rome a petition asking for the Italian army to occupy and annex Bosnia and Herzegovina, Dalmatia, Lika, Kordun, and Banija, and to overthrow the NDH government in those territories.*⁸ The Italian government used this for its expansionist pretensions and pressures on NDH in negotiations upon the outbreak of the rebellion, as well as for negotiations, cooperation and organization of Chetniks on its annexed and occupied territory in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia.

In July and the beginning of August 1941, a general Serbian rebellion occurred in almost all of the B-H and Croatian territory where the population was predominantly Serbian. The chief initiators and leaders of the rebellion were leaders of the Communist Party, and this the CK KP (Central Committee of the Communist Party) in Croatia and the Regional Committee of the KPJ (Communist Party of Yugoslavia) for Bosnia and Herzegovina as parts of the CK KPJ, even though there were places where the rebellion occurred spontaneously, and some places where Chetniks themselves headed the rebellion. At that time and in those regions, it was the Serbian population which almost exclusively participated in the rebellion. There were only some individuals and smaller groups of other nationalities, primarily members of KPJ and SKOJ (League of Communist Youth of Yugoslavia), who were involved in the rebellion. The crimes of the Ustasa Regime against the Serbian people were stressed as the main reasons for the rebellion with the goal of overthrowing the NDH and the re-establishment of Yugoslavia. While the communists endeavored to give the rebellion an anti-fascist and national liberational character, including all peoples and national minorities on Yugoslavian territories and to establish their communist power during the war, the Chetniks gave the rebellion a principally nationalist and expansionist character, including almost exclusively Serbians and endeavoring to uphold the old pre-war Greater Serbian system of government with the King at its head. This soon

resulted in a division into two movements, one headed by the communists in NOP (National Liberation Movement) and the other by the Chetniks. This soon led to armed battles which lasted until the end of the war. From the beginning until the end of the war, members of the Chetnik movement intentionally equated the entire Croatian and Muslim people with the Ustasa Regime by accusing them of the Ustasa crimes against Serbians in the NDH with an attempt to justify their own crimes using these formal reasons. In fact, throughout the war, the Chetnik movement had distinct genocidal, anti-Croatian, and anti-Muslim characteristics.⁹ In Chetnik documents, it is suggested that the reasons they began the rebellion in the NDH were only formal *while the real reasons lie in the aspiration for the establishment of an ethnically cleansed Greater Serbia at the expense of historical and national territories of Croats, Muslims and others. This was to be the basic motive for Chetnik terror and genocidal crimes against Croats and Muslims in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia .The Chetnik* movement was comprised of armed and political organizations which appeared on NDH territory shortly after the capitulation of Yugoslavia and the proclamation of the NDH and was active until the end of the war. By the end of 1941, the entire Chetnik movement was under the command of Draza Mihailovic.¹⁰

It is necessary to stress that the USA and Great Britain accepted the exiled government of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia as a legitimate government in June 1941. In July, the other great force of the anti-fascist coalition, the USSR did the same. Since the Atlantic Charter of August 14, 1941 stipulated the war aims of the anti-fascist coalition, including the re-establishment of all occupied states after the war, including Yugoslavia, its re-establishment was assured. It was precisely at that time, on Yugoslavian territory, especially on the NDH territory, that the civil war began between the Communist and the Chetnik movements to decide what the re-established Yugoslavia would be like. Throughout the entire war, the Chetnik movement was assisted by the government in exile and King Peter II situated in London. At the same time, the Chetnik movement received support and assistance from Western allies, especially Great Britain until 1944, and afterwards the USA. In the program of the Chetnik movement during and after the war, which was delivered by its leader, Draza Mihailovic, to the Yugoslavian King's government on September 1941 and accepted, Moljevic's plan was supplemented and the following was stated:"... prepare yourself so that in the days of the collapse, the following actions may be executed....

- b) define the "defakto" Serbian lands and allow only Serbian populace to remain in them.
- v) especially plan the rapid and radical cleansing of cities and fill them with fresh Serbian elements.
- g) develop a plan for cleansing or displacing the peasant population with the goal of a homogeneous Serbian national community.
- d) consider the Muslim question in the Serbian unit as an especially difficult problem and possibly solve it in this phase...."¹¹

In the "Instructions" of December 20, 1941, regarding the organization, goals and employment of the Chetnik units, Draza Mihailovic, who was promoted to General and soon became the minister for the army in the emigrant government, removed all doubts. According to him, the goal of the battle of the Chetnik movement under the leadership of King Peter was:

"... To create a Great Yugoslavia and in it a Greater Serbia, ethnically cleansed, within

the borders of pre-war Serbia, Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Srem, Banat and Backa..."

"... To cleanse the state territory of all national minorities and national elements..."

"... To immediately create mutual borders between Serbia and Montenegro, as well as between Serbia and Slovenia, cleansing Sandzak of Muslim inhabitants, and Bosnia and Herzegovina of Muslim and Catholic inhabitants..."¹²

Included was the punishment of all "Ustasas and Muslims" and those guilty of "our April catastrophe" of 1941, primarily Croats and Muslims, the colonization of Montenegrins in the cleansed territories, as well as the establishment of a "political body" which would ensure all this. The manner in which this was conveyed and explained in the field is seen in a letter by the commander of the Ozren Chetnik corps to the commander of the Zenica military Chetnik unit on February 13, 1943. Along with outline goals of the Chetnik movement according to Draza's "Instructions", the following is stated:

"... Perhaps these goals appear great and unachievable to you and your combatants. Remember the great battles for liberty under the leadership of Karadjordje. Serbia was filled with Turks (Muslims). In Belgrade and other Serbian towns, Muslim minarets were prominent and Turks performed their foul-smelling cleansing in front of mosques as they are now doing in Serbian Bosnia and Herzegovina. At that time our homeland was overflowing with hundreds of thousands of Muslims. Walk through Serbia today. You will not find a Turk (Muslim) anywhere, you will not even find even one of their graves, nor even one Muslim grave stone" "This is the best proof and greatest guarantee that we will succeed in today's holy battle and that we will exterminate every Turk from these, our Serbian lands. Not one Muslim will remain among us.... Peasants and other "little" people will be moved to Turkey. Our government in London, using the English allied and benevolent government, will endeavor to gain the approval of the Turkish government with respect to this (Churchill spoke about this in Ankara with Mr. Ineni). All Catholics who sinned against our people in our tragic days, as well as all intellectuals and those well off, will be destroyed without mercy. We will spare the peasant people as well as the low working class and make real Serbians of them. We will convert them into Orthodox by hook or by crook.

There, those are the goals of our great battle and when the crucial moment arrives, they will be achieved. We have already achieved them in some parts of our homeland...."¹³

This document directly shows the sources of Chetnik genocidal crimes against Croats and Muslims which originated from the creation of the Serbian national state and its expansionist politics. Draza went further than Moljevic regarding territory, asking for more than 90% of NDH territory for Greater Serbia in which more than 2,500,000 Catholics and over 800,000 Muslims lived, making up 70% of the entire population on that territory, while Serbs comprised almost 30% of the population. From Draza's "Instructions", all Croats, Muslims, and other non-Serbs would have to disappear from this territory, either during the war or immediately after it. Croats were given only about 10% of their territory at that time from Karlovac across Zagreb to Varazdin and approximately 1/5 of the NDH population. Accusations and allegations against Croats and Muslims for all the evil and sufferings caused to

the Serbians during the war existed for the purpose of constantly motivating Chetniks to execute punishments, that is, crimes of genocide against them. This is clearly stated in Draza's "Instructions". With respect to this, and with the same goal, is the exaggeration of Serbian victims caused by the Ustasa or, according to the Chetniks, by the "Croats" i.e. the entire Croatian and Muslim peoples, starting with the number of 382,000 at the end of 1941, coming to over 518,000 at the end of February 1942, then 600,000 in October 1942, with 800,000 at the end of 1943 and finally, at the end of the war, arriving at the number of one million Serbians killed on NDH territory.¹⁴ This is absurd to any objective researcher and is shown in the work of the Serb, Dr. B Kocovic. Draza's threats of revenge against Croats and Muslims as a prerequisite for life and rights in a future state had the same aim. Also, in other program documents of individual Chetnik leaders and units similar arguments and goals are expressed. The "Elaborat" of the Dinara Chetnik division of March 1942, which was established precisely at that time and encompassed northern Dalmatia, Lika, and the southwestern part of Bosanska Krajina, also presented its aims and arguments. The principle goal was the creation of a "Serbian national state" where "Serbians lived and which Serbians aspire to...", that is, a "Greater Serbia" which would include Bosnia and Herzegovina, a part of Dalmatia, Lika, and other territories with a pure national system and "King Peter at the head" in which "exclusively the Orthodox populace would live"¹⁵. The rest was to disappear so that on March 25, 1943, the Dinara division gave an order to its units to "cleansing the Croats and Muslims" from their territory. At the same time, "the establishment of a national corridor along the Dinara Mountain to link Herzegovina with northern Dalmatia and Lika", was assigned as one of the primary tasks of this division and the Chetnik movement, which they attempted to achieve, particularly in 1942 and 1943, through the cleansing of the local Croatian and Muslim population.

Vukasin Marcetic, the commander of the Chetnik unit "Manjaca", stated the following at a conference of the Chetnik units on June 7, 1942: "I believe that Bosnia and Serbia are one nation and I hope that everything that is not Serbian will be cleansed from Bosnia." Milan Santic, a Chetnik leader, was even more direct. In his speech, in Trebinje at the end of July 1942, he stated that the goal of the Chetnik movement was to "establish a Greater Serbia" as stipulated by Draza and then said "Serbian lands must be cleansed of Catholics and Muslims. Only Serbians will live in those lands. The cleansing will be thoroughly executed. We will drive out and destroy them all, without exception and without compassion. This will be the starting point of our liberation". He further stresses that all of this "must be executed quickly and in one revolutionary momentum" and because of this Chetniks will "never formally recognize" the NDH.¹⁶

All of these documents illustrate that Chetnik crimes of genocide against Croats and Muslims were deliberate and planned. The Muslims were even in a greater disadvantage than the Croats. While Croats were allowed the possibility of living in their own, albeit decreased, territorial units and in a future Yugoslavia, this possibility, according to Chetnik ideology, did not exist for the Muslims. According to the Serbians, Muslims were considered "a non-national element," an "internal enemy," and "Turks", and their destruction was considered to be the "most holy of tasks" to the Chetniks. This depended only on the military and given possibilities of the Chetniks and on the strength of the other military camps, as well as the situation in individual regions of this imaginary Chetnik Greater Serbia. In accordance with this, certain areas were cleansed of Croats and Muslims.

The organization of Chetnik military units was proposed in order to accomplish the

planned genocidal crimes against Croats and Muslims on the territory of today's republics of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia, the then NDH. They were founded on NDH territory (south of the Sava River extending to the Adriatic Sea) with direct support from Italian and German occupying forces. On the basis of contracts, these forces provided Chetnik military units not only with weapons, ammunition, provisions, and salaries but were also often initiators and protectors of a great number of mass Chetnik crimes against Croats and Muslims.

According to Chetnik documents on their military formations during the war years from 1941 to 1945, there were 14 corps, 76 brigades and 2 regiments on the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina while on Croatian territory, there were 4 corps, 1 division, 32 brigades and 2 regiments. Apart from the military formations there existed numerous authorities on the territories under Chetnik control. The exact number of Chetniks has not yet been established, but according to some indexes, some 100,000 individuals in the army and in the field passed through their ranks in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia of whom 98% were Serbian. At this point, it is necessary to stress the assistance the Chetnik leadership directed to these regions from Serbia and Montenegro. All Chetnik units committed crimes, special units, however, existed to whom this was the main task. These ranged from Chetnik three-man groups to troops and brigades.

Program documents, undoubtedly, suggest that Chetnik genocidal crimes were directed against the Croatian and Muslim people as a whole on the territory of their imaginary "Greater Serbia." Nevertheless, it must be stated that Chetnik terror and crimes were also directed towards the participants of the anti-fascist movement or NOP, as it was called, and against their families, regardless of nationality, although the Chetniks endeavored occasionally to spare the lives of individual captured partisans and members of NOP who happened to be Serbian. Crimes were also directed against the Serbs who displayed various forms of loyalty towards the NDH leadership. There were two main methods of Chetnik genocidal crimes against Croats and Muslims. The first was the direct, physical destruction of people of these two nationalities (and others as well). The second method was indirect, using various threats, physical and psychological violence, the rape of women and young girls, and robbery. Physical destruction took the form of massacres, hangings, decapitation, burning, throwing victims into pits and killing them with various objects. Victims were in most cases tortured before being killed. Indirect methods included Chetnik threats of massacring Croats and Muslims in pamphlets, songs, or speeches; various forms of physical violence ranging from stoning, beating, mutilation, torture by deprivation of food and water, especially in the main Chetnik prison camp in Kosovo, by Knin, and in prisons of corps headquarters; rape of Muslim and Croatian women and girls so as to nationally and religiously degrade them. There were two especially significant forms of indirect Chetnik crimes. These were robbery and forced conversion of Catholics and Muslims into the Serbian Orthodox faith. Robbery and plundering were carried out on an enormous scale and were often the main motives for setting Chetniks into action. They were practiced mostly during military operations but were also carried out whenever possible. This caused hunger and death in territories through which the Chetniks passed and the massive exodus of the population which was in fact the main Chetnik goal. The forced conversion to the Serbian Orthodox faith aimed at further degrading the victims and destroying that deepest of ties to the Croatian or Muslim nationality.

THE IMPLEMENTATION OF CHETNIK CRIMES OF GENOCIDE AGAINST

CROATIANS AND MUSLIMS FROM 1941 TO 1945

The actualization of genocidal crimes against Croats and Muslims, according to the proposed plan by the Chetnik leaders and commanders, began immediately after the plans were drawn up and lasted to the end of the war. Their scope depended primarily on their military capabilities, their deployment and the strength of their opponents. From the documents we notice three periods which, according to the number of victims of genocide, were the most massive. The first was the commencement of the rebellion, from the end of July 1941 to February 1942. The second was from August to October 1942 and the third was from January to March 1943. These were the strongest military periods for the Chetnik movement on the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia. It was also the time when the movement had the most intensive support of Chetniks from Serbia and Montenegro and the support of the Italian and to a lesser degree the German occupiers. We will mention several distinguishing examples from these periods.

A/ The first period (the end of July 1941 - February 1942

This period consists of two parts: the first, from the eruption of the rebellion until the autumn of 1941, when Chetniks and guerrillas participated in the rebellion together; and the second, which began at the same time as the division of the Chetnik and national liberation movement, namely, the division of the military into Chetniks and Partisans and crimes of Chetnik units may be observed.

In the first part, after the eruption of the revolt, in actions carried out jointly by the Chetniks and communists, the first massive crimes against Croats and Muslims in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia were carried out. In this way, on July 27, 1941 and several days afterwards, in Bosansko Grahovo and the surrounding area, 62 Croats, among whom were five women, nine children, and parish rector Ante Gospodnetić were killed by the rebels while their houses and five villages were burned after being looted. On July 2, in Krenjuz and its surrounds, as well as in Vrtoci, several hundred Croats, the majority being older individuals, women and children and the parish rector Kresimir Barić were massacred. They looted and burned houses and the Roman Catholic Church. Then followed the arrival of 2,500 Croats from Boricevac and the surrounding area into Bihać. Boricevac itself was looted and completely burned and never rebuilt after the war. As a result, 19 Roman Catholic parishes on the right side of the Una River and ten on the left shore ceased to exist since there was no congregation left. Subsequently, on September 5, 1941, in Kulen Vakuf, 3,000 Muslims and a hundred Croats were slaughtered and the area was looted and burnt. Also, 44 Muslims and 12 Croats were killed in Varcar Vakuf and the surrounding areas. In Glamoc and its surrounds, 45 Muslims and two Croats were killed. In Sanski Most the rebels "killed Muslims and Croatian peasants and even their families: women and."¹⁷

It was the same in other areas. In this way, the "liberated territories" were soon liberated from Croats and Muslims who were forced to leave so as not be slaughtered and killed. Their houses and villages were looted and burned. Soon, a river of 50,000 refugees began to flow into Bihać, Jajce, Knin, Sanski Most, Prijedor, Livno, and other towns. The share the Chetniks and their supporters took in executing these crimes was dominant. In eastern Herzegovina, massacres of civilians were carried by out rebels with assistance from Montenegro and this in Avtovac on June 28, 1941 when some 47 Muslims were massacred; in Berkovici (Dabar) on August 28, 300 Muslims were massacred, predominantly women and children, who were thrown into

pits, and the majority into the "Cavkarica" pit, according to Partisan documents. According to the documents of NDH authorities, the number is considerably greater. Some Croats were killed, while from the entire eastern Herzegovina region, colonies of refugees, flowed into neighbouring towns, predominantly Capljina, Mostar, and Dubrovnik. After being looted, many houses and villages were burned. It was in eastern Bosnia, where Chetnik units, established and assisted by Chetniks in Serbia, and active since the beginning of the revolt, that the first massacres of Muslims were recorded and this in Medjedja and Koraj in October and November 1941. Several hundred people were slaughtered.¹⁸

Since the NDH powers were unable to suppress the rebellion and hinder its spreading, Italian and German occupying forces intervened. The Italians occupied Zones I and II and the Germans brought in new forces. The Italians enabled the organization and supplies for the Chetnik units and their close links from Serbia to Slovenia, who in turn organized, planned, and commenced the genocidal crimes against Croats and Muslims. In this way, Chetniks around Knin and at the three border point started the terror against the Croatian population. On October 7 and 8, 1941, they slaughtered seven Croats in Donji Ervenik. On July 3, 1941, they ordered "that all Catholics in the village of Stikova be converted to the Orthodox faith." In an attack 16 days later, 11 local Croats and 1 gendarme were killed. On December 11, in the village of Velika Plana, by Lovinac, six Croats were massacred and before that, on September 29, 1941, 44 Croats of Brotinja by D. Lapac were captured and then slaughtered. The majority were women and children. This resulted in a new wave of Croatian refugees.¹⁹

From December 1941 until February 1942, many massive killings of Muslims by Chetniks were carried out in eastern Bosnia and Herzegovina where the Italians had handed over authority to them. In this way, 5,000 Muslims and a hundred Croats were killed in Foca and Gorazde according to a statement by a Chetnik commander. At the same time, in the Srebrenica region, 1,000 people were killed, in Vlasenica 2 to 3,000, in Rogatica under 1,000, and in Visegrad over a 1,000 individuals were slaughtered, burned and killed. The situation was similar in the Nevesinje district where Muslims were also slaughtered and five villages were burnt to the ground. Most of the victims were tortured, women and young girls were raped, while many were slaughtered and thrown into the Drina River from Foca to Ustipraca. After the looting, many of the houses and villages were completely destroyed along with mosques, three in Foca alone. Thousands of refugees fled towards Sarajevo, Tuzla, and other towns so that the number of refugees increased to 100,000 in the entire NDH territory mostly due to Chetnik terrors and crimes. The arrival of Partisans in this territory temporarily hindered further Chetnik crimes, but made possible the transition of many Chetniks into Partisans, without punishment for the crimes committed.²⁰

B/ The second period (August - October 1941)

In this period, the majority of Chetnik crimes were again carried out in eastern Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Chetniks captured Foca on August 19, 1942 in which 8,000 Muslims, both native inhabitants and some refugees, lived. Approximately 5,000 Muslims succeeded in escaping towards Sarajevo. Some smaller groups of Muslims went into hiding while the others were captured and killed. One of the survivors stated: "... As soon as the Chetniks occupied Foca, they captured and killed all the Muslim men, as well as a great number of women and children, whilst almost all the girls and young women were raped. Altogether, 11 men in hiding survived. Shops and

houses were completely looted and some of them were burned". The same source also claimed that there had been "about 2,000 innocent victims." On September 5, 1942, P. Bacovic reported to D. Mihailovic that in Foca: "...1,200 Ustasa in uniforms and approximately 1,000 Muslims who had compromised themselves have been killed, while we had four dead and five wounded.... We had an enormous booty. Our goal was to secure links with Serbia and this we achieved."²¹

From August 29 until September 4, 1942, during the Italian military operation "Albia" against the Partisans on Biokovo, a group of 1,000 Chetniks from eastern Herzegovina carried out massive looting, arson, and crimes against the local Croatian civilian population. It was on the territory of the Cetina parish alone (in Rascani, Zupa biokovska, Kozica, and Dragljani) that 160 Croatians were slaughtered, shot, or burned. Among them were three priests, Ivan Condic, Josip Braenovic who was decapitated, and Ladislav Ivankovic. On September 5, 1942, Bacovic reported on the "punitive expedition" to D. Mihailovic, stating that the Chetniks had killed over "1,000 Ustasa", and that they themselves had "not one dead or wounded". He went on to state that en route from Ljubuski to Vrgorac, they had "skinned three Catholic priests alive", killed "all the men 15 years of age and older" and that "17 villages had been completely destroyed", after which, with songs and the Serbian flag, they "came to the shores of our Adriatic" to the south of Makarska "and positioned our flag". From May until September 1942, on the basis of an agreement with the Italians, the Chetniks took over power in eastern Herzegovina with the exception of the towns. Subsequently, they killed several hundred Croatians and Muslims and a massive exodus of the Croatian and Muslim population from the left shores of the Neretva River followed. During this period, the exodus was primarily from the Stolac region, in which "from approximately 28,000 Catholics and Muslims" (with the exception of a few families in Stolac itself) not a single Croatian or Muslim remained according to Chetnik documents. During the Italian military operation against Partisans on the territory of Prozor in October 1942, the Chetniks first killed around 200 Croatians and Muslims in the Mostar area and then in the Prozor area, they killed, slaughtered, and threw into pits or water 1,716 people (340 Muslims and the rest Croatian civilians). Upon their return, they killed twenty Croatians, in the Konjic district, looted their homes and villages, and burned many of them as well. Bacovic sent the following telegram to D. Mihailovic on October 23, 1942: "In the Prozor operations, over 2,000 Croats and Muslims slaughtered. Soldiers returned." ²²

Meanwhile, in northern and central Dalmatia, Chetniks carried out more genocidal crimes against Croatians under directions from the Italians and under their auspices. In this way, at the beginning of October 1942, on the territory of the Cetina parish, Chetniks, under the command of commander M. Rokvic, killed 200 Croatians, looted and burned down houses in the villages of Gata, Naglice, Cislja, Ostrvica, Zvecanji, Dugopolje, Kolenice, Srijani and Dolac Gornji. The Italians reported: "Most of the people killed were the elderly, women and children, who had no ties with the Partisans". Every one was slaughtered when captured. During the killings, the Chetniks would sing: " Petar from London writes us, Oh Croatians, you are no more". On October 21, 1942, in Bitelic, near Sinj, Djujic's Chetniks, under directions from the Italians, killed 29 Croats and 6 more in Otisic and then burned down 220 Croatian houses. According to the report of the Italian General Berardi from Knin, "every Catholic was tortured and slaughtered and afterwards most of the corpses were mutilated in the most horrible manner", but he did not react. Djujic sent a telegram to D. Mihailovic reporting: " My people killed all those we came upon" On October 3, 1942, Chetniks from Medak killed five Croatians from Ribnik. All documents illustrate

that the victims in these massacres were civilians which may be seen by the number of Chetnik casualties. The consequence was a new wave of Croatian refugees from these territories towards the sea and deeper into NDH territories.²³

C/ The third period (January - March 1943)

Chetnik genocidal crimes against Croats and Muslims in this period correspond with German and Italian operations against NOP forces which began on January 20, 1943, throughout the NDH territory (headquarters in Bihac). Chetniks from the NDH territory, Montenegro and Serbia participated in these operations. They used this for the pre-planned cleansing of the Muslim and Croatian population, and so, from January 3 until February 7, 1943, Muslims were cleansed from the districts of Cajnice, Foca and Pljevlja. The Chetnik Commander P. Djuricic gave the following report to his commander-in-chief on February 13, 1943: *"All Muslim villages in the three mentioned districts are completely burned, so that not one of their homes has remained unscathed... The complete destruction of the Muslim population, regardless of sex and age, has been carried out during this operation."*

Victims. The number of our victims amounts to 22 killed, of whom two were accidents and 32 wounded.

*Of the Muslims, approximately 1,200 combatants and up to 8,000 other victims: women, the elderly and children"*²⁴. The cleansing continued in Sandzak. According to the German General Lutens, the aim of these Chetnik actions was *"the extermination of the Muslim part of the population, especially in Sandzak and in Herzegovina"*, because that *"Muslim wedge between Serbia and Montenegro must finally disappear"*. At the same time, he writes to his headquarters: *"It is necessary to stress the characteristics of Chetnik warfare, their attacks on the unarmed weaker enemy... Their slaughter of helpless women and children (Muslims) is in itself, for the Chetniks, an understandable, honorable and brave act, and the executors consider themselves heroes"*. This was confirmed by a Chetnik leader, D. Jevdjovic from the time when they *"who were heroes in looting and slaughtering women were cowards when the first gun was fired"*, fleeing 30 km ahead of the Croatian Partisans of Dalmatia.²⁵ It was precisely the defeat of the Chetniks by the Partisans at the Neretva and the Drina Rivers where the contribution of the Croatian Partisans was most significant which influenced the breakdown of their plans to destroy the Muslims and Croats. According to German verified data from the territory within their zone, in six east Bosnian and four central Bosnian districts, 8,400 Croats and 24,400 Muslims were killed, making a total of 32,800 people. The small remaining groups of Muslims were forced by the Chetniks to convert from the Islamic to the Serbian Orthodox faith as was the case in the villages of Potpece and Vikoc near Foca.²⁶

At the same time, at the end of January 1943, the Chetniks in Dalmatia, taking advantage of the absence of stronger Partisan forces, engaged in an action, killing over 100 Croats in the villages of Kijevo, Kosori, Maovice, Vrlika, Ruzic, Otavice, Gradac and Kricke, and raping women and girls, all under the slogan, "burn and slaughter everything Catholic". At that time, they impaled 68 year-old Niko Blazevic and roasted until he died. In Otavice, they threw 86 year-old Ilija Mestrovic, the uncle of the famous Croatian sculptor Ivan Mestrovic, into his burning house. Already on February 1, 1943, D. Mihailovic was informed: " In Kijevo and Vrlika, Bacovic shot 55 Ustasa and in Maovice and Otavice, Djujic killed 48 Ustasa. Afterwards, on February 3

and 4, 1943, Herzegovinian Chetniks, in the Imotski region, slaughtered and killed 32 Croatians, looted and destroyed their property, set their houses on fire and raped the young girls and women. In these actions, the only victims were Croatian civilians, who were all considered Ustasa by the Chetniks. Not one victim was Serbian and not one Serbian village was destroyed. Again, the consequence was the departure of 3,000 Croatians from Sinj alone²⁷.

In regard to the news of the horrific massacres of Muslims committed under the leadership of D. Mihailovic, on May 1, 1943, the British government brought to his attention that the Chetnik leadership should "moderate their attitude" towards Muslims. Meanwhile, C. de Gaulle, shortly afterwards, awarded several Chetniks with the French war cross, to their great satisfaction.²⁸

It is necessary to stress that Croatian and Muslim anti-fascists, activists, fighters, and members of NOP were killed without exception if captured by Chetniks. In this way, from May 25 until June 15, 1942, the Dinara Chetnik division alone in the battle against the Partisans, counted "over 500 Partisan corpses, mostly Croatians". Some time later, in 1942, near Rujiste, the Chetniks captured 23 Croatian Partisans and shot them, for which deed they received 10,000 liras reward from the Italians; yet another method which the Italians used to instigate them to crime. Djujic's report to D. Mihailovic of December 21, 1943, stated that in the battle against the Partisans, 140 Partisans had been captured, of whom seven were Serbian and the rest Croatian. The Serbians were released and the Croatians were all slaughtered and thrown into a pit. At that time, the commander of the Podrinje Chetnik Brigade wrote in his report, among other things, the following: "I shot 5 Partisans because they were Turks..." (that is, Muslims, Z.D.). From other documents, it may be seen that the majority were representatives of various anti-fascist organizations of NOP, as well as the wounded who were without adequate military protection, which the Chetniks used to their advantage.²⁹

Outside of these periods and until the end of the war, the Chetniks continued to loot, violate and kill Croatians and Muslims, whenever they had the opportunity. We will only mention a few of these crimes. On June 7, 1943, in the Brnjic municipality, 42 Muslims were slaughtered, after which 1,060 refugees escaped to Zenica. In February 1944, Dalmatian Chetniks, in the villages of Dubrava, Danilo, Radonici and Goris killed 30 Croats. On April 4, they killed 10 in the Promin village of Necmen, 27 in the Skradin region on September 12, 1944, and 32 in December 1944 in Bribir, Grizani, and Tribalje near Crikvenica, burning 70 houses and the Bribir Church. In May 1944, Chetniks in Gorazde slaughtered about 50 Muslims, burning 2 mosques. In northeastern Bosnia, on October 8, 1944, the Trebavska Chetniks killed 25 Croatians in the villages of Tramosnica, Turic, Liporasce and Srednja Slatina. On January 3, 1945, Chetniks "captured, raped, and shot 27 women and children" (Croatians) in the villages of Kladari and Carevac, and ten days later massacred Croatians in the village Pecnik. On December 21, 1944, the Chetniks of Rogatic killed 23 Muslims in the village of Vinograd. Up to June 1944, on the territory of the Rogatic district alone, 3,677 homes were burned and 4,635 were Muslims killed (among whom were a small number of Croatians) by the Chetniks.³⁰

At the end of the war, the Chetniks were militarily defeated but many of them were given the opportunity during the war, most often after being imprisoned, to "voluntarily" join the Partisans. More than 80% took advantage of this opportunity and, almost as a

rule, gained legal amnesty from their crimes. Only a few were convicted for their crimes. In this way, they were given the opportunity to plan the revenge which they had constantly stressed during the war, most frequently in the song: " Oh Croats, are we ever going to slaughter you, when Pero returns from London", even though their King did not return. This was especially revealed during the final operations after the surrender at Bleiburg, with murders and firing squads during "Death Marches", in camps and in places of execution for members of the Croatian defense forces and NDH authorities, as well as civilians throughout the territory of the former Yugoslavia, namely Croats and Muslims.

The number of Chetnik victims of genocide among Croats and Muslims during the war from 1941 to 1945 has not yet been confirmed. The newest demographic research suggests that the possible exact number of casualties on NDH territory is 200,000 Croats and 100,000 Muslims. These numbers refer to those killed. According to V. Zerjavic, of this number, 32,000 Croats (20,000 in Croatia and 12,000 in Bosnia and Herzegovina) and 33,000 Muslims were victims of the Chetniks.³¹ To many, Zerjavic's number appears too small, especially due to larger estimates in some sources and literature. I believe that this is possible, until future research, which is now being conducted, establishes concrete numerical data for these Chetnik genocidal crimes.

CONCLUSION

Chetnik crimes of genocide against Croats and Muslims in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina during the Second World War (1941-1945) were not incidental, rather they were planned and an integral component of the military and political goals of the Chetnik movement. Their origins are in the comprehension of Greater Serbian nationalists and expansionists, of which the Chetnik movement was the most extreme, most organized and most operative part during the war. According to this comprehension, national and historical territories outside of Serbia are also Serbian because Serbs live there, regardless of their number. Areas in which there are no Serbs may also be considered Serbian if geostrategic or other reasons exist. In this respect, they considered Bosnia and Herzegovina and the greater part of today's Republic of Croatia to be Serbian and endeavored to "cleanse" them, through crimes of genocide, of Croats and Muslims who formed the majority of the population and then annex them to the ethnically pure "Greater Serbia". It is precisely this constant effort of the Chetnik movement to establish this "Greater Serbia," on the mentioned territories, which is the real reason for the Chetnik terror and genocidal crimes and not religious and national differences, nor terror or counter-terror, as some would have us believe. The Chetniks displayed their genocidal comprehension at all opportunities in numerous documents, maps, speeches, statements and actions before, during and unfortunately even after the Second World War. During this war, they attempted to achieve their genocidal plans with the support of and under the protection of first the Italian occupiers and then the German occupiers, as well as the support of the exiled government of Yugoslavia, Great Britain, and the United States. This is why, along with the Chetniks, the above mentioned participants carry their share of the responsibility for these crimes. In this respect, as we have partially shown, Muslims and Croats in many territories in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, from Serbia, Montenegro to Slovenia were "cleansed". Wherever Chetnik units arrived, horrific crimes were committed, depending only on the relation of forces and the circumstances in a given territory and throughout NDH, Europe, and the world. This resulted in 300 villages and towns, numerous Muslim mosques, Catholic churches, and historical and cultural monuments burned and destroyed and tens of thousands of

Croatians and Muslims killed. Among them were 67 Muslim imams and hafizs (keepers of the Koran), 52 Catholic priests, and several nuns of whom the most well-known are the so called Drina martyrs, five nuns who were taken by the Chetniks just before Christmas 1941 from the Pale convent to Gorazde where they were tortured, slaughtered, and thrown into the Drina River.³²

The Chetnik movement did not fulfill its genocidal intentions because it did not possess enough military units. Yet, I personally believe that the main reason was the self-organized defense and armed opposition of the Croatian and Muslim people, which protected them from even more tragic Chetnik crimes in many places and brought about their military defeat. Following the war in 1945, all Chetnik criminals were given the opportunity to answer for their crimes of genocide against the Muslim and Croatians and their historical, sacred and cultural monuments in court. Many were even given the chance to continue with these crimes under a different symbol (the communist red star?) For this reason, it is not coincidental that such genocidal crimes of greater Serbian nationalists and Chetniks occurred in even more appalling forms, with respect to the number of those killed, the number of refugees, and the destruction, against the Croatians and Muslims in the greater Serbian aggression upon the Republic of Croatia in 1991, and then, against the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina until today. Historical experience shows that the military defeat of the Chetniks renders possible the return of the majority of the surviving Croatian and Muslim population to their homes, but that is not sufficient. It is necessary to punish all the criminals, because until this is done, there will be no peace on these territories, and the threat of danger, new conflicts and new Chetnik crimes will always exist, which is something all international factors must be conscious of, if they truly want peace and if they do not wish to bear their share of the responsibility for Chetnik genocidal crimes.

[Ljubica Stefan: Anti-semitism in Serbia During World War II](#)

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An International Symposium "SOUTHEASTERN EUROPE 1918-1995"

Publisher: [Croatian Heritage Foundation](#) & [Croatian Information Centre](#)

For the Publisher: Ante Beljo

Expert Counsellor: Dr. sc. Dragutin Pavlicevic

Editor: Aleksander Ravlic

Graphic Design: Gorana Benic - Hudin

Printed by: TARGA

Copies Printed: 2000

ISBN 953-6525-05-4

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retired professor: refugee from Belgrade where she lived for 30 years, researches genocide against Albanians, anti-Semitism and persecution of Jews, as well as the behavior of Serbia and the Serbian Orthodox Church in World War II

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ANTI-SEMITISM IN SERBIA DURING THE WORLD WAR II

There are still some significant historical facts about Serbia before and during the Second World War which remain suppressed or are even distorted with prejudice, not

only in Serbia but also abroad. We believe this to be the consequence of ignorance due to the energetic, and unfortunately successful, propaganda of Yugoslavia and Serbia these past fifty years. Thus, these facts should always be pointed out in a precise and detailed manner whenever this dark period is mentioned, which is, in effect, only just one such period in a series of similar centuries-old ones in Serbian history.

Until today, Serbia has worn a hero's halo in a land of martyrs as a member of the anti-Hitler coalition and an alleged contributor to the victory in the Second World War. This is completely untrue. Serbia was not an unfortunate occupied land subjected to German terror. During the entire war, Serbia was the most faithful ally to the Third Reich on European territory under its domination. As opposed to all the other countries of the former Yugoslavia, there was no organized, and an even less massive, armed anti-Hitler movement. When England finally ceased supporting and exalting Draza Mihajlovic, even Radio London, according to the Serbian press, had Mr. Harrison direct the following warning: "It is up to the Serbs to brighten their reputation and cleanse their blemishes. Serbs, remember! The Greater Serbian hegemony will never return. The other nations in Yugoslavia have been exploited enough by the Serbs. You are being given one more opportunity to save yourselves. There has been enough dawdling and enjoyment on the part of the Serbs while other nations have been fighting."

Serbia was a real state during World War II. It consisted of the following: a government, organized ministries, independent authorities in towns and villages, its own army which was armed by the Germans, and this Nedic's Serbian State Guard, the Serbian Guard, the elite Ljotic's Serbian Voluntary Corps, the Serbian Border Guard, the Serbian Country Guard, as well as numerous Cetnik units. Within the Ministry of Internal affairs there was a large, well-organized and well-trained Serbian police force, with numerous prisons, customs services and special police schools. Elementary and secondary schools were in function in the towns and villages. Many newspapers and magazines were being printed as well as a large number of books. New theaters and cinemas were being built. Museums were open. Art shows and concerts were organized. New laws and statutes passed by the Serbian government were published in the "Official Gazette". The Serbian National Bank, with a Serbian governor at its head, printed new Serbian money with an exchange rate in relation not only to the German mark but also to other significant European currency including the kuna. Ancient Serbian flags were hoisted everywhere and the national coat of arms was emphasized. Kosovo and the divine Knez Lazar were celebrated, St. Sava and the Karadjordjevic dynasty were exulted, etc. Until the very final moment, the Serbs believed that they would be rewarded with the creation of a Greater Serbia after Hitler's victory!

Anti-Semitism was, along with the militant, conquering, genocidal Orthodoxy of St. Sava, one of the constant ideologies and politics of the Serbian Orthodox Church before, during and after the Second World War. This is in effect even today. That is to say, the Serbian Orthodox Church (SPC) is in fact a kind of political party. It is greater Serbian and even racist. Pastoral work has been completely neglected.

Anti-Semitism began to spread in Serbia before the Second World War. The Fascist Party "Zbor", Dimitrij Ljotic, prominent Church dignitaries, as well as the church press, were the main generators of the expansion of anti-Semitism. Ljotic roused the Serbian population with the following types of statements: "The Jewish people use the

explosives in their hearts to destroy Christian communities and lead them to their ruin"; "The destructive action of the Jewish spirit may be felt in all domains of human life"; "Judaism is appearing as a cultural and national danger, which we must be free of as soon as possible". Ljotic's model and idol was the leader of the Third Reich. He praised him in the following manner: "Hitler is the instrument of God's providence. He is an instrument which can no longer be stopped until his assigned mission has been fully completed." A great number of Orthodox priests were very active members of "Zbor". The most prominent was the main ideologist of Orthodoxy and anti-Semitism in the Serbian church, episcopate Nikolaj Velimirovic who had been decorated by Hitler already in 1934. It was probably in gratitude that he wrote the following in his book about St. Sava in 1935: " We must regard with esteem the present German leader who, in the twentieth century, came up with the idea of St. Sava and as a layman took upon himself a task for his people as befits only a holy man, a genius and a hero." Several years later, in 1939, he publicly preached racism: " We are people of an Aryan race, which fate has given an honorary role... so that tribes of weaker races and inferior faiths will not...". In the "Glasnik Srpske pravoslavne Patrijarsije" (Gazette of the Serbian Orthodox Patriarchate), letters about Jewish people such as the following were common: "Jews are enemies, sly as snakes and dangerous". The same newspaper reported the following statement given by Patriarch Varnava to a German newspaper in 1937. "The Führer, is leading a battle which will benefit mankind", "God has sent the German people, a führer with foresight. We believe his truthful words". Sometime before this Varnava referred to the Soviet government as a "deceiving Jewish gang".

Germany attacked Yugoslavia on April 6, 1941, and without battle on April 12 its army had already entered Belgrade which had been abandoned by the Yugoslav Army and by all authorities since the first day of the war. The unconditional surrender was signed by the generals of the King's Army on April 17.

On the actual day of the German arrival, Milicevic, the Governor of Belgrade, informed the citizens on a posted notice that the Serbian army was already organized and armed. Several days later, Dragi Jovanovic became the Governor (he held this title until the end of the war), the Chief of the Serbian police, and later the Chief of Serbian Security. The following statement made by SS General Harald Turner, only a month after his arrival in Belgrade, proves the unlimited power of the Serbian police: "I attempted to re-establish the activity of the police system with particular haste. Today, executive power in Serbia is carried out by the police and gendarmes who have been given weapons... internal relations are regulated by local organs without German interference." Dragi Jovanovic himself stated in a report to the Gestapo: "Occupying forces were always able to rely on the Belgrade police. Special Police forces dealt with their assignments with great enthusiasm and success, unlike any other police in any city in all of occupied Europe". In 1946, at his trial in Belgrade, he added: "These results were better and greater than the results of the Gestapo itself in Belgrade."

For the first four months, Milan Acimovic was at the head of Serbia with his Council of Commissars and then, General Milan Nedic, former Minister of the Yugoslavian Army, who had a pro-German and anti-Semitic orientation, took over the leadership in Serbia. Owing to the wholehearted cooperation of all Serbian authorities and the police with the Germans, SS-man Harald Turner, stated the following in 1942: " Serbia is a nation in which the problem of Jews and Gypsies has been solved." Franz Rademacher of the Nazi Ministry of Foreign Affairs reported: "The Jewish problem in Serbia is no longer acute. The only thing left is to solve the legal questions concerning

property." The chief of the German Security Service in Serbia, A. Schafer bragged: "Belgrade - the only larger European city which is cleansed of Jews, has become 'Judenfrei.'" Let us be reminded of the historical fact that Serbia ingloriously took first place in the genocide against the Jews in Europe just three months after the meeting of Reinhard Heydrich, chief of the German Security Service, Heinrich Muller, chief of the Gestapo and Adolf Eichmann, chief of the Special Department for Jews, which was held on January 20, 1942, at Lake Wansee by Berlin when the decision was made to approach the "final solution to the Jewish problem". Specifically, at the end of April and the beginning of May of that year, the remaining Jews were killed in the Sajmiste concentration camp...

Until now, the Holocaust in Serbia has been an unspoken topic, a taboo. Jewish and Serbian sources offer relatively little data, mostly fragmented. What really happened, nevertheless, may be seen. The following was noted: "Only seven days after their arrival in Belgrade, the Germans announced that all Jews had to register themselves at Tasmajdan (Serbian Police Headquarters). Before then, they had already formed a special police force for Jewish people, with the help of the police, that is, the Civil Government of Belgrade. Every Jew received a yellow band." Another source stated that "Jude" was written on the first bands and had the "stamp of Belgrade's Governor". On one original preserved band (from a later time, it appears), "Jude" is written in German and "Jevrejin" is written in Cyrillic. The following data was found as well: "The Serbian Ministry of Internal Affairs, who always endeavored to deal with all their responsibilities on time, dealt with the Jewish problem, as well". Also: "From among local traitors, the Gestapo trained the "Special Police" to battle against Jewish-Communist actions. The special police closely collaborated with the Gestapo and was often the initiator of joint actions. The employees of the police were paid from a fund in which Belgrade Jews were forced to pay 1,400,000 dinars. Rewards for captured or killed Jews were paid from this fund as well..." By May 1941, German authorities had already announced the order by which "Jews were to register with Serbian police authorities", "they cannot be public servants, they must immediately be eliminated by Serbian authorities", so they were further forbidden to pursue a series of independent professions, to go to the theater or cinema, etc. Serbian authorities were declared "responsible for the carrying out of the order" which they immediately set out to do with in a conscientious and thorough manner, with the wholehearted approval of the press. Along with this, they rejoiced in the newspaper at the time: "Jews will never again be doctors, pharmacists, lawyers or judges in Serbia. The Serbs have finally opened their eyes". Dragi Jovanovic, the Serbian Ministry of Justice, even the Musicians' Associations and others, immediately proclaimed their own regulations that Jews turn in all radios and refrigerators even threatening citizens who might be hiding the property of their Jewish friends or providing them with unregistered shelter. They ordered the closing of all Jewish lawyers' offices appointing Serbians in their places. They prohibited Jews to travel on Belgrade streetcars and refused work licenses to Jewish musicians and others. In keeping with the battle for a pure Aryan race, the newspapers started to publish employment offers which had as one of their first stipulations: "that they be of pure Aryan race, without Jewish or gypsy blood". Confirmation of this racial purity was issued by the local Serbian authorities. Nedic's "Ministerial Council" published the following order: "Property of the Jews who were citizens of the former Kingdom of Yugoslavia on April 15, 1941, belongs to Serbia if it is on Serbian territory, without any compensation". The Serbian Council for the Management of Properties of Serbia of the National Mortgage Bank would then put the properties up for auction, placing an advertisement in the daily papers. The synagogue in Nis, which is now a part of the city museum, was among the properties listed. The

Jews also had to pay a sum of 4,834,231 dinars to Belgrade's Civil Government and a million dinars to the Belgrade municipality. According to a Jewish source, Serbians made up 33% of the buyers of Jewish properties! Some "deserving" Serbians, received, as a reward, a part of the looted Jewish money. The Gestapo Major Karl Krauss, ordered: "commencing July 1, 1941, every month until further notice, a sum of 10,000 dinars will be paid, without receipts, to Belgrade's Police Chief and a sum of 6,000 dinars to his assistant from money collected from Jews in Belgrade". Other than this, the Gestapo rewarded approximately 30 members of the Special Police with 10 to 20,000 dinars.

The physical liquidation of Serbian Jews began immediately in the spring of 1941. Almost all the men were killed by the autumn and the women and children and the remaining men were liquidated at the end of April and the beginning of May, 1942. The exact number of people killed is not known even from Jewish sources. Historian Jasa Romano, however, has come to the conclusion that 88% of all Serbian Jews were killed. The Serbian historian Sretenije Zrokic says that of the 11,870 Belgrade Jews only 1,115 or 9% survived the war. It was not only the Germans who captured and killed the Jews in Serbia, rather it was the Serbian Police, Nedic's volunteers and Cetniks. Most were killed in the Sajmiste and Banjica concentration camps. Not a single Jew managed to escape from the camps.

The Banjica camp in Belgrade was established in July 1941 and shut down at the end of September 1944, a month before the withdrawal of the Germans from Belgrade. At a meeting between the Serbian Police and members of the Gestapo in June 1941, it was decided that one of the barracks of the former Yugoslav Army in Belgrade's suburbs be transformed into a concentration camp. Dragi Jovanovic signed the document to this effect and the first prisoners were brought in on May 9. Svetozar Vujkovic was appointed director of the Serbian part of the camp where there were only Serbian police. The smaller German part was directed by members of the Gestapo. The commander of the camp and along with his assistant were German. The German and Serbian parts of the camps were completely separate.

The prisoners were watched by heavily armed guards: "Machine guns and reflectors were set up on the roofs. Day and night, double guards made up of one SS-man and a gendarme from the Special Police stood watch. Later when the police gained the trust of the occupier, the German guards were withdrawn". The same Serbian source also said: "The camp management apparatus was also made up of prison wardens, headed by their commander, who had been chosen from the ranks of former gendarmes, now members of the Serbian guard."

From partially preserved documents of the Serbian part of the camp we learn that 23,697 people were registered and 3,489 were executed by a firing squad. The German and Serbian police began, at the end of 1943, to destroy the documentation and to excavate and burn the executed bodies so that it is actually not known how many victims perished, nor how many were Jews, Serbs or others. The only thing that is known for certain is: not one Jew left Banjica alive... They were killed along with the other prisoners in the camp yard, shot down in the village of Jajinci at the foot of Avala, at the Jewish and the central cemetery in Belgrade. The Gestapo, the Special Police, and the Serbian National Guard performed the executions together. All the lists found were handwritten in Cyrillic. The prisoners were sent to the camps by the Belgrade Civil Government, the heads of the Serbian municipal police, the Serbian National Guard, Ljotic's volunteer units, Serbian court-martials, and by regional and

district leaders throughout Serbia. Execution lists were drawn up by the Special Police, the camp chief, Vujkovic, the Gestapo commander and his assistant. From the few preserved lists, it can be observed that even children were executed: 22 under the age of 7; 26 under the age of 14; 76 under the age of 17; even mothers with small children in their arms. Belgrade grave-diggers recall: "Members of the Gestapo and Special Police agents would draw women out of armored cars, one by one. Two men would hold each one by the arms and the third would shoot her in the head and then push her into the grave." A Jewish source stated: " From 1942 up to September 1944, Jews, who had found refuge in some villages in Serbia, were brought to the Banjica camp after being caught by Ljotic's and Nedic's men, as well as by Cetniks and handed over to the Germans for which they received financial rewards."

The only surviving Jews in Serbia were those who remained unexposed in remote Serbian villages where peasants were hiding them. In a written report after the war, one of the surviving Jews said the following " Draza Mihailovic's Cetniks, mercilessly pursued Jews in that region, especially the Cetnik units that came from Ravna Gora (Draza's main headquarters), whom we were forced to hide from just as we had to hide from the Germans. I know that it was these Cetniks who killed several families in that region in the most appalling manner."

The majority of Serbian Jews were killed in the Sajmiste camp. There is no precise information and documentation is almost non-existent, yet it is estimated that the number of victims comes to at least 11,000. The camp was formed on the left bank of the Sava by the railway bridge at the entrance into Belgrade where the pre-war trade fair was located. This is where the name Sajmiste originated. This territory which was, at that time, deserted, uninhabited and marshy, was several kilometers from Zemun and formed a part of NDH (Independent State of Croatia) territory, so the Germans asked for it to be given to them. It is, however, completely untrue that this was an Ustasa camp which Serbian propaganda claims even today. Not one Ustasa ever entered the camp. The commander, Androfer, and his assistant, were SS-men. On Gestapo ruling, order and discipline were maintained by the Camp Council which was comprised exclusively of camp inmates who were at first solely Jews because there were no others and some agents of the Serbian police. Supplies were provided by the "Department of Social Care and Social Institutions of Belgrade's Municipal Authorities". At the beginning of December 1941, Serbian gendarmes called upon Jews in Belgrade to report to the Special Police and to hand over their house keys. The transfer of Jews, primarily women and children, lasted from December 8 until 12. Conditions in the camp were extremely difficult - the damp and the cold, hunger and epidemics. A Jewish source says: "The food was appalling and often not even the minimal amount of food was supplied. In Nedic's units there were people who were no better than the Germans themselves." What is almost unbelievable is that even the camp's German commander protested against the quantity of supplies. The reply of Belgrade's Municipal Authorities to the Germans was just as unbelievable if not insolent: "Provisions for the Jewish camp will be carried out once all other needs are met."

As camp inmates starved and froze to death, they were transferred over the frozen Sava to Belgrade where they were buried. Many (the number is unknown) were led away to be shot by firing squads in Belgrade. They were killed in the same manner, in the same place and by the same people as were the Banjica prisoners. Some were killed by the Germans in a special gas truck on their way to Belgrade and buried in Jajinci but their number is not known. A Serbian company "Obnova" purchased the

clothes of those. Some were led away to camps in other countries (numbers and destination are unknown). When the number of imprisoned Jews began to decrease, Serbian prisoners and others began to arrive. One of these prisoners recalls: "The criminals were the same as those in Banjica. The commanders were also the same - Germans, Nedic's men and other Serbian fascists". According to some data, all Jews in that camp were liquidated before May 9, 1942. Belgrade had become "Judenfrei"....

Another surviving Serbian camp inmate, wrote in his book of memoirs: "Several thousand Jews passed through the Sajmiste camp... Long lines of sad histories were written on the walls of the pavilions and in many places artistic portraits were completed. For days we returned to these final traces of thousands of people. There were surviving Serbians who told us various details about the life of the Jews in Sajmiste and who had allowed the Jews to write their final parting thoughts and vows ." Today, there is not a trace of these words at Sajmiste. Which of the "liberators" erased, destroyed and eradicated their every trace? Consequently, in the pavilions that remain today, consisting of offices and warehouses, there is not even a small plaque commemorating that this was the scene of a horrific concentration camp for Jews. On February 11, 1993, the European parliament adopted the Resolution on European and International Protection of Concentration Camps as Historical Monuments. But it seems this does not pertain to camp Sajmiste. Sajmiste, the largest Jewish execution camp in Serbia, is not even listed among the names of the 22 largest camps for Jews in Europe in the Memorial Center Jad Vashem in the Hall of Memoirs in Jerusalem. Of all the camps in the former Yugoslavia, Jasenovac is the only name listed! Does this intentionally imply that all Serbian Jews were apparently killed in the NDH in Jasenovac?

* * *

Finally, how did the Serbian Orthodox Church (SPC) act during World War II? Not one word of condemnation of the genocide, the yellow bands, the concentration camps or the racism was ever heard from them. Immediately upon the arrival of the Germans, representatives of the Holy Synod paid homage to the German military commander and stated, first in print and then in person: " The Holy Orthodox Synod will loyally carry out the laws and commands of the occupying and territorial authorities and will, through its organs, endeavour to effect the complete abidance of order, peace and obedience." The synod remained loyal to their promise until the end and it never violated its promise given to the "father of Serbia" General Milan Nedic that "the Serbian Orthodox Church will, in the spirit of St. Sava's Orthodox tradition, continue to fight on his side". There are no known cases of any Serbian Orthodox priest saving the life or attempting to save the life of one Jew, although some of them often openly expressed anti-Semitic attitudes in their sermons, instigating their congregation against Jews. Metropolitan Josif, as the head of the Serbian church during war time, signed orders that Jews be forbidden to transfer to the Orthodox faith, even though this would have saved them. Three episcopates were the first to sign the "Appeal to the Serbian people" of August 1941, in which over 500 of the intellectual elite of Serbia publicly expressed their support of the occupiers and quislings, which was a unique case in war-affected Europe.

* * *

One clear manifestation of Serbian anti-Semitism was the anti-Masonic, specifically

the anti-Jewish exhibition which opened in Belgrade on October 22, 1941 and which was to support and justify the genocide against the Jews in Serbia and in Europe. Apart from the exhibits at the show, an overwhelming amount of propagandist material was prepared (over 200,000 various brochures, 60,000 posters, 100,000 leaflets, 108,000 copies of nine different post cards, 176 various cinema advertisements, four types of postal stamps, etc.). The organizers boasted: "Such a conceived exhibition will be unique, not only in Serbia but in the Balkans as well, not only in south-eastern Europe and Europe, but in the world". The press awakened the national pride of the people: "The success of the Belgrade exhibition has surpassed Serbia's borders and received deserved recognition by the press in entire Europe". The pride of the organizers was directed to a truly unique occurrence in Europe during the war, this being the anti-Jewish stamps which showed abominable racist drawings, and which were to, according to requests by Serbian anti-Semites, "in the entire world, for all time, serve as the most convincing evidence of how one nation awakened when faced with the danger of disappearing(?)". Milan Nedic expressed "his complete gratitude to the organizers and believes that the exhibition will have a great educational impact, because it systematically displays, in a clear manner, the work of the enemy of the nation and the people".

* * *

Much time has passed since what has been described in Serbia, but anti-Semitism in Serbia, like the vampire, does not die. In 1985, the Serbian eparchy in Western Germany printed a book in Serbian and in Cyrillic written by the already deceased episcopate, Nikolai Velimirovic, supposedly in 1945 in the Dachau camp. The fact that this is completely untrue is another theme. The book preaches to the Serbian Orthodox people: "Today, Europe is primarily the battlefield of the Jews and the father of the Jewish devil. Europe is not aware of this and in this lies the dark tragedy of its peoples. Europeans, Christians and the anointed, have completely surrendered themselves to the Jews. They think as the Jewish people do, they have adopted Jewish programs, accepted Jewish lies as the truth, they travel the same paths as Jews and they serve Jewish goals". There was no reaction from either side. In 1991, the Serbian Orthodox Church organized the spectacular transfer to Serbia of the remains of this anti-Semitic ideologist. The newsletter of the Serbian patriarchy "Pravoslavlje" printed an article in January 1992 by their correspondent in Israel "Jews Crucify Christ Once More", with the following allegations: "Many Israelis are sick with hatred for the Christians. The hatred is open among the ordinary people. Politicians are perfidious and work in secret.", etc. etc... Two weeks later, the Holy Orthodox Synod announced that the text "sounds anti-Semitic, things are carelessly reported" and at the same time claimed: "the phenomenon of anti-Semitism and anti-Judaism is completely alien to the tradition and history of the Serbian Orthodox Church". In February 1992, the Belgrade "Borba" wrote that at the entrance to the Jewish cemetery, someone had written: "Death to Jews and all Jewish p....", but the whole affair was covered up. The "Tanjug" news agency announced a few days later that "the Jewish lobby had arranged the diplomatic recognition of Croatia and Slovenia by Russia". One of Seselj's commanders stated in Subotica that the property of Jews (and Croats) should be confiscated. In August 1993, the president of the Jewish community in Belgrade, commenting on their relations with the Orthodox Church, stated in a conversation with Zagreb Jews that the Orthodox Church "still preaches deicide and is still streaked with anti-Semitism". Two months ago, in an Israeli newspaper, we learn that "a member of the Serbian parliament has accused the Jews of stabbing Serbia in the back".

It seems as if the "Borba" journalist was correct when he concludes his article with the following words: " Propagandistic platitudes on the non-existence of anti-Semitism in Serbia do not correspond to reality: there has always been anti-Semitism in Serbia".

It is true, history does not repeat itself in Serbia, it merely continues in a uninterrupted series...

As do certain statements made by Serbian intellectuals, for instance: "it is a propaganda lie that Serbians liquidated Jews during the Second World War and that anti-Semitism was present in Serbia before the war and is present now!" This statement was made by Dr. Ljubo Tadic's, a professor of the Faculty of Arts in Belgrade and a Serb, and Dr. Andrija Gams, professor at the Faculty of Law, sadly, a Serbian Jew.

[Count Nikolai Tolstoy: The Bleiburg Massacres](#)

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An International Symposium "SOUTHEASTERN EUROPE 1918-1995"

Publisher: [Croatian Heritage Foundation](#) & [Croatian Information Centre](#)

For the Publisher: Ante Beljo

Expert Counsellor: Dr. sc. Dragutin Pavlicevic

Editor: Aleksander Ravlic

Graphic Design: Gorana Benic - Hudin

Printed by: TARGA

Copies Printed: 2000

ISBN 953-6525-05-4

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Count Nikolai Tolstoy

historian; research on inforced repatriation of Croats and other nationalities after the World War II

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THE BLEIBURG MASSACRES

In 1945, the overwhelming majority of Croatian people returned to Yugoslavia from Austria were not killed at Bleiburg itself, but following their recrossing of the Drava. However, historically the involuntary repatriation of Croats in that year has long borne

the name of the Austrian town where their Calvary began. I do not propose on this occasion to attempt any detailed account of the fate of the unfortunate victims after they had been returned to Yugoslavia, nor to attempt any statistical estimate, since these are topics at present undergoing specialised research within Croatia.

I intend here to concentrate attention on one aspect of the greater event, which to this day remains a strange and sinister mystery: the decision of the British military authorities to hand the Croats over to be slaughtered has never received any satisfactory explanation. It is an enigma which I have been researching now for nearly twenty years, to which even now I am unable to provide a coherent account, which is consistent with currently available evidence and historically more satisfactory account contained in my book *The Minister and the Massacres* (1986), and the curious version of events which appears in the British Government's authorised report, *The Repatriations from Austria in 1945* (1990).

It is an exceptionally difficult history to explore, largely because of the unusual obstacles placed in the path of anyone attempting to investigate it. The English historian Herbert Butterfield once wrote:

'There are two maxims for historians which so harmonise with what I know of history that I would like to claim them as my own, though they really belong to nineteenth-century historiography: first, that governments try to press upon the historian the key to all the drawers but one, and are anxious to spread the belief that this single one contains no secret of importance; secondly, that if the historian can only find the thing which the government does not want him to know, he will lay his hand upon something that is likely to be significant'.¹

In my case the situation has been almost the other way round. The British Government permitted me to inspect a few carefully-selected drawers, while the remainder were kept firmly closed. Before attempting my own explanation, an important matter needs to be emphasised. That is the distinction which should be drawn between the tragedy of the Croats driven back to Tito at Bleiburg on 12 May 1945, and the subsequent fate of the smaller body of Croats who remained in Austria following the Bleiburg tragedy.

The events at Bleiburg are simply described. During the first fortnight of May 1945, as the war drew to a close in Yugoslavia, terrified people of all ethnic categories in Yugoslavia streamed across the Karavanken mountains and the River Drava in a desperate attempt to surrender to the British. What they sought above all was protection from the Communist Partisans. Fearful massacres were being perpetrated behind the Yugoslav lines, and there were few who did not anticipate a ghastly fate in the event of capture, regardless of their actions during the chaotic years of occupation and war.

Shortly after midnight on 13 May the British 5th Corps Headquarters in Austria estimated that 'approximately 30,000 POWs, surrendered personnel, and refugees in Corps area. A further 60,000 reported moving north to Austria from Yugoslavia. I am taking all possible steps to prevent their movement along roads, but this will NOT completely prevent them as they are short of food and are being harassed. Should this number materialise food and guard situation will become critical'. The 60,000 referred to were Croatian Domobran and Ustache military formations, followed by a vast

concourse of civilian refugees.

By 15 May, the head of the advancing Croatian column arrived in the meadows just south of Bleiburg in southern Carinthia. There the Headquarters of the British 38th Infantry Brigade had been established a few days earlier within the massive walls of Bleiburg Castle overlooking the town on the edge of the adjacent forest. The Croatian commander, General Herencic, together with his interpreter Danijel Crljen, drove up to the castle, where they attempted to negotiate a surrender on terms with the British Brigadier Patrick Scott. However they had no sooner made themselves known to Scott, than the Yugoslav General Milan Basta arrived on the scene and insisted on joining the talks. Basta and Scott swiftly decided that they would compel Herencic to surrender all Croats under his command to the Yugoslav forces. Scott made it bluntly clear to the General that he would not under any circumstances permit the Croatian exodus to advance further into British-occupied Austria, and that he would deploy all forces he could muster to assist Basta in compelling submission if required. Eventually, after passionate arguments on both sides, Herencic recognised this aggressive display of force majeure, and reluctantly accepted the surrender terms. General Basta assured Brigadier Scott that everyone returned to Yugoslavia would be treated humanely and decently, and that the Croats consequently had nothing to fear. Scott dutifully reported this pledge to his superiors: whether he believed it is another matter. Meanwhile in the fields to the south, lying just out of sight of the castle of Bleiburg, a vast mass of people was gathered in a state of terror and confusion. They comprised the vanguard of what was effectively a fleeing nation.

A terrible panic began, as Basta's Partisans opened fire from the woods on both sides upon the largely defenceless crowd collected below in the valley. Many people were wounded and killed. How many died in the fields beside Bleiburg I have been unable as yet to establish with any precision. Over the years I have obtained many accounts by eyewitnesses of what occurred. In addition graves of the fallen have been identified, and it seems that subsequently bodies were removed by the Austrian Black Cross and interred elsewhere. My impression is that the number of fatalities at Bleiburg itself was not great by comparison with what was happening elsewhere at the time, and may not have amounted to more than a few score. This suggestion may be imperfectly understood by many of the large number of Croats and sympathisers of other nationalities who attend each year at the commemorative service on the site. However I believe that as historical awareness advances, it will be increasingly appreciated that the annual obsequies are observed in memory of all those Croatian victims who died at the hands of the British and their Communist allies during the dark days of 1945, and not just those who fell in the immediate vicinity.

The great majority of people herded back to the guns of the Partisans were massacred during ensuing weeks and months, after they had recrossed the Yugoslav frontier. Thereafter they were subjected to the infamous death marches, which still await exhaustive investigation. Fortunately, now that Croatia is once again an independent nation, historians are at long last enabled to examine the issue on a free and scientific basis.

I turn now from the grim but historically relatively straightforward succession of events at Bleiburg to the vexed and convoluted question of British responsibility for crimes against the Croatian people. The Supreme Allied Commander in the Mediterranean was Field-Marshal Sir Harold Alexander, whose authority extended to Southern Austria. His Headquarters had been established at the royal palace of Caserta,

outside Naples. The chain of command passed down through 15 Army Group (General Mark Clark) at Florence, to the British 8 Army (General Sir Richard McCreery), whose headquarters was in north-east Italy near Udine. 8 Army comprised two corps: 13 Corps, which faced Tito's forces in Trieste and along the Isonzo, and 5 Corps (Lieutenant-General Sir Charles Keightley), which as has been seen occupied Southern Austria across the Yugoslav frontier to the north. On 15 May Alexander reported to the Combined Chiefs of Staff: 'Approximately 600,00 German and Croat Troops of Army Group E moving into Klagenfurt area'. For some twenty-four hours it was wrongly believed at Caserta that a huge body of Croats had actually surrendered to 5 Corps in Austria, and Allied Force Headquarters (AFHQ) was obliged to decide what should be done with them. This error appears to have arisen from a genuine misapprehension during successive transmissions of the report from Austria.

Clearly Alexander felt that this influx was more than the British occupying force in Austria, which consisted of a Corps comprising some 25,000 men, could be expected to look after. On 16 May he issued this instruction to Air Vice-Marshal Lee, his military emissary at Tito's headquarters:

"Commander of Allied troops in Austria reports that approximately 200,000 Yugoslav Nationals who were serving in German armed forces have surrendered to him. We should like to turn over immediately to Marshal Tito's forces and would be grateful if Marshal Tito would agree to instruct his commanders to accept them and to arrange with GOC Five Corps the rate at which they can be received, and handing-over point on Austrian frontier south of Klagenfurt for return to Yugoslavia".

A few days later Tito replied, thanking the Field-Marshal. By now however events had overtaken these exchanges, and the Croats were already within the Yugoslav dictator's grasp. Hindsight and moral judgements should be employed by historians with caution. My own belief, for what it be worth, is that General Herencic committed a grave error when he agreed to surrender to Basta. He was fully aware of the inevitable fate of the thousands of unfortunate people for whom he was responsible. The alternative course would have been to advance further into Austria, provoking Partisan attacks on their flanks and British military resistance ahead. While the Domobran forces were surely capable of fending off the Titoist irregulars, British artillery, armour, and air power presented a formidable obstacle. However Scott himself conceded that the forces at his disposal were insufficient to obstruct the passage of the Croatian exodus for long. Scott's decision to compel the Croatian withdrawal appears to have been reached unilaterally, and at this early phase of the British occupation I suggest that he had little choice but to react to events as best he could with the scanty forces at his disposal. Had Herencic ordered a peaceful advance and dispersal into the British zone, it is certain that British troops would have opened fire, inflicting casualties on the dense crowd of Croats whose likely extent is impossible to estimate. At the same time it may be questioned whether British troops would have continued for long shooting at a mass of panic-stricken and largely defenceless fugitives. Evidence of the likely British response is available in the contemporary logbook of Captain Nigel Nicolson, Intelligence Officer to 1 Guards Brigade. Early on the evening of 19 May, 3 Grenadier Guards reported: "10000 Croats just arrived at Ferlach. 3 GG told to tell all Titoist in the neighbourhood and are NOT to let the Croats over bridge whatever happens". However it was not long before the implications of this order registered with 6 Armoured Division Headquarters, which half an hour later issued this qualifying rider:

'NOT to fire at Croats if they attempt to rush bridge. (If they have women and

children)'.

Such were the circumstances of the Communist capture of the half-million or more Croats fleeing from slaughter at the hands of the Communists. I now move to a mysterious aspect of this tragedy, understanding of which has yet to be fully achieved. As has been seen, the Croats at Bleiburg did not surrender to the British, who cannot fairly bear more than tangential blame for the dreadful atrocities which ensued. Certainly there exists nothing in international law which requires a belligerent to accept the surrender of units demanding to be taken prisoner. The Croatian surrender at Bleiburg took place on 15 May 1945. As the War Diaries make clear, what daunted the Allied command was the enormous number of fleeing troops and refugees reported to be advancing into Carinthia, at a time when 5 Corps had barely established its presence in the region, and when relations with Tito were dangerously inflammatory. Prior to this, from 12 May onwards, numerous smaller bodies of Croatian soldiers and civilians had succeeded either in arranging a formal surrender to British forces, or in infiltrating undetected into their zone of occupation. Since it was clearly unnecessary to guard people who were desperate to remain in British custody, the fugitives were either directed to large camps improvised for their reception, or simply told to stay put where they found themselves. By 15 May 5 Corps reported to 8 Army that they held some 25,000 Croats.

Prior to the Bleiburg crisis, British forces had made no attempt to halt these lesser incursions, and accepted their surrender without recorded reservation. For the present the internees settled down as best they could in the British zone, safe (so they thought) from the clutches of Tito's executioners. Marauding bands of Partisans who sought to open fire on the refugees in their camps were deterred by patrolling British guards. Explicitly on occasion, and implicitly throughout, the British command accepted that their 25,000 uninvited "guests" lay under the protection of international law. The British Government was responsible for the protection and humane treatment of prisoners-of-war under the terms of the 1929 Geneva Convention.² Initially 5 Corps Headquarters does not appear to have contemplated any other course. Had they chosen otherwise, the refugees' arrival in the British zone of occupation could readily have been prevented, since access was confined to bridges across the Drava.

Such was the situation up to the middle of May. Yet from the 15th onwards 5 Corps policy towards the captive Croats changed drastically, from one in accord with the laws of war and dictates of humanity to one of ruthless co-operation with the greatest mass purge of the Yugoslav Communist regime. During the third week of May arrangements were made for all Croats in Corps custody to be transported into the hands of Tito, so that he might extend his genocidal policy to those Croats who believed themselves safe from return to Yugoslavia. Given the general awareness of Tito's attitude towards the wartime state of Croatia, the notoriously brutal nature of his regime, and the atrocious behaviour of his troops within the British zone of Austria, there can be little doubt that those who arranged their repatriation nurtured no illusions about the fate to which their charges were being consigned.

As early as 13 May 1 Guards Brigade War Diary had reported : 'Slovenes and Serbs mostly concentrated [in] Viktring cage. None of these can be repatriated except to almost certain death at hands of Tito'.

If that was the fate anticipated for the Serbs and Slovenes, how much worse was it

likely to be for the Croats! The Partisans made little attempt to disguise their appetite for a bloody retribution. Until forcibly prevented by British troops, they repeatedly attempted to murder inmates of Viktring camp, south of Klagenfurt. On 25 May Captain Nicolson's logbook recorded:

'100 further Croats ... are already on the way to Yugoslavia by train - *en route* for the slaughter-house ... Information came from Tito officer who was in charge of loading of dump at Maria Elend'.

What was it that caused this dramatic and dishonourable change in policy? The pattern of events shows clearly that the decisive intervention occurred on 13 May, when Harold Macmillan unexpectedly arrived at Corps Headquarters. Macmillan was at the time Minister Resident in the Mediterranean, a post which was effectively that of political adviser to Field-Marshal Alexander. In this capacity he possessed authority to communicate directly with the Foreign Office and the Prime Minister. On 12 May Macmillan had arranged with Alexander to fly to 8 Army in north-east Italy, where he intended to consult with General McCreery over the Allies' deeply worsening relations with Tito. As he reported to the Foreign Office on the eve of his departure, he intended to advise McCreery on the political situation, and receive in return a military assessment from those on the spot. Macmillan spent the evening of the 12th visiting McCreery and Lieutenant-General Harding, whose 13 Corps faced the Yugoslavs along the line of the Isonzo.

At this point there occurred a dramatic change to Macmillan's schedule. Instead of flying back to Naples as originally intended, he unexpectedly flew north over the mountains into Austria. There he spent two hours in discussion with Keightley and his staff. What happened at their conference can only be inferred from the evidence, since Macmillan never disclosed the motive for his altered itinerary and the nature of the discussion at 5 Corps Headquarters.

In his diary, which was probably compiled the next day, Macmillan expatiated at some length on what was evidently one of the more important issues laid before him by Keightley:

'To add to the confusion, thousands of so-called Ustashi or Chetniks, mostly with wives and children, are fleeing in panic into this area in front of the advancing Yugoslavs. These expressions, Ustashi and Chetnik, cover anything from guerrilla forces raised by the Germans from Slovenes and Croats and Serbs to fight Tito, and armed and maintained by the Germans - to people who, either because they are Roman Catholics or Conservative in politics, or for whatever cause are out of sympathy with revolutionary Communism and therefore labelled as Fascists or Nazis. (This is a very simple formula, which in a modified form is being tried, I observe, in English politics.).

Macmillan's diary was compiled with a view to eventual publication, and is consequently not always as candid or complete as it might otherwise have been. The passage quoted invites some obvious questions, and cannot be naively taken *au pied de la lettre*, as it has been by Macmillan's sycophantic biographer Horne and the authors of the Government-sponsored "Cowgill Report".

Plausible inferences may be drawn, categorised as follows:

1. It is clear that the whole of this information derived from General Keightley.
2. Given the brief time available for their meeting, and the pressing urgency which led Macmillan to alter his original travel plans so dramatically, the topic is unlikely to have represented mere small talk.
3. Though the passage recounting the visit to Klagenfurt is written in a style appropriate to a personal journal, it conveys the impression of reflecting the formal agenda which must have governed such a discussion. The topics appear to be listed in order of importance.

(I) The Yugoslavs had openly declared their intention of annexing Southern Carinthia, where their troops were behaving with increasing truculence.

(II) Among great numbers of surrendered enemy forces, 5 Corps held 40,000 surrendered Cossacks and White Russians, whose return was claimed by the Soviets. Marshal Tolbukhin's army, which had halted within the bounds of the allotted British zone, was likewise known to hold a number of liberated British prisoners of war.

(III) Various categories of "Yugoslavs" had arrived in panic-stricken flight before the advance of Tito's armies, as described in the passage above.

Macmillan concluded his account of the meeting by explaining: "We had a conference with the general and his [staff] officers covering much the same ground as those with Generals McCreery and Harding yesterday. He gave us his story and we gave him ours. I feel sure it was useful and helpful all round".

Thus, as might be expected, Keightley tabulated the major problems facing him in Austria, to which Macmillan responded with appropriate advice or directions. It is surely significant that each of the issues raised was governed by political factors, which Macmillan was pre-eminently qualified to address. Macmillan paraphrases the responses he provided for the first two issues.

(I) The Yugoslav aggression: "We have to look on, more or less hopelessly, since our present plan is not to use force and not to promote [provoke?] an incident".

(II) The Cossacks and White Russians: "We decided to hand them over ... I suggested that the Russians should at the same time give us any British or wounded who may be in his area".

However no indication appears in Macmillan's diary as to what if any advice he proffered on problem (iii). This omission appears the more curious the closer it is considered. The first point to note is that, if we discount Macmillan's characteristically florid language, his account implies that Keightley's report on the Yugoslav refugees was explicit and detailed. It covers the whole language of anti-Communist Yugoslavs held at Viktring and elsewhere by 5 Corps at the time of Macmillan's arrival:

1. 'Chetnik' Slovenian troops, being 'guerrilla forces armed and maintained by the Germans ... to fight Tito': i.e. Slovenian *Domobranci*.

2. Croatian forces, falsely categorised *en blocas* 'so-called Ustashi', in reality largely comprising 'guerrilla forces armed and maintained by the Germans ... to fight Tito': i.e. Croatian *Domobrani*

3. 'Chetnik' Serbs: i.e. anti-Tito Serbian formations acting under the authority of Generals Mihailovic or Nedic. The first three groupings were accompanied 'mostly with wives and children'.

4. Roman Catholic and Conservative elements 'out of sympathy with revolutionary Communism': i.e. civilians from varied ethnic groups in Yugoslavia who had reason to fear a Communist take-over.

Macmillan's listing is confirmed by the War Diary of 6 Armoured Division for the same day, which reported: 'Position with regard to surrendered personnel in the Divisional area was now very roughly as follows:- ...

'Mercenary Tps.

(a) In battle Group Seeler 21,000 Slovenes, Serbs and [White] Russians...

(b) Croats. Area Eisenkappel, military strength 7,000 plus 3,000 civilians'.

Macmillan's account of his conference with Keightley remains the only full version available, since both of Keightley's senior staff officers, Brigadiers Low (Aldington) and Tryon-Wilson, deny having been present. (The absence of the Corps Commander's two senior staff officers on such an occasion is remarkable). 5 Corps must have presumably have recorded a summary for its own reference, but if so it has disappeared from the War Diary along with so much else that the British Government subsequently deemed compromising. Accordingly we are obliged to rely on Macmillan's version, which at least has the advantage of being written at the time. However analysis reveals some curious anomalies.

Macmillan records the advice he gave in respect of the first two of Keightley's points, but does not reveal his response to the question of the Yugoslav refugees. The omission is curious, in that so far as the Cossacks were concerned Keightley had already received precise instructions how to treat captured Russians, in the form of a carefully-worded directive issued by 8 Army on 13 March. In the case of the Yugoslavs, however, the position was unclear. On 3 May 8 Army had issued a ruling that "Chetnicks, troops of Mihailovitch, and other dissident Yugoslavs ... will be regarded as surrendered personnel and will be treated accordingly. The ultimate disposal of these personnel will be decided on Government levels". The context of the order, however, was the surrender of all German forces in Italy. Furthermore it contained no explicit allusion to Croats, thousands of whom had now surrendered to 5 Corps.

It seems inconceivable that Keightley did not seek Macmillan's advice on this essentially political question, and that Macmillan did not provide him with some guidance. The picture becomes the more puzzling when Macmillan's motive for unexpectedly flying to Klagenfurt is taken into account.

The authors of the "Cowgill Report" assert that Macmillan flew to meet Keightley in order to explain to him the need for extreme tact in dealing with the Yugoslavs, since three days earlier Keightley had requested permission from McCreery to be permitted to shoot at Yugoslavs who disobeyed British commanders.³ Though advanced as settled fact, this suggestion represents pure speculation, and is clearly designed to substantiate the Report's thesis that Macmillan only encountered the refugee problem in Austria *en passant*, and played no material part in the decision to have them despatched to the Communists.

Had Macmillan thought it necessary to advise Keightley in person there can be little doubt that he would have planned to fly to Austria at the outset of his expedition. Moreover this does not explain why he subsequently concealed the decision to repatriate the Cossacks and Yugoslavs from the Foreign Office.

Recently a senior staff officer at 5 Corps Headquarters confirmed the accuracy of my suggestion that Keightley contacted Macmillan while he was with McCreery, and requested him to fly north and advise him how he should treat the Cossack. In a recorded interview held at the Imperial War Museum, Brigadier C.E. Tryon-Wilson recalled in 1990 that during the Italian campaign,

"I think when the history of that campaign is dealt with you will find that in many cases 5 Corps were in a position sometimes to go to Harold Macmillan, sometimes direct to Alex".

Going on to describe the problems facing 5 Corps in Austria, the Brigadier recalled a visit he made on 10 or 11 May to Red Army Headquarters at Voitsberg.

"Now soon after we arrived in there [Austria] - and it was within a few days of General Keightley going up - I was asked to go up for two reasons, really: one was to have a look at the area through which we might have to operate; and secondly to make a contact with the other side. I didn't at that particular time go up with any instructions, or intention to talk about the handing over of the Cossack. Because - again, I refer to the 78 Div ones - they were moved a long way, in the hopes that the Russians didn't know too much about them, because they didn't want them to be handed back. 46 Div, which was much closer, had quite a lot. General Keightley had prior to that (I think) - my journey - he had (I think, rightly) he had already had contact with General - with Harold Macmillan. And he'd told him what the problem was, and he had mentioned - or perhaps he'd mentioned that we had some White Russians. But we certainly at that particular stage, until the 15th I know (and it's a thing which sticks in my mind) we really didn't know the numbers or the names of anybody, because we had to tell the Divisions they had to feed the chaps out of the reserves that they'd got there. And Harold Macmillan had said: "Well, look, if you're going to hand these chaps back, and you want to hand them back, the only thing I can do is tell you that you'll get a better deal if you go directly to the top - not through an intermediate. And we suggest that you go straight to General Tolbukhin and sort the thing out".⁴ Brigadier Anthony Cowgill, Lord Brimelow, and Christopher Booker, *The Repatriations from Austria in 1945: The Report of an Inquiry* (London, 1990), pp. 4 The advice Tryon-Wilson ascribed to Macmillan appears a little confused, but its principal point is plain. Keightley requested Macmillan's attendance specifically for the purpose of advising him on the policy he should pursue with regard to the Cossacks.

Furthermore this first-hand account confirms that prior to Macmillan's visit 5 Corps had been anxious to protect the Cossacks from betrayal to the Soviets. Precisely what the Minister said to Keightley is not recorded, but the gist of it is indisputable. Ten days later Keightley informed 8 Army commander General McCreery: "As a result of verbal directive from Macmillan to Corps Comd at recent meeting we have undertaken to return all Soviet Nationals in Corps area to Soviet forces". Hitherto both Keightley and Macmillan had withheld all reference to this "verbal directive" from their colleagues, and the only reason that the 5 Corps Commander chose to reveal it was in the context of an attempt to reverse a newly-received order from Alexander forbidding him to use force to compel Cossacks to return "home".

At present I am concerned with the fate of the Croats rather than that of the Cossacks. However there exists abundant reason to believe that the repatriation of both peoples represented the outcome of an identical policy decision. Before Macmillan's arrival the evidence indicates that 5 Corps had neither the intention nor the desire to hand anyone over to be maltreated or killed. Thereafter a radical shift in policy occurred, which required extensive deception of the Allied command, to say nothing of the unfortunate prisoners. The 5 Corps war diary and other military records have been substantially doctored, a procedure which would scarcely have been necessary had all proceedings been above board. The "Cowgill Committee" was at pains to scout the idea of any conspiratorial activity on the part of Macmillan or Keightley, on general grounds of implausibility. However it is possible to provide a telling example of the ingenuity with which Macmillan succeeded in duping his "friend" Alexander. On this return to Naples on 14 May Macmillan succeeded in persuading Alexander's Chief Administrative Officer, General Robertson, to issue an order requiring the handover of Cossacks and Yugoslavs to the Soviet and Yugoslav Communists. Macmillan's diary is silent sent late that night by Alexander Kirk, Macmillan's American counterpart as political adviser to Alexander, to the State Department in Washington. 'This afternoon General Robertson, Chief Administrative Officer AFHQ requested us to concur in a draft telegram to CG British Eight Army authorising him to turn over 28,000 Cossacks (see our 797 of October 16, 1944, Midnight), including women and children to Marshal Tolbukhin, and further instructing him to turn over to Yugoslav Partisans a large number of dissident Yugoslav troops with exception of Chetniks. 'General Robertson stated that Macmillan, who talked with CG Eight Army yesterday, had recommended this course of action. We asked whether the Russians had requested that these Cossacks be turned over to them, and Robertson replied in the negative and added "But they probably will soon". We also asked General Robertson what definition he proposed to give to "Chetnicks" and he was very vague on this point. We then stated we could not concur without referring the matter to our Government. CAO expressed disappointment that we did not seem to agree with him on this point but added that he was faced with a grave administrative problem with hundreds of thousands of German POW's on his hands and could not bother at this time about who might or might not be turned over to the Russians and Partisans to be shot. He would have to send his telegram in spite of our non-concurrence.

'Department's views would be appreciated urgently'.

Given this conflict of opinion between the US and British Political Advisers, it is likely that Robertson would have reverted to Macmillan for confirmation of the course he now adopted. At 4.36 that afternoon (14th) Robertson despatched an order to 8 Army for onward transmission to Keightley, which required the prompt handover of 'Russians' (i.e. the Cossacks), and concluded with this instruction: 'All surrendered

personnel of established Yugoslav nationality who were serving in German Forces should be disarmed and handed over to Yugoslav forces'. Copies were sent to Alexander's Chief of Staff, General Morgan, who was on the point of departing on an extended mission to North Italy and Austria, and Macmillan. Significantly none was sent to Kirk, who would have observed that even the tentative saving clause regarding 'Chetniks' was dropped from the final version. The omission suggests that it was included in the draft in what proved to be the vain hope of gaining Kirk's. Having decided to proceed without his approval, Macmillan and Robertson seized the opportunity of extending the order. It was this order which those responsible at 5 Corps employed as justification for the repatriation operations which continued throughout the second half of May. It is a strange but seemingly indisputable fact that Alexander remained wholly unaware of the existence of this order until 21 May. Precisely how it was kept from him is uncertain, but the events which followed establish the omission beyond reasonable doubt. From 16 May onwards he was engaged in elaborate discussions with Eisenhower, whose purpose was the evacuation of the Cossacks to SHAEF custody. At the same time it was his declared intention to transport the Yugoslav prisoners and refugees in Austria to camps in Italy. It was not until 21 May that General McCreery came to query the discrepancy between this policy and that prescribed in the 'Robertson order', in response to which Alexander issued fresh clarificatory orders. It would be absurd to suppose that the two Supreme Allied Commanders went to all this trouble in the full knowledge that a diametrically different policy was already being put into effect. Fortunately it is unnecessary to rely on inference and general grounds of plausibility, since evidence of extensive deception is further to be detected in the contemporary records. On 17 May Alexander issued this emotive appeal for direction to the Combined Chiefs of Staff: 'To assist us in clearing congestion in Southern Austria we urgently require direction regarding final disposal following three classes:

- (a) Approximately 50,000 Cossacks including 11,000 women, children and old men. These have been part of German armed forces and fighting against Allies.
- (b) Chetniks whose numbers are constantly increasing. Present estimate of total 35,000 of which we have already evacuated 11,000 to Italy.
- (c) German Croat troops total 25,000.

In each of above cases to return them to their country of origin immediately might be fatal to their health. Request decision as early as possible as to final disposal'.

The wording indicates plainly enough the extent of Alexander's humanitarian concern for the helpless fugitives, and his objection to delivering them to their enemies. In the present context, however, the content of the signal is of secondary concern to the manner of its transmission. Though the format establishes that the message emanated from the Supreme Allied Commander in person, it was actually despatched from the office of his Chief Administrative Officer, General Robertson. This represented regular procedure, though in this instance it raises a significant query concerning Robertson's role in the policy of forced repatriation.

Three days earlier, at Macmillan's instigation, he had issued the infamous 'Robertson order' cited *supra*, which ordered 8 Army to hand over 'all Russians' to the Soviets and 'all Yugoslavs serving in German forces' to Tito.

When he received his copy of the Field-Marshal's signal of 17 May, Robertson must have recognised that Alexander was unaware of the existence of the prior order, which conflicted with his concern for the prisoners' welfare and made his appeal to Eisenhower superfluous. Why in that case did he not alert Alexander to the discrepancy? ⁵

It appears inescapable that Robertson deliberately withheld reference to his order of 14 May, whose callous provisions he well knew flouted the humanitarian intentions of the Field-Marshal. It may perhaps be questioned whether a such a deception was possible within the tightly-knit framework of a military headquarters. Alexander was notoriously a 'hands off' commander, who was inclined to leave much of the routine work to his capable subordinates. However this may be, fortunately there exists confirmatory evidence of the extent of the deception and indicates the skilful manner in which it was effected.

It will be recalled that late on 14 May Alexander Kirk, the American political adviser at AFHQ had reported to the State Department his dissent to Robertson's proposal to hand over Yugoslav prisoners to Tito. The proposed move was in direct violation of agreed Allied policy, and on 16 May Assistant Secretary of State Grew instructed Kirk to lodge a formal protest with AFHQ on behalf of the US Government. The same day (17 May) that Alexander issued his appeal to the Combined Chiefs of Staff, Kirk's deputy Carmel Offie registered formal objection with the Deputy Chief of Staff (General Lemnitzer), General Robertson, and Harold Macmillan:

'I wish to refer to my non-concurrence in the telegram which the CAO despatched to MACMIS with regard to disposition of certain Yugoslav nationals who have surrendered to the Allies.

'The Department of State has informed me urgently that in its opinion no distinction should be made between dissident Yugoslav troops and Chetniks and that the American position, with which the Foreign Office has agreed, with respect to dissident Yugoslav troops or anti-Partisans, has clearly been established.

'You will recall that the British Ambassador in Belgrade proposed some two weeks ago that there were three alternatives available in connection with handling of these Yugoslavs:

- (a) that they should be used as auxiliary troops;
- (b) that they should be handed over to the Yugoslav Army; and
- (c) that they should be disarmed and placed in refugee camps.

At that time the Department of State and the British Foreign Office agreed that alternative (c) was the only possible solution.

'In summary, therefore, we believe that the troops in question who wish to surrender to American or British commanders in Northeast Italy should be disarmed and placed in base camps for investigation; that those wishing to return to Yugoslavia as individuals should be permitted to do so; and that all others should be removed to refugee camps and those against whom there is evidence of war crimes should be handled as such'. Alexander needed no persuading in this respect, and it was on the same day (17 May) that he issued an order providing for the evacuation of Chetnik and other 'dissident'

Yugoslav prisoners in Austria to camps in the rear area of Northern Italy known as District One ('Distone'). Next day a gratified Kirk reported back to the State Department: 'S[upreme] A[llied] C[ommander] has informed Eight Army and ... Fifteenth Army Group that chetniks and dissident Yugoslavs infiltrations into areas occupied by allied troops should be treated as disarmed enemy troops and evacuated to BRIT concentration area. Total number believed about 35,000 AFHQ taking up question of final disposition'.

The order (known as 'Distone') to which Kirk referred required the evacuation of all surrendered Serbian, Slovene, and Montenegrin troops in Austria to camps in Italy, where thousands of their compatriots who had earlier surrendered in Italy were held. No reference was made in the order to the estimated 25,000 Croat troops held by 5 Corps in Austria, since the ruling had been issued in response to a specific enquiry from the 5 Corps Chief of Staff (Brigadier Low) regarding the disposition of 'Yugoslav Royal Army? units. The Croats could not be quartered alongside their inveterate enemies, and so it was necessary to retain them for the time being in Austria. Any decision as to the ultimate fate of all these captured troops of Yugoslav nationality now rested with the Combined Chiefs of Staff, to whom Alexander had referred the question on 16 May.

So far as Kirk was concerned all appeared to be well. AFHQ policy was now in alignment with that agreed by the United States and Great Britain, and there appeared no longer to be any question of repatriating fugitives to be butchered by a vengeful Tito. More than two months were to pass before Kirk discovered that both he and Alexander had been victims of an elaborate deception practised by their own colleagues.

It was on 14 May that General Robertson showed Kirk the draft of the order approved by Macmillan, which provided for the handover of all Yugoslav prisoners held in Austria. Robertson had ignored Kirk's protest, and shortly afterwards issued his notorious order FX 75383 providing for what he cynically anticipated would be the likely slaughter of Cossacks and Yugoslavs. However the text of the formal US protest of 17 May lodged at AFHQ reveals that by then Kirk's office had come into possession of what they presumed to be a copy of Robertson's order. Kirk's deputy Carmel Offie referred to it as 'The telegram which the CAO [Robertson] despatched to MACMIS with regard to disposition of certain Yugoslav nationals who have surrendered to the Allies'.

The reference betrays the manner in which the American Political Adviser was duped. 'MACMIS' was the abbreviation for the Maclean Mission to Tito, a section of which was based at Trieste to report on Yugoslav moves in the disputed frontier zone. In reality, however, the sole order sent to Macmis 'with regard to disposition of certain Yugoslav nationals who have surrendered to the Allies' was not Robertson's order FX 75383 of 14 May, but Alexander's signal FX 75902 of the 15th, which arranged for the return to Tito of the 200,000 Croats. Since the belief that the 200,000 had surrendered to the British was swiftly discovered to be mistaken, the second signal effectively became dead letter as soon as it was issued.

It was in this ingenious manner that Offie was gulled into believing that the signal effectively set aside Alexander's order of 17th May was that which Robertson had Shawn Kirk on 14 May. On 18 May Kirk accordingly reported to the State Department

that Alexander had issued orders superseding Robertson's signal, which consequently no longer posed a threat to Yugoslav prisoners. All must now have appeared well both to Kirk and Alexander, who were however unaware that the real Robertson order had not been explicitly superseded. It was retained by 5 Corps, who were to use it as justification for their subsequent handover of tens of thousands of Yugoslav nationals. It was this Machiavellian procedure which enabled the Robertson order to remain dormant, awaiting reactivation when required.

The conspiracy involved a high degree of skilful duplicity, with the consequence that its unravelling is also a fairly complex process. A brief summary of successive events will however serve to clarify events.

13 May

Following Macmillan's visit to 5 Corps, both he and Keightley omit all reference in their otherwise detailed reports to the presence of tens of thousands of Yugoslavs in the Corps area, and to their decision to deliver them to the Communists.

14 May

At Macmillan's instigation Robertson issues his order for the Yugoslavs to be handed back to Tito. Kirk is carefully omitted from the circulation list.

16 May

Alexander's Chief of Staff, General Morgan, visits 5 Corps. Reporting to Alexander, he explains that the presence of '25000 Croats [and] 25000 Slovenes' is imposing a severe strain on 5 Corps resources. He clearly cannot have been informed by Keightley of the Robertson order, which provided a remedy for the problem.

Alexander accordingly requests directions from the Combined Chiefs of Staff for the disposal of Yugoslavs in Austria. Again, it is inconceivable that he would have done this had he been aware of the existence of the Robertson order, which already provided for them.

17 May

The US Political Adviser is misled into believing that the Robertson order has been superseded.

Aldington at 5 Corps issues the following order, extending the category of those required to be repatriated, and taking care not to transmit a copy to higher command:

'all Yugoslav nationals at present in the Corps area will be handed over to Tito forces as soon as possible. These forces will be disarmed immediately but will NOT be told of their destination. Arrangements for the handover will be co-ordinated by HQ in conjunction with Yugoslav forces. Handover will last over a period owing to difficulties of Yugoslav acceptance. Fmns will be responsible for escorting personnel to a selected point notified by this HQ where they will be taken over by Tito forces'.

General McCreery instructs Keightley:

'Pending outcome of present Governmental negotiations with Yugoslavs you will avoid entering into any agreements with Yugoslav Commanders'.

18 May

Aldington receives Alexander's order of the previous day: 'Chetniks and dissident Yugoslavs infiltrating into areas occupied by Allied troops should be treated as disarmed enemy troops and evacuated to British concentration area in Distone [Italy]. Total numbers including eleven thousand already in Distone believed about thirty five thousand'.

19 May

Despite the clear terms of the last two orders Aldington enters into a written agreement with Yugoslav Colonel Ivanovich, committing 5 Corps to hand over all Yugoslavs in the area specifically including 'Chetniks and dissident Yugoslavs', and relying on the Robertson order for his authority.

21 May

Alexander learns for the first time of the existence of the Robertson order in consequence of General McCreery's enquiry as to whether it still expresses AFHQ policy.

It must be apparent by now who was masterminding this elaborate train of deception. Macmillan enjoyed a particularly close working relationship with Robertson. On 8 January 1945, for example, he noted in his diary: 'I like doing business with General Robertson, for he is a very clever man'. It was probably on the morning of 14 May that he approached the General, explaining the problem (as he saw it) of the Russian and Yugoslav prisoners whose surrender has been accepted by 5 Corps. Between them they devised the order despatched that day to 5 Corps, which flouted Allied policy by requiring the handover of Yugoslav prisoners to Tito. This move was kept a closely-guarded secret from Alexander, whose ignorance is proved *inter alia* by his elaborate arrangements in keeping with Allied policy.

It was Alexander's 'Distone order' of 17 May that endangered the whole conspiracy, which depended on the Robertson order's surviving unrepealed at 5 Corps. It can be seen why Lord Aldington was so concerned at the 1989 libel hearing to pretend that the 'Distone' order for some mysterious reason never reached his Headquarters (to which it was directed), and why his neighbour Judge Davies was at equal pains to withhold from the jury the evidence which proved the contrary.

It was on 15 May that Assistant Secretary of State Joseph Grew required Kirk to protest against the issuing of the 'Robertson order', and on 17 May that Kirk's deputy office reported that he had registered his 'non-concurrence in the telegram which the CAO despatched to MACMIS'. The likely date on which Offie was accordingly 16 May. On that day Macmillan spent some time with Offie, advising him on signals to be sent to the State Department, after which: 'As part of regular routine, I had a conference with General Robertson on various Italian questions ...'

Historians have increasingly come to recognise the extent to which deviousness and duplicity ranked among Macmillan's prevailing characteristics, along with a cynical contempt for humanity. He possessed both motive and opportunity for misleading the Americans, and the substitution of Alexander's outdated signal FX 75902 of 15 May for Robertson's FX 75383 of the 14th was precisely the sort of deception that was the condemnation to almost certain death of some 50,000 people merely inflated the sense of power which Macmillan's deeply-rooted sense of inferiority ceaselessly

craved.

I have not space here to analyse the complex machinations which followed over the next week, which confirmed the fate of the unsuspecting Croatian prisoners-of-war. Suffice it to say that between 19 and 22 May thousands of Croats were transported to the hands of Tito's executioners by means of further lying and deception.

It was not until August that Kirk came to learn of the deception which had been practised on him. On 14 August he reported bleakly to the State Department: 'On receipt to your telegram 719, August 6 we addressed memorandum to Supreme Allied Commander in accordance with Department's instructions. We have today been informed by Deputy Chief of Staff on behalf of Supreme Allied Commander that decision to turn over to Tito Yugoslav nationals under reference was made on grounds of military necessity in view of conditions existing at that time. It was stated that Supreme Allied Commander took note of our non-concurrence and pointed out that British Resident Minister had concurred in proposed action but that in any event Supreme Allied Commander took his decision because of conditions existing of which he was better aware than Dept. The communication from Deputy Chief of Staff added that in view of divergent political views expressed to him on subject, by Resident Minister and ourselves, Supreme Allied Commander suspended transfer of dissident troops as soon as emergency conditions ceased to exist. It was set forth that while Supreme Allied Commander of course seeks the advice of his political advisers on all occasions he must reserve unto himself right to decide matters of an urgent military nature as he sees fit. 'In conversation with Alexander this morning he stated to us that he was obligated to receive surrender of almost 1,000,00 Germans in mid-May and could not deal with anti-Tito Yugoslavs as he would have liked. We stated we had nothing to add to our memorandum under reference except to point out to him again that Resident Minister acted contrary to policy agreed upon after consultation by Department and Foreign Office.

British apologists for mass murder gleefully seized upon this signal to ascribe responsibility to Alexander for the repatriation operations, and so to absolve the Conservative prime Minister Macmillan. Such an interpretation is not only diametrically at variance with the evidence, but is implicitly refuted by the very explanation reported by Kirk. Alexander's explanation that 'in view of divergent political views expressed to him on subject, by Resident Minister and ourselves, Supreme Allied Commander suspended transfer of dissident troops as soon as emergency conditions ceased to exist' can only refer to the Bleiburg crisis on 15 May and the 'Distone order?' of 17 May, which required the evacuation of 'dissident' Chetniks to Italy.

It was characteristic of Alexander that he should accept blame for the misdeeds of his colleagues and subordinates. As one of his ablest generals recalled: 'Anyhow you had a great feeling of trust in him [Alex] as you knew that he would back you whatever happened, and that if things went wrong, he would accept full responsibility for far more than his own share of the blame'.⁶

In any case Kirk must by this time have acquired a fairly full appreciation of what had occurred in reality, and he made it plain whom he believed to be ultimately responsible for the treachery and slaughter:

'We stated we had nothing to add to our memorandum under reference except to point

out to him again that Resident Minister acted contrary to policy agreed upon after consultation by Department and Foreign Office’.

THE STATUS OF SURRENDERED CROATS UNDER INTERNATIONAL LAW

General Robertson’s order upon which Lord Aldington relies for justification of his part in arranging the repatriation of Croats and others in May 1945, read as follows: ‘All surrendered personnel of established Yugoslav nationality who were serving in German Forces should be disarmed and handed over to Yugoslav forces’. The accepted interpretation of the Geneva Convention is that uniform determines citizenship. If the Croats were regarded as part of the German armed forces, they should have been treated as such and held as prisoners-of-war of the power to which they surrendered, i.e. the British. In fact Aldington made no attempt to determine the citizenship or status of any of the Russian and Yugoslav prisoners in 5 Corps hands, and sent them to be killed indiscriminately. During the 1989 libel trial in London, Lord Aldington and his fellow Chief of Staff at 5 Corps in 1945, Brigadier Tryon-Wilson, defended the former’s classification of civilians accompanying surrendering Croat forces as ‘camp followers’. The claim was designed to legitimise the inclusion of civilians among Croats surrendered to Tito, who would not otherwise have been covered by the orders 5 Corps claimed to have fulfilled. Though this ploy served Aldington’s purpose at the time, in reality it served to aggravate the cynical violation of international law. Article 81 of the 1929 Geneva Convention provides that civilians engaged in this type of relationship with the military ‘have the right to treatment as prisoners-of-war’.⁷

FOOTNOTES

1 Herbert Butterfield, *History and Human Relations* (London, 1951), p. 186

2 Cf Appendix

3 Brigadier Anthony Cowgill, Lord Brimelow, and Christopher Booker, *The Repatriations from Austria in 1945: The Report of an Inquiry* (London, 1990), pp.

4 The authors of the "Cowgill Report" refer to my suggestion 'that Macmillan flew to Klegenfurt *'expressly'* to discuss the problem of the Cossacks' as one of a succession of 'unfounded assumptions'. Since Brigadier Tryon-Wilson was himself a member of the 'Cowgill Committee', the authors must have been aware of the validity of my conjecture.

5 The 'Cowgill Committee' (of which Aldington was an unacknowledged member) was clearly embarrassed by this inconsistency, to which its authors provide this curious attempt at an answer: "We do not know how consciously he [Robertson] was seeking political cover for the order he had given in the heat of a grave emergency three days before' (The Repatriations from Austria in 1945, i. p. 75). To which it is sufficient to respond (i) that the text emanated from Alexander, and was merely transmitted by Robertson; (ii) by no possible interpretation can it be interpreted as 'seeking political cover' for an order to which it makes no reference, whose provisions were in direct conflict with those indicated in Alexander's signal.

6 Unpublished memoir of General Sir Oliver Leese.

7 Gustav Rasmussen (ed.), Code des prisonniers de Guerre: Commentaire de la convention du 27 juillet 1929 relative au traitement des prisonniers de guerre (Copenhagen, 1931), p. 130. This clause reflected a provision enshrined in Article 13 of the Hague Convention (ibid., pp. 26-27).

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An International Symposium "SOUTHEASTERN EUROPE 1918-1995"

Publisher: [Croatian Heritage Foundation](#) & [Croatian Information Centre](#)

For the Publisher: Ante Beljo

Expert Counsellor: Dr. sc. Dragutin Pavlicevic

Editor: Aleksander Ravlic

Graphic Design: Gorana Benic - Hudin

Printed by: TARGA

Copies Printed: 2000

ISBN 953-6525-05-4

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GERMANS IN EX- YUGOSLAVIA

The Disappearance of Yugoslav Ethnic Germans (Volksdeutsche)

The fate of Yugoslav Germans (Schwabens) belongs to a series of once unwanted taboos, never to be spoken.¹ The German question has always been very touchy, because an attempt of collective oblivion had been undertaken in order to create a

past and a present without problems and doubtfulness. This is the nature of communist ideology.

The exodus of the South-Slav Germans exceeds in dimension and far-reaching consequences a similar process on the territory of ex-Yugoslavia in recent history. It has resulted in the creation of a completely different demographic structure (not counting the latest Greater Serbian aggression against Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina). Half a century passed before research began on the post-war fate and exodus of the German ethnic group. They were the most numerous and influential national minority in Yugoslavia until World War II.

The outbreak of World War I halted the organisation of German ethnic groups on the territory of Southeastern Europe. The outcome of the war brought the unsolved position of this minority in newly originated states back to its beginnings. When the Austro-Hungarian Empire disintegrated, ethnic Germans on the territory of the newly established Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes found themselves in a completely different situation.² The peace conference acted pragmatically but became a degradation for the Germans around the Danube basin (approximately 2 million Germans lived in the southeastern portion of the Monarchy). They were members of a dominating nation and overnight become a national minority in the new states (Hungary, Romania, and the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes). The super powers at the time imposed the obligation to honour and preserve minority rights within the new states, but the Germans took little comfort in this.³

When the Austro-Hungarian Empire disintegrated, the Germans were subjected to oppression, which led to mass emigration, primarily from Bosnia-Herzegovina and Slovenia.⁴ These regions had been under the direct Austrian state administration. When the war ended, all state employees and their families returned to their homeland. The rate of growth of the German population decreased between the two wars. Besides, many Germans had emigrated overseas during this period.⁵

The new government soon showed the true nature of its policy towards minorities. Germans and Hungarians were not allowed to participate in the first post-war elections. The peace agreement gave them the option to migrate to Austria or Hungary until the summer of 1922. The government conveniently took away their political rights until then.⁶ The Germans with no land were excluded from land distribution in agrarian reforms. The estates were given primarily to Salonika volunteers and other Serbian soldiers. The ethnic map of Voivodina, Syrmia, and eastern Slavonia changed significantly to the advantage of the primarily Serbian, Slav population. The Germans owned only a small number of large estates, so that their share in the total amount of confiscated land was relatively small.⁷

In the summer of 1922, the government decided to nationalise the school system. German schools were abolished, while minority classes could be organised only where there were more than thirty pupils. The authorities accepted no personal statements on ethnic membership, but investigated the descent of the pupil (three generations were examined). Other minorities shared the same fate. This unsatisfactory situation in the school system did not change until the dictatorship was abolished in 1931. Due to the influence of the School Foundation for Germans in Yugoslavia, but also due to the fact that the government became interested in establishing good economic relations with Germany, the conditions improved for the

Before World War II, Yugoslav Germans organized the Kulturbund (Schwäbisch-Deutscher Kulturbund), a cultural association which was founded in 1920 in Novi Sad to preserve and propagate German culture.⁹ The Kulturbund developed into a central driving force for ethnic Germans in the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes (later Yugoslavia) and went through different phases during its existence. It was prohibited on several occasions, and then renewed, depending on the current Yugoslav government and its minority policy.¹⁰ In the spring of 1924, after almost four years of existence, the government prohibited the Kulturbund and confiscated all its property. Their explanation was that the Slovenes in Austria were not being treated in a satisfactory manner. In the autumn of the same year, the prohibition was partly lifted. It was not before 1927 that the government approved the complete renewal of all activities under the condition that the statute of the organization be changed.¹¹

In 1922, when the option to emigrate to their homelands had expired, political rights were given back to both German and Hungarian minorities. That same year the Party of Germans in the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes (Partei der Deutschen im Königreiche SHS) was founded.¹² Its biggest success in its short life (prohibited when dictatorship was introduced on January 6, 1929, and never renewed, since the Octroyed Constitution did not allow national and political organisations¹³) came when eight German members of parliament entered the Yugoslav assembly (elected in 1923). The most drastic example of how the party was obstructed came in 1925 in Sivac (a village in Backa). Members of the Serbian Nationalist Youth (SRNAO)¹⁴ attacked Dr. Stefan Kraft and Dr. Georg Grasl during their election campaign.

The leadership of the German minority came to the conclusion that the only way to have minority rights in a state, in which the national question presented the centre of political conflicts, was to strike bargains with leading political powers. The protection of national identity was a very important political objective, but it did not uniform the political orientation of the Germans. The motto 'faithful to country, faithful to nation' (staatstreu und volkstreu) emphasises that the natural problems of a multinational community are not solved by building up the tensions between the nations, but by avoiding them. Taking into account all indicators, including the restraint of most Germans towards politics, the German minority was no different than any other ethnic group in the country.¹⁵

Most Yugoslav Germans lived in Banat, Backa and Baranja, regions that had belonged to the Hungarian part of the Monarchy. German settlements in Banat were situated in the vicinity of Veliki Beckerek (Zrenjanin) along the Romanian-Yugoslavian border and in the northern part of Banat around Velika Kikinda. German settlements in Backa were situated mainly in the southeastern portion of Palanka, Novi Sad, Odzak, Kula, Apatin, and Sombor, and in the relatively small part of Yugoslav Baranja around Popovaca and Beli Manastir. German settlements were rare in Slavonia and Syrmia. The majority of German settlements in the eastern part of Syrmia were situated around Zemun, Nova Pazova, and Indjija; in the western parts around Ruma and Mitrovica, in Slavonia around Osijek, Vinkovci, Vukovar, as well as smaller settlements in the broader vicinity of Djakovo, Pozega, Garesnica, Daruvar and Virovitica. There was also a significant number of Germans in Zagreb. The Germans were first settled in these regions during the 18th and 19th centuries by feudal lords. The majority of German settlers came to these regions in the second half of the 19th century, mostly

from the colonised regions of Banat, Backa and Baranja. The Germans in Bosnia and Herzegovina are the youngest colonial group on South-Slav territory. They settled there during the Austro-Hungarian occupation (after 1878). The most significant German settlements in Slovenia were in Kocevje (the oldest German settlement on South-Slav territory, 14th century), as well as Novo Mesto, Crnomelj, Maribor, Ptuj, and Celje. These were the strongest German communities both economically and socially. They were well organised and had a rich cultural and political tradition, as well as the strongest national consciousness of all groups of Yugoslav Germans.¹⁶

The history and fate of Yugoslav ethnic Germans should primarily be examined through population indexes.¹⁷ According to the first census, 505,790 citizens in the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes spoke German as their mother-tongue.¹⁸ Ten years later, in 1931, 499,969 inhabitants or approximately 4% of the Yugoslav population declared German to be their mother-tongue.¹⁹ To estimate the number of Germans, we should deduce from both figures approximately 10,000 German Jews. In 1931, the share of the German population was as follows: in Banat 20.6% of the population declared German to be their mother-tongue, i.e. 120,450 people (including 1,874 German Jews), in Backa 22%, i.e. 173,058 people (including 3,282 Jews), and in Syrmia 15.6 %, i.e. 49,345 people (539 Jews).²⁰ Many argue that the results of the 1921 and 1931 censuses are inaccurate pertaining to the real number of ethnic Germans because a significant part of the German population for various reasons (mainly economic and political) denationalised into Slovenes, Croats, Hungarians, Serbs.... In later years, a part of them declared themselves as Germans which contributed to the activities of the Kulturbund. Representatives of the German ethnic minority did not recognise the results of these censuses.²¹ Because there was no census in 1941, it was very difficult to estimate the number of ethnic Germans. Some German authors state explicitly that on the eve of War World II, there were 600,000 or even 700,000 to 750,000 ethnic Germans in Yugoslavia.²²

To avoid unnecessary generalisations, we must state a number of mutually interwoven facts which conditioned the behaviour of ethnic Germans during the occupation of Yugoslavia. The economic crisis in Central and Southeastern Europe, resulting in the poverty of the population and the threat of social uprisings, created conditions for a completely new political order, a fact fully used by the Third Reich. Thus, it was not only a matter of Germany invading the Danube basin, but also a matter of ripe international economic and political conditions to realise the invasion.²³

It is well known as a rule that ethnic Germans at the time had the best farming equipment, the finest houses, and well tended villages. Being industrious, the Germans achieved "agricultural wonders" on the fertile fields of Voivodina.

Nazi ideology invaded the German population (mainly Catholic farmers) very slowly, step by step. An open conflict of ideological concepts and strategies towards the Yugoslav state existed between the official leadership of the Kulturbund and the Nazis. The Nazis won the battle, not due to the attraction of their ideas, but due to extraordinary successes of Germany in world politics. The long national crisis of Yugoslavia ended in the Macek-Cvetkovic Agreement. All these changes were fertile ground for chauvinist passions, which rose high. The Chetnik meetings of Kosta Pecanac in Voivodina were observed with dread, especially by national minority members.

When the announcement came that the Kingdom of Yugoslavia had joined the Tripartite Pact, large scale anti-German demonstrations were organised in Belgrade. An atmosphere of suspicion was created towards all ethnic Germans. Various incidents occurred: the office of a German travel agency was demolished, German flags were burned, ethnic Germans were physically assaulted, wounded and even killed. The Germans were in a state of panic. During the night of March 26/27, a group of generals led by Simovic carried out a coup d'état. This triggered a series of events. Volksgruppenführer Dr. Sepp Janko, after finding out about the putsch and the anti-German incidents, ordered all local Kulturbund organisations to refrain from their activities, believing that in the given situation further legal work was not possible. He sent a telegram to King Peter, assuring him of the loyalty of the German minority.²⁴ At the same time, several leaders of the Kulturbund were placed under house arrest. When the war broke out, a number of Germans, whose names were on a list previously prepared, were taken hostage.²⁵

Contrary to statements by official Yugoslav historians, ethnic German historians prove that Yugoslav Germans answered the call to defend their country. The stories of all Germans being traitors and saboteurs are just that, stories.²⁶ They claim that during the Balkan campaign the Yugoslav Germans had no special armed formations. The task of local civil guards (nationally mixed) was to prevent robberies, violence, and preserve order.²⁷

There was a difference between Germans in Yugoslav lands under direct German occupation (Banat, Serbia, Slovenia) and Germans under Hungarian occupation (Backa, Baranja) even Germans who lived on the territory of the Independent State of Croatia. Ethnic Germans who were under direct German occupation and those who lived in the Independent State of Croatia²⁸ formed German national groups (Deutsche Volksgruppe) with legal authority which acted as an entity towards official occupying authorities i.e. the government of the Independent State of Croatia. This was not the case with Germans in Backa. Ethnic Germans in Backa under Hungarian occupation became part of the National Association of Germans in Hungary (Volksbund der Deutschen in Ungarn). In a short time, a firm organisational, political unity of all German national groups was established with leadership principles as in the Reich itself. By the same analogy, these groups had a military or half-military character. The system was characterised by strict centralism. This meant all orders from the centre were carried out unconditionally. Subordinate organisations and institutions had the task of working out these orders, taking care of their implementation, and reporting back to the centre. They were responsible for the implementation. The groups were nominally subordinate to the highest command in a given region, whereas they were all in fact subordinate to the Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle, the supreme command of all Germans outside the Reich.

To objectively judge the history of ethnic Germans on the territory of Yugoslavia, one should note several facts. In the beginning, almost all Germans felt great pride because Hitler seemed invincible; the propaganda was extremely strong and effective. It is true that the number of ethnic Germans actively engaged in military formations constantly increased until the end of the war. But, there were less and less volunteers and more and more forcible recruits. Many ethnic Germans realised that the Nazi ideology could bring them nothing positive. Still, their passive attitude towards communists, as well as local Nazis, sums up their resistance from the beginning to the end.

The leaderships of German national groups had to face the fact that there was no safety for either lives or property in Yugoslavia. As early as 1941, plans were made to evacuate smaller groups of ethnic Germans.... The developments on European battlefields forced the German military command to plan a mass evacuation of all ethnic Germans from Yugoslavia.²⁹ In the first half of 1944, evacuations were of a sporadic nature. The big exodus occurred by the end of 1944. Many fled in a hurry, and certainly not with a clean conscience. They have never answered for their crimes, but left behind an unforgivable legacy for those who remained and were innocent. Those who remained were women, children, and the elderly who had waited in vain for the war situation to change and for their relatives to return. According to a number of sources, there were, by the end of 1944, approximately 480,000 Germans left in Yugoslavia, so one must presume that the evacuation in Backa and Banat was not as thorough as in Slavonia, part of Baranja and Sylvania. The only reason the number of evacuated ethnic Germans was not greater, was the fact that German military circles believed that the war would end much later and the evacuation orders came too late. There was not enough time to evacuate everyone. There was also the lack of transportation. Railroads and lorries, which could have transported masses of German refugees, were engaged on the fronts. In such conditions, the Germans fled in long lines with horse or ox drawn vehicles. These convoys, often longer than 100 kilometres, moved northwards slowly with various misfortunes. The refugees consisted mostly of women, children, and the elderly, who were mostly on foot as their vehicles were filled with furniture, food, etc.. Individual Germans rarely decided on their own whether they would flee or stay. These decisions were brought by German national groups and the SS. Since many ethnic Germans had declared that they would not leave their homeland, the SS and group leaders used various methods of expulsion. Through newspapers, the radio, in proclamations, and leaflets, the German people were told to prepare for the move. They emphasised that the communists, the partisans and the Red Army would take revenge. Unfortunately, these warnings proved to be justified.

When the new authorities took control, a wave of imprisonment and liquidation shook the country. Some authors have established that in the first post-war days OZNA, the military intelligence service, planned and executed an operation under the code name Intelligence.³⁰ Thereby, not only ethnic Germans were persecuted, but also potential political enemies of all nationalities. There are no available Yugoslav sources to prove this. We cannot be sure of the existence and possible motives of such an operation. On the other hand, we do know from eyewitness reports that executions were performed.

The fate of ethnic Germans in Yugoslavia after World War II represents a new era in the history of Yugoslav Germans and a problem in itself. Until recently, Yugoslav historiography persistently kept quiet about this period of ethnic German history or presented it with the intention of preserving the ideological myth.³¹ It seems rather odd that nobody knows (or wants to know) where the documents relevant to this question are to be found.³² There are living witnesses on both sides who do not want to comment on what happened to ethnic Germans at the time. Today, the public is aware of a series of post-war events and government activities which may simply be classified as crimes. One can see how a particular decision was made and see the policy behind that decision. History will define the responsibility of political and military leaders of the time including Tito. There are no collective crimes only concrete victims and concrete perpetrators, including the ones who gave the orders and the ones who

executed them.

The authorities of the new Yugoslavia faced no dilemma. On November 21, 1944, the Presidency of AVNOJ (Anti-Fascist Council of the National Liberation of Yugoslavia) passed a legal act entitled 'Decision on the transition of enemy property into state ownership, on state administration over the property of absent persons, and on sequestration of property forcibly appropriated by occupation authorities'. Article 1 of the mentioned decision states precisely the status of ethnic Germans: "To be transferred into state ownership on the day this Decision becomes effective: 1. All property of the German Reich and its citizens situated on the territory of Yugoslavia; 2. All property owned by persons of German nationality, with the exception of those Germans who were members of the National Liberation Army and Yugoslav partisan formations, or are citizens of a neutral country who displayed no animosity during enemy occupation; 3. All property of war criminals and their accomplices, with no regard to nationality...." ³³

Thousands of Adolf Hitler followers had not remained in Yugoslavia to meet the Yugoslav army. They were evacuated long before, honouring the motto 'Heimatnot' - 'homeland in danger'. Those who had stayed in Yugoslavia (almost three quarters of the pre-war number) had very little to do with Nazism and the war. It turned out that they were guilty because they had not actively fought the enemy, i.e., their own fellow-countrymen. Following this strange logic, only those ethnic Germans who could prove that they had served or at least actively collaborated with the national liberation forces were able to escape the raving collective revenge. There were not many among the Yugoslav Germans. Everybody else ended in camps, which only the worst of pessimists could have prophesied. In any case, it was not desirable to be German at the time. The sad fact was that most of these people thought themselves innocent, not in the least responsible for the tragedy during the occupation. They stayed hoping that their family members and their neighbours would return after the war. Nobody could have presumed that the ghost of collective guilt would arise to haunt them. Settlers from passive parts of the country and from areas destroyed by the war found their way to the fertile plains. At the same time, the inhabitants of German villages and town districts were transported into camps. There is no official data on the death rates in these camps. The information obtained from ex-camp inmates is sporadic and quite unreliable. Various camp diaries, notes, correspondence, memoirs, discharge certificates and similar documentation have been preserved. Because of the lack of original archival material, documentation of this sort is precious and extremely helpful in the evaluation of the history of ethnic Germans in Yugoslavia. It is likewise precious in the evaluation of Yugoslav history.

The fact that ethnic Germans suffered the highest demographic loss after the war is indisputable. The 'Bonn Documentation' ³⁴ states that there should have been 510,800 Germans in October 1944 in Yugoslavia, in which 28,948 were killed in battle. This leaves 481,852 civilians. According to their data, only 409,500 were alive in 1950. They estimate that Yugoslav authorities shot 5,777 German civilians, that another 2,631 died fleeing, while 5,683 Germans died or disappeared during transportation and another 4,500 to 5,000 of these unrecognised Yugoslav citizens were sent to the Soviet Union ³⁵ after the arrival of the Red Army. They never returned. They state 48,027 Germans died in various internment and forced labour camps throughout Yugoslavia. 187 Germans were caught and then disappeared and that 6,273 Germans simply disappeared. The total number of murdered and missing according to the data

totals 68,308. The majority of German historians and demographers favour more radical interpretations. Josef Beer maintains that 135,000 ethnic Germans found their deaths in Yugoslav camps.³⁶ One reason why Yugoslav and German (ethnic Germans) authors differ (emphasised especially by Zerjavic) is because the fact that at the time of the first post-war census in 1948, approximately 3,000 ethnic Germans had assimilated and called themselves Croats (plus another 2,000 from Bosnia). 2,000 Germans declared themselves as Slovenes, 3,000 as Serbs, and even 7,000 (according to some authors even 21,000) declared themselves as Hungarians.³⁷ This is due to the overall climate of aggressive government propaganda. Zerjavic offers his own results on real and total demographic losses for members of the German national minority in every Yugoslav Republic. He estimates that the real demographic losses in Croatia were 92,000 (90,000 emigrated, 2,000 war losses), in Serbia 323,000 (299,000 emigrated, 24,000 war losses), in Bosnia-Herzegovina 13,000 (12,000 emigrated, 1,000 war losses). Thus, the real demographic loss of Germans in Yugoslavia (counting only those who died or emigrated) amounts to 452,000 people. The total demographic losses (including the unborn) total 463,000 people which is without precedent in the Balkans.³⁸ In the other side, Kocovic explains the enormous German losses very simply: "Mass emigration, some of it before, some during, and most of it at the end of WW II (...) justified or not, did this emigration, economically certainly negative, help to make Voivodina ethnically Serbian, reducing a very strong minority to a very insignificant number - we may pose this question, along with many others, but one thing is sure: the partisans did everything in their power to ensure that as many ethnic Germans as possible left Yugoslavia, not hesitating to add these demographic losses to the total number of victims of Nazism and fascism!"³⁹ Kocovic states that among the ethnic Germans there were 26,000 real victims, i.e. 2.6% of the total number of real victims in Yugoslavia. He further states that 335,000 ethnic Germans emigrated to the West, 51,000 were taken to the Soviet Union or found themselves in East Germany, and another 10,000 were taken to two camps in Voivodina. These numbers are estimates, the question being, how many more were deported to Russia and how many survived that ordeal? He comes to the conclusion that 20,000 to 50,000 were real victims, since many 'disappeared' probably after the end of the war. With the assimilation factor of the ethnic Germans after the war and then their disappearance from Voivodina, he estimates that "47,000 Germans assimilated, out of which 40,000 became Hungarians, 5,000 Serbs and another 2,000 Croats, some on the basis of mixed marriages, mingled with fear of partisan revenge or minority complexes towards the Serbs. (All these arguments are in favour of my thesis.) The Hungarians demographically gained 32,000 people, which cannot be attributed to natural growth, which was quite low (...) If my estimation is wrong, i.e. if there were less Germans who declared themselves to be of another nationality, then there were more victims and vice versa. There may be an error also in regard to the number of Germans who emigrated."⁴⁰

Immediately after the war, the territory of West Germany was flooded with more than 12 million German refugees and Germans who had been expelled from the East.⁴¹ It is estimated that another 2,300,000 people lost their lives during evacuation, flight or expulsion. The United Nations denied their help to the German refugees who were left to the care of domestic humanitarian organisations (The Support Organisation of the Evangelic Church, Caritas and the German Red Cross) and to themselves.

The first post-war census of 1948 in Yugoslavia registered only 55,337 members of the German national minority (Austrians were included in the column 'rest'), which

explains their sudden disappearance from the Yugoslav demographic map.⁴² The following censuses read as follows: in 1953 there were 60,536 Germans and 1,459 Austrians, in 1961 there were 20,015 Germans and 1,081 Austrians, in 1971 there were 12,785 Germans and 852 Austrians, finally, in 1981 there were 8,712 Germans and 1,402 Austrians.⁴³ Only a few thousand Germans and Austrians live today in their old homeland (including crypto-Germans). This is all that is left of a minority that numbered half a million people. When the Austro-Hungarian empire fell apart, the German minority in Yugoslavia was as numerous as the Hungarian or the Albanian minority.

From the beginning of the war until the first post-war census, the number of ethnic Germans decreased at least ten times (93,3 %). Still, there was no mention of the German national minority or its rights at the assembly meetings of the Democratic Federal Republic of Yugoslavia or the Federal National Republic of Yugoslavia or the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia. Yugoslav high-ranking officials refrained to mention the Germans during international conferences dealing with human rights' issues with the various United Nations' committees. The rights of the German and Austrian minorities were factually denied in Yugoslavia. Tito's Yugoslavia had no schools in their mother-tongue and no cultural institutions of any kind.

Every national community holds spiritual, social, and human values, as well as a precious gift of collective individuality and speciality. Every national community strives to preserve its existence and realise its cultural, economic and political abilities. Ethnic Germans in Yugoslavia had only two options: emigrate or assimilate. The majority chose the first option. Since the fifties, we have registered massive emigration waves of the German (and Austrian) minority from Yugoslavia. The censuses show this very clearly. The data supplied by the ethnic German author, Schumacher indicate that 85,860 Germans emigrated from Yugoslavia between 1950 and 1977. This was far more than any other southeastern country (Hungary, Romania). There are opinions that ethnic Germans continued to emigrate in the eighties, even until the present day. In the beginning, emigration was possible only when the person was listed with the Red Cross as part of the program to reunite families. Since 1952, however, one could emigrate individually. Despite the rather complicated and quite costly procedure (the fee per person amounted to three monthly wages), still, the majority of ethnic Germans chose to leave the country. Today, most live in the southern part of the former Federal Republic of Germany with Stuttgart as their "capital." Hundreds of thousands of Germans who emigrated from Southeastern Europe are bound in many ways to their old homeland. They have founded associations in Germany and Austria (Bund Donauschwäbischer Landsmannschaften, Verein Haus der Donauschwaben, Landsmannschaft der Donauschwaben aus Jugoslawien...) which nurture their specific culture, somewhat different from the one developed in their mother countries (Germany and Austria) because of the influence of East European cultures. They have preserved their customs and organise the same public and church celebrations as were held by ethnic Germans in Eastern Europe half a century ago. Many regularly visit their villages, their confiscated homes, churches, their graveyards and other reminders of their ancestors.⁴⁴

There are still many open questions. Yugoslav sources disagree with ethnic German sources, particularly when it comes to the number and purpose of prison camps in which ethnic Germans were detained after the end of the war. What is certain is that

people died in them no matter what they were, according to ethnic German specifications, called: Konzentrationslager, Vernichtungslager, Sammellager, Zivillager, Arbeitslager, Ersatzlager, Krankenlager, Zwangsarbeitslager, Endlager, Internierungslager or Todeslager. After all this time has passed (four decades), the camps remain a 'white spot' in Yugoslavian historiography. How many were there? What was it like to live in one of them? What were the working conditions? Those who decided to share their painful experiences did so in ethnic German papers (in Germany, Austria, the United States, Canada, Australia, Brazil, Argentina and other countries which became the homeland to ethnic German Diaspora). The Yugoslav public had no access to their writings. As a rule, those who did not emigrate still keep silent.

Ethnic German literature has enabled us to come to exact indicators that destroy the image of the 'spontaneous organisation' of these camps.⁴⁵ German sources are certainly more exact than Yugoslav ones, although, even their lists do not mention all the camps known from eyewitness reports or field work.

The majority of ethnic Germans who had stayed in Yugoslavia after the end of the war and the liberation of the country did not feel responsible for the actions of German occupation forces during the war.⁴⁶ Still, their fate was decided by the fall of the German Reich. They were transported in the middle of the night. They were only allowed to take the most necessary things with them. From existing literature and available archival material, we may estimate that at least seventy camps existed.⁴⁷ In the late summer of 1945, at least 100,000 members of the German minority were detained in various camps throughout Yugoslavia. The government became aware of the fact that the expulsion of ethnic Germans would give them more possibilities to implement their land reform and colonization.⁴⁸

The estimates on how much land owned by ethnic Germans was confiscated differs significantly. The procedure was quite simple. All German property on the territory of Yugoslavia was confiscated without compromises. Domestic Germans, until recently Yugoslav citizens, became equal with Reich Germans, and were declared enemies of the people of Yugoslavia. The confiscation procedure stipulated only the establishment that the property in question belonged to a German citizen or to a person of German nationality and this on the day the decision of the Presidency of AVNOJ (Anti-Fascist Council of the National Liberation of Yugoslavia) became effective.⁴⁹

Due to the great interest of economic historians in researching land reform and colonization, we may come to valuable data (statistics and other material) on the post-war exodus of ethnic Germans. The fate of ethnic Germans was linked to the fate of the colonists, 'heirs' of their confiscated estates.

The confiscation of estates which had belonged to members of the German minority in Yugoslavia resulted in the following: one estate (193 hectares) was confiscated in Serbia, 68,035 estates (389,256 hectares) were confiscated in Voivodina; 20,457 estates (120,977 hectares) were confiscated in Croatia; 3,523 estates (12,733 hectares) were confiscated in Bosnia-Herzegovina; and 5,703 estates (114,780 hectares) were confiscated in Slovenia. The total confiscated land amounted to 97,720 estates or 637,939 hectares of land. 59 % of the estates subjected to land reform had previously belonged to ethnic Germans (37% of surface area). Besides, the colonists

in Voivodina and Croatia received (for free): 72,158 houses with complete inventory, 58,455 farm-buildings, over 150,000 heads of cattle, approximately 200,000 tools and machines, over 48,000 tons of food, plus financial support.⁵⁰ These statistics are based on incomplete data and do not represent the entire confiscated property of the German minority, but only the part that was allotted to the colonists.

According to the 1948 census, the population structure in Voivodina had changed significantly. 71.91% of all colonists were Serbs, 17.80% were Montenegrins, 5.31% were Macedonians, 3.17% were Croats, 0.93% were Slovenes, and 0.82% were Muslims.⁵¹ Thus, 162,000 Serbian and 40,000 Montenegrin settlers had contributed significantly to justify the integration of Voivodina into Serbia.

The colonists did more than just change the ethnic structure of the region they settled.⁵² They also brought their culture and their customs. Besides, it took many years to restore the results of agricultural production to the level which had characterised ethnic German estates.⁵³ It is important to note the losses (not only in the material sense) which ex-Yugoslavia suffered due to the expulsion of Germans.⁵⁴

The attitude of the authorities towards the German ethnic community, as well as towards other ethnic communities, from the very beginning depended on state interests or the aspirations of influential political groups situated in Belgrade. One may recognise the Greater Serbian influence in creating significant changes in the ethnic structure of whole regions (Backa, Banat, Syrmia) which eventually became integral parts of Serbia.

Finally, World War II resolved the question of unwanted minorities, as designed by Greater Serbian ideologists. The problem of ethnic Germans was solved in a radical way. The aspirations of certain Serbian political groups, parties and movements took a more definite shape during the war. The extermination of Germans succeeded in uniting all political fractions, parties and options present in Serbian politics of the time. Greater Serbian ambitions and plans found their fulfillment in the totalitarian system of communist Yugoslavia.

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An International Symposium "SOUTHEASTERN EUROPE 1918-1995"

Publisher: [Croatian Heritage Foundation](#) & [Croatian Information Centre](#)

For the Publisher: Ante Beljo

Expert Counsellor: Dr. sc. Dragutin Pavlicevic

Editor: Aleksander Ravlic

Graphic Design: Gorana Benic - Hudin

Printed by: TARGA

Copies Printed: 2000

ISBN 953-6525-05-4

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DEMOGRAPHIC PROBLEMS, RESETTLEMENTS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF CROATIA

INTRODUCTION

After the end of the current war, Croatia will face a number of crucial decisions in regard to her demographic policy, population resettlement policies, and socio-economic development strategies.

Ever since W.W.II, the birth rate in Croatia was declining until in the 1990's when Croatia experienced a negative population growth. During the same time the Croatians were leaving Yugoslavia, in particular the mixed population areas of Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina, in larger numbers than the Serbs or the Moslems. The "ethnic cleansing" during 1991-1995 totally removed the Croatian population from those and adjoining areas and thus completed the process! With the liberation of Croatia and large parts of Bosnia-Herzegovina, the problem arises of how to reverse those negative developments and create a better future for the population.

The objectives of this paper are to investigate reasons for the decline in birth rates, and on the basis of that to suggest policies for the re-population of newly liberated areas, and for socio-economic development of the whole country.

REASONS FOR DEMOGRAPHIC PROBLEMS OF CROATIA

There are many reasons for the demographic problems that occurred after WWII in Eastern Europe and Croatia. But two of them are very specific for Croatia and the Croatians living in Yugoslavia, and they played a very important role.

The Second World War and its aftermath, with the massacre of the Croatian Army and the flight of its remnants to the West, caused severe demographic problems for Croatia. According to the census of 1948, the Croatian republic had the least number of men compared to women in the entire Yugoslavia. The pertinent figures were as follows: [\(TABLE 1\)](#)

Thus, in the entire Yugoslavia there were 7,4 percent more women than men, while in Croatia there were 12 percent more women. There is little doubt that the loss of men resulted in proportionately fewer marriages and fewer children than in the rest of Yugoslavia.

The second among the reasons for the small and declining birth rate in Croatia was the mass exodus of Croatian workers on the so-called "temporary work" in Western industrial countries. Permission of the Yugoslav Communist regime to its working class to go to work in capitalist countries of the West was essentially an open admission that the system was not able to solve employment problems of the country, and that its entire post-war concept of economic development was misdirected.

TABLE 2: TOTAL POPULATION AND MIGRANT WORKERS BY REPUBLICS AND AUTONOMOUS PROVINCES IN MARCH, 1971.

Table 2 presents two sets of data about, as the Yugoslavs called them, the "Migrant Workers". The first set was obtained at the Yugoslav census of March, 1971, and the second was an estimate by the Institute of Geography of the University of Zagreb. Members of the Institute claimed that the census missed a number of persons and thus their estimate is higher by some 118,592 person or 17.6 percent. Both sets of data indicate that the Republic of Croatia gave proportionately many more migrants than warranted by its population.

TABLE 3: PARTICIPATION OF VARIOUS NATIONS AND MINORITIES IN THE TOTAL POPULATION OF YUGOSLAVIA AND IN THE MIGRATION OF WORKERS, 1971

Tables 3 and 4 and the subsequent tables indicate that the Croats participated in the workers migration to a disproportionately higher rate than any other nation of Yugoslavia. All other constituent nations and minorities of Yugoslavia, except the Hungarians, participated in migration less than their share in population would warrant. In Bosnia, the Croats made only 20.6 percent of the total population, but gave 42.2 percent of all migrants, while in their own republic they made 79.4 percent of the population but gave 86.9 percent of all migrants. On the other hand, the Serbs were proportionately under-represented in migration in all republics and regions. For example, in Bosnia they were 37.2 percent of the population but gave only 29.8 percent of the migrants, and in Kosovo the shares were 18.4 and 15.7 percent.

TABLE 4: PARTICIPATION OF YUGOSLAV NATIONS AND MINORITIES IN THE TOTAL POPULATION AND IN THE MIGRATION (PERCENTAGE)-CENSUS OF 1971

Table 5 presents data on participation of the Croats and the Serbs in the population and migration by counties in Croatia.

TABLE 5. PARTICIPATION OF THE SERBS IN THE TOTAL POPULATION AND IN THE IMMIGRATION CROATIAN REPUBLIC

Among the Yugoslav Republics, Croatia had by far the highest migration rate average. That Republic alone furnished 33.4 percent of all Yugoslav migrants. Even in their own Republic, the Croats had a higher participation in migration (86.9 percent) than in the total population (79.4 percent). The second largest group in the Republic, the Serbs, represent 14.2 percent of the population but had only 8.5 percent participation in the migration. All other nationalities are represented by far less than 5 percent of the total population.

From 105 countries in Croatia, in 89 the Croats had a higher migration rate than the Serbs. In the 16 counties in which the Serbs had a higher migration rate, their population was less than 5 percent of the total. At these low participation rates, the calculated migration rates become meaningless. Thus, for example, the highest Serbian migration rate of 13.0 percent was in the town of Klanjec, where the total Serbian population was 23 from which 3 persons became migrants. Of 13 counties in which the total migration rates were 7.5 or higher, in 11 the Croats have the population majority and in the remaining two their population participation rates were 43.4 percent (Benkovac) and 22.6 percent (Vriginmost) respectively. In all of them the Croats' migration rates are substantially higher than the Serbian. The range in the migration rates for the Croats was from 19.0 (in Imotski) to .6 (in Buzet), while for the Serbs it was from 8.9 (in Vrginmost) to 0 (in Lastovo)

Of 11 counties in Croatia that had Serbian population majority, in two (Donji Lapac, Vojnic) the Croats represented less than 5 percent of the population. The difference between the Croatian and Serbian migration rate in the remaining 9 counties is visible from the following Table. **(TABLE 6)**

The case of Gracac is a particularly striking one. Here some 20 percent of the population provides 65.8 percent of migrant workers, while over 76 percent of the

population provides only 33.6 percent of migration.

Numerical data leave no doubt that the Croats represented proportionately the largest group among the migrants who went abroad. The question is why was it so? The official Yugoslav sources gave the following explanation of migration to the west phenomenon:

1. Fast abandonment of villages by the young generations and impossibility of young people to find jobs in urban areas;
2. Entrance of the baby boom generation into the labor market;
3. Inadequate construction of apartments;
4. Attraction of higher wages in the West;
5. Bad inter-personal relations in government owned enterprises; and
6. Poor employment outlook for many professions.

All of these reasons were valid for every nation of former Yugoslavia and they did not explain why the Croats left in such disproportionate numbers. It was further added that the Croats live very close to the West and that they have a long emigration history, and therefore there is no wonder that they were most attracted to work abroad. This, however, is not a valid argument. The Slovenians have a much larger emigration history and live much closer to the West than the Croats, but their migration rate was substantially lower than the Croatian rate.

It seems that real reasons for the disproportionately high emigration of the Croats have to be sought in two directions. First are the economic policies in the Croatian Republic dictated by the federal government of Yugoslavia, and the second is the political position of the Croats in the federation.

There were two dominant economic policies in Croatia between 1945 and 1980. One of them was substantial withdrawal of financial and other resources from Croatia for the benefit of less developed republics. Consequently the rate of investment in Croatia was lower than in the other republics and this meant less construction and less employment. Another problem was that the investment policy was directed mostly toward heavy industries which enabled relatively few employment opportunities.

On the political side of the problem it seems that there was a direct discrimination toward the Croats in employment as well as in apartment distribution, even in Croatia, with a much worse situation in Bosnia and Vojvodina. It is known and documented that the Croats had very limited access to jobs in the Yugoslav Army, police, diplomacy and other sensitive jobs, but the discrimination went far beyond that and was conducted even in employment policies of large Croatian enterprises in which position went very frequently to the Serbs.

The situation was far worse for the Croats in Bosnia-Herzegovina. In that Republic the Moslems were the largest group with 39.6 percent of the population (and 26 percent of migrant workers) followed by the Serbs with 37.2 percent of the population (and 29.8 percent of the migrant workers) and the Croats with 20.6 percent of the population (and 42.4 percent of the migrant workers). ([See Table 4](#))

If we consider data by counties and disregard the position of the group with less than 5 percent of the population, out of the total of 103 counties in Bosnia-Herzegovina, The

Croats had the highest migration rate in 59, the Serbs in 19, and the Moslems in 24 counties.¹ In one county, the Serbs and the Moslems had the same migration rate. For the Republic as a whole, the Moslems had a lower migration rate than the Serbs. Eleven out of 103 counties had migration rates of 7.5 or higher. Seven out of these 11 had Croatian population majority of over 65 percent, while the remaining four had a substantial Serbian majority. The range in the migration rates was for the Croats from 18.5 (Duvno) to 2.1 (Sarajevo), for the Serbs from 9.8 (Srbac) to .3 (Travnik), and for the Moslems from 8.9 (Banovici) to .4 (Srebrenica). In counties in which all three nations were strongly represented, the differing migration rates become rather indicative. (See Table 7).

TABLE 7: PARTICIPATION OF CONSTITUENT NATIONS OF BOSNIA-HERCEGOVINA IN TOTAL POPULATION AND IN MIGRATION, SELECTED COUNTIES

They leave no doubt that the Croats participated in the migration to a much higher extent than any other group. The question is, why? How can one explain the fact that in many counties and even many villages where the Croats and the Serbs live, side by side, the former have two, three or more times higher migration rates than the latter? One is led to the conclusion that a number of employment possibilities which were open to the others were not open to the Croats and so they left to work abroad at that time. There were practically no private employers in Bosnia-Herzegovina, and outside of agriculture the government dominated sector was the only possible employer.

TABLE 8: NATURAL INCREASE OF POPULATION IN THE CROATIAN REPUBLIC 1960-1989

TABLE 9: DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE CROATIAN AND THE SERBIAN MIGRATION RATE AND THE CONSEQUENT DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGE IN CROATIA (1971-1991)

What were the consequences of the higher migration rate and political discrimination for the Croats? In Croatia, during the thirty year period between 1960 and 1989, the natural increase of population was declining and in the early 1990's turned into a decline. (See Table 8). In the area of mixed population which later on became the so-called Krajina region, the situation was particularly bad for the Croats. (See Tables 9 and 10). Had Yugoslavia survived for another twenty years it is very probable that even without the "ethnic cleansing" there would have been no Croats left in that region.

TABLE 10: NUMERICAL LOSSES OF THE CROATIAN POPULATION IN THE 8 COUNTIES OF CROATIA BETWEEN 1971 AND 1991.

In Bosnia-Herzegovina the Croatian share in the total population dropped from 21.7 percent in 1961 to 17.3 percent in 1991. By counties the Croatian share in population declined between 1971 and 1991 in Mostar from 36.8 to 33.8 percent, in Tuzla from 25.9 to 15.6 percent, in Zenica from 21.9 to 15.6 percent, and in Stolac from 36.6 to 33.1 percent. Similar declines occurred in most other counties.

CONCLUSION

Drastic fall and decline of birth rates in Croatia after World War II, aging of population and other demographic problems in Croatia have several reasons. Some of them are common to entire Eastern Europe, but two of them are very specific for Croatia. In the opinion of this author they are crucial for understanding the demographic situation in Croatia. At the same time, they also indicate what should be done to overcome the present problems.

The first of those reasons the massacre of surrendered soldiers of the Croatian Army and exodus of its remnants to the West after W.W.II. The second reason was the mass exodus of Croatian workers and emigrants during the 1960 and 1970's. In both of those cases participants were mostly, but not exclusively, males in the age bracket 18 to 45. Women of the same age also participated in worker migration but in smaller proportions. Since 18 to 45 is the age when people from families and have children, it is no wonder that a loss of this segment of the population lowered birth rates in Croatia and in the Croatian parts of Bosnia-Herzegovina. Many of those emigrants and migrants formed their families abroad and had their children in foreign countries. It seems that a particularly great political and economic pressure on the Croatian population occurred in the "mixed areas" where it lived together with a sizable Serbian and/or Moslem population. The current war and the so-called "ethnic cleansing" brought additional demographic losses and problems to the Croatians.

The end of the current war will bring new deep demographic changes on territories of Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina. The Croatians were expelled from Eastern Bosnia and Herzegovina and most parts of Central Bosnia. The Serbs left the Krajina region and Western Bosnia and will probably leave the Eastern Slavonia. As much as we would want this to happen, there is little hope that the majority of both populations will return to their old areas. This raises several important questions for Croatia. First, how to repopulate the Krajina region and Western Bosnia-Herzegovina; and second, what kind of economic policy would be most stimulating to economic and demographic revival of these areas. The fate of several hundreds of thousands families and probably the whole nation will depend on the kind of answers the Croatian and Bosnian governments will provide.

There are two large groups of Croatians who could provide settlers for these areas. The first group make the displaced Croatian from Eastern Bosnia-Herzegovina and parts of Central Bosnia which is essentially rural population; and the second group is made of the Croatian emigrants and workers in Western Europe and overseas countries. It goes without saying that the first group, which currently lives in temporary shelters, should be resettled as fast as possible. For them this is a question of life and death. This process will require substantial resources for housing, agricultural implements and infrastructures.

The reintegration of the emigrants and workers from abroad presents a much more complicated problem. They were living for decades in modern industrial countries of the West, they raised their families there, they acquired various trades and professions, saved some money, and were accustomed to a higher standard of living. Above all they understand workings of the capitalist economic system and have acquired work habits necessary for survival in that system.

With each year they spend in foreign countries, there is less likelihood that they will

want to return home. Yet, they represent a great asset for Croatia. No other country in Eastern Europe has such a large proportion of its population in the West. No other country has so many university trained specialists, skilled workers, professionals and tradesmen abroad as does Croatia. They represent human capital which, given the resources, could relatively quickly transform Croatia into a modern economy. They have the know-how, work ethic, some capital, and I am sure that German, Austrian and French banks would gladly help their return to Croatia. While the other countries in Eastern Europe have yet to train their population for life in the new socio-economic system, and create new work habits and capital, Croatia already has some 10 percent of the population which for decades lived in modern economies and who can greatly speed up integration of Croatia into European Community. of course, provided that it returns home.

What should be done to encourage and hasten the return of the emigrants and workers from abroad and their reintegration into the economy? There are four suggestions that come readily to mind.

1. Rapid establishment and development of socio-economic system similar to the one in the European Economic Community. Economic freedoms, legal security and infrastructure are unavoidable conditions for return of emigrants and workers. People who worked most of their lives to save some money will not return home and invest that money if there is a possibility that they will lose it because of wrong government policies or incompletely structured economic and legal systems.

2. returnees to the settlement areas should be offered cheap credit for opening of private enterprises, free building lots for new housing, and other inducements.

3. As soon as practicable, and after former owners have been compensated, a new agrarian reform should be implemented. On abandoned land and land of big state and socially owned enterprises, new private family farms of some 25 hectares of fertile land should be created. In areas where land is less productive larger farms should be formed. Holland may serve as a model for this process. In that country every few years new areas for farming settlement are created on the land taken from the sea.

4. A great effort should be made to attract foreign capital to help in speeding up reconstruction and economic growth of the country and thereby also increase employment. With war damages of some \$20 billion in Croatia alone, corresponding to one year GNP of the country, there will be great needs and opportunities to take care of.

By adopting those and similar measures, Croatia would hopefully be able to create conditions for normal life of its population, enable return of its emigrants and workers from abroad, and thus solve some of her demographic problems. However, for this to happen determined governmental actions are necessary.

The future of Croatia will be bright only if the Croatians make it so. After the successful battle for political liberations must come strong efforts for economic development and demographic healing. Only an unqualified success in these two areas will ensure survival and prosperity of Croatia.

FOOTNOTE

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An International Symposium "SOUTHEASTERN EUROPE 1918-1995"

Publisher: [Croatian Heritage Foundation](#) & [Croatian Information Centre](#)

For the Publisher: Ante Beljo

Expert Counsellor: Dr. sc. Dragutin Pavlicevic

Editor: Aleksander Ravlic

Graphic Design: Gorana Benic - Hudin

Printed by: TARGA

Copies Printed: 2000

ISBN 953-6525-05-4

[IMPRESSUM](#)



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writer. Montenegrin, has been living in Croatia for four years; from the beginning of the aggression against Croatia he took the side of the Croatian people
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MONTENEGRO: THE FIRST VICTIM OF GREATER SERBIAN

On October 7 and 8, 1988, and January 10, 1989 (when Milosevic's putchists overturned the legal authority in Montenegro and established a Greater-Serbian dictatorship) it was not clear at the time to anyone what was happening to the Yugoslav Republics. But, in fact, it was the war for a Greater Serbia. Montenegro was

the first victim in the Greater Serbian aggression. No one's national being is so compact so as to exclude those obligatory quisling crevices, through which universal interests of the more numerous and more aggressive nationalism, flow and are achieved. The Greater Serbian putsch naturally found a great number of followers in Montenegro, and most were among the governing communists! Montenegrin quislings included Dr. Branko Kostic, Dr. Radivoje Kontic, Milo Djukanovic, Momir Bulatovic, Zoran Zizic and many others who were among the highest governing class of communists. If Milosevic's populist combatants had by any chance succeeded in entering into the core of Croatia and Slovenia, quislings would be found in these two former Yugoslav Republics. From this, it would be possible to form at least five governments if not more.

Why is it that in the former Yugoslavian Republics no one saw the collapse of Montenegro as the beginning of an aggression, towards the creation of a Greater Serbia? There are several reasons for this. The most significant reason being that in all Yugo-States, in Bosnia and Montenegro especially, there was a persistent class of citizens with totalitarian ideologies. They were spiritually asleep, fired with platitudes of "brotherhood and union", "eternal Yugoslavianism," and so brainwashed by the so-called communist socialist justice that they experienced Milosevic and his pep-talking attackers as an awakening of communistic ideals and bearers of the anti-bureaucratic revolution.

In my partially published journal, from these subversive days, under the date October 7, 1988, the following is written: neither the Montenegrin state and party management, nor the state security, foresaw that today would see the start of the third act of the battle for Montenegro, a battle as old as Garasanin's "Nacertanije", if not older. It has been known for months that preparation has occurred for this day and this night with one thoughtful furious "blitz-krieg" meant the end of the Republic of Montenegro. This slogan is known as well: "Today Novi Sad, in the morning Titograd, the day after tomorrow Sarajevo!" According to strategists, those who studied at the Serbian Academy of Arts and Sciences, in fact in the "wolf's den" of Greater Serbia, Sarajevo is not even the final goal. Preparations are being made for Zagreb and Ljubljana....

The non-historical positivistic relations towards the Yugoslav revolution smothered by the Balkan or South Slavic complex contradictions, historical and other, and the inadequate status of some South Slav and non-Slav peoples, made the second Yugoslavia into an intolerable state union for the nations it comprised. It is a fact that some nations were historically more defined than others, therefore they did not reconcile themselves to the subjection of their historical, national, cultural and geographic individuality to the twice-failed Yugoslavianism. This second Yugoslavianism is more evidently drowning in an overbearing, primitive, folkloric, destructive and violently exposed Greater-Serbianism. It is drowning as the first Yugoslavia from the first day - militarily, politically, diplomatically, commercially, economically, educationally and culturally, and even with respect to mentality. Greater Serbianism immorally metastasized on the entire Yugo territory, from Triglav to Djevdjelija as the song goes. It metastasized through various colonization's, and through the working class with the aid of Marx's slogan "that the worker has no homeland" through military, police and educational cadre and other ways.

It turned out that the first and second Yugoslavias were only names for Greater Serbia. It is similar to the now officially quasi-national construction of the third or Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. In the end, it all comes down to Pasic's well-known

statement, stated in 1917 on Corfu before the regent Aleksandar Karadjordjevic: "Yugoslavia can exist but only in the borders of a Greater Serbia." The regent, according to the testimony of Stevo Jakovljevic, the author of "Serbian Trilogy", nodded his head at Pasic's idea, touched his spectacles and said: "Baja, we'll have some problems with the Croats and Slovenians". Baja gave his regent added explanations and assurances that, "Croats come to their senses only after the train has passed, and Slovenians are in fact Alpine Croats, only with a happier disposition and a more work-oriented characteristic".

Nikola Pasic was undoubtedly the most true to Garasanin's "Nacertanije" ideals. He, when the defeated Serbian army left Serbia, when they retreated in dissolution through Montenegro and Albania, sent a telegram from Skadar to the regent Aleksandar stating: "Your Highness, Serbia is momentarily losing the war against Austria, but at any rate is winning the war against Montenegro." That same day, the Montenegrin army triumphantly put an end to the renowned Mojkovac battle which was led only to make possible the retreat of the defeated Serbian army. This meant sacrificing themselves for their ally, instead of focusing their strength to the south on the Lovcen front where it was difficult for Montenegro.

Following World War I, even in the greatest Serbian national, military and governmental catastrophe, in the defeat by the Austrian military, Nikola Pasic and regent Aleksandar console themselves in advance with the prepared victory over its only ally Montenegro. Yet, Montenegro did not need to enter into the First World War, as she had all the opportunities and offers to remain according to foreign world conflicts, the only oasis in the Balkans not engaged in the war. What allied brotherly dynastic, diplomatic, chivalrous "virtues" does such a connection towards the Sovereign Kingdom of Montenegro fall under? It is not difficult to guess. It falls under typical Serbian virtues. Yet today's Serbian forefather of a Greater Serbia, Dobrica Cosic would comment "that lies maintained the Serbian people as much as heroism." Everything that is happening now, this horrible dirty war, originated from Dobrica's moral vertical which was expressed long before him by wiser and less blood-thirsty Serbs than himself.

Pasic's predictions stated in 1915 about the "winning of the war against Montenegro" were actualized in 1918. The allies won the war for Serbia, and Serbia, as soon as her army disembarked in Bar, Budva, and Kotor occupied Montenegro which had already been liberated. The Serbian army on Montenegrin territory did not come upon one Austrian soldier. In the commands of Zivojin Misic (commanding officer of the so called Serbian Adriatic troops) to Colonel Milutinovic, it is literally stated "consider Montenegro occupied territory!" They did! They burnt six thousand Montenegrin homes, killing and imprisoning approximately twelve thousand insurgents and guerrillas. They began this terror and committed so many crimes of tyranny resembling today's crimes in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. The monstrous scale of crimes committed by today's Serbian Army and Serbian Chetniks has its origins in the crimes performed in Montenegro from 1918 to 1926. They burned houses, destroyed national, cultural, religious and historical monuments and desecrated sacred belongings of the Montenegrin people. They committed murders (hanging sixteen Montenegrins on one mulberry tree), killed children, placed cats in men's underpants and women's skirts, exhumed the remains of guerrillas and shot their bodies until they fell apart, and also raped women and girls of ages 12 to 60. 568 women and girls were raped in just one region of Montenegro, in the Kolasin district, and this mostly from the brotherhood of Bulatovic!

At the time American-English observer missions eagerly recognized the Serbian crimes as fact, but did not undertake any action to prevent further crimes and protect the Montenegrin people. The head of the British mission in Montenegro in 1920, Mr. Alex Devin, reported on the situation in Montenegro to his Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lord Kerzon. Alex Devin's report is quite significant and insurmountably reminds us of the reports of today's UNPROFOR in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. Below is the report of Alex Devin's:

"My Lord,

It is an honor to submit to you a report of the work of the mission in Montenegro and the continuous suspension of the mission's work by the Serbian government which has militarily occupied this land.

I am convinced that Your Lordship will consider the facts I bring to you as something of a complete and serious nature which should be made public as soon as possible. This is to ensure that the submitters to the British fund are offered an opportunity to familiarize themselves with the conditions there as should all public, in general. Consequently, I am taking this opportunity to bring forth my facts, first before You, and I hope, as this is a very urgent matter, that you will find a way to meet with the Serbian Minister in London and that You will endeavor to employ your influence to receive from him and his government a pledge that any further obstacles will not be put upon the subsequent work of the mission in Montenegro.

Taking into consideration the fact that the Serbian side will not admit to any forceful occupation of Montenegro (this is an action which has never been officially recognized by the super powers), it is entirely impossible for any type of British mission to enter into any kind of political situation and recognize a situation as such which the British government has not yet accepted. Well known is the fact that various American missions which did this, did not have freedom in the distribution of aid during their entire stay in Montenegro. Their aid was utilized only for the purpose of Serbian propaganda and not even the smallest coin was ever given to that part of the population which did not recognize the annexation of Montenegro."

The well-known Italian botanist Antonio Baldaci, who had done research on plant life in Montenegro for decades, wrote the following in his memoirs: "Italian politics began to sway in Montenegro immediately following the French-Serbian union. Unfortunately, our diplomacy was convinced of the propriety of the method of the French Minister of Foreign Affairs. France had its main and subsequent goal to minimize the prestige of King Nikola and the Petrovic dynasty using all means. It is clear that that was a plan which had been prepared by Serbian diplomacy, a plan which France immediately and eagerly joined, supporting the Belgrade government, and above all maintaining its well arranged material interest in the Balkans."

In Baldaci's memoirs there are credible conclusions about the personality of the already aged King Nikola and his masochistic need to sacrifice his two hundred year throne and thousand year old land and people. Here is how Antonio Baldaci, a long time personal friend of King Nikola, notes this: "With the coming of the world war, Montenegro had already made one of its greatest and most disastrous mistakes. Without hesitating for even an instant, it enters into war (even though the heir to the throne, Danilo was against such an act), accepts the cry for help and the request sent

by Serbia horrified by the invasion of the Habsburg monarchy! The impulsive but ideal cavalier, King Nikola forgives them of all their insults and once again pulls the saber to save the rival dynasty, its politics and diplomacy, those in fact who were even at that moment working against him, his crown and his land."

Here is another authentic note about the crimes of the Serbian army in Montenegro, namely, the desecration of the sacred objects of the Montenegrin people:

"One December day in 1918 at 1 A.M., a group of Serbian officers, accompanied by soldiers and a mob, terrorised the honest and peaceful citizens and executed the following disgusting crime in Niksic in the hopes of killing the authority of the church, that is of the patron saint of the Montenegrin people and the Montenegrin state. They constructed three chests in the form of coffins. Written on one of the coffins was St. Petar of Cetinje, on the second was St. Vasilije Ostroski, and on the third was the Montenegrin Crown. These coffins were carried through the town of Niksic like a church procession. Stopping at the town square, they dug three graves and placed the coffins inside. After this a funeral service was held in the manner of an Orthodox Church service. Traditional methods call for wine and oil to be poured over the graves but instead Serbian officers publicly urinated on the graves. These officers included infantry Lieutenant Dusan Stajic, infantry Lieutenant Mijuskovic, and artillery Lieutenant Tunguz."

This event was recorded in Rome, 1921, in the book "Several Pages From Karadjordjevic's Bloody Album". This booklet is a collection of documents about Serbian crimes in Montenegro.

There is a telegram from Colonel Burnam, the chief of the Canadian humanitarian mission in Montenegro, about the days and years of the frightful Serbian crimes. The telegram states: "This situation in this unfortunate land is from day to day getting worse. The people cannot live much longer. The entire land is in mourning. The people are losing sense because of this disgusting violence. The Serbians have tried every vile means possible by threatening my life. What then will they do to those poor people who have no help."

The telegram was sent from Bar on September 26, 1920.

These and similar authentic documents may be quoted for days. Nevertheless, at this time, it is very opportune to conclude: History does indeed repeat itself, however not as a farce, rather, unfortunately, as a bloody drama, bloodier even than in its first occurrence. Documents dating back seventy years and more show that the Serbian occupying army even then did not allow any humanitarian missions, that the French-Serbian alliance is unwavering and is even experiencing a certain renaissance. The desecration of national and religious sacred objects has occurred more often in this war (which continues today) than in all the Balkan Wars until today and we have seen that Serbian officers drastically practised the desecration of sacred objects on the Montenegrin sacred objects in Niksic in 1918. The appeals from Colonel Burnam are almost identical to the pleas by the Canadian Colonel who with the Canadian battalion recently entered destroyed Srebrenica where peoples' blood flowed down the streets. The life of this Canadian Colonel was threatened just as the life of Colonel Burnam was threatened in 1920 in Montenegro. Unmistakably, everything is the same but, unfortunately, in more drastic forms.

The great Croatian poet, Tin Ujevic, has a verse which reads: "All these things have already occurred" (quoted by memory), but for decades we did not notice them, nor predict such barbarian monstrosities and scenarios and this is testimony and incentive that all values of the Balkans, and above all, the taboos and historical entities must be carefully and consistently re-assessed. The barbarian adventures of the Serbian-Montenegrin army in Dubrovnik and those around the Neretva River have their barbarian roots from the era of Nemanja's conquests and destruction. Writing about the life of his father Nemanja, Rastko, who was later to become St. Sava, states: "My father Nemanja destroyed the land of Zeta and all coastal towns up to Ston!" Isn't it strange how history repeats itself in such a drastic sense? Now, a somewhat reasonable question is asked: If Zeta was Serbian land, why would Simeon Nemanja destroy it? It is not known to me which Croatian duke, prince or king stopped, beat and defeated Nemanja's army at Neum. But it is also a historical fact that towards the end of the twentieth century, the Croatian army, under the command of General Janko Bobetko, stopped the Serbian army from a similar barbaric conquest of Ston and Neretva in 1992.

For two full centuries, the Russian-Serbian scheme of access to the Adriatic Sea exists. The thirteenth point of the Testament of Peter the Great reads: "Russia will not be a nautical force until it gains access to the Adriatic Sea!". I have already stated that capitalist Russia, after it has recovered mentally and economically from the seventy year DIAMATA, will be far more dangerous for the Balkans and Europe than the former communist state with which Broz's propagandists have been frightening us and calming us down for a full forty years.

One cannot forget that the peacemaking "Balkan butcher" Milosevic had a great model in Lenin's bolshevistic stubbornness that everything may be sacrificed including territory and national pride in order to save the Revolution and the Revolutionaries. Lenin sent Leon Davidovich Trotsky to sign the Brest Litovsk Peace Agreement. When Trotsky realised that the terms of the agreement were degrading, he anxiously sent word to his leader Lenin that he would not sign such a peace agreement. Lenin neurotically sent word, rather orders: "Leon Davidovich, you wish to save Russia, and I wish to save the revolution, the revolutionaries and our power. This is what is essential to me, and I have no time to think about Russia and her fate, so I am ordering you to sign the Peace agreement in Brest Litovsk immediately!" The peace agreement was naturally signed. Does Slobodan Milosevic in Athens, Pale, and at the "all - Serbian assembly" in Belgrade not order the criminal Karadzic to sign and to save what can be saved and primarily to save himself and the dictatorial, communist, nationalist regime in Serbia. In all this, the only unsuitable comparisons are Milosevic - Lenin and Karadzic - Trotsky!

As for Montenegro and its existence and fate, a "horrifying battle" awaits it; a battle to liberate itself from, as Mr Marko Spadijer recently wrote in an article in Montenegro's opposition weekly "Monitor", "St. Sava's tallow-candle" as a lamp and source of light; to liberate itself from "national romanticism", "Yugoslavian illusionism", "proletarian internationalism" and "Serbian paternalism". When it becomes convinced that it truly does exist, it must immediately undertake a "great diplomatic action" to convince the world that it does exist and that its fate cannot be solved by "Belgrade, Bijeljina and Pale" rather in Montenegro itself, in Europe and in the world. This will be possible only when Montenegro provides serious evidence that it will never again "plant pumpkins with the devil" and that it wishes to enter Europe as a sovereign Mediterranean state

with considerable state pedigree, with true upright historical and national pride. If it is not too late, and perhaps it is not, Montenegro must urgently, if it wishes to survive, establish a modern, national, economic, cultural and educational program to remove itself as painlessly as possible from the deadly brotherly embrace of Greater Serbia!

[Stevan Dedijer: An End to the Myth of a "Greater Serbia"?](#)

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For the Publisher: Ante Beljo

Expert Counsellor: Dr. sc. Dragutin Pavlicevic

Editor: Aleksander Ravlic

Graphic Design: Gorana Benic - Hudin

Printed by: TARGA

Copies Printed: 2000

ISBN 953-6525-05-4

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Stevan Dedijer

professor; lecturer at American and Swedish universities. A true Serb decided to return to Croatia instead of Serbia (Yugoslavia)

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AN END TO THE MYTH OF "GREATER SERBIA"?

It is a shame that there aren't more young people here. I have a suggestion for the formation of a group of young individuals who would develop and conduct a project-study in Croatian and English, encompassing all the events which are to occur in

Serbia this year and next. This would be information from open sources which would then be analysed by two people with sharp minds who would draw conclusions which would then be given to the Croatian government, with the goal of creating a new Serbia that could be lived with in the future.

Serbia became free in the year 1867 when the last Turkish soldiers withdrew from Belgrade and gained its independence (as did Montenegro) at the Berlin Congress in 1878. That was the time of the alliance between Germany and Italy, which later turned towards imperialism and colonialisation. As a parachutist in the American army, I was jumping into Belgium in the war that permanently crushed Nazism and fascism. Afterwards, I was a witness to the collapse of all the great world empires; British, French, Belgian, Dutch, Portuguese along with their colonial empires. In newer times, we have all been witnesses to the disappearance of the largest social experiment in the history of mankind. On the basis of Marxist theory, it supposedly attempted to develop a social system which ended up costing the human race some ten million victims. The greatest world empire were also recently lost under the leadership of Russia-USSR.

In the last few years, we have been witnesses to the last attempt of creating an empire in South-eastern Europe - the realisation of a Serbian empire under the slogan Greater Serbia. This tremendous conflict which the imperialistic gang from Belgrade provoked, this war, would be funny if, unfortunately, it wasn't tragic. It was during this time that they wanted to create their empire in the middle of Europe while aspiring to rule over all the surrounding nations. However, all the empires crumbled, and so will this last one - Serbia. Because of this, I wish to speak about both the end of the idea and practice of the creation of a Greater Serbia, of the end to the idea of a Greater Serbian empire, and of the end to the idea of Yugoslavia in Serbia and among Serbs.

Therefore, I wish to briefly explain the meaning of Greater Serbia. What brought about the idea of the formation of a Greater Serbia? What roles did religion and culture have? What did the past three attempts of creating a Greater Serbia bring to the Serbian nation? What is Serbia without a Greater Serbia and what will soon happen to it?

If I wish to speak of a Greater Serbia, I have to stray a bit into the history of my own family. My father, Jefto Dedijer, who received his doctoral degree in Vienna in 1908, conducted many geographical and political studies of Herzegovina, Old and New Serbia, and Dalmatia. In the last brochure which I still have in Dubrovnik, he wrote of the increase in Serb territory under princes Caslav, Nemanja, Lazar and the despot Stevan. Afterwards, he mentioned Serbia in the II rebellion of 1813, 1833, 1878, and from 1912-1913, and even Montenegro as a part of Serbia. There are tabulated items, years, and kilometres of space upon which it was stated that Greater Serbia was supposedly larger than all of Yugoslavia in terms of territory. In the year 1915 in Nis, before the withdrawal of the Serbian Army from Serbia through Albania, my father wrote this anecdote: "Croatian politician Frano Supilo went to the Serbian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Nikola Pasic, and said: "The army is withdrawing, Italy has entered the war on the side of the Entente and is going to take Dalmatia from us". In response, Pasic asked: "What is Dalmatia?" For Greater Serbians, there weren't any Croats in Dalmatia, only Serbs and Catholics!!

The reasons why and how the idea of a Greater Serbia came about were also

discussed. My father was born into a peasant family near Bileca in Herzegovina, but through studying and reading he introduced himself to some precepts of geopolitics which were already taught in Vienna at the beginning of the twentieth century. He was well acquainted with the works of the famous Serbian geographer and ethnographer, Jovan Cvijic, who published some cultural-geographical and anthropogeographical works in which he discussed where Serbs lived, how many there were, who were Serbs, and how to make a Serb out of a non-Serb. That was a very important task in that time, but at the same time he showed how social sciences can be untrue even in the situation of current politics. Even today, unfortunately, many social sciences are in a similar predicament.

Even though my father was a member of the Serbian revolutionary (terrorist) organisation "Black Hand" in the beginning, and equally collaborated with its leader, Dragutin Dimitrijevic Apis, he later had trouble with them. My mother, a Bosnian Serb, taught me that all people are alike. In the year 1928, when Punisa Racic, with the knowledge of King Aleksandar, killed two Croatian representatives and seriously injured Stjepan Radic at the parliament in Belgrade, my mother told me, Vladimir and Boro: "Children, this is the end of Yugoslavia. King Aleksandar has killed the democratic leaders of Croatia."

When the Serbian Army captured Kosovo and Macedonia and committed a massacre of the Albanians during the first Balkan War (1912-1913), Dimitrije Tucovic, a prominent Serb socialist, automatically reacted by writing a book against it (Serbia and Albania).

Within a few weeks, my father Jefto published the book "New Serbia" in which it was written: "The conquest of Kosovo and Metohia gives Serbia an unbelievable position to conquer the entire Balkans." When the defeated Serbian Army retreated towards the sea through Albania in 1915, he wrote: "We are going to transform them into Serbs, not by beating them, but instead through school and other ways, and we are going to turn all of them into Serbs!" I brought up just a few facts to show how these seemingly "learned" methods created a Greater Serbia.

It should not be forgotten that the Serbs lived under Turkish rule for over 500 years and that that certainly had an impact on the Serbian people, on their minds, culture, and way of thinking. I had a conversation with Milovan Djilas prior to his death, and when I asked him what will happen to Serbia, he responded with a letter explaining how the idea of a Greater Serbia had arisen in Serbian cities (in Vojvodina, for example), how traders were spreading the idea, exporters of swine, a thin layer of Serbian bourgeoisie, and how that idea would never be effectuated in a war.

To a degree, the Serbs took over and learned the following motto from the Turks: "Bow down, turn Turk, and you are ours!" That is what the ideologists of a Greater Serbia demanded from Croatians, Montenegrins, Macedonians, Albanians and others; either turn Serbian, or if unwilling, be ruined - as were Christians in Turkey - completely suppressed, practically slaves. I will add another anecdote. When I returned from Turkey in 1960, a well-known Serbian author by the name of Dobrica Cosic asked me: "How is it in Turkey?" I answered: "Ah, my Dobrica, in Turkey everything is Serbian!" He was surprised, but I explained to him that the two have a great deal in common in terms of language, food, people, their expressions and mentality, so much so, that I was left dumbfounded.

And when we ask ourselves today: what did the idea of a Greater Serbia give to the Serbs, actually Serbian imperialism in the Balkans, we must answer negatively. For example, in World War I, Serbia fell to ruins and lost 20% of its active population. The first Yugoslavia was a prison for the non-Serb people which was proclaimed a dictatorship in the year 1929 under Serbian King Aleksandar from the Karadjordjevic dynasty. Because of this, that nation was lawless and fell apart in the year 1941 in World War II. The second communist Yugoslavia was founded on the same or similar ideas which is why it suffered a downfall in 1990.

And what did the idea of the formation of a Greater Serbia bring to the Serbs afterwards in the period of Slobodan Milosevic? An idea which they made every effort to actualise through the course of world history. It brought Serbia an economic catastrophe with embargoes and sanctions, as well as social poverty and decadence. It also brought it a national leadership for whom arrest warrants by Interpol and the Hague Tribunal have been issued. It brought it complete political anarchy and the loss of respect and credibility in the world. It brought the death and political emigration of 100,000 people, especially the young and educated. That is why my colleagues in Sweden told me: "We know that that you are a Serb, but forgive us for saying that the Serbs in this war were murderers, barbarians, and inhuman!" And now, that the failure of the idea of a Greater Serbia may be discerned, the question is posed: "What will Serbia be like without its imaginary empire, without the actualisation of the idea of a Greater Serbia? First, we must say something of the international community who needed a few years to begin resisting the conquering aspirations of Greater Serbia. Of that, my son Mihajlo, who doesn't speak "our language" very well, organised a special conference in Washington. For example, in 1993, the editor of the magazine "Duga", Mr. Milic, called me from Belgrade and told me: "A victory is being celebrated here. With the help of the international community, we have won. In our hands, we hold one-third of Croatia, 80% of Bosnia-Herzegovina, we have taken Montenegro, and Vojvodina was already ours!" And now I pose the question: "Who in that international community enabled the victory of the idea of a Greater Serbia which was celebrated in Belgrade?" I automatically wrote to my associates in America, for example to a friend who is the head of the CIA, and mentioned: "You say that the Serbian army is strong, but I assert that they are villains." I also added the fact that in 1944 Tito and the partisans forced 250,000 Serbian Chetniks to flee and that partisan Generals Koca Popovic and Peko Dapcevic crushed them in 1945. And that's how it was for this Serb military in the summer of 1995 which the Croatian wartime operation "Storm" confirmed. "There", I wrote, "that's your strong Serb military!"

Why did the Serbs celebrate a victory in 1993? They were given that opportunity by old British and French imperialistic politics which along with the help of Yugoslavia (Greater Serbia) and Greece, blocked the Germans and Russians in the Balkans. Yet English General Rose who killed Argentineans in the Falklands like animals, came to Bosnia-Herzegovina and declared: "I am not allowed to fire at the Serbs. I will not kill people!" Or as British Prime Minister John Major, for example, announced on TV which I watched in Sweden: "That is a civil war. We are going to take thirty children from Sarajevo and nurture them and treat them in our hospitals!" Consequently, he stated the same as did Mr. Milosevic. That is the perfidious and filthy politics of one nation's leader. That was also done by Lord Carrington, Rose, and even the best intelligence agent of this century, Fitzroy MacLean, who got involved in his later days and said: "Support Serbia, all Croatians are fascists!" And yet he is going to come to the Croatian island of Korcula again for vacation. Or as Lord Owen told the Bosnians: "Well, you lost the war, what more do you want?" The same can be said for Mr. Hurd

and Mr. Rifkind who were for Milosevic only until the Americans began bombing the Serbs in Bosnia, when by surprise, they turned around and conceded to it. This is that English unprincipled imperialistic politics which was implemented by all, with the exception of W. Churchill and M. Thatcher.

I also wrote to US President Bush in 1992 by way of my friends at the CIA and proposed that all they need to do is fly over Serbia with a number of planes and frighten Belgrade, and soon I will also tell president Clinton the same. After all, at least we attained the bombing of Serbian sites in Bosnia. However, look at what American diplomat Holbrooke is doing. He is giving the Serbs in Bosnia conquests, yet I would ask him: "In regards to the Persian Gulf, why didn't you give the aggressor Saddam Hussein one-third of Kuwait as a gift in order to maintain peace?" No, instead all of Kuwait had to be returned, and the aggressor had to leave. And what is he doing now? He's suggesting that Milosevic and war criminals Mladic and Karadzic be given 1/3 of Bosnia, namely the area where they surrounded Gorazde as well as the Banja Luka region where all the Catholic churches and mosques were destroyed, while the Orthodox (Serbian) churches remained and where Foca's name was changed to Srbinje.

Western politicians do not want to be overthrown by Slobodan Milosevic and his politics. From a Stalin-Milosevic they want to make a Gorbachov-Milosevic, from a Hitler-Milosevic to an Adenauer-Milosevic. And now Milosevic declares: "We must bring Serbia back to civilisation!" Even his wife allegedly says that there shouldn't be any nationalism in Serbia. At the same time, Serbia is a totalitarian country in which there are 120,000 policemen and 115,000 soldiers. Even after the Croatian operation "Oluja", Serbia is still a police state, yet the situation is an interesting one. Now Belgrade newspapers report that in 1991 Croats defended Vukovar with rifles only and held the front against 300 Serbian tanks. Even in the so-called Krajina in Croatia they had 500 tanks, but ran from the Croatian Army as if they had none.

And what is Slobodan Milosevic's strategy today? He wants to gather all the leftists in Serbia, even Vuk Draskovic, and then create a national block which would countenance Mr. Holbrooke who wants to make a peacemaker out of Milosevic. However, in Serbia there exists a large number of small political groups and individuals, and it should not be forgotten that in Belgrade in 1991, 100,000 people took to the streets against Milosevic. I believe that the Serbian people have been following what has been going on, that they're getting the most important information, and that they will not be misled in any of this. That is why for this situation in Serbia I apply the following proverb of former American President Lincoln: "You can trick some Serbs all of the time, and all Serbs some of the time, but you can never trick all of the Serbs all of the time!" Because of this I'd like to emphasise that just as all the communist regimes were ruined, so will this one be in Serbia. The exact moment that that is to happen cannot be predicted, but everything can change overnight, demonstrations can break out that could ruin all of this.

In the end, I would like to say something about the Republic of Croatia. President Dr. Franjo Tudman, on the occasion of the celebration of Croatian Independence on May 30, 1990, said something to the effect of how he would like to build a Croatia that would be a part of the free world. It would have to be a nation with unlimited freedom with the possibility of developing into a democracy. In economic terms, private enterprise and pluralistic ownership need to be made possible in Croatia. I think that Croatia will have many hardships if headed in that direction, however. It will need

Serbia as a neighbour, but only a Serbia that will be a part of the free world as well. Because of this, I believe that the project which I mentioned at the beginning needs to be actualised. Croatia has to be given the opportunity to influence those developments in Serbia which will lead to the inclusiveness of that nation into the global democratic process and Western-European civilisation.

That is why I personally try to touch upon that evolution of Serbia wherever I go. It is also why I sent a letter in September of this year to Dobrica Cosic who I knew as a young partisan, and suggested to him: "Dobrica, if the slightest bit of integrity and bravery of a "skojevac" (member of SKOJ - League of Young Communists - which Dedijer compared to Jesuit fanaticism and the first Muslims - Muhamed's followers) still remains in you, you would appear on Serbian television, call together a press conference and beg the Serbian people for forgiveness for all the harm you've brought to them." I am afraid that old man Dobrislav is no longer competent to do that anymore.

With that fear I now live like a "Serb from the bottom of a barrel", as I sign my articles in the Serbian language. This is because sauerkraut, a favourite Serbian dish, is best right from the bottom. Since 1988, I have been fighting a lonely battle. Fighting against a Greater Serbia, many times I thought of Willy Brandt and other Germans who from 1939 to 1945 fought the battle against the myth of a Nazi Great Germany. Will it make the task harder for those who fought for a democratic Serbia in which Serbs would learn to live in equality and peace with other people in their country, with their neighbours in the Balkans and in the world?

[Prof. dr. Stjepo Obad: Konavle's Prevlaka in the Centre of European Diplomacy](#)

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Graphic Design: Gorana Benic - Hudin

Printed by: TARGA

Copies Printed: 2000

ISBN 953-6525-05-4

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KONAVLE'S PREVLAKA IN THE CENTRE OF EUROPEAN DIPLOMACY

The Prevlaka peninsula as it is being called in recent times, or Cape Ostro, Ostra or Ponta Ostra as the locals of Konavle call it, was situated in the district of Vitaljina or Vitalina during the Middle Ages. It was first mentioned in history in the tenth century, although, there is more information available about the peninsula in the fourteenth

century. In the late Middle Ages, Vitaljina was closely linked with the remaining Konavle region with whom it formed a broader geographic, economic, ethnic and religious entity. The border between Vitaljina and Prevlaka was more precisely known in the year 1391 especially in 1419 when eastern Konavle and Vitaljina, properties of the Bosnian-Herzegovinian lord Sandalj Hranic, were sold to the inhabitants of Dubrovnik. The sale contract, among other things, states that the territory passed into the possession of Dubrovnik "na vike vika" (forever and ever). Just as the remaining Konavle was divided among the citizens and estate owners of Dubrovnik, so was the peninsula of Prevlaka. The land was to be cultivated by the villagers-serfs of Vitaljina. Throughout the duration of the Republic of Dubrovnik, Prevlaka was to serve as a shelter to the people of Konavle to protect them from invading mountain tribes from the hinterlands of territory to the north-east of Konavle.

In the early eighteenth century, the Republic of Dubrovnik separated from Venetian Dalmatia and Venetian Boka Kotorska through the corridors of Sutorina and Kleka. From that time, Ottoman Herzegovina descended towards the sea on both sides of the republic and surrounded it on all three sides until its collapse in 1808. During the periods of the later nations in this region, such as Napoleon's France, Austria, Austro-Hungary and monarchist and socialist Yugoslavia, the border of Konavle with Prevlaka towards its neighbours in the south-east did not change.

Prevlaka obtained strategic importance for the first time during the conflict of interests of the great powers in the eastern Adriatic in the early nineteenth century. In order to prevent the departure of the Russian fleet from the Boka Kotorska Bay towards Dubrovnik, French marine forces landed on Prevlaka in 1806 but had to quickly pull out because of the threat by Russian Admiral Senjavin in Boka Kotorska. In the conflict of interests between the French and the Russians in this part of the eastern Adriatic, the Dubrovnik area, especially Konavle, was looted and burnt, and many innocent inhabitants were killed by the Montenegrins and by the Serbs of Boka Kotorska and eastern Herzegovina who were also supported and aided by the Russian fleet from the sea during their advance towards Dubrovnik. However, the newly arrived French land troops forced them all to withdraw so that the territory of the former Republic of Dubrovnik with Prevlaka and Boka Kotorska became a part of Napoleon's France.

MAP

After the defeat of the French in Europe (1813), the victors created a new map of Europe at the Congress of Vienna, according to which Dalmatia and Istria entered into the formation of Austria, and later Austro-Hungary until 1918. The new Kingdom of Dalmatia extended from Rab and Karlobag in the north to Budva in the south and after the Berlin Congress (1878) it reached as far as Spie near Bar. Accordingly, the former territory of the Republic of Dubrovnik with Prevlaka entered into the Kingdom of Dalmatia and like a bridge connected Dalmatia and Boka Kotorska into a broader administrative-political entity. The first modern land survey in Dalmatia, carried out in the 1820's and 1830's, and in Konavle and Prevlaka in 1837, once again confirmed the fifteenth century borders towards the neighbours to the south-east of Konavle and stretched from Cape Kobilja along the elevations of Kosara Mountain, or Montanja as the people of Vitaljina call it, to near the village of Plovice and from there over the Gumanac Mountain to Debeli Brijeg and then north along the stream and then east along the elevations of Mount Bjelotina to Kunak where Konavle borders with

Herzegovina.

During Austrian and later Austro-Hungarian rule, Prevlaka obtained strategic importance due to the construction of a fortress (For), a road, lighthouse, and pier for military purposes in the 1850's. Until the downfall of the Monarchy in 1918, there was a permanent military garrison in the fortress. Prevlaka's importance increased with the conflicting interests of the great forces in World War I. The Entente powers, namely, through a secret pact in London, promised Italy a part of the eastern Adriatic and its war ships attempted to prevent the delivery of arms, ammunition, food and reinforcements to the Austro-Hungarian military base in the Boka Kotorska Bay. Prevlaka obtained great significance for defending the entrance to the Boka Kotorska Bay as well as for preventing the disembarking of Italians in the ports of Cavtat and Molunat in Konavle. Austro-Hungarian military and civilian authorities, wishing to purchase Prevlaka, evaluated the land plots whose value amounted to 290,145.62 Austro-Hungarian crowns in gold. The authorities were ready to pay the quoted amount to the proprietors of Vitaljina and the Priests' Assembly in Dubrovnik, however, in the meantime, the war ended and the Austro-Hungarian Empire collapsed, thereby bringing an end to this transaction.

In the new Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, the Yugoslavian army took possession of the Prevlaka point and during the period between the two wars, the army slowly spread toward the middle of the peninsula, constructing new buildings along with another pier on the inner side, as well as military hangars. The farmers of Vitaljina were denied the cultivation of the land and the gathering of harvest. On several occasions, the peasants complained to civil and military authorities on all levels, even to the government president Petar Zivkovic and King Aleksandar Karadjordjevic. They stated, amongst other things, that their plots of land in Prevlaka were their source of life and that they were paying taxes on land which they were not cultivating, forcing many to become beggars. However, all complaints were in vain. Some families from Vitaljina, who had been serfs for the Priests' Assembly in Dubrovnik, officially rather than practically, became land owners during the agrarian reform of 1931, so that all of Prevlaka was in the was owned by the villagers of Vitaljina.

With the creation of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, neighbouring Boka Kotorska was forcefully separated from Dalmatia with whom for centuries it had lived a civilised life administratively, economically, and culturally, and was annexed to the Zeta District (1922), then the Zeta Banovina (Ban's dominion) (1929) in other words - Montenegro. This is how the centuries-old historical border between Venetian, Austrian, French, and again Austrian or Austro-Hungarian Dalmatia, one of three Croatian lands, towards Montenegro, was tyrannically severed and moved west to the old border which divided Konavle and Sutorina along the mountain tops of Kosara (Montanja), Gumanac, Debeli Brijeg, and Bjelotina.

During World War II, the eastern half of Konavle with Prevlaka and Boka Kotorska found itself under Italian occupation. There was an Italian military crew and camp on the peninsula of Prevlaka where anti-fascists were brought mainly from the coastal areas. After the collapse of fascist Italy, Prevlaka was occupied by the Germans until the end of the war when it was freed by Croatian partisans. During the war, the farmers freely cultivated the land in Prevlaka and gathered their harvest.

In the first few years after the war, the farmers of Vitaljina cultivated the free plots of land in Prevlaka. However, the lots with military facilities were not accessible for cultivation or grazing. From 1951 to 1954, the Yugoslavian National Army paid rent to the farmers for the land on which there were military facilities. The State Secretariat for National Defence in Belgrade was ordered to administer the plots of land and the military facilities on Prevlaka. Two years later, the farmers were denied access to Prevlaka and the payment of rent was suspended to those Vitaljina farmers on whose land military facilities were to be found. The farmers voiced complaints to the civil and military authorities and pleaded that they be paid for the "confiscated land," or that they be given back their property to cultivate since they continued to pay taxes. They did not succeed. Finally, on December 15, 1958, the State Secretariat of National Defence brought a resolution, which, among other things, determines that the body which will administer property in the Vitaljina cadastral district, including Prevlaka, will be the State Secretariat of National Defence." The District Court in Dubrovnik, as the land registry court, had to carry out the registration. This was done. The appeals of the farmers to the Regional Court in Dubrovnik and the Supreme Court in Zagreb were in vain. The latter, namely, replied that the decision of the Regional Court was "final and valid". Since there was no legal redress, the farmers turned to some well known generals and admirals who promised to intercede on their behalf but nothing became of it. The farmers also called upon one of Montenegro's most prominent leaders, Blaz Jovanovic, who told them: "You are in the right but you are weak". In the end they decided to visit Josip Broz Tito in Belgrade to complain about the behaviour of the military authorities but they could not gather enough money to settle the travel and hotel expenses so that in the end they gave up. This is how the farmers of Vitaljina lost both their land and money. After World War II, in the territorial exchange between the government of the People's Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the government of the People's Republic of Montenegro, Herzegovina's Sutorina became a part of Montenegro. From then on, the People's Republic of Croatia, subsequently called the Socialist Republic of Croatia, and today's independent and sovereign Republic of Croatia border with Montenegro, along the same elevations marked in the land registry books of the fifteenth and nineteenth centuries. With the formation of the independent and free Croatian state, after multi-party and democratic elections, the question arose as to the future existence of the Yugoslav Army on its territory and in Prevlaka. In July of 1991, around the village of Vitaljina, the Yugoslav People's Army installed three machine-gun nests. The first provocation occurred on September 13, 1991, when a Croatian police van was attacked from Ilinica as it was approaching Vitaljina from Dubrovnik. The same incident occurred again the following day. On Sunday, September 22, 1991, the Yugoslav People's Army opened machine gun fire from the exact place on the Vitaljina people in the centre of a village called Greben, a place where the villagers regularly gathered on Sunday afternoons. They quickly scattered for shelter and, fortunately no one was killed. On the following day, the frightened people abandoned their homes and headed towards Cavtat and Dubrovnik. The provocation continued and within the next few days the members of the Yugoslav People's Army by agreement, shot at one another in such a way as to blame the "Ustashe" from Vitaljina of attacking them. Meanwhile, the people of Vitaljina were completely defenceless. The Yugoslav Army resorted to all kinds of fabrications, well-known from histories of warfare, so as to instigate Serbs and Montenegrins into turning against the Croats in the Dubrovnik region thereby justifying a general attack on the region on October 1, 1991. The Yugoslav People's Army attacked Konavle from the Montenegrin and Herzegovinian side by land, sea, and air. The majority of people were forced to leave their homes and move into Cavtat, Dubrovnik and other Croatian towns. A group of forty inhabitants of Konavle decided to move into the mountains in order to defend their birthplace. Over one hundred homes were

looted and burned while many people were captured and placed into the camps in Morinje and Bileca where they were mistreated in such a way that some became ill and died while others were simply killed. After the year long occupation of the Dubrovnik hinterland and the shelling of Dubrovnik which occurred repeatedly, an agreement was reached between the President of Croatia, Dr. Franjo Tudjman and the President of the so-called Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, Dobrica Cosic, in Geneva, in which the Yugoslav Army had to pull out of the Dubrovnik area. This was the first time the Yugoslav Army, by agreement, had to withdraw from Croatian national territory, while the peninsula Prevlaka was to remain under the control of United Nations observers.

During the last several years, we have often heard and read in the media the pronounced Greater Serbian claims that the peninsula Prevlaka in southern Croatia had in fact always belonged to them giving eastern Herzegovina access to the sea. Since Prevlaka, along with the rest of Konavle, has, since the Middle Ages, belonged to Dubrovnik, Dalmatia, and Croatia geographically, cadastrally, administratively, judicially, ecclesiastically, religiously, and nationally, eastern Herzegovina has its own two hundred and fifty year-old access to the sea in Sutorina with which Prevlaka and the rest of Konavle were never politically joined. Prevlaka never belonged to Montenegro nor does was it ever needed by the Montenegrins, as representatives of the Montenegrin liberal opposition claim, and Serbia has an exit to the sea directly and indirectly through Montenegro. Diplomats and politicians should know and should take into account historical and natural rights and the fundamental human rights of the centuries-old farmers and today's land owners on Prevlaka, on which they live and from which they have been departing for half a century, as well as the interests of the Croatian state for this its most southern region whose inhabitants they are. With the break-up of the former Yugoslavia, this region became the meeting place of two new state realities: the Republic of Croatia and the Republic of Montenegro and it would be best for both sides if this area were to become in the future an oasis of peace, a factor of stability and a heaven-sent area for domestic and foreign tourists and not a potential war zone which neither people want.

[Muhamed Zlatan Hrenovica: Structural Aspects of Greater Serbian Crimes in Bosnia and Herzegovina from 1991 to 1995](#)

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An International Symposium "SOUTHEASTERN EUROPE 1918-1995"

Publisher: [Croatian Heritage Foundation](#) & [Croatian Information Centre](#)

For the Publisher: Ante Beljo

Expert Counsellor: Dr. sc. Dragutin Pavlicevic

Editor: Aleksander Ravlic

Graphic Design: Gorana Benic - Hudin

Printed by: TARGA

Copies Printed: 2000

ISBN 953-6525-05-4

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STRUCTURAL ASPECTS OF GREATER SERBIAN CRIMES IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA FROM 1991 TO 1995

Ladies and gentlemen, esteemed scholars and dear guests, I bring sincere greetings to you all from encircled Sarajevo, the ancient center of multiethnic, multicultural and

multidenominational heritage. Sarajevo; a city under siege, where human life is the cheapest item on the market of human insanity, not yet liberated but always democratic.

For the duration of the war, I have been residing in Sarajevo, with my family and three children.

With all the due respect of scholarly methodology in expressing facts regarding important topics such as these discussed in this international symposium, as the author of this account of Greater Serbian crimes in Bosnia and Herzegovina, I could not avoid the need to direct this entire factual material which I have collected to a repeated appeal for general vigilance and constant caution. All this in order that the evil which happened to us and which, unfortunately, is happening still, may, in the future, be prevented in time and hopefully altogether destroyed. Let it never again be repeated!

Therefore, this study about inhumanity will serve as a repeated plea for action into creating something humane. So, if some of my words sound harsh and or even somewhat pathetic to you rational scholars, I apologize, because I, as a direct witness to numerous bloody events in Sarajevo, am morally obligated to completely, responsibly and rationally convey a portion of the events and conditions in which the Greater Serbian criminal aggression against the contemporary, internationally recognized Bosnia and Herzegovina escalated.

Although my task is to speak about the Greater Serbian aggression against Bosnia and Herzegovina with respect to various structural aspects, we will have to, from time to time, refer to similar events in the Republic of Croatia, because just as the Croatians and Bosnian Muslims were equally endangered in Bosnia and Herzegovina, so the contemporary republics of Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina possessed similar or identical experiences in the former, so-called Yugoslavia, with respect to the same enemy - the Serbian executors of conquering plans.

The structural analysis of Greater Serbian crimes in Bosnia and Herzegovina from 1991 until 1995, clearly reveals who is behind the creation of the Greater Serbian idea of hegemony or total domination in South-eastern Europe.

The multi-disciplinary approach to the planning of and execution of these crimes indisputably points to the fact that the renewal of the Greater Serbian project brought together the vast majority of Serbians. We must immediately make it clear that Chetniks are not the only ones at question here, as part of the total personal criminal structure, but rather the significant, *majority of the total Serbian national corps*. Since "Nacertanije", though the crimes committed in World War II, (especially those crimes concealed because of the so-called "Yugoslav national interests"), up to today's aggression, the domination of the Serbian Balkan lobby has been present in all spheres of life in the former so-called Yugoslavia. We must acknowledge that in the preparations and especially in the actualization of the criminal Greater Serbian project, its creators have succeeded in including all structural groups, from members of the so-called SANU to the most primitive social groups of problematic mental condition. This must be taken into consideration for the interpretation and the categorization of the manifold crimes committed in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The SANU memorandum succeeded in assembling a great number of "imbued" Serbian intellectuals of all scholarly fields. This wave was transmitted analogously to

other, lesser spiritual levels and up to the most massive support of the Serbian people "indoctrinated" by the Greater Serbian idea. This people had begun to suffer and was truly "endangered" by an epidemic of the "mythomania virus", which is inconceivable in a modern civilization. It was on the basis of this that all methods and forms of Greater Serbian crimes evolved. At this point, we must acknowledge a crucial fact: *Serbians know themselves well*. This is no surprise, nor are there exceptions! And it is in fact on the basis of these perceptions that they were able to employ all those axioms of endangerment as objectives for their crimes. In this manner, through various axiological levels, they realised a systematic group of crimes, endangering literally all the areas of life of peoples, victims of the Greater Serbian aggression.

Among reasonable people, and especially scholars, it is difficult to find a sufficiently convincing explanation for the type, cruelty and quantity of atrocities committed. For this reason, it may be very instructive to know the claim that the atrocities were based on the Serbians knowing themselves and on the knowledge the creators of these destructive ideas had of those who so devotedly carried them out. Thus, it may be suggested that fertile ground for the perception and successful reception of the mythomaniac tradition was found at one level of the mental framework of the majority of Serbians, through upbringing and tradition. The mythomaniac tradition, ranging from the incomprehensible celebrations of the flagrant defeat at Kosovo in 1389 to the nebulous autosuggestion that the Serbs were "divine people" are not the least bit innocent. In fact, they are based on that mental framework already mentioned. The evident level of ignorance and the innate mentality of barbarianism of the Serbs serves as the catalyst in this process.

On the other hand, all these circumstances were of advantage to the Serbs because the European and world public was completely confused by this, to them inconceivable, mythomania. The "Serbian mental chip" is not compatible with the codes of spiritual interaction of contemporary civilization, but it is certainly shocking! For this reason among others, European and world communities were late, and are still behind schedule, in decisively reacting to Serbian crimes. It is as if they still haven't seen through or are perhaps accepting the Serbian mythological-national-chauvinistic alibi. This confusion the world is experiencing with respect to the impossibility of perceiving signals of the so-called "Serbian chip" has given the basis and the wings for their foreign affairs activities, which has to a great degree delayed and made more difficult the path to the truth. Today, fortunately, things are quite different.

The syndrome of Serbian warped notions of heroism, all-Serbian unity, racial domination and megalomaniacal claims of ownership of other people's territories is so powerful that Serbians themselves believe in this lie, let alone the insufficiently informed world public. This gave them sufficient time to commit a great number of crimes from their bloody palette in order to paint the picture of the conquering invasion of South-eastern Europe.

PREPARATIONS FOR AGGRESSION

A part of the international community still believes that the wars on the Balkans are a type of "natural status" for the nations there. The tragedy of the people in Bosnia and Herzegovina, however, infers something quite different. What is at hand here is obviously an extensively and carefully prepared aggression executed by Serbia and Montenegro upon an internationally recognized, therefore sovereign state, endeavouring, at the price of totally destroying Bosnia and Herzegovina, to deter the plans of the citizens of Bosnian-Herzegovina to join contemporary international trends

by adopting a western type of democracy. This Serbo-Montenegrin aggression, supported in the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina by paramilitary formations from Serbia and SDS terrorists, as well as by the rebellion of part of the local Serbian population, represents in fact the final attempt of the remaining communist forces, together with hegemonic and nationalistic militants and the Serbian Orthodox Church, to prevent the establishment of democratic states on the territory of the former Yugoslavia. In fact, according to the opinions of several well respected analysts, the world public is beginning to accept the attitude that the issue here is something which may be referred to as "Serbian fascism", with all the accompanying manifestations which this phenomenon implies and clearly illustrates: disrespect for the norms of international law; aggression against neighbouring, internationally recognized states, member-states of the United Nations, for the purpose of occupying their territories; unheard of genocide against the citizens of states whose land is partially occupied; persecution of political opponents, including members of other nationalities; suppression of freedom of the press and other media and placing them under the control of the state which, through war-mongering propaganda, conducts itself with arrogance and hypocrisy towards significant international factors; the causing of uncertainty and instability in the entire region; support of extreme militant nationalism in addition to religious (orthodox) integration; introduction of national and religious intolerance and exclusivism into social relations.

Without exaggeration, it may be asserted that the appearance of Serbian fascism has been in preparation for decades. Its military manifestation in 1991, during the aggression against Slovenia and Croatia, overwhelmed the local and international communities, only to escalate especially in the spring of 1992 in the aggression against the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina. According to the opinions of some independent intellectuals and analysts, those responsible for the war are the following: The Serbian Academy of Arts and Sciences (SANU), the General Staff of the JNA (Yugoslav People's Army), Milosevic and his government and the Serbian Orthodox Church, which blessed the daily politics. A list of institutions, associations, political parties and individuals who participated in the preparations for the war is much longer. The question, therefore, arises regarding the responsibility of the creators of the ideology, with which Milosevic established power and began the war, and of those who constantly propagated the war. Without doubt, those who are responsible are the intellectual leaders of the Serbian national movement revolving around SANU. Even Karadzic, the unsuccessful neuropsychiatrist from the Durmitor Mountain, claims that his parliament is the most intellectual in the world, considering it is comprised exclusively of university professors, doctors and quasi humanists. Karadzic himself is surely the best indication as to what kind of intellectuals they are. During a parliamentary session, one of these "humanists" stated: "It is time our glorious, chetnik troikas made a move across Europe and America, as well as throughout Serbia". As a reminder, "chetnik troikas" were, during the Second World War, Serbian terrorist groups used for the liquidation of political opponents, especially members of other nationalities. So, when a Serbian says "democracy": read "dominancy"!

THE SANU MEMORANDUM - A PLATFORM FOR AGGRESSION

In order to present, to a certain degree, the circumstances which led to today's tragedy in Bosnia and Herzegovina, we should be reminded of some prior events. September 1986, saw the completion of the "SANU Memorandum" whose spiritual father, Dobrica Cosic, attempted to present himself to the public as an opposition democrat, whereas he was, in fact, only a national-communist-factionalist, dissatisfied with the fact that he was not in power. Later, Serbian academicians and politicians proclaimed this

document incomplete, which it was in effect, because the second part of the document, with respect to the war, was still being completed in specialised institutions and departments of the General Staff of the so-called JNA.

SANU, with its tendentious re-shaping of history, gave the Serbian regime and its followers the theoretical basis for waging the war against the neighbouring nations. The "Memorandum" was based on the senile ideas and frustrations of SANU members who wished to influence the outcome of Serbian history because they believed that it "was not concluded as successfully as it should have been in 1918". From the point of view of the attacked states, in particular the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the "Memorandum" is a document of aggression because time has shown that the events of the war were simply a means of actualizing the ideas contained within it. Certain events which occurred shortly after the completion of this document are still fresh in our mind, such as the removal of Slovenians, Croats and Bosniacs-Muslims from government, business and cultural institutions. In accordance with this ideological preparation and with the support of the JNA, the war criminal Karadzic, when speaking in the Bosnian-Herzegovinian parliament, was able to threaten: "Muslims will disappear because there is no one to protect them!" and to claim in the Serbian media in March 1992: "Not only are the Serbs ready for war, they were born for it". (Data from documents of the State Commission for the Collation of Data on War Crimes)

THE ROLE OF VISIONARY-EMIGRANTS IN THE EARLY EXPOSURE OF THE GREATER SERBIAN EVIL

Few people were able to see through the heavy disguise of serbianism and the intentions of Greater Serbian planners. Rare, but valuable sign-posts in this direction were the harsh and instructive reactions of our emigrants and their organizations abroad, who were able, from afar, to objectively observe and adequately evaluate the upcoming danger. For this reason, in the light of past and future analyses of the emergence and development of Greater Serbian hegemonic and conquering assaults upon neighbouring peoples and their sovereign states, the role of emigrants deserves the special attention of scholars in the early exposure of Greater Serbian and other evils which drove them from their homeland.

With almost unmistakable vision and decisive condemnation of Serbian crimes throughout the lengthy history of South-eastern Europe, our emigrants, visionaries of a new era, forewarned the world, pointing out the dangers of Greater Serbian hegemony and expansion. Unfortunately, we did not heed these warnings on time. The price of this negligence is high - thousands of victims of numerous barbaric methods of genocide and other drastic forms of evil. For this reason, the role of our emigrant-visionaries should be taken more seriously, perceived more responsibly and placed at the level which it objectively deserves. Their warnings, advice and experiences were paid by many years of exile and suffering for they felt the weight of the evil on their own skin. Thus, we must believe them. We must hear and listen to them on time. The world will be a better place and our people will be safer and happier if we do so.

In this respect, allow me to present an indicative and very instructive example, familiar to me in great detail.

Mate Sarlija, also known as, General DAIDZA, with a vast knowledge of history and of Serbian crimes committed during a lengthy period of attempts to establish a "Greater Serbia", was himself a victim of Greater Serbian aggression (his father was brutally tortured and killed in Sarajevo, his family was persecuted, he and his older brother

were exiled). As a longtime emigrant, General DAIDZA endeavored to convey some of his experiences to the leaders in Bosnia and Herzegovina of the approaching Greater Serbian dangers. As an experienced soldier, he advised that the people prepare themselves for an organized armed resistance against the Serbian aggressor. At that time, immediately prior to the aggression, this well-intentioned warning was not taken seriously.

The people of Bosnia and Herzegovina faced the aggression with significantly less weaponry and ill prepared. Croatia, however, listened to General DAIDZA and proclaimed him first brigadier of the Croatian Army.

- I emphasize this example, *as one of many*, as indicative and extremely instructive in the evaluation of *the position and role of the emigrant-visionary*. This category of patriot, immeasurably valuable in the creation of national identities and sovereign states, should be respected as the basic value and pointer in the early, preventive exposure of dangers such as Greater Serbian aggression. We in Bosnia say that those who do not see flagrant events in a nation's fate are "blind about the eyes". In order that we do not have to use this saying too often, I propose and invite scholars to take into consideration and adequately study, in corresponding scientific research, the mentioned category of patriot, emigrant-visionary.

THE ACTIVE PARTICIPATION OF THE SERBIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH IN THE AGGRESSION

The Serbian Orthodox Church (SPC), with the Holy Bishop's Synod at the head, has a special place and plays an active role in the complex structure of the crimes of the Greater Serbian onslaught. The role of the Serbian Orthodox Church and especially the Holy Bishop's Synod was, to say the least, that of an accessory. The palette of these activities is wide and colorful, ranging from its ideological support of Serbian nationalists and fundamentalists to its outright participation in arming its believers. The militant shepherds distributed weapons to their unbridled flocks. Profuse documentation regarding this exists in the archives. Throughout history, there has never been such a direct, unhidden, in a way, insolent, meddling of high-ranking religious dignitaries in ideologically based and even practiced preparations of atrocities.

In the first days of the aggression against Bosnia and Herzegovina, members of the resistance movement in Sarajevo had already discovered several Orthodox priests who were directly arming their alleged believers. Armories of infantry and anti-tank armaments were found in the priests' possession, including special butcher knives and steel wires for strangulation, in other words, silent liquidation. The Orthodox Church in Meljine in Dobrinja, a Sarajevo suburb, still under construction in 1991, was in fact the logistics center of the Serbian paramilitary forces. The church priest used the facilities more for the distribution of weapons, rather than for a place of worship. Because it was located in the immediate proximity of a very large military base of the JNA in Lukavica, this church was a transmission point for weaponry which was secretly transported from the Lukavica base to the church and distributed to parishioners after religious services. The responsibility of the patriarchy of the SPC lies in the fact that it not only participated in the inauguration of the Milosevic regime rather it expected the Milosevic regime to complete its imperial adventure, conscious of the fact that Serbia could gain much more territory and influence. Some of the high dignitaries of the Orthodox Church blamed Milosevic for "betraying the warring and Greater Serbia". The hierarchy of the Serbian Church, however, was not blamed for pushing Serbia into war. Milosevic to them is guilty for unsuccessfully beginning to bring the war to a close. Apart from

Milosevic, everyone else is apparently in the right - SANU, SPC, the opposition, the socialists, Chetniks, journalists, the university, the army, the volunteers. If the SPC already knew that Milosevic was guilty, why did it so persistently follow him in his crusade for a "Greater Serbia"? All of these, in fact, were delusions and endeavours. They were playing the game on two fields - militant on one side and alleged peacemaker on the other. Church doctrine does not excuse association with evil forces. The vulgarisation of the Orthodox Church today is prominent, more than ever before. One of the reasons for this lies in the association of the SPC with the governing Serbian nationalists.

The Holy Bishops' Synod officially announced the militant position of the Orthodox Church at its convention on January 18, 1992. It was then stated that "the church and Serbian nation has never recognized the AVNOJ borders (borders drawn up by the Anti-fascist Council of the National Liberation of Yugoslavia)" and that "no one's agreements could bind the nation, as a whole, without the nation's consent and without the blessing of their mother Serbian Orthodox Church". This illustrated that the Serbian Orthodox Church concerned itself more with politics than with religious activities. In December of the same year, the Holy Synod issued a report in which the Serbian Orthodox Church found it adequate to state, alongside all the sufferings of the population of Bosnia and Herzegovina, that mass rape had not been performed by Serbians upon Muslim women in Bosnia and that these were "fabricated accusations serving as dishonorable war propaganda against the Serbian nation as a whole". In May 1993, the Holy Synod supported the referendum, the results of which were rejected by the international community on occupied territories in the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, openly illustrating that it stood behind the aggressor and the aggressor's objectives. The Serbian patriarch, Pavle, never decidedly condemned the massive atrocities performed by Serbians against Bosnian Muslims and Croats. He even expressed support of the Serbian army, in effect, condoning their terror against the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

THE DISHONORABLE ROLE OF SERBIAN HISTORIANS AND JOURNALISTS

Serbian historians from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia and Montenegro, played an important role in the theoretical preparation of the aggression against Bosnia and Herzegovina which escalated to unheard of genocide, unprecedented in the history of Europe after World War II. Complying to the principle of "creating history", they offered justification for their premeditated crimes, in advance, providing an alibi before the crime.

Alongside the historians, the media's role in the preparation of war was almost immeasurable. The so-called "media dogs of war" illustrated that this honorable and truth-loving profession can become the opposite. Breaking all codes and moral norms in the journalist profession, reporters of the state-owned radio, television and press, for a full five years rapidly prepared the Serbian public for the events which would follow in 1991 and 1992 and escalate to aggression and genocide in the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Using such corrupt propaganda, the major part of Serbian public opinion still does not accept other opinions, or arguments and further believes that the world is wrong. In addition to this, they reject reports by independent and, of course, objective agencies from which it can be seen that Serbians committed more war crimes on these territories than Germans during the Second World War.

The scale of evil which the Serbian, Montenegrin and their puppet media on the occupied territories of other states has produced in the last few years, reminds us

remarkably of the propaganda machine led by Dr. Goebbels in the Second World War. Such created evil and methods, which were applied as a result of his provocations, lead us to conclude that the actions of the mentioned aggressive and secessionist Serbian media may be viewed as *a completely new category of crime against peace and humanity*. At the end of this short account of the active participation of the media and their place in the structure of Serbian crimes, I should also mention that the so-called "Serbian television", "Serbian radio" and the papers which are controlled by the regime of criminals, Karadzic and the SDS, are only branches of the propaganda headquarters in Belgrade. Mr. Roy Gutman, the recipient of the Pulitzer prize was indeed correct in saying: "*Serbians are experts in psychological operations because they have transformed great lies into an craft*".

MILITARY ATTACK UPON CIVILIANS

The basic terminology used in all levels of the polysemic structure of Greater Serbian atrocities in Bosnia and Herzegovina is implicit: *military attack upon civilians*. We are aware that war is an armed conflict between two or more armies, but what do we call a military attack on unarmed civilians? Only one word exists for this: *TERRORISM!* This is a characteristic which is most prominent in all axiological levels of our topic. For this reason, in our task of structural categorization of Serbian crimes, we will pay well deserved attention to this part of Greater Serbian polysemic atrocities. The military attack upon civilians is most ruthlessly observed in examples of *war crimes against children*.

On the territory of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the greatest victims of war are children. From the beginning of the aggression against the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina it was a daily occurrence for children of all ages to be killed, wounded, exiled, imprisoned, raped, used as means of bargaining and as living shields in order for the Serbian aggressors to achieve their objectives. Many children disappeared during the massive expulsion by the aggressor, so today, the fate of numerous children is not known. The majority of casualties among children in Sarajevo were caused by snipers, grenades and mines, but particularly by mass artillery fire which resulted in real massacres. The massive sufferings of children occurred in all municipalities of the city of Sarajevo in Alipasino polje, in front of the UNPROFOR base, in phase "C", while tobogganing, standing in line for humanitarian aid in Dobrinja, and during a game at the sports' stadium in Dobrinja. Mines and shells took many children's lives in Sedrenik, Vratnik, Bistrik, Kosevo. For those who are unfamiliar with Sarajevo, this means: everywhere in the city. This is indisputable evidence that the enemy, the Serbo-Montenegrin aggressor, chose his targets. The aggressor bombed the Maternity Hospital and the Children's Surgery in Sarajevo. Therefore, the aggressor deliberately chose children as targets in their killings. According to data from the Republic Institute for Health Care and the Republic Centre for Health and Social Care since the beginning of the aggression against the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina until August 29, 1994, the number of war victims among children in 61 municipalities is as follows:

- 16,693 children killed, died of hunger and exposure or disappeared, of whom 1,566 were from Sarajevo;
- 34,331 children in the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina were wounded of whom 1,566 were from Sarajevo;
- 1,821 children have thus far been registered as permanently disabled;
- 650,000 children from the entire Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, now living as refugees in other countries;

- 420,000 displaced children on territory under the control of the legal authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina. *This is incomplete data and the correct number is unfortunately greater.* Nevertheless, these overwhelming numbers are not the only confirmation of suffering of children because of the Serbian terrorists. The weight of their atrocities is much heavier when we present the *structural aspects of crimes against children*. Serbian terrorists did not only kill children using artillery weaponry and snipers, they also carried out mass expulsion of children from the temporarily occupied territories. In the Sarajevo region alone, 20,000 children were exiled in this manner.

Female children (minors) on the territory of Grbavica and Vogosca were raped and the majority were subsequently killed. As an example of these monstrous crimes I'll mention the statement of a young girl from Foca in the Psychiatric Clinic in Sarajevo. I quote: "They took me to the command centre of the Serbian army in Miljevina, in a motel. Everyone was in uniform. They all carried knives, guns and had emblems of the "Serbian Volunteer Guard". First, Pero Elez raped me and threatened that the entire guard would rape me if I resisted."

Foca was among the first cities to be targeted by the Serbian aggressor. This was in fact where the unprecedented genocide against children occurred. Children were held captive in the women's prison in Foca and subsequently in the secondary school center. Children were maltreated here in various ways, including having to be present at and observe their mothers and other women being raped.

Children served as living shields for the Serbian aggressor, as well: In Kalesija (Hajvazi and Bulatovci) in Sarajevo (on Mount Zuc), in Brcko (in the Brcko harbor) and elsewhere.

Over a hundred women and children on the territory of Rogatice were slaughtered, set on fire and trampled on by armoured vehicles. In Prijedor, 20,000 women and children were exiled, killed and massacred. These are only examples of various forms of the atrocities which the Serbian terrorists used in their genocidal onslaught in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In the entire structure of the atrocities against children, there were even those perfidious one, disguised as concern for the children in the war. In the forefront of these activities was the children's embassy "Medjasi", under the leadership of Dusko Tomic, a KOS (counter intelligence service) officer. In one convoy, organized by this organization, over 7,200 women and children were detained in Ilidza and used to bargain the release of Serbian snipers and other criminals who had been arrested imprisoned by Sarajevo's defense forces.

Dusko Tomic, a former KOS officer and a Serb from the "Medjasi Village" is still in Sarajevo, a free man and involved in suspicious, allegedly humanitarian work. His specialty is placing children without parents into homes for homeless children. Although there have been reports from Italy regarding the sale of children from Sarajevo, carried out by the so-called "Children's Embassy", measures against this KOS officer have still not been taken. This example should be perceived as one of the perfidious forms of Serbian atrocities, extremely indicative in the entire analysis of the forms and types of crimes performed in Bosnia.

The number of examples of Serbian terrorist attacks on civilians is extremely large. We will list only some based on reports by the Commission for Human Rights. One of these reports states that civilians and UN employees were constantly targeted as for example in Gorazde. Weapons, such as anti-aircraft tanks and mortars were used. These attacks occurred daily and resulted in blood baths, according to the report. The massacres in Sarajevo alone: in Ferhadija 1992, Markale 1994, Markale 1995, attacks on the Casualty and Surgery Clinics, on bakeries and on bread and water lines, give enough reason to say and prove to reasonable people that this is a military attack upon civilians, thus a terrorist act, and not "heroism" in a chivalrous battle among combatants.

DEATH FACTORIES

Contrary to all international conventions and with the goal of physically destroying Bosnians to create ethnically clean territories, from the first day of occupation the Serbian aggressor formed numerous concentration camps and prisons on the territory of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Their occurrence was not a singular or an uncontrollable incident, but rather a functional creation for the realization of the plan for forced exile and relocation of the Bosnian population. Concentration camps and prisons, as one of the most drastic symbols of fascism during World War II, were revived, in a most horrendous manner in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Barbaric, immeasurable crimes, occurred and are still occurring in such camps and prisons.

CONCENTRATION CAMPS

On the territory of the municipalities of Prijedor, Banjaluka, Bosanska Krupa, Bosanski Novi, Brcko, Kljuc, Kotor Varos and Sanski Most, the aggressor formed 50 concentration camps among which as many as 17, were on the territory of the Prijedor municipality. The camps are: Omarska, Trnopolje, Keraterm, Manjaca, Tomasica, Brezina, the sports center in Prijedor and others. The most notorious were of course Omarska, Keraterm, Trnopolje and Manjaca. 45-50 thousand inhabitants of this part of the Bosanska Krajina passed through these camps and the majority were killed there, as were thousands of Croatians and other peoples of Bosnia.

The common characteristics of all these camps are:

- individual and mass murders of prisoners;
- capture and imprisonment of people without legal basis (*the only criterion being national* - psychological and physical torture in unimaginable forms against imprisoned civilians;
- conditions which do not meet even the most basic needs.

Special types of camps were the so-called women's camps which were formed in cafe's, private homes, apartments and hotels and served for sadistic sexual violence, unimaginable psychological torture and the sexual indulgence of the aggressors. Victims were usually girls and young women. It was not rare, however, *for children (girls 14 and under)* and women older than 60 years to be victims as well. The Bosnian tragedy and golgotha is observed most deeply in the tragedy of their women and children. The Chetniks took special pleasure in dishonouring Bosnian women and girls knowing that in World War II Bosnians were known to say to their oppressors: "I give you my life, save my honour!"

ETHNIC CLEANSING OR A TERMINOLOGICAL CAMOUFLAGE OF THE REAL EVIL

As a separate and monstrous form of atrocity, this neoracist act has made an indelible

stain on the face of civilized Europe and the world. In Germany there is a sort of judicial table in the Society for the German Language which announced that "ethnic cleansing" was the ugliest term introduced into daily communication in 1992. Without this of course, we know that every war, including this war, Greater Serbia against Croatia and Bosnia, not only has its heroes and cowards, but also its own dictionary or phrase book. And even without this, we can sense that its basis in the evil spirit of its pre-word and all-word is precisely the term "ethnic cleansing". If nothing else, from the context in which it has been used for the past several years, one cannot discern whether it contains something more or something different from the word "genocide", whose place it has taken and completely replaced. A certain Alain Finkielkraut says that "Serbians do not even use Nazi euphemisms, they do not speak ambiguously about some "ultimate cleansing" rather they openly speak of "ethnic cleansing" with their cards on the table". It is true that the Nazi "ultimate solution" is a euphemism, but so is "ethnic cleansing" as its purpose is also to verbally conceal the type of crime which the "ultimate solution" also endeavoured to conceal. So much about the terminological pretenses behind which is concealed the organised resettlement of the population with immeasurable consequences for families and children, entire nations and probably for the definitive picture and fate of contemporary Europe. Finally, let us take a look at the types of euphemisms for the flagrant crime of mass murder used by the Greater Serbian side. One of these terms is "national transformation" which emerged in a speech by the rebel Knin authorities in the spring of 1992, in order to explain the fact there were no Croats in the Slunj municipality although, prior to 1992, 60% of the Slunj municipality was Croat. Another example is found in a letter by Dobrica Cosic to Boutros Ghali, in which he states that this bloody war is in effect a "re-composition of diasporic Balkan nations". In Belgrade they explained to an Italian journalist how Croats from Vojvodina should be resettled to Croatia, and Serbians from Croatia should be moved into their villages in Vojvodina calling this "demographic compensation".

URBACIDE AND CULTUROCID

The very first day of aggression against the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina saw the start of the destruction of the land, towns, villages, cultural and historical monuments, business facilities, factories, infrastructure, residential blocks and sacral objects. The aggressor, therefore, systematically destroyed every type of physical manifestation of the architectural filigree tissue of our homeland. Systematically and with all available means, the aggressor destroyed all aspects of life by performing a planned cultural genocide and urbicide simultaneously destroying anything urban, symbolizing the notion of civilization as well as the tradition of co-existence among Bosnian peoples. This was an attack of the rural against the urban. Since the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina is a state of multicultural values of architectural and artistic heritage, the aggressor had special reason to attack the wealthy architectural heritage of all traditional styles from all eras. *Thus, not only the people in Bosnia were attacked, but everything human.* This was an attack on that polysemic group of categories which is popularly referred to as the multiethnic, multidenominational and multicultural centre. This stratified "multi" contains all the beauty of the co-existence and interfusion of nations and their traditions into one civilized and democratic community.

Finally, instead of a conclusion, I remind you that the obvious interaction of various forms and methods in the structure of Greater Serbian crimes is not the result of the systematic realization of their idea. This interfusion of axiological levels of various crimes represents a group of Greater Serbian desires for hegemony and the destruction of everything non-Serbian. The amazing thing is the attack on the identity of

a nation, which is close to them - at least on the basis of denominational similarities. For example, Montenegrins and Serbians are both of the Orthodox faith. The inclination of Serbians towards hegemony has escalated in this respect as well. This is an extremely instructive basic characteristic of all Greater Serbian endeavors. Hegemony excludes democracy. When a Serbian says democracy, read dominance. In this respect, the many previous attempts by democratic communities to live with Serbians have suffered a great danger: the imposition of domination! Thus, the category of exclusiveness becomes a definition of Serbian national egoism.

SOURCES OF DATA:

- 1. State Commission for the Collection of Data on War Crimes Committed on Bosnian and Herzegovian territory;
- 2. Results of research by independent organizations
 - a) AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL
 - b) HELSINKY WATCH;
- 3. Reports from the UN Commission for Human Rights;
- 4. The repoer
- 5. Authentic statements by witnesses and victims of crimes.

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An International Symposium "SOUTHEASTERN EUROPE 1918-1995"

Publisher: [Croatian Heritage Foundation](#) & [Croatian Information Centre](#)

For the Publisher: Ante Beljo

Expert Counsellor: Dr. sc. Dragutin Pavlicevic

Editor: Aleksander Ravlic

Graphic Design: Gorana Benic - Hudin

Printed by: TARGA

Copies Printed: 2000

ISBN 953-6525-05-4

[IMPRESSUM](#)



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THE SERBIAN ARMED AGGRESSION AGAINST CROATIA FROM 1990 TO 1995

REMARK

The Serbian armed aggression on Croatia in 1991 signified the first in a series of events (the process of the break-up of Yugoslavia, the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina...)

which have brought into question the controlled course of European history since the Second World War. Despite the fact that the crisis, even after five years duration, has not yet been quietened, it is important to note the general circumstances which caused it, as well as to present in chronological order the course of the Serbian aggression. For this task it is important to bear in mind the requirements of the book itself, as well as the lack of documents and previous scholarly works which deal with actual events in south-eastern Europe.

HISTORIC HERITAGE AND CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE 1980'S

It is understandable that the Serbian aggression on Croatia, and the events which followed, have their complex causes which may analytically be divided into two basic levels of observation: time and space. The time level implies historic analysis which should begin in the nineteenth century at the latest and continue to the end of the 1980's, and the space level should include local (south-eastern Europe) and global (Europe and the world) dimensions of observations.

For a deeper understanding of the events which emerged in 1990, one must be familiar with and take into consideration the significance of the impact of several decisive historic facts and processes whose heritage is in the very foundations of all that has been happening these last few years on the territory of the former Yugoslavia. These above all are: the end of the First World War, when the political entity known as Yugoslavia was formed for the first time and the end of the Second World War when communist Yugoslavia was formed.

Scholarly literature confirms and accepts the fact that the creation of both Yugoslavias was predominantly the result of the interests and agreements (compromise solutions) of world powers, the victors of both world wars. This global interest was, on a local level, formed in co-operation with Serbian state and national interests, which in turn were based on the Greater Serbian ideology.

In this way, after the First World War, a multi-national state was formed - Yugoslavia, whose main features, according to world and Yugoslav (post-Second World War) scholarly literature were: the marked domination of Serbs in government structures, in the economy and in social life; national inequality; social oppression; unsolved basic agrarian and ownership problems; corruption on all levels of state organisation; police violence; murder and persecution of politicians and intellectuals who were not inclined to the Greater Serbian regime, etc. These features are listed as the main reasons which brought about the lightning break-up of the regime and Yugoslavia itself at the very beginning of the Second World War.

Neither the global level of events, nor the methodology of relations and behaviour changed in the second world armed conflict. The controversial course and conclusion of the Second World War - in particular after the agreements of the Allies in Teheran in 1943 and in Yalta in 1945 - ended in a series of compromise solutions which had, throughout the world, serious repercussions on a local level for small nations.

Particularly complex interests and events occurred on European soil and crucial global interests of world blocs - western powers and the Soviet Union - were always present behind the scenes of allied war activities and political decisions.

The problem of south-east Europe, a border area for centuries, a land of civilisational,

cultural, political and military connections and conflicts between East and West, was "solved" at the end of the Second World War through compromise, i.e. the formation of communist Yugoslavia. All the interior weaknesses which broke the Kingdom of Yugoslavia continued their destructive development in communist Yugoslavia and the ideology of Greater Serbia was realised through the primitive one-party police-military model state, i.e. the creation of state - political, economic and social - structures in which the Serbs were a privileged nation.

In the 1980's, however, in the world and in Europe in particular, different social processes were underway which led to the cessation of hostilities between two military, political and ideological systems (blocs), whose conflict - in various forms - was a decisive base of world events even after the Second World War. These general, world circumstances determined, for decades, the foreign and domestic political-economic fate and position of Yugoslavia.

The above-mentioned global interests and political processes of the 1980's led to the lifting of the "Iron curtain" which had for four decades stretched from the Baltic to the Adriatic so that Yugoslavia lost its previous global, geostrategic "tampon" role and significance. In concrete international relations, this simultaneously meant the end of substantial western loans which had kept post-war Yugoslavia alive. Apart from this, Yugoslavia had to start returning its international debt which amounted to several tens of billions of US dollars.

In such circumstances, the tough foundations of communist Yugoslavia started to be eaten away ever deeply from the inside by economic and social crisis. The 1980's saw a large increase in the number of strikes, as well as the failure of "self-managed" companies and the circle of privileged members of the ruling structures had to be drastically reduced since the national economy (despite the partial reprogramming of the national debt) was not capable, even slightly, of settling the megalomaniac needs of the state. The state bodies and the Yugoslav League of Communists attempted - by proclaiming numerous reforms and irrelevant economic decisions - to save the sinking state, however, daily inflation became crushing and the re-balancing of the state budget only postponed the agony for a short time.

The frequency and intensity of social unrest caused the gradual destruction of the bureaucratic and repressive system of totalitarian Yugoslavia. The monolithic state apparatus attempted to postpone its own end, thus reducing its efficiency in stopping the pressure of decades of accumulated problems. The first signs of democracy appeared on the horizon enabling more freedom of speech in some parts of Yugoslavia.

In Yugoslavia, the Albanians in Kosovo for years had borne the brutal terror of the Serbian regime and it is understandable that they - at the beginning of the 1980's - were the first to attempt an organised political protest. The peaceful demonstrations of the Albanians, requesting generally accepted national and human rights were, however, subdued by military and police force. The number of those killed were measured in the hundreds and mass trials put thousands of Albanians into the already crowded Yugoslav prisons.

Serbian scholarly, political and military structures were aware that only a radical and violent intervention within Yugoslavia would enable them to remain in power and hold on to their domination and privileges. The infamous 8th session of Serbia's Central

Committee and the arrival of Slobodan Milosevic at the head of Serbia represents the beginning of the realisation of the plan ("Memorandum") which was drafted in the Serbian Academy of Arts and Sciences and which worked out the strategy by which the Serbian power-holders would hold on to their control of the south Slav peoples or states.¹

The theoretic starting point and direction of the psychological propaganda activities of the Greater Serbian aggressive nationalism are reduced to the lowest level of simplicity: wherever Serbs live, they are in jeopardy and therefore it is the holy duty of their country and their nation to join forces with them and to mercilessly confront those who are putting them in jeopardy - and then to include all Serbs and all the territories they live on into one country "Serbia".² On the basis of the events which followed, it is obvious that these "messages of evil" found fertile soil in the economic situation and the cultural and socio-psychological frame of mind of those to whom they were intended.

The events proceeded according to the foreseen order and speed. In Serbia, all components of a social and political life were cleansed and the methods used were not important. A monolithic hierarchy of power was formed. Absolute control over the media was established, which was to become significant for the control over the masses at home and confuse the world public. Armed violence was used to neutralise Kosovo, and raids by street mobs (under the slogan "anti-bureaucratic revolution") subdued the multi-national Voivodina. Both provinces soon had their formal autonomy status annulled - but Belgrade kept their seats in federal bodies (which these provinces had precisely because of their autonomy, by their participation and by the constitutionalism of the Federation). In Montenegro, pro-Serbian politicians were placed in power through violent meetings. On the basis of all this, the predominance of Serbia was all the more strengthened in federal bodies of power, which verified all Serbia's unconstitutional moves. After the realisation of absolute power in Serbia - with Voivodina and Kosovo - and in Montenegro, the second part of the plan was put into action : the creation of Greater Serbia.

1990 PREPARATION AND BEGINNING OF AGGRESSION

The crisis in Yugoslavia and of the communist system had, however, a different course in the other states of the Yugoslav federation. The Republic League of Communists of Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Macedonia were pressed between the unsolvable socio-economic difficulties in their own states and the advancing danger of the Greater Serbian plan, in which there was no place for their own portion of power and their own personal safety was becoming more of an issue. Therefore, they finally decided on, for them, a more pleasant solution: democratic and multi-party elections.

At the end of the 1980's, opposition parties were formed in Croatia which, despite certain difficulties, started their pre-election campaigns. In the spring of 1990, however, just prior to the first multi-party elections in Croatia, the situation in Yugoslavia became critical because the Yugoslav People's Army (the JNA) started to become publicly more and more involved in political life wishing to influence the outcome of the Yugoslav crisis. The direction this influence was taking may be seen by the fact that more than 70% of officer cadre was of Serbian or Montenegrin nationality, and what is more, this percentage was even higher among high ranking officers.

All unconstitutional actions carried out by Serbia with S. Milosevic at its head were silently approved of by the General Staff and the Federal Secretariat of the National

Defence (SSNO), and the Army leadership proclaimed their threats quite openly at the very announcement of the realisation of democracy in Croatia and Slovenia. Not only this, but at Serbia's request, the Army occupied Kosovo and although the Albanians were merely demonstrating peacefully a bloody conflict ensued. Fifteen days before the elections in Croatia, General Veljko Kadijevic, who was touring the Fifth Military District (Croatia and Slovenia), stating how the Army would "decisively oppose the forces which were undermining the foundations of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia".³

It was clear even then that the practice of the primitive politics of Greater Serbian nationalism - symbolised by S. Milosevic - would not have been carried out so quickly and efficiently if the participation of the majority of Yugoslav Army officers had not been assured previously.

The Serbian propaganda machine systematically convinced (and to a great degree was successful) the Serbs in Croatia that they were in serious danger from the Croats and in particular from the Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ), which at the time was the most prominent party in Croatia and which during its pre-election campaign meetings suffered a series of physical threats and attacks (in Berk, Vukovar, Benkovac and elsewhere).

In July 1990, the actual events surrounding the elections passed peaceably enough (taking into consideration the lack of tradition in political democracy) despite the irregularities which were on the very edge of tolerability. After the elections, Croatia saw the start of the establishment of a democratic, multi-party system of government which meant the elimination from public life of all previously applied Yugoslav communist totalitarianism.

The Greater Serbian structure in Yugoslavia prepared various methods in order to prevent the process of general democracy in Croatia, which it started to apply. Immediately after the elections and before the newly elected democratic government was constituted in Croatia, the Yugoslav Army illegally dispossessed the Territorial Defence Forces (TO) in Croatia of their weapons, stating that the arms depots were "badly guarded". Founding SDS assemblies were held repeatedly during which primitive threats and transparent provocation were directed to the democratically elected government ("We'll kill Tudjman", "This is Serbia"). In the Croatian Parliament - in which the majority were members of the HDZ - members of the Serbian Democratic Party (SDS) proclaimed a "suspension" of all relations with the Parliament.⁴ In homogenised" Serbia, the Information Department of the Provincial Committee of the League of Communists of the Working People of Voivodina publicly announced its conclusion that "in Croatia there was a more serious case of counter revolution at work than in Kosovo".⁵

In the second half of June, in Belgrade, the "Serbian Chetnik Movement" with V. Seselj at its head was formed and a week later the "Association of Serbs from Croatia in Belgrade" was established which as its aim emphasised the battle for the formation of the autonomy of Serbs in Croatia. At the beginning of July, at the Serbian celebrations of Vidovdan in the village of Kosovo near Knin, the formation of the "Serbian Autonomous Krajina" was proclaimed with M. Babic as president, who four days later was to invite the "representatives" of 17 "Serbian districts" from Croatia to bring the decision to establish Krajina. Two weeks later "Serbian Radio Knin" started its

broadcasts. In Srb, on 25 July, a Serbian meeting was held at which the "Declaration on Autonomy" was proclaimed and the Serbian National Council was established, with government status, which was to carry out a referendum and other planned illegal Serbian actions and decisions.

Meanwhile, the Party of Reformed Communists (SKH-SDP) which was the strongest opposition party in the Croatian parliament, was undergoing a deep crisis and stratification along national lines: most members of Serbian nationality, as well as some municipal party organisations, joined the SDS accusing the SKH-SDP of betraying the interests of the Serbian people". Some members of partisan organisations also sent clear signals, for instance, Milan Sola of the Osijek SUBNOR (Organisation of Partisans of the National Liberation War) stated that it was necessary to "liquidate those who publicly announced that they do not respect partisans and the Army; and force the party in power to co-operate with us and not vice versa".⁶

The entire territory of Croatia was constantly bombarded with propaganda and organisational activities of Greater Serbian structures, which directed provocative and aggressive messages to the Croatian authorities and the Croatian people aiming to contribute to the general estrangement between nationalities, which was an important part in the realisation of the plan of Greater Serbia.

All the steps taken by the legal and democratically elected bodies of the Croatian authorities concerning the modifications to communist laws and state symbols and the democratisation of activities of executive authorities - were met with provocation and revolt by a part of the Serbian minority in Croatia, with the organisational and material support of the Serbian state and the JNA. The propaganda activities of pro-Serbian media and actions of the SDS managed to bring a part of the Serbs in Croatia to a state of irreconcilability towards the legally elected authorities. Various forms of mass protests were constantly being incited and the moment of their transformation into an open revolt was being prepared. This finally occurred on 17 August, 1990 in Knin and the surrounding area: all approaches to the area were blocked by armed civilians and the Knin SDS proclaimed a state of war.

Units of the Croatian Police attempted to prevent the armed violence of Serbian terrorists but all action was prevented by the JNA. This showed who the true organiser of the terror in Croatia was. All further events in Croatia - whether Serbian attacks on police stations or "peace" negotiations - led to a more intensive revolt and the spreading of the war-affected territory. Meanwhile, in Serbia, the war atmosphere was being warmed up via the media and mass "gatherings of support to the jeopardised Serbs in Croatia". Croatian authorities attempted to lead negotiating activities, but in vain; the circle of revolt and war continued to spread.

The scenario, prepared and practically supported by the JNA and Serbia, was a simple one: groups of armed Serbian civilians would attack several Croatian police stations in a particular area, steal the weapons, erect barricades and proclaim the annexation of the area to "krajina". Every attempt by the Croatian police to prevent this terrorism was stopped by the threat of the huge military force. The Serbs immediately formed illegal parallel "authorities" on the rebel territories which terrorised the inhabitants, in particular the Croats - who were therefore forced to save their lives and flee their homes for the safe parts of Croatia.

After the initial disorders, the general insecurity and terror in the Knin area, a similar process of "crawling war" at the beginning of autumn 1990 affected Banovina and western Srijem (the Pakrac area). At that time, eastern Slavonia was not affected by open revolt but rather the terrain was being prepared for the armed occupation of this Croatian land with Serbian propaganda and unarmed activities.

1991 - AGGRESSION USING ALL AVAILABLE MEANS AND THE DEFENCE OF CROATIA

In the period of the autumn, winter and spring of 1990/91, processes were definitively formed which were to transform Croatia into a zone of total war and brutal Serbian armed aggression. It became clear then that the Serbian ruling military and bureaucratic structures of communist Yugoslavia would not accept a single democratic variation of the solution to the Yugoslav crisis. How the events which ensued were predictable may be testified to by the evaluation which was publicly submitted in the autumn of 1990 by the very well-informed and expert US state intelligence agency - the CIA - which announced the imminent break up of Yugoslavia accompanied by a bloody war, with the originator named as S. Milosevic, although he was "de facto" merely a political symbol of the multi-institutionally based project of Greater Serbia.

The creation and maintaining of the Serbian "Krajina" was possible only with the protection of the JNA. Meanwhile, unannounced military manoeuvres were held more frequently in the areas of Croatia which were unaffected by the rebellion. While terrifying columns of army tanks passed menacingly through Croatian cities, Croatian soldiers were being transferred to barracks outside the borders of Croatia and the military court of the JNA - in the winter of 1990/91 - began the staged trials against the Minister of Defence of the Republic of Croatia - for alleged organised conspiracy and illegal purchase of weapons. The pro-Serbian media systematically sharpened the level of war mongering activities, and the more and more frequent meetings of the SDS prepared the terrain for the broadening of the war against Croatia.

By the middle of February, the Pakrac district brought the illegal decision to annex five villages and 32 hamlets from the neighbouring district. Several days later, in ten villages of the Vinkovci area, populated by a Serb majority, unknown persons announced a "referendum" on the annexation of these villages to the Vukovar district - although no natural or economic reasons, nor legal basis for this existed.

At the beginning of March 1991, Serbian terrorists attacked the Pakrac police station and stole the weapons. JNA tanks prevented the Croatian police from catching the perpetrators. Meanwhile, in the whole area of Slavonia, in villages with a Serbian majority, armed civilians erected barricades and set up sentries.

On the level of the whole of Yugoslavia - in the spring of 1990 - various acute controversies started to multiply. The communist regime of S. Milosevic in Serbia, pressed by the catastrophic state of the economy and the dissatisfaction of the forcefully oppressed opposition, was stimulated to transfer the tensions within Serbia to outside its borders, which was - apart from the plans for the Greater Serbia - an added reason to quicken the conquest of Croatia. This became particularly obvious after 9 March when the army and police used tanks to crush the opposition demonstrations in Belgrade and the whole of Serbia.

Since the federal budget received less and less money from Slovenia and Croatia, the

JNA submitted to the President of Yugoslavia in mid-March, a draft of a law "in regard to the difficulties in financing the JNA". The Serbian parliament illegally removed the representative of Kosovo in the Yugoslav presidency and in his stead appointed one of their men. Milosevic announced on 16 March that he would not respect the decisions of the Yugoslav presidency and ordered the mobilisation of the reserve police units, and several days later, he announced at the Belgrade University: "We will arm the Serbs in Croatia legally!" At the same time, the "Executive Council of Krajina" brought the decision to secede from Croatia. These are just some of the facts which pointed to the setting in motion of the Serbian war machine.

During the Easter holidays on the Plitvice Lakes, a large armed conflict occurred between the Croatian police and Serbian terrorists: a Croatian policeman Josip Jovic was killed - the first direct victim of the Serbian aggression against Croatia. At the same time, there was an increase in the number of Serbian barricades, JNA tanks on the roads and politicians from Serbia calling for rebellion against Croatian authorities at meetings throughout the remaining crisis regions in Croatia. In this way, for instance, the village of Kijevo was blocked by militia units of "SAO Krajina" (Serbian Autonomous District of Krajina), twenty JNA armoured vehicles occupied Vrpolje, tanks took to the streets of Osijek, terrorists attacked the police station in Dalj. In Knin, the Executive Council brought the "decision to unite SAO Krajina and the Republic of Serbia"; the Serbs of Glina and Hrvatska Kostajnica brought the "decision" to annex SAO Krajina, and the Serbian parliament publicly demanded armed JNA involvement in Croatia. Those days, at the beginning of April, three EU ministers spent several days in Belgrade and gave their support to an "undivided Yugoslavia".⁷

Since Croatia had less and less negotiating space and the rebel terrorism had begun to affect new territories, during the first half of April, Croatian authorities brought the decision to form a National Protection - ("the unarmed defence of the citizens of Croatia") and, at the first session of the Supreme State Council, the decision was brought to create the National Guard (ZNG).

During April, in the villages of the Vukovar district which had a Serbian majority, the final preparations for armed war were being carried out: the JNA publicly distributed arms to the Serbs and trained them; groups of armed chetniks from Serbia started to arrive; Serbian women and children started to leave for Voivodina, etc. Borovo Selo, a village in eastern Slavonia, stood out the most as far as the quantity of arms and the number of chetniks to arrive from Serbia, so it is hardly surprising that the bloody Serbian aggression on Vukovar and the entire eastern part of Slavonia started in exactly that village. Namely, on 2 May, 1991, Serbian terrorists in Borovo Selo killed and then massacred 12 Croatian police men and wounded 23.

The Croatian state was then almost completely unarmed in relation to the enormous arms potential of the JNA, so that the basic strategy of the Croatian authorities was to avoid armed conflicts of larger proportions, which the JNA persistently attempted to provoke. All negotiating activities of the Croatian government remained in vain since the Greater Serbian politics had escalated to such a degree in the preparation of the armed occupation of Croatia that negotiations served only as a tactical means in their psychological-propaganda war.

By mid-May, on the basis of earlier brought and applied statutes, it was the turn of a Croatian representative to head the federal presidency of Yugoslavia. The Serbian leadership, however, prevented this through unconstitutional means.

Several days later, on 19 May, Croatia held a referendum in which 94.17% of the voters voted in favour of an independent Croatian state and the right to democratic development (82.97% of all Croatian citizens of voting ages took part in the referendum).

The entire territory of Croatia was affected by this severe war crisis so that in mid-June the Croatian parliament decided to start permanent sessions. At the end of June, after the proclamation of the independence of Slovenia, the JNA decided to use all available means to attack this one-time part of Yugoslavia and the inhabitants of the north-western part of Croatia attempted to stop the JNA tanks who were departing army barracks in Croatia. The war between the JNA and Slovenia ended in agreement several days later, namely, it was agreed that the JNA withdraw from Slovenia. Since the JNA had operated with military aeroplanes and heavy weapons in Slovenia, completely disclosing its role in the Greater Serbian strategy, it was to be supposed that Croatia would also soon be exposed to air and heavy artillery attacks; this is in fact what took place in July.

At the very beginning of July, a paradoxical process of negotiations and agreements began under the auspices of various international societies and organisations (this process still continues). One notices, observing this five-year process, that the main characteristics are that events in general unfolded contrary to the way they were agreed and signed. Namely, at the very beginning of July, five members of the EU Observer Mission arrived in Belgrade and several days later the Declaration on the Peaceful Solution to the Yugoslav Crisis was signed on the Brijuni Islands - with the support and presence of the EU ministers. Soon after that, tanks from Serbia entered Baranja, the JNA shelled Vukovar, Osijek and Erdut all the more fervently and the Serbian military airforce attacked the Vukovar villages. At the end of July, the intensity of the Serbian aggression on eastern Slavonia, Baranja, as well as northern and southern Dalmatia continued to grow and the Serbian Army, with the massacre of ten Croatian police men in Kozibrod and seventeen civilians in Struga and Kuljani, began the bloody terror in Banovina with the aim of scaring and forcing the Croats to leave this region. With the same aim in mind, chetniks completely burned down the eastern Slavonian village of Celije which was inhabited by Croats; a part of the inhabitants were killed and the remaining were expelled. In this way Croatia had, at the beginning of August, approximately 30,000 displaced persons.

The range and intensity of the armed aggression on Croatia during August reached such proportions that not even Croatian daily papers managed to keep up with all the battles, the destruction and the massacre of civilians which were carried out by the Serbian Army. During this month, the direction of attacks of the Serbian Army were stabilised and Serbian units from Serbia, Montenegro and Bosnia-Herzegovina became all the more involved in all military activities.

These circumstances determined the corresponding organisation of Croatian defence so that eight global battle-fields, i.e. areas, were formed where the aggressor was confronted. Since the Croatian state had not managed to fully constitute itself before the Serbian aggression, since it did not have an established army or armaments and since within the ranks of the inherited Territorial Defence and police units there were many cases of betrayal, defence on all fronts was organised in general by self-initiative - on the part of the attacked inhabitants. During the war, the Croatian Army was gradually formed and strengthened so that defence became co-ordinated and complete.

The battle-fields were as follows: eastern Slavonia - which included the area of the former districts of Vukovar, Vinkovci and Osijek, although the Vukovar battle should be viewed separately; the Posavina battle-field - includes the area of Slavonski Brod and Zupanja and the region of the eight Posavina districts in B-H (Bosanski Brod, Orasje, Derventa, Modrica, Gradacac, Odzak, Brcko and Bosanski Samac); the western Slavonia battle-field - including the areas of the districts of Novska, Nova Gradiska, Pakrac, Grubisno Polje and Daruvar, and partially the areas of the districts of Virovitica, Podravska Slatina, Orahovica and Pozega; the Banovina battle-field - including the area of the districts of Dvor na Uni, Glina, Petrinja, Kostajnica and Sisak; the Kordun battle-field - including the districts of Slunj, Ogulin, Vrginmost, Vojnic, Duga Resa and Karlovac; the Lika front - embracing the districts of Gracac, Korenica, Donji Lapac (occupied in 1990), Gospic and Otocac; the northern Dalmatian front including the Zadar, Sibenik and Split areas with the islands and hinterlands; the southern Dalmatian front with districts Ploce, Metkovic and Dubrovnik and the Herzegovinian districts of Neum and Trebinje.

On all fronts the Serbian aggression unfolded according to the same scenario - the towns were heavily shelled from the land or air and infantry and armoured vehicles would enter the villages, Catholic churches were destroyed and the non-Serbian inhabitants were killed or expelled. In this way the Serbian Army had by the end of August - through massacres or expulsions - ethnically cleansed and occupied almost all the villages in Banovina. The same fate was experienced in Baranja which was completely occupied by the end of August.⁸

At the same time, on the border with Croatia, Serbia amassed an enormous military force (several hundred tanks and several tens of thousands of soldiers) who crossed over into Croatia at the end of August with the aim of annexing eastern Slavonia and uniting with Serbian forces which had started to section off Croatia towards the north in the western Slavonian front.

During the final days of August (24), the majority of villages of the Vukovar district were occupied and a general - air, tank and infantry - attack on besieged Vukovar began. The usual military estimates - knowing that the aggressor had several hundred tanks, a mighty artillery, tens of thousands of excellently armed soldiers, an air force and open supply routes, whereas the defender had approximately 1,800 mostly untrained volunteers with only light infantry arms, mortars and a limited quantity of anti-tank devices and ammunition and were totally encircled - spoke of a defence lasting approximately two days. However, the battle had a completely unexpected course and became fateful one for the Croatian state. The defenders managed to hold the town for more than eighty days (until 18 November) when their ammunition ran out. The Serbs completely destroyed the town with their artillery and the tragedy of the inhabitants in the cellars and the defenders was for months the centre of world attention. There are still incomplete data on the defence of Vukovar but we do know that that approximately 1,700 people were killed in the town (1,100 civilians), more than 4,000 were wounded, some 5,000 were taken prisoner and taken to camps in Serbia with more than 2,000 still missing (it is probable they were liquidated by the Serbs after their occupation of the town and this is confirmed by international organisations which have located many mass graves with hundreds of bodies in Vukovar and the surrounds, although no excavations have been allowed by the Serbian occupying forces), 30,000 people were displaced.

The immense military achievement of the defenders of Vukovar is completely outside all previous war experience: approximately 500 Serbian armoured vehicles were destroyed (including 200 tanks and 100 armoured transporters), between 25 and 39 military aeroplanes were shot down, the number of killed Serbian soldiers is estimated to be somewhere between 10,000 and 15,000 with 25,000 to 30,000 wounded.

The battle for Vukovar and the number of destroyed weapons and soldiers considerably weakened the potential Serbian conquering army in a material, political and military sense, and not only this, but for three months Serbia's enormous military reserves were tied down to the narrow area of Vukovar giving precious time to the creation and organisation of the Croatian Army and state. Therefore, Vukovar - apart from the decisive merits in the defence of the Croatian state - became the symbol of the Croatian resistance to the Serbian war aggression and of the system of values of the Croatian state.

During the course of September, the Serbian Army used all the heavy weapons it had at its disposal on all fronts; it gained rural areas for whose defence the Croatian state did not have the means; it massacred and expelled civilians of non-Serbian nationality, and targeted Croatian towns with artillery shells and air-to-surface rockets, aiming primarily at hospitals, sacral objects, schools and cultural monuments. Croatian authorities still opted for negotiations and in September several "cease fire agreements" were signed but were taken by the Serbian Army to be merely signs for even more brutal attacks. Further massacres of Croats were carried out by the Serbian Army in Banovina in the villages of Kraljevcani, Grabostani, Stubalj and Majur, and in the Drava River valley villages of Balinci, Cetekovci and Coljug. Then, during just one shell attack on Osijek at the beginning of September, 18 civilians were killed. The EU appointed Lord Carrington to be co-ordinator of the "Peace Conference on Yugoslavia" which had been set up. The Serbian Army continued to demolish Croatian towns in series. In the heaviest offensive of the Serbian Army on Vukovar - from 14 to 20 September - the defenders managed to destroy 130 tanks and armoured transporters and the road to Trpinja got the name "tank cemetery". The Serbian Army occupied Hrvatska Kostajnica and Petrinja at that time, the first general alerts sounded in Zagreb, Varazdin and Cakovec.

The survival of the Croatian state hung by a thread. The situation on all fronts was exceptionally difficult for the defenders, mostly because of a lack of arms and ammunition. It was, therefore, no longer possible to wait and various Croatian defence units and civilians - in mid September 1991 - finally decided to take over JNA barracks, warehouses and other military facilities, namely, ever since the attack of the JNA on Slovenia, Croatian civilians had spontaneously opposed JNA military facilities (peace movements, calls to surrender, blockades, obstruction of deliveries, occasional shooting, etc.). In September, this process developed into a real war for the barracks in which Croatia succeeded - by the end of September - to take a large number of barracks (about seventy), among them being the most important arms depots and barracks containing large quantities of weapons. In order to understand Croatia's previous lack of arms and the importance of the acquisition of weapons at that time, it is enough to say that the weapons were taken in facilities covered by the Varazdin Corps (74 tanks, 48 armoured tracked vehicles, 10 bazookas, 6 canon, 16 155 mm howitzers, 250 various vehicles, great quantities of infantry guns and ammunition) representing an amount seven times greater than the entire arms potential the entire Croatian state had possessed until then.

These weapons were - in relation to the Serbian military potential - only a bare minimum which did not change the ratio of strength but which did gradually arrive on all Croatian fronts and enabled the greatly motivated Croatian defenders to stop further occupation of Croatian territory. Only the defenders of Vukovar, for reasons that still remain unconfirmed (one of the reasons most frequently mentioned is the wrong evaluation of high ranking JNA officers who crossed over to the Croatian side and who believed that it was impossible to defend Vukovar anyway and that it therefore should no longer be aided; another reason is war profiteering, i.e. the sale of weapons to the highest bidder - regardless of who he is) were not given the crucial support in arms and ammunition.

Of the increasing danger Croatia was exposed to is testified to by the fact that in mid September - the US consulate in Zagreb called all US citizens to leave Croatia for reasons of their own safety. At the end of September, the UN Security Council accepted the resolution on the embargo against the delivery of arms to the territory of Yugoslavia, which was a direct assistance to the aggressor who had weapons for a ten-year war, whereas the victim's defence possibilities were considerably reduced.

At the very end of September, the Serbian Army began a maritime blockade of the Croatian coast and islands and several days later started an artillery, air and sea attack on Dubrovnik, including the old part of the town within the city walls. Serbian aeroplanes rocketed Banske dvore (the President's residence) in Zagreb on 7 October in which the Croatian president was at the time. The following day, on 8 October, was a historic one in the formation of the Croatian state; the Croatian parliament at its session - which for security reasons was held in the INA building - brought its decision to break all state ties with Yugoslavia. A general mobilisation was immediately carried out in Croatia.

By mid October, the Serbian Army occupied Cavtat and soon found itself at the approaches to the besieged city of Dubrovnik from which various appeals for help were sent out to the world. In Vukovar, on 16 October, the legendary defender - Blago Zadro was killed. Despite the presence and mediation of international observers, the Serbian Army on 17 October, expelled about 5,000 inhabitants of Ilok which they then proceeded to loot. The war on all fronts was being led at an unreduced tempo and Croatian towns were continuously shelled by Serbian artillery.

At the beginning of November 1991, there were approximately 300,000 displaced persons in the free parts of Croatia. On the day of the Serbian occupation of Vukovar on 18 November, the Serbian Army in Skabrnja massacred 74 elderly Croats and several days later they razed the Maslenica bridge completely cutting off the southern part of Croatia. In Geneva, on 23 November, an agreement was signed on the unblocking of JNA barracks and most of the arms in Croatia.⁹

Since the Serbian Army had, during its aggression, committed a series of crimes and completely violated several dozens agreed cease-fires, the Ministerial Council of the EU finally introduced sanctions against Serbia and Montenegro on 2 December. But the Serbian war machine could not be stopped through legal or economic means.

After the fall of Vukovar, decisive battles were led in western Slavonia where the Serbian Army intended cutting off the rest of Croatia. But the Croatian Army stopped the Serbian offensive and succeeded by 22 December, when the cease fire was

signed, to free Papuk, Bilogora and a large part of Psunj. In this way, it was here that the front was established and it was here that UNPROFOR was to be subsequently deployed (Sector West).

FROM 1992 TO 1995 - GRADUAL LIBERATION OF OCCUPIED TERRITORY

As time went on - through the gradual arming and organisation of the Croatian Army, as well as through the development of the situation on the terrain - it became more clear that the Serbian Army had lost its chance to break the Croatian state and so, during December 1991, international activity aiming at ending the armed conflicts was increased. Experience in similar circumstances and the development of the situation on the territory of the former Yugoslavia showed that this international activity had only one firm principle - to maintain the "status quo", regardless of legal and moral factors. It is important to emphasise this as it is only by taking this fact into account that it is possible to see the continuity of the logic and the consistency of the relations of international factors towards events in the "territory of the former Yugoslavia". Serbian strategists were very familiar with this principle so that even now - after four years of "intensive" international community engagement - they have not given up on the application of all forms of force in the realisation of their plans for a Greater Serbia.

In this way, during December 1991, the UN Security Council adopted what was known as the Vance Plan on UNPROFOR and the UNPA; Resolution 724 was brought - on the new observer mission which was a military one to a certain degree; the Ministerial Council of the EU brought the "general framework for the recognition of the new states"; Germany and Austria announced their recognition of Croatia and Slovenia for 15 January, 1992. The Serbian Army therefore, in December 1991 undertook its strongest offensive on all fronts, in order to enter international negotiations with as much Croatian territory as possible. The failure, however, of the Serbian offensive in western Slavonia signified the end of further Serbian territorial advancement in Croatia, so that the "freezing" of the status quo - with the presence of international guarantees (UNPROFOR) - was in the strategic interests of Serbia as it gave the Serbs a free hand to move on to the aggression against Bosnia-Herzegovina with full force.

The day after the 1992 New Year, in Sarajevo and in the presence of Cyrus Vance, an agreement was signed on the cessation of hostilities between Croatia and the JNA. Although the Serbs did not have the strength to take more Croatian territory, this did not stop them from frequent artillery attacks on Croatian towns which were within the range of their guns. The main aim of this was probably to prevent the Croatian state from undertaking any liberation operations.

Military aeroplanes of the Serbian Army shot down, on 7 January 1992, an Observer Mission helicopter and five mission members were killed. From the middle of January, Croatia was recognised as an independent state by a whole series of countries and two weeks later Croatia received observer status in the C.S.C.E.

In the second half of February, the UN Security Council brought Resolution 743 on the deployment of peace forces in Croatia and UNPROFOR's initial mandate was determined for a period of one year.

The plans for Greater Serbia, and even more their military, political and psychological preparations were no secret, so it was clear to the world that what was to follow would be the Serbian aggression against Bosnia-Herzegovina. It is probably for this reason

that on 24 February, 1992 in Lisbon, the EU offered a proposal to the solution to the B-H crisis - the forming of three constitutive (national) units on the basis of the last three population censuses. Since that time, world attention (official and unofficial) has been focused on B-H on which an aggression was carried out by Serbia with the aid of the B-H Serbs themselves with the same bloody and destructive methods and consequences which had already been seen in the attacks on Croatia.

Serbian artillery from Serbia, Montenegro, B-H and Serbian occupied parts of Croatia continued to attack Croatian towns and put the finishing touches to the expulsion and killing of the remaining Croats in the occupied territories. The political activities of Croatia during 1992 were focused on affirming and including Croatia in the complicated structures of international organisations and protecting the Croatian people in B-H from the Serbian aggression. At the end of March, Croatia was accepted into the C.S.C.E.

In April, when Serbia began its conquest of B-H from different directions, a bitter war ensued in the Posavina region which till then had been spared heavier Serbian attacks. The reason for this is that the narrow Posavina corridor - in war-torn B-H - served as the umbilical cord for the Serbian Army in western Bosnia and the (western) parts of occupied Croatia. Without the taking and control of the Posavina corridor, the creation of Greater Serbia would not be possible, therefore, (Croatian and Bosnia-Herzegovinian) Serbia took great effort in attacking Posavina. It was then that the most civilians in Slavonski Brod lost their lives from the Serbian long range artillery shells.

The Serbian aggression on B-H also brought a very heavy financial burden to the already damaged Croatian economic potential - at the end of April, more than 200,000 refugees from B-H had found shelter in Croatia and this number increased daily.

The attacks on Herzegovina grew stronger jeopardising the survival of Dubrovnik and the surrounding area which was, to a great degree, already occupied and the Croatian Army in May and June 1992 undertook a large action in the southern front and liberated twenty-seven villages from Osalj to Plat and the Herzegovinian hinterland.

At the beginning of May 1992, Croatia received guest status in the Council of Europe and on 22 May was received as a full member of the UN. In this month, the EU withdrew its ambassadors from Belgrade and Serbia was thrown out of the C.S.C.E. UN Resolution 757 dated 30 May, introduced sanctions to Serbia and Montenegro.

By the middle of May, UNPROFOR took over responsibility in Sector East and gradually the same occurred in the other three sectors, i.e. the occupied parts of Croatia. The UN soldiers in the occupied parts of Croatia did not get in the way of the Serbian Army as far as expelling non-Serbs or artillery attacks on Croatian towns was concerned. It became clear that UNPROFOR had absolutely no authority or strength for any efficient action, least of all in reintegrating occupied Croatian territory into the Croatian state system. This, therefore, had to be done - in accordance with the unbearable Serbian terror and international circumstances - by the Croatian armed forces themselves.

During 1992, in the free parts of Croatia, the inhabitants of Dalmatia were in the most difficult situation since they not only had to bear Serbian artillery attacks but also the problems arising from their isolation. In order to save the Dalmatian towns from close range artillery attacks, in June 1992, the Croatian Army, in a lightning attack, freed the

Miljevac Heights: seven villages and 180 square kilometres of territory, confiscating large amounts of arms and ammunition. At the end of January 1993, the Croatian Army freed 13 villages in the Zadar hinterland in the Maslenica action. This enabled the building of the Maslenica Bridge which had been destroyed by the Serbs in 1991.

At the beginning of October 1992 - under still unsolved circumstances - the Serbian Army entered Bosanski Brod and in this way took control over the Posavina corridor which extended the survival of most of the occupied areas in Croatia and western Bosnia. In the second half of October, the Serbian Army, on the basis of an agreement between Tudjman and Cosic, withdrew from Konavle and 30 villages between Cavtat and Vitaljina were returned to Croatian authority. Since Serbian artillery attacks continued, the Croatian Army was forced to liberate the Konavle hills in another military action. In the first half of September 1993, the Croatian Army freed the Medak pocket (Divoselo, Citluk and Pocitelj) from where the Serbian Army had constantly shelled Gospic. After this point, a full twenty months passed in political and diplomatic activity of the international community and groups of states which through extensions of the UNPROFOR mandate, numerous resolutions, decisions and advice promised the "peaceful reintegration" of occupied Croatian territory, but the actual situation showed only the strengthening of the status quo. Apart from this, the unbelievably long restraint of the Croatian state from any military action against the Serbian occupation conditioned the ever increasing dramatic and complex development of events in B-H. The long Croatian wait had one exceptionally favourable circumstance - in the meantime, the Croatian Army had become considerably stronger in its organisation and armaments.

The threshold of Croatian endurance finally broke at the beginning of May 1995 when in a lightning action called "Flash" which lasted several days freed the occupied parts of western Slavonia. After that Croatian towns (including Zagreb) which were within range of Serbian artillery were exposed to severe shelling.

Three months after "Flash", the Croatian Army carried out another action called "Storm" which liberated the entire occupied territory apart from eastern Slavonia.

THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE SERBIAN AGGRESSION ON CROATIA

Every study which chronologically presents a certain series of events must contain a certain level of interpretation, which in this presentation of the Serbian aggression on Croatia I attempted to reduce to the lowest possible level. This interpretation, which includes the value relation of the author towards events, could not be avoided nor was there any attempt to hide it. Therefore, because of the fact that world media in their reports on the Serbian aggression included and still include completely opposed explanations or cover-ups of political interest, it is interesting to quote some collective facts which speak for themselves as to the aim and type of the aggression carried out by Serbia in the final part of this study.

And five years after the beginning of the Serbian aggression on Croatia, and four years after the stopping of the Serbian advancement onto Croatian territory, one notices a certain lack of scholarly studies which process this complicated theme according to its causes, course and consequence. The deepest traces it left on individuals and on Croatia as a community were the consequences of war. And those consequences which are reflected in measurable units are not even completely evidenced so that the statistics I am about to submit should not be taken as final.

According to official statistics, 10,668 citizens of the Republic of Croatia were killed through direct military activity. Among them more than one third are civilians and of this number 300 are children. 37,180 people were wounded (more than a third are civilians and 1,000 are children). Officially there are 7,827 missing, forcefully abducted or imprisoned persons (of this number 2,642 are from Vukovar). Anthropological findings, witness testimonies or documents testify that more than 1,000 Croatian citizens were massacred. Only in UNPA Sectors East and South - after the arrival of UNPROFOR - more than 600 civilians were killed and 7,000 were expelled. Once more it is necessary to emphasise that these tragic numbers are not final as they include only those casualties which, by the end of 1995, passed official procedures of verification (for instance, those killed are considered to be those for whom medical or autopsy reports were made). An added problem is that in the making of these statistics, the occupied Croatian territories were not accessible although they formed 25% of Croatian state territory and were the scene of the majority of casualties.

According to reports of the Government Office for Displaced Persons and Refugees, the number of registered displaced persons in Croatia comes to 356,627. This figure does not include the persons (refugees from Croatia) who at the time of the most severe war in 1991 found refuge abroad. This figure comes to some 250,000 people but is reduced in 1994 to approximately 60,000 refugees. The numbers referring to refugees from B-H are as follows: at the end of 1992 in Croatia there were some 402,000 refugees and a further 700,000 travelled through Croatia to go to third countries. Some 100,000 refugees and displaced persons are accommodated in 501 accommodation units specifically built or adapted for this purpose and the remaining are in private accommodation.

In order to understand the severity of these statistics it is necessary to underline that the number of Croatian inhabitants on unoccupied Croatian territory is just over four million and that the financial means for providing for such a huge number of displaced persons and refugees are as follows: 70% from the state budget and 30% from donations.

According to statistics processed so far, direct material damage sustained by Croatia comes to approximately 28 billion US dollars. 30% of the economic facilities have been destroyed, 160,000 housing units and some 600 villages or towns have been destroyed, 1,067 villages or towns and 25% agricultural land were occupied. The number of destroyed or targeted hospitals, health centres and schools is measured in the hundreds.

The Institute for the Protection of Monuments submitted incomplete data as follows: among the destroyed villages, 322 are of historic significance (including 10 archaeological sites); more than 600 individual buildings or objects registered as cultural monuments have been destroyed or damaged - of this number 126 are of world or national significance; 46 museums, 9 archival buildings, 22 libraries have been damaged or destroyed; the fate of sacral and private collections is unknown, as well as the fate of the entire fund of five museums which was stolen and subsequently exhibited as "Serbian heritage" elsewhere. The historic centres of Vukovar, Vinkovci, Lipik, Pakrac, Hrvatska Kostajnica and Petrinja have been completely or partially destroyed; significant damage has been incurred to the historic cores of Osijek, Karlovac, Gospić and Otokac; the historic centres of Dubrovnik, Sibenik, Zadar, Split and many other smaller Croatian towns have been damaged. The historic centres of Dubrovnik and Split are on UNESCO's World Heritage List.

The Serbian Army targeted 502 churches and monasteries; 94 are completely destroyed, 98 heavily damaged and 59 lightly damaged, with the extent of damages to 103 sacral objects not yet determined.

Apart from the series of destroyed natural surroundings, also damaged are the national parks of Plitvice Lakes, Kopacki rit and Krka. Another serious and long term consequence of the Serbian aggression will be approximately two million mines which the Serbian Army laid in Croatia - mostly without mapping them. To this must also be added the unexploded shells whose percentage comes to 20% of the number of shells actually fired. It is enough to mention that in the period of only five months after "Storm" more than 400 civilians were killed when they returned on their own initiative to see their homes after four years of exile.

FOOTNOTES

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An International Symposium "SOUTHEASTERN EUROPE 1918-1995"

Publisher: [Croatian Heritage Foundation](#) & [Croatian Information Centre](#)

For the Publisher: Ante Beljo

Expert Counsellor: Dr. sc. Dragutin Pavlicevic

Editor: Aleksander Ravlic

Graphic Design: Gorana Benic - Hudin

Printed by: TARGA

Copies Printed: 2000

ISBN 953-6525-05-4

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COWARDLY ACTIONS OF THE WEST

During the course of 1990 I attempted unsuccessfully to convince my colleagues in the European Parliament and the European Union, that Yugoslavia, an artificial creation, could not survive.

The events in Kosovo clearly showed Greater Serbian expansionism. The calls for help

from Croatia and Slovenia to western countries should have given them cause to assist in the process of establishing new national countries not retarding it.

Still today, after four years of war, ethnic cleansing, killings and burning, concentration camps and countless rapes there are politicians in western Europe who still think Yugoslavia is ideal and would rather re-establish Yugoslavia again.

Many chose not to see that "Yugoslavia" was to the Serbs de facto Greater Serbia or a single party country. On the other hand, maybe they saw and thought this sort of situation as being correct. The words and actions of the so called mediators for the European Community, Lord Carrington and Lord Owen are proof enough of their manner and thinking.

UN mediator Stoltenberg recently announced that all the people of the former Yugoslavia were originally Serbian, and that this conflict should be viewed from a new stand point. It shows how little these "experts" in fact know about the structure of these countries.

Western countries had their embassies located in Belgrade. The people from these embassies were only acquainted with one side - Serbian, so their reports to their governments contained only the Serbian viewpoint.

This was clearly stated in 1992 by the newly appointed ambassador of Great Britain to Croatia, namely, prior to Zagreb he had been in the English Embassy in Belgrade.

In a conversation with me he stated that he had only now become familiar with the reality of the other side and that he deeply regretted this was so.

Bearing in mind that England and France regard Serbs as their allies in the Second World War nobody finds it particularly difficult to attribute to the Germans the same manner of thinking in relation to the Croats.

We apparently want an outlet to the Adriatic Sea - at least that was talked about after Germany's insistence upon the recognition of Croatia after the fall of the Croatian town of Vukovar and four months of war in Croatia.

Such openly proclaimed thoughts show something terrifying: after the Second World War the Germans started from nothing, forever burying the idea of a Greater Germany and were re-educated into a democratic way of thinking. Nobody forced the victors to change their way of thinking, and even today they are burdened with the unchanged prejudices from the first half of this century.

A unified Germany represents in their eyes such a clear German dominance, so that many politicians in the West would have nothing against a great and strong Serbian counter-balance, allowing ethnic cleansing in order to create a strong Serbia. Such thoughts are found undisguised in French and English media.

Today we stand before the remnants caused by the inconsiderate, selfish and cowardly politics of the West.

SREBRENICA HAS FALLEN!

I remember my discussion with French General Morillon when he left the Srebrenica safe haven. I accidentally met him in the Hotel Esplanade in Zagreb. I asked him whether he realised that he was doing the work for the Serbs. He had disarmed the Muslims and left behind a handful of UN soldiers so that the Muslims no longer had access to their weapons (the UN soldiers could not protect these people anyway because they were too few) thereby opening the way for new Serb conquests. Being in a bad mood, he arrogantly tried to hide his anger towards my words and then later attempted to counter my "naive" analysis. His words have recently been disproved in the most atrocious way.

The Muslims of Srebrenica which he disarmed had nothing to defend themselves with when the Serbs attacked. 35,000 women, children and elderly men are on the run, thousands of men have been imprisoned.

Zepa, a neighbouring safe haven looks as if it awaits the same fate. The Bosnian government asked the UN to return the confiscated weapons so the population could defend itself. The answer was "No"!

The UN has promised protection, however, it is these safe havens which are the least safe places in Bosnia. I suppose that by safety they do not mean the safety which is offered by a UN tank when people hide behind it while running across the most dangerous places in Sarajevo.

Safety also includes access to gas, water and electricity. The UN has not undertaken any measures to ensure the provision of these elementary needs. When I asked Mr. Akashi, the UN Special Envoy in Zagreb, this question he could only smile tiredly. The provision of these items depended entirely on the Serbian side and he could not achieve anything there.

During my last stay in Sarajevo the Serbs stopped the tank in which I was travelling from the airport. I, therefore, had the opportunity to speak to the French UN soldiers who were accompanying us. They believed they had been left on their own to complete a duty which they simply were not able to do.

"To keep the peace where there is none and shelling and explosions are a daily event. Assistance is limited to aid following Serbian attacks, it is not possible to stop them." Those poor youths, they will go mad there.

The Security Council came to a grotesque decision about Bosnia three years ago. By imposing an embargo on the import of weapons on the Muslims, Croats and Serbs the Council took the side of the Serbian aggressor. The Serbs had then, and still do today, enough weapons - and supplies from Serbia are still guaranteed despite Milosevic's insistence to the contrary. The victims continue to be helpless so that they can continue to be expelled, killed and raped.

The Bosnian Premier has from the time of the imposition of the embargo repeated that the embargo was an immoral and illegal act. Every member state of the UN has according to Article 51 of the UN Charter a right to self-defence. The West has effectively prevented this by not allowing the victim to actively defend itself.

This attitude of the West which many in Bosnia and outside of it interpret as anti-Muslim, could have serious consequences. I have often been told, and not only by Muslim leaders, but also by Bosnian citizen of all classes that we Christians do not want the Muslims and that they have know taken the role of Jews.

I tried to explain that the cowardly actions of the West were not anti-Muslim but that they were the inarticulate attempts by the West not to get involved and not to anger the aggressor. Did the Croats as a Catholic people receive help? No.

The so called Christian world allowed the Serbian aggressor to do what it wanted. From this the moderate Muslims in Bosnia could reach a conclusion that their moderation was of no help. The truth is that since 1992 we have tolerated Serbian aggression and even rewarded it by territory.

During many conversations in Mostar, Tuzla and Sarajevo I was warned by wise men, Muslims. I was told that the West would promote the road to Islamic fundamentalism, of which they were all afraid, if they lifted the carpet from under the feet of the Bosnian Muslims who were Europeans of the Muslim faith just as the Croats are Europeans of the Catholic faith.

It is only through their short-sightedness that, faced with a possible conflict between Islam and Europe, we have not been able to keep the Bosniacs as our allies.

The supposed neutrality, which the West at one time proclaimed, has led it to share the guilt since it has not made a distinction between victim and aggressor.

Rapid reaction troops cannot be used to protect Bosnians, they are to be used for the protection of the UN soldiers, whose lives are clearly more valuable than those of the Bosnian population.

The withdrawal of the UN troops and the arming of the Bosnians is the only action which can follow from the chain of our defeats. Those who continue to place all hope in negotiations should listen to the French General Lasprelle who has clearly stated that a political solution through negotiations is only possible if equally strong military forces exist on both sides. Why should the stronger party in negotiations give something to the weaker party if it can obtain more through war?

The West, since the beginning of this war, has not taken notice of its experiences in the last 50 years. It did not use any means to frighten whilst it still could have achieved results - when the Yugoslav Army attacked Croatia - the West should have arrived with aircraft carriers in the Adriatic. Later, after the attack on Bosnia-Herzegovina, it did not bomb the Serb position around Sarajevo, as was the wish of the then NATO Secretary General Wörner, and the Serbs continued to conquer, expel and kill. We were always told that such military intervention was not possible due to the Serbs and the geographic location of the war zone. These were the lies fed to us to hide the bias of the West.

That this was possible had to be demonstrated by the Croats, firstly in western Slavonia and later in the Krajina region and Bihac. It is shameful for the West that the people in the so-called safe haven of Bihac were liberated thanks to the brave action of the Croatian Army. Following this, the US was encouraged to take military steps which,

perhaps, bought the war closer to an end.

Croats from western Slavonia and Krajina waited from February 1991 for the implementation of the Vance Plan so that they could return to their homes. Nothing happened in three years, aside from the fact that their homes and churches in the Serb-occupied areas were destroyed.

Now, when Croatia has with one quick action returned its formerly occupied areas, there is no need to lament, but rather, it should welcome this act of liberation which should have occurred long ago. When the European mediator Bildt condemns this action and states that it is an invasion which deserves every condemnation and that President Tudjman, alongside Karadzic, should be placed on the defendants dock in the Hague, then this arrogant and stupid statement clearly exposes his pro-Serbian stance and disqualifies him as a European Mediator.

The coming peace agreement must deal with all the problems. I sincerely hope that the Serbian side is prepared to return eastern Slavonia to Croatia by peaceful means. To maintain a united Bosnia and at the same time allow a confederation with Belgrade and Zagreb actually spells the end of a united Bosnia. It would be dangerous not to solve the problem of Kosovo, which was in fact the initiator of the disintegration of Yugoslavia and to leave the Albanians at the mercy of the Serbs.

The question of refugees and displaced persons also has to be solved by peaceful means so that conditions can be created for their return to their homes. Ethnically clean areas are unnatural, areas like Krajina and eastern Slavonia in Croatia were the homes to many Serbs, just as Banja Luka was, for example, the home of many Croatsians.

I very much hope that this war will soon end and that the peace agreement will not carry with it the seeds of a new war.

30 SEPTEMBER 1995 "ROUND-TABLE"

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An International Symposium "SOUTHEASTERN EUROPE 1918-1995"

Publisher: [Croatian Heritage Foundation](#) & [Croatian Information Centre](#)

For the Publisher: Ante Beljo

Expert Counsellor: Dr. sc. Dragutin Pavlicevic

Editor: Aleksander Ravlic

Graphic Design: Gorana Benic - Hudin

Printed by: TARGA

Copies Printed: 2000

ISBN 953-6525-05-4

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